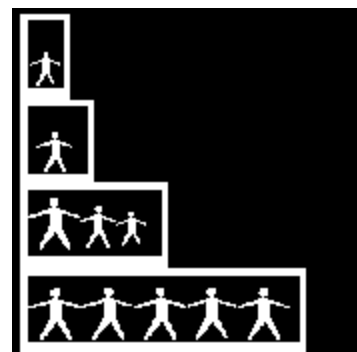


**Children  
Youth &  
Families  
at Risk**

EVALUATION COLLABORATION

# **Community-Based Project Evaluation Guide**



**REVISED 2000**

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# Preface

In 1991, USDA-CSREES (Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service) began funding the Children, Youth, and Families at Risk National Initiative (CYFAR). In 1999, CYFAR was graduated into Extension base programming. CYFAR includes State Strengthening projects and New Communities projects, CYFERnet, and the former National Networks. CYFAR emphasizes a holistic approach to preventive educational programs that address risk and resilience in children, youth, families, and communities. The goal of CYFAR is to facilitate the development and maintenance of healthy, happy environments that enable those at risk to develop life skills necessary for contributing, fulfilling lives.

State Strengthening projects were initiated in 1994 and designed: 1) to improve statewide capacity to support community-based programs for children, youth, and families at risk; and 2) to improve the quality and quantity of comprehensive community-based programs for children, youth, and families at risk.

The Evaluation Guide was first developed in 1997 by the members of the CYFAR Evaluation Collaboration at the University of Arizona. The guide was then updated in 2000 to reflect changes within the CYFAR Program and CYFERnet. The revised edition of the guide also includes various Web sites to assist users in evaluation of their community-based programs. In addition, a new evaluation template has been incorporated into Tier 4 of the current version of the guide. The efforts of the National Outcome Work Groups (NOWGs) have been integrated into the CYFERnet Program Component and are therefore not discussed separately in this revised edition. However, the NOWGs' work is an important part of the CYFERnet evaluation resources and is extremely valuable. Finally, although the revised guide is still based upon Jacobs' five-tiered approach to evaluation (1988), some of the evaluation language has been changed to be more user-friendly (e.g., "short-term outcomes" and "long-term outcomes" replacing "outcome" and "impact"). We hope these changes have made the revised Evaluation Guide more useful to those evaluating community-based programs for children, youth and families.

This guide will step you through a process that will help you evaluate community-based programs. The links between theory and research base, program goals and objectives, measures, variables, and program implementation are discussed.

# Introduction

An evaluation team consisting of community site coordinators, staff, project directors, evaluators, and other stakeholders will use this guide to evaluate community-based projects. Each member of the team is deemed critical to the evaluation effort as each brings an important perspective, knowledge and expertise. As a result of this collaborative effort, it is expected that communities will develop a greater understanding of the total evaluation process. While team members will learn from each other, it is not expected that every member will become an expert in every area of the project. The value of the team approach is that many experts can come together to pool resources for a common understanding and joint effort that result in successful evaluation.

After reviewing a number of evaluation models, we chose to present a modified version of Jacobs' (1988) five-tiered approach to program evaluation. Jacobs' approach has sound theoretical underpinnings and practical applications. Over time, teams will work through this guide, and thus the five tiers, to evaluate the process of their program and conduct short-term outcome and long-term outcome evaluations.

We recognize and respect the diversity of community-based projects. Projects address a variety of issues, have differing work styles, are at different stages of program implementation, and have differing needs relative to evaluation. As a result, we cannot present an "all inclusive" model of evaluation. What we offer is a framework for developing an evaluation. For projects in the early stages, the guide can be used to develop an evaluation plan simultaneous with the program. On the other hand, projects with evaluation plans in place will find this guide most useful for the supplemental information it contains, including resources and reporting forms.

As teams work through the guide, written documentation is encouraged at each tier; however, the extent of this documentation is up to the discretion of each team. The guide begins by introducing the CYFAR philosophy and resources and collaborators of the Evaluation Collaboration. The remainder of the guide is used to introduce Jacobs' (1988) five-tiered model and present the tasks associated with each tier.

## The CYFAR Philosophy and Evaluation

The CYFAR philosophy encourages Extension professionals to implement programs that promote positive development. The research on risk and resilience identifies attributes of effective programs that promote positive development.

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## **1 Exemplify a Community-Based, Holistic Philosophy**

A holistic approach to evaluation views families and programs as existing within a community, and within the larger society. Effective evaluations take into account the broader context within which programs exist and consider the constraints affecting them.

## **2 Promote Partnership with Citizens**

In evaluation, community members are deemed important stakeholders. Since community members are always evaluating the programs they participate in, evaluations benefit when the views of community members are represented.

## **3 Address Complex Conditions**

Families and programs exist within complex and dynamic environments. To be useful and effective, evaluations must consider the complexity of the program. Effective evaluations are often used to inform legislation and policy.

## **4 Solicit and Value Diversity**

With multiple, diverse stakeholders invested in a program, evaluations are more successful when they incorporate a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences. In addition, effective evaluations utilize culturally sensitive measures that honor the rich diversity of program participants.

## **5 Instill Collaboration**

"Collaboration between national and local development organizations, researchers, [citizens], and funders is necessary to ensure that program outcome evaluation is efficient" (National Collaboration for Youth, 1996). The most appropriate evaluation strategy is developed when funders collaborate with service providers. This collaborative process leads to an evaluation plan that is best able to serve children, youth, families, and communities (National Collaboration for Youth, 1996).

## **6 Combine a Coherent Spectrum of Services**

In evaluation, multiple services are best assessed by multiple methods. The ability of an evaluation to capture program effectiveness, along a wide range of program activities, is dependent on the evaluator's ability to draw upon different types of measurement tools.

## **7 Are Accessible and Respectful of People**

Effective evaluations provide results that are easily understood by staff, volunteers, and participants. Committed evaluators work with the staff directly in developing the evaluation plan. They care about and are respectful of all program and evaluation stakeholders.

## **8 Bolster Resiliency**

The continuous feedback process between program implementation and evaluation encourages growth and improvement in both. As a result, the program will be better able to promote resiliency in participants and become sustainable.

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In sum, effective programs and evaluations utilize and value the collaborative input of a wide array of people, including various levels of service providers, community members, and funders. The views and beliefs of all stakeholders are deemed important in the provision of services and in the promotion of resiliency.

# Resources and Collaborators

The partners of this evaluation effort include CSREES, CYFERnet collaborators, Land-grant universities, Youth At-Risk projects, State Strengthening projects, and New Communities Projects. Within this partnership, resources are available to evaluate the processes by which programs are implemented, as well as outcomes for children, youth, parents and families, and communities. The roles of the University of Arizona Evaluation Team and CYFERnet are discussed in this section.

## The University of Arizona Evaluation Team

The University of Arizona, in collaboration with other evaluation partners, 1) facilitated the development of comprehensive evaluations of community-based projects, 2) revised this guide to be used as an evaluation framework by community-based projects, 3) designed and conducted an evaluation of the change in Extension's ability to serve children, youth, and families at risk--this evaluation is being conducted again in 2000, 4) works with collaborators to provide training and technical assistance, and 5) provides leadership and coordination to the CYFERnet evaluation component.

## Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network (CYFERnet: <http://www.cyfernet.org>)

The Children, Youth and Families Education and Research Network (CYFERnet) is a national network of Land Grant university faculty and county Extension educators working to support community-based educational programs for children, youth, parents and families. Through CYFERnet, partnering institutions merge resources into a "national network of expertise" working collaboratively to assist communities. CYFERnet provides program, evaluation and technology assistance for children, youth and family community-based programs. CYFERnet materials are made available through national conferences, printed publications, and electronic technology including Web sites, listservs, email, and satellite downlinks. Following is a description of the components included in CYFERnet.



## **CYFERnet - Program**

CYFERnet's Program component provides for the review of Cooperative Extension System children, youth and family educational materials from across the country for inclusion on the CYFERnet Web site. Five separate editorial boards operate in the areas of child, community, health, parent/family, and youth. The Program component also oversees efforts to produce new training and educational materials to serve community-based children, youth and families at risk programs.

## **CYFERnet - Evaluation**

CYFERnet's Evaluation component provides evaluation resources and support for community-based children, youth and families programs; assessments of organizational support for working with at-risk audiences; studies the use of information technology within these programs; and conducts research on program sustainability.

## **CYFERnet - Technology**

CYFERnet's Technology component maintains the basic structure of the CYFERnet Web site, develops programming for working with youth and information technology, supports community-based program use of technology, and develops new technology-based online resources for these audiences.

## **Child Care - Extension Cares Initiative**

The Network's goal is to share knowledge about children and child care from the vast resources of the land-grant universities with parents, professionals, practitioners, and the general public. NNCC sponsors the Kidcare child care listserv, has over 1000 reviewed publications through the Web, and publishes the Connections Newsletter that is issued four times a year for family child care, center-based care, and school-age child care. Online Resources: <http://www.nccc.org/>

## **National Network for Health (NNH)**

NNH marshals the resources of Cooperative Extension and Land Grant University systems to promote improved health for children, youth, families, and communities. The Network reviews publications for inclusion on the Web, provides a National Database on Health Educational Resources and Materials, and assists in the development of comprehensive youth curricula products that address issues-based health programming. Online Resources: <http://www.nnh.org/>

## National Outcomes

CYFAR has identified four National Outcomes to support the objective to improve the quality and quantity of comprehensive community-based programs for children, youth, and families at risk. These outcomes are as follows:

### NATIONAL OUTCOME 1. CHILDREN

Children (ages 0-11 years) will have their basic physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs met. Babies will be born healthy.

### NATIONAL OUTCOME 2. YOUTH

Youth (ages 12-18 years) will demonstrate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior necessary for fulfilling, contributing lives.

### NATIONAL OUTCOME 3. PARENTS/FAMILIES

Parents will take primary responsibility for meeting their children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs and provide moral guidance and direction. Families will promote positive, productive, and contributing lives for all family members.

### NATIONAL OUTCOME 4. COMMUNITIES

Communities will provide safe, secure environments for families with children.

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If you are involved in the State Strengthening or New Communities Projects, your team selected both a Primary Outcome and a Secondary Outcome on which to base your evaluation.

