Engage the stakeholders: These are people or organizations invested in the program, interested in the results of the evaluation and/or with a stake what will be done with the results of the evaluation. Examples of stakeholders include funding agencies, partner organizations, administrators, staff, patients or clients, advocacy groups, elected officials, general public, or taxpayers.

Describe the program: A comprehensive program description clarifies all the components and intended outcomes of the program, thus helping you focus your evaluation on the most central and important questions. A comprehensive program description includes the following components:

- **Need.** What is the big community health problem you aim to address with your program?
- **Targets.** Which groups or organizations need to change or take action to ensure progress on the community health problem?
- **Outcomes.** How and in what way do these targets need to change? What action specifically do they need to take?
- **Activities.** What will your program and staff do to move these target groups to change/take action?
- **Outputs.** What tangible capacities or products will be produced by your program’s activities?
- **Resources/Inputs.** What is needed from the larger environment in order for the activities to be mounted successfully?
- **Relationship of Activities and Outcomes.** Which activities are being implemented to produce progress on which outcomes?

Determine what elements of the program are most important: achieving project goals, meeting intermediate project objectives, delivering services or activities on schedule, staying within the budget, building collaborative partnerships.

Consider developing a basic logic model, which is a common tool that evaluators use. It is a graphic depiction of the relationship between a program’s activities and its intended outcomes.


Ask the relevant questions: What do we need to know to determine whether or not the program is successful? Consider what kind of information future funding sources might want and the kind of information that would be useful to community organizations and constituents who are involved with the program. In general, evaluation questions fall into these groups:

- **Implementation.** Were your program’s activities put into place as originally intended?
- **Effectiveness.** Is your program achieving the goals and objectives it was intended to accomplish?
- **Efficiency.** Are your program’s activities being produced with appropriate use of resources such as budget and staff time?
- **Cost-Effectiveness.** Does the value or benefit of achieving your program’s goals and objectives exceed the cost of producing them?
- **Attribution.** Can progress on goals and objectives be shown to be related to your program, as opposed to other things that are going on at the same time?
Determine how to measure the aspects of the program that you want to evaluate. If your program has some long-term goals, it is important to establish intermediate measures in order to chart progress towards a broader more far-reaching goal.

Decide how to collect the data and how often it should be collected.

Select the instruments which will measure elements of the program. If suitable instruments are not available, they will need to be developed.

Gather the data

Analyze the data

Report the results regularly to your key stakeholders, which can be a community advisory board, community partners and/or other interested parties.

If you think that you may want to publish the results of the evaluation, you must secure IRB (Internal Review Board) approval in advance of conducting the evaluation.