

# Funding Advice Bureau

**SYFAB** guide to...

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**Monitoring and  
evaluation for small  
groups**

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# Monitoring and evaluation for small groups

Many funders ask groups how they will measure the success of their work. They want to know what difference their funding will make to the people who use your group's services or take part in the activities you provide.

Thinking through how you will monitor and evaluate your group's activities is an important part of planning your work. It can help you learn what works and what doesn't so that you can change or improve future activities or repeat things that you know went well.

Monitoring and evaluating what you do does not have to be complicated. It's an activity that we all do constantly without thinking about it. For instance, when you organise a bonfire party you will ask yourselves afterwards 'was it a success?' 'Did people enjoy themselves?' 'Was there enough food?' 'Was it safe enough for the children?' 'Would we do it again?'

## What is monitoring and evaluation?

Monitoring means collecting and recording information about what is happening. Activities can be monitored in different ways, you can record figures such as the numbers of people attending an event or you can ask people what they thought about the activities.

Evaluation means reviewing how things went by looking at the information that was collected and assessing how worthwhile it was. You might ask questions like:

- Did the activity or project achieve what we wanted it to?
- Who benefited from it?
- What did people think of it and did it make any difference to them?
- Could we have done it better?
- What changes will we make next time?

You need to make sure that you collect useful information that will help you to decide if the activity has gone well. You also need to collect any particular monitoring information that your funder has asked for.

## What to monitor and evaluate

To decide what to monitor and evaluate, you need to think about the following:

- What does our activity or project aim to do or achieve?
- What information will help us to see whether this has happened?
- What methods can we use to collect the information?
- Who needs to be involved in the evaluation?
- What monitoring has our funder asked for?

Funders are interested not only in the numbers of people involved in activities, but also the quality of their experience. So, you might organise an event for a small number of people, but everyone there gets a lot of support and information and finds it very helpful. In addition to recording the number and types of people attending the event, it would be just as important to collect information that shows how people benefited. This could be done with a simple questionnaire at the end of the activity.

## Writing a report

It's a good idea to write a short report summarising your evaluation. This can be useful when planning future activities. It can also be used in your funding applications to show funders that you know what you are doing.

A report could include:

- The aims of the activity or project

- The purpose of the evaluation
- What was being evaluated
- The timescale for the evaluation
- What information was collected
- What methods were used to collect information
- Who carried out the evaluation
- An analysis of the results
- Your conclusions
- How the group will use the evaluation and make any changes when organising future activities.

Your group should review the report in a management committee meeting and discuss the conclusions.

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