

Effective Monitoring & Evaluation



Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation should be built into the project at the planning stage. It should not be an ‘add on’ that happens at the end, but should be woven throughout the project.

“Evaluation is a way of seeing, of reflecting on practice” (Van Der Eyken 1993)

*“Judging merit against some yardstick”
(Phillips et al, 1994)*

Do you know?

- How you can show that a project is worth continuing
- What the project has done for the people living in your community
- Why grant providers should continue to fund your project

This is what evaluation and monitoring can help you find out and give you evidence to back up your findings



What is Self Evaluation

Self evaluation is carried out by the organisation that is delivering a project.

The evaluation is internally devised and delivered.

Self Evaluation

“.. is usually seen as inextricably linked with organisational development. Evaluation thus becomes an integral part of an organisation working out what it is trying to achieve, collecting evidence of progress, reflecting on how it is doing, and exploring the implications for future planning and development”

(Charitable Evaluation Services, 1998)

Self Evaluation - Advantages

- The evaluation is more integrated with other organisational processes
- Can tap into internal knowledge more readily
- Is flexible to the needs of the organisation
- Control of evaluation & other data remains internal
- The results are more likely to lead to change
- The process is less threatening to staff & volunteers
- Usually cheaper
- Enables staff and volunteers to learn new skills

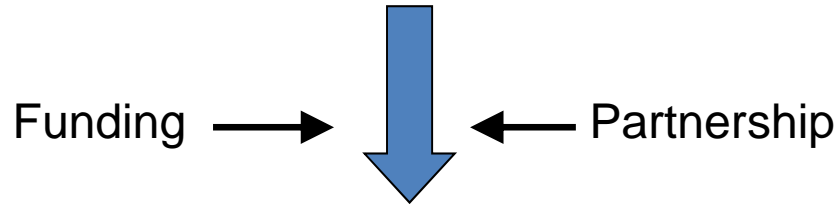
Self evaluation - challenges

- Demands time and resources from the organisation
- May be viewed as less objective
- Internal staff may be too close to the project creating conflicts of interest
- Participants may talk less freely to internal staff
- Staff & volunteers may not have the necessary evaluation skills
- May be difficult to link evaluation findings to broader issues

Project & Evaluation Diagram

What problem do you want to work with?

Needs Assessment



What changes do you want to achieve in your community?
Outcomes

What must you do to achieve this change?
Aims & Objectives

What must you do differently to increase your success?
Programme development



How will you know when this change has occurred?
Performance indicators, outcomes, quality standards

Have you succeeded in producing the required change?
Evaluation of organisation & project

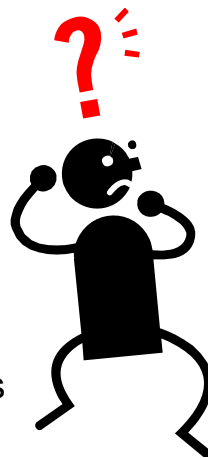
The benefits of evaluation

For Funders

- Ensures good use of public funds
- Highlights good practice
- Identifies gaps in provision
- Provides a basis for selecting among competing applicants
- Informs policy

For Staff

- Provides feedback on performance
- Challenges assumptions and confirms impressions
- Suggests areas to develop further
- Offers access to the views of others
- Helps staff (& volunteers) to see their work in a wider context



For Organisations

- Ensures that resources are used efficiently
- Helps clarify aims & objectives
- Provides evidence of impact
- Sets standards and provides quality control
- Uncovers unexpected consequences
- Provides information for planning and campaigning
- Helps validate new approaches

For Users

- Demonstrates usefulness or limitations of project
- Provides an overview of the project
- Offers a chance to have views heard
- Represents an opportunity for more active participation
- Publicises any gaps

Starting Point

To be able to carry out effective monitoring and evaluation you need to have something to measure against

When you are planning a project you need to set some aims and objectives

Setting Aims & Objectives

Aims

These are general statements of intent, used to indicate the overall purpose of a project or programme.

