WORKBOOK: OUTCOME MEASUREMENT OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS

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Division of Library and Information Services
Florida Department of State

Developed at the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and information Services, Bureau of Library Development with Elizabeth Sadlon, Eileen Boyle and Ruth O'Donnell.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Section I.1. Introduction and History

Inspired by a federal pilot project and growing pressure to answer the question "what difference do library services make?" the State Library of Florida began to explore outcome measurement in the fall of 1998. In the months since, the Library has reviewed various approaches to outcome measurement and chosen one, provided extensive staff training, developed a plan for introducing outcome measurement to all libraries, and required outcome measurement for some projects in the 2000-2001 funding cycle for federal Library Services and Technology Act grants.

Human service providers of all types have been developing tools for years to measure progress toward their mission (the "bottom line" for human service organizations). Leading this effort has been United Way of America (UWA). In 1996, UWA published *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*. This manual and its accompanying materials[1] offer a simple, useful, and meaningful approach to measuring the impact of health and human service programs. This approach was developed by UWA together with public agencies and leading national non-profit organizations. In the years since, this model has been applied throughout United Way systems across the United States; training has been shared with non-profit organizations as well as public agencies, creating a common language.

The first step toward measuring the impact of Florida library programs came through the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). In 1998 the Institute of Museum and Library Services staff sought participation of state library agencies in a pilot project that would test the United Way of America's outcomes measurement approach in projects funded under LSTA. State Library Agencies were invited to submit applications to the Institute. Florida was one of five states (including Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Washington) selected to pilot the United Way of America model.

Beginning in 2001, Florida libraries will be required to use outcome measurement to demonstrate the impact of their LSTA-funded projects. Division staff will incorporate outcome measurement as one criterion for evaluating grant applications. Division staff will use outcome results to identify areas for technical assistance and support to libraries in an ongoing effort to improve funded projects and maximize the impact of LSTA funds.

This workbook

This workbook is designed to help libraries take the important step of considering the impact of their programs overall beyond the first steps of measuring individual LSTA projects. It is written to stand alone, to guide library staff with no specific training in the UWA model as they develop an outcomes measurement plan. While LSTA applications provided a simplified approach to this model, the workbook explains all the components as described by United Way of America in its logic model and measurement framework.

The United Way of America publication *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*, while not written specifically for a library audience, is an excellent companion resource to this workbook. It can be ordered by calling Sales/Service America at 800-772-0008 item number 0989.

Section I.2. What are "Outcomes"

Traditional Program Measurement
Traditionally we have measured library programs using inputs, activities and outputs.

Inputs are the resources used by the program, such as:
- Money
- Staff
- Facilities
- Volunteers
- Materials
- Equipment

Activities are the services provided by the program and can be thought of as the "verbs" of the program. They might include:
- Training
- Tutoring

Outputs are the products that result from the activities. Through outputs we "count" what the program does. Examples are:
- Number of participants
- Frequency of class
- Hours of tutoring
- Circulation

By measuring outputs, we know how much has happened but do not know how much of a difference has been made.

In recent years, however, libraries have felt the pressure to know and report *more* about their programs. Funders, donors, other supporters, and the general public ask the question "How do we know the dollars make a difference?" Program people will confidently reply that they see good things happening as a result of their work, citing inspiring stories and individual successes. More and more, these external constituents pressured libraries to answer with more concrete, compelling results.

Internal pressure is also built from boards, management, and staff who want to know "How do we best use our scarce resources?" Given the extensive need in our communities, and the variety of ways to address the needs, those inside the libraries need to make careful decisions of how to spend the resources they have.

United Way of America's Outcome Measurement Model

United Way of America (UWA) is a national parent organization that provides research, training, and information to its member organizations nation-wide. In the mid-nineties, UWA recognized that many of the agencies funded by its local organizations faced the "pressure to know more." In response, UWA gathered together national leaders in public and non-profit organizations to develop a response.

The result is a simple, straightforward model of outcome measurement. This model takes traditional measurement one step further.

Outcomes measure the benefits for the patrons – the changes in knowledge, skills, behavior, or condition. Examples are:

- Patrons know how to use a computer to access information
- Parents read to their children

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Resources used by the program	"Verbs" of the program	Counts of activities	Measures of client change

Language

"Outcomes" vs "outputs" vs "objectives" vs "goals." Aren't we just splitting hairs?

Although it may seem that many of the differences we are exploring here are purely semantic, these distinctions reinforce the usefulness of the model. A significant benefit of adopting this outcomes model is that it develops a common language across all users.

Section I.3. Why Measure Outcomes

Improve programs The foremost reason to measure outcomes is to improve programs. Comparing data on the impact made with the results intended, staff can improve quality when they:

- Identify program areas for improvement
- Provide direction to staff
- Identify training needs
- Disseminate effective program components

Improve planning Outcome measurement is an outgrowth of effective agency planning. The planning process identifies an agency's or program's vision and mission, then determines goals and objectives. An outcome measurement system helps your library measure its effectiveness in achieving those goals and objectives.

Increase accountability The increased public pressure to know that dollars are well spent has led to an emphasis on program accountability. Outcomes allow libraries to respond to public cynicism about the effectiveness of any programs to make a difference in people's lives. Demonstrated results increase the public's confidence that what we do *works*.

Assure best use of funds Outcomes respond to governing body and staff questions about appropriate allocation of funds. Results can help identify excellent programs worthy of expansion and help detect and address ineffective programs. Resources can be focused where they have the greatest impact.

Compare programs locally and across regions As more libraries use the same language and measures, it will be possible to compare programs across the state and beyond. Staff can then share best practices to improve the quality of services overall.

Communicate with funders and the community Simple, compelling, and meaningful outcomes will help you communicate the importance of what you do.

Why Change?

We're just getting comfortable with the evaluation system we've been using for years. Now you're changing everything. Why is this better than what we're already doing?

"The numbers we have don't answer "so what." We have lots of data, but they don't prove anything. We need to validate our libraries every day."

"But we do have a foundation. Although we may not have used this model in the past, much of what we measure does fit – especially in the outputs areas."

"This gives us some structure to organize our thinking, evaluation, and improvement. In addition, the State Library offers training and technical assistance to help us learn this approach."

"There are many hands out competing for the same dollars. By demonstrating the impact of our programs, we are in a better position to receive the support."

"Communities are taking a broad view of services, looking for community-wide impact. By adopting this approach we are positioning ourselves to communicate our impact and be recognized as a player."

