

CLIENT EVALUATION OF LFA SERVICES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CLIENT EVALUATION OF LFA SERVICES

In April 2015, LFA contracted with an independent evaluator to conduct a seventh evaluation of its consulting services. An on-line Client Evaluation Survey was sent to 78 individuals whose organizations engaged the services of LFA in the past two years. A total of 52 clients (67%) completed the on-line survey.

FINDINGS

The following tables summarize clients' evaluation of LFA's services and staff.

Evaluation of LFA Services and Staff	Percent "Very Satisfied" "Strongly Agree" or "Satisfied" "Agree"
Overall quality of work (n=51) *	100.0%
Communication skills (n=51)	
Knowledge and expertise (n=51)	
Creativity and flexibility (n=51)	
Answered key questions/attained goals for the study (n=23)	
Contributed to clear strategic direction (n=26)	
Answered questions about program improvement (n=35)	
Interactions with LFA administrative/operations staff (n=45)	
Increased organization's skills, knowledge, and/or systems (n=44)	
Responsiveness and follow through (n=51)	
Work products and documentation (n=51)	
Understanding of organization's needs (n=51)	
Project direction and leadership (n=49)	
Project coordination and management (n=49)	97.7%
Contributed to effectiveness of our work (n=43)	
Answered questions about outcome/program effectiveness (n=30)	96.7%
Timeliness of project completion (n=50)	96.0%
Contributed to the sustainability of our work (n=35)	91.4%
Improved ability to use data to inform decisions (n=44)	88.6%
Increased our capacity to measure impact (n=44)	

*Respondents who marked "NA/No Opinion" are not included.

We value the work of LFA in making our organization more effective and influential in the policy arena.

*Mark Baldassare, President
Public Policy Institute of California*

LFA did an amazing job getting our entire organization (from SF to Bhutan) excited to learn how to implement a formal M&E system. Our team was comprised of big-picture, strategic thinkers but was also happy to get down in the weeds (almost literally) to make sure that every detail was perfect. They made this process enjoyable and educational for everyone and have built the capacity of our organization to take this work forward. It has been a pleasure working with them and I consider them to be trusted strategic advisors.

*Tina Sciabica, Executive Director
READ Global*

LFA ... has been and continues to be a crucial partner in PropelNext's work. PropelNext ... works with LFA as we strive to help promising nonprofits enhance their ability to collect, use and apply data for ongoing learning and improvement. As a result, our grantees are now able to deliver even stronger results for disadvantaged youth. We have thoroughly enjoyed working with ... LFA and look forward to our continued partnership.

*Lisette Rodriguez, Managing Director
PropelNext EMCF*

LFA's evaluation has been well planned and executed and also the team has been extremely responsive and creative in identifying alternative strategies to strengthen our approach.

*Tom Kelly, Vice President
Hawaii Community Foundation*

The results of LFA's seventh Client Evaluation Survey present a picture of clients who are highly satisfied with most aspects of the work they undertook with LFA. 2015 clients especially noted the responsiveness and follow through, communication skills, knowledge and expertise, and creativity and flexibility of LFA staff members. Clients were also impressed with the timeliness of LFA staff and projects, and with their interactions with administrative and operations staff. Furthermore, clients pointed to the clear impact that their engagement with LFA had on their ability to use data to document program effectiveness, and to make the case to funders for ongoing support. A comparison of surveys conducted in previous years shows that levels of general client satisfaction increased or remained the same in 13 of 20 measures since 2012.

While satisfaction with LFA staff, projects and results in general, and projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects is very high, satisfaction with the impact of the engagement with LFA is significantly less high. The two broad areas that LFA can focus on to improve client satisfaction are: 1) increasing the impact of engagement with LFA; and 2) increasing staffing, particularly senior level staff, to provide more engagement and commitment to projects.

The results of LFA's seventh Client Evaluation Survey reflect an organization that is a valued contributor and partner to its clients. An impressive 98% of clients surveyed indicated that they would recommend LFA's services to a colleague, and 96% indicated that they would hire LFA again.

EVALUATION REPORT

CLIENT EVALUATION OF LFA SERVICES

INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

In April 2015, LFA sponsored a seventh evaluation of its consulting services. The goal of the evaluation was to gather feedback from former clients in order to improve its services. This feedback was gathered using a Client Evaluation Survey, developed by LFA. The survey was posted on an online survey website and emails were sent to 78 individuals whose organizations had engaged the services of LFA during the past year. Respondents were asked to complete the survey online. Leslie Bell, an independent evaluator, conducted an analysis of the survey results, and compared the results of these surveys to that of LFA Client Satisfaction surveys conducted in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2012. This report presents the findings of the evaluation.

FINDINGS

2015 Survey Results

The Client Evaluation Survey consisted of four main sections: 1) Satisfaction with LFA's work; 2) Satisfaction with the LFA project team and administrative staff; 3) Impact of engagement with LFA and team; and 4) Overall satisfaction with LFA. Within the third section, there was a subset of questions for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects that I will address separately from impact of engagement with the LFA and team. A total of 52 people returned completed surveys for a response rate of 67%. Of the 52 respondents, 24 were in contract with LFA at the time they completed the survey.

Satisfaction with LFA's work

The first section of the survey focused on clients' levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their organization's project work with LFA, including project coordination and management, project direction and leadership, work products and documentation, timeliness of project completion, overall quality of the work, and the extent to which LFA contributed to an increase in the organization's skills, knowledge and/or systems. Respondents rated their level of satisfaction on a four-point scale: 1) very dissatisfied, 2) dissatisfied, 3) satisfied, and 4) very satisfied.

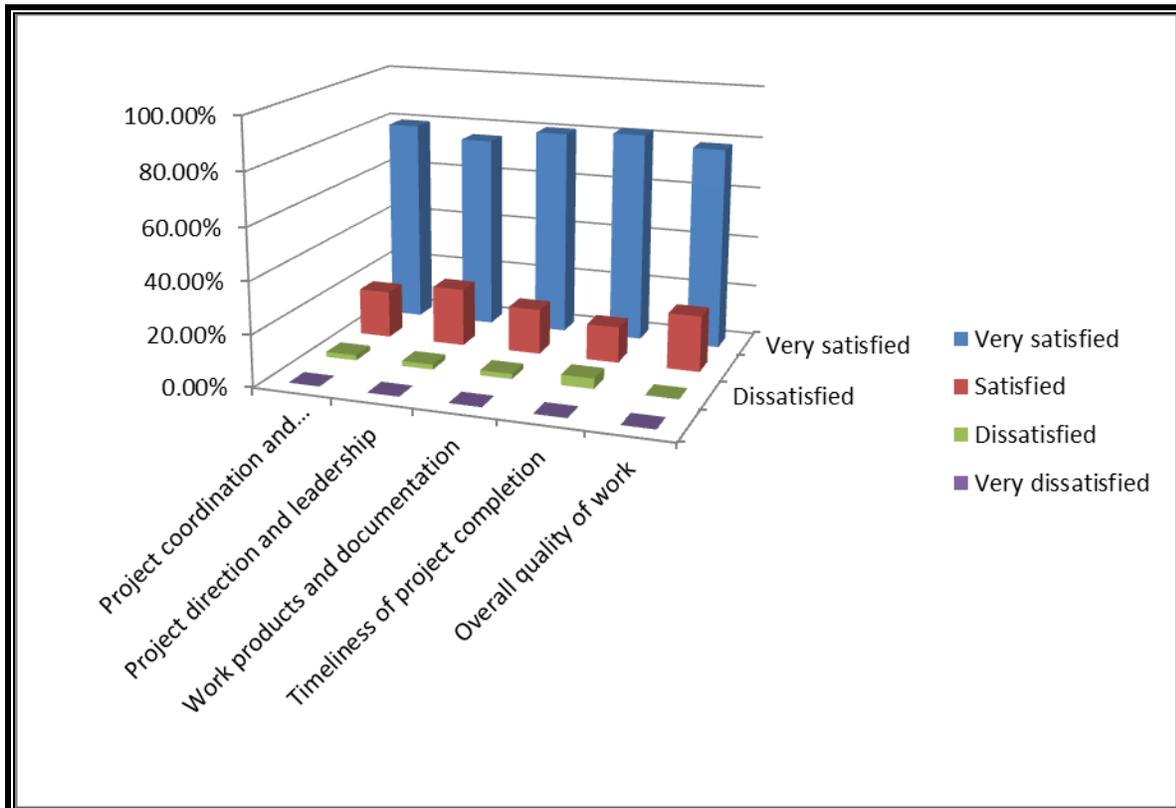
Overall, the majority of respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with LFA projects and results. Clients were particularly impressed with timeliness of project completion, work products and documentation, and project coordination and management. The following table and graph report client satisfaction with measured aspects of LFA projects and results for all projects.

Table 1. Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results

	Project coordination and management (n=49)*	Project direction and leadership (n=49)	Work products and documentation (n=51)	Timeliness of project completion (n=50)	Overall quality of work (n=51)
Very satisfied	79.6%	75.5%	80.4%	82.0%	78.4%
Satisfied	18.4%	22.5%	17.6%	14.0%	21.6%
Dissatisfied	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Very dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*Respondents who marked “Not Applicable/No Opinion” are not included.

Figure 1: Comparative Graph of Satisfaction with Aspects of LFA Projects and Results



All clients were either very satisfied or satisfied with overall quality of work. No clients reported strong dissatisfaction with any aspect of LFA projects and results. Out of 50, two (4.0%) reported dissatisfaction with timeliness of project completion; out of 51 respondents, one (2.0%) reported dissatisfaction with work products and documentation; out of 49 respondents, one (2.0%) reported dissatisfaction with project direction and leadership; and out of 49 respondents, one (2.0%) reported dissatisfaction with project coordination and management. Overall, satisfaction with project direction and leadership (75.5% very satisfied), is somewhat

lower than is satisfaction with overall quality of work (78.4% very satisfied), project coordination and management (79.6% very satisfied) and work products and documentation (80.4% very satisfied).

Satisfaction with the LFA project team and administrative/operations staff

The second section of the survey examined clients' satisfaction with the LFA team members who worked with their organizations on their projects. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with LFA team members' communication skills, knowledge and expertise, ability to understand the needs of the organization, creativity and flexibility, responsiveness and follow-through, and with interactions with administrative and operations staff. The same four-point rating scale was used in this section.

