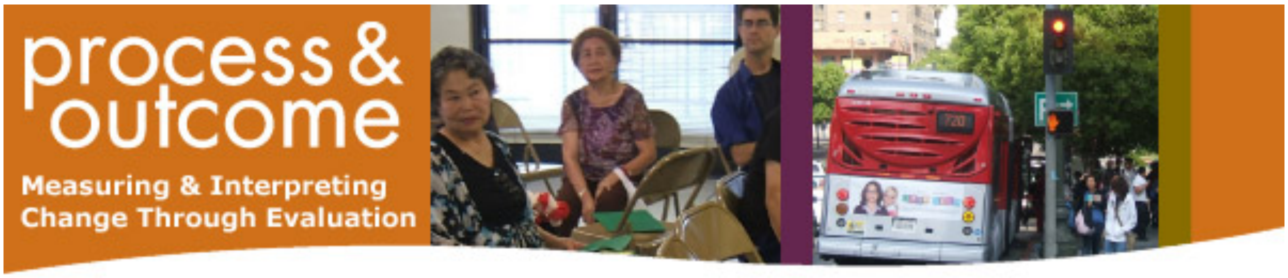
The content in this preview is based on the last saved version of your email - any changes made to your email that have not been shown in this preview.

CENTER FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

TOBACCO CONTROL EVALUATION CENTER



Fall 2009

In This Issue

Subscribe

Sign up here to receive the TCEC newsletter direct to your inbox every quarter!

Join Our Mailing List!

Your Photos Needed!

Help! We need your photos of data collection activities as well as images that represent objectives that your project is working on. For more details about the types of photos we need and how to share your photos with us, click here on submission details.

Welcome

Now it's crunch time! You need to lead your coalition members through the CX process, determine your new objectives, formulate your work and evaluation plans. A lot to do. To try to make it a little easier and clearer, this edition of our newsletter is full of planning resources and strategies. Hope you find it helpful,

Robin Kipke
Editor

How can you design a well-crafted evaluation work plan for the new funding cycle? The OTIS Evaluation Guide is your road map. Follow the guidelines outlined there. It tells you how to proceed step-by-step: from choosing the plan type to writing your evaluation narrative. If you still have questions about your approach, contact the Tobacco Control Evaluation Center (TCEC) for advice. We'll be happy to clarify anything about your evaluation plan. Also, check out useful resources on evaluation planning, including the OTIS guide, at our website http://tobaccoeval.ucdavis.edu. You can reach our team of Evaluation Specialists directly at tobaccoeval@ucdavis.edu or 530.752.9951.

EVALUATION NEWS YOU CAN USE

Take Off Your Shoes: Following Cultural Clues among Asians/Pacific Islanders

Plan ahead! Be sure to include money in your budget to attend at least one of the regional trainings Tobacco Control Evaluation Center will be hosting around the state on evaluation workshop topics you can't live without! Practical, hands-on half or full-day sessions will cover topics like:

- Getting Maximum Bang for Your Buck: Streamlining evaluation activities while collecting the information you need

- Making It Count: Evaluation methods from designing data collection instruments to making sense of the data

- Spreading the News: Effective ways to use and share your results for maximum impact

All workshops will be interactive and provide opportunities for you to apply what is covered to your own program. Specific training dates and topics will be determined according to regional needs.

So, be sure to include a line item for attending a TCEC training workshop in your new plans!

Don't miss two November webinars by TCEC on topics relevant to developing your evaluation plans. Tuesday, November 17th from 10-11 a.m. tune in to "Sampling Decisions for Data Collection Activities" and on Thursday, November 19th from 10-11 take part in a session on "Cost Effective Evaluation Strategies". Login information will be posted on PARTNERS.

Stay tuned for the next issue of our quarterly newsletter coming in January which will cover topics like:

- Documenting & using process data to support program activities
- Analyzing & interpreting data
- Visual presentations of data

back to top

EVALUATION TOOLBOX

Utilizing End-Use Strategizing to Create Data Collection Instruments

Say your project is planning to conduct a public opinion survey about smoking in outdoor dining areas, some key informant interviews with apartment managers, or an observation of tobacco litter in local parks. You'll need to adapt an existing data collection instrument or design your own. But either way, how can you be sure your evaluation activity will collect the information that will help move your policy work forward?

