

Promising Practices

EVALUATION STRATEGY & TOOL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE



PROMISING PRACTICES PROJECT RESOURCE

DEVELOPED BY HUMANE CANADA



EVALUATION STRATEGY & TOOL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE



ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS AS ALLIES IN PREVENTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

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ENCORE GRAPHICS



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INTRODUCTION

This guide was developed by Humane Canada's Promising Practices Project to support organizations in implementing the Promising Practices Framework within their humane education programs. It provides practical tools and guidance to help organizations integrate the framework effectively and evaluate the impact on both their programs and participants. By using this guide, organizations can better assess how their humane education efforts align with best practices and contribute to meaningful, measurable outcomes.

WHAT IS PROGRAM EVALUATION?

Program evaluation is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing information to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of a program. The main goal is to understand whether the program is achieving its intended outcomes and how it can be improved. There are four key aspects of program evaluation.



KEY ASPECTS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION

1 PURPOSE

This is to determine if the program is working as intended, as well as to inform if the program should continue or be modified. This will inform future implementation, while also demonstrating accountability to funders, stakeholders, and the public.

2 TYPES OF EVALUATION

There are different types of evaluation that will be explored in this guide. The organization is encouraged to determine the types of evaluation prior to implementing the program as this will help inform the plan for the gathering of evaluation data.

3 METHODS

These are the different ways of gathering data for the evaluation which will be explored further in this guide.

4 INTEREST HOLDERS

These are the individuals, organizations, and others who have a vested interest in the program or utilized the programs and will be affected by the results.



WHAT IS AN EVALUATION STRATEGY?

An evaluation strategy is a structured plan that outlines how a program or project will be evaluated. It defines the purpose, methods, timeline, responsibilities, and resources needed to assess a program’s effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. There are multiple components to an evaluation strategy that are contained in this guide. These components include:

EVALUATION STRATEGY COMPONENTS

› PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

› EVALUATION QUESTIONS

› INDICATORS AND OUTCOMES

› METHODS AND TOOLS

› DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

› INTEREST HOLDER INVOLVEMENT

› TIMELINE AND RESOURCES

› REPORTING AND USE OF FINDINGS



WHAT ARE EVALUATION TOOLS?

Evaluation tools are the specific instruments and methods used to collect data and assess the performance, outcomes, or impact of a program or project. These tools help evaluators gather evidence to answer key evaluation questions and measure progress toward goals. These tools may include:

EVALUATION TOOLS

› SURVEYS

› QUESTIONNAIRES

› INTERVIEWS

› FOCUS GROUPS

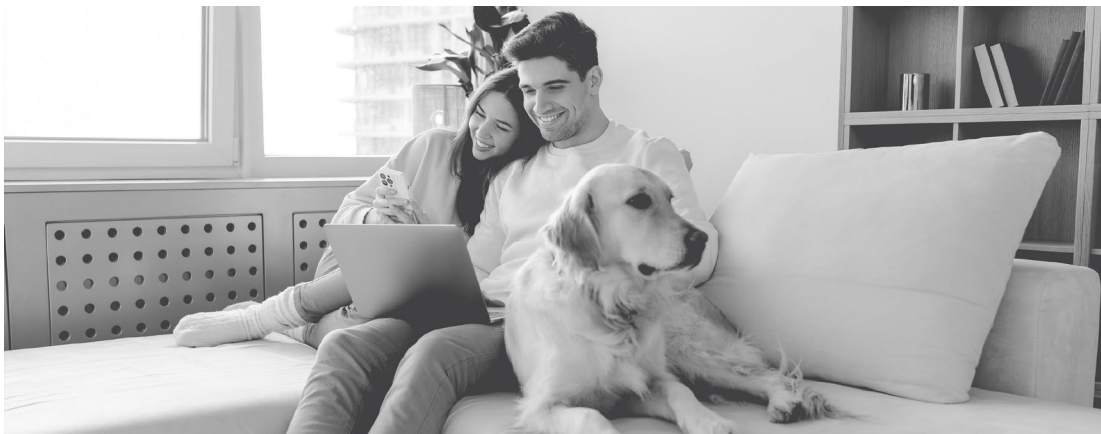
› CASE STUDIES

› DOCUMENT REVIEW

› OBSERVATION CHECKLISTS

› PRE- AND POST-ASSESSMENTS

› LOGIC MODEL/THEORY OF CHANGE





WHY UTILIZE PROGRAM EVALUATION?

