How To Make Your Project Last

Guide on creating impact and follow-up

YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE

Contents

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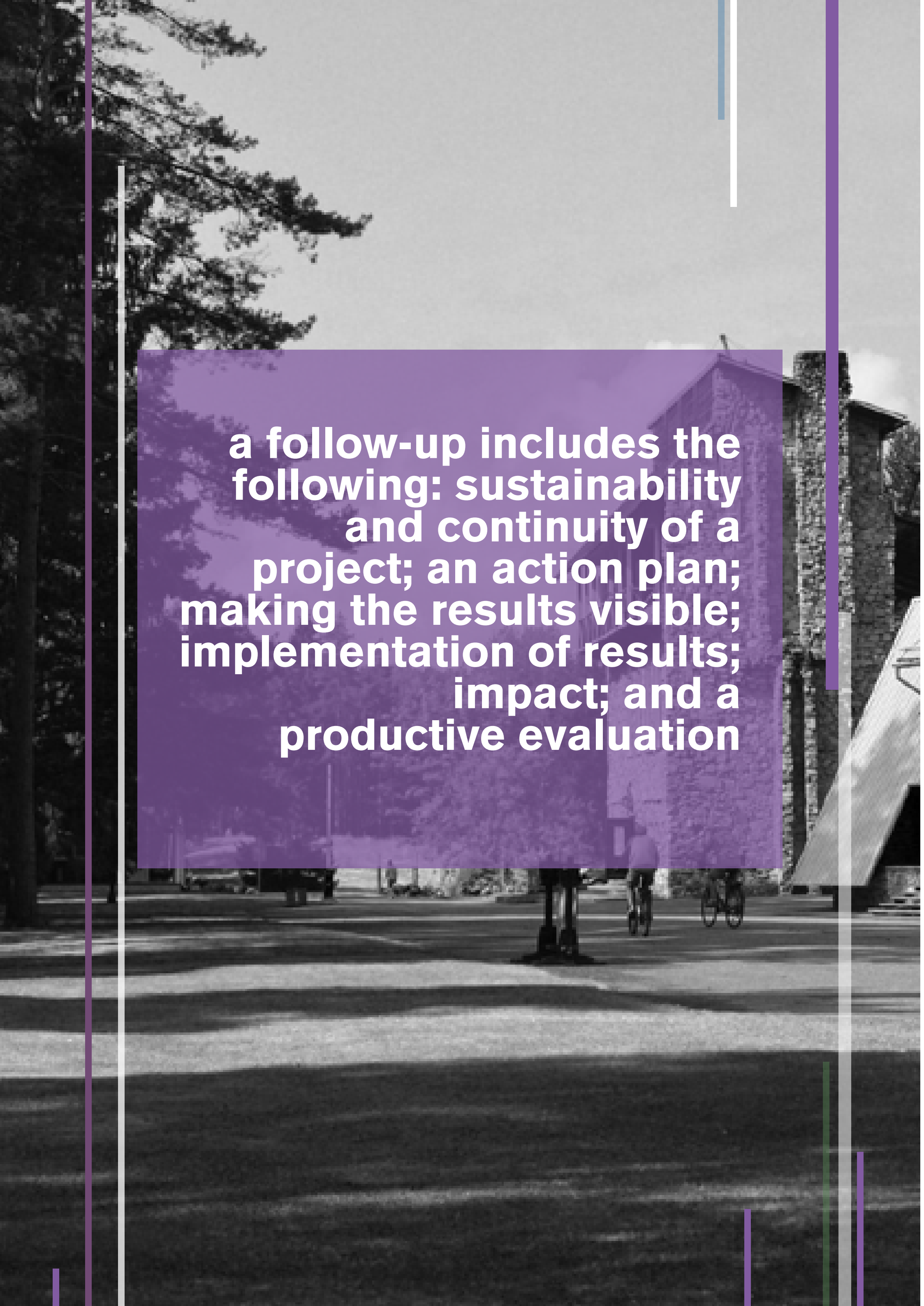


Introduction

What is a follow-up? How do you create an impact with your projects? What is the best way to spread the results? These are the questions which always come up during international and local projects. While everybody understands how important it is to plan the follow-up part of a project, many find it hard to organise successful activities and implement them after their projects.

Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) is a network of 44 youth environmental organisations from across Europe. One of the main fields of YEE work is organising international projects with our member organisations. We noticed that one of the universal challenges in international projects is to ensure the strong impact and the follow-up after the main activity.

This observation was the main inspiration for the training course "Follow-up and impact in international projects'' that took place on 8-15 August 2014 in Valmiera, Latvia. The project was organised by ***YEE*** and Latvian member organisation ***BALTA DABA***. During this project young people from various European countries discussed what a follow-up is, shared examples of successful and challenging follow-up activities and looked into different aspects of the follow-up: evaluation, dissemination and visibility, impact and project planning.

The publication *How to make your project last. Guide on creating impact and follow-up* was planned as a tool to share the ideas and methods from the training course. A group of participants formed an editorial team – they collected information from the training course, but also added more ideas and tools after doing further research.

Follow-up is an important part of any project, equal to preparation and implementation. However, it is quite hard to plan it as many organisations do not consider it important or they lack ideas and resources. The participants of the training course suggested that a follow-up includes the following: ***sustainability and continuity of a project; action plan; making the results visible; implementation of results; impact; productive evaluation.***

Planned follow-up can help you create a project which will have stronger impact and a wider reach. The project cannot be just created for the sake of creating a project. It always has a goal of reaching certain results and sharing them with wider public. Moreover, follow-up provides more opportunities to continue working on a topic and improve the work of your organisation.

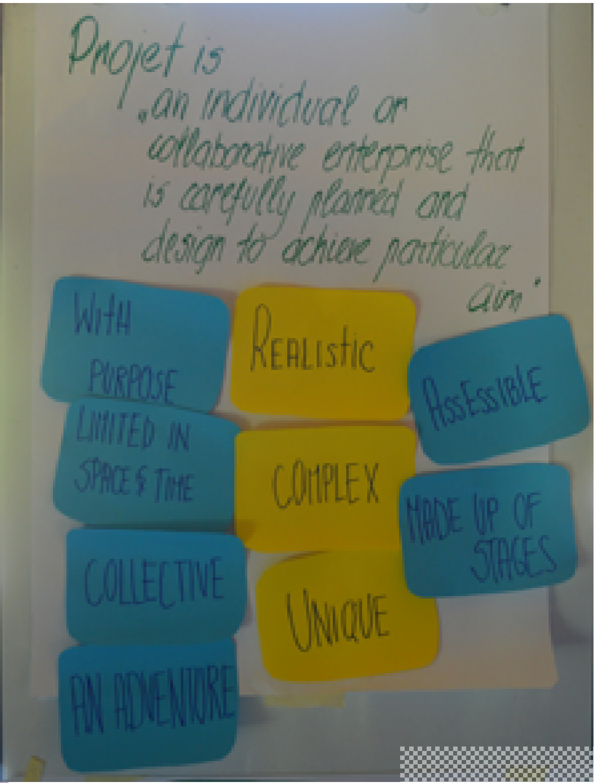
As there is no universal definition of a follow-up, we followed the ideas from the training course and included the following parts in this guide: *Quality criteria for projects; Impact of projects; Target groups; Visibility of a project; Dissemination and Evaluation of a project.*

In *Quality criteria for projects* you can find a checklist of things that are crucial when planning a project. Such criteria can help you during implementation of a project. In the chapter *Impact* you can read about various aspects of influence that youth projects can have. Reading about *Target groups* will help you identify the people who you want to reach with your activities. *Visibility* is an important part of any project and especially a follow-up – you can promote the results through different channels in order to attract more attention. The chapter *Dissemination* tells about spreading the results of your project. Finally, the *Evaluation* chapter explains how important it is to assess the outcomes of a project and follow-up activities and shows evaluation as a great method to improve work and future projects.

We believe that planning all these aspects well will help you to make your projects last and create with them a stronger impact. We hope you will find this guide helpful when preparing your future projects – you can read here some introductory information about various aspects of follow-up and take it as an inspiration for creating your own tools.

Natalia Luchko,
On behalf of the editorial team.

QUALITY CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS



When creating and organising a project we are often busy with many tasks. It can be hard to slow down and reflect on the ways of bringing quality to our project, especially when an organisation or project team does not follow any structured quality plan.

Quality can mean something different to different people or organisations. Your organisation should decide what is important for its work in terms of quality and choose certain criteria and indicators. This will help you create your own "quality criteria". It is important that everyone in your organisation or project team shares the same view on what project quality is and follow the same quality plan.

Why is it good to have a quality plan for your project?

- ***To make sure that your project will have impact, that it will make a change.***
- ***To make your work easier and more effective.***
- ***To save you time and worries.***
- ***To help you evaluate your project and its results in a clear and simple way.***
- ***It is an objective way to show others (partners, funders, etc.) that you have reached a certain level of quality in your project.***

There are many different points and criteria to check in order to bring quality through the whole cycle of your project, from the creation of the project and its implementation to the follow-up.

We prepared for you a set of tips and quality criteria that are useful while preparing and running a project. We hope that they will serve you as an inspiration to create your own list.

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

Developing the idea:

- ***Form a preparatory team or project team*** (it should involve people who will be committed to the project during all stages, people who can both bring their experience and expertise but also learn something new).
- ***Analyse and select the needs that you want to address with your project*** – everyone involved in the project should take part in this reflection.
- ***Set the aim and objectives of your project (SMART objectives)*** – everyone should take part.
- ***Decide on the crucial aspects of the project:*** title, type of project (training, youth exchange, seminar, campaign, etc.), approximate dates, venue, methodology, target group, countries involved, type and amount of partner organisations, selection criteria (for partners and participants), follow-up, potential funders, etc.

Communication/ cooperation with preparatory team:

- ***Create a space for members of the preparatory team to share expectations for the project.*** You can use shared online documents in case all members are in different countries.
- ***Divide roles and tasks*** – assess expectations and previous experience from members and divide tasks accordingly.
- ***Agree and establish the frequency*** (once per week, twice per month, etc.) and ways of communication that will be used (e-mails, online calls, online shared documents, etc.). Organise regular online meetings and plan a physical preparatory meeting, if possible.
- ***Involve, consult and inform everyone in the preparatory team about all decisions and issues regarding the project.*** Use collaborative online tools and shared documents.
- ***Organise evaluation and feedback sessions within the team and with partners.*** It will help people to follow their learning process and improve the cooperation and project planning.

