

Developing Useful Evaluat

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Developing Useful Evaluation Capability: Lessons From the Model Evaluation Program

**Developing Useful
Evaluation Capability:
Lessons From the
Model Evaluation Program**

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PREFACE

This report presents findings from an assessment of 12 attempts to develop and demonstrate model evaluation systems. Some were successful, some were not, and four are still underway at this time. The experiences encountered provide insights and guidance for those with a responsibility or interest in having evaluation make a difference in government operations.

The 12 model efforts were funded through grants from The National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ), and constitute The National Institute's Model Evaluation Program (MEP). The grantees were selected through a competitive process from proposals submitted by State Planning Agencies (SPAs) and Regional Planning Units (RPU's). The SPAs and RPU's are agencies established by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to carry out the planning and funding process authorized by the Act. During recent fiscal years, these agencies participated in the annual expenditure of over six-hundred million dollars in grants for projects at the state and local levels of government. In many cases, the SPAs and RPU's are components of state and regional organizations performing other functions than those authorized by the Safe Streets Act. For example, the RPU is part of a Council of Governments or some other regional organization of local governments.

The SPAs and RPU's have responsibility for developing comprehensive plans for the expenditure of funds awarded to them, and for administering the award and expenditure of grants created with those funds. The specific roles and responsibilities of the SPAs and RPU's vary among states and regions. The professional staffs of SPAs range from four to nearly seventy. Funds are awarded to states on a formula basis, with the larger states receiving the largest allocation.

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) has overall responsibility for administering the Omnibus Crime Act. The authorizing legislation and LEAA placed monitoring and evaluation requirements on the SPAs, who in turn place requirements on or receive cooperation from the RPU's. Over the years, LEAA, the SPAs and RPU's have emphasized evaluation, and have invested heavily in it. The Model Evaluation Program is but one of the LEAA and National Institute efforts to affect performance in the criminal justice area through evaluation.

In developing proposals for the \$2,000,000 set aside for MEP grants, SPAs and RPU's were given extensive freedom. As stated in the Program Announcement, "Any proposal to develop a system for generating information

on the results, costs and effectiveness of criminal justice projects, programs and activities is eligible.¹ The program objectives were:

- encourage state and local agencies to generate and use evaluation information; and
- test in what ways the effective use of evaluation information can help state and local agencies achieve their objectives.

Additional criteria and instructions were given in the announcement, but the freedom to propose what the SPAs or RPU's believed most appropriate was maintained and exhibited in the variety of proposals funded.

The 12 agencies receiving MEP grants, the short titles used to reference them in this report, and the status as of January 1978 are:

• State Planning Agencies:

- (1) The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission (short title used here--Illinois; status--grant completed);
- (2) The Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice (short title used here--Massachusetts; status--grant in progress);
- (3) The Michigan Office of Criminal Justice Programs (short title used here--Michigan; status--grant completed);
- (4) The New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency (short title used here--New Hampshire; status--grant in progress);
- (5) The Pennsylvania Governor's Justice Commission (short title used here--Pennsylvania; status--grant completed);
- (6) The Virginia Division of Justice and Crime Prevention (short title used here--Virginia; status--grant in progress);
- (7) The Washington Law and Justice Planning Office of the Community Development Office (short title used here--Washington; status--grant in progress).

• Regional Planning Units:

- (1) The Alameda (California) Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board (short title used here--Alameda; status--grant completed);

- (2) The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (short title used here--Central Oklahoma; status--grant completed);
- (3) The Columbia, South Carolina Central Midlands Regional Planning Council (short title used here--Columbia; status--grant completed);
- (4) The Jacksonville, Florida Office of Criminal Justice Planning (short title used here--Jacksonville; status--grant completed);
- (5) The Ventura Criminal Justice Planning Board (short title used here--Ventura; status--grant completed).

The Urban Institute was selected to document and assess the MEP. The work performed in that capacity included assistance and documentation of the individual grantee activities, and synthesizing the experiences and results of all the grantees. The individual documentation of the eight completed grants is contained in a series of case studies delivered to the National Institute. This document reports on the synthesis work, and summarizes the experiences and results of the individual projects. It principally presents information on the eight sites that had completed their grants by January 1978, but reflects experiences of all twelve sites.

Over the years the authors have worked with a broad range of federal, state and local agencies, and draw on those experiences in preparing this document. It is believed that the findings and conclusions based on the 12 MEP sites would not be significantly different if other sites had been included, and that the contents are applicable to most government agencies.

I. LESSONS DRAWN FROM THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM

The Model Evaluation Program (MEP) of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was successful in identifying both the potential and the limitations of a diverse set of evaluation systems, and the types of operational problem with which evaluation management must be prepared to resolve.

This document summarizes and synthesizes the experiences of state and local agencies that participated in the MEP. The presentation is aimed at persons who may wish to develop an evaluation capability in a government agency, manage an evaluation system, or are part of such a system.

This chapter summarizes the lessons drawn from the MEP. The lessons are organized in three sections: (1) "what evaluation systems can and cannot do" presents lessons on the utility of evaluation; (2) "what evaluation capabilities can and cannot be set up" presents lessons on the implementation of evaluation systems; and (3) "what operational problems may arise" presents lessons on the problems that evaluation managers should be prepared to resolve. In the discussion of the lessons, the term evaluation system refers to systems set up by the State Planning Agency (SPA) or Regional Planning Unit (RPU) during the MEP.

The lessons presented here are supported and discussed in the remainder of the document. Background information on the Model Evaluation Program and program participants is given in the Preface. Also, brief descriptions of the systems developed by the participants are given in Section

D of Chapter III. Those unfamiliar with the MEP may wish to review this material before proceeding with the lessons learned. The lessons reflect conditions encountered in the MEP, but are given as universal statements, since they coincide with similar conditions found in other government agencies.

A. WHAT EVALUATION SYSTEMS CAN AND CANNOT DO

Three outcomes anticipated for the MEP sites were:

- production of evaluation information for specific uses (which they specified), with
- utilization of the information to
- achieve agency objectives.

Successes were realized on the first two outcomes, but not on the third.

The successes and failures of the MEP sites on these outcomes are the bases for the following six lessons on what evaluation systems can accomplish.

1. EVALUATION SYSTEMS CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO HAVE A MEASURABLE IMPACT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF STATE PLANNING AGENCIES AND REGIONAL PLANNING UNITS, SINCE THESE AGENCIES DO NOT HAVE OBJECTIVES REGARDING THEIR PRIMARY MISSION THAT ARE BOTH VERIFIABLE AND REALISTIC. (No MEP site was judged to have such objectives.)

One purpose of the MEP was "to test in what ways the effective use of evaluation information can help state and local (planning) agencies achieve their objectives." For LEAA funded agencies, the authorizing legislation specifies the reduction of crime and the improvement of the criminal justice system as primary missions. Planning agencies involved in the MEP provided statements of their objectives and were interviewed about the relationship

between the MEP and agency objectives. These objectives turned out not to be in terms that could be measured and documented. Furthermore, in many cases, it was impossible to determine what the agency was trying to accomplish--other than disburse grant funds and meet federal administrative requirements.

Several of the 12 MEP agencies appeared to be well administered, with a sense of purpose, direction and progress. As with other agencies, the agencies judged to be well administered had objectives which had not been translated into measurable terms--"move local agencies toward adoption of national goals and standards," "increase the number of successful innovative projects continued by local agencies." However, the agencies had staff functions in place which appeared to be trying to bring about these objectives. That is, significant portions of the planning agency administrative budget and management attention seemed plausibly linked to the types of rhetorical objective put forward. The difficulty was that even in these cases, the objectives and progress are not measurable or verifiable. Where agencies appeared to be well administered toward some objective, it always seemed straightforward to translate rhetorical objectives into verifiable measures, even though the agencies had not taken that step.

None of the MEP demonstrations was used to formulate measurable agency objectives and evaluate progress in achieving them. In the absence of such objectives, it is impossible to say if the evaluation systems made a difference in agency achievements. No one can show whether the agency performed better, and whether programs and projects improved. Under current federal policies and direction, it is unlikely that the planning agencies will formulate such objectives.

2. EVALUATION SYSTEMS HAVE AN EVEN CHANCE OF PROVIDING INFORMATION THAT WILL BE USED BY EITHER PLANNING AGENCIES OR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES.
(Four of eight sites produced such information.)

Half of the eight completed MEP sites demonstrated that they produced information that was considered to be useful. Useful means: (1) the user claimed it was useful; (2) the user cited instances of using the information; and (3) there was evidence that the use cited was important to the performance of the user's function. This means that half the MEP sites were able to fund people who could use evaluation in carrying out the function for which they were responsible.

The limitation of the "use" success criteria for evaluation was raised in Lesson 1 above. One can document if the information was used, but not whether the use was correct or made a difference to the effectiveness of the function, or whether the function is important to the performance of an agency, a program, or a project. Thus, "use" is a necessary but not sufficient condition in judging whether an evaluation system contributes to improved agency performance.

The functions served by the MEP ranged from technical assistance services for subgrantees to county board decision processes. We grouped the functions served into two markets for evaluation information: Project Oversight and Issue Identification. The Project Oversight market consists of SPA, RPU and subgrantees using the evaluation system to design, monitor, manage, and provide technical assistance to LEAA funded projects. This market usually relies on data routinely collected by subgrantees. The Issue Identification market uses the evaluation system to raise, explicate or resolve some issues about policies or programs. For the Issue Identification market, ad hoc, one-time studies are designed to focus on issues considered relevant by some set of actors in the criminal justice system.

As discussed in the next three lessons, the likelihood of evaluation information being used depends on the existence of one of these markets and how it is served. One market appears to be quite common, the other relatively uncommon.

3. EVALUATION SYSTEMS ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE USEFUL TO THE PLANNING AGENCY STAFF UNLESS THE AGENCY IS BEING DIRECTED TOWARD SOME MISSION-RELATED OBJECTIVE. (One of three were useful.)

Three of the MEP sites attempted to provide information for use by the staff of a State Planning Agency. One site demonstrated that the Planning Agency needed and used evaluation information; two demonstrated that the agency did not need or use evaluation information. The successful MEP site was one where SPA management had created a Project Oversight market which used evaluation information to influence criminal justice system actions on the projects funded. The agency activities were directed toward a mission of affecting the operation of the criminal justice system. Although this mission-related objective was not well defined and measurable, the agency had in place staff functions which were expected to and did use evaluation information for the purpose of achieving the objective.

The other two sites attempted to use evaluation information to support their planning, funding and subgrant compliance functions. These functions, as practiced, turned out not to need or use the evaluation information. The functions were not plausibly related to LEAA missions of affecting crime and criminal justice system performance. Instead they had process type objectives: disseminate funds and comply with federal guidelines.

4. EVALUATION SYSTEMS HAVE AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF PROVIDING USEFUL INFORMATION TO STATE AND LOCAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES IF THEY CHOOSE TO SERVE THIS AUDIENCE. (Four attempted and three succeeded.)

Three of the four evaluation systems provided useful info

defined the user to be local criminal justice agencies, rather than the planning agency. Apparently there is a significant latent demand for evaluation information and evaluation assistance from this group of users.

These three MEP sites used three different mechanisms to identify and meet the need:

- provide technical assistance upon request to agencies undertaking their own evaluations;
- carry out studies upon request from agencies;
- assign planning agency evaluation teams to user groups which direct the evaluation effort.

At least one other site attempted to serve local criminal justice agencies and failed. The outcome indicates that the demand is not created by simply providing information.

5. AN EVALUATION SYSTEM CAN INCREASE ITS CHANCES OF PRODUCING USEFUL INFORMATION BY: SERVING USERS AND INFORMATION NEEDS THAT ALREADY EXIST, AND ALLOWING THE USERS TO OWN THE STUDY. (Four of eight did so.)

Four of the eight completed sites can be singled out as successful in producing useful information. When these sites are contrasted with other sites, two factors stand out: (1) a demand for evaluation information already existed; and (2) the users felt they owned the studies.

Rather than identify and serve an existing demand, several sites attempted to create a demand for evaluation information by providing it on demonstration or pilot test bases. The evaluators produced information which they thought would be useful to others or would cause others to take action. For example, one site that expected the creation of certain types of evaluation information would cause the SPA to create new planning functions. The evaluators were guessing and usually guessed wrong. In these cases, some users expressed satisfaction with what they received, but few actual - c did be identified.

Having a demand for information is not equated to having an administrative requirement to produce evaluation information. Administrative requirements did not ensure useful information. An existing demand for evaluation meant that people were available to describe the information they wanted and why they wanted it. Such demand was associated with a management systems already in place, or an issue involved with the delivery of criminal justice services.

The most successful evaluation systems allowed the user to own the study. That is, the users felt the study was answering questions they wanted answered, and in a way they understood and agreed with. Ownership required active user direction of, or participation in, the evaluation. When the users had either taken steps to produce the information on their own, or stayed involved with the design and production process, then the information tended to be used.

6. PLANNING AGENCY EVALUATION SYSTEMS CARRYING OUT INTENSIVE EVALUATIONS TO TEST PROGRAM CONCEPTS WILL NOT BE SUCCESSFUL. (Three sites attempted to, but none succeeded.)

Three MEP sites attempted to produce high quality, disseminative information about the costs, effectiveness and impacts of selected program concepts such as Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) and Special Police Units (SPUs). These systems were designed to develop "knowledge" about program concept in the form of scientifically acceptable research that would be widely disseminated and used in criminal justice planning and programming. Some studies were completed, but none of the sites succeeded in testing the concept. Either the described information was not produced, or the programs were not implemented sufficiently to provide an opportunity to test the concept.

Two characteristics of SPA and RPU projects disable the "knowledge" building evaluations. First, the variation that occurs among projects within program areas makes it difficult or impossible to characterize activities and objectives by similar measures. Second, there is usually found to be an enormous difference between what projects do and what the planning agency thinks they are doing. Consequently, the objectives and evaluation questions the agency is interested in are frequently inappropriate for the projects in place.

State Planning Agencies apparently do not have the resources and capabilities to be developers and testers of program concepts. The cost of evaluation is only one cost involved in successfully doing intensive evaluations. The cost of well designed and implemented projects has to be considered also. The MEP experience indicates that planning agencies and LEAA have underestimated the cost of developing well defined program concepts and getting them implemented in several locations as designed.

B. WHAT EVALUATION SYSTEMS CAN AND CANNOT BE SET UP

The MEP sites were expected to develop evaluation systems tailored to their needs and capabilities. If the tested system appeared successful, they were expected to institutionalize the system by continuation of funding from agency resources.

In all except one case, an evaluation information production process was established. The systems developed varied considerably and demonstrated that a variety of approaches are feasible and appropriate for planning agencies. Moreover, no single production process or methodology assures the utility of information produced.

Of the seven sites that tested a system, three had some success in institutionalizing it. However, even in these cases, the tested systems were significantly modified, and there is great uncertainty whether the continued system will perform as tested.

The experiences of the MEP sites in attempting to develop and institutionalize evaluation systems are summarized in the following five lessons.

1. IF FUNDS ARE EARMARKED FOR EVALUATION, PLANNING AGENCIES ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO SET UP AN INTERNAL EVALUATION SYSTEM THAT PRODUCES, OR HELPS PRODUCE, INFORMATION. (Seven of eight did so.)

Seven of the eight completed MEP grantees were able to establish a system that produced some evaluation information. In several cases, the systems and products fell short of what had originally been planned. For example, fewer products were produced than anticipated in most sites, some data were not collected and some that were collected were not analyzed, some analyses were not feasible, and certain planned data bases were not created. Yet a majority of the intended products were produced, and it was demonstrated that grants for evaluation systems will produce evaluation output.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF AN EVALUATION CAPABILITY DOES NOT ASSURE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE CAPABILITY. (Five of eight sites not continued)

Five of the eight completed sites are not continuing the evaluation activities operated during the MEP. Discontinuation is due to a variety of reasons, such as: changes in the operation of the planning agency; lack of funding; and failure to implement or build support for selected aspects of the desired system.

Three of the sites are attempting to continue the evaluation activities tested under the MEP and institutionalize them. However, sufficient changes have been made to make it uncertain as to whether the institutionalization will succeed. Reasons for the uncertainty include: changes in key personnel; changing responsibility for key functions; and changes in the planning agency itself.

3. PLANNING AGENCIES APPEAR TO BE UNSUCCESSFUL IN ESTABLISHING EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN LOCAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES. (Four attempts, three unsuccessful)

Four sites planned to develop an evaluation capability in local or state agencies that could function independent of the planning agency. One grant is still under way. The three completed sites were unable to transfer an independent capability to local criminal justice agencies. When their strategies appeared to be infeasible, these sites changed their objectives and set up evaluation systems internal to the planning agency.

Several sites demonstrated that an in-house RPU evaluation system can provide useful evaluation information and assistance to local criminal justice agencies. However, to date, no planning agency has been able to demonstrate that it can cause these local agencies to set up their own evaluation systems.

4. GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY, PLANNING AGENCIES WILL SET UP EVALUATION SYSTEMS WHICH DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER IN PRODUCT, COST, AND OPERATIONS.

The evaluation systems demonstrated through the MEP varied considerably in how they operated, what they cost, and what they produced. Some produced many products, others produced none, one, or a few. Some MEP

staffs performed all the evaluation tasks by following a formalized approach, whereas others were ad hoc, and others took on only a portion of the tasks involved in performing an evaluation, leaving many tasks to contractors or other agencies.

In general, evaluations utilizing complex research designs did not appear. A few studies used comparison groups or pre/post analyses, but most were descriptive or contained planned versus achievement comparisons.

The grantees did not exhibit consistent relationships among cost and products or effects. As could be expected, the sites with more MEP funds tended to directly handle most of the evaluation functions, whereas the smaller grantees had more instances of jointly performing some tasks with local agencies. However, exceptions existed, and no basis was exhibited for an optimum rule of how much funds to make available for evaluation.

5. THE ONLY CHARACTERISTIC OF AN EVALUATION SYSTEM ASSOCIATED WITH UTILITY WAS THE DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT OF THE USER IN THE EVALUATION ACTIVITY.

The more a user was committed to or dependent on evaluation results, the more utility the study was likely to have. The four sites judged as producing useful information had significant user involvement invested in the conduct of the study.

The users became involved in establishing the evaluation designs, data collection and analysis, and disseminating reports. This involvement allowed direction to be given that ensured the study would better meet user expectations, and frequently led to the user publicly endorsing and disseminating the results to others.

The user involvement does have its costs. Most of the users are state or local officials having several other responsibilities involved in the

management of public activities. Their involvement costs them in time expended and recognition given to the effort. But once the effort is invested, they tend to want to realize the results. Involving the user also costs the evaluator time, an investment which can be substantial.

C. WHAT OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS MAY ARISE IN SETTING UP AND OPERATING EVALUATION SYSTEMS

The MEP sites encountered diverse sets of problems in developing evaluation capability and using it. In some cases, the problems could not be resolved, and it was necessary to change strategies and expectations. In the end, most sites were able to accommodate the problems and produce evaluations. However, delays, cost overruns, and less than desired products often resulted.

Any evaluation manager or practitioner will encounter some of the problems and should provide time and resources to deal with them. The eight specific problems highlighted here are those that seemed to recur most often, or be most troublesome to the MEP sites. The extent they would reappear in some other site is a function of the management, organizational, and environmental characteristics of that planning agency.

There are no general solutions to these problems. When they occurred, evaluation managers developed solutions appropriate to their own situation. There, then, are problems managers can expect to occur, and with which they should be prepared to deal. Many of the problems can be avoided by giving them attention when planning the evaluation system.

1. STAFF TURNOVER IN THE EVALUATION UNIT WILL CAUSE DELAYS AND DISRUPTIONS.

All the MEP sites experienced some staff turnover, and half experienced significant problems. Without staff, the work does not proceed. But even if replacements can be found, problems of inadequate skills or familiarity with the problems at hand necessitate training and time to bring people up to speed. In the MEP these conditions led to delays and abandonment of some tasks. The problems were sufficiently severe that one site was content to operate after the MEP with a smaller staff, instead of attempting to fill positions vacated through attrition.

2. CIVIL SERVICE RULES MAY CAUSE DELAYS.

Several sites had difficulty initiating work due to their inability to obtain staff. Positions had to be authorized and filled through a Civil Service system that moved slowly and did not generate adequate candidates. The effect was to delay work or cause it to be stretched out over longer than planned periods.

3. PROJECTS MAY BE RELUCTANT TO REPORT DATA.

Several of the tested evaluation systems expected the projects to provide data for the analysis by the MEP team. This approach worked well for many projects, but did not work at all for others. Project refusal to report data seems to be part a political problem, and part a resource problem.

Several evaluation offices believed they did not have the authority or management support to require subgrantees to report data. Frequently subgrantees would not report data when they were not required by subgrant

conditions. One site had to promise some projects that data reported would not be used in refunding decisions.

The collection and reporting of data is a significant cost to whomever performs it. By transferring the responsibility to the projects being evaluated, the cost was transferred also. Since the NEP sites did not provide additional resources to the projects, the cost was an extra burden often unanticipated by the project. Consequently many projects could not or choose not to cooperate. Some projects stated that the cost of the reporting requirements were beginning to outweigh any expected project benefits.

4. PROJECT FILES MAY CONTAIN LESS DATA THAN EXPECTED OR REQUIRED FOR PLANNED EVALUATION.

Several evaluations depended on existing project files for data. Evaluation analysis plans were developed on the assumption that the data would exist and would readily be available. This frequently was not the case. Either data were missing, or extensive errors, discrepancies, and inconsistencies were discovered. The discovery of these conditions required the redesign of analysis plans, and the allocation of resources to generate other sources of information. The results were delays in and often abandonment of promised analyses.

5. COMPUTER PROCESSING OF DATA CAN BE A TIME-CONSUMING, ERROR-PLAGUED UNDERTAKING.

The sites that attempted to standardize data collection instruments anticipated utilizing computers to process and store data. The computer usage was expected to facilitate rapid and accurate processing of data.

In fact, the opposite occurred. Backlogs developed, processing was not quick enough to return data to projects for verification or timely use, and errors were encountered.

Some of the problems can be traced to the lack of adequate planning and management. Data flows quickly overwhelmed existing capacities to handle the situation. When evaluators began to analyze the processed data, they were dissatisfied with the method used to format and store them. The data were either reprocessed in a form usable by the analyst, or portions of the analysis were dropped.

6. CONTRACTING OUT EVALUATIONS HAS ITS OWN SET OF PROBLEMS.

Four of the twelve MEP sites relied significantly on contractors to develop or implement portions of their evaluation systems, and five others used contractors or consultants in lesser roles. This approach to obtaining evaluation capability avoided such problems as those posed by Civil Service, but still encountered problems of its own.

Several sites had difficulty in obtaining an appropriate contractor quickly. The competitive process requires extensive time and staff resources to implement. Once a contractor is selected, staffing problems are still encountered with personnel turnover and hiring difficulties. Two sites terminated their contractors early due to an inability to obtain the desired products without expending significant staff time. Also, the sites believed the contractors were spending too much time in becoming familiar with agency operations and in documenting what was already known.

If an agency decides to use a contractor, the agency should be prepared to invest a sizeable amount of staff time in working with contractors.

Communication and decision mechanisms between the agency and contractor need to be established. Those MEP sites that did this worked effectively with their contractors.

7. THE IDENTIFIED USERS CAN ADD TO THE COST OF EVALUATION BY HAVING UNCLEAR OR SHIFTING INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS.

Earlier it was pointed out that the ownership or involvement of a user in a study increased the chances useful information would be produced. While use would go up, cost also goes up if the user has unclear or shifting information requirements.

In some cases this problem was experienced when resolution of design issues could not be obtained. In other cases, the problem developed when shifts in requirements caused a change in data collection and analysis activities after they had been initiated. A major problem is that, when given an opportunity to ask questions, most people will do so. The result is a large set of questions, all of which cannot be answered. Not having a mechanism to prioritize questions, many evaluators try to answer most of them, and subsequently spread resources too thin to answer any question adequately or in a timely fashion.

8. DIVERSION OF EVALUATION UNIT STAFF TO OTHER PLANNING AGENCY FUNCTION IS A DANGER SIGNAL.

The evaluation activities supported in most sites were new management functions without a proven record of utility to the agency. When more established functions such as processing grants became understaffed, personnel in the newer functions became targets for filling the gap. In this manner, several sites delayed or diluted planned evaluation activities.

