

Defining the Evaluation Focus

Four possible types or areas of focus can be used for an evaluation. Depending on resources available and information needs, the evaluation can choose one, two, three, or all four.

1. *Formative* evaluation usually takes place at a campaign's front end and collects information to help shape the campaign's activities. For a public will campaign, this might involve measuring issue awareness through public polling or testing of messages and materials in focus groups, either formally or informally. Sometimes a "meta-survey" or summary analysis of existing polling data can serve the same purpose.
2. *Process* evaluation examines the campaign's implementation, or the way activities roll out. Process evaluation might count the number of materials distributed, the development and dissemination of messages and materials, and the number of efforts to work with the media.
3. *Outcome* evaluation examines the campaign's outcomes, which usually means its effects on its target audience(s). Evaluators often use surveys, polling, or more qualitative means of gathering this type of information.
4. *Impact* evaluation examines effects at the community, state, national or international level, or a campaign's long-term outcomes (including the effects of behavior or policy change). Impact evaluation can also attempt to determine causation – whether the campaign caused the observed impact(s). This type of focus typically requires more rigorous evaluation design methodology, such as experimental or quasi-experimental techniques.

| Evaluation Focus | Purpose | Example Questions |
|------------------|---|--|
| 1) Formative | Assesses the strengths and weaknesses of campaign materials and strategies before or during the campaign's implementation. | --How does the campaign's target audience think about the issue? --What messages work with what audiences? --Who are the best messengers? |
| 2) Process | Measures effort and the direct outputs of campaigns – what and how much was accomplished. Examines the campaign's implementation and how the activities involved are working. | --How many materials have been put out? --What has been the campaign's reach? --How many people have been reached? |
| 3) Outcome | Measures effect and changes that result from the campaign. Assesses outcomes in the target populations or communities that come about as a result of grantee strategies and activities. Also measures policy changes. | --Has there been any affective change (beliefs, attitudes, social norms)? --Has there been any behavior change? --Have any policies changed? |

| Evaluation Focus | Purpose | Example Questions |
|------------------|---|---|
| 4) Impact | Measures community-level change or longer-term results achieved as a result of the campaign's aggregate effects on individuals' behavior, and the behavior's sustainability. Attempts to determine whether the campaign caused the effects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Has the behavior resulted in its intended outcomes (e.g. lower cancer rates, less violence in schools)? --Has there been any systems-level change? |