ACCELERATEUP

Growing new and existing businesses

Impact Monitoring and Management Framework

Prepared by: ARC Evaluation at UW-Stout

Impact Monitoring and Management Framework

Accelerate UP

Overview

The Applied Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout (ARC Evaluation) was tasked with creating an Impact Monitoring and Management Framework for the Accelerate UP program. ARC Evaluation developed an evaluation plan to collect data in alignment with the following performance indicators:

- Business Management Capacity
- Financial Growth
- Jobs Created/Employment Retained
- Previous Employment Status of Entrepreneur
- Total Capital Invested and Source
- Confidence/Other Intangible Benefits

Qualitative Inquiry

There should be specific processes and procedures for every phase of data analysis when it comes to working with qualitative data.

Analysis is broken into the following steps:

- Responses to qualitative questions should be aggregated across all respondents and sorted by question prior to analysis. Reading all raw data (notes, transcriptions) and/or listening to recordings
- Two coders should individually develop themes that are emerging from the data
    - A theme is defined as a comment occurring three times or more
- Meet as a team (two coders) to discuss the theme definitions and determine the initial coding structure
- Verify coding by having a two coders code the data and compare results (inter-coder reliability)
- Once all data is coded and verified, frequencies are determined for each theme. Frequencies are determined by the number of comments that specifically mention a theme in comparison to the number of participants.
- Tables are created that show how frequently a theme was coded, in how many groups the theme emerged, the definition of the theme, and representative comments for that theme.
- Reports are sent out in draft form to group sponsors for comment/revision before reports are finalized and distributed.

Quantitative Inquiry

Descriptive statistics will serve as the primary data analysis method.

Unless otherwise noted, 5-point Likert scales should be used throughout the methodology. Participants are asked to rate the degree to which they agree with a given statement using a 5-point scale where 1 = low and 5 = high. Mean scores are used as item response summaries as they help to explain some of the variability in responses. Having a consistent scale is useful because it allows for easy comparison to other groups and other time periods.

Likert Scale

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
Very Poorly Rated	Poorly Rated	Neutral	Highly Rated	Very Highly Rated

Survey Methodology

ARC Evaluation is proposing a survey methodology as the primary data collection method for several reasons. First, surveys are a quick, low-cost, and easy way to reach many participants. Surveys also afford researchers an easy way to compare data points over time to identify trends.

All surveys should be administered electronically using a web-based service such as Qualtrics. This allows data to be collected in a way that allows for participant tracking. Qualtrics also affords users the option of building display logic into survey questions. Having a web-based data collection instrument also works to keep participants' information secure.

Response Rates

Because response rates caused concerns while collecting data to measure the current impact, it would be wise to identify strategies for improving response rates.

Strategies for improving response rates:

- Program staff discuss and promote data collection efforts early and often
- Survey invitations should come directly from project leadership (via email)
- Offer modest incentives
- Administer surveys to a captive audience (during a meeting with Alex, during a Cash Mob event)
- Present surveys as required program activities

Use of Interviews or Focus Groups

Although ARC Evaluation is not advising the use of focus groups/interviews at this time, it is advisable to re-evaluate this after several years of data collection and comparison as outlined in the monitoring plan. Focus groups/group interviews are a way to get a deeper dive into the data and allows participants to inform the researchers – especially when program leaders have interest in a specific topic. For example, if ratings of program activities are in a decline over multiple years, program staff may want to hold an impromptu group interview to get some in-depth information about why rates are declining.

Impact Monitoring and Management Framework

The table below details ARC Evaluation's proposed Impact Monitoring and Management Framework. This framework will evolve based on the results of the current scope of research to measure the impact of the program to date. ARC Evaluation will work closely with project leadership to create a shared understanding of the current impact in order to develop a long term, 5-year strategic plan for monitoring impact on an ongoing basis.

Impact Monitoring and Management Framework

Goal 1: The impact of Accelerate UP (AUP) on its clients			
Objectives	**Performance Indicators**	**Method**	**Data Analysis**
1.1 Business Management Capacity	1.1.1 Measure the management capacity of businesses • Marketing • Human Resources • Accounting • Production/Services	1.1.1 Client Business Survey	1.1.1 Annually
1.2 Financial Growth	1.2.1 % increase in individual income 1.2.2 % increase in business revenue	1.2.1 Client Business Survey 1.2.2 Client Business Survey	1.2.1 Annually 1.2.2 Annually
1.3 Jobs Created/Employment Retained	1.3.1 # of jobs created 1.3.2 # of jobs retained	1.3.1a Sales Force Metrics 1.3.1b Client Business Survey 1.3.2a Sales Force Metrics 1.3.2b Client Business Survey	1.3.1a On-going 1.3.1b Annually 1.3.2a On-going 1.3.2b Annually
1.4 Previous Employment Status of Entrepreneur	1.4.1 Employment status • # Full Time • # Part Time • # Unemployed • # Student • # Disabled	1.4.1 Client Business Survey	1.4.1 Annually
1.5 Total Capital Invested and Source	1.5.1 Dollars invested to start the business • Identify funding sources	1.5.1a Sales Force Metrics 1.5.1b Client Business Survey	1.5.1a On-going 1.5.1b Annually

