Strengthening Impact Reporting in REEport Progress & Final Reports

John Angelos, CFAH Director, August 2020

The following information is being provided to assist faculty in the School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) Center for Food Animal Health (CFAH) and Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) in writing impactful progress and final reports in the REEport system. Many thanks go out to Kit Alviz, Program Policy Analyst, and Katherine Webb-Martinez, Associate Director, in the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources' (ANR) Office of Program Planning and Evaluation for providing information and links, as well as to Dr. Rob Atwill for raising general awareness of the need for better impact reporting.

Writing strong impacts in your reports is important because each year ANR program experts review these reports to identify and summarize significant research accomplishments that have clear and compelling potential impact(s). The use of **Condition Change** language can help to elevate awareness of research accomplishments. We encourage faculty to use ANR Condition Change language in REEport when entering Accomplishments in their progress and final reports. Even if your project does not yet have a measured outcome such as a change in policy, participant knowledge or behavior, or condition, you should still provide information on *potential* impact in your reports.

For examples of research impacts that were highlighted in 2019, see UC ANR's 2019 Impact Stories and UC ANR's 2019 Annual Report that feature accomplishments by some of our Vet Med Extension faculty. In particular, see Improved animal management, productivity and efficiency and Improved food safety under the respective headings of "**UC ANR: Promoting economic prosperity in California**" and "**UC ANR: Safeguarding sufficient, safe, and healthy food for all Californians**."

Resources to guide you in writing the most impactful and meaningful REEport accomplishments that utilize Condition Change language:

1. National resources from Sara Delheimer, Impact Writer, Colorado State University:
   a. Video and Website on *Research Reporting: Why it's important and how to do it well*
   b. Research Reporting Handout
   c. Multistate Research Fund Impacts Webpage; include national examples; sign up for newsletter
   d. NIFA Impacts Website (examples of reported impacts from NIFA funded research)

2. Resources from ANR's Writing Impact Statements website:
   a. "Writing Strong Impact Statements": Nov 2019 Presentation by Chris Greer, Mark Lagrimini, and Katherine Webb-Martinez
   b. Condition Changes – How do I measure them?
   c. Putting Condition Changes to Work
   d. Action Verbs Handout
   e. UC ANR Training Impact Statement Template

3. REEport Information Guide: excerpts from the REEport Website (need login to enter portal) Progress & Final reporting templates. *Please note the sections under **Accomplishments** below to help you write the most effective impact statements that utilizes Condition Change language.*

   REEport Sections:
   a. Target Audience
   b. Products
   c. Other Products
   d. Accomplishments
        i.   *What was accomplished under these goals?*
        ii. *What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?*
        iii. *How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?*
        iv. *What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?*
   e. Changes Problems

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience(s) you describe should include only those that your efforts reached during the current reporting period; this may mean that the audiences you list are only a subset of the all those you included on your project initiation.

Target audiences include individuals, groups, market segments, or communities that will be served by the project. Where appropriate, you should also identify population groups such as racial and ethnic minorities and those who are socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged.

Efforts include acts or processes that deliver science-based knowledge to people through formal or informal educational programs. Examples include: formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, or practicum experiences; development of curriculum or innovative teaching methodologies; internships; workshops; experiential learning opportunities; extension and outreach.

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PRODUCTS-PUBLICATIONS

Report only the major publication(s) resulting from the work under this project/award. If there is a publication that occurred any time throughout the life of the project thus far but that you have NOT YET INCLUDED on a previous progress report, then you should include it here. There is no restriction on the number. However, agencies are interested in only those publications that most reflect the work under this project/award. See definitions below for the categories of publications.

Publication Definitions:

- **Publications** are the characteristic product of research. Agencies evaluate what the publications demonstrate about the excellence and significance of the research and the efficacy with which the results are being communicated to colleagues, potential users, and the public, not the number of publications.
- **Journal publications:** Peer-reviewed articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical, or professional journals. Include any peer-reviewed publication in the periodically published proceedings of a scientific society, a conference, or the like. A publication in the proceedings of a one-time conference, not part of a series, should be reported under "Books or other non-periodical, one-time publications."
- **Books or other non-periodical, one-time publications:** Any book, monograph, dissertation, abstract, or the like published as or in a separate publication, rather than a periodical or series. Include any significant publication in the proceedings of a one-time conference or in the report of a one-time study, commission, or the like.
- **Other publications, conference papers and presentations:** Identify any other publications, conference papers and/or presentations not reported above.

