

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

[Music]

JENELLE AZORE: Hello, everyone. I am Jenelle Azore and the webinar will start soon. Before we begin, we would like to cover a few housekeeping items. This webinar will be recorded and posted online on AmeriCorps Impact webinars page. Please be advised that all lines have been muted to avoid background noises and to allow for greater engagement. You can submit questions at any time during the presentation by using the chat feature below. Select everyone when submitting your questions. We will read your questions for you during the Q and A session following the presentation. Spanish captions are available. To activate, please select the live transcript icon on the Zoom menu and select show subtitles. As mentioned earlier, this webinar is being recorded and if you have any questions or experience technical difficulties, please let us know using the chat box feature. That takes care of all our housekeeping items. The webinar will start now.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

And here to welcome us is Mary Hyde, the Director of AmeriCorps' Office of Research and Evaluation.

MARY HYDE: Good afternoon. We are thrilled to be hosting this webinar and delighted to welcome Dr. Diana Epstein with the Office of Management and Budget, who will offer introductory remarks today. Today we are featuring the SCALER tool as a resource that will have utility both for practioners and funders and grant makers. The tool is meant to gauge readiness to scale evidence based models and provide guidance on ways readiness to replicate can be improved. We anticipate that this resource will be beneficial to AmeriCorps grantees and sponsors, but we also see a much wider application beyond our agency. We are hopeful that this tool will prove to be valuable to our federal partners, as well as community-based organizations, non-profits, and the philanthropic community. The tool is grounded in applied research, driven by state of the art implementation science and was informed by national service grantees who graciously agreed to provider user testing. This

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

allowed us to bridge fieldwork and scholarship. This tool is part of a larger suite of products developed through an investment in research by AmeriCorps. This work has been a long time coming, and we are so glad to be hosting this webinar today. I would like to introduce Diana Epstein, Evidence Team Lead with the Office of Management and Budget for some introductory remarks. Diana?

DIANA EPSTEIN: The Biden-Harris administration has made evidence-based policymaking a priority, starting with the Presidential Memorandum issued in January on scientific integrity and evidence-based policymaking. This strong support for evidence-based policymaking further amplifies the work that agencies across the federal government, including AmeriCorps, have been engaged in over the past few years, including implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act. We know we have a lot of work left to do, but we're really encouraged by the tremendous progress that we've seen agencies make, and their commitment to taking on what is often really

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

difficult culture change. You're going to learn all about the SCALER tool in today's session, so I won't go into those details. But I did want to point out a couple of connections to the broader focus on evidence-based policymaking that I think are particularly important. So first, we need to understand if the programs we're running, if the interventions we're implementing are effective. Are they producing the intended results for the populations and the communities that they're designed to serve? Are they working well in some places, but not others and do we know why? We need to build evidence, often through rigorous evaluation and other methods, to make these determinations. This focus on high quality evidence building is something we've been emphasizing where I work at OMB. If the study finds conclusive evidence of effectiveness, that's great. You know, you can use that information along with other pieces of information to figure out how you might want to scale to other populations. As you all know, communities are facing a lot of challenges, now more so than ever. We want to be able to share

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

and spread effective practices when we can and this is what SCALER is all about. On the other hand, maybe you don't currently have evidence that your program or your intervention is effective or maybe an evaluation led to surprising or unexpected results. That's not necessarily a bad thing. It just means it's time to build evidence. We have to understand what our programs are doing, if they're being implemented as designed, and if they're having the intended results. This is the only way we'll know if we're serving communities well. We need to build evidence where it doesn't exist and there are still many programs and many policy areas where we lack the evidence we need. So we want you to embrace evidence building in thoughtful and rigorous ways. It's not about showing that something doesn't work; rather it's about understanding what's happening, learning and improving where we need to. So to close, I'm really pleased that AmeriCorps invested the time and energy in building the SCALER tool. It's a great model of how a focus on evidence can be infused throughout the work of a federal agency and then

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

shared with grantees and community partners. With that, I will pass it off to Lily Zandniapour to tell us more about SCALER and how AmeriCorps got here.

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: Thank you so much, Diana. Good afternoon, everyone. It is a pleasure to be with you. I am Lily Zandniapour, and I oversee the scaling initiative at AmeriCorps. And before our main speakers begin their presentation and introduce you to this tool, which we are really, really excited about, I just wanted to give you a little bit of context and background about the scaling initiative and sort of give you a sense of the journey that really got us to this point. I think it would be sort of arguably the passage of the Serve America Act in 2009 was a pivotal moment for AmeriCorps. Following the passage of Serve America Act, you know, there was a renewed sort of emphasis on evidence, evidence building, and use of evidence in our work. And since then, there's been incredible amount of investments made, both by the agency and by our grantees, in program evaluation and evidence building. I think one

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

of the catalysts for this change and shift in focus was that the Serve America Act really called for the implementation of the Social Innovation Fund. This was a tiered evidence program where 100 percent of the grant funds went to programs that had some evidence that they worked and there was a very robust evaluation program attached to this initiative and a high rigorous evaluation bar was placed on it. And that was very - it was a catalyst for a lot of change in our agency. AmeriCorps State and National was one of the first programs and the largest program in the agency to really adopt the evidence framework and over successive years really started to incorporate the role of evidence in grant-making at AmeriCorps. I just want to draw your attention to this infographic. And if someone can put the - thank you - the link to this infographic in the chat box, you'll see that over time the share of investments that - the competitive grants have made with AmeriCorps State and National, have gone to evidence-based programs. And that change is really noteworthy, it's interesting. So I suggest you take a look at this

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

infographic, because that gives you a sense. Other programs in the agency too really started after the passage of Serve America Act, become more evidence-focused. For example, AmeriCorps Seniors started a very large research project to build its evidence base, and over time implemented a number of things. And I'm going to just stop there, but there's more that I can say about the National and the Community Corps program and also Vista and their efforts. But this is just to give you a flavor of this pivotal moment and this shift in focus in evaluation. Another thing that the agency did which I think was very influential and sort of a game-changer was the fact that the agency focused on evaluation, training, and technical assistance during this time, to support evidence building. So we not just asked for - put that in a requirement but really tried to support it. If you could go to the next slide, please. A few years after that passage of Serve America Act we really came to a point where there was a lot of evidence built and so there was an emerging evidence around the programs that the agency supported. And

