



Evaluation Toolkit

A practical guide to project evaluation

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1 What is Evaluation?

◆ Definitions

The means of systematically determining the extent to which a planned intervention or programme achieves predetermined objectives.

World Health Organisation

Evaluation is not about establishing 'certainties' or even about 'proving' anything. Rather, it is a process which helps us see more clearly what it is we are doing, and the nature of the issues being confronted. It is a 'way of seeing'.

Van der Eyken, 1992

There are different definitions of evaluation and different motives for carrying it out; whether it is to show what difference an intervention has made to someone's life or to learn about how well a process works. However, there are 3 main uses for evaluation:

- ◆ It is a way of assessing whether objectives have been achieved
- ◆ It is a way of assessing the outcomes of projects for people who use them
- ◆ It is a way of learning from successes and mistakes

◆ Principles

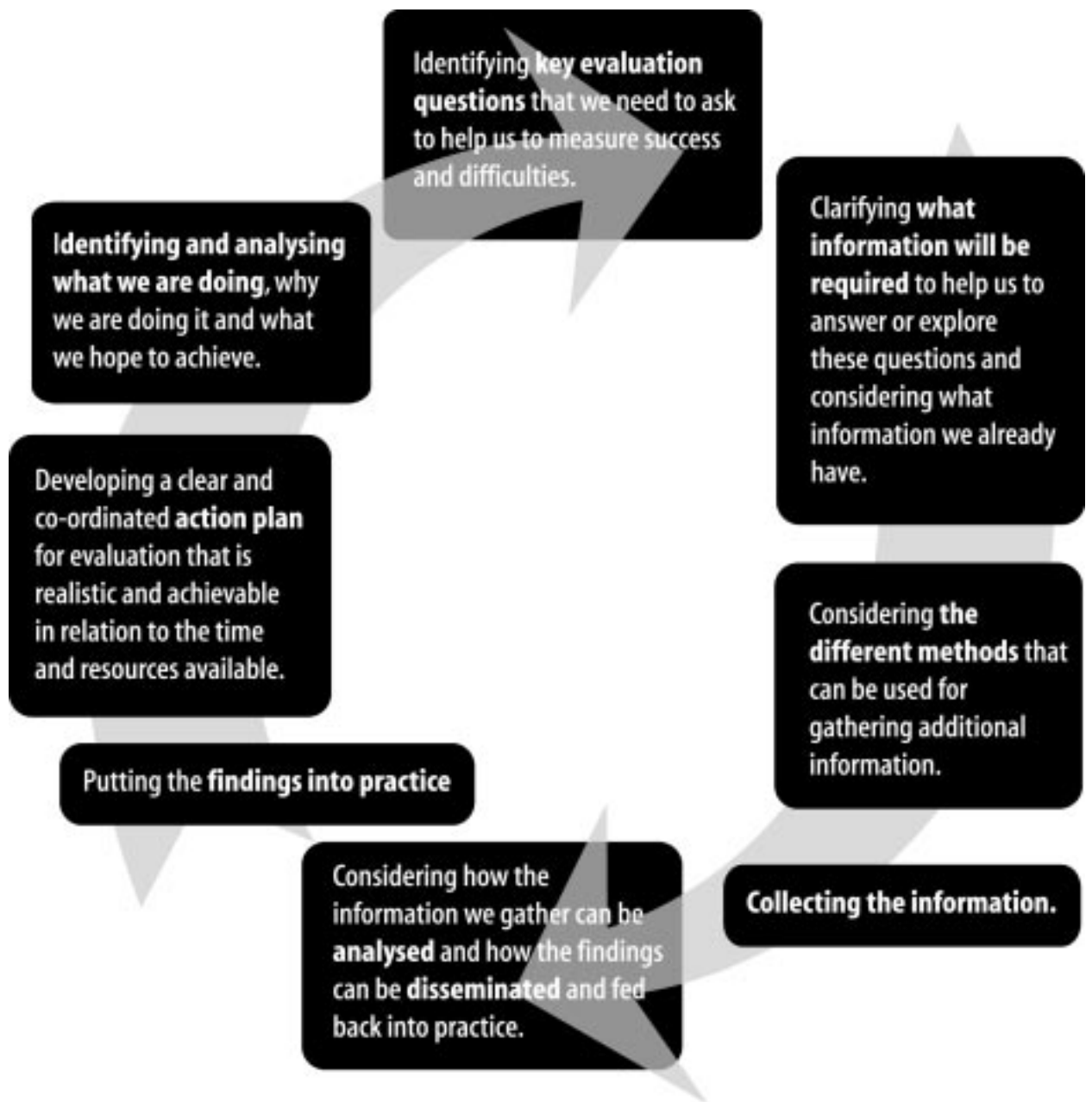
If you would like to evaluate your work, or have been asked to by funders, there are some key principles that you should keep in mind:

- ◆ Evaluation should be an ongoing part of planning and development – not an afterthought
- ◆ Evaluation should involve all stakeholders and be relevant to them
- ◆ Evaluation should be part of learning and sharing successes and difficulties

The diagram on the following page shows the steps in the evaluation process and you should also think how an evaluation will link to your project planning and development cycle, so that evaluation becomes part of everyday good practice.



Steps in the evaluation process¹



¹Adapted from Harris V, Wilde, P and Wilson M (2000) An Evaluation handbook for HAZ funded projects in Wakefield and District



2 Building Evaluation into Project Planning

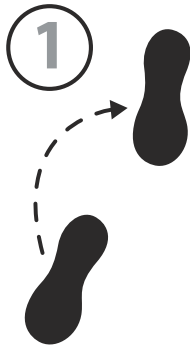
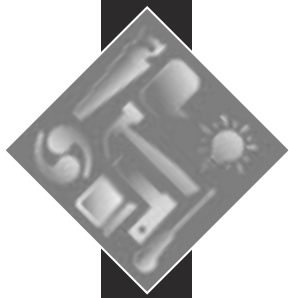
A Framework for Planning, Performance Management & Evaluation¹

This framework is based around the following key questions:

- ◆ Where are we now and where do we want to be?
- ◆ What will be different when we get there?
- ◆ What will we need to do to get there?
- ◆ What milestones will we need to reach at each stage of the journey?
- ◆ How will we know when we've reached them?
- ◆ How will we show others that we've reached them?
- ◆ How will we learn from our experiences en route?

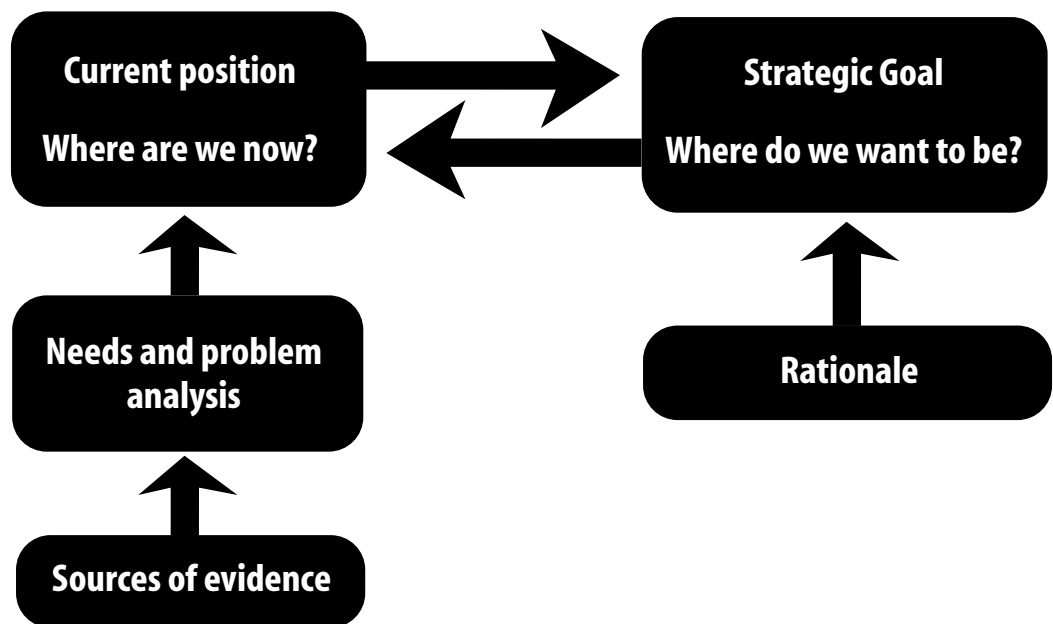
The framework follows a 6 step process but is not intended to be followed sequentially in a slavish way. All the steps need to be considered and if you are planning something from scratch with a clean sheet, then it might be helpful to follow the steps from 1 to 6. In the real world such situations are comparatively rare so the order in which you consider the steps will depend on what has already happened and what can and cannot be changed. However, even a little retrospective planning can go a long way so if you find yourself plummeted into activity without a clear idea of what outcomes you are expected to achieve, but with an instruction to evaluate your efforts, then this framework is still for you!

¹This framework draws on a number of other planning, performance management and evaluation models, notably theories of change (Connell JP, Kubisch AC, Schorr LB, Weiss CH, eds. *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods & Contexts*. Washington DC: The Aspen Institute, 1995), realistic evaluation (Pawson R, Tilley N. *Realistic Evaluation*. London: Sage Publications, 1997) and logical frameworks (Practical Concepts (1978) *The Logical Framework: A Managers Guide to a Scientific Approach to Design and Evaluation*. Washington D.C.).



Step 1: Where are we now and where do we want to be?

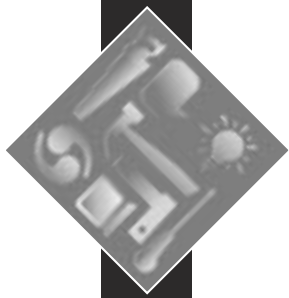
This step involves clarifying and describing the current position in terms of the need or problem to be addressed and setting out the strategic goal in relation to that need or problem. These two tasks have been merged into one step because they are inextricably linked – there's no point setting a goal without reference to the current position; at the same time, analysis of the current position needs to be in relation to the strategic goal. In setting out on a journey, we need to know both where we are now and where we want to go.



Clarifying the Current Position

This involves setting out our analysis of the problem or need which our initiative seeks to address and asking the following questions:

- ◆ What is the need or problem?
- ◆ Why do we think it exists?
- ◆ Whose need or problem is it (what is our target group or area)?
- ◆ What evidence is there to support our analysis?
- ◆ Who else has an interest in this need or problem (who are the other stakeholders)?
- ◆ Is our analysis shared by these other stakeholders?
- ◆ Can we describe the current position (establish baseline information)?



Key Points about clarifying the current position:

- ◆ A lot of information about needs and problems is in peoples' heads – to be of any use for evaluation, it needs to be documented.
- ◆ There can be many myths about the needs and problems of particular groups and communities. It is important to ensure that our analysis of the current position is supported by evidence, not just impression and anecdote.
- ◆ Needs and problems are generally defined by those stakeholders with most power and influence. Organisations providing services usually have more influence on the definition of need than those who are deemed to have the need. In setting out our current position it is important to be clear about whose need/problem is being analysed and who has had a say in the analysis.
- ◆ Traditionally, health and welfare services have been based on a 'deficit model' – there is generally much more focus on what is wrong with individuals, families and communities than what is right about them. A current position analysis should not lose sight of the strengths and resources which exist as well as the needs and problems.

Establishing the Strategic Goal

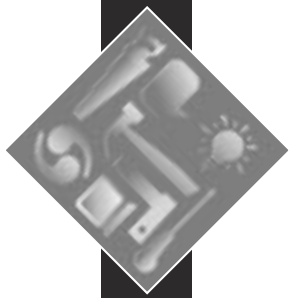
The strategic goal is a clear, succinct statement of intent. It should be capable of being summarised in a simple sentence which can be readily understood by all stakeholders. It should be visionary and inspirational. It should have a clear link to the current position analysis.

Establishing the strategic goal involves asking the following questions:

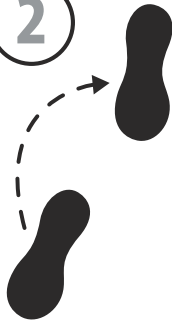
- ◆ What are we seeking to achieve with our initiative?
- ◆ Does this goal fit with the goals of the wider organisation/s?
- ◆ Is it expressed in a way which can be clearly understood?
- ◆ Is it shared by the key stakeholders?
- ◆ Is there a clear rationale for this goal?

Key points about establishing the strategic goal:

- ◆ The strategic goal is intended to be an overarching statement of intent – it should be kept short and simple.
- ◆ Avoid qualifying words and phrases such as 'as appropriate' or 'where possible'. These are weasel words often used to minimise expectations but which are actually quite meaningless.
- ◆ The strategic goal needs to be understood and shared by all the key stakeholders. This requires a participatory process and clear communication. If it is formulated by a few managers and concealed in a strategy document nobody reads, it is virtually useless.
- ◆ A strategic goal should be aspirational and inspirational but not laughable – it needs to be located within the real world.