Selecting and cooperating with partner organisations

- ***Prepare a call for partners including:*** basic details of the project, requirements, partnership application and deadline for applying.
- ***Send personal e-mails with the call for partners to specific organisations that could be potential partners.***

• ***Spread the call through youth networks or other platforms*** linked with the topic of your project.

• ***Assess the partnerships applications received with the preparatory team and choose your partners following the selection criteria previously set.*** Create a table with the list of partners and their details and ask members of the preparatory team to discuss and vote on the most suitable partners.

• ***Make an online meeting with all partners to discuss the details of the project and set up rules of cooperation.*** Sign with all partners a document regulating the rules of cooperation on the project.

• ***Involve and inform all partners about all steps of the project.***

Choosing trainers and/or experts:

• ***Decide on the desired profile of trainers or experts.***

• ***Set a selection process.***

• ***Create a call for trainers/experts* including:** information about the project, its aims and objectives, the requirements and explanation of the selection process.

• ***Search for trainers/experts.*** You can check databases of trainers available on many networks' or organisations' websites.

• ***Decide on the terms of cooperation with the selected trainers:*** fee, hours of work, involvement after the activity and other important points. After agreeing on them, sign the contract.

• ***Decide on the ways of preparing the methodology for sessions.*** Use some planning documents (session outlines) so that all trainers and preparatory team will be well informed in advance about the details of the programme.

Writing the application form:

• ***Involve the partner organisations in the application writing.*** How are they going to contribute to the project? Which expertise will they bring? Make sure they feel the project "belongs" to them.

• ***Work together with the whole preparatory team.*** Divide the parts of the application among members but make sure everyone agrees on the main points of the project like main activities, learning outcomes or follow-up.

• ***Write in a clear and simple way.*** Avoid overusing keywords. Focus on the real content of what you want to do and achieve through your project. The key questions are given already in the application form – so just try to answer them instead of giving irrelevant information.

• When the application form is ready, ***ask someone who was not involved in its preparation to read it*** and share what he/she understood from it.

• ***Ask the trainers/experts to help you*** with the creation of the draft programme of the activity and the selection of methodology and learning outcomes.

• ***Send the application form even before the official deadline.***

Selection of participants:

• ***Firstly, decide on the profile of participants together with the preparatory team:*** age, level of experience in the topic, their motivation and expectations from the project, etc. Secondly, decide on a selection procedure with the team.

• ***Prepare an application form.*** It can be a document or an online questionnaire. The application form can include: basic information about participants, emergency contacts, organisations' details, special needs, questions about motivation, experience, expectations, plans to use the results of the project. You can add any other question which seems relevant to the topic of the project.

• ***Prepare the call for participants.*** It should include the information about the project, the application form and information about travel reimbursement and participation fee.

• ***Involve the partners in the selection:*** they should promote the call and pre-select the participants (or select them, depending on what you agreed before).

• ***Promote the call for participants on social media and related websites.***

• ***Make the selection of the participants*** (or approval of proposed people) with the team.

Logistics:

• ***Prepare the information pack (info pack) for the participants.*** It should include: information about organisation, project, venue, travel arrangements, travel reimbursement, arrival and departure dates, meeting time and place, directions to the venue, what participants should bring.

• ***Arrange visas for participants.*** You should have a template of an invitation letter and basic information on how to apply for visa to your country.

• ***Arrange the venue.*** Discuss the conditions, arrival and departure days, payment and meals.

• ***Prepare the materials for the project.*** You can make a list beforehand and check up with it. Usually the necessary materials for projects are: whiteboard or flipchart paper, set of pens, pencils, markers, notebooks, tapes, colour paper, computer, printer, projector, wires and plugs in the room, promotional materials. Ask the trainers to write what materials they might need for sessions.

• ***Arrange the travel of participants:*** they should buy tickets in advance and know the rules of reimbursement well so that you will not have any problems with it after the project.

• ***Check if some of the participants have special needs*** and arrange everything that is necessary for them.

• ***Answer*** the questions from participants and partners on time.

• Make sure that you ***follow the environmentally-friendly principles*** while preparing the project.

• Prepare ***first-aid kit*** before the beginning of the project.

• ***Not to lose the overview of all these aspects, it is useful to define certain roles in the preparatory team,*** for example one person being in charge of arranging the venue, another one replying to participants' emails, etc.

DURING THE ACTIVITY

Finances:

- ***Check the financial and reporting rules*** of the funder who supports your project.

- ***Prepare the draft budget of the project.***

- ***Decide who from the preparatory team is going to be responsible for finances:*** they need to save all the bills before, during and after the activity.

- ***Collect all the bills and make copies***, then register them directly in the budget.

- ***Always double check the budget and all calculations*** with a person responsible for finances in your organisation or another member of the team.

Programme:

- ***Share the draft programme with participants in advance.***

- ***Adapt the programme to the expectations and needs of participants.***

- ***Be flexible.*** Always have a "plan B" in case something does not work out as planned (participants' reaction, change of weather, missing required person/materials, etc.).

- ***Include a wide variety of methods in the programme*** – change places, create groups of various sizes, encourage active participation, etc.

- Choose methodologies that ***follow the principles of non-formal education.***

- Prepare sessions dedicated to the planning of ***the visibility, dissemination and follow-up.***

- Include some activities to ***get to know the local community or do some environmental actions.***

Visibility:

- ***Document the project by various tools*** (photos, videos from sessions, interviews with participants, collecting materials from sessions).

- ***Make your project visible and spread information about your activities.*** You can check the *Visibility* chapter in this guide.

- Create ***visibility materials*** during the activity.

- Involve participants in ***publicising the project.***

Group dynamics:

- Organise ***team building activities*** for participants.

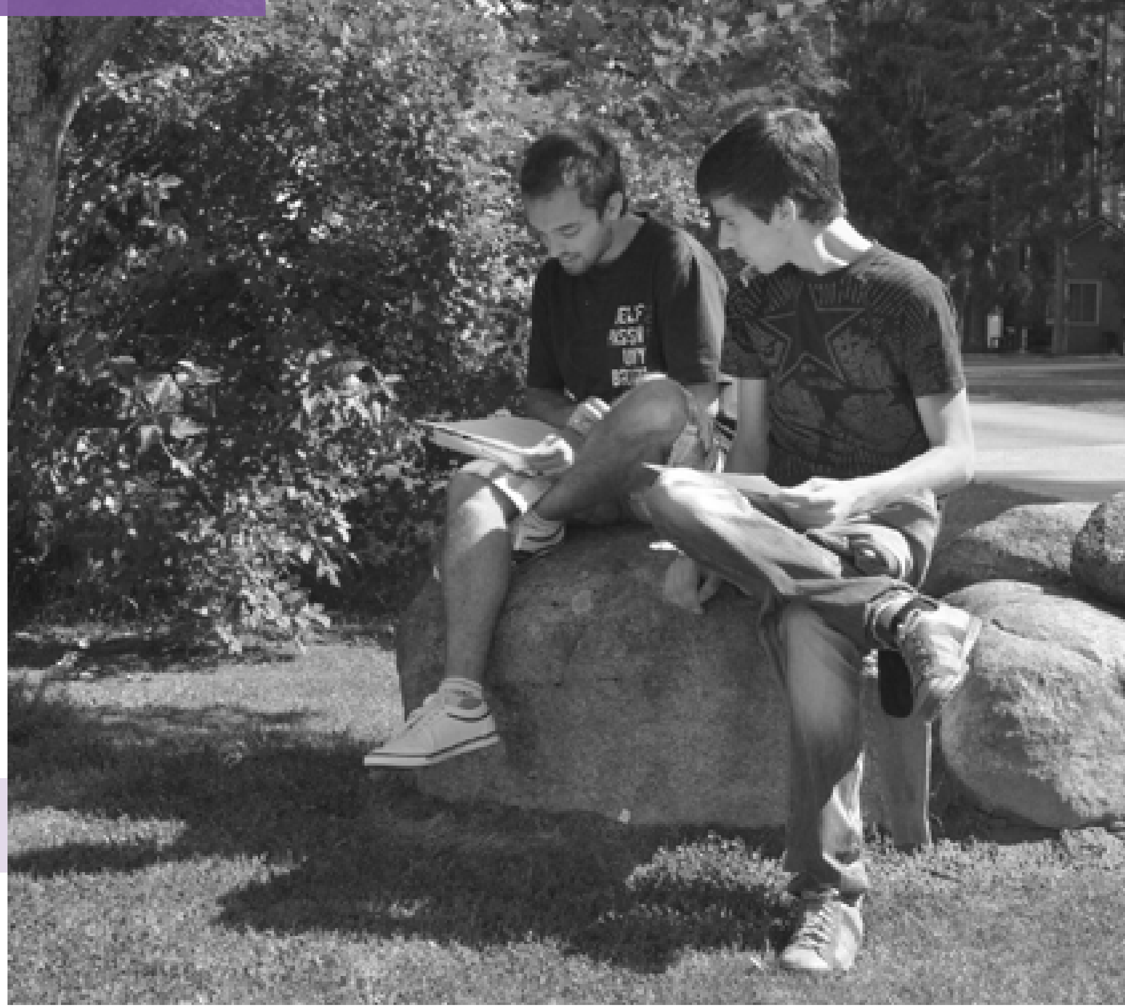
- ***Decide on the form of reflection groups and divide the participants in smaller groups.*** You can read more about reflection groups in the chapter *Evaluation*.

- ***Observe participants and discuss*** with trainers and organisers which activities and approaches would ensure that all participants feel included in the group.

Evaluation:

- ***Organise daily reflection groups*** or mid-term evaluation to know the reaction of participants and improve the project.

- ***Organise a final evaluation of the activity*** – think about what you want to get from it. You can read more about evaluation in the related chapter.



- ***Organise an individual written evaluation.*** Decide when it should be filled in: at the end of the activity or online after the project. Should it be prepared in advance or after the activity and adapted to the group?

