NCAI’s Mid Year Pre-Conference Data Partners Gathering
Monday, June 12, 2017
Schaghticoke Room
9:00am-4:00pm

Building Capacity for Tribal Research & Evaluation

Moderated by the NCAI Policy Research Center

Each year, the NCAI Policy Research Center (PRC) creates a space for its research and advocacy partners to share and coordinate information, data tools, and case studies to advance policy research in Indian Country. This year, both national and international perspectives on indigenous data governance and evaluation will be featured. In the afternoon, the PRC will highlight the results of the National Survey of Tribal Data Practices and share other insights learned from the “Using Science to Build Tribal Capacity for Data-Intensive Research” project, funded by the National Science Foundation.

Indigenous Sovereignty over Evaluation & Policy Studies
Dr. Nicole Bowman, Bowman Performance Consulting

Beyond Evidence-Based: Insights on Federal Roles in Supporting Tribal Research & Evaluation
Christine Crossland, Eugenia Tyner-Dawson & Steven Hafner
US Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice

Supporting Tribal Data System Infrastructure through a Toolkit & Technical Assistance
Dr. Erin Geary, James Bell Associates, Inc.

Māori Data Sovereignty
Dr. Tahu Kukutai & Maui Hudson
University of Waikato, Aoteroa/New Zealand

Afternoon break (12:00-1:00pm)

Indigenous Nation Data Governance: Data for Nation Rebuilding
Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear & Dr. Stephanie Rainie
University of Arizona, Native Nations Institute

Releasing a State-of-the-Art Report on Tribal Nation Data Capacity
Norm DeWeaver
Declaration of Indigenous Sovereignty in Evaluation & Policy Studies

NCAI’s Mid Year Data Partners Gathering
Monday, June 12, 2017

Dr. Nicole Bowman (Mohican/Munsee)
President, Bowman Performance Consulting;
Researcher/Evaluator, University of WI-Madison
“Research [or evaluation] offers Indigenous communities opportunities to ‘re-write’ and ‘re-right’ our histories.”

- L.T. Smith, 2012
Evaluation completes the decision-making circle and is embedded throughout.
This research is really going to help move our field forward.

This evaluation is really going to help our program become more effective.
## EVALUATION VS. RESEARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Add to knowledge in a field, develop laws and theories</td>
<td>Make judgments, provide information for decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who sets the agenda/focus?</strong></td>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>Stakeholders and evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generalizability</strong></td>
<td>Important to add to theory</td>
<td>Less important, focus is on particulars of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intended use of results</strong></td>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>An important standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria for adequacy</strong></td>
<td>Internal/external validity</td>
<td>Accuracy, utility, feasibility, propriety, accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation of those who work in area</strong></td>
<td>Depth in subject matter, fewer methodological tools and approaches</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary, many methodological skills, interpersonal skills</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: https://image.slidesharecdn.com/week2pptprogramevaluation-110125132248-phpapp01/95/edle-6513-4-728.jpg?cb=1295962742
EAST: beginnings, trust
From Cultural Competence to Culturally Responsive Evaluation

“Without nuanced consideration of the cultural context in evaluations conducted within communities of color and/or poverty there can be no good evaluation.”

Situating & Contextualizing Evaluation

“Speaking truth to power”

– S. Hood, 2016
Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (CRIE) Model
(Bowman & Cram, 2015)

Northern Door:
Wisdom of our Experiences is Used for Growth and New Visioning

Western Door:
Challenges and Gaps Addressed to Restore Balance

Eastern Door:
Building Relations and Sharing Strengths

Southern Door:
Affirming the Value of Our Lived Experiences in Context
The Stockbridge Mohicans’ “Trail of Tears.”

Statesburg (Kaukauna) settled in 1822.
Stockbridge, WI settled in 1834.
The Shawano County Reservation was established per the Treaty of 1836.
The migration to present-day Wisconsin was made gradually - one small band at a time. It wasn't over until 1829.
The Dakota Access Pipeline is not on Standing Rock Sioux Land.
THE BLACK SNAKE IN SIOUX COUNTRY
showing the Dakota Access Pipeline reroute through former Sioux lands
...and its consequences

LEGEND
- Dakota access pipeline route
- Original pipeline route (nixed by regulators due to concerns over drinking water in Bismarck area)
- 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty Sioux lands
- Standing Rock Indian Reservation
- Majority-White community
- County boundary
- Major road
- Mni (water)

Data sources: Dakota Access Pipeline Project Draft Environmental Assessment, National Hydrography Dataset, OpenStreetMap, National Boundary Dataset, 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie, participant observation. Map by Carl Sack, 11/1/16, CC-BY.