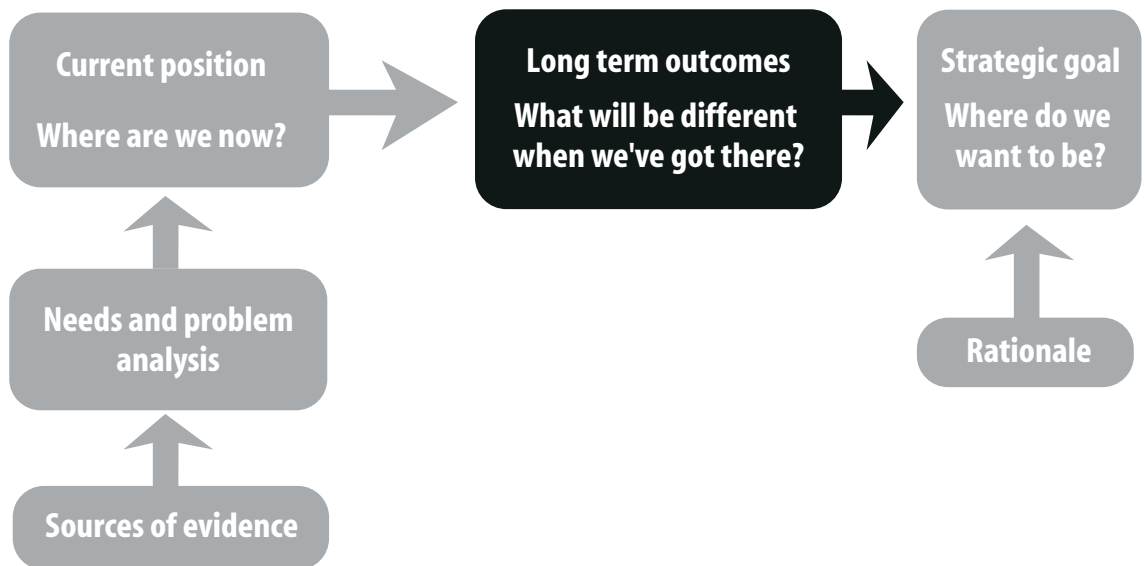
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Step 2: What will be different when we get there?

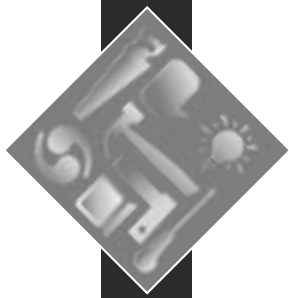
This step involves setting out the long-term outcomes which we seek to achieve from our initiative and agreeing a timescale by which they can realistically be achieved. Outcomes are the results we expect to see as a consequence of our interventions. They need to be focused on changes for people's health and well-being, not just changes in the way services are delivered.

Timescale – When will we get there?



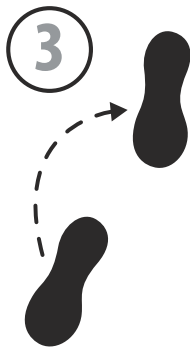
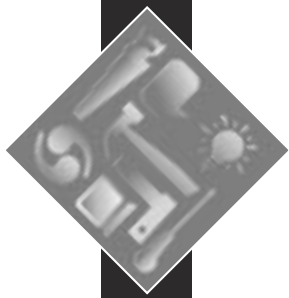
Setting out the long-term outcomes involves asking the following questions:

- ◆ If we were to be successful in bringing about positive change, what would be different for the target group or area we identified in Step 1?
- ◆ When do we realistically believe we can achieve these changes?
- ◆ Can we state these changes in terms of clear outcomes?
- ◆ Would these be understood and shared as being the most important outcomes by all the key stakeholders?
- ◆ How will we know when we've achieved these outcomes – are they measurable?



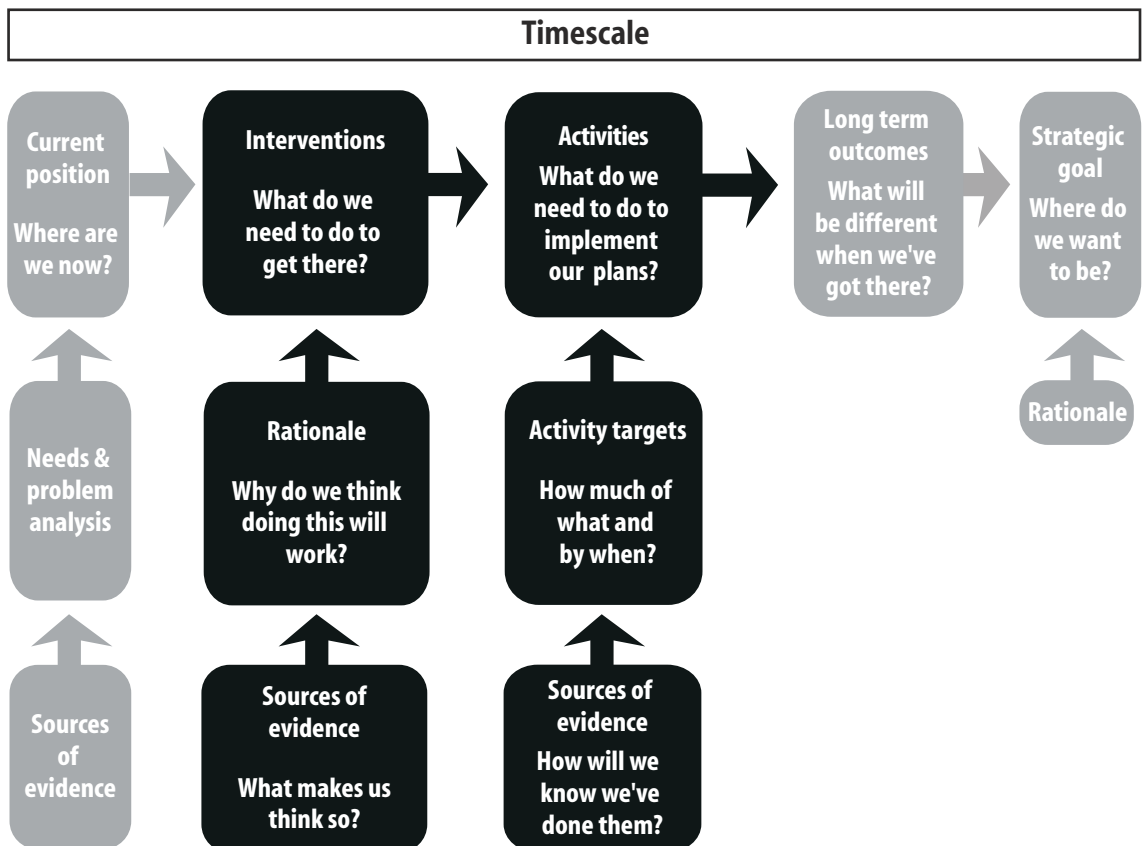
Key points about agreeing long-term outcomes:

- ◆ One of the most common mistakes when setting out outcomes is to express them in terms of changes to the way services are delivered or organised. Although these are important changes, they are only a means by which better outcomes for people may be achieved. Long-term outcomes need to be people focused.
- ◆ Setting a realistic timescale is very important. If you believe that achieving meaningful change will take 10 years that needs to be made explicit – even if your project only has two year funding. Pretending you can achieve in two years what will realistically take ten, is doing nobody any favours.
- ◆ Outcomes should be clearly linked to the current position analysis and the strategic goal. They should be a measurable expression of the changes which would be visible if the goal was being achieved.



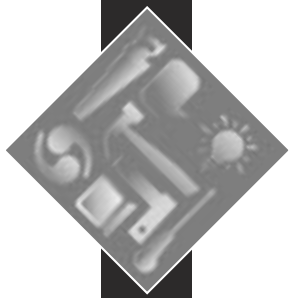
Step 3: What will we need to do to get there?

This step involves planning the interventions which we believe will be required to bring about our intended outcomes and the activities needed to implement these plans. In reality, many of our interventions are often pre-determined but this is an important step in assessing whether what we plan to do is likely to contribute to the outcomes we have set.



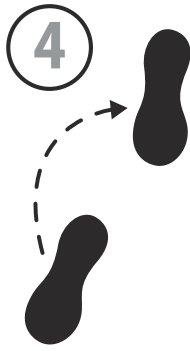
This step involves asking the following questions:

- ◆ What needs to happen in order for us to move from our current position towards our strategic goal?
- ◆ What do we need to do to make these things happen?
- ◆ Why do we believe these interventions will work in our particular context ('what is our theory of change')?
- ◆ Have these interventions been tried before nationally or locally?
- ◆ What evidence do we have for their effectiveness?
- ◆ Can we replicate models in our locality which have been shown to work elsewhere?
- ◆ Are our plans shared by the other key stakeholders?
- ◆ Can we articulate a rationale for our plans which is plausible, realistic, achievable and testable?



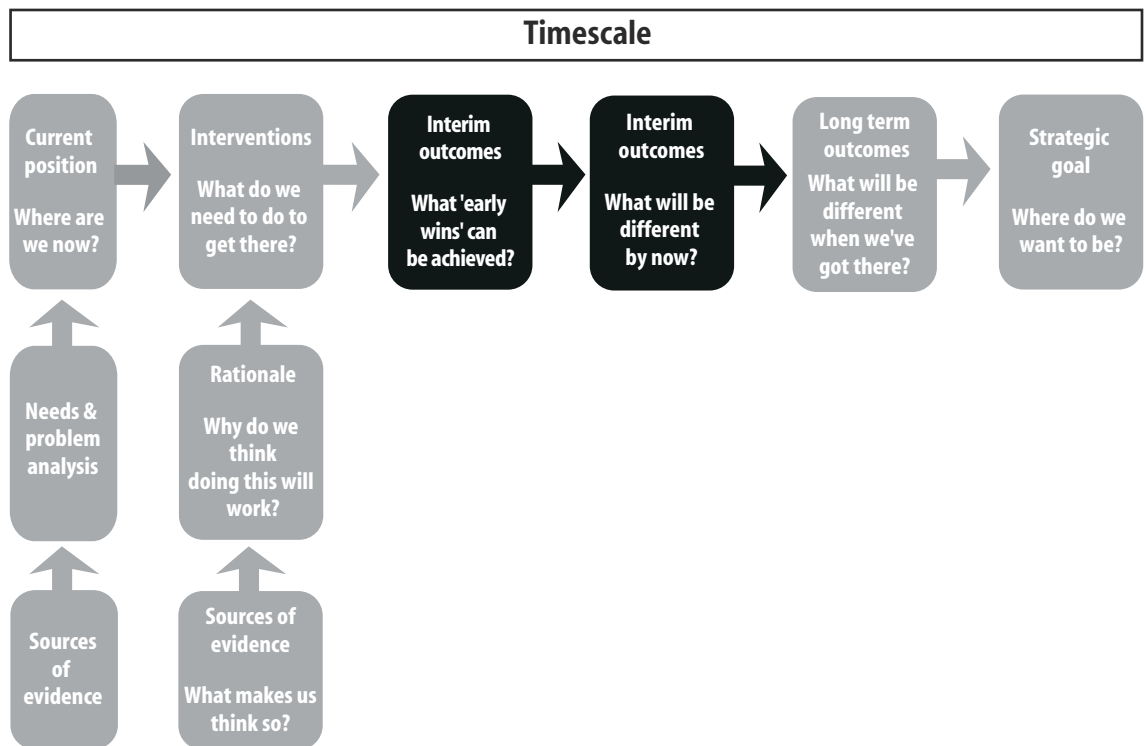
Key Points about planning interventions:

- ◆ Although planning interventions is step 3 in this framework, in reality it is often the first thing that is planned. Frequently, service providers and funders have committed themselves to developing a particular kind of service before carrying out a systematic analysis of need and often without an explicitly stated set of outcome objectives. In these circumstances, step 3 will entail assessing the likely effectiveness of the planned intervention and making some adjustments to the plans accordingly.
- ◆ In planning interventions it makes sense to use the available evidence for what works. The majority of interventions in health and social care are not evidence-based. This may be because existing evidence is not routinely used by planners, or because reliable evidence of effectiveness does not exist, or the available evidence is not applicable to the local context.
- ◆ Where the evidence for a planned intervention is uncertain, it is particularly important to build in a means of evaluating its effects.
- ◆ Interventions are frequently planned by service providers with relatively little input by those likely to be on the receiving end. People who use facilities and services often have expertise which can be overlooked in planning and designing interventions



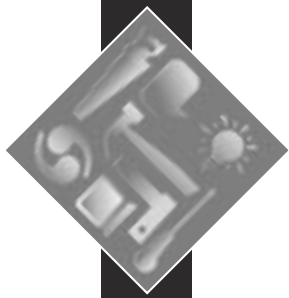
Step 4: What milestones will we need to reach at each stage of the journey?

This step involves setting out the interim outcomes which we expect to have achieved at periodic intervals on our way to the strategic goal. These should include some 'early win' outcomes – things which can be achieved in the shorter term.



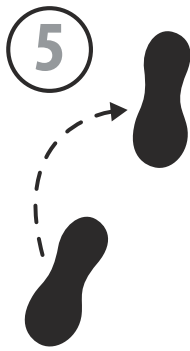
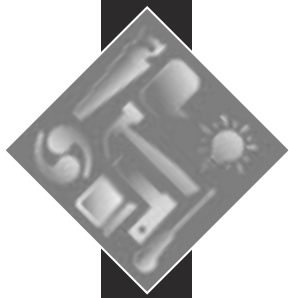
Setting interim outcomes involves asking the following questions:

- ◆ If we are to achieve the long-term outcomes we identified at Step 2, what will we need to have achieved at the intermediate points of our journey?
- ◆ What will we need to have achieved in the short-term?
- ◆ Are these interim outcomes realistic, achievable and testable?
- ◆ Are these outcomes shared by key stakeholders?



