

Northumberland **FACT** Sheet



working together for the voluntary & community sector in Northumberland

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation is an important aspect of the delivery of any project or service. Funders often ask you to monitor and evaluate your project but even if your project isn't funded it is important to continue monitoring and evaluating to ensure you are meeting the needs of your beneficiaries. Monitoring and evaluation should be a key part of your project not something that you try to do at the end.

Monitoring and evaluating projects and services helps organisations to show that they have achieved what they set out to do. Monitoring and evaluation can also help to identify changes that need to be made in order to achieve the results the project or services is aiming for.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a process of recording what is happening with your project or service. Remember to design monitoring into your project from the start.

For example:

- Counting the number of people who take part in your project
- Recording expenditure on the project
- Asking people who use your service what they think of it
- Asking what people think of your events

When you collect this information will depend on your project or funders requirements, some monitoring will be carried out on a regular basis and others more infrequently.

The information that is collected through monitoring is the starting point for evaluation. There's no point collecting information if you then don't do anything with it.

Evaluation

Evaluation is about making a judgement on how your project or service is performing. The information collected during monitoring, along with other information, will inform the evaluation.

For example:

- The number of people that take part in your project is falling.
- Expenditure on the project is increasing.
- Users of your services are satisfied.
- Your events are considered to be excellent

As part of the evaluation you will need to make a judgement as to why the project is performing in the way that it is.

For example:

- The number of people using the project is falling because another organisation is offering a better service.

- Expenditure is increasing because insurance costs have risen.
- The project offers a good service for users.
- Events are well managed.

Evaluations will need to use two sorts of data:

Quantitative data is based on information about your project that you can count or measure (e.g. numbers of people using your services).

Qualitative information is based on the quality of your project, it is often best collected through interviews, simple questionnaires or group discussions.

Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs focus on the quantitative measures for example focusing on the number of people benefitting, number events. However, many funders are now using an outcomes approach to funding which focuses on the wider benefit funding can bring and the changes that have taken place.

Top Tips

- Be clear about what you need to monitor from the start of your project
Keep it simple, focus on the important aspects of your project rather than trying to monitor everything.
- Make sure everyone knows what needs to be measured and when.
- Build your monitoring into your everyday practices so it doesn't become a burden.
- Ask other organisations about their monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Check what is required from your funders

The Charities Evaluation Service has produced some booklets on various aspects of monitoring and evaluation www.ces-vol.org.uk

The Big Lottery Fund have a number resources visit www.biglearningzone.org.uk/aims_and_outcomes.html

Your local development agency (LDA) has access to a wide range of resources to help you with monitoring and evaluation. For more information, advice and support contact the LDA covering your area.

For rural Northumberland contact:

Community Action Northumberland

UNIUN Enterprise Building Front Street Pegswood Morpeth
Northumberland NE61 6RG
Tel: 01670 517 178 Fax: 01670 511 400
Website: www.ca-north.org.uk email: info@ca-north.org.uk

Registered Company No 7805401 Registered Charity No's 1144604 / 224798

For Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley contact:

Community & Voluntary Action Blyth Valley

22 Beaconsfield Street Blyth Northumberland NE24 2DP
Tel: 01670 353 623 Fax: 01670 365 783
Website: www.cvabv.org.uk email: info@cvabv.org.uk

Registered Company No 5860971 Registered Charity No 1116430

For Ashington, Bedlington and Newbiggin by the Sea contact:

Wansbeck Centre for Voluntary Service

107 & 109 Station Road Ashington Northumberland NE63 8RS
Tel: 01670 858 688 Fax: 01670 784 160
Website: www.wansbeckcvsv.org.uk email: enquire@wansbeckcvsv.org.uk

Registered Company No 5980151 Registered Charity No 1119404



This Northumberland **FACT Sheet** is being funded by Northumberland County Council via Connect 4 Change

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