A study on evaluation capacity:
Implications for an evaluation capacity building program

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Executive Summary

Nonprofit organizations historically have attempted to solve society’s wicked problems in silos. Using the “collective impact” model, Mile High United Way and other organizations are beginning to pool resources and collaborate in order to achieve solutions to society’s problems. Essential to collective impact is a shared measurement system among participants. Mile High United Way wants to understand the capacity of organizations in the Denver area to evaluate progress towards the shared indicators.

Relevant literature was reviewed to identify the possible indicators and barriers of evaluation capacity. The ability to acquire and sustain evaluation capacity is dependent on the organizational environment, including available resources, culture, incentives, demands, and policies. Practical training and hands-on experiences are essential to developing an understanding of and appreciation for evaluation. A major barrier is the transfer of learning to daily work and peers but this can be overcome by the right organizational environment. Mile High United Way has an opportunity to shape capacity through implementation of evaluation capacity building (ECB) interventions, creating positive demands for ECB participation, and providing the right resources.

Results from an on-line survey begin to uncover the current capacity of Mile High United Way’s Denver area nonprofit organizations to perform evaluations. The findings will inform the design and implementation of an ECB program. Findings include:

- Charitable contributions from foundations or philanthropies were the main source of funding and funders were the primary audience for evaluation findings.
- Evaluation was the responsibility of the Executive Director or Program Staff who primarily perform outcome evaluations and then use their findings for program improvement.
• The logic model was not commonly used by most organizations.

• Dedicated staff time was the most important resource and significant barrier for evaluation capacity. The capacity to collect and manage data was the second most significant barrier.

• The ability to identify resources impacted the capacity to collect and manage data.

• Significantly more program staff than directors said that leadership was a barrier.

• Participation in ECB efforts was low, with most participating in just a few learning strategies. There was a preference for training, technical assistance, and learning networks.

• Preferred curriculum for ECB programs included linking strategic or employee work plans to evaluation and then how to interpret, communicate, and use evaluation findings.

• Organizations want Mile High United Way to help build its evaluation capacity. Slightly fewer were confident that Mile High United Way can help build its evaluation capacity.

Recommendations for an ECB program design and implementation include:

• Collaborate with other funders to align reporting requirements.

• Make transparent funding decisions based on ECB participation and outcomes.

• Develop and implement a communication plan for ECB efforts.

• Assess the readiness and commitment of each partner for ECB efforts.

• Create relevant and hands on learning experiences for target organizations.

• Walk the talk and meet the same expectations as its partners
Introduction

Nonprofit organizations historically have attempted to solve society’s wicked problems in silos. However, there has been a shift to working collaboratively towards solutions. This ideological shift and the reality that resources are becoming scarcer are encouraging a new model to approach social problems. This new model is cross-sector coordination of organizations. Kania and Kramer (2011) have coined this model “collective impact”, where organizations work together for greater opportunities to create social change. The authors specifically define collective impact as the “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem” (Kania & Kramer, 2011, p. 36).

In 1999, Mile High United Way adopted the collective impact model rather than simply filling a role as a funding organization. It agrees with the philosophy that multiple organizations and a variety of resources are needed to solve complex challenges facing Denver and its surrounding communities. Using the collective impact ideology, it partners with Denver metropolitan nonprofit organizations to achieve lasting change in areas determined by the community. These areas include School Readiness, Youth Success, and Adult Self-Sufficiency.

A shared measurement system is a key component to collective impact. Participating organizations must agree to a list of community level indicators to ensure that all efforts remain aligned. Collecting data and measuring results against those shared indicators enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other’s successes and failures (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). An assumption of the collective impact process is that nonprofit organizations have the capacity to perform evaluation. Evaluation is defined by the act of data collection, measurement of results, and then using those results to maximize benefits to the organization. This is a significant challenge as nonprofits often work in a resource-
constrained environment with little experience in evaluation beyond simple reporting for accountability purposes. Some organizations still do not understand evaluation and others simply lack the capacity to design and implement evaluation in meaningful ways. Community-based organizations need to start investing in their own evaluation capacity (Carman, 2007).

Historically, evaluation has largely been about accountability. Organizations that are dependent on government grants and other funders feel pressure to demonstrate their compliance with those contractual obligations. However, collective impact brings a new source of motivation for building and sustaining evaluation capacity. Organizations need new support – resource, educational, and infrastructure support - to meet these new expectations.

**Purpose of the research**

This research seeks to understand the current capacity of Mile High United Way’s Denver area nonprofit organizations to perform evaluations. Evaluation capacity is defined as not only an organization’s access to and knowledge of resources to perform evaluation but also the attitude, skills, and knowledge about evaluation. Specifically, findings from a literature review and a survey, will answer the following research questions about the Denver metropolitan area nonprofit organizations:

1. What are the barriers that keep nonprofits from performing effective evaluations? What enables Denver’s nonprofit organizations to perform evaluations?
2. If nonprofits perform evaluations, how are they using the findings?
3. What Mile High United Way interventions are likely to facilitate the inclusion of evaluation into the core operations of a nonprofit?

The answers to these questions will help the Mile High United Way inform its design and implementation of an evaluation capacity building (ECB) program.
Literature Review

ECB is a growing area of interest among researchers in nonprofit management. Researchers define evaluation capacity, its implementation, and the factors that influence its sustainability (Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton, 2002; Preskill & Boyle, 2008; Sanders, 2002; Carman & Fredericks, 2011; Eckerd & Moulton, 2011; Hoole & Patterson, 2008). ECB is a “context-dependent, intentional action system of guided processes and practices for bringing about and sustaining a state of affairs in which quality program evaluation and its appropriate uses are ongoing practices within and/or between one or more organizations/programs/sites” (Stockdill et al., 2002, p. 11). ECB is an ongoing process that takes into consideration organizational factors that may influence sustained evaluation. Preskill and Boyle (2008) describe an ECB model, found in Appendix A, that includes a set of factors that influence the initiation, design, implementation and impact that ECB activities have on sustainable evaluation practice. Many of these factors are explored in this review, including leadership, culture, systems, and communications.

Variables believed to influence evaluation capacity in nonprofit organizations include size of the annual operating budget, number of employees, age of the organization, type of service, and funding source (Carman & Fredericks, 2010). Other variables include an organization’s access to and knowledge of resources, dedicated staff time, and evaluation expertise, including data collection and management skills. Moreover, organizational culture, leadership and support for evaluation are important variables (Carman & Fredericks, 2010; Brennan & Major, 2011; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). Beliefs about evaluation capacity must be shared among key leaders (Preskill & Boyle, 2008).
Organizations with evaluation capacity are more likely to use evaluation methods in routine operations and use findings to make strategic decisions. The ability to acquire and sustain evaluation capacity is different for every organization. Different aspects of an organization present different challenges to sustaining evaluation capacity. A cluster analysis of nonprofit organizations revealed that when it comes to the challenges that nonprofits face in implementation of ECB efforts, there is no single, universal set of challenges (Carman & Fredericks, 2010). As a result, efforts to build evaluation capacity should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach (Eckerd & Moulton, 2011). Understanding what variables most influence each organization’s decision-making – knowledge, skills, perception, resources - can help to inform appropriate and effective ECB efforts, including who should participate and which teaching and learning strategies might be most beneficial (Preskill & Boyle, 2008; Carman, 2011).

For evaluation to be sustainable, it must be tied to an organization’s mission and contribute to the fundamental understanding of the people and issues the organization serves (Hoole & Patterson, 2008). Capacity builders have to teach participants how to design and conduct evaluation, use those evaluation findings to make decisions, and ultimately, show how the efforts result in more effective programs (Preskill & Boyle, 2008). Taylor-Powell and Boyd (2008) define the organizational environment that sustains evaluation as one with a learning culture, a result of “leadership and structures”, the right internal and external motivation or “incentives”, apparent utility of evaluation processes and findings or “demand”, and lastly, staff expertise and time as a function of “policies and procedures” (p.62-63).

