Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Local Evaluation Technical Assistance (HMRF-LETA)

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Family Assistance (OFA) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services seeks approval for two technical assistance (TA) tools: an Evaluation Plan Template and a Benchmark Tracking Form. This information collection supports the provision of targeted evaluation TA to Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) grantees conducting local evaluations.

Background

OFA has funded HMRF grantees since 2006 to promote healthy marriage and relationships, responsible fatherhood, and economic stability among adults and youth ages 14-24 nationwide. These programs advance OFA's mission to promote stable, economically secure households and communities that support the long-term well-being of children and families. In September 2025, ACF awarded five-year grants to 108 recipients in 38 states and 1 territory to implement HMRF programs. A subset of these grantees will work with independent evaluators to design and implement local evaluations that answer grantee-generated research questions, contribute to the broader evidence base for HMRF programs, and support ACF's learning agenda. In 2025, ACF also contracted with MEF Associates and its subcontractor MDRC to serve as the Local Evaluation Technical Assistance (LETA) team, providing evaluation support to HMRF grantees and their local evaluators. The LETA team will deliver group-based and individualized evaluation TA to help grantees plan and conduct rigorous local evaluations.

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Use

The purpose of this information collection is to support HMRF grantees and their local evaluators in planning and conducting local evaluations. The goal is to ensure local evaluations are rigorous. The **Evaluation Plan Template** provides grantees and their local evaluators with a systematic, comprehensive approach to documenting key components of their evaluation plans, while enabling the LETA team to provide feedback to help grantees fine-tune evaluations to be as rigorous as possible. This will help grantees and local evaluators develop evaluation plans that are rigorous, can draw well-founded causal inferences (internal validity), specify the populations and settings to which findings apply (external validity), and use reliable and valid measures.

After the evaluations launch, the LETA team will use the **Benchmark Tracking Form** to collect standardized information on grantees' progress toward reaching the benchmarks specified in their evaluation plan (e.g., evaluation enrollment goals, survey response rates, number of interviews conducted). The LETA team and OFA will use this information to monitor grantee progress and develop relevant, responsive evaluation TA, allowing challenges to be identified and addressed before they affect evaluation quality.

Information collected through these TA tools is intended to inform ACF activities and may be incorporated into documents or presentations made available to the public. Examples of products through which this information may be shared include project descriptions, special topics briefs, and conference presentations that highlight lessons learned from HMRF local evaluation planning and implementation. These products are intended for practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and funders in the HMRF field. In sharing any findings, the LETA team will describe relevant methods and limitations.

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- Delivery of TA and/or workflows related to evaluation implementation or the development or refinement of grant recipients' local evaluation processes.
- Planning for provision of evaluation-related training or TA.

The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

Processes for Information Collection

Grantees will be asked to complete the template and form using the following processes:

- **Evaluation Plan Template.** The LETA team will send an initial outreach email to grantees and their evaluators with information about completing the template. With the support of their local evaluators, each grantee will complete the template to document key evaluation components, including research designs and questions, evaluation enrollment and data collection plans, and data analysis methods, among others. They will use the instructions and resources provided in each section of the template as guidance, and they will receive a reminder email to ensure timely completion. Grantees will be able to draw from information they have already drafted as a part of their application for supplemental local evaluation funding. Once drafted, the LETA team will review and provide feedback to help grantees strengthen their evaluation plans.
- **Benchmark Tracking Form.** Prior to individualized TA calls with the LETA team, grantees will complete this standardized form using the instructions on the form as guidance. After grantees complete the form, the LETA team will review the data to identify grantee progress on evaluation benchmarks and provide targeted TA to address any potential challenges.

Data Collection Activity	*Instruments*	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
Documentation of grantee evaluation plans	Evaluation Plan Template	**Respondents**: HMRF grantees with the support of their contracted local evaluator(s). **Content**: Key components of their planned local evaluation, including research questions, data collection plans, and analytic methodology. **Purpose**: To support grantees in developing rigorous local evaluation plans.	**Mode**: Written responses in a template (Word Document) **Duration**: 12 hours to complete and revise plan, as needed (see A12 for detailed burden estimates)

Documentation of grantee progress on evaluation benchmarks	Benchmark Tracking Form	**Respondents**: HMRF grantees with the support of their contracted local evaluator(s). **Content**: Key evaluation benchmarks, such as evaluation enrollment and survey response rates. **Purpose**: To support the LETA team and OFA in monitoring grantees' progress on evaluation benchmarks.	**Mode**: Written responses in a form (Microsoft Form) **Duration**: On average, 8 minutes per submission, submitted monthly in Year 2 and quarterly in Years 3-5.

