

Ensuring Strong Program Performance

Using Results Oriented Management and
Accountability (ROMA) in State Monitoring
Activities

Nov. 16, 2010

NASCSP

We've already heard, today,
about some key issues related
to monitoring.

This session will focus on the elements of ROMA that are a part of the monitoring, self assessment, and continuous improvement processes to support strong program performance.

State Monitoring activities are based on:

- ❑ Legislative Requirements
- ❑ Office of Community Services (OCS) Guidance (via Information Memoranda)
- ❑ GAO Reports & Recommendations
- ❑ Performance Measurement Requirements
- ❑ Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) of 1993
- ❑ Principles identified in the NASCSP Standards
- ❑ National expectations (such as represented in the National Performance Indicators (NPIs) and CAP Standards of Excellence)
- ❑ State specific expectations

From presentation by James Gray (on ROMA1 web site)

This session will provide a brief introduction to ROMA

- A review of what ROMA is, based on IM 49
- A review of the core activities
 - Four activities for States
 - Four activities for eligible entities
- Discussion of how to monitor Community Action Agency (CAA) implementation of ROMA.
- Consideration of the use of information technology.
- How to use CAA results as part of the monitoring process.
- How to create ROMA focused monitoring tools.
- How monitoring and ROMA can support and further program improvement at the eligible entity level.

What is ROMA?

ROMA is a **performance-based** initiative designed to:

- ❑ Preserve the anti-poverty focus of community action.
- ❑ Promote greater effectiveness among State and local agencies receiving Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds.
- ❑ Provide a framework for **continuous growth and improvement** among more than 1000 local CAA.

ROMA provides a basis for State leadership and assistance toward those ends.

What is ROMA?

ROMA is often equated with the NPI portion of the report prepared by States for OCS.

- This view of ROMA is important, but limited in its application.
 - NPIs address the last of the identified core activities, but ROMA, as defined in IM 49, includes much more.
 - The CSBG network has faced and survived challenges, and IM 49 speaks to that success.
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“The cornerstone of the Network's longevity and accomplishments has been its willingness to understand and adapt to changing client needs, community conditions, financial support, and public expectations while maintaining a steady focus on eliminating poverty. The most successful State and local agencies among us have come to understand that community action not only survives, but thrives, when it engages in **continuous self-examination.**”

Our "star players" ask and answer, again and again:

"Why are we here?"

Who are we helping?"

What are we helping them to become?"

How will we know and describe success, both theirs and ours?"

**OCS believes that the core
activities constituting
ROMA implementation are:**

Core Activities For State Agencies

1. The State agency has developed a state-wide vision statement that speaks to the goals and purposes of community action within the State and that supports the six national ROMA goals. (State Plan)

- The agency is encouraged to participate in, and contribute to, broader State anti-poverty/community development initiatives with outcome measures and goals compatible with ROMA;

2. The State agency has trained all its eligible entities (staff and Boards) in outcome-based management,

- 80% of the entities use ROMA concepts in core activities for eligible entities
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Core Activities For State Agencies

3. Eighty percent of the plans and program reports received from eligible entities in the State describe plans to achieve projected outcomes, and evaluate results based on measurable improvements of condition(s) among clients and/or communities served;
 4. The agency submits annual reports to OCS on the “measured performance of the State and the eligible entities in the State”
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**DOES YOUR STATE AGENCY
USE THE NASCSP SELF-
ASSESSMENT TO MONITOR
THESE ACTIVITIES?**