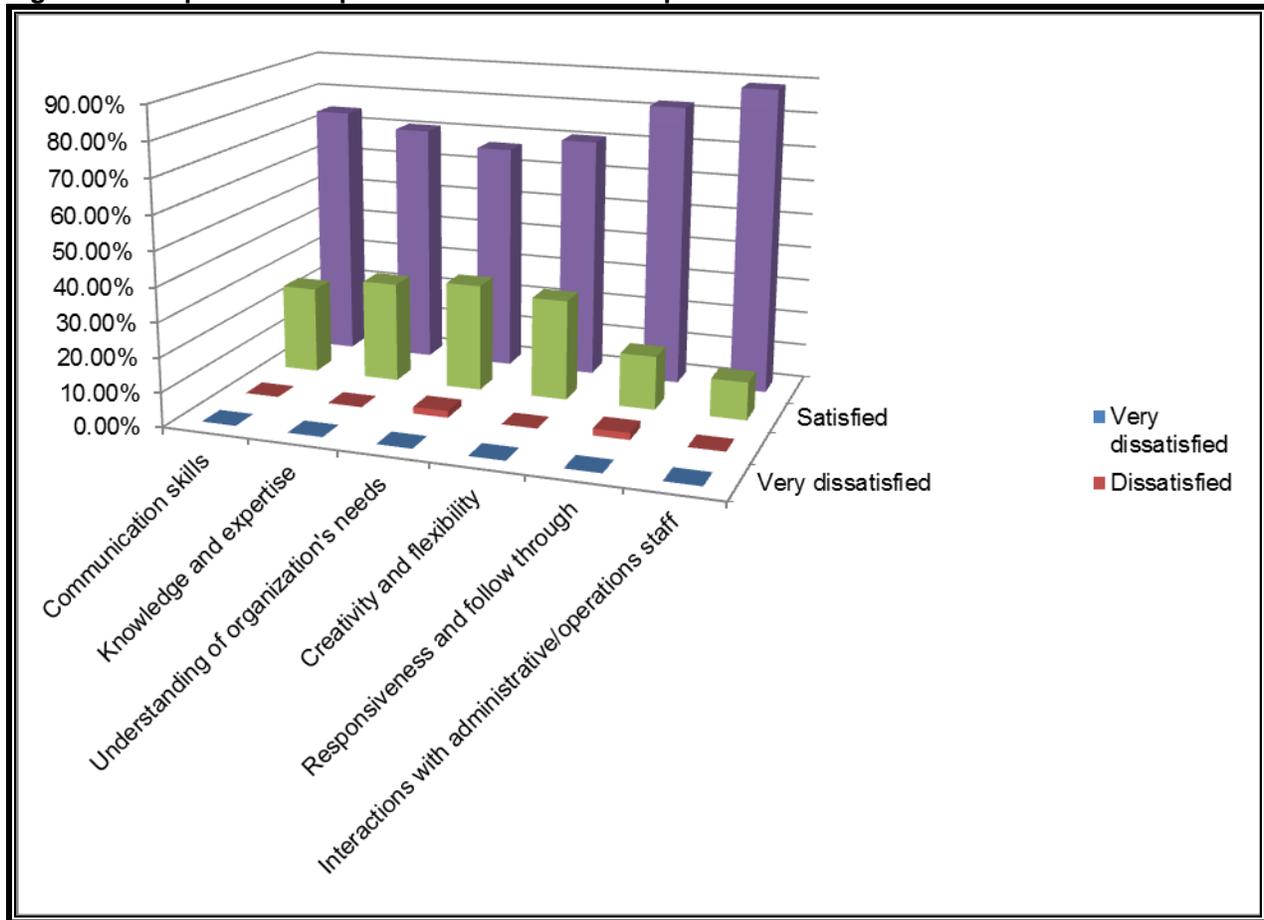
As with the findings regarding satisfaction with the overall project results, respondents generally reported high levels of satisfaction with LFA team members. Clients were consistently very satisfied with interactions with administrative/operations staff and with LFA staff's responsiveness and follow through, and they were consistently very satisfied or satisfied with LFA staff's communication skills, knowledge and expertise, creativity and flexibility, and understanding of organization's needs. The following table and graph report client satisfaction with all measured aspects of LFA projects and results.

Table 2. Satisfaction with LFA Project and Administrative Team

	Communication skills (n=51)*	Knowledge & expertise (n=51)	Understanding of organization's needs (n=51)	Creativity & flexibility (n=51)	Responsiveness & follow through (n=51)	Interactions with administrative operations staff (n=45)
Very satisfied	74.5%	70.6%	66.6%	70.6%	82.3%	88.9%
Satisfied	25.5%	29.4%	31.4%	29.4%	15.7%	11.1%
Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*Respondents who marked "Not Applicable/No Opinion" are not included.

Figure 2: Comparative Graph of Satisfaction with Aspects of LFA Team



All clients were either very satisfied or satisfied with interactions with LFA administrative and operations staff. No client reported strong dissatisfaction with any aspect of interactions with LFA staff. Out of 52 respondents, one (2.0%) reported dissatisfaction with understanding of organization's needs. Overall, satisfaction with interactions with administrative/operations staff (88.9% very satisfied) and with LFA staff's responsiveness and follow through (82.3% very satisfied) is somewhat higher than is satisfaction with communication skills (74.5% very satisfied), knowledge and expertise (70.6% very satisfied), creativity and flexibility (70.6% very satisfied), and understanding of organization's needs (66.6% very satisfied).

Satisfaction with LFA projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects

The third section of the survey examined satisfaction with LFA's project work with evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the extent to which LFA: answered questions about program improvement for evaluations projects, answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness for evaluation projects, answered key questions/attained goals for research projects, and contributed to a clear strategic direction for strategic planning projects. The same four-point rating scale was used in this subsection.

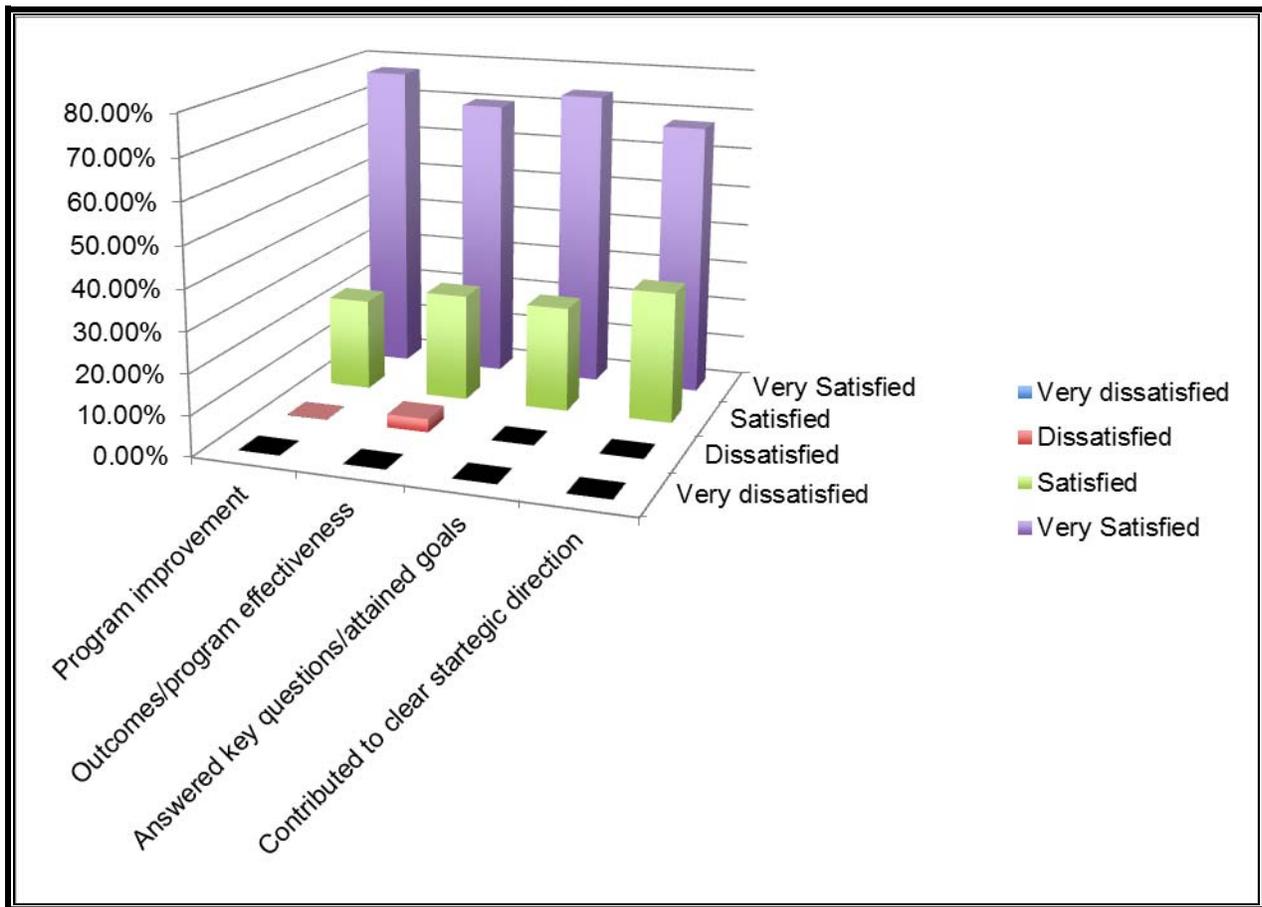
Overall, the majority of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with LFA projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects. Clients were particularly impressed with the degree to which LFA answered questions about program improvement and answered key questions/attained goals for the study. The following table and graph report client satisfaction with measured aspects of LFA projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects.

Table 3. Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects

	Answered questions about program improvement (n=35)*	Answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness (n=30)	Answered key questions/attained goals for the study (n=23)	Contributed to a clear strategic direction (n=26)
Very satisfied	77.1%	70.0%	73.9%	67.6%
Satisfied	22.9%	26.7%	26.1%	32.4%
Dissatisfied	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Very dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*Respondents who marked "Not Applicable/No Opinion" are not included.

Figure 3. Comparative Graph of Satisfaction with Aspects of LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects



All clients were either very satisfied or satisfied with the extent to which LFA’s evaluation answered their questions about program improvement, answered key questions and/or attained goals for the study, and with the extent to which the planning process with LFA contributed to a clear strategic direction. All but one client were either very satisfied or satisfied with the extent to which LFA’s evaluation answered their questions about outcomes and/or program effectiveness. Overall, satisfaction with all measures is consistently high, with 77.1% of respondents reporting being very satisfied with LFA’s ability to answer questions about program improvement, 73.9% reporting being very satisfied with LFA’s ability to answer key questions and/or attain goals for the study, 70.0% reporting being very satisfied with LFA’s ability to answer questions about outcomes or program effectiveness, and 67.6% reporting being very satisfied with LFA’s ability to contribute to a clear strategic direction.