1.6 Confidence/Other Intangible Benefits	1.6.1 Confidence measures • Current confidence • Examples of support • Sustainability 1.6.2 Intangible benefits • Identify intangible benefits as a result of AUP (indirect measure)	1.6.1 Client Business Survey 1.6.2 Client Business Survey	1.6.1 Annually 1.6.2 Annually
Goal 2: The top 3 most significant changes to client businesses as a result of AUP			
Objectives	**Performance Indicators**	**Method**	**Data Analysis**
2.1. Identify the top three changes to client businesses	2.1.1 Clients self-identify three most significant changes to client business	2.1.1 Client Exit Survey	2.1.1 As clients exit the program
Goal 3: What do AUP clients value most about AUP?			
Objectives	**Performance Indicators**	**Method**	**Data Analysis**
3.1 Gather perceptions of AUP clients about AUP	3.1.1 Client perceptions of AUP	3.1.1 Client Business Survey	3.1.1 Annually
Goal 4: What are the most significant barriers to growth and job creation faced by AUP clients?			
Objectives	**Performance Indicators**	**Method**	**Data Analysis**
4.1 Identify barriers to growth faced by AUP clients **4.2** Identify barriers to job creation faced by AUP clients	4.1.1 Barriers to growth (business capacity) 4.2.1 Barriers to job creation	4.1.1a Client Business Survey 4.1.1b Cash Mob Survey 4.2.1 Client Business Survey	4.1.1a Annually 4.1.1b Variable (as needed) 4.2.1 Annually

The Sales Force Metrics table details the definitions of the data that should be collected by AUP staff on an ongoing basis.

Sales Force Metrics

Item	Definition
Number of Clients	The total number of clients who have met with AUP.
Active Clients	The number of clients who have met with AUP within the last 60 days.
New Capital	Clients' investment into their company (e.g., loans, personal investment).
Total Sales	Total estimated yearly sales.
Total Client Contacts	The total number of times AUP has contacted clients.
Average Client Contacts	The average number of times AUP contacts each client.
Jobs Created	The total number of new jobs created.
Jobs Retained	The total number of jobs saved that would have otherwise been lost.
New Businesses	The number of AUP clients that start a new business or acquire another business.
Existing Businesses	The number of AUP clients that request assistance with an already existing business.
Client Industry	The industry that best represents the client's business.
Client Municipality	The municipality that best represents the client's business.
Acquisition Outcomes	The number of clients who have purchased an existing business in the area.
Expansion Outcomes	The number of clients who have acquired funding to expand their operations.
Minor Tune-Up Outcomes	The number of clients who needed assistance solving organizational inefficiencies.
New Business Outcomes	The number of clients who created a new business.
Enterprise Type	They type of enterprise that clients run (i.e., for-profit, non-profit).
Client Gender	The gender of the client.

The Data Collection Methods table details the types of data to be collected by Accelerate UP. Sales force metrics should be collected continuously as clients participate in the AUP program. This data will be used as a baseline in order to understand year to year changes in AUP's clients. The client business survey should be sent to AUP clients who have been active in the last year on an annual basis. Once clients report that they are no longer meeting with AUP, they should not receive this survey. This data will be used to get at other topics of interest that are not covered in the sales force metrics. The client exit survey should be sent to AUP clients one month after they indicate they are no longer interested in meeting with AUP. This data will be used to assess the impact of AUP. The Cash Mob survey should be used to gather data from AUP clients and resource team members as well as other community business owners. This survey should be implemented as a quick data collection measure at Cash Mob events. Survey content for each instrument is detailed below.

Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Method	Content
Sales Force Metrics (On-going)	• Client Metrics o Number of Clients o Active Clients o New Capital o Total Sales o Total Client Contacts o Average Client Contacts o Jobs Created o Jobs Retained o New Businesses o Existing Businesses o Client Industry o Client Municipality o Acquisition Outcomes o Expansion Outcomes o Minor Tune-Up Outcomes o New Business Outcomes o Enterprise Type o Client Gender
Client Business Survey (Annually, until client indicates that they are no longer meeting with AUP)	• Demographic o Business Sector o Length of Business Ownership o Prior to your involvement with AUP, what was your PRIMARY activity? • Quantitative (open response)

