

## Network Training Course - Unit 6: Measurement and Impact

### Key Scriptures

Refer to Network Development Reflections p.128 -139

**Evaluating Results: Understanding Outcomes & Impact:** Luke 8:4-15

**Collaboration and Impact:** Acts 2:1-47

**The Case for Evaluating Evidence:** John 20:19-31

**Reflection is the Rhythm of Life:** Psalm 90

### Main Themes

As partner networks of Viva, you can have a big impact on churches and children in your cities. **Impact means the long-term change that a network can have as a result of its intervention.** This can mean that there is more work for vulnerable children, better work for vulnerable children, longer lasting work for vulnerable children and children and churches that have a louder voice in their city. It is encouraging to know that our work is making a difference.

It is important that we continue to know what impact our work is having so that we know we are going in the right direction, and if not to know where we need to focus to get back on the right path. Knowing our impact also helps us to encourage more people to join or support the network. Measurement of our work is the first step to knowing the impact we are having and there are clear processes we need to have in place to do this effectively.

### Measurement and Impact I: Programme planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

There are three areas to think about when managing a programme

1. Programme planning (How can we make sure the programme is set up to succeed? What needs to be in place before the programme starts?);
2. Monitoring (during the implementation of the programme – Is everything happening to time and budget? Are we seeing the change we would expect to? Do we need to adapt the programme to meet our programme goals?);
3. Evaluation (At the end of the programme – what worked well? What did the programme achieve? What Impact did the programme have and what aspects will continue into the future? What can we learn for next time?).

#### 6.1 Programme planning

Each network programme should be carefully planned to ensure that the programme is directly responding to children's needs as found through your situational mapping report.

You should decide before the programme starts

- what you want to achieve through the programme,
- who do you need to work with to achieve it and
- what activities you can use collectively to achieve your goal.

Despite the good will behind programmes, not all programmes have the desired effect and can on occasions frustrate by informing but not empowering (for example, if a child knows about their rights but does not have a person to talk to if they experience abuse, or if a child is taught they should complete their education but their parents are not supported to help the child go to school).

It is therefore essential that before beginning work with children, networks have thought about the best way to approach an issue and the potential risks or unintended harm to ensure that programmes achieve the good they set out to do.

Internationally there is a significant move towards targeting and measuring ‘outcomes’ and not just measuring results or ‘outputs’. An ‘outcome’ is a description of the higher purpose that the individual results or outputs contribute to. It is the answer to the ‘so what’ question, what do these activities do to change children or change the churches. As Viva we will be moving in this direction and helping to set appropriate indicators and advise on gathering the right sort of data – you will see this aspect included in the questions below. The goal is to better describe the ‘impact’ of our work which in turn will attract better funding.

This set of questions should be asked at the start of any programme to help you think through the key areas and ensure that your programme will be effective:

1. What is the problem we want to address?
2. What do you want to achieve? Choose any of these ‘outcomes’ (can be more than one) and/or write your own:
  - Children are protected from abuse and danger, knowing how to keep themselves safe
  - Children grow up in a safe and nurturing environment, ideally within a strong family
  - Children are educated for life, with the skills and experience needed to develop socially, emotionally and spiritually
  - Children and adults advocate for a society where children are respected, valued and celebrated
  - Churches are united as one body committed to serving vulnerable children
  - Churches have strong structures to provide more sustainable and better quality care for children
  - Churches respond to children’s needs effectively through holistic, collaborative programmes to change their situations
3. To make this change, who do you need to reach? Who are your target beneficiaries?
4. Who do you need to work with to be successful?
  - i. How can we maximise the number of network members involved?
  - ii. Which external partners e.g. schools, city child protection service etc. do you need to work with?
5. What baseline analysis will you need to undertake to have a clear picture and evidence of the needs or gap in service, in order to be able to assess the change made?
6. How exactly will your programme contribute to your chosen outcomes? List the indicators you will use. (e.g. for children that are protected from abuse and danger: 30 children trained in good touch bad touch, 10 teachers trained in child protection, families informed about child protection point person in the school)
7. What activities will help you achieve these outcomes?
8. How will you ensure that the beneficiaries continue to be supported beyond the programme? E.g. Transfer running of services to individual churches, find additional sponsorship, support those trained to continue training others.
9. Thinking about the four building blocks for lasting change, how will you:
  - i. inform network members who are not part of the programme about the successes and achievements?
  - ii. strengthen network participants as part of the programme?
  - iii. strengthen the network as a whole through the programme?
  - iv. strengthen the city representation of churches through the programme?
10. What plan do you have to measure the success and impact of the programme?
11. What additional resources will you need i.e. management costs, administration etc. and how much will it cost?
12. Does your budget cover the cost of all of these actions stated above?

Once you have thought through these questions, you need to create a programme plan that is broken down to have a clear sequence of events, timescale, and itemised budget. Clear financial management is essential, following good practice from the start with all payments approved and signed off.

At the same time, the plan needs to include the desired impact and indicators the network will measure to know if they are on target to achieve this. Impact indicators measure what a project is achieving relative to its aims

Evaluation tools should be written before the beginning of programme activities to ensure all activities are tailored towards the goal. These should include systems to record breadth and depth of interventions with children using numerical data and stories. Data gathered at the end must have corresponding data gathered before the start in order to measure change – this is why the design of the baseline questions is so important – you effectively need to have the end in mind and work back to the very start.

## 6.2 Monitoring

Throughout the programme, networks need to monitor the achievements against the programme plan. Progress of activities should be monitored on a more frequent regular basis such as monthly or quarterly to ensure that activities are happening when you planned them to happen and if not, that you know why, and can make a plan to do the activities in time.

