Translating Research into Action: Moving Evaluations Beyond the Report

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Translating Research into Action:
Moving Evaluations Beyond the Report

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Participatory Evaluation

- A tool to assist in improving the quality of human services
- Systematic collection of information
- Opportunity to gain insight about services, improve effectiveness and quality and share information about the program
- Utilize information to improve program/field practices, services and policies
Components of Participatory Evaluation

- An evaluation team should be formed.
- The organization’s constituency should be actively involved at every step of the process.
- Constituents/users develop ownership of the evaluation process
Steps in Conducting Evaluations

1. Design the evaluation
2. Conduct evaluation/collect data
3. Report findings and increase utilization
The Outcomes Framework

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

INPUTS

ACTIVITIES

OUTPUTS

OUTCOMES
Planning for Utilization

- Prior to research commencement
  - Decide who reporting to
  - Decide how to report
- Solicit multiple levels of stakeholders for involvement
- Actively involve stakeholders in the dissemination and discussion of findings
Illinois Community Technology Fund

Mission:

- The Community Technology Fund shall be dedicated to activities which help assure that low-income areas and other underserved populations in urban and rural Illinois have access to advanced telecommunications technologies.
Background

- SBC-Ameritech Merger 2000
- ICTF Board Formation
- Request for Applications (RFAs)
- 2 rounds of funding
  - Maximum $50,000
- 77 grants throughout IL
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Schools
  - After-school programs
ICTF Evaluation Questions

- Types and Levels of Technology Access
- Educational and Employment Impacts
- Developing Model Programs
ICTF Methods

- Evaluation Team
  - CURL Staff
  - CURL Graduate Fellows
  - ICTF Community Fellows

- 3-level Approach
  - ICTF Board
  - Service Providers
  - Service Users
ICTF Plan

- ICTF Board Members
  - Focus Group

- Service Providers
  - One-page survey
  - Focus Groups
  - Site Visits

- Facilitate Stakeholder Dialogue
**ICTF: Quantitative Results**

### Number of Programs Funded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chicago</th>
<th>Outside Chicago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Amount of Funded Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$10,862</td>
<td>$35,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>$49,925</td>
<td>$10,527</td>
<td>$39,595</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Service Users per Week

![Bar chart showing the distribution of service users per week. The x-axis represents the range of service users (0-20, 21-40, 41-60, 61-80, 81-100, >100), and the y-axis represents the program responses with a scale from 0 to 16. The bars indicate the number of program responses for each service user range, with the highest for 0-20 and the lowest for >100.]
Employment

Program Responses

- Full-Time
- Part-Time
- Unemployment
- Retirement
- Armed Forces
- Other

The chart shows the distribution of employment responses with the highest number in Retirement, followed by Other, Unemployment, Part-Time, Full-Time, and Armed Forces.
Socioeconomic Status

Program Responses

- Lower SES
- Middle SES
- Upper SES
- Other
ICTF: Qualitative Results

- Themes
  - Funding
    - Sustainable, Program-Focused Funding
  - Integration of Technology and Organization Ideology
    - “Technology as a Means Rather than an End”
  - Staffing
    - Support for Planning Time
  - Level of Financial Support
    - Triangle of needs
ICTF Products and Dissemination

- **Funder**
  - Technical Report
- **Government Agencies**
  - Research Brief
  - Maps
- **Philanthropy**
  - Workshop
- **Service Providers**
  - Research Brief
  - Partner information
Information to Disseminate

- Brief Look at Technology Uses
- Call for Adequate & Appropriate Funding
- Call for More Research
  - Needs Assessment
  - Expanded Networking/Sharing
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  - Kristie Baumgartner, ICTF Community Fellow

- Illinois Community Technology Fund Board of Directors