



Washington State Rape Prevention and Education Program Evaluation Capacity Building (Year 2)

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EVALUATION
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SUMMARY

The Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) Program in Washington State currently funds seven local organizations to provide comprehensive primary prevention programming in their communities. In addition, RPE-funded local programs are required to participate in evaluation capacity building activities and apply what they learn to their implementation efforts. Evaluation Specialists, through a contract with the Washington State Department of Health, provides regularly scheduled capacity building activities and one-on-one evaluation support to all RPE-funded local programs.

For the 12-month period between February 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017, RPE-funded local programs have successfully completed the required planning tasks, rated their evaluation capacity as improved at year's end, and reported increased confidence in their ability to conduct program evaluation tasks. Local programs provided useful feedback about the evaluation capacity building activities and the support they received.



BACKGROUND

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides funding to state and territorial health departments to implement the Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) program. Washington has selected seven grantees through a competitive process to implement comprehensive prevention strategies in local communities. Each grantee provides primary prevention activities to specific population(s). Grantees vary widely geographically and in the populations they serve.

As part of their funding, grantees are expected to self-evaluate their programs. Washington state hired Evaluation Specialists (ES) to provide capacity-building training and support to grantees. This report summarizes evaluation findings about capacity building in Year 2 (2016).



APPROACH TO BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY

With support from the WA RPE Program Director, ES implemented a three-pronged evaluation capacity building program for 2016. This included:

- Program evaluation training via 8 monthly, one-hour webinars;
- Individual evaluation consultation and guidance
- Reporting tools to guide grantees in refining their evaluation plans, carrying out their implementation evaluations, and reporting evaluation activities.

Prevention staff from all seven RPE-funded programs were required to participate in the evaluation capacity development activities listed above. In addition, direct supervisors from each program were strongly encouraged to participate.

The eight evaluation training webinars provided between February 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017 (Year 2) covered a range of topics:

- Methods for measuring program effects (randomized, quasi-experimental, pre-post, and retrospective or “no-baseline” designs)
- Using cost-effective tools such as Excel and SurveyMonkey (freely available online survey software) for data collection, entry, and analysis
- Collecting data in ways that are culturally aligned to the participants based on such factors as race and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and cognitive and physical abilities
- Creative data collection approaches such as card sorts, photography, physically engaging responses to prompt questions (for example, live Likert scales), journaling, observation, and talking circles
- Why, when, and how to revise evaluation instruments (such as surveys)
- Overall survey design and item wording
- Using the state reporting tools to plan your evaluation and communicate your findings
- Presenting evaluation findings visually via tables, graphs, figures, word clouds, and infographics: How, why, and to whom
- Sharing evaluation findings through reports and presentations with your audience in mind
- Making use of fellow grantees in a community of practice: Sharing evaluation challenges, problem solving, and successes
- Writing case examples as one way of describing implementation experiences in evaluation reports
- Presentations by ES trainers of their own findings (such as those in this report) as a way of modeling the use of evaluation methods

ES included time at the beginning of each webinar for grantees to briefly answer questions about their evaluations that were relevant to that day’s didactic presentation. Additionally, in several webinars grantees reported on their use of evaluation methods and the resulting findings. These presentations provided concrete illustrations of the skills being taught in the webinars.



EVALUATING CAPACITY BUILDING

ES asked participants to complete a web-based evaluation following each webinar. The number of questionnaire responses varied because more than one staff person from a program could attend each webinar. Using the data from these questionnaires, this report answers evaluation questions about the success of year 2 capacity building. Questions also look at capacity building growth from the beginning of the projects (July 2015) through the end of year 2. Evaluation questions were:

1. Did grantees complete state- and CDC-required evaluation planning tasks?
2. Did grantees show increased confidence by year's end in specific evaluation tasks covered in the webinars?
3. What examples did grantees provide showing their use of evaluative thinking in action?
4. Did grantees rate their evaluation capacity as improved overall since the beginning of their projects (July 2015)?

Findings for evaluation question #1: Did grantees complete state- and CDC-required evaluation planning tasks?

Answer: **YES.**

By year's end, grantees had completed all required activities. Grantees completed their evaluation reporting tools adequately, continued to update them as needed, and participated in evaluation capacity building webinars.