- Plan what to do with the ***results of the evaluation.***

Following policies of the organisation:

- Check if your organisation or the host organisation of your project has any ***policy or requirements to follow.***

- ***Share your observations*** from the project and propose some improvements for future projects.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY

Evaluation:

• ***Organise an evaluation meeting of the preparatory team with trainers.***

• ***Organise an evaluation and feedback meeting of the preparatory team.***

• ***Assess the results of all the evaluations*** (participants, trainers, preparatory team) and discuss the possible improvements to adopt for future projects. Analyse the results with your organisation.

Follow-up:

• ***Share with the participants all materials from the project*** – a contact list, photos, videos, resources from sessions, etc.

• ***A general plan for the follow-up should be drafted*** in the application form and be a part of the budget planned for its implementation.

• ***Reserve some sessions during the activity*** for the discussion of the follow-up and the creation of an action plan by the participants.

• ***Involve participants and partner organisations*** in the creation and implementation of follow-up activities and materials.

• ***Keep in touch with the participants*** to be updated about their follow-up activities.

• ***Prepare certificates for participants*** (for example, Youthpass certificate).

• ***Plan concrete steps of dissemination*** of project results.

Travel reimbursement:

• During the activity, ***remind your participants to save all their tickets and boarding passes on the way home.***

• ***Prepare the travel reimbursement form*** and send it to participants with instructions on how to send their tickets.

• When you receive all the documents, prepare a document to ***calculate the travel costs*** and the amount to reimburse.

Reporting:

• Before the start of the project, ***check the reporting obligations and rules of the funder.***

• ***Prepare the financial report:*** save all the bills and invoices, make copies, make the final budget.

• ***Write the narrative part of the report and prepare the attachments:*** summary of the evaluation, links to the media coverage, photos from the activity. Involve the whole project team and partners in preparing/checking the report.

• ***Send the report in advance*** and follow the deadline.

We hope that for each future project you will decide with your team on the quality criteria. Use our points just as an inspiration and add things that are important for your organisation and your project. It will help you to plan better, remember about all details and thus create a stronger impact.

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Link: https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/inclusionqualitycharter/

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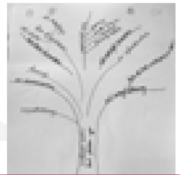
IMPACT

The simplest definition of the word “impact” is to have a strong effect on someone or something. Why do NGOs make projects in the first place? Since the very beginning when there is an idea for a project, activity or campaign, there is a need for change, for engagement, for tackling a problem. There is a need to make an impact. Usually the people who participate in these projects or activities share the same concern about the topic or want to learn more.

The impact of a project can be, in some cases, more visible than in others. We speak about visible impact when we have concrete, factual results. For example, a new sustainable business has been created in the community or the acceptance of Roma children in local schools has increased by 30%. In other situations, the impact can be related to more abstract aspects, such as a change in the local community’s mentality or moral support for young people to take initiative and become leaders. Nevertheless, impact is equally important for all projects and the follow-up, so we should know how to assess it and how to make it last.

THE ROLE OF IMPACT IN A PROJECT

In order to make impact through your projects, it is necessary to think in advance and have a strategy. That is why it is important to remember some elements of project planning that can strengthen the impact of the project:



Dissemination – spreading the results of the project, usually after the project, by producing various materials, videos, writing articles and making sure that they reach a wide public, especially the target groups.

Visibility – promotion of the project, actions during the project; raising visibility in the community/city where the project takes place; spreading the word in social media through videos, posts; producing visible materials like t-shirts, bags, etc.

Exploitation of results – making sure that the materials produced through the project are actually used by different groups of interest.

Follow-up – continuation of the project through different activities in order to keep the motivation of the participants alive and also provide the possibility for other interested people to get involved.

THE IMPACT

TYPES OF IMPACT

When you develop a project, it is important to think about all the ways in which the actions you make could affect the target groups or different factors in the community. In this context, we can speak of various types of impact, such as economic, social, environmental, political and public policy, and health impact, etc. Further on, we will focus on the ones that we consider to be the most commonly analysed in project management:

Social impact:

When you are identifying and analysing the social impact of your project, you actually think about the effects that your actions have on different target groups, on local communities or on the society as a whole, if that is the case. Assessing the social impact means, on one hand, estimating in advance what could be the possible social consequences, both positive and negative, that are likely to result from a project. On the other hand, you can also assess the social impact by the end of the project, when some or most of the planned actions have already taken place.
Social impact is extremely relevant in projects that deal with social issues, such as human rights, social integration, immigration, education, etc. A key aspect when assessing impact within social issues is having trust. If the past experience of a community with projects (their impact history) is bad, new projects will be regarded very sceptically, even if they might be beneficial.

Examples of social impact that can be identified in a project:

- By making a theatre workshop for people with disabilities, the level of their integration in the community was increased.

- Bringing together people from various countries in a training course about immigration created a framework for understanding and tolerance.

- Organising a work camp on renovating an old culture centre allowed the community to have a place to meet and organise culture events, etc.

Environmental impact:

The environmental impact refers directly to the natural environment and indirectly to the societies and groups of individuals who benefit as a result. Assessing the environmental impact of your project means that you are taking into consideration aspects such as: the security and condition of the local environment (forests, water sources, the agricultural potential, etc.), aspects that protect human health, maintenance of biodiversity, reasonable use of resources, involvement of community in environmental protection, etc.

One important aspect of environmental impact assessment is sustainability. It is advisable to analyse how long the impact of your project will last and to make sure that the environment is considered with every action you take.

Each gathering of people creates an impact on environment that it is good to assess:

- ***Before every project, think how to reduce the environmental impact*** – try to use local transport, choose accommodation that has environmentally friendly facilities, provide vegetarian, local, seasonal and organic food, buy ecological materials or reuse them, etc.

- ***During projects you can always organise an action to improve the environmental situation*** – for example, collecting trash, cleaning the river, planting trees, etc.

- ***After the project has been completed,*** analyse how much impact on environment had the travel of participants, prepared food, used materials, etc.

Examples of environmental impact:

- A seminar on how to be more sustainable at the workplace led to the reduction in energy consumption and better use of paper.

- By organising a training course in an ecological centre the costs were reduced and the sessions were conducted according to the principles of sustainability.

- Travelling by land instead of flying reduced the participants' carbon footprint (because planes are much more polluting than buses or trains), etc.

Economic impact:

Some projects can affect the community from an economic point of view, directly targeting private businesses, public institutions or entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs. Many projects that assess the economic impacts of their actions take into consideration the ways in which the community could benefit from a direct or indirect financial development. Here we also include unemployment, information about how to become an entrepreneur or to start a business, how to access different EU funds, etc.

The economic impact is strongly related to the social and environmental ones, as every change in the economic context of a community is connected to the way people interact and to whether the environment is taken into account in a sustainable way.

Examples of economic impact:

- A new business has been created.

- Employability has been increased through educating and training the unemployed people.

- Young people have been informed and trained in order to acquire leadership skills and become entrepreneurs, etc.

HOW TO ASSESS YOUR PROJECT'S IMPACT

In order to maximise the impact of your project, you should consider using what is called "impact assessment". This is the process through which you identify all the possible impacts that can result from your project. You can either identify anticipated impacts (before implementing your project) or the actual impacts that you get throughout the project development, including the evaluation stage.

There is a wide range of methodologies that you can use to assess your project's impact, but one of the main differences is made between **quantitative** and **qualitative methods.**

Quantitative methods can be statistics that analyse the general aspects of your project, such as aims and objectives, target group, outcomes,etc.

Qualitative methods in contrast, are used to investigate more complex aspects, such as possible sensitive types of social impacts (for example, integration of Roma children in local education).

If you want to make the impact assessment as relevant and beneficial as possible, we recommend you to keep in mind the following steps:

- ***Engage your partners in the process*** and keep a constant collaboration to make sure they actively participate in the assessment.
- ***Clearly define the purpose of the impact assessment*** in order to know what to do with the results afterward.
- ***Identify the methods and analytical tools*** that are the most suitable for the purpose of the assessment.
- Analyse especially the ***economic, social and environmental impacts*** of your project.
- ***Analyse*** possible connections or differences that can appear between the types of impacts.
- ***Communicate*** the results of the assessment.

HOW TO MAKE THE IMPACT SUSTAINABLE

Youth projects often have problem with creating wide impact and making it sustainable (that continues even after the end of the project). So already before you start your project, plan how to make it last longer.

- ***Plan visibility tools that can be used for longer time*** – for example, a website where contributors can add new content or a forum where people can discuss important topics.
- ***Make sure that results of your project will be used in future projects*** or your organisation and partners – you can create guidelines or tips or a document with results of the evaluation.
- ***Produce materials that can be used also in the future*** (time- and context-independent) – make sure that your publications, websites, blogs are useful and comprehensible for many groups and that they contain information which will not get outdated quickly.
- ***Plan who will keep your materials updated*** (for example who will be an administrator of the website).
- ***Invest in improving skills of participants*** and make sure to keep them involved in future projects. If you organise a training course for youth workers on project management, invite them later to create international projects that they will be able to coordinate.
- Plan how you will encourage people and organisations to ***continue working on the results of the project*** – you can organise regular skype meetings or reporting system, you can send reminder emails, plan long-lasting tasks, organise visits, etc.

Remember that to make your project useful and make it last, you have to start thinking about the expected impact and ways of strengthening it at the beginning of your project planning.

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Types of impact
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Making waves. Creating more impact with your youth projects, SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre
Link : https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1408/MakingWaves.pdf

TARGET GROUPS

The term "target group" is used to describe a specific group of people connected to a project. It can be any group or individual who can affect or be affected by the project results. Simply put, a target group are people for whom a project is made.

Every phase of each project, from the preparatory to the follow-up, should have a set target group. Moreover, the project and its results should be adapted to a specific target group as well.

When developing a follow-up, you should keep in mind the target groups for whom project results are intended.

You need to define your target group in order to set clear objectives of the project. When the target group is defined, you should take into account its needs. This is essential for successfully reaching the target group and the goal of the follow-up. At the same time, remember to plan carefully the involvement of the target groups through a strategy that describes their participation.

Your follow-up activities will depend a lot of different target groups: some of the activities and products should be adapted according to a specific target group. For example, if you want to involve young people, you can use social media or mobile applications. But if you are working with senior citizens, you will probably be more successful by organising social meetings in local communities.

