Introduction

Creating a monitoring and evaluation plan is essential for understanding the impact of climate strategies. The evaluation plan will create a roadmap to understand how the evaluation and monitoring will take place. This plan will lay out the objectives and goals for the evaluation, the metrics that will be considered, and it will serve as a management and accountability tool. It will also describe the partners involved in the evaluation and how the evaluation will be used in the future for decision making.

This worksheet offers suggestions for completing a basic monitoring and evaluation plan. Under each subsection there are questions for consideration; not all have to be answered. As noted in the BRACE Implementation Guide, this plan is a general starting point and may not be fully applicable to alternative evaluation approaches. Use the plan (or pieces of the plan) in ways that make most sense to your team.

Note: there are places in the worksheet that focus on the climate action, not the evaluation, and vice versa. It is important to recognize these distinctions.

Purposes, Context, and Interest Holders

This section will document the goals of the climate action, the purpose of the evaluation, and establish the evaluation users, partners, and interest holders.

Climate Action Goals and Objectives

*What are the goals and objectives of the action being taken? (Note: this is **not** the goals and objectives of the **evaluation**, but of the program/intervention being evaluated.) If you utilized the Abbreviation and Full Plan Template Worksheet, you may already have this information.*

Context

Every action, intervention, and program exists within a context. The first step in evaluation is to understand the context that your climate action operates in. This includes understanding the purpose and origin of the action (as indicated in the section above), but also includes the historical, economic, power, and social dimensions of the community the action is operating within (Wilce et al., 2021). The process of building this understanding is more important than drafting a written description of the context. Getting out and talking to people in the community, reading newspapers, websites, program communications, and historical documents are more valuable in building the understanding of context than the written product here.

Purpose, Use and Users of the Evaluation Findings

*What is the purpose of this **evaluation** of your climate action? In other words, what do you want to know? How do you anticipate the findings of this evaluation (what you want to know) will be used? Who will use them?*

Evaluation Interest Holders

- *What individuals and groups have an interest in this evaluation? Examples include community members, local health departments, government agencies, funders, and partner organizations.*
- *What aspect of the evaluation are they most interested in? For example, are they interested in the evaluation from a cost angle, effectiveness of the program, or possible improvements?*
- *What role will they play in developing or implementing this evaluation plan, if any? Examples include serving on the planning team or as external reviewer, collecting data, interpreting findings, or using results.*

Partner Name	Interest or Perspective in Evaluation	Role in Evaluation
May be an individual or a group	*Program, participant, staff*	*Evaluation team, external reviewer, mentor, consumer of results*

Description of Evaluation

This section outlines the theory of change of your **climate action**, which is fundamental to planning and describing the evaluation, including determining evaluation questions.

Theory of Change (ToCs)
The theory of change addresses why a particular strategy will be effective by showing how change happens. If you utilized the Abbreviated and Full Plan Template Worksheet, you may have already developed a theory of change. More guidance on developing a ToC is available at the end of the Abbreviated and Full Plan Template Worksheet.

Example Theory of Change Table					
Activities	**Short Term Outcomes**	**Assumptions**	**Intermediate Term Outcome**	**Assumptions**	**Long Term Outcomes**
What activities are conducted?	*What are the program's intended outcomes?*	*What are the assumptions leading from short to intermediate outcomes?*	*What occurs between your activities and the point at which you see these ultimate outcomes?*	*What are the assumptions leading from intermediate to long term outcomes?*	*What do you ultimately want to change as a result of your activities?*
Example 1 Sending air quality alerts via cell phone to all residents in a county with asthma	Increased awareness from residents when there is poor air quality in their area	Assumption that awareness means residents will reduce their exposure and avoid going outside on poor air quality days	Reduced exposure to air quality-related asthma triggers in residents	Assumption that poor air quality is the main trigger of asthmatic events	Reduced adverse asthma events in residents
Example 2 Health department partners with local CBO to provide home weatherization services for those 65+ who lack cooling in their household	Increased awareness of weatherization services application process in those 65+	Assumption that the application process is relatively easy to access and complete for priority population; assumption that weatherization happens in a timely manner	Reduced exposure to high indoor air temperatures; increase in applications for home weatherization services	Assumption that utilities cost do not change due to weatherization services; assumption that high indoor temperatures was causing heat-related illness	Reduced heat-related illness cases in 65+ who lacked cooling

Use the following space to outline the theory of change as it applies to your climate action strategy. What short, medium, and long-term outcomes are needed to reach your program's goal? What assumptions are being made about one outcome leading to the next?

Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Assumptions	Intermediate Term Outcome	Assumptions	Long Term Outcomes

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions should be high-level questions that your evaluation seeks to answer; these are different from survey questions. What 3–5 questions will the program be able to answer during or after the implementation of the action? In other words, what do you want to know from this evaluation?