Findings for evaluation question #2: Did grantees show increased confidence by year's end (January 2017) in specific evaluation tasks covered in the 2016 webinars?

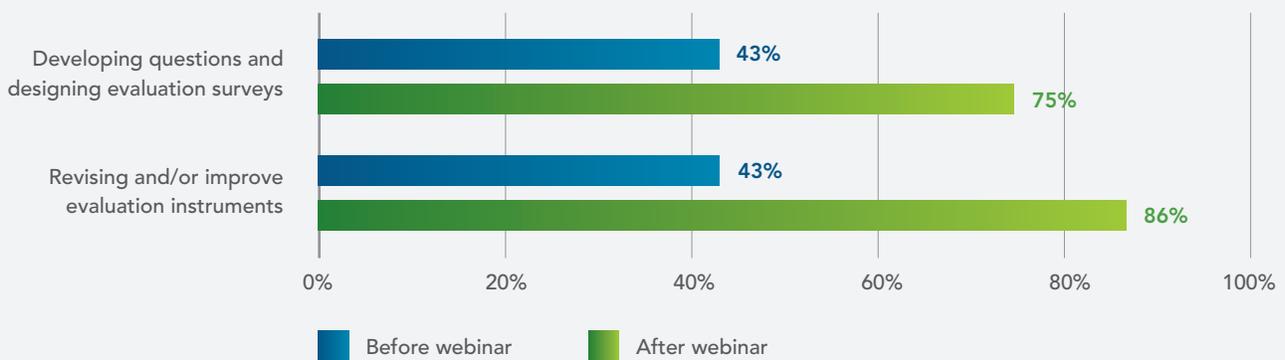
Answer: **YES**, as shown in the following graphs.



Evaluation Survey Creation and Revision

Two webinars focused on the development of effective evaluation instruments, including content on writing good questions, designing surveys, and revising and improving instruments based on their utility in practice and participant reactions. Comparing themselves to when they were first funded (July 2015), grantees (n = 7) reported higher confidence in their abilities to carry out these key evaluation tasks.

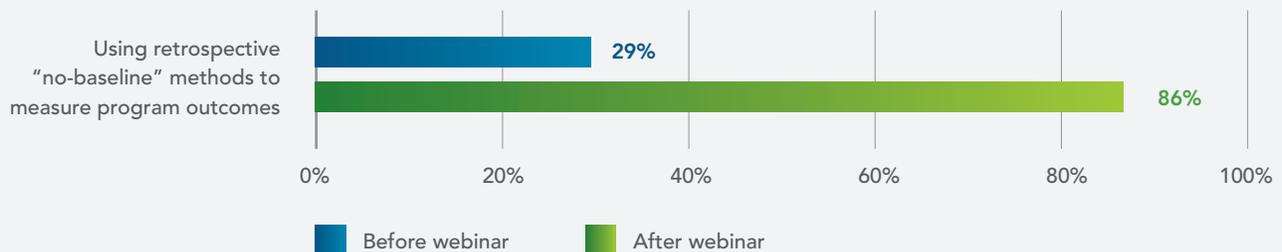
Percent of grantees rating themselves as "somewhat" or "very" confident at



Using Retrospective Methods

One webinar gave an overview of methods for measuring program effects. These methods included randomized, quasi-experimental, pre-post, and retrospective or "no-baseline" designs. We emphasized retrospective methods given that they are particularly feasible for community organizations like the RPE grantees. After this webinar, grantees (n = 7) reported improved confidence in using "no-baseline" methods to measure the effects of their programs.

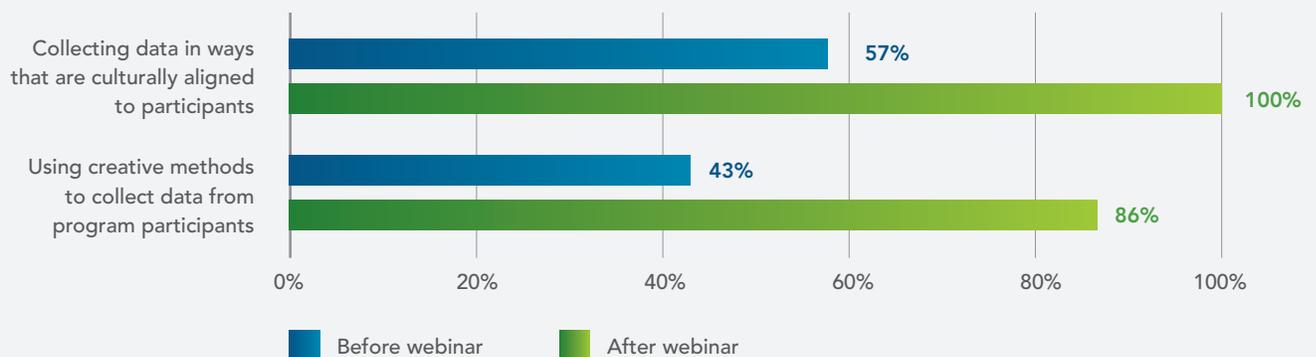
Percent of grantees rating themselves as "somewhat" or "very" confident at