There are two types of target groups: direct and indirect.

Direct target group – people who are directly involved and affected by your project. These are the people working on it or being involved from the beginning, such as your team and partner organisations, as well as participants or others for whom you organise the project.

Indirect target group – the wider public. These are the people who did not take part in your project. For example, it can be other NGOs, media, local community where you do your project, politicians, funders, schools, universities, etc.

STEPS FOR IDENTIFYING TARGET GROUPS

Here you can find some easy steps that might help you identify the target group(s) and their needs in order to have a successful follow-up of your project.

Step 1. Brainstorming on potential target groups

Gather your project team and write down all potential target groups for your project. Your target group will be directly involved with the objectives of your project. For this topic it could be participants, experts, funders, other NGOs, social media, local media, local community, etc. Then take a look at what you have brainstormed so far and think which other parties might have the same problems, needs, goals, etc. Add them to your list.

Step 2. Identifying target groups

After brainstorming on potential target groups, your next step is to identify them. To do this, you should answer the following question: "Who are the target groups which your project is designed for?" Together with setting the aim and objectives of the project, this is the most important part before developing your idea further. When you find the answer to this question, try to make a prioritised list of your selected target groups with whom you would like to work on more.

Step 3. Identifying the needs of the target groups

Apart from identifying the target groups, your further step is to identify their needs. So think about what information you need to know and why, in order to reach your target audience. The most common thing is to do research. Here are some proposals:

- See if anyone did a ***similar project and how they reached their target group's needs.***

- ***Make questionnaires and spread them among potential target groups***. For example, if you want to check the experience of NGOs about visibility of their project, questions could be: "What is your experience with organising projects? What part of the project implementation would you like to improve? Do you need any help with writing or organising it? What about the follow-up? Are you satisfied with the visibility of your past projects?"

- ***Interview*** potential target groups.

- Organise some sessions where you can ***present your idea*** and ask for their opinion and needs.

- ***Put a stand or a banner in a public space*** with an attractive headline connected with your topic and invite people to share their opinions and needs. Keep in mind that for organising such an action in a public space you need a written approval from the local authorities (which sometimes even needs to be announced or registered a few days in advance).

- After you collect all the necessary information, you can ***make a table with the target groups and their needs.***

Target group	Needs, problems, opinions

Step 4. Define a methodology to involve your target groups

The next step is to define a methodology on how to involve the target audience into your activity. Always bear in mind what level of involvement you need from each target group. Now you should think of the objectives you want to achieve with the target groups, so for each group define the objectives and answer the following questions:

- ***Do you need your target groups' assistance in developing the follow-up?***

For example, it can be local community or people working in other NGOs who want to take part, such as project coordinators, activists, translators, designers, experts, trainers, etc. In this case, one of the proposals is to send or give them an info sheet about your idea and ask them if they would like to help you.

- ***Do you want to inform them about the project happening, progress or results?***

For example, if the target group are local residents and your objective is to inform them that something is happening in their community, you can call local media (newspaper or TV), send them a pitch to intrigue them to come and make a video or write articles in local newspapers or even make some performance in their community. By doing this, you will also raise project visibility.

- ***Do you need your target audience's feedback?***

For example, you need the target groups' feedback on methodology or tools which were used or developed throughout your project. In this case you can make questionnaires, ask them to write what they think about methodology or tools that were used, or have a meeting (physical or virtual).

- ***Do you want to involve the target groups in the follow-up?***

One of the ways to involve your partner organisations is to ask them to post an article with photos on their web page. If you are addressing the local community or a part of a specific community, you can make presentations about your topic and activities or organise local actions such as cleaning the river. Furthermore, if you want to involve the participants of your project in the follow-up, you can share with them tools and skills which will be useful for them.

Remember that before you plan your project and the follow-up, you need to think firstly who you want to influence, who are your target groups and what are their needs. Secondly, think of the ways how to reach them. The chapters *Visibility* and *Dissemination* will help you to learn how to reach your target groups.

Sources:

Sally, H., Sarah, T., Creating an effective dissemination strategy, An Expanded Interactive Workbook for Educational Development Projects, Bridging the Gap, Innovations projects 2001.
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VISIBILITY

In project management, the concept of "visibility" is very much connected to another topic – "dissemination". Both notions talk about the methods and tools through which the activities and results of a projects are presented to the larger audience. However, you can make your project visible throughout the entire project, from its planning, through implementation and to follow-up, whereas dissemination mainly happens at the end of the project, in the follow-up stage. In simple words, through visibility you show the work you are doing in your project.

Why it is good to make your project visible:

- Spreading information about what you are doing will ***get people's attention.***
- It will get a ***positive image for your organisation and your project.***
- It will make the participants who are already involved feel more ***confident and motivated.***
- It can ***recruit more members*** for your organisation.
- It can ***attract new partnerships*** or more funding.

BEFORE MAKING YOUR PROJECT VISIBLE

Before applying any tools for visibility, it is important to ask yourself the following questions and try to find the right answers for your project:

What is my main objective with regard to my project's visibility?	To inform people about climate change; to let people know about the new eco-park we built through our project; to find unemployed young people willing to learn how to start their own sustainable businesses, etc.
What is my main core message?	Urban gardening is an alternative way to live healthy in big, polluted cities; using non-formal methods in primary schools will help children in their personal development, etc.
Who is my primary target audience?	Young environmental educators who are interested in sharing and exchanging experiences from their own communities; children from families with fewer opportunities; unemployed young people with a sense of initiative and an interest in environmental issues who lack funds and knowledge to start their own businesses, etc.
Where can I reach/find this audience?	In other NGOs, universities, youth centres, etc.
Which tools can I use to reach my target group?	Make a movie, use social networks, give away leaflets, etc.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE TO INCREASE YOUR PROJECT'S VISIBILITY

We often put a lot of efforts in our actions and sometimes we are disappointed afterwards: "Why have only few people come to our workshop?" or "I wonder how many people really read our publication." We know that visibility is important but do we really take time to analyse our visibility strategy and plan specific tools? In order to help you with that, we have prepared below a list of tools and good practices that you can use for your project's visibility.

Visual Identity

Good Practices:

- ***Make sure your organisation has a relevant logo*** that is easy to remember. If you are an environmental organisation, make your logo in "earthy" colours – green, blue, yellow, brown. If you are a youth association, go for more dynamic colours – orange, red, green. If you are an organisation that deals with social work or counselling, try warm or neutral colours – red, brown, dark blue, dark green, white.

- ***Find a catchy and, if possible, short title for your project***, so that people will remember it. If you can, include the name of your organisation in it. Here are some examples: *Snapshot for environment* (youth exchange on environmental issues using photography as the main tool); *My body my rights* (campaign about basic human rights); *Plan Bee – Living Without Pesticides* (Greenpeace project to save the bees), *The Right to Be(e)*, etc.

- ***Create a subtitle for your project title*** that will make it clear what the project is about. An example is given above: *Plan Bee – Living Without Pesticides.*

How to write an attractive and effective title for your project:

Step 1. Gather your preparatory team (in a physical meeting or on Skype) for a brainstorming. Make it your goal to conduct the session in a reasonable time – within 1 hour is ideal, but it should not last longer than 2 hours.

Step 2. Write down five keywords that best describe your project. For example, if you want to organise a communal meal in a community that lacks social cohesion, your keywords would be: food, dinner-party, neighbourhood, community, social cohesion.

Step 3. Each team member should suggest at least one title for the project with the selected keywords. Make the list as long as possible.

Step 4. Decide on the best 3 title proposals. You can make the decision in the big group or by smaller groups or teams. For example, you can form 3 teams and each team would select one title proposal.

Step 5. With the 3 title proposals, organise a focus-group with 6-8 people you know. Explain to them shortly what the project is about and invite them to have a discussion on the proposals. Take notes on the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal.

Step 6. After the focus-group, ***compare your notes and select the title proposal with the best feedback.*** Tell your preparatory team about the results and make sure they are all happy with the decision.

Step 7. Now you have a great title for your project, so it is time to make it visible!

Online Tools And Social Media

Good Practices:

- The highest activity on Facebook is during ***weekdays at 11:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.***, according to each time zone.

- Facebook users are the most active on ***Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m***. and the least active on Sundays.

- Although the highest activity is around 3:00 p.m., ***texts and photos posted in the morning tend to perform better than the ones posted in the afternoon.***

- Also, posting something in ***the first quarter of the hour*** (from :00 to :15 minutes) will bring you more interaction. The second best quarter is from :30 to :45 minutes.

- ***Facebook users are more active when posts deal with:*** commentary and analysis on breaking news, controversy, direct messages (for example, asking for recommendations on a place, a book, a movie, etc.), open questions (for example, "What do you think about climate change?"), strong photos, humour, calls to action.

- ***Posts which invite to conversation or a question*** receive 70% more interaction than posts that are simply giving information.

- Posts with a ***personal tone or clever language*** (talking about interesting and intelligent topics using facts, questions, wordplay, humour, etc.) receive 120% more interaction from users.

- ***Photos receive 50% more likes than non-photo posts***. Besides regular images, users like graphics and comics.

- ***Hashtags (#)*** reach more people and are very popular these days. However, they annoy most users when used in every post or are too many in the same post.

Let's face it, we live in an online world, so why not use this to your advantage? Write articles and post photos on your organisation's website. If you have a specific website for your project, even better, just make sure that you link it with all the other online resources that your target group has access to. Moreover, it is important to make sure that your presence on social networks such as Facebook or Twitter is strong.

You can attract more attention by:

- ***using catchy titles*** for your posts;

- ***having good photos*** with a lot of people in them (on Facebook, for example, they can tag themselves and, this way, their friends will see them and create a wider reach);

- ***creating a viral video;***

- ***making an interesting diary of your project,*** which will be updated constantly and can be made of photos, videos or small interviews, etc.

