

Benefits of Program Evaluation

The most effective management decisions are evidence-based. Program evaluation is research for the purpose of generating evidence, to support those decisions.

The evaluation produced by your organization in conjunction with EVIDENCE has multiple benefits. It contributes to increased accountability, enhanced decision-making, advanced knowledge and skills, social change, and cohesion and collaboration.

Accountability

Evaluation can support accountability for program performance and spending by providing information for stakeholders and meeting the requirements of funders.

Decision Making

Evaluation can help you make better decisions about:

- Program direction by setting and reviewing goals and priorities.
- Allocation of resources by determining the value of programs.

Evaluation can help you develop programs by:

- Improving program design and implementation.
- Improving program cost-effectiveness.
- Supporting effective management practices.
- Making more effective use of evaluation.

Knowledge and Skills

Evaluation can build knowledge about programming by increasing knowledge of needs and problems, and effective practices, programs, and programming.

Evaluation can develop capacity for effective program design and assessment by:

- Thinking more critically about programs.
- Improving attitudes toward evaluation.
- Developing capacity to understand, use, and/or conduct evaluation.

Social Change

Evaluation can be used to promote, defend, or oppose specific methods, approaches, or programs and shape public opinion.

Evaluation can be used to support pluralism and democracy by exploring diverse perspectives and supporting a democratic process for program decision-making.

Cohesion and Collaboration

Evaluation can increase communication between departments or organizations.

Evaluation can build energy and enthusiasm within the program team by building pride and confidence, and cohesion

What are the results?

EVIDENCE can provide your organization with reports and materials that allow your organization to:

- Implement the evaluation findings and recommendations.
- Adjust your services to meet the needs of the community.
- Demonstrate to funders the social impacts of your work.
- Support your proposal writing, marketing and promotion.
- Provide information to share with community partners.
- Have a basis for integrating information into strategic planning.

Depending on the type of evaluation you need, EVIDENCE can provide you with:

Needs and Assessment Outputs

- Description of unmet needs
- Description of program design and logic
- Articulation of standards for performance or criteria for success
- Description of the context of the program
- Determination of readiness for/appropriateness of evaluation

Process Outputs

- Description of program implementation
- Comparison of actual events with the program plan or standards
- Explanations of why implementation has deviated from the plan

Outcome/ Impact Outputs

- Description of program outcomes
- Identification of unexpected/unwanted outcomes
- Attributions linking outcomes to specific interventions
- Identification of factors that affect the effectiveness of an intervention

Outputs of Stakeholder Involvement

- Involvement of stakeholders in some or all evaluation activities
- Integration of the evaluation with the program's culture
- Consultation with stakeholders to solicit their views of the program
- Sharing of results with stakeholders
- New partnerships
- On-the-project training in evaluation for program managers and stakeholders

Outputs Spanning all Types of Evaluation

- Performance indicators and indicator systems
- Evaluation tools
- New questions about the program
- Syntheses of previous research
- Suggestions of good practices
- Recommendations