Impact of engagement with LFA and team

The fourth section of the survey examined the impact of engagement with the LFA and team. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the following statements: Our work with LFA increased our organization’s skills, knowledge, and/or systems; Our work with LFA helped increase the capacity of our organization to measure our impact; Our work with LFA improved our organization’s ability to use data to inform our decisions; Our work

with LFA contributed to the effectiveness of our work; and Our work with LFA contributed to the sustainability of our work. Respondents rated their level of agreement on a four-point scale: 1) strongly disagree 2) disagree, 3) agree, and 4) strongly agree.

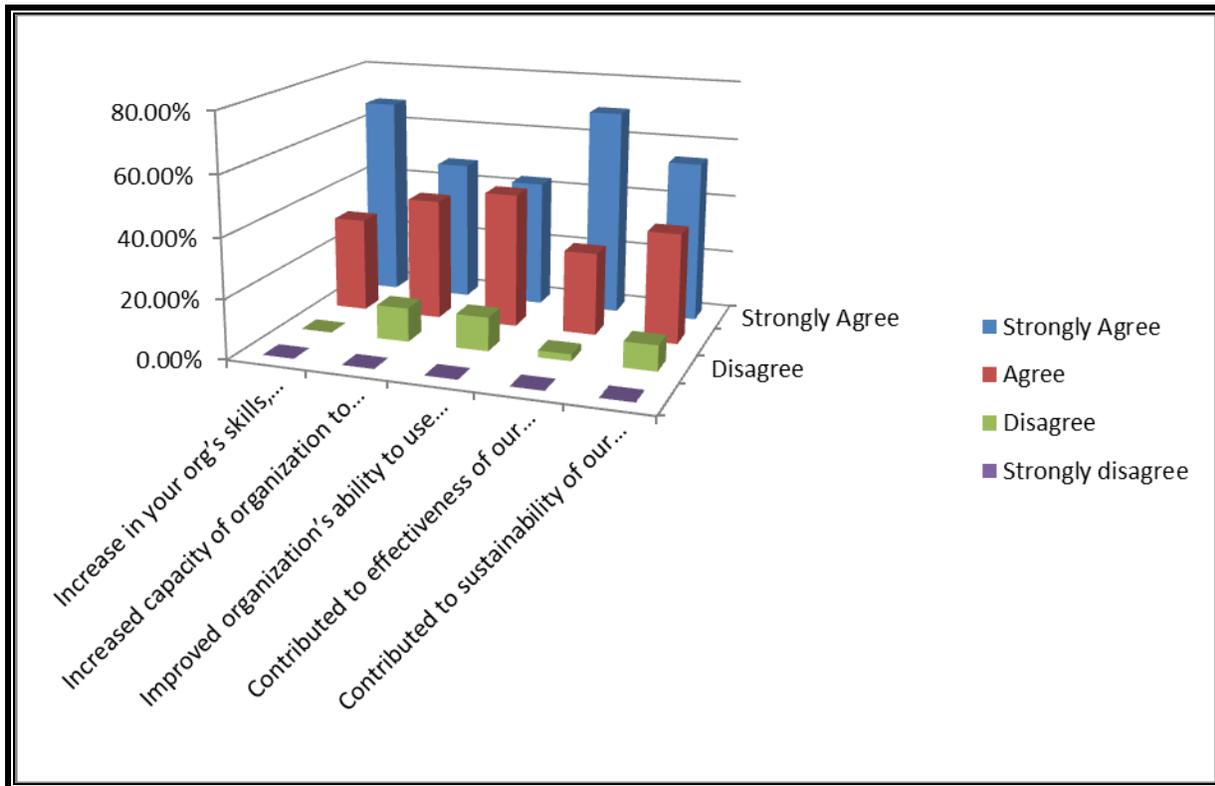
As with the findings regarding satisfaction with the overall project results, respondents generally reported high levels of agreement with the degree of impact that engagement with LFA had on their organization. Clients consistently strongly agreed or agreed that their work with LFA: increased their organization’s skills, knowledge, and/or systems; contributed to the effectiveness of their work; contributed to the sustainability of their work; increased the capacity of their organization to measure their impact; and improved their organization’s ability to use data to inform decisions. The following table and graph report the impact of engagement with LFA and team.

Table 4. Impact of engagement with LFA and team

	Increase in your org’s skills, knowledge, systems (n=47) *	Increased capacity of organization to measure our impact (n=44)	Improved organization’s ability to use data to inform decisions (n=44)	Contributed to effectiveness of our work (n=43)	Contributed to sustainability of our work (n=35)
Strongly Agree	68.1%	47.7%	43.2%	69.8%	54.3%
Agree	31.9%	40.9%	45.4%	27.9%	37.1%
Disagree	0.0%	11.4%	11.4%	2.3%	8.6%
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

*Respondents who marked “Not Applicable/No Opinion” are not included.

Figure 4: Comparative Graph of Impact of engagement with LFA and team – redo



A substantial majority of clients either agreed or strongly agreed about the impact of their engagement with LFA. 100.0% were either very satisfied or satisfied with the extent to which LFA services increased their organization’s skills, knowledge, and/or systems. 97.7% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Our work with LFA contributed to the effectiveness of our work.” 91.4% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Our work with LFA contributed to the sustainability of our work.” 88.6% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Our work with LFA helped increased the capacity of our organization to measure our impact.” And 88.6% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Our work with LFA improved our organization’s ability to use data to inform decisions.” No clients reported strong disagreement about the impact of their engagement with LFA and team. Out of 35-44 respondents (numbers vary widely because many respondents marked that it was “too soon to tell”), one (2.3%) disagreed with LFA’s impact on the effectiveness of their work, three (8.6%) disagreed with LFA’s impact on the sustainability of their work, five (11.4%) disagreed with LFA’s impact on the capacity of their organization to measure their impact, and five (11.4%) disagreed with LFA’s impact on their ability to use data to inform decisions. Overall, respondents agreed more strongly with LFA’s impact on the effectiveness of their work (69.8%) and with LFA’s impact on their organization’s skills, knowledge, and/or systems (68.1%) than they did with LFA’s impact on other aspects of their work.

In two open ended questions on the impact of engagement with LFA and team, respondents were asked to comment on the changes in their organization or program that occurred as a result of their engagement with LFA, and to offer suggestions for what LFA consultants could do to increase their organization’s ability to use and implement the results of the engagement.

43 respondents detailed important changes that resulted from engagement with LFA. The full text of these responses is included in the appendix. A substantial number of responses (14) had to do with the organization's capacity to use data to document program effectiveness and to make the case to funders for ongoing support. Representative comments on the impact that engagement with LFA had on documenting program effectiveness and ensuring ongoing support from funders include:

LFA helped us maintain good funder relationships and track the impact of our program for a high-stakes grant. We could not have navigated evaluation without them.

The evaluation findings are helping to ground the investments and give the program legitimacy with leaders so will help us move into the future.

We finally have data proving that our model produces measurable outcomes and we are proud to share that data with funders and potential funders.

A significant number of responses (6) addressed the impact of engagement with LFA on strategic planning for maximum impact. Representative comments include:

We now have a completed, workable strategic plan, in large part due to LFA leadership in getting us started on the path.

The most important result of the work with LFA was the strategic framework that LFA helped us develop.

A final set of responses (3) had to do with the impact of LFA's engagement on the organization's ability to think differently about change, action, and impact. Representative comments include:

[The work with LFA has] given us a better idea of what constitutes success for this program area and will allow for better measurement in the future.

I have a clearly articulated theory of change that helps me better communicate what success looks like.

A smaller set of responses (2) highlighted the role that LFA played as a catalyst for difficult conversations and internal changes. Representative comments include:

LFA was critical for our organization to uncover and face deep issues that had plagued the organization and created a sense of "being stuck."

Difficult conversations that needed to take place occurred. The participatory process of involving all staff was excellent. It gave everyone an opportunity to feel included and it validated their concerns.

35 respondents answered the open-ended question about what LFA could do to increase their organization's ability to use/implement the results of engagement. The full text of these open-ended responses is included in the appendix. 18 of these responses indicated that it was "too soon to tell" or that they had "no suggestions." Of the remaining 17 responses, six indicated that they wanted increased follow up and facilitated conversations. Representative comments include:

I think more ... facilitated conversations about "what it means" once evaluation results come in, would be wonderful.

[I] would like the opportunity for quarterly follow up sessions in year one and semi-annually in years 2-3. These would be opportunities to “check in” about implementation and refine the plan accordingly.

Seven respondents suggested additional assistance from LFA in how to understand and use data. Representative comments include:

Help us understand different types of evaluations, including the data and conclusions that (or are not) possible given various constraints.

We could have used more guidance about how to use the data ourselves. Even closed-door meetings with only program officers to explore what evaluation results really mean, could create significant change. It is very difficult for program officers to be open to evaluation data as it can sometimes reflect poorly on the portfolio overall. Helping them navigate this would be a huge asset to any evaluation.

Three respondents had suggestions about staffing – in terms of senior capacity, subject area expertise, and consistency.

Overall Satisfaction with LFA

The final section of the survey asked clients about their overall satisfaction with LFA. In this section, respondents were asked if they would recommend LFA’s services to colleagues and if they would hire LFA again. This final section also included four open-ended questions, allowing respondents to comment in their own words about their experiences working with LFA. While not all respondents chose to comment, those who did provided positive encouragement and helpful suggestions.

When asked if they would recommend LFA’s services to a colleague, an impressive 98% indicated that they would. Similarly, when asked if they would hire LFA again, 96% responded that they would.

In the open-ended questions, respondents were asked to comment on LFA’s strengths, provide any suggestions they might have for how LFA could improve its services, make any additional comments, and write in comments they felt comfortable sharing directly with LFA. Not surprisingly, the responses in this section reflect the strengths of LFA as reflected in the quantitative evaluations of the first four sections. The full text of open-ended feedback is included in the appendix.

An impressive 47 out of 51 (92%) commented on LFA’s strengths and had overwhelmingly positive perspectives on LFA and their working relationships. By far the most comments about LFA’s strengths address its excellent staff. Clients described LFA staff members as professional, responsive, flexible, expert, empathic, timely, creative, good listeners, knowledgeable, smart, committed, understanding, dedicated, smart, creative, attentive, competent, organized, thoughtful, adaptable, professional, non-judgmental, reliable, trustworthy, accountable, strategic, and engaging. One third of those commenting noted LFA staff members’ responsiveness. One quarter mentioned the substantial knowledge and expertise that the LFA staff brings to bear on their projects. Another one quarter commented on the communication skills of LFA team members. Representative comments on LFA’s staff strengths include:

Command of tools and measurements to achieve an appropriate and robust outcomes study. Great organization and follow-through. Excellent reports – very professional, both in content and aesthetically.