"Just because we always have**…** is not a good reason to do something today!"

"Because we have to! Ultimately, even if we don't buy the good that outcomes can do for our libraries, our funders are telling us we need to do this – so we must!"

Section I.4. Common Concerns About Measuring Outcomes

Concern #1: This will take more work and resources
Setting up an outcomes measurement system may be an investment if your organization does not have an established data management or quality control system. Other organizations have found the return on this investment to be more than paid back in the quality of information that is received.

On an ongoing basis, you can manage the amount of time and resources that are devoted to data collection and analysis. A basic minimum is required for effective management practices. But are you certain that all resources currently spent on program evaluation are well used? As you implement your outcomes system, conduct a thorough review of all data management. Eliminate any data collection that does not directly impact a decision.

Concern #2: Our program is hard to measure
Some programs are harder to measure than others, especially those that provide services over a very brief time period or to anonymous customers.

Remember that this approach has been used across the country since the mid-90s. Libraries in other states in addition to Florida are testing the same system. Together, these groups are finding ways to measure programs.

In addition, the State Library has developed model outcomes for Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant categories. Using these models as a place to begin, you will find that programs can be measured.

Concern #3: This will require us to intrude in patrons' business
Just as with hard-to-measure programs, there are others across the country struggling with this issue. Tools and measures are being developed to balance the need for information with the patrons' confidentiality.

Concern #4: The numbers will become more important than people
Most funding is typically determined based on more than a single outcome result. A variety of other factors will always come into play, including need for the service, program design, and population served.

As a manager, you will lead your staff in keeping the same balance within the program. Qualitative reviews and ongoing assessments will combine with the quantitative results to form a whole picture of the program and its effectiveness.

Concern #5: We do not have the skills to do this
Many libraries do not have the luxury of skilled evaluators on staff. One advantage of the United Way of America model is that people with basic evaluation skills can effectively generate and analyze the data. State Library staff have developed many of the tools needed, and will reinforce the outcome skills you need. Ongoing technical assistance is always available.

Concern #6: What if our results look bad?
Most funders would much rather know that *you know* that your program was not achieving as expected and have *developed an improvement plan*. By identifying these areas, together we can find ways to improve.

Concern #7: This is just another passing management fad
Given the breadth (over ten years' experience) and depth (federal through local public funders, private foundations, United Way) of demand for outcome measurement, it is becoming clear that this expectation will not go away. The technique will change as it evolves, improving as more organizations use it. The expectation that programs are accountable for results is here to stay.

CHAPTER II: ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS SURVEY

Section II.1. Overview

The purpose of the readiness survey is to help your library identify areas of the organization that need strengthening before beginning work on an outcomes measurement system. (This survey is in Appendix I.)

As an initial screen, you will review and determine the commitment of the library director to this effort. Once that commitment has been established, there are five key areas that will indicate the readiness of your library to launch an outcomes measurement system. This survey will review each of the following:

- Board Leadership
- Staff Leadership
- Organizational Stability
- Staff Skills and Structure
- Data System

Through the review you will consider a series of questions. Please answer each as truthfully as possible. You will not be required to share the results of the survey with anyone outside your library. A thoughtful and accurate evaluation of readiness will allow you to identify areas to strengthen, thereby increasing the effectiveness of your outcomes program.

"Who Completes the Readiness Survey?"

One option is for an **individual** such as the director, a planning person, or an evaluation person to complete the survey.
Advantages:

- Relatively quick

Disadvantages:

- Limited viewpoint; may need to go to others to collect information
- Easier to overlook problem areas

Another approach is for a **group** to complete the survey, perhaps an advisory or planning board.
Advantages:

- Broader perspectives and access to information
- More likely to challenge answers
- Will build buy-in from the participants

Disadvantages:

- Creates additional meeting(s)
- Takes more time

CHAPTER III: PREPARING FOR OUTCOMES

SECTION III.1. ASSEMBLE YOUR WORKGROUP

Members of the workgroup

The workgroup should include no more than six members, depending on the size of your library and the program, and whether the program includes outside partnerships. Since this is truly a task-oriented working group, and not a board or advisory group, a smaller size is more effective.

In identifying potential workgroup members, start by listing all possible members, using the worksheet provided. Use the checklist on the worksheet in Appendix II to assist you in narrowing down your list. After the list is narrowed down to the best working group, you will still want to keep your first list. The workgroup will very likely use those persons you have identified for feedback or as additional resources at different points in the outcome measurement process. Others from the list whose work will be impacted by outcome measurement, such as representatives from additional program sites, will need to stay informed even though they do not participate actively in the workgroup.

Other Planning Committees

If your library already has an active committee working on your Planning For Results or a long range plan, it will be useful to consider the composition of this group and the potential of coordinating efforts. If the current planning group consists primarily of local residents and does not include the kinds of expertise described below, or is a group already so busy with its planning work that it will be unable to focus on outcome evaluation, then communication and coordination through one common member may be most effective. If the current planning group consists of many of the same people identified for outcomes evaluation, you may consider using the group for your workgroup, and simply adding a member or two as necessary.

Smaller Libraries

Some libraries may have only a few staff members. If this applies to your library, you may rely more on program partners and volunteers, and your workgroup may be smaller as each staff person at your library wears more hats. You will still find it more valuable to have a group work on outcome measurement rather than doing it yourself. Refer to section 10 of the workbook for additional resources you may draw upon as you work through the process.

Possible workgroup members include:

- ❑ Library director
- ❑ Program director/manager
- ❑ Grant writer
- ❑ Data manager
- ❑ Representative of advisory board
- ❑ Members of current or recent planning group
- ❑ For multi-site programs, representation from each program site
- ❑ Consultant/trainer
- ❑ Representative of program partners (i.e., health care provider and community services provider)

Depending on the size of your library and other factors, some of the roles identified above maybe the same.

Criteria to consider in narrowing down the list include:

- ❑ Each person has the time available to commit to participation
- ❑ One person who can provide leadership by convening meetings, setting the pace and ensuring that other members meet their responsibilities to the workgroup
- ❑ One person has the skills and time to facilitate the group process, and has participated in training on outcome measurement
- ❑ One person has experience in data collection and analysis
- ❑ One person has experience with the specific program (if your workgroup will be developing and managing outcome measurement for more than one program, you may need more than one "program person")
- ❑ One person is an active participant in your long range planning process (if applicable)

Once you have a list narrowed down to the target number of members, invite them to an initial orientation and planning meeting. (See Appendix II for more suggestions on preparing for workgroup meetings.)