**ECB enablers and barriers of an organizational environment**

1. **Leadership and Structures: A Learning Culture.** Hoole and Patterson (2008) found that evaluation capacity requires a learning culture and infrastructure to support it. A learning
culture is one that internalizes evaluation as a value with a supportive infrastructure that maintains evaluation for improvement. One approach to establishing a learning culture is through the practice of strategic learning. The Center for Evaluation Innovation defines “strategic learning” as “the integration of evaluation and other feedback into decision making about strategy…using evaluation and evaluative thinking to learn in real-time and adapt their strategies to the changing circumstances about them” (Coffman & Beer, 2011). A culture that sustains evaluation views it “as a means for learning, changing, and becoming more effective in moving towards the vision for the organization” (Sanders, 2002, p. 256). Hoole and Patterson (2008) suggest that to create a learning organization, feedback must include stakeholder input and outside evaluation expertise. They found that although capacity building by funders was important, the commitment of organizational leadership was critical in transforming the role of evaluation from one of basic reporting and accountability to a true process of continuous learning. Lack of support from management or a sense that it is not an organizational priority will not motivate staff to take part in and use evaluation (Brown & Reed, 2002). Leaders must “share responsibilities for ECB and find ways to integrate evaluation into organizational life” (Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008, p. 62), including human resources, communications, and IT functions (Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO), 2012).

One can evaluate the presence of a learning culture. Appendix B provides a list of indicators offered by Sanders (2002) that evaluation has been “mainstreamed” within an organization. Appendix C provides Sander’s five steps in developing evaluation as a core value. Sander’s suggests that “professional development, capacity building, policy and infrastructure development, hiring new employees who possess desired traits, modeling behavior, mentoring, and rewarding desired behavior are all ways to move through the stages” (p. 257). Taylor-Powell
and Boyd (2008) found information flow throughout the organization, peer support and learning, and the existence of data management systems important. Carman and Fredericks (2010) also highlight the importance of building technical capacity, including investment in information technology and computers. Arnold (2006) found that organizations must recognize the need to have “in house” expertise (p. 268). Otherwise, those organizations that foster attitudes that assume programs are working may resist criticism, thus limiting evaluation capacity.

Recognition of the benefits of evaluation and the use of “negative” findings encourage a new attitude towards its relevance for program betterment (Milstein, Chapel, Wetterhall, & Cotton 2002, p. 42).

(2) Motivation and incentives. For ECB efforts to be effective, it is important to tap into motivations. Preskill and Boyle (2008) call these “triggers” or reason that organizations or systems consider when deciding to implement ECB efforts (p. 446). An organization’s primary audience, external or internal, for evaluation findings is a trigger. External audiences including funders, clients, and community stakeholders may create new demands for legitimacy and accountability. There may also be changes in the external environment, which alters available opportunities and a new need to signal effectiveness. Change in internal audiences may be brought about due to new leadership, a perceived need for improved internal evaluation knowledge to make program improvements or a desire to seek new or increased funding.

Organizations may partake in evaluation to reduce uncertainty and secure resources, including financial and political resources. Evaluation capacity can also meet an internal demand to achieve community goals.

It is important to use these triggers as a “lever” and “not the control” to build internal demand and intrinsic motivators to sustain evaluation capacity (Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008, p.
According to Amabile (1993), individuals are thought to be intrinsically motivated when “they seek enjoyment, interest, satisfaction of curiosity, self-expression, or personal challenge in the work” (p. 186). Taylor-Powell & Boyd (2008) found engagement in evaluation when it “is required in staff performance and tenure systems” and that “the extent to which evaluation becomes intrinsic depends on the individual, past experience with evaluation, and the perceived value of the evaluation experience” (p. 62). The authors identified leadership opportunities, recognition by peers, opportunities to demonstrate scholarship, and professional development as motivators. Having data to legitimize one’s work and information to improve programs and practice are other motivators. Additionally, Arnold (2006) found that an individual’s motivation to conduct evaluation changes from an external mandate to an internal desire to understand the impact of their programs as their expertise increased.

A mechanism to increase intrinsic value or motivation may be via the middle managers. Paarlberg and Perry (2007) found that middle managers play a key role in fostering the behaviors and opportunities identified by Taylor-Powell and Boyd (2008). Middle managers are in a position to translate organizational strategic values into every day work responsibilities and communicate and reward performance toward those values (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007). Middle managers can do this by providing meaningful work, clarifying organizational goals, and creating climates of trust (Cho & Perry, 2012).

(3) Demand: Utility of evaluation processes and findings. A clearly communicated objective for performing evaluation is essential to evaluation sustainability. Careful attention must be paid to the multiplicity of audiences findings address, the divergent needs of those audiences, and the timeliness of those findings to ensure that results of an evaluation will be used (Grasso, 2003). If an organization does not have a clear sense of the evaluation purpose, no form
of motivation, resources, leadership, or expertise, will sustain the use of evaluation. Knowledge that evaluation provides the ability to secure more resources, manage more effectively, or foster stronger relationships can help to change perceptions about evaluation (Carman, 2011).

Changing perceptions can begin with funders. GEO (2012) found that funders conduct evaluations primarily for internal audiences; only 31 percent viewed grantee organizations as a primary beneficiary of results, and just 10 percent viewed “other grant makers” as the primary intended audience. Thus, funders are not walking-the-talk and communicating benefits of evaluation to their grantees. The Center for Effective Philanthropy found that grantees on average do not perceive grant maker reporting or evaluation practices to be very helpful, and instead view evaluation as a resource drain and distraction (Buteau & Chu, 2011). To change this perception, it is important to change the power relationships between the grantor and the grantee. Evidence based work has to be recognized and used to inform decision-making by both parties for the power relationship to equalize. ECB efforts must involve communication between funder and grantee that evaluation plans are on track with all expectations (Welsh & Morariu, 2011).

Eckerd and Moulton (2011) define three categories of evaluation use. These include “conceptual”, “instrumental”, and “symbolic” and they differ in the extent to which they change an organization’s behavior. Instrumental use directly changes an organization’s behavior through use of findings for quality improvement, ensuring mission consistency, or determining spending priorities. Conceptual uses indirectly change the organization through learning to satisfy a funder requirement, inform the board, or motivate staff. Symbolic use does not change an organization and is purely used for signaling to its external environment to demonstrate legitimacy, promote or market, or obtain certification. Each type of use is important and its value to an organization is dependent upon the demands and expectations of its role in the community (Carmen, 2007;
Eckerd & Moulton, 2011). Integrating an awareness of an organization’s role is helpful to identify strategies to encourage nonprofit organizations to use evaluation in more productive and meaningful ways (Eckerd & Moulton, 2011).

Evaluation practice should be redefined within an organization so the value is apparent to staff (Carman, 2011). Many organizations do not understand or distinguish between reporting, monitoring, and management practices and evaluation because there are no distinguishing outcomes. Instead, these tasks are viewed as part of the broader agenda for more accountability. The emphasis on true evaluation, the value beyond simply collecting input and output data, is lost and therefore, so is how evaluation can result in beneficial outcomes (Carman, 2007). Arnold (2006) found that when participation in evaluation is voluntary, as the benefit to individuals became clear, participation increased.

(4) Policies and procedures. Implementation of evaluation processes and findings is a challenge for many organizations. Brown and Reed (2002) identify several factors, including individual factors (wasn’t comfortable, lacked expertise) and organizational factors (not practical, didn’t work, peers/subordinates weren’t motivated, limited support, not an organizational priority). Time was also a factor. Individuals may lack time for evaluation because it is not a core aspect of their daily work or performance expectations nor do peers and subordinates encourage it. This creates a challenge in sustaining evaluation capacity because as Arnold (2006) found, as time and expertise in evaluation increased, a willingness to participate in evaluation increased. If that time is not supported via organizational policies, staff will not be motivated to learn and engage in ECB efforts. Hoole and Patterson (2008) found that nonprofits that focus on using evaluation to make changes and improvements, i.e. instrumental uses, as opposed to using evaluation for accountability, had more success with implementation.
ECB interventions

ECB is a popular approach for helping community-based organizations to meet internal and external expectations, beyond simple accountability, meeting regulation expectations and auditing. However, developing evaluation capacity in organizations is a complex and multifaceted task. Assessing an organization’s culture and current evaluation capacity is an essential first step in building capacity (Newcomer, 2004; Sanders, 2002). This should include identifying to what extent organizations have problems with attitudes, skills, or knowledge of evaluation versus implementation challenges, such as limited staff time, lack financial resources, or inadequate IT infrastructure (Carman & Fredericks, 2010). Newcomer (2004) identified several themes exploring agency cultures that provide useful guidance for others attempting to build capacity, including taking into account where program managers stand in terms of their attitude toward the usefulness of evaluation and their knowledge of evaluation practice.

Identifying the best delivery mode is important as well as the inclusion of people into a learning group with similar levels of evaluation knowledge and skills (p. 217).

