

Advancing Best Practices and Cultural Relevance of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Programs for Indigenous Communities (I-HMRF)

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 - 0531

Supporting Statement

Part B

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Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes**

Part B

B1. Objectives

Study Objectives

The Advancing Best Practices and Cultural Relevance of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Programs for Indigenous Communities (I-HMRF) project seeks to understand more about how to make Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) programming more accessible and culturally responsive, in order to serve more Indigenous people and communities. Additionally, currently commonly used HMRF curricula current is not culturally responsive to the needs of Indigenous communities. Findings will be used to inform future programmatic technical assistance for HMRF grantees working with Indigenous communities, as well as to inform the development of a public facing toolkit for practitioners featuring promising practices for working with Indigenous communities.

Generalizability of Results

This study is intended to present a description of the experiences of staff, participants and community members at selected HMRF programs and other non-HMRF human service programs in order to learn about promising practices in service provision for Indigenous communities to inform ACF programs/services and that may be of interest to others in the HMRF field. It is not intended to promote statistical generalization to other programs or service populations.

Appropriateness of Study Design and Methods for Planned Uses

To answer the project's key research questions, we have proposed using qualitative data collection methods that align with Indigenous values and our proposed plans for analysis. By employing a collaborative, participatory development and sense-making process that incorporates the expertise of our Community Working Group (CWG), the project seeks to ensure the research design reflects Indigenous Ways of Knowing.

The project plans to use different qualitative methodologies that best fit the needs of our research questions and that will encourage authentic participation from respondents. This approach aligns with Indigenous values regarding storytelling, bidirectional learning, humility and generosity, and Indigenous Ways of Knowing. The data collected from these methods will inform both internal recommendations to federal staff about suggestions to make HMRF programming more culturally relevant to Indigenous communities and will also inform the content for a public toolkit to support the sharing of lessons learned for promising practices in delivering services in these communities.

As noted in Supporting Statement A, this information is not intended to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information. Data is not intended to be representative.

B2. Methods and Design

Target Population

Participation in this study is restricted to HMRF or other non-HMRF human service program sites that work with Indigenous communities. For each of the six selected sites, we will collect information from:

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- **HMRF program staff (Instrument 1):** Program administrators and facilitators from HMRF programs serving Indigenous communities, including those directly involved in overseeing or implementing program services.
- **Non-HMRF human service program staff (Instrument 2):** Program administrators and facilitators from other non-HMRF human service programs that have not applied for HMRF funding, but who work with Indigenous participants.
- **Program participants (Instrument 3):** Program participants at both HMRF and non-HMRF programs serving Indigenous communities.
- **Young adult participants (Instrument 4):** Young adult participants, ages 18-24, who have participated or are participated in HMRF or non-HMRF programs serving Indigenous communities will be invited to participate in photovoice activities.
- **Community members (Instrument 5):** Leaders and/or Elders in these Indigenous communities who have not participated in services in the selected site programs.

Respondent Recruitment and Site Selection

Sites that will be invited to participate in the I-HMRF project include two responsible fatherhood (RF) programs that serve Indigenous communities and four additional program sites that offer other non-HMRF human service programming in Indigenous communities. Because only two programs currently offer RF programs, both will be invited to participate, and the remaining invited sites will include other non-HMRF human service programs that serve Indigenous communities. Characteristics that will factor into site selection will include location (rural versus urban) and Tribal affiliation served to ensure a diverse range of programs. The research team will use non-probability, purposive sampling to identify participants. Because participants will be purposively selected, they will not be representative of the population of all Indigenous HMRF or non-HMRF programs.

To recruit data collection participants, we will use the following methods:

- **Program staff** will be recruited for focus groups or interviews based on their familiarity with the program's funding decisions and/or their familiarity with the services provided to Indigenous communities. For example, we would recruit program administrators who are familiar with why their program applied for HMRF funding.
- A convenience sample of **program participants** will be recruited to participate in focus groups and photovoice activities based on their exposure to the program's services and their interest and willingness to participate in the data collection. For example, the study team would ask program facilitators for help identifying a group of participants who have attended services frequently or long enough to speak to how their participation has shaped their concept of strong and healthy relationships.
- A convenience sample of **community members** will similarly be recruited to participate in talking circles based on their leadership role or status in the community. For example, the study team would work with program staff to identify respected Elders who could speak to the strength of community relationships and the needs of the community in the future.

B3. Design of Data Collection Instruments

Development of Data Collection Instruments

The instruments were designed in close partnership with the project's CWG and CORs to align with the project's research questions and need for culturally appropriate methods that revolve around storytelling and are human-centered. The instruments that have been collaboratively designed are

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purposefully broad to allow for flexibility across programs and respondents, as well as to streamline questions to only ask those that are necessary for the respondents.