Appx. eastern limit of pipeline construction west of Missouri R. prior to Sept. 3
Archaeological sites preemptively bulldozed on Sept. 3
### Bottom Line: SOVEREIGNTY STILL MATTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLONIALISM MANIFESTED BY</th>
<th>POLITICAL COLONIALISM</th>
<th>SCIENTIFIC COLONIALISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Removal of wealth</td>
<td>Colonial power explores and exploits raw materials and wealth from colonies for the purpose of ‘processing’ it into manufactured wealth or goods.</td>
<td>Colonial powers export raw data from a community for the purpose of ‘processing’ it into manufactured goods. (i.e. books, articles, wealth, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Right of access and claim</td>
<td>Colonial power believes it has the right of access and use to anything belonging to the colonized people.</td>
<td>Scientist believes s/he has unlimited right of access to any data source and any information belonging to the subject population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> External power base</td>
<td>The centre of power and control over the colonized is located outside the colony itself.</td>
<td>The centre of knowledge and information about a people or community located outside of the community or people themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cram & Bowman, 2014*
SOUTH: Balanced development, context
Our nation was borne in genocide.  –MLK, Jr., 1963
There is a cultural and legal component to carrying out rigorous & responsive Indigenous evaluations.
Contextual & Situational Advocacy

Historical Impacts
- Columbus / Colonizers

Contemporary Impacts
- Governments / Academia

What has changed?

Doctrine of Discovery

From the school house to the White House: Systemic and Endemic Reinforcement
Embracing the spirit of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination within an evaluation (or research) context/study.
“Validity repositioned in culture ... to free ourselves from epistemological racism ... because validity is a construct of legitimation that occupies a position of privilege.”

-Kirkhart, 2013, 2015
AEA Cultural Reading of the Standards.

- Recognize dynamics of power
- Acknowledge complexity
- Eliminate bias in language
- Use culturally appropriate methods
# Keep it Moving: Tribally Driven Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBPR Principles</th>
<th>TDPR Principles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of the community's values and goals; do</td>
<td>Tribal governments are established by law and have governmental authority to regulate research activities within their jurisdictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no harm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of research team and community as full</td>
<td>Tribal governments, particularly under self-determination policies and self-governance procedures, are more than a passive &quot;base&quot; for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partners who build a trusting relationship in all</td>
<td>research; they can actively control and &quot;drive&quot; research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aspects of the research process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community participation in all aspects of the research</td>
<td>Research in which Tribal governments drive the research agenda, as well as research where Tribal governments invite external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process</td>
<td>collaborators on the journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment of the community by building research</td>
<td>Empowerment is a reciprocal relationship where the community and research team build capacities and resources equally/together. This is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capacity</td>
<td>a strengths-based approach to research because it recognizes that there are strengths, knowledge, and resources within a Tribal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community/government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of the fact that the membership and</td>
<td>Tribal governments have defined authorities and jurisdictions. Tribal governments conduct their own research and build capacity over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boundaries of particular communities may change</td>
<td>time. Tribal governments have the jurisdiction to initiate and control research agendas and, as they determine appropriate, request the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over time</td>
<td>assistance and collaboration of agencies and universities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### A Blended Approach to Evaluation: The CRIE Model  
(Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation)  
*(Bowman & Cram, 2015)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Paradigm</th>
<th>Indigenous Paradigm</th>
<th>Blended Approach via CRIE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengths, skills, and capacities</td>
<td>Relation and community building</td>
<td><strong>Building community through sharing strengths, strengths based approach</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and barriers</td>
<td>Using your teachings</td>
<td><strong>Using challenges as opportunities for applying teachings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaps and needs</td>
<td>Humility and balance</td>
<td><strong>Addressing needs and gaps by humbly asking for help and restoring balance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions and strategies</td>
<td>Visioning and pathfinding</td>
<td><strong>Using experiential knowledge to develop evidence-based solutions for a future vision</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TLM/Policy Application. (Bowler, 2015)

United States Federal Government

Wisconsin State Government

United States Federal Government

Tribal Governments in Wisconsin

426 WI School Districts (LEAs)

11 Tribal Ed. Departments (TEDs)

LEA: Bowler SD & Ed. Board

LEA: Gresham SD & Ed. Board

LEA: Shawano SD & Ed. Board

Via S-M Tribal Education Board (TEB), the official arm of S-M government working with TED to carry out Tribal education programming.
TLM: Evaluation Application.