Researchers develop ECB frameworks and guidelines to help identify the right efforts for each organization. To build evaluation capacity, many evaluators suggest the use of trainings, technical assistance, and coaching/mentoring (Preskill & Boyle, 2008) and immersion approaches in which targets of ECB efforts are actively involved in evaluation activities (Arnold, 2006; Huffman, Thomas, & Lawrenz, 2008). A resounding theme in the literature is the importance of practical training and hands-on experiences to develop an understanding of and appreciation for evaluation (Milstein et al, 2002; Garcia-Iriarte, Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Luna, 2011; Huffman et al., 2008).
Frameworks help to guide ECB efforts by incorporating the factors that influence the utilization of evaluation. Volkov and King (2005) created a set of guidelines for incorporating evaluation routinely into the life of an organization (See Appendix D). The guidelines consider the organizational context, ECB mechanisms, and the availability and use of resources. These guidelines help an organization understand how best to begin investing in its own evaluation capacity, which is just as important as an organization’s investment in other critical management functions, including financial management, accounting, funding raising, donor development, and volunteer management (Carman, 2007). Taylor-Powell and Boyd (2008) developed an ECB framework, as shown in Appendix E, drawing on the work of King and Volkov (2005). They use a three-component framework to describe ECB including professional development, resources and support, and lastly, organizational environment, as discussed previously. Resources include evaluation expertise and materials, champions, organizational assets, financing, technology and time. They found the strongest evaluation presence in organizations with dedicated positions to evaluation. However, evaluation staff is often unaffordable and other staff positions lack capacity to systematically collect, analyze, and learn from information (Brennan & Major, 2011).

Taylor-Powell and Boyd (2008) found that an evaluation champion can offset the lack of a dedicated staff position by continuously nurturing an evaluation culture through new policies and resources and by withstanding potential setbacks. A champion can be identified (or can self select) as someone who has influence with peers, particular skills and interests, or scholarship needs. The authors found that “working with this individual over time, cementing relationships, and encouraging reflective practice help to build a cadre of key advocates that can communicate the value of evaluation and share ECB responsibilities” (p. 61). An ideal candidate may be staff in middle management according to Paarlberg and Perry (2007).
Each ECB method is beneficial for specific situations. Traditional ECB assumes that an individual can transform an organization. Huffman et al. (2008) however argues that individual learning must occur within a “social context within the organization for the organization to develop (p. 361). Collaborative evaluations and immersion programs allow opportunity for the exchange of ideas and methods and can diminish feeling of uncertainty or inadequacy as individuals learn and practice evaluation skills together, alleviating the “go-it-alone” intimidation of evaluation (Arnold, 2006; Huffman et al., 2008; Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2011). Seeing evaluation and its results in action improve outcomes by alleviating the fear and misperception of evaluation (Milsten et al., 2002). Huffman et al. (2008) studied collaborative immersion approach where individuals are first immersed in the complexities of evaluation as a means of developing capacity. The authors believe that providing just the tools and technical assistance is not sufficient to develop evaluation capacity. Arnold’s (2006) framework for capacity building on the other hand works first with individuals on a one-on-one situation and moves that individual into a more collaborative, large-scale evaluation as the capacity of the individual develops. Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2011) is similar to Arnold’s with a “catalyst-for-change” approach to ECB in which the capacity building process starts with one individual. Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2011) benefits an organization with limited staff resources. The one staff member will act as a change catalyst for the whole organization. However, gains in evaluation capacity of an individual are fragile and vulnerable due to staff turnover, setbacks, and other kinds of disruption (Milstein, et al., 2002). Stevenson, Florin, Mills, and Andrade (2002) found that organizational instability was best overcome with leadership from the top. The authors also found that for those smaller organizations with greater instability and limited financial resources, “the ability to collaborate” over evaluation processes offers the “best hope for empowering” organizations (p. 242).
Implications for Mile High United Way

Before ECB can be implemented effectively, it is first important that the value of evaluation is understood by each organization. Any strategy should reflect the learning interests and priorities each organization, including grantees, funding partners, or community leaders (GEO, 2012, p. 14). Funders and grantees should work together to identify a clear sense of purpose for evaluation capacity that responds to the other’s unique needs. Adoption of general standards is often associated with the decreased use of evaluation to meet an organization’s specific objectives and an increase in use of evaluation to satisfy program funder requirements (Eckerd & Moulton, 2011). Because the use of evaluation findings are thought to be related to an organization’s role in the community, Mile High United Way can start to understand what might motivate an organization to adopt and use evaluation. Instrumental use is important and valid. However, working first with organizations that need it for symbolic or conceptual purposes can help to change perception around evaluation and start the transition to instrumental uses.

Second, rather than asking for reports designed for accountability, which do not regard an organization’s evaluation objectives, funders need “to start asking and then rewarding organizations for reports designed to demonstrate how they are using evaluation and performance data to improve their outcomes” (Carman, 2007, p.72). Related, funders can create opportunities for grantees to put evaluation learning into practice. However, prior to doing so, funders need to understand the primary limitations of an organization’s choice to build its evaluation capacity. It can do so by establishing readiness reviews for ECB so that each approach is tailored to the specific needs of an organization or group of organizations.

For a sector wide impact that builds evaluation capacity, Mile High United Way has made a great step forward by creating a small collaborative of organizations working together to
identify metrics and outcomes for its three focus areas. According to the literature, the collaborative immersion will build knowledge and skills, while improve perceptions of evaluation. Engaging middle management in these efforts can help to integrate evaluation into the daily work of their superiors, peers, and subordinates.

**Research Methods**

Analysis focused on nonprofit organizations located within the Denver metropolitan area who were administered an electronic survey using Survey Monkey (n=613). Mile High United Way directly administered the survey to encourage a higher response rate. Attachment One provides the introductory email. The email made note of respondent confidentiality. The survey was open for two weeks, starting and ending on a Wednesday, with one interim reminder email. The survey was designed with input from Mile High United Way’s Evaluation Advisory Committee and is found in Attachment Two.

The survey included inquiry into the variables identified as important in the literature. Organizational demographic variables included age of the organization, type or role of organization (i.e. NTEE code), funding sources, number of employees, annual budget, location and what position is primarily responsible for evaluation. Evaluation variables included the primary audience for evaluation findings, type of evaluations performed, data collection methods used, use of evaluation findings, and lastly, the current and desired participation in different ECB efforts. Resource variables pertained to the availability of financial resources, staff time, staff expertise, organizational leadership, and availability of evaluation technology/software.

Using the method of Morariu and Welsh (2010), the sample was compared to the sample reported in the Nonprofit Sector in Brief (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2011) drawn from Urban Institutes’ National Center for Charitable Statistics database on budget size. See Attachment
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Three for this analysis. The sample was composed of organizations that were on average larger than the Wing et al.’s (2011) sample.

Analysis

The quantitative analysis of the responses included frequencies, Pearson chi square tests, and cross tabs using SPSS software (Carman & Fredericks, 2010) as well as qualitative analysis of open ended responses. Frequencies of the demographic variables and other responses provided descriptive information. Chi square tests using cross tabs were performed to identify if there was a relationship between organizational position of the respondent and their perception of leadership support. Similar analysis was performed to identify if there was a relationship between the capacity to collect and manage data with the ability to identify available resources. Open-ended questions were coded into themes identified in the literature. Questions related to use of evaluation findings were coded in NVivo using the descriptive variables identified by Eckerd and Moulton (2011), including “instrumental”, “conceptual”, and “symbolic” types of use (Table 2, p. 106).

Results

The survey was administered to 613 email addresses. Of these 613 emails, twenty (3%) were undeliverable and three emails had opted out for a total of 590 (96%) delivered. 194 (33%) of the email addresses were generic “info@email” addresses which yielded 20 (10%) responses. Of the 91 who began the survey, 84 completed it for a 14 percent response rate and 92 percent completion rate (n=84). It took on average 34 minutes (m) to complete (mode=14m; median=11m). The Executive Director completed 40 percent of the surveys. Program staff (31%), development staff (7%), evaluators (6%) and development director (4%) completed the
remainder. The largest representative of types of service was human services (32%) followed by education (23%).