The original purpose of the National Outcome Work Groups was to develop a set of common benchmarks and indicators that can be used by individual community-based projects to assess short-term and long-term program outcomes. This collection of information and instruments is accessible to all community-based projects and includes:

- ◆ menu of indicators;
- ◆ research base and supporting literature;
- ◆ recommended measures, methods and designs;
- ◆ criteria to select measures and designs; and
- ◆ analysis and reporting templates.

This information is disseminated on the web at <http://www.cyfernet.org> after it has been reviewed.

# Welcome to Evaluation

Evaluation is a field of applied science which seeks to understand how a successful social program may be designed, implemented, assessed, and sustained in a specific community (Ostrom, Lerner & Freel, 1995).

The information collected during an evaluation will allow you to make informed decisions concerning a program's worth and provide the opportunity to capitalize on program strengths. In addition, the ongoing feedback process that occurs during evaluation will allow you to fine-tune your program and make it more effective.

## **An evaluation will allow you to:**

- **Document what happened in the program;**
- **Tell which strategies worked best in the program; and**
- **Assess the short-term outcomes and the long-term outcomes of the program.**

Evaluating and improving a program takes effort. It takes discipline, wisdom, persistence, and an eye for detail. At times, this process may seem slow and time consuming. Program improvements, and thus better services, are the result of the "thoughtful collaboration between funders and service providers on an appropriate strategy for evaluating accountability" and this can take time (National Collaboration for Youth, 1996). The end result of your hard work will be a stronger, more effective program.

Generally, an evaluation focuses on the process of program functioning, the short-term outcomes, and the long-term outcomes of the program. The reasons for doing each and the types of information you'll gather are discussed next.

## Process Evaluation

The types of information collected in a process evaluation will tell:

- If the participants are those the program intended to serve;
- If program services/activities are provided in the manner proposed;
- How resources have been and are currently being used; and
- The “story” behind program delivery.

## Short-Term Outcome and Long-Term Outcome Evaluations

Short-term outcome evaluations focus on short-term effects of the program, whereas long-term outcome evaluations focus on the long-term effects.

The types of information collected in outcome evaluations will:

- Tell if the program was effective in meeting its objectives; and
- Provide concrete evidence to stakeholders concerning program effects.

**Short-term outcome and long-term outcome evaluations are not just at the end. Outcome evaluations should be continually performed.**

## How about an Example?

Below is an example that highlights the benefits of evaluation. This example will continue throughout the guide to demonstrate how the tasks associated with evaluation might be applied.

Concerns surrounding reading difficulties of children at Brown Road Elementary School were confirmed when the principal, teachers, and parents received results from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. A group of concerned individuals approached their county Extension agent for assistance in developing a reading program that could be supported by the resources of the larger community.

Because resources were limited, the Extension agent suggested they become a New Communities targeted community.

To decide the most appropriate strategy for tackling the problem of reading deficiencies, the group (Extension agent, parents, teachers, and the principal) turned to the research literature base available through the CYFERnet. They learned that teen tutored academic programs were often successful since younger children tended to look up to and listen to teenagers. In addition, the literature highlighted the positive benefits of teens taking positions of responsibility. Since the group was hopeful that this approach would work well in their school and promote positive outcomes in teens, they invited members from the adjacent high school to join them. This new team now consisted of the Extension agent, principals from both schools, several teachers, parents and teens, two local business owners, and a university evaluator.

Among the first questions the team had to consider included: What curriculum would be used? How would teens be recruited and trained? Which children would receive help? When would tutoring sessions meet?

To identify an appropriate curriculum, the Extension agent worked with an Extension specialist at the Land-grant university.

Several 4-H leaders offered to recruit and train teens interested in tutoring. The first round of tutors were accepted on a volunteer basis.

To pilot test the program, the team chose the classroom with the lowest grades in reading. Children from that classroom were enrolled in the program if their reading grades were below a "B-" on the last report card.

Finally, there was the decision as to when the program would meet. Teachers were concerned that participants would miss other classes if tutoring occurred during the day, while parents were concerned that some children would be unable to attend if tutoring took place after school. It was decided that tutoring would occur during the second part of lunch period three days per week.

During the early months of program implementation, short-term outcome evaluations revealed that the program was having the desired effect; reading grades were on the increase for target children. The team examined grades in other classes, as improved reading ability should apply to other subjects where reading was necessary. The results showed that math grades increased, but that history grades declined slightly.

The team also examined grades of teen tutors. The results were somewhat confusing here as well; some grades increased and some declined slightly.

Concerned about the findings and unsure whether program benefits outweighed the costs, the team examined the process of the program. The data from the process evaluation uncovered that:

- Math scores increased for target children because they could read the text better (incidentally, math met in the morning);

- History grades declined in target children, not because children couldn't read the text, but because history met later in the day. Children were not getting enough to eat at lunch on tutoring days, and consequently, were hungry and easily distracted during afternoon classes; and

- Teen tutors suffered in classes that met after lunch because their hunger distracted them, as well.

Feedback from the process evaluation resulted in program modifications that allowed participants and tutors to snack during the tutoring sessions. At the mid-term, grades in most academic areas increased slightly for target children and tutors. Parents, children, teachers, and the principals were pleased with the results.

During the rest of the school year, continuous feedback from the ongoing evaluation encouraged many other program improvements. At the end of the year, a short-term outcome evaluation examined the effects of the program. The team and many other stakeholders were pleased to see that the majority of improved academic grades were maintained for both target children and teen tutors. In addition, process evaluation revealed that target children enjoyed school more than they had before because of the added attention from older students. Teen tutors also expressed more enjoyment in school as they felt "important and useful." The promising results from this pilot program led to the development of a larger teen tutoring program that included children in other classrooms and teens at risk for school dropout.

Optimistic about the possible long-term benefits to children and teens in the program, the team designed a plan to assess long-term outcomes in the future.

# Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation

To develop an appropriate evaluation strategy, we have chosen to present a modified version of Jacobs' five-tiered approach to program evaluation (1988). Each tier focuses on purposes of evaluation and tasks to be accomplished (see Table 1). The tasks of the first three tiers are primarily concerned with process evaluation, the fourth with short-term outcome evaluation, and the fifth with long-term outcome evaluation.

**As you go through the process of evaluation, keep in mind that evaluation is a fluid, ongoing process. It is possible to work in two tiers simultaneously or move from later tiers back to earlier ones.**

We have developed a set of worksheets to facilitate the discussion and documentation of the team's evaluation plan. These worksheets are found at the end of each tier.



**Table 1: Summary Of Five-Tiered Approach To Program Evaluation**

<b><u>Tier</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose</u></b>	<b><u>Tasks</u></b>
Tier 1: Program Definition	Document need for a particular program in a community	Work with stakeholders to assess community needs and assets
	Use literature to justify planned program relative to community needs and assets	Review pertinent literature base
	Define planned program	Describe program vision, mission, goals, objectives and characteristics
Tier 2: Accountability	Examine if program serves those it was intended to in the manner proposed	Identify stakeholders
		Document program participants, activities, and how services are delivered.
Tier 3: Understanding and Refining	Improve program by providing information to program staff, participants & other stakeholders	Gather program satisfaction data
		Examine the fit between data collected in Tiers 1 and 2
		Examine process data and identify lessons learned
		Identify program strengths & weaknesses
Tier 4: Progress Toward Objectives	Document program effectiveness and short-term outcomes	Revisit literature
		Sort objectives by short-term outcomes and long-term outcomes
		Select short-term outcome indicators and identify measures
		Decide on design issues & data analysis
Tier 5: Program Long-Term Outcome	Demonstrate long-term improvements in quality of life of children, youth, families & communities	Report findings
		Plan to document long-term outcomes
		Provide evidence of program sustainability
		Identify program components worthy of replication
Tier 5: Program Long-Term Outcome	Contribute to Extension's ability to serve children, youth, families & communities at risk and to the professional literature	Distribute findings of long-term outcomes

Based on Jacobs' (1988) Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation

# Tier One: Program Definition

The purpose of the first tier is to:

- Assess community needs and assets;
- Review research literature; and
- Describe your program.

Ideally, these tasks will be performed prior to program implementation, however, it is never too late to do them. Before advancing to Tier Two, consider issues in each of the above areas.

We begin by assessing community needs and assets.

## Assess Community Needs and Assets

Before beginning a program, document the needs and assets of the community. This information specifies the type, depth, scope, and complexity of problems in the community (Rossi & Freeman, 1993), as well as community resources and strengths (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993).

If an assessment has recently been done, you're ahead of the game. You might not need to perform another one. Documenting the results of that assessment may be sufficient. However, we do recommend that assessments be performed periodically throughout the life of the program to ensure the program continues to address the changing needs and assets of the community.

On the other hand, if you have not yet conducted an assessment, CSREES makes many resources on this topic available to Extension professionals. If you'd like more information on how to do a needs and assets assessment, CYFERnet (<http://www.CYFERnet.org>) is a good place to begin. Further information on assessing community needs and assets, also called context evaluation, is available at both of the following sites:

<http://www.wkkf.org/Publications/evalhdbk/chapter4.htm>

<http://deal.unl.edu/TOP/needsassessment.html>

The Needs and Assets Assessment Worksheet found at the end of this tier will not cover everything that you may have documented in your assessment. It is intended to be used as a discussion guide for the evaluation team. Find a time when your team can meet for two or three hours to begin this discussion. You may identify needs for additional information or consideration. The purpose is to mobilize your evaluation team, establish common ground, and examine your assessment process.

Concerned that children from Brown Road Elementary School were deficient in reading skills, the principal, teachers, and parents approached their county Extension agent for assistance. The agent made several initial suggestions. First, she suggested that they work together to document the demographic characteristics of the larger community and the school (e.g., ethnic composition, SES, mobility rates, birth and divorce rates, primary occupations, percentage of population receiving welfare assistance, etc.). This was important in documenting the need for funding. Second, she suggested that the group determine the extent of reading difficulties in the school and ensure that the drop in scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills was not just a fluke. She thought they might compare report card grades to those of other schools in the city, ask teachers their opinions concerning reading difficulties of children at Brown Road Elementary, ask children about ease of reading, and talk to the school's reading specialist, as well as people from the university. Third, she encouraged them to explore needs of teens that might be satisfied by their involvement in a program, if they found one to be necessary.

The assessment revealed that children were experiencing reading difficulties. Teachers expressed concern that lessons were taking longer than expected and that they did not have the resources to allow for specialized time with certain children. In addition, it identified teens who were isolated and not connected to the school or community.

