U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office for Victims of Crime

OVC
Webinar Transcript

2012 OVC Discretionary Grantee Orientation Series

Measuring Success

January 10, 2013

Welcome

Keely McCarthy: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the fourth and final Webinar in the OVC Discretionary Grantee Orientation Series. Today's Webinar is titled *Measuring Success*. I want to remind everyone that the material presented during today's Webinar session will be available on the OVC Website in approximately 2 weeks. You will be able to find it by clicking on the "Help For Providers" tab or the "Grants and Funding" tab on the home page. Please note that participants will remain on mute throughout this session, and the session is being recorded. As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the Webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. The Webinar session will resume shortly after.

Keely McCarthy: My name is Keely McCarthy and I am a Visiting Fellow at OVC. I will be facilitating today's Webinar.

Presenters

Keely McCarthy: Today's presenters are OVC's Acting Director Joye E. Frost, Debra Whitcomb, one of OVC's other Visiting Fellows, Richard Greenough, Budget Analyst for OVC, and Zoë French, Grant Program Coordinator for OVC.

Agenda

Keely McCarthy: During today's Webinar, I will go over some Webinar rules and etiquette and the learning objectives for this Webinar. We will hear from Joye E. Frost, Acting Director for OVC; then we will go into the majority of the Webinar content which includes evaluation, performance measures, and grant closeout. We will have time for some additional Q&A at the end and a few closing remarks.

Webinar Tools

Keely McCarthy: Some of the Webinar tools that we will use today are the chat box and the feedback box and polls. Since all participants will be muted throughout the Webinar, you can ask questions through the chat box located in the bottom left corner of your screen. The feedback box and polls allow participants to respond to questions posed by the presenters during the orientation session. We would like to test this feature now to make sure everyone can hear me okay. Please click yes or no as to whether or not you can hear me right now.

Keely McCarthy: Thank you, we are getting some of the results in, and it looks like everybody can hear me so far. There is one no. Just to remind you, to hear the session, please call 1–877–423–6338, and the passcode is 792824.

Learning Objectives

Keely McCarthy: By the end of today's Webinar you should be able to explain the benefits of evaluation, identify the key components of a logic model, understand the relationship among a logic model, performance measures, and evaluation; identify various federal efforts of performance management and reporting, explain how performance data are used by federal managers and could be used by policy makers, describe the OJP close-out process, and identify close-out package deadline requirements.

Keely McCarthy: Now we will hear some opening remarks from Joye E. Frost, Acting Director for the Office for Victims of Crime.

Message from Joye E. Frost, Acting Director, OVC

Joye E. Frost: Thank you, Keely, and good morning and good afternoon, depending on where you may be, and thank you for being with OVC this afternoon. I want to thank Keely McCarthy for stepping in this afternoon and leading this Webinar, as well as Debra Whitcomb, Rich Greenough, and Zoë French. I addressed many of you before in similar Webinars, so I am going to keep my remarks short. But I do want to focus on why evaluation and performance measurement data matter. It is just really ensuring that if it is a program, a practice, a model, or a training, that we know that it is effective, that it works. OVC recently completed a final report to our Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services strategic initiative, and probably the most fundamental issue that was identified was the lack of data and evaluation data, evidence-based practices and so forth within the crime victims field, primarily – well, there are a lot of issues for why that is. There are insufficient resources, there is not enough technical assistance and training, there is not enough programmatic flexibility in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) statute in the guidelines, and OVC is actively advocating for more resources for the field. So I think you will find the Webinar pretty interesting, and Debra Whitcomb has just done superlative work here at OVC in making evaluation understandable. Rich Greenough has a long history of working on performance measures. I know for many of you, Zoë's part in today's seminar on the close-out process may seem far away, but we thought that was important to cover as well. So again, thank you very much.

Keely McCarthy: Thank you, Joye, for those excellent remarks on the importance of evaluation and performance measures, especially how they relate in the crime victims field, and for being with us throughout the entire Webinar series.

Keely McCarthy: So let us continue with today's Webinar. Our next presenter is Debra Whitcomb, a Visiting Fellow here at OVC.

Evaluation

Debra Whitcomb: Good afternoon. I am going to walk us through some of the issues around evaluation.

What is Evaluation?

Debra Whitcomb: Let us start with: What is evaluation? Evaluation assesses the effectiveness of a program in achieving its objectives, and determines whether the activities related to a program, policy, or practice caused the outcomes.

What Isn't Evaluation?

Debra Whitcomb: What is not evaluation? Data collection, in and of itself, is not the same as evaluation. Counts of the activities you have completed is not evaluation. Anecdotes from successful clients, while useful and helpful to hear and important to keep track of, are not evaluation.

Why Evaluate a Program?

Debra Whitcomb: So why do we evaluate programs? Well, most importantly, we want to improve the program. We want to determine which components of the program had the greatest effect on the outcome. We want, certainly, to secure future funding. We want to determine whether the program was more effective for some participants than for others. We want to be able to link program activities to outcomes.

The Dreaded Logic Model

Debra Whitcomb: So let us take a look at the dreaded logic model. And I say dreaded because this terminology has turned up in so many places and I think there is a fear surrounding it. It is really not that bad. What it is is a way of expressing your theory of change. What are you trying to accomplish? What is the plan to accomplish this? And how do the program activities accomplish your goal? OVC does not require its grantees to produce logic models, but I would strongly encourage them because it can be helpful in a number of ways. One is that the development of a logic model engages your planners in articulating what they hope to accomplish and how they expect to get there. The logic model will help you demonstrate what your program is accomplishing and it will also help you find ways that you can improve. You can also use the logic model to present your program plan to your stakeholders, including funders.

Debra Whitcomb: I am going to go through a couple of examples with you. The first example is directed mostly at those of you who are direct service providers to victims and family members. The second example is directed more to the National Training and Technical Assistance grantees. Just keep in mind as we go through this that the examples are offered to illustrate, not to define, the content of your logic model. Each program will have to fill in the blanks based on its own unique circumstances.