Creative and Culturally Appropriate Data Collection

Two webinars focused on effective data collection in the context of evaluation. Comparing themselves to when they were first funded, grantees (n = 7) reported higher confidence in their ability to collect data in ways that are culturally relevant for their participants. Cultural factors discussed included race and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and cognitive and physical abilities. Grantees (n = 7) also improved their confidence in using creative data collection approaches. Creative approaches covered in this webinar included card sorts, photography, journaling, observation, talking circles, and physically engaging approaches to responding to prompt questions.

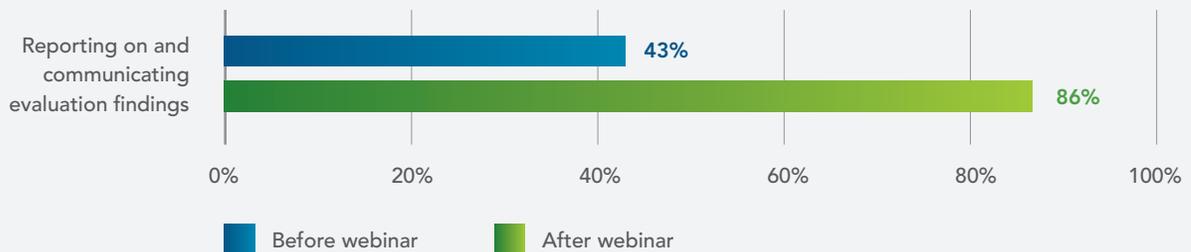
Percent of grantees rating themselves as "somewhat" or "very" confident at



Communicating Evaluation Findings

Another webinar topic was methods for sharing evaluation findings through written reports and presentations, including presenting evaluation findings visually and keeping your specific audience in mind. Grantees (n = 7) reported they had greater confidence regarding these skills following the webinar.

Percent of grantees rating themselves as "somewhat" or "very" confident at



A key aspect of developing evaluation capacity is the ability to share evaluation findings with others. In the final webinar for 2016, grantees reported on who they share evaluation findings with, another reflection of their evaluation capacity. Six of seven grantee organizations participated in this webinar (n = 6).

Report Audience	Number of Grantees
Funders (CDC)	6
Other organization staff/ supervisors	5
Organization Board of Directors	4
Gatekeepers/ potential partners	2
Peer organizations	1
Clients/ participants	1
Publication/ formal presentation	1



Findings for evaluation question #3: What examples did grantees provide showing their use of evaluative thinking in action?

In 2016's final webinar, grantees reflected on their use of implementation evaluation. Grantees Discussion centered on challenges it helped them identify, and how they then addressed those challenges by altering their programming or evaluation approaches. Example responses here highlights grantee's use of implementation evaluation and illustrates their capacity development.

Challenge encountered by one or more grantees during implementation

Response to challenge

Found that student reading levels were different than anticipated

Adapt evaluation materials to be more developmentally appropriate

Parental consent for participation sometimes challenging to obtain

Examine data on eligible youth who do not receive parental permission to participate to understand who they are, and hence, what recruitment approaches might be appropriate and effective

Attendance sporadic for some participants

Examine whether improvements in content enhance attendance

Higher program demand than anticipated

Offer programming to more and sometimes different groups; adapt evaluation materials and assessment methods to be appropriate for more diverse audiences

Negative participant responses to length and frequency of data collection

Review data collection approach and identify opportunities to reduce frequency

Recognized that unexpected data or data analysis was needed

Begin collecting data (e.g., additional risk and protective factors, community desire for specific content); examine effect of dosage/attendance on benefit from program