Once the team had documented that both children and teens could benefit from a program that involved teens as reading tutors, the Extension agent suggested that they examine community programs that might already exist to address reading difficulties and issues of isolation. She also asked them to consider what untapped community resources existed that might be used to solve the problem. The assessment identified community members as the greatest source of untapped resources. When asked, most people in the community said they would be willing to contribute time or money to improve the reading skills of children and to connect teens to the community. Some teens were willing to volunteer time and had the support of their parents.

In sum, the assessment supported the need for a program that addressed reading difficulties of children at Brown Road Elementary School and issues of isolation for teens in the community.

## Review Literature

Once the needs and assets of the community have been clarified, a review of the literature will allow your evaluation team to explore what programs and activities have been useful in communities similar to your own. It will equip you with the knowledge and information needed to convince funders and community members that the program has a good chance of producing the desired results.

A literature review provides the opportunity to identify attributes of successful programs, as well as those of ineffective programs. This information will allow you to capitalize on the strengths of other programs, while avoiding their weaknesses. This will increase the chances that your own program will be successful.

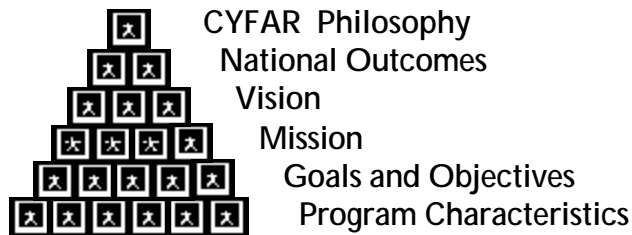
A literature review will also provide the foundation needed to develop a theory as to how the program will successfully meet the needs of the community. It is never advisable to invest in a program unless there is reason to believe that it will lead to the desired outcomes. The literature can provide the basis needed to make this claim.

If you've never done a literature review, you may wonder where to gather your information. Any university library will serve as a good resource. Many universities have their own electronic databases available for you to search. Or, universities may provide links to other searchable databases. Some of these databases can be accessed without going through a university Web site. For example, ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is available at <http://www.accesseric.org>. The CYFERnet Web site (<http://www.CYFERnet.org>) is also a good place to go for pertinent literature.

The team turned to the CYFERnet for literature on reading programs. They were particularly interested in programs that included teens. The literature pointed to the benefits of teen tutoring programs for both young children and teens. The literature also suggested that parents play an important role in reading development. Because of this, parents were encouraged to read with their children each night.

# Describe Your Program

With the necessary background information in place, it is time to give your program an identity. A well defined program is essential to an effective evaluation. Below are six steps that can be used to define the identity of your program.



At the broadest level of definition, the philosophy of your program will be consistent with the philosophy of CYFAR. Next, discuss how your program addresses each of the National Outcomes. From there, describe the “thinking” behind the development of the program as it relates to program vision and mission. Finally, you’ll become more specific and discuss the goals and objectives of the program, then launch into its characteristics.

We begin defining your program by relating it to the philosophy of CYFAR.

## CYFAR Philosophy

It is important that your program reflect the basic attributes of effective programming identified in the CYFAR philosophy.

Your evaluation team should take time to discuss with program staff how your program reflects the CYFAR philosophy in each of the eight attributes.

- Exemplify a community-based, holistic approach
- Promote partnership with citizens
- Address complex conditions
- Solicit and value diversity
- Instill collaboration
- Combine a coherent spectrum of services
- Are accessible and respectful of people
- Bolster resiliency

Once you feel that your program reflects the CYFAR philosophy, you’ll be ready to move on to the next step of program identity formation — identifying primary and secondary National Outcome Areas.

## National Outcome Areas

The next step in program definition is to decide how it addresses each of the four National Outcome Areas and determine which are central to your program. Based upon an ecological approach to program development and delivery, projects will incorporate all of the National Outcome Areas into their programs. By integrating all four outcomes, programs will reflect the research base of CYFAR that emphasizes a community-based, holistic philosophy for the purpose of creating greater gains for children, youth and families.

Since it is difficult to implement a program that addresses all four outcomes equally, ecological projects will typically give more attention and resources to one or two of the National Outcome Areas. As you read the outcomes below, determine which are primary to your program and which are secondary (at least one should be designated as primary). This information can be documented in the Specifying National Outcome Areas Worksheet.

### National Outcome Areas

**Children:** Children (ages 0-11 years) will have their basic physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs met. Babies will be born healthy.

**Youth:** Youth (ages 12-18 years) will demonstrate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior necessary for fulfilling, contributing lives.

**Parents/Families:** Parents will take primary responsibility for meeting their children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs and provide moral guidance and direction. Families will promote positive, productive and contributing lives for all family members.

**Communities:** Communities will provide safe, secure environments for families with children.

Clarifying priorities relative to the National Outcome Areas will help focus thinking as you proceed with the next step of creating a vision.

The primary focus of the teen tutored reading program was on the Children and Youth National Outcome Areas.

The reading program directly addressed the Children Outcome Area in that it fostered the intellectual development of children. Also, by incorporating teens as tutors, social and emotional needs of children were met.

The program directly addressed the Youth Outcome Area in that as teens became more adept at tutoring, they obtained knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for fulfilling, contributing lives. The academic aspect of tutoring enhanced their knowledge of the English language, while the social aspect enhanced attitudes of self and perceptions of their ability to make a difference in the community.

The Parents/Families and Communities National Outcome Area were the secondary focus of the program.

The program addressed the Parents/Families Outcome Area in that the team met with parents each semester to emphasize the importance of parents for the academic success of children. At these meetings and at all parent-teacher conferences, parents were encouraged to read with children each night and to become actively involved in the intellectual development of their children.

The program addressed the Communities Outcome Area by involving community members. The team had been examining what types of incentives might be offered by local businesses to teens willing to donate time toward improving the literacy skills of young children.

## Vision

Vision will take the form of a global statement that expresses the ideal of the program. The vision needs to reflect community needs and assets, the CYFAR philosophy, and the National Outcomes.

### CYFAR Vision

American communities where children & youth lead positive, secure & happy young lives while developing skills, knowledge & competencies necessary for fulfilling, contributing lives;

All children & youth live in families & communities which promote their positive development.

The vision statement:

- communicates purpose and incorporates the present with the future.
- is expressed in words that everyone can understand and facilitates goal development.
- is long-term, meaningful, and appeals to a higher purpose.
- makes the program worth doing and keeps it on track (King, 1994).

For those in CSREES, "vision" evolves from the collaborative efforts of Extension professionals, community members, funders, evaluators, and program participants. The collaborative process makes it important for stakeholders to discuss why they want to implement the program and what they hope to accomplish. In the end, stakeholders will feel as though they "know" the program and its values.

If more information is needed on the process of creating a vision statement, there are web-based resources available. For example, go to <http://www.allianceonline.org/faqs/spfaq7.html> for a description of what's in a vision statement.



Below are possible questions\* to consider when creating “vision.” Your team can document the vision in the Vision Statement Worksheet at the end of Tier One.

**Q. When the program began, where did you hope it would be in five years?**

**A. We hope teen tutored reading sessions will expand to other academic areas so that children struggling in any class can receive help before that class becomes problematic. We hope all children needing help in any academic area will receive it and succeed in school. Furthermore, we hope that teens will receive academic and personal growth benefits from taking active roles of responsibility and that their chances of high school completion will increase.**

**Q. What is the purpose of the program? What problem does it address?**

**A. There are two primary purposes. First, the program aims to eliminate a multitude of academic problems that stem from reading difficulties for children at Brown Road Elementary School. Second, the program aims to provide opportunities for teens that will promote positive growth and development.**

**Q. What do you hope your program will offer over and above what other programs offer?**

**A. We hope that our program will target children before they fall behind in class. Other programs wait until it’s too late, leaving children frustrated from playing “catch-up” all the time. We also hope to provide teens with a unique school experience. The program is unusual in that it fosters personal growth as teens take on roles of responsibility. As personal growth blossoms, greater commitments to school and community are expected to develop. It is believed that they will grow to realize that adults recognize their worth and value their contributions.**

**Q. What is the vision?**

**A. All children in our school will possess the academic skills needed to succeed in school, hence, increasing their chances of high school graduation and living fulfilling, contributing lives. Teens will play an important role in the success of the community. The increased responsibility will lead to personal growth and increase their chances of graduating from high school.**

\* Questions adapted from King (1994).

## Mission

To attain the vision of the program, you will first need to create a mission for the program. The mission statement must be consistent with community needs and assets, the CYFAR philosophy, the National Outcomes, and the vision.

### CYFAR Mission

To marshal resources of the Land-grant and Cooperative Extension Systems to collaborate with other organizations to develop and deliver educational programs that equip limited resource families and youth who are at-risk for not meeting basic human needs, to lead positive, productive, contributing lives.

The mission identifies the program and participants (i.e., what the program will do and who it will serve).

The mission statement allows others to act consistently with the broader goals of the program.

The mission statement reflects the quality of a program's services.

It reflects the value of the program and the effective and efficient use of resources.

The mission statement reflects the services or activities of the program. It translates into the amount of time and resources that can be spent on one participant, while continuing to serve the needs of other participants (King, 1994).

A helpful Web site on what's in a mission statement is available at <http://www.allianceonline.org/faqs/spfaq6.html>

**Vision represents the end; mission represents the means to the end. The vision statement defines what you want your program to be and the mission statement defines what you'll do to get there. Good vision and mission statements will help keep you focused and on track (King, 1994).**

Below are possible questions\* to consider when creating "mission." The mission of your program can be documented in the Mission Statement Worksheet.

**Q. What services are offered by your program? Are they related to the needs and assets identified in the assessment?**

**A.** The assessment identified that reading problems at Brown Road Elementary School were a major concern of parents and teachers. A second concern involved teens at risk for school drop-out. Our project offers teen tutored reading sessions that provide targeted children with extra help. Furthermore, by incorporating teens, their bond with and commitment to the community will strengthen.

**Q. Who will be the recipient of these services?**

**A.** Any child in the school whose reading grades drop below a "B-" anytime during the school year (not limited to report card grades) will be targeted for services. For the pilot program, tutors will consist of teen volunteers. Afterwards, teens identified as at risk for drop-out will be recruited as tutors.

