MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE EVALUATION

Evaluation is the Alliance's planned and careful use of information to understand the Alliance's work and its relationship to its goals. Evaluation can be used to show the Alliance members and community stakeholders, the challenges, successes, and accomplishments achieved in the community. It strengthens accountability and promotes sustainability.

In order to evaluate the Alliance's interventions for its effectiveness, it is important to understand the different elements of evaluation and the connection to the Alliance's logic model. There are five elements to evaluation: process, short-term, intermediate, long-term outcomes and long-term impact evaluation. All elements are necessary to achieve long-term effectiveness and sustainability over the course of the grant cycle.

Reviewing the Five Elements of Evaluation

Process Evaluation (Start of the program to year 1):
Process evaluation looks at the delivery of the intervention. It is used to determine if the target audience was reached, if the Alliance stakeholders were engaged, and if the intervention/program was delivered as intended. This is the first step in evaluating an intervention's effectiveness since it is conducted as the program is occurring. Questions that process evaluation should answer are:

- Who delivered the program? Was it the person originally identified to run the program?
- Was the program delivered as planned? Did it run for the intended number of sessions?
- Was the target audience reached?
- Were Alliance stakeholders engaged? Did they have input into the intervention/program?
- Were the participants satisfied with the intervention/program?

Ways to measure this information may include:

Program and direct service change:	*Community-level change:*
- Attendance logs for each session	- Survey for Alliance members to ensure the Alliance structure is sound and able to provide the intervention
- Alliance meeting minutes	- Survey Alliance members to ensure they feel they have a real and equitable voice

• Participant satisfaction surveys	• Key informant interviews

Short Term Outcomes (during year 1 through year 5):

Short-term evaluation determines if the intervention/program has met its intended goal of changing attitudes, knowledge or skills within the population it is serving. The data used to determine short-term outcomes should be accessible within 1-3 years of the intervention's start date. Questions that short-term evaluations should answer are:

- Did the intervention/program change attitudes, knowledge or skills of the participants?
- Was the change as expected prior to the program start?
- Is the intervention/program doing what it intended to do?

Ways to measure this information may include:

Program and direct service change:	*Community-level change:*
• Interviews/focus groups with instructors and participants	• List policy changes that have occurred
• Pre/Post tests or questionnaires	• List any community change practices that have occurred
• Photographs documenting the change (i.e. changes in physical design)	• List resources generated and media outlets that have been utilized

Intermediate Outcomes (after year 2 and through year 5):

Intermediate evaluation determines if the intervention is making a difference in the problems detailed in the Alliance's local conditions identified on the logic model. The data used to determine intermediate outcomes should be accessible by year two of the intervention's start date. Questions that intermediate evaluations should answer are:

- Is there a positive result in achieving the intended objective outlined for the local condition being addressed by this intervention/program?
- Is the local condition improving? If so, how?
- Do the data sets defining the local conditions show the results of the positive outcomes?

Ways to measure this information must include:

- Comparing the data used to substantiate the local condition with the most current data available from that same data source (i.e. 2012 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the number of juveniles seeking treatment

for alcohol compared with 2014 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the same).

Long Term Outcomes (After year 3 through year 5):

Long-term evaluation determines if the changes in the local conditions are affecting the root cause and ultimately reducing the problem as identified in the problem statement on the Alliance's logic model. This includes evaluating the goal stated for the root cause by retrieving the current version of the data used to substantiate the root cause. This data should be accessible by year five of the Alliance's origination of the logic model.

Long-term outcomes will not be tied to any one intervention/program but should be the result of multiple interventions/programs targeting the same root cause. Questions that long-term evaluations should answer are:

- Is there a positive result in achieving the intended goal outlined for the root cause?
- Is the root cause improving? If so, how?
- Do the data sets defining the root cause show the results of the positive outcomes?

Ways to measure this information must include:

- Comparing the data used to substantiate the root cause with the most current data available from that same data source (i.e. 2012 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the number of juveniles seeking treatment for alcohol compared with 2014 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the same).

Long Term Impact (After year 5):

Long-term impact identifies if a change has been made in the problem and the priority as detailed on the Alliance's logic model. Long-term impact occurs over a 5-10 year period and considers the long-term health and social consequences to the community. Long-term impact is determined when the Alliance conducts another needs assessment process in preparation for the next grant cycle.

Questions to determine long-term impact are:

- Is there a positive result in tackling the problem identified in the problem statement?
- Has the problem improved? If so, how?
- Do the data sets defining the problem show the results of the positive impact?

Ways to measure this information must include:

- Comparing the data used to substantiate the problem with the most current data available from that same data source (i.e. 2012 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the number of juveniles seeking treatment for alcohol compared with 2014 data from the Substance Abuse Overview detailing the same).

Cultural Competency

According to the American Evaluation Association, "Cultural competence… represents the intentional effort of the evaluation team to produce work that is valid, honest, respectful of stakeholders, and considerate of the general public welfare." (Retrieved from http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=92 on July 24, 2013). Evaluation must take into account the diversity of the community and produce measurement tools that are culturally relevant to the population being served. The American Evaluation Association recommends taking the following into consideration (see citation above for reference):

- Ensure that the members of the evaluation team collectively demonstrate cultural competence in the context for each evaluation.
- Select or create data collection instruments that have been (or will be) vetted for use with the population of interest.
- Use intermediaries to assist with collecting data from persons whose participation would otherwise be limited by language, abilities, or factors such as familiarity or trust.
- Engage and consult with those groups who are the focus of the evaluation in the analysis and interpretation of data, to address multiple audience perspectives.

Sustainability

Evaluation results that show successes can be used to promote the intervention/program and engage the residents-at-large in maintaining a healthy and safe community. However, often times what is proposed isn't how things turn out. Evaluations are meant to give the Alliance an opportunity to change components of the intervention/program to better meet the needs of the community. Understanding what makes the intervention/program successful is vital in determining how it is impacting the community.