



## Montana AmeriCorps VISTA Reporting Definitions

- **Assessment**
  - Assessment refers to a focused evaluation in its entirety.
  - An example of an assessment might be a 'needs assessment' developed for a grant. The needs assessment might include the results of a survey, research documenting the problem, longitudinal data maintained on the problem, etc. This is still considered *one* assessment, though containing many parts.
  - A survey should be counted as *one assessment* regardless of the number of individual copies completed i.e. one survey completed by twenty-seven respondents is equal to one survey, or one assessment total.
- **Public Relations/Education**
  - Public relations activity reporting is divided into two categories; activities developed and implemented.
    - Development is defined by the creation and delivery of a public relations activity by a VISTA.
    - Implementation, on the other hand, may be the result of executing either a pre-existing public relations activity or an activity developed by someone else.
- **Community Groups**
  - Board development is defined as the development, of which the VISTA either led or assisted in the creation, of a cohesive group of diverse stakeholders who have a vested interest in the outcomes defined by the host organization.
- **Strategic Planning**
  - A strategic plan is defined as the creation of an action plan that serves an end that is congruous with the mission of the organization or an individual project that addresses a single desired outcome that is in line with an organizational goal.
- **Strategic Plan Implementation**
  - The implementation of a strategic plan is marked by the execution and/or completion of the above stated strategic action plan.
- **Evaluation**
  - Evaluation is defined as an official analysis of the outcome(s) of a component of an individual project, the project as a whole or the overall effectiveness of an organization. Typically, this step follows as a formal assessment at the conclusion of the implementation of a strategic plan. See assessment.
- **Sustainability**
  - A sustainable activity is that which remains with or without the presence of the VISTA. For example, a database of volunteer information compiled, updated or maintained by a VISTA could be classified as a sustainable activity. Where as a permanent appointment as the minutes recorder for a board would not be a sustainable activity. CNCS defines project sustainability as "the ability of programs, services, and other program infrastructure developed by a VISTA project to endure beyond the completion of the

VISTA project.” A sustainable activity is typically tied to the previous steps of the community building cycle; i.e. the construction of a board, community group involvement, strategic plan implementation and systems of evaluation. These are activities that will have lasting effects and encourage the sustainability of an organization/project/program.

- **Data Sheet**

- **How many persons benefited directly from the VISTA’s efforts?**

- This is the number of persons who have personally benefited from the VISTA’s work. This number reflects folks who would self-identify as personally benefiting from a component, or the entirety of a project of which the VISTA was a part.

- **How much additional cash funding was generated by the VISTAs?**

- This number reflects the value of cash resulting from an effort of the VISTA – for grants, report the dollar amount of the grant. For example, the total number of cash raised during a fundraiser, whether designed by the VISTA or not, led/co-led by a VISTA qualifies as a number that is reportable in this category. Detail your role in acquiring the money/donation and its (monetary) value – include only amounts that you played an important role in attaining.

- **What is the approximate dollar value of the in-kind contributions generated?**

- This equals the market value of all in-kind donations received. In-kind goods and services – the dollar value of a qualified professional’s rate - are items and/or services provided specifically for a project you have planned (e.g. a grocery store donates juice for an after school program, or a volunteer loans equipment and expertise for a community fitness trail). Do your best to ensure that all of the individual items are accurately accounted for.

- **How many community volunteers were recruited by VISTAs?**

- CNCS defines a community volunteer as “an individual recruited and/or coordinated by an AmeriCorps\*VISTA member. Community volunteers provide direct or indirect service to help the project achieve its objectives.” This definition also includes parents and other adults who participate with their children in a family math or other learning type night. When adding up the total number of active community volunteers, be sure to count each person only once (even if that person volunteered for several projects). Keep track of how many hours the volunteers work and, at the end of the quarter, add up all the hours for total volunteer hours.

- **About how many hours of service were provided by the community volunteers recruited by the VISTAs?**

- The sum total of hours contributed by the volunteers defined above during the specified reporting period.

- **How many computer systems were established or expanded by VISTAs for the sponsoring organization?**

- Examples of a computer system established or expanded are; websites, databases, file management systems, et al.

- **How many hours did you spend over the last quarter on record keeping or general office administration for the sponsoring organization?**
  - This number should include that hours that you spent doing general office tasks related to your VISTA position.
- **How many technical assistance or training sessions were provided to other organizations by VISTAs?**
  - To qualify as a technical assistance or training session provided by a VISTA, the assistance or training must come as a result of a VISTA's efforts – either in developing the program and/or facilitating the program.
- **How many technical assistance or training sessions were provided to the staff of the sponsoring organizations by VISTAs?**
  - This is defined as an assistance or training put on by the VISTA for the staff of his/her organization.
- **How many individuals served as community volunteers in your program?**
  - This number reflects the total number of volunteers who served in your *program* during the last quarter – both those that the VISTA has recruited and those who were recruited by other means or have served previously.
- **How many disadvantaged children and youth served as community volunteers in your program?**
  - Disadvantaged youth are defined as persons 18 years of age or younger who are forced to operate in unfavorable circumstances, especially with regard to financial or social opportunities. This data counts the number of disadvantaged children and youth who as volunteers in your program. This data is very important. Take the time to disaggregate this data.
- **How many “Baby Boomers” served as community volunteers?**
  - A “Baby Boomer” is defined as anyone born between the years 1946-1964 – those folks who in 2010 will be 46-64 years of age. Use your best judgment on who might qualify as a “Baby Boomer”. This data is very important. Take the time to disaggregate this data.
- **How many community volunteers served in disaster-related services?**
  - This data quantifies the number of volunteers who served in some capacity directly linked to disaster-related services – i.e. emergency shelter work; 24-hour response services; adequate, nutritious food and clean acceptable clothing.
- **How many disadvantaged children and youth were served through your program?**
  - Disadvantaged youth are defined as persons 18 years of age or younger who are forced to operate in unfavorable circumstances, especially with regard to financial or social opportunities. This data counts the number of disadvantaged children and youth who received services through your program.
- **How many children of incarcerated parents were served through your program?**

- This piece of data should be quantified using your best judgment and working knowledge of your clientele (without probing the matter).
- **How many individuals were mentored through your program?**
  - This number represents the number of individuals who receive(d) ongoing counseling and direction as a result of your program.
- **How many clients are receiving independent living services through your program?**
  - This data reflects the number of folks receiving living services as a result of your program's work.

### **Attachments**

- For the content of this section, you will send any appropriate attachments (via e-mail or regular mail) to the VISTA Leader(s). CNCS appreciates receiving news clippings, flyers, etc. that show how our VISTA members are being recognized, or detail their specific accomplishments. You may send school newsletters, articles from your local paper, pictures you have taken, or anything else you decide is relevant.