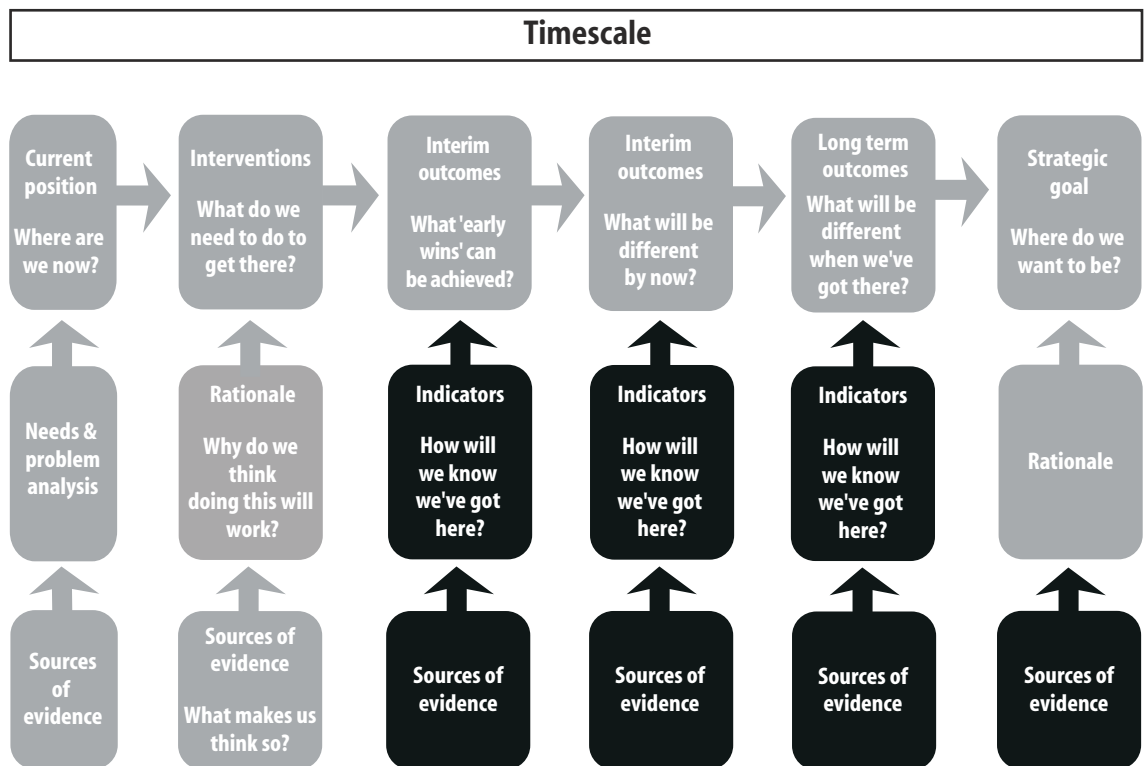
Key Points about setting interim outcomes:

- ◆ Whilst long-term outcomes should be people-focused (improvements in the lives of our target group), interim outcomes are more likely to be a mixture of people-focused changes and service-focused changes.
- ◆ It is important to be clear about timescales for achieving interim outcomes. If you have set your long-term outcomes to be achieved by year 5, you need to be clear what outcomes you will need to see by year 4, by year 2, by year 1.
- ◆ Establishing these timescales is particularly important if your project is short-term funded and you hope to use evaluation to support further funding bids. You should be able to demonstrate that you have achieved your planned outcomes in two years and are therefore on target to achieve long-term outcomes if funding is continued.



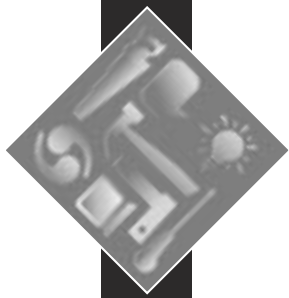
Step 5: How will we know when we've reached our outcomes and show others that we've reached them?

This step involves setting out the indicators that we will seek and the sources of evidence we will use to assess whether or not we are achieving our outcomes:



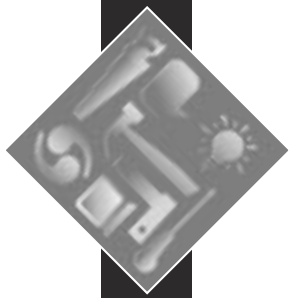
Identifying indicators and sources of evidence involves asking the following questions:

- ◆ How will we know whether we are achieving our outcomes?
- ◆ What will be different at each stage of our journey if we're being successful?
- ◆ What will show that we have done the things we said we'd do?
- ◆ Who is our target audience for this evidence? What will they be most interested in knowing?
- ◆ What quantitative evidence might there be to demonstrate achievement?
- ◆ What qualitative evidence might there be to demonstrate achievement?
- ◆ How will we build the collection of this evidence into our planning?
- ◆ How can we involve all the key stakeholders in collecting this evidence?
- ◆ What evaluative tools might be most appropriate for collecting this evidence?
- ◆ What do we need to be doing now to ensure that we have systems for collecting this evidence?



Key points about choosing indicators and collecting evidence:

- ◆ Some evidence is easier to collect than others which can make it tempting to collect what is collectable regardless of how useful it might be. It is important not to fall into the trap of monitoring for its own sake. Avoid the mindless number crunching syndrome!
- ◆ In attempting to demonstrate a causal link between intervention A and outcome B not all evidence is equal. Some will be more convincing than others. The aim of self-evaluation is to use the best possible evidence available in the circumstances and to be honest about what it can and cannot prove.
- ◆ Where possible, systems for collecting evidence should complement the practice of the project rather than being an additional burden. It is worth thinking about what recording and reviewing processes already exist and whether any of these existing systems can also be used for evaluation purposes.
- ◆ There are a variety of methods and tools which can be used to collect evaluative information. Which approaches you use will depend on the sort of information you are trying to collect and from whom. It is worth being creative in the use of methods and tools. Questionnaires are not the only option.

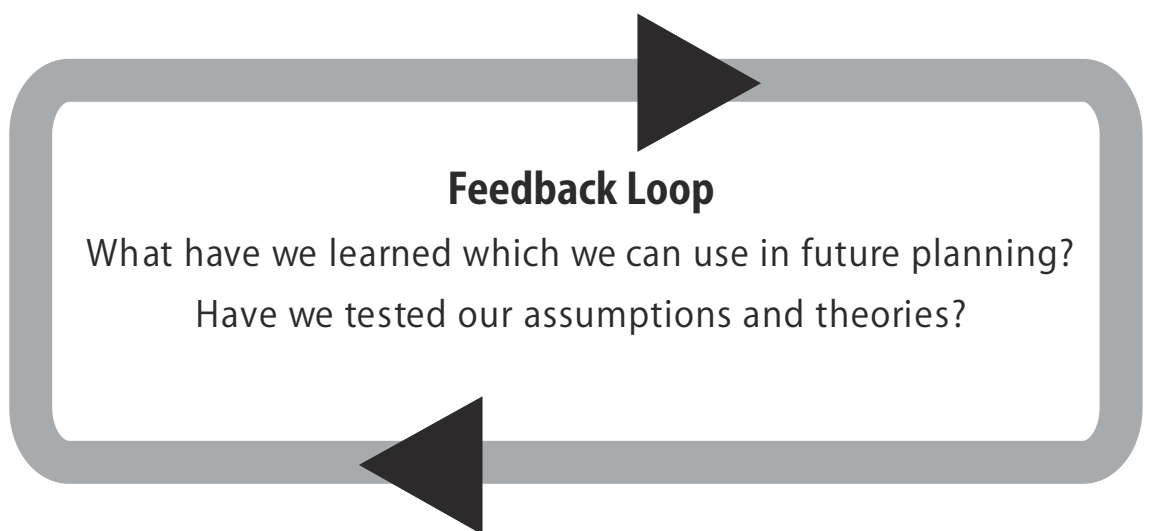
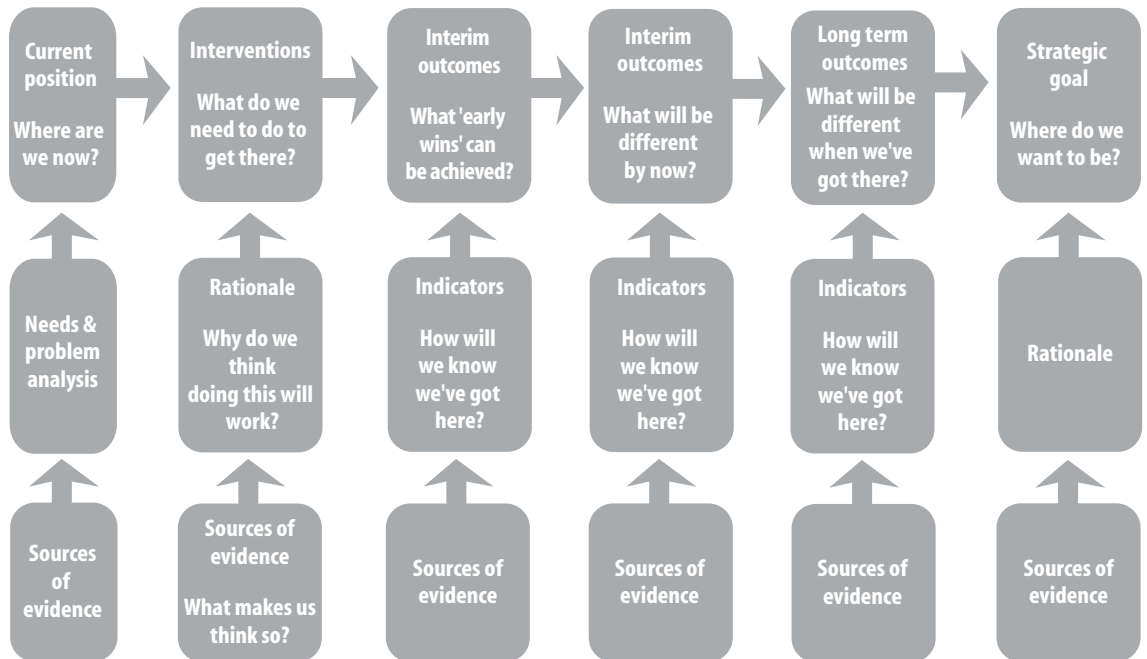


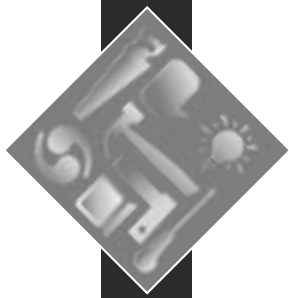
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Step 6: How will we learn from our experiences en route?

This step involves making sure that there is a 'feedback loop' at every stage of our planning, performance management and evaluation process.





Step 6 involves asking the following questions:

- ◆ Have we built into our planning a way of having regular reviews with all our partners?
- ◆ Are we open to learning from our mistakes as well as our successes?
- ◆ Are we willing to spell out the assumptions implicit in our plan and test them against the evidence?
- ◆ If we are being successful, what were the factors that made it work in our particular context?
- ◆ If we are less successful than we'd hoped, what were the factors which inhibited our progress in our particular context?
- ◆ What do we need to do differently now and are we flexible enough to change our plans?
- ◆ Are these lessons transferable to other situations?
- ◆ How will we share what we've learned with others?

Key points about the feedback loop:

- ◆ This is arguably the most important part of any planning and evaluation process, yet probably the most frequently overlooked.
- ◆ There is no point in collecting performance management and evaluative information unless we are willing to use it to inform future planning. It is worth having an honest discussion with partner agencies about this from the beginning particularly if there is any risk of evidence being sensitive.
- ◆ Sometimes organisational planning processes mitigate against learning. If plans are set in stone so that a course of action cannot be changed once embarked upon, then systems of performance management and evaluation are almost pointless. Flexibility in planning implies flexibility in resource management.
- ◆ There are a variety of ways of sharing learning. Which approaches to use will depend on the sort of information you are trying to share and with whom. Again, it is worth being creative in the use of approaches.



3 Involving Stakeholders in Evaluation¹

◆ What is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder is anyone who is affected by or who can influence the impact of an initiative. Stakeholders can be individuals, groups, communities or organisations.

Examples of stakeholders include:

- ◆ People who use the services of the initiative
- ◆ People who live in the area of the initiative
- ◆ Staff and volunteers
- ◆ Partner agencies
- ◆ Funding bodies
- ◆ Local and national policy or decision-makers

Stakeholders are sometimes divided into:

- ◆ Primary stakeholders: people who are directly affected by the initiative (either benefiting from it or adversely affected by it)
- ◆ Secondary stakeholders: all others who have a stake or interest in the initiative

Clearly, not all stakeholders have the same level of power. Stakeholders who use services may have less influence over them than those who fund them or make decisions about local or national policy.

◆ Stakeholder Analysis

When you are planning your initiative it can be useful to carry out a stakeholder analysis to look at who your stakeholders are, how important they are to your initiative and what influence they have over it.

1. List all of the stakeholders in your initiative.
2. Categorise your stakeholders in terms of their importance to the initiative and influence on the initiative.