Program evaluation is essential for understanding whether a humane education program is meeting its objectives and having the intended impact – especially in efforts to engage allies in ending gender-based violence. By systematically assessing the program’s effectiveness, evaluation helps identify what’s working, what needs improvement, and how the program influences participants’ knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours.

In the context of gender-based violence prevention, evaluation provides concrete evidence of the program’s impact—such as increased empathy, greater awareness of harmful gender norms, and strengthened allyship among participants. It also ensures accountability to interest holders and funders and supports strategic decision-making. Ultimately, evaluation empowers organizations to refine their approach, scale successful strategies, and contribute to broader systemic change in the fight against gender-based violence.





DEVELOPING A PROGRAM EVALUATION STRATEGY

Creating a clear and intentional evaluation strategy is a critical step for humane education programs implementing the Promising Practices Framework to engage allies in ending gender-based violence. An effective evaluation strategy helps organizations measure progress toward their goals, understand the impact of their work, and make informed decisions to strengthen their programs. This section of the guide offers practical guidance on designing an evaluation approach that aligns with your program's objectives, captures meaningful outcomes, and supports continuous learning and improvement. By embedding evaluation into your program planning and delivery, you not only demonstrate accountability but also contribute to a deeper understanding of what drives real, lasting change.





WHO ARE YOUR KEY INTEREST HOLDERS?

Determining who your key interest holders are is a foundational step in developing a strong program evaluation strategy. In the context of humane education programs using the Promising Practices Framework to engage allies in ending gender-based violence, identifying these individuals and groups ensures that the evaluation reflects the values, needs, and expectations of those most invested in the program's success.

DETERMINING KEY INTEREST HOLDERS

There are multiple ways of determining key interest holders. These methods include:

› **INTEREST HOLDER MAPPING**

› **SURVEYS & INTERVIEWS**

› **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

› **LISTENING SESSIONS**

› **FOCUS GROUPS**

› **COMMUNITY FORUMS**





Knowing your key interest holders helps shape the evaluation questions, priorities, and outcomes. For example, funders may want evidence of impact, while educators might focus on classroom effectiveness, and participants may value personal growth. Involving interest holders ensures that the evaluation findings are meaningful and actionable. It increases the likelihood that results will be used to improve programs and inform decision-making. When interest holders are included early and often, they're more likely to support the evaluation process and use its results. This is particularly important in gender-based violence prevention work, where trust, safety, and inclusivity are essential. Actively identifying and involving diverse voices—especially those directly impacted by gender-based violence—ensures the evaluation reflects a wide range of experiences and avoids reinforcing power imbalances.

WHAT ARE YOUR PROGRAM GOALS? WHAT ARE YOUR PROGRAM OBJECTIVES?

Clearly articulating your program goals and objectives is a critical step in developing an effective evaluation strategy—especially for humane education programs implementing the Promising Practices Framework. Goals and objectives provide the foundation for your evaluation by clarifying what your program is aiming to achieve and how you expect to get there. They guide what you measure, how you measure it, and how you interpret your findings.





DEVELOPING A THEORY OF CHANGE

Developing a Theory of Change may be a step your organization wishes to take in building a strong evaluation strategy for your humane education program. A Theory of Change is a visual and narrative roadmap that outlines how and why a program is expected to lead to meaningful change.

It connects your program's activities to its intended short, medium, and long-term outcomes, while identifying the assumptions, values, and context that shape your work. A Theory of Change helps you articulate how your program's activities—such as workshops, curriculum delivery, or community engagement—are expected to lead to specific outcomes like increased allyship or shifts in attitudes, particularly if you are implementing the Promising Practices Framework to engage allies in ending gender-based violence. A Theory of Change provides a clear framework for identifying what to measure and when. It allows you to align your evaluation questions and tools with each stage of your program's intended outcomes. A well-developed Theory of Change makes your program logic visible to interest holders, funders, and communities—demonstrating a thoughtful approach to creating impact and supporting shared understanding.





Here is an example of one method for developing a Theory of Change. However, you may wish to review additional materials regarding developing a Theory of Change.

