CHAPTER 5

Program/Policy Implementation and Monitoring

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- ***Monitoring*** refers to the collection of information to determine to what degree the program or policy design (see Chapter 3) was carried out as planned. How will we know whether the intended target population was reached? Were program/policy activities or provisions actually carried out as planned? Were appropriate staff or responsible authorities selected and trained, and did they carry out their assigned duties?
- ***Design monitoring instruments to collect data*** (e.g., observations, surveys, interviews). Data is collected to find out what is actually being delivered to clients or targets. The purpose is to identify gaps between the "program/policy on paper" (design) and the "program/policy in action."
- ***Fiscal monitoring.*** Funding sources require regular financial reports detailing how funds were spent. Once the program or policy is implemented, one may find that adjustments to the budget become necessary.
- ***Designate responsibility for data collection, storage, and analysis.*** Ensure that there is no ambiguity about what information is to be collected, who is responsible for collecting it, or how it is to be collected, stored, and analyzed.
- ***Develop information system capacities.*** Information systems may consist of written forms and records that are filed, or fully computerized data entry and storage systems.
- ***Develop mechanisms to provide feedback to staff, clients, and stakeholders.*** Depending on the results of monitoring analyses, it may be necessary to make adjustments either to what is being done ("the program

or policy in action") or to the intended design ("the program or policy on paper").

- ***What is translational criminology?*** If we want to prevent, reduce, and manage crime, we must be able to translate scientific discoveries into policy and practice. The goal of translational criminology is to break down barriers between basic and applied research by creating a dynamic interface between research and practice.

We need to develop a strategy to observe the program or policy in action. History has taught us that good intentions alone are insufficient: planning and implementing an intervention are two different things. The example below illustrates how the same strategy can be implemented very differently in different locations.

Example 5.1 Did "Weed and Seed" Bear Fruit?

The Weed and Seed (W&S) strategy was launched by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) as a community-based, comprehensive, multiagency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and community revitalization in high-crime neighborhoods. As of 2010, 256 Weed and Seed sites were active in 46 states and two territories nationwide (Trudeau et al., 2010). Four key components were included (Dunworth & Mills, 1999):

1. *Weeding:* Concentrated and enhanced law enforcement efforts to identify, arrest, and prosecute violent offenders, drug traffickers, and other criminals operating in the target areas.
2. *Seeding:* Human services, including after-school, weekend, and summer youth activities; adult literacy classes; parental counseling; and neighborhood revitalization efforts to prevent and deter further crime.
3. *Enhanced Coordination:* Coordinated analysis of local problems and developing strategies to address them. The federal oversight responsibility for each participating site rests with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the corresponding district.
4. *Community Policing:* Proactive police/community engagement and problem solving in which police officers are assigned to specified geographic locations. This effort is seen as the bridge between weeding and seeding. By gaining the trust and support of the community, police engage residents and businesses as problem-solving partners in the law enforcement effort (e.g., neighborhood watches, citizen marches and rallies, and graffiti removal).

A national evaluation of eight cities examined program implementation and effects on crime and public safety (Dunworth et al., 1999). Each site had high rates of violent crime related to drug trafficking and drug use. The study included a review of funding applications and other program

documents; interviews with key program administrators, senior law enforcement staff, managers of seeding activities, service providers, and community leaders; analyses of automated, incident-level records of crimes and arrests; group interviews with participants in seeding programs; and two surveys of residents in target areas.

Developing appropriate seeding strategies in specific communities proved to be more difficult than anticipated. Seeding efforts (e.g., youth prevention and recreation programs, family support services, community economic development) required participation and commitment from many diverse organizations with many different goals. Community participants discovered that much more time was needed for planning, relationship building, and gaining consensus and commitment. Weeding, in contrast, had a relatively clear mission and was carried out within the more established structures of law enforcement and criminal justice.

Within the target areas of each site, evaluators compared Part 1 crime trends for the year prior to implementation of Weed and Seed and the second year after Weed and Seed began. Five target areas had double-digit percentage decreases: (Stowe Village in Hartford, 46 percent; Crawford-Roberts in Pittsburgh, 24 percent; North Manatee, 18 percent; the Shreveport target area, 11 percent; and the Central District in Seattle, 10 percent). One target area (West Las Vegas) had a single-digit decrease (6 percent), and three target areas experienced increases in Part 1 crime (South Manatee, 2 percent; Meadows Village in Las Vegas, 9 percent; and Salt Lake City, 14 percent).

Because a controlled experimental study was not possible, researchers could not state definitively the extent to which Weed and Seed or other factors contributed to observed changes in crime. Available evidence, however, suggested that Weed and Seed had little effect on crime rates. Crime rates in the surrounding (non-target) areas mirrored increases or decreases in the target areas. For example, Hartford and Pittsburgh achieved the largest Part 1 crime decreases in their target areas, but they also experienced the largest Part 1 crime decreases in non-target areas (i.e., areas where there was no intervention).

