Leading by Convening (LbC):
Rubrics to Assess and Shape Practice

Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation

Evaluation goes beyond the collection of performance measurement data to collect information that explains performance levels. By engaging stakeholders meaningfully in evaluation, we learn the unique insights that can help us understand change.
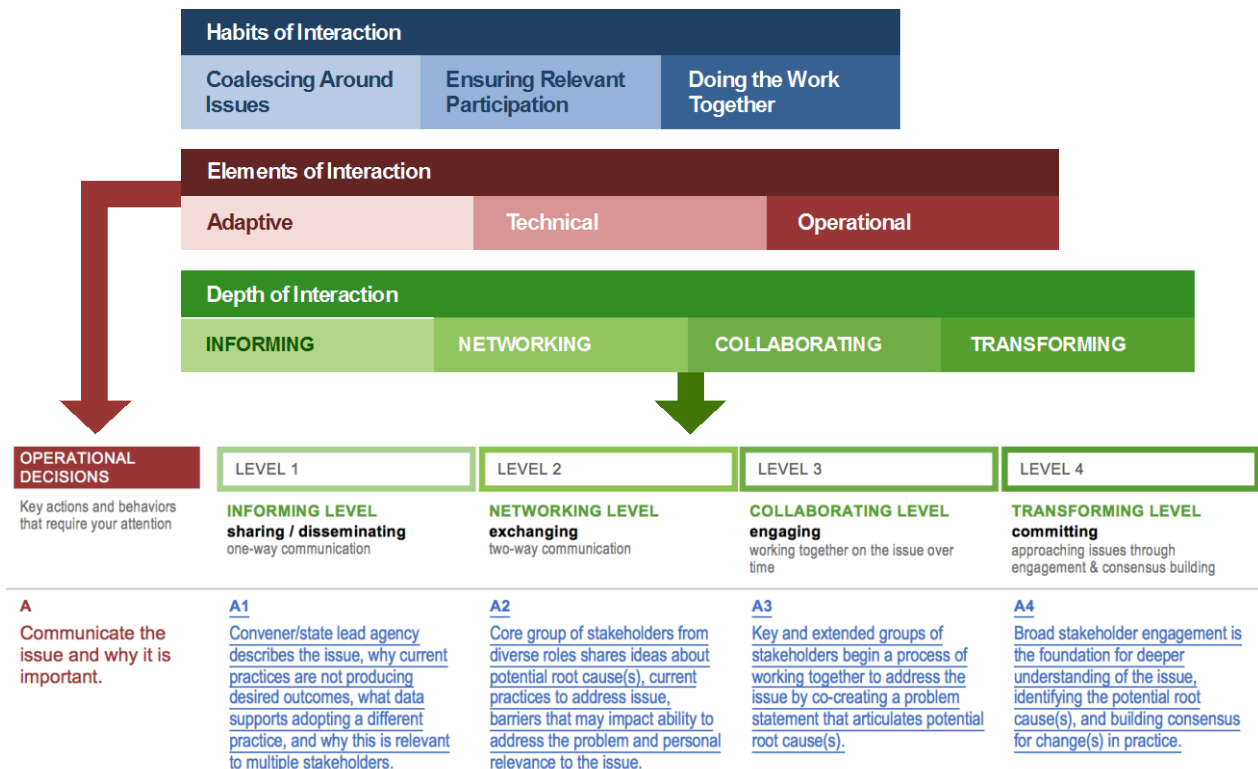
About the LbC Rubrics

Each LbC rubric describes a set of observable behaviors focused on a change in the practice of authentic stakeholder engagement. The rubrics can be used by teams to:

- discuss authentic engagement from the viewpoint of the stakeholders;
- assess current levels of interaction;
- guide future interaction;
- routinely assess changes in perception and practice; and
- chronicle changes in outcomes as engagement deepens.

