RESULTS FOR AMERICA

Workforce Primary Strategy 5: Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation *are mechanisms to ensure that the work is achieving its desired result by establishing outcome and impact goals and then tracking and validating progress toward them. Many of the BIL and IRA grants lean in on data collection to better understand not only the results of the work but who is included. A monitoring and evaluation strategy will help cities ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems to collect, analyze and report on the impact of grant dollars.*

Monitoring and Evaluation includes two core substrategies. Use the links below to jump directly to the strategy of interest.

Monitoring and Evaluation Substrategies		
5a - Logic Models	Graphic representation of the work that is useful for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating an initiative. Outlines desired outcomes and impact.	· **JQ Principle:** Various
5b - Evaluation	A process that critically examines a policy, program or implementation. Often conducted at the end of a phase or project. Generally builds on data collected through ongoing monitoring during the life of a project but may go deeper in particular areas.	· **JQ Principle:** Various

5a - Logic Models

Logic models are an important tool to help city leadership visualize the desired outcomes and impacts of the work outlined in the proposal or project. Logic models can also be referred to as theories of change. They help an organization begin with the end in mind by outlining what it will take to accomplish a given goal and how that goal will be measured. They serve as the baseline for determining what data will need to be captured and can inform personnel estimates such as time, level of resources and costs.

Logic models can take a variety of visual formats but generally include the following for each area of focus. Depending on the complexity of the proposed project, a separate logic model may be created for each area of focus or workstream:

Area of Focus				
Your Planned Work		Your Intended Results		
1 Resources and Inputs	2 Activites	3 Outcomes	4 Outcomes	5 Impact

- **Inputs:** Inputs are the resources such as funding, staffing or materials that go into the work. For example, developing an RFP that increases the diversity of responding organizations and the living wages paid to their staff will require allocating staff time to write the materials, deliver technical assistance and participate in the evaluation process.
- **Activities:** Activities undertaken to produce desired outcomes. For example, ensuring the procurement will foster job quality for all may require engaging with community organizations prior to issuing a formal procurement to ensure the impacts on equity are being fully considered.
- **Outputs:** Outputs are the direct, tangible results of activities. For example, this could include the number of respondents from different demographics.
- **Outcomes:** Outcomes are the desired results and are often looked at both as short-term and medium-term effects. For example, if the procurement focused on increasing access to quality jobs in the tech sector, a short-term outcome might include the increase in the number of diverse participants or hires.
- **Impact:** Impact is the direct, intended or unintended change as a result of the effort over the long term. For example, if a procurement focused on increasing access to quality jobs in the tech sector, an impact might be that the wages of tech workers who completed the program is 20 percent higher than others who did not.

Developing and including a logic model as part of your infrastructure submission or plan will not only help to align stakeholders around a set of objectives but also support prioritizing and allocating resources effectively. Additionally, logic models set the basis for in-flight analysis of a project and post-project evaluation. For a deep dive on logic models, check out the Kellogg Foundation's Logic Model Guide.

Once the logic model is in place and the funds awarded, data should be routinely collected to track and measure progress toward achieving program objectives. Deviations from the logic model can serve as an early warning system for potential problems, as well as uncover unexpected positive impacts that are created through the work. Monitoring should be conducted routinely (e.g., monthly, quarterly) based on the cadence of the work, and necessary data collection to support monitoring functions should be built into the program from its start.

5b - Evaluation

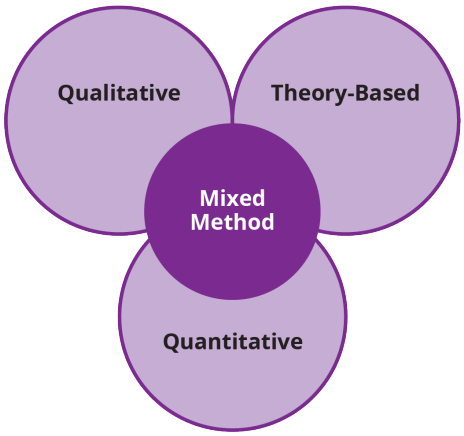
There are a variety of different types, or methodologies, of evaluations across a spectrum of complexity. A city should choose an evaluation approach that will help them answer the questions that are of greatest interest to the organization in its deployment of BIL or IRA funds. Thoughtful inclusion of evaluation is a tactical way to bring to life the organization's commitment to understanding disparate impacts and ensuring that underserved communities will benefit from the initiative, positioning them as a forward-thinking partner for BIL funding implementation.

