IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS REPORTING GUIDANCE

Implementation analyses are an important component of impact evaluations. The descriptive findings of an implementation analysis can help contextualize the impact findings and generate hypotheses about why the program did or did not have a positive impact.

In a brief impact report, it is important to tell a clear, succinct story about program implementation. Developing a structured implementation analysis plan before examining the data will foster an efficient and effective approach for analyzing the data and reporting the findings.

OAH are asking all grantees with independent evaluations to provide an implementation analysis plan. The analysis plan will describe a core set of implementation elements and analyses that will be used to describe adherence, quality, contrast, and context in a brief section of the final evaluation report on program impacts. OAH recognize that while this analysis plan will only focus on a limited number of implementation elements and analyses, some grantees may be planning longer implementation reports for other publications. If so, there is no need to describe the additional data you will use, and the additional analyses that you plan to conduct in this implementation analysis plan. Please focus this implementation analysis plan on a limited number of requested elements outlined below so that the final presentation is consistent with the goal of briefly describing implementation adherence, quality, counterfactual, and context in the impact report.

All implementation analysis plans submitted as part of this request should include a discussion of how you will measure and report on: (1) **Adherence of implementation to the program model or the planned intervention**, (2) **Quality of delivery of the intervention (if available)**, (3) **Counterfactual experiences (to understand the effective contrast between intervention and control groups)**, and (4) **Contextual factors** **that may have affected program implementation and/or the evaluation**.

The implementation analysis plan should be structured into the following two sections (and include completed versions of Tables A.1 and A.2 described below): (I) Data Sources and Data Collection, and (II) Analysis. **You do not need to complete a Section III (Findings) at this time (this will be completed as part of the final evaluation report)**.

## I. Data sources and data collection

For the analysis plan, in Table A.1 (Appendix A below), please indicate the data that will be used to assess each of the core aspects of program implementation, including (1) adherence to planned implementation for the treatment group, (2) implementation quality (if available), (3) counterfactual experiences, and (4) the context in which the program was implemented. These implementation elements are described in detail in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on [Implementation Findings](https://www.tppevalta.com/Shared%20Documents/Evaluation%20Updates/TPP%20Update3_120611.pdf).

We are requesting information for a small subset of implementation elements, which are part of the performance measure data collection, mentioned in the implementation FAQ, and are expected to be correlated with program impacts. The implementation elements of interest for this implementation analysis plan are not a comprehensive set of all possible features of program implementation. They instead focus on a set of primary implementation elements that can be easily quantified and described to help readers understand key features of implementation that might influence participant outcomes. These implementation elements are listed in Table A.1 in the appendix, along with *italicized* *examples* of the types of data you plan to use to measure program implementation.[[1]](#footnote-1) We are requesting that in this table, you provide information on the following aspects of your implementation analysis (these are shown as columns in the table):

* **Types of data used to assess implementation:** Please indicate the types of data that you will use to measure each implementation element (row in the table). Data sources might include program materials, attendance logs, observation tools, interviews, focus groups, etc.
* **Frequency/sampling of data collection:** For each implementation element, please indicate the frequency with which the data were collected, and how each element was sampled. For example, attendance might be collected for all sessions on a daily basis, but observations of program delivery might only occur during 10 percent of all sessions (perhaps selected randomly from all possible sessions).
* **Party responsible for data collection:** Please indicate whether the data were collected by program or evaluation staff (that is, whether the data collectors are affiliated with the program or if they are affiliated with the independent evaluator).

Below is a set of specific considerations to help guide data collection for each component of the implementation analysis (i.e., the panels, or collection or rows, in Table A.1):