Once the momentum was lost, it was difficult to regain.

The sites that were most successful in implementing evaluation systems prevented the MEP Evaluation Unit from diverting evaluation staff to carry out other planning agency functions. This was accomplished either through a strong management process which maintained the integrity of the Unit, or by organizational arrangements which made diversion difficult to initiate. One site made a policy decision during the MEP grant period to abandon in-house evaluators because it could not keep the evaluators from being diverted to other tasks by the Board of Directors. It was believed that less diversion could occur if the evaluators were obtained on a contract basis.

D. THE MEP MESSAGE: USER INVOLVEMENT

The MEP demonstrated that it is easy to get evaluation information produced, but much harder to produce useful information. There are no "right" methods or system; there are no easy answers. Decision makers have to want the evaluation results, and be willing to invest time and resources in obtaining information if it is to have utility. Evaluation cannot make a difference by just existing.

The remainder of this document discusses in greater detail the lessons summarized here. Examples of the sites' experiences are provided to demonstrate and support the points made. Chapter II examines the success of the MEPs in demonstrating that evaluation can make a difference. The strategies used to develop evaluation capability, and the types of system developed are described in Chapter III. Finally, Chapter IV presents the major implementation and operation problems encountered during the MEP. The information is structured to provide guidance to others attempting to establish a useful evaluation capability.

II. SUCCESS OF THE TESTED EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Twelve Model Evaluation Program sites were funded. As of January 1978, eight of the twelve had completed their MEP demonstration; four were still in progress. This chapter discusses the demonstrated success of the evaluation systems tested at the eight completed sites. Section A provides an overview of the program outcomes. Section B presents the three types of outcome originally projected for the MEP that are used here as criteria in assessing the success of the program. The rationale for the criteria and the manner in which they are applied are developed there also. Sections C, D and E assess the performance of the program relative to the three criteria, and Section F gives factors that affected success.

A. OVERVIEW OF THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Three criteria were used to measure the success of an evaluation system: did it help agencies achieve their objectives; did it identify and meet a real demand for evaluation information; and was it continued after the MEP grant expired?

No site was able to demonstrate success on the first criteria. None of the 12 sites attempted to develop or measure the agency objectives, nor

were any of the sites able to demonstrate that the evaluation systems helped the agencies achieve their objectives.

Of the eight sites, only one failed to produce evaluation information. Examination of how the information was used at the seven remaining sites led to the conclusion that four sites had demonstrated that they identified and met a real demand for information. Two other sites appeared to be providing a free good service for which there was not a clear need. The remaining site was associated with the production of useful information, but it was not demonstrated that the MEP system was the principal reason the information was produced and used.

The MEP sites were able to develop information for two types of user market--one associated with the design and monitoring of LEAA funded projects, and one associated with identifying or resolving issues about program operations for agency management or policy makers. Four MEP sites attempted to meet a third type of market--developing and disseminating knowledge--but failed to produce the required information.

Three of the eight tested systems were continued initially by the planning agency at the end of the MEP, but the long-term fate of these three is uncertain. The discontinuation decisions at the five other MEP sites were based on a variety of judgments, including: failure to implement desired evaluation system; product perceived as not useful; and severe agency budget cuts prevent continuation.

Figure 1 summarizes the results of the Model Evaluation Program grants. Figure 2 summarizes the level of production and investment among the eight completed sites. The following sections of this chapter define the success

FIGURE 1: OUTCOMES OF THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM

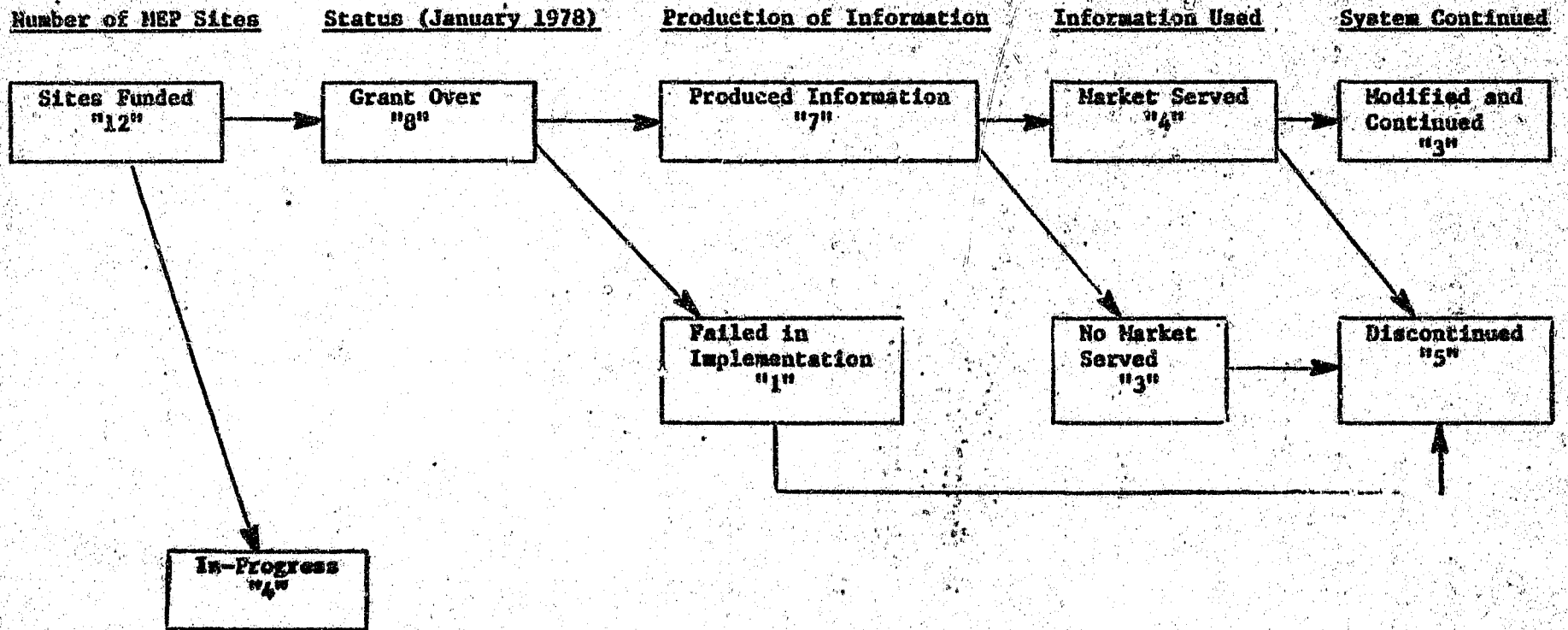


FIGURE 2: PRODUCTION LEVELS ACHIEVED BY MEP SITES

	MEP Budget* (Rounded to \$1,000)	Number of Analyses or Studies Completed	Approximate Cost per Study	Were substan- tial non-MEP resources used to do the studies?
Central Oklahoma	\$108,000	6	\$18,000	No
Illinois	\$250,000*	17	\$14,700	No
Ventura	\$ 74,000	18	\$ 4,100	Yes
Alameda	\$144,000	8	\$ 8,000	Yes
Michigan (Reporting System)	\$142,000*	4	\$35,500	Yes
Michigan (Intensive)	\$190,000*	2	\$95,000	No
Columbia	\$ 56,000*	4	\$22,400	No
Jacksonville	\$ 85,000	7	\$12,140	No
Pennsylvania	\$261,000*	0	Not Appli- cable	No

*Two year grants include 50 percent second year match.

criteria, discuss site performance on each, and identify factors associated with success.

**B. THREE SUCCESS CRITERIA FOR
THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAMS:
ACHIEVEMENT OF AGENCY OBJECTIVES,
USE AND CONTINUATION**

The original Model Evaluation Program request for proposal contained three success criteria:¹ (1) evaluation information would be used; (2) evaluation would contribute to the achievement of agency objectives; and (3) the demonstrated evaluation system would be continued if it proved to be useful. At the time of the program announcement, it remained an open question of how to measure and apply the criteria to select grantees or assess success.

The nature of the program required that these criteria be defined as each site developed and implemented its program. At the start of the program, there was uncertainty among all parties involved as to how "use," "achievement of agency objectives," and "continuation" would be interpreted by the MEP agencies.

The evolution of the criteria began with the grantee selection process. Agencies submitting proposals were asked to describe, among other things: their evaluation objectives and goals; their agency objectives; the direct relationship between agency and evaluation objectives; and how the proposed evaluation program could be evaluated. Following grant awards, site visits

1. Model Evaluation Program Announcement, Washington, D.C., Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Fall 1974.

and interviews were held with the agencies selected to clarify the criteria. As it turned out, none of the sites had developed well-defined, measurable objectives and expectations for their MEP Project or for their own agency. Most, however, had a clear idea of the evaluation system they wished to establish, and how they planned to go about it.

The rationale for developing agency success criteria that emerged among the grantees was:

- Each agency planned to produce a specific type of evaluation information for one or more users.
- How that information would be used and the difference it would make could not be predicted by the agency before-hand.
- The agency would produce and disseminate the information and make a decision on continuation based on its experience with the production process and its own estimate of the utility of the product.

Given these conditions, the national evaluation of the Model Evaluation Program adopted a trace method for documenting success. The flow of actual evaluation products was documented and the actions associated with these products identified. Also, the status of the evaluation systems tested as part of the Model Evaluation Program during and following the grant period was traced. This approach enabled the definition of MEP success criteria in a way that reflected both the intent of the program, and what the agencies actually did. Eventually specific measures were developed for the three program success criteria that could be used for all sites.

"Use" of the evaluation information was defined as occurring when three conditions were met:

- (1) Intended and actual users claimed the information was useful.
- (2) The users cited actual instances of using the information.
- (3) There was evidence that the use cited was important to the performance of the user's function.

The first two conditions were determined from a survey of recipients of the evaluation information identified by the MEP grantee. Recipients were interviewed to answer such questions as:

- Did they receive evaluation information?
- Did they absorb the information?
- Did it provide information they did not have?
- Did they find it useful?
- How did they use it?
- Could they identify decisions or actions affected by the evaluation system?

Frequently, people interviewed would say the information was useful and used, but had difficulty describing the use. Moreover, it became obvious that differences existed among the cases of use. Some users clearly wanted, needed, and used evaluation information to make a difference in programs and policies. Others were unable to show that the information made a difference, sometimes acknowledging they could get along without it. These latter users appeared to be getting a free good (i.e. evaluation) for which there was no clear need. Therefore, the third condition needed to attribute "use" was established: successful use required evidence that the use cited was important to the performance of the user's function. One of two types of evidence was considered sufficient:

- (1) evidence that it made a difference to the outcome of the user's function, such as programmatic or policy changes, enabling a program or policy issue to be raised and debated, or enabling programmatic technical assistance to be delivered; and
- (2) evidence that the information was in great demand, such as unusual effort on the part of the user to secure the information, or a formal decision process where the demand for and use of evaluation was highly visible.

The evidence called for by the last of the three conditions would not include such cited uses as: "I found it informative"; "I decided to change my file system as a result"; "I sent the report along to department managers."

The data to apply the criterion of "importance" were drawn from: (a) interviews with users, MEP personnel, and SPA and RPU personnel; and (b) site observations of agency operations, MEP activities, and MEP interaction with users.

The discussion of utility in this report is designed to identify both the uses cited, and to support a conclusion as to whether the MEP served a real market for evaluation, one in which the information made a difference.

"Contribution to the achievement of agency objectives" was undefined at the start of the program, and remained in the end to be undefined. The agencies were examined and agency management was interviewed to determine whether differences in agency performance could be documented and attributed to the Model Evaluation Program. As will be discussed in Section C below, the concept of "agency objectives" has not been operationally defined by State Planning Agencies or by Regional Planning Units, or by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. The implications of this outcome are significant. The primary measurable success criterion becomes "use" of information, rather than demonstrable improvement in agency programs or policies.

"Continuation" was measured by tracking the maintenance of MEP resources, and MEP processes and policies after the grant was over. Interviews were held with MEP personnel and agency management to document continuation decisions and reasons for them.

C. MEP CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AGENCY OBJECTIVES NOT DEMONSTRABLE

Two of the criteria used to select MEP grantees described the

"achievement of agency objectives" as an expectation of the MEP:

1. degree to which the evaluation program goals and objectives are directly related to achieving agency objectives; and
2. likelihood that the evaluation program will help the agency achieve its objectives.

The MEP grantees, then, might have been expected to monitor progress toward overall agency objectives and provide information that would enhance agency achievement of those objectives. Most MEP proposals described the agencies' objectives and how the MEP was expected to help achieve them, but they did not provide a basis for management or evaluation of the MEP project or the agency.

Agency objectives were rhetoric—statements without underlying definition or measurement system:

. . . introducing change and encouraging innovation . . . ;

. . . improve the quality and effectiveness of criminal justice programs and projects . . . ;

. . . raise the level of consciousness regarding goals and standards . . . ;

. . . provide overall coordination . . . ;

. . . improve the quality of planning. . . ."

These concepts are not inherently unmeasurable or unattainable; rather, the agencies receiving MEP grants had not defined them.

Grantee objectives for the MEP paralleled those for the agency. They were vague:

improvement of the comprehensive planning process . . . ;

development of priorities and policies for funding . . . ;

improve programmatic design . . . ;

increased amount of relevant objective information . . . ;

increase awareness (of) the need for evaluation . . . ;

provide decision makers with the information they need to implement 'management by objectives (or goals) systems.'

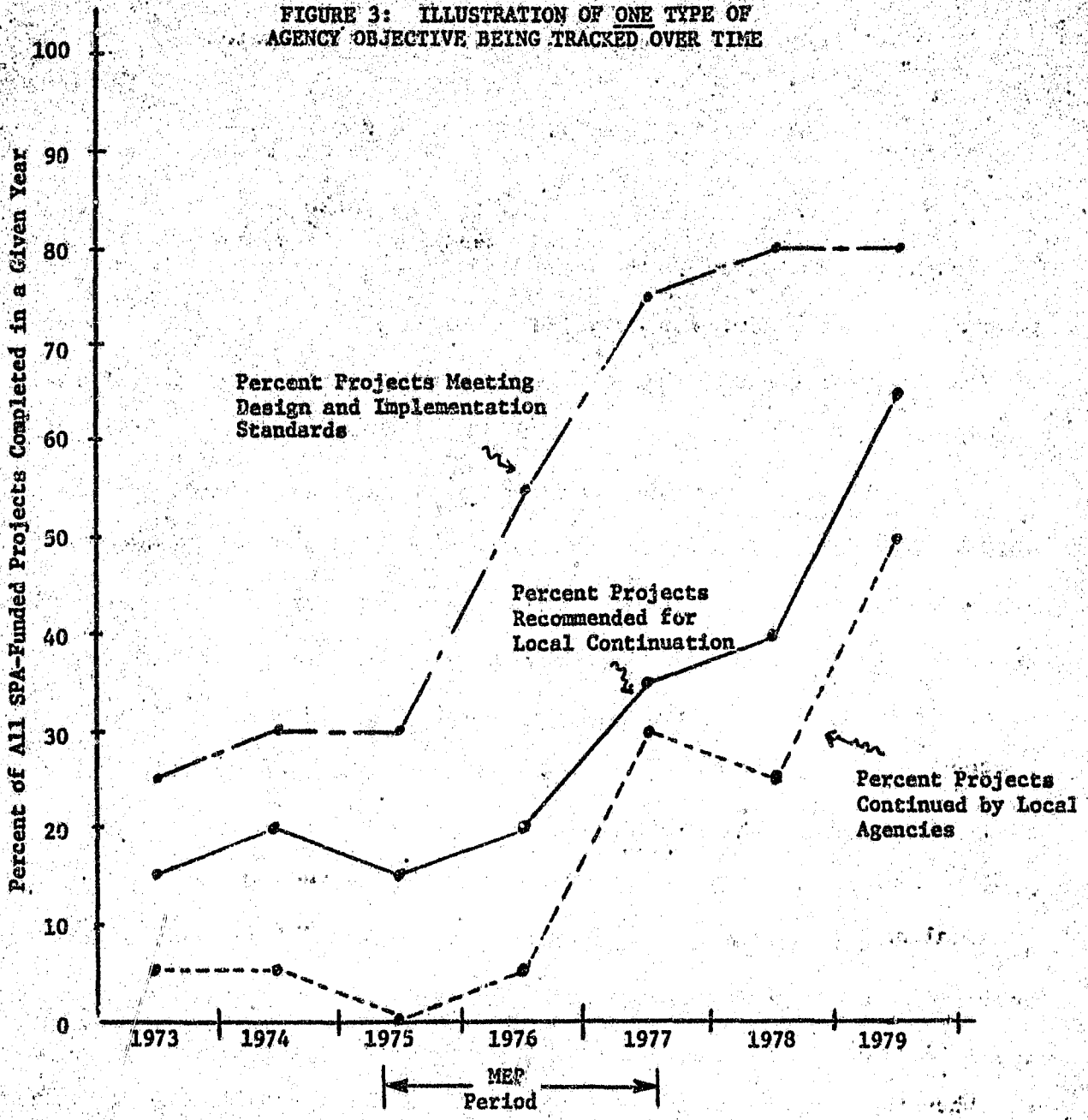
Grantees did not describe how the MEP would help the State Planning Agencies or Regional Planning Units achieve their objectives, or what those objectives were.

The legislative statement authorizing LEAA documents implies that SPAs or RPUs will operationally define such objectives as: improve the criminal justice system, reduce crime, or increase safety. Yet, in neither the agency plans nor agency interviews were descriptions of how the agency would define, achieve, and measure such objectives identified.

This is not to say that the agencies had no objectives toward which they were working. Several appeared to be well administered, with a sense of purpose and direction. The difficulty is that the directives and the objectives were not measurable or verifiable. Performance and progress were subjective determinations made by agency management--"things look like they are getting better," or "this year's plan is better than last year's."

Where agencies appeared to be well administered, it always seems straightforward to translate their rhetorical objectives into verifiable measures. Figure 3 shows how one might define and monitor an objective frequently cited by agencies--"to put in place innovative projects that perform well and are adopted and continued by state and local agencies." Any MEP project could have been designed to improve the agency's performance on the several measures proposed to monitor this objective:

FIGURE 3: ILLUSTRATION OF ONE TYPE OF AGENCY OBJECTIVE BEING TRACKED OVER TIME



- Percent projects meeting SPA project design and implementation standards
- Percent projects that received a "high performance" rating and a recommendation for "local continuation" from a peer review panel of local officials and experts
- Percent projects that were continued by local agency at the same or increased operating level

- better project, evaluation and monitoring designs leading to more successful project implementation;
- better evaluations of projects leading to more selective and more persuasive recommendations for local continuation; and
- access to evaluations lead to more continuation decisions.

As Figure 3 implies, if agency objectives were measurable, it might be possible to associate the MEP with "contributing to the achievement of agency objectives." No agency was observed to define and monitor its rhetorical objectives in this way.

If one cannot measure agency performance on its rhetorical objectives, then a dilemma exists as to what objectives, if any, can be measured? Resolution of the dilemma requires one to ignore the rhetoric and examine the activity of an agency to extract a set of measurable objectives from agency actions. Following this line of reasoning, SPAs and RPUs were found to have as an objective the funding and administrative monitoring of subgrantees. That is, they fund subgrantees to carry out projects acceptable to the local criminal justice officials, and in compliance with federal guidelines and regulations. The grants management function may involve technical assistance to subgrantees, as well as monitoring progress and evaluation of results. LEAA requires that some level of evaluation (monitoring or more intensive) be carried out.

When the staff functions of an SPA/RPU have no overall measurable objectives other than selection and funding of subgrants, and compliance to federal guidelines and regulations, one then has an additional dilemma in assessing "the use" of evaluation information. Some means is needed to determine what evaluation information produced by the MEP is supposed to accomplish,

What happened in practice was that the evaluation information from the MEP was disseminated to:

- SPAs/RPUs for use in formal decision processes such as subgrant renewal;
- SPA staff to help carry out their functions such as providing technical assistance and preparing the comprehensive plan;
- subgrantees for their information; and
- criminal justice system officials for their information.

How they were supposed to use it, and for what purpose, were left to the discretion of the user. Success of evaluation on the criteria of achieving agency objectives thus reduces to an assessment of its utility to users.

**D. HALF THE MEP SITES WERE ABLE
TO DEMONSTRATE THAT A MARKET
FOR EVALUATION WAS SERVED**

We concluded that four of the eight MEP sites studied demonstrated that a market for evaluation was identified and served. They produced evaluative information, and there is evidence that the use of that information made a difference to the performance of the user's function. Of the four remaining sites, two did not get their information product used; a third left it unclear whether use can be attributed to the MEP; and, in the fourth case, there was no information produced.

The MEP sites attempted to use evaluation to support three different types of decision process (or markets for evaluation):

- Project Oversight: The SPA, RPU, subgrantee process whereby projects are funded, designed, monitored and routinely assessed for refunding decisions.
- Issue Identification: The use of ad hoc studies by decision-making individuals or groups to raise and resolve issues about programs or policies.

- Knowledge Development: The process of testing and disseminating effective program concepts, relying heavily on research standards to produce high quality evaluation information on program cost and performance.

One or more sites were able to demonstrate that useful information could be produced for the first two markets, Project Oversight and Issue Identification. None of the three MEP sites that attempted it were able to produce the evaluation information required by the Knowledge Development market.

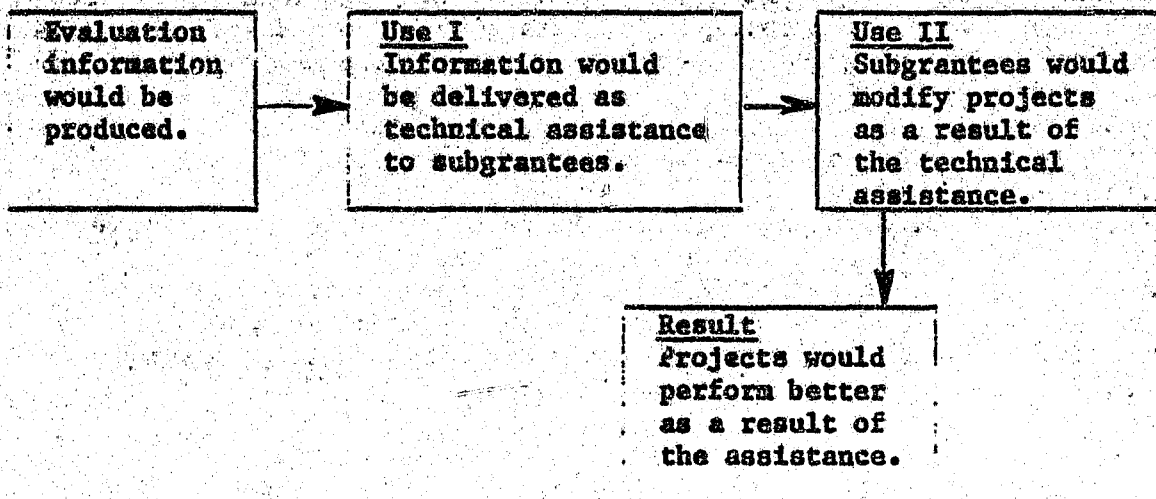
This section describes the limitations of the use criterion, the types of use encountered, and the achievement of the MEP sites on each type of use.

1. SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE USE CRITERION

The evidence of use available to this study has its limitations. This study had to rely heavily on user perceptions of use. The two major problems with this are the reliability of the user observations, and the distance of this indicator from the effect of the information.

When possible, the first problem was dealt with by getting several observers and sometimes several users to describe the consequences of any one study. Our impression is that the observations are reliable--people describe similar things occurring.

The second problem is a more serious limitation. Frequently the "user" interviewed was far removed from the ultimate desired effect of information. For example, one model of use commonly cited assumed the following sequence of events would occur for an SPA technical assistance function:



Clearly, one would like to judge the worth or contribution of the technical assistance function in terms of improvement in project design or performance. As described earlier, agencies were not set up to permit this level of evaluation. Instead, the function of the primary user, in this case deliver technical assistance (Use I), was examined and the question asked: "Did the evaluation system make a difference to the performance of that function?" In other words, could the primary user identify changes or instances of technical assistance attributable to the evaluation? The assessment did not go further to evaluate the technical assistance function itself. Thus, one might say that being successful on the "use" criterion is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for judging an evaluation system to be beneficial.