What Do You Want to Change?

Debra Whitcomb: So we will start and we will ask the basic question, as I said it is a theory of change. What do you want to change? Well, here is our example. We want to implement a SANE program for sexual assault victims in our county. This is a goal.

What Needs to Happen to Start a SANE Program?

Debra Whitcomb: What needs to happen to start a SANE program? We need to raise community awareness. We need to recruit and train nurses. We need to establish referral protocols. These are examples of objectives.

Debra Whitcomb: On your screen you see the beginning of the model itself, the graphic version of the goal and how it leads to the objectives.

How Do We Raise Community Awareness?

Debra Whitcomb: So we will start by choosing one of those objectives just to, again, to walk through the process. This one is: How do we raise community awareness? Well, here are some examples of things you might do. We might distribute materials at community events. We might hold gatherings of women and girls. We might invite speakers for teen groups in the community. These are examples of activities.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, the next step in the logic model shows the objective that leads to the activities intended to reach that objective.

So What?

Debra Whitcomb: So what? Well, these are your counts. How many brochures did you distribute? How many special events did you hold? How many girls and women attended these events? You might also want to capture how many boys and men were there. How many speakers addressed teen groups? How many teens attended these meetings? These are examples of performance measures or outputs.

Debra Whitcomb: Keep in mind that performance measurement is necessary but not sufficient for evaluation. Remember earlier we did say that just counting what you do, in and of itself, is not evaluation. Rich Greenough will cover performance measures much more thoroughly in his presentation that follows mine.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, the next step, how the activities relate to the outputs in your logic model.

Did These Activities Raise Awareness?

Debra Whitcomb: So the question comes up: Did these activities raise awareness? Here are a couple of examples of topics that you might have wanted to address in your community awareness activities. Can women and girls recognize different types of sexual assault? Do they know where to get help? These are examples of short-term outcomes.

How Do We Answer These Questions?

Debra Whitcomb: So how do we go about answering these questions? Well, you might want to ask women and girls, or men and boys if you are including them, before and after your educational event. You might use interviews, you might have focus groups, you might distribute surveys. And then you would compare their answers. Did they learn anything from the educational event or other public awareness activity that you did? These are measures of short-term outcomes.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, the next step, how the outputs relate to the short-term outcomes, showing that you are hoping to see change.

Questions You Can Ask

Debra Whitcomb: So what can you do with this kind of information? You can ask some questions. So, for example, did adult women score better than teen girls after attending a special community event about sexual assault? Did girls who heard a speaker in a teen group score better than girls who attended a special community event? These are examples of process evaluation questions. Process evaluation can tell you how well your program is being implemented. These are just two examples. You might look for differences between girls and boys in a teen group, or other kinds of outcomes from the activities that you offered.

Process Evaluation Can Help You

Debra Whitcomb: Process evaluation can help you identify ways to improve your services and activities, or to identify unmet needs in your community.

Example # 1

Debra Whitcomb: So let us try a question for you. If girls score better on knowledge questions after a community event than after hearing a speaker, then what can you do? Please take a moment and select the best answer from the choices provided.

(silence)

Debra Whitcomb: Okay, looks like we are not getting a lot of response here. There is no correct answer to this one. The point of this exercise is simply that the answer could be all of these. You could try a different speaker. You could instruct the speaker to "teach to the test." You could do all of these. You could do other things. The point is that testing for the question in the example, looking at differences in outcomes from community events versus speakers, should stimulate ideas for improving your program.

Example # 2

Debra Whitcomb: Let's try another example. If there is no change in knowledge scores after distributing informational brochures in your community, then what can you do? Again, let us take a moment to take a look at the options, and select the one that makes the most sense to you.

(silence)

Debra Whitcomb: Okay, so it looks like about half of you selected "all of the above." That is pretty much the right answer. Again, the point is that doing this kind of evaluation gives you an opportunity to tweak your approach, revise your approach, see what is working, see what is not working as you implement your program.

Repeat This Exercise

Debra Whitcomb: Okay, so you would repeat this exercise in developing your logic model, and loop back to your objectives. Objective # 2, recruiting and training nurses. The third objective, to establish referral protocols. And, again, identify the specific activities for each objective and each activity will have specific performance measures and questions about process and outcome.

Congratulations!

Debra Whitcomb: Congratulations! We have completed a basic logic model for implementing a SANE program.

Debra Whitcomb: This is how it might look. Again, just using the one example of raising community awareness and all the related activities, outputs, and outcomes.

So What?

Debra Whitcomb: So what? You might ask the "so what" question again. Having done all that and assuming that all your activities were successfully implemented, and the women and girls, people, in your community did better understand what sexual assault is and how to report it, what difference does it make? Are more sexual assault cases reported now? Are more victims receiving SANE exams? Are more cases being investigated? Are more cases being prosecuted? These are long-term outcomes. They reflect the larger goals, why you wanted to implement the SANE program in the first place.

How Do We Answer These Questions?

Debra Whitcomb: So how do we answer these questions? This requires collecting data at baseline, meaning before your program is implemented, and then annually or periodically as your program moves forward so that you can compare and look for changes over time. You would need to have a plan and a data collection system in place before implementing your program so that you can gather data, such as the number of sexual assaults reported, investigated, and prosecuted, or client satisfaction with their experience in the system. You would want to know that before you implement the program so you can compare the same measures at periodic times after the program is in place.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, this would be another step in your logic model, looking at longer-term outcomes and the measures.

What Do You Want to Change?

Debra Whitcomb: So let us move on to an example that is geared more towards a grantee that is providing training and technical assistance. What do you want to change? We want all crime victims to receive quality services. This is your goal.

What Needs to Happen So That All Victims Will Receive Quality Services?

Debra Whitcomb: What needs to happen so that all victims will receive quality services? We need to provide training to victim/witness assistants and advocates. We need to provide technical assistance to victim/witness assistance and advocacy organizations. These are your objectives.