Think about the types of evaluation as you consider the questions you want answered. CDC's Evaluation Framework lists five types: formative, process/implementation, outcome, impact and economic. Refer to the Prioritize & Plan chapter for more details.

For example, a process evaluation might seek to understand whether steps in an intervention were followed correctly (and why or why not), whereas an outcome evaluation may seek to understand if an intervention achieved the stated outcomes from the ToC.

Some example evaluation questions are:
- *Was the activity implemented as planned?*
- *Did outcomes occur and at an acceptable level for the population overall and for specific groups?*
- *Were the changes in outcomes due to activities as opposed to something else?*
- *What factors prevented or facilitated the activities in the focus from being implemented as planned? Were certain moderating factors responsible?*
- *What was the cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness of the outcomes that were achieved?*

Data Collection and Analysis

This section describes how you will gather data for your evaluation and how you will analyze it. Provide information on methods you will use to compile data and they are related to the evaluation questions you identified. If your team elects to use the below table, each evaluation question will have its own.

Evaluation Design
What is the design for this evaluation? (e.g., quasi-experimental, pre-post with comparison group, time-series, case study, post-test only). What is the rationale for using this design?

Data Collection Methods
Will you collect new data to answer the evaluation questions? Will you use secondary data? What methods will you use to collect or acquire the data? Will you use a sample? If so, how will you select it? How will you identify or create your data collection instruments? How will you test instruments for readability, reliability, validity, and cultural responsiveness? How will you determine the quality and utility of existing data? From whom or what will you collect data? (source of data)

Indicators
What are some measurable or observable elements (indicators) that can serve as markers of your program's performance? What constitutes success on the indicators? That is, to what standards will you compare your evaluation findings? Alternatively, what process will you engage in to understand and interpret performance on this indicator?

Table 1: Evaluation Design				
Concept	**Indicator**	**Measure**	**Standard(s) for performance** *(if applicable; may not apply for qualitative measures)*	**Data Source**
Example: knowledge of heat exhaustion prevention measures	*Example: self-reported episodes of heat exhaustion*	*Example: % change in self-reported episodes of heat exhaustion*	*Example: 50% reduction in self-reported episodes of heat exhaustion*	*Example: online survey response*

Analysis Plans

What method(s) will the team use to analyze the data (e.g., descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and qualitative analyses such as content analysis and thematic analysis)? Who will be involved in drawing, interpreting, and justifying conclusions? Does this group include program participants or others affected by the program? What are the plans to involve them in this process?

Evaluation Timeline and Responsibilities

What are the start and end months, as well as major milestones within the project period? Who is responsible for them? The evaluation timeline should be woven into the climate action timeline. Timelines serve as a useful tool to track activities and shifting schedules. There are several types (milestones, yearly/monthly basic progress, Gantt chart) of timelines that may be suitable for your team's activities.

Plans for dissemination of findings

How will the evaluation findings be used? How does the timeline for reporting findings and potential recommendations align with key events? Who is responsible for creating and monitoring an action plan to guide the implementation of evaluation? How will the program disseminate findings from the evaluation (e.g., reports, flyers)? What methods (e.g., in-person meetings, emails, written reports, newsletter articles, presentations) will be used? Who is best suited to deliver the information (e.g., evaluator, program manager, coalition leader)?

Table 2: Plans for Dissemination of Findings					
Audience for evaluation findings	**Evaluation information of interest**	**Purpose of communication to this audience**	**Potential dissemination formats**	**Month and year of planned dissemination**	**Persons responsible for dissemination**
Example: health department staff leading the intervention	*Example: Effectiveness of the intervention*	*Example: They are the core implementation team and will make decisions about how to adjust the intervention.*	*Example: In-person presentation and discussion*	*Example: January 2027*	*Example: Lori and Will*

Key Resources

- **CDC Program Evaluation Framework** (CDC, 2024)

- **CDC Checklist for Assessing Your Evaluation Questions** (CDC's National Asthma Control Program, 2013)

- **Evaluation Guide: Developing and Using a Logic Model** (CDC - Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, 2006)

References

1. CDC. CDC Program Evaluation Framework. Published 2024. Accessed Nov. 15, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/evaluation/php/evaluation-framework/index.html

2. CDC's National Asthma Control Program. *Good Evaluation Questions: A Checklist to Help Focus Your Evaluation*.; 2013. http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm.

3. CDC - Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention. *Evaluation Guide: Developing and Using a Logic Model*.; 2006. Accessed August 15, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/cardiovascular-resources/media/pdfs/logic_model.pdf?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/logic_model.pdf

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