Collected data but then found it did not provide much usefulness

Eliminate collection of that data

Realized data could be collected that had not been thought of but would be useful

Expand types of data collected

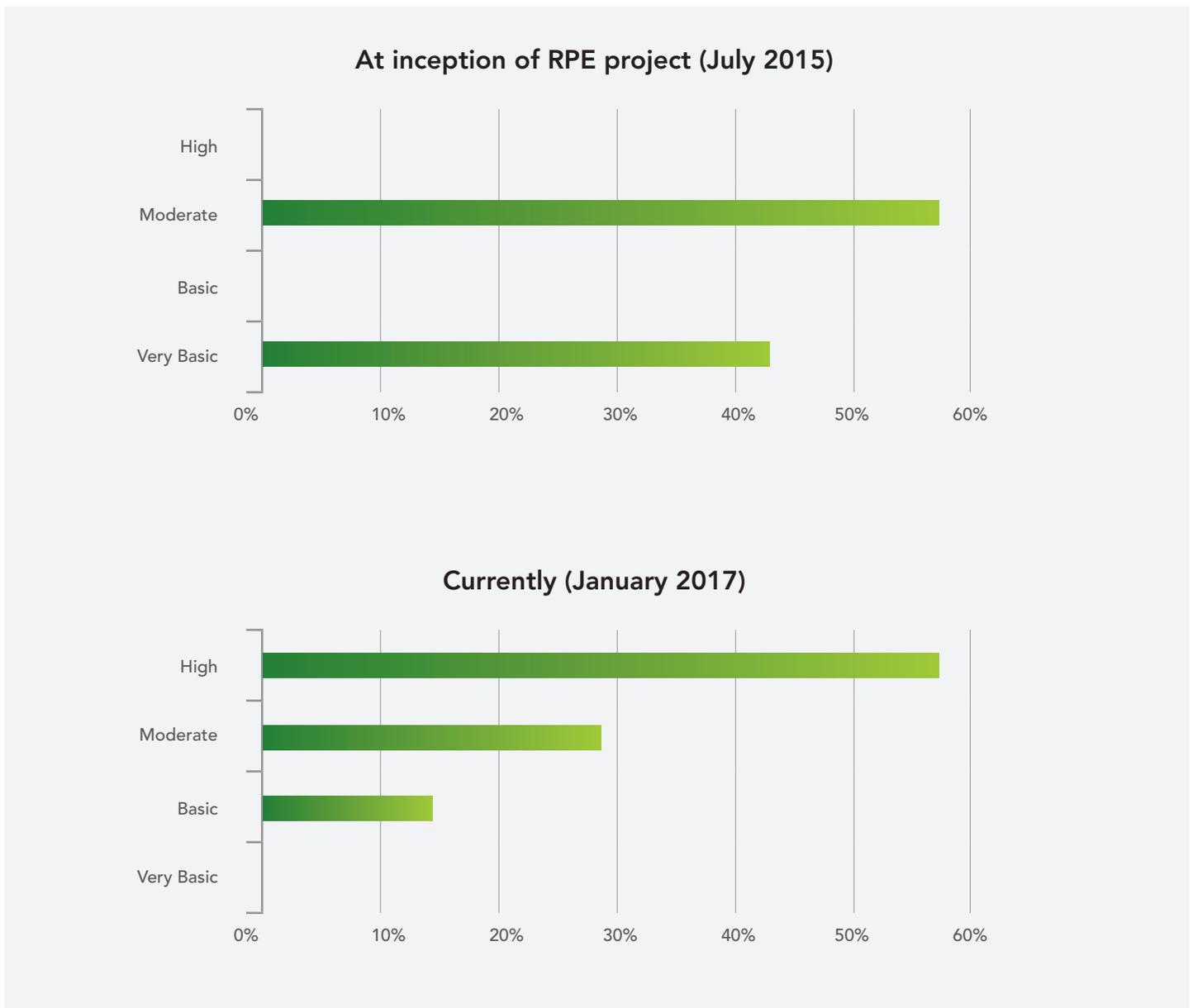


Findings for evaluation question #4: Did grantees rate their evaluation capacity as improved since the beginning of their projects (July 2015)?

Answer: YES.

