Evaluation Tools & Resources for Food Policy Councils

FORMATIVE EVALUATION		
Definition	**Uses**	**Examples**
• Evaluation done during development to make early improvements • Helps to refine or improve a policy, program, or council	• When starting something new • To assist in the early phases of development	• How well is the program being delivered? • What strategies can be used to improve this policy?

Tools & Resources

Get it Toolgether: Assessing your food council's ability to do policy work – This toolkit can be used to evaluate your group's current capacity or learn more about the process of working on food policy using a stakeholder model. The toolkit covers 6 areas and can be done by multiple people in your group:

- Organizational Assessment
- Advocacy Goals, Plans & Strategies
- Conducting Advocacy
- Advocacy Avenues
- Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy
- Policy Implementation

ESHE Community Measures Toolkit – This toolkit serves as a resource to agencies or organizations interested in identifying avenues for policy or programmatic changes that improve and promote access to healthy food. It provides:

- A step-by-step guide for users and links to resources for community assessments
- Examples of how the Environments Supporting Healthy Eating (ESHE) Index has been used in urban and rural counties
- Links to a variety of community-level food environment data collection instruments

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Resource Guide
While this document is focused on cancer prevention efforts, the approach and methods can be utilized more broadly for other evaluation and planning efforts. Specific sections which may be of greatest use include:

- ***Developing a Policy Agenda – What are the Key Steps in Developing a Policy Agenda?*** (Pg. 24)
- ***Reaching Out to Stakeholders – How are Stakeholders Engaged Strategically?*** (Pg. 28)
- ***Creating Strategic Alliances and Facilitating PSE Change – Organizing and Implementing a Policy Campaign*** (Pg. 35)

FOOD POLICY NETWORKS

JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER *for* A LIVABLE FUTURE

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION		
Definition	**Uses**	**Examples**
• Provides information on effectiveness • Conducted after the completion of the design	• To decide whether to continue or end a policy, program, or council • To determine whether a policy, program, or council should be expanded	• Should this project continue to be funded? • Should we expand this campaign within our community?

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Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Resource Guide

- ***Sustaining Momentum – How Can PSE Initiatives Be Sustained?*** Pg. 42
  - While the PSE Guide suggests addressing these questions early in the planning process, it would also be useful to revisit these questions at a later date to determine whether or not a policy, strategy, or council can or should be sustained.

PROCESS EVALUATION		
Definition	**Uses**	**Examples**
• Focuses on implementation • Determines if specific elements were implemented with fidelity	• To determine if/why a policy, program, or council has changed over time • To address inefficiencies • To accurately portray to outside parties daily operations (e.g., for replication elsewhere)	• What tactics did you implement during your policy campaign? • How often did council workgroups meet?

Tools & Resources

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Resource Guide

- ***Creating Strategic Alliances and Facilitating PSE Change – Organizing and Implementing a Policy Campaign*** (Pg. 35-38): While this tool is intended to help plan campaign strategies, this tool (once filled out) can also be helpful for tracking and evaluating process.

Food Policy Council Self-Assessment Tool: Development, Testing, and Results – This tool is designed to measure internal function of food councils by measuring concepts such as leadership, inclusiveness of council climate, knowledge sharing, member empowerment, and synergy.

- The Food Policy Council Self-Assessment Tool (FPC-SAT) can be used to establish a baseline of council function and measure change over time, particularly before and after capacity-building initiatives. The tool can be used for formative, summative, and impact evaluation.
- Councils are welcome to use the tool, which is continually being improved. Larissa Calancie, who developed it with input and support from researchers, practitioners, and FPC members, is happy to return an anonymous feedback summary for councils whose members complete the survey. Email Larissa if you would like a feedback report.

Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy - Meeting Observation Protocol & Record Review – These documents are utilized by HACFP to track meeting logistics, participants, and discussion and decision items.

Social Network Analysis (SNA): This research method can be used to explore how relationships have changed as a result of council's work, and how those relationships have influenced participants' work.

- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation offers this report on using SNA in evaluation.
- You can use software like Kumu to map social networks. See examples from the Appalachian Foodshed Partnership and Ohio Food Policy Network.
- Academic studies using SNA have studied food coalitions and public health networks.

OUTCOME EVALUATION		
Definition	**Uses**	**Examples**
• Focuses on the changes that resulted from policy, program, or council activities • Can include both short and long-term results	• To decide whether the policy, program, or council affected the community or the issue • To establish and measure clear benefits of the work	• Did the community report the desired changes after the policy/campaign? • What are the short or long-term results observed by council members?

Tools & Resources

Cleveland – Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC) Evaluation Framework – This detailed report documents the evaluation efforts of the CCCFPC, and outlines the processes and results of their formative, process, outcome, and impact evaluation efforts.

Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy Logic Model – Logic models such as this one allow you to map out the full scope of a policy, campaign, program, or council starting from resources/inputs all the way to outlining desired impacts in the community. While logic models themselves do not explicitly serve to evaluate, they can be an invaluable tools for identifying what to evaluate, what kinds of questions to ask, and who to involve.
  • Hartford also has a comprehensive evaluation report that has surveys for residents, non-profits, commissioners, and city officials.

IMPACT EVALUATION		
Definition	**Uses**	**Examples**
• Focuses on long term, sustained changes as a result of the policy, program, or council • Looks at both positive/negative and intended/unintended results	• To influence further policy change • To see impact in longitudinal studies with comparison groups	• What changes in the community are attributable to your policy? • What effects would communities miss out on without this policy in place?

Tools & Resources

Step by Step – Evaluating Violence and Injury Prevention Policies – Brief 5: Evaluating Policy Impact – While this resource was designed for evaluating violence and injury prevention policies, it provides a good general overview of evaluating policy impacts. Assessing impact can be challenging, as it typically requires in-depth study – such as a randomized controlled trial or quasi-experimental designs.

Monitoring and evaluation of policy influence and advocacy – Chapter 3 Methods and tools for monitoring and evaluating advocacy—This document provides an extensive overview of different methods for evaluating advocacy impact.

Whole Measures for Community Food Systems – Values-Based Planning and Evaluation — This resource offers a unique approach to evaluating the impact of food systems by examining a set of elements – justice & fairness, strong communities, vibrant farms, healthy people, sustainable ecosystems, and thriving local economies.