Importance: those who are directly affected by the initiative (either benefiting from it or adversely affected by it)

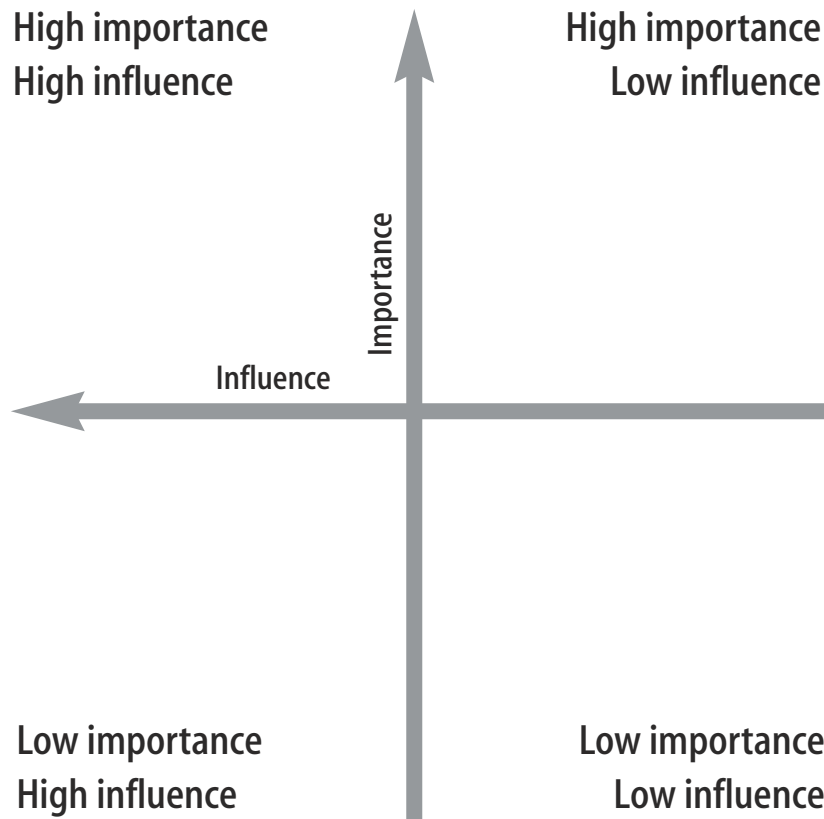
Influence: those who can affect or influence the initiative

Whilst this is a useful exercise, it can be a difficult distinction to make. It might help to use the table overleaf which has a few examples already filled in.

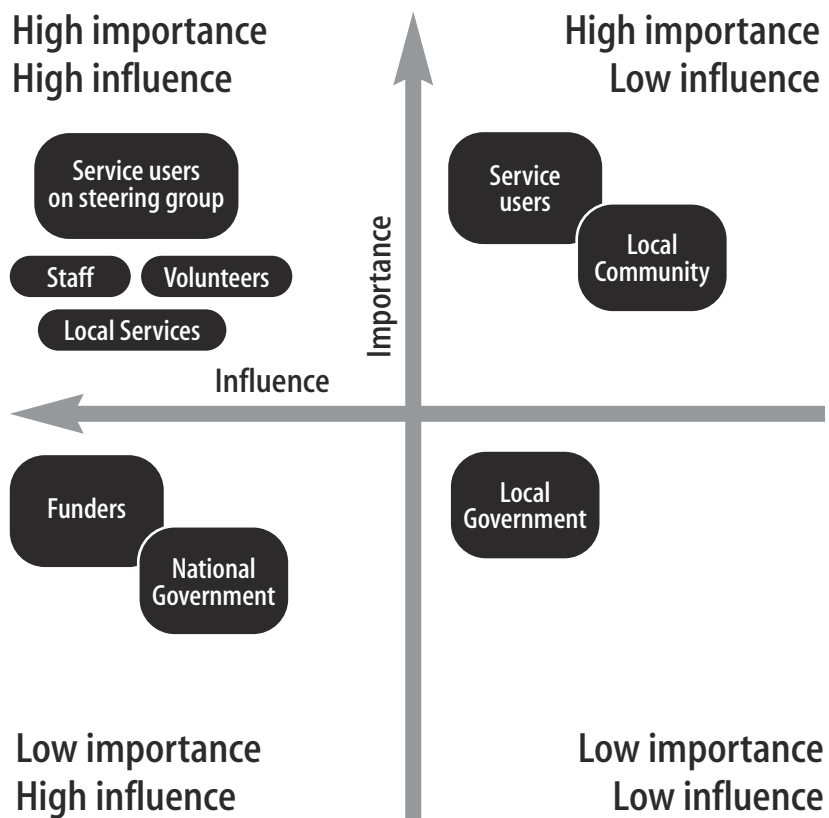
¹This section draws heavily on information from a Project Cycle Management/Logical Framework workshop put on by Philip Dearden from the Centre for Rural Development and Training, at the University of Wolverhampton.



Table/matrix for a stakeholder analysis



Example of a basic stakeholder analysis





You will find that some groups break down further; for example different service users have different levels of influence over a project, e.g. parents often have more influence than children. You might want to make a distinction between the majority of service users, and service users who are on your steering group, for example.

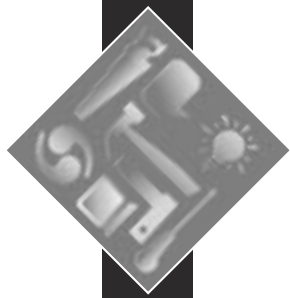
Look at your table; are there any stakeholders who are very important to the project (they are affected directly by it), but have relatively low influence over the project? If this is the case you might want to think about how you can involve them in your project, and give them more influence.

Look again at your table and consider how your different stakeholders need to be involved in your evaluation (see below).

◆ Stakeholders and evaluation

Different stakeholders will have different interests in the evaluation of the initiative. They may have different priorities for what should be evaluated and what methods should be used. They will vary in their level of interest from virtually none to considerable.

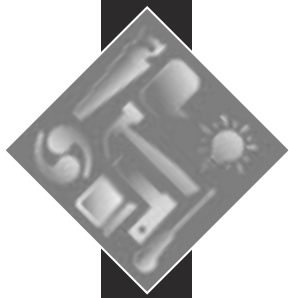
Stakeholders can be involved in the evaluation process in several ways as illustrated by the table overleaf:



Stakeholders' participation in evaluation – an illustrative model²

Role of stakeholder	Role of evaluator/nature of evaluation
Stakeholders as non-participants	Evaluator formulates research question, designs and implements study which does not involve stakeholders at any stage.
Stakeholders as research objects	Evaluator formulates research question, designs and study which involves stakeholders in an entirely passive capacity e.g. observational study. Some clinical trials are examples of this.
Stakeholders as passive respondents	Evaluator formulates research question, designs and implements a study which involves people as respondents of structured interviews. Stakeholders' participation is limited to giving consent and responding within confines of the interview schedule e.g. survey or poll. No additional information or feedback is provided to respondents.
Stakeholders as active respondents	Evaluator formulates research question, designs and implements study which involves people as respondents in semi – unstructured interviews. Stakeholders are given greater freedom to express views and influence the questions within the parameters of the study design. The researcher may seek to encourage stakeholders to be active respondents by seeking their views in a variety of ways e.g. individual interviews, focus groups, visual techniques. Researcher provides information and feedback to respondents and may invite comment on findings.
Stakeholders as consultants	Evaluator formulates the research question but involves stakeholders in shaping the design and implementation of the study to be carried out. Stakeholders may also be involved in advising on ways in which the findings might be disseminated. Examples include involvement of stakeholders on advisory groups.
Stakeholders as evaluators	Stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the study. This involvement may be largely instrumental e.g. via the use of service users as interviewers in a study which has been completely planned and designed by 'professional' researchers. More participatory examples include those where stakeholders have designed and carried out the study in partnership with professional researchers or with no professional involvement.

This model is not intended to be viewed as a hierarchy – extensive participation is no guarantee of good evaluation. However, some level of participation is essential to effective evaluation. The issues to be decided are who needs to be involved and to what degree.



Involving service users and the community in the evaluation

As key stakeholders in your project, local people/services users can be involved at every stage of the process; setting the outcomes measures, developing appropriate ways of collecting relevant data, carrying out the evaluation, assisting in the analysis and disseminating the final product.

Community participation and user involvement can result in a more relevant evaluation, and improve response rates.

It is important to consider what will motivate people to take part, what their role and responsibilities will be, and how they will receive feedback. You will need to consider what training and support may need to be offered to those who get involved.

◆ Checklist for Involving Stakeholders in Evaluation

- ◆ Who are the stakeholders of your initiative? (include primary and secondary stakeholders)
- ◆ What are their interests in relation to the initiative and its objectives?
- ◆ How important is each stakeholder?
- ◆ How influential is each stakeholder?
- ◆ Which stakeholders need to be involved in the evaluation?
- ◆ What level of involvement should they have?
 - To be informed about the evaluation (i.e. provided with information about the evaluation process and the findings)
 - To be consulted about the evaluation (i.e. given an opportunity to have a say about what should be evaluated and how)
 - To be partners in the evaluation (i.e. given an active role in deciding what should be evaluated and how)
 - To control the evaluation (i.e. to have the final say in what should be evaluated and how)
- ◆ What role should they play in the evaluation?
 - In the planning of the evaluation?
 - In collecting the information for the evaluation?
 - In interpreting the findings?
 - In making use of the findings?
 - In disseminating the findings?

4 The Evaluation Planning Checklist

The main aim of spending time on planning your evaluation is to clarify its purpose. The kind of information you collect will be determined by this purpose. Without proper planning it is very easy to waste time collecting too much of the wrong information.

The planning stage does not have to take too long. Answering the following checklist of questions should help:

What is the evaluation for?

You may simply be aiming to satisfy the minimum requirements of your funders or you could have more ambitious plans. For example, if you hope to attract funding from other sources in the future then you may want to do more than provide evidence that you have met the requirements of your existing funding. You will want to convince other bodies that your project is effective and that your approach offers real value for money. You may also want to publicise your work and share what you have learned with others – that may mean collecting information not only about what you have achieved (outcomes), but how you set about it and what you learned from your successes and failures along the way (processes).

What are the main research questions?

Are you seeking to answer questions about effectiveness or efficiency or both?

Effectiveness evaluation is concerned with measuring the *outcomes* of your activities. If you want to evaluate your effectiveness then you will want to know whether your activities have brought about any positive change for young people and whether that change is likely to last over the long term.

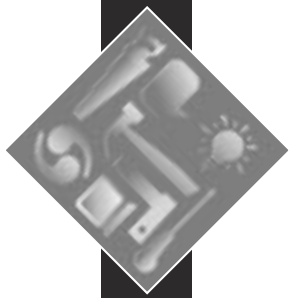
If you want to be sure that you are doing some good, then effectiveness evaluation is what you should be seeking to do.

Efficiency evaluation is more concerned with measuring *outputs*. If you want to evaluate your efficiency then you will want to know whether you are providing the right number of services to the right people and they are of the right quality.

This is sometimes called value for money.

If you are sure that your activities are effective provided they are delivered in the right way, then efficiency evaluation may be appropriate for you.

In reality, most projects want to do both. They need to ensure that their service is provided efficiently but they also want to know about the outcomes of their services.



Who is the intended audience?

The answer to this should be closely linked to the above e.g. if your funder is the main target audience for your evaluation, then what will they want to know? What is really important to them? There may be other potential audiences who have different interests. What will the evaluation need to cover and how will it need to be presented to be most useful to these audiences?

What role do service users have in this evaluation?

Service users will need to be an integral part of your evaluation but the role they play will depend on a number of factors including:

- ◆ The nature of the research question
- ◆ The time, interest and commitment on the part of service users to be involved
- ◆ The skills and the resources available to support their involvement

If you intend to involve service users there are a few factors you need to consider at this planning stage:

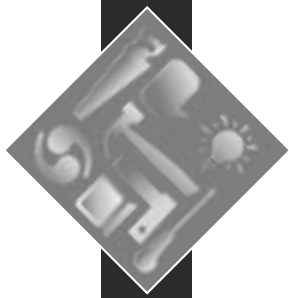
- ◆ Involve them as soon as possible. If they have not been involved in the planning so far, think how you might do so. Involving them once the staff have got it all sewn up can be worse than not involving them at all.
- ◆ What role do you want them to play? Are your expectations realistic?
- ◆ How are you going to support their involvement? The participation of service users takes time and needs resourcing.
- ◆ Will you involve all service users or just a few and how will you decide?

Who else needs to be involved?

Depending on the purpose of your evaluation, there may need to be a whole range of other groups and individuals involved. These may include:

- ◆ Staff
- ◆ Community groups
- ◆ Volunteers
- ◆ Partner or referring agencies

If your evaluation depends on the co-operation and goodwill of any of these, you may want to involve representatives in this planning process. A stakeholder analysis can be a helpful way of clarifying who needs to be involved and what their main interests are in the evaluation.



Who is going to do the work for this evaluation?

There may not be extra resources available to buy in the time and expertise of an independent evaluator. However, even with self-evaluation the following questions need to be addressed:

◆ Who will take overall responsibility for ensuring the evaluation gets done?

In most cases the evaluation will consist of a range of tasks which need not be undertaken by the same person. However, it is very important to ensure that someone has the co-ordinating role to make sure that everything gets done to the agreed timescale and to produce the final report.

◆ Who will do what and how are the tasks to be shared out?

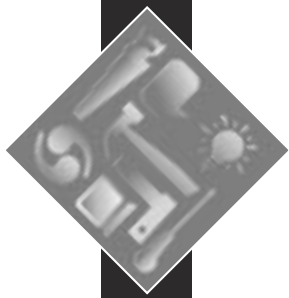
It makes sense to use the resources and skills available to you. For example, if you've a worker or volunteer with computer skills, they may be able to collate the statistical information. Someone else might have better interviewing skills. Another person may be good at drawing all the information together and writing it up. Design and presentation skills are something else to look out for.

◆ Are there external sources of help we could draw upon?

Even without the extra resources for evaluation, it might be possible to get external help e.g. links with a university where there might be an academic willing to help in a voluntary capacity or a research student interested in this area for their course? Seeking external help in this way will not necessarily reduce your workload – the more people who are involved the more careful your planning will need to be. But it does bring one big advantage – it introduces an element of independence to your evaluation which may be important if you want to increase the reliability of the information collected.

◆ What is the timescale?

