**Introduction**
This guide is a supplement to the SMART objectives worksheet, found [here](#). Following the introduction of SMART objectives to Washington State SNAP-Ed on What’s Up Wednesday, some important questions were posed that fell into four main categories: Planning, Audience, Project Scope, and Reporting. Please refer to this guide first when you have a question on creating, editing, or evaluating SMART objectives using the SMART objectives worksheet. If you cannot find your answer here, please work with your IA or email the evaluation team with your question at SNAPedEvaluation@doh.wa.gov. The evaluation team will update this document with new questions annually, or more often as needed.

**Planning**

**Q**: Is there a relationship between Key Program Indicators (KPIs) and SMART objectives?

**A**: SMART objectives can be used to develop KPIs. A key performance indicator is a specific performance measure that will indicate progress towards a goal or objective. Identifying your project’s goals and objectives can help you figure out what specific types of information you want to collect to measure success or progress. Remember that goals are broad, overarching statements of what a project or program aims to achieve, and an objective defines the strategies and implementation steps that a program or project will use to achieve the goal(s). It comes down to how you and your program want to measure success.

**Q**: How do you know when to change your SMART objectives? How do you know that they’re still relevant?

**A**: Changing a SMART objective should be discussed with your IA. If a project has changed or evolved, for example as a project ends or is being extended, then it’s reasonable that a program may need to change their SMART objective. Deciding whether a SMART objective is still relevant and what changes to make is very specific to individual projects. If an LIA is unsure whether their SMART objective is still relevant, LIAs should work with their IAs and can reach out to the evaluation team with an evaluation request for additional support.
Q: If our SMART objectives need to change due to COVID, do we just delete them in our workplan (with tracked changes) and write new ones?

A: LIAs should work with their IAs to manage any potential changes to their workplans.

Q: What if my project is still being developed?

A: SMART objectives can be a great tool to help LIAs work with their partners to define a project during a project’s formative stages. Objectives can be written as tasks to help LIAs and partners with decision-making and accountability. For example, “The Healthy Choices team will meet the third Wednesday of every month to write SMART objectives for the planning and launch of the program in the Sprouts food pantry.”

Audience

Q: Can you write SMART objectives that turn the outcomes towards the audience? So that the audience can choose their goal in a culturally appropriate way?

A: This is a great time to write a process-driven SMART objective. For example, “By the end of this fiscal year, the Healthy Choices team will meet with the program’s target audience at least twice to establish how to measure success of the program.”

Q: How can we use SMART objectives and capture data or measure success in a different, more creative, and/or non-linear way?

A: SMART objectives can be used and applied in a variety of ways, including to measure process goals (see previous questions in this Q&A), so it still might be applicable to use process-driven SMART objectives. There are so many great evaluation methods out there that don’t involve surveys or checklists, and plans to use these methods can be made into SMART goals such as “By the end of the fiscal year, we will have conducted two Photo Voice sessions with the community”.

These kinds of methods are often more labor- and resource-intensive so they have not been rolled out statewide. If an LIA is interested in evaluating their program or project using stories, art, photos, etc., they should submit an evaluation request form. The evaluation team is happy to work with LIAs to tailor evaluation methods for their project and audience.
**Project Scope**

**Q:** Many agencies work on projects that are really large with huge scopes. How do you write enough SMART objectives to capture the work but not be so specific that they’re writing 50 goals?

**A:** Start by developing a few overarching goals and then write SMART objectives for each goal. It may help to think about using SMART objectives as a way to help keep their project on track. Through that lens, programs may not need a SMART objective for each element of their project.

**Reporting**

**Q:** Do you have guidance or suggestions on how to report out?

**A:** The more specific you are, the easier it is to keep track and report out. There is no statewide requirement to report out on SMART objectives, but IAs may have some requirements in their quarterly and annual report templates.

**Q:** We created SMART objectives at the beginning of the plan and they’re a great tie-in for tracking. What are suggestions for checking in on SMART objectives and their timelines?

**A:** The evaluation team recommends revisiting SMART objectives at least annually, but it may be useful to review them each reporting period or each time a project’s scope shifts or changes. When discussing SMART objectives during the planning process, an LIA can also discuss when they will review their objectives. Keep track of the steps taken to achieve your smart goal (ex. Classes held, agreements signed, participation at an event) to include with your SMART objective reviews.