



September 2005 Number 4.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

The Issue

The Signature Programme, Volunteerism (SPV) is about change and growth in volunteerism. Part of being accountable for the use of resources is determining how and what change and growth is being achieved. . Tracking, documenting and reviewing progress, to measure what value is being added for girls, young women and their communities is a way of evaluating the SPV. Disseminating what is learned can help towards future work on volunteerism.

- Impacts – Significant changes in the programme or people (e.g., programme expansion that is sustained over time and an expanded volunteer base over time reflecting changed individual commitments to volunteering and corresponding changes to civil society indicators).

Types of evaluation

Evaluation can be ongoing during and summative at the end of the project.

Typically, evaluation focuses on:

- Community (Country) Need – Specific unmet need in a community or country. SPV will address the need for new volunteers to support girls and young women.
- Inputs – SPV resources such as staff, volunteers, facilities, equipment, training curricula, and funding.
- Activities – How SPV uses inputs to provide programming, deliver services and meet community needs.
- Outputs – Services and products of SPV programme. This is a simple count, not a measure of change (e.g., number of press releases distributed, and events held).
- Outcomes – Short-term and intermediate changes in the lives of program participants or in programming (e.g., growth of membership, policy instituted to expand programs in country and changes in volunteers' perceived commitment to the organization and community service)

Accountability

The SPV was required to provide reports each three months of the three year programme. These reports were to include (inter alia):

- Progress towards achievement of goals
- Unanticipated outcomes/obstacles

When and what does the SPV evaluate?

1. The SPV evaluates outcomes each three months. It measures progress towards achieving goals and objectives. It notes any unanticipated outcomes – whether positive or negative. This indicates where/how strategies, process and use of resources might need to be reviewed and/or changed during the course of the project.

2. The SPV will evaluate the process, resources and impact of the project at the end of the three year period of the project.

Who evaluates?

- Teams of staff and volunteers in each of the three countries participating in the project.
- WAGGGS' Global Director
- Support and oversight is provided by the Points of Light Foundation, (POL) an organization with expertise in organisational development and evaluation.

What outcomes are evaluated?

Global goals were agreed for the SPV. Initial objectives were agreed for each of the three participating countries. As the project progressed it became clear these objectives needed review and refinement in order to breakdown strategies to meet the goals. Each of the refined objectives could be measured. Also, as the project progresses there are unanticipated outcomes which are also documented and reviewed as part of ongoing implementation of strategies to achieve goals and objectives. Some of these also help evaluate process and resourcing of the project.

What were the base lines for assessing progress?

Some of the goals had clearly quantifiable base lines – such as membership numbers or zero base lines where new work was to be undertaken. Others needed to have objectives designed to enable measurement and evaluation of qualitative change or growth. This was possible in more cases than initially imagined.

One unanticipated outcome was the discovery that Member Organizations often have great difficulty in establishing and managing membership numbers and need workable and reliable systems if growth is to be measured accurately.

What support and tools are used in evaluating the SPV?

Points of Light helped design specific tools and systems based on the project goals and refined objectives. Teams in each participating MO were helped to use these tools.

- A questionnaire with simple 'tick the box' responses to evaluate training events, workshops and seminars. The same questionnaire, used in all similar events to enable comparative analysis, asks about usefulness of content and materials and includes a composite indicator to measure overall satisfaction of the event. A follow up questionnaire will measure longer term usefulness.
- A 'Crosswalk' – This is a spreadsheet recording data for each objective. It includes numbers of activities, participants, media features, new volunteers, members, government contacts, visits and awards - a range of measurable data linked to project outcomes.

- A 'Dashboard'. This is a graphic report of progress. Not all objectives are measured on each dashboard but all are eventually covered.
- A narrative report on aspects not easily measured with data and any unanticipated outcomes or obstacles.
- Financial reports – against agreed annual budgets and the budget for the project as a whole.

At the end of the second and third year of the SPV, Points of Light will assess the evaluation of the project.

How and why does the SPV disseminate what it learns?

- One goal is to develop models to be replicated. WAGGGS is committed to sharing new ways of work which may benefit other Member Organisations not directly participating in the project.
- Reports and papers are shared with World Board members, senior staff and volunteers. Progress was shared at World Conference. A seminar was held with senior staff in London in 2004 and another is planned for 2005.
- Sharing results and even tools for evaluating can act as an incentive for increased focus and performance.
- Within the participating MOs, teams share learning widely for sustainability of growth – especially where leadership and professional staff could change. New, young leaders will take organizations into the future.
- Information is shared on web sites.
- Within the Western Hemisphere and Asia Pacific Regions, other MOs offer ideas and support – some are adapting ideas.
- Regional conferences, committees and staff share reports and papers widely.
- Issue papers such as this one are distributed.

bmf
Global Director Signature Programme
Volunteerism
World Association of Girl guides and Girl Scouts
12c Lyndhurst Road, London NW3 5PQ, UK.

