
Part Three - Evaluating crime reduction projects and initiatives





Introduction

The aim of this section is to give you an understanding of evaluation.

A more detailed look at evaluation can be found in “**The Passport to Evaluation**” which is available from;
<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/evaluation.htm>

Objective

By the end of this section you will be able to:

-  Describe evaluation, monitoring and assessment
-  Describe different types and levels of evaluation
-  Explain how evaluation fits into project management
-  Describe how to evaluate and what to do with evaluation results.



Overview



72 Section One - **What are evaluation, monitoring and assessment?**

Explains evaluation and monitoring and describes how they differ. Describes what makes a good assessment. Explains some of the levels and types of evaluation.

77 Section Two - **Project Management**

Describes the 10 Steps Method devised for the Home Office by Geoff Berry.

79 Section Three - **How to evaluate**

Describes the 7 stage evaluation model and explains some of the issues about what to do with evaluation results.

81 A **summary** of key points can be found on page 81.

What are evaluation, monitoring and assessment?

Evaluation and monitoring?

Evaluation is the process of assessing, at a particular point in time, whether or not a project is achieving or has achieved its objectives. This is called impact evaluation.

Evaluation can also be used to measure whether the processes being used to help you achieve your objectives are working properly. This is called process evaluation.

A key point is that evaluation is about measuring progress against objectives. You must bear in mind that evaluation is not an exact science and even the best will only give you an approximation of whether the project has been a success.

Monitoring is the process of continually assessing whether or not a project is achieving its objectives.

How does evaluation differ from monitoring?

Evaluation and monitoring are terms that are often used interchangeably, but they mean different things.

They both involve measuring what you've actually achieved against what you set out to achieve (the objectives). The difference is that monitoring involves continuous measurement of progress and evaluation involves measurement at a given point in time.

Good assessment:

- PASSPORT** Needs a clear definition of the problem and a description of how it is being addressed in order to focus measurement where success is most realistically to be expected.
- PASSPORT** Needs a good description of what was actually done and when action was taken as there is often a difference between what was planned and what was actually done.
- PASSPORT** Needs to identify whether a response failed to achieve its hoped for outcomes because it was not applied as had been intended, or whether it genuinely failed to make an impact.
- PASSPORT** Needs a collection of incident and other data about the problem before and after the response and the identification of the precise action taken to resolve the problem, rather than a basic “broad brush” before and after measure.

Evaluation types & purposes

Evaluation in the early stages of a project, before any work is done, is called **pre-evaluation** or appraisal. Its purpose is to allow the project team to decide whether its proposed plans are feasible.

Evaluation at key points during a project acts as a check to see whether objectives are being met. Evaluation at this time is most useful in larger projects, or ones with an extended timescale. The purpose is to provide information so that changes can be made to the project if required.

Post-project evaluation is used to see whether the objectives of a project have been achieved. Post-project evaluation can take place either directly at the end of a project to check the immediate effect, or after some time has elapsed to see whether the effects have been sustained. By sharing evaluation findings you can learn from previous projects and encourage resources for future projects.

As you can see, evaluation is a dynamic process. It is carried out at all stages of a project, and is not something that should be done as an afterthought at the end of a project.

When and why you carry out evaluation are important factors. Another is the **level** at which it is done.

Used properly, evaluation is a tool to assist in the management and control of projects. It can take place at pre-planned points during the life of a project and for different purposes.

Levels of Evaluation

Evaluation can take place at different levels. The main ones are:

Project level evaluation

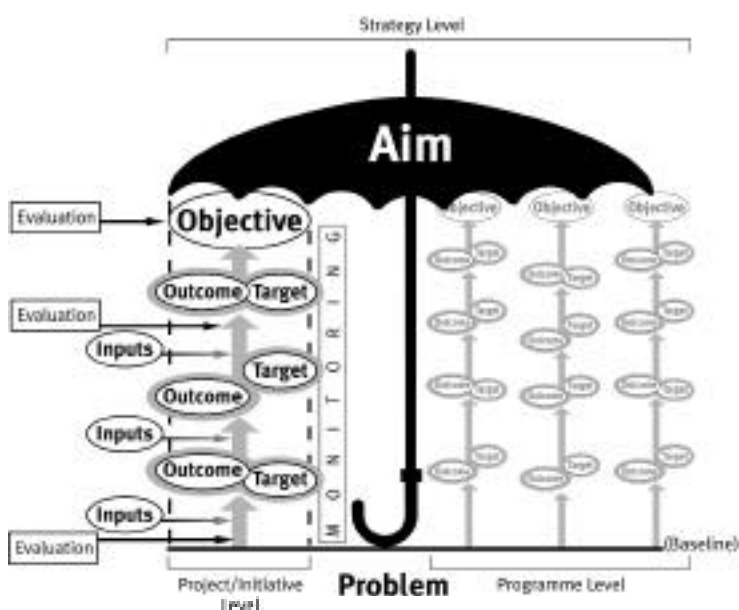
This is a basic level of evaluation. A project is a set of related tasks that have a specific objective. It normally has a clearly defined scope and looks at a single problem. For example, work to reduce car crime on a single estate by setting up a youth education programme. The purpose of this level of evaluation is to measure whether the project has achieved its objective.

Programme level evaluation

A programme is a group or set of projects, which have a common theme and are designed to achieve linked objectives. For example, a burglary reduction programme for a town or city involves several projects designed to tackle the problem from different perspectives. The purpose of this level of evaluation is to measure whether the individual projects have achieved the programme's objectives.

Strategy level evaluation

This tends to be at a fairly high level and will involve the evaluation of many projects and programmes. For example, Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies have to be evaluated every three years to see if they have met their objectives. The purpose of this level of evaluation is to measure the achievement of long-term aims and objectives across a wide range of departments, organisations and activities.



The evaluation of each level depends on how successfully the preceding level was evaluated. For example, the burglary reduction programme's evaluation depends on the results of individual project evaluations and a strategy evaluation depends on the evaluation of all the programmes of work.

Why evaluate?

Evaluation can be a time consuming process, so why do it?

In the space below, write down why you think it is important to evaluate projects. Think of as many different answers as you can and compare your answers with ours on the next page.





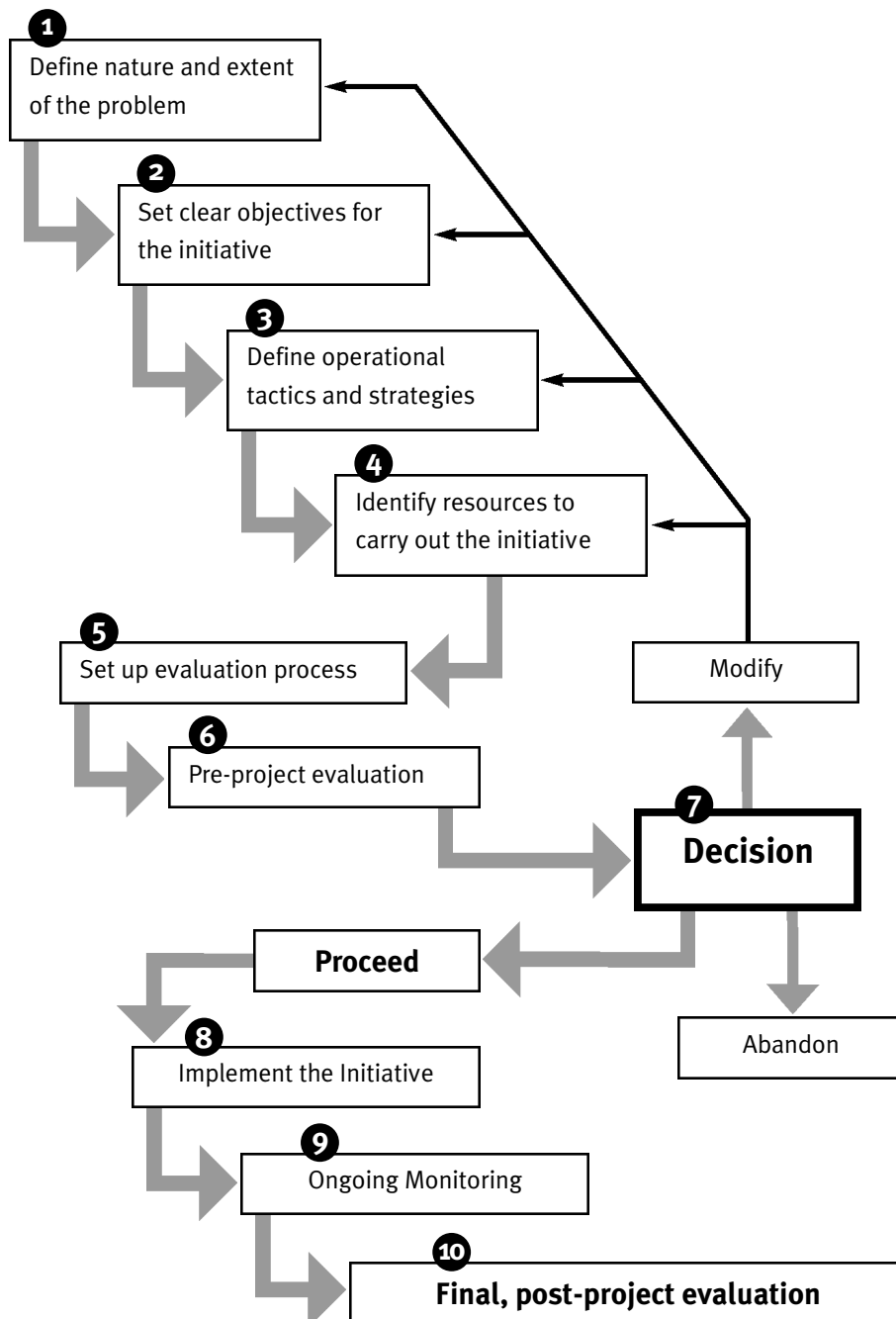
Evaluation is important for several reasons:

- PASSPORT** It provides evidence of a project's level of achievement.
- PASSPORT** It can be used to make improvements to a project as it progresses.
- PASSPORT** It shows how effectively resources have been used. This is important, particularly if projects have been funded externally. It is usually a condition of receiving funding that the costs and benefits of a project are measured.
- PASSPORT** Evidence of successful work attracts resources for future projects. If you can show that a particular project has been successful it is easier to get resources for further work. Even if the evaluation shows that you haven't met your objectives, it shows that you are aware of the mistakes made and are willing to learn from them.
- PASSPORT** It allows improvements to be made to future work. Examples of good practice learned through an evaluation can be adopted in other projects.
- PASSPORT** It provides information for others who may want to run a similar project. A good evaluation is a useful piece of research and helps to spread ideas.
- PASSPORT** An evaluation will identify what worked well and what didn't. It will help any future projects by highlighting the most effective aspects and by identifying any potential pitfalls.
- PASSPORT** Projects can have a variety of impacts on an area or community. Some of these may be unexpected and evaluation is often the only way of finding out.
- PASSPORT** It is an important stage in the process of accountability. There is increasing emphasis on improving the accountability of organisations for their actions. Evaluated projects form a part of this process. This is especially the case where individual initiatives form part of local crime and disorder reduction strategies, because the strategies themselves are evaluated every three years.

The purpose of an evaluation may affect how it is carried out.

Project management and evaluation

Before we go on to look at evaluation in detail, we'll take a brief look at a system for managing projects to show you how evaluation can be built into a project. There are many different systems for project management, but the system we will look at is 'The 10 Steps Method', which was specifically designed for the planning, implementation and evaluation of crime reduction initiatives. Geoff Berry and Mike Carter devised it for the Home Office using a study of different police-led projects.



There are many different systems for project management, and your organisation may have its own, but whichever system you use the principles will be the same.

As you can see from the diagram, the first five steps of the 10 Steps Method are about identifying the problem and defining the project.

Steps 6 and 7 cover making sure the project will work and getting the go-ahead.

Steps 8 and 9 are about implementing the project.

The last step covers the final post-project evaluation.