<u>How much time do workgroup members need to commit?</u>

One of the first questions potential workgroup members will ask you is "how much time will it take?" There is no simple answer and the answer will be more clear following the second meeting of the workgroup when you establish a timeline. However a good working plan is that monthly meetings lasting 2 hours each will be sufficient for workgroup meetings. Each member may have additional work between meetings. Some individuals, such as the grant writer, will be doing additional work at various times based on their job.

(Add in specific list of times for each major segment of work, and add it all up)

Responsibilities of the workgroup

a) Provide leadership, with the library director, to outcome measurement
b) Understand outcome measurement and its value to your library and program
c) Incorporate past work from your long-range planning process
d) Communicate as appropriate with program staff and program partners
e) Identify resources needed for outcome measurement and plan to obtain those resources
f) Complete all tasks required for outcome measurement

Workgroup tasks

a) Develop a timeline
b) Regularly communicate progress to the rest of the organization
c) Review results of readiness survey
d) Create a one-page summary of the program: a "logic model"
e) Identify outcomes to measure
f) Identify outcome indicators
g) Develop a data collection plan
h) Monitor data analysis and reporting
i) Evaluate the results of the outcome measurement process and make necessary changes
j) Communicate results to the outside community

SECTION III.2. DEVELOP A TIMELINE

The first task for your workgroup is to develop a timeline for outcome measurement. Just as a timeline is a useful management tool for your program, it is a critical tool to help the workgroup stay on track in the outcome measurement process.

> How will a timeline help us?
>
> A timeline is an important part of the action plan because it helps the program coordinator to manage all of the elements necessary to keep the program on track and assess progress toward the objectives. A timeline will also allow the library to mark accomplishment milestones that can be communicated to stakeholders and to update the action plan to accommodate inevitable changes during implementation.
>
> Setting activities out in a timeline allows the library to see the "trigger points" in the sequence where a program review (evaluation) should be done. This will assure a smooth transition through each phase of implementation. Also, be sure to build in time for staff to become comfortable with new technology [or process]. Their comfort and confidence will positively influence their interaction with the public.
>
> LSTA Grant Writing Workshop, January 1999

Outcome measurement is a long-term, ongoing process, with a potentially more intense start-up phase. Start to create your timeline by identifying several key deadlines and drop these milestones, into the timeline worksheet. This worksheet is provided in Appendix III.

Once you have identified these key dates and entered them in the worksheet, it is time to fill in the blanks. Identify specific deadlines for each task indicated on the timeline. Many of the activities will be completed by the workgroup, others by individual members of the workgroup or library staff or partners who are not a part of the workgroup. Indicate the lead person responsible for the completion of each activity.

The timeline will assist you in setting the pace of your workgroup meetings as well as planning the agenda for those meetings. As your workgroup thinks and works through outcome measurement, there may be additional key points in the process that are relevant to your program or organization but are not included in the timeline worksheet. Add these to the worksheet.

Each time the workgroup meets, check your progress against the timeline. Adjust it as necessary, keeping in mind that certain dates, including the grant deadlines for submission of logic model and data, midyear and annual report are fixed.

Please refer to United Way of America's *Measuring Program Outcomes*, for additional information about the development of your timeline. A sample schedule, which describes the order and length of time each step will reasonably take to complete, is provided in Appendix III.

Section III.3. Incorporate Planning Information

Developing your Program Overview

This section of the outcome measurement workbook will assist your workgroup in developing the framework or background for your program's logic model and outcome measurement system. It will also help you to demonstrate how well your program fits with local funding objectives, as well as your library's mission. The last part of this section will discuss how to build on the goals and objectives you developed in your planning process for your outcome measurement process.

At this stage in the process, it will be useful for your workgroup to review and utilize the planning materials including the written plan developed through your most recent planning effort. In addition to having a copy of your written plan, materials created through that planning process may save you additional time and resources in outcome measurement.

If you have included someone from your library's planning process in the outcome measurement workgroup, you may consider asking that person to provide leadership to the workgroup through this step of the process. If you have not included someone from your library's planning process in your workgroup, now is a good time to draw on that resource.

Use the worksheet and sample in Appendix IV as a guide for developing the program overview using information from your various planning documents.

Building on Your Long Range Plan

The outcome measurement process is a logical "next step" to your long range planning process. Through your long-range planning process you have identified your library's mission, goals, objectives and activities. Outcome measurement gives you the tools to truly understand how well the services you provide are assisting you in reaching those goals. Outcome measurement allows you to demonstrate whether you are meeting the goals of that plan through measuring the results of your programs, and, if you are not, helps you to improve your program so it can get the results you want.

In developing your long-range plan you identified goals, objectives and activities for library service. You can use this as a foundation for building your outcome measurement system. While outcome measurement is a natural extension of planning, the language used to describe some of the components may cause some confusion. The table below outlines key words and concepts in each system, to assist you in making the transition smoothly.

As you follow the steps outlined in this workbook, refer to your planning document periodically. Try not to get too focused on language or the differences in the processes. Just let the experience and work that went into creating your planning document assist you as you move through outcome measurement.

CHAPTER IV: LOGIC MODEL

Workgroup Leader's Notes:

Activity: Develop Logic Model
Time: 4 hours
Sections:

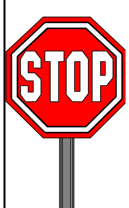
A. Where are We Going? *Longer-term outcomes*
B. What Resources Do We Need? *Inputs*
C. How Do We Get There? *Activities*
D. Counting *Outputs*
E. Bridging Outputs to Longer-Term Outcomes
F. Pulling it All Together – The Logic Model

Section IV.1. Overview

The foundation of your outcome measurement system is a Logic Model. The Logic Model is a one-page description of your program that uses a simple but specific format. It provides enough information that a person who knows nothing about your program can get a very clear sense of what you do, whom you serve, and what results you expect.

The process of developing a Logic Model often helps a workgroup focus on the most important parts of program design, raise and explore philosophical issues, and agree on the ultimate results of the program.

<u>Did You Skip the Readiness Survey?</u>



If you have not completed the Readiness Survey, you may want to return to Chapter 2. Investing a small amount of time in this review before launching an outcomes system could improve your effectiveness in the long run!