They know their business. Have great ideas and suggestions for improvement. Are very responsive. It is great to work with LFA.

Great team, stayed a step ahead of me in the process, helped to stretch our thinking, focused on learning not judging.

Listening to a variety of stakeholders, reflecting that back and distilling it down to the key issues.

When asked what LFA could do to improve its services, 33 out of the 51 respondents wrote in comments. Of these, nine had no suggestions. The remaining 24 suggestions focused on the need for consistently excellent and expert staff to provide increased feedback to clients and exercise leadership, greater area expertise among staff, timeliness, and clearer and more accessible written materials.

Seven respondents highlighted staffing as an area of improvement. Comments clustered in two areas: 1) need for more staff in order to provide more engagement and commitment, and 2) need for more senior level staff. Suggestions along these lines included:

The consultants seemed over-committed with other projects. Their work was high quality, but I wonder if we could have had stronger engagement and strong deliverables if the consultants weren't pulled in so many other directions.

LFA could build its capacity at the senior level and that would enable Steven to play more of a leadership role in specific engagements and also enable the diversification of contracts. I believe the organization is too reliant on Steven as a senior leader and not sure who else is available for engagements that require senior consultants.

Three clients mentioned a need for greater area expertise among staff. Suggestions included:

I think that more issue area expertise is sometimes needed – and could be brought from outside occasionally as it's very difficult to have the right issue experience in every field.

Three clients pointed to the need for greater timeliness. And two clients suggested that LFA offer more accessible and simpler writing. Some ideas include:

The LFA team is whip smart and can tend to create greater density and complication in both capacity building projects and in evaluations than is needed. Keeping things simple and straightforward for a lay audience, board members, grantees, community members, staff, etc. would really make a huge difference in the usability of evaluation data.

Confidential comments included nine positive and laudatory ones, and three with suggestions for improvement. These comments echoed those discussed above, focusing on a need for consistently excellent staff, improved project management, and increased quality in reports. Representative comments include:

I have the highest regard for LFA. They are extremely client centered and well worth the investment!

The quality of more junior staff inputs has been varied ... We did communicate dissatisfaction and have a new plan in place, where LFA is working with consultants whom we chose, to improve the indicators.

The constructive feedback suggesting areas that LFA could improve its services was rounded out by eleven additional non-confidential comments further applauding LFA's staff and services. Representative comments include:

I think that it's a credit to LFA that even across multiple teams and changes in the staff we've worked with LFA staff have always been up to speed on our history as an organization, the work we do, and the past work that LFA has helped us with. That matters to me and to the effectiveness of our projects. It's appreciated.

We value the work of LFA in making our organization more effective and influential in the policy arena.

LFA, under Steve LaFrance's leadership, has been and continues to be a crucial partner in PropelNext's work. PropelNext, an initiative of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, works with LFA as we strive to help promising nonprofits enhance their ability to collect, use, and apply data for ongoing learning and improvement. As a result, our grantees are now able to deliver even stronger results for disadvantaged youth.

It is clear that LFA is appreciated and highly regarded by its clients. A comparison of the results of this survey with previous years' survey results will allow us to contextualize these results within a trajectory of the company's history.

Comparisons with 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2012 Survey Results

The survey results for this year present a picture of clients highly satisfied with most aspects of the work they undertook with LFA. Thirteen of the twenty measures show that 98-100% of clients are either satisfied or very satisfied with LFA's services and staff. The remaining seven measures show that clients are mostly impressed with LFA, with between 88.6% and 97.7% of respondents reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with LFA services and staff.

Comparing these results with the results for the same survey conducted in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2012 shows consistently high levels of satisfaction in three categories (100%), increased satisfaction in ten categories (a difference of between 1.4 and 4.2 percentage points), and decreased satisfaction in seven categories (a difference of between .2 and 6.6 percentage points).

Table 5. Satisfaction with LFA Services and Staff over time

Assessment of LFA Services and Staff	Percent “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied”						
	2002 (n=24)*	2004 (n=39)*	2005 (n=30)*	2007 (n=44)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Extent to which LFA answered key questions/attained goals for the study	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.0%	100.0%	95.8%	100.0%
Extent to which LFA increased organization’s skills, knowledge and/or systems	100.0%	97.2%	96.7%	100.0%	93.1%	96.0%	100.0%
Extent to which LFA answered questions about program improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.0%	95.7%	97.3%	100.0%
Knowledge and expertise	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.2%	98.3%	100.0%
Communication skills	100.0%	100.0%	93.3%	97.7%	100.0%	98.3%	100.0%
Creativity and flexibility	100.0%	100.0%	93.3%	100.0%	100.0%	98.3%	100.0%
Extent to which LFA contributed to clear strategic direction	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Overall quality of work	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	97.6%	100.0%	100.0%
Interactions with admin/operations staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	100%
Responsiveness and follow through	95.5%	100.0%	96.7%	100.0%	97.6%	96.6%	98.0%
Understanding of organization’s needs	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	97.6%	96.6%	98.0%
Project coordination and management	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.6%	98.0%
Work products and documentation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	97.7%	97.6%	98.3%	98.0%
Project direction and leadership	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	98.2%	98.0%
Extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to effectiveness of our work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95.8%	97.7%
Extent to which LFA answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.3%
Timeliness of project completion	95.3%	100.0%	93.3%	100.0%	100.0%	98.3%	96.0%
Extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to sustainability of work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	97.0%	91.4%
Extent to which engagement with LFA increased capacity of org to measure impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95.2%	88.6%
Extent to which engagement with LFA improved org’s ability to use data to inform decisions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	90.9%	88.6%

*Respondents who marked “Not Applicable/No Opinion” are not included in the percentage totals.

Satisfaction has remained the same or increased since 2012 in: extent to which LFA contributed to clear strategic direction, extent to which engagement with LFA increased organization's skills, knowledge and/or systems, overall quality of work, interactions with administrative/operations staff, responsiveness and follow through, understanding of organization's needs, project coordination and management, knowledge and expertise, communication skills, creativity and flexibility, extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to effectiveness of our work, extent to which LFA answered questions about outcome/program effectiveness, extent to which LFA answered questions about program improvement, and extent to which LFA answered key questions/attained goals for the study. However, satisfaction has decreased slightly in: project direction and leadership, work products and documentation, timeliness of project completion, extent to which LFA answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness, extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to the sustainability of their work, and extent to which engagement with LFA increased the capacity of their organization to measure impact.

The number of responses marked "Dissatisfied" has decreased slightly since 2012, a total of 22 in 2015 versus 24 in 2012. The bulk of these dissatisfied responses (15) have to do with the following four areas: extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to the sustainability of their work; extent to which engagement with LFA improved the organization's ability to use data to inform decisions; extent to which engagement with LFA increased the capacity of the organization to measure impact, and timeliness of project completion. And while number of responses marked "Dissatisfied" has increased in five categories, it has decreased or remained the same in fifteen categories.

Table 6. Dissatisfaction with LFA Services and Staff over time

Assessment of LFA Services and Staff	Number of responses marked “Dissatisfied”						
	2002 (n=24) *	2004 (n=39)*	2005 (n=30)*	2007 (n=44)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Extent to which LFA increased organization's skills, knowledge and/or systems	0	1 (2.8%)	1 (3.3%)	0	2 (6.9%)	1 (1.7%)	0
Extent to which LFA answered key questions/attained goals for the study	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	1 (4.2%)	0
Knowledge and expertise	0	0	0	0	2 (4.8%)	1 (1.7%)	0
Extent to which LFA answered questions about program improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	1 (4.3%)	1 (2.7%)	0
Communication skills	0	0	2 (6.7%)	1 (2.3%)	0	1 (1.7%)	0
Creativity and flexibility	0	0	2 (6.7%)	0	0	1 (1.7%)	0
Overall quality of work	0	0	0	0	1 (2.4%)	0	0
Extent to which LFA contributed to clear strategic direction	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0
Interactions with admin/operations staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
Responsiveness and follow through	1 (4.5%)	0	1 (3.3%)	0	1 (2.5%)	2 (3.4%)	1 (2.0%)
Understanding of organization's needs	0	0	0	0	1 (2.4%)	2 (3.4%)	1 (2.0%)
Project coordination and management	0	0	0	0	0	2 (3.4%)	1 (2.0)
Extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to effectiveness of our work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 (4.3%)	1 (2.3%)
Work products and documentation	0	0	0	1 (2.3%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (2.0%)
Project direction and leadership	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 (1.7%)	1 (2.0%)
Extent to which LFA answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	1 (3.3%)
Timeliness of project completion	1 (4.8%)	1 (2.9%)	3 (10.0%)	0	0	1 (1.7%)	2 (4.0%)
Extent to which engagement with LFA contributed to sustainability of work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 (3.0%)	3 (8.6%)
Extent to which engagement with LFA improved org's ability to use data to inform decisions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4 (9.1%)	5 (11.4%)
Extent to which engagement with LFA increased capacity of org to measure impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2 (4.8%)	5 (11.4%)

*Respondents who marked “Not Applicable/No Opinion” are not included in the percentage totals.

When we look at the percentage of “very satisfied” responses, we see a trend toward higher client satisfaction from 2012. The first set of figures shows that the percentage of respondents who were “very satisfied” with all aspects of LFA projects and results has increased since 2012. The second set of figures shows that in assessments for all aspects of the LFA projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning, the percentage of respondents who were “very satisfied” has also increased.

