**General advice on collecting information**

* Make sure you **always keep a record** of how many people attend sessions, projects or events with you as well as how many sessions you have throughout the project timeframe.
* When planning how to measure the change your project has made make sure **to involve service users as much as possible** and to ask them:
	+ what types of changes they would like to see
	+ what ways they think would be best for you to record these changes?
* **Remember data protection and confidentiality!** If you want to share stories or images from service users on social media/with funders/on funding applications, make sure you let them know well in advance why you are collecting this information and what you plan to do with it. Check they are OK with this and don’t use if not.
* **Decide what questions are important to you and your project** and then make sure you select measurement processes that make the most sense to what you’re trying to achieve. Here are some things to think about:
	+ The aims that you have with the project: Are you trying to achieve a specific outcome, are you trying to solve a specific need? Are you just spreading the word about your services more generally?
	+ What might help your funders understand how important and successful the project was? How would be the best way to engage with them?
	+ If you have future events, activities or funding applications coming up, what can you take from this project/activity which will help in the future?
	+ What is the best way to interact with the people who will be coming to the activity? Teenagers are most likely to use their phones, but elderly people will do better with physical interactions. English isn’t everyone’s first language either, so how will you engage with those people? And what’s the best way to get children involved? Keep things as simple as possible.

**How to measure change and impact**

These easy tips are all about how to measure the change and impact your project has had on people’s lives.

**Photographs**

* If you take photographs of an event yourself - ask participants to pick from a range of photos that best show how they feel and that they are comfortable with.
* Encourage participants to take photos on their mobile phones or lend them a camera and ask them to take pictures of what they enjoyed during the activity. You could ask them to write short captions to go with each picture, or ask them to tell you them directly so you can write it down.
* Be aware of data protection regulations – it’s usually safer to ask participants not to include people’s faces or identifying information such as the venue and location.
* Another fun way to show involvement is through selfies - you can provide a selfie frame with props for people to interact with which they then upload onto social media themselves, or which they send to you (over email or WhatsApp or Facebook) to use later.

**Social media engagement (good for teenagers!)**

* With photos in mind, if you are asking people to share directly to social media, make sure you encourage this at the start of the event and tell everyone how to find, like and tag you on social media (make sure you include your @ name). You could also stick these up on around the event space and anywhere free Wi-Fi information is displayed to remind people. Also include any hashtags (#) you want people to use.
* Later on, it’s a good idea to make a note all of the likes and shares (on your own pictures) and tags (where you’ve been tagged in other people’s pictures). This is a great way of showing how many people you reached. If you were encouraging people to use a hashtag, you can then search for this hashtag later and again see how many people used it as a way to demonstrate your reach.

**Art (perfect for children!)**

* Ask participants to draw a picture to show how they enjoyed the session, or what they got out of it. If you are doing a craft activity then you can take pictures of what is created and ask for a few words about why it has meaning for them, or what they like about making it etc. (See above advice on taking photographs).

**Mapping**

* Ask participants can draw a spider diagram to show their support networks, or how they understand a particular theme or problem.
* Encourage the use of different colours to show old and new aspects or how something has developed since their time with you.
* For example: they could map out their community, family and friendship connections and then draw more lines between themselves and people they have met through working with you.

**A sticky wall (good for voting and feedback!)**

* Put a flipchart or other large sheets of people on the wall and ask people to write their comments on it about what they’re looking forward to, what they would like to change, what they want to see more of any other feedback they have etc. If you want specific feedback then you could organise these pieces of paper through different categories etc.
* Alternatively, if you want to ask a question you could put two sheets of paper on the wall and ask people to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ by using coloured Post It notes. These are good because they don’t put pressure on people to write or to fill up lots of space.

**Asking kids to vote**

* If you’re hosting a children’s event and want to encourage voting then you could use different sides of the room or bean bags to represent different ideas and ask them to walk to the sides they want to vote for.
* Ping-ping balls or different colours in pots are also good for simple voting.
* For online events with children you could ask them to vote via Menti, Google Jamboard or the Vevox voting app (with their parent’s help!)

**Stop-start-continue**

* Ask people to write on a postcard: one thing they will stop, one thing they will start and one thing they will continue to do because of their session with you.
* You will probably get the most amount of responses to this if you do it at the event before people leave, but you could also post out the postcard to them after a few weeks as a nice reminder (this is good if the event was online).
* This is a simple way to capture the key changes your project had and it allows people to do it in their own words.