Components of the Logic Model

From Program Overview Worksheet:
- Program name
- Program mission or purpose
- Population served

To be developed:
- Inputs
- Activities
- Outputs
- Initial Outcomes
- Intermediate Outcomes
- Longer-term Outcomes

Logic Model

Program Name ___________________________ Population served _____________

Program Summary ____

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes

Why Does it Look Different?

If you completed a grant application for a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the State Library, you will notice some similarities and differences between the LSTA Outcomes Plan and the logic model. All definitions and language are the same. The LSTA Outcomes Plan is a simplified version designed to measure a specific, often short-term, project. This full representation of the United Way of America model works for projects and also for longer-term and bigger-picture programs.

The workgroup will build a Logic Model one component at a time. Based on the planning review, you are ready to step back and ask “What are the ultimate results we want from this program?” These will become the longer-term outcomes. Once these outcomes are established, you will return to the “inputs” column and determine how to achieve the desired longer-term outcomes.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes

Section IV.2. Where Are We Going? *Longer-Term Outcomes*

Definition of outcomes

Outcomes are *client-based:* they measure the changes in knowledge, skills, behavior or condition of the client as a result of the program. Although outcomes are an important and powerful way to measure the impact of your program, they are not the only information you will collect. Outcomes will complement, not replace, other important management information that includes data on outputs, client demographics, and internal program operations.

Effective outcomes are concrete, objective, measurable, and client-focused. Outcomes will build on each other over time.

IF an initial outcome is achieved

THEN

an intermediate outcome occurs

IF an intermediate outcome occurs

THEN

a longer-term outcome occurs

<u>Initial – intermediate – longer term</u>

“*Initial outcomes* are the first benefits or changes participants experience, and are the ones most closely related to and influenced by the program’s outputs. Often, initial outcomes are changes in participants’ knowledge, attitudes, or skills. They are not ends in themselves, and may not be especially meaningful in terms of the quality of participants’ lives. However, they are necessary steps toward the desired ends, and therefore are important as indicators of participants’ progress toward those ends.

Intermediate outcomes link a program’s initial outcomes to the longer-term outcomes it desires for participants. They often are changes in behavior that result from participants’ new knowledge, attitudes, or skills.

Longer-term outcomes are the ultimate outcomes a program desires to achieve for its participants. They represent meaningful changes for participants, often in their condition or status. Although the program may hope that participants go even further in their growth and development and that similar changes will occur throughout the larger community, the program’s longer-term outcomes are the most removed benefits that it can reasonably expect to influence.**”**

United Way of America. *Measuring Program Outcomes.* Alexandria, Virginia. 1996, page 32.

“Initial” and “longer term” will mean different periods of time, depending on your program. For example, if you work with clients over several months in a literacy program, then the “initial outcome” might be after several weeks and “longer term” might be after a year.

At the other extreme, such as an information and referral service, your program may have one-time interaction with a client. In these cases, there may be an “initial” change in knowledge by the client, and the “longer-term” might be their action that day as a result of their knowledge.

Some programs, especially those that interact only once with a client, may have no intermediate outcome at all.

CRITERIA: LONGER-TERM OUTCOME
A longer-term outcome should meet the following criteria:

- Is client-focused
- Measures a change in knowledge, skills, behavior, or condition for the client
- The change is meaningful – it answers "why is this program important?"
- Is objective
- Is specific
- Identifies "who" achieves the outcome
- Describes a client-change that can be tied to the program (is not beyond the scope of the program)
- Describes a *single* client result – if the word "and" is included, see if you are addressing two different outcomes
- Is concise, clear, and lingo-free
- Represents the ultimate purpose of the program, measuring results as far in the future as the program can expect to have an impact

At this point, do not worry about including a *target* in the outcome that shows how many clients are expected to achieve it. Here are some examples of longer-term outcomes:

Program	**Possible Outcomes**
Early Literacy	• Parents understand the importance of child development • Parents read with their children
Family Literacy	• Adult learners increase their reading skills • Parents read with their children
Library Automation	• Patrons access information they previously could not • Patrons use information to improve the quality of their lives
Library Service to Older Adults	• Patrons learn how to access information on the internet • Patrons use information from the internet to improve their quality of life
Genealogy Services	• Patrons access genealogy information they previously could not • Patrons use information to improve the quality of their lives
Homework Centers	• Patrons use information to assist them with formal education studies

It is important to go through the process of identifying outcomes for your program. Through this process, you will address important questions about the purpose of what you do and the results you expect to achieve. Working through this process can be valuable in creating focus and a common approach to the program. In addition, the Logic Model is an important way for a program to communicate its philosophy. Although two libraries may provide a similar program, their approaches may vary.

Identifying the Program's Clients

Since outcomes are client-based, you must know who your client is before identifying outcomes. For programs that provide a single, specific service (such as software training for older adults) this is straightforward. For some programs, there are multiple clients, such as the parents and children involved in family literacy programs. In other programs, it is more difficult to determine your client, such as a library automation program.

To identify your clients, the workgroup should address the following questions:

- Who participates in our program activities?
- Whose life do we change as a result of the program?
- Who should demonstrate improvement as a result of the program?
- When we review the mission or purpose of the program, who is our target?

Program clients

Identifying Longer-Term Outcomes

Once you have agreed upon your clients, begin to identify your longer-term outcomes by asking the following series of questions. (For additional information, see United Way of America Measuring Program Outcomes Manual.)

- How far into the future can we expect to impact our clients' lives?
- What changes will we see in our clients when we have achieved our mission?
- What new behaviors will clients show as a result of the program?
- What stories do we tell to demonstrate our program's success? What outcomes are reflected in those stories?
- How does our local philosophy or approach make our program different from similar programs in other parts of the state? What client changes do we expect to see as a result of those commitments?

The workgroup will brainstorm a list of possible longer-term outcomes. Accept all suggestions at this point, focusing on thinking of as many outcomes as possible, not on the merits of each suggestion. Try not to worry at this point about how you're going to measure the longer-term outcomes.

Once you have generated this list, cluster similar ideas. Review each proposed outcome against the Criteria List and be sure it is truly an outcome. Rewrite the outcomes to be as clear and concise as possible. Think about how the outcomes build on each other in "If/Then" chains. Identify longer-term outcomes by choosing those that are as far in the future as the program can reasonably expect to have an impact.