Organizations were on average 41 years old with 83.52 fulltime and part-time staff. The majority of organizations had 49 or less staff (75%). 74 percent of the organizations were primarily located in Denver County and served surrounding counties. The majority of the organizations (79%) main source of funding was charitable contributions from foundations or philanthropies. Other primary sources of funding included charitable contributions from individual donors (68%), government grants or contracts (58%), charitable contributions from corporations (43%), dues, fees, and other direct charges (28%), or earned income (26%). These percentages add up to more than 100% because the majority of the respondents selected several funding sources as their “main source of funding”. The most frequent response for the primary audience for evaluation findings was “funders” (39%). The “organization’s CEO/ED/other management” was the second most likely audience (22%) and “Board of Directors” the third most likely audience (13%).

The majority of responding organizations have less than one employee who has evaluation as a primary responsibility (68%). For organizations with no evaluator position, independent evaluators are responsible for evaluation in six percent of the organizations. Executive Directors were primarily responsible for evaluation within organizations (40%) followed by Program Staff (30%) and Development Staff (12%).

When asked what types of evaluation are performed, 88 percent responded outcome evaluation. Since responding organizations were given the option to select all that apply, the majority of organizations also responded with needs assessment (62%), impact evaluation (60%), implementation evaluation (51%), and process evaluation (51%). Cost-effectiveness and cost-
benefit analysis (31%) and evaluability assessment (10%) were selected the least. Other responses did not specifically address type of evaluations but rather evaluation purpose, including personnel evaluations, stakeholder satisfaction surveys, and mission consensus. Two respondents responded that there were no formal evaluations taking place. Feedback forms, questionnaires, and surveys were the most frequent evaluation methods used by organizations (94%). Internal tracking forms (68%), use of logic model or similar document (55%), structure observation (38%), interviews (33%), and focus groups (33%) were other methods studied. Other methods identified by the organizations include intake data, third-party review, pre-post test (2), client data system, reading test, fidelity checklists, and reports by committee chair to Board. Descriptive analysis described above is summarized in Attachment Four.

*Research question one: What are the barriers that keep nonprofits from performing effective evaluations? What enables Denver’s nonprofit organizations to perform evaluations?*

Evaluation capacity is defined by the accessibility of financial resources, staff time, staff expertise, organizational leadership, data collection, data management, evaluation resources, and ability to identify affordable evaluation resources. Organizations were asked to prioritize how important each of these was to their ability to perform evaluation as shown in Table 3. While all of the resources were considered very important, dedicated staff time was the most important to the greatest majority of respondents (72.9%). The second most important resource was the capacity to collect data (60%) closely followed by the capacity to manage that data (57.1%).

Table 3 also provides the responses from organizations when asked to identify which of these resources presented challenges when performing evaluations. For the responding organizations, there was only one challenge the majority identified as significant (60%) – limited staff time. Approximately a third of the organizations said that insufficient financial resources
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(42%), limited staff expertise, limited capacity to collect data (36%) and manage data (33%), limited ability to identify resources (31%), and insufficient technology (37%) were significant challenges. Crosstabs founded a relationship between the ability to identify resources, including technology to perform evaluations, and the capacity to collect and manage data (p < 0.001).

Generally, leadership support was not a challenge from both board (63%) and organizational leadership (69%). Chi square analysis using cross tabs did not find a relationship between leadership staff (n=44) and program staff (n=36) perception of leadership support (p=.065) and board support (p=.904). A larger sample size might indicate differently. A summary of these crosstab analyses are shown in Attachment Five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What challenges does your organization face when performing evaluations?</th>
<th>Responded it was a significant or minor challenge (%)</th>
<th>Responded it was a significant challenge (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited staff time (n=85)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient financial resources (n=83)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources (n=84)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited capacity to manage data (n=84)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited staff expertise in evaluation (n=83)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient technology/software to perform evaluation (n=83)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited capacity to collect data (n=84)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient support from organizational leaders (n=81)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient support from organizational leaders (n=83)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages total more than 100% because respondents could select more than one answer.

Research question two: How are nonprofits using their evaluation findings?

Organizations were asked if they used evaluation findings to achieve different objectives “all of the time”, “sometimes”, or “never”. Using Eckerd and Moulton (2011), the “all the time”
responses were grouped into “instrumental”, “conceptual”, and “symbolic” uses, shown in Table Four. The majority of respondents used their findings for instrumental uses (51%). Conceptual and symbolic uses made up just 28 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

Surveyed organizations were asked to respond to the question: “If your organization had access to the right resources and support, how would you like to use the results of your evaluation?” The open ended question resulted in a response rate of 67 percent (n=56). The answers were categorized into three types of uses: “instrumental” (60%), “symbolic” (20%), and “conceptual” (19%). The responses are included in Attachment Six and analyses of responses are in Attachment Seven, Eight, and Nine. Instrumental use was the most frequent response for current use of findings (51%). It was also identified the most as an ideal use of evaluation findings (60%) with the greatest percentage increase from current use of findings (+ 9%).

Table 4: Use of Evaluation Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Current Use of Findings &quot;all the time&quot; (n=472)</th>
<th>Ideal use of findings (n=93)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To improve the quality of our programs</td>
<td>72% (63)</td>
<td>46% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients</td>
<td>71% (61)</td>
<td>20% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better understand our clients’ needs</td>
<td>55% (47)</td>
<td>21% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help managers and staff make decisions</td>
<td>52% (43)</td>
<td>13% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To determine spending priorities</td>
<td>32% (27)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To satisfy funder requirements</td>
<td>68% (56)</td>
<td>56% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To inform Board of Directors</td>
<td>59% (51)</td>
<td>33% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To motivate managers and staff</td>
<td>30% (24)</td>
<td>6% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote or market our programs</td>
<td>51% (42)</td>
<td>74% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To demonstrate legitimacy</td>
<td>49% (40)</td>
<td>26% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To obtain a seal of approval or other certification</td>
<td>23% (18)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organizations were asked how a like they are to the statements about how they use evaluation findings, as shown in Table 5. The majority of organizations say they collect and know how to
A STUDY ON EVALUATION CAPACITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR AN EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

best use data (60%) for internal decisions (52%) and external (32%) audiences. More organizations are comfortable with using data for internal decisions than for external audiences.

Table 5
How closely do the following statements reflect your organization?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>A lot like us (%)</th>
<th>Like Us (%)</th>
<th>Not like us (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our organization does evaluation primarily for external audiences.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our organization uses evaluation often to make internal decisions.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our organization collects data but we do not how best to use it.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question three: What Mile High United Way interventions are likely to facilitate the inclusion of evaluation into a nonprofit’s core operations (i.e. sustainable evaluation)?

The majority of respondents only attend “a few” learning strategies to building evaluation capacity. More respondents said they did not participate in learning strategies than those who said they participated in “many”. The majority of respondents participated in “a few” trainings (61%), conferences (61%), technical assistance (55%), and learning networks with peers (51%). Coaching and mentoring was the strategy with the least participation (40%).

Overall, respondents would prefer to participate in training (78%), technical assistance (67%), and learning networks with peers (51%). More than half of the respondents would like to learn more about linking strategic or employee work plans to evaluation needs (61%), how to communicate evaluation findings (60%), interpret evaluation results (54%) and use evaluation results (54%). The willingness to participate in Mile High United Way’s future capacity building efforts was high. The majority of respondents would like Mile High United Way to help their organization build its evaluation capacity (81%) and slightly fewer are confident they can (77%).
Recommendations for an ECB Program by Mile High United Way

Mile High United Way has a foundation to build upon its ECB program. However, work still needs to be done. One strong indicator of this is that only half of the surveyed organizations used logic models. Logic models are considered an essential tool for evaluation and for an organization’s learning process. A positive indicator supporting a new program is that organizations would like to use their findings for instrumental purposes but just don’t have the resources to do so. There is also a willingness to participate in an ECB program.

Based on findings from the literature review and survey, the following recommendations are offered for consideration by Mile High United Way seeking how best to design and implement an ECB program. Quotes are from open-ended questions shown in Attachment Ten.

1. **Collaborate with other funders to align reporting requirements**

Mile High United Way should bring together foundations working towards the same efforts to align reporting requirements to overcome barriers. Reporting requirements should account for ECB efforts and outcomes. As a pilot approach, foundations can work with partners or their grantees to identify mutual funders and then, establish similar reporting protocols. Findings suggest that nonalignment of funder requests creates problems for organizations struggling to keep up with conflicting demands.

> “I think we have some organizational issues that prevent us from effectively evaluating the organization as a whole maintaining multiple databases for different funders.”

> “...would want to participate in conversations about aligning evaluation requirements of various funders including city, state, and federal government.”