Promotional Materials

Good Practices:

- When organising a training course on ways to save energy, you can offer participants wall-stickers that would remind them to turn off their light. You can also ***add the title of the project or the name of the organisation on the sticker,*** as a constant reminder.
- When creating t-shirts for participants, ***think of a colour that represents your organisation***. It can be a t-shirt only with the organisation's name and logo or, if you have more funds, it can be a t-shirt specific to the project. For instance, the organisers of the "No hate speech" campaign are giving participants white t-shirts with the message *No hate* in a red heart and the logo of the organiser.
- One important aspect to ***keep in mind is the material used*** for making the t-shirts. Make sure that they are made of organic cotton. You can look for brands such as the *Earth Positive* from Continental Clothing, for example. Also, you can check whether there is the option of choosing eco-friendly ink.
- If you are offering notebooks or booklets at a training course on an environmental topic, make sure they are **made of recycled paper.** Also, try to give **pencils with an eraser** instead of pens – it's easier to erase things you wrote and reuse the paper. All materials should contain the name and/or logo of your organisation.

Brochures, posters, leaflets are the best way to present information about your project. They should be easy to read and understand, have a good and attractive design and include photos that show what is happening in your project.

In order to make your project even more visible on a long term, create and distribute promotional materials that can be used long after your project has ended, such as pens, notebooks, bags, hats or t-shirts. Keep in mind that the materials you use for these products should be sustainable and ecological.

How to write a good message:

When it comes to visibility, a clear message should be:

- ***Short*** – the message must be read/heard in maximum 1 minute, otherwise the audience will lose interest.
- ***Truthful and credible*** – what you deliver needs arguments, experience and knowledge.
- ***Persuasive and relevant*** – talk to people's hearts, not minds, and make it in a professional way.
- ***Clear*** – avoid general truths and hypothetical situations and keep your message specific and easy to understand.
- ***Targeted*** – think of the people who would best benefit from your project and address them, not others. Make sure to highlight their benefit, as they will listen more carefully and become more interested.
- ***Good to repeat*** – share your message again and again, through different channels (posters, social media, on the radio, etc.) and at different times during your project.

Photographs:

Photos make a text more attractive. Consider the following suggestions when using photos for your projects:

- All photos you take during a project that show people should have the ***permission of participants.***
- Choose ***close-up photos*** or photos that show people's faces and ***positive emotions.***
- A good photo from a project should ***contain between 1 and 3 people.***
- It is better to ***try to include project identifiers*** in your photos, like the project's logo or title. It is also good to include the logo of the funders.
- ***A photo that shows action*** is preferable to one with a static image.
- Make sure you ***take both horizontal and vertical photos***, so that you can use them in any kind of context.
- The photos should have ***a sharp image, a balanced contrast and bright, positive colours.***
- ***Choose a resolution*** that is high enough for printing the photo in any size.
- If you have photos taken by someone else, do not forget to ***mention the copyright.***
- If you want to get more ***tips on photography,*** we recommend you to try some of the online photography courses.

Here are some examples:

Vimeo Photography school -
http://vimeo.com/channels/photographyschool

Free Photography course -
http://photographycourse.net/

Free Online Photography&Video classes -
https://www.creativelive.com/photography

Video-Making

Good Practices:

- ***Choose a good camera.*** On one hand, camcorders have a better image and audio quality, better zoom options and more settings that you can use. On the other hand, smartphone recorders are improving with regard to image and audio quality and they are much easier to transport – since people have their smartphones with them all the time.

- Before starting your film project, it is important to have ***extra batteries and memory cards with you***, in case of running low. Also, ***always carry a microfiber cloth with you to clean the lens*** (in case of having a camcorder).

- When filming, try to ***hold your camera steady.*** You can also use a tripod that will do the work for you. This is especially recommended for shooting interviews, descriptive documentaries or rather static events, in general. ***If you want to film a dynamic scene, you can also use the technique of the moving camera*** (the cameraman will move with the camera to follow the subject, as if he is part of the story).

- The ***zoom is an essential element for the message*** or story you want to share through your video. It makes the difference between large, panoramic images (like a landscape or a big group of people) and close-ups (for example, when the focus is on a person's face).

- ***Make sure your subject faces the light source.*** Try not to film people who are lit from the back, it will show only shadows on their faces. Also, it is good to pay attention if there are shadows in the image and how they show on your subjects. We recommend you to try filming outside, in a sunny weather and with good colours (not too bright, not to dark).

- ***Background is as important as the subject,*** so try not to have disturbing elements in it. For example, if you are filming an interview, workers building a house in the background will attract unnecessary attention from the viewers, so you should avoid it.

- With regard to composition, always try to plan ahead what you want to film and how you want it to look like. ***One of the best tips to follow in video-making is the rule of the thirds.*** This means that you should imagine your camera screen is divided in three by two horizontal lines and again in three by two vertical ones. The points where the lines meet are where you want to have your subject. [see images opposite]

- When editing your videos, always remember to ***save your work constantly and have back-ups on an external hard-drive***, a USB flash or a DVD.

- You can learn more about video-making on online guidelines, such as the ones on ***Vimeo Video School –*** http://vimeo.com/videoschool/101 ***or Slideshare –*** http://www.slideshare.net/Lenneke/basics-of-making-video

Videos are easy to follow and they offer a great interactive way of presenting the purpose, actions or results of a project. You can choose to shoot:

- ***a descriptive video;***
- ***interviews*** (one-question-more-answer type or more questions with one or many answers);
- ***a parody;***
- ***a musical;***
- ***an animation;***
- ***a documentary, etc.***

Keep in mind that your video style will have to relate to the purpose of your project, so choose the tone, setting, message and "actors" accordingly.

How to use video-making as team-building activity:

Divide your group in teams and ask them to make a documentary on a certain topic. For example, in a project about recycling, ask them to make a video about the recycling habits of the community where the project takes place. Or if you are organising a training course on gender equality, participants can interview women of different ages in the local community and find about what challenges they face in their everyday life, if any. What to keep in mind:

- The video should ***not be longer than 5 minutes.***
- Participants should have ***2-3 days to prepare*** it.
- Find the ***best theme*** for the video. Examples: "exclusion", "community", "waste management", "upcycling", etc.
- ***Divide the groups into sub-groups*** with specific roles, such as director, camera operator, reporter, actors, logistics coordinator, etc.
- ***Provide all the necessary technical equipment*** for the groups: video-camera, photo camera, audio recorder, headphones, laptop with editing software.

Rule of 1/3s ***DON'T***

Rule of 1/3s ***DO***

Flash Mobs

Good Practices:

In order to organise a successful flash mob, keep in mind the following aspects:

- ***Research***. See what related actions have been made before. Videos on streaming websites can be a great source of inspiration.
- ***Location***. Find the right spot for your flash mob, where many relevant people will be able to see it. Keep in mind ethical norms and citizen's rights (for example, don't block the traffic, unless this really is the purpose of your action). Also, be sure you know the limits of your location and can deal with them, if needed.
- ***Time***. Find a time that is convenient for all the supporters of your action and in which the action can get the largest audience.
- ***Choice of action***. The success of a flash mob event depends on the originality, energy, and attractiveness of the event. However, you can still get inspired by what has been done before, such as choreographed dance, singing, acting on a scenario, miming, world record, freeze flash mob, etc. For more details, see http://www.ihollaback.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/07/HOWTOorganizeaflashmob.pdf
- ***Communication***. If your action does not contain words or explanations, consider making signs, having team members in the public, or having audio of some kind, so that the audience would understand what you are doing, what are your intentions and who you represent.
- ***Participation***. Get people involved through different channels, such as social networks, e-mail, phone, word of mouth. Contact your network of people and partner organisations' networks – or even strangers that have a strong relation with what you do.
- ***Roles***. Make sure you have specific roles in your group, such as a person in charge of technical support, volunteer coordinator, choreographer, etc. Create and communicate clear instructions to all the people involved.
- ***Supplies***. Prepare all the materials you want to show: costumes, banners, flags, signs, etc. They should be clear and eye-catching, so that they would attract more attention.
- ***Finish***. Once the flash mob event is over, ask the participants to not sit around and talk or to start talking to the crowd. They need to mingle back with the crowd and leave as if nothing ever took place.
- ***Meeting point***. Establish a clear meeting point for before and after the flash mob.
- ***Back-up***. Make sure you have a "plan B", in case something goes wrong – participants may not show up, location may be unavailable at the set time, devices may not work, people's reaction might be unexpected, etc.

According to oxforddictionaries.com, a flash mob is defined as a large public gathering at which people do unusual actions and then go away. They are often organised through viral means such as email, text messaging, word of mouth, and more recently, social media.

Even though flash mobs are very eye-catching and might be a quick choice for many people, it is important to keep in mind that such an action should have the same purposes and values as your project. Also, we recommend you to ask yourself how relevant a flash mob would be for your target group and your project's topic. Will it have the impact you expect it to have?

What other ways of visibility do you know or have you used in your projects? Think about which would be best for your project and keep in mind the questions and tools above to make your project more visible.

Sources:

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Lindsey Castrodale, Flash Mobs and Viral Marketing
Link: http://lcastrodale.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/flash-mobs-and-viral-marketing-lindsey-castrodale.pdf

How to organise a flash mob
Link: http://www.ihollaback.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/HOWTOorganizeaflashmob.pdf

DISSEMINATION

Dissemination means to spread widely, to create a multiplying effect. It involves spreading the word about the project's successes and outcomes as far as possible. Making people aware of the project's results can create bigger impact, help other organisations in the future and contribute to raising the profile of the organisation carrying out the project. The dissemination is usually done at the end of the project when we want the outcomes to reach as many people as possible. To effectively disseminate results, you need to design an appropriate process at the beginning of the project. This will help you when you collect data and ideas for dissemination during the project itself. The planning should cover why, what, how, when, to whom and where disseminating results will take place. It is especially important to create the dissemination tools focusing more on various target groups that could be interested in results of the project and find the ways how to reach them.

PROJECT RESULTS

Before looking for the most effective ways of dissemination, we have to understand what the object of dissemination is. The results of the project may be very different – we can divide them into concrete (tangible) results and more abstract (intangible) results, such as skills and new competences of people taking part in the project.

The guide of Erasmus+ Programme gives us examples of various project results, both tangible and intangible.

