

Four Program Logic Models

Final Report

06/16/2020

Prepared for:
Office of Program Performance, Analysis, and Evaluation
Office of Performance Management and the Chief Financial Officer
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street SW
Washington, DC 20416



U.S. Small Business
Administration

Prepared by:
Optimal Solutions Group, LLC
5825 University Research Court, Suite 2800
College Park, MD 20740



OPTIMAL SOLUTIONS GROUP, LLC
REAL-TIME DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Contract No. **73351018A0038** Order No. **005**

The statements, findings, and conclusions in this study are those of the contractor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Small Business Development Centers, the United States Small Business Administration, or the United States Government.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Logic Model Development Process	4
1. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)	5
1.1. SBDC Logic Model	5
1.2. SBDC Logic Model Evaluation Questions	7
2. Microloan Program	8
2.1. Microloan Program Logic Model	8
2.2. Microloan Program Logic Model Evaluation Questions	10
3. Women’s Business Centers (WBC)	11
3.1. WBC Logic Model	11
3.2. WBC Logic Model Evaluation Questions	13
4. SCORE	14
4.1. SCORE Logic Model	14
4.2. SCORE Logic Model Evaluation Questions	16
Conclusions and Recommendations	17
Key Sources	18

Executive Summary

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) developed a program evaluation framework that underscores the importance of developing logic models to provide the foundation for successful program evaluations. The purpose of a logic model is to define the program's theory of change by depicting how the program's underlying assumptions, strategies, resources, activities, and contextual factors are expected to lead to the desired outcomes. A logic model provides a visual representation of the key program pathways linking program components to short-term, intermediate and long-term outcomes. The goal of this task order is to prepare logic models for the four SBA programs: 1) Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), 2) Microloan Program, 3) Women's Business Centers (WBC), and 4) SCORE.

The components for the four logic models were developed by gathering information on each program from reviews of legislations, program documentation, standard operating procedures, government information sources, the preliminary logic models for the four programs, and the logic models for other SBA programs. Then, focus groups with program stakeholders (SBA officials and program workgroups) were conducted to refine, revise, and augment the logic model components.

The logic models are composed of the following components:

- *Inputs* involve investments and resources available to support the program.
- *Activities* refer to what the program does to achieve its outcomes.
- *Outputs* define the products of conducted activities.
- *Short-term outcomes* describe changes in knowledge, understanding, awareness, attitudes, or perceptions achieved as a result of the program participation.
- *Intermediate outcomes* assess changes in participants' behaviors, skills, practices, or decisions.
- *Long-term outcomes* examine expected effects of the program at the higher levels of analyses including organization, local community, business ecosystem, or society.

Based on the logic models, initial formative, summative and impact evaluation questions were developed for each of the four programs to address future program evaluation efforts. After receiving feedback from SBA program stakeholders, proposed evaluation research questions were revised.

There were several suggestions for improving the logic model development process for future SBA program evaluations:

- *Use a reverse model building approach* of developing long-term outcomes first, followed by intermediate outcomes, and subsequently by all other program components. This ensures that the developed components are logically interrelated and avoids overcrowding the logic model.
- *Expand the use of qualitative assessments* to gain feedback about the program from multiple levels, including local program administrators, staff, trainers, technical assistance providers, and participants.
- *Increase the focus on business ecosystem and local community* as important long-term outcomes established by all four of the reviewed programs. This involves developing additional conceptualizations and measures of these outcomes.

Introduction

The Small Business Administration (SBA) established a program evaluation team within the Office of Program Performance, Analysis and Evaluation (OPPAE) to determine how best to employ evaluation to assess the effectiveness and impact of SBA-supported programs. The SBA team developed a program evaluation framework that governs its program evaluation activities. This framework underscores the importance of developing logic models as the foundation for successful program evaluations. The purpose of a logic model is to describe the program's theory of change by depicting how the program's underlying assumptions, resources, strategies, activities, and contextual factors are expected to lead to the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. A logic model provides a visual representation of the key program pathways linking program components to the desired outcomes. A logic model offers the framework for formative and summative program evaluations to develop the research questions, identify performance measures, construct an appropriate research design, interpret the results, and provide recommendations for the program improvements.

The key components of the logic models are defined by the following:

- Inputs involve investments and resources available to support the program implementation (e.g., funds, staffing, information technology (IT) systems).
- Activities refer to what the program does to achieve its outcomes (e.g., meetings, trainings, events, outreach materials).
- Outputs define the products of conducted activities (e.g., number of potential participants reached, number of participants trained, length and intensity of training sessions).
- Short-term outcomes describe changes in knowledge, understanding, awareness, attitudes, perceptions, or beliefs achieved as a result of the program participation.
- Intermediate outcomes assess changes in participants' behaviors, skills, practices, or decisions.
- Long-term outcomes examine expected program effects at the higher levels of analyses including organization, local community, business ecosystem, or society (changes in organizational, social, economic, or civic conditions).