1 START WITH THE END

Start with the end in mind – identify your long-term impact.

Example: “A community where youth are empowered as allies to prevent gender-based violence.”

2 WORK BACKWARDS THROUGH OUTCOMES

Work backwards through outcomes – outline the medium-term and short-term outcomes to achieve that impact.

Example: Increase knowledge of gender norms, develop empathy and critical thinking, strengthen commitment to allyship and social justice.



3 DEFINE ACTIVITIES AND INPUTS



Define activities and inputs – this may include listing the key program activities and resources to achieve these outcomes.

Example: Humane education workshops, peer led discussions, etc.

4 STATE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS

State your assumptions – make explicit the assumptions behind your program logic.

Example: “Youth who understand the root causes of gender-based violence are more likely to become engaged allies.”



5 ENGAGE INTEREST HOLDERS IN THE PROCESS

Engage interest holders in the process – this means co-developing the Theory of Change with staff, participants, community partners, and survivors to ensure the Theory of Change is inclusive, grounded and reflective of your community.

6 CREATE A VISUAL MAP



Create a visual map – a clear diagram showing the connections between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and long-term impact.



ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When developing an evaluation strategy for humane education programs implementing the Promising Practices Framework, ethical considerations are crucial to ensure that the evaluation process is respectful, equitable, and protective of participants. These principles safeguard the rights, dignity, and safety of all involved, particularly when addressing sensitive topics like gender-based violence. Key ethical considerations for your evaluation strategy include:

KEY ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent ensures that participants fully understand the purpose of the evaluation, the data being collected, and how their information will be used. It is a foundational ethical practice that protects participants' autonomy and rights to make informed decisions about their involvement. This consent must be clearly communicated, and consent must be offered voluntarily. It is important to ensure the participants understand what is being asked of them and that parental/guardian consent is obtained when needed. See the evaluation tools for a sample consent form for parents/guardians.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality protects participants' personal and sensitive information from being disclosed without their permission. This is especially important in a program focused on gender-based violence, where participants may be sharing personal stories or experiences related to trauma, safety concerns, or vulnerabilities. This means ensuring anonymity, when possible, and utilizing data protection methods. It is also essential to maintain clear boundaries that participants are informed of, and to ensure participants are aware of how their data will be used.



KEY ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS CONT'D

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Cultural sensitivity ensures that the evaluation process respects the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and practices of participants. Given the diverse nature of communities involved in efforts to end gender-based violence, cultural sensitivity is critical to avoid perpetuating stereotypes, biases, or misunderstandings. This includes utilizing culturally appropriate methods as well as clear language that is inclusive and respectful.



POWER DYNAMICS & INCLUSIVITY

Programs addressing gender-based violence inherently involve power imbalances, both within society and often within the program itself. Evaluators must be aware of these dynamics and ensure that the evaluation process doesn't further marginalize vulnerable groups. This includes considering how to include marginalized voices and considering how to avoid re-traumatization.



DESIGNING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Designing a program evaluation is an important step in assessing the effectiveness and impact of humane education programs. A well-structured evaluation ensures that you can systematically measure how well your program achieves its goals, identify areas for improvement, and make data-driven decisions to enhance outcomes. This process involves creating a clear framework for data collection, defining measurable indicators, selecting appropriate evaluation methods, and considering ethical principles that protect participants. By carefully designing your evaluation, you not only ensure the program's success but also contribute to the larger movement for social change, demonstrating accountability and building trust with interest holders, funders, and the communities you serve.



FACTORS THAT IMPACT YOUR EVALUATION

Several key factors must be considered for developing a program evaluation, including time, resources, and capacity. These factors can significantly influence the scope, methodology, and overall success of the evaluation process. Understanding and addressing these constraints upfront ensures a more feasible, efficient, and meaningful evaluation.





The timeline for your evaluation determines what you can measure, how long you can track outcomes, and when you will be able to report your findings. If time is limited, you may need to adjust your evaluation design, focusing on specific outcomes or reducing the scope of data collection. Factors to consider include:

- › Program duration
- › Data collection period
- › Evaluation phases
- › Reporting

The resources available for your evaluation, including funding, personnel, and technology, directly influence what kind of evaluation you can conduct, the tools you can use, and the scale of your data collection efforts. You may want to consider factors like your budget, the skills of the members of your team, the resources needed for data collection and analysis, as well as other support you have from community and participants.

