



SURVEYS



A survey is a set of questions (e.g., experiences; opinions; behaviors) asked of a group of individuals to develop an understanding about specific topics/issues. Providing actionable feedback, surveys can be an essential tool in helping programs with their assessment efforts (e.g., community-wide; project; program). The information collected can:

Create Stories

Communities can openly share what matters to them using surveys in a way that is more private (confidential and/or anonymous) than interviews or focus groups.



Inspire Conversations

Surveys can provide an opportunity for ongoing conversations to discuss topics or issues that are important to individuals and their communities.



Suggest Direction

Well-developed surveys can provide additional levels or confirmation to concretely explain feelings or experiential understanding of an issue.



Advantages & Disadvantages of Conducting Surveys

Advantages

- **Convenience:** can be quick and easy to create using online survey tools.
- **Inexpensive:** can be less costly than interviews and/or focus groups.
- **Multiple options to disseminate:** in-person; online; email; phone; etc.
- **Privacy:** can be conducted anonymously.
- **Data collection:** provides written record.

Disadvantages

- **Accessibility issues.**
- **Difficult to engage:** can be challenging to get information if survey topic is sensitive (e.g., victimization, mental health, etc.).
- **Incomplete or inaccurate responses:** skipped questions; survey quit halfway through.
- **Impersonal:** difficult to clarify/modify questions if respondents are confused.

When to Conduct a Survey

A survey is one way that organizations can develop a better understanding about the needs of their community and the people they are serving or hope to serve as well as assessing their program activities (e.g., training, community outreach, policy development, direct services, etc.). Below are a few examples of when tribal programs may want to conduct surveys:



Example 1: The tribal victim services program has noticed an increase in the number of elders seeking services with their program. The program does not have specific services designed specifically for this population. The program might consider crafting a survey to administer in the tribal community as well as to their current elder program clients to better understand the elder population's experiences and needs. This information would inform the program so that they may develop specialized services, create a new project within their program, seek new or additional funding, etc.

Example 3: The tribal victim services program has created a new transitional housing program with supportive services. It has been a year and the program wants to assess how helpful the program has been to the clients who have utilized their services and determine if there are ways to improve. The program might develop a short satisfaction survey for clients that includes questions about the ways in which the program has helped their clients, ways to enhance services, and identify additional needs.

Please note: Grantees must obtain prior approval before conducting surveys with OVV grant funds. Be sure to contact your OVV grant manager before conducting a survey.

Example 2: The tribal victim services program has been conducting training in their tribal community. To better understand if the training material and methods of delivery are valuable to the participants, the program may administer a short survey before (to determine how much knowledge the participants have about the topic) and a short survey after (to determine whether there was an increase in their knowledge and whether the method of delivery was effective).

Example 4: The tribal victim services program has received funding to create outreach campaigns. The program may create a short survey to administer to their current clients to determine how they learned about their organization (i.e., word of mouth, a community event, poster/flyer, PSA, social media, etc.) and then may create another survey for the community to assess the communities' awareness of the program and all of the services offered for victims/survivors (check-list).