Debra Whitcomb: And here is the first step of the logic model showing how the goal is connected to the objectives.

How Do We Provide Training and Technical Assistance (TA)?

Debra Whitcomb: So how do we provide training and technical assistance? Well, we develop curricula. We offer training opportunities. We receive and respond to requests for technical assistance. These are your activities.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, the next step in the logic model.

So What?

Debra Whitcomb: So what? And here we have our counts again. How many trainings did you conduct? How many individuals were trained? How many TA requests did you receive? How many requests were you able to complete? These are your performance measures or your outputs.

Debra Whitcomb: Next step in the logic model, connecting the activities to the outputs.

Were These Activities Effective?

Debra Whitcomb: So were these activities effective? Did the training meet the participants' needs? Did the participants improve their knowledge? Did they improve their practice? Were your TA recommendations implemented? These are examples of outcomes.

How Do We Answer These Questions?

Debra Whitcomb: So how do we answer these questions? Well, we ask our training participants to complete course evaluations. We administer pre- and post-tests of course content. We conduct followup surveys of training participants. And we conduct followup surveys of TA requesters. These are outcome measures.

Debra Whitcomb: Again, we take a look at the outputs and the outcomes.

Pilot Tests Can Help You

Debra Whitcomb: Doing a pilot test of new training program is an important step in the process, because it can help you improve the content of your training, for example, by identifying gaps or changing the priority or emphasis of certain topics within the training. And it can help you improve the delivery of training, for example, with the exercises that you use or visuals, handouts, and other things to supplement. At a minimum with a pilot test you should administer the course evaluation and a pre/post test so that you can determine what your participants learned and where the gaps are.

Debra Whitcomb: So here is an example of a logic model for a training and technical assistance program.

The Big Picture

Debra Whitcomb: So in the big picture, what difference is your training and TA making in the lives of victims? This is the long-term outcome and, of course, the ultimate goal.

How Do We Answer This Question?

Debra Whitcomb: How do we answer this question? Well, we might administer victim satisfaction surveys. We might want to survey allied professionals who work with victims in other capacities in the system, such as law enforcement officers or prosecutors. Again, you want to analyze changes over time so you would have to plan for a baseline data collection before you deliver your training and TA program in your community, and then again at various points in time afterwards.

More Big Picture Questions

Debra Whitcomb: Then we have more big picture questions, and these apply to all types of programs, whether it is a training and TA program or direct service provider. How will you know whether it was your project that created any observed change? How can you prove that it was your project? This is your program impact.

Impact Evaluation

Debra Whitcomb: Impact evaluation requires comparing outcome measures for victims served against similar victims not receiving program services, or comparing outcomes for victims served before and after providing training and TA. These kinds of evaluations require careful selection of comparison or control groups or a method of random assignment, which is the gold standard in evaluations.

Debra Whitcomb: These are all very difficult types of evaluations to implement in the real world, but it is important to know about them anyway.

Questions?

Keely McCarthy: Thank you, Debra, for that great presentation on evaluation. Right now we will take some questions from attendees. You can type in your chat box any questions you have. Right now it looks like we have a couple of questions already from Karen Duncan. Does process evaluation also involve how we implemented a program?

Debra Whitcomb: I am not quite sure exactly what you are asking there in terms of how you implemented the program. But the purpose of the process evaluation is to examine all the steps and what was missing, perhaps. It depends on how you phrase the questions that you want to evaluate. Hope that helps.

Keely McCarthy: There are a couple more questions from Karen. She asks: What number of people are recommended to be included in a pilot? For example, for a training, should we pilot with 10, 20, 40 people?

Debra Whitcomb: That is a good question, and in my experience usually it would be around the 20 mark because you want to leave some room for variation, some way to really have enough numbers to compare.

Keely McCarthy: Thank you. And the next is: Is there a sufficient level of funding for impact evaluation? This is a quite different type of research.

Debra Whitcomb: You are absolutely right. I certainly cannot say whether there is or is not. It is certainly desirable to have enough funding to do impact evaluation and I would certainly encourage anyone to seek funding to do that if you are interested. But I cannot say for sure whether it would be available or what the source might be.

Keely McCarthy: Thanks, Debra. The next question is from Lynette Parker. How would you find similar victims if your program is serving all known victims?

Debra Whitcomb: That is a good question, and there are ways to do that. It is hard because, clearly, no program is going to intentionally design services to any victim strictly for the purpose of evaluation. But in some circumstances, this may not be true for yours, but sometimes there are waiting lists, and that might be a way of comparing victims who are receiving services at one particular point in time to victims who are not receiving them at that time but you know they will get them at another time when the waiting list clears up. So that is one example.

Keely McCarthy: Great. The next one is from Lita. It would be impossible to evaluate folks not receiving services to compare to those that are. Is there a suggestion on how to get around this?

Debra Whitcomb: Well, again, that is the suggestion that I just mentioned around folks who might be on a waiting list; that is one example. In other circumstances, people might look to nearby communities that may not have the same service programs available to them. But, again, it is very hard to match similar victims in those kinds of circumstances, so I am going to be honest, it is very hard to do that kind of evaluation in the victims field. There are creative people out there who can work with you and come up with some good ideas, perhaps, but it is a very tough thing to do.

Keely McCarthy: Next is: Are we expected to conduct long-term evaluation if it was not outlined in our proposal?

Debra Whitcomb: I have not seen that in my experience. If it was not a requirement in your solicitation, if you did not propose to do one, then there should be no expectation that you produce.

Keely McCarthy: Thank you. And the next one is from Beth Rosenthal. If we are providing training to victim advocates, but we never directly touch the people they are serving, is there any way to measure impact on victim services, aside from asking if a service provider learned something or changed their own practice?

Debra Whitcomb: That is a good question, again. All of these are good questions. My immediate thinking here is that you might want to work with another agency in your system that does directly touch, to use your term, the victims who are served. So perhaps you may be working with a law enforcement agency or the prosecutor’s office or some other organization that does have access and does work directly with the victims, and they, in turn, could work with you to survey victims on satisfaction.