Changes in drug arrest rates appeared to be associated with changes in the overall Part 1 crime rates. Among six target areas for which arrest data were available, the four areas reporting decreases in Part 1 crime from the year prior to Weed and Seed through the second year of implementation (Hartford, Pittsburgh, North Manatee, and Shreveport) all experienced initial high rates of drug arrests, suggesting an initial period of intense weeding activities followed by declining drug arrest rates. Assuming that levels of law enforcement remained somewhat constant, this trend may reflect some success in reducing drug activity.

Participant interviews and community surveys were also conducted. According to the residents interviewed, the seeding programs provided services that otherwise would not have been available in the target areas. Most of those interviewed indicated that participation in the seeding programs was a positive experience that helped them feel more secure emotionally, physically, or both. Benefits perceived by participants included providing additional structure and discipline in the lives of target area youths, and opportunities and assistance for adults to work toward personal and professional growth.

Community surveys, however, suggested inconsistent effects. Residents in only two areas (Manatee and Pittsburgh) perceived substantial improvements in police effectiveness and decreases in

crime severity. Residents in Akron and Seattle perceived slight reductions in drug-related crime; Hartford residents perceived some reduction in violent and gang-related crime. Residents in three areas (Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, and Shreveport) perceived little improvement in general public safety or the severity of specific types of crime.

In sum, the implementation and effectiveness of weeding and seeding activities varied considerably across the eight sites. Pre-existing community features (e.g., community cohesion) likely played a key role in enhancing or weakening Weed and Seed efforts. Important factors included the strength of the existing social and institutional infrastructure (e.g., an established network of community-based organizations and community leaders), the severity of crime problems, geographical advantages favoring economic development, and transience of the population.

Similarly, Trudeau et al. (2010) found evidence for positive effects of Weed and Seed in an independent evaluation, but noted that: "It is difficult, if not impossible, to establish *with certainty* that W&S caused the improvements in outcomes reported above. These types of outcomes are influenced by a wide array of factors, making it a challenge to isolate the effects of any single intervention. This challenge is heightened when the intervention in question is not a well-defined and limited program but rather a comprehensive strategy that takes different shape in different locations, reflecting each community's priorities and resources" (pp. 10–11). Finding the appropriate mix and sequence of "weeding" and "seeding" activities for specific communities remains a compelling challenge.

Previously, in the design stage (Chapter 3), we talked about *identifying* "who does what to whom in what order, how much, and how often?" At the monitoring stage, we are concerned with finding out whether the intended design is (or was) properly implemented, or whether it was implemented differently at different sites. Monitoring, as we will see shortly, requires ongoing data collection throughout the life of the program or policy. It is useful to distinguish implementation from monitoring.

Implementation

The initiation, management, and administration of the action plan (see Chapter 4). Once the program or policy actually begins, we want to minimize discrepancies between what was planned (i.e., the program or policy design) and what was actually done (i.e., the "program or policy in action").

At the monitoring stage, we attempt to find out if the program or policy was implemented properly. Monitoring refers to the collection of information to determine to what degree the design or blueprint (the program or policy "on paper") is being carried out as planned. Data (e.g., observations, surveys,

interviews) are collected to find out what is actually being delivered to clients (the program or policy in action). Adjustments may then need to be made to revise either the design of the intervention (e.g., either service delivery or policy provisions) or to make what is currently being done conform to the intended design. The example below illustrates monitoring requirements of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), a major source of federal funding for local and state justice programs.

Monitoring

An attempt to determine whether program or policy implementation is proceeding as planned. Monitoring is a process that attempts to identify any gaps between the program or policy on paper (design) and the program or policy in action (implementation).

Example 5.2 Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Monitoring Requirements

All grantees are required to submit semi-annual Progress Reports (OJP FORM 4587/1) on project activities and accomplishments. In order to capture pertinent information on a consistent basis, OJP asks six major questions to monitor grant implementation and goal achievement.

Reporting Requirements. The reporting requirements noted in this section are designed to provide the grantor agency with sufficient information to monitor grant implementation and goal achievement. To support effective monitoring of the grant, progress reports must be keyed to the grant implementation plan provided in the grant application. Specifically, the report should:

1. Indicate the status of each goal that was due for completion during a previous reporting period but carried over due to implementation or other problems.
2. State the status of each goal that was scheduled to be achieved during the report.
3. State the corrective action planned to resolve implementation problems and state the effect of these problems on the remaining schedule for achieving the project remaining goals.
4. If appropriate, identify changes that are needed in the implementation plan specified in the grant application to overcome problems. Changes that alter plans and/or goals set forth in the application require prior grantor agency approval and issuance of a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN).
5. State what technical assistance the grantor agency might provide during the next six month period to help resolve implementation problems. If technical assistance has been provided to

resolve implementation problems, state the problems (or tasks) addressed and the results (or impact) of the assistance provided.