“ *Tangible results may include for example:*

- ***an approach or a model*** to solve a problem;
- ***a practical tool or product***, such as handbooks, curricula, e-learning tools;
- ***research reports or studies;***
- ***good practice guides or case studies;***
- ***evaluation reports;***
- ***recognition certificates;***
- ***newsletters or information leaflets.***

Intangible results may include for example:

- ***knowledge and experience gained*** by participants, learners or staff;
- ***increased skills or achievements;***
- ***improved cultural awareness;***
- ***better language skills.*** ”

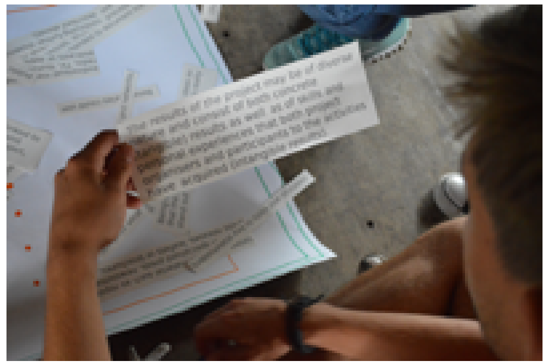
As we know, it is easier to spread concrete results – you can always send your publication or share a link to your website. But sharing intangible results is equally important. But how can you spread skills and new competencies or the way how to pass the knowledge – the methodology? You have to find a way how to document them.

Here are some ideas on how to document gained skills:

- ***Provide participants with special certificates describing their new skills –*** participants of Erasmus+ projects can receive Youthpass certificate that describes key competences gained during the project https://www.youthpass.eu/
- ***Ask participants to write their impressions from the project*** – you can use them later in the materials concerning the project.
- ***Follow the development of participants –*** ask them to send reports on how they used the new competencies and how the project helped them to start new initiatives.
- ***Use some form of self-assessment*** – send them a special form before and after the project and it will help to follow the learning process.
- ***Document the project by photos, videos, various materials produced by participants*** – ask them to express in creative ways what they learnt.

Here are some ideas on how to document methodology:

- ***Collect scenarios of sessions*** (session outlines) where trainers/organisers describe which methodology they prepared for the specific parts of the programme.
- ***Prepare special toolkits describing methods you used.***
- ***Collect all results of sessions*** – visual materials, things created by participants, take photos – it will be easier to explain methods with the visual help.
- ***Make a list of resources*** – recommended reading, movies on the topic, interesting links.
- ***Create a document with conclusions after analysing the evaluation –*** it can be useful for future projects.



WAYS OF DISSEMINATING RESULTS

As we can see, results can be really different and each of them should be spread in different, well prepared way.

There are many ways of how you can disseminate the results of the project:

- ***the EU Dissemination Platform and websites of other funders;***
- ***websites*** (special websites or existing websites of organisations and partners);
- ***follow-up sessions, workshops, seminars and training courses;***
- ***publications*** – toolboxes, guides (such as this one), booklets;
- ***social media;***
- ***public events.***

EU Dissemination Platform

This is a new platform created for Erasmus+ which offers an overview of projects funded under the programme and allows sharing best practices. The platform will also allow organisers to share various outcomes of the projects. The link to the EU Dissemination Platform: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/

Websites

A website allows easy access to information about the organisation/project and its work. It is easy to update. However, the target audience needs to know it is there and has to be interested enough to visit the website in the first place. Once they have been attracted to the website, you have to find ways of ensuring they visit the site regularly.

Some tips:

- ***You can either create a new website as a result of your project or you can add a new section on existing websites*** – yours and your partner organisations.

- If you decide to create a new website, remember about the following elements:

  - ***Plan the name of the website and the structure*** (menus, photos, visual side).

  - Decide ***who will be responsible for the content*** and who will be in the team of contributors;

  - Decide ***who will be responsible for updating the website*** and keeping it active.

- ***Use various visual elements*** to make the website more interesting – photos, videos, pictures, schemes, etc.

- Send an email to all your partners ***informing about launching new website/section.***

- ***Promote your website in various ways*** – links in social media, in other websites, in publications, in forums on this topic, mention it during meetings and projects.

- ***Think of ways how to make the website active in a longer term*** – who can use it and read it in the future, how to link it with the follow-up projects.

- ***Monitor the results*** – check through analytics how many people visit the website, from which countries and try to make a promotion strategy based on this data.

Follow-up sessions, workshops, seminars and training courses

Sometimes it is the easiest to share the results of the project by direct contact. It can be done in the form of meetings, workshops, seminars or even special follow-up training courses.

Examples:

- ***meeting in the town hall*** after the conference on making cities more sustainable;

- ***workshop*** in a primary school after the training course on methods of environmental education;

- ***photo exhibition*** with a lecture after the project on using arts in ecological projects;

- ***seminar*** for local NGOs after the training course on project management, etc.

Often the organising team prepares a special meeting to spread the results but we would advise you to encourage participants of your project to organise such events in their local communities. To prepare them for that, make a special session during your project where they can plan a scenario of such a meeting and all aspects (for whom will be the workshop, how to publicise it, what will be the content, how to present it in attractive form, etc.).

Before every direct presentation, plan well how to pass the information, taking into consideration your public. Try to use visual elements that will make the presentation more interesting – show photos and videos from the project.

How to organise public events

A public event multiplies the results of the project and it can reach wide public. To organise a good public event you can follow these few steps:

Step 1. Publicise your event

The success of your event lies in how well you promote it. Try these tactics to help ensure a successful event:

- ***Email local organisations*** you think might want to attend.

- Use ***social media***.

- ***Local newspapers*** often have a community calendar that can list your event. Local coffee shops or other public spaces may have community boards where you can advertise your event.

- If it is a big tour through various institutions, you might spend a few weeks ***visiting local organisations*** in person and asking them to get involved.

- ***A well-known speaker*** can bring in lots of attendees.

Step 2. Documenting the event

One of the most important things you can do is document your event.

- ***Take lots of photos*** and try to promote the best ones online. Reporters can turn to publicly-available photos when writing news about your issue, activist groups can use the photos to promote future events, and participants can post the photos on social media to help spread the word.

- Be aware that you may have participants who do not want to have their photograph taken. It is good to respect those wishes – this creates a safe environment where people feel comfortable. ***Make sure to get all of the participants together for a group photo.***

- ***Videos are also powerful ways to document events***, and are especially good for speeches and panel discussions.

- For speeches or lectures, a ***live stream of the event can gather viewers*** from around the world.

Publications

Publications provide a great opportunity to share the results of a project with both the involved stakeholders and wider public. You can include the methods and tools from your project, new ideas from participants and additional information on the topic.

Here are some general tips to help you:

- When planning a project, ***decide if you want to have a publication as a follow-up.*** Thus, you will be able to plan the financial expenses for design and printing. You will also know how much time you will need after the activity to set the end of the project.

- Make a call for the editorial team during or after the activity. ***Make it clear for the team that they will need to commit to this publication until it is ready.*** Therefore, they should think about their availability for the next two-three months after the activity. It is better to have a certain amount (4-5) of people in the team – it will be easier to coordinate everyone's work and have online meetings after. You can also invite trainers to contribute to your publication – think about it beforehand as you would need to discuss the additional fee for that. Trainers will have wide knowledge on the topic of the publication and can provide valuable material.

- ***Start having regular meetings with your team***. Decide on the type of publication, the title, parts to include, the size of the publication, the design, deadlines and division of parts between the team. There should always be one person coordinating the whole publication. He/she will help the team with their work and make sure that the deadlines are followed.

- ***Discuss with your team how they will work on their parts*** – they should research the topic first, prepare the plan of their chapter and then work on it. There could be two people working on one chapter, this way they can support each other and bring fresh ideas.

- ***It is important to have "writing rules" for your publication*** – spelling and punctuation rules, style, quoting and so on.

- ***Find a designer who can work on your publication once the text is ready.*** You can give him/her some general suggestions and clear requirements (amount of pages, selection of pictures, etc.)

- You also need to have a ***proof reader to check the final version*** of your publication.

- ***Decide if you want to print the publication.*** Think of the environmental impact. An online version can include links to various resources. If you decide to print it, find a publisher who can print on recycled paper.

To create good toolboxes, guides and booklets it is very important to make it attractive and clear for readers. You can use these steps to make your publications useful for a wide group of people.

Step 1. Plan the visual side of your publication

Using suitable colours in your publication enhances your message visually and emphasises specific points. Colour is closely tied to emotion. Using a colour scheme that is consistent and pleasing provides a better experience for your reader. Add photos and materials from your project.

Step 2. Text

Decide what you want to say in the front cover, back cover, and inside the publication. Make sure that your message is consistent and easy to understand. Front covers ''sell'' your project, back covers provide contact information, and the inside pages usually tell a story.

When it comes to fonts, less is more. Choose one font for the body of the text, with a complementary font for titles or headers. Choose a font colour that is easy to read on your background colour.

Step 3. Photos and graphics

All good booklets should include visual elements. The images you select should complement your text. A compelling cover photo can be the key to getting your audience. Remember to ask participants for permission if you take photos during the project and use them for publications.

HOW TO REACH PEOPLE

One part of dissemination is documenting the results and using the right tools to share them. But another important part is deciding to whom to send the results, who are target groups of the dissemination. We want to give you few ideas on how to make results available to the right people.

Some tips:

- ***Decide on your target groups*** for the dissemination.

- ***Prepare special contact lists for each dissemination tool*** – maybe different people could be interested in the publication and different in videos.

- ***Collect contacts and details of target groups already before the project*** – gather email addresses during events, research online, etc.

- ***Always ask people if they want to receive information about your project*** – you can have a special list where people can write their contact details or a subscribe button at your website/ social media.

- ***Ask your partners and networks you know if you can share information using their contacts*** or if they can recommend you potentially interested organisations.

- ***Check contact lists from previous projects*** and see who could be interested in this topic.

- ***Have a system of collecting data*** – use various spreadsheets (you can use Excel or online Google Drive documents) for different contact groups.

- ***Keep all contact lists up to date.***

- ***Inform people what kind of information they can expect to receive and how often;*** give them also the possibility to unsubscribe from your contact list; always adapt the message according to whom you send it.

As you can see, there are many ways to disseminate the results of your project. You can always use your imagination and creativity to think of new methods of reaching a wider public and sharing new knowledge with them. It is important to treat dissemination as a vital part of any project – spreading the outcomes to more people will make the project even more useful and influential. It can make it last longer.