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/community-support-service/how-to-do/project-planning.htm>

Setting Aims & Objectives

Objectives

- These state what will be achieved at specific points and are more down to earth action statements.
- They provide structure for an event or project
- They act as stepping stones – what skills, knowledge or behaviour are you hoping to change as a result of the project
- They help with planning
- Ensure you use appropriate verbs, avoid word like ‘understand’ unless you can prove it in your evaluation
- Need to be ‘measurable’ as they will act as a basis for appropriate monitoring and evaluation
- Need to be SMART (see next slide)

Setting Aims & Objectives

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Attainable/ Achievable

R = Realistic

T = Have a timetable

What sort of data?

Quantitative or Qualitative

Quantitative

Numerical or statistical data

e.g. the number of attendees

This type of information

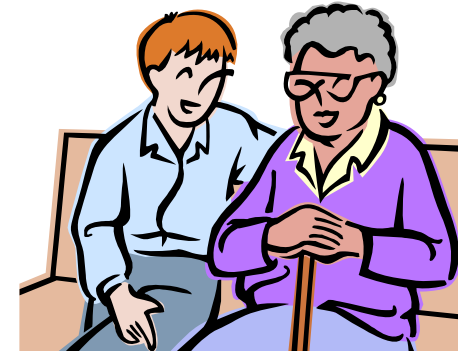
- Gives objective, accurate results
- Can be used to make comparisons
- Does not identify opinions/ feelings
- Unlikely to measure *'impact'* (long term changes)



Quantitative or Qualitative

Qualitative

Observations that do not involve measurements or numbers – e.g. descriptions or opinions

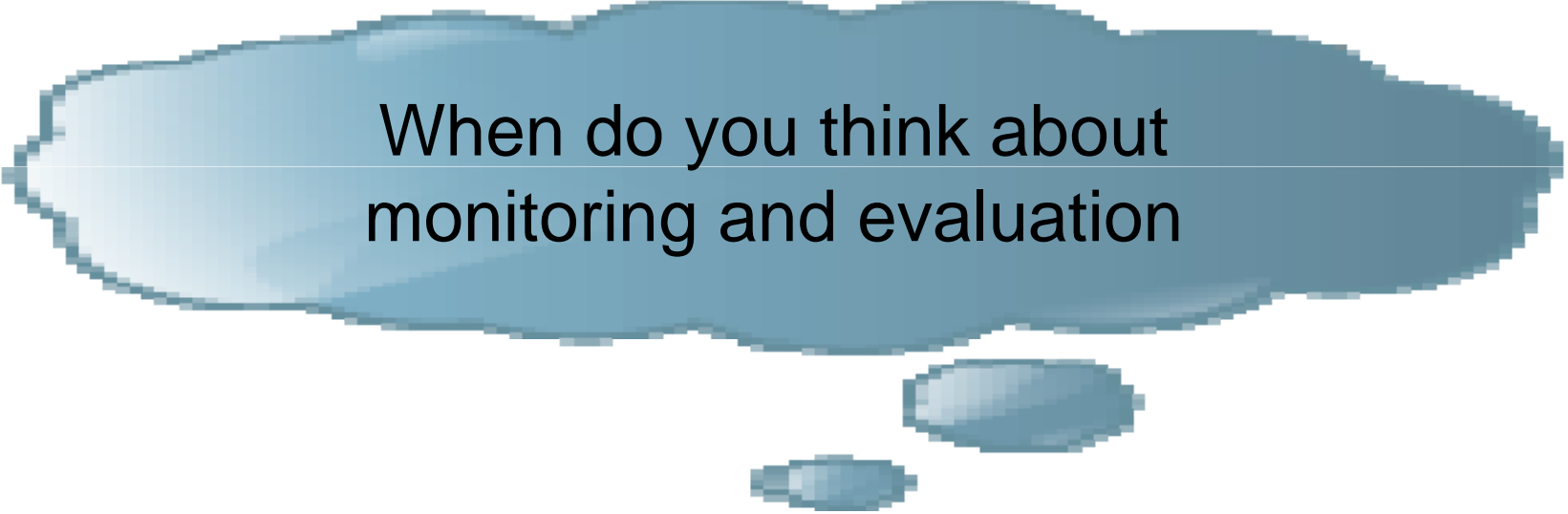


This type of information

- Can produce more in depth, comprehensive information
- Collects opinions that have a holistic view
- Can have problems with reliability if not managed well
- Is subject to researcher bias
- Can be time consuming
- Can't be generalised to the wider community
- Can give an indication of any changes the project has made (impacts)
- Can measure 'soft outcomes' that can not be measured in numbers

Summative or Formative

- Summative – gather the information towards the end of the project
- Formative – Gathering information right from the beginning of the planning stage, Focuses on the process as well as the output, probably the most useful for you.



