

INVESTING IN WHAT WORKS INDEX (September 2013)

Better Results for Young People, their Families, and Communities

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	U.S. Department of Education	U.S. Department of Labor	U.S. Agency for International Development	Administration for Children and Families (HHS)
TOTAL SCORE (5 Possible Points Per Criteria)	25 POINTS OUT OF 35	21 OUT OF 35	21 OUT OF 35	21 OUT OF 35
<u>Evaluation Office / Senior Evaluation Officer</u> : Did the department have an office for research, development, dissemination, and evaluation and a senior staff member with the authority and budget to evaluate its major programs in FY13? ¹	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)
<u>Data</u> : Did the department have an office that made updated, accessible, and user-friendly data related to its core missions publicly available in FY13? ²	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)
<u>What Works Clearinghouse</u> : Did the department gather and make publicly available scientific evidence-based standards of what works in the field in FY13? ³	YES (5 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (2 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 Points)
<u>Common Evidence Framework</u> : Did the department use a common evidence framework in FY13 to inform its funding decisions and to communicate its standards for research and evaluation methods to potential grantees? ⁴	YES (5 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 Points)
<u>1% of Program Funds for Evaluations</u> : Did the department invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations and make the results of those evaluations public in FY13? ⁵	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (2 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (2 points)
<u>Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs</u> : Did the department allocate funds from its 5 largest competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY13? ⁶	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (2 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (2 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (2 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (2 points)
<u>Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Formula Grant Programs</u> : Did the department allocate funds from its 5 largest formula grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY13? ⁷	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (1 point)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (0 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (0 Points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (1 point)
Other Evidence/Evaluation Efforts ⁸	YES	N/A	YES	YES

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<p>¹ <u>Evaluation Office / Senior Evaluation Officer</u>: Did the department have an office for research, development, dissemination, and evaluation and a senior staff member with the authority and budget to evaluate its major programs in FY13?</p>	<p>1. ED: The U.S. Department of Education's <u>Institute of Education Sciences Director's budget</u> was \$594 million in FY13.</p> <p>DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor's <u>Chief Evaluation Office</u> appropriation for evaluations was \$8.5 million in FY13 and \$15 million in set-aside funds for evaluations described below were obligated."</p> <p>USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development's <u>Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research Director's budget</u> was \$12 million in FY13.</p> <p>ACF: The Administration for Children and Family's (HHS) <u>Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation Director's budget</u> was \$90 million in FY13.</p>
<p>² <u>Data</u>: Did the department have an office that made updated, accessible, and user-friendly data related to its core missions publicly available in FY13?</p>	<p>2. ED: The U.S. Department of Education's <u>National Center for Education Statistics</u> (\$109 million in FY13) serves as the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations.</p> <p>DOL: <u>The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor *Statistics</u> (\$613 million in FY13) serves as the principal Federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy.</p> <p>USAID: The USAID <u>Development Experience Clearinghouse</u> includes technical and program documentation from more than 50 years of USAID's existence, with more than 155,000 documents available for viewing and electronic download. The USAID <u>Foreign Assistance Dashboard</u> provides a view of U.S. Government foreign assistance funds and enables users to examine, research, and track aid investments in a standard and easy-to-understand format. USAID publishes its <u>core datasets</u>, as well as program specific data, in API formats.</p> <p>ACF: The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) makes data available through <u>Research Connections</u>, <u>the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research</u>, <u>healthdata.gov</u>, and the <u>National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect</u>.</p>
<p>³ <u>What Works Clearinghouse</u>: Did the department gather and make publicly available scientific evidence-based standards of what works in the field in FY13?</p>	<p>3. ED: The U.S. Department of Education's <u>What Works Clearinghouse</u> (\$8 million in FY13) identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (referred to as "interventions"), and disseminates summary information and reports on the WWC website.</p> <p>DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor's new Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR) builds on and uses the information technology platform of the U.S. Department of Education's "What Works Clearinghouse." CLEAR is now in beta-testing with evidence reviews being conducted on: evaluations of programs and services for disconnected youth; and evaluations of the effectiveness of Occupational Safety and Health inspections. Additional resources are being committed to CLEAR to expand the number of subject areas for evidence reviews. The Department expects CLEAR will be fully operational in late 2013.</p> <p>ACF: The Administration for Children and Families has conducted evidence reviews of human services interventions in several programmatic areas and made the information available on the web for practitioners and policy-makers. These reviews rate the quality of evaluation studies and summarize the findings for each intervention model. Reviews to date have covered <u>teen pregnancy prevention</u>, <u>home visiting</u>, <u>relationship education</u>, and <u>responsible fatherhood</u>. A review of employment and training programs will be launched in FY2013.</p> <p>USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provides evidence of "what works" by sector through USAID's technical Bureaus; <u>Bureau of Food Security</u>; Bureau for Global Health; Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment; and Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), <u>Microfinance</u>. For instance, DCHA has the <u>Center of Excellence on Democracy, Rights, and Governance</u> which published evidence based standards on what works in this field, such as best practices in electoral security. As just one among many bilateral and multilateral international development agencies trying to understand "what works" in development, USAID is a member and provides funding along with other donors for the <u>International Initiative for Impact Evaluation</u> (3ie), which serves as a "What Works Clearinghouse" in Development. With USAID and other donor funds, 3ie funds impact evaluations and systematic reviews that generate evidence on what works in development programs and why. Evidence about what works is included on 3ie's public database of policy briefs, systematic reviews and impact evaluations. In addition to membership funding, two systematic reviews funded by USAID were completed by 3ie in 2013 (one on interventions to reduce youth gang violence in developing countries and one on the effectiveness of parental, familial and community support for student learning outcomes in developing countries). USAID is in the process of funding a third review. These are in addition to the many impact evaluations that USAID funds that feed into these systematic reviews. USAID's Scientific Integrity Policy provides standards for scientific work.</p>