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

ACF and its contractors (MEF Associates and MDRC) will employ information technology as appropriate to reduce the burden of respondents who agree to participate. This data collection effort will use electronic templates and forms for completion, electronic submission, and emails for communication. Using electronic templates and forms allows grantees to complete and submit their Evaluation Plan Template and Benchmark Tracking Form at their convenience, without the need for paper-based processes or in-person submission. The Benchmark Tracking Form uses a standardized format with clear instructions and skip logic, so grantees can complete it efficiently. Email communications will allow the LETA team and Family Assistance Program Specialists to reach grantees and their evaluators efficiently with information about completing the template, submission reminders, and approval notifications.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

There are no other sources of information that would allow us to effectively support HMRF grantees and their local evaluators in planning and conducting local evaluations. No unnecessary information is being requested. The templates were based on preexisting templates and forms used by the government for other contracts and were modified accordingly to improve the utility and efficiency of the government's review of the completed template and form.[1] Additionally, the grantees will be encouraged to build on their supplemental application for local evaluation funding in order to complete the Evaluation Plan Template.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

The potential exists for data collection activities to affect small entities since HMRF local evaluations may be conducted by local evaluators affiliated with small organizations. This information collection is designed to minimize the burden on all organizations involved, including small organizations, by collecting only critical information, using standardized templates, allowing electronic submission, and designing instruments that allow grantees to draw on information already submitted in their grant and supplemental applications. The burden estimates in A12 apply equally to all respondents regardless of organization size, and no additional reporting is required beyond what is described in A2.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

[1] We used the following pre-existing templates and forms: Strengthening the Implementation of Responsible Fatherhood Programs (SIRF) Evaluation Plan Template – 2020 (0970-0356) and Strengthening the Implementation of Marriage and Relationship Programs (SIMR) Evaluation Plan Template – 2020 (0970-0356).

- **Evaluation Plan Template:** All grantees will need to complete the Evaluation Plan Template before launching their evaluations. Grantees will likely need to revise this template at least once based on feedback from the LETA team and ACF. Grantees may also need to periodically update the template during grant Years 2 through 5 to document any changes to the approved design. If grantees do not complete the template as described, the LETA team will not be able to have a clear sense of how to provide TA to grantees while developing their evaluation designs. This step is critical in helping grantees develop rigorous local evaluations.

- **Benchmark Tracking Form:** Grantees will submit the Benchmark Tracking Form on the schedule described in the data collection table in A2. If grantees do not submit the form as scheduled, the LETA team and ACF will not have timely information needed to monitor grantee progress on local evaluations or provide targeted TA.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of this information collection request to extend approval of the umbrella generic with minor changes. The notice was published on April 28, 2025, (90 FR 17603), and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any comments on the first notice. A second notice was published, allowing a thirty-day period for public comment (90 FR 42248), in conjunction with the submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Outside Experts

No consultations have taken place with experts outside of the LETA team pertaining to this information collection.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation for Respondents

No tokens of appreciation for respondents are proposed for this information collection.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Personally Identifiable Information

- **Evaluation Plan Template**: The Evaluation Plan Template asks grantees to identify staff responsible for each evaluation activity. This information is used to (1) verify evaluator independence by identifying any overlap between program delivery staff and evaluation staff, and (2) confirm that named staff are in place to carry out each key evaluation activity.

- **Benchmark Tracking Form:** The Benchmark Tracking Form will collect the name of the individual completing the form to facilitate follow-up or questions, if needed.

Information will not be maintained in a paper or electronic system from which data are actually or directly retrieved by an individual's personal identifier.