Using the LbC Rubrics

The image below displays a graphic representation of the LbC framework and a rubric that is derived from it. LbC is based on three habits of interaction (Coalescing Around Issues, Ensuring Relevant Participation and Doing Work Together). These habits unpack into three elements of interaction (Adaptive, Technical, and Operational) that further unpack into four depths of interaction (Informing, Networking, Collaborating and Transforming).

The LbC rubrics use the operational elements and depths of interaction to help leaders and teams engage their stakeholders more actively. Rubrics typically list a criteria or behavior in the left column and describe levels of performance in columns moving to the right. This arrangement creates cells that describe the performance at each level for each criterion. In the LbC rubric below, the criterion column is called an "operational decision." Operational decisions result when a team examines both the technical and adaptive elements of the change it envisions and defines several important aspects of interaction that they will attend to over time.

| **Habits of Interaction** | | |
| Coalescing Around Issues | Ensuring Relevant Participation | Doing the Work Together |

| **Elements of Interaction** | | |
| Adaptive | Technical | Operational |

| **Depth of Interaction** | | | |
| INFORMING | NETWORKING | COLLABORATING | TRANSFORMING |

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Key actions and behaviors that require your attention	**INFORMING LEVEL** sharing / disseminating one-way communication	**NETWORKING LEVEL** exchanging two-way communication	**COLLABORATING LEVEL** engaging working together on the issue over time	**TRANSFORMING LEVEL** committing approaching issues through engagement & consensus building
A Communicate the issue and why it is important.	**A1** Convener/state lead agency describes the issue, why current practices are not producing desired outcomes, what data supports adopting a different practice, and why this is relevant to multiple stakeholders.	**A2** Core group of stakeholders from diverse roles shares ideas about potential root cause(s), current practices to address issue, barriers that may impact ability to address the problem and personal relevance to the issue.	**A3** Key and extended groups of stakeholders begin a process of working together to address the issue by co-creating a problem statement that articulates potential root cause(s).	**A4** Broad stakeholder engagement is the foundation for deeper understanding of the issue, identifying the potential root cause(s), and building consensus for change(s) in practice.

Each rubric is interactive. Follow the image below to see how you can interact with the rubrics as you move towards greater depths of interaction.

A1 – Resources to move from Informing to Networking

You are on the Informing Level. You are working towards the Networking Level.

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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A Communicate the issue and why it is important.	**A1** Convener/state lead agency provides information on evidence-based, evidence-informed, and promising practices and how they will address identified issue(s).	**A2** Core group of stakeholders from diverse roles shares their knowledge of effective practices, including levels of evidence, the context for implementation, and potential barriers.	**A3** Stakeholders from diverse roles collectively analyze practices based on the problem statement, available data, contextual variables, and structural challenges. They identify a new practice to address need.	**A4** Stakeholders fr[...] regularly work t[...] and analyze pra[...] to consensus o[...] implementation [...] evidence-based [...]

> The header helps to know where you are and where you are working towards.

Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Four Simple Questions**: Permits the convener and the stakeholders to communicate connections a[...] knowledge from the standpoint of others.
- Download the book, *Leading by Convening*.
  http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Leading by Convening 508.pdf

> Tools from LbC to help you move towards the next level are hyperlinked for quick access.

Leading by Convening
A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement

Resources beyond LbC

Research the array of federal investments on the EBP under consideration.
Begin with the OSEP Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network:

- Graphic Version
- Word Version

> Resources beyond LbC — such as slides, templates, toolkits and videos — are identified and hyperlinked.

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Use multiple means of representing information (*e.g.,* audio narration, slides, graphics, Venn diagram[...]
- Widely share resources and continuing education opportunities that are specific to the practice.

> Tips are given for each section.