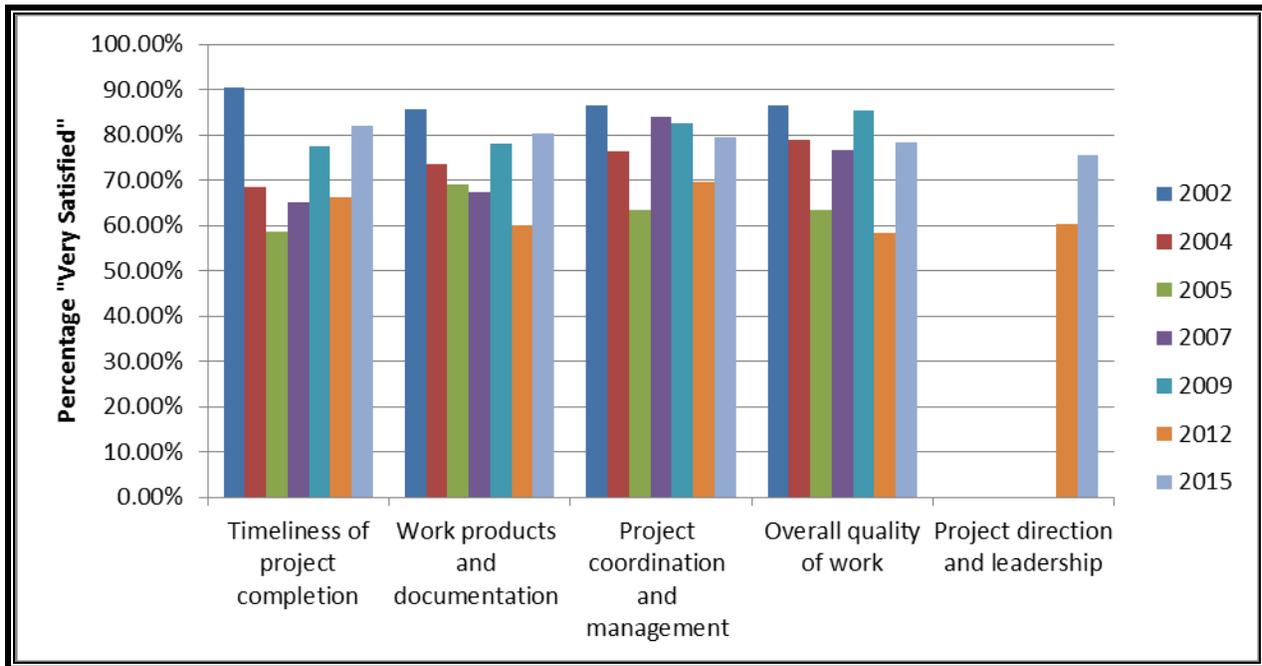
The first set of figures (table 7 and figure 5 below) depicts the levels of high satisfaction with different aspects of LFA projects and results over time. In most cases, high satisfaction levels have returned to 2009 and 2007 levels and have bounced back from considerably lower levels of high satisfaction in 2012.

Table 7. High Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results over time

Assessment of LFA Projects and Results	Percent “Very Satisfied”						
	2002 (n=24)*	2004 (n=39)*	2005 (n=30)*	2007 (n=44)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Timeliness of project completion	90.5%	68.6%	58.6%	65.1%	77.5%	66.1%	82.0%
Work products and documentation	85.7%	73.6%	69.0%	67.4%	78.1%	60.0%	80.4%
Project coordination and management	86.4%	76.4%	63.3%	84.1%	82.5%	69.5%	79.6%
Overall quality of work	86.4%	78.9%	63.3%	76.7%	85.4%	58.3%	78.4%
Project direction and leadership	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	60.3%	75.5%

*Respondents who marked “Not Applicable/No Opinion” are not included in the percentage totals.

Figure 5. High Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results over time



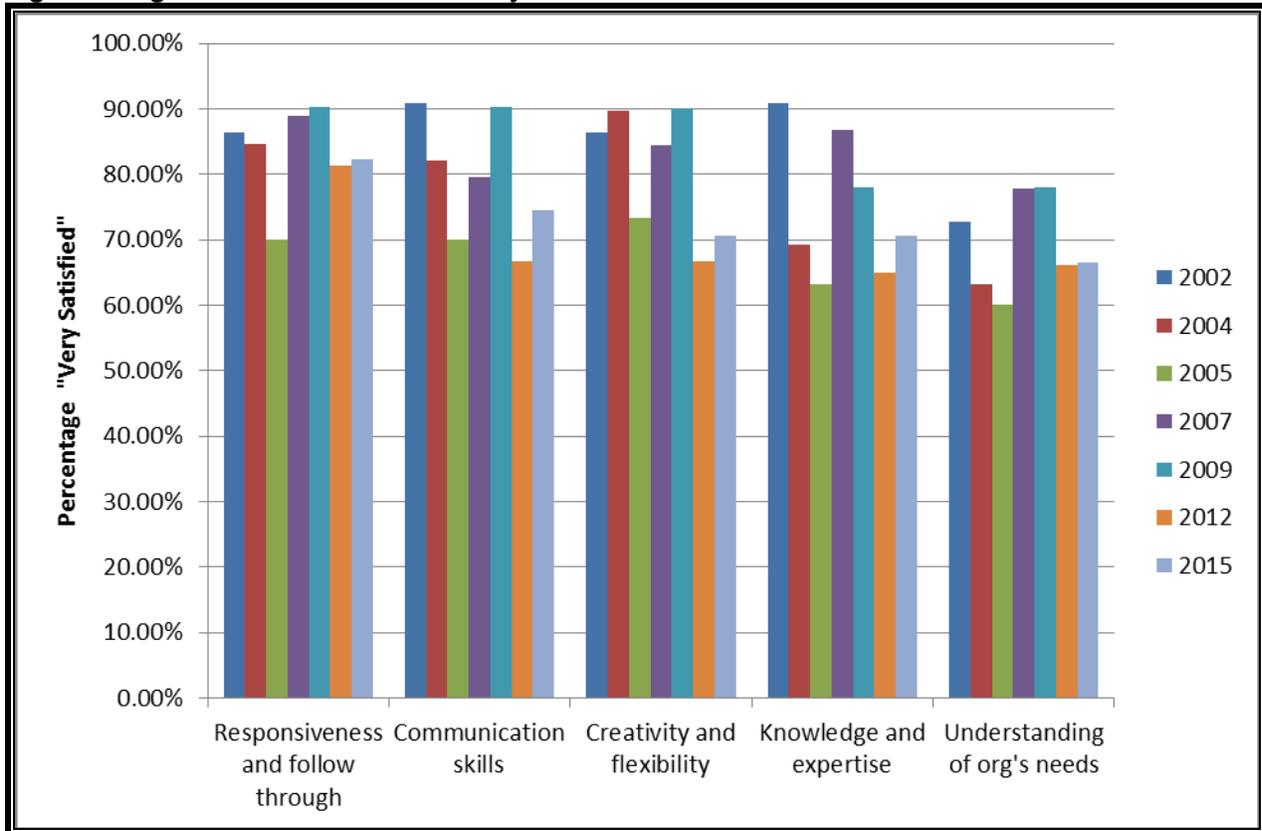
The second set of figures (table 8 and figure 6 below) depicts the substantial increase (between .5 and 20.9 percentage points) in high satisfaction with different aspects of LFA project teams from 2012 to 2015.

Table 8. High Satisfaction with LFA Project Teams over time

Assessment of LFA Project Teams	Percent "Very Satisfied"						
	2002 (n=24) *	2004 (n=30)*	2005 (n=30)*	2007 (n=45)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Interactions with administrative/operations staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68.0%	88.9%
Responsiveness and follow through	86.4%	84.6%	70.0%	88.9%	90.2%	81.3%	82.3%
Communication skills	90.9%	82.1%	70.0%	79.5%	90.2%	66.7%	74.5%
Creativity and flexibility	86.4%	89.7%	73.3%	84.4%	90.0%	66.7%	70.6%
Knowledge and expertise	90.9%	69.2%	63.3%	86.7%	78.1%	65.0%	70.6%
Understanding of organization's needs	72.7%	63.2%	60.0%	77.8%	78.1%	66.1%	66.6%

*Respondents who marked "Not Applicable/No Opinion" are not included in the percentage totals

Figure 6. High Satisfaction with LFA Project Teams over time



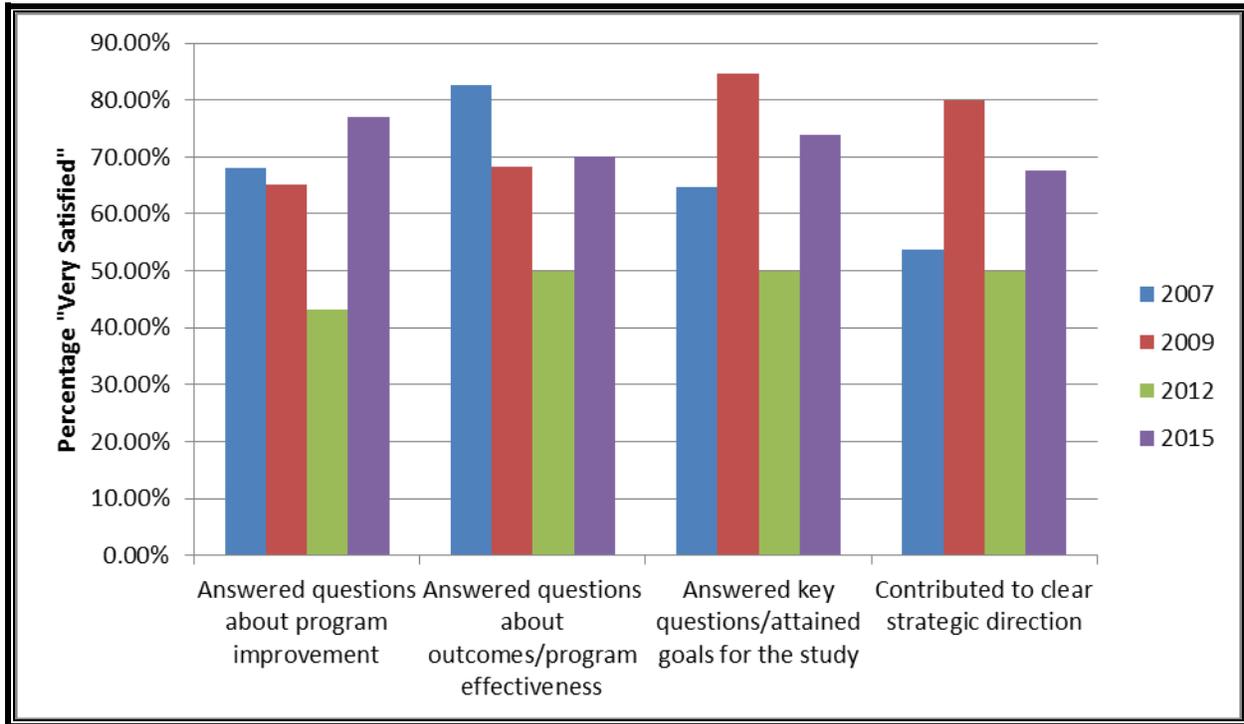
The third set of figures (table 9 and figure 7 below) shows a steep increase (between 17.6 and 33.9 percentage points) in high satisfaction with all aspects of LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects from 2012 to 2015.

Table 9. High Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects over time

Assessment of LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects	Percent "Very Satisfied"						
	2002	2004	2005	2007 (n=44)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Answered questions about program improvement	N/A	N/A	N/A	68.0%	65.2%	43.2%	77.1%
Answered key questions/attained goals for the study	N/A	N/A	N/A	64.7%	84.6%	50.0%	73.9%
Answered questions about outcomes/program effectiveness	N/A	N/A	N/A	82.6%	68.2%	50.0%	70.0%
Contributed to clear strategic direction	N/A	N/A	N/A	53.8%	80.0%	50.0%	67.6%

*Respondents who marked "Not Applicable/No Opinion" are not included in the percentage totals.