> “We have many funders and partners (including our nationals) who want different outcomes.”
2. *Make transparent funding decisions based on ECB participation and outcomes*

Mile High United Way should provide complete transparency about how it will use participation in ECB efforts and any positive or negative outcomes for its own decision-making. It should use evaluation and performance information in its funding decisions by rewarding those organizations that use evaluation findings to make quality improvement decisions. Reporting requirements will need to incorporate partners report on ECB activities and how it influenced decision-making. To do this, Mile High United Way should use a similar point system as its recent *Impact Investment* Request for Proposal criteria to evaluate its ECB efforts via its grant reporting process. It should allocate a significant number of points towards ECB participation and application.

3. *Develop and implement a communication plan for ECB efforts*

Mile High United Way has an organization’s attention due to grant reporting and can therefore, communicate the purpose, goals and expectations ECB efforts. A communication plan must include clear objectives, expectations, and explanation of what types of support will be offered and how ECB participation will be used by Mile High United Way. Participants should be clearly identified. Core messages should be developed and then articulated by Mile High United Way staff, its Evaluation Subcommittee members, and other volunteers. A system should be in place to capture success stories and lessons learned, including those of other United Ways.

Resources in the community should be identified and communicated to organizations.

> “It would be great to have Mile High United Way provide information to board members who do not understand the reasons for evaluations.”

> “The evaluation function is desperately needed by the organization but to date it has been impossible to get the buy-in and support from executive staff and the board members... no one has thought through how to use new software for evaluation purposes.”
4. **Assess the readiness and commitment for ECB for each partner**

Mile High United Way should have target organizations complete a self-assessment tool to understand its current capacity for participation in ECB efforts. The assessment will inform the appropriate level of intervention and may lead to greater ownership of results and likelihood that capacity improves. In addition to an organization’s completion of an assessment, Mile High United Way must ask leadership to demonstrate commitment. This may be done through a leader’s decision to allocate sufficient staff time, ideally that of a middle manager, and other resources to the efforts. Commitment can be assessed using tools provided by Sanders (2002) found in Appendix B and C. Colorado Trust uses a readiness assessment that could Mile high United Way could model (Appendix F). Flexibility must be allowed if an organization lack signs of readiness and Mile High United Way should establish specific benchmarks for those organizations showing progress towards readiness.

5. **Create relevant and hands on learning experiences for nonprofit partners**

Mile High United Way should use the current collective impact work to identify and develop hands on learning experiences applicable to the current needs of its partners. Based on the research, middle management should be targeted for participation. Curriculum should incorporate individual and group reflection on the value of evaluation. It should focus on how to access and secure resources including budget friendly data collection and management strategies. It should also focus on communication strategies for leadership, peers, and subordinates about evaluation. An evaluation plan should be created that includes clear expectations for people’s evaluation roles and how to allocate sufficient time. It should be a strategic plan that integrates evaluation processes into existing organizational policies and infrastructure. Following the
learning experience, there should be frequent follow up – including both positive and negative feedback – to ensure that any discouragement is alleviated and the learning process continues.

> “We’ve had assistance in with capacity building in the past for specific programs. It would have been helpful to have had some assistance after we’d been implementing new processes...it would have been great to have additional feedback”

> “The most significant needs around building evaluation capacity are the investments needed to upgrade our data platform, professional development training needed related to evaluation, and the need for funded staff time to be dedicated to evaluation”

6. **Walk the talk and meet the same expectations of its partners**

According to its 2011-2014 Strategic plan, Mile High United Way is “committed to continuous improvement and to gaining insights from experience, knowledge, and data” (p. 4). It should show this commitment by meeting the same expectations its sets for its partners. It should be transparent about its own evaluation and organizational learning. It should perform its own organizational capacity assessment and show how it is using the results for its decision-making.

**Limitations and Future Research**

Given that the study was fairly small, done over a short period of time, and targeted one person within an organization, there are limitations to the research. The research used one person’s judgment that served as a proxy for entire organization’s experience with evaluation. While both directors and staff responded to the survey, it would be beneficial to conduct additional research from other stakeholders within the organizations to identify different perspectives. The research also relies on self-reporting information that raises validity questions and the potential for respondents to give socially acceptable answers, particularly when the audience is a foundation. Selection bias might have occurred due to the survey referencing “evaluation” in the introduction email and title. Some recipients of the survey may have decided to decline the survey if they did not perceive their organization as an “evaluating” organization.
Several related questions deserve attention from future research. For one, literature suggests that age impacts evaluation capacity. The surveyed organizations were on average established organizations. Younger organizations might indicate less capacity and may require different types of interventions. With more data, correlations could be made to see if age should be taken into consideration when designing ECB interventions.

The study also had limited ability to better understand perceptions to evaluation. A positive perception of evaluation may be indicated by the responses to how organizations would like to use evaluation findings if they had more resources. A negative perception might have resulted in a lack of interest or thought in those responses. However, a more direct analysis of perception may be important to uncover other barriers.

**Conclusion**

The results provide reasonable evidence that funders, such as Mile High United Way, are able to build evaluation capacity for nonprofit organizations. Denver’s nonprofits indicate that there is a basis of evaluation knowledge and skills that can be built upon but there are significant barriers to overcome. While responses indicated some general level of capacity, there is still great diversity between organizations. Sector wide transformation will require partnership between foundations, the primary demand for evaluation today, and nonprofit organizations. The partnership may need two different sets of goals but must have a mutual understanding that evaluation capacity is the right strategy to achieve those goals.
References


Attachment One: Introduction Letter to the Survey

Hello All,

Below please find information and a request for your participation in a survey going to non-profits in the Metro Area.

We, at Mile High United Way, are interested in engaging the foundation and non-profit communities in a set of work to increase the capacity of our sector to use data for program improvement and to support decision-making. We believe that children, families, and individuals are best served and are most likely to achieve intended outcomes when programs utilize data to inform their practice.

As part of the process to best understand what is needed in this area, we are working with Robyn Scrafford, a graduate student from the University of Colorado School of Public Affairs, to conduct a survey of non-profits about their current successes and barriers to engaging in evaluation.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes of your time. Responses to the survey will be confidential – that is, your responses will not be linked to your organization as we are interested in information across the sector, not about specific organizations.

Responses will be collected by Robyn using Survey Monkey. You will receive an email with a link to the survey.

We greatly appreciate your time in completing this survey so that we might better design supports for the use of evaluation within our community.

Many thanks, Cindy Eby, Director, Evaluation
Attachment Two: Survey

Section 1: About your organization’s evaluation approach

1. Who is the primary audience for your organization’s evaluation?
   - The organization’s CEO/ED/ other management
   - Other staff within the organization
   - Board of Directors
   - Funders
   - Clients/ community stakeholders
   - I don't know
   - Other, please specify

2. What types of evaluation does your organization do? Select all that apply.
   **Needs assessment** to determine who needs the program, how great the need is, and what might work to meet the need

   **Evaluability assessment** determines whether an evaluation is feasible and how stakeholders can help shape its usefulness

   **Implementation evaluation** monitors the fidelity of the program or technology delivery

   **Process evaluation** investigates the process of delivering the program or technology, including alternative delivery procedures

   **Outcome evaluations** investigate whether the program or technology caused demonstrable effects on specifically defined target outcomes

   **Impact evaluation** is broader and assesses the overall or net effects -- intended or unintended -- of the program or technology as a whole

   **Cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis** address questions of efficiency by standardizing outcomes in terms of their dollar costs and values

   **Other, please specify** __

3. What data collection method has your organization used within the last year? Select all that apply.
   - Feedback forms, questionnaires, or surveys
   - Logic model, theory of change, or some other similar document
   - Focus groups
   - Internal tracking form
   - Interviews
   - Structured observation
   - Other, please specify
4. How do you use the results of your evaluations? Select all that apply.
   Likert scale for each response: All the time  Sometimes  never
   To improve the quality of our programs
   To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients
   To determine spending priorities
   To satisfy funder requirements
   To inform Board of Directors
   To better understand our clients’ needs
   To motivate managers and staff
   To help managers and staff make decisions
   To demonstrate legitimacy
   To promote or market our programs
   To obtain a seal of approval or other certification
   Other, please specify _____________________

5. How closely do the following statements reflect your organization?
   Likert scale: A lot like us  Like Us  Not like us
   Our organization does evaluation primarily for external audiences.
   Our organization uses evaluation often to make internal decisions.
   Our organization collects data but we do not know how best to use it.