**Q. How will what you do achieve the vision?**

**A.** The extra help received during tutoring sessions will teach reading skills to children who are deficient in this area. Research literature shows that children who cannot read don't do well in school, and therefore, are at greater risk for later drop-out. School drop-out has been linked to greater difficulties in leading fulfilling, contributing lives as adults. If we can help children with academic difficulties early on, the chances of them completing high school should increase and so should their chances of living fulfilling lives. Similarly, as teens take roles of responsibility and develop a sense of positive self worth, their connection to school will increase. These attributes have been linked to school completion.

**Q. What is the mission?**

**A.** To offer teen tutored reading sessions to children who may be at risk for future academic failure if they are unable to master basic reading skills at an early age. Academic failure has been linked to school drop-out, which has been linked to fewer chances for productive, contributing lives. Similarly, by incorporating teens as tutors, their sense of responsibility will increase and make school more intrinsically rewarding. Teens have been found to continue school when they find it rewarding.

\* Questions adapted from King (1994).

## ☒☒☒☒☒ Goals and Objectives

So far, the steps of program definition have been rather general. This is about to change. To tighten program definition, you will specify the goals and objectives of your program.

### *Purpose of each...*

**Goals** serve the purpose of determining whether the vision and mission are being carried out effectively and as planned (King, 1994).

**Goals** are the criteria by which program success will be judged.

**Goals** specify what will happen as a result of the program.

**Objectives** state how it will be determined if goals have been achieved.

**Objectives** state who will change, by how much, and by what date as a result of the program.

**Objectives** are measurable and linked to the variables of interest (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

### *How to state each...*

Clearly stated goals are a necessity. Clearly stated goals will reflect program priorities, assure important variables have been identified, and facilitate accurate measurement of program success. For more information on writing goals, go to [http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval\\_wrgoals.html](http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval_wrgoals.html)

Objectives can be stated in absolute or relative terms (Rossi & Freeman, 1993). Absolute objectives state that negative behavior will be eliminated from everyone or that desirable behavior will be present for everyone. Relative objectives state that negative behavior will be reduced by some proportion or that desirable behavior will be increased by some proportion.

To write useful, measurable objectives:

- use strong verbs;
- express only one aim and one result for each objective; and
- specify the estimated time of attainment (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

Go to [http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval\\_wroobj.html](http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval_wroobj.html) for further guidance in writing objectives.

### *Incorporate literature review...*

Research based literature provides a good source of information on which to base goals and objectives. You can use the information you collected in your literature review. Another useful Web site on goals and objectives is available at <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/eacwest/evalhbk.htm#IIIGoals>

## Application ...

At this time, your team will find it useful to document the goals and objectives of the program. These will be referred to periodically as we evaluate the process of program delivery and plan for the outcome and impact evaluations. Space has been provided for this activity in the Goals and Objectives Worksheet. This worksheet includes questions designed to facilitate discussion around the link between earlier activities in this tier and your program's goals and objectives.

### Poorly stated goal with accompanying objective:

Goal: To increase self-esteem in students.

Objective: Improve reading skills.

We have a few problems here. First, the goal is too vague and broad to be useful. Second, the objective has no apparent connection to the goal, unless it is ASSUMED that improved reading skills will lead to increased self-esteem. Even so, this is an inappropriate objective for that goal because the connection between the two is not clear and is not based on the literature. Furthermore, the objective fails to specify which students will change (any student? all students? the teens or the younger students?), to what extent they will change (improved compared to what?), and by what date they are expected to have made these changes (tomorrow? next week? next year?). Finally, an objective that relates to reading skills does not lend itself to a measurable indicator of self-esteem.

### Well stated goal with accompanying objective:

Goal: Significantly increase the literacy rates among children with reading difficulties at Brown Road Elementary School by implementing a teen tutored reading program.

Objectives: By the end of the 1996-1997 school year, all children who received tutoring will:

(a) maintain at least a "B-" average in reading; and

(b) score above the 75th percentile on the Woodcock-Johnson, Revised and the WYATT.

The goal is specific as to what it expects the program to accomplish (increase literacy rates).

The objectives are closely linked to the goal and specify who will change (children with reading difficulties), to what extent they will change ("B-" average in reading and scoring above the 75th percentile on assessment tests), and by what date they are expected to have made these changes (end of the '96-'97 school year). The objectives lead to measurable indicators of the goal — school grades and standardized test scores.

## Program Characteristics

The final step in defining the program is to describe its characteristics. Your evaluation team will discuss who your program intends to serve, what it is designed to do, and what the intended results of participation will include. At the very least, consider recruitment procedures, potential participant characteristics, services offered, expected outcomes, program personnel, and program surroundings. The Program Characteristics Worksheet includes questions that address each of these areas and can be used to facilitate your team's discussion.

One classroom, determined by need, was selected to serve as the "pilot." Teachers referred a student to the program when his or her reading grades dropped below a "B-" average. Once referred, the child met with a teen tutor for one half hour, three times per week. During these sessions, tutors worked with participants on specific reading lessons designed to promote literacy. Tutors were also encouraged to aid participants with their classwork and homework. The sessions were overseen by a teacher. Teachers alternated this position.

For the pilot program, eight teens had been trained as tutors. They were trained by a 4-H leader and received extra class credit for their time.

Once implementation problems were resolved, the program planned to expand to include all classrooms and to recruit and train more teens. Teens identified as at risk for drop-out were to be actively recruited. The literature showed that teens with excessive tardies and unexcused absences are at greater risk for drop-out; this is how "at risk" was defined.

Over the short-term, it was expected that grades of participants would continue to improve. Over the long-term, it was expected that the developing pattern of academic success would keep children engaged in school. Program participants were expected to be more likely to continue school than if they had not been in the program.

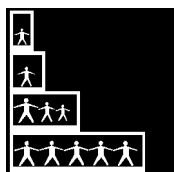
Both immediate and long-term improvements were expected in teens who tutored, as well. Teens were expected to experience an increase in school grades and to report an increased sense of responsibility. It was expected that these two outcomes, combined, would keep teens engaged in school and increase their chances of completion.

# Tier One Worksheets

**Tier One:****Needs and Assets Assessment Worksheet**

Discuss, with your team, the needs and assets of your community. At a minimum, you'll want to answer the following questions. We encourage you to document other information your team deems relevant.

1. How were needs and assets of your community identified (e.g., via surveys, standardized testing, based on SES, through referrals)?
2. Who was asked about needs? About assets?
3. What needs were determined?
4. What assets were identified?
5. How are program participants involved in the assessment and subsequent planning of the program?
6. What specific needs guide program development?
7. What specific community strengths/assets guide program development?
8. What are the characteristics of the community (e.g., ages, ethnicity, SES, marital status, mobility rate, birth and divorce rates, employment rates, typical occupations of people in the area, percentage of population receiving welfare assistance)?
9. What existing community programs address identified needs?





**Tier One:****Specifying National Outcome Areas Worksheet**

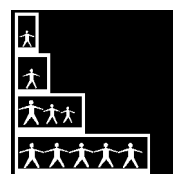
Discuss and determine which National Outcomes Areas are the primary and secondary focus of your program. Also discuss how your program addresses each of the National Outcomes Areas.

The National Outcome Area for Children is the primary/secondary (circle one) focus of our program. Our program addresses this outcome in that...

The National Outcome Area for Youth is the primary/secondary (circle one) focus of our program. Our program addresses this outcome in that...

The National Outcome Area for Parents/Families is the primary/secondary (circle one) focus of our program. Our program addresses this outcome in that...

The National Outcome Area for Communities is the primary/secondary (circle one) focus of our program. Our program addresses this outcome in that...



**Tier One:**

# Vision Statement Worksheet

1. When your program began, where did you hope it would be in five years? If just beginning the program, where do you hope it'll be in five years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the purpose of the program? What problem does it address?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What do you hope your program will offer over and above what other programs offer?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Write your vision statement.

**Tier One:**

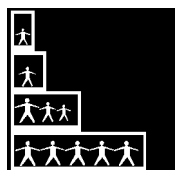
# Mission Statement Worksheet

1. What services are offered by your program? Are they related to the needs and assets identified in the assessment?

2. Who will be the recipient of these services?

3. How will what you do achieve the vision?

4. Write your mission statement.



**Tier One:**

# Goals and Objectives Worksheet

Part 1. Make a list of the primary goals and objectives of your program. Goals should be stated clearly and objectives should lend themselves to measurable indicators of goals.

Goal:

Objective(s):

Goal:

Objective(s):

Goal:

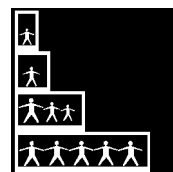
Objective(s):

**Part 2. Looking over program goals, discuss the following issues.**

1. How will the program lead to the achievement of the goals?
2. What participant behaviors are necessary to reach program goals?
3. How will staff know if goals are being accomplished?
4. How much time will be spent trying to attain each goal?
5. How do goals address community needs?
6. How do goals incorporate community assets?
7. How are the National Outcome Areas reflected in program goals?
8. Specify how the literature base provides support for program goals.

**Part 3. Looking over program objectives, discuss the following issues.**

1. How were objectives selected and by whom?
  - a. Were established needs and assets used as a basis for developing objectives?
  - b. Were they selected from other programs?
  - c. Were they selected from the literature?
2. Are there any omissions of objectives?
3. Are the objectives realistic?
4. Do objectives lend themselves to measurable indicators of respective goals?  
What might some of these indicators include?
5. How will staff determine if objectives are being accomplished?
6. How much time is spent trying to accomplish each objective?
7. Was there a review process prior to inclusion that determined which objectives would be included in the program?
8. Do objectives focus on program activities, on intended outcomes, or both?
9. How are National Outcome Areas reflected in program objectives?
10. Is it clear, to all team members, how accomplishment of objectives will lead to the attainment of program goals?



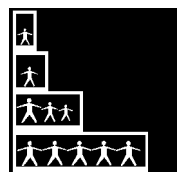
**Tier One:****Program Characteristics Worksheet**

**Part 1. Discuss who is targeted for services and procedures for recruiting desired participants.**

1. What are the characteristics of the population your program intends to serve?
2. How are possible participants identified?
3. How are possible participants informed about the program (referrals, ads, media presentations, etc.)?
4. Specify the recruitment procedures.
5. Do your recruitment procedures reflect program goals?
6. What groups of people does your program NOT serve?
7. Describe the Human Subjects Committee or Internal Review Board process you will go (or went) through before beginning.