The goal of this task order is to prepare logic models for the four SBA programs: 1) Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), 2) Microloan Program, 3) Women's Business Centers (WBC), and 4) SCORE. The following describes the logic models development process, presents the detailed logic models for each of the four programs, offers potential research questions for future program evaluations, and outlines recommendations for future program evaluations.

Logic Model Development Process

The program components for the four logic models were developed based on the program information gathered during reviews of program-related legislations, program documentation, standard operating procedures, government reports, preliminary depictions of the logic models for the four programs, and logic models for other SBA programs.

A logic model development involved the reverse logic approach in which the theory of change was articulated by identifying the program's short-term outcomes, intermediate and long-term outcomes so that they could be clearly linked back to the program inputs, activities and outputs.

This involved developing long-term outcomes first, followed by intermediate and short-term outcomes, and subsequently by all other program components. This ensured that the developed components are logically interrelated, parsimonious, and relevant. Furthermore, the Z-type of the logic model was used, which involved a nested model in which a set of outcomes for program implementation becomes inputs to the second program level that produces outcomes for the program participants, their businesses, ecosystems, and communities.

The focus groups with program stakeholders were conducted to refine and revise the logic model components. The logic models were developed in collaboration with SBA officials and program workgroup members. Multiple sessions were conducted to gain feedback for the components of the program's logic model. Three one-hour meetings were held for each program, resulting in a total of twelve meetings with stakeholders – four in-person and eight virtual.

Based on the final logic models, the formative, summative, and impact evaluation questions were developed for each of the four programs to address future program evaluation efforts. The formative evaluation questions focus on the program implementations, activities, and outputs with the goal of identifying best practices, gaps, and areas for improvements. The summative questions focus on the program short-term and intermediate outcomes to provide evidence about the value of a program or the extent to which the program has achieved its intended outcomes. The impact questions address the program effectiveness by determining whether the long-term outcomes can be attributed to the program, which typically requires quasi-experimental research designs. The SBA feedback was used to refine and revise the research questions.

Below are the four program logic models and the evaluation questions developed in collaboration with SBA officials and the program workgroup members.

1. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)

The Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) program is the SBA's largest matching grant-funded program providing a broad network of assistance for the small businesses by linking the resources of Federal, State, and local governments with the resources of the educational community and the private sector. The purpose of the program is to provide quality business and economic development assistance to small businesses and prospective small businesses, promoting growth, expansion, and innovation, increasing productivity, and improving management practices. The mission of SBA's Office of Small Business Development Centers (OSBDC) is to administer and oversee the SBDC Program.

The SBDC Program has 63 Recipient Organizations – one in each state (four in Texas and six in California), the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. The Recipient is responsible for establishing a Lead SBDC Office and a network of SBDCs that cover its designated Area of Service. The SBDCs provide counseling and training services to help small businesses access capital; develop and exchange new technologies; improve business planning, strategy, operations, financial management, personnel administration, marketing, exports, and sales. These services are designed to improve small business formation, growth, management, productivity, and innovation.