2. TYPES OF MARKET FOR EVALUATION

The MEP identified three general types of use for evaluation;

- o Project Oversight;
- o Issue Identification;
- o Knowledge Development.

All represent strategies for improving the criminal justice system. However, each uses evaluation in a different way for a different immediate purpose. Consequently, the uses cited and significance of those uses differ among the three models.

The Project Oversight model uses the evaluation system to help design, monitor, manage and evaluate projects funded by the SPA or RPU.

The uses commonly cited under this model are:

- evaluation designs lead to better project designs in subgrant applications;
- monitoring a project uncovered problems which were corrected;
- evaluations affected decisions to refund or continue the project; and
- project performance improved over time as a result of SPA or RPU technical assistance initiated by evaluation information.

The primary users in this model turned out to be one or more of the following: the subgrantee taking action on his or her own initiative; the SPA and RPU staff assigned to monitor and give assistance to subgrantees; the SPA and RPU decision-making bodies deciding on subgrant refunding and subgrant special conditions.

The difference the additional evaluation information would make in the adequacy of project design and in project performance was never described in measurable terms, or recorded by the MEP sites. The success measure for evaluation relied on the primary user's perception of information use, and its influence on project design or performance.

Issue Identification is different from Project Oversight in that:

(1) it does not have a role in designing projects and programs prior to evaluation; and (2) it is not an ongoing, routine tracking of some group of projects over time. The Issue Identification model uses the evaluation

system to raise, explicate, or resolve some point of an issue about existing or proposed policies and programs. Ad hoc, non-routine studies are designed to meet the situation and focus on issues considered relevant.

The uses commonly cited under the model include:

- it showed that a problem existed that had to be solved;
- a policy decision was changed and reconsidered;
- a grant was let to deal with some problem identified;
- an agency was reorganized; or
- a program was redesigned.

The primary users are the decision-making individual or group who acknowledge that an issue exists or must deal with it.

The Issue Identification model attempts to raise and resolve issues. If many of these studies were done and nothing wrong was ever found, then, at some point, one would have to question their utility. (The Project Oversight model, on the other hand, seeks to avoid issues by careful planning and monitoring, and the early correction of potential problems.) The success measure for evaluation in the Issue Identification model relied on primary users' perceptions of the impact of information on their attitudes and on their decisions. The difficulty with interpreting user opinion in this Issue model is that anything can be an issue, and the cost of raising them is not borne by the user. Issues identified ranged from "project files are not adequate," to "should we build a prison." Therefore, evidence was required that the user considered the information to be necessary, and the issues were significant to performance of the users' responsibilities.

The Knowledge Development model uses the evaluation system to produce and disseminate high quality, disseminable information about what

programs work best (or worst), under what conditions. Whereas in the other two models the information addresses specific projects or issues, in the Knowledge Development model, general statements about the cost and performance of some program concept are generated and supported by scientifically acceptable research. The uses commonly cited under the model include:

- the identification of optimum program models;
- setting of funding priorities among programs in the Comprehensive Plan;
- dissemination of program and project models to state and local agencies.

The primary user was usually identified to be the SPA or RPU in either a dissemination role or in setting its own funding policies. Success indicators for this model would be the number of "practices" conclusively evaluated, and the number of decisions influenced by that information. In the MEP no one was able to successfully implement this model.

It should be noted that a less rigorous type of knowledge development occurs in the other two models of use. SPA and RPU staff can develop knowledge about what does and doesn't work through their experience with projects. The knowledge will be softer by research standards and less accessible, but it can be equally valid and useful.

Table 1 shows for which markets the sites planned to develop information, and for which markets they actually produced information. Table 2 summarizes conclusions about which sites produced information that was used, i.e., which sites identified and served a real market for evaluation.

3. PROJECT OVERSIGHT

Four sites attempted to serve the Project Oversight market; only one,

**TABLE 1: TYPE OF USE FOR WHICH MEP SITES
PLANNED TO DEVELOP INFORMATION AND
WERE ABLE TO DEVELOP INFORMATION**

MEP Site	Project Oversight	Issue Raising and Resolution	Knowledge Development
Central Oklahoma	X	✓	
Illinois	✓		X
Pennsylvania			X
Ventura		✓	
Alameda		✓	
Michigan (Reporting System)	✓		
Michigan (Intensive Evaluation)		✓	X
Jacksonville		✓	
Columbia	✓		

✓ - Developed information

X - Planned to but did not develop such information

**TABLE 2: SUCCESS IN PRODUCING
USEFUL INFORMATION**

For Project Oversight Market

Illinois: Some information use, but not critical to function of users, and no significant results from use.

Columbia: Isolated cases of uses that affected the criminal justice system. Doubtful if use can be attributed solely to MEP.

Michigan: Considered successful, with uses cited.

**Central
Oklahoma:** Information for this market not produced.

For Issue Identification

**Central
Oklahoma:** Users claim information useful, but few uses cited, and none critical to function of user.

Ventura: Successful information used to assist user perform criminal justice functions.

Alameda: Successful. Uses cited that were significant and depended on the information produced.

Michigan: Successful. Information used to alter management and program operations.

Jacksonville: Users satisfied with information and uses cited.

For Knowledge Development Market

No site developed information for this market.

Michigan, demonstrated that a real market for evaluation information was identified and served by the evaluation system.

Three of the four sites were able to develop information to test in the Project Oversight market: Michigan, Illinois and Columbia. Michigan and Illinois tested standardized SPA project reporting systems. For such systems, all projects funded under a "Program Element" in the State Plan would be defined and measured using a common set of measures developed by the SPA. Columbia (RPU) used a different approach--a regional evaluator to help subgrantees design projects and evaluations to meet SPA requirements. A fourth site, Central Oklahoma (RPU), developed a project design methodology for use by SPA subgrantees and local agencies, but did not test it. Here we discuss the use of the information produced at the three sites that did produce information for the Project Oversight market.

a. Michigan (Reporting System)

With its "standard evaluation system," Michigan demonstrated that SPA management can create a demand for evaluation information within the SPA. The standard evaluation system developed process and outcome data on similar projects using common, standard reporting instruments. The system was pilot tested on 20 projects in 4 program areas. It was to produce 20 project analyses and 4 multi-project analyses on the program areas.

At the time this report was written, Michigan was still carrying out the computer analyses and experiencing some difficulty with the computer contractor. However, the SPA program staff were familiar with the designs and the data, and had experience in using similar types of information in the past. Based on the work done to date, observation of

Michigan's decision processes and interviews with the primary users, we judged the system to be successful on the use criteria. Our observations are described below.

(1) Users Perceived the Information To Be Useful: At the end of the grant, we interviewed four program specialists and asked them to describe how useful they expected the information to be, and how they expected to use it. They responded that the information was necessary and would be useful. They identified three ways in which the information would be useful. It would help their monitoring function:

. . . hope to make overall conclusions about value of a program element. . . . Find gross conclusions on what stands out, and go look at that. Decide what should be added to or dropped from projects;

help them justify programs and argue for continuation locally:

Confirm what we have endorsed and encourage locals to put up dollars;

and lead to changes in project design or operations:

(In the past) used on individual basis to improve projects . . . and in setting refunding requirements.

(2) Users Cited Instances of Using This Type of Information in the Past: The specialists could identify having used similar information for these purposes in the past. For example, they had changed the design and operation of programs.

For jail rehabilitation programs, their budget is sent in with staff salaries and what they will do. But in reality, it takes six to seven months to get going. During the time, they mainly staff up and find a home. As a result of the review of data, we now first fund them

For one to six months to perform the administrative work—hiring, etc. Then we fund for a period of providing services.

One methodology for a type of program appeared superior at one-fourth the cost. As a result, we revised the (alternative education program).

. . . found that lower pupil/instructor ratio and taking pupils to alternative educations . . . proved to be effective.

Each of the program specialists, when asked, held that the standard evaluations were necessary, and that they should continue to design such evaluations for other projects and programs.

(3) There Is Evidence That the Use Cited Is Important to the Performance of the Market Identified: Four observations indicate that there exists a real demand for the evaluation system: SPA management's investment of its own resources into evaluation, SPA management's interest and support of the system, the existence of a formal decision-making process which uses evaluative information, and the support of the data collection by RFUs and projects.

The Michigan SPA demonstrated that the information was wanted by the commitment of management time and its program staff time to evaluation activities. Management invested a significant amount of program staff time (that is, non-evaluation staff) in training to increase staff evaluation capability. The program specialists are also required to allocate their time on an on-going basis to the design and implementation of standard evaluations for their projects. The level of involvement of non-evaluation staff personnel is exceptionally high in comparison to other SPAs and RFUs.

During the course of the MEP, we interviewed six members of the SPA top management, and all were aware of the MEP, supportive, and participating in it. Moreover, they all were expecting improved performance from the program staff in terms of well-designed projects and better staff assessments and recommendations. Management demonstrated its support for the system by demanding participation in the training program when attendance began to slip.

The need for evaluation arises by the unique decision-making process that exists in Michigan, and the role the program specialists play in it. The Michigan SPA management is unique in that its governing Commission has delegated a great deal of policy-making and funding authority to the SPA management. Thus, the Director and the line-supervisors constitute an active and strong decision-making body. For planning and grant review sessions, they have required that the program specialists bring forward evaluative information on projects and programs. In addition, the program specialists are responsible for giving technical assistance to potential applicants and subgrantees on project design and operations. Interviews with six of the sixteen program specialists confirmed the existence of these roles. The program specialists used the standard system to help define projects, to help monitor projects, and to accumulate expertise on programs.

Finally, the response of other non-SPA actors lends credibility to the system. The Michigan MEP invested time in meeting with regional staff and project staff to review and discuss the standard instruments and reporting requirements. Moreover, site visits were made to each project to verify the applicability of the instrument and the project's

ability to collect the data. The recorded comments of regional and project staff indicate that the evaluation system was viewed as necessary, appropriate and useful. Subsequent data reporting was generally good.

(4) The Information Used Is Attributable to the MEP Evaluation System: The MEP standard evaluation is, in effect, a further development and improvement of an evaluation and management system that already existed at the SPA. Our interviews and reviews of site material indicate that the MEP would make a significant difference in the quantity and quality of project information flowing between subgrantee and program specialists.

Prior to the MEP, projects were required to report summary data on standard factors, but the requirement was not enforced or monitored. Reporting was spotty, and reports varied in quality and comprehensibility. The reports from similar projects were not comparable. With the standard instruments, enforcement, central analysis and cross-project analysis, the specialists were expecting more detail, more questions answered and clearer answers.

b. Illinois

The Illinois project reporting system did not demonstrate that it produced information that was used. This system was similar in form, but not in operation, to the Michigan reporting system. Standard reporting instruments were used by subgrantees to routinely report data which the SPA would process and analyze. The Illinois system developed evaluation packages estimated to provide data collection instruments for about 60 percent of the funded projects. The system produced 16 project analyses and 1 multi-project analysis during the MEP to test the use of the product.

The primary users were the SPA grants management and technical assistance staff, and the SPA evaluation staff which participated in some reviews of applications for continuation funding.

(1) Usefulness of the Information Was Questionable: Five program personnel (grants managers and technical assistance staff), seven evaluators and two SPA management personnel were interviewed. The general view of the evaluation information was: (1) that it was not used to monitor projects; and (2) that it may have been useful for grant review committees, but there were other, equally significant sources of information.

Four of the five program staff described the information as not useful:

- One was not aware of the information he was receiving for his project areas. Over the past year, he had not used evaluation office products, or had much contact with the evaluation office staff.
- Two stated that they receive the evaluation data submitted by projects, but do not read or file them. They asserted that they did not use the data for managerial purposes. When refunding decisions are to be made, they will read the results of an evaluation if they are available.
- One claimed that he does not use the evaluation data for monitoring purposes. Monthly meetings with projects and telephone calls provide a better mechanism for feedback and discussion.

A fifth person claimed that he did use the evaluation reports as a basis for developing special conditions on some grants. Similarly, four of the seven evaluators identified the grant review process as where the information was useful.

(2) Citations of Use Were Few: Special conditions on grants and project guideline development were cited as the primary uses:

developing special conditions . . . such as ensuring that the intended target population was being served;

as a result of some informal analyses with the data . . . original guidelines on what constituted a deferred prosecution project were modified.

These were the only specific uses directly attributed to the information. While further probing might have uncovered others, most people interviewed implied that the information produced was not essential.

(3) The Evidence Was that the Use Cited Was Not Necessary to the Performance of the Market Identified: Several observations led one to question whether the information produced made a difference or was needed: There was no sign of a great demand among program personnel; the claim that the evaluators and the evaluations contributed to the grant review process was not supported by management; and the casual implementation of the system makes it suspect.

Interviews with program staff produced no evidence that they required or wanted the information. Most seemed to have their own sources of information on which they would rather rely. They did not invest significant amounts of their own time in developing or using the information.

Neither of the two management level persons interviewed claimed that the system made a difference after a year of operation. When asked if MEP had made a difference and its products used, one SPA manager stated that:

He did not think there had been use, except to respond to a specific LEAA request for data. He found it hard to differentiate whether there had been any change over the year in the amount of data that existed. He stated that there had never really been a problem with the lack of a data base, even though data

deficiencies did exist on occasion. However, there was not such a marked change in data quality that it was noticeable to him.

The other manager interviewed could not identify any payoff, other than more detailed project descriptions in the 1977 comprehensive plan.

Management also claimed that the inclusion of the evaluators in the grant review process, the primary use cited by evaluators, just did not work:

The staff was already over-committed and did not have time to allocate to the activity. Also, the project designs were of such a poor nature that the evaluation review was not really feasible except on a superficial nature.

However, one manager judged the effort of producing the evaluation information worthwhile, since it did lead to "some special conditions aimed at tightening up the projects." The attribution of this effect to the MEP was more uncertain to the other manager interviewed. When recommendations were made to the Executive Committee concerning a program or a project, he would not know the source of the information used to support the recommendations.

Finally, the evaluation system was implemented in such a way that it is difficult to take its products seriously. Many projects were told that the data would not be used in making refunding decisions. For the data that were submitted, there was no quality control over the data, or attempts to correct errors. Data or analyses were never fed back to the projects for review or validation. There were no analysis plans or routines developed for much of the reported data. In short, the quality, validity, and utility of the product are suspect.

(4) Information Use Is Attributable to the Tested Evaluation

System: The information produced and the use that did occur are attributable to the evaluation system tested as part of the MEP. The reports that were produced were obtained from data collected with the evaluation packages developed for the system, and through analyses conducted as part of the system.

The system itself is only partially attributable to the MEP. The Illinois SPA had begun development and operation of the evaluation system using standardized data systems prior to receipt of the MEP. In fact, 17 of the 36 evaluation packages eventually developed were developed or being developed prior to the MEP grant award, and reports produced developed during the MEP utilized the pre-MEP data collection instruments. The MEP grant served to accelerate the development process and provide some activities not previously planned.

The limited level of operation of the system achieved is, therefore, not solely due to the MEP. However, the number of standardized evaluation instruments, the amount of data collected, and the number of reports produced would not have occurred without the augmentation with MEP funds. Furthermore, operation of the system to the point of breakdown would not have been realized. Thus, much of the information produced and lessons learned are due to the MEP; the overall system cannot be attributed to the program.

c. Columbia

The Columbia MEP was associated with information that was used by both the project directors and the SPA. However, it is unclear whether

the production of the information can be attributed to the MEP. Our observation of the activity of the MEP and interviews with participants raise doubts about the MEP contribution.

Columbia established an evaluation assistance capability rather than a set of designs and procedures as did Michigan and Illinois. An RPU position was established with the MEP grant to help local subgrantees meet SPA evaluation requirements and, at the same time, to develop information that they, the subgrantees, could use. This facilitator was involved with eight projects over a two year period. At the end of the grant, six people responsible for six different projects and SPA evaluation personnel were interviewed.

(1) Subgrantees Perceived the Information To Be Useful: Four of the six subgrantees interviewed claimed they had used the information in decision making; five of the six said they plan to use the information.

(2) Subgrantees Primarily Cited Examples of Intended Use: One subgrantee claimed to have modified his project based on information developed in the evaluation:

- Crime trend data developed by the study were used to shift police manpower and equipment (participating in the project).

Three of the subgrantees cited how they planned to use the information in program planning and design:

Information changed our way of thinking. Now more prevention oriented. . . . Plan to use it to decide where to set up preventive patrol.

Plan to use geographic data of study to plan new programs. Found that largest single group (of clients) comes from public housing; therefore, will set up satellite agency in those areas.

Using the results of the utilization of men and equipment in this study to find a better procedure to allocate men and equipment.

A fifth planned more detailed evaluations as a result of the experience.

We have redesigned the evaluation after looking at the results. Now changed to collect more detailed data. Will need 12 months before can use data.

(3) There Is Evidence that the Uses Cited Are Important to the Market Identified: The market for evaluation in Columbia is created in part by SPA requirements that evaluations be done, and in part by the interest of the subgrantees to use information.

There is strong evidence that the SPA actually reviews and uses the information it requires projects to produce. Early in the grant the MEP evaluator prepared evaluation progress reports for subgrantees that directly led to the SPA cancelling two projects. This action caused the local agency involved to take the evaluation requirements and the content of reports more seriously.

As the MEP work evolved, the project personnel were investing their own time and effort in evaluation activities. Four of the six claimed to have developed positive attitudes towards evaluation as a result of the MEP experience. For example:

Now I feel good about evaluations and can see what they do and what impact they have.

See accomplishments of an updated record system.

Now we can tell where we were, what we did, and where we are going.

Two respondents indicated no change in their opinions of evaluation--one had been positive, the other negative, prior to the MEP.

Much of the MEP effort went toward working with one agency (Police Department) on two of its four subgrants. The SPA, the MEP evaluator, and the Police Department acknowledge a positive change in the agency's attitude towards, and investment in, evaluation. However, this was the agency that saw two grant cancellations associated with evaluations.

(4) While Information Was Generated and Used, It Is Not Clear that the MEP Was Required for this To Have Occurred: The production and use of information cited could be attributed to the SPA evaluation system. There is no clear cut evidence that the RPU evaluator did or did not make a difference to that system.

Four of the six subgrantees believed that the evaluation activities carried out by their projects could have been done without the regional evaluator. The other two view the regional evaluator undertaking research-type activities they would not have had the skills or resources to do.

The role of the MEP evaluator most frequently identified by local personnel was one of answering questions and giving advice concerning the evaluation requirement of the subgrant. One project claimed there was no involvement worth mentioning, whereas three projects identified involvement in setting up data collection and analysis procedures, and some participation in the implementation of the procedures. Four of the six persons interviewed identified having someone to answer evaluation questions as the main advantage of having a regional evaluator.

The SPA evaluation director claimed that, from the SPA perspective, the regional evaluator may not have added to the information available, but that the MEP appeared to have helped institutionalize

evaluation activity in the Columbia Police Department. As indicated earlier, following receipt of quarterly reports, the SPA cancelled two of the grants and required a redesign of the third. The reports had been prepared by the regional evaluator. The SPA staff claimed that the situation would eventually have come to the attention of their monitor and resulted in similar action without the MEP evaluator's activities. That is, the timing may have been accelerated, but the actions would eventually have occurred. The MEP evaluator did not share that opinion.

The RPU, in the final progress report to the National Institute for the MEP project, cites the changes in the Columbia Police Department as evidence of achievement of the objective to improve local attitudes toward evaluation. An SPA evaluator concurs in this view by noting that without the presence of a regional evaluator working with the Department on SPA evaluations, its acceptance and use of evaluation may not have occurred.

In summary, the regional evaluator appears to have had an influence on two subgrantees. However, overall, the uses cited are tentative, and the role of the evaluator is not consistently a significant one across projects. Consequently, the experience at the Columbia site is judged to be inconclusive.

4. ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Four sites demonstrated that they were able to produce information used in the Issue market. In all, five MEP sites attempted to serve the market. Michigan, Ventura and Alameda were successful at producing useful

information. Jacksonville had some evidence of success, but it was not as strong as the other three sites. The Central Oklahoma effort was judged not to be successful in serving this use.

All of the five sites produced a number of separate studies which raised issues about some criminal justice program or project. Each site differed in approach and type of study:

- Michigan: Carried out under contract two intensive evaluations covering two program areas and involving forty-three projects.
- Ventura: RPU evaluator gave technical assistance to 18 local agency evaluation efforts, most of which would not have been done or have been as useful without this assistance.
- Alameda: Eight studies in two program areas were carried out by RPU staff, with control of the studies delegated to local agency officials designated as users.
- Jacksonville: Seven studies were carried out by RPU staff, some upon local agency activities, some on RPU subgrants.
- ACOG: RPU staff produced six individual project evaluations using a common evaluation design approach.

The following is a discussion of how this information was described as being used.

a. Michigan

The Michigan SPA produced two intensive evaluations on two program elements covering forty-three projects. The users of the information were the SPA top management, and its program staff responsible for the program element. Five members of a nine member management group and two program specialists were interviewed.

(1) Users Perceived the Evaluation as Being Useful: All seven users were familiar with one or both of the studies. When asked, they were able to cite the study findings.

All but one person responded that: (1) they believed the study findings; and (2) they felt that they had received new information. The new information was described as:

• Special Police Unit Study (SPU)

SPUs are not as effective as program specialists have implied; program specialists get to be proponents.

SPUs did not do what they said they would do.

Information on project implementation strategy and problem gave us statistical analysis on the way SPUs function, which we did not have before the study.

• Youth Service Bureau Study (YSB)

Surprised that impact on crime not there.

YSB not doing what we thought.

YSB not a unitary concept; are all things to all people; no commonality of business.

Respondents claimed that this information changed or reinforced their attitudes toward the program.

(2) Users Could Cite a Number of Organizational and Policy Changes under Way or under Discussion: Several respondents said that the two studies led to a major change in SPA policies regarding how program staff spend their time. The SPA has put new emphasis on program specialists spending more time in the field, and giving technical assistance to subgrantees during the proposal writing and project design phase. The two studies had concluded that the projects were not operating as assumed by the SPA, or as planned in grant proposals. Interviews with the specialists confirmed that these policy changes had been issued.

Each user responded to the use question differently. In the aggregate, Michigan has taken or plans to take the following types of action based on the study:

● Change the SPA planning and funding process or criteria:

Change or tighten proposal requirements.

. . . change requirements before new grantees can submit proposals.

. . . in administrative review (we are) using the studies to ask applicants if they are doing what (they planned).

● Change how the program specialists spend their time.

We now have program specialists in the field to participate (with subgrantee) in (project) design.

. . . encourage YSB staff and program specialists to do a better job in tracking and monitoring.

. . . spending more time in the field . . . there is an office policy to give more technical assistance . . . give technical assistance before funding and help clean up the details.

● Provide technical assistance to subgrantees.

Used results in technical assistance discussions with YSB directors.

We are funding a project to give technical assistance to all state YSB projects, and will use this study and lessons from this study.

● Disseminate the information.

Wrote a new section for the Commission on youth diversion . . .

. . . sent it to state YSB organizations.

. . . discuss results with projects

- Discuss the implications of the report in the management group.

Used it in internal discussions at the SPA.

Used it in discussions, but not in decision making.

(3) There Is Evidence that the Use Cited Is Important to the Performance of the Market: Management's reaction to the findings and investment of non-evaluation staff time in the effort is evidence that the study is making a difference.

The changes made by Michigan in organizational policies indicate that the results of the study are being taken seriously. The study results were overwhelmingly negative:

- There was no evidence of effects on crime and on the criminal justice system.
- Projects were never implemented as planned or expected.

The contractor concluded "that the apparent lack of project effects is due to implementation failure, rather than conceptual failure." These findings caused Michigan SPA management to re-examine its administrative policies and change them. Michigan plans to go ahead with future intensive evaluations, but with tighter project designs and SPA monitoring of implementation.

The Michigan SPA also devoted a relatively significant portion of management and program staff time to guiding and reviewing the implementation of these studies. While the involvement was not as big as

with the standard evaluations, there was participation by non-evaluation personnel.

(4) The Information Used Is Attributable to the MEP Evaluation System: The two intensive evaluations were funded directly out of the MEP grant. The contract was a pilot test of both the utility of intensive evaluations, and the phased contracts used to carry out the studies. The production of the information and its utilization are directly attributable to the MEP.

b. Ventura

The Ventura RPU demonstrated that there existed a demand for evaluation information among criminal justice agencies, and a market for technical assistance in evaluation.

