

## Project Sponsors

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The Annie E. Casey Foundation



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# The Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit

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## DEDICATION

We gratefully dedicate the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit to all Community Health Workers, their colleagues and supporters around the world. Whatever their titles, wherever they work and whatever the health challenges they face, Community Health Workers share in the struggle and show the way to healthier, happier lives and communities for all of us.

We invite you to dedicate this copy of the Tool Kit to someone who is important to your work in community health.

Dedicated to:

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Dedicated by:

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“The Community Health Worker knows the community  
- its history, assets, needs, geography and politics.  
The Community Health Worker knows how to  
navigate systems and find resources.  
The Community Health Worker encounters  
challenges and always finds a way to deal with them.  
The Community Health Worker is a powerful cultural educator  
who has fine ears and can truly listen with the hearts”.

**Lorenza Zuñiga**

*Promotora de Salud/Community Health Worker*

“For nearly five decades many great Community Health Programs, although successful in their efforts to improve the health and quality of life for the underserved communities, lost funding due to insufficient data or measuring outcomes and impacts.  
I believe the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit will greatly help existing and future programs measure the quality and caliber of their interventions.”

**Yvonne E. Lacey**

*Co-Chair, Advisory Council of the National Community Health Advisor Study  
and Community Health Worker Specialist*



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# Introduction to the Tool Kit

## *Welcome to the Community Health Worker Evaluation Tool Kit!*

The Tool Kit is meant to be a practical, practitioners guide to program evaluation. The Tool Kit reflects our belief that the purpose of evaluation is to help you make your program as good as it can be, to help you measure your program's success, to help you sustain your program and to help you defend your program when necessary. For these reasons, it is results oriented. It focuses on your program's outcomes and impacts and costs and benefits so that you can better answer the kinds of questions that are asked by funders, agency directors, boards of directors, policy makers and evaluation researchers who may be working with you.

The Tool Kit was developed in response to the need for guidance in evaluation that was expressed loudly and clearly by practitioners, including Community Health Workers (CHWs), other program staff, sponsoring agencies, funders and evaluators from many CHW programs across many regions of the country during the preparation of the National Community Health Advisor Study (NCHAS, 1998).

This seminal study found that many frontline CHW program staff lack evaluation skills. It also noted that CHWs themselves are rarely engaged in developing evaluation plans, designing protocols and refining instruments. One consequence of this omission is that many evaluations miss important results. Community Health Workers then may become frustrated and demoralized, feeling that their work is not highly valued because no one is documenting some of their important accomplishments. CHWs, who often are tasked with collecting much of the evaluation information, may become resistant to doing so, feeling that it is not really important enough to be taking time away from their "real" work.

The NCHAS included an exhaustive review of the field, and its authors and consultants developed a framework that suggested levels of evaluation, evaluation methods and types of information that could be gathered. The Tool Kit includes a modified version of that framework. The new version concentrates on results, and we hope you will find it useful and thought provoking.

Based on the findings of the NCHAS, The Annie E. Casey Foundation has supported the Tool Kit as the logical next step to promoting sound, feasible CHW program evaluation.



Our Tool Kit team is ultimately responsible for the Tool Kit. However, as our acknowledgements show, we had a lot of help from many people. We began the project in May 1998 with a focus group held at the National Promotores/CHW Conference in Phoenix. That was followed by meetings with CHWs and program directors at the American Public Health Association (APHA) meetings in Washington, D.C. in November 1998, by a meeting of evaluation experts and CHWs at the May 1999 National Promotores/CHW Conference and, finally, by two meetings of professional evaluators and CHWs at the 1999 APHA meeting in Chicago.

During this process we kept in touch with as many programs and individuals as possible via email, mailings from our growing database and conference calls. We solicited actual tools or instruments from programs, conducted case studies, kept up with the evaluation literature, attended meetings and asked for still more help at strategic moments.

### What will you find inside the Tool Kit?

First, we offer an overview of evaluation in Section 1, summed up in twenty-one basic principles that should guide all CHW program evaluations, with the possible and partial exception of those that are part of a research program rather than a service program. There is a Logic Model Development Guide in Section 2, which we believe is a fundamental evaluation tool. Ours has been developed and provided to us by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and we are pleased to be able to share it here.

Then there are the tools themselves, organized according to the Tool Kit's evaluation framework, in Section 3. We could not possibly include all the useful tools, so we had to choose, and that section of the Tool Kit explains how we decided what tools to include. You will also find referrals to other tools and a directory of the programs that contributed their tools.

We created two new tools for the Tool Kit. "The River of Program Life" provides a visual, group approach to reflecting on your program's successes and challenges and is one way of highlighting and illustrating elements of the logic model. The other new tool is our "Cost-Benefit Analysis Primer", which will help you justify your program in terms of dollars and cents. We also provided partial support for the development of a client satisfaction survey that can be adapted to many kinds of CHW programs. These tools are also included in Section 3.

To illustrate some of the strategies, issues and experiences of actual evaluation, we conducted several case studies, which you will find in Section 4. One of the lessons learned is that first person success stories of clients and CHWs are as important as impressive statistics when you present your program's results. Another is that an effective evaluation requires marketing and visibility.

We provide a guide to writing program proposals and reports in Section 5. This section guides you through some typical proposal formats and includes "boilerplate" language that you are welcome to use for your own proposals.

Finally, Section 6 of the Tool Kit includes a selected bibliography and a glossary of evaluation terms. These, too, may be useful to you as you plan and conduct your own program evaluations.

This first version of the Tool Kit is not the end of this project. We hope to hear from many of you with comments and suggestions for improving it. There will also be a CD-ROM version of the Tool Kit available soon. And we hope to have the Tool Kit on the World Wide Web before long, to make it interactive and dynamic, to be changed and improved as all of us learn more about how to tell the great success stories of our CHW programs.