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OTHER PRODUCTS

Other Products/Outputs are activities, events, services, and products that reach people.

- **Activities** include: conducting and analyzing experiments or surveys, assessments, facilitating, teaching, or mentoring.
- **Events** include: conferences, demonstration sites, field days, symposia, workshops, and trainings.
- **Services** include: consulting, counseling, and tutoring.
- **Products** include: audio or video products; curricula; data or databases; equipment or instruments; models; networks and/or collaborations fostered by the project or activity; physical collections or resources, new animal germplasm, or genetic maps; software; technology, methods, or techniques; train-the-trainer manuals; website(s) with the appropriate URL(s); information, skills, and technology for individuals, communities, and programs; or students graduated in agricultural sciences.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS-What was accomplished under these goals?

What was accomplished under these goals?

In this section, NIFA defines Accomplishments as impacts and outcomes achieved as a result of the project AND the results of the experiments that led to the impacts and outcomes.

At the beginning of this box, before information on specific goals and objectives, include a statement of 1 to 2 paragraphs describing the **IMPACT** of your project. This statement will be a primary tool for briefing leadership and legislators about what has been accomplished with the public funding invested in grant programs. Refer back to the non-technical summary you provided at the outset of your project. This impact statement should reflect the results and conclusion of your work that will provide benefits to broad audiences. It is imperative that this portion of your report be written in plain, non-technical language. Please do feel free to use numbers that will be meaningful to non-scientific audiences such as community leaders, politicians, taxpayers, and farmers. You will need to translate results of your work into lay terms – things that everyday people can relate to. Consider reporting things like changes in economics, community dynamics, environmental conditions, or agricultural norms.

How to accomplish this:

Revisit the logic model for your project if you have one. Impact statements should arise from the outcomes described in a logic model. A good impact statement in a final report has three elements:

1. State the issue in terms that will connect with a broad audience. Think back to what need you were seeking to address when you proposed the project.
2. Describe, in general terms, who did what, and the results. Specific quantitative values or trends help validate the impact.
3. Translate those results into broader outcomes in the real world. Engage your peripheral vision in order to remember how the work you are doing is important to the bigger picture and then explain that simply and directly.

NEXT:

For each goal listed in your project initiation form , there will be a numbered list of objectives. Please continue to use this format by numbering and restating the objective you are reporting on. Be certain to report on ALL objectives. For each objective, report for this reporting period on:

1. Major activities completed / experiments conducted;
2. Data collected;
3. Summary statistics and discussion of results and
4. Key outcomes or other accomplishments realized.

For the impact statement and #4 above, remember that impacts and key outcomes/accomplishments are defined as changes in knowledge, action, or condition.
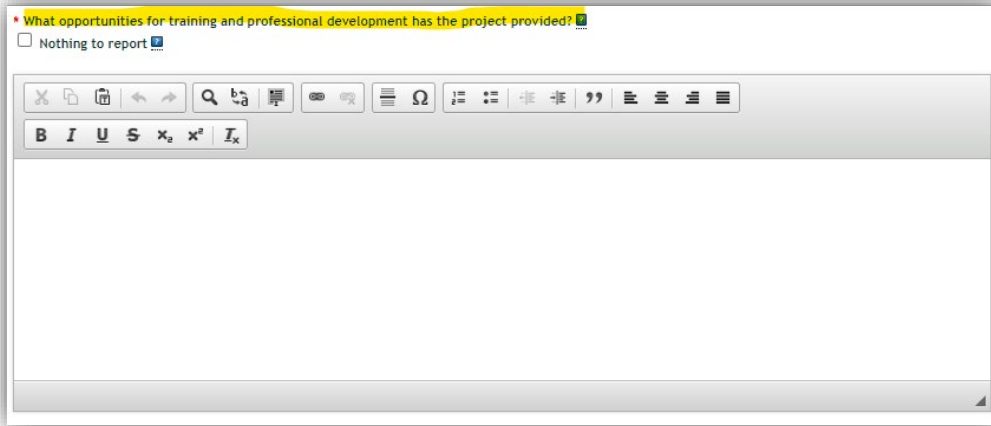
A change in knowledge occurs when the participant (scientist, trainee, or citizen) learns or becomes aware. Examples of a change in new fundamental or applied knowledge significant enough to be included in a publication; methods and techniques; policy knowledge; improved skills; or increased knowledge of decision-making, life skills, and positive life choices among youth and adults.