Core Activities For Eligible Entities

1. The entity and its Board complete regular **assessments**;
 2. Based upon the periodic assessments described above, the entity and its Board has identified specific improvements, or results, in its strategic **plan**;
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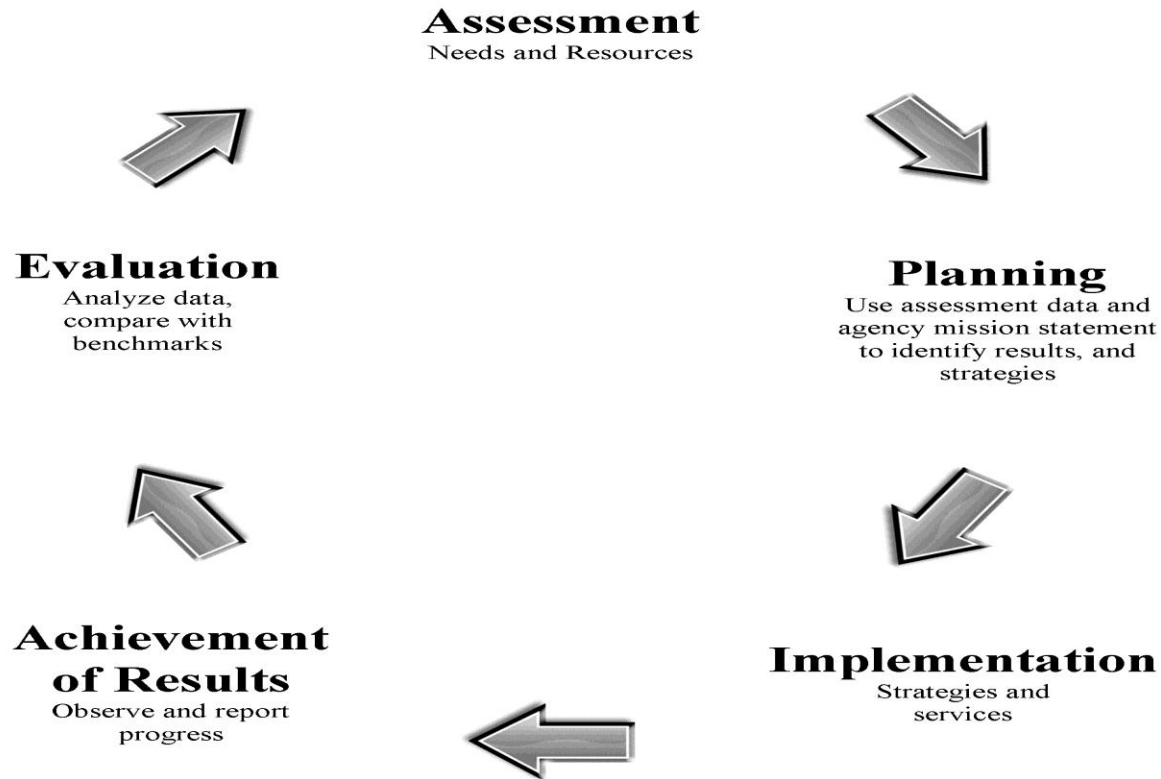
Core Activities For Eligible Entities

3. The entity **organizes and operates** all its programs, services, and activities toward accomplishing these outcomes;
 4. The entity provides reports to the State that describe client and community outcomes and that capture the contribution of all entity programs, services, and activities to the **achievement of those outcomes.**
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ROMA Core Activities from IM 49

- Identification of core activities for State offices and eligible entities helped to define ROMA **as a framework for supporting self reflection and continuous improvement.**
 - The graphic on the following page provides a visual to help understand all of the elements associated with ROMA.
 - It includes a fifth activity: analyzing the performance data and using it in the next round of assessment activities.
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The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



The ROMA Cycle graphic was developed by the National Peer to Peer ROMA Training Project, based on guidance regarding Core Activities for States and CSBG Eligible Entities provided by OCS Information Memo 49. From [Planning for Results](#) © 2006, Community Action Association of PA, Jakopic and Mooney.

Achievement of Results

In Monitoring a local eligible entity, you want to find out **what results are being achieved**.

Some questions:

- ❑ To what extent are families, agencies and communities achieving results in the Six National Goals?
- ❑ To what extent is the entity changing lives and improving communities?

or more simply:

- What is happening?
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Monitoring Activities

You also want to see **documentation** that will support what is being reported

- ❑ How do you know? Review reports, spreadsheets, tracking logs etc. to validate numbers reported

You also need to understand **how the data and documentation support the overall mission** of the CSBG funding/legislation:

- ❑ What does the performance information mean?
 - ❑ What analysis has been done?
 - ❑ How is the entity using their performance data?
 - ❑ How often is the data reviewed?
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Staff interview questions

- Has the agency incorporated Outcome thinking (ROMA) into the various aspects of the agency?

Consider: Open ended questions. What kind of answers would it produce?

- “tell me more about...”

How can you best ask questions to find out the information you need?

Consider some questions and directions for what to expect to hear:

- Has the Board received training on ROMA?
 - Is there documentation of this training? Ask for Board minutes or other that shows training was provided & members present
 - Has all of the staff received training on ROMA?
 - Listen for: Awareness of ROMA concepts and understanding of the full range of activities in the ROMA Cycle
 - Offer assistance
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Activity

- Identify questions that support ROMA thinking and promote continuous self assessment and improvement
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Core activity: Conduct Assessments

The entity and its Board complete regular assessments of the entity's overall mission, desired impact(s) and program structure, taking into account:

- 1) the needs of the community and its residents;
 - 2) the relationship, or context, of the activities supported by the entity to other anti-poverty, community development services in the community; and
 - 3) the extent to which the entity's activities contribute to the accomplishment of one or more of the six ROMA national goals;
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Follow-up questions

Has the entity conducted a community assessment? How often?

- Listen for: how low-income people and staff are assured of input
 - how community strengths and resources are evaluated
 - how new problems or issues are included
 - how information is secured from a variety of sections of the community
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Core activity: Planning

- Based upon the periodic assessments, the entity and its Board has **identified specific improvements, or results**, it plans to help achieve in the lives of individuals, families, and/or the community as a whole
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How does the entity prioritize the findings of the community assessment?