Figure 7. High Satisfaction with LFA Projects and Results for Evaluation, Research, and Strategic Planning Projects over time

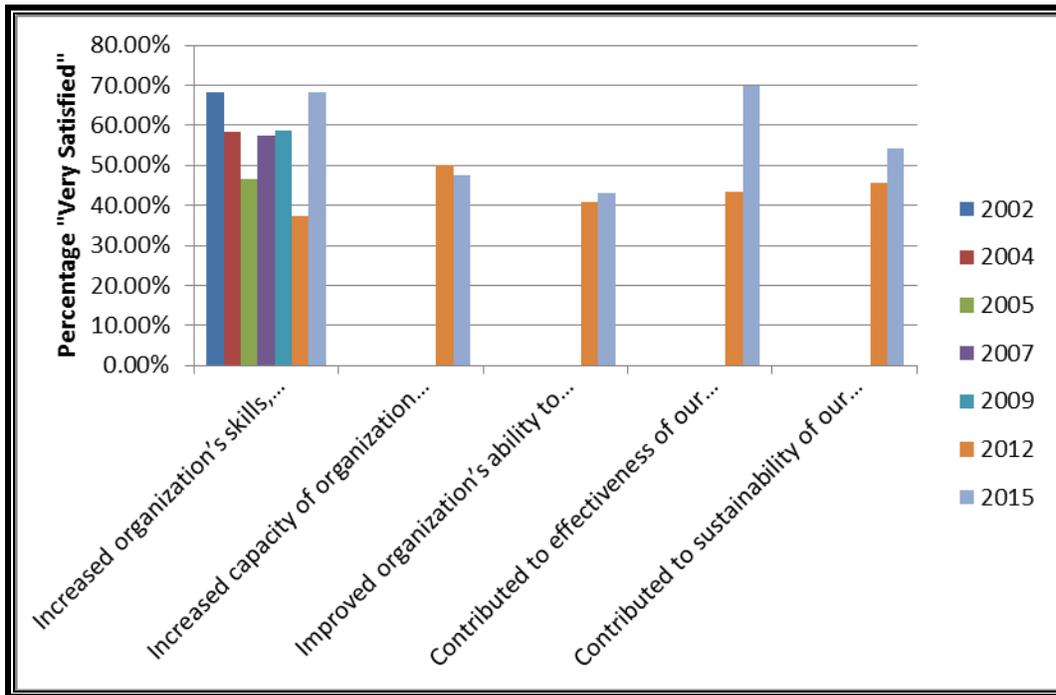


A fourth set of figures (table 10 and figure 8 below) shows a steep increase in strong agreement/high satisfaction with the impact of LFA and its team over time. In all cases but one, high satisfaction has increased dramatically (between 2.3 and 30.3 percentage points).

Table 10: High satisfaction with impact of LFA and team over time

Impact of engagement with LFA and team	Percent "Very Satisfied"						
	2002 (n=24)*	2004 (n=30)*	2005 (n=30)*	2007 (n=45)*	2009 (n=41)*	2012 (n=60)*	2015 (n=52)*
Increased organization's skills, knowledge, and/or systems	68.2%	58.3%	46.7%	57.5%	58.6%	37.3%	68.1%
Increased capacity of organization to measure impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50.0%	47.7%
Improved organization's ability to use data to inform decisions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	40.9%	43.2%
Contributed to effectiveness of our work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43.5%	69.8%
Contributed to sustainability of our work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.5%	54.3%

Figure 8: High satisfaction with impact of LFA and team over time



In contrast to 2012, when levels of high satisfaction with LFA had decreased from 2009 levels, 2015 presents a very different picture, with level of high satisfaction approaching or reaching levels of high satisfaction in 2007 and 2009

Overall satisfaction with and perception of LFA remains high, with 98.0% of respondents indicating that they would recommend LFA's services to a colleague. And 95.9% of respondents indicated that they would hire LFA again. While both numbers indicate a decrease from 2012, the number of respondents who would not recommend LFA services to a colleague totals just one, and the number of respondents who would not hire LFA again numbers just two.

Table 11. Overall Satisfaction with and perception of LFA over time

	2002	2004	2005	2007	2009	2012	2015
Would recommend LFA services to a colleague	100.0%	100.0%	93.1%	100.0%	97.5%	100.0%	98.0%
Would hire LFA again	N/A	100.0%	96.6%	100.0%	97.6%	98.3%	96.0%

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of LFA's seventh Client Evaluation Survey present a picture of clients who are highly satisfied with most aspects of the work they undertook with LFA. Clients especially noted the strengths of LFA staff members and were impressed with the overall quality of work, and with LFA projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects. A comparison of surveys conducted in previous years shows that levels of overall client satisfaction increased or remained the same in 13 out of 20 measures since 2012. Furthermore, levels of high satisfaction with LFA staff and services have increased on all measures since 2012. Significantly, LFA has improved in levels of satisfaction with its written reports and presentations, a perennial area of somewhat lower satisfaction in earlier years. And satisfaction with staff at the junior level is very high, which had also been an area of concern in previous client satisfaction surveys.

While satisfaction with LFA staff, projects and results in general, and projects and results for evaluation, research, and strategic planning projects is very high, satisfaction with the impact of the engagement with LFA is significantly less high. Clients pointed to a need for more staff, particularly senior level staff, to provide more engagement and commitment to projects. These findings point to some recommendations for LFA to consider:

- Make sure that the reports and documentation generated will provide organizations with the tools they need to: increase skills, knowledge, and systems; increase capacity to measure impact; improve ability to use data to inform decisions; and improve sustainability.
- Assist clients in developing realistic expectations for evaluation work so that outcomes more closely match expectations.
- Consider hiring additional senior consultants to increase capacity and provide more engagement and commitment to clients and client projects.

OPEN-ENDED SURVEY FEEDBACK

CLIENT EVALUATION OF LFA SERVICES

Please describe the most important change in your organization or program that has occurred as a result of your engagement with LFA. What is possible for you now that wouldn't have been possible without your work with LFA?

LFA helped us develop a 2014-15 internal strategic plan and a draft 2015-18 formal strategic plan. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the Wellness Initiative will actually act on the priorities and strategies we laid out. The initiative is going through a leadership change and the priorities of the next leaders are not clear. While our line staff feel the need for action to address the priorities identified in the strategic plan, the initiative leaders at the agency level do not appear to believe that there is any urgency to act.

I do feel good about the fact that the staff feedback is clearly outlined in the strategic assessment prepared by LFA so there is formal documentation of the needs that have existed for quite a long time. I hope that in the future there will be greater willingness to devote time and attention to doing the hard work that we proposed in our draft strategic plan.

Focus of our programmatic priorities, clear implementation plan for our strategies.

Our agency has been able to commit to ongoing strategic planning and develop a plan to guide our organization in a more focused approach. We are currently still in the process and LFA consultant has provided great support and expertise throughout the entire process.

The most important result of the work with LFA was the strategic framework that LFA helped us develop. In addition, without LFA, we would not have been as focused and organized on the project.

LFA played a role in developing a case study. This was a relatively small project so it's hard to answer many of these questions. I believe there were some staffing transitions during the time we worked together. I enjoy working with Nancy and feel that she has great expertise.

Revising our theory of action

Since our work at the board offsite October last year lead by Stephen from LFA the board has decided to further built the future with their support and leadership.

The impact questions above are not relevant to our engagement. Our engagement was not designed to measure impact, improve sustainability, use data for decision-making. That said, LFA was critical for our organization to uncover and face deep issues that had plagued the organization and created a sense of "being stuck". Steven was masterful in navigating the issues and emotions across the staff in addition to traditional project management. The naming and confronting of issues was THE most important Change not only of the engagement, but arguable the most important change of the year!

We are now better able to tell the story of the impact our school base services are making for SFUSD children and staff.

We are able to reflect on the effectiveness of our WISE grantees across sites and trouble-shoot who needs more training and technical assistance support and in what areas. They have helped us crystalize how best to provide webinars and to know what components of the WISE learning community are most beneficial to grantees.

As a result of LFA work, SF was awarded a Pacesetters Award.

The process largely validated what many of us already senses. That validation was helpful, both internally and in dealing with funders and related organizations.

LFA's work impacts our grantees, not us directly so it is difficult to answer this question directly. However, in terms of the work of LFA with grantees, we have heard very good feedback about Steven's work in particular and his understanding of the local context and his work within that context. Many of these organizations would have had a hard time making the desired changes or improvement without that type of consulting support.

I have a clearly articulated theory of change that helps me better communicate what success looks like.

Management structure, strategic plan

LFA helped us maintain good funder relationships and track the impact of our program for a high-stakes grant. We could not have navigated the program evaluation without them.

LFA reports have demonstrated and documented program success for funders and key stakeholders.

Need to focus on developing environmental stewards rather than just increasing standardized test scores

Better understanding data to identify goals

Creating, and beginning to implement, a system that will give us the ability to assess the impact of our work and make course corrections.

We can refer to a formal evaluation to demonstrate the effectiveness of our funding model which was new and risky for the board.

Our leadership became more aware of the challenges facing the collaborative. Difficult conversations that needed to take place occurred. The participatory process of involving all staff was excellent, it gave everyone an opportunity to feel included and it validated their concerns.

The evaluation findings are helping to ground the investments and give the program legitimacy w/leaders so will help us move into the future.

Excellent technical assistance through LFA to shape the evaluation component of our large innovation project - our staff did not have the expertise or time to make this happen

We have confidence that strong evaluations can be contracted out to LFA and the quality of the work will meet our expectations. In fact, our staff learn a lot in terms of methodology from the consultants at LFA. Thanks for that.

An external evaluation has allowed for us to have more robust reporting for potential upcoming grants, given us a better idea of what constitutes success for this program area and will allow for better measurement in the future.

We have been able to better implement a consumer-led vision in the development of new programming and services.

LFA helped to establish systems and processes for gathering impact information on our program.

Coalescing all staff from sites around the park that work directly with youth to create a measurement system has created a community of practice.

We were able to use the data from the resident interviews to inform our Transformation Plan that was submitted to HUD.

Reprioritization of our strategic initiatives based on assessment and articulation of need and grantee impact and ROI.

LFA has served as a tremendously helpful partner on the development and sustainability of AACC's Plus 50 Initiative.

It keeps opportunities from the ACA in the forefront of our strategy to develop sustainable programs.

