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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 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>
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</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>
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</table>

#### Amount of Funded Grants

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

Program Responses

Service Users

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-20</th>
<th>21-40</th>
<th>41-60</th>
<th>61-80</th>
<th>81-100</th>
<th>&gt;100</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Employment

[Bar chart showing the distribution of employment responses by category: Full-Time, Part-Time, Unemployment, Retirement, Armed Forces, Other. The Retirement category has the highest responses, followed by Full-Time and Other. Unemployment and Armed Forces have the lowest responses.]
Education

Program Responses

No Diploma  Diploma/GED  Some College  College Degree  Post-Bachelors  Other
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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