

# Process Evaluation

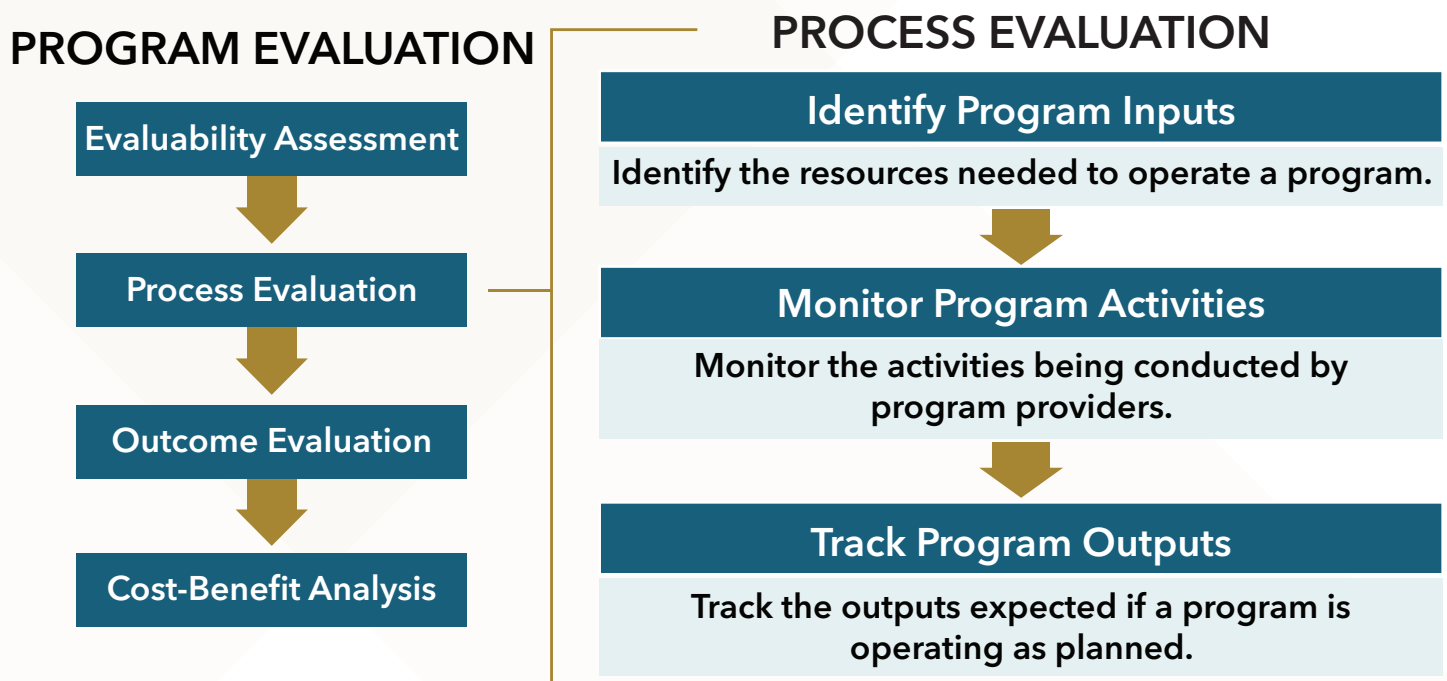
## What is a process evaluation?

**Process evaluations aim to describe the process of a program or service's delivery** – documenting the program model, tracking its progress or implementation, and measuring key milestones along the way. The goal is to understand whether a program's strategy is being implemented as planned (e.g., staff are following procedures) and producing the intended outputs (e.g., appropriate clients, such as victims, are receiving services). Process evaluations can help:

- Provide information about a program's driving forces and challenges so service providers can correct things, as needed, during a program's delivery or after its completion.
- Increase a program's transparency to stakeholders by identifying which elements have been successfully adopted and to support future program replications.
- Explain why a program reaches (or does not reach) its desired outcomes, when combined with an [Outcome Evaluation](#).

## What steps are involved in a process evaluation?

Before any evaluation, it is critical to understand what you want to assess. Outlining a program's logic model, or conceptual framework, helps clarify its intended goals and objectives; inputs, activities, and outputs; as well as expected outcomes. After the program model is understood, three key steps are involved in a process evaluation (see figure and next page).



1. **Identify program inputs** – resources, funding, staff—needed to operate the program. Document these so others understand what is required to make the program run.
2. **Monitor program activities** – both planned and actual—to determine which services are operating as intended and where activities differ from what was intended.
3. **Track program outputs** – including the number of clients eligible for a program, the number actually served, and so forth—as evidence that activities were conducted as planned. *Outputs measure what a program immediately produces, which differs from outcomes that measure effectiveness at, for example, improving victim well-being.*

## How do I conduct a process evaluation?

The following activities commonly support a process evaluation:

- **Review program documentation** including plans that describe program goals, objectives, and activities, and guides that outline implementation procedures.
- **Observe the program** when it is getting started and when it's actively underway to learn how things were supposed to work and how they functioned in practice.
- **Interview key staff** implementing the program, including frontline providers, managers, and partners; aim to capture perspectives before and after the program is underway.
- **Develop checklists** for staff administering the program to track progress as they deliver services. Emphasize honesty in reporting and regularly discuss any challenges.
- **Talk to clients** to understand their perspectives on the amount, type, and usefulness of services they received. Respect procedures to [protect victims](#) during research.
- **Survey staff and stakeholders** to assess their understanding of how things were supposed to occur, how they actually occurred, and suggestions for improvements.
- **Review program/service data** collected by providers on the number of clients who received the program and whether referrals or services were delivered as planned.
- **Summarize information collected** to identify where the program went well and where it needs improvement. Share findings with key stakeholders to support program refinement, guide strategic planning, and improve the response to crime victims.

## Additional Resources

For more on [program evaluation](#) and a [library](#) of research materials, visit [CVR online](#).

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