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

what we did then was we started to think about how we can be more intentional and leverage all of these investments. And think about how with sort of all this evidence that had emerged how we could take solutions, things that work, interventions that really affect lives, and try to bring that to other communities, communities that were underserved, that didn't have these effective program models to help communities and different groups across the country. So, our vision was really to bring that, bring solutions to all of America and really use national service as a way to grow that impact and facilitate that. So we started this scaling evidence-based models project in 2016. And we're sort of about to wrap it up in this format, although the journey is going to continue. But this project, a lot of people really contributed to that. I was just thinking of Diana who was with our agency at the time and was critical in sort of the conceptual piece of this work. So we're grateful for that. I wanted to give or acknowledge three other people that really are team members past and present that worked on this

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

initiative on our end. Anthony Nurino managed this contract and this initiative on our end for several years. Roshni Mennan who's now since has moved to HHS also was very supportive of this work. And one of our current team members, Katie Hussy-Slonecker, has been just instrumental in getting a SCALER tool out and really supporting the initiative in more recent years. So I really want to thank them for their contribution. So, with that, what we've ended up doing was partnering with a great firm, Mathematica, that had deep expertise in this space and we started to sort of engage on answering some of the key questions that we had at that point. So if you could go to the next slide please. What you'll see here is some of the key questions that drove this project. We wanted to know where we have the strongest evidence of effectiveness, what are the programs that the agency had supported over time that had the strongest evidence of effectiveness. We also wanted to learn how organizations, national service organizations and the organizations that the agency had funded over time, defined scaling and how they operationalized

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

it. And we also definitely wanted to know how this work can be supported, how we can support scaling effectively so they are successful. In relation to these questions, these were the main driving questions, but alongside of this, many other things came to light, like our interest to know the role, for example, of fidelity and adaptation as you increase - as you try to take a solution to a new community. About factors that facilitate or hinder scaling. The use of evaluation to inform the scaling process - that was a big thing. And as I said, readiness was a big factor there. If you could go to the next slide, please. The evidence snapshot you see, this - and I hope that there is a link to that in the chat box, this document provides you with an overview of this project, more detailed, because there's no time to really go into all of it. But this effort has been a multi-year, multi-component project. It had different phases. There was a very targeted attempt, as Mary mentioned in the beginning, to make sure that the experiences of the practitioners and experts on the ground were incorporated in this

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

work. As one of the things, for example, that we did and you see some of the components listed on this slide, is to conduct deep analysis and case studies on examples where our grantees had attempted scaling, to learn from that. But we also drew insights from a broader group of practitioners through a field work group to inform this work. And again, as Mary mentioned, a lot of our grantees helped to assist us in the tweaking and finessing of the SCALER tool, which we'll be talking about shortly. So many resources, such a generative process and created so many tools and resources. The evidence snapshot that you see there and you have the link too really lists out all of those resources and links to them so you will have them and you can sort of map it back to the phases of this project. And with that, I am delighted to turn it over to our partners, Dr. Scott Richman from Mathematica has been managing this project and has been a great partner with us. And Mary Anne Anderson has been the lead researcher on Mathematica's side who has also worked on the SCALER tool, and everything else that you see in this suite

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

of products that are offered by this. So with that,
I'm going to turn it over to Scott and Mary Anne.
Thank you.

SCOTT RICHMAN: Thank you so much, Lily - we really appreciate it. And good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us today for the webinar. Mary Anne and I are excited to discuss the new SCALER tool that Mathematica has developed in collaboration with AmeriCorps' Office of Research and Evaluation. The purpose of this part of the webinar is to provide an overview of the SCALER where we'll discuss the purpose of the tool, along with some of the practical aspects of how the tool can be completed and used. We'll also discuss the SCALER's framework and underlying components that are the basis of the self-assessment tool. And finally, we'll conduct a brief demonstration of the SCALER tool itself as it's now live on the AmeriCorps website and we'll highlight the tool's features and run through an example of how users can complete the tool. So let's get started with a general overview of the SCALER, which was

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

designed to support the successful scaling of an intervention. So when we say successfully scaling an intervention, that means that you're taking an intervention with documented evidence of effectiveness, and then maintaining or surpassing its beneficial impacts. And you're doing so, for example, when replicating the intervention in a new location, expanding the number of existing individuals being served, or adapting the intervention to serve a new target population. Broadly speaking, when an organization successfully scales an intervention, it's helping to improve the lives for a larger number of individuals and communities than organizations could have otherwise done before scaling. So the ways in which organizations can maximize their potential to successfully scale their interventions is to first ensure that the interventions have rigorous evidence. Once such evidence is established, the intervention and the organization need to have certain definitions, procedures and processes in place in order for that organization to take that intervention and scale it successfully. However, sometimes an

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

organization may try to scale an intervention that doesn't yet have evidence of beneficial impacts, or even if such evidence is in place, the organization doesn't have everything that it needs and that the intervention needs to support successful scaling. In these circumstances, organizations may find difficulties in achieving their goal of successful scaling. So with this in mind, Mathematica's scaling evidence based models developed a tool called the SCALER which stands Scaling Checklists: Assessing your Level of Evidence and Readiness. The tool can help organizations identify whether they have the evidence and conditions necessary for scaling. It also helps identify areas that organizations can focus on to better prepare for scaling. Funders can also make use of this SCALER to communicate expectation to grantees about their scaling readiness, or to inform the types of training and technical assistance they provide to grantees based on the areas of need that the SCALER can help identify. So the SCALER tool can be completed online and can be found on the AmeriCorps website, along

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

with the other evaluation resources that the agency provides to its grantees. And the primary audience for the SCALER are the organizations who are interested in scaling their interventions. So to complete the SCALER, users should have some familiarity with any research studies that have been conducted on the intervention. They should have knowledge of their organization's preparedness and support for building evidence for the intervention if, in fact, evidence is needed. And of course, having an understanding of the intervention's core activities, target population and implementation supports, along with their organization's culture and infrastructure that can supporting scaling. We would recommend designating one person or role at an organization to be the SCALER owner who could help ensure that the tool is completed. And this individual can be the person who's most knowledgeable about the various components that the SCALER covers, or it can be a person who can seek out input from other team members who have that necessary knowledge and expertise. Personnel who might be well positioned