**Part 2. Discuss services/activities offered by your program.**

1. What services/activities will your program offer?
2. Does the program run continuously or just during certain times of the year?
3. Who delivers each of the different services/activities provided by the program?
4. How are activities consistent with the community needs?
5. How do activities utilize existing community assets?
6. How are program services/activities consistent with program goals? With objectives? With the National Outcome Areas?
7. Is it clear how program activities will lead to the accomplishment of each of the program goals?
8. Will any curriculum be used? If so, what?

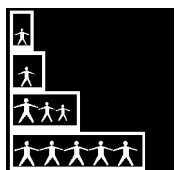


**Part 3. Discuss expected outcomes of the program.**

1. What was the program designed to accomplish?
2. How are children, youth, parents/families and communities expected to change as a result of your program?
  - a. Is there any literature to support your hypothesis?
  - b. If yes, briefly review this literature.
  - c. If no, what evidence do you have to support your claim?
3. What are the anticipated short-term outcomes/benefits of the program?
4. What are the anticipated long-term outcomes of the program?
5. Might there be any unintended outcomes of the program?
6. Might there be any negative outcomes?
7. Discuss how program results are related to community needs and assets, and to program goals, objectives, and activities.
8. Specify the link between intended effects and the National Outcome Areas.

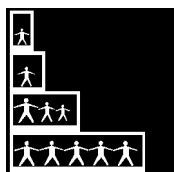
**Part 4. Discuss the roles of program personnel.**

1. What groups or organizations are key in implementing program activities?
  - a. How do they feel about the program?
  - b. Why did they become involved?
2. How many employees will take part in the program and what are their roles?
3. Are there program elements that staff must implement? What are they?
4. How much of staff time is dedicated to responsibilities of the program?
5. Do outside individuals, such as volunteers, also participate in the program?
  - a. How many are there?
  - b. What are their roles?



**Part 5. Program surroundings and accessibility.**

1. Discuss the major characteristics of the program site. For example, where does the program meet? Is the site located in an area that is accessible to targeted participants? Are the hours of program operation conducive to serving your target population? Is the site a pleasant place to visit?
2. Do you provide transportation to participants that may need it?
3. Is child care offered at the site for those who may need it (only if applicable)?





# Tier Two: Accountability

The purpose of Tier Two is to gather process data to demonstrate program accountability. Your evaluation team will gather information that documents:

- Stakeholders of the program and the evaluation;
- Who and how many are receiving services;
- Services received; and
- Process of program delivery.

You need to show that your program serves those it was intended to in the manner proposed in Tier One.

## Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders are those who are “directly or indirectly affected by the implementation and results of social programs” (Rossi & Freeman, 1993). Below are some questions to help identify the stakeholders of your program and evaluation.

- 1) Who is the population targeted for services?
- 2) Who are the people involved in developing and running the program?
- 3) Who are the major decision makers?
- 4) Who operates the program?
- 5) Who are the key community players?
- 6) Who are the funders?
- 7) What other community groups might be affected by the program (e.g., teachers, other service providers)?
- 8) Who else, not previously mentioned, might be interested in the results of the program (e.g., anyone in the local or state government)?

For more information on including stakeholders, go to:  
<http://www.wkkf.org/Publications/evalhdbk/chapter5.htm>

# Program Participants

In Tier One, you considered what groups of people the program would serve. In Tier Two, you will examine who the program actually serves to show stakeholders that it serves those it was intended to serve.

First, document demographic characteristics of participants, such as age, gender, ethnicity, SES, marital status, etc.

Second, document participant characteristics that might influence the effectiveness of the program (e.g., whether there are books in the home, whether parents regularly read with children).

Third, document how many have been served by your program.

The Program Participants Worksheet at the end of Tier Two provides items to facilitate the discussion of whether participants are those intended for services.

The program was designed to target elementary school children who were experiencing reading problems (grades below "B-"). At the onset, teen volunteers were used as tutors; however, once implementation problems were resolved, teens at risk for high school drop-out were to be trained as tutors.

The intake form for children participants (completed by parents) requested basic demographic information, such as ethnicity, age, and gender of the child, SES and marital status of parents, number of children in the home, etc. It also asked whether participants had ever received additional help in reading, whether they were currently receiving additional help in reading, and how often the parent, or someone in the home, read with the child.

The team found that the program was serving a diverse population in terms of gender, ethnicity, parents' marital status, and how often someone read with participants. In addition, it was discovered that some participants did not meet the "B-" criteria.

The teens filled out a similar basic demographic form, but answered additional questions regarding other volunteer activities, personal hobbies, and life dreams and goals.

The background information collected on teen tutors revealed that tutors in the pilot program had always done well in school, were ethnically diverse, and varied in age and gender.

At the time, records indicated that the program had served 20 children and had trained eight teen tutors.

## Program Activities

In addition to documenting whom the program served, it is important to document services provided and the amount of service each participant received. A program may be designed to provide specific services, but unanticipated events may prevent this from occurring. This problem can be easily overlooked if the program manages to produce positive outcomes even when failing to function at 100%. The Program Activities Worksheet provides discussion items to document program activities. For a description of ways of collecting process evaluation data, go to [http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval\\_eval.html](http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval_eval.html)

In the initial stages of program implementation, the pilot reading program produced only modest results. Observational data collected by the team, coupled with teens' written reports, revealed that tutors were spending an average of 15 minutes per session on actual reading assignments. Too much time was spent dealing with discipline problems. The team also noted that some children attended more regularly than others.

## Process of Program Delivery

The final task of Tier Two is to document the process of program delivery. This information will be critical to your process evaluation. The team will discuss the process of participant recruitment and service delivery to identify program strengths and weaknesses. The Program Delivery Worksheet will facilitate this discussion. For more information on documenting program delivery, or implementation evaluation, go to <http://www.wkkf.org/publications/evalhdbk/chapter4.htm>. Then scroll down to a gray box entitled "Implementation Evaluation: Understanding How the Project was Implemented."

Upon examination of participant recruitment procedures, it came to light that a few of the first children referred to the program were those that caused trouble during lunch time. As a result, teen tutors spent the majority of their time trying to get these children under control and very little time tutoring. Another issue that came to light was also unexpected. As parents learned about the reading program, some became overly enthusiastic and went to great lengths to see that their child was admitted to the program even though the child's grades did not meet the criteria.

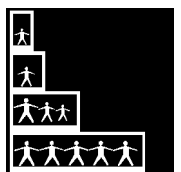
Several challenges relative to the teen tutor recruitment process were anticipated. It was expected that initial volunteers would, more than likely, be teens who did well in school. Now however, effective recruitment and training procedures of at-risk teens needed to be developed.

# Tier Two Worksheets

**Tier Two:****Program Participants Worksheet**

Discuss who your program actually serves.

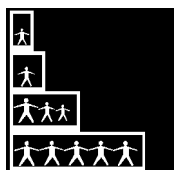
1. Who is the program actually serving? What are their characteristics?
  - a. Are these the people you identified in Tier One as the intended recipients?
  - b. If they are not, why is this?
2. How have participants been selected and how does the selection process work?
3. Do participants differ systematically from non-participants?
4. How many participants have been served by the program?



**Tier Two:****Program Activities Worksheet**

Discuss the services/activities that are being provided.

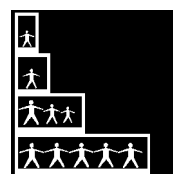
1. Describe the services/activities that are actually being provided.
2. Which staff members are providing which services?
3. How much of program time is spent doing proposed activities? How much is spent doing other activities?
4. How many program sessions are offered?
  - a. How many people attend a typical session?
  - b. Do the same number of participants attend each session?
  - c. Do you have participants that attend sporadically throughout?
  - d. Do you have others that drop out of the program before completion?
5. On average, how frequently do participants have contact with the program during the course of its delivery? How long does this contact last?



**Tier Two:****Program Delivery Worksheet**

Discuss the process of program delivery.

1. Describe how the program operates (e.g., how services are offered and who uses them).
2. What techniques are used to monitor or modify the program operations on a day-to-day basis?
3. What obstacles have you encountered in the process of participant recruitment?
4. What factors facilitated the process of participant recruitment?
5. What factors contribute to continued participation?
6. What factors interfere with participants continuing to seek services with the program?
7. Describe the different attitudes of participants throughout the program.
8. Describe various participant reactions to the materials or curriculum.
9. What additional services are requested from participants?
10. What is the program cost, if any, to participants?



## Tier Three:

# Understanding and Refining

The purpose of Tier Three is to improve the program. This tier will be revisited often as understanding of program delivery and outcomes increases and you plan for the future. To improve the program, you will:

- Gather information from program staff and participants to assess participant satisfaction;
- Compare information obtained in Tier One with that from Tier Two to determine if current program activities are consistent with the original intent of the program;
- Examine program delivery documentation to identify lessons learned;
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the program; and
- Revisit the literature.

In addition to improving the program, written documentation in this tier will contribute to process evaluation and help document how program outcomes were achieved.

**Program improvements result from modifications and adjustments that are normal and necessary components of program implementation.**

## Participant Satisfaction

It is important to ensure that the program meets the needs of participants. One way to begin assessing participant satisfaction is to examine data from staff meetings and to administer participant satisfaction surveys. It is up to your team to determine the best way to collect these data.



## Assess “the Fit” of Tier One with Tier Two

Tier One stated that a clearly defined program was essential to an effective evaluation. Now in Tier Three, you will reap the benefits of having taken the time to explicitly lay out the program plan.

One way to determine whether program adjustments are necessary is to examine “the fit” between the original intent of the program and what it actually does. In Tier One, program vision, mission, goals, objectives, and characteristics were defined. In Tier Two, you documented who the program was serving, what services/activities were provided and the manner in which they were provided. Now in Tier Three, you’ll examine this information to determine if it produces a good match or fit. For instance: Are program goals reflected in program activities? Are community needs reflected in program activities?

To begin the process of fit assessment, review the information documented in Tier Two. Next, discuss whether this information is consistent with the vision and mission of the program. Also, discuss whether goals and objectives are directly reflected in program activities and participants. Finally, discuss whether the program actually serves those specified in Tier One and if it does so in the manner proposed. The Fit Assessment Worksheet at the end of Tier Three will facilitate these discussions.

## Identify Lessons Learned

If inconsistencies are found, the team will need to decide where adjustments are most appropriate (e.g., in program goals or in activities, in the target population or in recruitment procedures, etc.). Remember, program adjustments are a “normal” part of making program improvements.