Being realistic about what can be achieved in what timescale is a fundamental part of planning an evaluation. You will obviously want to keep in mind any externally imposed deadlines e.g. the requirements of funders for a report by a particular date. If you are evaluating a new piece of work you need to estimate the time needed for it to get established and when information may be available for evaluative purposes. If you have a time-limited project of one or two years then you need to consider what can be evaluated within that time-frame. A problem facing those evaluating for effectiveness is that some outcomes can only be measured after a period of time. Your project might be finished before such measures can be implemented so you need to think about what interim measures might be meaningful indicators of longer term outcomes.



What ethical issues do you need to consider?

Evaluation is a kind of research and anyone who carries out research needs to make sure their activities are ethical. The main factors to be considered are:

- ◆ What sort of information will we be collecting and from whom?
- ◆ What will we need to do to make sure that we are getting fully informed consent?
- ◆ How will we make sure that information is collected and used sensitively?
- ◆ How will we fully inform service users about this evaluation?
- ◆ How will we make sure that no harm is done through this evaluation?

The majority of people who are asked to provide information for an evaluation do so willingly. However, the responsibility lies with the evaluator to ensure that:

- ◆ There is no coercion
- ◆ That people are treated with respect when information is collected and used
- ◆ That people know how the information is to be used and they are happy for it to be used in that way
- ◆ That the report does not identify individuals

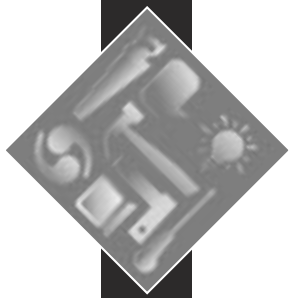
Depending on the nature of your project, its participants and the sensitivity of the issues being dealt with, ethical considerations may lead you to revise your research questions.

What sort of end product do you want?

Most evaluations end in a written report and it is likely that you will need to provide some sort of report for funders and other audiences. However, other possibilities may need to be considered at the planning stage so that adequate time and resources can be built in. The following questions may be appropriate:

- ◆ Will we produce a single report or will we want to present the findings in a range of formats e.g. summaries for parents and young people?
- ◆ Will we need to have reports translated into different languages?
- ◆ Will we want to produce the findings on tape?
- ◆ Do we want to produce a video?
- ◆ Will we present our findings at a conference?
- ◆ Will we want to get the media interested e.g. a newspaper or journal article?

All of these options are possible but some need more forward planning than others. Making a video or organising an event can be expensive and time consuming and you'll need to start planning well before your evaluation is complete. If you want to get media coverage for your evaluation then you need to consider what aspects may be particularly newsworthy.



How will you use the findings?

As well as impressing funders and other audiences, a question to consider at the planning stage is how you as a project intend to use the findings. Ultimately, an evaluation is only worth doing if it is used to inform future development. If you are part of an ongoing project you need to consider how an evaluation can help you develop your future practice. If you are evaluating a time-limited piece of work, then are there others who could benefit from what you have learned? How can you share that learning?

If you have worked through the above planning checklist and involved everyone who needs to be consulted, you should be well on the way to having a sound plan for evaluation!



Summary of the Planning Checklist

- ◆ What is the evaluation for?
- ◆ Who is the intended audience?
- ◆ What role do service users have in this evaluation?
- ◆ Who else needs to be involved?
- ◆ What are the main research questions?
- ◆ Who is going to do the work for the evaluation?
- ◆ What is the timescale?
- ◆ What ethical issues do we need to consider?
- ◆ What sort of end product do we want?
- ◆ How will we use the findings?



5 Writing an Evaluation Plan

Although the exact format of an evaluation plan may vary, according to the intended audience, the type of project and the type of evaluation; it can be helpful to look at the issues under the following headings:

1. Project details and plan

Your project plan will be the starting point for your evaluation plan, therefore the following questions should be answered in summary form at the beginning of your evaluation plan:

- ◆ What is the overall goal of the project/initiative?
- ◆ What outcomes does it aim to achieve and by when?
- ◆ What are the interventions being used to achieve them?
- ◆ What is the theory of change underpinning these approaches?
- ◆ What is the time scale for the project/initiative?

2. The purposes of the evaluation and the main evaluative questions

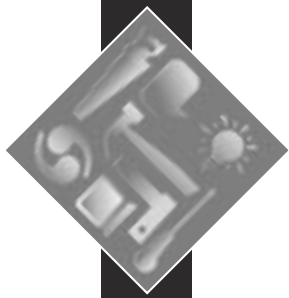
Your evaluation plan should make explicit what the main purpose is of the evaluation. There may be all sorts of interesting questions arising from the project, but if the prime purpose is to report to funders (for example) then there may only be a few priority issues on which the evaluation should focus. The purpose of the evaluation should lead you into defining the main evaluative questions. Examples include:

- ◆ How effective is the project being in achieving its objectives?
- ◆ What lessons can be learned from the work of the project?

These can then be broken down into further, more detailed questions such as:

- ◆ Have we been successful in reaching our target group?
- ◆ What do services users think of what has been provided?
- ◆ Are service users better off after getting involved in the project than they were before?
- ◆ Was the Tuesday afternoon group a good way of delivering our objectives?

You may wish to include questions not only about what you have achieved (outcomes), but how you set about it (processes). An example of one possible way of presenting your research questions with possible measures is shown at the end.



3. Sources of data and methods of data collection

Your evaluation plan should set out the information that will be needed to address the above questions. This should include both quantitative and qualitative information.

You also need to describe how this information will be collected. Examples might include:

- ◆ Numerical information on who is using the project to be collected through monitoring of referrals and attendance records.
- ◆ Information on how people feel about the project and the difference it is making to them to be collected through routine feedback, questionnaires, interviews or other approaches.

This section should also include a description of how the information will be analysed.

4. Who will carry out the evaluation

Your evaluation plan needs to set out who will be responsible for collecting and analysing the information and whether an external evaluator is to be involved.

5. How services users and other stakeholders will be involved

The evaluation plan needs to include your proposals for involving key stakeholders.

6. Time-scale

Your evaluation plan should include a time-table which sets out when information will be collected, analysed and presented and how this fits in with the time-scale for the project itself.

7. Discussion of any ethical issues

Your evaluation plan needs to provide an account of any ethical concerns which might arise. Issues include obtaining informed consent from service users for information to be collected about them/from them, how sensitive information will be used, how people's anonymity will be preserved, what feedback people will get.

8. How the evaluation will be presented and used

The plan needs to set out what end products are envisaged from the evaluation e.g. report to funders, summary of findings for other stakeholders, production of video or other material, articles for the media etc.



Suggested layout for looking at the main and more detailed evaluation questions

Main evaluation question

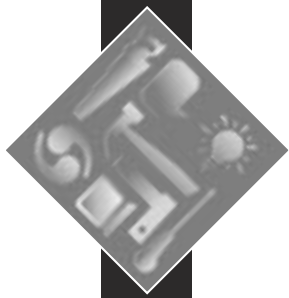
EXAMPLE: *Has the project improved access to services for its target group?*

Evaluation questions	Possible measures/methods
	Note: The examples below suggest possible measures, you would probably only use one or two of these in practice to answer a question. Also, one measure could cover several questions, for example a user focus group might cover views on involvement, access to services and health status.
◆ Do more people access services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Take-up rates ◆ Treatment records ◆ Self report through questionnaires ◆ Survey of attendance levels
◆ Are people more aware of services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Questionnaire/survey of target group ◆ Interviews with target group
◆ Do people feel more able to use services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Focus group on views of service users ◆ Individual interviews with service users and non service users ◆ Questionnaires
◆ Do professionals feel more people are accessing their service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Telephone interview with professionals ◆ Questionnaire to professionals
◆ Do professionals feel more people are accessing their service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Telephone interview with professionals ◆ Questionnaire to professionals

Main evaluation question

EXAMPLE: *Has the project improved people's health?*

Evaluation questions	Possible measures/methods
◆ Have people's physical health improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Physical measures/tests such as heart rate ◆ Number of visits to GP
◆ Have people's mental health improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Measures of stress
◆ Do people feel healthier?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Questionnaires ◆ Interviews ◆ Diaries ◆ Pictures of self-image ◆ Drama



Main evaluation question

EXAMPLE: *Has the project increased community involvement in services?*

Evaluation questions	Possible measures/methods
◆ Are more people having a say in the way services are run?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Interviews◆ Focus groups◆ Questionnaires◆ Number of people on advisory boards/steering groups
◆ Do people feel more involved in the way services are run?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Focus groups◆ Interviews◆ Questionnaires◆ Pictures◆ Drama
◆ Do people have power and influence in this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Attendance rates◆ Influence on decisions◆ Member ship of steering group/advisory board

6 Choosing and Using Methods and Tools¹

Qualitative and quantitative data

Performance and evaluation measures fall broadly into two main types – qualitative and quantitative. Put simply, quantitative measures focus on things that can be counted, such as the amount of money spent or the number of people who have used a service. Qualitative measures focus on how the service is viewed or experienced by the people involved, whether they be service users, staff or other stakeholders. It can be tempting to view one as superior to the other, however using the two in combination is likely to be most effective in gaining an overall picture of the situation. The table below gives you some of the key characteristics about qualitative and quantitative measures.

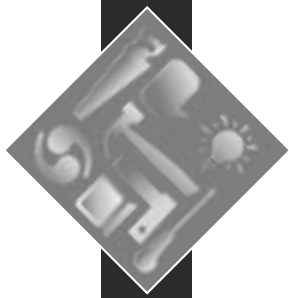
Choosing tools

You will need to decide which measures will give you the best answer to your evaluation questions, and which tools will be the most useful in the collecting information you require. You will need to take into account:

- ◆ **Usefulness** What do you want to know and is the chosen tool the best way to collect the data you need? Will it give you enough data? For example, a questionnaire or a picture might not give you enough detail from the respondent about a complex situation or experience.
- ◆ **Practicality** Do you have the resources and capacity to collect data with your chosen tool? For example interviews can be expensive in terms of time, and focus groups can require skilled facilitation.
- ◆ **Sensitivity** Are there any ethical issues to consider with your chosen method? Some methods may be more intrusive than others and you must consider whether that intrusion can be justified. Issues of, for example, confidentiality will be more complex with vulnerable groups such as children. You should get permission from respondents for any data you use.
- ◆ **Appropriateness** Who are your respondents and is the tool chosen suitable for your sample group? Is it age and gender appropriate? Does it allow for different language and literacy abilities?
- ◆ **Analysis** How will you analyse the information? Focus groups can give you a huge amount of material which can take time to analyse. Pictures or photographs will still require some sort of interpretation or analysis which may be difficult to do, and be quite subjective.
- ◆ **Reliability** How reliable will the information be that you collect? Will there be bias? Will there be differences in people's interpretation of questions?

¹Some of the information from this section is drawn from:

Barr A and Hashagen S (2000) *ABCD Handbook: A framework for evaluating community development*. Community Development Foundation
McNeish D (1999) *From Rhetoric to Reality: participatory approaches to health promotion with young people*. Health Education Authority
Everton L, McNeish D and Burnett L (1999) *Successful Evaluation: a resource pack for Right Fit Projects*. Barnardo's

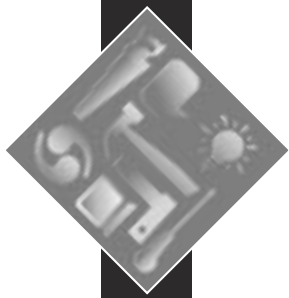


Designing data collection systems

- ◆ Use or adapt existing processes where possible. Don't give yourself extra work if you don't need to. But be prepared to be critical of them if they are not right for your need – don't try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear!
- ◆ Don't duplicate information – if you end up with dozens of forms you've gone wrong somewhere!
- ◆ Keep it simple – collect only what you need. It can be very tempting to add questions onto a questionnaire or to collect a few more pieces of information about someone. But be very strict with yourself about what you really need. Otherwise you will end up with mountains of information that you can only use a tenth of.
- ◆ Think about how the information can be analysed and who will have to do it.
- ◆ Think about who will have to complete any forms you produce. Will people understand them? Will they complete them in the same way? Will people have time to complete them?
- ◆ Think about issues of confidentiality and ethics – can you justify your use of this information to your service users?