Depending on the length of the programme, a more thorough evaluation should be carried out at the middle of the programme. This should consider if the change you expect to see is starting to happen. If it is, be encouraged. If it isn't, there is still time at the middle of the programme to look at what is working well, and where you need to make changes so that you are able to achieve your goals by the end of the programme.

Depending on who the programme is supported by, you may be required to send reports to the donors on how the programme is going. It is important to be real with your supporters and share your achievements and struggles but where things are not going as planned, you must explain what you have learnt and how you are responding to improve the programme. It is vital that all reports are submitted on time to keep the confidence of the donor.

## 6.3 Evaluation

At the end of the programme, you will need to produce a programme report. As well as including results (e.g. numbers of teachers trained, numbers of children attending the day care centre etc.) you will be more encouraged if you can evaluate the successes and challenges and begin to look at the impact your programme has had. The best way to do this is to compare what you can see now against your baseline data. If you did a questionnaire at the beginning of the programme, repeat it to see what has changed; if you counted the number of children out of school in the community at the beginning of the programme, count how many are still out of school to see the difference.

Sustainability is now a key aspect to report on in any evaluation. There are different parts that need to be included:

- How has the network been strengthened through the programme
- How have the individual participating churches and organisations been strengthened
- What results will ripple on after the programme has ended – how will the results, child and church outcomes continue, what did you do to ensure that they are long lasting and not just forgotten or dropped?
- What aspects of the programme have been transferred to the normal processes or procedures of the network churches and organisations ensuring continuity?

You can use your evaluation reports to demonstrate to the donor how their gift or investment has been used effectively, and to encourage those in the network of the impact they have had and will continue to have. This will help them to want to commit to further programmes in the future.

Beyond this, it is important that you store all of your results from different programmes together. This information will contribute to your annual report and other important documents to raise the profile of the network.

To assist in the storing of results and to monitor the global impact of Viva's partner networks, all networks are asked to complete our network health check, in which all programmes are logged and the numbers of churches, organisations, adults and children involved. You are encouraged to use this tool to gather your results and analyse the overall development of the network each year.

**Programme planning, monitoring and evaluation Checklist:**

- Networks design programmes based on findings from situational mapping to meet defined need
- Programmes should be well-planned with timescales and budgets monitored
- Programmes should have defined indicators and tools to track progress that are evaluated at the middle and end of the programme
- Networks should store all results and include in the NHC annually

## **Measurement and Impact 2: Viability and sustainability benchmark**

In order to sustain the impact of the network, we need to ensure that each network is sustainable to be able to continue to offer its programmes with children and to build the community of care to last for children in the future.

Viva's Viability and Sustainability Benchmark is the set of milestones that we have designed to support networks to achieve a good level of sustainability in the first 3 years of their development (or within the next 2 years for existing networks). Passing the benchmark at 100%, demonstrates that the network has strong foundations in place necessary to move to scaling-up their impact for vulnerable children for the long-term.

We have ensured that each criteria of the Viability and sustainability Benchmark is covered in this network training guide and at the end of each unit, we included the yellow box to show you how achieving everything on the 'checklists' link to the Viability and Sustainability Benchmark. By using this Network Training Guide, if you complete each item on the checklist, you should be in a position to score 100% in the Viability and sustainability Benchmark.

By the end of this course, we encourage all networks to make a sustained effort to achieve 100% in this benchmark to have confidence that the network will continue to have impact on the lives of children in your city.

Your Viva contacts are committed to working with you to achieve 100% and supporting you to continue to grow your network and its impact into the future. With this benchmark achieved, we believe networks are in a position to grow their programmes to be even more impactful. This will be the focus of the second stage of this training course.

#### Measurement and Impact Checklist:

- Network scores 100 in the Viability and Sustainability Benchmark

#### Viva's Viability and Sustainability Benchmark:

The Sustainability and Impact Benchmark is a set of milestones that we expect networks to achieve in the first 3 years of their development (or within the next 2 years for existing networks) in order to have strong foundations in place to scale up programmatic impact in the future. Networks that achieve this benchmark are in a sustainable position with organisational strength and are impacting children in their communities in such a way that they could continue doing so for the foreseeable future.

1. Understand children's needs and current response (a situational mapping report)
2. Clear purpose and vision (vision and mission statements, value proposition, distinctives)
3. Strategic plan (that contains both programme and network growth and development)
4. Strong relationship and communication with Viva and with other partner networks (signed agreements and attendance at the annual regional events).
5. Clear leadership and staff structures (a full-time coordinator with clear job description, a steering group and working groups).
6. Good governance and accountability (Child Protection, Financial transparency, and Governance policies with ongoing network development training from Viva).
7. Strong membership (Capacity building and developed management systems of members using Viva programmes where appropriate).
8. Collective action outputs (for children with credible measurement and reporting).
9. City-wide influence outputs (implementing WWP, Good Treatment Campaign or other such programs with groups inside and outside the network; signed agreements with authorities and/or significant partners in the city).
10. Active Fundraising (including communications plan and fundraising strategy with focus on raising 'in-country' funds that cover coordinator costs, office rent, travel and communications through regular local funding).

#### Reflective Questions

1. How can we as a team quickly achieve the 100% benchmark?
2. If good measurement provides 'evidence' or 'proof' of success – how committed are you to provide it?
3. How much 'proof' do you think you and your team need? How much do network members need? How much do external supporters of investors need? Is it the same or different in each case?
4. How will you upgrade the skills and competence of yourself and your team to be better at MEL (monitoring, evaluation and learning)?

#### Action Plan

- What actions do you need to put into place as a result of this unit, particularly to achieve the required benchmark criteria?