Inconsistencies and information obtained in Tier Two on the accountability of program delivery will guide the discussion concerning lessons learned during the course of program development and implementation.

“If only you had known then what you know now, what would you have done differently?” This is yet another way to identify areas in need of adjustment that will improve the program. Discussion items appear in the Lessons Learned Worksheet.

## Identify Program Strengths and Weaknesses

As a way to celebrate program strengths and establish a written history of program improvements, your team may find it useful to document program strengths and weaknesses (see the Program Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet). This activity provides the chance to establish written documentation as it relates, specifically, to program strengths and areas in need of improvement. For further discussion of program improvement, go to <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/eacwest/evalhbk.htm#VProgram>

## Revisit Literature

As the program evolved over time, it may have changed focus. It is important to go back and review the literature in light of new program developments.

To identify areas deserving improvements, the team examined various types of information from all three tiers. First, they reviewed the original intent of the program and program accountability information. Second, they developed and administered program satisfaction surveys that were filled out by participating children, teen tutors, parents, and teachers. They also interviewed the teen tutors, and a few parents and teachers for more in-depth information regarding the operation of the program.

As they discussed the information before them, they realized they had a mixed bag of findings. Satisfaction surveys suggested that the program was making a positive difference and that most were pleased with the program. On the other hand, the team was able to identify several areas in need of improvement. To begin the assessment process, they made a list of program strengths and discussed how they could capitalize on these. Next, they listed program weaknesses, and in the process, discussed all of the things they had come to learn since the program was implemented.

Several issues in need of attention arose from their discussions. First, there was the issue that program accountability information was not explicitly supportive of the original program plans. For example, the vision, mission, and goals of the program specified that the program was to serve children with reading difficulties, and yet, not all children in the program had received grades below "B-." The team was faced with the decision of whether to modify the program plan to include all children or redesign the screening policy to ensure that children with satisfactory grades did not enter the program. While deciding who, exactly, the program would continue to serve, they considered the fact that some teachers and tutors wanted to exclude "trouble-makers" from the program. Teachers and tutors thought excluding these children would allow for better use of time.

The team decided to respect the original intent of the program to serve those children most in need of help. At the same time, they realized they had been overambitious in attempting to serve all children with grades below "B-." After much discussion, the team came to agree that grades "C" and above were "average" and should be considered satisfactory. As a result, they modified screening procedures, and a few goals and objectives to reflect the change in how deficiencies and difficulties were defined. To enter the program, children would need grades below "C."

Concerning “trouble-makers,” the team agreed that excluding these children was out of the question. These were the very children in need of a support system that would increase the likelihood of their school continuation and completion. They planned a training session to teach tutors more effective ways to handle discipline issues.

On the other hand, the team could not ignore that there were real time constraints. It was obvious that there were too few tutors. Furthermore, all of the tutors were in the top quarter of their class. The program was having trouble soliciting teens at risk for school drop-out as volunteers. The team was, once again, faced with the issue of modifying the original intent of the program or devising more effective means for recruiting teens. The team firmly believed that it was important to engage teens at risk for school drop-out in roles of responsibility.

The teen members of the team asked peers who were regarded as “at risk” why they weren’t interested in volunteering for the program. There were many reasons, but in general, teens who were not motivated to graduate, were not interested in doing things for extra class credit. The team went to the literature to see how other programs succeeded in recruiting teens. They discovered that material incentives were often successful and thus solicited the help of local business owners. Many business owners were willing to offer gift certificates for food, movies, stores, and the like, to teens willing to volunteer for the program.

To train the greater number of anticipated teen volunteers, the 4-H leader planned a train-the-trainer workshop for the eight initial volunteer teen tutors.

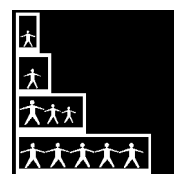
The team believed that their program should strive to be the most effective program possible. Each member was dedicated to the continued collection of program accountability and satisfaction information, as well as to the incorporation of program adjustments as necessary. They believed the program should be as dynamic as the environment within which it functioned and knew that appropriate assessments and adjustments would strengthen their program.

## Tier Three Worksheets

**Tier Three:****Fit Assessment Worksheet**

**Part 1. Examine and compare data collected in Tiers 1 & 2, personal observations of staff members, and program satisfaction data to discuss the fits between (1) participant needs and services received and (2) the proposed plan and actual implementation.**

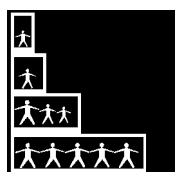
1. Has the program been implemented as planned? If not, what happened?
  - a. Have some components been dropped, modified, or added?
  - b. Have critical activities actually occurred?
  - c. What meetings occur to help remedy program problems and share successes?
2. Is it clear how current activities will lead to the accomplishment of program goals?
3. Are there any services that need to be modified?
4. Do participants feel that modifications could improve the program? Is there any evidence to support this?
5. Do participants feel that extending the life of these services would be useful? Is there any evidence to support this?
6. Have there been any changes in the people you serve?
  - a. If there have, could you describe these changes?
  - b. Why did these changes occur?
  - c. What differences have you noticed as a result of these changes?
7. Is your program reaching the targeted population? Are any other groups of people being reached by the program?
8. What are the daily experiences of staff, volunteers, and participants? Are they consistent with the goals of the program?
9. Does the data suggest that the program is meeting the identified needs of the community?
10. Do participants say that the program is meeting their needs?



11. Does the data suggest that the program utilizes community assets?
12. Have additional needs or assets come to your attention since program implementation? Have you attempted to incorporate these into your program?
13. Do materials/curriculum seem to fit program objectives and goals?
  - a. How are they used?
  - b. Are they all used?
  - c. How often is each used?
  - d. How are they chosen?

**Part 2. Assess the fit between staff, services provided, and program participants.**

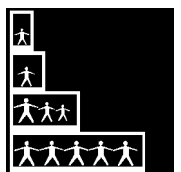
1. What are the job descriptions of staff and are these accurate?
2. Have job roles been modified or new ones added?
3. What are the credentials of staff members?
4. How were staff members selected?
5. Were any positions difficult to fill?
6. What training procedures were used? Were these adequate?
7. Were there any specific problems in developing and maintaining staff morale?
8. What are the rates of staff turn-over and the causes?
9. Have there been any changes in the type of volunteers or the personnel working with the program?
  - a. If there have, could you describe the changes?
  - b. Why did the changes occur?
  - c. What differences have you noticed as a result of these changes?



**Tier Three:****Lessons Learned Worksheet**

Examining the data collected thus far, discuss important lessons learned throughout the process of program development and implementation.

1. What changes have occurred in the program since it first started?
  - a. Please describe the changes.
  - b. Why did they occur?
  - c. What differences have occurred due to these changes?
2. Describe the different attitudes of the participants throughout the program. How do attitudes change during the course of the program?
3. Are there any differences in receptiveness toward the program based on gender, age, ethnicity, SES, etc? If so, discuss these differences and possible reasons for these differences.
4. What evidence is there that activities are interesting and useful?
5. Have any concerns been raised? If so, what are they and how were they remedied?
6. Describe the various reactions to the materials or curriculum.
7. Do you have any indication that the materials (or curriculum) are appropriate (reading level, understanding of child development, etc.) for participants?
8. How are program policy decisions made?
9. What accountability issues affect the program?
10. What feedback can be used to improve the program in the future?



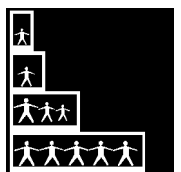
**Tier Three:**

**Program Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet**

Make a list of program strengths and weaknesses.

Program Strengths	Program Weaknesses

What decisions are made based on the review of information pertaining to program strengths and weaknesses?





# Tier Four: Progress Toward Objectives

The purpose of this tier is to document program effectiveness. Incorporating the work of previous tiers will help to accomplish this purpose. Please keep in mind that an ecologically based program addresses all four National Outcomes. However, a full evaluation of program effectiveness is expected for only your primary National Outcome area(s) as identified in Tier One.

To document program effectiveness, your team will:

- Sort objectives by short-term outcome and long-term outcome;
- Select short-term outcome indicators and identify measures;
- Prepare an evaluation plan (Worksheet 1);
- Decide on design issues;
- Decide on data analysis; and
- Report findings.

If someone asked you, “what difference are you making in the lives of those who are in your program?” what would you tell them? You may tell them that you want your participants to gain some kind of knowledge, or learn specific skills, or change the way they behave, or perhaps even change the environmental conditions in which they live. The answer that you give to the question, “what difference are you making in the lives of your program participants” is, in essence, what we mean by short-term program outcomes. In other words, short-term outcomes refer to gains in knowledge or skills and changes in attitudes, beliefs, values, aspirations, and behavior. When you evaluate, you are gathering evidence to see how much progress has been made toward the intended short-term outcomes.

Worksheet 1 at the end of Tier 4 (Short-Term Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet) was designed to assist projects with developing a plan to evaluate short-term outcomes. This worksheet has 5 parts; each will be discussed in the following sections. A completed worksheet has been included (Worksheet 2) to provide your team with an example of how a short-term evaluation plan may look.

# Sort Objectives by Short-Term Outcome and Long-Term Outcome

Building on the foundation that you established in the first three tiers, Tier Four encourages your evaluation team to examine the relationship between program goals, objectives, activities, indicators, and measures. Clearly articulated relationships among these five areas increase your chances of finding program effects.

If your evaluation team documented program adjustments in activities, goals, and objectives, it will pay off now. The goals and objectives need to be consistent with the activities. If they aren't, revisit Tier Three to make adjustments.

Examine your current program objectives and sort them by whether they address short-term or long-term changes. Short-term outcome objectives describe how participants (or their peers, families, schools, communities, etc.) will change over the short-term as a result of the program. Long-term outcome objectives specify expected long-term changes. As you sort objectives, consider which ones you plan to measure for the evaluation. It is not always realistic to assess success relative to all objectives. Refer to the Sorting Objectives Worksheet to complete this activity. After separating your short-term and long-term outcome objectives and deciding which to measure, Box 1 on the Short-Term Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet can be completed.

