

Measuring and reporting the success of your project



Measuring and reporting the success of your project is key in fundraising, especially when applying for grants. Grant funders will want to see evidence of how you measure your success, and reporting back to them will help your church's projects grow and improve. Our webinar gives insights into the different ways you can monitor and measure success and how you can then report back to the funder.

Key terms

Outputs	The services or goods that are delivered. E.g. we will deliver 50 food parcels.
Outcomes	The difference your outputs will make. E.g. families will be able to eat and heat their homes.
Impact reporting	The process of measuring and letting people know about your outputs and (especially) outcomes.

More information on outputs and outcomes can be found on the Ecclesiastical church fundraising hub www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising/outputs-outcomes

Deciding what your church will measure and report on

When making a grant application, you will often be asked how you will measure and report success. To answer this question, your church will have needed to identify some outputs and outcomes that you want to achieve.

The first step is to decide on the desired project outcome. What difference you actually want your project to make to people's lives? Starting with outcomes will help you design better projects in the first place, that will help your church make the impact it wants to have.

Once you have decided upon the desired outcome, then think about your outputs – the service or goods that will help you get to this outcome. For example, if your desired outcome is to reach young people and reduce antisocial behaviour, your outputs will be to reach 10 young people every day by employing a sessional youth worker to run daily drop-ins.

These desired outputs and outcomes then become the basis of what you will measure and report on. Be sure to sense check them with the following criteria:

- Do the outputs look reasonable for the cost?
- Are the outcomes a logical result of the outputs?
- Are the outputs clearly attainable?
- Are the outcomes ambitious but achievable?
- Are the outcomes things you really want the project to achieve?

How to measure your outputs and outcome

It is important to think through how you will measure your desired outputs and outcomes.

Some outcomes, such as how many people attend a particular activity, are relatively straightforward to measure - you just need to ensure that there is a count made and recorded.

Other, more subjective outcomes can be measured by asking people. For example, if your project outcome is that "young people will feel safer and more understood" then you can do a questionnaire with all the young people who have come to the project and ask them how it makes them feel.

Some outcomes are simply not measurable – not because they are having no impact but just because there are so many other factors at play. For example, "older people will stay in their own home longer because of a lunch club". Try to avoid making these central or critical to your grant application if possible. If you can't measure your outcome, then it's hard to know whether you are achieving your goals or not.

Once you have decided on your desired outcomes, it is useful to create a table to show how you are going to measure them.

Example table of outcomes and measurement

Outcomes	Target values after 1 year	Target values after 2 years	How measured?
The parent and toddler group will provide support to the most vulnerable families and create a strong network of support for families	● 20% increase in attendance (to 24 children). ● 60% of parents report the group is a significant support to them.	● 100% increase in attendance (to 40 children). ● Increase in proportion of single parents from Y1 baseline.	● Weekly count of attendance. ● Create an annual survey to send to attendees of the group.
Numerical and spiritual growth in the worshipping community at the church	● Total weekly adult attendance increases by 15%. ● 80% of attendees report the church is a significant positive part of their life.	● Total weekly adult attendance increases by 80%. ● 85% report the church is a significant positive part of their life.	● Weekly count of attendance. ● Create a survey to send every 6 months to the worshipping community.

After a successful grant application

Once you have received funding for a project, some funders will expect you to report back to them, and inform them on the success of your project. They will tell you what format this should be in, and whether the reporting is annual or after a project is complete.

It will be useful for your church not just to measure your success when needed by the funder but much more frequently (perhaps reviewing weekly, monthly or quarterly depending on the project). This will help you see if you are on the right track and review the project.

Most funders won't ask for formal reporting but it's still a good idea to make sure you write to them once the project is completed and let them know what you have achieved.

Almost no funder is going to take away your grant because you didn't meet your targets (as long as you spent the money on what you said you were going to spend it on!). However it will significantly improve your chances of getting future funding from that grant maker if you achieve your targets, or even if you don't but you communicate well why this is and what you are doing about it.

The importance of measuring the success of your project

Most importantly as you think about project monitoring, evaluation and reporting it's vital to remember why it's in place. It is not just for the benefit of funders, although they may have particular formats and timelines that you need to stick to. If you approach it with the mentality that this is just a hoop to jump through for funders you will have entirely missed the point and it will be very tedious!

Remember that the fundamental reason for monitoring what you are achieving and for evaluating your projects is so that you can do more of the things you want to do as a church. Project monitoring and evaluation is there to help your church ask important questions about what is and isn't working well.

If you approach it with that conviction you'll design better projects, make better decisions, and reach more people in spiritual and material need in your community.

Want to find out more?

A dedicated helpline has been set up to help support churches with the fundraising hub.

If you or your church would like support with our online resources please request a call back via the church fundraising helpline on **0345 601 9959** or the online form on the fundraising hub and we will be in touch.

And don't forget to keep checking the fundraising hub for more updates.

www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising

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