

# INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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## WHAT IS IT?

**Monitoring** is collecting and recording information about the activities your group delivers

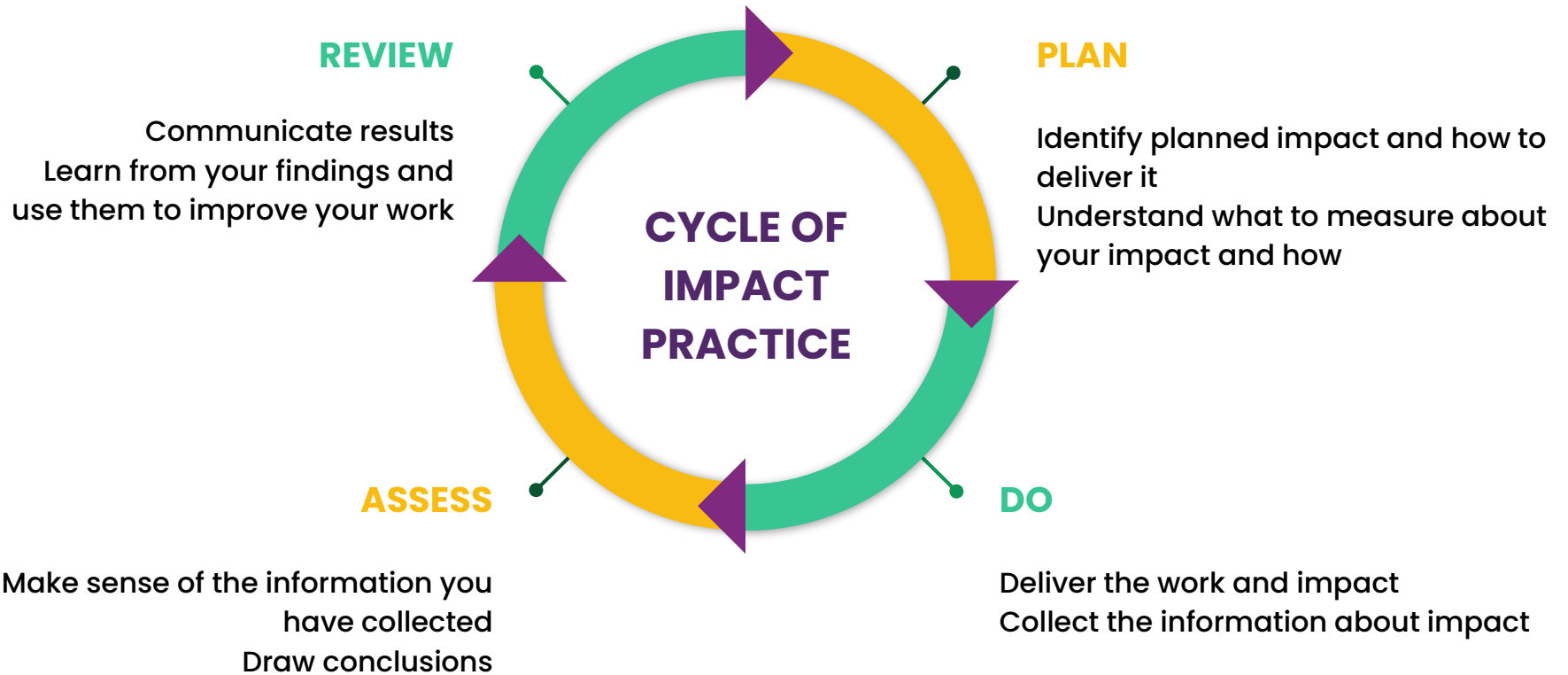
**Evaluating** is using that information to assess the effectiveness and impact of the activities

## WHY DO IT?

- Report to funders and attract further funding
- Make your work even more effective
- Motivate staff and volunteers
- Communication with public
- Develop future plans



***“It’s given me a new sense of purpose, I feel happier than I have for some time”***



# PLANNING YOUR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- **Involve others**
- **Keep it simple** – your volunteers or employees need to be able to collect the information without it taking over the main activities
- **Only record what you really need to** – never collect data without knowing why you need it.
- **Make sure it relates to the aims** you have agreed, and is useful in measuring whether you are achieving them.

## Define what you aim to achieve from your activities.

- Do we have a clear statement of what we are trying to do?
- Does it contain clear targets which are measurable?

E.g. Our project aims to **improve mental health** and **reduce loneliness** for young carers in Cardiff.

Over a **1 year** period we will facilitate **monthly** arts workshops that connect young carers with others in their area.