**Tribal Government**
- Run FNS programs: Food Distribution on Indian Reservations as evidence based model

**Federal Government**
- USDA Congressional Study: Evaluate Feasibility of Tribal Run FNS Programs

**State Government**
- FNS programs run by the State: National School Lunch, Summer School, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs

**Tri-Lateral Responsibility:** Tribal/Federal/State

**Ensuring Sovereignty, Culture, & Scientific Rigor**
WEST:
Unknown, perseverance, potential
It’s about the networks, politics, & money honey

As well as technical skills & competencies

Respond to Procurement
Design Study
Build Skills and Capacities
Implement Design
Analyze Data
Report and Disseminate

Bowman & Chamberlain, 2014
Don’t forget about cultural and community protections!

Bowman, 2012-present
This is how research, evaluation, and legislative policies make change happen.
NORTH: Understanding, guidance
Evaluations Using UNDRIP and ADRIP is Critical for Us.

Exercise Your Sovereignty: Create Intellectual & Cultural Ordinances and Indigenous Evaluation Standards for Developing Tribal Evidence
Know the Literature and Key Industry Groups and Publications.
American Evaluation Association:
Indigenous Peoples in Evaluation Group.

Website: http://comm.eval.org/aeaipetig/home
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/aeaipetig/
Twitter: https://twitter.com/IpeAea
Continue Strengthening Nations by Building Relations via Strategic Networks.
In Conclusion...

Evaluation generates evidence that shapes policies, programs, and resources.
Anushiik Njoosuk (Thank You Colleagues)

Go Forward with a Seven Generations’ Mindset
Nicole Bowman (Mohican/Munsee), PhD

- BPC E-Mail: nicky@bpcwi.com
- UW-Madison E-Mail: nrbowmanfarr@wisc.edu
- BPC Website: http://www.bpcwi.com
- UW LEAD Website: http://lead.wceruw.org/
- UW WEC Website: http://wec.wceruw.org/

/BowmanPerformanceConsulting
/NBPC1
/NicoleBowman
/bpcwi
Federal Efforts to Enhance the Public Safety of Tribal Nations through Research and Evaluation Capacity Building

Eugenia Tyner-Dawson (Sac and Fox)
Senior Advisor to the Assistant Attorney General for Tribal Affairs, Office of Justice Programs

Christine Crossland
Senior Social Science Analyst
Office of Research & Evaluation
National Institute of Justice

Steven Hafner
Research Assistant
Office of Research & Evaluation
National Institute of Justice

Meghan Doughty
Research Assistant
Office of Research & Evaluation
National Institute of Justice
National Institute of Justice
a research, development, and evaluation science agency

Mission: **Strengthen Science. Advance Justice**

Strategic Goals:
- Foster science-based criminal justice practice
- Translate knowledge to practice
- Advance technology
- Work across disciplines and adopt a global perspective
Tribal Research & Evaluation at NIJ

• NIJ actively funds research & evaluation (R&E) involving tribal communities and stakeholders

• Committed to ethical and engaged efforts in line with responsible research conduct and federal trust responsibilities
Areas for Capacity Building

**Approaches**

- What are the most appropriate and ethical approaches to R&E with tribal programs and practices?
- What counts as "evidence?"
- How should this evidence be collected?

**People**

- What are the training needs for researchers, evaluators, and tribal partners?
- What should equitable and mutually beneficial partnerships between tribes and researchers look like?
- What type of infrastructure should be in place to support such partnerships?
APPROACHES TO R&E FOR TRIBAL PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES
TRIBAL CULTURE & TRADITIONS

Traditional Justice Approaches
The “Evidence-based” Approach

• Evidence-based paradigm
  – Need data for funding applications
  – Evaluation requirements for funding

• Not always appropriate to evaluate cultural practices using standard Western approaches
What is “evidence” for tribal sovereign nations?