By providing technical assistance in evaluation, the Ventura MEP was involved and partially responsible for the production of 18 studies. The users were officials in local agencies.

(1) Users Perceived the Evaluation Information To Be Useful: Eleven local officials were interviewed concerning the usefulness of evaluation results. Several were users of more than one study, so the user sample is 14. Of the 14, 13 thought the information produced was useful, and only 1 remarked: "We could have gotten along without it."

(2) Users Claimed the Studies Were Informative, and about Half Could Cite Program Changes that Resulted: The following selected quotes and descriptions illustrate the comments of the users.

• Informative (six of thirteen)

(Drunk Driving Study) It put to rest the argument that we ought

to do something different than the way we're doing it now. The study validated our general belief that there didn't need to be a change in our policy with regard to the drunk driver--District Attorney.

(Jail Study) It helped in overall planning--Police official.

(Sentencing Pattern Study) Contributed to more knowledge based on hard data of what is going on, and what has been going on. The problem is that the final report has not been published, and relatively few people have read it --Judge.

Three respondents commenting on the same study indicated that it is affecting opinions, and that they could have used it; however, at the time of the interview, the State Attorney General had ruled that that type of program could no longer be operated. So the study has been shelved until such time as the Attorney General's ruling is changed.

● Changes in Operation (seven of thirteen)

(Witness Utilization Study) We adjusted our calendars so as not to hold officers unnecessarily. Also introduced a one day delay in jury trials to reduce officer overtime --Judge.

(Organizational Study) A few times had thought that a couple of supervisors (officers) were a little arbitrary with the troops, and that some team training or supervisory training might be necessary. But after reading the report, decided that didn't need to do this--Police Chief.

(Victimization Study) Some of the things learned caused us to institute a burglary task force at Christmas time--Police Chief.

(3) There Is Evidence that the Uses Cited Are Important to the Performance of the Market Identified: Three observations indicate that there existed a real market for the evaluation information: initiative of the local agencies in undertaking these evaluations; the investment of local resources in doing the studies; and the nature of the uses cited.

Most of the evaluations which the RPU participated in were local agency efforts undertaken at the initiative of the agency. The agency usually had invested its own resources and carried out many of the necessary steps on its own. The MEP was in a supportive role, providing resources and/or technical assistance and/or services.

The Ventura RPU added to the quantity and quality of evaluations that the agencies wanted to do. Having the evaluations underway without the MEP indicates that they wanted and needed the information. Moreover, the user interviews indicate that when local officials received the information, they used it to change policies and operations. All users interviewed were familiar with the results of the study, and most could cite planned or actual uses.

(4) The Information Used Is Attributable to the MEP: Since Ventura was acting in a technical assistance role, one might question whether the MEP really was necessary. Based on the user surveys and observation of MEP activities, we concluded that the Ventura MEP was responsible for much of the information produced.

Eleven of the fourteen users said that the MEP enabled a study to be done that would not have been done without the MEP. Ten claimed that

the MEP involvement improved the quality of the study. In many cases the MEP evaluator provided resources or assistance which the projects probably could not have gotten easily on their own initiative--e.g., computer time, programming assistance, and analysis capability.

c. Alameda (Detention Studies)

The Alameda MEP experiences demonstrate that a market for evaluation information exists among local officials that can be served through a Regional Planning Unit. The Alameda RPU carried out two sets of studies during the MEP which involved two different mechanisms for serving the market. In one case, the market could be served through existing local organizations: evaluation information was provided to a local decision-making body on controversial issues surrounding the construction of new detention facilities and the operation of pre-trial detention programs. In the other case, a mechanism for serving the market was established: the RPU brought together local officials concerned about an area of criminal justice; provided them evaluation information that identified issues; and they lobbied for action on the issues. Experiences with the detention studies are presented here. The following subsection, (d), discusses the juvenile studies.

The studies of pre-trial detention services and facilities were conducted for the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The Board and County Administration were to make decisions on the future of the services and facilities, and issues existed on which there were recognized information gaps. The RPU offered to fill the information gaps with studies of the issues. The Board publicly approved the RPU performing the studies and received two completed reports at a public hearing.

One report addressed the jail facility issues; the other the operation of the pre-trial service activities. Subsequently, staff and the public reviewed the reports, and actions were taken on the issues that had been studied.

(1) Local Officials Perceive the Detention Studies As Being Useful: Ten local officials were interviewed concerning the utility of the detention studies, and documents from a dozen other sources were reviewed. Information was obtained from County Board members, County Administrators, local agency heads and citizen groups. All evidence indicates that the evaluation studies were used and considered useful.

All persons interviewed were definitely aware of the studies, had read them, and had used them in developing positions or action plans. A member of the County Board claimed that the study convinced him that plans for selected jail facilities could not be delayed due to the performance of pre-trial services. Another board member cited the provision of additional information and options for planning jail facilities as the primary uses of the information.

Four of the ten persons interviewed cited the studies as a catalyst to decisions on reorganization of the pre-trial services organizations. They claimed it was known that changes would occur soon, but the study helped focus attention on issues and provide an information base for acting. The reverse finding was true on the detention facility studies. Four officials stated they believed that the debates that preceded a decision had been extended by the introduction of information from the study. "It opened up for debate options that had been resolved long ago, and thus delayed inevitable decisions. In this regard it was a disservice."

(2) Users Cited Instances of Using the Detention Studies: The users of the study on the pre-trial services cited the study as the catalyst that led to the reorganization of the Division of Pre-trial Services. Various organizational schemes were debated, judges and other officials took public positions, and a new scheme was eventually adopted by the County. While the change was attributed to the study, the modifications did not reflect the study's recommendations. The new organizational arrangement included the transfer of the County Office for Coordination of Pre-trial Services from the Probation Department to direct support of the courts.

In the case of the Detention report, the County Board was committed to make a decision on new jail facilities for pre-trial detention. The questions to be decided involved the size and configuration of the facilities. After publication and review of the report, a decision was made that differed both from the position previously recommended by the County Administrator, and the options given in the RPU's report.

(3) There Is Evidence that the Use Cited Is Important to the Users' Function: The demand exhibited for the evaluation information provide evidence of the importance of the information to the County government and the resolution of the issue. The studies were initially requested by the County Board, and the Board prior to receipt of the MEP had authorized funds for conduct of a smaller study in the same area. County funds were eventually utilized to complete the studies.

All persons interviewed concurred in the point that the studies had an effect in changing the organization of pre-trial services and the outcome of the detention facility decisions. The changes did

not follow the MEP recommended actions, but were aimed at resolving the issues studied and raised.

(4) Information Used Is Attributable to the MEP: Local officials had acknowledged an information gap prior to the MEP and had initiated actions to fill it. However, the information production process was assumed and expanded by the MEP. In particular, the expansion of the study effort to the organization of the pre-trial services is directly due to the MEP.

d. Alameda (Juvenile Studies)

The studies of the juvenile justice system were conducted under the guidance of a Juvenile Justice Committee of citizens and local officials established by the RPU. The Committee was charged with studying juvenile justice practices in Alameda, and using the study results to define model juvenile justice practices and get them adopted. A series of five studies were completed and provided to the Committee for use in defining issues and taking actions on them.

For this set of studies, the time invested by local officials in evaluation supervision, review of findings, preparation of recommendations, and lobbying, indicates that there was a serious need and desire for evaluation. Also, local officials were able to identify changes in policies, funding decisions, and operations resulting from the studies.

(1) Local Officials Perceived the Juvenile Studies As Being Useful: Six members of the Juvenile Justice Committee and six local officials working in juvenile justice were interviewed concerning the utility of the studies. All interviewed were familiar with the studies, and could describe how they used the studies. All claimed that the studies were useful.

The six interviewed members of the Juvenile Justice Committee used the studies to develop recommendations for changes in the local juvenile system, and to lobby for the changes. They discussed the studies in meetings, used the studies to answer questions they raised earlier, and prepared cover letters for transmitting the reports to other groups.

The local officials used the information to:

- alter programs they managed;
- develop grant applications to remedy identified problems; and
- request changes by other agencies with which they worked.

The officials claimed that the studies identified gaps or problems in juvenile services in a manner that permitted them to take remedial actions. The use occurred by direct provision of results to them by the evaluators, by meetings with the evaluators and Committee to discuss the results, and by receipt of the final reports. Three of the officials cited the existence of the information produced by someone outside their organizations as being extremely useful. They were aware of the problems documented, but had been unable to convince others of them prior to the evaluation.

(2) Users Cited Instances of Using the Juvenile Studies: Several instances were cited of where the utilization of evaluation information could be associated with decisions and with changes in the local criminal justice system. The uses cited fall into three categories:

- Informative

As cited above, the evaluation studies were a source of information for participants in public meetings and hearings concerning organization of services and location of jail facilities.

- Administrative and Program Changes

Several new or modified services were introduced by juvenile justice agencies to overcome problem areas or service gaps

identified by the studies (e.g., nurse practitioners added to Juvenile Hall to increase health services; Recreation Coordinator added to Probation Department; intake procedures modified to better serve short- and long-term detainees; and changes in group counselor classification).

Modification of juvenile recordkeeping procedures by local communities to make them more uniform throughout the County.

• Development of Grant Applications

Information from the studies was used to support two grant applications aimed at resolving juvenile justice problems identified through the studies.

(3) There Is Evidence that the Use Cited Was Necessary to the Performance of Important Functions: The effort put into the evaluation efforts by the users demonstrate the value they attributed to the activity. The Juvenile Justice Committee members met routinely, reviewed products and the progress of the work, helped obtain data, and actively participated in the dissemination of results.

The availability of the evaluation information was cited by several persons interviewed as being essential to initiating action on problems. Agencies were aware of the problems, but required documentation of the issue to convince others to take action.

(4) Evaluations Used Were Attributable to the MEP: Some evaluation activities of the type supported were planned and partially initiated prior to receipt of the MEP. The MEP assumed and expanded these activities. Without the MEP, the number of issues examined would not have been undertaken.

e. Jacksonville

The Jacksonville RPU utilized the MEP to expand an existing Evaluation Unit to provide additional planning and evaluation information

to local decision makers. The pre-MEP Evaluation Unit focused on the evaluation of LEAA funded projects; the MEP unit expanded study areas to cover other parts of the criminal justice system.

The seven studies were found to be useful by local officials, and some use could be cited. Although many program decisions were associated with the studies, it is unclear to what extent those decisions were affected by the studies.

(1) Local Officials Claim Evaluation Information Useful: Eleven local officials were interviewed in Jacksonville to determine whether or not the studies conducted under the MEP were useful to them.¹ Three of the interviews were conducted prior to the end of the MEP, but after completion of studies which were of specific interest to the persons interviewed. The other eight interviews were conducted after the MEP grant had terminated. Most of the persons interviewed were satisfied with the studies of programs on criminal justice components with which they were familiar. Sample responses were:

Had positive feelings about what they read; e.g., . . . is one of the most significant studies in a long time, and good product.

Felt that what had been read had been useful, e.g., reports reinforced some ideas already held; report provided clout to implement policies and procedures which might otherwise have been resented; some planned to use reports in future decision making; committee formed to decide how to implement recommendations of the Correctional Master Plan.

1. Those interviewed included: two judges; the sheriff; a member of the sheriff's staff; a court administrator; the Director of Jacksonville's Department of Human Resources; the Director of Jacksonville's Department of Health, Welfare and Bio-Environmental Services; Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Jacksonville; the Director of an evaluated program; and the Director of the Community Relations Commission.

All responses were not positive, however. One person expressed neither positive nor negative feelings, and another negative feelings.

Recommendations . . . not applicable
. . . and probably illegal.

The Correctional Master Plan appeared to be the most widely read and most controversial of the studies. It was viewed by several officials as containing recommendations worth implementing or worth further study and, in fact, the MEP Unit was asked to do a cost analysis for one of the programs proposed in the study.

(2) Some Uses Cited: Some use could be cited from six of the studies. Most activity was associated with the Correctional Master Plan Study:

Criminal justice agency personnel and City Council members made decisions based, in part, on information produced, e.g., to build a juvenile shelter, postponement of decision to build a jail, introduction and partial passage of legislation which would enable Jacksonville to form a Department of Corrections independent of the sheriff. Initiated a pre-trial intervention project.

Other uses cited were:

- included evaluated project in the RPU's annual funding plan;
- changes in project activities;
- discontinuation of project which had uncertain future before the study.

(3) Some Information Necessary to Performance of Important Functions: The Correctional Master Plan Study does seem to have been critical to the planning process. The information was used to affect decisions in a process that was initiated independent of the MEP. The need for and importance of the evaluation information is less evident

in the other studies. However, six of the seven studies performed were requested either by a local criminal justice agency or the advisory council to the RFU. These requests indicate that at least at one point in time, the information was considered as needed by local decision makers.

(4) Information Use Attributable to the MEP Project: The major uses that did occur can be attributable to a combination of existing issues and the provision of appropriate information on the issues. While the MEP did not create the issues in all cases, a component of the Jacksonville system involved seeking out and responding to issues. Thus, the provision of appropriate information in a manner that increased the chances of it being used can be attributed to the Jacksonville evaluation system.

f. Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

The Central Oklahoma MEP produced six demonstration evaluations aimed at providing useful information to the management of the evaluated projects. While those receiving the information claimed it was useful, they could cite few uses. Further, the uses cited did not demonstrate that the evaluation information supported a critical function. On the whole, the Central Oklahoma approach did not create or demonstrate the existence of an evaluation market, or show that evaluation made an important difference in local criminal justice operations.

(1) Local Officials Claim Evaluation Information Useful: Seven local officials were interviewed concerning the utility of the evaluation information produced by the Central Oklahoma MEP. The officials were the managers of the projects that had been evaluated, and were in a position to be aware of all local uses of the MEP evaluations. All seven were aware of

the contents of the evaluation of their respective projects. They had read the reports, discussed them with the Central Oklahoma staff, and disseminated them to others.

All the local officials believed the reports had been of benefit to them, and the agencies in which they worked:

- Gave an understanding of what was happening that was previously unavailable.
- Indicated the need for better data collection.
- Documented some problems.
- Provided information that would support funding requests.

Only one person indicated how the studies would have been more useful by stating they were too descriptive and did not identify preferable service alternatives available in the projects.

Five of the officials claimed that the evaluations were of sufficient use that they would participate in them again if given the opportunity. Also, five of the officials claimed that, given the choice between applying resources to evaluation or to additional project activities, they would chose evaluation.

(2) Few Uses Cited: While all projects claimed the evaluation process and products were useful, few actual uses that affected criminal justice system operations could be cited. The uses cited by officials interviewed and in Central Oklahoma documents were limited to:

- modification of record systems (four projects);
- support grant funding requests (two projects);
- modify project design (one project).

The first use is actually due to the evaluation process, as well as the information produced. While conducting the evaluations, Central

Oklahoma personnel encountered discrepancies and gaps in existing record systems that inhibited the evaluators. Modifications were developed in these systems to meet the needs of the evaluators and project managers. Those modifications were continued by the local agencies after completion of the studies.

Information from two of the evaluations was used in applications for continuation grants. The grantees claimed the information was requested by the Oklahoma Crime Commission, but they do not believe that it affected funding decisions. If the information had not existed, funds would still have been granted. Central Oklahoma evaluators shared this opinion.

One project manager identified a part of his project that was modified on the basis of evaluation information. The project included a component aimed at increasing public awareness of the project activities. The awareness was discovered not to exist, and remedial actions were proposed.

(3) Use Did Not Serve a Critical Function: On the basis of the following factors, it is concluded that evaluation did not serve a critical function: level of local resources committed; uses cited; and lack of an existing decision process to be served.

The local projects cooperated in the evaluations, but expended little staff time and resources on them. A decision was made during the first month to abandon plans to ask the projects to collect new data for the evaluations. The RPU management concluded that it would be unreasonable to levy data requests when grant funds had not been made available to the projects to provide data, or the request had not been made prior

to award of the project grant. The projects cooperated with the evaluations by: reviewing and approving evaluation designs; submitting to interviews; making project and agency records available to the evaluators; and by reviewing and commenting on final products. The cooperation was judged excellent by both evaluators and managers, and no major problems with the relationship were identified by the managers. However, major parts of the planned analyses had to be dropped due to the lack of data and restrictions adopted on requesting the projects to produce additional data.

As noted above, there were no uses cited that affected the criminal justice system's operations in a significant way. A review of existing record systems could have produced the majority of uses achieved. Given this level of use, it was concluded that a real need for evaluation information was not discovered or demonstrated.

The primary customer for evaluation information was the management of the project or the agency operating the project. The evaluation results were given to the managers in draft form and as final products. The managers were free to utilize the information as they saw fit. Two of the six evaluated projects incorporated the evaluation into the process of requesting continuation of the projects, and all claimed to have disseminated copies to local officials having contact with the projects. But none of the managers interviewed could identify a local or state decision process that depended on the information to function.

(4) Evaluations Used Are Attributable to the MEP: The evaluations were completely funded with MEP funds and would not have occurred

without the MEP. Other evaluations were conducted concurrently on half of the projects as a result of grant requirements imposed by the Oklahoma Crime Commission. Thus, some evaluations would have occurred, but not of the type undertaken by Central Oklahoma.

5. KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

No site was able to develop information to test in the Knowledge Development market. Three sites had planned to do so, but fell short in practice. Two different strategies were attempted--one relying on standardized project data reported by subgrantees, the other intensive multi-project evaluations of a program area. The results of these efforts raise questions about the feasibility of the "knowledge" building evaluation.

Two sites attempted to rely on reported data, Illinois and Michigan ("Standard"). The Illinois system originally was to link project data with data on area crime and population characteristics to carry out computerized program impact analyses. The system was never implemented because of several operational problems. For example:

- The standard designs for a program area frequently fit only one project.
- The link between computerized project and socioeconomic data bases was never set up.

An Illinois senior manager summarized their experience as follows:

When we started we were shooting for the moon, but we didn't have a rocket or know how to build one. Now our sights are set lower, but we know how to get there.

The Michigan standard reporting system attempted to measure program process and outcome indicators; it did not attempt cost-effectiveness and

impact analyses. In addition to being a monitoring tool (project oversight), Michigan hoped the standard system would enable it to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of program concepts. Implementing the system required some accommodation of the standard instruments for variation among projects in a program area. At the time this report was written, Michigan had not completed any cross-project analyses. There is, however, a question about the validity of the standard instruments, and whether the project data can be aggregated for a program area. This issue is raised dramatically by the two contractor intensive evaluations carried out under the Michigan MEP.

There were two attempts at doing intensive evaluations of program concepts: Michigan's contractor evaluations and Pennsylvania's phased approach to evaluation. Michigan carried out intensive evaluations of two program areas which indicated that the programs had no effect on crime, criminal justice system or clients. The contractor labeled this an implementation failure, rather than a failure of the concepts tested. He concluded that the projects' operations and objectives deviated markedly from what was described in plans and subgrants, and expected by the SPA. The concepts to be tested had never been implemented.

Pennsylvania tried a phased approach to evaluation--the first phase was to group similar projects, develop measures, and identify "best" project models; the second phase would be a more intensive evaluation of project models. Pennsylvania was unable to complete Phase I. One of the reasons cited was the great diversity of projects funded under any one program element. Common objectives and measures were not readily apparent.

Evidently, two characteristics of SPA/RPU projects tend to disable the "knowledge" building evaluations:

- Variation among Projects within Program Areas

Some agencies retrospectively attempt to group projects according to similar activities and/or similar objectives. They find that projects with similar names (i.e., Youth Service Bureaus) or projects funded under a common program title (i.e., Youth Diversion Projects) have major differences in activities and purpose. For evaluation purposes they cannot be grouped and characterized by similar measures.

- Difference between Project Operations and Agency Rhetoric

A problem that can occur with or without variation among projects is that the projects are doing drastically different things than assumed by the agency. Thus, the objectives and evaluation questions the agencies have are not appropriate. An evaluation will show "no effect" in terms of agency objectives because the projects are not doing what the agency thought they were doing.

These characteristics can be traced to the inability of agency proposal review, technical assistance, and monitoring functions to assure the level of project definition and implementation needed to do "knowledge development" evaluation.

E. SITE CONTINUATION OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM TESTED

The ultimate test of the utility of the evaluation system is whether or not it is continued. Of the eight completed MEP sites, three plan to continue a version of the systems they tested: Jacksonville, Ventura and Michigan. However, even in these three cases, the systems tested will be significantly modified. Table 3 summarizes the continuation results.

In dropping the MEP evaluation systems, the sites went to some alternative; in most cases, to what they had before MEP, in a few cases to a

TABLE 3: CONTINUATION OF THE TESTED SYSTEM

	Continuation Decision on Tested System	Site Rationale for Decision
Michigan (Reporting System)	Modified and Continued	System essential to SPA subgrant management strategy.
Ventura	Modified and Continued	High demand for technical assistance from local agencies.
Jacksonville	Modified and Continued	Demand for studies was confirmed.
Michigan (Intensive)	Not Continued	Contractor--SPA interactive design process was disruptive. Intensive evaluations will be performed under a different process.
Illinois	Not Continued	Reporting system too expensive to implement across all projects.
Alameda	Not Continued	Studies controversial and evaluation capability too expensive. In-house staff vulnerable to diversion to non-evaluation tasks.
Central Oklahoma	Not Continued	Funding not available
Columbia	Not Continued	Funding not available
Pennsylvania	Not Continued	Original Phase I-II methods could not be implemented.

new approach. Sometimes it is arguable whether a system was being continued or discontinued. Several sites claimed they were continuing the system when, in fact, no essential components of the system remained. In this report a site is said to continue its MEP evaluation system when it has formally allocated resources to: (1) carry out activities tested under the MEP; (2) produce products whose utility was demonstrated under the MEP; and (3) carry out those activities tested that are essential to produce the information product. Sites can modify systems by deleting unnecessary activities, and by changing who carries out the tested activity--and are still viewed as continuing the system tested.

1. CONTINUATION: MICHIGAN,
JACKSONVILLE, AND VENTURA

a. Michigan (Reporting System)

Michigan pilot tested a reporting system on four program areas.

The evaluation system had the following characteristics:

- a design phase carried out by SPA program staff;
- standardized instruments used by subgrantees to collect and report data;
- interns collecting data on site and monitoring the reported data;
- central, computer data processing;
- project tabulations and multi-project (program) analyses of process and outcome variables;
- a new evaluation office with formal responsibility for managing the evaluation system.

Continuation would mean expansion of the reporting system to other program areas, and retention of sufficient system components to assure production of useful information.

Funding limitations have caused Michigan to modify the data collection, data processing and data analysis components substantially. Three of the four intern positions have been dropped, thus limiting the on-site collection and monitoring of reported data. Some of these responsibilities will be transferred to SPA program staff. For new program areas, with the exception of juvenile projects, there will be no central, computerized data processing; subgrantees will submit summary data.

Despite these changes, it appears that Michigan will be able to produce the project tabulations and multi-project comparisons, while retaining several of the tested features that made the system work: the design phase, standardized instruments, and an SPA evaluation office with responsibility for the system. The SPA has established a two person evaluation office (plus one intern), and already has program staff carrying out design work for additional program areas under the direction of the evaluation office.

There is some question as to whether the tested system will be successful as modified. The tested system had student interns carrying out a number of functions (site data collection, monitoring data flow, data processing, report writing) which now will have to be carried out by the SPA program staff. It remains to be seen whether the program staff have, or can create, the time needed to do the work. Michigan's policy is that they will.

b. Ventura

The system tested by Ventura had the RPU evaluation staff (one person) serving as an evaluation resource for local criminal justice agency.

personnel. The experience indicated that this resource was very much in demand by local agencies.

The system tested had the following characteristics:

- a demand for evaluation assistance from local agencies;
- an RPU evaluator with evaluation skills and resources available to use in technical assistance;
- an RPU evaluator with the ability to diagnose the information needs of local officials and meet them.

Continuation would require the RPU to secure funding for the position and fill it with the appropriate person.

Ventura plans to continue to provide the service but at a lower level of effort, due to funding constraints. A position for an evaluator was funded through a subgrant, and at least half the evaluator's time was to go to the technical assistance function. In addition, funds from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act are being used to create additional evaluation positions which the RPU's evaluator will be able to use.