Sources:

Erasmus+ Programme Guide
Link: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

Making waves. Creating more impact with your youth projects, SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre.
Link: https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1408/MakingWaves.pdf

EVALUATION

Evaluation means observing and measuring for the purpose of judgment. The word origin comes either from French meaning “find the value” or Latin “to strengthen and empower”.

Why is evaluation important for planning follow-up?

At first sight it might be hard to see how the evaluation is connected with the follow-up activities of a project. It is good to think over:

WHY WE EVALUATE PROJECTS...

- to assess the achievements and failures
- to think over possible improvements for future projects
- to assess if the project objectives have been achieved
- to provide the report to the funders (as it is usually required)
- to see what was learned and which skills were developed
- to summarise the outcomes

As we can see, there are a lot of reasons to make an evaluation and it can be a useful tool for improving the project team and organisation’s performance. The evaluation is essential also for successful follow-up activities.

To begin with, you should start planning follow-up before the activity itself, meaning that the project team should have some ideas and suggestions for follow-up projects which they can present and develop with the participants. Evaluation could help to assess if this plan worked out and was followed. Various evaluation tools can help you to track the implementation of the follow-up, its success and things that were not accomplished.

The other connection of the evaluation with the follow-up is identifying the areas which could be improved in the future projects.

TYPES OF EVALUATION

It can be very helpful to know different types of evaluation before planning it. There are several classifications depending on the various aspects of evaluation.

If we talk about people involved in evaluation, then we can divide it into three types:

- ***Personal evaluation*** during which each participant makes his/her own assessment about their experience.

- ***Interpersonal evaluation*** involves more than one person and often happens in small groups. The purpose of such evaluation is to share and discuss conclusions between all participants.

- ***Group evaluation*** takes place with a bigger number of people and focuses on aspects of the group's learning process.

The other classification of evaluation focuses more on its functionality:

- ***Summative evaluation*** checks whether objectives were met and which outcomes were achieved.

- ***Formative evaluation*** analyses the results, makes judgments on the undertaken work and draws conclusions.

Final division might be quite familiar to you and it deals with the nature of evaluation:

- ***Quantitative evaluation measures the "quantity" of the project***. It uses questions like "How many?", "How much?", "How often?" This evaluation is structured and draws conclusions based on the analysis of data, e.g. "80% of the participants thought the venue met the needs of the project".

- ***Qualitative evaluation focuses on the quality of the programme and the meaning of experience for everyone involved in the project.*** However, this evaluation is not only about quality, as it includes more open questions (e.g. "What did you learn during the training course?") and what is said there cannot be analysed easily by numbers. Each individual answers this differently and therefore you can derive some tendencies from it.

Depending on methods used for evaluation as well as "asking the right questions" for collecting useful and helpful data, there are three levels of evaluation questions that we should remember about in order to get high quality answers/deep answers:

Ask specific questions

By formulating questions generally, you might get contradictory answers which would be hard to understand. The results do not provide us with information we need. (The answers are below surface.)

Example: "How did you like the trainers?"- "They were good." "How did you like the food?" - "It was disgusting." "How did you like the programme of the training course?" - "It was not satisfying."

The information that could be hidden here is, for example, that two of three trainers could have been very good for this participant, but the third one did not adapt his/her working style to the participants (or this participant in particular).

Although the trainers were described as "good", the schedule was "not satisfying" – this could be an example of a contradictory answer. If the trainers were good, they could have adapted the timetable to better meet the needs of the participants.

Moreover, this example shows that the conclusions we draw from these results stay speculative and do not reveal the real problem and thus do not provide possible means for improvement.

Examples for more specific questions are:

"Did trainer A/B/C/... support your learning process? Please explain how and why.";

"Was the session about visibility useful for you? Please explain briefly, why."

Personalise

A person can write more than just a one-word or one-sentence answer, when he/she is asked for his/her personal view: "Which methodologies used in the training helped you to learn and why?"

Here, you ask for reflection and get very personal answers. Explanations help to understand the reasons and could also help the trainer to adapt methods in different ways to the diverse participants. Thus, you can reach the surface, but still there is the risk that people only write what they think the evaluators want to hear.

Assessing the answers

We tend to read over positive feedback quite quickly, and focus on critical answers. However, positive feedback is very important to analyse as well: Is it really appropriate and reasonable?

Positive feedback does not mean that you do not need to change anything. Some behaviour could work for a certain group, and everyone enjoyed it, but it was exceptional and would have been inappropriate for another group. Real expertise means that one can also identify possible improvements from positive feedback.

EVALUATION STRATEGY

It is important to develop your own evaluation strategy during the planning phase of your project. Although it is only the beginning of the project, it is essential to already think about the implementation during and at the end of the activity. This will help you track the progress and will make the evaluation easier and more effective.

Whenever you add or find a value in the topics you want to evaluate (and of course in the results, too), you will get results that reach deeper.

The question that should lead us while we create an evaluation strategy is:

"Could we get more information out of the group instead of superficial answers like 'The trainers were great'?" How can we do this?

To create an evaluation strategy for your next project, you can go over these questions:

- ***What*** do I want to evaluate?
- ***Who*** will be involved in evaluation?
- ***When*** will I make evaluation?
- ***Which*** methodologies should I use and why?
- ***How*** will I use the results of evaluation?

What do I want to evaluate?

There are several models of evaluation which you can use to select the important topics for your evaluation. We suggest to use the Kirkpatrick model with four fields of evaluation criteria:

- ***Reaction*** – reflection from participants;
- ***Learning*** – learning achievements;
- ***Behaviour*** – changes in behaviour based on what was learned;
- ***Results*** – effect of the changes on the organisations.

Who will be involved in the evaluation?

When planning the evaluation, you should also think about who will use it and benefit from it. Here are our suggestions:

- ***The participants.*** They will evaluate what they learned and how they can use it in the future. They are also the target group of your project which means you can see how much impact your project had on them.
- ***The project team.*** As these are the people who were involved in all activities of the project and were responsible for implementing it, evaluation is valuable for their professional and personal development.
- ***The organisation*** (including partners). The organisation should use the results of the project and evaluation could help them to assess if the project met the overall objectives and direction of the organisation and brought the new valuable experience.
- ***The funders.*** As they were the supporters of the activity, it is quite natural that the funders would like to know the result of the project.

When will I make evaluation?

For some people this question might seem unnecessary – usually evaluation is organised at the end of the project to assess the overall experience. However, if you want to have meaningful and productive evaluation, it is better to use it during different stages of the project.

- ***Initial evaluation*** is the evaluation done before the beginning of an activity. At this stage you can think if the objectives reflect the overall aim, if the programme reflects the objectives, if the methods are relevant, etc.
- ***Ongoing and mid-term evaluation*** takes places during the activity and allows you to track the progress and just to check how things are going. This evaluation can help you improve your project to address the needs of the participants.
- ***Final evaluation*** is done to assess the whole project.

Which methodologies should I use and why?

Here you can find a list of examples of methodologies used for evaluation. We tried to explain the methodologies and give you some tips on how to apply them efficiently. You can research for even more tools following the references given at the end of the chapter.

PERSONAL METHODS

Questionnaire

The questionnaire or evaluation form is a method of personal evaluation which collects both qualitative and quantitative data. This is one of the most widely used tools of evaluation which is often the only one as well. Well-prepared and designed evaluation forms can provide a lot of useful information. However, the questionnaire should not be the only tool used for the evaluation, as it covers the specifics of the projects only partly.

There are some basic tips which you can always remember while preparing an evaluation form:

- ***Ask specific and short questions.***
- ***Put questions in a logical order.***
- ***Give clear instructions.***
- ***If you want to include rankings from 1-10, do not forget to leave a space for comments.***
- ***Use open questions.***
- Try to ***check some examples of evaluation forms from previous projects*** – they can serve both as an inspiration and example.

Example: "In the training I learned (more than 3) new methodologies?" Choose from 1 to 10 (1 meaning "not much", 10 – "very much"). Someone ticks 1, but comments: "I already knew all of the methodologies, therefore it was not new to me. But now I know how to use them more efficiently."

The comment helps us to understand the "negative ranking". Additionally, leave a space for: "I cannot judge" (in case the participant was absent in a certain session). This way you can make sure you get “honest” and valid results, and not someone ticking a 1 or 10 just because they do not have a choice.

Advantages: Written form; individualised; gives space and time for participants to think over; rankings from 1-10 are quite easy and fast to fill in.

Disadvantages: Questions must be formulated and prepared well (time-consuming); analysis is time-consuming; filling in the questionnaire is time-consuming (choose only the most important questions or a short questionnaire, otherwise participants will not fill it in completely, or will not answer questions at the end properly anymore).

“Food for thought” when using questionnaires: Should the form be anonymous or do participants have to write their name on them?

Advantages of writing the name: Participants will have a higher commitment and might choose their words more carefully – not to offend or insult people they did not like. They will have a stronger feeling of expressing their personal opinion.

Disadvantages: People might not dare to be honest and write freely what they think, especially when it comes to topics they did not like.

Write a story

This evaluation method is great for personal reflection of your participants. They can track their progress, realise their learning achievements and change in attitude. You can help your participants by adding some questions to lead their self-reflection.

Advice: Give a well formulated task on what the participants should do: “Write a story about the highlight of the training course.”; “Write a one-page report about all (new) things that you have learned or improved during the TC.” Decide on the frame: hand-written or typed, how much time, etc.

Advantages: Very personalised feedback; written document that could also serve as a follow-up (multiplying – to share this report with your organisation at home after the TC).

Disadvantages: How honest is a story, how many details invented? In case of a story: how many stories will be about the content of the sessions, or rather evening programme/ experience? Analysis can be difficult.

INTERPERSONAL METHODS

Interview

This is a great method for more personal in-depth evaluation which will involve both a participant and a member of project team. During the interview you can ask specific questions which are the most interesting to you and try to draw conclusions together with the participant.

Advice: Choose questions wisely (open questions, ask additional questions afterwards: “Could you tell me more about...?”, “What do you mean by...?”).

Advantages: Very personal atmosphere, participants might easily open up and speak freely.

Disadvantages: Analysis and summary of results is very time-consuming (when all participants should be interviewed), the results might be more difficult to compare.

