

Draft

Exploring a Cross-Agency Platform for Judging Evidence: Resources for Federal Agencies

Informal Federal Interagency Workgroup on
A Common Evidence Framework
February 2013

DRAFT

Common Evidence Framework Workgroup

- * Agencies involved in the initial draft
 - * U.S. Department of Education
 - * Institute for Education Sciences
 - * U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - * Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
 - * U.S. Department of Labor
 - * Chief Evaluation Office
- * Will expand to include other agencies

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Workgroup Purpose

- * Establish common evidence framework for Federal agencies
- * First stage: Develop a framework for evidence standards

Guiding Principles

- * Build on existing agency work
- * Establish standards that can be used for both reviewing and conducting evaluations and related research
- * Establish standards that are applicable to all types of evaluation and research designs, and all types of results
- * Establish standards that are useful and relevant for all Federal agencies and assess areas where agencies may need to augment or adapt
- * Establish an approach to efficiently share evaluations and research that have been reviewed

DRAFT Framework for Evidence and Evaluation Reviews

Assessment of Single Studies

Types of Research Studies

Exploratory Analysis
(Early Stage Design,
Problem Identification,
Descriptive Analysis ,
Hypothesis Generation)

Developmental Designs
(Concept Proofs,
Pilots/Pre-Pilots)

Implementation &
Operational Studies
(Process Analysis,
Implementation
Science, Institutional
Analysis, Performance
Analysis)

Formal Impact
Evaluations of
Interventions,
Programs, Models, &
Systems (Efficacy Tests,
Scale-up Tests,
Replications)

Cost, Cost-Benefit &
Cost Effectiveness
Analysis

Standards for
Research Quality
and Results

Infrastructure
for Creating
Reporting &
Review
Guidelines
(including
template) for
Coding
Individual
Studies

Central
Collected
Library of
Reviewed/
Coded Studies
(linking
clearinghouses,
sharing reviews
and guidelines
across agencies)

Analytic Products From Assessments

Intervention
Effectiveness
Summaries/
Evidence Reviews
(e.g., Teen
Pregnancy
Prevention,
CrimeSolutions,
What Works
Clearinghouse)

Cost-Effectiveness
Analyses

Implementation,
Performance &
Operational
Analyses

Technical
Assistance
Products (e.g.,
Promising
Practice Guides)

Policy Analyses &
Syntheses

Actions

Decision-Making for Replication

Includes assessing:

- Evidence of Impacts
- Implementation Readiness
- Site Readiness
- Fit

Decision-Making for Research

Includes assessing:

- Need for Refining, Improving, Enhancing Evaluations
- Implications/ Recommendations for New Research Studies

Decision-Making for Innovation

Includes assessing:

- Key Research Gaps
- Promising Approaches from Exploratory Work that Require Demonstration

General Categories of Standards

- * **Research Design:**

- * Study questions
- * Conceptual framework or logic model
- * Evidence/theoretical base
- * Evaluation design

- * **Analytic Approach:**

- * Outcome/impact measures
- * Sampling (e.g., sample size, sample selection method, baseline equivalency, stratification, attrition)
- * Data collection methods (e.g., instrumentation, follow-up)
- * Analytic methods (e.g., internal/external validity, modeling, subgroup analysis)
- * Operational setting/context (e.g., implementation fidelity)

- * **External Review:**

- * Peer review
- * Funder monitoring
- * Advisory/technical group review

- * **Reports/Products:**

- * Presentation quality and clarity

Reporting and Review Guidelines

- * Examples of agencies/programs using and updating specific guidelines to review studies:
 - * Crime Solutions, DoJ
 - * Prevention Research Synthesis, HHS/CDC
 - * What Works Clearinghouse, ED
 - * Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Evidence Review, HHS
 - * FindYouthInfo.gov – provides youth programs from Crime Solutions and the TPP Evidence Review
 - * CLEAR - Clearinghouse of Labor Evaluation and Research, DoL
 - * Workforce System Strategies, DoL
 - * Self Sufficiency Research Clearing House, DoL
 - * Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness, HHS

Ratings, Scores, Levels of Evidence....

- * We have agency/program-specific coding of studies but there are many underlying common dimensions
 - * “Study Design Ratings” (HHS-TPP): High (high quality RCTs), Moderate (RCTs with high attrition and QEDs with baseline equivalence), Low Study rating; (these ratings are based on study design, attrition, baseline equivalence, reassignment, confounding factors)
 - * “Evidence Standards” (ED-WWC): Meets standards without reservation (high quality RCTs), meets standards with reservations (RCTs with attrition and QEDs with equivalence), does not meet standards (insufficient causal validity)

Library of Coded Studies

- * **Definition:**

- * A central collection of all of the individual studies that have been reviewed and coded by any clearinghouse

- * **Purpose:**

- * If studies in the library have been coded for similar elements, coded versions of individual studies can be pulled out from the library for different analytic products, and different clearinghouses can capitalize on existing work

- * **Contents:**

- * A searchable list of each study reviewed, including links to:
 - * The protocol that was followed for conducting the review (which will identify population of interest, age level, eligible outcomes, etc.)
 - * Outcomes that were considered
 - * Study rating for each outcome: meets standards, doesn't meet standards, etc.
 - * Study details that have been recorded on the coding template (for example, the Study Review Guide for the WWC)

Ideas for Next Steps

- * Share the draft framework and gather feedback
- * Develop some core codes and checklists for the general categories of standards that can be adopted in new work across agencies for:
 - * Clearinghouses and resource libraries
 - * Proposals and study designs
 - * Assessing additional types of studies beyond causal impact
 - * Reporting of results for studies that do not meet standards
- * Develop specifics for others areas of the framework