

Claiming Your Results

Making Evaluation a Core Organizational Practice

Assignment #3: Understanding Inquiry Needs

PART 1 – Identifying Critical Questions

What questions does your organization need to know the answer to in order to successfully fulfill its mission? Listed below are common categories of questions with examples to spark ideas. In the Box below each category write a few (no more than 5 for each category) high-level questions that are essential to your organization.

Implementation of Strategies

- How many and what type of people are we reaching?
- How well are programs being delivered?
- Are we providing what our stakeholders need and want in away that is useful?
- Where do we fit in the ecosystem—how do we fit with what others are doing in the service of the changes we seek?
- What supports or limits the effectiveness of our strategies?



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How Are We Living Our Values?

- To what extent and in what ways are our values experienced internally?
- To what extent and in what ways are our values experienced externally?
- To what extent and in what ways do Funders and the Field experience our values?

What Changed?

- What has changed in terms of context, trends, or evidence that we need to account for?
- What progress toward our outcomes has occurred?
- What unanticipated changes (good and bad) have occurred? What are the implications for our strategies?



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Did It Matter?

- To what extent have changes made a significant positive difference in progress for individuals, communities, and systems?

Was It Worth It?

- Is the benefit to communities most impacted by the problem we named substantial enough to justify the investment of time, resources, relationships?
- Are our existing efforts still the best use of our resources?



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PART 2 – Identifying Current Data Sources

Now that you have a sense of the critical questions to ask, use the following table to list the data your organization currently gathers such as surveys sent after a program, or membership renewal forms, community forums, etc.

Data Source	Who provides the information?	How is the information used?	Which of your critical questions are informed by this information?



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PART 3 – Mining the Data, Minding the Gap

As you think about the critical questions and the currently available data, what stands out for you?

- What data could be leveraged to provide greater benefit?
- What data are being gathered for which there appears to be limited use or benefit?
- What are critical questions about which little information is gathered?
- Are there stakeholder groups who should be more or less involved?