The uncertainty in continuation lies in the recent departure of the MEP evaluator. Since local observers attributed much of the success of the MEP to this person's technical and interpersonal skills, it is not clear whether the RPU will be able to find a replacement. However, the RPU still plans to "provide technical assistance to any criminal justice agency undertaking evaluation studies." The position has been created and recruitment is underway.

c. Jacksonville

Continuation of the Jacksonville Project would involve maintaining the in-house evaluation staff and performing evaluations in response to local requests. The in-house staff has been maintained at a lower

level (four) than during the MEP (six), but at a higher level than before the MEP (two). The remaining staff is performing studies similar to those conducted during the MEP, and responding to local requests for evaluation information.

The size of the in-house staff is a function of available funds, experiences with the level of demand, and prior problems with increasing staff size. During the MEP, demand for information did not exceed the staff capacity. Studies were performed in response to local officials' request for information. Based on the requests received during the MEP, the RPU believed that requests could be met with a slightly smaller staff than maintained during the MEP.

Upon receipt of the MEP, the RPU doubled the size of the existing evaluation staff. Also, several times during the grant period, staff turnover necessitated recruitment and training of new personnel. These staffing activities were found to be time consuming and, on several occasions, did not result in the needed evaluation capability. Consequently, when through attrition the MEP grant ended with a competent but smaller evaluation staff, the RPU was content to stay at that level and avoid capability building problems encountered during the MEP.

2. DISCONTINUED

Five sites did not continue the MEP systems tested: Michigan (Intensive); Central Oklahoma; Illinois; Columbia; Alameda; and Pennsylvania. In four sites discontinuation is clear cut and acknowledged by the site. In two cases the conclusion is less clear cut--Michigan (Intensive), and Illinois. Here some part or version of the tested system was carried on.

However, we concluded that the change in the product or the absence of system components necessary to produce information were so severe that one could not say that the tested system was judged successful and is being continued.

a. Michigan (Intensive)

Michigan pilot tested multi-project impact and effectiveness evaluations on two program areas. The evaluation system had the following characteristics:

- one large contract to a university research center;
- a phased contract calling for a design phase in which Michigan's information requirements would be documented and analyzed;
- program specialists guiding the contractor design work.

Continuation of this component would mean that Michigan would carry out several intensive evaluations of programs annually using a university research center and the phased contract approach.

Michigan has decided to do three to four intensive evaluations a year. They will be contractor efforts and funded with grant monies, rather than through an SPA budget item. The contractor will receive guidance in a design phase from SPA program staff, and will be monitored by and responsible to the SPA evaluation office. However, it is concluded that the tested system is not being continued for two reasons: discontinuation of the phased approach and the feasibility issue raised by the field test.

Michigan is dropping one design activity from its tested system. The contractor will not be asked to collect data to identify SPA information needs. This activity was viewed as disruptive and non-productive by

the SPA. Instead, the contractor will develop a design based on discussions with program specialists and subgrantees, and submit the design to the evaluation office for comment.

It was, however, this interaction among contractor, program specialists and management that made the intensive evaluation system different than what Michigan had done in the past. Many agencies hire contractors to evaluate a number of projects. The design phase in the MEP field test raised issues, affected what the contractor did, and affected the users.

Finally, as a result of the field test, there remains some uncertainty about the feasibility of producing information on what effects projects have under different conditions from intensive evaluations. Recent intensive evaluations have found no effects of programs, and have raised issues about whether programs and projects as designed and implemented by the SPA have plausible relationships between activities and effects which could be tested. The SPA has decided to place more staff time in giving assistance to subgrantees during project design and implementation phases. Whether the SPA can successfully implement a number of similar projects with similar objectives remains to be seen.

b. Illinois

Illinois used its MEP to develop standardized reporting instruments that would cover all evaluable funded projects originally estimated to be about 80 percent of those funded. The evaluation system to be set up had the following characteristics:

- project reporting instruments standardized for each program area;
- all evaluable programs covered;

- central computerized processing and analysis;
- routine project and multi-project analyses of project processes, outcomes and impacts.

Continuation would require establishment of the data flow from subgrantees, and funding of the central processing and analysis capability in the SPA.

Illinois' experience with the system was negative--it was not able to implement across all eligible projects the data flows and data processing capabilities it had envisioned. During the MEP, Illinois had been able to obtain and process data from only 25 percent of the projects provided data collection instruments. Moreover, in most cases, the standardized instruments could only be applied to one project in one class, making multi-project analyses infeasible.

As a result of these problems, a decision was made to drastically curtail the system rather than invest the resources and energy required to implement it fully. Illinois planned to continue to use the standard instruments on about one-fourth of its projects as a monitoring tool. There are no plans to perform on a continuing basis the project and multi-project outcome and impact analyses using standardized forms.

c. Central Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma tested a project evaluation system in which RPU evaluation teams used readily available project data augmented by selected surveys to do quick evaluations of project performance. The evaluation system had the following characteristics:

- routine short duration project evaluations;
- a standard evaluation framework followed on each study;
- RPU in-house evaluation teams carried out data collection and analysis.

Continuation would have required funding of the RPU evaluation positions.

CONTINUED

1 OF 2

**Descriptions and
Assessments of the
Model Evaluation Program
Projects**

55723

QUALIFICATION

**Descriptions and Assessments of the
Model Evaluation Program Projects**

June 1979

**U. S. Department of Justice
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice**



Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
Henry S. Dogin, Administrator

National Institute of Law Enforcement
and Criminal Justice
Harry M. Bratt, Acting Director

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CONTENTS**ASSESSMENTS OF THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAMS:**

The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission

The Michigan Office of Criminal Justice Programs

The Pennsylvania Governor's Justice Commission

The Alameda (California) Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board

The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

The Columbia, S.C. Central Midlands Regional Planning Council

The Jacksonville Office of Criminal Justice Planning

The Ventura Criminal Justice Planning Board

PREFACE

In the Fall of 1974, the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ) announced the Model Evaluation Program (MEP). Through the program, 12 grants were awarded to state and local agencies to develop and demonstrate model evaluation approaches. One such grant for \$249,968 was awarded to the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission. The grant initially was for a one year period.

The MEP grantees were selected through a competitive process from proposals submitted by State Planning Agencies (SPAs) and Regional Planning Units (RPU's). The SPAs and RPU's are agencies established by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to carry out the planning and funding process authorized by the Act. During recent fiscal years, these agencies participated in the annual expenditure of over six-hundred million dollars in grants for projects at the state and local levels of government. In many cases, the SPAs and RPU's are components of state and regional organizations performing other functions than those authorized by the Safe Streets Act. For example, the RPU is part of a Council of Governments or some other regional organization of local governments.

The SPAs and RPU's have responsibility for developing comprehensive plans for the expenditure of funds awarded to them, and for administering the award and expenditure of grants created with those funds. The specific roles and responsibilities of the SPAs and RPU's vary among states and regions. The professional staffs of SPAs range from four to nearly seventy. Funds are awarded to states on a formula basis, with the larger states receiving the largest allocation.

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) has overall responsibility for administering the Omnibus Crime Act. The authorizing legislation and LEAA placed monitoring and evaluation requirements on the SPAs, who in turn place requirements on or receive cooperation from the RPU's. Over the years, LEAA, the SPAs and RPU's have emphasized evaluation, and have invested heavily in it. The Model Evaluation Program is but one of the LEAA and National Institute efforts to affect performance in the criminal justice area through evaluation.

In developing proposals for the \$2,000,000 set aside for MEP grants, SPAs and RPU's were given extensive freedom. As stated in the Program Announcement, "Any proposal to develop a system for generating information

on the results, costs and effectiveness of criminal justice projects, programs and activities is eligible.¹¹ The program objectives were:

- encourage state and local agencies to generate and use evaluation information; and
- test in what ways the effective use of evaluation information can help state and local agencies achieve their objectives.

Additional criteria and instructions were given in the announcement, but the freedom to propose what the SPAs or RPU's believed most appropriate was maintained and exhibited in the variety of proposals funded.

The Urban Institute was selected to document and assess the MEP. The work performed in that capacity included assistance and documentation of the individual grantee activities, and synthesizing the experiences and results of all the grantees.

The documentation of individual grants is contained in a series of eight case studies prepared on those grants that were completed by the Fall of 1977, and a summary report. This report is one of those case studies.

Each of the case studies begins with a brief summary of the activities funded and the results achieved. The second chapter presents the evaluation system that was to be developed and the system tested. In some cases the system planned and the system built were quite different. The third chapter describes the strategy followed by the grantees to develop and test the system and the experiences encountered. A final chapter presents the outcomes of the grantee's MEP efforts.

1. Model Evaluation Program Announcement, Washington, D.C., Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Fall 1974.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These reports prepared on the eight completed Model Evaluation Program (MEP) grants and the summary report on the program are based on the experiences of grantees who developed and implemented their approaches to evaluation. Without their willingness to experiment with new approaches and be subject to evaluation themselves, this report and the lessons contained in it would not have been possible.

The authors wish to recognize the MEP participants for their openness and cooperation in this program. They provided extensive documentation on their projects, and submitted to extensive interviews and surveys. The authors are grateful for the time and effort expended. Unfortunately, the list of persons who provided information over a several-year period is too numerous to give here.

The MEP and this assessment also depended on the efforts and staff of The National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ). The initial grant to The Urban Institute was awarded when Gerald Caplan was Director of the National Institute, and was continued by Blair Ewing. The principal NILECJ staff member on the MEP was Dr. Paul Lineberry, who expended many hours with the authors and in overseeing the grantees. He provided many insights into the management and evaluation activities studied, and continually pushed for a synthesis that would provide useful guidance to all government managers and evaluators.

Other National Institute personnel contributing to the MEP and this effort are: Joel Garner; Victoria Jaycox; Richard Rau; and John Spevacek. Their support and cooperation were essential and are appreciated.

Finally, many members of the Program Evaluation Research Program of The Urban Institute contributed to the MEP and this report by performing field work or reviewing products. They include: Richard Schmidt; Joseph Wholey; and Sumner Clarren.

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM
OF THE ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION**

by

**John D. Waller
John W. Scanlon
Paul G. Nalley**

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I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission (ILEC) is the State Planning Agency (SPA) for Illinois. The Commission is responsible for developing a comprehensive plan for expanding the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) block grant to Illinois, and for awarding subgrants from the block grant. In 1974 the Commission began to develop a new evaluation system to be used by the Commission staff. The evaluation system was to use two types of data: project data reported by subgrantees using ILEC provided forms standardized for similar projects; and data on project environment obtained by ILEC from existing sources. With these data, the Evaluation Unit was to produce: (a) several multi-project impact/outcome analyses; and (b) single project analyses.

The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission primarily used the Model Evaluation Program (MEP) to accelerate the development and test of the new evaluation system. The key steps in the development of the new evaluation system were the in-house production of standardized data collection instruments and analysis procedures for similar projects, and the packaging of existing socioeconomic data for in-house use. In the year prior to receipt of the MEP grant, the ILEC Evaluation Unit had developed data collection instruments and analysis procedures for several sets of projects. The MEP grant provided the resources for a temporary augmentation of the Evaluation Unit staff to complete these development processes and initiate the new system on a comprehensive basis within one year.

The augmented ILEC staff did develop the standardized evaluation packages, but experienced implementation problems and did not obtain the desired socioeconomic data bases. Implementation problems were encountered in convincing projects to provide data, processing the obtained data and ensuring the quality of the data, conducting analyses, and preparing reports. Portions of the system as initially proposed were never implemented. Near the end of the year of MEP funding, the Evaluation Unit decided that there were insufficient resources available to overcome the data problems and operate the systems as designed.

The Evaluation Unit also decided that even if the data problems could be remedied, the type of evaluation results that could be produced did not warrant the expenditure of the resources required to do so. In particular, with the multiproject evaluations, the Evaluation Unit had hoped to produce information on the relationship between project activities and impact on crime or the criminal justice system. However, the Evaluation Unit's experience in attempting to perform such evaluations convinced it that there was too much variation among projects to produce such information.

On the basis of their experiences in attempting to develop and implement the new evaluation system, the ILEC Evaluation Unit decided to abandon several components of the new system and reduce the extent of utilization of the remaining components. About half of the data collection instruments that had been developed were dropped, and the remaining were modified to focus on documenting process activities for monitoring purposes. The Evaluation Unit returned to the practice of conducting a limited number of special in-house and contract studies to produce information on the effectiveness and impact of projects.

3

What the ILEC staff attempted to accomplish with MEP funds, their experiences, and the results achieved are discussed in the next three sections. The presentation briefly documents what occurred, and attempts to highlight problems and lessons that are thought to be of value to other agencies considering the development of a similar evaluation system. Two major issues that stand out from the ILEC grant are:

- the need to not over-estimate what can be accomplished with available resources, and to plan carefully for the use of available resources and develop data processing procedures before backlogs develop; and
- the standardized data approach did not work and was judged inappropriate for producing impact results or increasing confidence in evaluation results for LEAA projects.

II. THE ILEC EVALUATION SYSTEM DESIGN AND RATIONALE

The evaluation system that ILEC proposed to develop and implement with the aid of MEP funds is illustrated in Figure 1. As the project was actually implemented, several portions of the system were not developed. The system that was partially developed is given in Figure 2. The various components of the systems, proposed and developed; and the reasons for developing them, are described in the following sections.

A. RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING THE NEW SYSTEM

For several years prior to 1974, ILEC evaluation staff had conducted, or contracted for, individual project and multi-project evaluations. Those evaluations were considered useful by ILEC management, and there were several instances cited of results from the evaluations being used to modify project designs and support planning, policy and funding decisions. However, for each of those evaluations, a new evaluation design with unique data collection instruments and analysis procedures was developed. Such an approach was considered by ILEC management to be too limited since:

- e only a limited number of multi-project evaluations could be attempted with available funds; and
- e data from the individual evaluations could not be aggregated over similar projects to provide information on project types and isolate factors affecting program performance.

EVALUATION

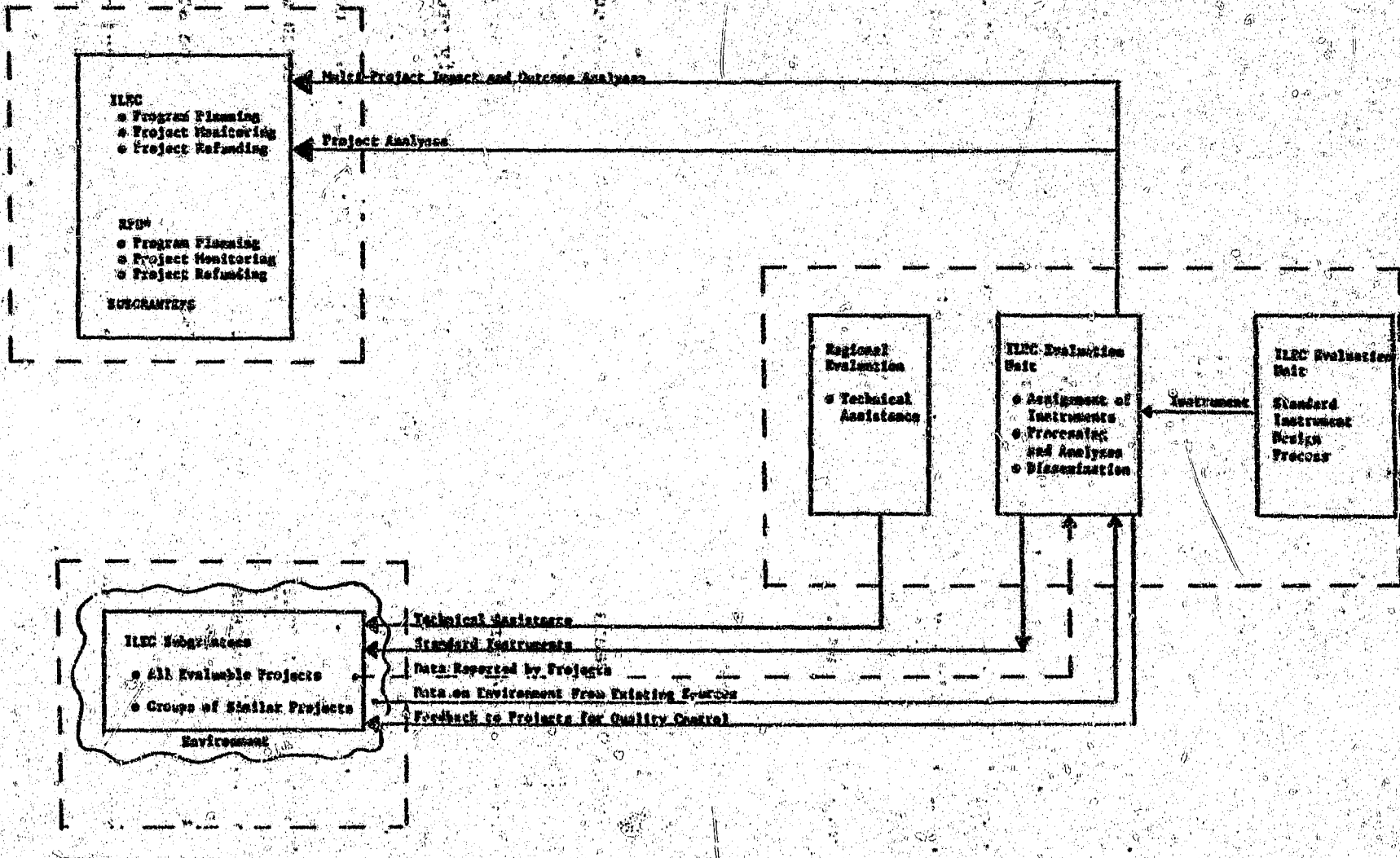


FIGURE 1: ILEC EVALUATION SYSTEM AS PLANNED

EVALUATION

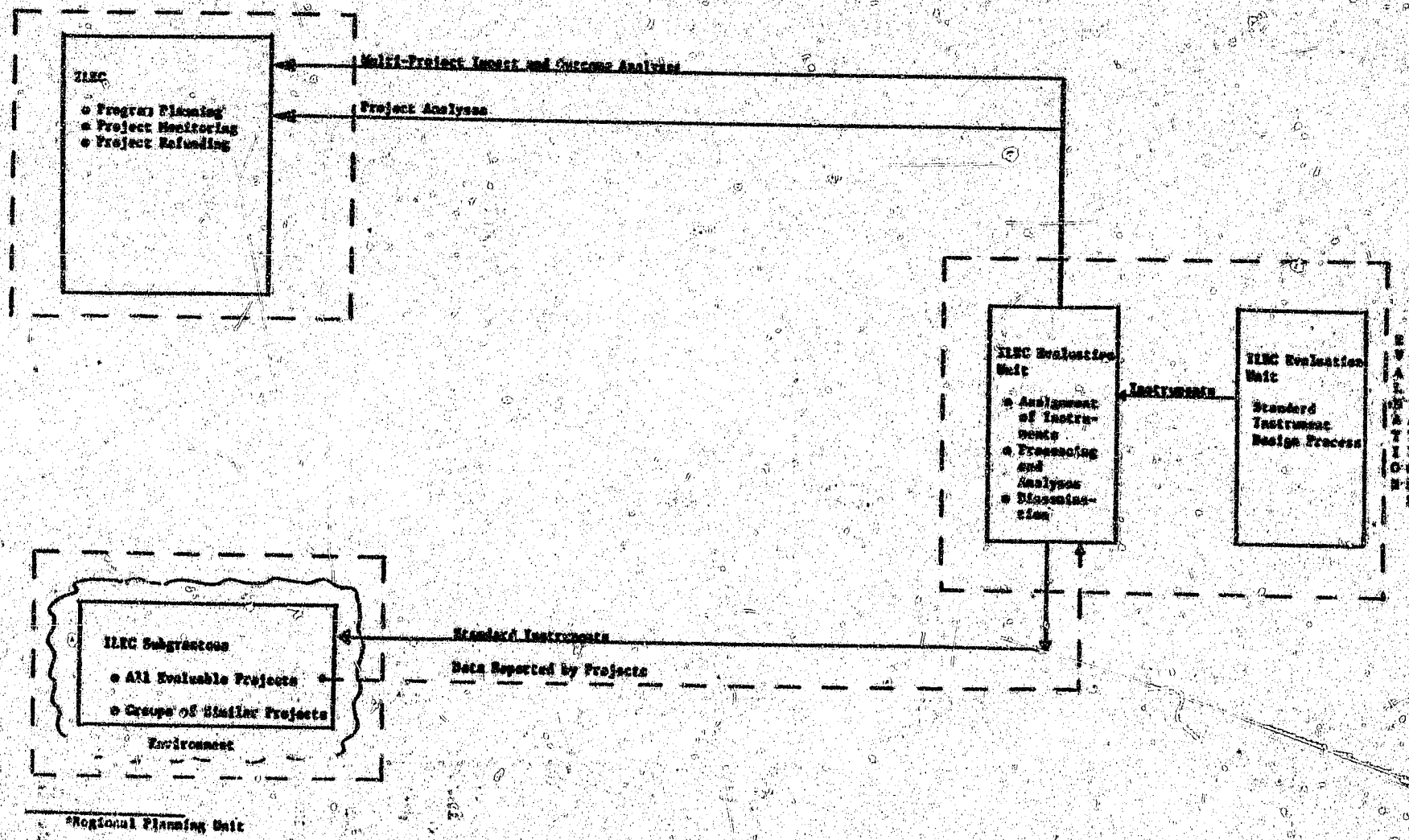


FIGURE 2: ILEC EVALUATION SYSTEM AS OPERATED

Development of a new evaluation system using standardized evaluation designs was begun to provide a means of remedying these limitations. That is, the Evaluation Unit expected to be able to achieve some "economy of scale" cost savings in conducting evaluations, and increase the amount of knowledge produced on project operations and effects.

The next chapter describes the strategy followed by the Evaluation Unit to develop and institutionalize the new evaluation system.

B. THE PROPOSED AND DEVELOPED EVALUATION SYSTEMS

The proposed evaluation system and the one actually developed during the period of NEP funding differed on users served, what was evaluated, and evaluation activities performed. Elements of the proposed system given in Figure 1 that were not developed and have been eliminated in Figure 2 are:

- involvement of Regional Planning Units (RPUs) in operation of the system and use of evaluation information produced;
- involvement of projects being evaluated in verification and use of information produced; and
- utilization of data beyond that produced by the evaluated projects.

Also, the proposed system was to cover most of the subgrants awarded by ILEG, and emphasize both multi-project and single project evaluations. The development effort that did occur covered a smaller set of subgrants than originally intended, and primarily resulted in single project evaluations.

1. USERS AND USES

The three principal users of the proposed evaluation system were:

- (1) ILEG--the Commission and staff,

- (2) Regional Planning Units--councils and staff, and
- (3) Projects--staff and local agencies through which the projects function.

As the system was developed during the MEP grant, the principal user was the ILEC staff as it performed the function of reviewing applications for sub-grant renewal.

In the proposed system, the ILEC staff expected to use the information in:

- The formal and informal processes which involve decisions on the projects evaluated (technical assistance, continuation funding) and future funding levels for similar projects and programs (preparation of the comprehensive plan, funding of new subgrants).
- Support of its staff role as criminal justice program experts (e.g. providing advice on program design to subgrantees, to state and local criminal justice agencies).
- General dissemination of evaluation results to criminal justice agencies.

Data submitted by projects were to be immediately made available to grant monitors in ILEC (called the technical assistance staff) for monitoring purposes. This occurred, but little actual use could be demonstrated. The Evaluation Unit expected to periodically comply with requests from the technical assistance (TA) staff to compile all data submitted by a project to create a progress report useful for making continuation funding decisions. These compilations did occur, were used in reviews of requests for refunding of some subgrantees, but had little effect on the refunding process. Data from several similar projects and socioeconomic data bases were to be used to produce evaluations supporting program planning activities of the Commission. Very little of this type of use occurred.

The RPIs were expected to, but did not, use information from the system

- monitor LEAA projects operating within a region and
- support decisions on future project designs and funding priorities.

They were to receive copies of the data submitted by the projects, reports prepared on individual projects, and the multi-project evaluations.

Projects were expected to use the information provided by the evaluation system to assess their progress, design future activities, and support funding requests. The project staff were to receive and review copies of the data they submitted after they had been formatted for computer storage and analysis by the ILEG Evaluation Unit. Quality control for the processing system was to be achieved by quickly feeding the processed and formatted data back to projects for verification. Also, it was expected that the data would be useful to the projects for management purposes if returned quickly. However, this use was not tested. Neither data or reports were sent to the projects.