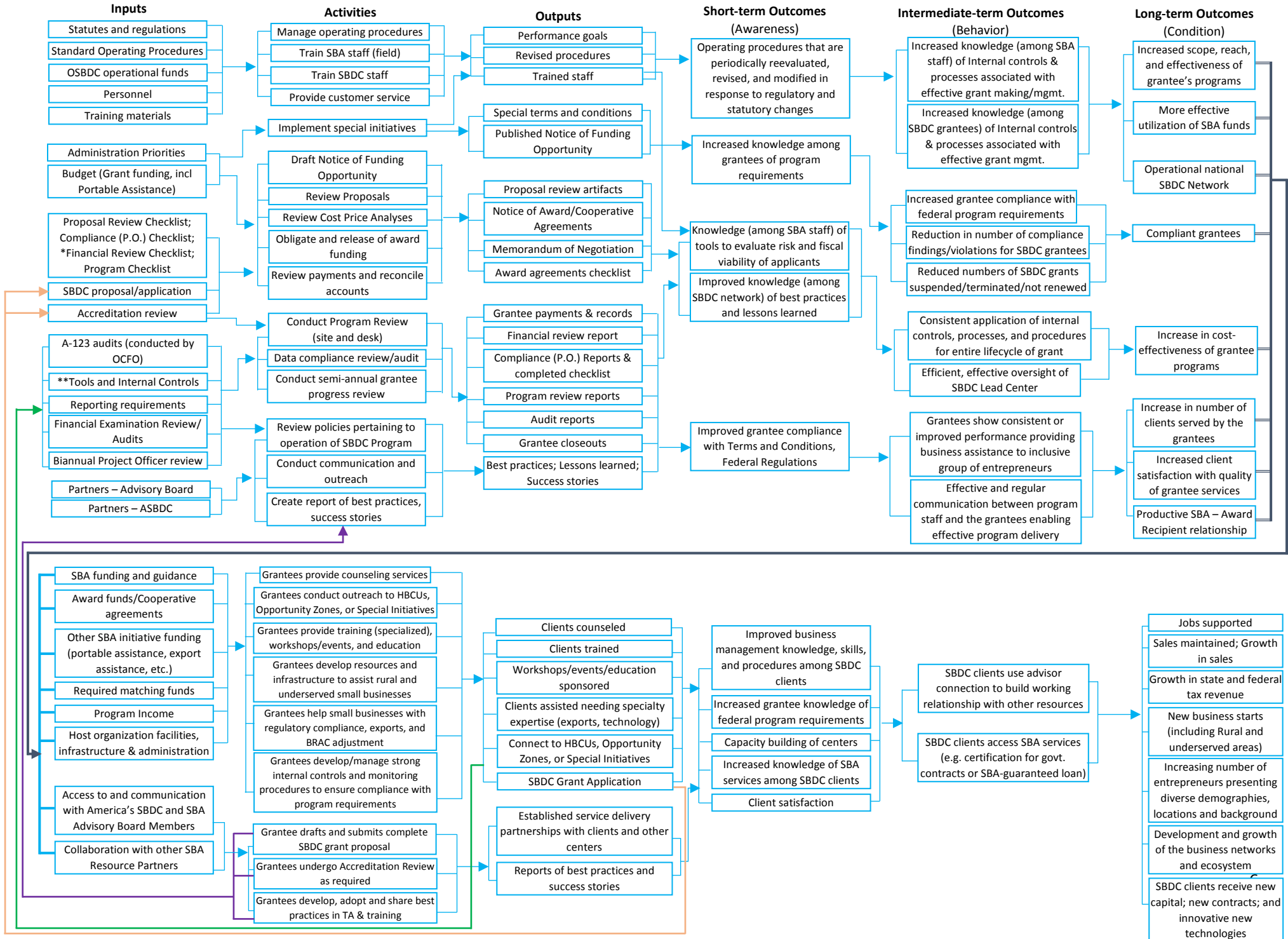
1.1. SBDC Logic Model

Figure 1 illustrates the final version of the SBDC logic model.

Figure 1. Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) logic model

Office of Small Business Development Centers (OSBDC) Logic Model

The mission of the Office of Small Business Development Centers is to promote entrepreneurship, small business growth and the U.S. economy through the SBA-funded SBDC Network.



Note: *Financial Review Checklist includes all accounting principles to be followed during the audit. ** Tools include Entrepreneurial Development and Management Information System (EDMIS), PRISM, Sam.gov, Grants.gov, SBDC Net National Information Clearinghouse and JAAMS. TA = Technical Assistance.

1.2. SBDC Logic Model Evaluation Questions

Based on the logic model, the following formative, summative and impact evaluation questions were developed for the SBDC to address future evaluation work.

Formative, program implementation:

1. Which program resources are needed to successfully and efficiently ensure grantees' compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, the program requirements, and federal regulations?
2. How can the program improve outreach activities to ensure meeting targeted utilization levels by businesses?
 - a. What is the description of the characteristics of firms and owners who utilize the program?
 - b. To what extent does the program reach current and prospective small business owners from socially and/or economically disadvantaged groups (minority, veterans, women, rural)?
 - c. How can the program improve outreach activities to ensure that socially and/or economically disadvantaged clients enroll and utilize the program?
3. What is the pattern of SBDC clients' use of the various types of program activities (e.g., counseling, training, other SBA services)?
 - a. Are the best practices in services provided to clients? What are the gaps in services?
 - b. To what extent do SBDCs refer clients to other SBA resources or local partners?
 - c. To what extent does the usage of services and activities vary among different types of SBDC clients (economically and/or socially disadvantaged)?
 - d. How can the program improve services to ensure that a greater number of socially and/or economically disadvantaged clients utilize the program?
 - e. To what extent does the usage of services and activities vary among the SBDCs?
4. What effect does SBA technical assistance (e.g., program reviews, financial examinations, project officer checklist) have on grantee compliance (e.g., with terms and conditions, the program requirements, federal regulations) and grantee performance (reduced numbers of grants that end in suspension, termination, or non-renewal of an SBDC Cooperative Agreement)?

Summative, program outcomes:

1. To what extent are the various types of SBDC program activities perceived as valuable by clients and improve their business management knowledge, skills, and abilities?
2. Which types of program activities are most strongly related to improved business management?
3. What are the characteristics of businesses and their owners that relate to improved business management?
4. What effect do revisions to statutes and regulations have on grantee performance (reduced numbers of grants that end in suspension, termination, or non-renewal of an SBDC cooperative agreement) and clients' business outcomes (e.g., employment, revenue, new business formation)?

5. If SBDC grantees are underperforming (e.g., based on program review findings, goals achievement), what are the effects on their program delivery to the clients (e.g., number of clients served, number of services provided, partnerships developed)?