Your organization's capacity—its ability to implement and manage the evaluation effectively—plays a critical role in determining whether the evaluation will be successful. This includes both organizational capacity (staff expertise, systems, and experience) and community capacity (engagement and collaboration).





SAMPLING

Sampling involves selecting a subset of participants from a larger population to represent the overall group, enabling you to draw meaningful conclusions while managing resource constraints. The sampling process must be carefully planned to ensure that the selected group accurately reflects the diversity and characteristics of the broader population you are serving. You may want to consider your target population which may be just your program participants or may include community members or additional interest holders. You may also want to consider the sampling method you choose (random, stratified, purposive, convenience) which may influence the sample size you determine. You will also need to determine how you will recruit participants, which may involve incentives for participation.



DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection is a key element of any program evaluation. The methods you choose for gathering data will determine the quality and relevance of the information that informs your program's effectiveness. In evaluating such a sensitive and critical issue, the data collection methods must be thoughtful, culturally sensitive, and aligned with the program's goals and ethical standards.

Below are various data collection methods that can be used to evaluate the impact of your program while engaging allies in gender-based violence prevention:

SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

Surveys are an efficient and scalable way to gather quantitative data from a large number of participants. They can assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions regarding gender-based violence and allyship.



INTERVIEWS

Interviews, whether one-on-one or in a group setting, provide rich, qualitative data that can help you explore participants' experiences, perspectives, and personal stories. This is particularly valuable in a program aimed at addressing gender-based violence, as it offers a deeper understanding of participants' transformations, emotional responses, and engagement in the program.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are valuable for gathering qualitative data in a group setting, allowing participants to interact and discuss their thoughts, experiences, and ideas. This method is especially useful for understanding how collective attitudes or beliefs about gender-based violence evolve as a result of the program.



CASE STUDIES

Case studies offer in-depth, qualitative insights into specific individuals or groups that have participated in the program. They allow you to document personal journeys of change and highlight the program's impact on individuals or communities.

OBSERVATIONS

Observational data can provide real-time insights into how participants engage with the program, interact with each other, and apply learned skills or knowledge. This method is particularly useful in assessing group dynamics and behavior change in natural settings.



DOCUMENT REVIEW

Reviewing existing program documents (e.g., curriculum materials, participant surveys, feedback forms, and program reports) provides valuable baseline data on the structure, content, and goals of the program, and how they align with the actual implementation and outcomes.





DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

A well-designed Data Management Plan (DMP) is critical for ensuring that the data collected during the evaluation of programs is handled ethically, securely, and efficiently. The DMP outlines how data will be stored, protected, and used, ensuring that it aligns with both ethical standards and legal requirements, while also maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of participants. To create a comprehensive data management plan, consider the following:

DATA COLLECTION & ORGANIZATION

Consider which tools will be used for compiling the data (e.g., Excel, Word) and ensure that the data is entered consistently and accurately. This may include manually checking for errors in data or periodically auditing the data set for inconsistencies.



DATA STORAGE

Data must be stored in a manner that ensures security, accessibility, and integrity. This may include digital storage (e.g., encrypted files, secure databases, backup protocols) or physical storage (e.g., locked cabinets, rooms with restricted access), and defining how long the data will be retained and how the data will be properly destroyed.



DATA ACCESS

Access to data must be strictly controlled to protect participant confidentiality and the integrity of the evaluation. Only authorized personnel should have access to specific types of data.





DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

A comprehensive Data Analysis Plan is essential for making sense of the data collected during the evaluation of the program. This plan outlines how data will be processed, analyzed, and interpreted to evaluate the program's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and draw actionable conclusions. A well-thought-out analysis plan ensures that the data is handled systematically and that the evaluation findings are both reliable and meaningful.

Before beginning the data analysis, clearly define the specific questions your program evaluation seeks to answer. These should directly align with the program's goals and objectives. Understanding these evaluation questions will guide the analysis and ensure that the data addresses the right issues.