- ❑ Listen for: Knowledge of the community assessment process
 - ❑ Understanding that not all community needs can be served by the entity, but the entity can be involved in a collective process to begin to address the problem with partners
 - ❑ Does the entity fall back on “services previously provided” or explore new approaches
 - ❑ Consider new needs and new resources in the community
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Who is involved in developing the entity's strategic plan?

- How often is the plan reviewed?
 - Does the plan include both long and short term strategies?
 - Listen for: the role of the Board, staff and program participants
 - Involvement with partners
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Core Activities:

Operation/Implementation

3. The entity organizes and operates all its programs, services, and activities toward accomplishing the identified results.
 - Link with other agencies in the community when services beyond the scope of the entity are required
 - Staff understand the direct or indirect relationship of their efforts to achieving specific client or community outcomes
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How is the entity organized to serve individuals/families and communities?

Listen for:

- Focusing efforts on client/community/organizational change, not particular programs or services.
 - Understanding that the agency must be results-oriented, not process-based or program-specific.
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How does the entity track services to individuals/families and communities?

Listen for:

- Use of central intake procedures, referral protocols
 - Understanding that services designed to meet the six national goals must recognize that they are most successful when activities supported by a number of funding sources are organized around client and community outcomes, both within an agency and with other service providers
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Core Activity:

Reporting/Achievement of Results

4. The entity provides reports to the State that describe client and community outcomes
 - that capture the contribution of all entity programs, services, and activities to the achievement of those outcomes.
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What systems have been established to assist staff to track outcomes?

When are systems of observation established so that staff implementing services and strategies to produce identified results have the tools to observe, document, and report on progress toward outcomes as well as achievement of outcomes?

Listen for:

- ❑ Use of electronic systems,
 - ❑ Evaluation tools that have information that can document progress,
 - ❑ Establishment of periodic review throughout the year.
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How often is reporting provided to upper management and Board Members

Listen for:

- Communication with appropriate staff
 - Identification of both the reporting processes and types of reports received
 - Inclusion of progress, problems, suggestions for changes needed in agency programs
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Core Activity:

Using Performance Data

Once the entity collects and reports on the achievement of results, the entity must understand this data in the context of the next cycle of ROMA activities:

- ❑ Assessment, planning and operation
 - ❑ How does the data provide direction for new kinds of assessment activities?
 - ❑ How does performance, or lack of results, impact on the next plan for, and implementation of, services and strategies?
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How do you know what produces results?

- ❑ Listen for: Use of electronic reports to aggregate information in ways that are useful to analysis
 - ❑ Ability to identify the multiple services provided to a single individual or family to enable them to move toward self-sufficiency
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How is the information about success and/or lack of progress used by the entity's management and the Board?

Listen for:

- ❑ Service data analyzed to identify new locations needed, time of available service decisions, increase or decrease in workforce, outreach to partners, or new sectors of community
 - ❑ Identification of periodic reviews of data -
 - Listen for how often is data reviewed? By who?
 - What is the advantage of frequent review?
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“The President believes that it is more important than ever to maximize the effectiveness of every tax dollar we spend. We must be aggressive in identifying which programs work, and which do not. When programs work, we should support them and continue to push for improved performance. When they do not, we need to reform or terminate them. To accomplish this, we need to measure the performance of programs and continually search for more effective and efficient ways to operate.”

Statement of Jeffrey D. Zients
Chief Performance Officer and Deputy Director for Management
Office of Management and Budget
October 29, 2009

NASCSP Monitoring Standards

- The Monitoring Standards provide suggestions for areas of review
- The Monitoring Standards provide suggestions for questions to be included as part of monitoring reviews

What areas and questions relate to
ROMA?

How does ROMA help the CSBG network?

Results Oriented Management principles provide a framework for:

- Reviewing, periodically, the mission of eligible entities
 - Assuring that services and activities of eligible entities align with community needs and resources
 - Creation and support of alliances and contractual relationships with other agencies that share responsibility for individual/family and community outcomes
 - Providing a common understanding of what community action does
 - Identifying high quality implementation of services and strategies that produce results
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How does ROMA help the CSBG network?

Results Oriented Accountability provides guidance for:

- Helping agencies target and coordinate their services
 - Producing data that identifies results and progress toward results
 - Using the data to identify what works and what needs to be changed
 - Sharing high quality outcome data to gain support from local, State and national community members, funders, and legislators
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Accountability

- What gets measured gets done.
 - If you do not measure results, you cannot tell success from failure.
 - If you cannot see success, you cannot learn from it.
 - If you cannot recognize failure, you cannot correct it.
 - If you can demonstrate results, you can demonstrate success.
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“The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works - whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.”

President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address,
January 20, 2009