6. Based on the performance measures set forth in the grant application (implementation plan), indicate in quantitative terms the results (of the project) achieved both during the reporting period and cumulative-to-date. Explanatory and qualifying statements will be helpful here, especially if project objectives have changed.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice (2014).

OUTLINE THE MAJOR QUESTIONS FOR MONITORING

Monitoring relates directly back to the design stage (Chapter 3). How do we measure whether the critical elements of program or policy design have been implemented properly? We can specify all the key questions for monitoring in terms of their corresponding program or policy design features (see Table 5.1).

TABLE 5.1 *Key Questions for Monitoring*

PROGRAM/POLICY DESIGN FEATURE	KEY QUESTIONS FOR MONITORING
Target population.	• Were appropriate targets selected? What were the characteristics of the actual persons targeted by the program or policy? • Did the program or policy meet its specified criteria in terms of client eligibility (e.g., age, sex, income, region, etc.) and numbers to be served? • Were proper target recruiting, referral, screening, and intake procedures followed? How were target selection decisions made?
Program components or policy provisions.	• Who did what to whom in what order, how much, and how often? We need some unit of measuring what was done. In a drug treatment program, for example, one way of measuring services delivered to clients is to record the total hours of counseling that were actually delivered to clients. We could also measure the number of clients

TABLE 5.1 *(Continued)*

PROGRAM/POLICY DESIGN FEATURE	KEY QUESTIONS FOR MONITORING
	admitted, attendance at regular program sessions (e.g., group meetings), and the number of clients who successfully completed a program. For three-strikes laws, in addition to describing the rules for charging and processing suspects, we could count the number of people charged and convicted. • Were there variations in how program services or policy provisions were delivered? In a program, for example, did one client receive different amounts or types of services than another (e.g., frequency or quality of treatment)? Was there more than one site or location where a program or policy was carried out, and if so, were services administered consistently across different sites? Within a state, for example, were courts in some cities or counties more active than others in charging under three-strikes provisions?
Program staff or individuals designated to implement the policy.	• *For a program:* Were proper staff selected and trained? Did they fit the specified job descriptions? Did staff understand their duties and perform them as expected? Did different program staff provide services in a different manner? • *For a policy:* Were the individuals responsible for carrying out a policy clearly identified? Did they understand the policy and their specific responsibilities? Were proper procedures for implementing a specific policy consistently followed by the designated authorities? Did different policy authorities implement the same rule differently?

We can illustrate the correspondence between program or policy design and monitoring by referring to the chart in Figure 5.1, and we can easily see what kinds of questions we need to ask. In Column 1, we summarize all the key design features in terms of targets, staff or responsible authority, and program components or policy provisions. We should have all this information available from our previous

	1. *What was intended?* (i.e., the program or policy on paper, the design of the program or policy)	2. *How was monitoring done?* (i.e., which of the four data collection methods were used?)	3. *What were the results of monitoring?* (i.e., how was the program or policy actually implemented?)	4. *What gaps were found* between the program or policy on paper (design) and the program or policy in action (implementation)?
Targets (e.g., eligibility, numbers to be served, access, screening, intake)				
Program Staff or Individuals Responsible for Implementing the Program or Policy (e.g., selection, training, duties)				
Program Components or Policy Provisions (e.g., specific goods, services, opportunities, or interventions to be delivered)				

FIGURE 5.1 *Monitoring Analysis*

assessment of program or policy design (Chapter 3). Then, as Column 2 indicates, we need some method of collecting data (to be discussed shortly) to find out whether intended design features were properly implemented. In Column 3, we report the results of monitoring: how was the program or policy actually implemented? Finally, in Column 4, we summarize any gaps detected between program or policy design and implementation (compare Column 1 with Column 3). Information collected from monitoring analysis is vital for modifying the program or policy to correct any implementation gaps detected.

INSTRUMENTS TO COLLECT MONITORING DATA

There are four major data-collection techniques for monitoring (Rossi et al., 2003): (1) observational data, (2) service records (documents), (3) service provider data (staff), and (4) participant data (targets). Wherever possible, it is best to use more

than one technique, and, depending on the time and resources available, as many as possible. Each has its advantages and limitations.