Keely McCarthy: Great, thank you. Are there any more questions?

(silence)

For More Information

Keely McCarthy: Okay, here is Debra’s information if you have any additional questions on evaluation, and there is an online tutorial on evaluation and performance measurement at the Web site listed on the PowerPoint slide. Once again, this PowerPoint presentation will be on OVC’s Web site in approximately 2 weeks. So let’s move on with our presentation since I see no additional questions. Our next presenter is Richard Greenough, Budget Analyst for OVC.

Performance Measures

Richard Greenough: Good day to everyone. I am just switching on the headgear here and I do have a giant head so if my voice does not carry well enough, please let me know right away. If you turn to the "Overview" section, this is kind of the geography of what I am getting to here today.

Overview

Richard Greenough: You will find that the slides are rather dense, but I hope you can see that they will be good resources for you. And as you go through these items, you will see there will be a lot of ties to evaluation, and, specifically, I hope you will see some of the ties in measuring performance to management of the project – your effort, if you will – and the budget processes as well. Keep in mind that dreaded logic model that Debra referred to; I will be referring to that a lot, not necessarily in the context of evaluation but in the context of management of your grant and measuring its performance. We will turn, in a moment, to the scope, the objectives.

Richard Greenough: Second bullet, management trends through the years. I am limiting that to about 60 years or so of public policy analysis. We could take it back quite a bit longer than that, but I just want to focus on efforts to make it a science, if you will.

Richard Greenough: The next bullet, in terms of tying performance measurement to the awarding agency. What I am going to get at here is what do the funders do with all this stuff? And give you, I hope, a good sense of the kinds of things – why we ask you to jump through the hoops that we do.

Richard Greenough: Performance, outcomes, and evidence-based practices. It is going to be a bit of a foreshadowing there of some of the things that we think will be coming online. And almost the rebuttal to that, we will give you some sense of government-wide uses of performance data and conclusion. You will find that there are some obvious applications to the budget, but there are also some great limitations as well.

Objectives

Richard Greenough: Turning to the objectives, the first one, I am going to get at here the notion of setting the whole tone of science in measuring performance. The second one, you will hear a lot of echos of Debra's presentation relative to performance outcome. And if you kind of think of this as – I do not want to denigrate any of it – but evaluation is a very high order. Measuring your performance is a little different order, but it is more immediate and obviously more available. So funders, and specifically the Congress, are very interested in measures on a regular basis. They love evaluation, of course, when they can get it, but the cost and time involved in it make measures more real time for much of our inquiries.

Richard Greenough: Then, to discuss how performance data are used by federal managers. Mostly this is the budget, but this also, I think, will tie to the whole grant application process, that you are looking at a solicitation in some way, you frame an application relative to that solicitation, and then you do stuff, and then it is time to measure it.

Richard Greenough: Finally, making predictions as to what do we think will be happening with these data in terms of measures.

Trends

Richard Greenough: Now, into trends, there are a whole bunch of performance measurement trends through the years, and conceivably we could roll this back to Frederick Taylor in the early part of the 20th century, but that is really not what we are going to do here. We are going to focus on how these efforts that science in the public sector in the last 50–60 years have been blended and culminating, finally, I believe, in the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA), in which performance measurement is so critical.

Richard Greenough: The first management term I want to refer to is Management By Objectives (MBO). Those of you have read Peter Drucker, it is a really easy read, it has got some interesting stuff. What is notable with MBO is that he brings forth the whole notion of participatory goal setting. In this case, it was with employees and reporting results. But that whole notion of setting goals and reporting results will become important later with GPRA.

Richard Greenough: We move into the whiz kids under Robert McNamara at the Pentagon with PPBS, Program Planning Budgeting System, which is another revolution because we begin to link operational requirements with financial obligations. In some places where I have worked in budgeting in the federal government, there are actually cost modules, for example, attached to each full-time equivalent (FTE). An FTE, an administrative support person costs X amount of dollars for salary, but then, as you know, there is this whole back story that comes with that, such as training, equipment, rent, and turning lights on, and blah, blah, blah. PPBS was the first time that all of that was actually linked, and it was kind of a modular effort to actually give the Congress a good sense of what the Department of Defense was requiring for building missile systems, for example.

Richard Greenough: We then come to President Jimmy Carter with his whole effort of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB). This presented yet another challenge of budgeting in measurement because currently most budgets in the federal government, you can hear, “We have cut the budget by X dollars,” and then you look at it and say, “But it went up by Y percent.” That is because most budgets are actually calculated on a basis of current services, meaning what is inflation and what is the cost of doing business in the next federal fiscal year. So in that case, programs and budgets just focus on the increases. ZBB says there is no base, you have to justify your base every year. And you will see that with performance measurement, the same principle applies.

Richard Greenough: Okay, DISCO in the 1980s. There really was not a David Stockman and a DISCO, but this is kind of an interesting era because we dip into a notion of measurement count is the basis of belief. And the particular belief structure was that taxes could be cut significantly, appropriations to the Department of Defense could be increased significantly, and there would not be deficit. Well, we saw how that turned out. There were some deficits that began under Lyndon Johnson because of the Great Society and the war in Vietnam, and Presidents Carter and Ford continued them, but they were really coin deficits. They were in the order of less than $50 billion. Sounds pretty good for today, would not it? The Reagan and Stockman budgets in the first 4 years were generally in the order of $300 billion, so it was a real shocker, but what it did was it reinjected this notion of political rationality in the whole measurement process.

Richard Greenough: Finally, the last thing I want to mention is the National Performance Review. If you remember Vice President Al Gore, he was on *Letterman* and there was a famous episode where he was wearing safety glasses and was trying to smash a glass ashtray with a hammer. What he was doing there was demonstrating the futility in the way the federal government had sort of lost its ability to measure performance by focusing on how things should be done rather than what we want to have done. So now you see, for example, most contracts do not specify how an ashtray is to be built. It would simply be put out as, “We want an ashtray that can hold 500 cigarettes, and, by the way, quit smoking while you are at it.” But the point is it is a whole move from how things are going to be done specifically to a very general set of goals.