The evaluation staff consistently expressed the intent of using the evaluation information to be produced to support resource allocation and refunding decisions. However, several grant monitors had assured the projects they worked with that no refunding or allocation decisions would be made on the basis of the data the projects provided through the new system. These grant monitors characterized the requested information as necessary for future planning and for determining appropriate project modifications. As discussed later, the system was not used to alter funding patterns, and only in a few instances was it used to modify project designs.

2. WHAT WAS EVALUATED

The proposed evaluation system was to provide information solely on ILEG

funded projects. Analysis was to be conducted on both "programs" (sets of similar projects) and individual projects. Both types of evaluation were attempted, but the majority of the evaluations focused on individual projects.

The action component of the ILES comprehensive plan is organized according to "program categories." Each program category is distinguished by a description of a type of project that will be funded under the category. The degree of specificity of "project models" varies between categories and from year to year. In some cases, specific projects are described--activities, expected outcomes, sponsoring agency, location of operation, cost, etc. In other cases, a general description of either the problem area, allowable activities and/or the expected results are provided, along with an estimated number of projects to be funded. In all cases, a specific amount of funds are designated for each program category. When an individual subgrant is awarded, it is with funds allocated to one of the program categories.

It was expected that a standard evaluation package--consisting of data collection instruments and analysis procedures--would be applicable to all projects in a program funding category. Also, once developed for a category, a package was expected to be useable for several years. The data collected were to be tabulated for each individual project and for projects from the same program category. In this manner, the system would produce project and program evaluations. The aggregation of data across projects proved to be more difficult than anticipated.

3. EVALUATION OPERATIONS

As indicated in Figures 1 and 2, the proposed evaluation system was

to be operated by the ILEC Evaluation Unit staff, with the cooperation and assistance of regional evaluators and grantees. The grantees were to periodically submit project data to ILEC using data collection instruments provided by ILEC at the time of grant award. The instruments were to be the same for all projects in a program area of the comprehensive plan. Those Regional Planning Units with evaluators were expected to provide technical assistance to grantees in making project designs compatible with the evaluation design, and in meeting the data requirements. During the MEP grant, a comparison was to be made of the data submitted from projects in regions with evaluators and from those in regions without evaluators. It was expected that detectable differences would exist in the quality of data submitted from projects in the regions with evaluators when compared with data from regions without an evaluator. As the system was operated during the MEP, the regional evaluators rarely became involved with the data collection and analysis.

Once submitted to ILEC, the data were to be coded and entered on a computer data base. Three types of subsequent analysis and products were envisioned.

- Project feedback of submitted data: After data from a given grantee was stored on the computer data base, copies of the submitted data--as processed and formatted by the ILEC staff--were to be fed back to the respective subgrantees for validation and use.
- Project (mini) evaluations: As needed, data on a specific project would be compiled into a report on the grantee's activities and achievements to date. The main use of such reports was expected to be subgrant refunding decisions.
- Multi-project impact evaluations: The data from projects in a given program area of the comprehensive plan, along with socio-economic data from existing sources, were to be analyzed to determine relationships among various project activities, outcomes, and impacts.

Once the developmental phase of producing and introducing new evaluation packages was completed, the Evaluation Unit expected to coordinate the data flow, conduct the analyses, and produce reports with a staff of from four to six professionals. Annually, the staff expected to modify or develop at most a few evaluation packages. Once developed, the packages were expected to be applicable for about five years.

During the MEP grant period, the Evaluation Unit expected to notify the subgrantees shortly after the funding of their application of the need to participate in the system. Notification was to be through a letter from the Director of Evaluation referencing a general special condition to all grants requiring grantee cooperation on evaluations. Eventually the Evaluation Unit expected a requirement of cooperation and data collection instruments to be included in information provided prospective subgrantees, and the need to comply included as a standard condition to the subgrant.

Submission of data was to be enforced through monitoring and follow-up by the Evaluation Unit of recalcitrant subgrantees. When possible, the Evaluation staff would work through or request the assistance of the subgrant monitors and RPU staffs. Eventually a system of making disbursement of subgrant funds contingent on receipt of the required data was to be developed. But at the time the system was introduced, the ILRC management did not believe the capability existed to administer such a contingency arrangement. The Deputy Director expressed the belief that there would be too many errors of the type where funds were released even though the required reports had not been submitted, or where project funds were not released even though reports were already submitted.

As part of the development effort, procedures and computer programs for automating the processing and analysis of data were to be developed. All data submitted by projects were to be coded and stored on state-owned computers by ILEC staff and through ILEC-controlled terminals. Once stored, automated processing of the data would be available.

As discussed next, major problems were encountered in the processing and storage of data. The projects did submit the data that were collected, but in several instances no data were obtained. The RPU evaluator did not become involved in processing of data, and the expected level of computer utilization did not occur. Much of the analysis was conducted without the aid of the computer. However, the data processing and analysis that were conducted were handled, as planned, by in-house ILEC staff.

III. ILEC's MEP STRATEGY--- EXPECTATION AND EXPERIENCES

ILEC originally intended to develop the ~~new~~ evaluation system discussed in the last chapter over a several year period with the evaluation staff that existed prior to the MEP. During the phase of developing evaluation packages and procedures, the staff was to continue to respond to information requests levied by management, conduct some in-house program area or project specific evaluations, and contract for other evaluations. Using available staff, the development process was expected to take several years. With the availability of MEP funds, ILEC attempted to accelerate the development process sufficiently to complete the development phase and test the use of RPU evaluators by July 1976.

As discussed below, the bulk of the MEP funds supported a doubling of the ILEC staff for one year and the funding of four RPU evaluators. While ILEC did not completely develop and test the system as initially envisioned, they did achieve sufficient experience with the approach to convince them that the proposed system was not feasible or useful. Following the MEP, ILEC dropped much of the system that had been developed, and returned to an evaluation strategy similar to what was used prior to the MEP.

A. ILEC's DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Prior to receipt of the MEP grant, the ILEC Evaluation Unit had initiated a development process that involved:

- the in-house design of data collection instruments and analysis procedures (the evaluation packages) using a prescribed process; and
- the working out of procedures for the adoption and use of the packages as they were initially introduced to subgrantees.

When the MEP grant was initiated in July of 1975, the Evaluation staff had developed or was developing 17 evaluation packages, and had begun to use them in 13 program areas covering slightly more than 100 projects. Analysis was underway on data from two program areas.

With receipt of the MEP grant, the development process was to be expanded through the temporary expansion of the staff, and the value of utilizing RPU evaluators in the operation of the system was to be tested. The ILEC MEP strategy for developing the desired evaluation system is characterized here in terms of five major steps:

- Augmentation of ILEC staff.
- Test utilization of RPU evaluators.
- Development of standardized evaluation packages.
- Development of socioeconomic data bases for ILEC use.
- Utilization of the evaluation packages and data bases.

Three of the steps were to be operational only during the one-year period of MEP funding--the staff augmentation and development of evaluation packages and data bases. The two other components were expected to result in on-going activities similar to those conducted during the period of MEP funding.

B. ILEC'S EXPERIENCES WITH THE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Tables 1 through 4 summarize the ILEC expectations and experiences for each of the five major steps of the ILEC development strategy. The symbols

+, "0," and "-", are used to indicate the extent to which ILEC achieved what they attempted to accomplish with each component. The general criteria used in developing the summary indicators are:

- "+": Either completely achieved stated expectations or sufficiently implemented to produce most of the intended effect.
- "0": Partial achievement, with major subparts not attempted or producing intended effect.
- "-": Not attempted, or few instances of achieving intended effects.

Table 2 and the following discussion provides some of the rationale for the indicators by summarizing the degree of success achieved, major problems encountered in implementing the components, and the significance of the outcome on the evaluation system and developmental efforts. The schedule of events followed in implementing the five major components are given in Table 3, and Table 4 provides information on costs associated with several of the components.

1. STAFF AUGMENTATION

The MEP provided funds for the ILEC staff to increase for a one-year period from five to nine full-time professional positions. Also, funds were provided for two part-time positions. The purpose of the temporary augmentation was to develop, within the year, the tools needed for the new evaluation system, while allowing the permanent staff to maintain existing responsibilities and to begin to utilize the new system.

Table 5 represents the staffing patterns of the Evaluation Unit over the last two years. As demonstrated in the table, a staff augmentation did occur, but it reduced through time. The permanent SPA funded staff size was increased by two at the completion of the MEP. No employees

TABLE 1: ILEC'S EXPECTATIONS FOR EACH COMPONENT

	Result Expected from Component	Components Expected To Be Part of Ongoing System if Successful
I. Augmentation Evaluation Unit Staff	Temporarily increase Evaluation Unit staff size and make proportionate amount of staff time available for developmental activities. (0)	No continuation of new slots. (-)
II. RPU Evaluators	Hire four regional evaluators and develop their role in the new evaluation system. (-)	Continuation and expansion of position to other RPUs. (0)
III. Develop Standardized Package	Develop standard packages for all evaluable projects. (0)	Further development of packages as a low level activity (two to three packages per year). (-)
IV. Develop Socioeconomic Data Bases	Computerized socioeconomic data base adopted for use with standard packages. (-)	Data base maintenance. (-)
V. Utilization of Evaluation Packages	Evaluation analyses produced and used for all available projects in a program area. (-)	Continued use of the packages and procedures developed. (-)

Legend: +: Success
 0: Partial success
 -: Was not attempted or did not occur as planned

TABLE 2: ILEC's EXPERIENCE WITH EACH COMPONENT

	Degree of Success with Component	Major Problems Encountered with Component	Significance of the Experience with Component
<p>I. Augmentation of Evaluation Unit Staff</p>	<p>(0) Staff were hired and integrated into ongoing staff. The increase in manpower was not devoted to developmental activities to the extent planned.</p>	<p>Evaluation staff had other duties, as well as the development of the new system. No mechanism to assure that the development activities received priority.</p>	<p>Resources required to implement the system not made available.</p>
<p>II. RFU Evaluators</p>	<p>(-) Evaluators hired. Did not participate in the use of standard packages.</p>	<p>High turnover in positions. No guidance or control from ILEC Evaluation Unit. Evaluators given tasks by RFU directors; many unrelated to evaluation.</p>	<p>Regional evaluator component not tested as part of the system.</p>
<p>III. Development of Standard Packages</p>	<p>(0) Packages developed for about 60 percent of projects.</p> <p>Packages did not always contain analysis plans. Impact analysis and use of socioeconomic data bases not accounted for in designs.</p>	<p>Proposed development steps only partially followed --field test and consultations usually dropped.</p>	<p>Sufficient number of packages were developed to test the system. Identification of potential data collection and analysis problems delayed until implementation.</p>

TABLE 2: ILEC'S EXPERIENCE WITH EACH COMPONENT (Cont'd.)

	Degree of Success with Component	Major Problems Encountered with Component	Significance of the Experience with Component
IV. Development of Socioeconomic Data Base	(-) Census data modified for use on ILEC computers. Other data sources not developed. Analysis plans for using socioeconomic data in evaluation not developed.		One of major objectives, to do impact evaluations, was not achieved.
V. Utilization of Evaluation Packages	(-) Evaluation packages sent to 169 projects. Most packages could be used by at most one project; thus data could not be aggregated over groups of projects for most evaluations. Compounding problems in reporting, processing and analysis resulted in few analyses being done.	Anticipated data flow not established. Many problems with data, no capability to assure quality, data suspect. Analysis turned out to be difficult to do because of data quality and lack of analysis plans.	System experienced difficulties in the data collection and analysis stages.

Legend: +: Success
 O: Partial success
 -: Was not attempted or did not occur as planned

Comment

I. Augmentation of ILEC Staff - 4 full-time; 2 part-time				
II. Use of RPH Evaluators - 4 positions	5 persons were through 4 positions			
III. Develop Standardized Packages				
IV. Develop Socioeconomic Data Base	- Census Tapes Produced			
V. Build Evaluation Packages - 13 packages in use	- 31 packages in use - 8 packages in use			
July 1976 start of MRP	July 1976 Planned MRP end	August 1976 Decision to drop the new system	January 1977 Transfer positions to state funds, end MRP funding	

TABLE 3: ILEC SCHEDULE

TABLE 4: MEP COSTS INCURRED

Component	In-house Staff	Contract/ Consultant
I. Augmentation Evaluation Unit Staff	Time expended in obtaining authorization, recruitment, management: one to two man-months. ILEC in-house staff: Budgeted: \$73,824; Average salary: \$18,456	
II. RPU Evaluators	Four RPU evaluators: Budget: \$115,326 Salaries: metro - Two at \$19,500 per year each; non-metro - Two at \$10,000 per year each	
III. Develop Standardized Packages	Average staff time required to develop one package estimated at 21 person-days (based on samples of 22 packages).	
IV. Develop Socio- economic Data Bases	Greater than three man-months of one part-time person.	Small contract to University of Illinois to produce modi- fied census tape per ILEC's instruction.
V. Utilization of Evaluation Packages	All costs cannot be broken out. Packages were implemented by Evaluation Unit staff as part of normal activity. One full- time professional for developing computer routines for data entry and analysis, and two to three part-time persons worked on data entry.	
Total Grant: \$249,468		

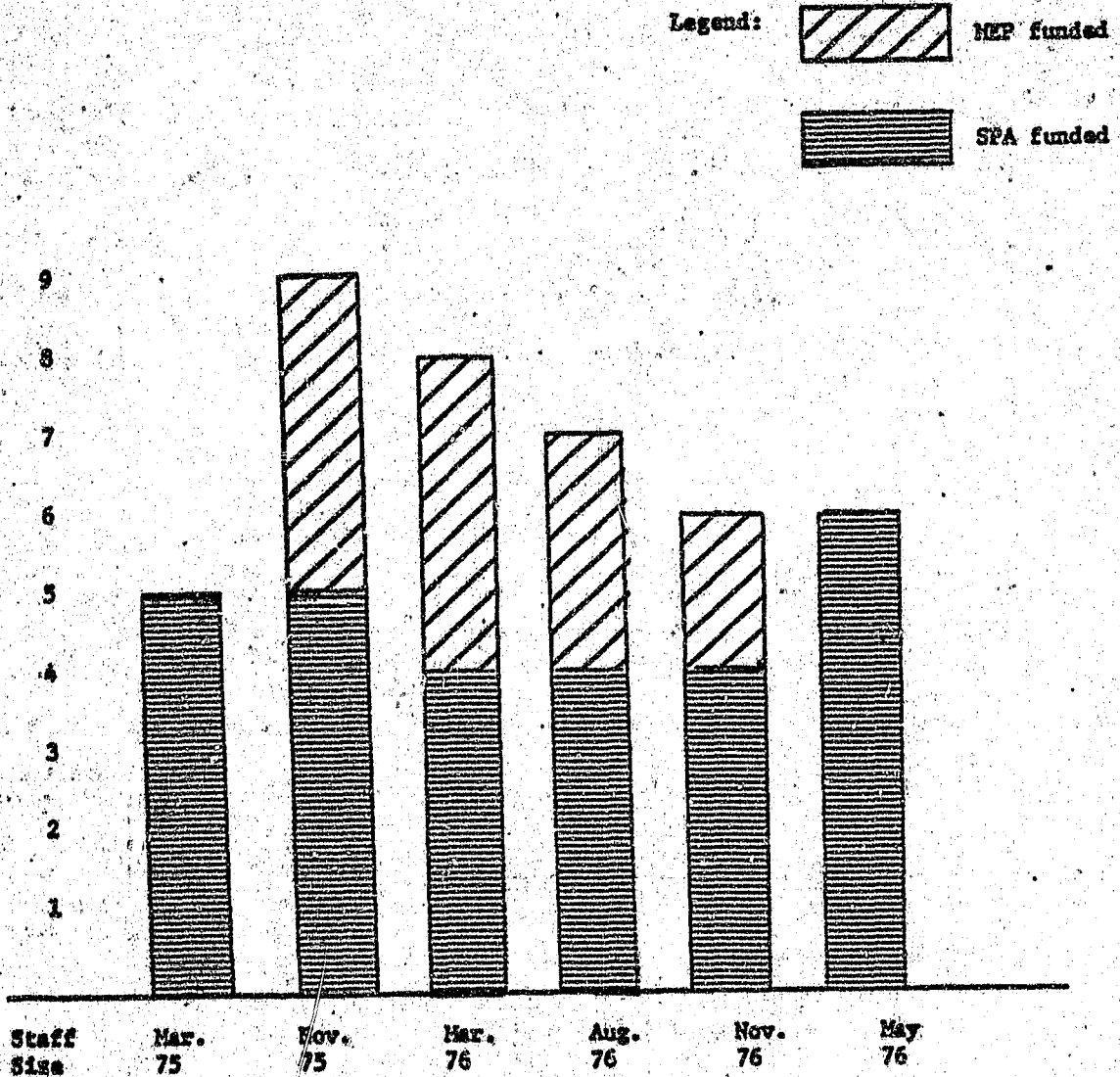


TABLE 5: ILEC EVALUATION STAFFING PATTERNS (FULL-TIME PROFESSIONALS)

were let go at the end of the MEP grant for lack of funding. Two persons funded under the MEP moved into permanent staff positions, and the attrition that did occur in both the MEP and SPA supported staff was due to persons assuming other professional positions or resigning for personal reasons.

The Evaluation staff consider themselves generalists, and did not organize into specialties--such as contract monitors, data collectors or analysts in specific components of criminal justice work. Consequently, the additional staff supported with MEP funds was integrated into the permanent staff and assigned responsibilities similar to the permanent staff. This arrangement spread all responsibilities--developmental and ongoing--among the entire staff. This had the effect of defusing the focus of the MEP staff to other tasks than developing the new evaluation system.

During the MEP grant period, the Evaluation Unit was requested to perform a variety of functions other than developing the tools for the new system. MEP and non-MEP staff were utilized to perform those functions at the expense of time expended on the new evaluation system. Consequently, portions of the developmental and initial implementation work on the new system could not be staffed, backlogs developed, and it became necessary to abandon the effort. The Evaluation Unit Director eventually decided that the staff was not large enough to meet management requests and develop or operate the new system. The Unit then attempted to negotiate with management a statement of what the Unit was to accomplish in the future in order to provide a mechanism for setting priorities on their work and avoiding future diversions of staff.

2. RPU EVALUATORS

The SPA issued contracts to four RPUs, providing funds for the regional units to hire evaluators. The distribution of positions, turnover and personnel costs are shown in Table 6. The high rate of turnover in Region 1 was attributed to low salaries, and in Regions 2 and 5 to "political" problems not related to the MEP.

During the MEP grant period, the RPU evaluators performed a variety of tasks:

- developing evaluation procedures for the regions,
- helping develop and process grant applications,
- conducting some evaluations and
- supporting planning, administration and public relations functions of the regions.

The regional evaluators were used only sporadically in the development and test of the new evaluation system. They were not consulted on most evaluation designs, were not routinely provided copies of data submitted by grantees through the system, and except in a few instances, were not called upon to obtain data from subgrantees. Furthermore, the formal assessment of their value to the new evaluation system in comparison with RPUs without evaluators was not performed. However, at the end of the MEP grant period, the need to have someone involved at the regional level in evaluation was judged to still exist by the SPA, and a decision was made to request refunding for the positions. Since the continuation role was not originally planned under the MEP or related to the proposed or tested evaluation system, the continuation effort is not listed in Table 2 as a success in terms of the expected outcome of the ILEG MEP strategy.

**TABLE 6: REGIONAL PLANNING UNIT
MEP EVALUATION STAFFING PATTERNS**

Region	MEP Professional Positions	Number of Persons Who Passed through Positions
#1	1	3
#19	1	1
#2 and #5 (shared evaluation)	2	5
Total	4	9

3. DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD PACKAGES

The ILEC grant application for MEP funding identified an 11 step process that was being followed to produce the evaluation packages. The steps, and the extent to which they were utilized during the MEP, are given in Table 7. The staff generally followed through on the steps involved with reviewing the literature, developing draft packages in-house, and checking with other ILEC staff on their information needs and the acceptability of the packages. But the interaction with subgrantees and others in the criminal justice system dropped off rapidly as the effort proceeded. The main reasons cited for the deviations were lack of time, lack of interest from other participants, and lack of resources.

The SPA initially expected to produce evaluation packages to cover all evaluable projects--estimated at 80 percent of the funded projects. Projects were considered unevaluable if the project staff could not readily think of a method to be pursued for evaluating them. Among the projects excluded were those in training and equipment. Eventually they also decided to exclude court projects involving staff augmentations.

Table 8 summarizes the number of packages developed during various time periods over the last two years. In all, 36 packages were prepared which were thought to cover 173 projects--about 60 percent of all funded projects.

The packages varied in content and evaluation design characteristics. All packages included data collection instruments to be used by projects to submit data to the SPA. About 50 percent of the instruments collected data on individual clients served by the project. All of the packages collected summary data on project activities, clients served, and personnel

TABLE 7: STEPS OUTLINED FOR ILEC'S DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

	Percent Time Development Steps Utilized
1. Literature search for comparable evaluation activities elsewhere.	100%
2. Detailed discuss/ops with the responsible technical assistance personnel of ILEC.	100%
3. Interviews with operating project personnel.	71%
4. The evaluation unit then develops an evaluation strategy and designs a draft of the data collection form.	90%
5. Invitations are sent out to potential project operators to attend or send a representative to a meeting in the ILEC offices to discuss data reporting needs and methodology, as well as the draft form.	33%
6. At the meeting, after much discussion, the attending personnel and ILEC reach agreement on how to test a pilot version of the form.	24%
7. The forms are put into use by selected projects. At this stage, much technical assistance is provided by the evaluation unit to the projects.	14%
8. Letters go out to the potential project operators inviting them to attend another meeting for discussing the strengths and shortcomings of the pilot data collection instrument.	9.5%
9. After lengthy discussions, the form is substantially revised and a new committee appointed to put the final touches on the form.	14%
10. The form is then sent out for general use of all applicable projects--even for programs not funded by ILEC.	38%
11. Another series of letters are sent to appropriate criminal justice agencies and projects funded by ILEC to attend a training session on the use of the forms.	9.5%

**TABLE 8: PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT
OF THE EVALUATION PACKAGES
(as of February 4, 1977)**

Program Areas	Evaluation Packages Identified for Development	Packages Developed	Packages Implemented	Analysis Reports Prepared
153	Program areas in 1975 plan			
46				
44				
42				
40				
38				
36				
34				
32				
30				
28				
26				
24				
22				
20				
18				
16				
14				
12				
10				
8				
6				
4				
2				
0				
	Forty-six packages identified for development.	Thirty-six packages developed —78 percent.*	Thirty-three implemented —71 percent.*	Sixteen analysis reports prepared —35 percent.*
	Thirty-eight of 153 program areas in 1975 plan identified for receipt of evaluation packages.			

*Percentages are percent of those identified for development, that is, n = 46.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOECONOMIC DATA BASES

Over the years the Evaluation Unit periodically utilized data from existing sources, such as the Unified Crime Reports. In the new evaluation system, the staff was to have such data stored in computers accessible through terminals at ILEC. Candidate data for reformatting and storage by ILEC included: crime statistics, criminal justice system activity data, and census data.