6. If your organization had access to the right resources and support, how would you
   like to use your the results of your evaluation?

Section 2: The evaluation capacity of your organization

7. How important are each of the following list of organizational characteristics to your
   organization’s ability to perform evaluations?
   Likert scale for each response: Very important;  Important;  Somewhat important
   Financial resources
   Dedicated Staff Time
   Staff Expertise
   Organizational Leadership
   Capacity to collect data
   Capacity to manage data
   Availability of evaluation technology/ software
   Ability to identify available affordable evaluation resources
   Other, please specify _________________
8. What challenges does your organization face when performing evaluations?

   Insufficient financial resources
   Limited staff time
   Limited staff expertise in evaluation
   Insufficient support from organizational leaders
   Insufficient support from board leaders
   Capacity to collect data
   Capacity to manage data
   Ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources
   Insufficient technology / software to perform evaluations

9. What, if any, teaching and learning strategies did/does your organization participate in to build evaluation capacity?
   Rate for each: Many; A few; None
   Learning networks with peers
   Technical assistance
   Coaching or mentoring
   Training
   Conferences
   Other, please specify __________________________

10. When Mile High United Way begins its program to building evaluation capacity, which of the following would you prefer to participate in?
    Learning networks with peers
    Technical assistance
    Coaching or mentoring
    Training
    Conferences
    Other, please specify __________________________

11. What would you like to learn more about?
    Likert scale: Yes, definitely!; Maybe; No
    How to collect and manage data
    How to interpret evaluation results
    How evaluation results may be used
    How to link strategic or employee work plans to evaluation needs
    How to communicate evaluation findings
    Other, please specify ________________
12. How much do you agree with the following statements?
   Likert scale: Strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree
   I would really like Mile High United Way to help my organization build its evaluation capacity.
   I am confident Mile High United Way can help my organization build its evaluation capacity.

Space for comments ______________

Section 3: About your organization

13. How old is your organization?

14. In what county is your organization located?
   Adams
   Arapahoe
   Denver
   Douglas
   Jefferson

15. How many FTEs (including part-time and full time, but no volunteers) does your organization have today?

16. What is your organization’s NTEE code? If you are unsure, select the category that best represents your work?
   Arts, culture, and humanities                     Mental health & crisis intervention
   Civil rights, social action, and advocacy       Public and societal benefit
   Community improvement and capacity building     Public safety, disaster preparedness, and relief
   Education                                        Recreation and Sports
   Employment                                       Social Science
   Health Care                                      Youth Development
   Housing and Shelter                              Unknown
   Human Services                                   Other

17. What is your organization’s annual budget for FY 2012?
   Less than 100,000
   $100,000 or more, but less than $250,000
   $250,000 or more, but less than $500,000
   $500,000 or more, but less than $1,000,000
   More than $1,000,000
18. What were the sources of funding for your organization? Select all that apply.
   - Dues, fees, and other direct charges
   - Government grants or contracts
   - Charitable contributions from individual donors
   - Charitable contributions from foundations or philanthropies
   - Charitable contributions from corporations
   - Earned income
   - Other sources (including interest from investments)

19. How many FTEs in your organization have evaluation as their primary or sole responsibility?

20. If no one position is dedicated to evaluation, what position was primarily responsible for conducting evaluation work for your organization?
   - Executive director
   - Development director
   - Development staff
   - Program staff
   - Evaluator
   - Other ________________

21. What is the position do you hold in your organization?
   - Executive director
   - Development director
   - Development staff
   - Program staff
   - Evaluator
   - Other ________________

22. What is the name of your organization. (Optional)

23. Please share any additional thoughts or information relevant to building evaluation capacity at your organization. (No response is required)
Attachment Three: Comparison of Sample by Budget Size
(Wing et al., 2011)

Table 1
Comparison of Sample by Budget Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Size</th>
<th>The Nonprofit Sector in Brief sample (percentage)</th>
<th>MHUW Evaluation Sample (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $100,000</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $499,999</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 to $999,999</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $1 million</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median budget size</td>
<td>$100,000 to $499,999</td>
<td>More than $1 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attachment Four: Descriptive analysis summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Age (year)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $100,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>41.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $499,999</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 to $999,999</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $1 million</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Primary audience</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Funders</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>The organization's CEO/ED/ Other management</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Clients/community stakeholders</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 49</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 99</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Combination of all the above</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 to 499</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Other staff within the organization</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 or more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Other***</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Evaluation methods</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human services</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>Feedback forms, questionnaires, or surveys</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Internal tracking form</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Logic model or some other document</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil rights, social action, and advocacy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Structured observation</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Shelter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community improvement and capacity building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health and crisis intervention</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Other****</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Culture, and humanities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main funding source</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Type of evaluations</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charitable contributions from foundations or philanthropies</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>Outcome evaluation</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable contributions from individual donors</td>
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<td>68%</td>
<td>Needs assessment</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government grants or contracts</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Impact evaluation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable contributions from corporations</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Implementation evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earned income</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>Process evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dues, fees, and other direct charges</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Cost-effectiveness &amp; Cost-Benefit Analysis</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other sources (including interest from investments)**</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Evaluability assessment</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other****</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 1:
H₀: There is no relationship between position and perception of support from organizational leaders.
H₁: There is a relationship position and perception of support from organizational leaders.

Hypothesis 2:
H₀: There is no relationship between position and perception of support from board leaders.
H₁: There is a relationship position and perception of support from board leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Type of position *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient support</td>
<td>3.410</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from organizational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaders</td>
<td>(Pearson Chi-Square)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of position *</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from board leaders</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Pearson Chi-Square)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Findings:** From these results, there is not a relationships between the type of position and support from organizational leaders, $\chi^2=3.41, \lambda=1, p=.065$. There was also not a significant difference between leadership and staff regarding board level support, $\chi^2=0.15, \lambda=1p=.904$.

**NOTE:** Given the small sample size and that two Chi-Square cells contain less than five observations, further research should be conducted with a larger sample to test the hypothesis that there is a relationship between position and perception of organizational leadership or board support.
Hypothesis 1:
\( H_0: \) There is no relationship between capacity to manage data and ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources.
\( H_A: \) There is a relationship between capacity to manage data and ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources.

Hypothesis 2:
\( H_0: \) There is no relationship between capacity to manage data and ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources.
\( H_A: \) There is a relationship between capacity to manage data and ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited capacity to manage data * Limited ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources (Pearson Chi-Square)</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.323(^a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited capacity to collect data * Limited ability to identify available and affordable evaluation resources (Pearson Chi-Square)</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.953(^a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Findings:** Crosstabs founded a relationship between the ability to managed data and available and affordable evaluation resources, \( \chi^2 = 13.323, \lambda = 1, p = .000 \). Crosstabs also found a relationship between the ability to collect data and available and affordable evaluation resources, \( \chi^2 = 15.953, \lambda = 1, p = .000 \).

**NOTE:** Given the small sample size and that two Chi-Square cells contain less than five observations, further research should be conducted with a larger sample to test the hypothesis that there is a relationship between position and perception of organizational leadership or board support.
Attachment Six: Survey Responses

Survey question: Response to how you would like to use evaluation findings (n=61)

1. To determine impact. We know what we are doing, but we don't know what's happening year after year.
2. We would like to be able to better evaluate the efficacy of our programs and use the information to inform the work we do.
3. Marketing, promotion and education
4. To help refine our process and make the sharing of information quicker for all involved.
5. We would use the information to define a better, more clear and concise way of telling our story ... framing it as a piece of the funder's story.
6. We would collect the right data sets to inform all of the key stakeholders in our org, internal and external, in terms of goals, outcomes, and efficiency and impact of activities.
7. Evaluation results would be shared with funders, and also used to inform the work of our organization as well as other partners in our field.
8. To create and strengthen programs and services to provide enhanced impact.
9. To stay in touch, either via email, phone or mail, with our clients.
10. A workable database would save us time.
11. Program development and decision making; information sharing will more stakeholders
12. Quarterly reports to community and all applicable stakeholders both internally and externally
13. To continue monitoring our decisions about our programs and staff on a consistent basis
14. We would use it for funders. To promote and market our programs. To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients
15. For both internal and external use
16. To market and secure more funding
17. It's all about the client. Anything that can be done to help the client in the most efficient and cost-effective manner would be the priority.
18. To demonstrate the community need and the need to collaborate with other agencies.
19. To understand which programs are truly making an impact
20. To incorporate client evaluation and feedback into program delivery. To strengthen grant submissions and better demonstrate a grasp of clientele and need to funders and the public.