Blended Elements of Earlier Systems

Richard Greenough: Now into this foray steps GPRA, the Government Performance and Results Act. Beginning to the left here, the first couple of boxes, “Defining the Organizational Mission” and the “Strategic Performance Objectives,” those all find their roots in MBO and PPBS and ZBB. Again, we see this notion of strategic performance objectives, new terminology, but basically that is a challenge to budgeting because we can no longer assume that, as in most traditional budgets and most traditional measures, we produce X widgets costing Y dollars. Now the question becomes do we even need those widgets or do we need something else to better accomplish the goals that we are seeking to achieve?

Richard Greenough: The next box to the right, “Establishing Integrated Performance Management.” That really harkens back to PPBS and that whole notion of a module in that it is tied to the budgeting process, which, amazingly enough, really did not happen until that point.

Richard Greenough: You see this notion of accountability. That comes out of MBO and we will see that in performance measurement that federal managers are responsible, just as you are, for performance. We will get into a little bit in terms of there is a basic tension between those two things, but there is some notion of accountability, which is very different from traditional budgets which basically seek to get as much of an appropriation as possible and expend as much of that as possible. It is kind of a reverse approach to budgeting, which no longer exists.

Richard Greenough: The next box is “Establishing a System.” That comes right out of PPBS and ZBB. What are the data that you need? What is the system? Is it workable?

Richard Greenough: Then finally, “Establishing System to Use the Performance Data.” That is a whole feedback loop that comes from MBO and ZBB, and that is in the budget process now. As I get into the next couple of slides, that is how the budget functions now. We do demonstrate, or are supposed to demonstrate, performance.

Richard Greenough: Finally, there is “Maintaining the Performance System.” This is a major struggle and we will get into this in a little bit. OJP right now is looking at different ways to bundle up performance data that will make it easier for you, as grantees, to just simply provide that information. It would also enable us to better roll up that information in our budget submissions to the Congress and the Administration. But that is really the hearty chestnut of difficulties in budgeting and performance management systems. How do you automate all that stuff? And, by the way, thank you to all those of you who include in your progress reports all the performance data so we do not have to drill down at the GMS and get it, because that is actually a pretty terrible display. And there is some resistance here because this whole focus on performance really shines a spotlight on results and effectiveness rather than expending, if you will, the appropriations. And performance reports, we see some resistance in that for a variety of reasons, because it primarily leads to questions about a program’s worth and the program’s administration.

Government Performance Results Act

Richard Greenough: Here are some basics on GPRA. Passed early in 1992, 1993 I guess it was. Then modernized, if you will, in 2010, and this is just the most recent effort to introduce performance based management and budget into the federal budgeting process.

Richard Greenough: Now, as alluded to earlier, prior efforts to measure performance failed because of a variety of reasons, including administrative complexities. For example, with PPBS, the staff just were not ready to do this, they did not understand modules, and we will see a lot of that now even in performance measurement. Are your staff ready and are we ready to subsume the data you provide us? The lack of investment, a second important point, that there was a difficulty, lack of investment in managerial, accounting, and information systems. That persists to this day, today, but GPRA tries to attend to all of this, and the most important thing it does is provide some kind of incentive to measure performance because it becomes a matter of winner take all. So, if you will, all jobs training programs, at least in theory, are put in one big beauty contest and the ones that do the best are supposed to be the ones that are funded henceforth. It never really played out that way, but the potential exists for that to happen. In any event, GPRA forces federal agencies to manage activities with results to consequences. A very novel kind of a concept, I suppose.

Richard Greenough: The important elements, and bear in mind here your application narrative because a lot of this, you will see, will tie as we go forward. The whole notion that there is a mission, that there is a strategic plan, that there are goals and measures. Those are all things that are in your narrative, so if you keep in mind your application narrative, it just becomes a roadmap to measurement because it is outlining what it is you intend to accomplish or hope to accomplish, and how it is you would like to report on it. We then would tie that at the federal level to budgeting, and that, as I alluded to earlier, is a winner take all approach, and then finally, report it to the Congress and the public, as we saw with some of those earlier management trends.

Richard Greenough: An important resource – and we are at OVC TTAC right now, in fact – an important resource TTAC provides is a number of guides relative to the performance measurement. You can drill down there until your hearts are well satisfied. I recommend that resource to you. But, again, keep in mind your grant application as we go forward, the narrative really just ties to the strategic plan of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and explains how your goals and end results are measured.

Goals and Reporting of Results Scheme

Richard Greenough: The reporting of results scheme, there is kind of a parallel process between goals and reporting line. At the goal line – again, think about your application here – the GPRA sets the tone in terms of the basics. We are looking for measurement. There is also some program legislation, the statute that is the guide to the development of the solicitation. That is translated into DOJ's strategic plan: "We want to improve" fill-in-the-blank. That is then operationalized at the performance plan level at OJP, our component home office, and OVC's specific performance plan. Then we develop a solicitation that outlines the regulations and requirements, and that all ties back to the enabling legislation. Again, keep in mind your application here. I hope the light is shining on you pretty well. Then, finally, we have the project plan that is specific, that you won your grant on.

Richard Greenough: The reporting scheme parallels the above. The first two blocks really should be side by side rather than one feeding to the other. Project performance reports or state performance reports, both of those are going to roll up to the OJP – we are a component within the Department of Justice – to a component program performance report. So you are rolling it up, you feed it to us, we in turn roll it up to the Department of Justice, and we provide a performance report to the Congress and the public. This is going to be important in a time – as we have all experienced – in a time of very tight budgets, this is possibly useful. Not all the time, but it can be.