Impact, quasi-experimental research designs:

1. Does participation in the program improve business outcomes (e.g., business survival, new business formation, revenues, profits, employment)?
2. To what extent the effectiveness of the program with respect to businesses outcomes vary among different types of participants (economically and/or socially disadvantaged)?
3. Does participation in the program improve the development of business ecosystems (e.g., size, composition, and density of the networks)?
4. Does participation in the program improve the economic outcomes of local communities (e.g., net employment, local gross domestic product (GDP))?

2. Microloan Program

The purpose of the Microloan Program is to assist women, low income, veteran, and minority entrepreneurs, and other small businesses in need of small amounts of financial assistance. Under the Microloan Program, SBA makes direct loans to Intermediaries that, in turn, use the proceeds to make small loans to eligible Microborrowers. The mission of the Microloan Program is to integrate micro-level financing with training and technical assistance for start-up, newly established, existing, and growing small businesses. By offering financing and support to these businesses, the Microloan Program aims to support job creation and retention for small businesses that would have difficulty securing funding from conventional channels.

Some of the major objectives of the Microloan Program include the following. ensuring broad geographic availability of the Microloan Program, including availability in rural areas and HUBZones. development and expansion of efficient and effective local non-profit intermediaries committed to economic and microenterprise development in their communities. Proper administration of grant funding to ensure timely and effective delivery of training and technical assistance. Continued availability of business capital and business based training and technical assistance for start-up, newly established and growing small business concerns in need of micro-level financing.

To ensure the proper implementation of the Microloan Program, SBA provides training to and oversees the intermediaries. SBA provides or procures training for Intermediaries each year, which may include a single annual conference, regional training conferences, training via electronic media, or any combination thereof. The SBA also conducts periodic risk assessments on each Intermediary. The SBA conducts annual site visits to Intermediary offices and may also conduct site visits to microborrower locations. Oversight of the Intermediary continues throughout each Intermediary's period of participation in the Microloan Program as the SBA continually reviews reports, account information, Microloan portfolio performance, technical assistance milestones, repayment anomalies, collateral, and other such information for compliance with program requirements.