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

to lead or help complete the SCALER can be executive directors, program managers or project directors, frontline supervisors or measurement learning and evaluation team members. So after completing this self-assessment tool, the SCALER will help organizations by summarizing areas of strength, and different scaling components in which an intervention or organization might not yet be ready to scale. The results can also help organizations to develop procedures or processes to build capacity in these areas, or to help to identify new partners to help gain this capacity. And organizations can also identify specific next steps to take to further their scaling preparations and set short-term goals to gauge their progress. For example, reviewing their SCALER results can help organizations to identify and discuss their areas of strength and biggest needs, and how to prioritize their next steps to advancing their scaling readiness. And lastly, organizations can visit the SCALER regularly based on their own priorities or previous use of the tool. For example, some may wish to complete the SCALER on a periodic

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

basis, such as two or three times a year to make sure that certain scaling components remain in place.

Others may wish to visit the SCALER again soon after making changes to address a scaling condition that they scored low on when we previously took the SCALER. What the SCALER is there for organizations to use as often as makes sense to them, and they can access their previous results which we'll discuss later on in the demonstration. With that, let's dig into a little bit more about the SCALER tool in terms of the larger framework that informs the tool's design, along with the specific components of the tool. So here's the framework that helps organize and sequence the different components of the SCALER. An organization wanting to scale an intervention should first ask the question in the red box, is there evidence that this is an effective intervention? The answer to this question, which is what step one of the SCALER is all about, is critical because it determines what needs to be done to prepare an organization to scale their intervention. So the SCALER framework begins with guidance and a checklist

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

to help organizations identify what rigorous evidence for their intervention looks like. And then if that evidence doesn't exist, the organization should then seek to build that evidence before scaling. So on the right hand side of the graphic, the SCALER framework includes step two, which is a process to help organizations build evidence that the intervention is affected. To this end, the SCALER includes guidance and a checklist to help organizations move towards conducting research that can help establish evidence for their intervention. And finally, once the evidence has been identified or built, the SCALER step three then provides guidance and a series of checklists that are designed to help organizations get ready to scale. More specifically, the SCALER discusses five conditions that should be present for an intervention in an organization to have scaling readiness. But let's unpack these different steps a bit more, starting with identifying evidence of effectiveness. So rigorous research can be difficult to conduct because it requires isolating, whether the intervention itself contributed to changes in

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

participant outcomes. Yet knowing that intervention and not some other factors change participant outcomes, this provides the confidence that intervention is effective and then it warrants scaling. So step one of the scale has a checklist of items designed to help organizations identify whether an intervention has such evidence. So informed by federal evidence review clearing houses, the first set of items speaks to the rigor of the research which are presented on the table on the right. And these items include having an evaluator that is external to the organization to conduct the evaluation. It includes using a study design that has a counter-factual, meaning that there's a comparison group included in the study to show what would have happened to participants had they not received the intervention. And it also involves making sure there are no confounds in the study design, which means that evaluators are able to attribute any impacts to the intervention and not to other factors that could account for these effects. And finally, the research needs to be carried out in such a way to maintain its

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

strong internal validity. In that regard, the conducted research, depending on the study design used, would need to show low attrition, no reassignment, and it should establish baseline equivalence between its study groups. And once an organization is able to identify existing studies that were carried out with a rigorous design, step one of the SCALER then asks whether the studied intervention actually produced the beneficial participant impacts. If the intervention was not shown to be effective, then it's not yet ready for scaling. And the last part of the SCALER captures whether the context and the environment used as the basis for the research evidence, whether that's generalizable or relevant to the scaling plans that an organization has for its intervention. And if there is a no on any of these items in the step one checklist related to research rigor, effectiveness or relevancy, the organization still has a need for evidence and should think about building that evidence themselves. And if there's a yes on all these items, than that organization can proceed to

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

determine their scaling readiness at which Mary Anne will speak to shortly. First, when rigorous evidence does not yet exist, this evidence must be built before an organization can look to scale. The SCALER framework highlights a process organizations can use to openly gain knowledge about an intervention's impact. The ultimate goal of this process is for an organization to come away with an evaluation that beats those standards, like just discussed on the previous slide. So organizations can use SCALER step two checklist as they seek to build evidence for their interventions. And this process begins with clearly defining the intervention. This involves having a well-articulated theory of change, which will describe the assumptions for how the intervention will successfully affect outcomes for participants. And the organization then needs to lay the groundwork for evaluation by working to build a common understanding among organization stakeholders and partners about the value of the evaluation and what the evaluation is aiming to achieve. And next, organizations need to prepare for the evaluation

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

which requires sufficient financial resources, and personnel to help evaluators carry out the evaluation design. And once an organization has prepared for its evaluation, they can then work with a third party evaluator to conduct an impact study which would ideally be rigorous enough to allow the organization to know whether its intervention has evidence of effectiveness. And upon completing its evaluations, organizations may find that the intervention that did not, in fact, improve participant outcomes, or it was unable to carry the rigorous study design, as they hoped. And that's okay. In those instances the organization is faced with a continued need for evidence and should start over with this process for building such evidence until they have the impact study they're looking for. And once an organization is able to complete each of these steps and the evaluation shows evidence of effectiveness, then they can think towards getting that intervention and the organization itself ready to scale, which Mary Anne will speak to next.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

MARY ANNE ANDERSON: Thanks, Scott. So once an intervention's effectiveness has been established, organizations can seek to get ready to scale it. So the SCALER framework has five conditions that guide both an organization and an intervention's readiness to scale successfully. The first three conditions, a well specified intervention, a well-defined target population, and implementation supports indicate whether the intervention is ready to scale, which means that it has the features that could allow it to be implemented with fidelity after scaling. This, as Scott mentioned, increases the likelihood of achieving the same beneficial outcomes that were seen prior to scaling. The last two conditions on the slide, having an enabling context that's conducive to scaling and sufficient implementation infrastructure in place speak to whether the organization is ready to scale. So I'll touch a bit on each of these five conditions. So first is having a well-specified intervention. This includes the core components that are thought to be critical for achieving beneficial outcomes after scaling. So