Qualitative and Quantitative approaches – key characteristics²

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Research /policy question	What? Why? How?	How many? Where? What proportion?
Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In depth exploration ◆ Understanding processes ◆ Explaining why ◆ Showing how ◆ Generating ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Forecast/estimate ◆ Measure the extent of something
For evaluation Emphasis on	Might explore underlying and contributory factors and their role	Might be used to measure views and outcomes
Emphasis on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Depth and detail of understanding ◆ Intensive coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Breadth of understanding ◆ Extensive coverage
Scale	Resources used to glean maximum detail from minimum number of cases	Resources used to secure 'minimum' detail from a maximum number of cases
Sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Small sample ◆ Flexible design – who can inform the question? ◆ Purposively selected ◆ Maps/includes diversity ◆ Sample allows comparisons and explore the issues in depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Larger sample sizes ◆ May be randomly selected/ probability samples ◆ Numerically representative



	Qualitative	Quantitative
Particularly useful for...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Exploratory work – where issues not clearly understood or preliminary investigations ◆ Issues which need detailed understanding of individual circumstances ◆ Can identify new ground ◆ Complex issues or processes ◆ Sensitive issues ◆ Map the range of behaviour and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To describe patterns and trends ◆ Measure extent ◆ Measure location ◆ Measure differences
E.g. in health research	Describe and understand complex behaviours, health actions, perceptions, views experiences, people's pathways to services	Rates of service use, test effects of a health intervention
Data collection emphasises	Open-ended questions	Can be closed questions
Flexibility of approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Can be flexible to persons' point of view/circumstances ◆ Follow their line of thinking – perhaps more interactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Perhaps more oriented to researchers' agenda ◆ Have more structured tool to gain information so perhaps less interaction with people talking to
The types of tools you might use include:	In-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews, focus groups, observation, case study	Structured interviews, survey, postal questionnaire
Format information is recorded and analysed	More unstructured data – unordered, unwieldy	More structured data
Analysis	Preserves the concepts and dialogue of those people you are talking to/observing	Reduce what people say to a 'minimum' number of standard categories
Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Can make (theoretical) generalisations about the meaning of relationships and events. ◆ Represent what you are looking at in a non-statistical way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Numerical testing of hypotheses ◆ May make (statistical) generalisations about the wider population/group based on the findings drawn from a sample of individuals



Measuring outcomes – challenges

As well as establishing how a service is being used and what people think of it, it is important to consider what difference it has made to the people concerned. There are some fairly obvious difficulties associated with measuring outcomes:

- ◆ It is not easy to be certain of a direct causal link between what a project does and a desirable outcome for a service user. Thankfully, we have only limited influence over people's lives and it may be that someone's life has been changed more by falling in love than by attending our group on a Tuesday afternoon!
- ◆ Some very important outcomes are actually quite hard to pin down or even to define. For example, an important outcome for many disability projects is greater self-confidence and independence for service users. Breaking these concepts down into components which can be measured is very challenging.
- ◆ Some outcomes are very long-term and may not become evident for a number of years. Many services provided to young people now are at least in part geared towards enabling today's children to be more healthy as adults. Whilst a 20 year time scale for evaluation may not be realistic for most projects, it may be important to think ahead to some extent.
- ◆ It may be difficult to differentiate who the outcomes are for. When working with families there are several people involved for whom different courses of action have different outcomes. It is important to be clear which outcomes we are most interested in measuring.

Sometimes there may be some extremely interesting but completely unintended outcomes from the provision of a particular service. If your evaluation has been planned to measure one outcome and in the process you come across another which was quite unanticipated, a decision has to be made what to do with it. In most circumstances it is unwise to ignore the unintended consequences of an intervention, whether negative or positive.

◆ Quantitative data collection

Some important quantitative data will already exist. Budget information, for example, will provide data on income expenditure. Other information which should be readily available is number of people referred, staff employed, numbers of volunteers, numbers of actual services provided. All these elements may be used for evaluation purposes, but it may also be necessary to design systems for collecting very specific data geared to measure your objectives.

Some examples of useful quantitative information you may wish to gather are as follows:

Cost: What does your intervention cost per user? Cost is an important indicator and being clear about what your service costs and what your funders are getting for their money is becoming increasingly important. It also enables comparisons to be made between interventions.



Productivity: How much work is completed within a defined period of time? Some 'products' are difficult to count but some aspects of a service can be measured in this way e.g. number of group work sessions carried out within a 12 month period.

Utilisation: To what extent are the available services used? What is the take up rate for your sports club, for example.

Volume of service: How many people have received a service from you?

Outcome Measures: How many of the people using your services have achieved their desired outcomes? How many people have given up smoking, for example?

◆ Qualitative data collection

How services are perceived by their users is very important. The perceptions of other key groups can also provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of a service. The views of staff, volunteers, funding agencies and other 'stakeholders' may also need to be taken into account. It is important to consider which method will be most appropriate for different groups.

There are a variety of information gathering techniques which use the **written word**. The most common of these is the questionnaire, but other options can also include the use of diaries and suggestions/complaints slips. Clearly these will result in different types of data. For example, suggestions and complaints slips may give a very one sided view of a service but will be easy to collect.

Diaries may rely on recall and memory and may not record the required information. In addition respondents may lose motivation to continue recording in their diaries. However diaries can be good for understanding routines and patterns. As with all written tools, literacy and language can be a barrier, however diaries do not necessarily rely on the written word; for example, video diaries can be a fun and effective way of gathering people's thoughts.

There are a variety of **verbal methods** of data collection including interviews, focus groups and video diaries.

Whilst the above methods outlined are the most commonly used tools for evaluation they are not appropriate for everyone. **Other tools** may be more suitable for certain groups of people and for giving a different type of information. Think creatively and involve users in designing tools.

Details of the advantages and disadvantages of different tools, and how to use them are given in the next section.



Carrying out your evaluation and collecting data

1. Designing your tool

A better and more useful tool can be designed if you involve your stakeholders, particularly a small sample of your target group, in the design of your tool. They can help ensure that language is appropriate and questions are understandable and relevant.

2. Piloting

It is important that all questions are tested out (piloted) before they are finalised. This is to check for misunderstanding or misinterpretations. Pilot studies only need to be carried out on a small number of people and can mean the difference between good useful results and a lot of wasted time and effort. Once the pilot study has been completed, amendments or additions can be made to the questions/schedule.

3. Draw up a list of potential participants

Deciding how many people to involve in a study is not always easy and there is no perfect text book answer. Time and money often mean the decision is made for you. What is important to remember, however, is that enough people need to be involved to provide a reasonable sample and your sample needs to be sufficiently representative of the group as a whole.

4. Inviting people to take part

You should always ask the respondents if they are willing to take part in the study. Make sure you have explained why the research is being done, how it is being done and by whom, what will be done with the information and what feedback arrangements there are.

5. Feedback and thanks

After analysing and writing up the evaluation (see section on analysing your findings) you should ensure that the people who have taken part (your respondents) receive thanks and feedback on the evaluation, including what actions have been taken as a result of the evaluation.

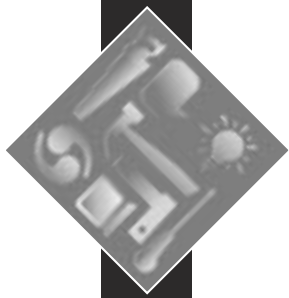


Questionnaires

Written questionnaires can provide both quantitative and qualitative information and can range from formal tick boxes to informal ones which invite general comments and responses. Although questionnaires are perhaps the most commonly used evaluation tool, they are not always appropriate. Thought and care need to go into their design. They are likely to be more responsive if users/stakeholders/local communities are involved in the design of the questionnaire.

Questionnaires – advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
▼ Quick and efficient – less time consuming than interviews	▼ Often yield a poor response rate (although this can be minimised)
Relatively cheap	Can only get as much information as questions asked (always include a box for further comments)
Easily administered	Open questions get varying amounts of information
Can be sent to large numbers of respondents	Can result in biased sample as only those interested will fill the questionnaire in
Can collect views and data from many different people	Reliant on written communication skills
Can be structured to ensure that the views of minorities are sought and represented	Translation into appropriate language required for some groups
Many people enjoy expressing their views in writing	
Writing can be less intrusive and more private than an interview	
People may feel more able to answer embarrassing questions/give socially undesirable responses/make critical comments	
Can be reasonably straightforward to plan and analyse	
Can provide powerful quantifiable results	



Designing and administering questionnaires

Questions basically fall into two categories, open and closed.

Open questions give the respondent no alternatives, so that their own answer can be supplied.

Examples include:

Q *How do you feel you have benefited from attending the club?*

Q *How do you think the service could be improved?*

Q *Why did you start attending the club?*

Closed questions give respondents alternatives.

Examples include:

Q *How many days a week do you attend the club?*

Please tick one box

One day a week

Two days a week

Three days a week

Four days a week

Five days a week

Q *Do you travel home from the club by car?*

Yes

No

Q *What do you think about the activities at the club?*

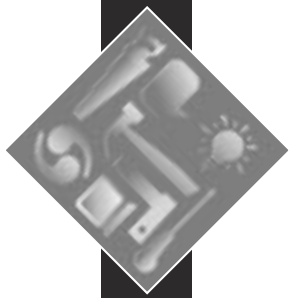
Please circle one response for each statement:

Art Activities			Health Sessions		
▶ Good	OK	Boring	▶ Good	OK	Boring
Exercise classes			Cookery		
▶ Good	OK	Boring	▶ Good	OK	Boring

It's best to use closed questions (i.e. tick boxes / yes-no answers) if you want to survey a lot of people, or ask a lot of questions. Open questions are better for getting more detailed information but can take longer to do and a lot more time to analyse.

All questions should be clear and simple and not include words that respondents are likely to misunderstand or not understand at all. Abbreviations should be avoided where possible. Care should be taken not to replicate questions or topics.

Don't be tempted to ask too many questions unless you are sure you will use the answers!



Providing directions to guide people through a questionnaire is important– it should be very clear who should answer a question:

1. *Did you visit your child while they were in a hospital?*

Yes

No

2. *How many times?*

Everyday

5–6 times a week

3–4 times a week

Less than twice a week

3. *Why was your child admitted to hospital?*

.....

This might cause confusion on the part of the respondent; those who did not visit their child in hospital might then go on to tick the less than twice a week box. An improvement might be:

1. *Did you visit your child while they were in a hospital?*

(If YES go to question 2, if NO go to question 3)

Yes

No

2. *If yes, how many times?*

Everyday

5–6 times a week

3–4 times a week

Less than twice a week

3. *Why was your child admitted to hospital?*

.....

However, if possible you should try to minimise the number of questions that only a few respondents can answer.

If questions involve numbers, care should be taken not to overlap categories:

2. *If yes, how many times?*

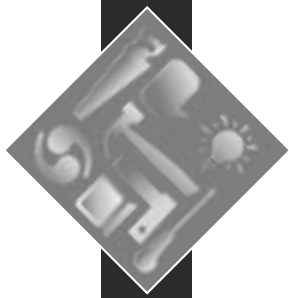
Everyday

5–6 times a week

3–5 times a week

Less than twice a week

Respondents who visited their child 5 times a week in hospital could have ticked two boxes in this instance.



Avoid long sentences and questions which contain two concepts or questions within them.

For example:

Q. *When you first came along to the exercise group what did you think of it and was there anything you would have liked to have known?*

This should have been broken down into two separate questions.

Think of the order the questions appear in; generally more sensitive questions should appear towards the end of the questionnaire. Factual, less subjective questions, such as asking the respondent's age, are easier to get people started.

Try to avoid asking hypothetical questions, or questions about the respondent's intent, such as:

Q. *Will you continue to do the exercise after the class ends?*

Although this type of question can provide an insight into people's attitudes; for example this question might tell you if they liked the exercise, or found the exercises easy to remember, but it will not necessarily tell you if people actually will continue to exercise. There can be a difference between what people think, what they say and what they actually do!

Care needs to be taken over the layout and format, so the final product is pleasing to the eye. In addition clear instructions need to be included on who should complete the questionnaire, how it should be done, when and to whom it should be returned and some space provided for additional comments. If you are sending out a postal questionnaire, you might want to think about providing a pre stamped, pre addressed envelope with a postal questionnaire so that people do not have to pay the cost of postage. If it looks like your response rate might be low, a reminder letter can be sent out just before or just after the closing date.

Piloting your questionnaire should help to minimise the various pitfalls and problems described above and it can be useful to ask your pilot respondents for feedback on the questionnaire itself.



Interviews

Interviews tend to be conducted on a one to one basis and are useful when directed at an identifiable target group. They can take several forms. Open or unstructured interviews (as a qualitative tool) allow the thoughts and views of the interviewee to direct the interview. This can give an in-depth and rich source of information on a particular topic. However it is time consuming to analyse and some parts may not be relevant to your project.

A semi-structured interview includes some pre-determined questions but within those questions the interviewee is free to elaborate on an idea and give their views. Having some structure means that common themes or issues can be compared across interviews, but it still takes time to analyse such themes.

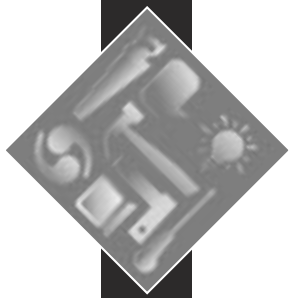
Structured interviews allow specific questions to be prepared in advance for the interviewee to answer, and are essentially a verbally completed questionnaire. They are quicker to carry out and more straightforward in terms of analysis, yielding some quantitative data, but they limit the response of the interviewees and thus can lack depth and variety.

Interviews – advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
▼ Enable in-depth and detailed data to be gathered Usually have a reasonable response rate May be more appropriate than questionnaires in some circumstances, for example if talking about sensitive issues, or you want to collect data from those with limited written skills.	▼ Can be costly and time consuming As a large amount of in-depth data is collected analysis can be complicated Trained interviewers may be required Some people may find a one to one situation intimidating

Designing and carrying out interviews

For all types of interview you will need to prepare an interview schedule, containing the topics or questions to be covered. Gaps can be left between questions to enable the interviewer to write down the interviewee's response, if the interview is not being tape recorded. Make sure the interviewer is familiar with the interview schedule, as this makes it easier to adapt if the respondent jumps around topics in their responses.



When designing your interview schedule, many of the same guidelines apply as to questionnaire design, such as keeping your questions simple and not starting with sensitive questions. If questions are open, prompts can be included to assist interviewees in answering questions.

For example:

Q *Which welfare professionals do you have contact with?*

(prompt: social workers, health visitors, psychologists, probation, education welfare etc..)