A common problem with many projects is that evaluation is included as an afterthought. It is often rushed and not very effective in identifying how well the project worked. In this system evaluation is built into the project at a very early stage, before any work is carried out.

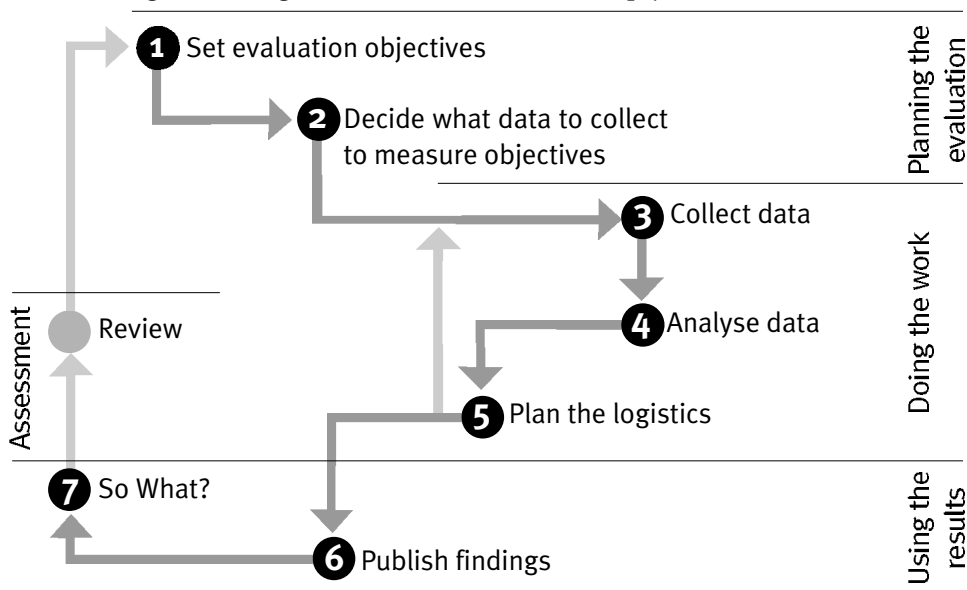
By building evaluation into the early stages of project planning, it can be used as a tool to measure the project throughout its life.

How to evaluate

When you carry out an evaluation or assessment of a project you should approach it as a project in its own right. You should make sure that it;

- PASSPORT** is planned
- PASSPORT** is organised
- PASSPORT** has clear objectives and methods for achieving them.

Using this 7 stage evaluation model will help you.



Every evaluation is about measuring to what extent a project’s objectives have been achieved. Before you start your evaluation you must be clear about the objectives (the **outcome**) of the project.

Unless you have a clear idea about what the project is trying to achieve, how can you measure whether or not it has been done?

Check to see if:





- PASSPORT** there is an aim for the whole project
- PASSPORT** SMART objectives have been written to show what the project is trying to achieve
- PASSPORT** targets are in place to show what reduction in crime is intended.

One very important reason for setting objectives for a project is that, “what gets measured gets done”

Before you move on to the practical aspects of evaluation you should take a moment to consider what you would need to deliver the responses, who would do the work and what will be the result.

Evaluation results





All your work will be wasted if the end results can't be understood, so there are a number of things you should consider.

-  The report of your evaluation findings should be set out clearly in a way the audience will understand.
-  The level of complexity and the length of the report can vary depending on the audience.
-  If it is a written report you might want to include a summary so that people can decide how much of the report they need to read.
-  It may be necessary to set up a way of reviewing any work carried out as a result of your evaluation. Management teams, community groups or Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships might carry out this role.

This information has been condensed from “**The Passport to Evaluation**” a 110 page book all about evaluation. It is available from:
<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/evaluation.htm>
or from; The Home Office Crime Reduction Centre,
The Hawkhills, Easingwold, York YO61 3EG
Tel: 01347 825079 Fax; 01347 825096

Summary - Part Three

In Part Three we looked at;

-  Evaluation and monitoring and how they differ.
-  What makes a good assessment.
-  Types and levels of evaluation.
-  How evaluation fits into project management.

We described the 7 stage evaluation model and looked at what to do with evaluation results.



Part Three