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

specifying these components helps organizations implement interventions with fidelity. The four components that we include in the SCALER framework are first, clearly identified core activities. So, for example, for a school-based reading program, core activity might be the curriculum that the program uses whereas a non-core or supplement activity might be suggestions of books that parents could read to their children at home. Second are clearly defined personnel roles. So this includes the number of personnel needed, what they do and their qualifications. Third is a clearly defined setting, meaning where the intervention takes place. And then fourth is a clear definition of participation, participant completion. The next condition is having a well-defined target population. So when scaling offering an intervention to the same population for whom the intervention was designed and shown to be effective makes it more likely that the intervention will be successful when scaled. To be able to do this, the population should be well defined and include the characteristics that people must have to

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

participate in the intervention. So this, so some examples of this might be children within a certain range of ages or grades, having a certain health condition or being at risk of a certain health condition or being a recipient of a specific public benefits program. Next, the intervention should have implementation supports in place to facilitate scaling. So these help to ensure that an intervention can be implemented with fidelity as well. These include a system to monitor implementation of the intervention, performance goals for personnel who are implementing the intervention, continuous quality improvement or CQI process which are a systematic process for improving service delivery and outcomes. Pre-service and in-service training for personnel, meaning training that occurs before implementation of the intervention and while it's being implemented. Systems to ensure communications about the intervention are smooth and the appropriate personnel are communicating about it, and data systems that allow organizations to record, track and analyze data and use it for intervention monitoring and

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

improvement purposes. So now we move on to the two conditions that indicate whether an organization is ready to scale an intervention. The first is having an enabling context. So that means that an organization's culture supports innovation, learning and improvement during scaling. And also that the organization's roles, structures and functions facilitate service delivery. So there's two specific components that we look at under having an enabling context. First is support by organization leader and key stakeholders and second is having a culture of innovation and learning within the organization. And then the final condition for scaling readiness is establishing an implementation infrastructure that supports fidelity. So the implementation infrastructure includes two components, financial and human resources and materials and physical space. So these components cover hiring the necessary personnel for the intervention, supporting their supervision and professional development, and providing funding, materials and space for implementing the intervention. And now we're going to jump into a

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

demonstration of the SCALER tool so that we can highlight the tool's key features and show how organizations can use it. To help with our demonstration, we're going to be referring to a fictitious program that we made up named Flag Football for Fitness or F-4. So F-4 seeks to combat childhood obesity, promote healthy eating and exercise habits and foster positive youth development. So while in the program, students play flag football, while also learning about health eating and exercise practices. The F-4 program is an after school program. It works with students in grades K through 8 who attend schools that receive Title I funding in urban school districts throughout the country. The F-4 program works with groups of students in person, face to face. So 90 minutes per day, three days a week for twelve weeks during the school year and there are spring and fall sessions. And at each F-4 school or site there's a site coordinator who has at least five years of experience and at least a bachelor's. And that person oversees administrative and programmatic functions at the

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

school. And then there's also a coach that runs the program activities. The coach should have demonstrated experience working with youth and they are most often college students, parents and teachers. So we'll refer to this fictitious program throughout our demonstration. And now we'll switch over to the SCALER tool on the AmeriCorps' website, and Scott is going to walk us through the first few screens of that.

SCOTT RICHMAN: Thanks, Mary Anne. So the SCALER tool can be found on the AmeriCorps website on the evaluation resources page. So after clicking on the link here, you are taken to the SCALER main home page where you are immediately greeted with the SCALER framework diagram that Mary Anne and I just discussed. And on the page users will see some general overview information that describes what the SCALER framework is designed for. The main home page also provides some helpful information to help get users oriented to the SCALER tool itself such as providing information on who should complete the SCALER, what

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

information is needed and how the results can be used. And users can expand or collapse on these different content panels to access the information they need based on the questions they have about the SCALER. The SCALER also provides the starting points to the SCALER's three steps. As we mentioned before, there's a sequential nature to the SCALER, with users starting at Step 1, then going to Step 2 if needed, before ultimately going to Step 3. That said, we recognize that identifying or building evidence or getting ready to scale, are processes that each take time for an organization to do. So we anticipate organizations needing to kind of come back to the SCALER multiple times. So the SCALER is designed so that users can start the SCALER at any of these steps, if they want to complete them at those different time points. But with this demonstration, where we're thinking about the F-4 program Mary Anne discussed, and because we haven't used the SCALER before, I'm going to begin with Step 1. So when I click on the step 1 button users will immediately see a popup that asks whether they want to start a new

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

step 1, or if they want to return back to a prior step 1 checklist they may have already started or completed. And I'll come back to that point in a little bit, but for now let's start a new step 1. So on the step 1 landing page, we have an overview information that tells us what the purpose of this step is. And because the step is about identifying evidence of effectiveness for my intervention, users can click on this middle panel here, definitions about the three different components that are involved with building - with identifying evidence. And on the right hand side you can see we have a series of expandable FAQs. For example, if I would expand on the what information do I need, the SCALER tells us that for this step, users will need to know about any research studies that have been conducted on their intervention. And if they're not aware of any, it points to the SCALER resource page where they can find links to various research clearinghouses to see if any studies have been conducted on their programs. But for this F-4 program example, I know that our big research study about our study that our

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

organization did on a program, did it a few years ago and I'm not aware of any other studies, so I'm going to get started on the step 1 with this one study in mind. So here is the step 1 checklist. And I'm going to select the items that reflect the nature of the research that has been conducted on the F-4 program. First, we designed the checklist page so that users can have helpful information and guidance if they need it and to avoid toggling back and forth between screens. So for example, we have these floating question marks that users can hover over for definitions to key terms. And underneath each of the items, we also provide some examples that have some user friendly content to further explain what the item is asking. So for my F-4 program, I'm thinking about that study my organization conducted which was a randomized control trial where we compared middle school students who received the program to a group of middle school students who did not. So the study was conducted by my organization, so I'm going to leave this first item here unchecked, but I'm going to check off the next two items because we did a