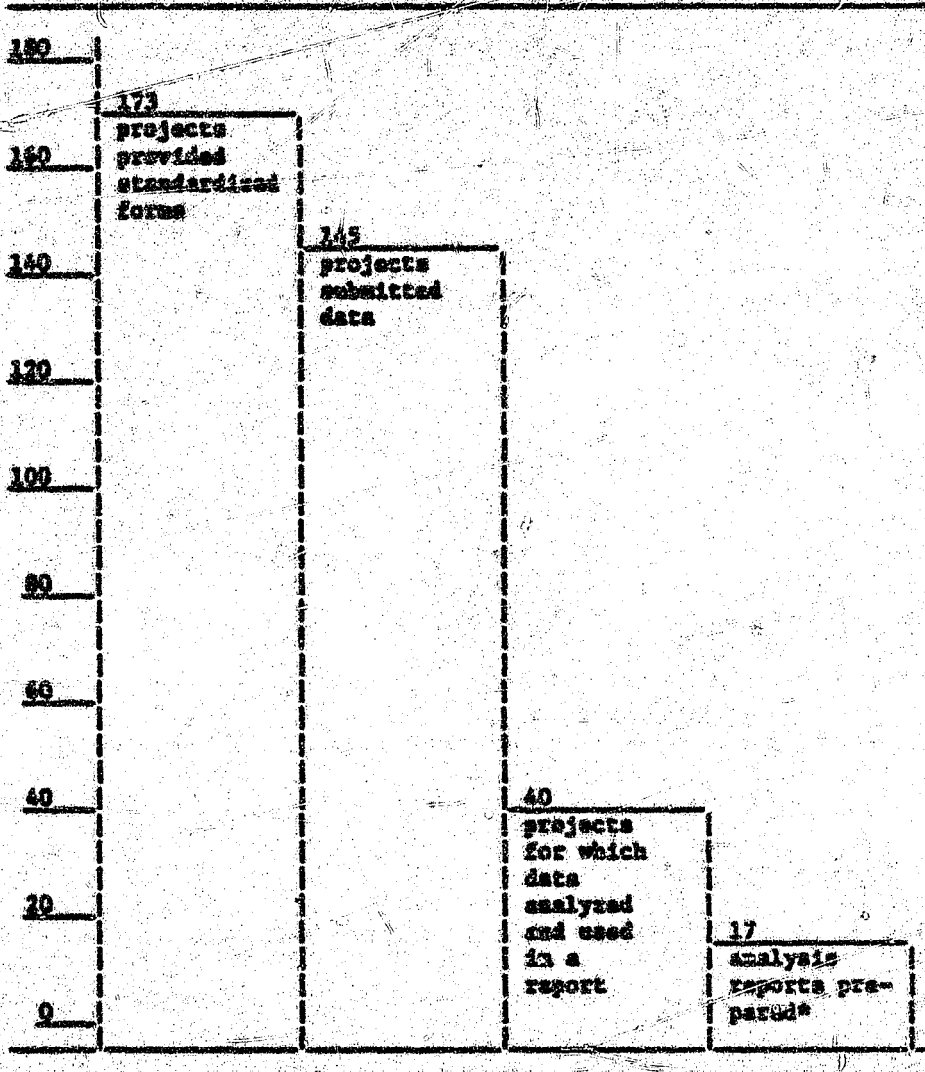
During the MEP one part-time staff member reviewed the existing data sources, reviewed data needs with the staff, and began the task of reformatting the data for direct ILEC access. The work focused only on the census data and did result in data tapes being restructured and delivered to ILEC for use with state computers. The restructuring of the census tapes was performed through a contract to the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. However, by the time the tapes arrived for ILEC use, the decision to abandon the new system had been made, and the person developing the file had resigned for personal reasons. The tapes were then turned over to the Statistical Analysis Center of the SPA for whatever use they choose to make of them.

The outcome of this component had little effect on the development effort, since the evaluation packages did not contain specific uses for the socioeconomic data.

5. UTILIZATION OF THE EVALUATION PACKAGES

The extent of utilization of the evaluation packages is summarized in Table 9, which displays the number of projects that were provided

**TABLE 9: NUMBER OF PROJECTS INVOLVED
IN USE OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM**



*One multi-project; sixteen single project.

packages; submitted data; and for which reports were produced. The extent of coverage rapidly drops off as one progresses from receiving data instruments to producing an evaluation report.

A. Introduction of the Evaluation Packages to Projects

In the proposed and developed evaluation systems, collection and submission of data for analysis were the responsibility of the projects to be evaluated. The data to be provided and the format in which they would be submitted were specified by ILEG. The project was provided forms to be used to record and transmit the requested data to ILEG.

The original process for the development of the evaluation packages included the involvement and training of project personnel. This process was not maintained, however, and most projects were not involved. During the MEP, the evaluation staff utilized a variety of techniques to introduce the projects to the use of the evaluation packages:

- telephone contacts;
- personnel meetings;
- training sessions; and
- the mail.

The data collection forms were accompanied by instructions on the use of them, and a letter from the Director of evaluation. The letter requested cooperation and offered assistance in the use of the form.

With new or renewal grants, the data collection forms and a letter were sent to the grantees within a week of award. Initially the evaluation staff did not have a reliable means of identifying grant awards or existing grants for which evaluation packages were available. Eventually in-house record systems were identified or developed to remedy the identification problems.

The use of the evaluation packages was never made a conditional requirement for receipt of a subgrant. The evaluation staff referenced a general grant requirement to cooperate in ILEC evaluations when requesting grantees participation. The plan for subsequent years was to:

- identify the data collection and submission requirement in the SPA Comprehensive Plan and in grant application instructions;
- make receipt of a grant conditional on agreeing to provide the requested data;
- issue the data collection forms and instructions with the notice of grant award and requirements; and
- not honor requests for payments until required data were submitted.

These procedures were not developed, however, before the overall system was dropped.

A major factor in the decision to develop the evaluation packages was to have data collection and analysis instruments that could be used by sets of similar projects. The availability of such instruments was expected to permit aggregation of data from similar projects and permit more projects to be evaluated. Eleven of the packages were utilized on more than one project, but twenty-two were used only once.

b. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were to come from two sources: projects and existing data bases. As discussed earlier, the existing data bases of criminal justice events, census statistics and other demographic environmental information were not formatted for use in the proposed evaluation analysis. Such data were utilized occasionally, but not as a routine part of the impact analyses as originally intended.

Project data were to be submitted directly to the ILEC Evaluation Unit, coded for computer processing, processed on state computers, and copies of the processed data returned to the projects for utilization and verification. Analysis of the data from single projects and for groups of similar projects was expected to occur periodically.

The majority of the projects cooperated in submitting some data, but processing and analysis procedures and resources were not sufficient to carry out the intended evaluations. The Evaluation Unit experienced difficulty in all phases of the evaluation process.

- At least one-third of the projects initially refused to provide data, and twenty-four never submitted data.
- Another one-third provided data that were incomplete or showed that they did not understand how to use the standardized data collection instruments.
- For about six months, nearly all the data received by the Evaluation Unit were "filed" by stacking reports in various analysts' offices.
- The backlog of data eventually became too large to enter in computer data bases or analyze.
- There was no feedback to the projects of processed data for verification of accuracy.
- Quality control measures within the Evaluation Unit were not uniformly established. Consequently, the quality of the data received from the projects was unknown. However, sufficient errors were detected to make the staff wary of utilizing much of the data.
- As the analyses began on data that had been coded and entered in computer data bases, it was decided that much of the data could not be used as formatted. Additional data collection or restructuring of the data as filed was necessary.
- Analysis focused on process activities, since little impact or output data were available. Part of this problem was due to the failure of projects to provide some of the requested data, but much of the problem was due to the fact the data were not included in the data collection instrument.

In general, the evaluation process was initiated, but sufficient bottlenecks developed in the collection, processing, and analysis of data to force a decision to abandon the system before most of the collected data could be utilized. The bottlenecks appear to be a mixture of: not anticipating and planning for processing problems; defusing available staff to other activities; evaluation designs that did not specify analysis plans; and data problems. The data problems included gaps in data due to both the failure of the data collection instruments to request certain data, the non-compliance of some projects with the data requirements, and the lack of the socioeconomic data bases that were to have been created.

c. Dissemination of Evaluation Results

Three methods of dissemination of information to users occurred during the MEP:

- provision of copies of completed project data forms to the technical assistance personnel (grant monitors) responsible for the projects;
- development and provision of reports on individual projects for use by in-house staff reviewing applications for refunding;
- development of multi-project evaluations with dissemination to ILEC and RPU staff for general information purposes.

The expected dissemination results to projects being evaluated and to RPUs for use in planning and managing functions did not occur.

When completed project data forms were received at ILEC, copies were made for simultaneous delivery to the Evaluation Unit and the technical assistance staff. The technical assistance staff could do what they wanted with the forms. Three different uses that occurred are:

- reading the forms as received;
- filing of the forms for future reference if needed; and
- throwing them away as received.

The technical assistance staff that read the reports claimed to do so in order to remain current on all submissions by projects to ILEC. They did not want the projects reporting or proposing things without them knowing of it. Occasionally the technical assistance staff contacted the project in regards to something reported on the forms, but the incidence of this was small.

The single project reports were prepared in response to requests for information on a project's previous performance for use in ILEC staff reviews of applications for continuation funding. The review involved planning, evaluation and technical assistance staff. For these reviews, the Evaluation Unit representative compiled collected data on a project and presented them to the review group. The information was presented in the form of a memorandum that varied in length from five to twelve pages, with most under ten. The information primarily consisted of data on the extent to which: promised activities had been carried out; intended clients had been served; and expected immediate outcomes had occurred. The reports were descriptive and, for the most part, limited to planned versus achievement analyses. During the MEP, 16 such reports were produced. Table 10 presents samples of the contents of the reports.

The reports were used used to support selected special conditions added to subgrants to motivate performance of activities not adequately performed previously. None of the reports recommended against refunding.

The one multi-project report completed during the MEP involved the performance of the RPU's. The report provided descriptive information on the activities of the RPU's, and contained correlations between various characteristics and outputs of RPU's. The stated purpose of the report prepared from the analysis was to determine answers to three questions:

**TABLE 10: SAMPLE OF RESULTS FROM
ILEC PROJECT EVALUATIONS**

<u>Type of Project</u>	<u>Example Results</u>
Juvenile Treatment	Recommended priority be given to serving juveniles with present or prior law enforcement contacts.
Diversion	Tables showing comparisons of experimental and control groups for offense, education, marital status, income and sex variables.
Crime Prevention	Statements that clients are well satisfied, and descriptive data on level of service provided.
Deferred Prosecution	One-half page of description of typical client; seven pages of tables showing demographic cross-classifications.

- (1) How does the regional staff distribute time over various tasks?
- (2) Does the allocation of staff time to various tasks differ among regions?
- (3) What are the relationships among the allocation of staff time to various tasks and the characteristics and performance of the regions?

The analysis involved correlation of data for variables representing different parts of these questions. Typical of the results produced are:

- (1) regions which expend proportionately more staff time on reviewing applications prior to submitting them to ILEC appear to have somewhat more success in getting those applications funded;
- (2) regions whose time allotted to travel for participation in the planning process appear to be more successful in terms of completing the planning requirements; and
- (3) travel is not highly correlated with geographic area.

The multi-project evaluation was distributed to ILEC and RPU staff as a piece of information that might be of use to them for planning purposes. The information was excluded from use for funding decisions.

At the conclusion of the MEP grant period, the Evaluation Unit was still attempting to analyze much of the collected data and complete several additional multi-project analyses. The success of those attempts or the use of subsequent reports is not addressed here.

IV. OUTCOME OF THE MEP

The ILEC MEP Project was part of an effort to develop a new evaluation system. Thus, the outcome of the MEP is tied to the outcome of the entire development effort. Some specific outcomes expected from the MEP involvement did occur. For example, as intended, the rate of developing evaluation packages did increase over what had been planned. However, the overall outcome of an operating system producing certain types of evaluation information did not result.

A. USER REACTION TO THE NEW SYSTEM

In order to obtain user reaction to the new evaluation system, Urban Institute personnel periodically interviewed ILEC:

- Evaluation Unit staff (seven);
- senior managers (two);
- technical assistance staff (five);
- RPU personnel (from three RPUs).

Most staff view the experience as a valuable and necessary learning experience. The Director of Planning and Research summarized their experiences as:

When we started we were shooting for the moon, but we didn't have a rocket or know how to build one. Now our sights are set lower but we know how to get there.

The Director of the Evaluation Unit stated that the experience during the MEP had convinced him that:

It would take a lot more resources than they could expend to make the system work (in particular, much more effort would be required to obtain data of known reliability and validity); and

the projects funded by ILEC did not provide an opportunity to produce knowledge on project processes and effects through multi-project evaluations.

The latter conclusion was based on the fact that projects operated under the same program, and the environments in which they operated, varied too much to permit the isolation of cause and effect relationship through evaluation research techniques.

The technical assistance staff did not provide evidence of utility of the system to them in their monitoring and assistance roles. All staff interviewed claimed they did not read information provided or did not use the system as a means of obtaining needed information on projects.

The persons participating in reviews of grant renewal applications found the information produced from the system useful in the review process. Those interviewed claimed that the information had been used to formulate special conditions to grant renewals. The special conditions involved the identification of components of projects that were previously not implemented at an acceptable level, and were to be given special attention in the future operations.

Less than 1 percent of the grant applications processed by the SPA were involved in this process, and even in those cases the effect of the new information is not certain. Information from the evaluation system is included with information from other sources to provide a basis for funding recommendations from the staff to ILEC management and the Commission. A Deputy Director of ILEC stated that he:

- had not detected a noticeable change during the MEP in the quality and quantity of information presented in support of recommendations;
- had not identified portions of the information as coming from the Evaluation Unit's new system; and
- did not have problems with the data provided.

In short, from his perspective, he had not noticed any outcome which he attributed to the MEP.

B. CONTINUING EFFECTS

As a result of the experience with the development effort during the MEP, the ILEC Evaluation Unit proposed to eliminate evaluation requirements on about half the Commission's projects, collect data for process purposes on about one-fourth of the projects, and evaluate the remaining through special studies. Some of the developed packages will be used in the monitoring and special study efforts, but most have been eliminated. The principal continuing activity from the development effort is the monitoring of a portion of the projects with data collection instruments developed during the MEP.

In summary, the ILEC development effort funded through the MEP did meet its objectives of producing a number of evaluation packages and partially testing their use. Evaluation reports were produced and can be associated with decisions to add special conditions to some refunded grants. But the desired evaluation system was not put in place, and the major long-term result appears to be the lessons learned on the problems of operating such a system.

C. SUMMARY FINDINGS

The ILEC Evaluation Unit utilized the MFP grant to increase the evaluation staff at the SPA level and create four regional evaluator positions. The staff were obtained to accelerate the development and implementation of a particular type of evaluation system. The system was not fully developed, and further development of the original concept has been abandoned.

The ILEC experiences, however, demonstrate some findings that may be useful to other agencies attempting to develop evaluation capabilities, and partially explain the outcome of their development effort.

Having resources is not sufficient to ensure a successful development effort. ILEC doubled the size of the Evaluation Unit and the number of RPU evaluators. The increased resources did result in an acceleration of the development process, but the staff did not develop sufficient momentum to prevent diversion to other tasks. There were not sufficient mechanisms available to keep the staff focused on the new evaluation system, and little of the RPU resources were not utilized for developing and implementing the new system.

Without planned, well managed processing procedures, high volume data systems quickly become unmanageable. The evaluation packages were to contain procedures for analysis. Also automatic data processing procedures were to be established. These ~~procedures~~ were developed prior to the time data being produced, and the procedures were to be used. Problems in developing the procedures quickly developed, and backlogs resulted which were never eliminated. The Evaluation Unit did not adhere to a previously proposed development process, and development became ad hoc.

Quality control and data analysis are expensive. Having data processing procedures developed in advance would not have solved all the processing problems encountered. In those cases where data were analyzed, it was discovered that unavailability and sizeable staff resources would be needed to exercise quality control on the data collection and processing activity, and to extend the analyses conducted to the number of projects originally to be covered.

The amount and type of information that can be produced through a standardized system is limited. The Evaluation Unit concluded that variation in project operations and environments prevent the aggregation of data from similar projects to improve confidence in evaluation results. In fact, most standardized packages were limited to use on at most one project due to lack of standardization among projects. The LEAA environment is not conducive to the type of system attempted.

A demand for evaluation information was not demonstrated. The primary needs to be served by the evaluation system involved the functioning of the LEAA grant funding and monitoring process. The evaluation system output had at most a small role in less than 1 percent of the projects processed through the funding process, and was not utilized in the monitoring process. Yet the funding and monitoring processes continued to function, and exhibited little demand for the expected information output.

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM
OF THE MICHIGAN OFFICE OF
CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS**

by

**John D. Waller
John W. Scanlon
Paul G. Nalley**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Michigan's Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) received a two year Model Evaluation Program (MEP) grant, September 1975 to November 1977, for \$247,575. OCJP's objective was to make the design and use of evaluation a responsibility and on-going activity of the OCJP planning and grants management staff.

OCJP implemented two evaluation systems and was able to demonstrate that the information was used. One system was continued after the MEP, the other system was not continued as tested.

Prior to the MEP, OCJP had an evaluation system on paper, but had not uniformly implemented it across programs and projects. The system consisted of project monitoring and data collection using a set of standard evaluation measures. The Comprehensive State Plan identified evaluation measures (inspection factors and evaluation factors) for each type of program in the plan. Subgrantees were asked to submit summary data quarterly. However, there were no uniform reporting requirements placed on subgrantees. Implementation of evaluation requirements was left to the discretion of individual OCJP grant managers. OCJP management felt that the existing evaluation system was not producing sufficient evaluation information. Its decentralized nature led to uneven implementation and utilization. With the MEP, OCJP intended to give the evaluation responsibilities of in-house staff higher priority and more central direction and quality control.

II. MICHIGAN OCJP's MODEL EVALUATION PROGRAM

A. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE MEP

Prior to the MEP, OCJP evaluation consisted of:

- (1) a system in which all projects funded within a program element were to be measured on selected "evaluation factors" and "inspection factors" listed in the Comprehensive State Plan, and
- (2) the occasional letting of contracts to evaluate some set of OCJP projects.

Table 1 illustrates the evaluation and inspection factors.¹

The OCJP had no Evaluation Unit or budget. The grants management staff was responsible for completion of the inspection factors (effort and input measures). The subgrantees were responsible for collecting data on the evaluation factors (effect, output or change measures). Data were tabulated and submitted by the subgrantees in quarterly and final reports. Reporting by subgrantees was considered to be spotty.

OCJP had let several contracts for evaluation studies in the past. There was, however, no policy on the frequency and conditions under which such studies would be done, nor a set-aside budget for evaluation studies.

OCJP identified in their MEP proposal six limitations of this existing system:

1. Most projects are not evaluated; the number of quality evaluations is not sufficient to meet the needs of decision makers.

1. Source: 1976 Michigan Comprehensive Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Plan. Only certain factors would be applied to a project type.

**TABLE 1: MICHIGAN OCJF -
SELECTED EVALUATION AND
INSPECTION FACTORS**

Evaluation Factors

1. Number, type and disposition of formal consumer complaints processed
2. Number of investigations conducted
3. Number, type and disposition of criminal fraud warrants authorized
4. Number and type of public presentations, and the number of persons in each audience
- .
- .
- .
73. Number of clients served
74. Impact upon caseload and dispositions
75. Percent of persons arrested for subsequent offenses while in program
76. Compare recidivism rates before and after.
77. Cost benefit analysis
- .
- .
87. Average length of time between referral and initiation of services for youth referred to other agencies
88. Reduction in number of status offenders placed in detention or jail
89. A longitudinal measurement indicating outcomes and the number appearing for adjudication
- .
- .
- .

Inspection Factors

1. Verify employment of project staff.
2. Completion of major project tasks identified in application is on schedule
3. Administrative organization is adequate.
4. Verify availability of service to those requesting it.
5. Obtain subjective evaluation from project personnel.
6. Review procedure for compiling statistical data.
- .
- .
42. Examine for compliance with pertinent regulations.
43. Examine documentation and/or method of selecting target population.
44. Ascertain increased capability to respond to crime.
45. Verify availability of services to those requesting them.

- Current evaluation activities are practiced unevenly by staff; implementation of evaluation requirements and use of evaluation lacks uniformity.
- There is no long-term evaluation strategy.
- Staff and project access to evaluation training has been limited.
- The procedures for incorporating evaluation findings in the decision-making process are loosely structured and dependent upon the predictions of each staff member. Some staff have only a marginal interest in evaluation.
- Coordination of OCJP evaluation efforts with other groups is inadequate.

In interviews, OCJP management stressed changing the decentralized nature of the current evaluation system that had led to a wide variation in evaluation practices among staff, and to very little evaluation being done.

The MEP was designed to increase the evaluation capability of the staff, and to institutionalize the design and use of evaluation as a staff function. The MEP was also to develop a long range evaluation policy, and establish a central OCJP Evaluation Unit with control over the reporting system and contract evaluation.

B. THE EVALUATION SYSTEMS PLANNED AND TESTED

1. DESCRIPTION

OCJP tested two evaluation systems: intensive evaluations carried out by contractors, and standard evaluations produced by OCJP from data reported by projects and data collected by OCJP staff. Under these systems, evaluation activities--design, analysis, dissemination, utilization--were to be built into the OCJP staff functions, thereby increasing OCJP in-house evaluation capability and institutionalizing the production and use of evaluation information.

The MEP was expected to result in:

- Active participation of OCJP staff in the design, implementation and use of standard and intensive evaluations.
- A common evaluation framework used by all staff.
- A set of standard evaluations produced from data collected and reported by projects using standard instruments designed by OCJP evaluation and program staff.
- A set of intensive evaluations carried out under contract, but with the participation of OCJP staff in the design phase.
- An OCJP evaluation policy establishing control and responsibility for the evaluation functions and its role in OCJP.

The MEP was to have the two evaluation systems operating independently and concurrently. Figures 1 and 2 are simplified illustrations of the evaluation systems envisioned by OCJP.

For standard evaluations, Figure 1, the evaluation design would be developed jointly by the OCJP program specialists and the evaluation unit. The program specialists and the evaluation unit were to design standard data collection instruments and analysis plans for projects of a given type. Group sessions, called "application groups," were set up to carry out the design function. Once the designs were produced they would be implemented by the evaluation unit. This part of the evaluation system relied on data collected and reported by projects.

For intensive evaluation, Figure 2, Michigan State University's Criminal Justice Systems Center was used as a contractor. The contractor was to produce a design following interaction with an OCJP staff group. A group consisting of program specialists and the evaluation coordinator was formed to work with the contractor.