Observational Data

Observational data may provide a rich and detailed source of information about program activities and policy provisions. By observational data, we mean that evaluators and/or trained observers actually participate in or observe the program or policy in operation. For example, in the classic Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment (Sherman & Berk, 1984), trained observers rode along in police cars to observe how police handled domestic violence calls, and to determine whether they followed agreed-upon procedures for administering one of three interventions (arrest, mediation, or separation). Good observational data, however, is rarely obtained simply by "hanging out" at the program or policy site. Observers must be trained in how to make observations and how to record their observations. We need some systematic method for making and recording observations. Three main observational techniques are possible: (1) the narrative method, (2) the data guide method, and (3) the structured rating scheme (Sherman & Berk, 1984).

When using the *narrative method,* an observer records events in detail, in the order in which they occur. This is very much like a diary. It is the least structured of the three observational methods, but it may provide rich detail on implementation. The observer describes what services were provided, how the clients reacted, how the staff acted, and so on.

In the *data guide method,* the evaluator or change agent gives observers specific questions that they are required to answer from their observations. This technique is more structured than the narrative method, but less structured than the structured rating scheme. For example, observers may go out with police to observe DUI stops. Observers are given a list of questions that they attempt to answer for each stop:

- How did police officers select the vehicle for a DUI check?
- How many people were in the car?
- What kind of car was it (model, year)?
- Describe the driver (age, sex, race).
- Was the suspect: respectful? cooperative?
- Was the officer respectful? Did the officer explain the purpose of the stop?
- What police action was taken (e.g., sobriety test, breathalyzer, warning, other, none)?
- Did anything unusual or significant happen during this stop?

The structured rating scheme is the most constrained of the three observational methods. We can ask observers to rate some kind of behavior on a standardized scale or checklist. Using the same example as above, where observers go out on police DUI stops, the observer may be given a checklist that he or she completes for every police stop. The checklist may contain items such as those shown in Figure 5.2.

In general, the major advantage of observational methods lies in the firsthand description of program activities that observers can provide. The major problem with these techniques is that the presence of observers may actually alter the behavior of program personnel or participants. Would police officers, for example, be more guarded in their speech and actions when they know a civilian observer is watching them? Another problem is that observers may not report or record information consistently or accurately. The less structured the observational scheme is (e.g., the narrative method), the greater the concerns with observer reliability and subjectivity.

Service Record Data

Service record data refers to written, typed, or computerized records that are kept by staff. Many programs require staff to collect certain information on program clients, service delivery, and staff duties. One simple example is program attendance data: staff may be required to record whether clients are absent or present for scheduled meetings, or they may be required to record the total number of hours each client participates in the program. The first author once worked at a federal forensic prison in Canada. This facility provided psychological assessments for the courts and treatment services for convicted offenders. Because the facility was an accredited hospital, as well as a prison, medical records had to be kept. Staff (e.g., psychiatric nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, and research staff) were required to make an entry in a medical records binder each and every time they visited a prisoner, describing the purpose of the visit, the length of the visit, what happened, the client's state of mind, and what (if any) action was taken with that client. In general, for many programs, we could ask program staff to make regular entries in a logbook describing what they did with each client, how much time they spent on different activities, and so on. These records may provide a good source of monitoring information, depending upon their complexity and reliability.

Service record data have at least two advantages: such data is (1) inexpensive, and (2) easily obtainable. However, service record data also present two common disadvantages: (1) program records may not contain sufficient information needed to monitor clients and the services provided adequately, and (2) staff may not record this information consistently, accurately, or completely. There are three possible solutions to these problems: (1) seek participation by staff in developing monitoring instruments, (2) train staff in how to use these instruments, and

Name of observer: _____ Date and time of DUI stop: _____

Type of vehicle: _____

Observer Instructions: Rate the behavior of the suspect and the police officer on the five-point scales provided below. Circle the number that best fits your perception of what happened.

1.	The suspect was:	1	2	3	4	5
		polite				abusive
2.	The police officer was:	1	2	3	4	5
		polite				abusive
3.	The police instructions were:	1	2	3	4	5
		clear				vague

4. Action taken (check one):

_____ Field sobriety test _____ Breathalyzer

_____ Warning _____ No action taken

_____ Other (Please specify: _____)

FIGURE 5.2 *Observer Checklist for DUI Stops*

(3) conduct regular quality-control checks to make sure that records are being kept properly. There are three key guidelines for using service record data:

1. It is better to gather a few items of data consistently and reliably than to gather a lot of data poorly.
2. Recording forms should be structured as checklists whenever possible to simplify usage by program staff.
3. Service records should be checked immediately after completion for consistency and accuracy. Checks should be conducted on a regular basis, and corrective feedback should be given to staff as needed.

