Program Analysis

When you are running multiple programs or considering adding a new program it is helpful to create a visualization of where your programs fit into your mission and your funding. A simple 2 X 2 matrix and a little financial analysis can put things into perspective in a way that just looking at the numbers might not.

Programs contribute to the sustainability of the organization in many ways, but there are two factors that stand out:

1. Mission Impact – Where does this program fit if you scale its mission impact from low to high?
2. Financial Contribution – How does this program contribute (or not) to the finances of the organization? Does it need to be supported or is it a cash cow.

Get the Data

Obtaining mission impact for each program is something that can be accomplished by a small leadership team engaging in discussion and then rating each program

Financial reports will provide the total cost of each program. These reports should take into consideration:

- Direct costs
- Indirect costs
- Revenue brought in by the program
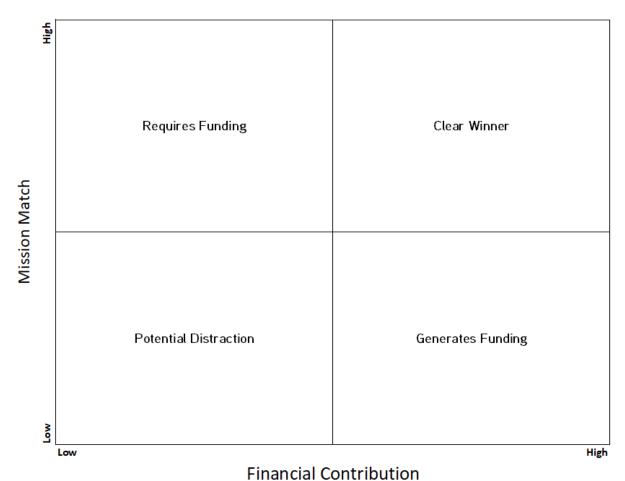- Costs associated with the program

Plot your Programs

Once you have the data, use the matrix on the next page and plot out each program into one of the four boxes. Once they are plotted out you can start to ask other questions:

- Program A has low mission impact and low financial contribution. What pressures exist that would cause you to continue this program? Does this program pull staff time away from other higher impact, greater financial contribution programs?
- Program B has high mission impact but low financial contribution. Are there strategies in

place to financially support this program? Does it have the potential to be self-sustaining eventually?

- Program C has low mission impact and high financial contribution. At what point does low mission impact become out-of-scope of the mission? Are you sure that this program isn't "Unrelated Business Income" which is taxable?

- Program D has high mission impact and high financial contribution. What needs to happen to keep this program going?

- Which category do most of your programs fit into? What does this mean for your organization's future?

Program Analysis

	Low — Financial Contribution — High	
High	Requires Funding	Clear Winner
Mission Match		
Low	Potential Distraction	Generates Funding