From this revised and reviewed list, identify the most important longer-term outcomes. Programs may have different numbers of longer-term outcomes – choose the smallest number that will reflect the heart and ultimate purpose of the program. *Record the most important longer-term outcomes under column I and the remaining longer-term outcomes under column II.*

Don't lose track of the outcomes you identified but did not choose as longer-term. You will incorporate them later in the process. *Record these outcomes in column III.*

I. Priority Longer-Term Outcomes	**II. Other Longer-Term Outcomes**	**III. Outcomes that are not Longer-Term**

Section IV.3. What Resources Do We Need? *Inputs*

Once you have identified your longer-term outcomes, you have a sense of where the program is headed. Now you will return to the first column of the Logic Model and determine what you need to accomplish those outcomes.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes

DEFINITION OF INPUTS:
Inputs are the resources used by a program, such as money, staff, facilities, or volunteers. Inputs may include referrals from other organizations (i.e. if a school identifies children for a reading program).

CRITERIA: INPUTS
- Identifies a resource used by the program
- Identifies a *single* input
- Is concise, clear and lingo-free
- Is quantified if possible

Some examples:
- 3 full-time staff
- 20 trained volunteers
- County grant funding
- 5 networked computers with Internet access
- Library facilities
- Library collection

Again using the brainstorming method, identify all possible inputs. Once all ideas have been listed, combine similar ideas, review and revise. Check each suggested input against the criteria list. Agree upon a list that reflects the major inputs of the program.

Program Inputs

Section IV.4. How Do We Get There? *Activities*

What happens with those inputs? The next step in building the Logic Model is to determine the activities.

DEFINITION OF ACTIVITIES:
Activities are what a program does using its inputs to achieve its purpose or mission. Activities are the “verbs” of a program. They are focused on the client, such as “provide adult literacy classes,” not on the operations of the program, such as “prepare training curriculum.”

But in Planning for Results…

The activities you developed in your long-range plan may include many that are program-related. Examples of these might be “hire new staff,” “revise written materials,” or “develop checklist.”

The activities we focus on when measuring client outcomes are those that provide service to the clients. This is a subset of the activities that might be on your plan.

CRITERIA: ACTIVITIES
- Shows what the program does
- Identifies a *single* activity
- Is concise, clear and lingo-free
- Focuses on client services

Some examples:
- Organize developmental experiences for children
- Train participants in methods of searching the internet

Brainstorm, review and revise a list of activities of the program.

Program Activities

Section IV.5. Counting *Outputs*

You are probably quite familiar with measuring the next stage of the Logic Model: the outputs. These will continue to be important pieces of information to collect.

DEFINITION OF OUTPUTS:
Outputs are the direct products of the program activities. Outputs will measure "how many" for the activities… "how many" classes, "how many" participants, "how many" hours of service. Often (but not always) an output is simply an activity that has been quantified.

CRITERIA: OUTPUTS
- Identifies the result of program activities
- Is quantified
- Measures a *single* activity
- Is concise, clear, and jargon-free
- Does not measure a change for the client (that would be an outcome)

Some examples:
- Ten adult literacy classes
- Developmental experiences for 100 children
- Train 50 participants in accessing the Internet

Outputs are generally stated for a one-year period. Brainstorm, review and revise a list of activities of the program.

Traditionally, programs have measured their effectiveness through outputs: we have served 1,000 people; we have held 100 classes; we have provided 50 hours of training. With the push toward outcomes, these measures continue to be important but are no longer the final step in measurement.

Many funders continue to require that programs measure and report their outputs. At this point, bring together the reporting requirements from any funders that support this program. Identify any outputs that they require. *Note that some funders may use the word "outcome," or perhaps objective or goal, to refer to a measurement that is considered an "output" in our terminology.*

Add to your list any outputs of this program that must be measured and reported. By incorporating the requirements of all funders, the Logic Model will organize your data collection needs in one central tool.

Program Output	**Required by (name funder if appropriate)**

Section IV.6. Bridging Outputs to Longer-Term Outcomes

Now that you have determined the program's inputs, activities, and outputs, it is time to complete the Logic Model by identifying the initial and intermediate outcomes.

CRITERIA: OUTCOMES
An outcome should meet the following criteria:
- Is client-focused
- Measures a change in knowledge, skills, behavior, or condition for the client
- The change is meaningful – it answers "why is this program important?"
- Is objective
- Is specific
- Identifies "who" achieves the outcome
- Describes a client-change that can be tied to the program (is not beyond the scope of the program)
- Describes a *single* client result – if the word "and" is included, see if you are addressing two different outcomes
- Is concise, clear, and jargon-free

Issues in Defining Outcomes

Measuring Program Outcomes discusses a series of principles for identifying program outcomes. Please see pages 49-52 for a discussion of the following issues:
- There is not a right number of outcomes for a program
- Some programs may have more than one "outcome track"
- For some programs, initial outcomes may be arguably closer to outputs

- The more immediate the outcome, the more influence a program generally has on its achievement
- Conversely, the longer term the outcome, the less direct influence a program has over its achievement
- Just because other forces may affect an outcome does not mean that it should be excluded from a program's logic model
- On the other hand, a program's longer-term outcomes should not go beyond the program's purpose
- Similarly, a program's outcomes should not go beyond the scope of its target audience
- It is important to consider carefully what unintended and possibly negative consequences your program may have for its participants or the community

Link the program's outcomes together in "If/Then" chains. Each program will have a different flow of outcomes. An initial outcome may lead to two intermediate then one longer-term outcome. All initial and intermediate outcomes may lead to the same longer-term outcome. Use the examples to generate ideas, but build your Logic Model to reflect the reality of your program.

Revising Longer-Term Outcomes

You may find, as you move through this process, that you need to revise the longer-term outcomes you identified earlier. Indeed, each step of the process may require fine-tuning of other steps. Feel free to make these improvements.

Once you have built the outcomes portion of the Logic Model, identify any outcomes that are required, and verify that they are included in the Logic Model. You may find that you need to change the wording of an outcome so you are able to collect the information in a format required by an outside organization. The objective is to create a single tool that organizes and describes the output and outcome data you collect.

Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-Term Outcomes

Section IV.7. Pulling It All Together – The Logic Model

The complete Logic Model should provide a one-page snapshot of your program.

CRITERIA: LOGIC MODEL

- Taken as a whole, the Logic Model accurately represents what happens in the program
- The logic model will communicate the benefits of the program to a wide audience, including people who are not familiar with the program

- The outcomes build on each other from initial to intermediate to longer term as appropriate
- The outcomes indicate client progress or improvement
- The outcomes measure meaningful client changes that result from participating in the program
- The outcomes support the purpose or mission of the program
- Fits on one page (in a readable font!)