We changed our committee structure based on LFA recommendations. So far it appears to be working much more effectively than the prior structure.

We now have a completed, workable strategic plan, in large part due to LFA leadership in getting us started on the path

JT helped me gain a deeper appreciation for how an experienced consultant can help guide and steer the path toward a new program such as the Peer Respite. JT has a unique way of taking random thoughts and ideas from the participants and gave it meaning and structure. I don't think we would be able to make the progress we did with the peer respite without JT's guidance at the beginning and throughout the program development stage. JT's facilitation style made it possible for the peer counselors and the administrators to better share and collaborate on this very new concept of a peer respite. The peer counselors have many praises for JT and said that she made it possible for them to feel empowered, valued, and that their opinions are important in the overall planning of the program.

JT and her colleague also helped us with the development of surveys and focus groups for the vocational programs and that gave us a better understanding of the needs of the community.

Increased the ability of program staff to think through outcome definition and measurement issues

The work with LFA has built the capacity of the entire organization (both in our SF headquarters and in our three country offices in south Asia) to measure our impact. We finally have data proving that our model produces measurable outcomes and we are proud to share that data with funders and potential funders. I think that by the end of the project, we will be in a position to continue measuring our impact for years to come.

A roadmap for sustainable funding

By focusing on the qualitative learning in the programs themselves, LFA helped us shift into real "learning" mode, as opposed to evaluation mode. The project was so challenging, and I'm honestly amazed that LFA stuck with us and didn't walk away from the project. By year 3, we framed out a much more successful approach, with LFA's help, and the product was superior. The first few years were hard, and LFA stuck with it and kept creatively and flexibly adjusting as our approach shifted. They really helped me create change where it was needed most—and without their expertise and ability to create real "learning documents," I never would have been able to create change in our evaluation approach.

We're undertaking a major revision of our the backbone of our tool based on LFA feedback that we hope will make it more flexible and more responsive to the way that client foundations seem to be using the tool to create change in their organizations.

NOTE: above, I checked "disagree" for the questions about improving our capacity to use data and measure. That's not a ding on LFA, it's just not the point of this study and we're already at pretty high capacity on those fronts.

What could LFA consultants do to increase your organization's ability to use/implement the results of the engagement? (For example: offering one or more follow-up phone consultations; improving our recommendations made in reports and deliverables; providing in-person presentation and discussion of results to key staff and stakeholders)

It might be helpful to have a follow-up phone conversation with the new leaders of the Wellness Initiative (at SFUSD School Health Programs) and Max Rocha at DPH to see what sort of appetite there might be for re-engaging in the strategic planning recommendations.

Created 3 year plan. Would like opportunity for quarterly follow up sessions in year 1 and semi-annually in years 2-3. These would be opportunities to "check in" about implementation and refine the plan accordingly. Would be willing to pay for these sessions.

We are not at this point quite yet, but I foresee LFA consultants being very helpful in devising the formal written strategic plan that our team will inform and provide context, and content.

Maybe providing more research to support the framework and strategies that were developed.

The person who started working on the vignettes moved to another position, I believe, and there was some confusion about next steps for the project and it took longer than anticipated.

So far the process has been working very effectively, the engagement of the board as well as the staff, we are well informed and following the steps as the process continues on the evaluation

LFA/Steven was incredibly flexible with meetings/calls with multiple people to advance the work.

I would love more follow-up and coaching from the LFA on how to use the data to affect change in our system. Phone consultations would be great

NA

I can't think of anything I'd recommend.

Sometimes it appears that the LFA team is stretched thin, particularly the most senior folks. I think adding to LFA's senior capacity would enable a broader engagement of folks beyond Steven and would enable him to also be more selective in his engagements.

Nothing

Help us understand different types of evaluations, including the data and conclusions that are (or are not) possible given various constraints. More info about how to use the results would be welcome.

Nothing to offer. all good

Clone JT

This may not answer your question directly, but the one thing that we have asked them to do in order to increase the meaning of the evaluation work for us is to increase their expertise in our subject area, immigration policy, by following it closely and hiring consultants with this expertise to supplement their knowledge. LFA are doing both of these things.

They have been extremely accommodating in taking steps to enable us to use and implement the results of the engagement

Alex was extremely flexible and participated in follow up meetings.

Presenting the findings to multiple internal audiences and helping to make sense of the information

No suggestions on improvement

We will definitely want to discuss the findings of the project with LFA and key stakeholders, when it reaches completion, and generate strategies for broader implementation based on these findings. The recommendations included in the Pilot Evaluation will be key deliverables to be discussed at length so that improvements can be made.

Although it does cost more, having LFA do a program observation to better understand the program may allow for better support in asking the measurement questions.

Providing in-person presentation and discussion of results to key staff and stakeholders

They were all great; no suggestions for improvement

Tracking the implementation of the measurement system and working out the kinks to refine.

Nothing

Consistency in staff assignments.

All was good considering the budget

Follow up was great -- the LFA leadership was very responsive to questions we raised, research answers for us and continued to provide guidance as we moved forward on the board restructuring and the development of our strategic plan.

Everything was perfect - please continue with your wonderful work.

I think the team is already doing this, but we would love to have more training of our country teams to take this work forward. It would be great if, once our engagement with LFA has ended, if they could make themselves available by email and the occasional Skype call with our country teams, so that they can answer questions that might arise as READ seeks to manage M&E without relying on LFA to do so.

Follow up phone consultations

I think more t.a. or facilitated conversations about 'what it means' once evaluation results come in, would be wonderful. Steven is a skilled facilitator and really knows how to engage people in conversation. Building this into the model for LFA's evaluation would really set them apart from other evaluation firms.

LFA did a terrific job of helping our grantees use data--once we started building this in after the first year or two. But I think we could have used more guidance about how to use the data ourselves. Even closed-door meetings with only program officers to explore what evaluation results really mean, could create significant change. It is very difficult for program officers to be open to evaluation data as it can sometimes reflect poorly on the portfolio overall. Helping them navigate this would be a huge asset to any evaluation.

N/A

What are LFA's strengths?

Responsive, hard working, thoughtful, adaptive, team oriented, familiar with trends and strategic choices facing grantmakers, smart facilitators

Smart, skilled staff members with good writing skills and capacity to distill information

expertise in field, suite of services, professional and organized, dedicated and committed staff, communications.

Professionalism

timely delivery of services

flexibility

Listens to clients

Responsive to clients identified needs

Very smart, experienced, creative staff

Good at connecting with people, evaluation expertise, aware of complexity for programs and projects.

vision and knowledge

empathy, project management, creativity, responsiveness, synthesis, honesty in challenging situations. I was most impressed with Steven's emotional intelligence. The emotions and dynamics were high stakes and fully charged and deeply personally. Steven was attentive, validating AND advanced the work in professional and humane ways.

Command of tools and measurements to achieve an appropriate and robust outcomes study. Great organization and follow-through. Excellent reports-very professional, both in content and aesthetically.

Great communication, follow-through and follow up on their excellent evaluation services. I have used them in two organizations I have worked for and recommended them for an upcoming project as well.

Listening to a variety of stakeholders, reflecting that back and distilling it down to the key issues

Understanding of youth organizations, work with integrity and commitment to results, ability to manage different types of engagement (organizational consulting, evaluation, group training, etc). Ability to work with single organizations or cohorts, strong expertise. Steven's leadership style and human level of engagement.

Incredibly smart, dedicated, responsive, creative, technically sound, and engaging staff. I really like the members of the LFA teams that I've worked with - Steven, Kathleen, and others.

Staff knowledge and values

Great, dedicated and smart staff.

LFA has expertise in a variety of areas.

Flexibility, accessibility

JT

Steven LaFrance's listening, analytical, writing, and communications skills, and commitment to success of our project. Shahla Fisher's strong project management. The team's flexibility, responsiveness, and attentiveness to our needs.

Great team, stayed a step ahead of me in the process, helped to stretch our thinking, focused on learning not judging.

Provided a bilingual, bicultural staff person to interview Spanish speaking staff and participate in meetings.

Alex was very flexible, on top of this project even though it was probably a small project. Very knowledgeable and intuitive when it came to organizational issues and strategic planning processes impacting our collaborative.

JT is clear, articulate, creative and responsive. The team has been great to work with for us.

Competent and knowledgeable staff

High quality evaluation planning and evaluation work. Excellent efforts at building rapport with client and with data collection sites. Excellent communication with us (clients) throughout the project (just enough, not too much). Thoroughness of work with data

Organized, great follow through, great communicators

Timeliness of reports. Ability to extrapolate/integrate key data coming from a variety of sources.

Steven

Kathleen Hentz Beach. Flexibility. Responsiveness

Smart, thoughtful, cutting-edge thinking, strong analytic skills and great understanding of organizational culture and impact on the work

Education and youth development strategy, evaluation/dissemination, organizing for ultimate impact

Communications regarding the data and its evaluation.

Flexibility and customer service attitude. Research and literature reviews.

Its ability to adapt to different needs with so much insight.

They know their business. Have great ideas and suggestions for improvement. Are very responsive. It is great to work with LFA.

Good people developing a good product

The ability of their leadership to fully inform themselves about the nuts and bolts of our program, where our strengths and our weaknesses lay, and building their presentation with that information at the forefront.

Flexibility, professionalism, non-judgmental, punctual, reliable, trustworthy, accountable

High quality eval planning and implementation, including final products. Good communications to non-experts and general audiences

Creative in identifying alternatives

Very strategic, knowledgeable, engaging, and they can work across cultures. The team we worked with was able to get our country teams really excited about M&E from the very beginning--something I was really worried would not happen. They used creative techniques during the initial training with our country teams that inspired people and got them excited to dedicate a lot of energy toward learning M&E. The last 2-3 years of work with LFA has been a positive experience for everyone in the organization.

Great customer service. Friendly staff, very responsive. Patient! (even with our most challenging program staff).

Promptness, easy to work with, intelligent analysis

Flexibility, knowledge of working with diverse populations.

How could LFA improve its services?

Some of the products developed for our project were not always helpful to facilitating the discussion - they were too complex and not accessible to outside audiences.

The consultants seemed over-committed with other projects. Their work was high-quality, but I wonder if we could have had stronger engagement and stronger deliverables if the consultants weren't pulled in so many other directions.

Clearer roadmap about process, roles, responsibilities of the work together.

continuity of staff for projects, when possible, be more sensitive to time frames

nc

Nothing comes to mind. I had heard from others on staff that they felt in the dark about the process, so perhaps there was more Steven (or I) could have done to share the process with others. However, the dynamic nature of this project didn't allow for a script that was followed line by line.