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<p>⁴ <u>Common Evidence Framework</u>: Did the department use a common evidence framework in FY13 to inform its funding decisions and to communicate its standards for research and evaluation methods to potential grantees?</p>	<p>4. ED: On September 20, 2013, the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and the National Science Foundation issued a <u>report</u> which explains how the two agencies hope to realize the full potential of their education research and development investments – including obtaining meaningful findings and actionable results – through a more systematic development of knowledge. The report describes six types of research studies that can generate evidence about how to increase student learning. On August 13, 2013, the U.S. Department of Education finalized <u>amendments to the Education Department General Administrative Regulations</u> - commonly known as "EDGAR." The amendments enable programs across the Department to encourage and reward grant applicants that propose rigorous evaluation methods that meet its 'What Works Clearinghouse' standards, so as to build credible evidence about the effectiveness of Department-funded grant projects; they also enable Department programs to focus funds on projects and strategies backed by differing levels of evidence, as appropriate.</p> <p>DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor initiated a working group with the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services which developed a <u>Common Framework for Cross-Agency Evidence Guidelines</u>. All Department agencies have reviewed the framework which is being used in the development of the Department's evaluation plan as well as in the design of evaluations within various Department agencies. The Department's Chief Evaluation Officer is also developing an agency-wide evaluation policy.</p> <p>USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) USAID has published an <u>Agency Evaluation Policy</u> which lists evaluation best practices and criteria for quality reports. USAID has released its <u>Policy Framework and Program Cycle</u> that will be updated every 4 years. USAID has released a <u>Scientific Integrity Policy</u> that includes standards for scientific research. Feed The Future has an evidence-based framework that informs funding decisions. Global Health is re-doing its monitoring and evaluation policy to create a more integrated evidence based framework.</p> <p>ACF: The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) has established an <u>evaluation policy</u> that addresses the principles of rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations.</p>
<p>⁵ <u>1% of Program Funds for Evaluations</u>: Did the department invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations and make the results of those evaluations public in FY13.</p>	<p>5. ED: The <u>Elementary and Secondary Education Act</u> currently allows the U.S. Secretary of Education to set-aside .5% of ESEA funds (except Title I and Title III) for evaluations. The U.S. Secretary of Education used this authority to evaluate 4 Department programs in FY13. The U.S. Department of Education's <u>FY14 budget request</u> recommends allowing the Secretary to set-aside up to .5% of all major Department programs (except the Pell Grant program) for evaluations.</p> <p>DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor's FY12 and <u>FY13 budgets</u> allowed the Secretary to set-aside up to .5% of operating funds from nearly every agency, for departmental evaluations coordinated by the Chief Evaluation Office (in addition to evaluations funded by the various agencies). The Department's <u>FY14 budget request</u> recommends allowing the Secretary to set-aside up to 1.0% of all operating agencies' budgets. The Department's Chief Evaluation Office directly funds evaluations and combines resources for joint evaluation studies with other agencies, including the Employment and Training Administration, the Veterans' Employment and Training Service, the Women's Bureau, the International Labor Affairs Bureau, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Employee Benefit Security Administration. In addition to evaluations funded by the Department's Chief Evaluation Office, other DOL agencies have specific budgets for evaluations (e.g., the Employment and Training Administration, the Veterans Employment and Training Service, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Employee Benefits Security Administration).</p> <p>USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development <u>agency-wide evaluation policy states</u>: "On average, at least 3 percent of the program budget managed by an operating unit should be dedicated to external evaluation." The Agency invested \$36 million in evaluations in FY12. 186 high quality evaluations worldwide were developed using USAID Forward criteria and are helping USAID make smarter decisions. More than 50 percent of completed evaluations led USAID staff to make mid-course corrections and more than a third led to budgetary changes. All evaluations are available on usaid.gov in the Development Experience Clearinghouse.</p> <p>ACF: In FY13, the Administration for Children and Families (HHS) is planning to spend nearly \$100 million on evaluations, representing 0.2% of ACF's \$50.6 billion budget in FY13 (in addition to investments in evaluations by ACF grantees).</p>
<p>⁶ <u>Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs</u>: Did the department allocate funds from its 5 largest competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY13?</p>	<p>6. ED: The U.S. Department of Education's <u>Investing in Innovation Fund</u> (\$149 million in FY13) provides competitive grants to local school districts and non-profit organizations with records of success to help them leverage public/private partnerships to implement education practices that have demonstrated positive impacts on student achievement. The U.S. Department of Education also invested \$29 million of the \$255 million appropriated for the Charter School Program (CSP) in FY13 in <u>Grants for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Schools</u>. This initiative provides competitive grants to non-profit charter management organizations to help them expand student enrollment at charter schools with demonstrated records of success and to open new charter schools based on models that have significantly increased academic achievement for all students.</p> <p>DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor's <u>Workforce Innovation Fund</u> (\$50 million in FY13) provides competitive grants to state workforce agencies, local workforce investment boards, and institutions eligible to apply for WIA Section 166 grants to help them develop and expand innovative evidence-based workforce development strategies. The <u>Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program</u> (\$500 million in FY13) program provides competitive grants to community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education to help them develop and expand innovative evidence-based education and career training strategies that can help economically dislocated workers who are changing careers.</p> <p>USAID: One of the criteria for all grant determinations across the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the criteria that makes up 40% of the decision, is demonstrated past experience, which may include independent evaluations. The U.S. Agency for International Development is rebuilding its <u>framework</u> of planning, monitoring and evaluation to produce and use evidence through the introduction of the new Program Cycle. This will systematize use of evidence across all decision making regarding grants and all USAID's work.</p> <p>ACF: In FY12, the Administration for Children and Families established the <u>Head Start Designation Renewal System</u> requiring Head Start (\$8 billion in FY13) grantees to compete for grants moving forward if they failed to meet criteria related to service quality, licensing and operations, and fiscal and internal controls. The <u>Personal Responsibility Education Program</u> (\$75 million in FY13) includes three individual discretionary grant programs supports evidence-based competitive grants that teach youth about abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.</p>