A change in action occurs when there is a change in behavior or the participants act upon what they have learned (adoption of techniques and methods or a change in practice).
Examples of a change in actions include: application and actual use of fundamental or applied knowledge; adoption of new or improved skills;
direct application of information from publications; adoption and use of new methods or improved technologies; use of skills by youth and adults in making informed choices; adoption of practical policy and use of decision-making knowledge.

A change in condition occurs when a societal condition is changed due to a participant's action.
Examples of a change in conditions include: development of human resources; physical, institutional, and information resources that improve infrastructure technology transfer; management and behavioral changes and adjustments; quantified changes in descriptive statistics (trade balance, export sales, etc.); better and less expensive animal health; changes in conditions (e.g., wages, health care benefits, etc.) of the agricultural workforce; higher productivity in food provision; quantified changes in quality-of-life for youth and adults in rural communities; safer food supply; reduced obesity rates and improved nutrition and health; or higher water quality (e.g., increased water clarity) and a cleaner environment (e.g., measurably reduced pollution).

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS - What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

Describe opportunities for training and professional development provided to anyone who worked on the project or anyone who was involved in the activities supported by the project.

Training activities are those in which individuals with advanced professional skills and experience assist others in attaining greater proficiency. Training activities may include, for example, courses or one-on-one work with a mentor.
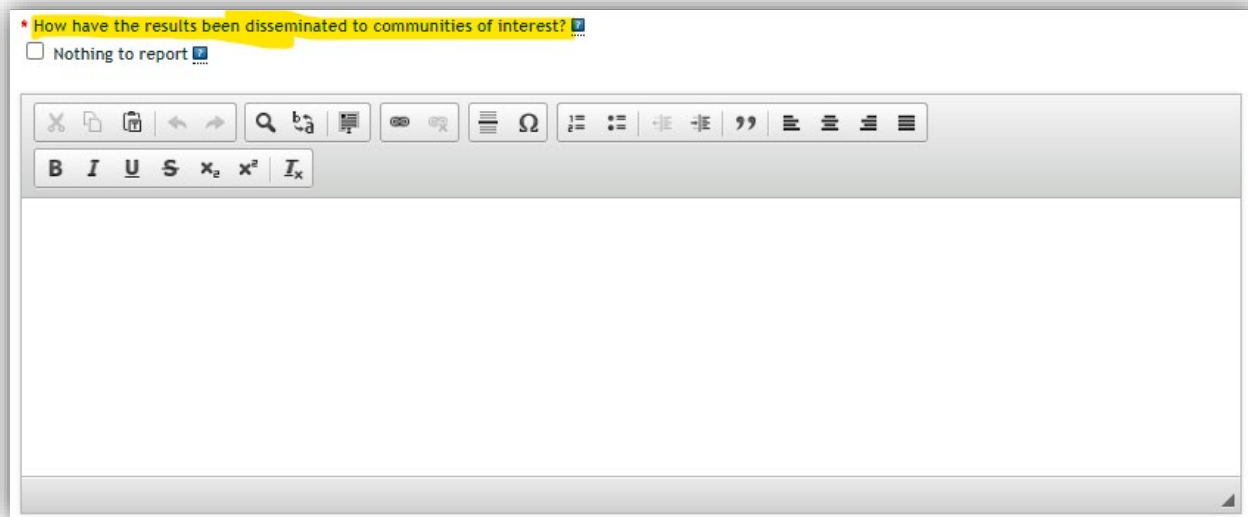**Professional development** activities result in increased knowledge or skill in one's area of expertise and may include workshops, conferences, seminars, study groups, and individual study. Include participation in conferences,workshops, and seminars not listed under major activities.

If the research is not intended to provide training and professional development opportunities or there is nothing significant to report during this reporting period, click the "nothing to report" box.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS - How have results been disseminated to communities of interest?

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

Describe how the results have been disseminated to communities of interest. Include any outreach activities that have been undertaken to reach members of communities who are not usually aware of these research activities for the purpose of enhancing public understanding and increasing interest in learning and careers in science, technology, and the humanities.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS - Plans for next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

Describe briefly what you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals and objectives. If there are no changes to the agency-approved application or plan for this effort (i.e. nothing was submitted through the "project change" module), click the box for "nothing to report."

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CHANGES/PROBLEMS

Major changes include:

- major problems or delays that may have a significant impact on the rate of expenditure;
- significant deviations from research schedule or goals;
- unexpected outcomes;
- or changes in approved protocols for the use or care of animals, human subjects, and/or biohazards encountered during the reporting period.

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