As you review the Logic Model in its entirety, you may continue to fine-tune it.

Congratulations! You now have a powerful one-page description of your program. This is a big accomplishment. Be sure to share the Logic Model with staff, volunteers, and others involved with the program to bring in their comments as well as to communicate your priorities.

CHAPTER V. DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Workgroup Leader's Notes:

Activity: Develop Data Collection Plan
Time: 4 hours
Sections:

A. Identifying outcomes to measure
B. Defining indicators
C. Choosing data sources and methods
D. Setting targets
E. Determining influencing factors
F. Pulling it All Together – the Data Collection Plan

Section V.1. Overview

The Logic Model describes your entire program. The next step is for the workgroup to identify which of the outcomes on the logic model you will measure. This section takes you through the steps of choosing outcomes, and determining whether your program participants have achieved those outcomes.

Components of the Data Collection Plan

- Program name
- Outcomes chosen to measure
- Indicators
- Sources and methods
- Influencing factors

Outcomes	Indicators	Source/Method

Just as we did with the logic model, we will build the data collection plan one step at a time.

Section V.2. Identifying Outcomes to Measure

Depending on your program, the number of outcomes on your logic model will vary. Regardless, it is inadvisable for you to attempt to measure all the outcomes on your logic model when you first design your outcomes system. Indeed, even when the system is fully implemented you may not measure all the outcomes of your program.

Considerations when choosing the first outcomes to measure:

- Measure what will be simple to begin with; measure what you already collect data on
  Note: If there are initial, intermediate, and longer-term, the initial outcomes are often easier to measure. Perhaps wait until later in your outcome measurement efforts to tackle the longer-term outcomes.
- Focus on areas where you want to improve or you have a sense that the information you collect will help you make a significant program improvement
- If there are different activities, clients, or “chains” in the logic model, choose an outcome from each
- Measure outcomes that the public will easily understand and where results will be meaningful to those outside the program

Record the outcomes you have chosen to measure and report:

Outcome

Section V.3. How will we know? *Indicators*

Once it has chosen the outcomes to measure, the workgroup must decide how you will know if each client has achieved that outcome.

DEFINITION OF INDICATORS
Indicators show you how well the program is doing on an outcome. An indicator answers the question "how do we know that an outcome is achieved?" It is the statistics or data you gather to prove your results.

Each outcome must have at least one indicator. Indicators usually begin with the phrase "number and percent." For example, the outcome "children learn to read" may be measured using the indicator "number and percent of children who improve their reading one grade level."

CRITERIA: INDICATOR
- Is objective
- Is observable
- Is measurable
- Is specific
- Shows that the outcome has been achieved ("proves" the client did or did not achieve the outcome)
- Measures one item (for example measures increased reading skill; not increased reading and math skills)
- Measures at the individual client level (not group)
- Measures information that no other indicator measures
- Be stated as both number and percent

An example:

Program	**Outcome**	**Indicator**
Family Literacy	Adult learners increase their reading skills	# and % of participants who increase their reading level

Generate a list of all possible indicators. Some will be straightforward (for the outcome "students earn their GED" the indicator is "number and percent of students who complete their GED). Some will have more than one indicator (for the outcome "participants develop Internet skills" two indicators could be "number and percent of students who can conduct a search" and "number and percent of students who can send email messages.")

For some outcomes, you may feel that there is an almost endless list of possible indicators. In these situations, your objective is not to measure every part of the outcome, but to choose powerful indicators that will give you a good idea of client performance in that area.

Generate as many possibilities as possible, then choose with the following thoughts in mind:

- A small, manageable number per outcome – ideally no more than three indicators per outcome
- Indicators that measure different but very important aspects of the outcome
- Indicators that may shed light on different performance issues
- Those that are very specific and measurable

Outcome to be Measured	**Indicator(s)**

Evolution

Very often when you start identifying indicators, you will find that you want to change some of your outcomes. This is all part of the evolutionary improvement process – follow your ideas and change outcomes or any part of the logic model that you understand better as you move through the process.

Once you begin measuring outcomes, you will want to refrain from changing the logic model or data collection plan significantly. Be sure to give yourself opportunities at regular intervals (annually, or perhaps more often if your program timeframe is shorter) to revise the logic model and data collection plan.

Section V.4. How will we measure? *Sources and Methods*

At this point you must determine "who" will provide the information you need to measure your outcomes, and "how" it will be collected.

DEFINITION OF DATA SOURCES:
The Source for each outcome will provide the data, answering the "who" question. Possible sources include:

- The client
- Family members
- Program staff
- Volunteer observers
- Other organizations, such as a school system for student grades
- Existing program records
-

DEFINITION OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS:
The Method of data collection answers the "how" question. Possible methods include:

- Review of program records
- Questionnaire or survey
- Interview
- Rating by trained observer

Choosing Source-Method combinations
You will need to choose a Source – Method combination for each indicator you measure. When considering the possibilities, remember:

- Don't reinvent the wheel – access the many existing measurement tools
- Emphasize reliability of the tool– using a statistically tested and valid tool correctly will assure that you get meaningful information on your program
- Consider reliability of the source – new literacy students may not be able to accurately assess their reading level but could accurately tell how often they read the daily newspaper
- The person collecting the information may influence the results – a participant may give the "expected" response or be hesitant to demonstrate an ineffective program when reporting to the staff
- Consider response rate in assessing the validity of the results
- Completion time – for client and staff or volunteer who administers it
- Cost

CRITERIA: SOURCES

- Identifies "who" provides the data
- There is at least one source for each indicator
- Is clear and specific
- Is unbiased (i.e. person providing the service does not measure it)
- The combination of sources for an indicator is likely to provide reliable information

CRITERIA: METHODS

- Identifies "how" the outcome will be measured

- There is at least one method for each indicator
- The method is tested and verifiable
- The combination of methods for an indicator is likely to provide the specific data needed to determine whether the outcome has been met

Some examples:

Grant Category	**Outcome**	**Indicator**	**Source/Method**
Born to Read	Parents read with their children	# and % of participants who take out a children's library book within a week of the program	Library circulation records
Grant Category	**Outcome**	**Indicator**	**Source/Method**
Family Literacy	Adult learners increase their reading skills	# and % of participants who increase their reading level	Student reading evaluations

For each indicator, discuss the possible ways of measuring whether the outcome has been achieved. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each source-method combination.