Richard Greenough: A good resource here is from the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). When GPRA was passed it was funded at NAPA, a whole center for excellence relative to GPRA performance measures, and if you drill into NAPA you will find a lot of great resources there.

Richard Greenough: I do want to mention generally, just to give a little context. Grants are about $600 billion in the federal budget, so there is a lot of competition, but there are a lot of things that can be won. So if you can keep in mind the enabling legislation and measurement, I think that will serve you well in your own application, and then reflect those in your progress reports.

Measuring Performance Can be Complicated

Richard Greenough: Measuring performance can be complicated. You really think so? Yes. A couple of issues. Are the baseline data available or do you need to establish them? If you have a new program, do not get creative, work with your grant manager. Sometimes people get stumbling over a very wide base of performance measurement data that they are trying to collect when maybe three, four, or five measures may suit you well.

Richard Greenough: How well does the data collection work? Is it new? Is it routinized? Are the staff trained in it? A good resource that kind of fell off here is from the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, which is a state administering agent in Georgia and they throw a whole bunch of stuff on victims in measures and reporting. And I think you will find some good resources there in terms of how they did it. But this whole thing of collecting data is going to be a problem. For those of you in trafficking, for example, you know the definition of trafficking kind of has a flavor or air of quality to it, and as that definition changes, it poses difficulty for law enforcement and for first responders and for intake workers who are not sure, “Do we include this type of trafficking? Is it domestic? International?” All of those kinds of problems have an impact on the quality of data and, ultimately, on the ability to measure performance. So you need to attend to that carefully in the beginning or you will just end up with data soup.

Richard Greenough: Now, the nature of the program itself can be an issue. Are you providing one-time or anonymous contact with the target? If it is a hotline, for example, you could poll the caller to determine effectiveness, and I think Debra gave some good examples of the evaluation models that are applicable here. Things like short-term assistance such as shelters, focus on output based. That is acceptable in that circumstance. Anything that is prevention in nature becomes difficult because it is hard to measure something that did not happen. So think about the control group or the baseline that currently exists or followup surveys as ways to provide measurement data that support your program. Anything related to training programs that measures what has changed versus what was provided, again, is very slippery and difficult to measure that. This source from Harvard’s Web site gives a really good example, it is law enforcement based, but it kind of talks about this whole issue of how do you measure what did and what did not happen. If you have a program that outcome is not expected for years, provide performance data for just one year. Do not overdo it.

Richard Greenough: To tie back to some of the things that Debra was saying, if you Google this term “frugal evaluation,” you will find some great ideas, I think. You do not have to get at the evaluation level, you are just trying to provide measurement data for your progress reports, that may be useful to justify a budget submission later. But, in any case, the same principles that Debra applied that have been discussed apply here, it is just how do you do it on the cheap?

Feedback Loop Between Funder and Project

Richard Greenough: Getting into the feedback loop between the funder and the project, I mentioned earlier that there is kind of a tension between the program and the funder. We are kind of interested in being able to do a budget submission and a justification. Your interest is, “Listen, I want to do a good program that matters.” And sometimes the focus – and this certainly happened to me in my career at different points – I am busy getting things done, I do not have time to report. Well, reporting is important to your funder because it enables the funder to better make the case. In our circumstance, we have to make the case to the Department of Justice, we have to make the case to the Office of Management and Budget, we then further on down the road to Congress who makes the ultimate decision. So there is a lot of case making, if you will, and if we do not have good data, it becomes difficult for us to present a decent budget submission that helps us provide the information we need to better justify our budget submission.

Richard Greenough: Okay, skipping on down here. All these points, reinforcing performance skill, reviewing performance, those are all tied to some of the earlier management trends. Again, tie it to the legislation, tie it to the program, and ensure that there is some consistency here.

Richard Greenough: I have this little bullet on magic. This is the difficulty for us. We have a lot of programs with really great performance measures, but they do not roll up to tell the story that OJP, OVC, and DOJ need to tell the Congress with respect to the worthiness of our programs. So you may find some struggle with your program manager, you may not be sure about the solicitation outlining the measures that are outlined. Those measures are there to help us for budgeting reasons. We are supposed to be open – I hope that is working for you, at least in part – we are supposed to be open for you to help define performance measures going forward, and in some cases I have been able to do that, but that is a pretty choppy process. Nonetheless, do not hesitate to help resolve that tension between the funder and you at the program level about adequate performance measures. So we are sort of stuck on our end, we are trying to balance an ideal performance data system against the real world of cost and time.

Relationship Between Funder and Project

Richard Greenough: Okay, things that we should be doing are we should be providing information on our Web site, which we do, regarding the approaches that do work. And this could be on the Web site, newsletters, all sorts of means to do this.

Richard Greenough: We provide technical assistance, pre- and post-award. And, again, funders rely on the application. Think about using the logic model in your own application narrative. How were your targets derived, for example? I think Debra outlined that nicely. The same principles, the same framework applies to the applications, to your successful applications.

Richard Greenough: We should be providing resources, such as good examples, and working with you in terms of defining, identifying project performance gaps. Again, think about your own application narrative, the essence that outlines these objectives which is based on the legislation, and then you are tying that to the progress reports that you submit to us.

Developing a Performance-Based Plan for Your Project

Richard Greenough: Okay, we are in the homestretch here. A performance-based plan for your project, this is really the pith of your effort. This is what the manager of the project is about, and this will tell the tale of your effort. So I am just touching on a few things here.

Richard Greenough: Try to avoid outputs. In some cases, you just cannot get away from outputs when it comes to performance measures. That is just the way it goes.

Richard Greenough: I note a resource here, which is the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. It gives some really kind of – what is the opposite of glowing? - some dramatic examples at the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office, at the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), and at OJP, about the failure of funders to set good goals and conduct effective measurement. So ensure that your work is aimed at the targets, and I think you will work out all right.

Richard Greenough: I think Debra has mentioned the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). If not, let me just get another plug in this. It is a great resource, it is just an excellent drill-down resource. SAMHSA is so confident in its solicitations that generally, when it comes to evaluations, they focus on process evaluation because they think it is a failure of implementation, not of the program itself.