Applying end-use strategizing can help. Instead of beginning with forming the questions you want to ask, start by thinking about the purpose and use of the data you hope to collect. What is it you are trying to achieve with the data? Who are you trying to convince or inform and what actions should result as a consequence? The more specifically you can outline this, the easier the rest of the process becomes.

How will the data be used?

Once you've identified the target audience for the data, then think about what type and quantity of data will be convincing to this audience. The sample size and rigor needed to persuade council members is likely to be very different from what is needed to convince apartment managers.

Next, figure out what sources of the information will be most credible to your target audience. Think too about who should be excluded from the sample. For example, the opinion of park users who live (and vote) outside of the county may hold less weight than local residents (voters) with city council members. Also, what quantity (numbers as well as percentages) of respondents would convince them there is public momentum for a policy?

Now you are ready to consider the types of questions you might ask. Pinpoint what pieces of information your audience will care about. From here, you can begin to word questions that will best collect this specific data. Keep in mind any cultural factors that might affect the construction or sequence of your questions such as the language spoken, literacy level, and cultural understanding of your potential data sources (interviewees). This might affect the examples you use in the instrument, the way questions are asked or whether to use a face-to-face or pen-to-paper format.

What pieces of information will your audience care about?

Consider the type and level of analysis you want to be able to conduct on the data. How might you need to be able to separate out and analyze data? Is it important to be able to distinguish characteristics of these sources (by gender, age, zip code, income, education, ethnicity, whether or not they use tobacco, etc.)? If so, then you'll need to ask relevant demographic questions.

All of these factors will affect how you construct your data collection instrument. Applying reverse logic to the development process will help ensure that after you've put in all the hard work to collect the data, it will really speak to the purpose you intended, and hopefully convince your target audience to move in the direction your project is promoting.

For more ideas on how to apply end-use strategizing, check out several tools, examples and even an archived teleconference on the subject on the TCEC website.

back to top

WHAT'S NEW AT TCEC

New Contact Information

We've moved to a new office home, so our mailing address has changed to: 1616 Da Vinci Court, Davis, CA 95618. Our phone numbers and email addresses remain unchanged. Our main phone line is 530.752.9951.

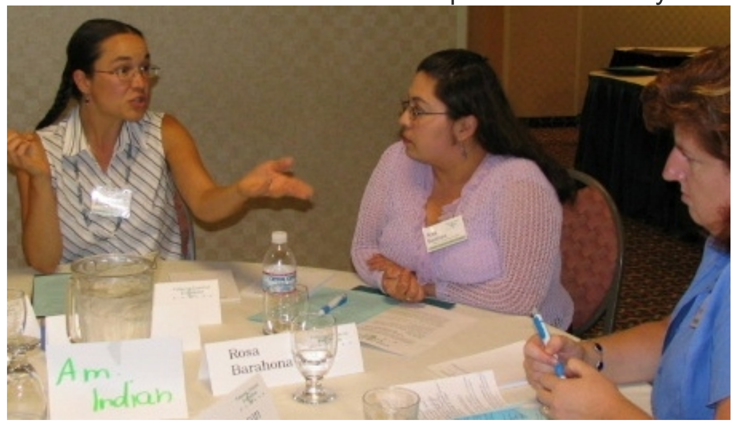
back to top

CULTURE IN EVALUATION

Why Culture Matters

This *Culture in Evaluation* series explores ideas and topics related to conducting tobacco control program evaluation with priority populations in California.

In August 2007, the Tobacco Control Evaluation Center launched an initiative to promote culturally competent evaluation strategies among tobacco control programs in California by hosting its first workshop on the topic. Discussions in breakout sessions on various priority populations led to the development of a series of culturally specific evaluation guides. These tools are meant to be starting points to help TCP-funded projects overcome evaluation challenges in communities where generic strategies are not always effective.

