

## Step 3a

# Learning from your evaluation

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## In brief

Learn from your evaluation, so that you can refine your programme or inform other decisions about your services, policies or funding priorities.

## Key resources

- Learning and Sharing Plan (completed at STEP 2)

## Why it's important

- ▶ To improve your programme (and deliver it more effectively or efficiently);
- ▶ To inform other decisions at your organisation.

## What's involved

Evaluation is not just about demonstrating impact. At its heart, evaluation is about learning: we evaluate to learn from what we do, to refine our services, programmes or policies.

This stems from the evaluation questions you ask, and your Learning and Sharing Plan (see STEP 2c): what do you want to learn about? Who needs to learn, why and in what format? When does reporting need to happen?

This stage of your evaluation is about enacting the plans you have put in place to learn from your evaluation. Refer to your Learning & Sharing Plan; keep it up to date and adjust it when necessary. Think about what you need to do to make sure that learning from your evaluation is timely and relevant so that it has the maximum effect.

Whoever has carried out your evaluation should organise a session to share the learning, gather initial feedback and discuss how you will use the findings. You can then adjust your Theory of Change based on the findings from your evaluation: this will help to build up evidence for how the activities within your programme link to the outcomes you are looking to influence. It will also help you to identify any gaps where you may need to look for more evidence if you run the programme again.

You can also use this evidence to think about any changes you might want to make to the structure or resourcing of your programme if you were to run it again. It is important to report your reasons for any changes as this will help others to avoid making the same mistakes. Additionally, evidence you have gathered for your programme may also help you to make decisions about other activity at your organisation.

## Further Reading

- [Principles of Good Impact Reporting](#) (Various authors, 2011) – high level principles and case studies, to help your reporting meet the needs of your stakeholders.
- [The insiders' guide to social media](#) (Charity Comms, 2015) – how to use different social media channels to communicate. Not aimed specifically at reporting evaluation findings, but still relevant.