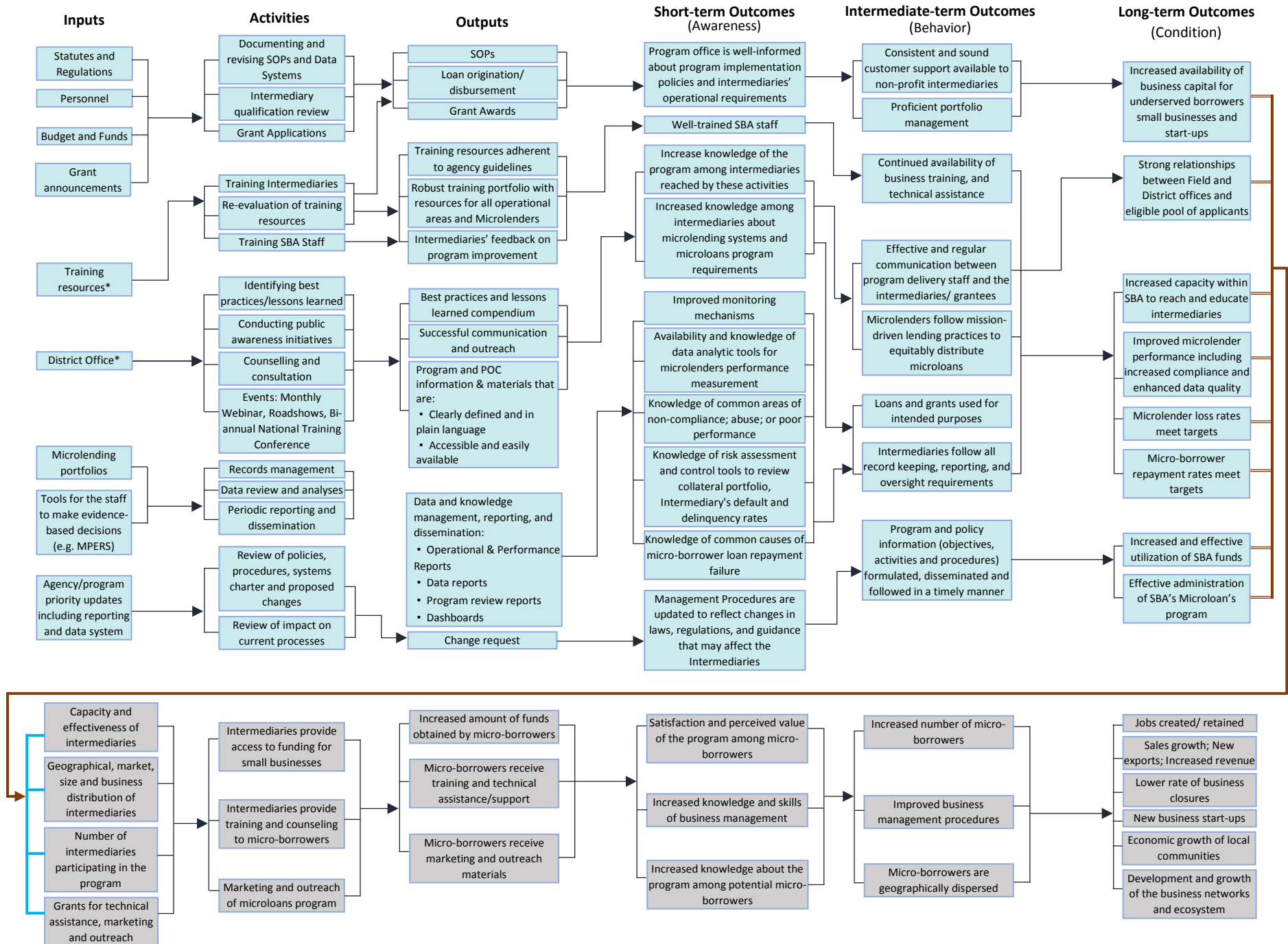
2.1. Microloan Program Logic Model

Figure 2 illustrates the final version of the Microloan Program logic model.

Figure 2. The Microloan Program logic model

Microloan Program Logic Model

The mission of the Microloan Program is to integrate micro-level financing with training and technical assistance for start-up, newly established, existing, and growing small businesses.



* Personnel in District Office receive training and professional development resources described above. *Training resources include all aspects of microlending, best practices, needs assessments and professional development.

2.2. Microloan Program Logic Model Evaluation Questions

Based on the logic model, the following formative, summative and impact evaluation questions were developed for the Microloan Program to address future evaluation work.

Formative, program implementation :

1. What types, frequency, duration, intensity, and delivery modes of training and technical assistance are being provided to microborrowers by intermediaries?
 - a. Which microborrowers' characteristics are associated with types, frequency, duration, intensity, and delivery modes of training and technical assistance?
 - b. What are considered the best practices for training microborrowers?
2. What are the characteristics of microborrowers and their businesses?
3. What is the association between revisions to microlending related statutes and regulations and the lending practices of microlending intermediaries?
4. Have all available program funds allocated for intermediaries been consistent with grant awards and loan disbursement agreements?
5. Are microlending intermediaries in compliance with the Microloan Program requirements and applicable federal regulations?
 - a. Which program resources are needed to ensure microlending intermediaries' success in meeting Microloan Program requirements and federal regulations?
6. Which outreach activities are most effective in reaching microlending intermediaries?

Summative, program outcomes:

1. What is the trend over time in the number of intermediaries and microborrowers participating in the program?
2. What is the geographic distribution of microborrowers?
 - a. Are some regions, states, and areas (rural, urban) under-represented?
3. What are the trends in microborrowers' business outcomes (e.g., business survival, revenues, employment, new business formation)?
4. How many microborrowers are from economically and/or socially disadvantaged populations?
5. What are the characteristics of microlenders associated with meeting targeted portfolio default rates?
6. What are the characteristics of microborrowers associated with lower default rates?
7. What is the association between revisions to federal microlending statutes and regulations and microborrowers' business outcomes (e.g., business survival, revenues, employment, new business formation)?
8. Is training and technical assistance provided by microlending intermediaries perceived as valuable by microborrowers?
 - a. What types of training and technical support are perceived as most valuable for microborrowers?
9. Is training and technical assistance provided by microlending intermediaries associated with increases in microborrowers' business management knowledge, skills, and abilities?
10. Is training and technical assistance provided by intermediaries associated with improvements in microborrowers' business outcomes (e.g., business survival, revenues, employment, new business formation)?

- a. Are the frequency, duration, intensity, and delivery modes of training and technical assistance associated with microborrowers' business outcomes?

Impact, quasi-experimental research designs:

1. Does participation in the program improve business outcomes (e.g., business survival, new business formation, revenues, profits, employment)?
2. To what extent does the effectiveness of the program with respect to businesses outcomes vary among different types of participants (economically and/or socially disadvantaged)?
3. Does participation in the program improve the development of business ecosystems (e.g., size, composition, density of the networks)?
4. Does participation in the program improve the economic outcomes of local communities (e.g., net employment, local GDP)?

3. Women's Business Centers (WBC)

The Women's Business Center (WBC) Program was created with the Congressional intent to remove barriers to the creation and development of small businesses owned and controlled by women and to stimulate the economy by aiding and encouraging the growth and development of such businesses. The mission of the WBC Program is to act as the catalyst for providing in-depth, substantive, outcome-oriented business services to women entrepreneurs, both nascent and established businesses, a representative number of which are socially and economically disadvantaged. This mission is accomplished through the award of financial assistance to private, 501(c)- certified non-profit organizations to enable them to affect substantial economic impact in their communities, measured by outcomes such as successful business start-ups and capital infusion. The specific objectives of the Program are to provide long-term training and counseling to potential and current women business owners, including those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, in order to promote growth, expansion, innovation, increased productivity and management improvement.