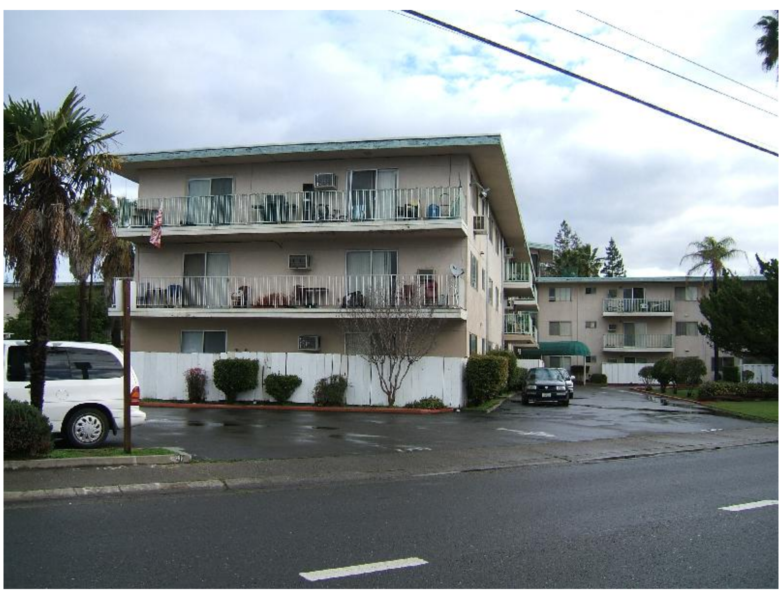


Why all this emphasis on culture in evaluation? Because culture affects how well we are able to achieve results in our programs. The fact that "priority populations" still have higher smoking and related disease rates than the general California populace is an indication that a one-size-fits-all approach to communicating norm change messages around tobacco use just might not be enough. It hints that not everyone receives the message in the same way. Evaluation activities are critical in this endeavor because they can tell us how well our message is reaching specific populations.

One-size-fits-all approach is not enough

If we conduct evaluation activities without understanding the cultural nuances of the groups we are targeting, the data is likely to yield inadequate results. For example, if your project wanted to survey people of low socioeconomic status about their exposure to secondhand smoke, there are a number of cultural factors to be aware of.

First off, some segments of the low SES population may have difficulty reading a self-administered survey, so asking them to fill out a survey could mean that many will decide not to participate. Even with face-to-face surveys, respondents with low literacy levels may have trouble understanding percentages, scales or even multiple choice questions.



Think carefully, too, about the wording of questions. The policy lingo we so commonly use may be obscure to certain population groups. Ask yourself if the individuals you are interviewing ever use the term "tobacco use." Chances are they only hear and use the terms "smoking" or "chewing." Instead of "multi-unit housing," use the term "apartments." Addressing small but crucial cultural considerations like this will help ensure that your data collection efforts will produce valid and useful evaluation results.

For ideas about conducting evaluation activities with one of the priority populations in California, you can download culture-specific guidelines for working with LGBT, rural, Native American, African American, Hispanic, low SES, and Asian/Pacific Islander populations from the TCEC website. Each publication provides practical suggestions for gaining access to a community, developing data collection instruments and collecting evaluation data.

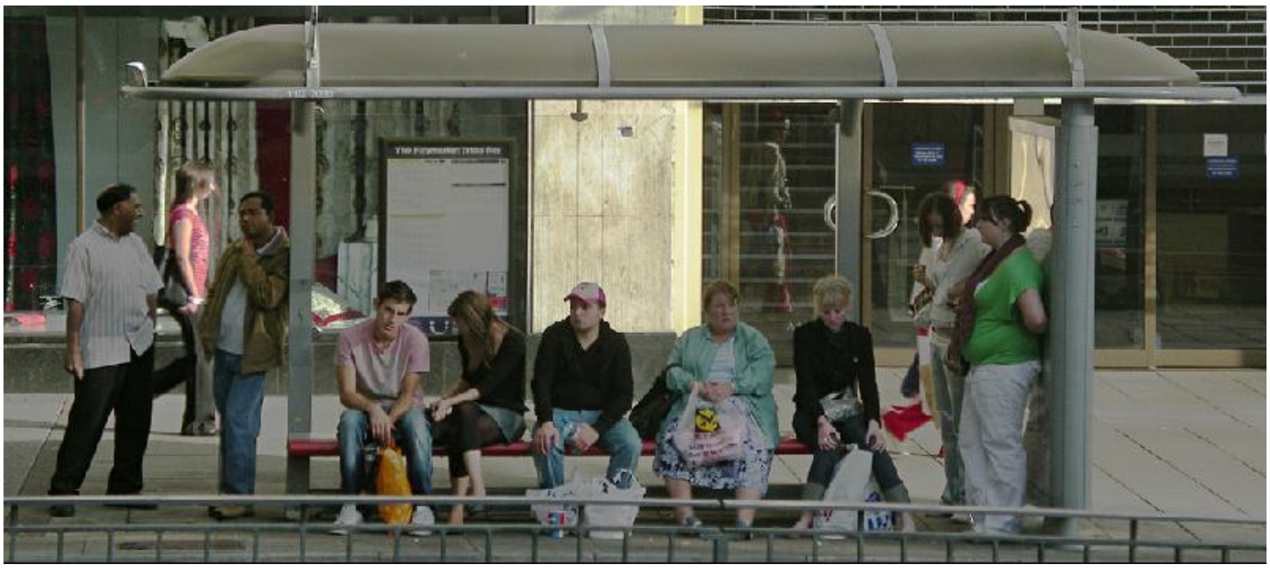
If you have suggestions, comments or questions about one of the documents, please email us. We'd like to update the guides periodically with knowledge from the field about evaluation challenges as well as effective solutions you've experienced in your tobacco control work with priority populations.