DEVELOP EVALUATION CRITERIA

When evaluating a humane education program, it's essential to establish clear, comprehensive evaluation criteria. These criteria help measure the program's effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and equity & inclusivity. Each of these dimensions offers valuable insights into the program's overall impact, operational efficiency, long-term viability, and ability to engage diverse communities.

EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness measures the extent to which the program achieves its intended outcomes, such as increasing participants' awareness of gender-based violence, shifting attitudes, and prompting behavioural changes toward allyship. This criterion assesses whether the program is making a real difference in the lives of participants and the broader community.



EFFICIENCY

Efficiency assesses how well the program uses its resources (time, money, staff) to achieve its goals. It helps identify areas where the program can reduce costs, streamline operations, or improve processes to maximize impact.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability evaluates whether the program is designed to be sustainable in the long term, considering factors such as funding, community support, and the capacity to adapt to future needs. It reflects the program's potential to continue to make an impact even after initial funding ends or when it faces changing social dynamics.

EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY



Equity and inclusivity measure the extent to which the program is accessible to all participants, particularly those from historically marginalized or underserved communities. A truly inclusive program addresses disparities and ensures that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of gender, race, socioeconomic status, or other factors.





IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A detailed implementation plan ensures that the evaluation of your humane education program is conducted efficiently, on schedule, and with clarity on roles. This plan outlines the key phases, milestones, and responsibilities to guide your team through the evaluation process from planning to reporting. An implementation plan provides a structured, time-bound roadmap for conducting a rigorous, ethical, and inclusive evaluation of your humane education program. By clearly outlining the timeline, key milestones, and team responsibilities, you ensure accountability and consistency throughout the evaluation process.





SELECTING & DEVELOPING DATA COLLECTION METHODS & TOOLS

Selecting appropriate data collection methods is a foundational step in conducting a meaningful program evaluation. Your choice of tools and techniques should align with the evaluation goals, be sensitive to the subject matter (gender-based violence), and consider the context, capacity, and needs of participants and interest holders.



METHODS

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Focus on numerical data and measurable variables (e.g., knowledge scores, participation rates).

Example: Pre- and post-program surveys, rating scales, demographic forms.

Benefits: Easy to analyze statistically; suitable for measuring change over time; can reach large samples.

Challenges: May not capture depth of experience or nuance in participant attitudes and emotions.



QUALITATIVE METHODS

Explore deeper insights, stories, and experiences using non-numeric data.

Example: Interviews, open-ended survey questions, focus groups.

Benefits: Provides rich, detailed information; captures personal narratives and emotional impact.

Challenges: Time-consuming to collect and analyze; can be harder to generalize findings.



MIXED METHODS

Combines quantitative and qualitative approaches for a more comprehensive evaluation.

Example: Using both surveys (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) in the same evaluation.

Benefits: Provides rich, detailed information; captures personal narratives and emotional impact.

Challenges: Requires more resources and careful integration of data.



TOOLS

SURVEYS

Collect standardized responses from participants, typically before and after the program.

Example: Pre/post surveys measuring knowledge of gender-based violence, confidence in being an ally, or attitudes toward harmful gender norms and satisfaction surveys after program completion.

Benefits: Efficient for reaching large groups, standardized format allows for statistical analysis, and anonymity can encourage honesty on sensitive topics.

Challenges: Limited depth—may not capture personal stories or emotions, low literacy or language barriers may impact accessibility, and risk of low response rates if not administered thoughtfully.

PROGRAM RECORDS

Use existing data sources to complement other methods.

Example: Attendance logs, facilitator notes, workshop evaluations, social media engagement statistics and follow-up records showing participants' continued involvement in advocacy or community projects.

Benefits: Readily available and low-cost, useful for tracking participation, program reach, and ongoing engagement, and can supplement self-reported data for triangulation.

Challenges: May be incomplete or inconsistent, not originally collected for evaluation purposes (may lack key details or have privacy concerns if personal data is involved).



REFLECTION TOOL

Encourage participants to reflect on their learning, growth, and potential actions they plan to take after the program.

Example: A short, guided journal or worksheet with prompts like: “What did you learn about allyship today?” and/or “What will you do differently after this session?” and/or “What challenged your thinking?”

Benefits: Encourages self-awareness and deep engagement, helps assess transformative learning and intention to act, and can be integrated into sessions for real-time feedback.