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<p>⁷<u>Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Formula Grant Programs</u>: Did the department allocate funds from its 5 largest formula grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY13?</p>	<p>7. ED: The U.S. Department of Education allocated 1.5% of funds from its <u>ESEA Title II Part A Program</u> (\$2.5 billion in FY13) based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY12. This program helps schools and local school districts improve teacher and principal quality and ensure that all teachers are highly qualified.</p> <p>ACF: The Administration for Children and Families' <u>Foster Care Program</u> authorizes waivers that give states the flexibility to use their foster care maintenance payment funds to support evidence-based practices to address the needs of high-risk families. Waiver recipients are required to include an evaluation that is "the most rigorous and appropriate approach to determine the impact and effectiveness of the program intervention(s)."</p>
<p>⁸Other Evidence/Evaluation Efforts</p>	<p>8. ED: In December 2010, the U.S. Department of Education finalized its "<u>Secretary's Supplemental Priorities</u>" which authorize the Department's competitive grant programs to award bonus points to applicants to support programs, practices, and strategies designed to build evidence of effectiveness (Priority #14) and to support programs, practices, or strategies for which there is strong or moderate evidence of effectiveness (Priority #15). These priorities were the basis for the amendments to the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, commonly known as "EDGAR," published in August 2013. In FY13, the <u>Higher Education Strengthening Institutions Program</u>, which helps postsecondary schools expand their capacity to serve low-income students, established strong or moderate evidence of effectiveness (Priority #15) as an eligibility requirement; the <u>Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Program</u>, which supports national non-profit projects that support teacher or principal training or professional enhancement activities established moderate levels of effectiveness as an eligibility requirement and is awarding 5 points out of 109 to applicants that proposed projects supported by strong evidence of effectiveness; and the <u>Arts in Education Model Development & Dissemination Program</u>, which supports the enhancement, expansion, documentation, evaluation, and dissemination of innovative, cohesive models that are based on research, is awarding up to 5 points to applicants that address building evidence (Priority #14) and up to 10 points out of a total of 130 points to applicants that address strong or moderate evidence (Priority #15)</p> <p>USAID: The <u>USAID Development Innovation Ventures</u> (\$25 million in FY13) supports breakthrough solutions to the world's most intractable development challenges by finding and testing bold ideas that could change millions of lives at a fraction of the usual cost. 58% of DIV awards include randomized control trials. The Agency has also launched multiple competitive mechanisms to fund development solutions with proven results including <u>Grand Challenges</u> (\$78 million in FY13) which has received over 2500 applicants.</p> <p>ACF: <u>The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program</u>, which allows collaboration and partnership at the federal, state, tribal, and community levels to improve health and development outcomes for at-risk children through evidence-based home visiting programs, is administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in cooperation with ACF.</p>