TCEC will continue the effort to develop useful tools and processes for building cultural competency in evaluation by hosting teleconferences and trainings on the topic. Keep an eye on PARTNERS for related postings.

back to top

TALES FROM THE FIELD

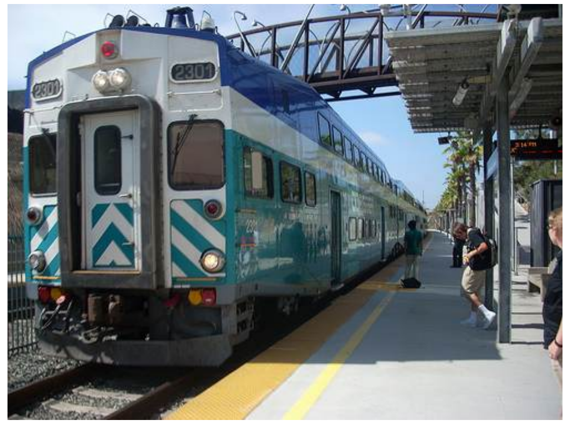
Making the Right Connections: Adapting a Public Opinion Survey for a Low SES Population



The commuters waited patiently for their next bus or train. Some read, some listened to music through headphones, and a few smoked, exposing others to harmful secondhand fumes. Gena Knutson and her staff at the Vista Community Clinic wanted that scenario to change.

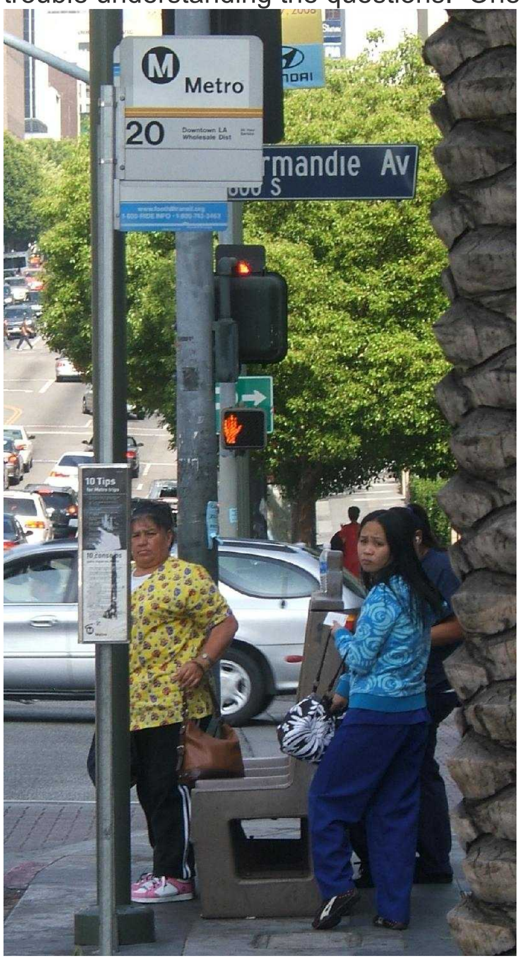
The Vista tobacco control project was interested in promoting a policy to ban smoking at bus and train stops in the North County Transit District of San Diego County. Buses and trains had long been smoke-free, but there was no policy on smoking at transit stops. Knowing the smoking rates and attitudes of bus and train riders about secondhand smoke would help the Vista program make a case for the need for a smoke-free transit stop policy to the board members of the transit district.