RUBRIC
Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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A Stakeholder participation as an underlying value in evaluation.	**A1** Convener/state lead agency outlines the evaluation goal and process. They commission an external evaluation and inform the stakeholders that an evaluation is underway.	**A2** Convener/state lead agency invites a core group to review and give input on the evaluation design, focus, and process. They have a dialogue on the evaluation.	**A3** Convener/state lead agency, together with an expanded group of stakeholders, build understanding of the goals and use of evaluation. There is an expectation that stakeholders will inform evaluation efforts.	**A4** Convener/state lead agency ensure that those most impacted by the evaluation's results are the most engaged in the evaluation process. There is an expectation that stakeholders are partners in evaluation.
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A1 – Resources to move from Informing to Networking

You are on the Informing Level. You are working towards the Networking Level.

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Meet the Stakeholders:** Find the groups that have deep and durable connections related to the issue. Reach out and identify potential partners at the practice level.
- **Engaging Everybody:** Outline roles and expectations for engaging in shared work on your issue; help people self-select a role that suits their level of commitment.
- **Learn the Language Make the Connection**: Shared interests or concerns may be masked by the use of different vocabulary, program names and funding.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

The Center to Improve Project Performance at Westat hosted a session at the IDEA Data Center Institutes that offers guidance on assembling a team to evaluate state improvement plans (See Handout on working with third party evaluators).

- Guidelines for Working with Third-Party Evaluators

Developing a logic model can be a very useful way of bringing together existing evidence about a program, clarifying where there is agreement or disagreement about how the program is understood to work and where there are gaps in the evidence.

This website presents a comprehensive listing of practical guides, examples, and scholarly articles for preparing logic models with stakeholder engagement.

- Evaluation Logic Model Bibliography

An evaluation design is simply a plan for conducting your evaluation. This resource opens your team to a toolkit for choosing an evaluation design and completing a logic plan.

This packet, developed through the Corporation for National and Community Service, describes steps to collect meaningful information for performance measurement.

- Collecting Performance Measurement Data

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Use your networks to find as many stakeholders as possible and involve them in the evaluation from this point forward.
- Generate an infographic to visualize the goal and the process that is intended to lead to that goal.
- Create a short description to distribute to stakeholders about the evaluation in understandable and concise language. Avoid jargon.
- Prioritize outreach efforts and promote dialogue to develop an engagement strategy.
- Stakeholders can develop a fact sheets that provide background information, explaining the ways different groups express the same issue.
- Review and consider ideas presented in the IDEA Partnership Dialogue Guide.
- Plan your evaluation and work with the stakeholders to create the best possible evaluation communication plan.
- Articulate the value of stakeholder participation in the invitation to stakeholders who are not present at the initial meeting.
- Continue to reach out to groups that are important to the success of your evaluation efforts, even if they do not respond to the initial invitation (e.g., ask who else cares about this issue and why?).

BACK TO FULL RUBRIC

A2 – Resources to move from Networking to Collaborating

You are on the Networking Level. You are working towards the Collaborating Level.

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Key actions and behaviors that require your attention	**INFORMING LEVEL** **sharing / disseminating** one-way communication	**NETWORKING LEVEL** **exchanging** two-way communication	**COLLABORATING LEVEL** **engaging** working together on the issue over time	**TRANSFORMING LEVEL** **committing** approaching issues through engagement & consensus building
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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Building Engagement:** Use this list of stakeholder engagement activities to find ways people can contribute to shared work. Let people choose what activities have value for them.
- **What's in it for Me**: Participation is not the same as engagement. This activity helps identify the difference. Work with partners to develop simple methods of tracking the progress of engagement activities that are expected to build capacity.
- **Four Simple Questions:** Use these questions to explore common interests or concerns with stakeholder groups. Outline activities to pursue together.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

The World Health Organization has a step-by-step guide (found in Section 2 of the Global Health Alliance Toolkit) for conducting a stakeholder analysis.

- Stakeholder Analysis Guidelines

The U.S. Agency on International Development developed a technique to identify and assess the importance of key people, groups, or institutions in an evaluation.

