Performance Measures Data Quality Optional Self-Assessment

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Corporation for National and Community

Service

Brief Overview of the Data Quality Review Process

As you may know, in FY 2011 CNCS introduced a new Performance Measurement framework that provides a common focal point for work across all CNCS programs and initiatives in relation to the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. As CNCS award recipients (i.e. grantees, sponsors, and all other entities that receive awards from CNCS) implement their performance measures, and CNCS collects and rolls up the data, CNCS is committed to ensuring that it collects high quality performance measures data from its award recipients.

As CNCS reviews and evolves its monitoring protocols, CNCS is developing a monitoring process that will help the agency review and provide greater assurance of the quality of its award recipient performance measures data. These additional Data Quality Review questions are intended to help CNCS consistently assess the quality of award recipient performance measure data reported to the agency. In FY 2014, CNCS will integrate these data quality questions into its current monitoring processes.

In turn, this helps award recipients strengthen their programming. High quality data is a critical element of sound organizational decision-making, operations, and strategic planning. And reporting high-quality data enables organizations to speak confidently about their performance measures and evaluate program impact. Treating data as a long-term asset and managing it within a coordinated framework produces an on-going value for award recipients.

What the Data Quality Review process _is_ …
The Data Quality Review is a monitoring process designed to help CNCS staff assess the quality of award recipient performance measures data reported to CNCS. Just like any other monitoring activity, the review asks CNCS staff to engage award recipients in a mutually beneficial dialogue about the underlying processes award recipients use to gather and manage performance measures data. This monitoring process supports a standard approach to assessing the quality of performance measures data reported to CNCS.

What the Data Quality Review process _is not_ …
This monitoring process is not about assessing performance. It is also not intended to present CNCS staff as experts on evaluation or scientific methodologies. Rather, the process provides a foundation to help CNCS staff review and understand award recipients' data collection and management processes and practices.

What is the general timeline for implementation?
In fiscal years 2012-2013, CNCS is introducing and socializing the data quality elements that are being formally incorporated into our monitoring process. In fiscal year 2014, the plan is to fully implement the new, formal monitoring tool to review the quality of the performance measures data that CNCS award recipients report.

CNCS will phase in the Data Quality Review monitoring process with a deliberate, largely qualitative, iterative, and award recipient-centered learning and teaching approach.

What if I have any questions?
Please contact your CNCS Program or Grants Officer if you have any questions regarding this process.

Performance Measures Data Quality: *Optional* Self-Assessment

The optional self-assessment encourages you to think proactively about how you collect and manage your performance measures data. The self-assessment is a valuable tool that can help you understand where you are in terms of data collection and management and start to think about what processes or procedures they may find helpful to use in planning for the future. You may decide to modify your processes. If so, you may find it helpful to revisit the tool in the future to compare how you answer the questions pre and post modifications.

Origin of the Questions: The Government Accountability Office (GAO) as well as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) direct Federal agencies to provide assurance statements about the accuracy and reliability of agency performance data reported to Congress. Guidance and recommendations from published GAO and OMB reports prompted the self-assessment questions provided. To view the referenced reports, either click on the links or view the final reference page for the web address.

Learning and Feedback: We hope you find that the self-assessment is another useful planning tool for you and your organization. If you have any suggestions to strengthen the self-assessment, please share them with your Program and/or Grants Officer. As this tool is a learning opportunity for you, your feedback is a learning opportunity for us. We welcome feedback!

Instructions: Answer each question to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answer, you can select "DK." If a question is not relevant to a particular measure, you may leave it blank and make a note of it in the Section Comments area.

Each section of the self-assessment begins with a "Big Picture Question." You do not need to answer the Big Picture Question. It is one way to help you understand that the questions under each heading are interrelated.

Remember that the Self-Assessment is **optional**. You are not required to submit your answers with CNCS. You may feel free to share any feedback on the form with or to questions of your CNCS Program and/or Grants Officer.

