

VSPE Veteran Serving Organization Impact Highlight Objective Zero Foundation



Objective Zero Foundation (OZF) received funding for three cycles of VSPE between 2019 and 2022. OZF began in 2016 and is a non-profit organization with a social media application (app) called [Objective Zero](#). The app connects the military and Veteran community to peer support, wellness activities, and mental health resources. The app uses an upstream approach to suicide prevention by proactively addressing many of the root factors of suicide such as social isolation, history of mental illness or substance misuse, and barriers to healthcare. This approach reduces the risk of severe crises and need for crisis response intervention, like calls to 911 or [988](#). The Objective Zero App is accessible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week around the globe on a smartphone or website browser.

OZF implemented process evaluation—which looks at whether program activities are implemented the way they were intended—to understand and improve the app user’s experience in their first year. They developed evaluation tools such as surveys and interview guides to collect meaningful feedback and developed indicators to understand user experience and impact or influence of the app. This process evaluation approach helped them collect and use valuable data to understand and improve the app user’s experience.

The skills learned from VSPE enabled OZF to:

- **Monitor user volume, which is approximately 1,000-1,500 users per month.**
- **Assess which aspects of the app were most popular. OZF used this data to improve engagement with app users. This was useful as app engagement increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **Include relevant programmatic information within grant applications using the logic model they developed in VSPE, which identifies resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes.**
- **Quadruple their grant funding between 2020 and 2021. OZF views this as a direct result of their participation in VSPE.**

OZF built upon their previous year’s work to continue evaluating their app during their second year of VSPE participation. This allowed OZF to improve their original evaluation methods to reach a larger, more diverse app user sample for their data collection and build stronger data analysis skills. Evaluation findings informed:

- **Programmatic improvements to the app, onboarding processes, trainings, resources, and technologies.**
- **Response rate increase of 300-400% in 2022 after the integration of this feedback.**

OZF conducted an outcome evaluation to assess intended outcomes from using the App in their third year of VSPE. Preliminary evaluation findings showed increased user awareness of resources and services and increased user belief that these resources would be useful. OZF continues to evaluate additional outcomes to better understand and increase the app's impact and helpfulness.

OZF's outcome evaluation has allowed them to:

- **Strengthen the effectiveness of training programs, services, and communications that enable intervention before community members are in crisis.**
- **Start a new initiative for customer relationship management to streamline data collection on how users engage with their communication materials.**
- **Develop a communication plan that identifies audiences, approaches, and metrics for sharing evaluation findings.**

OZF experienced a gap in their ability to evaluate their app. Through their participation in VSPE, they gained valuable skills to assess and improve their program. They have and will continue to use skills gained in VSPE to assess and improve their program. OZF developed an evaluation subcommittee from their Board of Directors to sustain evaluation activities and momentum. OZF remains dedicated to using evaluation across their programs to enhance data collection and use to improve Veteran well-being.

Contact information: Glori Fernandez, glori@objectivezero.org



OBJECTIVE ZERO