* **Adherence:** Adherence to the program requires documenting: (1) How many and how often were sessions offered, (2) What and how much was received, (3) What content was delivered to youth, and (4) Who delivered material to youth. For each of these four aspects of adherence listed in the first panel of Table A.1, please provide information about the data sources used to measure the degree to which the intervention was delivered with adherence to the planned intervention.
* **Quality [if available]:** Please outline the data sources, such as quality rating scales, that will be used to measure the quality of implementation, including any definitions of “quality” that are used for each implementation element. ***Quality of implementation should only be included in the implementation analysis plan if there is a scientific assessment of “quality” being used to assess program delivery through observations (for example, using the Youth Program Quality Assessment [YPQA] to measure the quality of interactions between staff, youth and youth engagement with the material, etc.).*** If data on implementation quality are not available, please indicate this information in Table A.2 or in prose.
* **Counterfactual:** Please provide information on the types of data you will use to describe the experiences of the counterfactual condition. Whenever possible, it would be best to describe adherence to the counterfactual condition with similar implementation elements used to assess adherence for the intervention group (that is, as many of the four implementation elements used in the Adherence column as possible). We expect that at a minimum, all grantees will have survey items that will broadly describe the experiences of the counterfactual group, and that these survey data will be used as the data source for this element.
* **Context:** Please outline any key sources of data that are used to measure/define other TPP programming broadly available to study participants (both T and C groups), as well as other important views/attitudes/events that affected program implementation. For example, if information on programming available to all study participants was obtained through a school district website, please provide that information here. Furthermore, if there are any data sources that describe substantial unplanned adaptations to programming (i.e., aside from those planned adaptations identified pre-implementation), these data sources should be listed here. Substantial unplanned adaptation(s) include those that affect the population, setting, or program delivery (e.g., Program implementation occurred over 8 months instead of the required 9 months; a lesson or activity was changed or added; significant cultural adaptations were made; and others).

See the table footnotes for guidance on how to fill out the table and the italicized examples in the cells of the table. If needed, please elaborate on elements listed (for instance, measures of program content delivered, quality, youth engagement, etc.).

If it would be helpful to supplement the completed version of Table A.1 with additional text, please do so.

## II. Implementation analysis

For the implementation analysis plan , describe how you will use the data documented in Table A.1 in your implementation analyses in your final report to describe on-the-ground implementation (that is, what and how the intervention was delivered to youth). In this section of the report, please articulate how you plan to quantify/describe the implementation elements in your report. Describe the measures you will create for each implementation element of implementation, focusing on easily understandable indicators and benchmarks. Discuss how you will analyze and report on these measures for each of the elements in Table A.2 (this table contains the same implementation elements shown in Table A.1):

* **Adherence to planned intervention.** Describe the approach that will be used to assess and quantify the data used to measure (1) what was offered, (2) what was received, what content was delivered to youth, and (4) who delivered material to youth. For example, to create an indicator of average session duration, an entry in Table A.2 might indicate that average session duration is calculated as the average of the observed session lengths, measured in minutes. Or to use a benchmark measure of attendance, the measure described in Table A.2 could be the percentage of students who attended 75 percent or more program sessions.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* **Quality (if available).** Describe the approach used to assess quality of program delivery (for example, constructs and analyses based on quantitative quality ratings given during observations). As described earlier, if there are reliable assessments of quality of interactions and youth engagement (likely from observations), please describe how the implementation elements will be synthesized into easily understood benchmarks. For example, a benchmark indicator of quality of interactions could be the percentage of observed sessions that were scored as having “high quality” interactions by an independent observer.
* **Counterfactual.** Describe how the experiences of the counterfactual group will be assessed. Ideally, these will include the same implementation elements used to describe adherence for the intervention group. However, if the counterfactual is no intervention/business-as-usual, describe the methods used to quantify the experiences of the counterfactual. For example, if adherence data on the comparison group are available (such as attendance), Table A.2 could use as a benchmark the percentage of youth in the comparison group who attended at least 75 percent of program sessions, or the average percentage of sessions attended by comparison group youth.
* **Context.** Describe how data collected on program context will be used in the implementation analysis. In particular, how will this information be summarized (e.g., in a descriptive paragraph describing how the contextual factor influenced implementation). For example, if the intervention occurs in a saturated environment where both intervention and comparison group youth are receiving several other pregnancy prevention initiatives, the implementation element entry in Table A.2 could indicate that all of the initiatives available to both groups of youth will be listed in the final report. We understand that during program implementation, some unplanned adaptations to the originally selected intervention may be necessary. For example, due to district shutdown (a contextual factor), a selected intervention could only be implemented for 40 weeks instead of the expected 45 weeks, and as a result, a subset of sessions were dropped (thus, the implemented intervention was effectively an “adaptation” of the proposed intervention). Please provide information on how (contextual) factors that influenced implementation or caused a substantial unplanned adaptation in implementation will be described (as appropriate).