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

randomized control trial. So it had a comparison group as a counter-factual and there were no confounding factors in the research design. But the study did report having some high attrition because we were unable to collect survey data from a good number of students. And we didn't do any baseline equivalence analyses afterwards. And because of that, I'm going to leave this box unchecked. And then just for the purpose of this demonstration, I'm going to quickly check off the next two boxes, which are to say whether the research study showed positive impacts for the F-4 program and whether the study context was relevant to the plans that my organization has for scaling the F-4 program. And with that, I'm going to hit the next button and I am taken to the next screen. So this is the results page for step 1. And I just want to quickly point out that at the top you'll see a green box which says that your results are saved, and I'm going to come back to that in a little bit. But organization personnel can use this page as a summary of the evidence that exists for their intervention. And here we have the

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

headline that says, 'Evidence for Your Intervention's Effectiveness That Aligns To Your Plans For Scaling Does not Yet Exist.' Your organization will need to build such evidence. And I can see my results for the items I did and did not select. And I'm provided with some summary information from my choices, and given information on why these intervention evidence components are important, and also what my organization can do next for the ones that I did not select. In this case I can quickly see that I received my rating, just because I did not select that my intervention evaluation was conducted by a third party evaluator and we had some low attrition issues with our study design. Scrolling down to the bottom, I'm given the instruction that I should proceed to Step 2 of the SCALER so that my organization can work towards building evidence for my F-4 program. I just want to quickly note that had I selected all the items in the checklist, I would have been given the direction that I can proceed directly to Step 3, because I would have identified evidence, that was rigor enough, and show positive

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

impacts. But in this case before going to Step 2, you'll see that your SCALER has a feature that allows users to print off their Step 1 results, which would produce a pdf copy of this summary page. And in the chat we'll upload an attachment for you to see what an example results page can look like when you print it or save it to your own personal computer. But if users wanted to stop here or return to their results at a later time, they can also obtain a unique URL token that will allow them to access their step on SCALER later on. So to do this, I can click on the copy My Step 1 link button which will give me a unique URL token that I can paste into a separate document and then save it for accessing the SCALER later on. Or I can email that token to myself, which for me would open up an Outlook email message that would already have the URL pre-populated into the message and then I can just email it to myself. But I'm going to click on this copy my link button which will give me my unique URL token. And if I were to then go back quickly to the SCALER homepage, and I'll do that right now. And if you recall, when we go to

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

that Step 1 button here, and then enter my token, and then access my results from the previous session. So this is something we wanted to make sure that it was available to users so they can revisit previous SCALER results, especially as they're making progress towards SCALER. But I'm going to proceed to the Step 2. So on this Step 2 landing page, we have an overview information that describes the purpose of this step, which again is to help organizations work towards building evidence for their intervention. And as we saw in Step 1 and its landing page, users can toggle across the different tabs here, to get more information on what these different components are for this step, for building evidence. And of course we have some useful FAQs on the side for users to expand as they need, if they desire more information. But for our demonstration let's get started on Step 2. So as you can see here, they have all the items from the first section, which is defining intervention, and all the other components that were described on the landing page. And for me I'm going to fill out this first section here for the

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

demonstration we're doing right now. And my organization does have a theory of change. We have been running our program for a while in its current form and we haven't made any tweaks, so I would consider it mature and stable. We've been able to implement it with fidelity according to the model and the theory of change. And then previously when we developed the intervention, we did so as it was grounded in research. We really looked at previous studies to really think about the design of our intervention. So I'm going to check off that as well. And then we also, I'm going to just quickly fill out the next section which is saying we've been able to develop a lot of consensus among our key stakeholders about the need for evidence, what we're going to measure, and what outcomes are important to us, what are the goals of our evaluation, and just broadly speaking our organizational leadership, partners, and other key stakeholders - are they in support of our evaluation. And then the final two sections of this, and again users will likely need to come back at later times as they work on these processes which can

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

take a little while. Your organizations can ultimately check off whether they have the resources and personnel available to conduct the evaluation. And then once that evaluation is conducted, these are the standards that referred back in Step 1 in terms of the rigor, the effectiveness, and the relevancy of the study. So I'm just, for the purposes of this demonstration, I'm just going to check off all of these here. And I'm hitting next, you're going to be taken to the Step 2 Results page, which will look very similar to what we saw with Step 1. And again, users can receive a headline that tells them the status of their evidence building efforts in this case. And we see here we get check marks across the board. Go us. And we can then scroll across different tabs here if we wanted to look for more information about why these components are important. And had I not selected anything, we'd have gotten a red X icon here, and it would point me to some things I can consider doing next as I continue my efforts towards building evidence. And scrolling down to the bottom, again users can print off their results as needed.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

And here I'm given the direction of continuing to Step 3. And I'm going to do that next, and then Mary Anne is going to take it from here.

MARY ANNE ANDERSON: Thanks so much, Scott. So, I'll share an overview of Step 3, which focuses on those five conditions of scaling readiness that I talked through a few minutes ago. So when you first come to the landing page for Step 3, you'll see an overview of what we mean by specifying the intervention, which is the first checklist. But if you click through the tabs there you can also see an overview of the other four conditions and checklists. So if we scroll down, and click the start button, we can get going on the checklists. So I will just give an overview of each one and highlight a few examples of items in each of these checklists. So, this first one is for specifying the intervention just to orient you all a bit. At the top you can see a tracker that shows your progress in completing the five checklists on the way to receiving your results. So this checklist is split

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

up into four different sections. So looking at identifying core activities first. Using our F-4 example, we know that the core activities are playing flag football and learning about healthy habits. And we also talked through the modes and intensities. So we know for our program students and their coaches meet face to face in groups. So that's the mode. And that they meet for 90 minutes a day, three days a week, for 12 weeks. So we also know the intensity. So for all three of those we can check yes, this is defined. If we scroll down the next set of items is on clearly defining personnel roles. And from our F-4 example we also know that these are well-defined. So, we have one site coordinator and one coach, per school or per site. We know that the site coordinator is - covers administrative and programmatic duties, and the coach works directly with the students and we also know their qualifications. So, five years of experience and a bachelor's for the site coordinator and experience working with youth for the coach. So for all three of these we can also check yes, this is defined. The next two groups of items, the first is