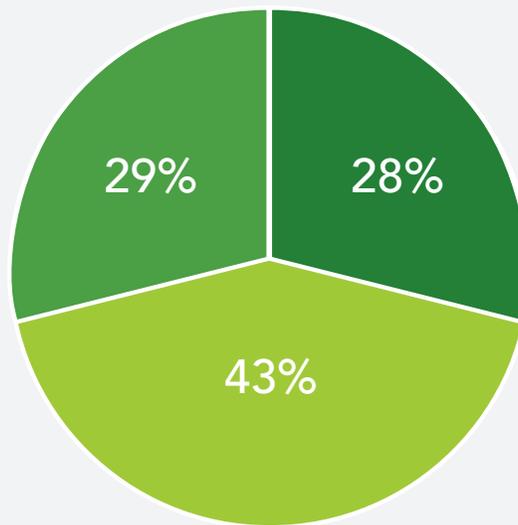
Grantees (n = 7) rated their capacity higher when surveyed early in January 2017 than when their RPE programs were first funded in July 2015.

How would you describe your overall evaluation capacity?



Grantees (n = 7) also rated themselves as having improved their evaluation capacity. The majority reported substantial improvement since the inception of their RPE projects in July 2015.

How much has your evaluation capacity improved since RPE project inception (July 2015)?



■ A little ■ Quite a bit ■ A lot

Note: A "Not at all" option was also provided, but no grantee chose it



USEFULNESS OF CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING

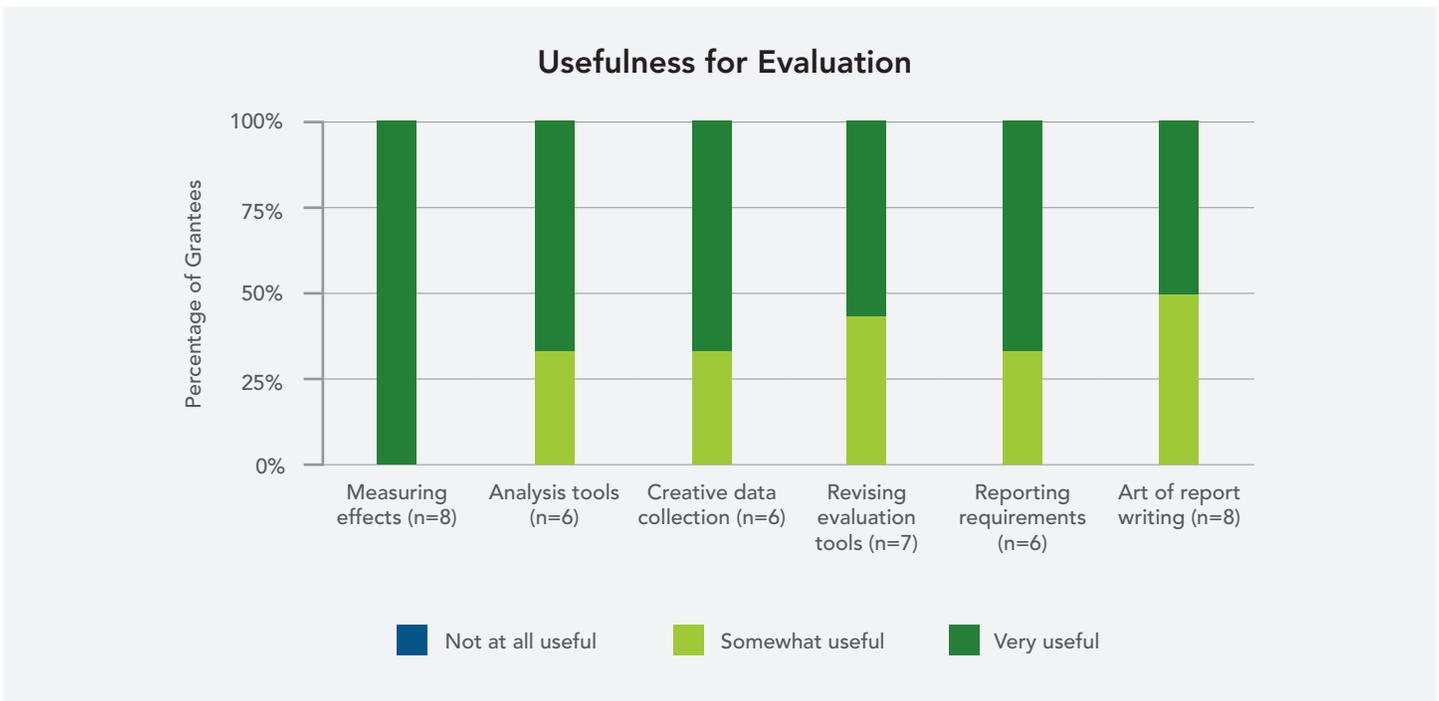
Two additional evaluation questions addressed how useful grantees found the provided training in building their evaluation capacity. In the online questionnaires, ES asked participants to provide reactions and feedback to each webinar. The number of responses varied because more than one staff person from a program could attend each webinar. Responses provide answers to these two evaluation questions about the webinars:

