Developing, Implementing, and Using Practical Evaluation of Oral Health Programs

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Objectives

- **To identify approaches to involving stakeholders in evaluation studies**
- **To increase understanding of how to make oral health evaluation studies more useful to potential users**
- **To articulate methods for increasing evaluation use by primary intended users.**
- **To describe key issues to be addressed in an evaluation**

What is Program Evaluation?

- *Program evaluation* is "the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future program development."

Steps in Developing an Evaluation Plan

1. Identify evaluation team/Involve stakeholders (<u>PRACTICAL USE</u>)
2. Develop a logic model
3. Develop evaluation questions
4. Identify potential sources of data collection and a system to collect that data
5. Identify methods of data analysis
6. Develop a preliminary dissemination plan
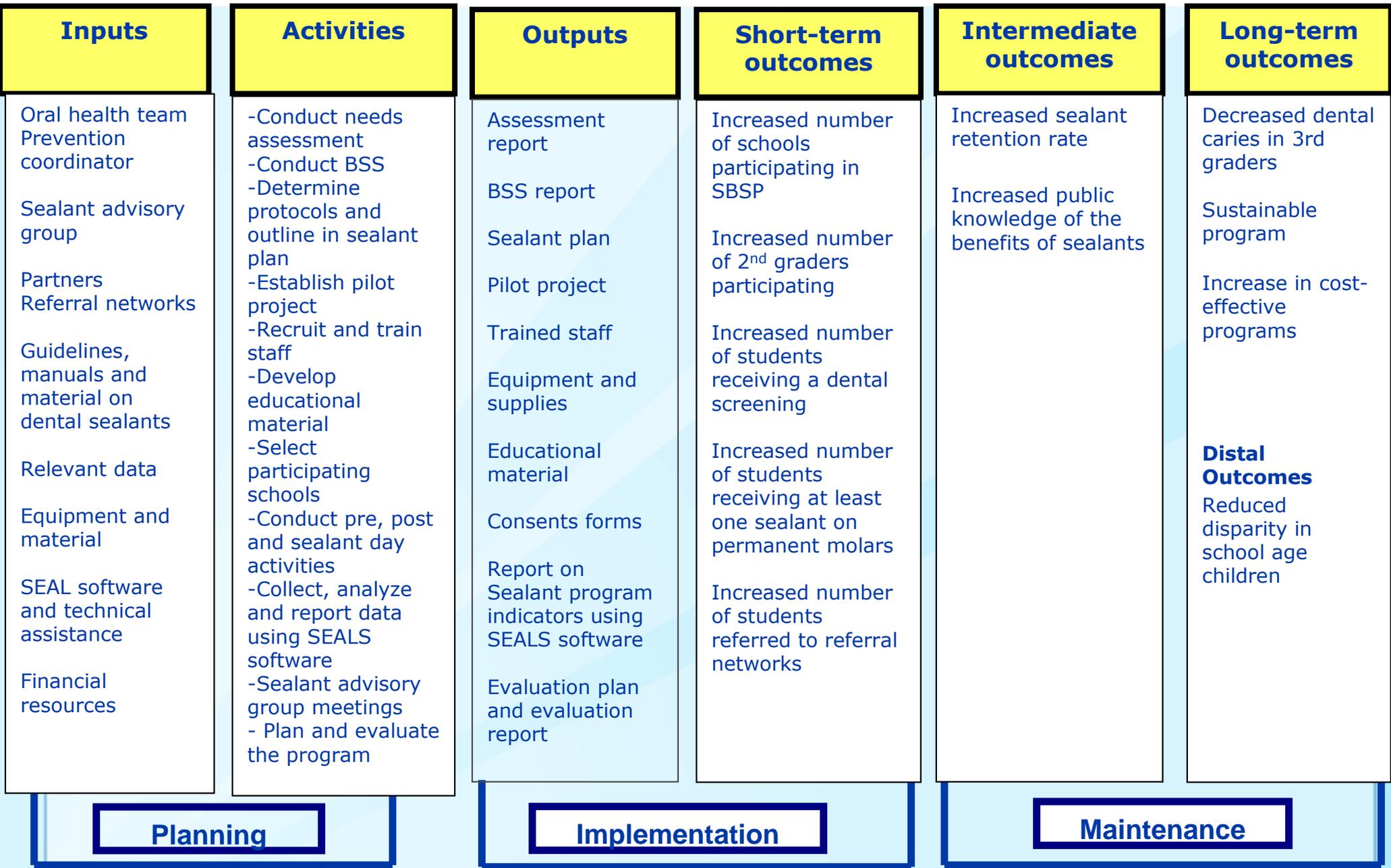
1. Evaluation Team/Users/ Stakeholders

- **Which users/stakeholders should be included?**
  - Primary intended users of the evaluation
  - Decision makers
  - Program staff
  - Partners
  - Served or affected by the program