Gena began by contacting the Tobacco Control Evaluation Center (TCEC) to see if there were any transit stop surveys that she could look at for some ideas about questions to ask. Robin Kipke, an evaluation associate at TCEC, researched the repository of more than 400 surveys and observational instruments collected from state-funded tobacco control projects over the years. There were no existing surveys aimed at bus or train riders, so Robin adapted an instrument on smoking in outdoor public places and outlined some ways Gena could adapt it for use at bus stops.



The short, one-page survey asked how mass transit users felt about a variety of smoke-free policy options for train platforms or bus stops and their opinions on smoking in general. The remaining eight questions asked demographic questions such as age, race, city of residence and whether the respondent suffered from any respiratory problems (which could be aggravated by secondhand smoke). The survey was designed to be self-administered to a sample of 350 transit riders as they waited for their bus or train to arrive.

With surveys in hand, Vista Community Clinic staff visited transit stops in the North County area to begin their work. The field test of the train survey with 25 commuters worked without a hitch. The test of the bus survey did not go as smoothly, however. Data collectors approached people waiting for the bus, and asked if they were willing to complete a short survey. Many people agreed to do so, but some had trouble understanding the questions. One woman asked a staff member to read her the questions. Apparently, among this rider population the questions were too long and complicated. It was clear that the population of bus riders differed from that of the train riders.



When crafting the surveys, Gena and her staff had assumed that mass transit users constituted one population-commuters. However, it soon became apparent that bus riders differed from train riders in at least one respect-they appeared to be less educated and had greater difficulty with the survey wording. This raised several possible hypotheses: Either bus riders were of lower socioeconomic status than train riders (with less education and lower literacy) OR perhaps they were not native English speakers (or readers) and this accounted for their trouble understanding the survey language. To test that hypothesis and explore the characteristics of the different types of riders, several more demographic questions about income levels and primary language could have been added to the survey.

Based on what they encountered during the pilot test, the Vista Community Clinic staff made the bus survey easier to read and complete. The survey was shortened by deleting several opinion questions as well as demographic questions. Words like "designated areas," "secondhand smoke" and "health hazards" were changed to more everyday language. With fewer questions, a larger font was used for the text and the amount of white space was increased.

After reviewing the survey results, Gena concluded, "What was very useful to us was the information on the types of people who were using the buses compared to those who were using trains." The survey showed that 35% of bus riders smoked daily, but only 14% of train riders did. The survey results clearly demonstrated a need for a smoke-free policy. Four waves of the intercept surveys will continue to collect the opinions of bus and train riders which can then be used as evidence of the need for smoke free transit stop policies when meeting with policy makers.

For useful ideas about conducting evaluation activities with low SES populations, look at the [Culture in Evaluation Low SES Populations] on the TC Evaluation Center's website. Another resource is a handout from the TECC library, [Developing Materials for Low SES Populations] which has some good advice for developing educational materials that are just as applicable to developing new surveys.

Photos by Stringberd, LA Wad and Robin Kipke

back to top

CENTER FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

TOBACCO CONTROL EVALUATION CENTER

We are the statewide technical assistance center on evaluation for all TCP-funded projects in California.

Project directors, their staff, evaluators and subcontractors can call or email our evaluation associates for individualized assistance with questions about their tobacco control-related work with regard to:

- Developing evaluation plans
- Creating or adapting data collection instruments
- Analyzing data and interpreting results
- Writing up your final evaluation report

Access our collection of useful evaluation resources on our website where you can:

- Download our Tip Sheets for "how to" information on evaluating tobacco control interventions
- Watch short training presentations on data collection methods
- Find our Culture in Evaluation guides for suggestions on working with priority populations
- Listen to archived recordings of past TCEC teleconferences

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Tobacco Control Evaluation Center (TCEC)
Dept. of Public Health Sciences, UC Davis
1616 Da Vinci Court, Davis, CA 95618
530.752.9951 main line, 530.752.3239 fax
tobaccoeval@ucdavis.edu
http://tobaccoeval.ucdavis.edu

back to top

ASK AN EVALUATOR

Q & A about Developing Evaluation Plans

How are proposed workplans scored?