5. How did grantees rate the webinars' usefulness?
6. What feedback did grantees provide about webinar content?

Findings for evaluation question #5: How did grantees rate the webinars' usefulness?

Answer: All webinar topics appeared to have relevance: Grantees typically said that they found the content somewhat or very useful for their own evaluations.

All grantees found the webinar content somewhat or very useful for their own evaluations.



Findings for evaluation question #6: What feedback did grantees provide about training activities?

Answer: Grantees provided positive comments, as well as suggestions for improvements.



Overall, grantees provided positive feedback in response to open-ended questions about webinars. In terms of suggested improvements, they asked to see more varied techniques used in the webinars, and said they particularly benefited from webinars that involved structured reflection and participation from all grantees. These four themes emerged from feedback across all webinars.

"The content [on revising evaluation tools]. Good to be reminded that we can change our tools."

Ongoing revision and adaptation are positive and expected.

"I just really appreciate the affirmation that data collection tools can be flexible enough to really capture accurate information."

"The case study really brought home the importance of this month's webinar, and made it much more tactile and understandable. More please!"

Grantees benefit from active, participatory webinars in which they can share their experiences and learn from others.

[The webinar on reflective learning, where all grantees spoke about their experiences]...

"...seemed to flow really well. ...was a great format!"

"It's always good to hear what others are doing and the successes and challenges they're experiencing."

"Loved hearing another preventionist's approach to evaluation."

Having a structured format for hearing about other grantees' experiences of and reactions to evaluation challenges is validating and helpful.

"It was very validating. I felt like my program was struggling with a lot of setbacks and obstacles. It was great getting to hear about others..."

"I liked hearing other programs' ideas to help overcome [evaluation report writing] challenges. Feels way out of my skill set."

"I also appreciated the structure of the questions and knowing the info that would be shared/expected."

"I thought the information [on revising evaluation tools] would have been a lot more helpful if it had been presented to us at the beginning. I had a lot of concerns... about whether the surveys I was creating were using best practice."

Grantees want the timing of webinar content to match where they are with their evaluation activities.

"[The information on evaluation reporting] was very easy to understand. It might be because we recently completed a report and I finally 'get it'."



CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Grantees reported gains in confidence and improvements in self-rated skills. Additionally, they successfully completed evaluation tasks. Grantees rated capacity building trainings as useful, and provided some recommendations for how to keep them helpful and instructive. As in the previous year, in a small number of cases grantees responded very differently to webinars. For example, one grantee found the placement of one topic in the webinar schedule to be problematic while another found the same webinar to well-timed. This reflects the challenge of structuring the webinar schedule to provide well-timed training when grantees' programming and evaluation work occurs on different timelines.

Lessons learned

- The model of providing instructional webinars complemented by individualized support continued being a successful approach to capacity building.
- Grantees provided positive feedback about the inclusion, of structured time for each to report on aspects of their evaluation including both successes and challenges.
- Activities like the end-of-year structured reflection webinar, in which grantees shared case examples of evaluative thinking in action, illustrate ways grantees have integrated evaluation skills and concepts into their work.

Recommendations for future evaluation capacity development activities

- The provision of webinars that have didactic information, opportunities for grantees to learn from each other's experiences, and ongoing individualized support continues to be a successful approach to evaluation capacity building.
- It is important to note that some turnover in agency staffing occurred during Year 2. New staff may need additional individualized support (in addition to the recorded webinars available on the ES website).