Government Business Council Survey Results

Richard Greenough: Okay, skipping over to the survey results, this is kind of one of those shocking and enlightening and (unclear) resolve. A government executive survey of federal managers who claim – they say that the metrics, which is just a 50 cent word for performance measures, are just not well defined, people do not know what they mean.

Richard Greenough: Eight percent say, “Data collection is automated.” Well, by my math, that is 92 percent that is not happening, and that is a real problem, I think. That, ideally, should all set up so that it ties to the budget submission, but we are a long way from that.

Richard Greenough: 73 percent say, “My agency is not able to calculate program costs.” Just think about that. How much does it cost to actually turn on the lights and get a program running? Many cannot do it at the federal level.

Richard Greenough: Then, only 22 percent use performance measures to guide budget formulation, and that is distressing, but I think we still have to be prepared to provide performance data because it is one of those things that, if you do not have it, you could look really bad even though it necessarily is not used.

Richard Greenough: Okay, kind of a foreshadowing of things that are out there. Take a little poke from Carl Sagan, if you remember Carl Sagan, the preeminent astronomer from Cornell. “If we did not respect the evidence, we would have very little leverage in our quest for truth.”

Administration Emphasis on Evidence-Based Programs

Richard Greenough: The Administration has established a new emphasis on evidence-based programs, and I outline here what that is meant, but I do want to give you a resource here, www.crimesolutions.gov. That is an OJP reference and there are 55 programs on victimization nationally that are cited in there. I think you can drill in there for some examples of some of the things that you might want to do.

Richard Greenough: Okay, just to tie all this up, your grant application narrative outlines the why, the what, and the how, and performance measures allow you to bring a spotlight onto the accomplishments that you have pulled together. And, in turn, these are tied to DOJ's strategic plan and, ultimately, the budget submission to the Congress and the Administration. So with that, it is time for questions.

Questions?

Keely McCarthy: Great, thank you, Rich. Now we do have time for some questions. You can use the chat box located in the bottom left hand corner of your screen. And we will give you a few minutes to think of some questions and type them in.

(silence)

Keely McCarthy: No? It is silence on the attendee end.

Contact Information

Keely McCarthy: Well, here is Rich's contact information if you think of any questions regarding the performance measures. And now we will move on to our last presenter who is Zoë French, Grant Program Coordinator for OVC.

Grants Management System Close-out Process

Zoë French: Good afternoon, everyone. It seems really appropriate that we started off this series of Webinars with *Getting Started*, and now we are going to end it with my final presentation on the close-out process. I just want to tell you all thank you for your participation in this series of Webinars. As some of you approach the final end date of your awards, you need to start thinking about the submission of your award close-out package that is submitted through the Grants Management System. This package is due 90 days after the project end date.

Learning Objectives

Zoë French: This presentation is intended to prepare you for the close-out requirements and meeting OJP deadlines. The Grants Management System provides step-by-step instructions to complete close-outs within a system. These instructions can be accessed by logging into GMS and clicking on its computer-based training materials link. The link will take you to the computer-based training screen where you would select Grants Management System close-out. Please note that in order to access the GMS online training tool, your computer must have the latest version of Adobe Flash Player installed. For the purpose of this presentation, I will address a few key requirements that grantees often encounter as they go through the close-out process. For more detailed instructions, please set aside time for the online training. I strongly encourage you to take the training prior to the project end date of your grant.

Five Requirements

Zoë French: Let us begin by going over the five requirements to complete a close-out package: Final progress report, final financial status report, special condition compliance, financial reconciliation, and programmatic requirements.

Final Progress Report

Zoë French: The first requirement, final progress report, must be approved by your grant monitor for the status to read complete. Please contact your grant monitor for specific content that should be included in your final progress report, and please remember that the final progress report covers the entire project period. This report must be submitted in the Grants Management System within the 90-day deadline period.

Final Financial Status Report

Zoë French: The second requirement is a final financial status report. You can access the 269 system to complete your final financial status report by going to the 269 module on the Grants Management System. And your financial point of contact should be very familiar with this module because they should have been submitting your financial status reports throughout the life of the grant. When you submit your final financial status report, this will move the status from incomplete to final within the close-out module. And, again, when you go into the Grants Management System, you will have a more visual of the requirements, and you will see the status that says incomplete, and once you complete it, it will move over to complete.

Special Condition Compliance

Zoë French: The third requirement is special condition compliance. If the status of this requirement reads incomplete, please click on the special conditions to get more details. By clicking on this link, it is going to display any special conditions that are still associated to your award. And for assistance in coming into compliance with outstanding special conditions, you will need to contact your grant manager for that award. Remember, you can submit your close-out package for this section without this section being complete, because the ownership of completing this section is on your grant manager. A lot of times the special conditions are associated to grant requirements and deliverables, and your grant monitor may need to review a deliverable and then go into the Grants Management System again to remove that special condition.

Financial Reconciliation

Zoë French: The fourth requirement is the financial reconciliation. If this requirement is incomplete, that means that there is a discrepancy between what you have reported as obligation on your final SF-269 and the amount of funding you have drawn down. For more information, if you click on the link, the page lays out the financial information pertaining to your award being closed out, and you will not be able to submit your close-out package until obligations and drawdowns reconcile. And, again, your financial point of contact will be the one to go into the system to reconcile the award.

Programmatic Requirements

Zoë French: The fifth and last requirement is the programmatic requirements. At OVC, what we have seen throughout the close-out process is a lot of times our grantees think that they have completed the close-out, but, in fact, they have not because they have not gone into the programmatic requirements and completed the necessary information. So for this requirement, you would go into the system and just select not-applicable for all of the questions, click save, and then continue on through the close-out process.