- “It is what we know” | “It is our way of knowing”

- Accepted and recognized tribal cultural practices resulting in positive outcomes

1. Can we capture this information in a respectful and meaningful way?

2. Should we be capturing this information?
NIJ’s Information Gathering Activities

- Conduct key informant interviews with experts & practitioners
- Conducting stakeholder listening sessions
- Consult with other federal agencies
BUILDING RESEARCHER AND EVALUATOR CAPACITY
Challenges of Building a Tribal R&E Portfolio

- Federal government application process
- Solicitation/RFP/RFQ requirements
- Types of funding mechanisms
- Lack of R&E capacity (supply vs. demand)
- Omitted researcher-practitioner partnership
- Cultural competency
Tribal Research Investigator Development Program

- Research and evaluation technical assistance
- Student support to pursue STEM and public safety
- Tribal Research Center
- Tribal-Researcher Partnerships
- Research-to-practice support
## Elements of a Tribal-Researcher Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mutually agreeable and equitable relationship</th>
<th>• Both partners will benefit from the relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-learning and capacity building</td>
<td>• Both partners have knowledge and skills to offer to the project, and will learn from each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribally relevant</td>
<td>• Partnerships will prioritize tribal issues for the benefit of the tribal community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tribal Research Investigator Development Program Feasibility Study

- Stakeholder Listening Sessions
- Feasibility Study
- Survey of Eligible Grant Applicants
- Federal Program Manager Interviews
- Admin Review of Previous Grant Applications and Awards
Outcomes

• Report to NIJ leadership in August 2017

• Actionable recommendations TBD

• Further stakeholder guidance and feedback on recommendations
Current Capacity Building Activities

• Cross Science Office Collaborations at NIJ
  - Intramural research
  - Training & technical assistance
  - Social & behavioral science
  - Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
  - Investigative & forensic sciences

• Cross-agency collaboration
  - Office of Minority Health, Health Equity Fellows
Current Capacity Building Activities

• Student Engagement
  – American Indian Science and Engineering Society
  – Society for the Advancing of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science
  – Annual International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference
    • Undergraduate and graduate STEM travel scholarships
Contact

**Additional Comments:**
TribalResearch@usdoj.gov

**Questions or Concerns:**

*Christine Crossland*
Christine.Crossland@ojp.usdoj.gov

*Steven Hafner*
Steven.hafner@ojp.usdoj.gov
Supporting Tribal Data System Infrastructure through a Toolkit & Technical Assistance

Erin Geary
James Bell Associates
6/12/17
Overview

- Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting and the Tribal Evaluation Institute
- Data Systems Context
- Data System Technical Assistance
- Data System Improvement Toolkit
Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

- Administered by ACF in collaboration with HRSA
- Funded through Social Security Act, MIECHV includes 3% set aside for tribal program
- Cooperative agreements awarded to Tribes, Tribal consortia, Tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations
- 5-year grants that begin with a needs assessment and a planning year
Tribal MIECHV Program Goals

- Supporting the development of healthy, happy, and successful AIAN children and families
- Implementing high-quality, culturally-relevant, evidence-based home visiting programs in AIAN communities
- Expanding the evidence base around home visiting interventions for Native populations
- Supporting and strengthening cooperation and coordination and promoting linkages among various early childhood programs, resulting in coordinated, comprehensive early childhood systems
Tribal Evaluation Institute (TEI)

• James Bell Associates, Inc.*
• Face-to-Face Integrated Technologies*
• University of Colorado School of Public Health, Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health
• Michigan Public Health Institute

*Involved in Data System Toolkit and TA
To help Tribal Home Visiting grantees build capacity in gathering, using and sharing information to improve the health and well-being of children and families.
TEI provides support on:

- Tracking and reporting performance measurement data
- Rigorous evaluation
- Data systems
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Ethical dissemination and knowledge translation
Data systems can be a challenging but effective and usable systems can:

- Reduce “paperwork” burden for staff and free them up for engagement with families
- Support self-governance and data-informed decision-making
- Protect private data and support sovereign ownership

... and much more.
Data Systems Context

Multiple systems—65% of grantees use more than one system to collect data.

Diversity of systems—15 different primary systems across 25 programs.

Range of costs—0-$50,000 annually (mean=$9,000).

Multiple policies and approaches.
Data Systems Context

Mixed feelings about current system(s)– 83% either somewhat satisfied or somewhat unsatisfied

Mixed feelings about using an ACF developed system– 52% somewhat or very interested and 48% not interested
Draw on capacity-building approach to support improvements in current data systems, policies, and practices through two activities

1. TA pilot with two grantees—8 month improvement project with on-site time with each program

2. Data System Improvement Toolkit
Data Systems TA

Goal: To support improvements in existing data systems through a dedicated, grantee-led improvement effort.