Service Provider Data

Service provider data refers to information that the evaluator or change agent obtains from program or agency staff members directly. As opposed to service

records, for example, we could ask staff about the specific activities and services being provided. We could ask them whether client participation was high/low, how much time was spent on different activities, how clients responded, and so on. We could use relatively informal or more structured interviews to obtain staff perceptions, or we could use questionnaires or surveys. The major advantage of this technique is that program or agency personnel have regular involvement in the intervention, and they can often provide detailed, first-hand experience and knowledge. The major problem is potential subjectivity: program staff or policy authorities may answer questions so as to make themselves or the program/policy look good. Staff may also dislike the extra time or work required by this method (e.g., more paperwork), so the researcher or change agent must make sure that the information provided by staff is not incomplete or inaccurate.

Participant Data

Participant data refers to information that the evaluator or change agent obtains from clients or targets directly. Too often, client perceptions of interventions are ignored. It is important to get clients' perceptions not only of what services were actually delivered, but often their degree of satisfaction with program services or policy provisions. In asking about services provided by a DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) program, for example, we might ask participants whether the information they received was understood, and whether the information was utilized (e.g., were students less likely to use drugs as a result of participating in the program?). Evaluations in elementary schools found that the information provided by the DARE programs was fairly well understood but had little effect on drug use behaviors (Gottfredson, 1998; Ringwalt et al., 1994). More recent research, however, reported significant reductions in tobacco, alcohol, and multi-drug use for DARE PLUS—a middle school DARE curriculum that was supplemented by after-school activities (Play and Learning Under Supervision) and other evidence-based prevention strategies (Perry et al., 2000; 2003).

As was the case with measuring staff perceptions of program services, we can assess client perceptions by using questionnaires and/or interviews. The advantages of obtaining client perceptions are that clients have abundant firsthand experience with program or policy services, and they are the only ones who can provide the perspective of the intended targets of change. Disadvantages to be considered are possible subjectivity (clients or targets may want to make the intervention look either "good" or "bad," depending on their personal experience), and their possible mistrust of unfamiliar evaluators or "outsiders." It takes some skill to get valid responses from participants, but these problems are by no means insurmountable.

FISCAL MONITORING

An additional type of monitoring data is always required by funding sources: regular (usually quarterly or semi-annually) financial reports detailing how funds were spent during the project, program, or policy implementation. It is necessary to have a sound accounting and financial reporting system in place prior to implementation of the intervention (see Section "Resource Planning," Chapter 4), and it is necessary to comply fully with the reporting requirements of the funding agency. An example of federal accounting requirements is provided below.

Example 5.3 Standards for Financial Management Systems: Excerpts from the Office of Justice Programs Financial Guide

All recipients and subrecipients are required to establish and maintain adequate accounting systems and financial records and to accurately account for funds awarded to them. As a recipient, you must have a financial management system in place that is able to record and report on the receipt, obligation, and expenditure of grant funds. You should keep detailed accounting records and documentation to track all of the following information:

- Federal funds awarded
- Federal funds drawn down
- Matching funds of state, local, and private organizations, when applicable
- Program income
- Subawards (amount, purpose, award conditions, and current status)
- Contracts expensed against the award
- Expenditures

Please consult *Title 28 CFR Part 66* and *Title 28 CFR Part 70* for more information.

Accounting System

- An adequate accounting system can be used to generate reports required by award and Federal regulations. Your system must support all of the following:
  - Financial reporting that is accurate, current, complete, and compliant with all financial reporting requirements of your award or subaward
  - If you are a recipient, establishment of reasonable procedures to ensure the receipt of reports on subrecipients' cash balances and cash disbursements in sufficient time to enable them to prepare complete and accurate cash transactions reports to the awarding agency
  - Accounting systems should be able to account for award funds separately (no commingling of funds).

- An adequate accounting system allows you to maintain documentation to support all receipts and expenditures and obligations of Federal funds.
- An adequate accounting system collects and reports financial data for planning, controlling, measuring, and evaluating direct and indirect costs. Your system should help you capture all relevant expenses to make sure that you obtain approval from your cognizant Federal agency for all indirect costs.