I would love for LFA to not disappear after the final report is complete. I would appreciate additional consultation from LFA on how to use the data to affect change.

NA

LFA could build its capacity at the senior level and that would enable Steven to play more of a leadership role in specific engagements and also enable the diversification of contracts. I believe the organization is too reliant on Steven as a senior leader and not sure who else is available for engagements that require senior consultants. Sometimes we get the sense that Steven is quite stretched and it's not clear why that is.

Not sure. I think LFA is doing great.

Nothing

They seem a bit stretched thin. More communication and face-time with clients might be good.

timeliness is always an issue.

Deeper subject matter expertise on immigration. This is in process.

To the extent allowable by clients, share the work products you're creating more widely and more regularly.

?

no suggestions

LFA is the best group we work with. You show what it means to do this well.

Clone Steven

Timeliness and clarity of deliverable deadlines

Can't think of anything!

Little more dynamic in the delivery of trainings

Sending surveyors that understand and can cope with the difficult neighborhoods they may have to operate in.

Too many people at meetings with implications on cost. Might be redundant many times.

not sure if it's realistic, however they could lightly follow up themselves on the recommendation about using the ACA to our advantage - we budgeted to do more work, but didn't find the time. My outline of the project alone would take a good amount of time - they could do that part for me...but it requires an initial investment from them.

Have more staff to take on more projects.

I think they do this to some degree already, but it would be great if they could think about the long-term sustainability of M&E efforts for smaller nonprofit organizations that cannot afford to keep hiring LFA (in the absence of special grants that fund M&E work) and build more capacity-building into the overall work plan. I say this knowing that they DID do this in our case...but perhaps they could do MORE of it. Honestly, I'm struggling to find anything else to say--they did a great job for us!

Ensure that the people on a project have good communication skills. We brought a lot of chaos and bad behavior to the project, which made it difficult. But some of the challenges also came from the LFA side--and in particular one staff who had trouble communicating succinctly and who tended to ratchet up the stress/confusion rather than diminishing it. A lot of work on our end had to be done to undo this pattern. Catching it earlier would have helped. But again, a lot of it came from our side, so it was certainly not LFA's fault.

I think that more issue area expertise is sometimes needed--and could be brought from outside occasionally as it's very difficult to have the right issue experience in every field.

More info on what is happening in the field--statewide and nationally. It really helps when LFA can situate our work and our evaluation within a larger context of which we may not be aware.

More boundaries! Tell us when we are off the mark, keep us on track with the scope of work, and if we go over budget, make sure to let us know early in the process. Or make clients horse-trade--if they want something new and different as a project evolves--they either have to increase the budget or let go of something else. LFA kept saying yes to us, and the budget went way over as a result. I needed to know that they would push back, as I was managing multiple evaluations and needed consultants who would challenge/go up against me. Having that kind of strength really helps the client relax and trust more. Greater simplicity. The LFA team is whip-smart and can tend to create greater density and complication in both capacity building projects and in evaluations than is needed. Keeping things simple and straightforward for a lay audience, board members, grantees, community members, staff, etc. would really make a huge difference in the usability of evaluation data.

N/A

Please share any additional comments here that you would like to be kept confidential.

You should make every effort to keep Alex H. as part of your team for as long as you can. He is an individual that makes clients feel as if they are the most important client whether they are a big contract or not. He has been extremely responsive to our needs and has provided great insight and knowledge as we have worked through our strategic planning process. He always finds a solution and will talk through difficult topics to help land in a positive space. We look forward to his continued support.

I don't feel the last project we did together worked out very well. We relied heavily on a consultant outside of LFA to complete the work. In the past, I had only good experiences with LFA. I would consider working with them again, but I would be more clear about expectations and project management.

While our work was tightly focused with Steven, there were others on the team who assisted. I was very impressed with the seamless-ness!

It's been a pleasure to work with LFA and with Steven in particular. We look forward to our continued partnership.

nothing to add

The quality of more junior staff inputs has been varied. The indicators that we initially received for the US program were not usable. We did communicate dissatisfaction and have a new plan in place, where LFA is working with consultants whom we chose, to improve the indicators.

Love working with JT.

Sorry to see Jasmin leaving!

We hope to work with LFA in the near future.

I thought their work on the evaluation plan was mediocre to date. I don't think it offered much more than we already had in place but they did help us keep organized and put it all into one document. They had a plan in place for what the process should be to develop an evaluation plan.

Happy to participate.

I have the highest regard for LFA. They are extremely client centered and well worth the investment!

Working with JT Taylor has been a true pleasure. She is fantastic.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL COMMENTS

CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH LFA SERVICES

Are there comments you feel comfortable sharing directly with LFA?

Please use the space below to provide any thoughts, suggestions or feedback to be separated from the confidential questions and shared directly with LFA. Please note that this feedback may be published with your name on the LFA website.

You can contact me directly if you are interested in additional feedback. Thanks.

*Ramona Mosley, Director of Operations
Health Education Council (contacted, haven't heard response yet)*

I appreciate and value working with Nancy on various evaluation projects. Thank you!

*Lori Nascimientto, Learning and Evaluation Manager
The California Endowment*

We value the work of LFA in making our organization more effective and influential in the policy arena

*Mark Baldassare, President
Public Policy Institute of California*

Thank you for your dedication. You made a big difference at Transgender Law Center over the years. I am grateful for your team.

*Masen Davis, former Executive Director
Transgender Law Center*

No

*David Fernandez, Transformation Director
Mercy Housing*

Nancy Latham's outstanding work has been a contributing factor in the success of the Plus 50 Initiative.

*Mary Susan Vickers, Plus 50 Initiative Director
American Association of Community Colleges*

LFA's evaluation has been well planned and executed and also the team has been extremely responsive and creative in identifying alternative strategies to strengthen our approach.

*Tom Kelly, Vice President
Hawaii Community Foundation*

LFA did an amazing job getting our entire organization (from SF to Bhutan) excited to learn how to implement a formal M&E system. Our team was comprised of big-picture, strategic thinkers but were also happy to get down in the weeds (almost literally) to make sure that every detail was perfect. They made this process enjoyable and educational for everyone and have built the capacity of our organization to take this work forward. It has been a pleasure working with them and I consider them to be trusted strategic advisors.

*Tina Sciabica, Executive Director
READ Global*

I think that it's a credit to LFA that even across multiple teams and changes in the staff we've worked with, LFA staff have always been up to speed on our history as an organization, the work we do, and the past work that LFA has helped us with. That matters to me and to the effectiveness of our projects. It's appreciated.

*Kevin Bolduc, Vice President, Assessment Tools
The Center for Effective Philanthropy*

[LFA's strengths include] empathy, project management, creativity, responsiveness, synthesis, honesty in challenging situations. I was most impressed with Steven's emotional intelligence. The emotions and dynamics were high stakes and fully charged and deeply personally. Steven was attentive, validating AND advanced the work in professional and humane ways.

LFA was critical for our organization to uncover and face deep issues that had plagued the organization and created a sense of "being stuck." Steven was masterful in navigating the issues and emotions across the staff in addition to traditional project management. The naming and confronting of issues was THE most important change not only of the engagement, but arguably the most important change of the year!

*Carol Ting, COO
Stuart Foundation*

LFA, under Steven LaFrance's leadership, has been and continues to be a crucial partner in PropelNext's work. PropelNext, an initiative of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, works with LFA as we strive to help promising nonprofits enhance their ability to collect, use and apply data for ongoing learning and improvement. As a result, our grantees are now able to deliver even stronger results for disadvantaged youth. We have thoroughly enjoyed working with Steven and the LFA team and look forward to our continued partnership.

*Lisette Rodriguez, Managing Director
PropelNext EMCF*

SAMPLE SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. So that LFA can improve its services, an independent evaluator, Leslie Bell, is conducting this survey and will analyze the results. Leslie will present all information confidentially: no LFA employee will see names attached to results. If you have any questions, please contact Leslie at 510-548-7960.

1. Name
Title
Organization
Your project with LFA
Is your project status complete or ongoing?

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with LFA's work during your consulting engagement.

2. How satisfied are you with LFA's project coordination and management?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
3. How satisfied are you with LFA's project directing and leadership?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
4. How satisfied are you with LFA 's work products and documentation?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
5. How satisfied are you with LFA 's timeliness of project completion?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
6. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the work performed by LFA?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
7. How satisfied are you with your interactions with LFA administrative/operations staff (e.g., invoicing questions, reception, etc)?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the LFA team member(s) who worked with your organization.

8. How satisfied are you with the LFA team members' communication skills?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
9. How satisfied are you with the LFA team members' knowledge and expertise?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
10. How satisfied are you with the LFA team members' understanding of your organization's needs?
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A
11. How satisfied are you with the LFA team members' creativity and flexibility?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

12. How satisfied are you with the LFA team members' responsiveness/follow through?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the results of LFA's work.

13. [For evaluation projects] How satisfied are you with the extent to which LFA's evaluation answered your questions about program improvement?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

14. [For evaluation projects] How satisfied are you with the extent to which LFA's evaluation answered your questions about outcomes/program effectiveness.

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

15. [For research projects] How satisfied are you with the extent to which LFA's research answered the key questions/attained goals for the study?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

16. [For strategic planning projects] How satisfied are you with the extent to which the planning process contributed to a clear strategic direction?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

17. How satisfied are you with the extent to which LFA services increased your organization's skills, knowledge, and/or systems?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied N/A

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

18. Our work with LFA helped increase the capacity of our organization to measure our impact.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree Too soon to tell

19. Our work with LFA improved our organization's ability to use data to inform decisions.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree Too soon to tell

20. Our work with LFA contributed to the effectiveness of our work.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree Too soon to tell

21. Our work with LFA contributed to the sustainability of our work.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree Too soon to tell

22. Please describe the most important change in your organization or program that has occurred as a result of your engagement with LFA. What is possible for you now that wouldn't have been possible without your work with LFA?

23. What could LFA consultants do to increase your organization's ability to use/implement the results of the engagement? (For example: offering one or more follow-up phone consultations; improving our recommendations made in reports and deliverables; providing in-person presentation and discussion of results to key staff and stakeholders, etc.)

24. Would you recommend LFA's services to a colleague?

Yes

No

25. Would you hire LFA again?

Yes

No

26. What are LFA's strengths?

27. How could LFA improve its services?

28. Please share any additional comments here that you would like to be kept confidential.

29. Are there comments you feel comfortable sharing directly with LFA?

Please use the space below to provide any thoughts, suggestions or feedback to be separated from the confidential questions and shared directly with LFA. Please note that this feedback may be published with your name on the LFA website.

30. Demographic information – to be used if you wish to make comments public

Your name

Your title

Your organization

Thank you for your time.