



## Program Evaluations & Assessments

Social Sectors Development Strategies, Inc. (SSDS) conducts evaluations to guide policy makers and program managers in evidence-based decision-making for public health and social sector programs. To ensure that evaluations are useful to clients, SSDS uses participatory, capacity-building approaches to develop evaluation frameworks and establish priorities. SSDS assists clients in the design and implementation of performance-based monitoring and evaluation systems.

### SSDS, Inc.

1411 Washington St., Suite 6  
Boston, MA 02118 USA

**Phone:** +1 (617) 421-9644

**Fax:** +1 (617) 421-9046

**Website:** [www.ssds.net](http://www.ssds.net)

For more information,  
please contact:  
[evaluation@ssds.net](mailto:evaluation@ssds.net)

---

### SSDS Activities

#### Evaluation Skills & Experience

SSDS offers a broad range of quantitative and qualitative evaluation skills to carry out mixed method evaluations as well as studies feeding into program design such as situation analyses and needs assessments. SSDS conducts formative evaluations focused on program learning and improvement, and results-focused outcome and impact evaluations to test new strategies and inform future strategies. In addition to collecting data on relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness, SSDS takes a holistic approach to identifying good practices as well as factors that facilitate or inhibit program results. SSDS evaluations inform strategic planning by formulating recommendations to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of implementing organizations.

SSDS is committed to capacity building. Training and mentoring of implementers or local researchers or client agency staff in monitoring and evaluation design, data collection and analysis, and presentation of findings is an integral part of many of our evaluations.

#### Multi-disciplinary Approach

In addition to leading and staffing evaluation teams, SSDS staff members serve as single evaluators or as members of teams led by other organizations. SSDS recruits evaluation team members with the specific disciplines and technical expertise needed to under-

stand the factors affecting program performance. The SSDS staff includes senior professionals with training in management and organizational development, health service provision, health economics (costing cost-effectiveness, and cost-benefit), community health promotion, and behavior change communications. SSDS thus has the capability to address a broad spectrum of evaluation questions, designing as needed large-scale economic studies and health system assessments, service quality studies, scanning of the policy environment, household surveys, stakeholder analyses, or in-depth case studies. SSDS and its network of collaborators draw on multiple disciplines to analyze the context of policies and programs — the organizational, political, socio-cultural and economic factors that may either facilitate or inhibit program success.

SSDS staff members have applied their diverse thematic expertise to conduct evaluations in nutrition, maternal and child health, reproductive and sexual health, HIV/AIDS, adolescent health and development, pharmaceutical supply systems, health sector reform and financing, substance abuse, gender-based violence, and health policy advocacy. This senior-level technical expertise allows SSDS evaluation teams to determine whether programs adhere to the latest evidence on good practices in a given field.

---

---

SSDS teams bring both methodological and the relevant technical expertise to bear on a wide range of types of evaluations. These examples illustrate the range of SSDS's skills.

### **Mixed-method Multi-site Evaluations**

SSDS evaluates large agency programs with multiple projects to determine the effectiveness and relevance of a whole program as well as each local project within it, to generate recommendations at each level that build on strengths and address weaknesses.

- For Plan International, SSDS researched and wrote case studies in eight countries on child survival programs among the most vulnerable tribal or ethnic minorities. The SSDS team developed comparable methodology and instruments, including household surveys for child survival indicators and semi-structured interviews on questions such as degree of community ownership of the program and decision-making power of women. SSDS analyzed the data and synthesized findings in a comparative report that identified good practices and crosscutting recommendations to strengthen Plan's programs.
- For a large US foundation, SSDS led a team of evaluators based in the US, Latin America, Africa, and Asia, to evaluate a multi-project global sexual health initiative. SSDS developed the evaluation design, and with the active input of the regional evaluators, designed data collection instruments including interview guides for different types of stakeholders, and coding instruments to standardize qualitative data analysis. The evaluation provided valuable lessons learned for the foundation for global multi-project initiatives, along with project-level recommendations.

### **Large-scale Service Assessments**

SSDS evaluators design and implement large-scale surveys to assess health program implementation. SSDS has in-depth familiarity with Service Provision Assessments (SPA), nationwide surveys that consider the availability and quality of public health and primary care services delivered in both the private and public sectors.

### **Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks**

SSDS has advised numerous global agencies and local organizations on the development of feasible, cost-effective, and appropriate monitoring and evaluation frameworks, including the design of logical frameworks that identify indicators and sources of data to measure outcomes.

### **Economic Evaluations**

SSDS has conducted numerous economic evaluations in developing countries. Please see the fact sheet on Health Economics and Financing for examples.

### **Other Technical Program Evaluations**

SSDS fields expert teams in the evaluations of programs in most international public health sectors. Please see the fact sheets on Nutrition and Public Health, the Pharmaceutical Sector, and Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health for examples of evaluations in these areas in which SSDS counts on senior staff expertise.

Evaluation reports are written in clear, candid language and many remain confidential due to the client's preference. Whenever possible, SSDS evaluators disseminate findings and insights that would be useful to a broad audience in presentations at professional conferences such as the American Public Health Association and the American Evaluation Association, and publish findings in peer-reviewed journals or books. Please see the publications section of the SSDS website for examples.