Impact Statements for Multistate Projects

H. Michael Harrington

Executive Director, WAAESD
What?

- Over the last several years we all have been challenged to measure the outcomes of our activities.
Why?

- The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)
- AREERA of 1998
- Performance assessment based resource allocations.
- Development of assessment tools.
- The challenge has been to assess and effectively communicate the impacts of our efforts.
Who cares?

- The Public
- Federal, state and local officials
- University administration
- Stakeholders
- External funding sources
- Industry representatives
Why does their opinion matter?

- Seeking quantifiable benefits of programs
- Have competition for their attention
- Exercise some type of control over your programs
- $$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Why should you care?

- Provides an overview of your programs
- Builds a greater understanding of what you do and its importance
- Helps keep programs and activities organized and focused
- Encourages community involvement and support

$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
What is Impact?

- Quantitative, measurable benefits of the research outputs as experienced by those who receive them.
- The quantifiable difference a program makes in the quality of life for its clients and general citizenry.
- The measurable change in:
  - Economic and/or Social condition
  - Environmental condition
- The change in understanding within a discipline.
Examples

- Adoption of technology
- Creation of jobs
- Reduced cost to the consumer
- Less pesticide exposure to farmers
- Access to more nutritious food
- Cleaner environment and healthier communities
These are outputs!!!

- Reports, publications, patents, data, workshops
- Description of the program
- General, long-range goal
- Number of persons attending a meeting
- Number of persons enrolled in a program
Importance of impact statements to administrators

- Makes it easy to sell research, extension, and education programs when impacts can be demonstrated
- Builds greater understanding of programs
- Provides a product you can reuse
- Serves as a repository of anecdotes for speeches and letters
Importance of impact statements to faculty and staff

- Programs get more exposure
- Opportunity to attract funding sources
- Informs the public about the value of your efforts
What is an Impact Statement?

- It is a brief non-technical document that describes the difference that your research, teaching, or extension efforts have made.
- Specifically, it states your accomplishments and the payoff to society.
- It answers the questions: 
  - "So what?"
  - "Who cares?"
Ideal Statement Elements

- It demonstrates quantifiable change in at least one of the following:
  - Economic value or efficiency
  - Environmental quality
  - Social well-being
  - Health or quality of life
  - Discipline
Components

- Issue
- Actions – What has been done
- Impact – the benefits
- Who was responsible
- Contact information
Key ideas for MRF Projects

- What are the project’s objectives and what do these mean to each of the members?
- Interdependence and relatedness
  - What have you been able to accomplish as a result of your participation?
Potential Impact

- Potential impact should be considered; especially in basic research, teaching, or youth and family work.
- Should be clearly identified as “potential”
- Include quantitative predictions based on sound models, if possible.
- Include accomplishments to date that will lead to impact.
Examples

- Development of new methodology or approaches
- Implementation of solutions or adoption of recommendations developed
- Leveraging of resources (grants, etc.)
Impact Statement Example
Parent and household influences on calcium intake among preadolescents (W-1003)

**Issue**

- Kids’ calcium intake is well below the 1300 mg Adequate Intake level for calcium set by the Institute of Medicine.

- During this time of maximum bone growth, the children of America are not consuming sufficient calcium to reach peak bone mass; potentially leaving them vulnerable to osteoporosis later in life.
What has been done

- Focus groups of boys and girls were used to learn about calcium intake.
- Results were used to develop a food frequency and motivation/barrier questionnaire for multicultural kids to learn about kids’ calcium intake.
- Parental and household factors influence calcium intake in teens.
- Based on results, interventions will be developed to prevent osteoporosis in later life.
Impact

- Information has been developed on what motivates or prevents kids from eating foods high in calcium.
- Successful intervention strategies have been developed to increase calcium intake among Asian, Hispanic, and White youth.
States
- Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming
**Problem**

Something was killing watercress on an Oahu farm. The grower didn't know what hit him and his crop. He turned to CTAHR Cooperative Extension agent to identify and stop the killer. Thus began the watercress caper.

**Solution**

CTAHR Extension agent Steve Fujihara called in colleagues from UH Manoa and USGS to help. The usual suspects were first in the lineup: aphids, thrips, and aster yellows. The list of suspects was narrowed considerably, but the mystery remained. In the meantime, the first watercress crop was destroyed, and the killer had moved to another farm. This serial killer had to be stopped.

**Impact**

Field problems and lab science converged when aphids, thrips, watercress were put in solution culture. Despite optimum nutrient conditions, the plants' symptoms weren't reproducible. Extension agent Steve Fujihara (left) studied the problem from its beginning, while colleagues at another Wai'anae farm provided the high-tech analyses indicating the culprit.

Out of nowhere, something was killing watercress on an Oahu farm.
What does your mind’s eye see when you read “protea” — exotic, vividly colored, beautiful flowers, right? Hard to imagine that they could be improved upon, but important work is being done at this moment at CTAHR to hybridize the pincushion protea to make it even more beautiful, to make it flower longer so that Hawaii’s growers are competitive for more months of the year, to make it disease resistant, even to make it lighter weight so that it costs less to ship to distant markets. Thanks to variety development work begun in the 1970s and expanded by CTAHR extension specialist Kenneth Leonhardt, Hawaii’s protea growers are looking forward with excitement to a bright economic future. Maui protea grower Carver Wilson says, without hesitation, “CTAHR’s protea hybridization program has made the Hawaii protea industry viable.” Leonhardt and Pamela Shingaki, working in close cooperation with David Oka, manager of CTAHR’s Kula Research Station, and Hawaii protea growers, have created a hybridization program second to none. Wilson says their work is so impressive that it will be a featured highlight of an international protea conference to be held in Hong-Kong in the spring of 2002. CTAHR’s efforts are helping to build a local industry whose profits will stay at home and contribute to Hawaii’s economic resurgence.