	o How many times (approximately) have you met with Alex? o Please indicate the amount (by percentage) of total capital invested in your organization according to self, friends, family, investor, loans, grant, other. • Quantitative (scale 1-5) o As a result of working with AUP my organization's capacity to manage tasks related to Marketing/Human Resources/Accounting/Production & Sales has increased. • Quantitative (category selection) o Have you had an increase in personal income as a result of working with AUP? o Has your business experienced an increase in revenue as a result of working with AUP? o Has your business experienced an increase in the number of available jobs as a result of working with AUP? o What impact has working with AUP had on retention within your organization? o Do you want to meet with AUP in the future? • Qualitative o Usually clients meet with Alex multiple times, is there a reason you only met with him once? o Keeping in mind that your response is voluntary and will be kept confidential, could you estimate the increase in percentage in income? o Keeping in mind that your response is voluntary and will be kept confidential, could you estimate the increase in percentage in revenue? o Please estimate the number of jobs created. o Please estimate the number of positions retained as a result of working with AUP. o In what specific ways has AUP supported your business? o What are the most significant barriers your business has faced in getting your business started? o What are the greatest challenges your business has faced in achieving goals and maintaining desired growth? o What do you value most about AUP? Why? o What did AUP do well in serving you as a client? o Have you recommended AUP to anyone you know? If so, why? o Are you familiar with the AUP Resource Team? o Have you received suggestions, ideas or business connections from the AUP Resource Team? If yes, did you find them valuable and/or useful?
Client Exit Survey	• Quantitative (scale 1-5) o Overall, how satisfied are you with the AUP program? • Qualitative

(Once, one month after client indicates that they are no longer meeting with AUP)	o What are the top three changes you made to your business as a result of meeting with AUP? o Do you have any suggestions on ways to improve the AUP program?
Cash Mob Survey	• Qualitative o What is <u>one thing</u> that helped you on your journey as a business owner? o What is <u>one thing</u> that business owners in the greater Marquette area could use more of?

Resource Team

In order to use the data collected via the methods described above, the resource team should informally look at the sales force metrics data quarterly (every 3 months) and formally look at the client business survey data and the client follow-up survey annually. These results should be reviewed carefully and used to update the strategic plan of the program. If no strategic plan exists, a document should be created that describes the goals of the program and the activities that will be done to meet these goals.

Structure

In order to effectively use the data, the structure of the resource team needs to be addressed. Specifically, it would be beneficial to appoint core resource team members through a voting process. These resource team members would have the additional responsibilities of reviewing the data and helping Alex make informed decisions about the program. By creating a collaborative environment between resource team members and Alex, AUP will be able to effectively conduct data driven decision making.

Impact Beyond

In order to assess the impact of Accelerate UP beyond the client, Accelerate UP should use both the informal data collected from resource team and the formal data collected from the clients through the client business survey and the client follow-up survey.

ACCELERATE UP MONITORING PLAN 2019-2020

A SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR 1 YEAR

Milestones

- 07/1 Our calendar starts in mid-summer
- 8/1 Initial planning phase for the year
- 9/1 Administer Client Business Survey
- 10/7 Compile Sales Force data
- 10/28 Administer the Client Exit Survey
- 12/1 Report writing
- 1/1 Disseminating results
- 2/1 Update strategic plan
- 3/16 Implement changes

PROJECT PHASE	STARTING	ENDING
INITIAL PLANNING PHASE	8/1/19	8/31/19
CLIENT BUSINESS SURVEY	9/1/19	9/21/19
COMPILE SALES FORCE DATA	10/7/19	10/27/19
CLIENT EXIT SURVEY	10/28/19	11/11/19
REPORT WRITING	12/1/19	12/31/19
DISSEMINATING RESULTS	1/1/20	1/31/20
UPDATE STRATEGIC PLAN	2/1/20	3/15/20
IMPLEMENT CHANGES	3/16/20	4/30/20

JULY 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AUGUST 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

OCTOBER 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

NOVEMBER 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

DECEMBER 2019

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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30	31					

JANUARY 2020

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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2020

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

MARCH 2020

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL 2020

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

MAY 2020

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE 2020

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Timeline sequence is described for a sample year (2019-2020). The sample timeline describes a one-year cycle based on the proposed methodological approach. Timelines should be reviewed each year and modified where appropriate.

Late Summer 2019

Evaluation cycles will always begin with looking at was done the previous year and internally thinking through what went well and what did not go well in the data collection/reporting phases of the previous cycle. (July-August when looking at the sample timeline).

Early Fall

After sorting through the previous years' data, key stakeholders should meet to discuss and reflect on previous years' data, then work to establish a timeline of the current years' activities, and finally to identify roles and responsibilities within the group.

Fall

The Client Business survey should be sent to AUP clients who have been active in the last year on an annual basis. Once clients report that they are no longer meeting with AUP, they should not receive this survey. Survey content is outlined in the Survey Instruments table and includes a specific item to inquire about employer contact information.

Salesforce data should be compiled in early October.

Late Fall

The Client Exit survey should be sent to AUP clients one month after client indicates that they are no longer meeting with Accelerate UP.

Spring

Changes to the program should be implemented in March.

Reporting

Reporting should occur at each stage of the data collection process immediately after data collection is done for a given activity. Reports should be combined and disseminated on an annual basis and should include all data collected that year and should make comparisons to data collected in previous years. The focus is on identifying trends and monitoring fluctuations in data from year to year.