B4. Collection of Data and Quality Control

Two study team members (one lead and one support) from Mathematica, the contractor for this work, will conduct data collection activities. All team members conducting and supporting data collection activities have experience conducting qualitative data collection in a diverse range of populations—including Indigenous communities—and have experience working with community-based organizations. All team members will receive training to ensure that sites are engaged in a consistent manner. With participant permission, in-person and virtual interviews, focus groups, and photovoice meaning-making discussions will be recorded, and a junior staff will take notes during all activities (especially talking circles, which will not be recorded). Lastly, to ensure quality and consistency, the team will meet frequently to discuss recruitment and data collection activities and troubleshoot issues as they arise.

To recruit data collection participants, the study team will work closely with site leaders to identify program staff, participants, and community members to invite. The study team will identify site leaders during the site recruitment phases to assist with navigating local approvals. These leaders will likely be program administrators and/or facilitators. We will ask these contacts if they are willing to reach out to other eligible program administrators, facilitators, participants, and members of the community to notify them of their eligibility to voluntarily participate. If the contact is willing to do so, the study team will provide email text that describes the opportunity and gives the study team's contact information for anyone who is interested in participating (see Attachment A, part A.6). By hearing about this opportunity from site staff, we hope that people are more trusting of the invitation and willing to participate. However, if the site contact prefers, the study team will send a similar email outreach based on lists provided by the site (Attachment A, parts A.1-A.5). The study team will also offer to provide flyers for site staff to print out or distribute if they would like to support the email outreach effort (Attachment B).

B5. Response Rates and Potential Nonresponse Bias

Response Rates

These qualitative data collection activities are not designed to produce statistically generalizable findings and participation is wholly at the respondent's discretion. Response rates will not be reported.

Nonresponse

As participants will not be randomly sampled and findings are not intended to be representative, non-response bias will not be calculated. Respondent demographics will be documented and reported in written materials associated with the data collection.

B6. Production of Estimates and Projections

Data collected for I-HMRF will support federal teams to help shape the design of future HMRF funding opportunities and learn more promising practices related to how to develop and administer HMRF programming in Indigenous communities. The data will not be used to generate population estimates for dissemination. Data collected will be used to inform the development of a public facing toolkit for practitioners. The data will not be used to generate population estimates, either for internal use or dissemination. Data is not intended to be archived. The study team will follow the guidelines laid out in the Department of Health and Human Service's [Privacy Act Regulations](#) with regards to the maintenance of records.

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B7. Data Handling and Analysis

No personally identifiable information will be given to anyone outside of the I-HMRF study team and ACF. We will separate PII from notes and other data. Typed notes and audio recordings will be stored on Mathematica's secure network, which is accessible only to the I-HMRF study team and destroyed upon completion of the study.

Data Analysis

This project will not employ complex analytical techniques on the instruments included in this information collection request. To analyze qualitative data, such as notes from the focus groups, interviews, photovoice meaning making discussion, and talking circle, we will use standard qualitative analysis techniques such as thematic identification. The team will anonymize the data during analysis, for instance, using site identification numbers and respondent descriptions during qualitative coding (for example, "Site 1: HMRF participant 001").

Data Use

The Mathematica study team will produce a final internal memo for ACF describing knowledge gained about common implementation challenges and solutions. The report will provide details about the design and general insights, lessons, and themes from conducting rapid cycle learning with HMRE programs to aid with interpretation. When necessary, results will be labeled as examples. The study team will destroy the data at the conclusion of the project after the data has been fully analyzed and summarized in final products. The study team will destroy the data at the conclusion of the project after the data has been fully analyzed and summarized in final products.

The study team will also design a public toolkit to elevate lessons learned and promising practices for providing HMRF and other human services in Indigenous communities. These could include methods for making existing services more culturally congruent or recommendations for overcoming common barriers. Lessons learned may also be incorporated into public materials, such as presentations, contextual reports, or other similar efforts.

In sharing findings for any products developed, we will describe the study methods and limitations to generalizability and as a basis for policy.

B8. Contact Persons

- Lauren Tingey, Mathematica, project director, LTingey@mathematica-mpr.com
- Aleta Meyer, OPRE, contracting officer's representative, Aleta.Meyer@ACF.hhs.gov
- Kathleen McCoy, OPRE, contracting officer's representative, Kathleen.Mccoy@acf.hhs.gov

Attachments

Instrument 1 – I-HMRF: HMRF Administrator and Facilitator Focus Group Protocol

Instrument 2 – I-HMRF: Non-HMRF Administrator and Facilitator Interview Protocol

Instrument 3 – I-HMRF: HMRF and non-HMRF Participant Focus Group Protocol

Instrument 4 – I-HMRF: HMRF and non-HMRF Young Adult Participant Photovoice Guide

Instrument 5 – I-HMRF: Community Members Talking Circle

Attachment A – I-HMRF Recruitment Notifications

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Attachment B – I-HMRF Site Recruitment Flyer