21. We would inform the local and larger community. We would use it to influence decision makers on best options for investing funding sources. Look at possible replication strategies to improve the access for vulnerable populations to have more options of proven programs.

22. ED would use data to increase Foundation funding and business/club donor development.

23. Identify our capabilities, and understand how to use these to our advantage while minimizing threats. Identifying the needs and challenges to help us serve our clients more effectively.

24. I would like to use it to influence external audiences more.

25. We would like to better quantify the impact of our program, rather than just have testimony.

26. We would use evaluation results to better market our programs based on outcomes. Educating staff on evaluation purpose. Internal communication and review of program effectiveness.

27. If additional resources could be made available we would like to use our results to better communicate our unique model and its successes with Latino students.

28. Decision making within the agency and the community - assessing overall impact on those served.

29. To inform all decisions and ensure the work we do has the expected outcomes and impact.

30. To make sure we're keeping up with changing needs and methods of delivery.

31. To improve programs and services.

32. For program quality improvement.

33. To improve our programs and to see if our programs help impact the results that MHUW is looking for.

34. To support program practices and professional development for staff to support best practices.

35. For hiring a marketing and events person.
36. We are fine the way we are.
37. To respond to the needs of current and potential members & do better outreach
   (information about our program) to public and professionals
38. Continue to improve practices/outcomes, best use of resources, solicit funding
39. I am a sole practitioner, and the results of my evals, internal or external, are to improve
   my methods and service delivery to clients.
40. Better use of data for education and advocacy. To add to the scientific literature to better
   understand the complexity that is manifest in the lives of homeless individuals.
41. More comparative analysis from year to year, looking at trends
42. To write better grant proposals; focus time, energy, and spending on programs that are
   effective; goal setting for the agency as a whole
43. Demonstrate needs, show meet our expected outcomes
44. More immediate program changes for individual students; funding decisions
45. We would use metrics to demonstrate our impact on the physical and emotional health of
   the population we serve.
46. Not sure. We've had assistance with capacity building in the past for specific programs. It
   would have been helpful to have had some assistance after we'd been implementing new
   processes for a while. There have been things that need tweaking and it would have been
   great to have additional feedback.
47. Funding priorities, strategic planning
48. Include long-term impact evaluations
49. To gather more comprehensive data that lead to informed decision-making.
50. To obtain additional dollars to serve clients in our high quality programming.
51. To help with funding.
52. To inform program operations, to better meet client needs, to meet funder requirements
   and to present client outcome information to our Board and other stakeholders.
53. Program improvement, volunteer recruitment and retention, funding
54. It would be good to have data analysis, and have that inform program effectiveness, any
   needs for modification, and how to best use resources.
55. To update and market our programs to potential funders.
56. To develop a community-wide plan to address the unmet needs of those who are at-risk and eliminate unnecessary overlaps in services.

57. We currently use evaluation results to inform local sites of their success with the program, to inform internal practice improvement, to help decide where we need to focus more time and to demonstrate success to funders.

58. Fine tune what we do, see what the priorities are for services so that we can focus on what is needed, not on what we do best.

59. Broaden scope and impact to community

60. Continuous improvement, process reengineering and organizational structure changes.

61. We are such a small organization, that I doubt more resources would impact our use of evaluations.
### Attachment Seven: Instrumental Use

**Analysis of responses to Survey question: Response to how you would like to use evaluation findings (n=61)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrumental Uses Responses (n=56)</th>
<th>To help managers and staff make decisions and share information</th>
<th>To improve quality of our programs</th>
<th>To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients and measure efficacy</th>
<th>To understand our clients' needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To determine impact. We know what we are doing, but we don't know what's happening year after year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would like to be able to better evaluate the efficacy of our programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To use the information to inform the work we do.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To help refine our process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make the sharing of information quicker for all involved.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Also used to inform the work of our organization as well as other partners in our field.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To create and strengthen programs and services to provide enhanced impact.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To stay in touch, either via email, phone or mail, with our clients.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program development and decision making; information</td>
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<tr>
<td>To continue monitoring our decisions about our programs and staff on a consistent basis</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's all about the client. Anything that can be done to help the client in the most efficient and cost-effective manner would be the priority.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To understand which programs are truly making an impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>To incorporate client evaluation and feedback into program delivery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look at possible replication strategies to improve the access for vulnerable populations to have more options of proven programs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Uses Responses (n=56)</td>
<td>To help managers and staff make decisions and share information</td>
<td>To improve quality of our programs</td>
<td>To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients and measure efficacy</td>
<td>To understand our clients’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the needs and challenges to help us serve our clients more effectively</td>
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<td>We would like to better quantify the impact of our program, rather than just have testimony.</td>
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<tr>
<td>decision making within the agency and the community</td>
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<td>assessing overall impact on those served</td>
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<td>To inform all decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure the work we do has the expected outcomes and impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To make sure we're keeping up with changing needs and methods of delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td>to improve programs and services</td>
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<tr>
<td>To improve our programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>To support program practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>To respond to the needs of current and potential members</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue to improve practices/outcomes</td>
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<td>best use of resources</td>
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<td>I am a sole practitioner, and the results of my evaluations, internal or external, are to improve my methods</td>
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<td>Service delivery to clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>More comparative analysis from year to year, looking at trends</td>
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<tr>
<td>To focus time, energy, and spending on programs that are effective</td>
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<td>More immediate program changes for individual students</td>
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<td>Instrumental Uses Responses (n=56)</td>
<td>To help managers and staff make decisions and share information</td>
<td>To improve quality of our programs</td>
<td>To help us achieve desired outcomes with clients and measure efficacy</td>
<td>To understand our clients' needs</td>
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<td>Include long term impact evaluations</td>
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<td>To gather more comprehensive data that lead to informed decision making.</td>
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<td>To inform program operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>To better meet client needs</td>
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<td>Program improvement,</td>
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<td>It would be good to have data analysis, and have that inform program effectiveness, any needs for modification</td>
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<td>How to best use resources.</td>
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<td>To develop a community-wide plan to address the unmet needs of those who are at-risk</td>
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<td>Eliminate unnecessary overlaps in services.</td>
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<td>Fine tune what we do, see what the priorities are for services so that we can focus on what is needed, not on what we do best.</td>
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<td>Broader scope and impact to community</td>
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<td>Continuous improvement, process reengineering</td>
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<td>Organizational structure changes.</td>
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<td>To inform internal practice improvement</td>
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<td>to help decide where we need to focus more time</td>
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<td>Internal communication</td>
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<td>Review of program effectiveness</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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</table>
### Attachment Eight: Conceptual Use

**Analysis of responses to survey question: How would you like to use evaluation findings (n=61)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Use (n=18)</th>
<th>To satisfy funder requirements</th>
<th>To inform board &amp; other stakeholders</th>
<th>To motivate staff</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would collect the right data sets to inform all of the key stakeholders in our org, internal and external, in terms of goals, outcomes, and efficiency and impact of activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation results would be shared with funders,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information sharing will more stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly reports to community and all applicable stakeholders both internally and externally</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would use it for funders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To secure more funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To strengthen grant submissions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would inform the local and larger community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To use data to increase Foundation funding and business/club donor development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educating staff on evaluation purpose.</td>
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<td>Solicit funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>To write better grant proposals;</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To obtain additional dollars to serve clients in our high quality programming.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet funder requirements</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To present client outcome information to our Board and other stakeholders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Attachment Nine: Symbolic Use

Analysis of responses to survey question: How would you like to use evaluation findings (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbolic Use (n=19)</th>
<th>To market or promote</th>
<th>To demonstrate legitimacy</th>
<th>To obtain a seal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing, promotion</td>
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<td>We would use the information to define a better, more clear and concise way of</td>
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<td>telling our story ... framing it as a piece of the funder's story.</td>
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<td>To promote and market our programs.</td>
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<td>To market</td>
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<td>To demonstrate the community need</td>
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<tr>
<td>To better demonstrate a grasp of clientele and need to funders and the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We would use it to influence decision makers on best options for investing funding</td>
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<td>sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like to use it to influence external audiences more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If additional resources could be made available we would like to use our results</td>
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<tr>
<td>to better communicate our unique model and its successes with Latino students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To see if our programs help impact the results that MHUW is looking for.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To do better outreach (information about our program) to public and professionals</td>
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<td>Better use of data for education and advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>To add to the scientific literature to better understand the complexity that is</td>
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<td>manifest in the lives of homeless individuals.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate needs, show meet our expected outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>To update and market our programs to potential funders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To demonstrate success to funders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To better market our programs based on outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>currently use evaluation results to inform local sites of their success with the</td>
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<td>program</td>
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<tr>
<td>To use evaluation results to better market our programs based on outcomes.</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>74%</strong></td>
<td><strong>26%</strong></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
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Attachment Ten: Survey Responses

Survey Question: Please share any additional thoughts or information relevant to building evaluation capacity at your organization (n=14).