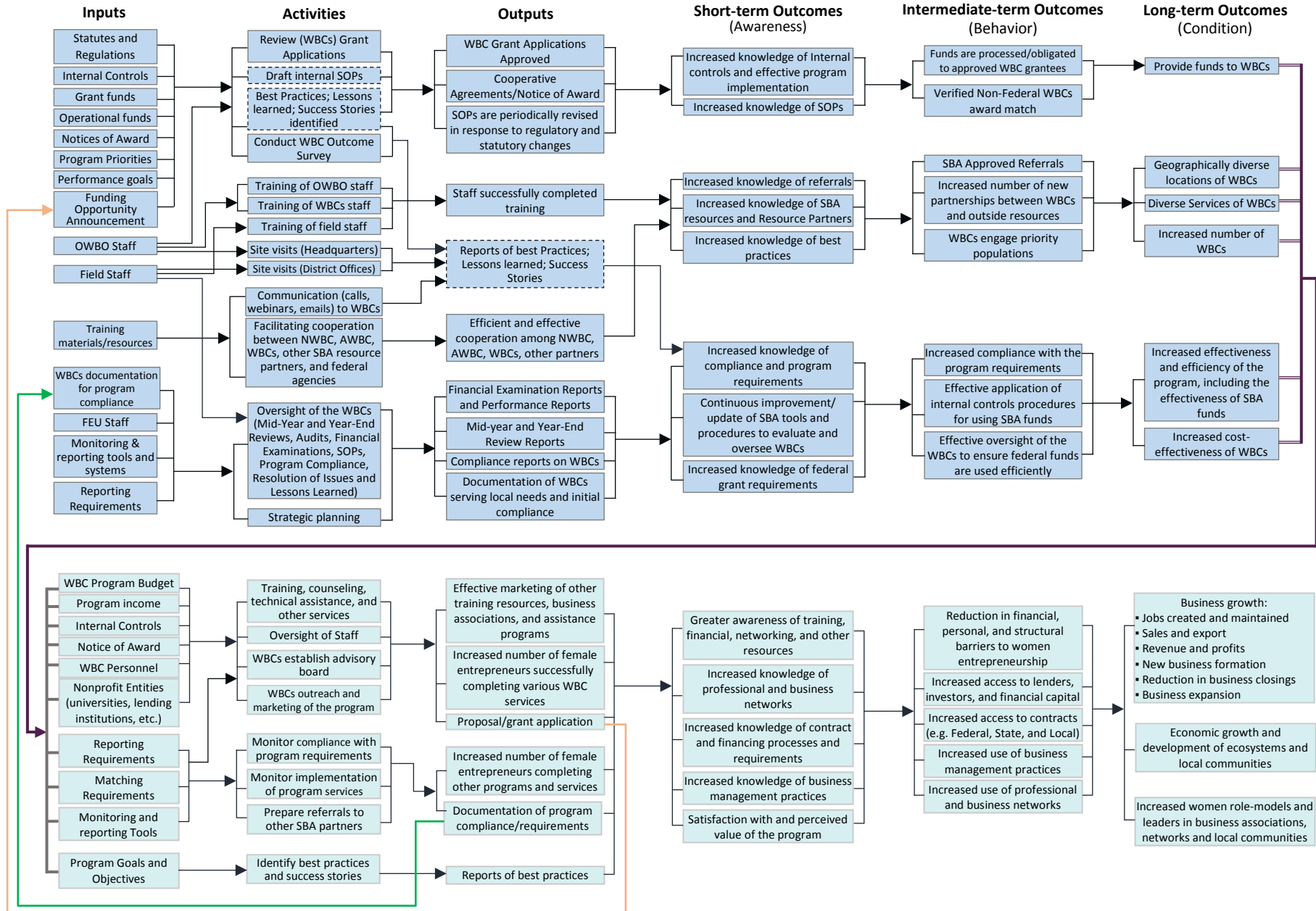
3.1. WBC Logic Model

Figure 3 illustrates the WBC logic model.

Figure 3. The WBC logic model

Women's Business Centers (WBC) Logic Model

The mission of the WBC Program is to provide substantive business services to women entrepreneurs, both nascent and established businesses, a representative number of which are socially and economically disadvantaged.



Note: Dotted boxes indicate peripheral (non-core) activities and outputs. FEU = Financial Examination Unit.

3.2. WBC Logic Model Evaluation Questions

Based on the logic model, the following formative, summative and impact evaluation questions were developed for the WBC program to address future evaluation work.