Recipient and Subrecipient Accounting Responsibilities

1. Reviewing Financial Operations
   - Direct recipients should be familiar with, and periodically monitor, their subrecipients' financial operations, records, systems, and procedures.
   - As a recipient, you should direct particular attention to the subrecipient's maintenance of current financial data.
   - Please refer to *Chapter 3.14* for additional information about subrecipient monitoring.
2. Recording Financial Activities
   - The recipient should record in its books in summary form the subrecipient's award or contract obligation, as well as cash advances and other financial activities.
   - The recipient should record on its books the expenditures of its subrecipients. Alternatively the subrecipient may file report forms for tracking of its financial activities.
   - Non-Federal contributions applied to programs or projects by subrecipients should likewise be recorded, as should any program income resulting from program operations.
3. Budgeting and Budget Review
   - The recipient should ensure that each subrecipient prepares an adequate budget on which its award commitment will be based.
   - The detail of each project budget should be kept on file by the recipient.
4. Accounting for Non-Federal Contributions
   - Non-Federal contributions may include in-kind services (donated services such as volunteered time) or cash.
   - Recipients should ensure that the requirements, limitations, and regulations pertinent to non-Federal contributions are applied.
5. Ensuring that Subrecipients Meet Audit Requirements
   - Recipients must ensure that subrecipients have met the necessary audit requirements contained in this *Guide* (see Chapter 3.19).
6. Reporting Irregularities
   - Recipients and their subrecipients are responsible for promptly notifying the awarding agency and the Federal cognizant audit agency of any illegal acts, irregularities, and/or proposed or actual actions.

- Illegal acts and irregularities include conflicts of interest, falsification of records or reports, and misappropriation of funds or other assets.
- Please notify the appropriate OJP Bureau or Program Office of any irregularities that occur.

7. Avoiding Business with Debarred and Suspended Organizations
   - Recipients and subrecipients must not award or permit any award at any level to any party which is debarred or suspended from participation in Federal assistance programs.
   - For details regarding debarment procedures, see *Title 28 CFR Part 67, "Government-wide Debarment and Suspension."*
8. Bonding
   - The awarding agency may require adequate fidelity bond coverage where a recipient lacks sufficient coverage to protect the Federal Government interest (see *Title 2 CFR Part 215, Subpart C*).

(Office of Justice Programs, 2014)

MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE RESOURCE PLAN

Once the program or policy is implemented, one may find that adjustments to the budget become necessary because resources prove inadequate, or potential funding providers cannot fully fund the proposed budget. In the first instance, program expenditures after implementation may begin to get too high (e.g., beyond the limit of available funds), necessitating cutbacks on the program's activities and/or its objectives. Better to cut back now than to find out later that we simply didn't have the necessary resources to implement our intended program design. If the program fails to achieve its stated objectives, nobody is interested in hearing the excuse that "we just didn't have enough resources;" that is tantamount to saying: "we didn't know what we were doing when we did our budget." Such excuses do not inspire confidence. In the second instance, a potential funding source may receive the application for funding, favorably review it, and then ask the proposal writer to cut program or policy expenses by, say, 2–30 percent. Or worse, the funding agency may run into fiscal difficulties after the intervention has already begun, and ask the grantee to cut costs by 25–30 percent.

As a result, the change agent and/or members of the action system (e.g., the program director) must be ready to make adjustments (see Chapter 1 for discussion of different types of stakeholders). Four options for adjusting resources are possible should available resources prove inadequate to implement the intended program or policy design (see Figure 5.3).

1. *Try to increase funding to cover costs:* Multiple funding sources may be required to fund the program's expenses. Maybe more than one grant will be needed. Sometimes funding providers will ask the agency applying for funds to match the provider's contribution, with the requirement that no award will be made until the applying agency comes up with matching funds.
2. *Redefine target selection and/or eligibility criteria:* This might involve restricting the eligibility of clients (e.g., to those most in need) or lowering the number of clients to be served (e.g., perhaps only 30 high-risk youths can be effectively served by an after-school delinquency prevention program, rather than the originally intended 50).
3. *Reduce or modify program objectives* (e.g., reduce the number of objectives): Rather than provide substance abuse counseling, life skills training, and vocational education and job preparation, limit the program's objectives to one goal, such as employment.
4. *Modify the program design:* Eliminate one or more program components, beginning with the least essential components of the program, or shorten the length of the program.

FIGURE 5.3 *Making Adjustments to the Resource Plan: Four Options*

DESIGNATE RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLECT, STORE, AND ANALYZE DATA

We emphasize that monitoring requires collecting information. This usually means more work for program or agency staff, on top of their service delivery duties. Such information is indispensable, however, and no program or agency can survive or grow without it. For example, all programs need to record some basic information for accountability purposes. Examples might include the number of contacts made with clients in an intensive supervision probation program, the number of hours of participation in an after-school delinquency prevention program, and weekly attendance at group counseling sessions in a substance abuse program.

In the authors' work with nonprofit groups and criminal justice agencies, we have often found that funding agencies or program supervisors do not always clearly communicate or emphasize the information reporting requirements for programs, and we have found that staff who have been assigned the responsibility for collecting monitoring data often lack the training, skills, and time needed to fulfill such tasks. These are not excuses. The program manager or director bears full responsibility to make sure that certain information is recorded consistently and accurately. Expect that stakeholders will want regular reports on the numbers and characteristics of clients served, their level of need, their progress and participation in the program, and, eventually, their outcomes.

