

## 2c.TS1 What Things about What We Are Doing - the Implementation of Our Strategies and Activities -- Should We Measure and Assess?

There are several purposes for measuring a group's programs and activities — those that it is directly implementing and those that it may be supporting financially or in other ways.

- One purpose is purely descriptive, as a historical record or for a report.
- Another purpose is as a check on operations or part of due diligence over use of resources.
- A third purpose is to assess whether it was possible to carry out the intended activities and programs and reach and engage the intended individuals or groups.

You may need to collect the same or similar information for all of these purposes. However, you will probably organize and use the information differently for each.

The information (data) you might need could include:

- Activities (Examples of activities might be mobilizing neighborhood residents, creating a collaboration among parents, teachers, school principals and business people, doing a public campaign about the achievement gap in the local schools, identifying key openings of local boards and commissions and nominating individuals to fill them, etc.)
  - What activities were carried out?
  - When?
  - In what order?
  - By whom?
  - Using what resources?
  - Targeted to which individuals or groups, and to how many?
  - Reaching which individuals or groups, and how many?
- Services or programs (Examples of services or programs might be workshops for Latino/a business owners, high quality multi-lingual pre-school programming, undoing racism training, programs that help recent immigrants obtain driver's licenses, etc.)
  - What services or programs were delivered?
  - How many?
  - By whom ?
  - To whom?
  - When?
  - Where?

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- How many of the intended set of individuals or groups received any services or participated in any way?
- What was the intensity or “dose” of what they received? That is, how much service or support did they receive on average, or how long did they participate on average?
- How many were considered to have completed the program or received the appropriate amount of services?

These data could be organized and used in the following ways, for the following purposes:

- Descriptive information is usually compiled and summarized at the end of a program or activity or at certain periods such as annually.
- Monitoring information is usually collected more frequently and is most closely examined by those responsible for operations or management.
  - When monitoring reveals substantial problems in implementation, then a more intensive assessment is often done to understand more about the nature and reasons for the problem.
- In addition to responding to issues identified during monitoring, evaluation of implementation and participation should be planned for those activities and programs that meet one or more of the following conditions:
  - Are critical to the overall success of the strategy
  - Require substantial resources
  - Are highly visible
  - Are innovative or involve significant changes to a proven effort

Evaluation questions about the implementation of activities and programs tend to focus on the “why” of implementation success or failure and how this relates to the difference the programs or activities made on the things the group hopes to change.