Assurances of Privacy

MEF Associates will follow all applicable laws and regulations to protect the privacy of individuals whose data are collected. Grantees and local evaluators will be informed of all planned uses of data and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

Data Security and Monitoring

MEF Associates will follow all applicable laws and regulations to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of project data through appropriate data security and monitoring practices. This includes implementing technical, physical, and administrative safeguards for the protection of all project data and compliance with federal rules and regulations, as well as ongoing oversight to ensure compliance with data protection requirements. MEF Associates shall ensure that all staff and subcontractors at all tiers who perform work under this contract complete required privacy and security trainings and comply with the above requirements.

Grantees will submit their completed evaluation plan via email and Benchmark Tracking Form via Microsoft Forms. Both will be saved in secure project folders.

Information collected through the Evaluation Plan Template and Benchmark Tracking Form is intended primarily for internal use by the LETA team and ACF to provide targeted evaluation TA and monitor grantee progress. However, information may also be incorporated into publicly available documents or presentations, such as project descriptions, special topics briefs, and conference presentations that highlight lessons learned from HMRF local evaluation planning and implementation. Any information used in external products will be presented in aggregate or summary form. Grantees and local evaluators will be informed of all planned uses of their information.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Burden Estimates

The information collection materials are designed to minimize respondent burden, as described in A3. Annual reporting burden is calculated based on these design features, as shown in the burden table below. The assumptions underlying the table are as follows:

- **Evaluation Plan Template**: A maximum of 32 HMRF grantees will complete the Evaluation Plan Template. We estimate that each grantee will need approximately 12 hours to complete the template (10 hours for the first draft and 2 hours for revisions).

- **Benchmark Tracking Form**: A maximum of 32 HMRF grantees will complete the Benchmark Tracking Form. We estimate that each grantee will need, on average, 8 minutes to complete the form per submission. The submission schedule is described in the data collection table in A2. The form uses branching logic to display only the questions relevant to each grantee's approved evaluation design type.

Cost Estimates

The cost to respondents was calculated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) job code for Social and Community Service Managers [11-9151] and wage data from May 2025, which is $42.73 per hour. To account for fringe benefits and overhead the rate was multiplied by two, resulting in an hourly rate of $85.46. https://data.bls.gov/oesprofile/?major_group=110000&occupation=119151&measure=01&areas=INDUSTRY,STATE,MSA

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Total Annual Cost
Evaluation Plan Template	32	1	12	384	$85.46	$32,816.64
Benchmark Tracking Form (Monthly in Y2 and Quarterly in Y3-Y5)	32	24	0.13	99.84	$85.46	$8,532.33
Total Burden and Cost Estimates:				483.84		$41,348.97

Average burden hours per response for the Benchmark Tracking Form (0.13) reflect 8 minutes per submission rounded to two decimal places. Total burden hours are calculated using the rounded figure.

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be $41,348.97.

A15. Change in Burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531).

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

- **Evaluation Plan Template:** Following OMB approval and ACF's selection of HMRF grantees for local evaluation funding, the LETA team plans to distribute the template at the end of July 2026 using the initial outreach email. Grantees will receive a reminder email in mid-August 2026 and will submit a draft evaluation plan by the end of August 2026. They will revise their evaluation plans based on LETA team feedback, aiming to have a complete, rigorous evaluation design plan by the end of September 2026.

- **Benchmark Tracking Form:** The LETA team will distribute the Benchmark Tracking Form monthly in grant Year 2 (beginning after evaluation plans are approved) and quarterly in grant Years 3 through 5.

Information collected through these TA tools is primarily intended to inform targeted evaluation TA. However, it may be incorporated into publicly available documents or presentations, such as project descriptions, special topics briefs, and conference presentations that share findings from HMRF local evaluation planning and implementation. These products are intended for practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and funders in the HMRF field. The LETA team will describe relevant methods and limitations when sharing any findings.

The umbrella generic currently has an expiration date of September 30, 2028. When ACF requests an extension for the umbrella generic, we will include this information collection in that request to extend approval and cover data collection in Grant Year 5.

A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

- Instrument 1: HMRFLETA Evaluation Plan Template
- Instrument 2: HMRFLETA Evaluation Benchmark Tracking Form
- Attachment A: HMRFLETA Evaluation Plan Example Emails