Someone must take responsibility to make sure the job gets done. If the program manager assigns responsibility to staff to undertake these tasks, he or she is also responsible to make sure that it gets done. If there is any ambiguity at all about what information is to be collected, who is responsible for collecting it, or how it is to be collected, recorded, and stored, the program manager must make sure such ambiguities are cleared up before the program or policy begins operations. If

gaps are detected afterwards, they must be filled. The risk of not taking such mundane considerations seriously is the potential death of the program or policy when those funding it or authorizing it lose faith in it.

DEVELOP INFORMATION SYSTEM CAPACITIES

A good information system can serve several purposes. First and foremost, a good information system can demonstrate accountability to funding agents, the community, and other stakeholders who may provide either critical support or resistance. A good information system is also useful for planning: it allows program managers or policy authorities to see how well plans are going and what problems emerge, and make decisions about adjustments. A useful information system allows for continuous monitoring over time: it is sensitive to both intended and unintended changes in program or policy design. Five guidelines should facilitate the development of a useful information system.

Information Systems

Information systems are ongoing methods of collecting data about clients, staff, and program or policy activities. They may consist of written forms and records that are filed, or fully computerized data entry and storage systems.

First, it is vital to gain staff acceptance. Extra paperwork or online data entry is unwelcome unless you can show that it provides meaningful and useful information. For example, staff may be more receptive to doing the work if they find out that they receive useful feedback about client performance, program services, and their own performance.

Cost is another consideration. Even printing new forms can be expensive for a small, nonprofit agency. Certainly purchasing new computers or setting up a coordinated computer network can get very expensive. The bigger the agency, and the greater the number of clients, however, the greater the likelihood that more sophisticated information storage systems are needed. Greater needs are also implied by detailed and regular client assessment and reassessment procedures (e.g., risk and needs classifications of ex-offenders), and sophisticated, multiple services provided to a diverse clientele.

We should also consider compatibility: what information is already being collected? Can current information systems be modified somewhat, rather than designing a brand-new information system? Is there a need to share information with other agencies?

Safeguarding of information is important. In a delinquency prevention program, for example, staff need to protect the identity of the juvenile. To assess a juvenile's needs adequately, however, the program needs sensitive information about the juvenile's previous criminal record and his or her current school performance. Strict procedures must be developed for handling, using, and storing such information.

In general, training of staff is essential if good information is to be collected. Never just give someone an overview of an online system or hand over a package of forms and explain that "instructions are enclosed." Make sure that staff members understand what is being asked of them and why. Consider these five guidelines as you read Case Study 5.3.

DEVELOP MECHANISMS TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO STAKEHOLDERS

Finally, make plans to use monitoring information. The change agent should identify the appropriate stakeholders (e.g., program clients, staff, other agencies, legislators, funding agencies, community representatives), and schedule individual and/or group meetings to communicate results. Some reporting, particularly to funding agencies, will come in the form of program reports or research reports. Wherever gaps are detected, corrective action should be discussed and implemented. The bottom line is that any effective organization, private, public, or nonprofit, requires monitoring information on a regular basis to figure out how well it is doing. Can you imagine any effective business that only examined its sales once a year? A stock market that reports transactions only once a month? A television network that examines ratings only at the end of the season? Failure to monitor program or policy performance is not good business. In extreme cases, such failure can be fatal to the program or policy.

WHAT IS TRANSLATIONAL CRIMINOLOGY?

At the 2011 National Institute of Justice (NIJ) research conference, the theme was "Translational Criminology: Shaping Policy and Practice with Research." In his keynote address, then-Director John H. Laub (Distinguished University Professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park) noted that two major goals for NIJ were: (1) to generate knowledge through research that is scientifically rigorous; and (2) to disseminate that knowledge in ways that are useful to policymakers and practitioners, such as police, prosecutors, judges, correctional officials and victim advocates. One of the ways for NIJ to meet its dual mission, according to Laub (2011), is through "translational criminology."

The idea of translational criminology is simple, yet powerful: If we want to prevent, reduce, and manage crime, we must be able to translate scientific discoveries

into policy and practice. The goal of translational criminology is to break down barriers between basic and applied research by creating a dynamic interface between research and practice. This is a two-way street: In one direction, practitioners in the field describe challenges they face in their jobs every day; in the other direction, scientists discover new tools and ideas to overcome these challenges and evaluate their impact. However, translational criminology goes beyond the conventional "research-to-practice" idea. It does this through a systematic study of the process of knowledge dissemination, recognizing that successful dissemination of research findings may require multiple strategies. Successful dissemination also requires that the evidence is implemented correctly. In other words, it is not just about finding evidence that something works; it is figuring out why it works and how to implement the evidence in real-world settings. Moreover, this facet of translational criminology places a priority on applicability—that is, on research with the potential for real-world implementation, something that is especially attractive in an era of limited resources.

