

# DOWNLOADS, DISCUSSIONS, DOCUMENTS OR DATA?

## PRACTICES FOR EVALUATING REACH

A REVIEW OF 30 BC/FEDERAL EVALUATIONS FOUND...

THEY MOST OFTEN REPORTED ON... THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS AND WHO THEY WERE...

Evaluation Questions	Metrics	Methods/ Sources	Findings Themes
<b>Which clients are participating in the program?</b>	Overall definition(s)	Administrative data Program documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants may be individuals, family members (of children/seniors), projects, businesses/organizations, communities, governments, partners or other stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>How many are participating?</b>	Total # and take up levels/rates	Administrative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant totals and take up levels may be low, "sufficient", high or "too high" (with waitlists)</li> </ul>
<b>How are they participating?</b>	Types of participation/ activities/streams	Administrative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in terms of attendance/ completion, length of involvement, barriers faced/services received and/or by program site/partner</li> </ul>
<b>Who are they?</b>	Demo/firmographics	Administrative data Participant surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants by gender, age, Aboriginal status, immigrant/newcomer type, first language, ethnicity, rural/urban, region/community, risk factors (e.g., homelessness, mental illness, substance use), organizational role, business size and/or income/revenues</li> </ul>



SOMETIMES ON... HOW CLIENTS HEARD, REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING AND BARRIERS...

Evaluation Questions	Metrics	Methods/ Sources	Findings Themes
<b>How are we communicating about (promoting) the program?</b>	Channels/materials being used	Program documents Stakeholder interviews Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popular outreach/communication activities include websites, blogs, email outs, newsletters, information sheets/flyers/ posters and onsite engagement activities (events)</li> <li>Communications are direct (to clients) and indirect (to referrers or partners - those who also provide services to the same client base)</li> </ul>
<b>How did clients hear about it?</b>	First heard/ongoing	Participant surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar to activities list above</li> </ul>
<b>Why are clients participating?</b>	Reasons for participating	Participant surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants have need, are aware, eligible &amp;/or encouraged by others</li> </ul>
<b>What makes it more difficult for them to participate?</b>	Barriers	Participant surveys Stakeholder interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access barriers include lack of (program) resources, lack of (potential participant) awareness, lack of clarity on selection process, administrative burden, poor opinions of the services</li> </ul>



NOT OFTEN ON... PARTICIPATION FACILITATORS OR WAYS TO IMPROVE...

Evaluation Questions	Metrics	Methods/ Sources	Findings Themes
<b>What makes it easier for them to participate?</b>	Facilitators	Participant surveys Stakeholder interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience – location, hours, lack of wait time/list</li> </ul>
<b>What can we do to improve awareness and access?</b>	Suggested improvements	Participant surveys Stakeholder interviews	