- Evaluation Stakeholder Analysis

This [evaluation manual](#) describes the steps and phases of Participatory Program Evaluation. Pages 19-21 specifically cover topics of engaging stakeholders when forming an evaluation team. The entire 86-page manual is dedicated to involving program stakeholders in the evaluation.

This workbook provides a template for developing evaluation questions that engage stakeholders' interest in the process.

- [Evaluation Workbook](#)

This website includes a description of Social Network Analysis (SNA) and when it might be used in an evaluation. SNA helps describe and measure links and relationships among stakeholders or groups.

- [Social Network Analysis](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- At this level, it is important to gauge which groups are most vested in the results of the shared work and prioritize outreach and engagement activities.
- Begin to collect baseline information and simple processes for stakeholders to contribute to measuring progress.
- Develop a rhythm of interaction that allows stakeholders to check in and report data on progress.

A3 – Resources to move from Collaborating to Transforming

You are on the Collaborating Level. You are working towards the Transforming Level.

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **How People Are:** Change is hard for most people and support is important as stakeholders work through the process. Use quote #2 to discuss stakeholder involvement in implementing change. Then ask participants to reflect on the implications for stakeholder engagement in evaluation.

- **Problems Come Bundled:** Identify some of the technical and adaptive challenges associated with expanded stakeholder engagement in evaluation and begin generating potential solutions.

- **Defining Our Core:** Express your driving purpose and share it simply with others. This exercise can also help your team describe the evaluation work in straightforward ways that are understandable to potential partners and the public.

- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

This website provides an array of resources to help convey the value of involving stakeholders. It includes practical guidelines on who to include, strategies on how to involve, and engage stakeholders, and specific activities to use at various points in the process.

- Identify and Engage Stakeholders

A theory of change outlines how to create that change. It is an essential part of a successful community transformation effort.

A logic model can keep participants in the effort moving in the same direction by providing common language and point of reference.

- Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change

This guide outlines the value of stakeholder engagement in the evaluation process and provides the reader with a five-step process for involving stakeholders in developing evaluation questions. It includes a set of four worksheets to facilitate this process.

- Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders In Developing Evaluation

This workbook provides a template for developing evaluation questions that engage stakeholders' interest in the process.

- Designing and Reporting Mixed Methods in Evaluation

This document can be used to get started with participatory data analysis. By involving stakeholders in analysis, evaluators can better understand the context and meaning of the data, resulting in added nuance and richness of the final evaluation report.

- Participatory Analysis: Expanding Stakeholder Involvement in Evaluation

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Consider what key competencies are needed to lead collaborative efforts and group people with complementary skills or knowledge. Talk together about how to leverage skills and influence when taking collective action. Think about the people and the groups involved in key activities and ask:
- Who brings group facilitation skills?
- Ask yourself: Have we allocated time/ resources for training partners on the basics of evaluation methods and vocabulary?

A4 – Resources to sustain Transformation

You are on the Transforming Level. Continue to engage your stakeholders to sustain your progress.

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Measuring Progress:** Demonstrates how to turn qualitative measures into quantitative data. Develops action plans that address ways in which progress can be measured.
- **A Quick Chronology of Engagement:** Helps stakeholders to reflect on their work together, tell the story of their engagement and describe the value of their collaboration.
- **Your Brand:** Tells how to discuss and create a brand with the stakeholders, make adjustments over time, and sustain the work through changes in leadership and other developments.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

This website provides vignettes of community-based stakeholder engagement methods for data collection that can be used in the evaluation.

- Research Methods Vignettes

This guide is organized into two sections: (1) Section One provides information to facilitate a theory of change process with a community group, and (2) Section Two is a resource toolbox for the theory of change facilitator.

- A Community Builders Approach to Theory of Change

This guide outlines the value of stakeholder engagement in evaluating processes and provides a five-step process for involving stakeholders in developing evaluation questions. It includes a set of four worksheets to facilitate this process.

