



World Society for the Protection of Animals

# Monitoring and Evaluating your Education Work

**Aim:** This short document covers different aspects of monitoring and evaluating your education work to allow you to assess whether your work is having the impact you want.

[www.wspa-international.org](http://www.wspa-international.org)

## What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

Simply put, monitoring your education programme involves asking questions and getting answers about various aspects of the programme. More formally we can say monitoring is regular tracking and assessment during the course of the programme.

Evaluation follows monitoring and can be described as finding out how successful your education programme was. Or in more formal language: it is a periodic retrospective assessment of the programme.

## Why do monitoring and evaluation?

There are numerous reasons why monitoring and evaluation should be built into your education programme. This document will look at three of these reasons: clarifying objectives, learning experience and providing evidence and accountability.

### Clarifying objectives

In order to know what you want to monitor you need to know what you are trying to achieve. By setting up a monitoring system you are forced to define what outcomes you want from your education programme and the lessons, leaflets etc that are part of it. You will also need to think about how you will know if you have achieved these outcomes.

This process also allows you to think about why you are doing what you are doing. It may highlight that a change of plan is needed.

*Example: "When we sat down to write our monitoring plan; we realized everyone had different ideas about what they wanted the education programme to achieve .....If we hadn't discussed monitoring at the beginning we may have not found this problem till the end of the programme, when it was too late."*

### Learning experience

By monitoring and then evaluating your programme you will learn about what you have achieved and what works and what doesn't. This learning process is vital as through this you can avoid repeating work that is ineffective and concentrate on maximizing positive outcomes. When working with limited resources, this will become extra important.

The learning process should generate improvement in your education programme by highlighting which activities need modification in order to be effective.

*Example: "Through monitoring and evaluation we found that the Animal Birth Control posters we printed and displayed around town didn't have any impact on the number of animals taken for de-sexing....so next time we can save that cost and put the money towards printing leaflets which did have an impact."*

### Evidence and accountability

By monitoring and evaluating your programme you will have a record of what you did and the impact it had. This type of evidence will often be required by funding organisations and

it can also be used in securing further funding by showing conclusively the results of the programme.

Evidence of positive outcomes can also be used to gain support of authorities, which may enable you to reach a wider or greater audience. Compare these two, which would you consider funding:

*“Last year we went to quite a lot of schools, the students seemed to enjoy the lessons and we hope they learnt a lot from them”*

*“Last year we visited 70% of primary schools in our local authority area, a total of 27 schools. After the lesson students showed an average 60% increase in their knowledge of pet care; assessed through a pre and post lesson quiz.”*

## What to measure in monitoring and evaluation?

For each objective you should set indicators; the changes or things you expect to observe. Indicators can be categorised in several ways. This document will cover some of the different types of indicators you can use to monitor and evaluate your education programme. A good indicator must be unambiguous, reflect the objective and be easy to collect. Whenever possible collect baseline data; information about the situation before your programme which you compare against later.

### Examples of indicators

- *Percentage change in desired answers between pre- and post programme surveys of students' attitudes towards owning of exotic pets*
- *Percentage change in number of animals brought in for spay/neuter before and after distribution of an ABC leaflet*
- *Number of villages reached in local area during 3 month community outreach campaign*
- *Percentage of children able to demonstrate correct behaviour first time after lesson about how to act around an aggressive*

It is often tempting to offer colouring or drawing activities for children, but while these can be fun for the children they can present problems in monitoring whether learning objectives have been met. However, it is easy to build these activities into assessable pieces of work. For example, in place of asking students to colour in a picture of a dog, ask instead that they colour the picture and also add their own pictures of at least five things a dog needs. By doing this it is easy to check from the pictures whether the learning objectives have been achieved.

### Process and outcome indicators

These record different types of information. Process indicators record what was done and with whom. A lot of the data collected will be numerical, but also includes dates and places. Outcome indicators record whether what was done made a difference. They look at changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

Example of a process indicators recording table for a donkey care workshop:

| Date       | Location                      | Leader  | Number of participants | Notes                     |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 12-09-2007 | Rokoray, outside village hall | Ishmael | 17                     | 3 donkeys given treatment |
| .....      | .....                         | .....   | ...                    | .....                     |

Example of outcome indicators:

- Percentage decrease in the number of reported dog bites in the target area.
- At the end of the lesson number of students that can demonstrate how to safely approach a dog.
- Increase in the number of wildlife crimes reported in the 3 months after the education programme.
- Decrease in incidence of overloading of working animals in villages with training.

### Indicators at different time scales

Immediate: At the end of the class have the learning objectives been met? If you set out to make sure participants know five reasons to preserve local habitats, do they?

Medium term: What is the retention time for acquired knowledge? What happens when you go back to a class after 3 months, how much do they remember?

Long term: Has the education programme translated into behavioural changes? Are there less stray dogs, exotic pets, people buying bear products etc?

### How to carry out evaluation?

Evaluation will help with decision making regarding your education programme. This document highlights just two methods.

One way is to produce a table for each strand of the programme to allow easy collation of data and comparison with the desired objective, see the example below:

**Objective:** To increase responsible pet ownership (RPO) in the district.

**Strand:** Primary education.

| Target  | Indicator   | Outcome   | Conclusion  |
|---|---|---|---|
| After the lesson all students to know 5 facts about RPO of dogs | Percentage of students achieving 100% in post lesson quiz                         | Only 67% of students achieved 100%                    | Redesign lesson to reinforce the desired learning objectives  |
| To reach 60% of primary schools in district.                    | Number schools visited at least once compared to total number of schools          | 24 schools visited once, 5 visited twice, 63% reached | Target met  |
| 20% increase in dogs adopted                                    | Comparison of numbers in the 3 months after programme compared to 3 months before | 17% increase in adoptions                             | Good increase but not possible to tell if increase was due to Primary School lessons. Next time we need to record how adopters heard of us. |

Another way to evaluate your education work is to use a set of specific questions to address the programme overall and also particular strands. See the examples below:

- What did you want to happen?
- What did happen?
- Were there differences?
- Why were there differences?
- What worked? Why?
- What didn't work? Why?
- What changes should be made for the future?

## Conclusion

Remember monitoring and evaluation of your education programme isn't very different from monitoring and evaluation of your other areas of work.

Through a good monitoring and evaluation plan a mediocre education programme can evolve into a successful one and a successful education programme has potential to make real lasting change.

This guide is not designed to be exhaustive; if you have any further questions please contact us.

More information on animal welfare education can be found at WSPA's dedicated education website [www.animal-education.org](http://www.animal-education.org)