Outcome	**Indicator**	**Source-Method**

Section V.5. Setting Targets

Whenever you measure the effectiveness of a program, the question arises, "How good can we be?" No program can achieve 100% success with every client. But it is sometimes hard to know what success rate is acceptable.

This is where targets are helpful.

DEFINITION OF TARGETS
Targets are the numerical goals related to each outcome or indicator. The target communicates what number and percent of clients will succeed in this outcome.

If your program is new, you may not be able to set targets in the first year of measuring outcomes. Choosing a number out of the air is worse than having no target at all, since it is not based on any realistic expectations. Instead, you should plan to collect data for at least one service cycle (the length will depend on the program) and set targets from there. In addition, you can create your targets based on the success rates of similar programs in other communities.

Ways of setting targets
- Establishing baseline figures: gathering data for your own program and determining what level you want to achieve in the future
- Program history: tracking your program's success over time and setting targets for improvement
- Similar programs in Florida: reviewing the results and setting your targets accordingly; be sure the programs, populations, services, and measurement approaches are comparable
- Comparing similar programs at a national level
- Required by a funder:

For each outcome you will measure, the workgroup should discuss the data available and determine if you will set a target in the first year of measurement. If you will set a target, identify which information you will use and what the target is.

Outcome	**Way Of Setting Target**	**Target**

Section V.6. Influencing Factors

All clients do not achieve the same levels of success within a program. Some subgroups of participants may consistently perform better than others. In order to improve the program, it is important to understand which clients respond well and which are not succeeding. Influencing factors are used to understand the performance of subgroups of clients.

DEFINITION OF INFLUENCING FACTORS
Influencing factors are individual characteristics of clients that are likely to influence success in reaching an outcome. Influencing factors are used to analyze outcomes data for subgroups of clients so program staff can identify pockets of success.

Influencing factors are often demographic characteristics such as age, gender, or race. They are sometimes the level of difficulty of the case, or the geographic area the client lives in.

Some conditions may influence the program but are not considered influencing factors since they affect all clients equally, such as staff turnover, or a change in the service provided. These conditions may be important to consider as you improve the program but are not part of the client outcome measurement.

CRITERIA: INFLUENCING FACTORS
- Measure at the individual client level (not group)
- Likely to affect outcome in an important way
- Objective
- Observable
- Measurable
- Specific

Generate a list of possible influencing factors. From them, choose the one to three that are most likely to impact client success in the outcomes you will measure. There will be many influencing factors that you do not measure at this time. After measuring one set of influencing factors, you may find that they do not have an impact on client success and can then begin to measure other factors.

Influencing factors

Section V.7. Pulling It All Together – the Data Collection Plan

The one-page data collection plan defines how you will measure your client's success in each of the chosen outcomes. Together with the Logic Model it will demonstrate the effectiveness of your program.

Congratulations! You have now described your program in a one-page Logic Model and put together a plan for measuring your success. It is now time for the workgroup to lead the efforts to test your measurement system, collect data, and generate reports. With the data and reports, you will then be able to improve your program as well as demonstrate your effectiveness to funders.

Appendix I: Organizational Readiness Survey

Initial Screen: Director Commitment

The most critical predictor of a successful outcomes measurement system is the commitment of the Library Director. Before moving forward with the organizational readiness portion of the survey, consider the Director's demonstration of commitment through the following.

Condition	1 = has not happened	2 = is in process	3 = is complete!
Director understands the outcome measurement model	1	2	3
Director advocates for outcome measurement with the board/council/commission	1	2	3
Director has committed time on an ongoing basis to outcomes	1	2	3
Director has committed money to establishing an outcomes system	1	2	3
Director has committed to staff training and time to develop necessary skills	1	2	3

Total	

Score:

The Library Director has demonstrated sufficient commitment and resources if you score a **12 or higher**. If you score below a 12, it is necessary to develop and implement plans for making the necessary improvement.

For each condition listed under each key area, mark the response that is most accurate for your library. Total all scores in each key area.

1. Board leadership

Governance

Each public library has a governing body that provides leadership, sets policy, and is ultimately responsible for the organization. This group may or may not be called a "board." For this question, think about the people who provide the leadership to your library. If there are several groups, focus on the one that is most widely representative, ongoing, and involved in policy-setting. Some possibilities…

Advisory Board…
Board of Directors…
Board of Trustees…
Ad hoc planning group…
Board of County Commissioners…
City Council…

Condition	**1 = has not happened**	**2 = is in process**	**3 = is complete!**
I.1. Presentation of outcome materials at Board meeting: overview of concepts, purpose, benefits, impact on the organization, resources needed	1	2	3
I.2. At least one Board member acts as a "champion" for outcome measurement	1	2	3
I.3. Board incorporates outcome measurement into annual or long-range plan	1	2	3
I.4. Board commits financial resources for outcomes into annual budget	1	2	3
I.5. Board policy states their commitment to outcomes	1	2	3
I.6. Board creates a committee to plan and implement outcome measurement, or identifies board members to be part of a broader committee	1	2	3

Total	

2. Staff leadership

Condition	1 = has not happened	2 = is in process	3 = is complete!
II.1. Management staff attend training to learn about outcomes	1	2	3
II.2. Program-level staff attend training to learn about outcomes	1	2	3
II.3. Outcomes responsibilities are part of staff member(s)' job descriptions	1	2	3
II.4. Director emphasizes the use of data in staff and board decision-making	1	2	3
II.5. Reports to the Board include results of the program	1	2	3
II.6. Staff are assigned to outcomes planning committee and time is made for them to participate fully	1	2	3

Total	

3. Organizational stability

Condition	Yes	No
III.1. Director is new within the past six months or has announced he/she will leave	1	2
III.2. Key senior management position(s) recently new or about to turn over	1	2
III.3. Board turnover is greater than 30% in the past year	1	2
III.4. Staff turnover is greater than 30% in the past year	1	2
III.5. In the midst of a significant organizational change, i.e. moving facilities, computer system conversion	1	2
III.6. Severe financial troubles	1	2