2. Logic Model

- **Describes the sequence of events for bringing about change**

- **Components of a Logic Model**
  - **Resources (Inputs)**
  - **Activities (Strategies)**
  - **Outputs (Results of Strategies)**
  - **Expected Effects (Outcomes)**

- **Other Considerations**
  - **Stage of Development**
  - **Context**

Comprehensive School-based/linked Dental Sealant Program Logic Model Example

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Intermediate outcomes	Long-term outcomes
Oral health team Prevention coordinator	-Conduct needs assessment	Assessment report	Increased number of schools participating in SBSP	Increased sealant retention rate	Decreased dental caries in 3rd graders
Sealant advisory group	-Conduct BSS -Determine protocols and outline in sealant plan	BSS report	Increased number of 2nd graders participating	Increased public knowledge of the benefits of sealants	Sustainable program
Partners Referral networks	-Establish pilot project	Sealant plan			Increase in cost-effective programs
Guidelines, manuals and material on dental sealants	-Recruit and train staff -Develop educational material	Pilot project	Increased number of students receiving a dental screening		
Relevant data	-Select participating schools	Trained staff	Increased number of students receiving at least one sealant on permanent molars		**Distal Outcomes**
Equipment and material	-Conduct pre, post and sealant day activities	Equipment and supplies			Reduced disparity in school age children
SEAL software and technical assistance	-Collect, analyze and report data using SEALS software	Educational material	Increased number of students referred to referral networks		
Financial resources	-Sealant advisory group meetings - Plan and evaluate the program	Consents forms			
		Report on Sealant program indicators using SEALS software			
		Evaluation plan and evaluation report			

Planning	Implementation	Maintenance

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3. Evaluation Questions

- **What questions should evaluation answer?**
  - **Consider purpose of evaluation**
  - **Users and uses of evaluation**

- **Evaluation questions:**
  - **Dependent on the stage of development of the program**
  - **Identified by evaluation team**
  - **Prioritized based on importance and feasibility**
  - **Include both types - qualitative and quantitative**

Planning	Implementation	Maintenance
Inputs and Activities	**Activities and Short-term Outcomes**	**Intermediate and Long-term Outcomes**
Who are our stakeholders? Are these the right stakeholders for our program? What type of burden of oral disease data are available? What are the criteria for target schools and target population? Does our identified risk group reflect our state burden? What is the total number of eligible schools? What is the total number of children in the target grade of the target schools? What are the results of our environment assessment for readiness for the program implementation? What are the resources and support available for program implementation? What policies do we have to support oral health activities?	How does our overall implementation process work? How could the process be improved? What type of data are being used for evaluating program activities and what is accuracy and timeliness of this data? How far have we reached or fall short on meeting our goals? What are the challenges to the program? What is the level of understanding and support for the oral health program from stakeholders and the community? What is the quality of sealant placement? What is the retention rate?	How Is the sustainability of the oral health program being ensured? Are the right policies in place? Are they having the intended impact? What is the prevalence of caries? What are the levels of disparity for dental caries and untreated decay? What is the prevalence of untreated decay? What are the policies in place to support OH activities? Are these the right policies? What are the intended impact of these policies? What were the unintended effects (positive and negative) of the program? How was the cost effectiveness of the program assessed?

4. Methods

- **Evaluation results must provide a credible evidence and they must be seen as credible by evaluation's primary users**

Data Collection System and Sources

- **What data collection procedures best match the primary users, uses and questions?**
- **Is it possible to mix methods to overcome limitations of any single approach?**

4. Methods (Continued)

- Sources
  - What sources will be accessed to gather data?
  - What will be done to integrate multiple sources?
- Quality
  - Is the information trustworthy and reliable?
- Quantity
  - What amount of information is sufficient?
  - Is the respondent burden reasonable?
- Logistics
  - What techniques, timing and resources will be used to gather data?

5. Methods of Data Analysis

- Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis methods

6. Preliminary Dissemination Plan

- A Preliminary Dissemination Plan should be in place before the evaluation activities begin and should be discussed among the Evaluation Advisory Group members.

Summary

Essential element for program evaluation and its success:

- Stakeholder involvement

- Utilization Focused Evaluation

Workshop Activity

A "mock" evaluation consultation group meeting

To design an evaluation of an oral health initiative – School Based Sealant Program

Workshop Activity

- **Form an Evaluation Consultation Group (ECG)**
- **Each member assumes a role of one of the members in a face-to-face meeting**
- **Then the group works on the following:**
- ❖ **Purpose of the evaluation**
- ❖ **Primary intended users of the evaluation Uses of the evaluation**
- ❖ **Evaluation questions**
- ❖ **Methodologies to answer the questions**
- ❖ **Political considerations**