When do you think about
monitoring and evaluation

Should feature in the first plans for any project –
not an add on at the end

Should ensure you have the time and resources
needed to implement (you can add this cost
to a funding application)

Guidance

- Make it participative
- Make sure you are gathering the information you need – if you don't need it why ask!
- Don't leave it to the last minute
- Plan it and include the costs into your project
- Ensure all staff & volunteers are informed and involved
- Make it fun & interesting



Methods

- Observations

A valid method gathering information, have a think about how this is recorded and evaluated. Photography can be used as one tool for this.

- Questionnaires

Tried and trusted method, remember to make them user friendly – consider equalities and diversity with this method, will everyone be able to contribute equally through this method.

- Interviews

Good way to collect qualitative information, but 1:2:1 method will be time consuming. Also need to ensure interviewers are well trained to reduce interviewer bias.

- Telephone interviews

As above- but an opportunity to speak to people after they have had a chance to reflect on the event or activity.

Methods

- Participant log books

Good method for longer term activities e.g. play scheme or training course

- Group discussion

Useful method, but make sure it is facilitated carefully to allow everyone to have their say. You may want to put ground rules in place or even use a 'talking stick' where only the person holding the stick can speak.

- Focus groups

Bringing 6-8 people together to have a guided discussion can be a very effective method of finding out more in depth information about what people think.

Take a look at the Focus Group Project toolkit







<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/community-support-service/how-to-do.htm>

- Data collection

There are several ways to collecting numbers, ethnicity, age etc (see next slide), but only collect this information if you are going to use it

Interactive Evaluation Methods

How did you get here today?

	Walk	
	Car	
	Bus	
	Train	
	Bicycle	
	Other	

Using sticky dots, this form of data collection can be used to gather a wide range of information.

In this example it is asking how people travelled and has this in picture and word form to make it more accessible

You could also use this to gather age groups, ethnicity or any other information that falls into groups.

Have this at the beginning of your event when participants are arriving – it gives you a chance to talk to people and an opportunity to gather information in a non threatening way.

N.B. You could also mount this on a piece of polystyrene and use map pins if you wanted to reuse it for several events

