

## Appendix C: Challenges and Potential Solutions to Policy Evaluation

Refer to Brief 1 for additional information similar in topic to Appendix C.

Policy Evaluation Challenges	Potential Solutions
Lack of resources or clear responsibility for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a clearly written evaluation plan with specific roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>■ Identify and partner with the stakeholder who has responsibility for monitoring the implementation (if that is not your agency).</li> </ul>
Fear of evaluation and lack of familiarity with policy evaluation methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Start small by evaluating the content or implementation of a policy with few components.</li> <li>■ Reach out to partners within and outside your agency.</li> </ul>
Lack of control over policy implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conduct a policy implementation evaluation or closely monitor implementation so that you clearly understand how the policy was implemented.</li> </ul>
Rapid pace of policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strive to develop the evaluation plan before implementation if at all possible.</li> <li>■ Identify potential indicators up front to plan for their collection.</li> </ul>
Political scrutiny and desire for quick production of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify short-term and intermediate outcomes in addition to long-term impacts.</li> </ul>
Lack of strong evidence base to support policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reach out to partners to identify any unpublished evaluations.</li> <li>■ Conduct evaluation on multiple phases of the policy (content, implementation, and impact) to inform interpretation of results.</li> </ul>
External and contextual factors such as economic conditions or public awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Measure contextual factors to the extent possible.</li> <li>■ Use an evaluation plan that measures short-term and intermediate outcomes that logically link to long-term outcomes.</li> </ul>
Lack of access to appropriate data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify available pre-existing data sources and explore the possibility of data linkage to increase analysis possibilities (see Brief 6).</li> </ul>
Lack of appropriate measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conduct a stakeholder discussion to assist with identifying or developing appropriate measures.</li> <li>■ Reach out to communities that have done similar evaluations.</li> </ul>
Concern about allowable participation in policy development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Request clarification of rules.</li> <li>■ Identify key nongovernmental partners to evaluate areas best suited to their capacities and expertise.</li> </ul>
Challenges of finding an equivalent comparison group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify variables within the implementing community (such as degree of implementation) that may allow for comparisons.</li> <li>■ Consider alternative designs.</li> <li>■ Look for opportunities to use within-group comparisons.</li> </ul>
Conflicting results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ When weighing the results, consider how accurately the methods were implemented, the extent to which data accurately represent the indicator or impact, your confidence level in the logic model and theory of change, the statistical significance and magnitude of findings, the assumptions made by statistical tests, and the match between evaluation methods and evaluation questions.</li> </ul>
Lag in availability of data for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure that your evaluation plan factors in availability of data</li> <li>■ Partner directly with the agency that collects the data rather than waiting for the data to become publicly available</li> </ul>