**Diaries or creative writing (good for regular, long-term work with people!)**

* Ask people to record their progress through a journal or diary or a story. You will need to give very clear prompts to them which reflect what you are most interested in hearing about. (Community, confidence, skills, mental health etc.)

**Surveys, questionnaires**

* These can be done at the time (which will probably get a better response) or emailed/posted out afterwards.
* A quick before and after survey tracks their changes very easily
* During online events, you could ask a question at the beginning of the event and ask people to vote via Menti, Google Jamboard or Vevo, and then ask the same question at the end to see what the change has been.
* You could also run a poll on Facebook or Instagram which asks people’s thoughts on a specific topic, or via WhatsApp if you have a group WhatsApp conversation.

**Interviews (good for more in-depth information!)**

* Interviews are perfect for people who aren’t comfortable writing – you could even record the interviewee if they give their consent.
* Interviews can be long and formal or short and quite casual – whichever works for you
* They can be one-to-one or in a group.
* They could take place over coffee after the main session or as a separate Breakout Room if you’re hosting a Zoom event.

**Case studies (good for letting people tell their own story!)**

* Case studies are a good way for users to show their journey with you, in their own words.
* They can show both positive and negative elements as well as what they, and you as an organisation have learned.
* Think carefully about whether you want this to be anonymous and what permission you will need to get from the participant.

**Most significant change**

* Ask participants about the most significant change they have experienced through your interaction with them and why this change was important to them.
* Ask them to highlight how your work with them helped them to achieve this change – this gives them the power to think about what is important to them.
* This will show what the most important aspect to them was and it will also help you identify changes that maybe you weren’t expecting.
* For the most impactful results, give people a bit of time to think about this before asking them to answer - you could tell them at the start of a session to answer at the end.
* Alternatively, you could ask via a survey or interview or even online through social media

**Focus groups (good for big projects where you want to ask people specific questions!)**

* Focus groups are where you bring together a group of people for a couple of hours at a time and ask them very specific open questions to find out how they feel/what their thoughts are about something.
* You often get a lot of information out of these groups because you can ask any question you like and people are encouraged to respond however they like.
* They can be time-consuming to set up though, so they are usually best used after a big project where you have a lot of information to work through.

**Useful links and resources**

**Voting/live questioning**

**Menti**: https://www.menti.com/

**Google Jamboard**: https://jamboard.google.com/

**Vevox:** https://www.vevox.com/

**Instagram stories polls:** https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/instagram-stories-polls-how-to-use/ questions & polls

**Facebook questions:** https://www.lifewire.com/facebook-questions-for-fans-friends-1240569

**Zoom Polls:** https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/203749865-Polling-for-webinars

**Questionnaires/surveys**

**Typeform:** https://www.typeform.com/

**Google Forms**: https://www.google.co.uk/forms/about/

**Doodle Poll:** https://doodle.com/free-poll

**Survey Monkey:** https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/

**Create photo collages/social media posts**

**Canva:** <https://www.canva.com/>

**Focus Groups**

**Advice on how to run:** https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conduct-focus-groups/main

**Ideas and templates**

<https://evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/ess-resources/ess-evaluation-methods-and-tools/>

**Tips for choosing measurement methods which best fit your activity**

* If you are doing a social, one-time only event quick comment cards might be good.
* If you are doing a series of workshops then it might be appropriate to ask participants how they think about something at the start of the workshop and then again at the end so you can see the change and how they have developed.
* Use a method that is proportionate to what you as an organisation can manage. You don’t want to gather lots of information that you cannot use.
* Think about what might make it harder for them to participate, what can you do to make it easier for them? Could it be language issues – then maybe more visual methods are better, are they children – then make is short and fun, and ideally taking place within the activity. Are they more vulnerable – be very clear on not collecting personal or identifying information.
* Leave room for people to tell you about what was most important to them, this will be very valuable for them to share the information that they want you to know and also will be valuable for when you are planning future projects as it may help you to identify other needs, or alter your activity to be as good as possible.
* Explain why you are asking them – to help you to support them in the best way, to be able to show how good the work is that you are doing – to get more funding to keep working, to grow and improve.
* Think about how you might feed some of the collected information back to the community, not just to funders. Would participants like to hear about what other people thought, how other people benefited?