**Short-Term Outcome Objective:**

**By the end of the 1996-97 school year, all children who received tutoring will have maintained at least a "C" average in reading.**

**Long-Term Outcome Objective:**

**By the end of the 1998-99 school year, all children who received tutoring will have maintained at least a "C" average in at least four out of five classes.**

## Select Short-Term Outcome Indicators and Identify Measures

Box 2 on the Short-Term Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet asks, "What is the evidence you will need to show progress toward your short-term outcomes?" Evidence of change can come in many forms. These could be existing data like school records or census information. Evidence could also be observed behavior or interactions. It could also be a paper and pencil questionnaire that asks a set of relevant questions, some sort of a standardized test, or products such as portfolios or posters. It is important to understand that for any outcome, there are multiple kinds of evidence you can collect to show change. The kind of evidence you examine should be determined based on your program, research and practice around your outcome areas.

In our example, the short-term outcome objective, indicator, and measure of program success were obvious. This is not always the case. Consider a teen pregnancy prevention program with fourth and fifth grade students. Few or no pregnancies would be expected at the end of program years one and two, so what are the outcome indicators?

In general, effective indicators are credible, practical, useful for program improvements and reporting, and clear about what they measure (Hendricks, 1996).

Indicators are likely to be credible when they:

- Are based on data that is verified often;
- Are based on a known and consistent methodology; and
- Measure real changes.

They are practical when they:

- Cost what they are worth;
- Are derived from existing data when possible; and
- Have been used effectively by others.

They are useful for program improvements and reporting when they:

- Measure change at the appropriate unit of analysis;
- Use measures sensitive to change; and
- Have been measured and reviewed as appropriate.

They are likely to be clear when they:

- Measure the outcome directly;
- Measure only one aspect of performance; and
- Are operationally defined in precise terms.

In the teen pregnancy prevention program, outcome indicators based upon the research literature might include gains in knowledge about reproduction and adolescent development, attitudes toward sexual involvement, stage of pubertal development, level of sexual involvement to date, and intended sexual behaviors. Measures might include pre- and post-program surveys or qualitative methods which have been used and validated in similar programs elsewhere.

Your team's task is to examine and discuss your short-term outcome indicators and related measures. The "[Evaluating the National Outcomes](#)" link on the CYFERnet Evaluation page contains literature reviews, suggested evaluation instruments, and annotated bibliographies for various key indicators for children, youth, parents/families, and communities. Another good source of measures is available from the Buros Institute of Mental Measures (<http://www.unl.edu/buros>).

## Decide on Design Issues

**“While the appeal of standardized instruments...is understandable, sole reliance on them in evaluating family support programs, with their multiplicity of desired outcomes, is indefensible. A combination of measurement strategies, including development of program-specific...instruments, is critical” (Jacobs, 1988, p. 60).**

The next step in preparing to assess program effectiveness is to consider various design issues. Your team will need to make decisions regarding:

- Who or what will be your best source of information? Participants themselves? Parents? Teachers? Neighbors? Schools? Social Service Agencies? Other existing records? etc. Go to [http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658\\_3.PDF](http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658_3.PDF) for a discussion of different types of sampling.
- What is the unit of analysis? Will you examine changes at the individual level? the family level? the community level?
- Will it be necessary to obtain similar information from or on a comparison group? Will a comparison or control group strengthen your evaluation? Are statistical comparison groups available or will you need to collect your own data?
- What will you need to do to get your information? Administer surveys? Find trained observers to code behavior? Look through existing data? Interview key people? etc.
- When will be the best time to collect the information? At some specific intervals during the program? Throughout the program? At program exit?
- How will you define various program aspects such as amount of program services received or degree of participation?
- When has a participant formally entered, completed or dropped out of a program?
- How often will you need to gather the information? Pre-post test? Pre-post-follow-up? At other key intervals?
- Who will collect evaluation data? How will they be trained?
- Will you want to compare program effects for different groups (such as gender, age, grade, SES, etc.) Consider the demographic or other information you will need to make such comparisons.

After thinking about these questions, your team should be ready to complete Boxes 3 and 4 on the Short-Term Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet. Box 3 asks, "Given the evidence you will need, how will you go about collecting the information/data?" and Box 4 asks "Given the information collection plan, what tasks will be required and who will carry them out?"

Once your team has addressed these and other design issues your evaluation contact may raise, you are ready to discuss data analysis. For further guidance on design issues, go to [http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658\\_4.PDF](http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658_4.PDF) or <http://www.wkkf.org/Publications/evalhdbk/chapter5more.htm>

# Decide on Data Analysis

Data analysis serves two purposes:

1. To describe with summary statistics; and
2. To examine relationships among variables.

Your evaluation contact will bring expertise in analysis methods to the team as you determine the questions, variables, and relationships of interest. An overview of data analysis is available at [http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658\\_6.PDF](http://extremist.uwex.edu:80/ces/pubs/pdf/G3658_6.PDF)

## Report Findings

Formal and informal reports discussing the results of the program will be of interest to other stakeholders such as community members, local and state government officials, and other service providers. A discussion of Extension accountability is available at [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/pub/reviews/review\\_extension\\_accountability.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/pub/reviews/review_extension_accountability.html)

Evaluation results are most useful when a regular feedback loop is established with service providers and other stakeholders. This is illustrated in Tiers Two and Three, but is true throughout a program's life.

**There are several issues to consider when deciding how to report your findings. Below is a list of questions for your team to discuss.**

What are your plans for the information/data? How will you use the information? For program improvement? Communicate program success? Obtain more funding? Report to funders? Marketing the program to others? etc.

Did the results show that your program was successful in achieving its intended short-term outcomes? What can be learned from the results?

How will you communicate successes, concerns or lessons learned? Overviews? Visuals? Reports? Brochures? Impact statements? etc.

Who will have access to the results? Who will be your audience for the evaluation reports?

What resources will be needed to distribute your results?

After considering the questions above, your team can develop a plan for reporting your evaluation findings. This should be recorded in Box 5 on the Short-Term Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet.

To see how some programs have reported their findings, follow the "Evaluation Made Easy: Examples of Practical Evaluations - Bulletins" link on the CYFERnet Evaluation page (<http://www.CYFERnet.org/evaluation.html>). Most of these bulletins contain a section called "Reporting Evaluation Results" that describes how different projects have communicated their evaluation results.

At the time the team began Tier Four, they were already well aware of the success stories behind their program. Now they faced the challenge of demonstrating program effectiveness to others.

The team began by reviewing program goals and objectives. Since they had made periodic adjustments as necessary, they felt that goals and objectives and the relationship between each to program activities and community needs and assets were well articulated and an accurate reflection of the program. As they sorted objectives into short-term and long-term outcome categories, they realized that they had a lot of objectives. It became clear that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to measure all of them. As a result, they spent a good deal of time prioritizing objectives to determine which ones were essential to assess.

After arriving at a manageable number of key outcome objectives, the team considered indicators and measures of each. In some cases, the indicators and measures were obvious (i.e., report card grades), but in others, they were less clear. For example, one issue the team grappled with was how best to assess personal growth in teens. Feeling that quantitative measures were not satisfactory, they explored various qualitative methods that would capture the essence of personal growth at the individual level.

The team agreed that the individual was their unit of analysis and utilized survey measures, interview data, and school records to assess improvements in children and teens. Data were collected from all participating children and teens. In addition, teachers who had contact with participants were interviewed. Finally, parents of children and teens answered questionnaires. Parents willing to be interviewed provided more in-depth information regarding changes in their children. Data were collected prior to program entry/teen trainings (pre-test) and at the end of each semester (or upon program exit).

Since the program was in the pilot stage, the team was able to use children from other classes as a comparison group. Children who received less than a "C" on their last report card and in the same grade as the pilot classroom were used as a comparison group. Additionally, eight teens were chosen to serve as controls for the tutors and were matched by grades, grade level, gender, ethnicity, SES, and school attendance.

The data were collected and analyzed by a few graduate students for course credit. The team asked them to compare the relationships among key variables for the participants and comparison groups to look for between group differences. To explore significant differences in mean scores between the target and comparison groups, Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) with post-hoc significance tests were performed. In addition to comparing target groups to comparison/control groups, the team assessed differential program effects among participants. Finally, graduate students looked for recurring themes in responses to the qualitative data.

The team wrote the annual report that was submitted to CSREES. In addition, they wrote several informal reports that were disseminated to parents, teachers, the local government, news stations and papers, and other stakeholders.

# Tier Four Worksheets

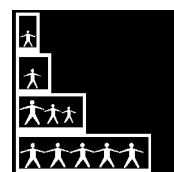
### Tier Four:

## Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet

(check only one)

- Child       Parent/Family
- Youth       Community

<b>1. List one major short-term outcome of your program:</b>  	➔	<b>2. What is the evidence you will need to show progress toward your short-term outcomes? (e.g. What are your indicators, measures, etc.)</b>     
<b>3. Given the evidence you will need, how will you go about collecting the information/data?</b>          	←	<b>4. Given the information collection plan, what tasks will be required and who will carry them out?</b>          
<b>5. What will you do with the results?</b>          	←	



