
Example I.3: A sample periodic report using social indicators

Example: A watershed group wants to increase adoption of rain barrels by 30% over the course of a two-year implementation grant. They use a Public Service Announcement (PSA) on local radio stations to inform people that pollution is a problem in the watershed and ask people to prevent urban runoff. They also use a demonstration of a rain barrel at a local hardware store. The group expects the demonstration to have a more direct impact on adoption rates of rain barrels than the PSA. The group includes questions about the demonstration and PSA on their post-project survey to help assess impact. Following their use of the PSA and the demonstration workshop for rain barrels, the watershed group decides that it wants to assess effectiveness of their demonstration only. They provide this narrative:

1. Provide a brief description of the activity and what you did to evaluate it:

Our group hosted a demonstration "How to" project for installing rain barrels on residential downspouts. Following the demonstration, 90% of the participants volunteered to fill out a questionnaire. Our organization followed this with a mailing six months later to determine if barrels had been installed.

2. Provide information about any general measures you wish to report (for example, quality and extent you reached your target audience):

The questionnaire was developed using guidelines from UW-Extension's Program Development and Evaluation Unit. We collected information on the demographics of the participants. While our target audience was broad, we were interested in homeowners in the denser neighborhoods within a half-mile of the lake. 21 of the 22 participants lived in the target area.

3. Provide information about outcomes related to awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity:

This was a capacity building exercise. All 22 participants indicated they had increased their understanding of the purpose and function of rain barrels; 22 indicated that they understood how to install a rain barrel; and 20 indicated that they felt that they could install a rain barrel. For the two participants that did not indicate that they felt capable of installing a rain barrel, there may have been an age or gender relationship (both were women in their late 60s to early 70s).

4. Provide information about outcomes related to how the activity led to actions by target audience:

The follow-up survey was mailed; there was a 77% response rate from the participants (17 of 22). Of those, 10 (58.8%) installed rain barrels at their home. 4 of those participants helped to install rain barrels for 2 to 5 other households in their neighborhood, and 1 helped to install 5 or more rain barrels in their neighborhood. In total, 30 rain barrels installed.

5. Comments and insights on factors that helped or hindered activities.

We did not take into account the fact that some participants might come because they were interested in rain barrels, but potentially not physically capable of installing their own. Also, we didn't expect that there would be nearly as large a percentage of the participants helping others to do rain barrels, as there were installing barrels at their own homes. I think we may want to think about the idea of a structure that trains a team of volunteers to install them for others (especially the elderly or infirm).