Analysis of a Portfolio of Evaluation Plans for 4-H Science Programs

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Introduction and Overview

- Evaluation Partnerships and the “Protocol”
  (What the cohort has been through)

- Overview of the Programs and their Evaluation Plans

- Patterns and Questions
Evaluation Partnerships

- CORE provides training, brings evaluation expertise
- Partners bring experience, expertise in their programs, their communities, their “systems”

Planning Phase is a one-year commitment, with intentions and clarity of roles captured in an MOU
The Evaluation Partnership project in Cornell Cooperative Extension is about developing and extending the capacity to make good choices about evaluation.
The Evaluation Partnership project in Cornell Cooperative Extension is about developing and extending the capacity to make good choices about programs.
CORE and the Evaluation Partnerships in CCE

Map of New York State Counties

Cohort Year
- 2006
- 2007
- 2007 and in 2009 cohort
- 2009
What the Systems Evaluation Protocol entails, in the “planning year”

Stages: (timing for 4-H Cohort in 2009 in green)

- Preparation for Partnership (*Jan – March*).
- Modeling (intensive!) (*April – June*).
- Evaluation Planning (*July – Oct/Nov*).

Formats in 2009:

- Two in-person, full-day training meetings.
- Web-conferences.
- Listserve, e-mail, phone support.
Audiences and Formats in the 4-H Cohort

Participant Grade/Age Levels

Program Formats
Topic Areas of Programs in the 4-H Cohort
Logic Model Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input:</th>
<th>Activities:</th>
<th>Outputs:</th>
<th>Short-Term Outcomes:</th>
<th>Mid-Term Outcomes:</th>
<th>Long-Term Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200 volunteers (60 enrolled leaders, 200 casual volunteers) generating over 8,000 annual hours of service. 3.3 FTE (1 FTE Program Leader, 1.3 FTE Community Educators, 1 FTE Administrative Assistant) 2 part-time seasonal interns/employees during summer months. Access to a wide range of resources including juried curricula from Cornell and other land-grant colleges; NYS 4-H Resource Directory. Annual program budget of $24,200 includes general 4-H, fair, awards and recognition, teen leadership, trips and tours, animal science programming, and farm day camp.</td>
<td>Club Activities / Projects Community Service County Fair / State Fair Educational Programs Leader/Volunteer Training Leadership Public Presentations</td>
<td>Achievement Day Celebration Awards and Recognition Certificates of completion.</td>
<td>Increase in knowledge as it relates to subject matter that is taught. Youth develop communication skills. Youth gain self-confidence. Youth participate in community service projects and initiatives. Youth participation in vocational skills and citizenship programs.</td>
<td>Practice leadership skills Youth develop a sense of belonging to 4-H and community. Youth develop a sense of responsibility and accountability. Youth develop problem-solving skills. Youth will demonstrate ownership of program by taking on leadership roles.</td>
<td>Increased rates of higher education and career goal attainment Increased rates of participatory citizenship Increased youth engagement and youth voice. Participants recognize value and life-long need for community service. Youth organizations/programs effectively serving needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions: 4-H generates responsible young leaders through their long-term involvement in the club program. 4-H is a well respected program with a strong historical tradition in St. Lawrence County. 4-H is made possible by a caring and well trained volunteer base. 4-H is misunderstood by today's youth. Branding has worked to some extent at 4-H's disadvantage 4-H youth and volunteer enrollment is dwindling due to changing demographics and competition from a plethora of extracurricular activities.

Context: A deep sense tradition surrounds the 4-H club program, making it slow to change, market, or develop new programs or curriculum. The 4-H club program has fiercely loyal alumni and constituents. The 4-H club program takes place in a variety of venues from the individual club settings to countywide events such as the fair and public presentations. The 4-H club program's current challenges include marketing, volunteer recruitment, program development and fiscal planning. The 4-H club program is very cyclic in nature with similar programs/events planned each year. The club calendar year is very busy, thus creating sense of urgency (sometimes frustration) among staff.
Pathway Model Development

4-H Urban After School Program
CCE-Tompkins County
Netway, March 2009
Cohort Members in Action
Patterns in Program Models

Frequency of Outcome Types
(in 4-H Cohort Program Logic Models)

- Short
- Medium
- Long
Factors determining “evaluation scope” and selection of evaluation questions:

- Program Lifecycle
- Program Logic
- Stakeholder priorities
- Internal priorities

What did this 4-H Cohort pick? …
Program & Evaluation Alignment

Initiation

Development

Maturity

Translation & Dissemination

- GPS/GIS
- Robotics
- SET
- Horticulture
- GPS/GIS
- SET
- Nutrition
- Veterinary Science
- Rocketry
- Agriculture
- Dairy
- Horse
- Agriculture

Program Phase (self-report)

Evaluation Phase (my report)
## Evaluation Questions – what type?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Element</th>
<th># EQs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumption</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program (Implementation)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome – short term</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome – medium term</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome – long term</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

# programs = 17  
*total # evaluation questions = 50.*
Outcomes of greatest interest …

Among the evaluation questions about outcomes, what kinds of outcomes are they?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SET</th>
<th>Youth Development</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Belonging</th>
<th>Mastery</th>
<th>Life Skills</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(plus, 1 on a topic-specific skill, and 1 on community valuing the 4-H program as a resource)
There are opportunities for sharing resources, based on broad commonalities across programs in the cohort.

Ability to refine solutions to broad needs in order to fit program contexts will be essential.

Evaluation resources for early-stage programs will be useful to many, as older programs “catch up” on evidence base.

Even brand new programs want to do outcome evaluation!

Your thoughts? …