Formative, program implementation:

1. What is the trend over time in the number and characteristics of women participating in the program?
 - a. What proportions of participants are from economically and socially disadvantaged populations?
2. What types, frequency, duration, intensity, and delivery modes of training and technical assistance are being provided to participants?
 - a. What are considered the best practices for training and technical assistance?
 - b. Do best practices for training and technical assistance vary by type of participating organizations (e.g., non-profits, universities, lending institutions, chambers of commerce)?
3. Which program resources are needed to successfully and efficiently ensure WBCs' compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, the program requirements, and federal regulations?
4. What are best practices for promoting efficient and effective cooperation among the National Women's Business Council, Association of Women's Business Centers, WBCs, other partners?
5. What outreach activities are most effective in recruiting the participants?
 - a. Do outreach activities and their effectiveness vary by type of participating organizations (e.g., non-profits, universities, lending institutions, chambers of commerce)?

Summative, program outcomes:

1. Which resources, tools and procedures are needed to successfully evaluate and oversee WBCs to ensure the efficient use of federal funds?
2. Is training and technical assistance provided by the program perceived as valuable by the participants?
 - a. What types of training and technical assistance services are perceived as most valuable by the participants?
3. Is training and technical assistance associated with improvements in participants' knowledge and use of business management procedures?
4. Is training and technical assistance associated with improvements in participants' access to financing and contracts?
5. Is training and technical assistance associated with improvements in participants' business outcomes (e.g., business survival, revenues, profits, employment, new business formation)?
 - a. Is the type, frequency, duration, mode of delivery, and intensity of training and technical assistance services associated with business outcomes?
 - b. Which dimensions of training and technical assistance services are most strongly associated with business outcomes?
 - c. Does the effectiveness of training and technical assistance vary by type of participating organizations (e.g., non-profits, universities, lending institutions, chambers of commerce)?

Impact, quasi-experimental research designs:

1. Does participation in the program improve business outcomes (e.g., business survival, new business formation, revenues, profits, employment)?
2. To what extent does the effectiveness of the program with respect to businesses outcomes vary among different types of participants (economically and/or socially disadvantaged)?
3. Does participation in the program improve the development of business ecosystems (e.g., size, composition, and density of the networks)?
4. Does participation in the program improve the economic outcomes of local communities (e.g., net employment, local GDP)?

4. SCORE

The SCORE is an entrepreneurial development program administered by the SBA Office of Entrepreneurship Education. The purpose of SCORE is to foster vibrant small business ecosystems through mentoring and education. SCORE is a government-chartered nonprofit corporation dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, scale and achieve their goals through education and mentorship. Organizationally, SCORE consists of the National SCORE Office (NSO) that markets the program nationally and locally and supports business mentoring and training services provided by over 300 chapters and network of over 10,000 volunteers. A SCORE Chapter consists of volunteers that provide mentoring, counseling and training sessions to nascent (pre-venture) and existing small business entrepreneurs, including veterans, women, entrepreneurs, disaster recovery and minorities.

The SCORE Program achieves its mission by providing professional, high quality business and economic development assistance to existing small businesses and nascent entrepreneurs. The SCORE program delivers individualized business advising and technical assistance to help small businesses access capital, develop and exchange new technologies, and improve business planning, strategy, operations, financial management, personnel administration, marketing, Web-based retailing, export assistance, sales, and other areas. Mentoring and counseling are available at no cost to the clients and they can also access SCORE Chapters via free, ongoing face-to-face mentoring sessions or through email mentoring services. However, SCORE typically charges a fee to attend training workshops and seminars. These mentoring, advising, technical assistance and trainings are expected to promote small business growth and expansion, management improvement, increased productivity and innovation.

4.1. SCORE Logic Model

Figure 4 illustrates the final version of SCORE logic model.

Figure 4. The SCORE logic model

SCORE Logic Model

The mission of the SCORE program is to foster vibrant small business ecosystems through mentoring and education.



Note: Dark blue boxes indicate the Office of Entrepreneurship Education (OEE) and their customers are the National SCORE Office (NSO). Light blue boxes refer to NSO and their customers are Chapters. Grey boxes denote the SCORE Chapters and their customers are small businesses.

4.2. SCORE Logic Model Evaluation Questions

Based on the logic model, the following formative, summative and impact evaluation questions were developed for the SCORE program to address future evaluation work.

Formative, program implementation:

1. Which resources, tools and procedures are needed from the SBA and other sources to promote effective collaboration of Chapters and the NSO to complete programmatic, performance, and financial reports?
2. Which resources, tools and procedures are needed from the SBA and other sources to promote effective implementation of internal controls by the NSO?
3. Which resources, tools and procedures are needed from the SBA and other sources to ensure efficient use of SBA funds and cost effectiveness of Chapters and the NSO?
4. Which resources, tools and procedures are needed from the SBA and other sources to ensure Chapters compliance with Terms and Conditions of contract award?
5. What are the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of mentors?
6. What outreach activities are most effective in recruiting mentors, particularly those from economically and/or socially disadvantaged populations?
7. What types, frequency, duration, intensity, and delivery modes of training and mentoring activities are being provided to participating businesses and owners?