- [Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders in Developing Evaluation](#)

[Social Network Analysis in evaluation](#) helps describe and measure links and relations among stakeholder groups. This website provides a description of SNA and how to include it in an evaluation.

Consulting firm FSG highlights nine evaluation propositions that can help leaders navigate the unique characteristics of complex systems, improve their evaluation practice, and better serve the needs of the social sector.

- [Evaluating Complexity](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Involve primary users of evaluation reports in determining evaluation methods.
- Learn about [empowerment evaluation](#) methods, using processes that help people develop skills so they can become independent problem solvers and decision makers.
- Conduct focus groups with stakeholder groups that are affected by the evaluation results.
- Post evaluation results on websites with request for anonymous feedback.

B1 – Resources to move from Informing to Networking

You are on the Informing Level. You are working towards the Networking Level.

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Grounding Assumptions:** Develop shared beliefs and understandings to serve as the foundation of collaborative efforts.
- **One-Way, Two-Way Learning:** Interaction demands a two-way process; transform one-way processes into two-way learning activities.
- **Measuring Progress:** Develop consensus about the beginning and the end result. Capture deepening engagement.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

This presentation from the IDEA Data Center Institute offers guidance on assembling a team, including the types of skills, and knowledge needed to build an effective team.

- Building an Effective SSIP Evaluation Team

The purpose of this checklist is to aid in developing effective and appropriate evaluation questions and in assessing the quality of existing questions. It identities characteristics of good evaluation questions, based on the relevant literature, and experience with evaluation design, implementation and use.

- [Evaluation Questions Checklist](#)

A practical guide for determining the meaningful measures for program evaluation to enhance its usefulness for all audiences.

- [Measuring What Matters](#)

This resource looks at some of the ways to structure an evaluation to examine whether the program is working, and explores how to choose the one that best meets stakeholder needs. These arrangements for discovery are known as evaluation designs.

- [Selecting an Appropriate Design for Evaluation](#)

Evaluation design is often an iterative process that prioritizes the evaluation questions based on resources and time available. This resource presents a practical Evaluation Design Checklist.

- [Evaluation Design](#)

This document published by Better Evaluation describes steps to collect and analyze data to answer causal questions about what has produced outcomes and impacts that have been observed.

- [Understand Causes of Outcomes and Impact](#)

This web-based evaluation toolkit outlines what should be considered when determining data collection surveys. You will also learn about several data collection methods and tools. Information on how to best select a sample and increase participation rates is provided.

- [Evaluation Toolkit](#)

Provides information about how to [communicate evaluation results.](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Verify with stakeholders that their knowledge and experience are included in the evaluation.
- Communicate with stakeholders frequently and create support for the evaluation by conveying the value.

B2 – Resources to move from Networking to Collaborating

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Give Value First:** Allows partners to express their expectations as they enter a learning partnership. Examine how expectations shape a potential partnership.
- **Web of Connections:** Articulate the various perspectives on a shared issue. Think about why the core leadership team identifies certain groups as potential partners and why those groups might want to become a partner in the work.
- **Co-Creating Tools:** Bring people together to co-create materials to be used and promoted by all the partners.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

Different points in the program cycle may require different types of evaluation designs. This guide provides practical examples and steps for selecting an evaluation design to help the team answer evaluation questions.

- Study Designs for Evaluation

Evaluation design is often an iterative process that prioritizes the evaluation questions based on resources and time available. This resource presents a practical design checklist.

- Evaluation Design Checklist

This packet, developed through the Corporation for National and Community Service, describes steps to collect meaningful information for performance measurement.

- [Collecting Performance Measurement Data](#)

The Centers for Disease Control report demonstrates how the evaluation report can serve as a bridge between conducting the evaluation and use of the evaluation findings.

- [Developing an Effective Evaluation Report](#)

Logic modeling can greatly enhance the participatory role and usefulness of evaluation as a management learning tool. The Kellogg Foundation offers a guide to developing and using logic models as an important step in building community capacity and strengthening community voice.