The two planned systems were refinements of existing OCJP practice. They were, in fact, an attempt to proceduralize and formalize two mechanisms

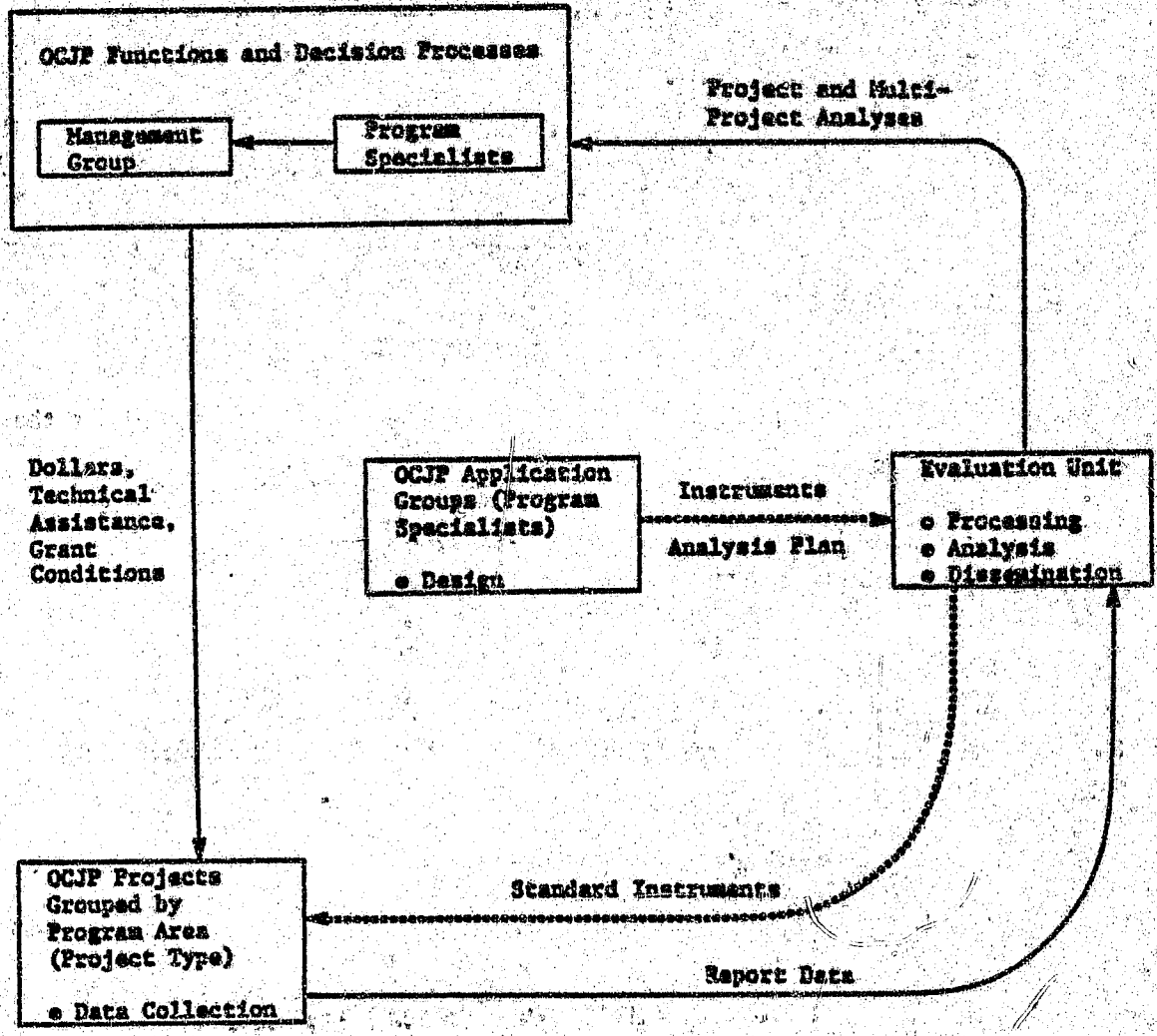


FIGURE 1: MICHIGAN'S STANDARD EVALUATION

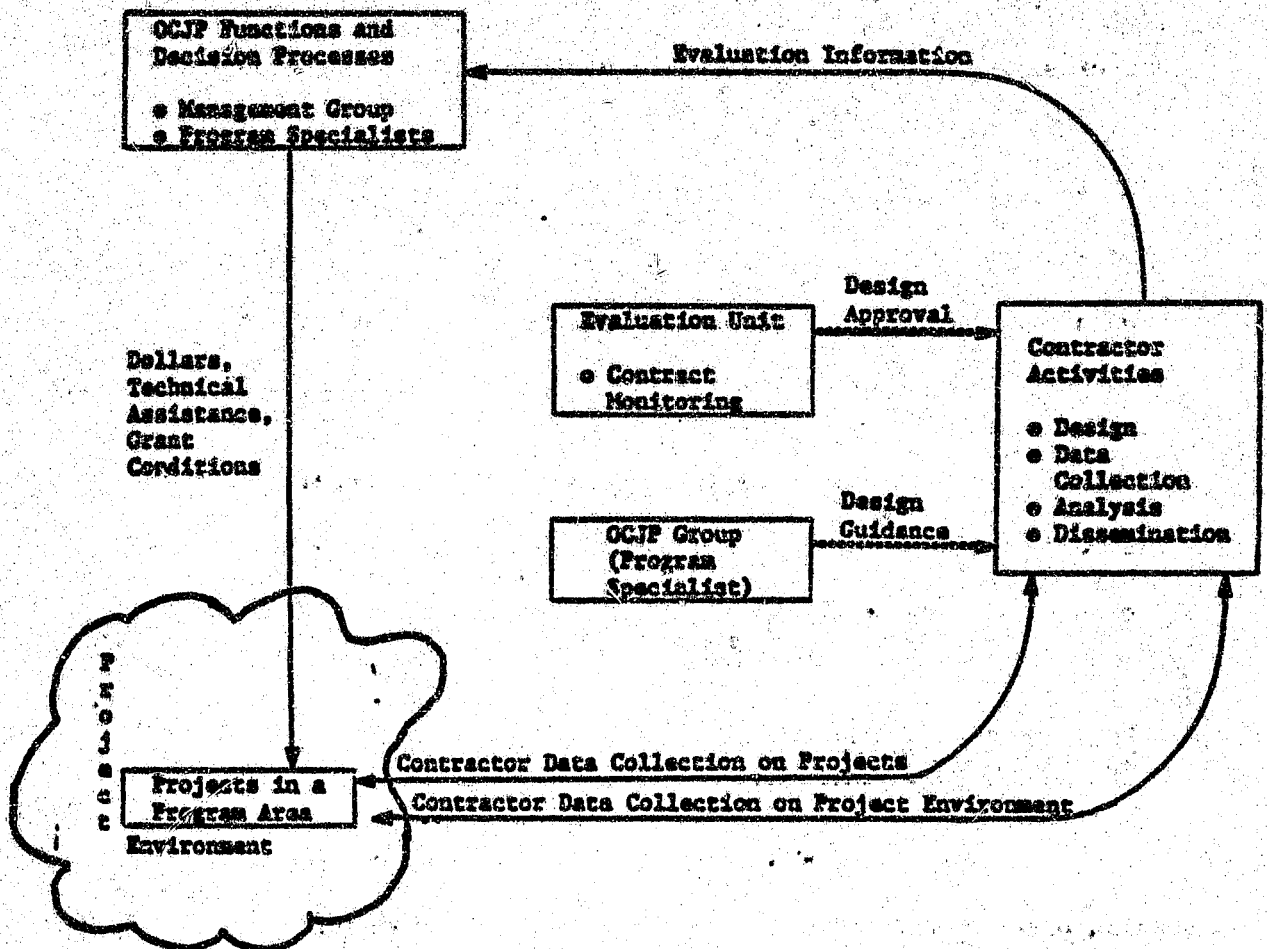


FIGURE 2: MICHIGAN'S INTENSIVE EVALUATION

in place--the contract studies and the evaluation and inspection factors-- in order to increase the production and utility of evaluation information. Table 2 identifies the major characteristics the MEP was expected to add to the existing system. For standard evaluation, the MEP planned to add four types of characteristics:

- formal uniform reporting requirements on projects;
- analysis plans that integrate all data collection and reporting;
- a centralized data processing and analysis system; and
- OCJP management review and control over staff design of evaluations and staff use of evaluations.

For intensive evaluations, the major changes planned were:

- OCJP participation in the design work with the contractor, and
- a policy of routine intensive evaluation of program areas.

2. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND FUNCTIONS THE EVALUATION SYSTEM PLANNED TO SUPPORT

At the start of the MEP, OCJP was able to identify the user, the decision processes and functions the evaluation information was to support. While it was able to say where it would be used, it was not able to say how the data would be used, the findings expected, or the difference evaluation would make. The test of its worth to OCJP would be how useful participants in the decision processes judged evaluation to be.

The user of evaluation was to be OCJP staff. OCJP is involved in a number of decision processes (e.g., application review) and functions (e.g., technical assistance to subgrantees) which were expected to benefit from evaluation. The primary link between evaluation and the decision processes and functions was to be the "program specialist." At the start

**TABLE 2: CHANGES IN OCJP EVALUATION PRACTICE
THAT HEP PLANNED TO TEST**

Characteristics of the Evaluation Systems	System Prior to HEP	System under HEP Plan
<u>Standard Evaluation</u>		
• Measures for Project Types	Yes	Yes
• Analysis Plan (Project and Program)	No	Yes
• Standard Project Reporting Instruments	No	Yes
• Formal Project Reporting Requirements	No	Yes
• OCJP Staff on-site Data Collection	No	Yes
• Central Computerized Data Processing	No	Yes
• Quality Control over Data	No	Yes
• Routine Project and Program Analyses and Reports	No	Yes
• Use of Evaluation by OCJP Staff	Some	Yes
• OCJP Review of Staff Designs and Staff Use of Evaluation	No	Yes
• Access to Staff Training in Evaluation	No	Yes
• Standard Evaluation Designs for all Program Areas	No	Yes
<u>Intensive Evaluation</u>		
• Contractor Analysis of OCJP Information Needs	No	Yes
• OCJP Staff and Contractor Develop the Evaluation Designs	No	Yes
• Contractor Implementation of Designs	Yes	Yes
• Review of Evaluation Results by OCJP	Yes	Yes
• Routine Intensive Evaluation of Program Areas	No	Yes

of the MEP, OCJP reorganized the state staff. Grants managers who reviewed and audited grants were combined with functional area specialists who wrote the plan. This new division of 16 program specialists was organized along functional lines--a.g. police, juvenile justice, corrections. These people were responsible for managing grants, program development, writing the comprehensive plan, technical assistance. They also brought forward evaluation information, as needed, into the formal OCJP decision processes.

Michigan SPA is unique in that the Commission has delegated much of the real decision-making authority to the SPA. Thus, the OCJP management are the key decision makers when it comes to planning and funding decisions. The internal OCJP decision process can be characterized as follows. The key actors are a group called "top management" and, when appropriate, the program specialist. The management group consists of the administrator, deputy administrator plus the division supervisors (seven to nine people in all). The program specialist prepares material and recommendations for review by the management group. In this role, they are responsible for bringing together available evaluative information. The management group considers this information, along with other information individual members may contribute, and decides.

OCJP identified a number of decision processes and functions for which they expected to use the evaluation information. Four internal OCJP decision processes in which evaluation could be used were described:

- Decisions on whether to recommend to the Legislature continuation of state agency projects with state funds.
- Decisions on program elements to go in the state plan.
- Decisions on programmatic changes to require of applicants during application review.

- Decisions on adequacy of project progress and adherence to grant conditions.

OCJP is also the state budget office for state criminal justice agencies and, therefore, another OCJP use of evaluation was stated as:

- Decisions on recommendations to make to the Governor on state agency budgets and programs.

A number of additional OCJP functions were identified which evaluations would support.

- OCJP provides information for decisions by local agencies and governing bodies on whether to continue a project with local money.
- OCJP disseminates evaluation results to state and local agencies.
- OCJP gives programmatic advice to applicants and non-applicants.
- OCJP gives applicants technical assistance in evaluation design, thus improving their projects.
- OCJP identifies and "sells" successful programs to criminal justice agencies.

The MEP was set up to involve the program specialists, the direct user, in evaluation design and review work. Involving the user was expected to increase their use of evaluation information in the various decision processes and staff functions.

3. UNIT OF EVALUATION

The standard and intensive evaluations were to be done on OCJP funded projects. The units of analysis were to be "program element" and individual project. OCJP's Comprehensive Plan is organized by program categories (e.g., Community Reintegration Programs) and within categories by program elements (Jail Inmate Rehabilitation, Probation and Parole Improvement). A program element is a group of like projects. For each program element,

the plan has a description of the project's objectives, methods and procedures, and evaluation criteria.

4. EVALUATION FUNCTION

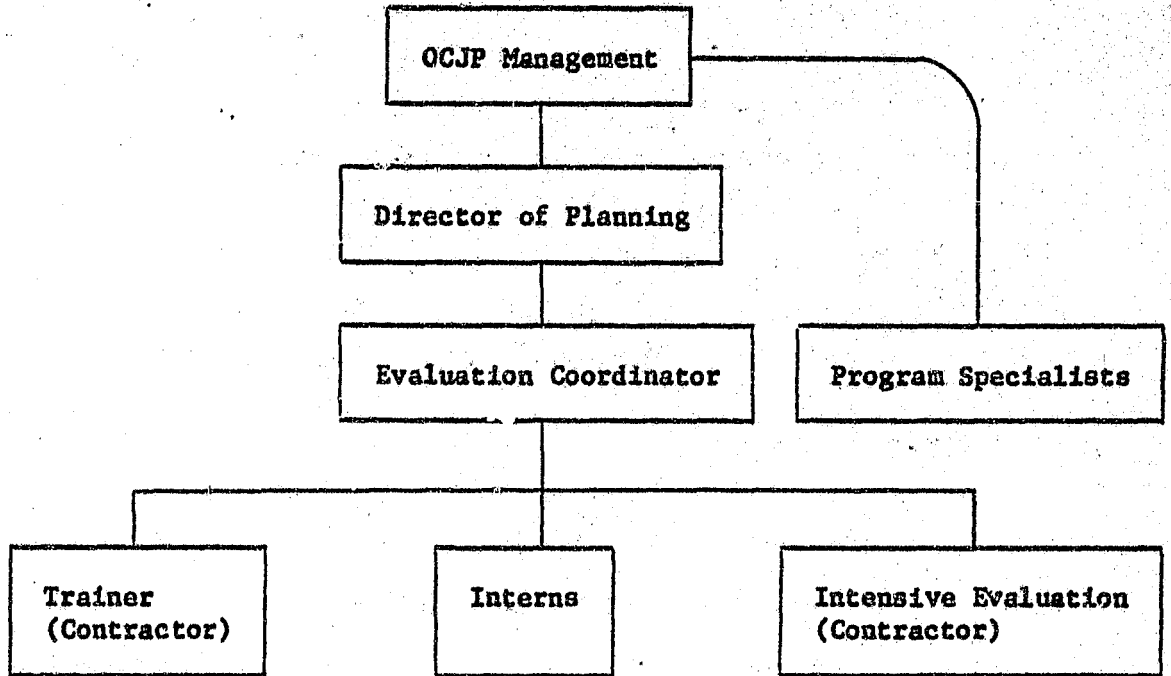
The organization of the OCJP evaluation function involved the following actors:

- OCJP top management;
- Director of Planning;
- Evaluation Coordinator;
- interns;
- program specialists;
- trainer; and
- contractor.

The MEP was the responsibility of the Evaluation Coordinator who reported to the Director of Planning (see Figure 3). The standard evaluation was to be carried out by in-house staff--student interns and program specialists. The intensive evaluation was to be carried out by a contractor, with guidance and input from program specialists. The program specialists and OCJP management were to receive training in evaluation.

Table 3 summarizes the involvement of the different actors in the two evaluation systems. The interns were only involved in the standard evaluation, the contractor only with the intensive. The trainer and program specialist had a heavy and direct role in the standard evaluation. The program specialists worked with the intensive evaluation contractor during the design phase.

**FIGURE 3: MICHIGAN MEP
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



**TABLE 3: RESPONSIBILITIES IN OCJP
EVALUATION SYSTEMS**

Elements	Responsibility for Elements of Evaluation System	
	Intensive	Standard
Selection of:		
• Program Element	OCJP Management	OCJP Management
• Projects	Contractor	Program Specialist
• Evaluation Questions	Contractor (OCJP Review)*	Program Specialist
Design:		
• Measures	Contractor (OCJP Review)	Program Specialist, Interns, Trainer
• Instruments	Contractor (OCJP Review)	Program Specialist, Interns, Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning
• Analysis Plan	Contractor (OCJP Review)	Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning, Interns, Program Specialists
Data Collection and Processing:		
• Data Collection	Contractor	Subgrantees, Interns
• Data Processing	Contractor	Interns, Evaluation Coordinator
Analysis of Data	Contractor	Evaluation Coordinator, Interns, Program Specialist, Director of Planning
Dissemination	Contractor	Evaluation Coordinator, Interns
Assuring Utilization	Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning	Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning, Top Management
Management of Evaluation	Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning	Evaluation Coordinator, Director of Planning

*OCJP reviews involved the program specialists, top management and evaluation coordinator.

III. MICHIGAN'S EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Michigan MEP grant ran from September 1975 until December 1977. During that period, they were able to set up and operate both evaluation systems. Two intensive evaluations and four standard evaluations were produced and fed into OCJP decision processes and staff functions.

This chapter describes OCJP expectations for the MEP and its experience in implementing it. Section A describes the strategy OCJP used to set up and test the evaluation systems. Section B describes the results of the strategy. The following chapter discusses the users' reactions to the information produced and OCJP decisions on continuation.

A. MICHIGAN'S STRATEGY AND EXPECTATIONS

The Michigan strategy for developing and testing the planned evaluation system consisted of seven major steps. Two were intended to establish an in-house capability:

- acquire staff and contractors to develop and test the system; and
- develop a curriculum and train OCJP staff in a common approach to evaluation.

Two were intended to involve the OCJP staff in the evaluation process by:

- establishing "application groups" for the design and dissemination of standard evaluations; and
- establishing an in-house user group to participate in intensive evaluation design with the contractor.

Two were intended to develop and test the process of doing evaluation:

- implement standard evaluation; and
- implement intensive evaluation.

And finally, the seventh was intended to have "top management" review the MEP experience and establish a long range evaluation policy:

- establish an evaluation policy group.

The relationship among the steps is shown in Figure 4. Here we briefly describe each.

For the first step, OCJP decided to hire an evaluation coordinator to run the MEP, and to provide the coordinator with the following personnel:

- four student interns to help with the training and standard evaluation;
- a trainer under contract to develop the curriculum, provide training, and guide the standard evaluation design process; and
- a \$190,000 contract with Michigan State University (MSU) for two intensive evaluations.

In addition, the entire OCJP staff (40 people) were to be trained and available for application groups and intensive design groups. It was expected that the on-going evaluation system would continue the interns and the intensive evaluation contracts if they proved to be successful. Staff training was seen as a one time thing; the training contract was to be discontinued.

The second step was to be carried out by the trainer with assistance from the interns. A framework defining evaluation was to be developed, packaged in a curriculum and delivered through an all staff training program. Each OCJP staff person was to receive 50 hours of training, and each member of management 32 hours. The groups assembled for training

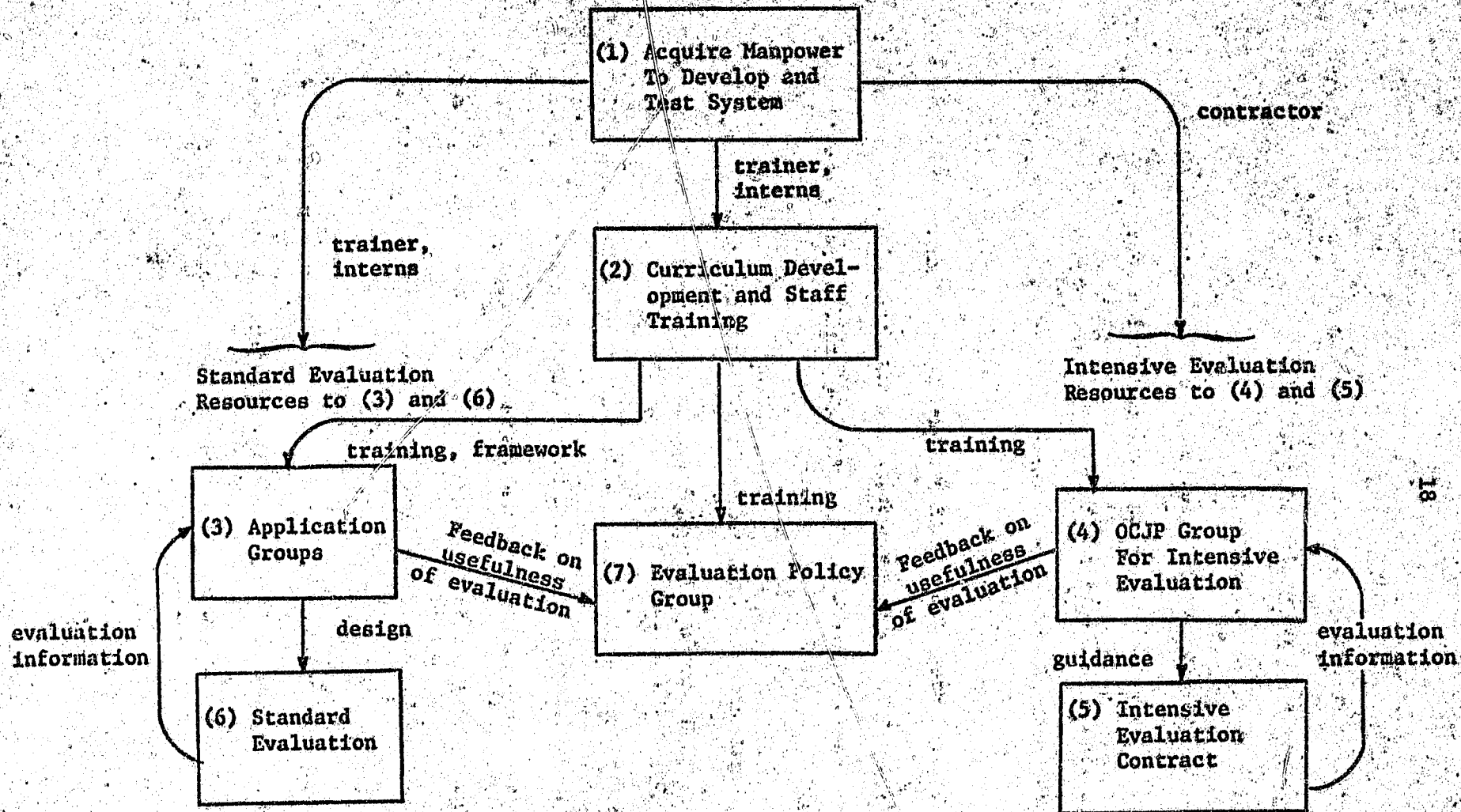


FIGURE 4: MICHIGAN OCJP'S EVALUATION STRATEGY

were called "fundamental" groups. While training on this scale was seen as a one time thing, the curriculum was to be available for training new staff and refresher courses.

Following the "fundamental" group training, the staff was to be organized into "application groups," Step 3, to apply what they learned by designing standard evaluations. The trainer would chair the groups, the interns would act as recorder and facilitator. Four groups were to be formed to design four evaluations. Implementation of the standard designs, Step 6, had the interns and evaluation coordinator largely responsible for establishing the data flow from projects, data processing, analysis and dissemination. The application groups were to be reestablished when results were available to review.

OCJP staff were also to be involved in the design of the intensive evaluations through Step 4. Two OCJP/contractor groups were to be formed consisting of the evaluation coordinator, the program specialists responsible for the area under study, and the contractor. The staff's role was to guide the contractor's design work and serve as a vehicle for dissemination. The contract had a two to three month design phase built into each study which required the contractor to:

- interact with OCJP to determine their information needs;
- meet periodically with OCJP groups for review and input;
- review grant materials;
- conduct site visits to projects;
- develop draft designs and review with OCJP; and
- finalize evaluation designs and methodologies and prepare status reports.

OCJP had to approve the evaluation designs presented in the status report before work could proceed. Step 5 had the contractor implementing the evaluation designs.

A seventh step was also to be carried out following the "fundamental group" training--a group consisting of OCJP management was to meet five times and develop an evaluation policy for OCJP.

Table 4 summarizes the expected results of each step and plans for continuing the activity if it was successful. Of all the steps, only the all-staff training was seen as a one-time effort. All the others might be expected to have a significant role in an on-going evaluation system.

Table 4 also indicates the degree to which expectations were met, as will be discussed in Section B below. The code used in Table 4 is:

- (+): Component met OCJP's expectations.
- (0): Component only partially implemented or successful
- (-): Expectations not realized

OCJP was very successful in implementing all steps except the seventh, long range evaluation policy. In the end, some of the steps were not continued in any form, and some were continued but modified significantly.

B. MICHIGAN OCJP's EXPERIENCE

Table 5 summarizes OCJP's experience with each step in the strategy. As Table 5 indicates, only the last step, the long range evaluation policy group, did not realize its expectations to some degree. While some problems came up at each step along the way, the Director of Planning¹ was able to deal with them and complete the MEP field test pretty much as planned. Figure 5 shows the schedule over which the components of the MEP strategy were carried out. In the end, OCJP was able to set up its

1. There was high turnover in the Evaluation Coordinator position, and the Director of Planning played a strong role in managing the MEP.

TABLE 4: MICHIGAN'S DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGY
--EXPECTED RESULTS

Steps	Result Expected from Steps	Part of Step To Be Continued if Successful
(1) Acquire manpower to develop and test system.	(+) Provide: • evaluation coordination; • trainer under contract; • four student interns for standard evaluations; and • contract with MSU for intensive evaluations.	(0) Interns and MSU contract would be continued (training seen as one-time only).
(2) Curriculum development and staff training (fundamental groups)	(+) • A common approach to and definition of evaluation • A curriculum for evaluation training • About 25 hours of training to each OCJP staff person	(0) Curriculum would be available for informal training.
(3) Application groups for standard evaluation	(+) • In-house staff produce four evaluation designs --instruments and analysis plans. • Program specialists use resulting information.	(+) Application groups produce standard designs for additional programs.
(4) OCJP/contractor group for intensive evaluation	(0) • Two evaluation designs meeting OCJP information needs • OCJP group uses evaluation results.	(0) Groups would be formed to guide future intensive evaluations. (-) Analysis of OCJP information needs
(5) Intensive evaluation implementation	(+) • Two intensive evaluations implemented as designed.	(-) MSU contract for intensive evaluations would be continued. (0) OCJP money would be budgeted for intensive evaluation.
(6) Standard evaluation implementation	(+) • Establish data flow from the field to OCJP and data processing system.	(+) Standard evaluations continue to be produced. (0) Central data processing and analysis continue.
(7) Long range evaluation policy (evaluation policy group)	(-) • An evaluation policy, OCJP based on the MEP experience.	(-) Policy would be adopted by OCJP.

Legend: +: Expectations met.
0: Partially implemented or successful.
-: Expectations not met.

CONTINUED

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