Starting the Interview

- ◆ Making a good first impression is very important – you need to make the person about to be interviewed (the respondent) feel relaxed and comfortable. If they think you are unfriendly or over-powering they may not want to talk to you.
- ◆ Remember to introduce yourself. It is natural for both you and the respondent to feel a little awkward and nervous – you may want to practice an opening sentence which will put you both at ease.
- ◆ Explain what the interview is about and how the information will be used. People need to feel that the information they give will be of real value. Take plenty of time to explain and answer any questions the respondent may have about the study.
- ◆ Explain how long you expect the interview to take, how long it will last and why they have been chosen to take part.
- ◆ Assure them that they do not have to answer a question if they don't want to.
- ◆ Reassure people about confidentiality. Their responses will not be used for any other purpose than for the study and the interview material will be written up in a way which will not identify anyone individually. If there is something they don't want to answer, that is OK. If you are interviewing a child you should be aware of child protection guidelines.
- ◆ Try to find somewhere to conduct the interview that is comfortable and private. It may not be possible to avoid all interruptions but try to keep them to a minimum. Don't try to carry out the interview when it is obvious the respondent is trying to get on with something else – arrange to come back at a more convenient time. Refreshments can be relaxing and friendly.
- ◆ Make sure you are ready to start writing down people's responses as soon as the interview starts. Explain why you are doing this. It can feel as if you are being rude – writing down while people are talking – but the information is no good unless it is recorded. Similarly if you are using a tape recorder explain this to the respondent and ask their permission to use it. Explain what you will do with the tape and who will hear it.
- ◆ Start with easy, non-sensitive questions first if possible.



During the Interview

- ◆ Always listen very carefully and record what people say – not what you think they have said.
- ◆ Give the respondent time to answer and to think about their replies – don't be afraid of a silence.
- ◆ Try to stick to the wording on the questionnaire or it can distort the information. Do explain any questions that people don't understand.
- ◆ Try not to talk about your own views during the interview – if someone asks you for your views, turn the question around by asking them what they think. If they are insistent about hearing your views, try to wait until the end of the interview before getting into a discussion of them.
- ◆ Encourage people to expand on their views by using prompt questions such as 'in what way?' or 'can you give me an example?'
- ◆ Use 'playback' questions to clarify what people are saying. 'Can I check with you that I understand what you are saying there?' 'You are saying that ... is that right?'
- ◆ Don't make comments about the respondent's answers – especially if you disagree! Encouraging noises are OK though.
- ◆ Do use encouraging body language and non-verbal signals to show that you are interested in what people are saying and are listening – encouraging nods, smiles and eye contact.
- ◆ Make sure you record each answer very carefully. Check out with people that what you are writing down reflects what they are saying. Don't be afraid to ask people to slow down a bit so you can get their views down on paper. Remember that if the information is not properly recorded, the interview has been a waste of time.

Ending the Interview

- ◆ Try to make the encounter end in a positive way – try not to leave people feeling depressed!
- ◆ Remember to thank the respondent for their help and remind them how the information will be used.
- ◆ Ask people if they would like further information about the evaluation and/or the project.

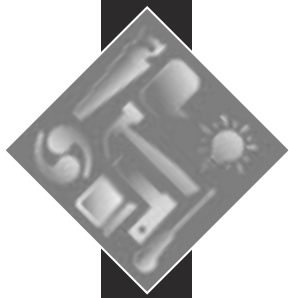


Focus Groups

A focus group is a qualitative approach that may be useful for extracting information from a group of people on a pre-determined list of topics/questions. In addition to extracting this information, the focus group allows for observation of the group dynamics and the way participants respond to particular issues and debates. The focus group tends to be relatively small in size, about 6–8 individuals. These individuals may be representative for your local community or target group, such as mental health services users or smokers.

Focus groups – advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>▼</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Allow a variety of views to be expressed, discussed and explored.Can be a good way of getting a sophisticated view of what is happening.Usually less time consuming than individual interviews, although there may be more irrelevant material producedEncourages interaction between respondents to generate more ideas than might have surfaced via individual interviewsGood for getting suggestions on future improvements to a serviceCan enable those less confident and less articulate to express their viewsCan be enjoyable/fun for participants	<p>▼</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can be time consuming to set upRequires skilled facilitatorsCan be a difficult format for some people who are not used to sitting and talking in a group (such as some young people with behavioural difficulties). In these situations it might be better to consider paired or individual interviews, or provide training in group working skills beforehand.Those with minority views within the group might not feel able to express themData can be difficult to record, and as a large amount of material is likely to be gathered, analysis can be complicatedConfidentiality can be an issueNot appropriate if you need data on individuals



Designing and carrying out focus groups

Setting up a focus group can take time and there may be advantages in using established groups where people already know each other and feel comfortable talking together.

In arranging a focus group you should consider the location, travel arrangements, childcare arrangements, access, time and expenses.

Refreshments can help to break the ice, but remember, if you are tape recording the group don't provide any 'noisy' refreshments, such as bags of crisps, as this is all you will hear on the tape!

For group discussion, topic areas rather than long precise questions are required. Ask clear but open ended questions to get the discussion going. Focus groups need to be led or facilitated by a designated individual who ensures that the main issues are discussed in a constructive way. They tend to be tape-recorded (with the group's consent) so the dialogue can be analysed in detail, perhaps along the set questions, or in terms of identifying particular themes that emerge in the discussions.

Many of the pointers on interviews apply for focus groups but there are also some extra issues to consider when facilitating a focus group:

- ◆ Ask the group to come up with some ground rules for the discussion
- ◆ Agree on the confidentiality of the group
- ◆ Try to keep everyone involved and speaking
- ◆ Be prepared to handle conflicts
- ◆ Try not to give your own opinions in the discussion
- ◆ Allow for interruptions
- ◆ Take note of visual cues as well, for example whether people reacted positively to a comment made by a member of the group
- ◆ Give people the opportunity at the end to give you any feedback or views in private, for example suggest that they can jot any other points down on a piece of paper and send it to you afterwards if they wish to. This allows people to give opinions they might not have felt able to give in the group.

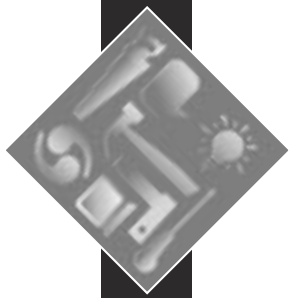


Creative, Visual and Non-Verbal Methods

Visual methods can involve producing drawings, paintings, sculptures, videos, photographs etc. For example, children's drawings of their area could be used before and after a community development intervention and their perceptions of the area in which they live could then be compared to assess change over time. Role plays can be used to act out events as part of the research or be used as a stimulus for other activities, such as focus group discussions. The use of drama or puppetry with children can be a particularly useful way of communicating about sensitive topics or to explore various alternative scenarios. Other possibilities include video diaries, photography, collage, stories, cartoons and discussion games. Think creatively!

◆ Creative, visual and non-verbal methods – advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
▼ They can be fun Involve all abilities They don't depend on words Yield more interesting results They capture events differently to words	▼ Analysing the material can be a challenge – it's hard to put a video or a drama into report form! Rely on the researchers' interpretation of the visual representations Will not give easily quantifiable information



Observation

Observation involves the evaluator being present, watching events and actions and writing down, filming or tape-recording what happens.

Observation – advantages and disadvantages

Advantages



Observation can be a useful way to build hypotheses which can be subsequently tested using other types of information

Can see what people do, rather than what they say they do

Disadvantages



Observer may affect what happens

It is hard to observe and take accurate notes at the same time

What the observer records may be biased by their own views of what is important, It requires the observer to be present when the key events occur

May not be suitable for some projects/activities



7 Analysing, Interpreting and Presenting Evaluation Findings¹

Turning data into findings

Until it is interpreted, data may not tell you very much. Therefore, once you have collected all the data, it needs to be analysed. In particular, this should draw out the key messages from all the information you have gathered and make recommendations for the continuation of the activity, or provide messages for the future operation of similar projects.

For example, the video diaries of people responding to questions provide raw qualitative evidence. By watching the tapes once or twice you could draw out two or three points which keep recurring. This turns the evidence into information which will be useful for the various stakeholders to consider.

Interpreting evidence can be a difficult task, and you need to allow enough time for it – reading 20 questionnaires and comparing and summarising the answers to 6 questions can take several hours.

Interpreting quantitative evidence

It should be possible to summarise the quantitative information in terms of total responses. This will describe the material/responses in numerical terms, for example:

- ◆ How many families use a service per day/per week
- ◆ How many children under five attend a play group
- ◆ The average number of people using a drop in advice service per week

Some of this material may be used most effectively by displaying the information in bar charts, graphs or tables. You might also choose to use percentages, but be careful of this if your numbers are very small. If you do, you should always explain how many or how much would be 100%. 7 out of 10 people or 70 people out of 100 are both 70%. However, evidence based on what 70 people say, as opposed to what 7 people say, may carry more weight. It is important that the basis of the information you are offering is clear.

Interpreting qualitative evidence

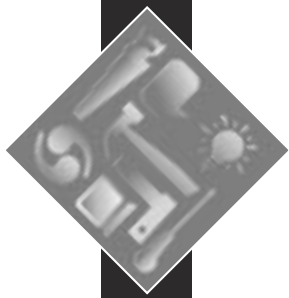
Qualitative evidence gathered is not as easy to interpret as quantitative data. Unpacking and interpreting evaluative material is concerned with sifting the findings and exploring their implications. You may have collected a wide range of very different opinions, especially about the quality of the process and outcomes, and find it difficult to draw conclusions.

¹ Much of this section has been adapted from three reports:

Barnardo's (1999) *Successful Evaluation: A Resource Pack for Right Fit projects*

Woolf, F. (1999) *Partnerships for Learning: A Guide to evaluating arts education projects* Regional Arts Boards and the Arts Council of England. Copies available free from Yorkshire Arts 01924 455555.

SRB: *Evaluation Framework: Guidelines for Projects*



In order to get the best use out of qualitative data, it may be helpful to sort the material into some order – positive/negative responses, advantages/disadvantages.

The responses that do not fall into these categories will need to be sifted separately – why don't they fit, are they similar or very different? It may also be useful to return to the original objectives or expectations of the project and discuss the fit or mismatch views or findings. When the information has been sorted it should be possible to identify and assess the themes or patterns that emerge from the data.

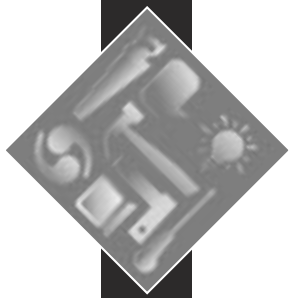
Where possible it will be important to acknowledge that some of the findings/data may be interpreted in different ways. It will be helpful to discuss these tensions and the way you resolve them in deciding how you choose to use the material. In order to convey a balanced picture of the evaluation, the perceptions of the people being examined should also be incorporated. This should help to ensure the emerging picture is objective and that a reasonable weighting is given to the spread or variety of the information.

Analysing qualitative data

- ◆ Summarise the material into a series of points
- ◆ Look for recurring points and note how many times they appear, and with what qualification and differences, if any.
- ◆ Aggregate the information by noting the most frequently occurring points and any other points which seem to be of particular importance, bearing in mind the context.
- ◆ Look back at your original measure of success and outcomes to help pick out what you need.
- ◆ Avoid being unduly influenced by a tiny number of either very positive or very critical comments.
- ◆ Try to establish the majority view.
- ◆ Check that your judgements are based on evidence from different categories of people involved with the project (e.g. participants, carers, group leaders).
- ◆ Look for unexpected outcomes.

Qualitative evidence is likely to provide many quotes. Used alone these may give a flavour of the project, and can often sum up unexpected outcomes, but they will be most convincing if you can provide some quantitative evidence and analysis to support them. If using quotes, whilst you should not give any identifiable details as to the source of the quote, you should indicate the type of person who gave the response, for example; service user, volunteer, worker, manager.

It is important to set the information out clearly so that the findings are coherent and understandable. The extent to which this is achieved may have a crucial impact on the credibility the evaluation is subsequently given.



What sort of end product do you want?

An evaluation is only worth doing if it is used to inform future development. If you are part of an ongoing project you need to consider how an evaluation can help you to develop your future practice. If you are evaluating a time-limited piece of work, then are there others who could benefit from what you have learned? How can you share that learning?

It is important to first establish how the information you have gathered will be used:

- ◆ To gain publicity?
- ◆ To persuade funders?
- ◆ To influence policy?
- ◆ To influence practice?

Most evaluations end in a written report and it is likely that you will need to provide some sort of report for funders and other audiences. While they can be useful, they are not the only way of telling people about a project. Other ways of reporting may be more appropriate for some people, and may capture more closely what the project was about. However, approaches to sharing findings which are not based on written reports can become similar to documentation. They may provide a description and celebration of the project, without including any judgements or conclusions from the evidence.

Other possibilities for dissemination may need to be considered at the planning stage so that adequate time and resources can be built in. With different audiences in mind you should consider what the most appropriate format/s to use for communicating your message might be:

- ◆ Written report – long or short?
- ◆ Summaries for different audiences eg young people, carers, older people or funders?
- ◆ Reports translated into different languages?
- ◆ Findings on tape?
- ◆ Large print or Braille reports?
- ◆ Verbal presentations?
- ◆ Conference for large numbers?
- ◆ Seminar for smaller numbers?
- ◆ Journal article?
- ◆ Use of the media?
- ◆ Video?

All of these options are possible but some need more forward planning than others. Making a video or organising an event can be expensive and time consuming and you'll need to start planning well before your evaluation is complete. If you want to get media coverage from your evaluation then you need to consider what aspects may be particularly newsworthy.



Writing a report

A clear advantage of a written project report is that it provides a permanent record. This may be useful for:

- ◆ Building up an archive to save 're-inventing the wheel' for another project
- ◆ Sharing ideas and good practice with others
- ◆ Helping with future funding applications
- ◆ Showing people what you do.