Evaluations should be included in the city's initial proposal or project as it can have a variety of impacts on the work including:

- **Timing** – May require an additional phase in the project to complete evaluation processes, may need to occur in tandem with particular aspects of the program, which could slow down service delivery if the same resources are involved.
- **Funding** – Funds may be required to contract with an evaluator or provide technical assistance to funded partners. Additionally, funded partners may need to estimate a portion of time as part of their personnel budget to respond to requests from an evaluator or participate in evaluation-related meetings. Changes in data systems may also be required in order to support collection of the necessary information.
- **Pre-planning** – Some styles of evaluations, such as randomized control trials, can also require selecting a comparison group prior to launching a project and may necessitate coordination with community stakeholders such as workforce development boards or community-based organizations to understand any potential limitations.
- **Equity** – Plans to disaggregate data can impact the amount of information that must be collected in order to protect individuals from identification. Qualitative data collection should be designed and conducted in close collaboration with the impacted communities.

There are three key categories of evaluation that can be used individually or in concert.

- **Theory Based** – Generally used for early stages of work. Includes realist evaluations which are initial data collection or needs assessments. It also includes theories of change (logic models) which outline outputs, outcomes and impact.
- **Qualitative** – Can be used at various stages of the process. Focused on drawing out a group or an individual's personal experience or perception. Often achieved through surveys, interviews or focus groups, or case studies.
- **Quantitative** – Can be used at various stages of the process. Focused on understanding the numerical values. Often achieved through experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation, or cost-benefit evaluation.



For more information about each approach, check out the evaluation section of [Results for America's Workforce Development Spending Guide](). It's also important to note that the world of impact evaluation is continuously evolving. Over the course of a multiyear implementation of BIL and IRA funding, new evaluation approaches may become available or the additional data collected may make quantitative approaches more accessible. Agencies can add new approaches, or additional requirements, as they build evaluation capacity—both internally and among their service providers—and as the data is available.

Evaluation resources

- MDRC provides evaluation services to governments and publishes a wide variety of evaluation reports on topics including early childhood, K–12 education, post-secondary education, young people, income and family support (supportive services), employment and economic mobility, housing and communities, and criminal justice.
- The U.S. Department of Labor's Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR), includes descriptive, implementation and impact studies for workforce development and employment-related programs on a wide variety of topics.
- Pew Charitable Trusts and Pennsylvania State University's Results First Clearinghouse brings together information on the effectiveness of social policy programs, including workforce topics, from nine national clearinghouses.
- J-PAL offers a guide on Leveraging Evaluation and Evidence for Equitable Recovery (LEVER) to support government agencies in their design and implementation evaluations.

Embedding Equity in Monitoring and Evaluation[1]

Without an intentional focus on equity, evaluations may not provide a full and accurate picture of how a policy, program or other implementation is impacting all people and may perpetuate disparities. Cities can embed equity in evaluation by prioritizing evaluation approaches that empower workers and communities to be full partners in the research, including helping design the research, interpret data and shape how findings are used. Using an equity lens in evaluation is critical to ensuring that evidence is built from comprehensive data that is appropriately collected and analyzed, that evaluations are inclusive of subpopulations, and that workforce agencies understand what works, for whom and under what circumstances.

- Community-Based Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a research approach that engages community members as full partners at every stage of the research process, including shaping research questions and empowering community members to collect and analyze data. PAR disrupts historical power imbalances between researchers and communities, generating better research and knowledge. This approach recognizes that deep expertise lies within each community, making research done without community input incomplete and inaccurate. The Conservation Law Foundation's PAR Field Guide includes guidance on setting up a PAR project, developing research questions and tools, and collecting and analyzing data.
- Chicago Beyond's Why Am I Always Being Studied? aims to level the playing field between researchers and communities during evaluations, moving away from historical power imbalances and protecting against unintended bias in traditional research relationships. The guidebook includes questions and considerations for researchers, community-based organizations, and funders to ensure evaluations reflect community needs, goals, experience and expertise.
- Urban Institute's Community Voice and Power Sharing Guidebook offers practical advice on partnership building, community advisory boards, community-engaged survey development and youth engagement. Urban has also created a guide for holding Data Walks, in which program administrators and service providers empower program participants and community members by sharing program outcome data or research findings with them. Data Walks allow participants and community members to ground the data in their lived experiences, shedding light on how and why programs and services are serving their community.

1 This section is an excerpt Results for America's Workforce Development Spending Guide, used with express RFA permission.