Developing Capacity for Program Evaluation & Design

Jaime Anstee Ph.D., Edward Galvez, M.P.P., María Cruz, Amanda Bittaker - Wikimedia Foundation

Introduction

Activities in the Wikimedia movement are carried out by many individual contributors, volunteers, groups, organizations, partners, and others throughout the world. In an effort to support these program leaders, the Evaluation Initiative began in order to develop community capacity for program evaluation and design

The Evaluation Initiative's Aims

- **Capacity building** – To provide program leaders with the skills and tools to evaluate and design their programs. Doing this successfully will enable the community to evaluate more easily and effectively.

- **Self-evaluation** – Program leaders are responsible for evaluating their own programs. The L&E team is here to support that self-evaluation.

- **Collaboration** – Program evaluation and design was a new concept to many community members and Wikimedia Foundation staff members. We went in this together, and by learning and working together as an evaluation community, we have been working to build a shared understanding about evaluation and design to maximize our learning from, and impact of, Wikimedia programs.

- **Support Quality Programs** – Improve reporting and knowledge about the design and effectiveness of Wikimedia programs.

Citations

[1] m:Category:Learning_Day_events

[2] Grants:Evaluation/Library/Workshops

[3] m:Grants:Evaluation

[4] m:Grants:Evaluation/Program_Toolkits

[5] m:Grants:Learning_patterns/How_to_use_the_global_metrics_magic_button

[6] Grants:Learning_patterns

[7] m:Surveys

[8] m:Grants:Evaluation/Newsletter

[9] https://outreachdashboard.wmflabs.org/

[10] m:Wikimedia_Resource_Center

[11] m:Grants:Evaluation/L%26E_Workshop_Kits

[12] File:Evaluation_Pulse_-_Data_Retro_2015.pdf

Capacity Development

Capacity development efforts have focused to develop community awareness of program models, skills for evaluation and program design, systems and tools for a shared practice of evaluation.

Learning Day Events [1]

Since the first capacity development workshop [2] held in Budapest in June 2013, we shifted to a regular routine of hosting pre-conference events for capacity development alongside existing movement conferences such as Wikimania and the Wikimedia Conference.

These Learning Days are full days of workshops and exchanges for learning about relevant skills and tools for community leaders who design and implement programs. The event participation has slowly been scaled up from about 20 community participants and a single learning track in our early years to 50-60 community participants and two full learning tracks today which are co-designed with participants through a needs assessment and teaching assets mapping process.

Over time, community leaders have presented and led more and more presentations in the context of their work and unique expertise. At this point, community presenters and facilitators contribute to 75% or more of Learning Day sessions.

The outcomes we have seen related to Learning Days skills development are hard to claim full credit for as they have been just one piece of a paradigm shift toward evaluation and accountability in Wikimedia programs and initiatives.

Tools & Resources

Learning Day events have also worked as a connecting space as we have worked to identify the needed supports for designing and evaluating WIkimedia programs: the **skills, tools, and peer connections** for learning have been a shared work with our community program leaders and the foundation staff as we have worked to build systems for evaluation and learning exchange to support our growing community of practice:

- Evaluation Portal [3]
- Program Toolkits [4]
- Evaluation & metrics consultations with grantees
- Wikimetrics & Global Metrics Magic Button [5]
- Learning Pattern Library[6]
- Survey Support Desk [7]
- Learning Quarterly Newsletter[8]
- *New* Program & Events Dashboard [9]
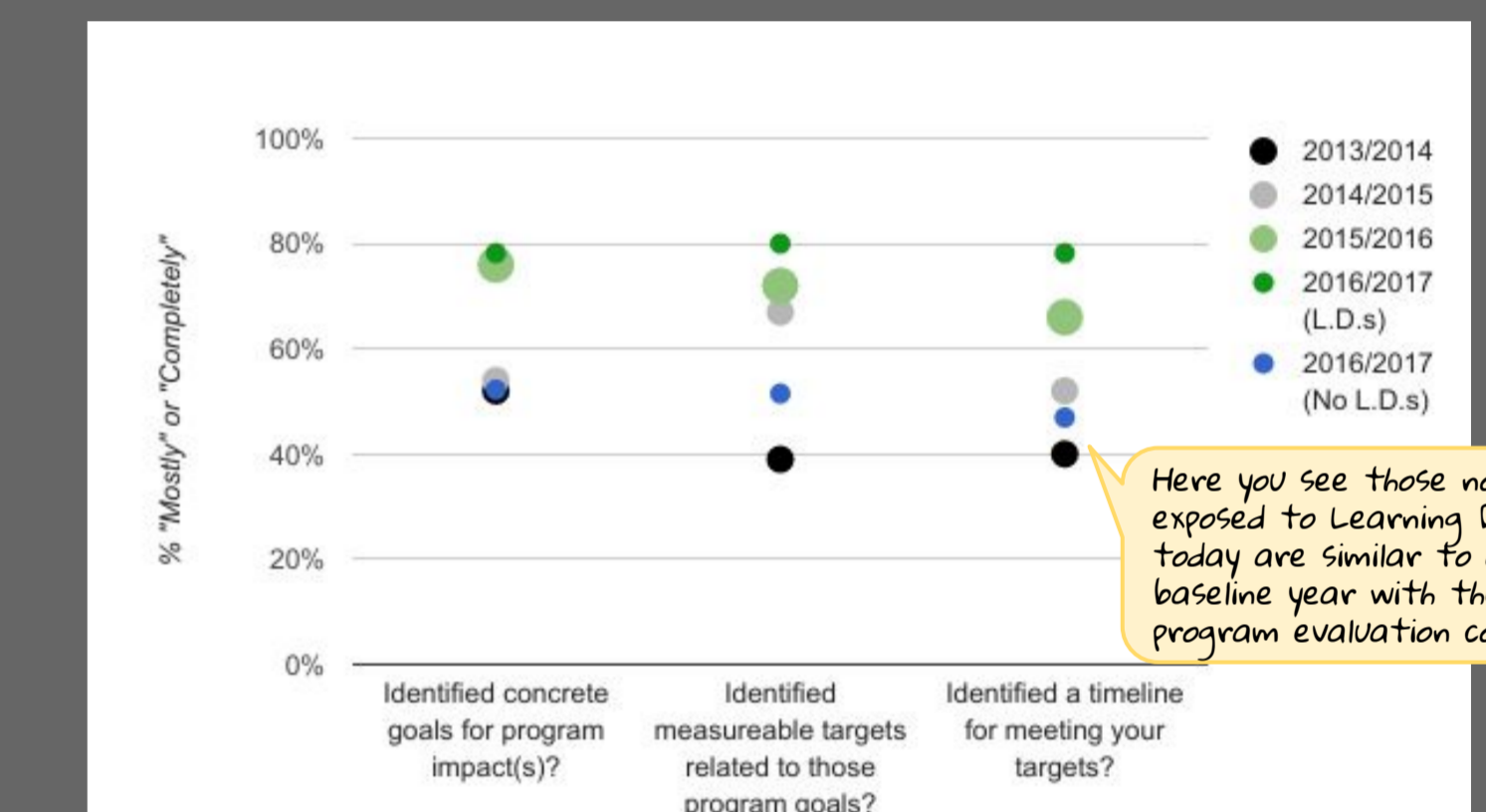- *New* Wikimedia Resource Center [10]
- Learning Day Workshop kits [11]

Evaluation Capacity

Each year beginning August 2013 we have collected an annual survey of evaluation capacity via the **Evaluation Pulse** survey**.** Although the reach and audience has changed over the past two iterations, reaching more broadly in 2015/2016 to grantees and 2016/2017 to all affiliates making statistical comparisons a challenge, in our year-over-year assessments we have seen consistent improvements over the years [12] in terms of program planning and evaluation among program leaders who engage in Learning Days.

The progress we have seen in terms of capacity growth for program design and evaluation speaks of highly trained Wikimedians. Program leaders who not only plan for and document their activities more consistently, but who have also taken up the habit of documenting lessons learned to share with the rest of the movement.

In addition to the passion and drive of program leaders, we also consider our work with Learning Days as well as other initiatives mentioned to have contributed to the progress we've seen. The majority of our participants report that Learning Days helped them too.

Increased capacity for setting goals and measuring against targets

Self-reported ability to set and measure against goals and targets continue to increase but may be seeing some slowed development in terms of identifying measures.

Relatedly, since implementing Learning Days and other learning resource supports, we have also seen grantee proposals and reports, (as well as non-grantee affiliate reports), improve significantly in terms of setting clear program goals and targets and then executing and measuring the impact of those goals.