There are no golden rules about how to structure reports. It is important to be clear at the outset who the report is being written for, what purpose it is intended to serve – to inform, and/or persuade – and what general or specific actions or activities it is hoped will subsequently be taken. Clarity about these aspects should enable the writer to ensure the report is written with a clear and relevant focus.

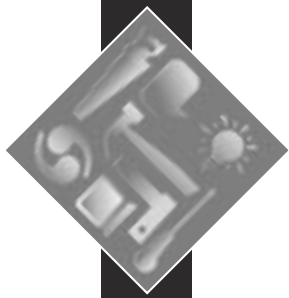
It is not suggested that evaluative reports need to be lengthy tomes. Indeed it is questionable if the material and discussion are rambley and dense that the report's impact will have its desired effect. It is also important to pay particular attention to the summary/conclusion and recommendations. Busy managers and decision makers are likely to read these sections first and form an initial – possibly lasting – assessment of the report's relevance. It's also good to try to liven up the report by using photographs, drawings and quotes where appropriate.

The most common weakness of project reports is that they include too much description and not enough judgements. To try to overcome this problem:

- ◆ Aim to make your report as short as possible
- ◆ Avoid long, unbroken passages of text
- ◆ Use tables and bullet points to summarise
- ◆ Remember that photographs and diagrams save on words
- ◆ State the findings of the evaluation clearly
- ◆ Keep it clear and simple
- ◆ Keep it brief
- ◆ Pay particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations

Keep asking these questions:

- ◆ Are we just telling the story of the project?
- ◆ Have we interpreted the evidence?
- ◆ Have we made judgements based on the evidence and drawn conclusions?



Dissemination

It is important that evaluations progress beyond well written reports and that they are disseminated to relevant audiences. The findings need to be used and acted upon. If people have been involved in the process of evaluation they may be more receptive to the results and more willing to act on the results. Consideration also needs to be given to providing feedback to the people who have taken part in the evaluation, for example services users, who may have given up their time to take part in interviews or fill in questionnaires and may be very interested in the outcomes of the evaluation.

Before sharing any information from the evaluation make sure that all partners, including people taking part, agree to it. This is especially important where information is not anonymous, or if any group or individual is criticised in the evaluation.

Summary checklist for analysing and interpreting information

- ◆ Has data been changed into information?
- ◆ Has evidence been interpreted convincingly?
- ◆ Does the information show if aims have been achieved?
- ◆ Have unexpected outcomes been included?
- ◆ Has descriptive documentation been kept to a minimum?
- ◆ Has the information been put together to give an overview of the project?

Possible format for a written evaluation report

Summary	Summary of the report, detailing the key points from each section. This should be no more than about one side of A4.
Background and context	The setting for the project and why it was set up - When the project took place and the timetable – This section might also include a short literature review of relevant material.
Aims	What we planned to do: Aims, objectives and measures of success as agreed during planning, with changes made after review meetings
Project delivery	What we did: The main activities of the project
Evaluation methods	How we evaluated the project: This could include explaining how the evaluation was planned, the design and methods adopted. It will be helpful to describe how many people/organisations the evaluation attempted to include, how they were selected and how many responses were completed. This section might also include a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the approach taken.
Results	What the evidence told us: If aims and objectives were achieved – Unexpected outcomes A discussion of the findings may usefully be divided into two or three separate sections depending on the issues being addressed and the material that emerged from the evaluation. It may also be helpful to provide sub-headings to help the readers understand the structure the writer is following to convey the themes and messages of the evaluation. Include quotes where appropriate.
<i>Some possible sub-headings include:</i>	
Case studies	If appropriate you could give some case studies (anonymised).
Successes	A summary of success or things that worked in the project. Include quotes where appropriate.
Lessons learnt	A summary of lessons learnt and what didn't work about the project. Include quotes where appropriate.
Challenges	A summary of the issues that need to be addressed and how they will be addressed in future where appropriate
Recommendations and conclusions	What the project would recommend to others What will be done differently in future Most importantly the recommendations should be clearly linked to the outcomes of the evaluation. Preferably they should have a future form to take the service, practice or a desired course of action forward.
Appendices	Useful information can be included in this section, such as details of the evaluation, including questionnaire or interview schedules and key policy or practice statements. Their purpose should be relevant and they should not unbalance the report.

8 Putting Evaluation into Practice¹

We often put a lot of effort into evaluating our work, but less into sharing the messages we learn from it. Below are some of the factors that can influence whether a report has an effect on policy and practice.

◆ Factors in effective dissemination

◆ Target the right audience

Think which organisations and what level of staff (e.g. managers, practitioners etc.) need to know about your findings and plan your dissemination activities accordingly. Use a variety of different formats for your findings. Provide summaries and verbal feedback.

◆ Balance speed with usable results

Evaluations are often timed to coincide with the end of a project, giving it the maximum time to collect information and measure change. However this often means that the evaluation comes out after it is needed, for example after applications have been made for further funding.

◆ Don't overload with information

Busy people are not likely to sit down and read a big report, and are unlikely to take it in. Give people only the information they need, and provide summaries.

◆ Clarity of message

For your message to have an impact, it needs to be clear and understandable. Draw out the key policy and practice implications.

◆ Relevant to current issues – the right information at the right time

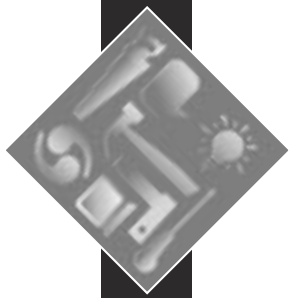
Often, research has an impact because it has come at the right time, and it is relevant to current practice issues.

◆ User ownership

Involve your stakeholders throughout your evaluation, especially in drawing out the key recommendations, and they will be more likely to take on board the results. Make links with policy makers and involve them.

◆ Accessibility

Make your evaluation findings accessible. Consider publishing it in a professional journal (not just academic journals) that you know your target audience reads, use a local newsletter, hold a seminar, put your findings on the web and visit organisations in person.



- ◆ **Make material attractive**

Make your evaluation report look attractive and readable.

- ◆ **Clear strategy at outset**

Plan ahead, when planning your evaluation, think about the end product you want and how you will disseminate it. Don't leave it to the end when you have run out of time and money.

Key factors in disseminating evaluation and research findings:

- ◆ Relevance
- ◆ Quality
- ◆ Accessibility
- ◆ Ownership
- ◆ Timing

◆ **Reflective practice**

Most importantly, ensure you build in opportunities to learn from your evaluation at regular intervals in your project. Reviewing your practice in light of your evaluation should be a regular part of your project management. Providing feedback to your stakeholders is also a key part of this.

9 Using the Media

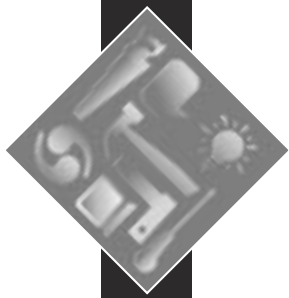
◆ Why do we want media coverage?

- ◆ Media coverage is one of the most effective ways of getting a message across to a large number of people.
- ◆ Organisations need the media to publicise their work, and they need you to supply material to fill newspapers and programme time.
- ◆ Many people are cynical about the media but it can highlight important issues
- ◆ Media activities are not add-on. They are integral to the activities of an organisation.
- ◆ Learning to use media opportunities effectively is the best way of dealing with an unavoidable part of modern life.

Using the media effectively can help you to:

- ◆ Raise awareness of the issues affecting your service users
- ◆ Raise money and attract funding
- ◆ Attract the attention of key target audiences
- ◆ Promote knowledge and understanding of what your organisation does
- ◆ Keep your organisation front of mind
- ◆ Contribute to the spread of good practice in your area of expertise
- ◆ Encourage people to attend an event or support fundraising activities
- ◆ Affect attitudes towards user groups
- ◆ Increase public confidence
- ◆ Increase brand awareness
- ◆ Enhance everything you do
- ◆ Say thank you
- ◆ Insurance for a rainy day – familiarity breeds favourability: if the only time the public hears about your organisation is when things go wrong, the impact will be much greater.

When you are using the media, be clear about what you are trying to achieve



Who do you want to reach?

- ◆ TV, radio and newspaper reports could be the only source of information on your organisation for many people.
- ◆ Using the media can be one of the cheapest and most effective ways to reach the people you want to speak to.
- ◆ MPs and councillors, captains of industry, user groups and many, many others all read newspapers, watch TV or listen to the radio.
- ◆ Using the mass media is one of the most cost-effective ways of changing the perceptions of your organisation among a wide cross section of people.

Through the media you can reach:

- ◆ Opinion formers and decision makers
- ◆ Policy and decision makers in central and local government
- ◆ Business leaders
- ◆ Sponsors
- ◆ Users
- ◆ Former users
- ◆ Partner organisations
- ◆ Other relevant organisations
- ◆ General public

Always keep your audience in mind when targeting the media.

◆ How the media works

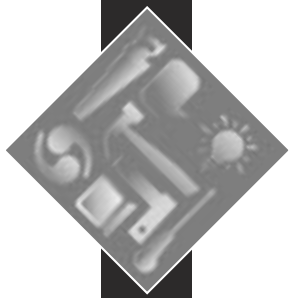
"News is people. It is people talking and people doing. Committees, cabinets and courts are people; so are fires, accidents and planning decisions. They are only news because they involve and affect people."

Harold Evans, former editor, Sunday Times

- ◆ Human Interest – how an event or an issue affects different people – is the key to all types of media coverage.
- ◆ An individual story can make a point in a way that no amount of facts and figures can, and will stay in the audience's mind for much longer.

Three basic types of media coverage, whatever the medium:

- ◆ News is about something immediate that is happening now. It concentrates on who, why, where, what, when and how.
- ◆ Features take a wider, or more in-depth, look at a topical issue. A newspaper feature will involve the personal views or observations of the journalist.
- ◆ News features are a combination of the two, looking at the background to a new story. These tend to be more investigative than news.



The media is not a public information service. It is not there to publish a story exactly as you may see it. It is the journalist's job to gather facts and opinion from a wide range of people and to tell all sides of a story.

Journalists need to reflect the range of facts and views in a limited space or time. Reporters have to spend time getting the facts right, but what appears is likely to be a small part of what you have said.

◆ Writing a press release

The news release is a tool to gain publicity. It outlines the facts, briefly and simply.

FACT: Journalists spend only around 15 seconds on every release they receive.

FACT: Seventy per cent of all news releases are 'spiked' – filed in the bin!

The heading and the first paragraph can make the difference between success and failure.

When writing a news release, provide answers to the five 'Ws' – who, why, what, when and where – in the first two paragraphs. Then tell them how!

Try and identify the three most important points you want to get across.

Information should be used in descending order of importance.

FACT: News releases are edited from the bottom up.

Layout

- ◆ Date the release at the top.
- ◆ Mention details of a good photographic opportunity at the top.
- ◆ If you want different media to carry the story on the same day, add an embargo at the top of the page (Embargoed until 00.01am, 10 March 2001).
- ◆ Give your name and contact telephone numbers (daytime and evening) for more information.
- ◆ Use headed paper for the first sheet of the release to identify your organisation. Type on one side only.
- ◆ If you don't have press release paper, mark clearly in BOLD the top PRESS RELEASE or NEWS RELEASE.
- ◆ Try to limit the release to one side of A4 – two at the most!
- ◆ Use 1.5 or double line spacing to leave room for journalists' marks.
- ◆ Don't continue a sentence or paragraph over to the next page.
- ◆ If you use more than one page type 'more' at the end of each page.
- ◆ Number each page and put 'continued' on the top of the second sheet.
- ◆ At the end type 'ends' so the reporter knows there's no more information.
- ◆ Give background information after 'ends' under a sub heading of Notes To Editors. This is also where you should put your contact details.



Content:

- ◆ Don't use jokey headlines – the title should succinctly sum up the release.
- ◆ For local releases make sure the name of the town/local company etc is in both the heading and the first paragraph. Journalists are always looking for a local angle.
- ◆ Identify the most interesting angle of the story – what would make YOU do a double-take? If relevant focus on one particularly interesting individual – journalists love a human interest story. E.g. 'Anytown Grandmother In race to Help Families' has more impact than 'Local People to Run Marathon for Charity'.
- ◆ Always include a good, strong quote either from an organiser or guest/well known supporter.
- ◆ State facts not opinions

Using a News Release:

- ◆ Depending on the size and importance of the event, send out your release between four and 10 working days ahead – the bigger the event the more advance notice needed.
- ◆ Weekly papers usually have a deadline of Tuesday lunchtime (sometimes Wednesday) for publication Thursday or Friday. So don't contact them on Tuesday morning – leave it to the end of the week.
- ◆ Direct the envelope, fax or email to the News Editor or to a local contact who may be a district reporter in your area.
- ◆ A few days before the event, after the release has been issued, ring the papers concerned to check they've received the information. Ask if it's gone in the photographers' diary, if appropriate. Don't pester reporters or they will ignore you next time you get in touch.
- ◆ Even if you think the press will turn up, try and have your own photographer there. This will ensure you've got something to send the papers if they don't turn up.
- ◆ Get the names and relevant details of all the people in any photographs taken and attach to the prints.
- ◆ If the media don't take their own pictures send your own as soon as possible, preferably the same day. Supply a couple of the best shots, with captions, plus a copy of the original release and updated information such as numbers attending, how much raised. Don't forget to mention anything unusual which may have occurred.

Remember

- ◆ Only issue a press release if you've got something to say!
- ◆ A constant flow of releases from one organisation saying very little will ensure the information is spiked before it's read.
- ◆ Remember – who, why, where, what, when and how.