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

on clearly defining the setting, so where the intervention takes place. And the last set of items is about defining who is a program participant and what does it mean to complete the intervention. Just in the sake of time we'll skip talking through those and move on to the next checklist. So the next checklist is about defining the target population. This one actually only has three items. The first two are about characteristics of the population, and the criteria for who is eligible to participate. So, inclusion criteria. And again we had a pretty good definition of this for our F-4 example. We said that students in grades K through 8 at schools receiving Title I funds in urban districts throughout the country can participate and are eligible. So we can say, yes, this is defined, for both of those items. But imagine for the next item is about exclusion criteria, so determining who's not eligible to participate. And let's imagine that F-4 leadership wants to set some criterion around this. Right now in some schools students can participate as many times as they'd like in F-4, whereas in other sites

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

students can only participate once, and then they can't participate again. So, they're going to put together some standards around this. So they're making plans to develop a definition here. And that completes our target population one, so we can hit next, and that moves us on to establishing implementation supports. So this is our third checklist. This is divided into six sections and we'll start with this first group of items on monitoring. So for F-4, we don't know a lot about monitoring the program. Let's assume here that F-4 leadership is working on plans for who will monitor, how they will monitor, and how they'll report on issues and challenges. So we can say, no, but making plans to set up for those items. Scrolling down, the next group of items is around establishing performance goals. So let's imagine first that benchmarks for service delivery are clearly - are being actively established. So, they're close to, but they haven't quite gotten those in place. And they're also concurrently working on a plan for monitoring those benchmarks. So, because these are in the works,

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

we can say, actively setting it up for those items. And then in the interest of time I won't - we won't go through and fill in the rest, but I just wanted to give a quick overview. The next set is on CQI. So this covers having a CQI process, regularly using it, and updating the intervention based on CQI results. The next one is on engaging in personnel training. So this looks at whether training is in place and personnel are receiving it in a timely manner, both before and during implementation of an intervention. Next is on communication systems. So these items look at whether a communication system exists that supports coordination among personnel, as well as whether there's processes in place to make sure communications function smoothly and there's a process to resolve issues if they occur. And then the last setoff items is on data systems. So this helps organizations assess whether they have a data system in place and whether there are processes to ensure data are entered in a timely manner, analyzed appropriately, and then used in decision making. So we can click next, and go to the next checklist,

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

which is on enabling context. So here we have two sets of items. The first set of items looks at support for the intervention. So going back to our F-4 example, let's imagine that organization leaders are very supportive of the intervention, so we can say fully descriptive. But maybe some community groups or some schools and some of our target communities need to be more brought on board and don't know as much about F-4. So we might say somewhat descriptive for that item. The other set of items here is on engaging in innovation and learning. Just to give you a sense of what they cover, they help an organization assess whether there's a history of innovation, whether there's been ways to or the organization has used ways to improve the intervention model and whether successes and challenges are regularly discussed. But we'll skip actually filling those out. And then if we hit the next button, we'll move to our last checklist, which is on establishing an implementation infrastructure. So this first set of items is on procuring financial and human resources. The first item is on adequate

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

funding, so imagine for F-4 that the F-4 leadership has some funding in place, but they're actively applying for grants to fill in some funding gaps. So we can say actively setting it up for that item. For our dedicated personnel, which is the next item here, let's also say that they have most of the personnel in place, but they have some hiring gaps that they're looking to fill, so we can say actively setting it up for that one as well. And the last item in the group here is on having a human resources system, so let's just say that's in place. We can say yes, there's human resources. And the next group we won't fill in, but this is about providing materials and physical space. And the next group we won't fill in, but this is about providing materials and physical space. So having a thorough description of those resources and then making sure each of those are in place. So that brings us to the end of our checklist. You would normally hit the next button, but we actually pre-filled the separate results page to share with you all, so Scott has switched over to that. So this is what would populate after you complete Step 3 of the

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

SCALER. So this is information that organizations can use to understand their scaling readiness for each of those five components in the framework. So we have circle graphs up here, up at the top here, that represent how far along an intervention and an organization is towards achieving maximum scaling readiness in each of those five conditions. So here you can see for F-4, they are relatively stronger on having a well-specified intervention and a well-defined target population. But they have some more room for growth for their implementation supports, the enabling context and the implementation infrastructure. And then below that, you can click on these five tabs that align with each of those conditions to get detailed information about your results. So the text on each of these tabs is tailored to the answers that were given to the items in the checklists. So organizations will see different headings and tabs based on their answers. So for F-4, for specifying the intervention, if you don't mind scrolling up, Scott, the headline says you've begun to specify your intervention, but

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

there's still work to do. And then you have a paragraph with some general guidance on where F-4 might want to focus their efforts to make sure they're ready to scale. If you scroll down in areas where F-4 met the criteria, they get these green checkmarks and some guidance that's saying you're doing good, you're doing a good job here. The last group of items, F-4 received a blue clock that's saying you're making some progress, but you have some progress to go, so they partially met the criteria here. So the text next to that symbol gives some guidance on next steps that they might want to take to make sure that they have definitions of participation and completion in this case. And just to point out on the left hand side, there's also bar charts that show how many of the items the organization answered like yes, this is defined too in the actual checklists. So just to give one more example. Scott, if you could click on implementation infrastructure. Thank you. You'll see a similar structure to the guidance here. The headline says keep working to ensure, or you have taken some steps

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

to make sure the necessary infrastructure is in place, but there's still some work to do. And here you can see that F-4 received a blue clock to say they've made some progress on financial and human resources, but haven't kind of achieved maximum progress. And then they did receive a red X here. We assume that hardly any progress had been made on providing materials and physical space. So they have some guidance there to help them - to help them sort of get ready for scaling in that area, in both of those resources. So when personnel are ready, they can scroll down and hit continue to planning your next steps. And this takes us - this is a static page that just helps organizations digest their SCALER results and identify action steps. So we provided some guiding questions that personnel might want to discuss to build their scaling readiness in the tan box. And then if you scroll down, you can also hit the discussion guide link to bring up these questions in a fillable pdf worksheet, which will also be included as a handout in the chat box. And then - yeah, you can also navigate to the SCALER resources.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

So that brings us to a list of documents, tools and guides that organizations can use to address areas of growth or challenge after completing the SCALER. So we organized these resources to align with the SCALER framework, so organizations can find resources on identifying evidence, building evidence and getting ready to scale. And I believe that concludes our demonstration. I just want to pause and say that we worked with several AmeriCorps grantees to test this site while it was being developed and we really would like to appreciate, thank them, and we really appreciate their time and effort in participating in that user testing and helping us get this fully completed and launched. And now we, I believe we can open it up for questions.