INVESTING IN WHAT WORKS INDEX (September 2013)

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About the Results for America Investing in What Works Index. In June 2013, [Results for America](#) (RFA) unveiled its first-ever Investing in What Works Index which highlighted the extent to which the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor are currently using evidence and evaluation when making budget, management, and policy decisions. In September 2013, RFA unveiled its second Investing in What Works Index which describes the evidence and evaluation work of the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Agency for International Development and the Administration for Children and Families (within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). It is important to note that:

- Results for America developed the criteria and scoring structure in the attached index in close consultation with more than two dozen policy experts and practitioners in evidence-based policy from all across the country.
- The purpose of the attached index is to educate members of the general public as well as public, private, and non-profit sector leaders on how federal departments and agencies are currently using evidence and evaluation to invest taxpayer dollars in what works.
- Results for America gave the federal departments and agencies included in the attached index multiple opportunities to review and comment on the presentation of the information included in it. We greatly appreciate their willingness to help us develop this document and their continued commitment to making the federal government as effective and efficient as possible. Since we recognize that it is very difficult to distill complex practices, policies, and programs into a single cross-agency scorecard, we exercised our best judgment and relied on the deep expertise of leaders both within and outside of the federal government during the development of the attached index.

The attached index assesses four federal departments and agencies against seven evidence and evaluation criteria. Each criteria is equally weighted and scored on a scale of 1-5 resulting in a total possible score of 35 points. Federal departments and agencies were given one point if they have demonstrated an intent to meet the stated criteria; two points if they have demonstrated some initial internal progress toward meeting the criteria; three points if they have made some initial public progress toward meeting the criteria; four points if they have made some meaningful public progress toward meeting the criteria; and five points if they have fully and successfully met the criteria. These scores are based on the information and links provided by these four departments and agencies.

Moving Forward. Results for America intends to update and expand the attached index on a regular basis moving forward.

About RFA. [Results for America](#), an initiative of America Achieves, is committed to improving outcomes for young people and their families by helping drive public resources more efficiently toward results-driven solutions. Now more than ever, government spending at all levels – local, state and federal – needs to be spent more wisely and efficiently. Results for America will work to ensure taxpayer dollars are invested strategically with a rigorous focus on data, evidence and better results, and discourage continued support of programs that consistently fail to achieve measurable outcomes.