Total	

4. Staff skills and structure

Condition	1 = has not happened	2 = is in process	3 = is complete!
IV.1. At least one staff person is trained and/or experienced in data collection: designing or selecting a valid instrument and data collection methodology; accurate methods for gathering and tracking data; systems for reporting results	1	2	3
IV.2. Staff with these skills are responsible for outcome measurement in their job descriptions	1	2	3
IV.3. Staff who write grants interface with program staff who collect data	1	2	3
IV.4. Program staff who collect data are trained in how to properly use the data collection tools	1	2	3
IV.5. All managers have a basic understanding of using data in decision making	1	2	3
IV.6. The library has Staff Development or Staff Training personnel who have attended outcome evaluation training	1	2	3

Total	

5. Data system*

Condition	1 = has not happened	2 = is in process	3 = is complete!
V.1. Data system has been reviewed for redundancies	1	2	3
V.2. Staff time is committed to managing and maintaining the system	1	2	3
V.3. The library uses all information that is collected	1	2	3
V.4. Sufficient computer resources are available	1	2	3
V.5. Data collection tools and reports have been tested for statistical validity	1	2	3
V.6. Partners are willing and able to contribute to data collection	1	2	3

Total	

* Note: A “data system” is how you collect, organize, and report program data. It may be a computerized database, or a series of hand-written tracking forms.

Results

Add the score in each category. For those areas that are not yet "Ready" develop a plan to increase your score. Determine a calendar of how long it will take to prepare.

	Score	Interpretation	Plan Needed
Board Leadership		16–18 = Ready! 12-15 = Need some work 6-11 = Need lots of work	
Staff Leadership		16–18 = Ready! 12-15 = Need some work 6-11 = Need lots of work	
Organizational Stability		12 = Ready! 10-11 = Caution! 6-9 = Need lots of work	
Staff Skills & Structure		16–18 = Ready! 12-15 = Need some work 6-11 = Need lots of work	
Data System		16–18 = Ready! 12-15 = Need some work 6-11 = Need lots of work	

Remember that the purpose of this tool is to help you identify areas for strengthening. It is not meant to discourage your efforts or activities, but is designed to help you realistically plan and move forward. There is no value in embarking on a new effort as significant as outcome measurement without the necessary organizational foundation behind you.

Appendix II: Workgroups

The first workgroup meeting: As shown in the sample agenda in Worksheet A, this first meeting will serve to provide a very brief overview of outcome measurement and what benefits there are for the library or program, and developing a game plan for the process. If your library director will not be a regular member of the ongoing workgroup, it will be useful to have him or her attend the first meeting to demonstrate your library's commitment to outcome measurement.

The second workgroup meeting: At the next meeting, the key agenda item is to develop a timeline (see section III.2) and begin working on the next steps. You will set additional meetings based on the pace determined by your timeline.

Future meetings: Develop your own agendas for future meeting based on your timeline and the pace you have set for the process. Chapter III will provide program leader tips and workgroup action items for that section, as well as an estimate of the time needed. Some sections will require more than one meeting. Your group may decide to spend a half-day working rather than two 2-hour meetings – this is entirely up to you and what works for your group.

Worksheet A: Identifying Workgroup Participants

	Name	Representation	Criteria	Best Fit
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				

In the criteria column, place one check (X) for each of the criteria that person meets. This will help you identify which five to six people will best meet the needs of the workgroup.

Worksheet B: Agenda for 1st Workgroup Meeting

Approximate time needed -- 2 hours

Welcome and Introductions	Library Director
Introduction to outcomes (*handout)*	Workgroup leader
Why outcomes *(handout)*	Library Director
Responsibilities of workgroup members	Workgroup leader
Identification of other important workgroup members/resources	All
Review of readiness survey results	Workgroup leader /all
Identification of tasks (based on readiness survey), who will be responsible for their completion, and deadline	All
Set next meeting date	All

Appendix III: Develop a Timeline

Sample schedule for first-time outcome measurement systems

Task	When	
Conduct readiness survey	month 1	January
Assemble your workgroup	month 1	January
Develop program purpose statement	month 2	February
Identify outcomes to be addressed	month 2	February
Create logic model	month 3-5	March - May
Identify outcomes to measure	month 4	April
Develop a data collection plan	month 5-6	May - June
Test your system	months 7-8	July - August
Analyze your results	month 9	September
Review and improve your system	month 9/continuous	September +++
Review and improve your program	month 9/continuous	September +++
Submit logic model and data collection plan	month 10	October
Program begins, outcome system in place	month 10	October

If you do not begin in January, adjust the timeline to fit your schedule. This sample offers a realistic timetable, but you may certainly spend more time, and some sections can be completed more rapidly by having the workgroup meet more frequently or for longer meetings.

In subsequent years, your workgroup will move more quickly through some steps, simply making improvements to the system in place. Nor will it be necessary in subsequent years to "test" and analyze your system.

Worksheet: Outcome Measurement Timeline

TASK	DEADLINE DATE	LEAD PERSON
Second workgroup meeting		
Develop a program mission statement		
Identify common outcomes to be addressed		
Create a logic model		
Identify outcomes to measure		
Develop a data collection plan: define indicators, data sources, data collection methods and targets		
Test your measurement system		
Analyze your results		
Review and improve your system		
Deadline to complete logic model		
Deadline to complete data and analysis		
Review and improve your system		
Communicate results externally		

Appendix IV: Incorporate Planning Information

Worksheet: Program Overview

Program name:

Library mission statement:

Program purpose summary:

Target population/estimated number of persons to be served:

Target population/characteristics of persons to be served:

Worksheet: SAMPLE Program Overview

Program name: The Library Summer Love-To-Read Program

Library mission statement: *From your planning process.*
The Sun County Public Library helps members of the community meet their need for information on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal interests. The Library provides materials for recreational reading, viewing and listening. It provides information about subjects of popular interest. It also assists individuals with their efforts at self-directed personal growth and development and provides resources to assist people in reaching their personal literacy goals.

Program purpose and summary: *For this worksheet, try to simplify the summary to just two or three sentences.*
To provide first through eighth grade students with fun reading activities, story-telling and personal interest exploration designed to foster a love of reading, encourage consistent family reading time and understand how to use the library as a source for information retrieval.

Target population/estimated number of persons to be served: 1,600

Target population/characteristics of persons to be served: *Identify general characteristics of your "audience." Demographic information can help you plan your program.*
First through eighth graders in the Everyville community. Most attend the Lincoln and King public schools. Most are from one- and two- parent families with moderate income levels. About 2/3 are Caucasian, 1/6 Hispanic and 1/6 African-American. Program specifically targets children who are not already regular library users.