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: Thank you so much, Scott and Mary Anne. Really appreciate it.

Katherine Hussey-Sloniker: So let's start by asking the panel some questions. From Savannah Kid, please

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

repeat how you arrived at the study design elements,
or elements that produced credible evidence.

SCOTT RICHMAN: And I can take that one. So that's a great question. So really, we looked to the existing research clearinghouses that cut across multiple content areas, whether it's clearinghouse, Home-V that does child and parenting intervention reviews and so forth. And really, these clearinghouses define evidence and rigorous research in a variety of ways, but they have these common set of principles and that's what we really looked to in terms of creating the, what we called the standard for identifying evidence in the SCALER. So again, that was, things really to internal validity in terms of having a comparison group, confounds, how well the internal validity was carried out in terms of attrition or based on equivalence. And these are common themes and principles that cut across the different clearinghouses. And of course, they define it a little bit different, depending on the context of their area, but that's really where we try to ground

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

the Step 1 of the SCALER in terms of really leveraging the great work that has been done across various federal agencies in this space.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: Thank you, Scott. I'm going to read the next question, but I would like to remind everyone to please place your questions in the chat. The next question comes from Laura Schultz, or it's not been covered yet, is there a checklist that supports schools and efforts to place participants in an effective intervention that addressed their specific needs, and further, how to apply the taxonomy of intensity and other variables.

SCOTT RICHMAN: That's a really good question as well. There isn't anything in terms of checklist items for that. At one level, we wanted to be conscious of making the SCALER framework generalizable across a lot of different content areas. So there isn't anything, for example, healthy future specific or economic opportunity specific, or education specific. But what I think about when I hear your question

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

though is the importance of as you're scaling, working with those community partners or the context in which you're bringing your intervention to, to make sure that not only are you, the organization, implementing the intervention as you hoped and intended, but that there isn't then any issues with implementation fidelity and with carrying it out in the schools. And that might be then working with those partners to help ensure that on the ground the schools are carrying out the intervention as you had designed. Because if that doesn't happen, then you start deviating from the intervention model which then would start raising concerns, you know, are you going to jeopardize the effectiveness that your intervention has had in previous efforts.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: Thank you. Would anyone else like to add to the response? All right. The next question is, is this tool something funders can use, or is this specific to practitioners and community-based organization program leadership only?

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: I can take a stab at it, and then I'll let Scott and Mary Anne also weigh in. We foresee this being used both by practitioners and by funders. And you know, first off, I just wanted to point something about the tool which, even though Scott mentioned it, it wasn't really overtly discussed. One of the things that we did as we put this tool together and you know, brought it to you is get it through our privacy and security analysis. And one of the things that you'll see is that there's no identifiable information about any organization as you fill this out. So the privacy of organizations and individuals that fill out the form is fully protected and we won't have any of that information at hand. So just one point so folks can be aware of. There is a token that is generated when you start filling out the form. And that's the token you use to go back to the tool and no one would know it unless you share that token number with another one of your colleagues and so forth. But one of the ways we think this tool can be really helpful is, for example, funders can use it to kind of gauge where

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

their grantees are in terms of their readiness to scale. Findings and results from the SCALER tool can be used to perhaps support the grantees, to increase their readiness. They can be a foundation for technical assistance services, funding supports and the like to really make them ready to start scaling or replicating an intervention that has evidence behind it. You know, it could be that an organization needs to go back and do a more robust evaluation, that's another thing, or do it more externally so there's more validity and credibility to the results of the evaluation. All of those factors come into play. It could also be a facilitative tool that is used for just communication engagement, right? And then on the practitioner side, we think that they can use it just to self-assess and see where they are, take it back to the organization. You know, take it to the leadership, to the program implementers, and really figure out how best to get ready to do this. So we see it having utility and application, you know, both for the funder community and for practitioners on the ground. And with that, I'm going

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

to pass it on to Scott and Mary Anne if they want to add something.

SCOTT RICHMAN: Yeah, that was a wonderful summary. I can very much see, for example, if there's a grant maker or someone who's overseeing a portfolio of grants that this could even be a discussion tool. You know, that's something that you and an organization that you work with can fill out together. Or, as you think about what guidance and supports you'd want to provide to the grantees you oversee or organizations you have support. If you were to fill this out with them in mind, it might identify areas where you might want to ask about for further support and to say hey, do you have this in place, is there anything we can do to help provide training, resources or any tools to help kind of build your capacity in this area. So it could also be a little bit of a self-reflection for those project officers or portfolio managers, for example, who really have that intimate knowledge of their grantees or organizations they work with to kind of guide what level of support they may want to

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

provide to those organizations. Mary Anne, I don't know if you have anything to add as you reflect on that question, too.

MARY ANNE ANDERSON: Yeah, I will say here at Mathematica we do participate in a lot of training and technical assistance. And we are adapting parts of the SCALER to other projects to kind of do like an assessment of grant recipients upfront to determine what kinds of evaluation or research support and capacity building support we could provide in areas related to scaling. So that's another application of it as well.

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: Yeah, and then one final point that I wanted to make is you know, within an organization, within - whether it be - any organization working in different areas, you might also have multiple perspectives of people who actually work there. You know, depending on who fills out the form and you know, the amount of knowledge they have, the grounding they have, their perspective on things. So it could also be something that, again, as Scott also

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

referenced, can be a tool that can be used for discussion. If there are differences of opinion about where you are, it could be a tool that is used to sort of frame that discussion and come to agreement or make decisions about what to do next to sort of bridge gaps and reach consensus or an understanding at least of where you are.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: A follow-up question from Savannah Kid. Was anyone in your test group representative of the American Indian, Alaska Native organizations?