Summative, program outcomes:

1. What types of training and mentoring activities are perceived as most valuable by the small business owners?
2. Are training and mentoring activities associated with improvements in small businesses owners' knowledge and use of business management procedures?
3. What type of training and mentoring activities are associated with improvements in small businesses access to financing and contracts?
4. What types of training and mentoring activities are associated with improvements in small businesses outcomes (e.g., business survival, new business formation, revenues, profits, employment)?
5. Is the match in the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of mentors and their trainees associated with larger improvements in small businesses outcomes?

Impact, quasi-experimental research designs:

1. Does participation in the program improve small business outcomes (e.g., business survival, new business formation, revenues, profits, employment)?
2. To what extent the effectiveness of the program with respect to small businesses outcomes vary among different types of participants (economically and/or socially disadvantaged)?
3. Does participation in the program improve the development of business ecosystems (e.g., size, composition, and density of the networks)?
4. Does participation in the program improve the economic outcomes of local communities (e.g., net employment, local GDP)?

Conclusions and Recommendations

The suggestions for improving the logic model development process for future program evaluations include the following.

- Develop a program theory of change by conducting the reverse model building approach of developing long-term outcomes first, followed by intermediate and short-term outcomes, and subsequently all other components. This ensures that the developed components are limited to those logically interrelated and avoids overcrowding the logic model.
- Use more extensive and comprehensive qualitative assessments to gain feedback about the program from multiple levels, including local program administrators, ethical assistance providers, trainers, and program participants. In this process, it is important to develop the sampling approaches for qualitative assessments to ensure the coverage of diverse perspectives from various groups of program staff and participants.
- Use qualitative assessments to gain insights about contextual influences on program activities, outputs, and outcomes to better understand the factors affecting the implementation of best practices in various locations and among diverse groups of participants.

The implications of using the logic model for future program evaluations include the following.

- *Conduct multivariate analysis to test the program's theory of change.* Examine direct and indirect effects of program activities, outputs, short-term and intermediate outcomes on the long-term outcomes. The results of these modeling analyses would be used to support and refine the program's theory of change, as well as provide suggestions for program improvements to further enhance long-term outcomes.
- *Examine business ecosystems development and economic outcomes of local communities.* All four of the reviewed programs had objectives and program activities focused on promoting not only business growth but also growth and development of the business ecosystems and local communities. There is a growing literature on the importance of the business ecosystem approach as a strategy to accelerate entrepreneurship, business growth, community capacity building, and local community economic development. This approach involves identifying, tracking, and promoting local resources, community engagement, and partnerships between private, public, and local ecosystem actors to create resources for mentorship, technical assistance, and coordination of services among businesses, organizations, and supporting agencies. Therefore, future program evaluations should measure these long-term program outcomes, determine the program effectiveness in reaching them, as well as examine their effects on the business growth outcomes.

Key Sources

1. Audit of SBA' Oversight of the SCORE Association, Report Number 19-12, April 25, 2019.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Framework for program evaluation in public health. <https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm>
3. Deborah M. Markley, Thomas S. Lyons & Donald W. Macke. Creating entrepreneurial communities: building community capacity for ecosystem development. *Community Development*, 2015, Vol. 46:5. 580-598.
4. GAO. Entrepreneurial Assistance: Efficiency and Effectiveness of Fragmented Programs Are Unclear. Testimony Before the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, U.S. Senate, March 29, 2012. GAO-12-601T.
5. Melita Nicotra, Marco Romano, Manlio Del Giudice, and Carmela Elita Schillaci. The causal relation between entrepreneurial ecosystem and productive entrepreneurship: a measurement framework. *Journal of Technology Transfer*, 2018, Vol. 43. 640–673.
6. Robert Jay Dilger. SBA Assistance to Small Business Startups: Client Experiences and Program Impact. Congressional Research Service report, 2019. R43083.
7. SBA Framework and Guidelines for Program Evaluation, March 2019.
8. SBA, Office of Economic Opportunity, Microloan Program Standard Operating Procedures, SOP 52 00 B, Effective Date: July 1, 2018.
9. SBA Office of Entrepreneurship Education, SCORE Funding Opportunity Announcement, FY 2018, No. SCORE-2018-01.
10. SBA Office of Entrepreneurship Education, SCORE Program Standard Operating Procedures, SOP 90 84, Effective Date: August 26, 2019.
11. SBA Office of Small Business Development Centers (OSBDC) Standard Operating Procedures, SOP 60 16 1, Effective Date: September 29, 2017.
12. SBA Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO), Women's Business Center (WBC) – Renewal Grant, FY 2019, Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) No. OWBO-2019-02.
13. SBA regulations for the Women's Business Center (WBC) Program, 13 CFR Part 131, Federal Register, Vol. 84, No. 227, Monday, November 25, 2019.
14. SBDC Grant Lifecycle PowerPoint Slides, November 2019.
<https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2014%20Project%20Officer%20Handbook.pdf>
15. Women's Business Center (WBC), Notice of Award, Revised Terms and Conditions, 2019-20.