A separate review process occurs for the applications for the RFA 100 and the 2010-2013 workplans for local lead agencies. Teams of reviewers are assigned to read and score a batch of proposals based on the criteria set forth by CTCP in the RFA for each type of funding. Review teams consist of project directors, program consultants, budget specialists and evaluators. Each component of the workplan is given a point score based on how sound, complete and logical it seems. While fresh, innovative ideas can be frosting on the cake, what reviewers are really looking for is whether the plan makes sense. Is there an apparent logic that connects the intervention activities to the objective? Will the evaluation clearly support and inform the intervention? Do the data collection activities match the plan type and evaluation design? Is the justification for the evaluation approach clearly laid out in the narrative? Do all of the pieces fit together to reveal the big picture of the puzzle. So pay attention to the little components as well as the overall view and make sure to provide enough detail so the brilliant logic of your plan shines through!

What should go into the evaluation narrative?

The OTIS Evaluation Guide describes both the purpose and the components of an evaluation narrative (see pages 131-132). Basically, should provide a reader insight into what your evaluation plan will consist of and why you are using this approach. One way to think about the narrative is, what information would need to be included in order to satisfy a critic that your results were valid? You would need to describe: 1) what you were trying to do and why [what was your objective and why you chose to work on that topic. And don't just say it became a priority due to the CX process!], 2) what your evaluation plan was designed to do [how it supports/informs the objective], 3) your evaluation design [plan type, process and outcome measures, overview of data collection activities], 4) describe the data collection activities in chronological order so it is clear how all of the steps fit together, 5) how data collection will be carried out [target population, sample size & selection, data collection training, who will collect the data], 6) how data will be analyzed and what you think it will tell you, 7) how results will be used and shared, 8) outline any anticipated limitations and challenges to the evaluation. The narrative should be infused with the rationale for the evaluation approach you've decided to take. It should convince the reader that the approach that you are proposing in the evaluation plan is logical!

How should you write a plan which continues work on current objectives that were not yet achieved?

Start with what has been done to date, then show what still remains to be done and discuss why important to continue on this objective at this time. For example: What hindered the achievement of the goal in the current cycle? What did the results of your data collection reveal? Is there a lack of public and/or leadership support? Is more education and outreach needed? If so, then plan more frequent, widespread or effectively targeted activities? Do you need more/better media coverage? Then plan press campaigns or media events to garner more coverage? Or would decisionmakers be convinced with more or better data? Then think about what type and scope of data collection activities could capture data that would be convincing. Is there just a lack of political will due to factors outside of your control, such as council members that are vehemently opposed to a policy because of personal reasons or ideals? Then, what activities can be planned that could work around those members or bring political pressure on them? The lessons you have learned from your efforts to date should shape the activities and approaches of your new work plan.

Decide whether the amount of work needed to achieve a second round on this objective will constitute a primary focus of your program (primary objective) or will it be a lesser focus (non-primary objective). Write up your proposed workplan from there.

What's the best way to determine percent allocations for deliverables?

There is no standard way to determine this. It will depend on a number of variables - the size of your program, the number of objectives in your plan, whether the objective is primary or secondary. The one set rule is that all of the deliverables in your overall workplan should total 100%. How you determine a value for each deliverable is somewhat subjective, but the smallest increment is 0.5%. In general, think about what activities you will be spending the bulk of your staff time on - first among the objectives Assign a ratio for each objective, for example: getting a TRL policy passed in this city is going to be a tough sell and quite time consuming as compared to developing culturally relevant materials and passing an outdoor parks policy in a supportive community, so you might figure 50% of time will be spent on obj. 1, 20% on obj. 2 and 30% on obj. 3. If you convert that into points for the moment, that means you have 50 points to divvy up between intervention and evaluation activities for obj. 1 and so on.

Remember that collaboration and coordination activities for a policy objective are not given a deliverable (that's what assets are for). Primary objectives, in which more program time and effort is spent, should get more % time allocated than non-primary objectives.

When in doubt, look at other plans in OTIS working on an objective similar to yours. You can also phone a friend (call other project directors) and ask how they arrived at the percentages for their deliverables on a specific objective. You could also request advice through the Project Director's

Association by emailing Rich Heinz at thellapda@yahoo.com or contacting the Association President, Bill Hall in Modoc County via email at bhall@modoccounty.us.