In addition to specifying how each of the implementation elements will be operationalized/quantified, please use Section II as a place to articulate any limitations of a given data point. For example, if data collected for a particular implementation element do not include the population of all data points (or a random sample of all data points), and instead is a purposive sample, then this should be noted as a limitation in Table A.2. Other limitations could include questions regarding the quality and/or objectivity of the data, given how it was collected. See Table A.2 for examples of limitations in italics.

Please supplement the completed version of Table A.2 with additional text as needed.

## III. Findings (final report)

The implementation data and analyses described above will form the basis for a description of implementation findings in your final report. Because programs are still ongoing, and additional implementation data are being collected, we do *not* expect grantees to present any implementation analysis findings in the implementation analysis plan. Focus on your plans for analyzing the data that are relevant to adherence, quality, contrast, and context.

We expect that in your final reports, you can distill the information presented in your implementation analysis plan and the analysis itself into short, prose descriptions of implementation grounded in numeric findings (for example, “95 percent of all program sessions were delivered… 82 percent of the sample attended at least 75 percent of the program sessions… 93 percent of the staff received the expected training… 12 percent of the sessions had poor staff-student interaction scores” etc.). If necessary, tables containing additional details about program implementation results can be included in appendices for the final report.

## Appendix A: Implementation data and analysis tables

Table A.1. Data used to address implementation research questions

| **Implementation Element** | **Types of data used to assess whether the element of the intervention was implemented as intendeda** | **Frequency/sampling of data collectionb** | **Party responsible for data collectionc** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Adherence** | | | |
| **(1) How many and how often were sessions offered:** e.g.,number of sessions delivered, average duration, average frequency | *e.g., All sessions offered are captured in MIS*  *Length (number of minutes) of program sessions captured in MIS* | *e.g., All sessions delivered are captured in MIS*  *Session length sampled 1x/week* | *e.g., Program staff*  *Program staff* |
| **(2) What and how much was received:** e.g.,average number (percent) of sessions attended, percentage of sample that did not attend at all (no-shows) | *e.g., Daily attendance records* | *e.g., student attendance at all sessions is captured in MIS* | *e.g., Program staff* |
| **(3) What content was delivered to youth:**  e.g.,total number of topics covered, proportion of material that was ultimately discussed in sessions | *e.g., Number of topics covered captured on observation spreadsheet*d | *e.g., Classroom observations occurred 2x/year* | *e.g., Evaluation staff* |
| **(4) Who delivered material to youth:**  e.g.,# and type of staff delivering the program to participants, position requirements or qualifications, % of staff trained and receiving ongoing support | *e.g., List of staff members hired and trained to implement program*  *Background qualifications of staff members from staff applications* | *e.g., Data on all staff members are available to program staff* | *e.g., Program staff* |
| **Quality** | | | |
| **Quality of staff-participant interactions** | *e.g., Observations of interaction quality using protocol developed by evaluators* | *e.g., Convenience sample of 10% of classroom sessions were selected for observation* | *e.g., Evaluation staff* |
| **Quality of youth engagement with program** | *e.g., Observations of engagement using the YPQA* | *e.g., Random sample of 5% of all sessions were selected for observation* | *e.g., Evaluation staff* |
| **Counterfactualee** | | | |
| **Experiences of counterfactual condition** | *e.g., Survey items on baseline and follow-up assessments*  *Focus groups of comparison group members* | *e.g., pre and post intervention*  *Convenience sample of comparison group participants (1x)* | *e.g., Evaluation staff* |
| **Context** | | | |
| **Other TPP programming available or offered to study participants (both T and C)** | *e.g., district website listing all TPP programming*  *Interview with school district curriculum director* | *e.g., ad hoc*  *Once per year* | *e.g., Evaluation staff*  *Evaluation staff* |
| **External events affecting implementation (for instance school turnover, budget cuts, etc.)** | *e.g., news sources indicated school closure list* | *e.g., ad hoc* | *e.g., Program staff* |
| **Substantial unplanned adaptation(s)** | *e.g., adaptation request, work plan, 6 month progress report, annual progress report* | *e.g., annually, ad hoc* | *e.g., program staff, project director, evaluation staff* |

a Indicate the types of data which are used to measure each aspect of program implementation: for example, pen-and-paper surveys, online surveys, interviews, focus groups, direct observations [videos, audio, in-person], checklists, meetings notes.

b Indicate how often the data are collected, and how data collection events were sampled: for example, daily, during each session, every 10th session, randomly sampled 5% of sessions for observations.

c Identify the types of staff responsible for collecting the data: for example, administrative staff, program staff, and/or evaluator.

d It is expected that OAH-approved facilitator logs will be used for this data collection.

e If possible, please use the adherence implementation elements to describe the experiences of the counterfactual. Otherwise, please provide information on the implementation elements used to capture the actual experiences of the members of the comparison group (e.g., a survey item that requests self-reported info on other TPP experiences).