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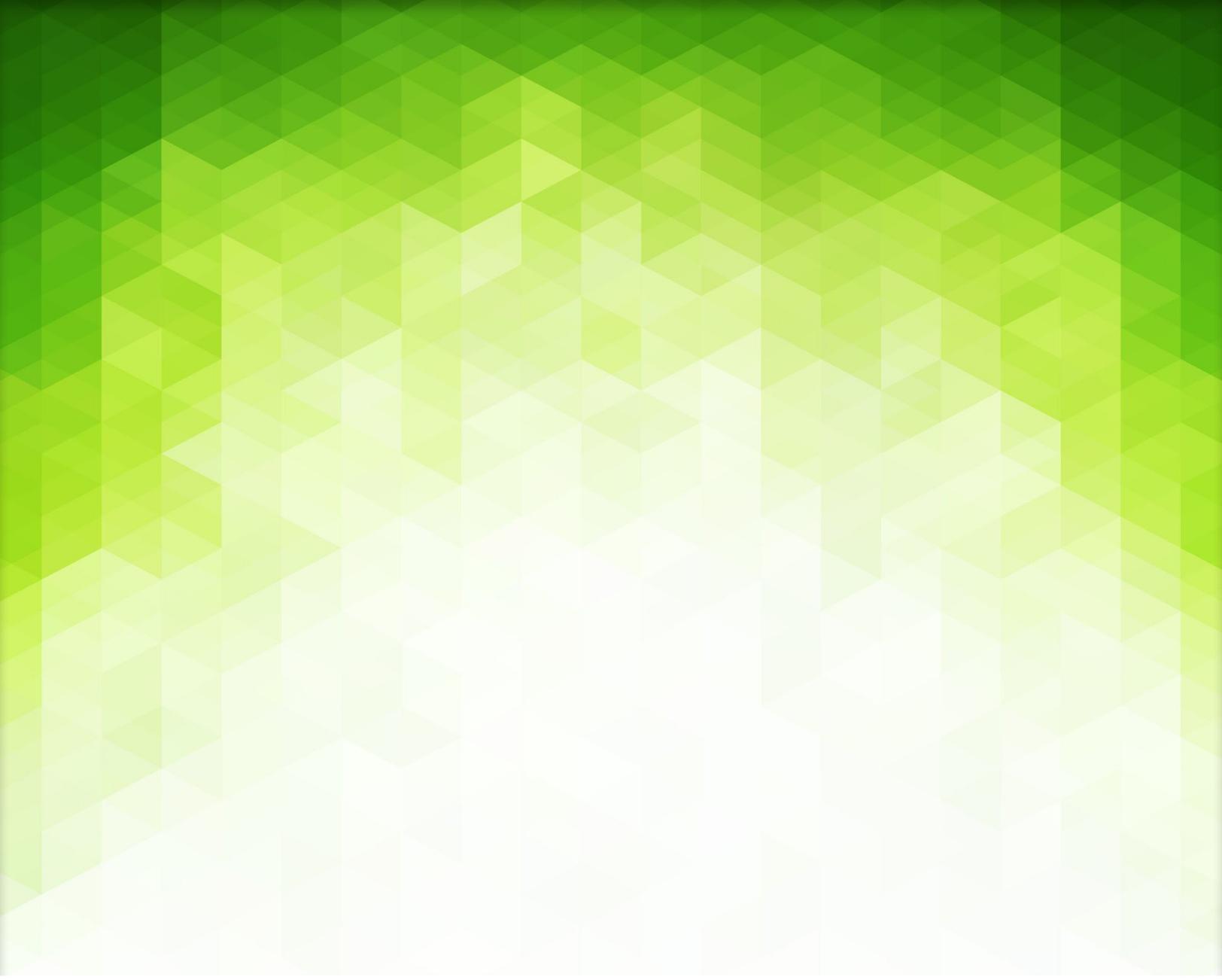
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ADDENDUM: METHODS USED

Tables detailing all findings are available upon request. We used SurveyMonkey online surveys to collect most data. When looking at improvements in capacity (e.g., at beginning of funding versus at end of year), data was from a year end questionnaire. Grantees rated their confidence for each item twice, once for the present time and once for (for example) when they were first funded. We did not compute statistical significance because the number of grantees is too small to meet the assumptions of such statistics.





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