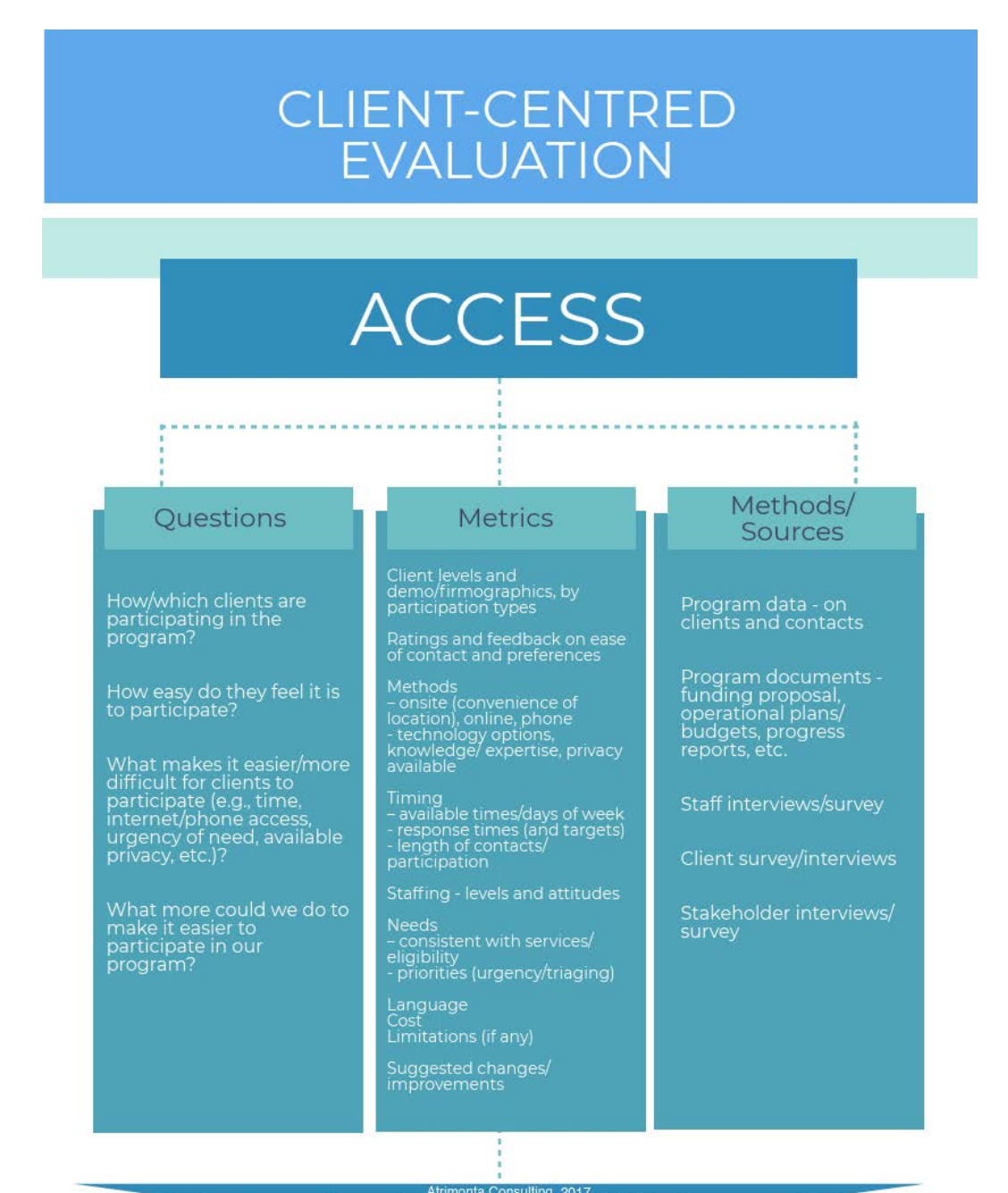


OTHER EVALUATORS SAID THEY ALSO LOOK AT...

- ❖ Who is not coming?
- ❖ Are these participants unique/duplicates?
- ❖ Are they new/repeat participants?

## METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Qualitative and exploratory only (though systematic)
- ❖ Analysis of recently completed evaluations
  - ❖ 30 evaluations were included - 15 provincial (British Columbia) evaluations and 15 federal (Canadian) evaluations.
  - ❖ From 5+ sectors (e.g., Health, Justice, Education, Labour Market, Environment, etc.) All reported in the three years (2014 to 2016) previous to the analysis (2017).
  - ❖ The analysis began by using Awareness and Access questions/metrics/ methods and sources categories previously identified. Each evaluation was reviewed in terms of these categories, the findings summarized in Excel and analysed thematically.
- ❖ A group "roundtable" discussion at an 2017 AEA Conference (est. 15 to 20 evaluators) also contributed to this project





## **MOST OFTEN THESE REACH FINDINGS WERE BASED ON DATA (EXTRACTS) AND DISCUSSIONS (SURVEYS)...**

- ❖ **DATA** extracts – from Administrative databases or
- ❖ **DISCUSSIONS** – responses from Participant surveys

## **SOMETIMES ALSO FROM DOCUMENTS AND DOWNLOADS (ANALYTICS)...**

- ❖ Program **DOCUMENTS**
- ❖ **DISCUSSIONS** – comments from Stakeholder interviews or
- ❖ Analytics (e.g., Google/Social Media) including **DOWNLOADS**

## **A DISCUSSION GROUP OF EVALUATORS SPOKE TO COMMON CHALLENGES/SOLUTIONS EVALUATING REACH SUCH AS...**

- ❖ **Tracking across promotions, events or activities**
  - ❖ Plan in advance for rolling up or breaking down
- ❖ **Lots of noise in the analytics – how to find the people?**
  - ❖ Action analytics (clicks/downloads) and log file analysis
- ❖ **Greater for some segments** (e.g., disadvantaged/underserved groups and professionals)
  - ❖ Use segmented approaches
- ❖ **When it's organizations or stakeholders** (rather than clients)
  - ❖ Assess "engagement" as participation
- ❖ **Survey overburden and saturation**
  - ❖ Once a year (only!), in-person (after training) and real-time (interactive) at events
- ❖ **External Approval processes**
  - ❖ An overarching agreement/consistent requests
  - ❖ Able to show truly informed consent

## **PRELIMINARY THEMES FROM THIS RESEARCH...**

- ❖ **What works is:**
  - ❖ Using multiple channels
  - ❖ Webinars – can get people in the door who then continue to participate
  - ❖ Referrals – can reach fewer people but have higher impact (per person)
  - ❖ Events – can encourage participation (especially onsite participation), though it can be challenging to break out impacts especially across events
  - ❖ Having Champions – can influence/encourage participation
- ❖ **Sub-populations can differ:**
  - ❖ Older participants – are a better fit with webinars and in-person relationship channels, and younger participants through online incl. social media channels
  - ❖ Website users – can be of different types e.g., hummingbirds and in-depth visitors



## **REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS**

**Which Reach evaluation questions do you use most often and why?**

**How easy/challenging/useful do you find different metrics or methods to be?**

**How relevant/similar are these findings themes to the ones in your own evaluations?**