Identified two grantees who:
- Were different in size, IT support, needs, type of organization
- Had expressed concerns with current system
- Were willing to commit time and resources to improving current system

Staffed with:
1. TEI Liaison with long-term working relationship
2. Consultant with expertise supporting tribal data system development and improvement
Data System Improvement Project

Begins with site visit to develop improvement charter to define needs, strategies, timeline, etc.

Work continues remotely via conference call and screen sharing with site visits planned in late Summer.
Data System TA- Early Takeaways

• Supporting grantee-identified strategies has meant greater engagement through the project

• Needing to develop data systems while planning data collection led to unexpected challenges for both programs

• Site visits were critical to engaging whole team in improvement effort

• Maintaining pace of improvement project is difficult with competing priorities.
To support Tribal MIECHV grantees (primary audience) and other tribal programs (secondary audience) in developing or improving their data system through tools that can be used stand alone or with TA.
Structure of the Toolkit

5 Modules:
1. Choosing a system and working with vendors and developers
2. Documenting and improving data system processes
3. Enhancing understanding of data ownership
4. Displaying and reporting data
5. Optimizing your current system

5 Types of Tools:
Guide, Template, Example, Scan, Checklist/Assessment
Data System Improvement Toolkit

Who is this toolkit for?
This toolkit is designed for tribal programs hoping to develop or improve a data system. Your program may be a grantee in the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (Tribal MIECHV) program and other tribal human service, education, or early childhood programs. Your program does not have to be in a “data system crisis” to use this toolkit.

What do we mean by “data system?”
A data system is any software used by your program to store and organize data. Some of your programs may be using or developing a system just for your program. This is known as a custom built system. For others, you may be using a system already developed that you are either using as is or modifying. This is known as a commercial-off-the-shelf system (COTS).

How is this toolkit organized?
Data system needs are varied and complex. In order to serve your program’s needs, we have organized this toolkit into five modules:

1. Choosing a system and working with vendors and developers
2. Documenting and improving data system processes
3. Enhancing understanding of data ownership
4. Displaying and reporting data
5. Optimizing your current system

Each of these five modules include an introduction that describes the data system needs addressed within the module and provides a brief overview of the tools.

What types of tools are included in the toolkit?
Each module has a distinct set of tools. Some of the tools are designed to be used by themselves and others are used alongside another tool. There are five different types of tools:

- Guide: A brief document that describes key considerations related to the topic.
- Template: A tool designed to be completed by your program.
- Example: A completed report, contract, or other document. Many of the examples are designed to be used with templates so your team better understands how to complete the template.
- Scan: A table of options for addressing a particular need.
- Checklist/Assessment: A set of questions to guide decision making.

What is the first step for using the toolkit?
Before you use this toolkit, it will be important to identify which of the five areas represent your highest priority. The step-by-step process on the right provides more explanation for using the toolkit.

The five modules in this toolkit represent steps in a cycle. Although choosing a system and working with a vendor or developer often represents the first step in a process, frequently system changes lead to new work with a developer. This work can reshape understandings of process, raise new issues related to data ownership, and represent new needs for displaying and reporting data.

Just because these five modules are distinct and related does not mean that your program will only have needs in one of the areas. It is, therefore, essential that your program begin by determining which of the five modules is focused on your team’s highest priority.

To determine this first priority, it may be helpful to pose the following questions to your team:

1. Are we using a system that currently meets our needs (even if there may be challenges) or do we need something new?
2. What data system challenges are having the biggest impact on our team’s ability to serve families?
3. What improvements can we focus on given available time, resources, and policies?

How to use this toolkit

Step 1. Decide which module is right for your program.

Do your program needs match the needs addressed for one of the five modules? For example, if your program is satisfied with your current system but are looking to improve reporting capabilities, Module One won’t be the best place to start.

Step 2. Identify the tools available for your program’s needs.

Once you have identified the right module, take a look at the brief summary of tools listed under each need to find the right fit. It may be helpful to open up a few of the tools to take a closer look. The module introduction provides a brief summary as well as information on whether tools should be used together. For example a template tool may be accompanied by a completed example.

Step 3. Determine if you need technical assistance.

Once you have identified some tools that fit your team’s needs, it is important to take a closer look at the tool and decide whether you will want to see technical assistance support to better understand how to use the tool. If you are a Tribal MIECHV grantee, you can contact your TEC Librarian.

Step 4. Evaluate.