Reflection Groups

Reflection groups are small groups of 4 to 6 participants who meet every evening after the end of the programme with or without a facilitator to talk about the day. The meeting usually lasts 30 minutes and is guided by a facilitator or prepared questions.

This tool creates a space for participants and project team to exchange impressions, feelings, experiences, to evaluate the day, to suggest improvements to the programme and logistics. It allows the project team to get to know participants better and connect with them.

Advice: Ask open questions to let the participants put their focus freely (what they mention first is the most important aspect for them; topics they repeat might be of emotional value for them) and very important: build up trust and a comfortable atmosphere where everyone dares to speak freely, honestly and openly.

As a facilitator: do not comment on the feedback/thoughts of the participants, only say “Thank you (for being so open and honest and for sharing this with us)”. However, what facilitators can do is ask additional questions: “I did not understand your point, could you tell us in more detail, please?” Provide enough time. Reflection and feedback will not come in a hurry.

Advantages: Informal, very close atmosphere (you only talk to a small group of people, listen to only a few), not strict frame but participants can put emphasis on what really mattered to them.

Disadvantages: No written document to work on afterwards (facilitator has to remember and take notes afterwards); there might not be information about the points the trainers wish to get some feedback on – it is not that predictable.

Thinking loudly

One person from the preparatory team sits together with one participant. The participants can utter all their thoughts freely and the member from the preparatory team should take notes or even audio-record it. The participants can be supported by showing them photos/materials/videos from the project. Possible questions could be: “How did I feel in this situation? How did I manage to solve the situation?” Thus, the learning process of individuals can be discovered.

Advantages: Deep level of individual reflection can be reached.

Disadvantages: Difficult and time-consuming in large groups.

GROUP METHODS

Closing circle

As a closing activity you can organise a sharing of impressions in a big circle. Invite your participants to sit around comfortably and listen to each other. This space can be a great closing activity – participants can share their overall impressions and feelings with the whole group.

Advice: Use an object for marking the person who is talking. Object is passed around or thrown across the circle; several rounds possible. Only one person at a time is supposed to reflect on a question. The others should only listen and not comment.

Advantages: Everyone has the chance to say something and give feedback to the whole group.

Disadvantages: Often repetitive, takes a lot of time, some people do not want to talk and open up in front of the whole group.

Observation

The preparatory team sets up a list of criteria that can be observed. For example, the quantity of participants’ participation in plenary discussions, whether all people are integrated and speak in group work, etc. Make sure that the criteria are SMART. Then, one member of the preparatory team should fill in an observation sheet during the sessions (to take these special “minutes” for evaluation).

Advantages: You collect data yourself, do research during a process/session.

Disadvantage: Only participation can be observed and quantified, but it is difficult to observe quality or find out the reasons (for example, why so many or so few people participate in discussions).

Games

The games can be a fun and interactive way to involve the participants in evaluation. You can think of many different ideas for such evaluation. The main point of games is that it is non-verbal communication technique which gives more freedom to participants. You can choose some area which you would like to assess (logistics, programme, evening activities, atmosphere in a group, mood, etc.) and then think of some visual method to use.

Advice: One of our suggestion is ***The Thermometer.***

It is a good tool for mid-term evaluation. All you need to do is ask participants to stand in the middle of the room and move from one end to another according to their answers. Prepare your questions and make sure they are clearly formulated. Example: "Topic: Food. Go to the right corner if you like the food (quality) and to the left if you do not like it."

Afterwards, you can split up the group again and ask: "Go to the right corner, if you think the amount of food (quantity) was sufficient, and to the left corner, if it was not enough." Even four corners of a room could be used for that. When the people stand in a line ask them why they stand there or ask volunteers to explain their opinion.

Another easy exercise is ***Applause***. Ask participants to form a circle and then read out different sessions of the programme or different aspects of a project. If participants are happy with it, they should clap. The louder claps are, the higher the level of satisfaction.

Advantages: It is a methodology that does not take much time. The results and tendencies are clearly visible.

Disadvantages: Some people might not stand according to their own opinion just because they feel safer in a group and do not want to stand alone at one end of the thermometer.

Theatre play

There are two ways of using a theatre play for evaluation: firstly, the trainers can initiate a play and involve the participants, for example, by giving them tasks (related to evaluation) which they have to fulfil. Secondly, you can give participants the assignment to act out a theatre play themselves – to express their emotions and make them highlight certain difficulties or special events of learning outcomes from the training. The members from the preparatory team can take notes meanwhile (to summarise what the play was about, which activities were highlighted by participants). But remember that it is difficult to present content or reflective and educational processes.

Advantages: It is entertaining and participants might enjoy this form of evaluation and be excited about what other groups would present.

Disadvantages: Preparation is time-consuming; it is difficult to write down results and draw a conclusion afterwards.

Welcome space and evaluation space

You can also let participants reflect on the project by themselves. The method of Welcome/Evaluation Space allows participants to freely visit several zones where they can reflect on and evaluate various aspects of the project with creative tools. Evaluation Space is usually a reverse of Welcome Space and can include such zones as analysing aims and objectives (e.g. group discussion), agenda (marking on the written agenda the most useful sessions or things that people learnt during particular parts of the programme), expectations, fears, contributions (which expectations were fulfilled, if fears became true, how participants contributed to the project), knowing other people (which links were established between participants), etc. Participants should have enough time to visit all zones and freedom to choose where they spend more time for reflection.

Advantages: Encourages self-reflection and responsibility for learning, allows people to focus more on the part of evaluation they find more important, uses creative tools.

Disadvantages: Can be challenging for some participants that are not used for self-guided reflection; can be hard to gather all results.

Creative visual methods

For some people visual tools help to evaluate. You can use, for example, such visual tools:

- *Pizza –* you can divide a circle into different parts symbolising different aspects of the project – participants can mark how useful each part of the programme was or how successful the elements of the project by marking the part of the piece.
- *Washing machine, suitcase, trash –* participants write on small post-its their observations and put them on three pictures (washing machine – things that made you think; suitcase – things you take home; trash – things that were not needed).
- *Train –* a picture of the train with different carriages signed with different elements of the programme. Participants can write down what they learnt in each of these parts and what they take with them for the future.

Advantages: Attractive way, visual elements can help to reflect.

Disadvantages: Hard to keep results and does not cover a wide part of the project so it is better to use it as an additional evaluation tool.

The question for each methodology mentioned above is: "What is the aim of the evaluation?" Do you want to evaluate the performance of trainers or single sessions, the effects of certain activities on the group, or do you want to see or make visible what kind of educational and reflectional processes went on in the minds of the participants during the training? The second option is very interesting, however, often more time-consuming, and less helpful when it comes to evaluating the project and its implementation in general.

HOW WILL I USE THE RESULTS OF EVALUATION?

Now that you have the results of evaluation, the question is: how do you use them?

You can begin with collecting the information from your evaluation sessions: write down the answers from interviews, last rounds, evaluation space, put together the answers from questionnaires.

The important part of the evaluation process is meeting of the project team. During this evaluation the team can share their impressions from the project, give their assessment of the programme, working with participants and so on. This is a great opportunity to summarise what has been done and plan the follow-up activities.

During the meeting with the project team you can also assess the results of evaluation with participants. You can look back on the objectives of the project, the expectations of participants before the activity and also establish criteria to evaluate the objectives. For example, if the objective was "To practise various environmental educational methods", the criteria to assess this could be "The amount of practical exercises in the programme".

When the evaluation is finished, it is time to report the results.

There are several groups of potential readers of such reports:

- ***The funders.*** It is usually obligatory to prepare a final report for the funders as they would like to know about the implementation of the project they supported. There are usually special forms for such reports.

- ***The participants.*** The participants might find it useful to read the summarising report about the project and will enjoy looking at the results.

- ***The organisation*** and other stakeholders. It is usually only one or two people involved in organising projects, therefore the rest of organisations' staff do not know how the project turned out. The report can be useful in assessing if the project was in line with the working plan and if its results can be used for future projects. Moreover, you can share practical tips and tools for future projects as well as some negative aspects which should be considered in the future.

Remember that it is important to plan your evaluation well in order to get information that will help you to improve things. Evaluation should be a part of educational process and is important for making your project useful and sustainable, as well as for planning follow-up activities.

Sources:

T-kit Educational evaluation in youth work, Training Youth – Partnership Council of Europe and European Commission.
Link: http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-10-educational-evaluation-in-youth-work#PzNeAKfGpO6g

T-kit Training Essentials, Training Youth – Partnership Council of Europe and European Commission.
Link: http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-6-training-essentials#PzNeAKfGpO6g

YEE
YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE

This publication was created by Youth and Environment Europe.

Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) is a network of 44 youth non-governmental organisations coming from 27 European countries. YEE's activities aim to promote sustainable development, environmental protection and nature conservation. All our activities are organised and carried out by and with the involvement of young people under the age of 30. YEE encourages all activities that can increase the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of nature and the awareness of environmental problems amongst young people in Europe.

www.yeenet.eu

BALTA DABA

The training course "Follow-up and impact in international projects" was hosted by BALTA DABA (Latvia).

The association was established on March 4 2010. The aim of the organisation is to promote public engagement in the preservation and renewal of culture and nature, especially focusing on youth initiatives and youth participation in decision-making and public life. BALTA DABA is a youth oriented environmental organisation which serves young people aged 18-30. The board is also made up of young people. The organisation's main activity is environmental and sustainable development. One of its main areas of development is in promoting direct youth participation in environment protection, renewal and clean up activities.

www.baltadaba.lv

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This publication is the follow-up of the training course "Follow-up and impact in international projects". The training course and the publication have been funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

"Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. Education, training, youth and sport can make a major contribution to help tackle socio-economic changes, the key challenges that Europe will be facing until the end of the decade and to support the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion."

Source: Erasmus+ Programme Guide
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

More about the Erasmus+ Programme:
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm

The publication *How to make your project last. Guide on creating impact* and follow-up is for those who want to improve and enhance the impact of their projects with follow-up activities.

Inside this guide you can find information about:

- quality criteria for projects and impact
- working with target groups
- visibility of your project
- dissemination
- evaluation and using the results of evaluation in future projects.

We hope you will find this guide helpful when preparing your future projects – it is full of tools and methods which can be used for future projects and also be an inspiration for a great follow-up.

Printed on recycled paper.

YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT EUROPE