Zoë French: When the close-out package is complete, you must then click submit. Often grantees think that they have submitted a package when, in fact, they only have saved it. Saving the close-out package does not make it visible to us at OVC to complete the final close-out package. So after you have completed the close-out process and you believe you have clicked on the submit button, I strongly urge you to call OVC and communicate with your grant manager that you have, in fact, submitted the close-out package.

Deadline

Zoë French: Now we move on to what is very important, the deadline. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of meeting the required deadline for the submission of your close-out package. I strongly, strongly urge you to begin this process as early as possible. For example, if today were the end date of your award, tomorrow you can go into the Grants Management System and begin the close-out process. You can start working on your grant progress report and complete the other requirements. Remember, all requirements must be complete for the close-out package to be submitted for you to close out your award. And your grant monitor will need time to review, for example, the final progress report and release any special conditions that bring you in compliance. These actions cannot take one day, so if you submit your close-out package on the 90th day, it does not give us time here at OVC to review a progress report or to remove any special conditions that are associated to your award. What will happen is on the 91st day, the Grants Management System will automatically issue an administrative close-out package, and this type of close-out package can adversely impact your organization when applying for future funding. So it is very, very important that you start the close-out process before the 90th day. Work on your progress report, work on completing all of the four out of five requirements, and communicating with your grant monitor.

Zoë French: So, to avoid submitting a late close-out package, these are things that I strongly recommend. Communicate with your grant monitor throughout this process. Contact your grant manager after you submit the close-out package.

Asking for Help

Zoë French: Contact the GMS Help Desk for technical issues or the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) Customer Service Center for issues pertaining to your SF-269, the financial status report or your financial reconciliation. And, number one, please, please start your close-out process shortly after the end of the project end period. The OCFO Customer Service number, if you need assistance, is 1–800–458–0786, or you can send e-mails to ASK.OCFO@usdoj.gov. So thank you, and if you all have any questions, I am open for them right now. Thank you.

Questions?

Keely McCarthy: Thank you, Zoë, and I see that we do have a couple of questions coming in right now. The first one is from Carla. If your grant period was extended beyond the original time, is the deadline of the close-out package also extended for 90 days after the end of the new period?

Zoë French: Yes, it is. If you have submitted to your grantee prior to 30 days before the end of your grant end date, yes, it will be extended, so the new award period will still have that new 90-day requirement.

Keely McCarthy: Great, thank you. The next question is: How long before the project end date should you submit a request for an extension?

Zoë French: Well, no-cost extensions must be submitted through GMS at least – well, after 30 days prior to the end date of your grant, you will be locked out of the system. So prior to that 30 days, you should submit a no-cost extension. And you should be communicating with your grant monitor about what are the activities to get approval, because you still need that OVC approval. Just because you want a no-cost extension does not guarantee that you will be approved for a no-cost extension. You would have to have appropriate justification.

Keely McCarthy: Thanks, Zoë. Next question is: Where can I look to see if I have special conditions?

Zoë French: All special conditions were on the award, your award package that was submitted when you initially received your award, and your authorized representative signed off on those special conditions. And if you are the program director or manager, you should have a copy of that in your grant file.

Keely McCarthy: Great. The next question is from Scott. Is there a listing available online of those actions, or lack of them, that will cause a demerit to be applied against an organization? Even a list of common ones would be helpful to review beforehand. Thank you.

Zoë French: I am not aware of anything available, but when I go back to OVC, I can followup with you, Scott, and send something out to you. But right now, off the top of my head, I am not familiar with anything. Oh, well, one thing, of course, would be the financial status report and the progress reports. If those reports are submitted late in the Grants Management System, your grant funds will automatically be frozen. So, for example, grant financial status reports are due 30 days after a quarter. If you do not submit it on time, the system automatically freezes your funds, and that also applies to your semi-annual progress reports. If you do not submit those reports on time, the system will automatically freeze your funds and you will not be able to draw down against your award.

Keely McCarthy: Great. Lola wants to know: How long does it take to review the changes requested to be made by OVC program specialists?

Zoë French: It depends on the change. If, at the end of your project period, you submit a final progress report that may miss a one-pager, your grant monitor may change request it back to you and say, “You do not meet the requirements. Please resubmit,” and give you some guidance on what you need to put into your progress report. As far as the timeline goes, I cannot give you a definite time line on how long it would take to review the change. It would kind of depend on the extent of the changes to the documents you have made.

Keely McCarthy: It looks like they are a new grantee and have not been able to start the project yet.

Zoë French: Okay, if you are a new grantee and you have not been able to start your project, are you saying that your funds are still on hold?

Keely McCarthy: Yes.

Zoë French: So what will happen is once your funds are released and a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN) is issued, your grant monitor will go into the system and issue a GAN extending your grant out for the required grant period. So if your award was for 2 years and today your grant funds were released, and 2 years from today you will have to perform those activities, and at the end of those 2 years, the 90 calendar days will apply towards the end for submitting your close-out package.

Keely McCarthy: Great, thank you. The next question is from Cassandra. I know you indicated we should contact our program manager for the information required in the final progress report. Is there a separate close-out form that needs to be completed?

Zoë French: No, there is not a separate close-out form that needs to be completed. What happens is the close-out module will just pull over the information from the GMS module just to indicate that the progress report was submitted and approved by your grant manager. So the same process that you used to submit your semi-annual progress report, you will use to submit your final progress report.

Keely McCarthy: Great, thank you, Zoë. Do we have any more questions regarding close-out process? I do not see any more. So thank you again, Zoë. If there are no more questions, I will go over a few final announcements.

Evaluation

Keely McCarthy: Everyone will be receiving a follow-up e-mail that includes a link to the *Measuring Success* online evaluation. The e-mail will also include the links to the evaluations for the previous three Webinar sessions. We ask that everyone please take a moment to complete all four Webinar evaluations if you have not done so already. Your feedback is extremely important as we plan for the next Grantee Orientation Series.

Keely McCarthy: Once again, we thank you for participating in today's Webinar, *Measuring Success*, and the entire 2012 OVC Discretionary Grantee Orientation Series.