Once you have used the tools is it it be helpful to ask some key questions? Did using the tools help address your program’s needs? Is it time to use the toolkit to address a different need?
Module 1: Choosing a System and Working With Vendors or Developers

Welcome to Module 1 of the Data System Improvement Toolkit! This module will be helpful for you if your tribal program has decided to develop a new data system or is interested in working with a new data system vendor or system developer.

Let’s start by reviewing some of the terminology in this module. A data system vendor is an individual or company that owns and licenses a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software product. A data system developer is an individual or company that is contracted to build or modify a data system. A developer may use or modify COTS software and work with a vendor. This module contains tools related to working with these entities outside of your organization.

This module addresses two basic needs of a program interested in establishing a data system:

1. Determining whether to use an existing off-the-shelf system and, if so, which one
2. Laying the foundation for a strong working relationship with a data system vendor or system developer

Summary of the Module 1 Tools for This Need

| Need: Choosing a Data System Path—COTS or Custom |
| Description: This table of questions guides programs through a process to determine whether various COTS solutions or a custom data system would meet their needs. |
| Type of tool: Guide and Self-Assessment |

| Need: Working With a Software Vendor or System Developer |
| Description: This tool provides a summary of many commonly used COTS products, including those used by tribal and state MIECHV grantees. |
| Type of tool: Summary |

Many programs face a key question early in their system development process: Is it better to use an existing COTS software product or develop a customized data system from scratch? The tools described here will help your program make this decision and identify examples of relevant COTS software if using an existing product is the right choice for your program.

Summary of the Module 1 Tools for This Need

| Request for Proposals Timeline Guide |
| Type of tool: Guide |
| *Used with Request for Proposals Template and Request for Proposals Timeline Template |
| Description: This timeline template identifies the major activities from developing a request for proposals through completing the project. Your program can complete the template by adding vendor or developer activities from the Request for Proposals Template. |

| Request for Proposals Timeline Template |
| Type of tool: Template |
| *Used with Request for Proposals Timeline Guide and Template |
| Description: Once your team has identified a realistic timeline using the Request for Proposals Timeline Guide, you can fill the selected dates into this timeline table and the visual chart will automatically populate. Feel free to add columns to the table to include the staff responsible, notes, or other information. |

| Example Data System Software License Agreement |
| Type of tool: Example |
| Description: If your program plans to use a COTS, you will need to sign a user agreement. This tool walks you through the key elements of this type of agreement. Software user agreements are typically non-negotiable with software vendors, but they contain important language about the vendor’s expectations, including penalties users pay when they stop using the software before the agreed-upon time. |
Data mapping is a process where links between data points in different tables, databases, or data models are documented. This is a critical process for understanding where and how data is stored and connected, and for preparing data to be migrated to new systems.

Data in modern data systems and databases is usually stored in multiple tables. This is called a relational database because there are fields of related data that appear in multiple tables. These fields may share data such as names or ID numbers. For example, a table full of contacts might assign a contact ID number to each person listed, and then that ID will be used in another table with data that has been entered from a form. The contact ID then appears in both tables. It establishes a relationship between them.

Mapping is also important when migrating data between systems. Tables containing the same data may have different table names and field names, making it necessary to map the relationship between fields in the tables. For instance, the contacts table in one system contains the same data as the caregivers table in another, but they use different field names. Mapping these tables would mean finding the fields in each table that contain the same information.

There are several methods for mapping databases, but two methods are most common for manually mapping data. One method is graphical mapping - drawing connections between the tables (as seen below). This method is easy to follow and allows users to quickly visualize how fields may be shared across multiple tables. However, graphical mapping can become difficult to follow when dealing with very large tables.

Another method is the use of codes. Codes can be applied to fields that are common across multiple tables. An advantage of using codes is that they can later be combined with automation files called transforms, allowing much of the data mapping process to be done automatically. In this example you can see multiple fields with codes that show the matching fields in other tables. Colors have been applied to make it easier to see matches.

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Guide to Data Mapping

Data mapping is a process where links between data points in different tables, databases, or data models are documented. This is a critical process for understanding where and how data is stored and connected, and for preparing data to be migrated to new systems.

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Next Steps

Toolkit finalized by end of August and available on:  
www.tribaleval.org

Data System Improvement TA Pilot completed in early Fall
  • Working with ACF to develop broader TA strategy based on lessons learned
Thank You!!
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For more information on TEI, contact:

Nicole Denmark  
Federal Project Officer  
Office of Planning Research and Evaluation  
Nicole.denmark@acf.hhs.gov

Kate Lyon  
Project Director  
James Bell Associates, Inc.  
lyon@jbassoc.com