Table A.2. Methods used to operationalize each implementation element

| **Implementation Element** | **Methods used to operationalize each implementation element** |
| --- | --- |
| **Adherence** | |
| **(1) How many and how often were sessions offered:** e.g.,number of sessions delivered, average duration, average frequency | *e.g., The total number of sessions is a sum of the sessions captured in the MIS.*  *Average session duration is calculated as the average of the observed session lengths, measured in minutes.*  *Average weekly frequency is calculated as the total number of sessions divided by the total number of weeks when programming was offered.* |
| **(2) What and how much was received:** e.g.,average number (percent) of sessions attended, percentage of sample that did not attend at all (no-shows) | *e.g., Average number of sessions attended will be calculated as the average of the number of sessions that each student attended.*  *Percentage of sessions attended will be calculated as the total number of sessions attended divided by the total number of sessions offered.*  *(Note: A limitation of these data is that attendance was not reliably entered for cohorts 1 and 2 of this 6 cohort evaluation).* |
| **(3) What content was delivered to youth:**  e.g.,total number of topics covered, proportion of material that was ultimately discussed in sessions | *e.g., Total number of topics covered is the combination of the topics checked during the 2x/year observation.*  *(Note: a limitation to this measure is that the two observation points may not be a reliable way to see whether all of the content was covered).* |
| **(4) Who delivered material to youth:**  e.g.,# and type of staff delivering the program to participants, position requirements or qualifications, % of staff trained and receiving ongoing support | *e.g., Total number of staff delivering the program is a simple count of staff members implementing the program. We will report the average # of staff members implementing the program at any one point in time during the 3 year intervention.*  *% of staff trained will be calculated as the # of staff members who were trained divided by the total # of staff who delivered the program.*  *(Note: a limitation to the staff background information is that it is self-reported, and some staff may have indicated they had experiences that are not accurate).* |
| **Quality** | |
| **Quality of staff-participant interactions** | *e.g., An indicator of staff-participant interactions will be calculated as the % of observed interactions where the independent evaluator scored the interaction as “high quality.”*  *(Note: because a convenience sample of observations were used to capture staff-participant interaction quality, this measure may not be representative of all possible interactions)* |
| **Quality of youth engagement with program** | *e.g., A benchmark of the quality of youth engagement will be calculated as the % of sessions where the independent evaluator scored youth engagement as “moderately engaged” or higher.* |
| **Counterfactual** | |
| **Experiences of counterfactual** | *e.g., The data on the survey question on experiences of the counterfactual at follow-up will be presented as frequency counts and percentages.* |
| **Context** | |
| **Other TPP programming available or offered to study participants (both T and C)** | *e.g., All of the TPP programming available to both intervention and comparison groups described on district websites will be listed in the final report.* |
| **External events affecting implementation (for instance school turnover, budget cuts, etc.)** | *e.g., The number of schools that were closed as a result of district turnaround initiatives (unrelated to the TPP programming that occurred in this project) will be indicated in the final report.* |
| **Substantial unplanned adaptation(s)** | *e.g., The number of staff members who delivered the program (instead of teachers, as originally intended) will be indicated in the final report.*  *e.g., The unplanned change in program delivery setting will be indicated in the final report. The resulting change in time allocated for facilitation of sessions will also be indicated in the final report.* |

1. If there are any additional implementation elements that you have collected, and wish to include them in the implementation analysis, please mention them in the tables below. Or alternately, if there are implementation elements that are listed here which were not collected (or are not appropriate for your particular study), please indicate this in the completed version of the table. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. There may be some unintended changes to program implementation that occurred during the course of the project that resulted in an “adaptation” of the intended program model. For the purposes of this implementation analysis plan, please plan to use indicators that reflect the initially intended intervention targets, rather than what was ultimately possible in the unintended “adapted” version of program implementation. For example, if the originally intended implementation was 10 sessions, but only 8 sessions were ultimately possible due to a contextual factor, then the implementation analysis indicator described in the plan should be relative to the original 10 intended sessions. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)