In a policy essay written for the 2009 American Society of Criminology conference, Maguire (2010) argued that the emerging evidence-based criminology (EBC) movement holds significant promise for expanding the policy reach and relevance of criminology. A major assumption is that if there is sufficient evidence that a program or policy "works," organizations should want to embrace it, support it, and implement it. Irrationality, however, is a particular concern among public sector organizations, which are often able to persist in spite of compelling evidence of ineffectiveness and inefficiency. As a result, evidence about what works is insufficient to compel organizations to do things differently, and Maguire (2010) deftly notes that: "Implementation is currently the Achilles heel of the evidence-based criminology movement (p. 267)." Evidence-based criminology has focused so intently on accumulating high-quality research evidence on the effectiveness of interventions that little attention has so far been paid to understanding the agencies charged with implementing those interventions.

Even in the more established field of evidence-based medicine (EBM), adherence of clinical practice to the evidence is highly uneven (Eisenberg, 2000; Institute of Medicine, 2001). Although evidence-based medicine has attended to implementation issues much more seriously than evidence-based criminology, the medical field also continues to evidence a substantial gap between knowledge and practice.

Like Laub, Maguire (2010) suggests that a more systematic research agenda is needed to explore the capacity of criminal justice organizations to adopt evidence-based practices. Evidence-based criminology can benefit from blending insights from criminology, health, and organizational science in an effort to understand not only whether interventions reduce crime but whether agencies are capable of implementing and sustaining those interventions.

CONCLUSION

Monitoring is a process that attempts to identify any gaps between the program or policy on paper (design) and the program or policy in action (implementation). We can specify all the key questions for monitoring in terms of corresponding program or policy design features: what was intended in terms of targets, staff, and program/policy services? Second, how do we collect data to determine the degree to which these design features are actually being implemented? Third, what gaps exist (if any) between the program or policy on paper, and the program or policy in action? Where gaps are found, adjustments must be made: either the design (the program or policy on paper) must change, or the way the program or policy is being implemented (the program or policy in action) must change.

We emphasize that the purpose of monitoring is not simply to ensure compliance with the original program or policy design. There is always some drift between the original design and actual implementation of any program or policy. Over time, as conditions in the environment change, and as unanticipated difficulties emerge, modifications to the original design are inevitably made. Leadership changes, staff persons come and go, and services are altered. Sometimes these changes are necessary and for the better. We discuss the need for innovations to learn continually and adapt more fully in Chapter 7. What we are seeking, after all, is better programs and policies, not blind obedience to a piece of paper. If monitoring is timely and consistent, we can observe these changes in program or policy design and make explicit, intentional decisions about whether to adopt certain changes.

Consider this example. A residential drug treatment program's funding from the county is in jeopardy because it is serving too few clients with serious drug abuse problems. Monitoring data has indicated that the staff persons responsible for client intake have been turning away seriously addicted clients because they are too disruptive. What actions should be taken? Different options are possible. First, less stringent client eligibility criteria might be adopted to maintain funding levels. Alternatively, the program may seek funding from a different sponsor that will be more sympathetic to their existing client selection and treatment procedures. In the first case, changes in client selection (e.g., more clients with more serious drug abuse problems) will also necessitate changes in program design (e.g., type of counseling and total hours of counseling needed for seriously addicted clients). In the second case, changes in program funding may affect the program's entire mission and goals. We emphasize: any deviations from the original program or policy design should be consciously intended, explicit, and visible. Monitoring facilitates deliberate decisions about program or policy design, and helps prevent unintended or invisible "drift."

Monitoring provides essential, continuous information that can be used to satisfy accountability requirements, improve program services or policy implementation on a regular basis, and move toward desired outcomes. As we will see in the next chapter, thorough monitoring should precede and accompany any valid

evaluation of a program or policy. Though the two are linked, monitoring more closely emphasizes process; evaluation emphasizes outcome.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. (a) What is meant by the term "monitoring"? (b) What is the purpose of monitoring?
2. What questions do we need to ask about a program or policy at the monitoring stage? Be specific, and give examples to illustrate your answer.
3. Describe each of the four methods that can be used to collect data for monitoring. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each.
   (a) Observational methods
   (b) Service records
   (c) Service provider data
   (d) Program participant data
4. What options are possible when resources prove to be inadequate?
5. What are the purposes of an information system? Describe three major guidelines for developing such a system.
6. What are the goals of translational criminology? Give an example.
7. Read the report *Drug Court Monitoring, Evaluation, and Management Information Systems* (https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/195077.pdf) or read a different one assigned by your instructor. Complete a monitoring analysis by using the Monitoring Analysis Chart as a guide (see Figure 5.1).