# HOW TO MONITOR YOUR ACTIVITIES

There are two main kinds of information to collect:

1

Information about what you are doing e.g. number of activity sessions held, number of people attending  
**(‘OUTPUTS’)**



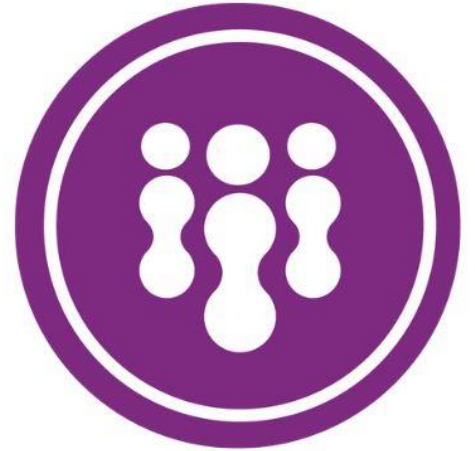
2

Information about the effect your work is having e.g. improving wellbeing, physical health, job opportunities  
**(‘OUTCOMES’)**

## BEFORE AND AFTER

If possible, gather information on how the activities have affected people over a set period of time.

E.g. if you run a community dance group which aims to improve mental and physical health, you could use a questionnaire to ask people simple questions about their physical and mental wellbeing before they join the group, and then the same questions again after six-months of attending.





# HOW TO COLLECT YOUR INFORMATION

## Informal feedback ideas:

- Smiley face / satisfaction tokens
- Suggestion / feedback boxes
- Social media comments
- Case studies
- Group discussions (recording comments)
- Creative activities
- Handwritten comments

## Formal feedback ideas:

- Questionnaires / surveys
- Observation
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Interviews with other stakeholders (e.g. family, carers)

# DECIDING WHAT METHODS TO USE

Decide how to collect information based on your relationship with service users. Consider:

- **Frequency of contact** – is it one off, infrequently, or frequently
- **Type of contact** – face to face, telephone, email?
- **How comfortable using technology** – consider using alternative methods such as face to face or paper
- **Additional needs** – remove barriers and support people if there are additional needs (e.g. large print, explain questions, ask family/carers).

## 2 minute exercise

Think about a project you run and ask:

**1. What is the overall aim of the project?** Broad, long term change.  
E.g. Improved wellbeing of older people living in Bristol care homes

**2. What 2 outcomes do you hope to achieve?**  
E.g. 1. Reduced loneliness 2. Increased access to enriching activities

**3. How will you collect this information and when?**  
E.g. In an annual online survey with care staff and in group discussions with older people every month

# EVALUATING

Look for themes and draw conclusions about the impact you have had based on the findings.

## Ask

- What does the information tell you about your activities?
- Does the information suggest you are achieving your aims?
- What can you learn from these findings? Can they help you to improve anything?

**Negative feedback is just as valuable as positive.**

## BACK UP STATISTICS WITH QUOTES

78% of young people said that the workshops increased their confidence at job interviews.

***“I felt really low before joining this group, it’s made me feel like I’ve got something to offer. I feel more confident and able to put myself out there.”***



## SHARE IT WITH OTHERS!

You've done the hard work, now it's time to tell the story! Share the successes with as many people as possible.

**Share it with staff/volunteers/trustees!** Group meeting, email, bulletin, poster, internal report

**Share it with funders!** Reports or in person meetings. Use it in future applications to secure further funding

**Share it with the public and your supporters!** Press release, newsletter or an annual report. Put it in a social media post or on the website

Meet Abigail.  
 When she was six-years-old, Abigail was diagnosed with a variation of restrictive cardiomyopathy. This meant her heart couldn't work effectively and she needed a heart transplant. She was placed on the transplant list in early 2020.

After being on the transplant list for 589 days, Abigail's family had almost given up hope. But then the call came.... See more



My story (Name Optional):  
 I came to Colchester Foodbank today because...

*Car required me.  
 As my household income has dramatically changed  
 its embarrassing and debilitating, Staff were compassionate  
 and kind Thank you.*



# TOP TIPS

- **Aim for a balance** of stories, quotes and numbers
- **Keep learning at the heart of the process**
- **Keep it simple and manageable** – pick your most important impact area/aim and focus on demonstrating that well.

***“It is better to measure one thing well, than ten things badly” Kieron Kirkland  
Nominet Trust***

- **Be clear about your aims**

***“It is worth spending time clearly articulating who you are aiming to help,  
how, why, and what change looks like” David Hounsell, The Children’s Society***



# FREE RESOURCES

NPC - fill out a 5 minute online questionnaire and get a free recommendations report to help you understand what information to collect and how to go about doing this

<https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/data-diagnostic/>

Arts Council - advice, templates and in depth guidance on our collect evidence of impact

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/measuring-outcomes>

NCVO Evaluation Framework examples

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/strategy-and-impact/impact-evaluation/planning-your-impact-and-evaluation/decide-what-to-measure/examples-of-monitoring-and-evaluation-frameworks/#/>

Training - this course is sometimes offered for free. Check with the organisers

[https://booking.ncvo.org.uk/training/event\\_series/sage-foundation-training-outcome-and-impact-measurement](https://booking.ncvo.org.uk/training/event_series/sage-foundation-training-outcome-and-impact-measurement)

Putting your results into a graphically designed format <https://www.canva.com/>