Here you see those not exposed to Learning Days today are similar to our baseline year with the program evaluation community
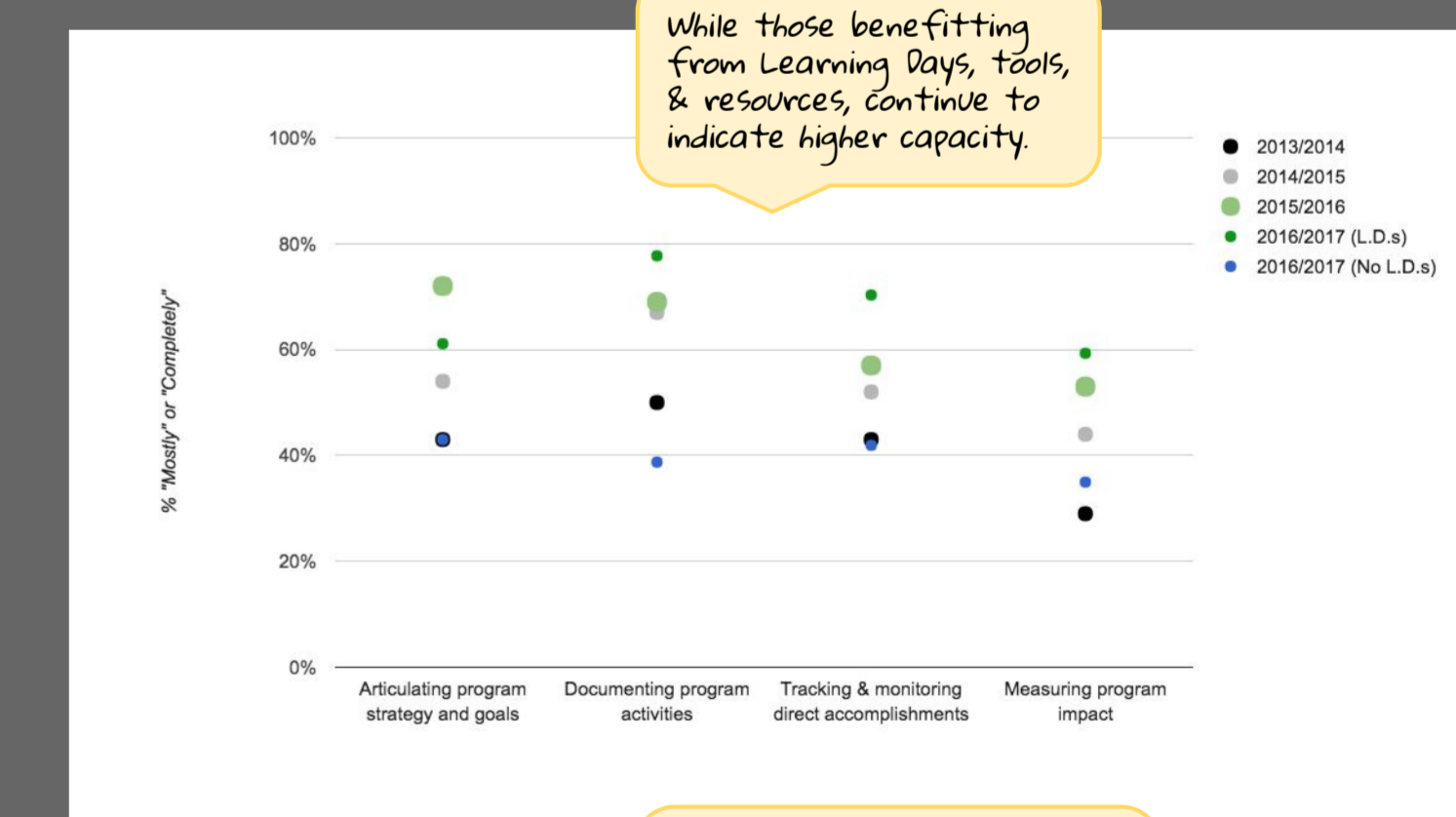
Continued growth in overall evaluation capacity.

We continue to see development in all four areas of evaluation capacity but still have much to do in terms of tracking, monitoring, and impact measurement.

Relatedly, we have a much better understanding of the outcomes associated with grantee programs and have seen exponential growth in outcomes reporting along a set of shared metrics.

In comparison to grantee results reported in 2014/15, reporting in 2015/16 indicated increased reporting of outcomes from grantee programs including:

While those benefitting from Learning Days, tools, & resources, continue to indicate higher capacity.

Improved capacity has helped us learn a lot about how Wikimedia affiliate and volunteer-led programs work, and what they accomplish.

- more than **5 times** as many **individuals served** and **images uploaded**
- nearly **4 times** as many **pages created or improved** from grantee programs
- **2 times** the **unique images used f**rom grantee programs and projects

Next Steps

We are working to develop a peer academy, which is both an online space to meet, and a practice. Through the Wikimedia Resource Center [10], community leaders will be able to find other peers that can support them in developing a new initiative, the resources other Wikimedians share, and also share resources that they have created themselves, for others to use. This peer academy will continue to better support individuals on their development paths.

Keep the learning gears **turning!**