Challenges: May require facilitation, especially for those unfamiliar with reflection practices, subjective and harder to analyze systematically, and literacy and language access must be considered.



INTERVIEWS

Gain in-depth insight into participants' experiences, attitudes, and behavioral changes.

Example: Semi-structured interviews with participants about how the program influenced their understanding of gender-based violence or key informant interviews with facilitators or community leaders about program relevance and effectiveness.

Benefits: Flexible, allows for probing and clarification, captures nuance, emotion, and personal impact, and can build relationships and trust.

Challenges: Time-consuming to conduct and analyze, requires skilled interviewers (especially for sensitive topics), and participants may be reluctant to share openly without strong rapport or confidentiality assurances.

FOCUS GROUPS

Explore group dynamics and shared experiences; generate rich discussions on program topics.

Example: Conducting a focus group with youth participants to explore their views on masculinity and allyship and group reflection with facilitators to assess delivery and content effectiveness.

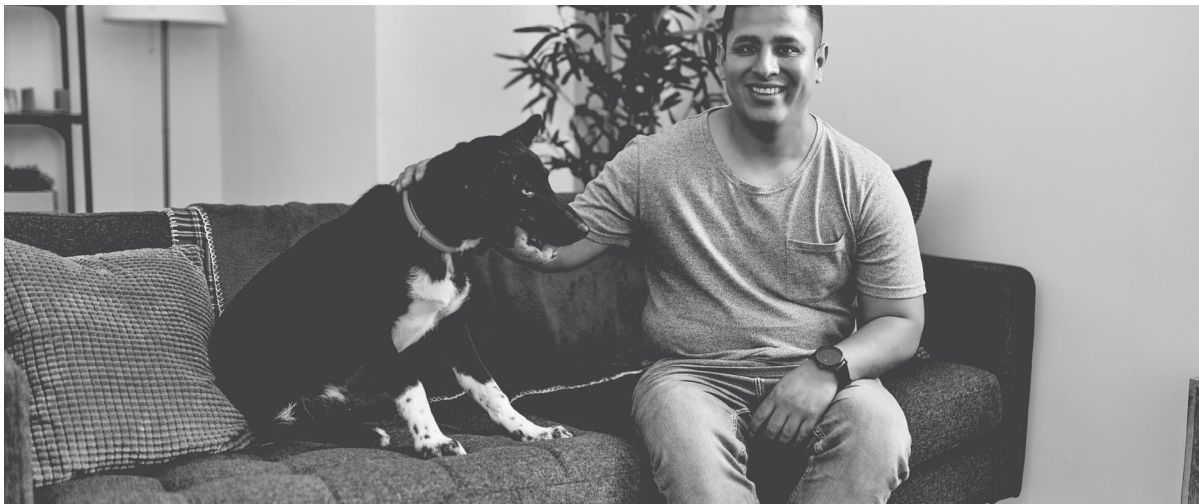
Benefits: Encourages idea-sharing and collective reflection, efficient way to gather diverse perspectives and useful for understanding community norms and peer influence.

Challenges: Risk of groupthink or dominance by outspoken participants, sensitive topics may be difficult to discuss in a group and requires skilled facilitation to manage dynamics.



