Using Evaluation

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The Kollective TK

Evaluation can sound daunting

However, it can be straightforward

What's key

- early thinking
- planning it systematically
- modesty - linking it to what the project and activities can do and to your resources

Important to show you've got an evaluation plan for funding applications.

Evaluation activities can:

Help plan your project so it will more likely achieve your aim *(Formative evaluation)*

Record what you did and what happened in the project – also helps explain results *(Process evaluation)*

Help find out if the project made a difference and achieved the impact you hoped for *(Impact/Outcome evaluation)*

Project Plan

Important because helps teases out

- **What you want to change**

- **Why**

- **How you will do it and what resources you need**

- **How you will know you are making a difference**

After developing a project plan putting it into a logic model or diagram can be useful

- **Think about your 'theory of change' - what and why and how you think your initiative will make a change**

- **This draws on your knowledge and experience, evidence, common sense**

- **This will also help tease out what you want to evaluate**

What do you want to evaluate? eg

- specific skills learned

- changes in behaviour, understanding, knowledge, feelings or confidence

- changes in circumstances /conditions eg homeless to homed

- use of facilities

- achievement of qualifications

- number of pests trapped, or trees planted, or pets adopted

- increase in enrolments and attendance

- levels of satisfaction

- expressions of enjoyment

- reduction in reports of abuse

- reduction in injuries from falls

- development of new community initiatives

Data/information Collection

Once you have decided what you want to evaluate

What tools/methods might be useful (quantitative and qualitative)

- **Short surveys – before and after for example**
- **Focus/group discussions**
- **One on one interviews**
- **Observations**
- **Debriefs**
- **Journals, documents related to project**
- **Stories, experiences**
- **Photographs, videos, recordings…**

Example: First draft of a Logic Diagram for the Get It Together Charitable Trust's initiative.

Concern/Issue: *Some people in our community who are struggling with the cost of living don't know basic cooking techniques and if they did, it could help reduce their food costs and also help them cook tasty, nutritious meals.*

Activities we will do	Quality (how we will deliver this)	Change Mechanisms (change process participants go through)	Short/Medium Outcomes we hope to achieve	Impact Longer term
Eg: Provide community-based planning and cooking classes on low-cost nutritious meals	Ensure people attending feel comfortable and not judged for not knowing techniques.	People enjoy and participate positively in classes.	Participants: Increased knowledge of: planning low cost nutritious tasty meals	More people able to use techniques they learned to lower costs and feed their family well
Employ a tutor(s) from the community or maybe volunteers	Skilled friendly tutor from our community (rather than using celebrity chef/youtube videos).	Feel able to ask questions of tutor		Skills and knowledge passed on to others in the family or wider community – ripple effect
		Ask for help if needed.	Increased skills in making: -White/roux sauce -Pasta sauces -Vegetable stock	
	Have hands on practice and friendly classes.	Develop knowledge		
	Safe clean well equipped space to learn in	Have a go at practising techniques		
		Enjoy learning the techniques	Use of knowledge and skills in daily lives	
	Make the classes accessible in different venues.	Grow in confidence	Increased sense of confidence enjoyment and pride.	
	Grow community - have a shared meal afterwards.	Share their own knowledge	Feel satisfied with classes and tutor	
			Reduced costs and more nutritious variety of meals.	

Ideas for evaluation: -

Formative - Ask 'cooks we know' and target group (how) and community members what might be good techniques and skills to learn

Process - ask participants in the classes to do brief self-reflection survey before and after the classes on their level of knowledge, skills and confidence, are they using the techniques at home (also use for short/medium outcomes). Use rating scales and open ended questions – comment boxes.

At the end of the class, ask what they liked/enjoyed, any suggestions for activities, improvement etc. –

With permission take photos, videos of classes and activities such as sharing meal . Keep documents of plans, what was taught, ask for tutor's reflections.

Short/medium outcomes – see if changes in knowledge, skills, use, feelings of confidence,

Could also consider asking what spending on food and if changed during/since the classes ?? Maybe a group discussion – take notes?

Would we look at trying to assess nutrition knowledge? Is this a priority for us? Maybe too hard and complex.

Then:

Making sense of it – data and information analysis, , discussion of what findings mean, what the broader context was, what worked, what didn't, unintended consequences, suggestions...

Reporting – eg summary report, poster, powerpoint, participant voices, conferences, TED talks….

Contributing to and sharing your knowledge and experience!

☺ **Happy to help discuss options:** lizstewart@socialink.org.nz

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