Interactive Evaluation Methods

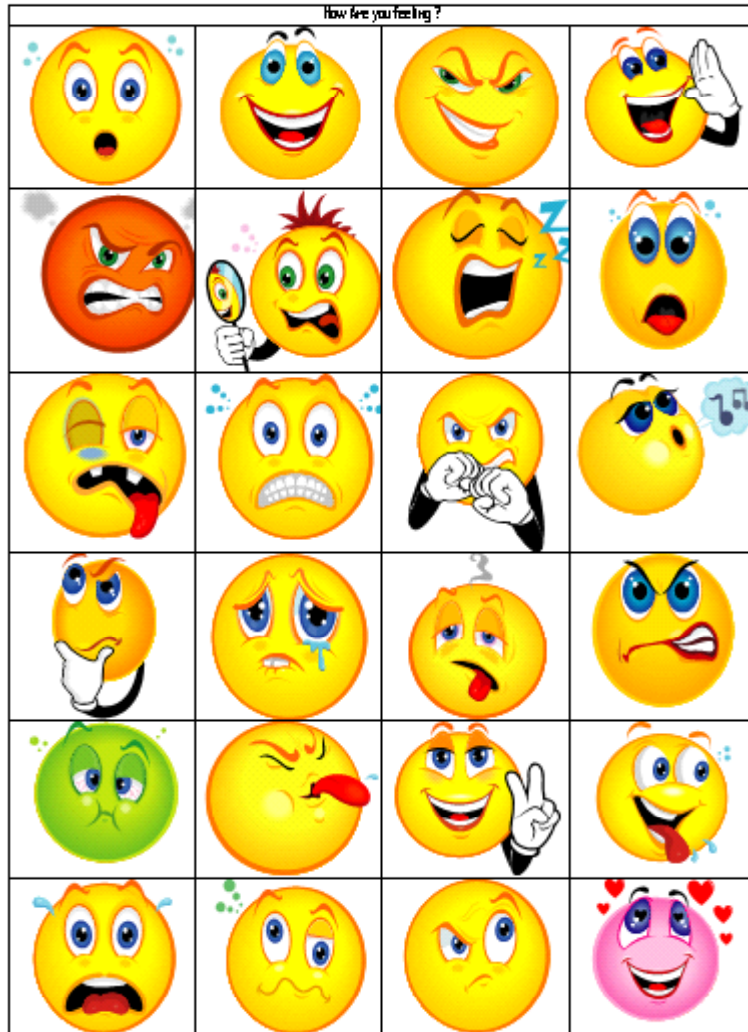


Put the three faces on the wall and give each participant a sticky dot to show how they feel about the event.

To make this even more effective you can do this at the beginning and end of the event to track changes

Hopefully you will end up with a face like the one shown on the left

Measuring Change



This sheet can be used for a fairly small group to find out how people feel at the beginning of an activity and again at the end.

It is a good ice breaker (in an appropriate situation) as you can ask people to explain why they have chosen a particular face. This is then repeated at the end.

This could then indicate how participants feel at the end of the process and with careful facilitation will give you an idea of how effective the activity has been

Balls in Buckets



Simple voting Systems

Think laterally about the way you collect data – ask a question and have a bucket (or some other receptacle) for each of the possible answers. Give each of the applicants a ball (or something similar) to put in the bucket that is showing the statement they agree with

Tip – if you want accurate results make sure there are no toddlers around playing ball!

Evaluation Checklist

<i>Issues to consider when embarking on evaluation</i>	Tick
Do stakeholders have differing views about the purpose of evaluation and the approach adopted	
Who will be involved in the self evaluation	
What form of support will be available to the staff undertaking the evaluation	
Do Staff or volunteers need training in evaluation skills	
Is the process of self evaluation integrated with other organisational processes	
Have realistic time scales been made of the time needed to carry out the self evaluation	
Have steps been taken to increase the credibility of the data gathered	
Do you have frameworks or other resources to guide the evaluation	

10 top tips for ensuring your evaluations are sound

<http://rodlaird.hostinguk.org/default.asp?page=398>

Monitoring & Evaluation



Hampshire
County Council

Assessing Impacts

These are the longer term effects that your project may have – how has participating impacted on the life of people who took part.

- Record expectations at the beginning
- Carry out a mid point review
- Complete an end of session review

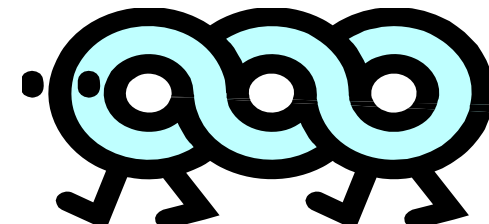
Assessing Impacts – what you might ask

- Will they come again/ take part in future opportunities – think about sustainability for the future
- Did the event meet their expectations
- What did they enjoy/ not enjoy
- Things they gained
- Is there anything they want to do as a result of attending this event
- Ask for simple words to summarise event

Completing the Loop

Ensure the information is fed back to the right place at the right time and in the right format to -

- 😊 Funding body
- 😊 Workers (staff & volunteers)
- 😊 Participants (including any partner organisations)
- 😊 Community (users)
- 😊 Other stakeholders



Finally

- 🌻 Evaluation and monitoring gives you a chance to be creative just make sure the method you use is appropriate to the situation or activity.
- 🌻 Make it fun, but plan it carefully as part of your project to ensure you get the information you need
- 🌻 Don't forget to use the results to help you plan future events and feedback to any stakeholders
- 🌻 Don't think of monitoring and evaluation as a chore – look for ways to make it fun and you will get better reactions and results from the participants