1. If MHUW decides to take this one, it is imperative that other funders be involved. Our organization reports to a variety of different funders, and if we are not able to better streamline reporting across multiple funders - including city, state, and federal government - this will not be sufficient. – Program Director

2. It will be important for us to learn how to evaluate better internally, but also how to link to the multiple youth success indicator projects already existing so that we can better understand how our work fits into the larger scope of community work. – Executive Director

3. It would be great to have MHUW provide information to board members who do not understand the reasons for evaluations – Executive Director

4. It should not be complicated. – Executive Director

5. This survey addresses an issue that has been on my mind quite often recently, so thank you! – Executive Director

6. I have found if you budget is less than $100,000 foundations like the Denver Foundation do not want to fund you. – Executive Director

7. Biggest area of need is how to collect alumni contact information so we can quantify outcomes. – Marketing Manager

8. I don't know how well the evaluation models of United Way and its other agencies would apply to us. – Office Coordinator

9. The evaluation function is desperately needed by this organization but to date it has been impossible to get the buy-in and support from the executive staff and the Board members. New software for collecting, maintaining and reporting client information is being implemented program by program but no thought has been given to using the information for evaluation purposes. – From Program Staff

10. We need to find new board members. - Secretary
11. As a call center for mental health and substance abuse crises, our biggest challenge with evaluating our data for various uses is the 'unknown' data, when clinicians cannot collect certain data based on the safety concerns that preclude the call. – Program Staff

12. We are currently purchasing a new database and adding a systems administrator position for the purpose of collecting more and better data in our large agency. – Program Staff

13. We have many funders and partners (including our nationals) who want different outcomes. Also, funders want non-self report information, which is difficult to get from schools. – Program Staff

14. The most significant needs around building evaluation capacity are the investments needed to upgrade our data platform, professional development training needed related to evaluation, and the need for funded staff time to be dedicated to evaluation. - Director of Quality Improvement Initiatives”
Attachment 11: Areas of course knowledge and skills

The capstone seminar provides an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of the concepts and principles discussed in the MPA curriculum and to apply that knowledge to analyze a current problem. Specifically, PUAD 5003 Research Methods and Analytics, PUAD 5003 Organizational Change and Management, and PUAD 5350 Program Evaluation directly helped with this capstone paper.

PUAD 5003 Research Methods and Analytics

Research and Analytic methods is a core course in the MPA program and contributed to an understanding how to conduct research. The course helped me become a more critical and analytical thinker, to examine relationships, and consider alternatives. It taught me how to locate, critique and synthesize research literature. It taught me how to develop questions to guide the research and appropriate research designs, data collection, and data analysis needed to inform Mile High United Way’s decision-making regarding the design and implementation of a new evaluation capacity building program. It helped me in the design and administration of the survey tool.

PUAD 5003 Organizational change and management

Organizational Change and Management is another core course. It taught me how better to translate theoretical knowledge into practical management situations. Knowledge learned in this course and applied to my capstone recommendations included organizational theory, how to managed human capital, and group performance and communications. Specifically, this class was unique in its application of the case method. We were responsible for reading real life scenarios and analyzing them to develop recommendations that were theory-based and actionable next steps for improvements. We also gained practical experience. We selected a
client and worked with them to analyze and make recommendations to address their identified challenge. I performed an assessment on how to help the Donor Communications and Relations Unit (DCAR) of the American Red Cross seize the opportunity of the One Red Cross leadership strategy to increase its capacity and recognition for excellent donor recognition, stewardship, and communications. I found that for DCAR to successfully meet its directive to help unify the American Red Cross brand, it needed to become a recognized leader of the national chapter network and strengthen its performance measurement system to increase accountability and effectiveness. The recommendations were to use PARTNER, a network analysis tool, to determine its place in the current network and to develop performance indicators related to service quality. The process of working with this client prepared me for Mile High United Way and its interest in building evaluation capacity.

*PUAD 5350 Program Evaluation*

Program Evaluation, an elective course, specifically introduced me to the theories and methodologies used in social research to evaluate public programs. The course provided a real-life program evaluation opportunity where I worked with a client to identify and develop research questions for a process evaluation. I developed an interview guide and held interviews with key stakeholders. I learned and developed the quantitative skills to analyze open-ended responses using NVivo. I applied this learning to the responses in the capstone survey about how organizations use and would like to use their evaluation findings.

Taken together, these courses provided me with the technical and theoretical knowledge to understand evaluation and the challenges facing the public sector regarding capacity to effect change.
Appendix A: A Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building

(Preskill & Boyd, 2008)
Appendix B: Indicators that evaluation has been mainstreamed
(Sanders, 2002, p. 256)

- Someone asking “how are you going to evaluate this?”
- Board members asking for evaluation findings for every program report.
- Evaluation appearing on the agenda of every staff meeting,
- Buyers asking for evaluation data from every sales agent.
- Clients being asked for evaluation that is then taken seriously by staff members.
- The CEO distributing a list of organizational values that includes continuous evaluation.
- Orientation training for new employees that includes their role of evaluating services, policies, and products.
- Using evaluation advocacy as a selection criteria when hiring new staff.
Appendix C: 13 Steps to Sustainable Evaluation Capacity

(Stevenson et al., 2002)

Organizational resources
1. Commitment of agency leadership
2. Resources (hardware, software)
3. Staff with expertise
4. Staff team with clear evaluation responsibilities and time for them

Preliminary steps and measures
5. Program logic model
6. Measurable process objectives
7. Measurable outcome objectives
8. Measures of objectives selected

Data collection and analysis
9. Plan for collecting data (including timing and personnel)
10. Data collection under way
11. Data getting stored and recorded
12. Data analysis planned/expertise lined up

Utilization
13. Clear plan for reporting the findings and recommending future actions
Appendix D: A checklist for building organizational evaluation capacity

(Volkov & King, 2007)
Appendix E: An evaluation capacity building framework
(Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Elements</th>
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<td>Professional development</td>
<td>Training</td>
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<td>Technical assistance</td>
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<td>Collaborative evaluation projects</td>
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<td>Mentoring and coaching</td>
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<td>Communities of practice</td>
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<td>Resources and support</td>
<td>Evaluation and ECB practice</td>
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<td>Evaluation materials</td>
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<td>Evaluation champions</td>
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<td>Organizational assets</td>
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<td>Financing</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Organizational environment</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<td>Demand</td>
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<td>Incentives</td>
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<td>Structures</td>
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<td>Policies and procedures</td>
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Appendix F: The Colorado Trust – Organizational Assessment Tool


Designed as a means to engage grantees in a participative process of organizational assessment at the beginning of their grant period. It is intended as a foundation for identifying, designing and delivering appropriate technical assistance (TA) to the grantee over the life of the grant. In itself, it can be a valuable and insightful exercise for the grantee’s leadership to benchmark their organizational capacities and then decide, in consultation with their Project Liaison, i.e., their TA provider, where assistance in building those capacities would be most fruitful.
Appendix G: Recommended Reading

   - Provides a comprehensive overview of key conditions, good practices, barriers, and financial strategies for effective capacity building.

   - Provides case studies of foundation work to build evaluation capacity.
     - Specific case studies that may be of interest include:
       - Case Study: Provides a look at United Way Toronto used a staff wide intranet to share resource and hose discussions across teams and regularly convened staff, grantees, and community leaders for the express purpose of reflection and learning.
       - Case Study: Provides a look at the Colorado Health Foundation who built a system for shared measures across grants that doesn’t pace undue burden on grantees and the y did so by engaging grantees in developing the approach.

   - Provides case studies that share the experiences with funder initiatives to strengthen grantee evaluation capacity and practice. Each case study includes a description of the overall grant making initiative, followed by a discussion of the ECB services requested by grantees and/or provided by Innovation Network. The paper concludes with a reflection on lessons learned and recommendations for funders considering ECB for their grantees.