Section I - Big Picture Question: Do the performance measure data you collect appear to measure your project's performance measure outputs and/or outcomes?

1. Are the reported data consistent with the approved measure or the approved focus/goals of your program?

❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

2. Are you measuring what you intend to measure?

❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

*References***:**
GAO Report GAO/GGD-99-139
OMB Circular No. A-11, Section 210-211

*Section Comments***:**

Section II - Big Picture Question: Do you have enough data?			

1. Have you collected all of the data relevant to the measure? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

    a. Do you collect data from all sites? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

    b. Do you collect data with the same frequency at all sites? (If not, you may add why in the comments section.) ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

2. Are you missing any vital information (e.g. for a period of time or for a group of participants) within the data reported? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

    a. Do you have any documentation at all to explain missing data? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

    b. Do you describe the plans to resolve issues and collect missing data in the future?

3. Do you collect data at intervals that seem appropriate for the performance measure? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

4. If your data collection process involves sampling (e.g. statistical sampling, rates of response), did you get the sampling plan approved by CNCS? [Note: not applicable to all CNCS programs]. ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

***References*:**
OMB Circular No. A-11, Section 210-211
GAO Report GAO/GGD-99-139

***Section Comments*:**

Section III - Big Picture Question: Do you use standard plans and procedures across people, places, and times to collect data?			

1. Do you provide a glossary (or other guidance) with clear, consistent definitions describing the data? Definitions should include sufficient context and be unique, clear, and positively described. (You should describe what the data definitions and procedures are rather than what they are not). As much as possible, your definitions of data should align with published CNCS definitions (e.g. definitions referenced in the relevant NOFA, etc.) ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

2. Do the definitions remain the same over the lifespan of the award? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

3. Do you use standard definitions used across sites? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

4. Do you clearly document your data collection methods? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

5. Do you use the same data collection methods over the lifespan of the award? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

6. Do you use the same standard data collection methods across sites? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

7. When applicable, do you train new data collectors trained on standard definitions and data collection methods? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ DK

Reference: **GAO Report GAO/GGD-99-139**

Section Comments:

Section IV - Big Picture Question: Do the data appear "free" from significant errors?			

1. Do you have a plan or procedures to collect and review data?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
    a. Does your plan include checking for errors?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
2. Do you have documentation showing that you follow your data collection and review plan?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
3. Do the data vary significantly? If so: ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
    a. Do you explain that?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
    b. Does the data vary due to errors?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK
    c. If errors exist, do you have a plan to fix/prevent future problems?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

***References*:**
OMB Circular No. A-11, Section 210-211
GAO Report GAO/GGD-99-139

Section Comments:

Section V - Big Picture Question: Do you follow quality assurance practices to help ensure the quality of the performance measures data reported?			

1. Do you have a system to double check that data are collected, aggregated, reviewed, maintained, and reported according to written plans or procedures?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

2. Do you use controls throughout the data collection and management process?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

3. Do you regularly review / update your data quality control procedures?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

4. Do you get a statement of certification from data providers to confirm that your data are accurate? (Data providers may include data collectors or third-party sources that collect data.)   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

5. If possible, do you assign someone (who does not directly collect data) to either oversee data quality or do an objective review of performance measures data?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ DK

***References*:**
OMB Circular No. A-11, Section 210-211
GAO Report GAO/GGD-99-139

Section Comments:

Section VI – Additional Input: What are some other helpful questions to consider?			

1. What strengths do you have in collecting and reporting high quality data to CNCS?
2. What challenge(s) make it difficult to collect and report high quality data?

Section Comments:

References

a. **Performance Plans: Selected Approaches for Verification and Validation of Agency Performance Measures**
    GAO/GDD-99-139; July 1999
    Available: http://www.gao.gov/archive/1999/gg99139.pdf

b. **OMB Circular A-11 : Performance.gov and Public Reporting, Section 210**
    Available :
    http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/a11_current_year/s210.pdf