SHARING THE RESULTS

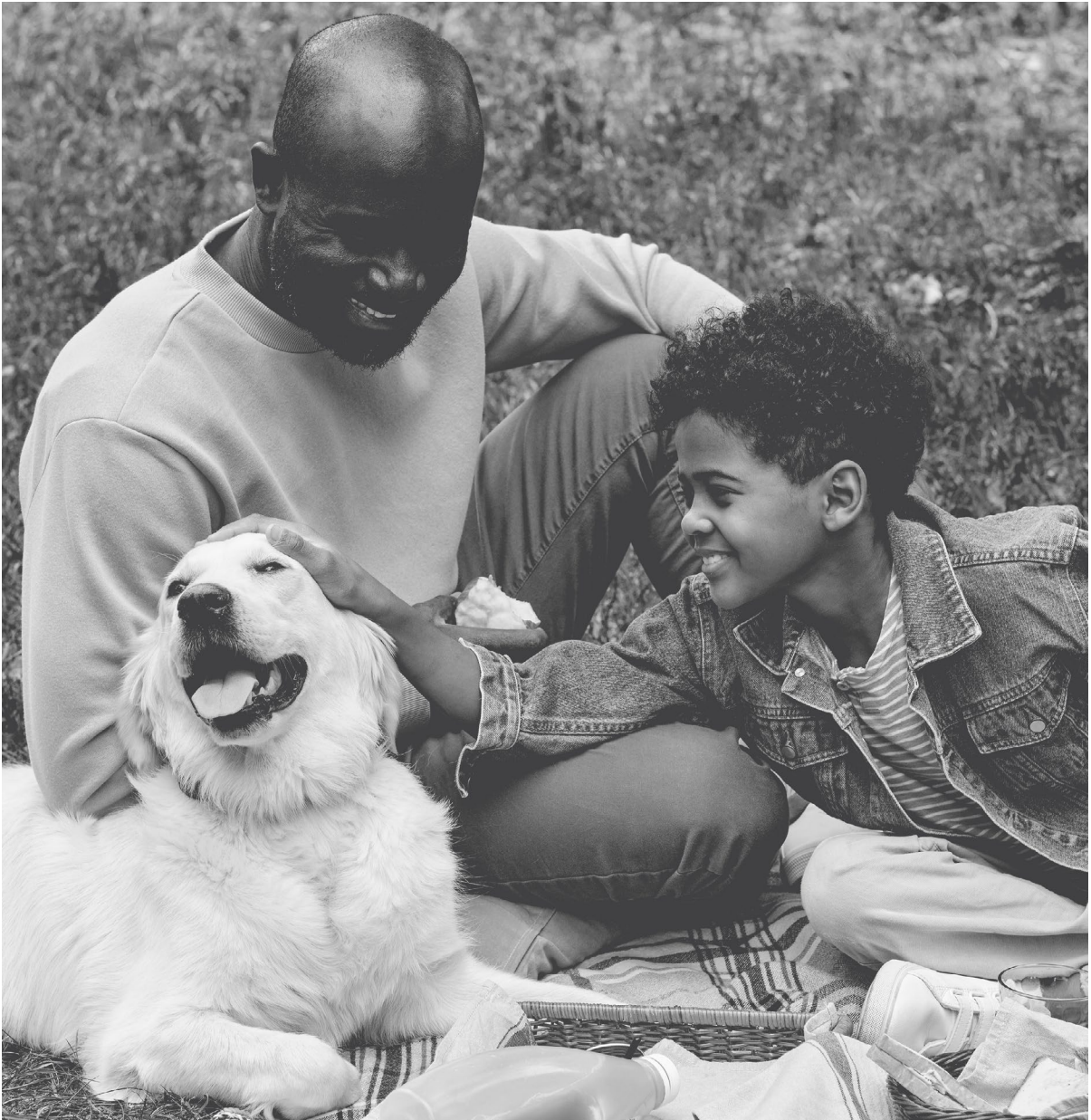
Sharing evaluation results is a vital step in the program evaluation process. It ensures transparency, strengthens relationships with interest holders, and supports continuous learning and improvement. Effective communication and strategic use of findings allow organizations to amplify impact, secure support, and inform future program design.



COMMUNICATING THE RESULTS TO INTEREST HOLDERS

Interest holders—such as program participants, community leaders, funders, staff, and partner organizations—have an interest in the outcomes of your program. Clear, accessible, and inclusive communication ensures they understand the program’s impact and can see their role in its success. To effectively communicate these results, ensure to tailor the message depending on your audience (funders, participants, community members, program staff, and partners). It is also important to select a format that is accessible for the audience you are hoping to reach. There are a variety of formats including executive summaries, infographics, detailed reports, presentations, and feedback sessions.





UTILIZING THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation is not just about collecting data—it's about using it. Applying findings helps strengthen your program, inform future planning, influence policy, and demonstrate accountability to interest holders and funders. Ways to utilize these findings may include program improvement, strategic planning, staff development, advocacy, and community empowerment.



This guide was developed by Humane Canada's Promising Practices Project to support organizations in implementing the Promising Practices Framework within their humane education programs. It provides practical tools and guidance to help organizations integrate the framework effectively and evaluate the impact on both their programs and participants. By using this guide, organizations can better assess how their humane education efforts align with best practices and contribute to meaningful, measurable outcomes.



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