- [Logic Model Guide](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- To help move to the Collaboration Level, the *LbC* [Learn the Language](#) tool can be adapted to encourage the groups that are beginning to see connections between their work to explore what success would look like if they worked together.
- Remember the logic model is just a graphic representation of how the program is supposed to work. There must be rich discussion within the team on what underlies the graphic elements. Be a skeptic – ask why members believe the program will work as represented.

BACK TO FULL RUBRIC

B3 – Resources to move from Collaborating to Transforming

You are on the Collaborating Level. You are working towards the Transforming Level.

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Seeds of Trust:** Show sincerity in direct and indirect ways and identify small changes that build trust among stakeholders.

- **Developing a PowerPoint and Notes:** Develop content for a PowerPoint presentation that can be shared by all the partners. When cross-stakeholder groups deliver common messages to the field, it models collaboration across roles and levels of the system (e.g., state, region, local).

- **Dialogue Guides:** Help partners and their networks identify and discuss topics to build common knowledge and a shared understanding that are important in achieving stakeholders' goals.

- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

The presentation by the Parent Technical Assistance Center directors discusses possible changes in child outcomes and how state leaders can obtain meaningful stakeholder engagement in evaluation using the evaluation rubric and other valuable resources.

- Fostering Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation

This packet, developed through the Corporation for National and Community Service, describes steps to collect meaningful information for performance measurement.

- [Collecting Performance Measurement Data](#)

Designed for evaluating community health programs, Phase III of this manual provides detailed information on how to prepare fieldwork teams to carry out the evaluation data collection and analysis.

- [Participatory Evaluation Manual](#)

This website describes the "Data Party" as a way to enhance stakeholder involvement in data analysis.

- [The Data Party: Involving Stakeholders in Meaningful Data Analysis](#)

This affinity mapping protocol can be used to find the intersections of various initiatives that contribute to the same goal.

- [Affinity Mapping](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Explain the time commitment necessary to do this work well, so there are no surprises.
- Always remember that all programs operate within a specific context, including economic, and political, as well as existing or emerging positive or negative influences. Ask, "what factors outside the program might be influencing the implementation and success of the program?"

B4 – Resources to sustain Transformation

You are on the Transforming Level. Continue to engage your stakeholders to sustain your progress.

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Links to useful tools in LbC

- **Needs of the Field:** Articulate a shared vision along with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to reach the vision.
- **Defining Our Core:** Learning partnerships generate new knowledge grounded in doing the work together. Affirm stakeholder commitment to the shared vision and expected results.
- **Co-Creating Tools:** Convene meetings to co-create tools that reinforce shared purpose and generate materials that the stakeholders can use or customize to mobilize action within their networks.
- **Leading by Convening Blueprint**: Partners also 'lead by convening.' They are able to mentor others to replicate or sustain the effort and ensure continuous improvement.
- **Download the book, Leading by Convening.**

Resources beyond LbC

Consulting firm FSG highlights nine evaluation propositions that can help leaders navigate the unique characteristics of complex systems, improve their evaluation practice, and better serve the needs of the social sector.

- **Evaluating Complexity**

Section two of this Aspen Institute guide can serve as a resource toolbox for the theory of change facilitator.

- [A Community Builders Approach to Theory of Change](#)

This presentation shows how to use photographs as a data collection tool, and can be modified to use video for data collection.

- [Using Photovoice to Engage Stakeholders](#)

The Centers for Disease Control report demonstrate how the evaluation report can serve as a bridge between conducting the evaluation and use of the evaluation findings.

- [Developing an Effective Evaluation Report](#)

Tips from implementers and stakeholders

- Encourage self-evaluation of projects and activities.
- Develop executive summaries of evaluation reports and offer "discussion questions" to stimulate dialogue and continuous learning.
- Locate websites for organizations that fund evaluations. Highlight the approach to evaluation described by the organization for potential adoption.
- Revise project logic model based on evaluation results.