SCOTT RICHMAN: I believe the answer to that is no. When we tested the SCALER during its development, we had a small number of users. And the focus there as we were thinking about different ways to go about that testing was to, one, think about the different focus areas that AmeriCorps funds. So making, again, going back to what I was saying earlier, like wanting to ideally create a tool that could be useful to organizations who are working in various focus areas.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

And the other part that we wanted to focus on is trying to get some diversity with regards to the individuals that could potentially use the tool. So whether this could be a project director, this could be an evaluation lead. So I think given the - what we were able to do in terms of usability, that is where we focused on. But I do think that's a great suggestion in terms of thinking about the broader usability and accessibility and applicability of this tool. I think that definitely warrants some future testing and feedback. Lily, I don't know if you have any other thoughts on that as well.

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: Well I think that's a great question, and I like the way you responded to it, Scott. And I would just add that we are constantly trying to think, you know, how we can support this tool, use this tool, maybe do more outreach to our - the different organizations that we work with. And the grantees - the Native American grantees that you're referencing also are among the groups that we are thinking of in terms of how to strategize and

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

consider engaging with them with this tool and other tools and sort of help in best sort of using it to help organizations grow and get better and get more ready for scaling. So, it's in the works.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: Thank you. So, Rani Kinashida asks, will AmeriCorps engage in any regulatory practices for programs to build their evidence of effectiveness? i.e., requiring programs to use these tools to gain funding?

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: I'll take that. You know, at this point we don't have any specific plans to use this particular tool, the SCALER tool, or tie it to funding-related things. You know, our grant competitions typically require, have an evidence component to it and in a sense that sort of marginally - it relates to this tool. But no, we think that this tool needs to be a standalone, and for folks to use as they see fit. And it's meant to be a resource, and we didn't want to have it have that big baggage attached to it, related to funding.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: So a follow from Rani, how can we raise awareness of the AmeriCorps evidence exchange and the tools available for your program to build out programs evidence base?

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: That is a great question. Evidence exchange, you know, has been a repository that we've used and all the resources that we've put on there. There's just a ton of information there about effective programs, a lot about different programs that have already begun on the sort of path of building their evidence. And there's many, many resources and the SCALER included are available on the resources page. We do everything we can to try to make sure that the word is out, but this is not something that we can do by ourselves. You know, we need our agency partners to do that and partners in the communities to help spread the word. So I think that our team at AmeriCorps and within our unit does, we do everything we can to promote evidence exchange and make sure that all of this information and these

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

tools and resources are in the public domain and are magnified. And that is going to be an ongoing effort to really bring more attention to it, spotlight it and so forth. In fact, one of our hopes is that SCALER tool would be a shining and great tool to bring more attention to those resources and information that is on the website.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: So the next question - there are a lot of questions here from the people. So be aware, there's more questions coming. Calvin Patterson wants to know, is there more weight, to part - more weight to part of the process, e.g., financial and personnel is more important than materials and setting?

SCOTT RICHMAN: I can jump in with that one. Yeah, so at this stage we think of the SCALER as something where everything matters equally. That one thing isn't more important than the other. But I think what you're question suggests also, that could be a great empirical question as you think long-term when

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

grantees are scaling and whether they have success in scaling or not. That might be an interesting thing to look at in terms of what factors did they have in place or not when they sought to scale. And I think that sort of analysis research, can help I think illicit ideas of you know, what is more important or not. But at this stage, we are thinking of this as these are our, you know, the things that need to be in place for scaling and not prioritizing one or the other.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: All right. And the last question that I have in the open chat, please feel free, we have a few more minutes before the chat closes, is basically will we have access to the recording to absorb the information again and use it for discussion? The answer is yes. The recording will be made available through the impact page, webinar page of the AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation in about two weeks. It will have support materials with it to include the slides as well. All right, lots of messages listed in the chat talking

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

about how wonderful the SCALER tool is. We have time for one more question, if someone would like to place it in the chat. As I see none, I guess I'd like to ask for closing comments from each one of you here, both Mathematica, Scott and Mary Anne, and Lily from AmeriCorps. Closing comments?

SCOTT RICHMAN: Sure. I just want to thank everyone, again, for attending. As Lily and Mary Anne said at the beginning, our hope is to really just support the work that communities, organizations are doing on the ground and really our mission at the beginning was to create something that was usable to really support the, you know, what organizations bring to individuals and communities. So we really appreciate the questions. And again, as Mary Anne also noted, the users who helped to test this along the way and kind of where, give us some bearings that we were on the right track with creating something useful. And we hope that you are able to put this in practice. And thank you again for your questions and attendance.

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

LILY ZANDNIAPOUR: Yeah. On my end, I want to first thank Scott and Mary Anne. The partnership with Mathematica has been so wonderful. We have learned so much in the process and there is just a ton of information. And all of you, I thank you for attending today's webinar and really encourage you to engage with the tool and check out all these resources that were generated as part of this initiative. They are very, very informative and useful. And, you know, I think they have set the stage for hopefully bigger and better things in the future. And again, thanks for the questions. As I noted in the beginning, there have been many other people that have been involved in this effort and I just want to thank all of them too in the background and supporting, have been supporting this work, both on the agency side and on Mathematica's side to bring this project with all of this wonderful products to everyone. And yeah, just to thank everyone for their work and contributions. And hopefully, you can find it really useful and engage with the tool. Mary Anne?

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

MARY ANNE ANDERSON: I totally echo everything that's been said. So glad to see how many people were able to attend today. And I do, you know, want to acknowledge this was not just Scott and me. We had a large team on Mathematica's side as well that helped put together the resources that are in report form, as well as our kind of more product development side that helped to put together the tool for the website. So thank you to all those team members.

KATHERINE HUSSEY-SLONIKER: Okay. Thank you all very much for attending. We've provided the speakers' email addresses here on the page. A recording will be available in about two weeks. And the AmeriCorps SCALER tool is located on the evaluation resources page, and was also embedded as part of the chat that you see here. All follow-up and support materials will be included in the recording as attached - attached supplement. There will be the slides, there will be all of the official worksheets and documents that were placed in that chat as well. So we'd like

ICF Transcription
Deepening Our Understanding of What
It Takes To Scale An Effective Program:
Scaling Evidence-Based Models Initiative and Tool

to thank you very much for attending the webinar
today. Thank you.

[End of File]