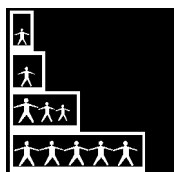
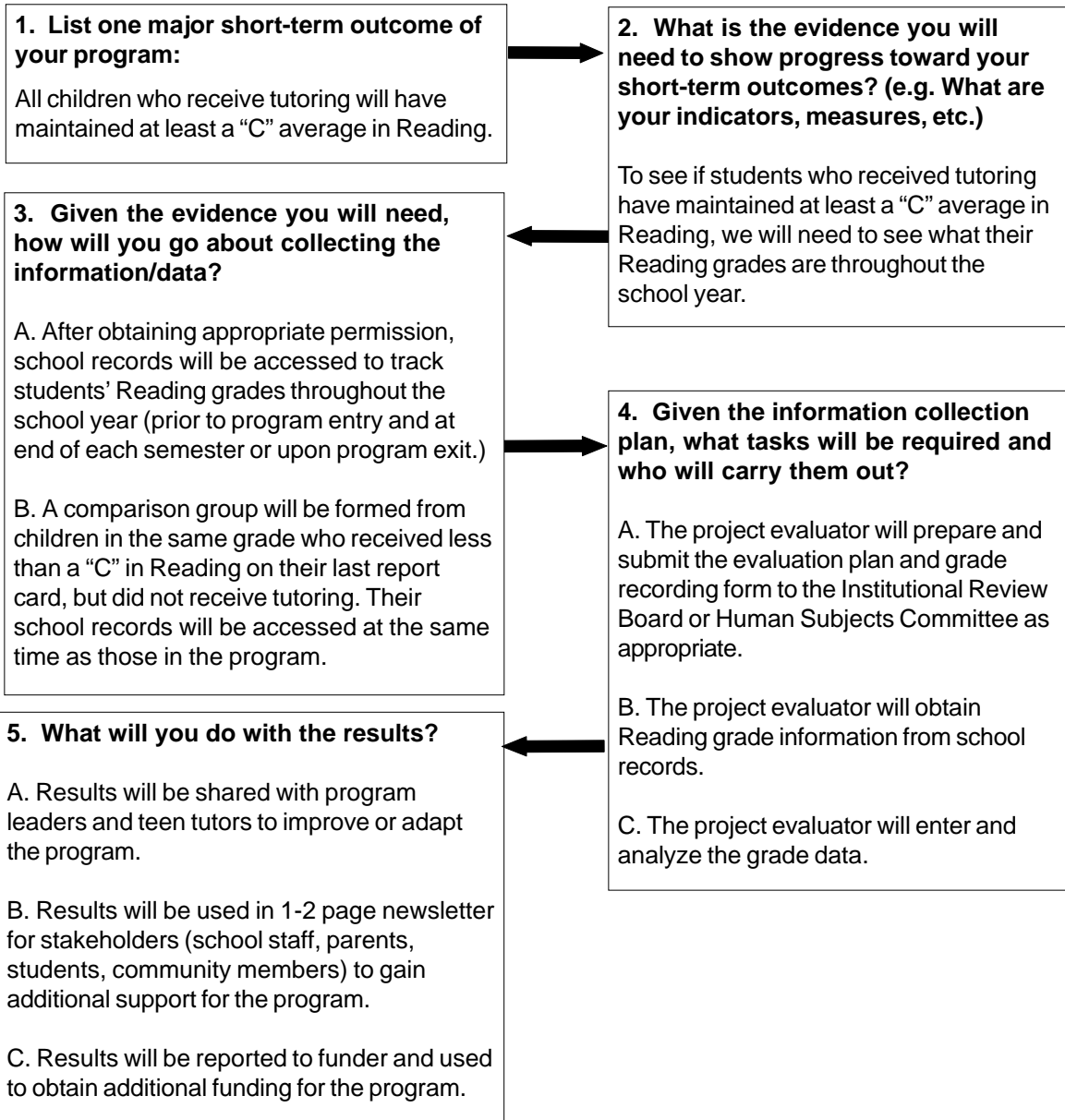


**Tier Four:**

**Outcome Evaluation Plan Worksheet**

(check only one)

- Child       Parent/Family
- Youth       Community



**Tier Four:**

# Sorting Objectives Worksheet

Sort program objectives into those that assess short-term outcomes and those that assess long-term outcomes.

Short-term outcome objectives describe how participants will change over the short-term as a result of the program. Referring back to the Goals and Objectives Worksheet, identify short-term outcome objectives the team intends to measure for the evaluation.

Short-Term Outcome Objective:

Short-Term Outcome Objective:

Short-Term Outcome Objective:

Short-Term Outcome Objective:

Long-term outcome objectives specify what long-term changes will be expected as a result of the program. Referring back to the Goals and Objectives Worksheet, identify long-term outcome objectives the team intends to measure for the evaluation. You'll need this information in Tier Five.

Long-Term Outcome Objective:

Long-Term Outcome Objective:

Long-Term Outcome Objective:

Long-Term Outcome Objective:

# Tier Five: Program Long-Term Outcomes

The purpose of Tier Five is to provide evidence that your program has made long-term improvements in the lives of children, youth, and families at risk.

There are four tasks associated with Tier Five:

- Plan to document long-term outcomes in the quality of life of children, youth, families, and communities;
- Provide evidence of program sustainability;
- Identify program components worthy of replication; and
- Distribute findings of long-term outcomes.

## Plan to Document Long-Term Outcomes

What do you expect program participants to “look” like five years from now, ten years from now? What evidence is there to suggest that your program will continue to affect participants several years after they’ve been in the program? These are the kinds of questions your team will consider when designing a plan to document long-term outcomes (see the Assessing Long-Term Outcomes Worksheet).

The first step in establishing a plan is to identify the long-term outcome objectives of your program (a task you did in Tier Four). Once you have these objectives in-hand, your team can follow the same steps in Tier Four that prepared you to assess short-term program outcomes—identify indicators, measures, design, and analyses (see Select Long-term Outcome Indicators and Identify Measures Worksheet).

When planning to assess long-term outcomes several years down the road, there are a couple of issues to consider. First, participants, as well as the context, will change over time. Maturation, historical events, and environmental factors influence the participants and the contexts, regardless of program participation. As a consequence, indicators and measures that were appropriate at one time may no longer be appropriate in the future. For instance, self-esteem in a four-year-old is not the same construct as self-esteem in a 15-year-old; it is not defined the same way nor is it measured the same way. Issues related to change over time in participants and contexts are important points to consider when planning to assess long-term outcomes.

Second, what sources of data will be accessed in the future to demonstrate long-term outcomes? How will these data be collected? Who will be compared—participants to themselves, to those in other communities, to others in the U.S.? What factors need to be in place now to ensure access to these data in the future?

After spending a good deal of time planning to demonstrate long-term outcomes, it may become tempting to talk about cause and effect relationships related to program participation. We offer a caution against this temptation. The goal in assessing long-term outcomes is to demonstrate that the program has contributed to the desired outcomes and to celebrate these contributions.

## **Provide Evidence of Program Sustainability**

Plans to sustain a program should be integrated into the daily life of a program. Mancini and Marek (1997) identify four keys to program sustainability:

- 1) Leadership with vision;
- 2) Identifying assets and mobilizing resources;
- 3) Collaboration and community partnership; and
- 4) Accountability/evaluation.

The task at this point is to ensure that your program has incorporated these keys into the functioning of the program (see Program Sustainability Worksheet).

For more information on program sustainability, go to <http://www.ext.vt.edu/vce/specialty/famhumdev/350-801.html>

## **Identify Program Components Worthy of Replication**

As your program demonstrates success, the team may decide to expand it or replicate certain components. Documenting the process and outcomes of the program will allow your team to formulate an implementation manual that will allow others to examine how the program worked in certain contexts and hypothesize about its effectiveness in other contexts.

## **Distribute Findings of Long-Term Outcomes**

The final task of Tier Five is to use all that you've learned in program development, implementation, and evaluation to contribute to Extension's ability to serve children, youth, and families at-risk. One way to do this is by publishing your work, both formally and informally. Reports will be submitted to CSREES and may be posted on your Web site. In addition, you may decide to share your findings with local government, community members, and other service providers. There are various ways to accomplish this, but some ideas include contacting television news stations, the newspapers, and community meetings. You may want to convey your findings in the form of success stories. Go to <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/AboutCES/Factsheets/stories.html> for information on how to write success stories. Or you may want to use Impact Statements. Go to <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agpsd/impact.htm> for information on writing Impact Statements. Finally, you might consider submitting your work to professional journals.

The team began by referring back to the Sorting Objectives Worksheet to access long-term outcome objectives and to re-evaluate decisions regarding priorities. As they discussed methodological issues, they learned that it was going to be a challenge to assess the contribution of the program on future personal growth in teens. They considered how the definition of personal growth might change from the teen years to the young adult years and how access to such data could be obtained.

On the other hand, some objectives would be easier to assess in the future. For instance, they found that continued access to school records allowed them to examine academic success of participants over time and allowed them to compare participants to non-participants in the district. Similarly, they accessed data of national averages to chart the progress of participants relative to the country as a whole.

Although they believed that comparing participants to non-participants in the district, as well as to a national statistical comparison group, would help control for unanticipated factors, they felt it wise to list possible events that might occur in the next few years that could influence their impact results. For instance, the implementation of a new reading curriculum in their school or in neighboring schools could contribute to a rise in scores among participants and non-participants alike, thus obscuring contributions of their program.

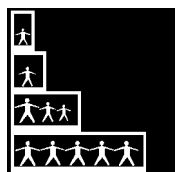
The results from the long-term outcome evaluation were submitted in the annual report to CSREES and as a community report to local government. They also chose to post results on the web. They wrote several news releases and held an annual award ceremony to inform the community and to recognize participants for their hard work. The team felt confident in their ability to sustain the project once State Strengthening funding expired as they had employed the four keys to sustainability from the onset.

# Tier Five Worksheets

**Tier Five:****Assessing Long-Term Outcomes**

Discuss the following as a way to consider how to document the long-term outcomes of your program.

1. Consider the following four questions:
  - a. What short-term changes have participants made?
  - b. What difference will these changes make in the long-term?
  - c. How much have participants changed?
  - d. To what extent do you feel the program will lead (has led) to these changes?
  
2. Discuss:
  - a. What information is needed to provide concrete evidence supporting answers to the above questions?
  - b. What is the best way to measure long-term changes, degree of change, and the likelihood that the program contributed to those changes?
  - c. What baseline data can you collect to show change over time?
  - d. What process data need to be collected to examine changes in service delivery over time?



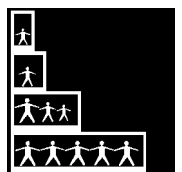


**Tier Five:**

**Select Long-Term Outcome Indicators  
and Identify Measures Worksheet**

Referring back to long-term outcome objectives identified in the "Sorting Objectives Worksheet," specify indicators and measures for long-term outcome objectives.

Long-Term Outcome Objectives	Indicators	Measures



**Tier Five:****Program Sustainability Worksheet**

Discuss the steps your team has made toward the four keys to sustainability.

1. Leadership with vision:

- a. Who are the formal and informal leaders in this project?
- b. How do they articulate the vision of where the program is going?
- c. How are others brought into the accomplishment of their vision?

2. Identifying assets and mobilizing resources:

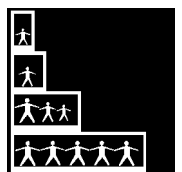
- a. How is the project building on community strengths/assets?
- b. What plans are in place to continually assess changes in community needs and assets?

3. Collaboration and community partnerships:

- a. How are resources and leadership tasks shared among collaborators?
- b. How will the partnership be sustained if one key player is lost?

4. Accountability/evaluation:

- a. How is the evaluation being used at the community level?
- b. What feedback loops are needed?



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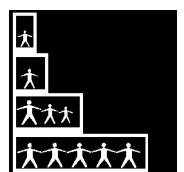
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