Reflection Workshop

Purpose	**A reflection workshop provides an opportunity to bring relevant stakeholders together to interpret the evaluation evidence and discuss conclusions and recommendations.**
When?	• When organisations want to evaluate their community engagement activities
Resources	• 1 - 2 days to prepare for the workshop • 4-hour workshop attended by relevant people included in the evaluation • 4 hours after the workshop to record the workshop output
Rating	

A reflection workshop is a space for participants to review the evaluation data and co-develop conclusions as a group. This is beneficial because it allows everyone to dive deep into the data and gain an understanding of the results; it reduces or removes the burden of reporting; and it provides a space for constructive, informed discussions. The report is not written beforehand, and the evidence is not presented in PowerPoint - it is stuck to the walls of the workshop room (on separate pieces of paper or printed in A3), to allow participants to read, interpret, and discuss the information in groups.

Theory behind the workshop

The reflection workshop process moves through three stages of evaluative thinking based on the “What? So what? Now what?” reflective framework model that was developed by Terry Borton in 1970[1].

- **What happened?** A process to assemble an evidence base
- **So what?** A process to interpret and judge the evidence
- **What now?** A process to make action plans/recommendations about what we are going to do

Define your objectives

Before you undertake a reflections workshop, it is important to get clear on what you are hoping to achieve in your session. How you run the workshop will reflect the focus you choose. Your objectives may vary but are likely to include:

- **Reporting and communication**: to synthesise data, analysis, findings and management responses required to develop a report for donors or an external audience. If you are not focusing on reporting, you might still want to generate a narrative related to the performance of your engagement
- **Improvement**: to identify and reach agreement on the management responses for your engagement

1 Borton, T. (1970). *Reach, Touch and Teach: Student concerns and process education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- **Contextualising**: to generate a better understanding of the context, trends, risks and associated issues with your engagement.
- **Experiential**: to build ownership of the analysis, findings and management responses across the project team
- **Quality assurance**: to create a safe space where the quality assurance of evidence can be undertaken collectively

How it works

Planning and preparation

The planning for a reflection workshop is an important part of the process. The main preparation steps are detailed below.

- **Scoping** with key decision-makers to build agreement on:
    - the objectives, scope of the engagement activities or strategy that you will consider
    - timeframe for the workshop (eg: often associated with reporting timeframes and conducted 2-4 weeks in advance of reporting deadlines).
    - participants who will attend the reflection workshop
    - the logistics (location/venue, space of the room, audio-video (AV) requirements, lunches, invitation etc.)
- **Agenda** to be shared with the participants, highlighting their level of engagement expected in the workshop.
- **Engagement of key participants** in the workshop is critical to doing a comprehensive review of the M&E results. The organiser/facilitator should send out the **invitation** a few weeks prior to the reflection workshop and check-in with participants as necessary. Suggested participants for the reflection workshop include:
    - internal or external facilitator/s to facilitate the reflection workshop process
    - community engagement implementers –key staff, volunteers, coordinator/s, and contact person/s responsible for M&E data collection and reporting, any key partners
- **Key evidence inputs required for a reflection workshop**, which are generally crowdsourced from the team in advance and populated into an evidence table. In this case, your evidence will be whatever information you have collected using the toolkit and any other relevant information. This information is ‘evidence’ because it is judgement-free, there should be no interpretation of what the data means or whether it is ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Further guidance can be found here[2].
- **Synthesise the evidence.** Before the workshop, someone must collect all the data and summarise the results against each key evaluation question and sub-question (we have included

[2] https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/orid

an example evidence table to help you do this). Print off this summary of evidence (on separate pages for each question if possible).

Conducting the workshop

The workshop itself is largely divided into three parts, detailed in the table below.

Agenda item	Description
What happened? Review and interpret evidence	• All the evidence should be stuck onto the walls or printed in handouts. Evidence should be organised by Key Evaluation Question (KEQ). • Participants divide into groups. Each group will: • Review and interpret all the evidence on their wall • Use post-it notes to comment on each page of evidence • Use coloured dots to rate the strength of each page of evidence (green= strong evidence, yellow = moderate evidence, red = weak evidence) • Groups should then swap and repeat the exercise. If you are doing this in a small group, you can go through the questions sequentially.
So what? Discuss conclusions as a group	As a plenary, discuss the conclusions from each wall and how the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) would be answered based on this evidence (for example: based on the evidence here, have we been successful in increasing community support for the Australian seafood industry?)
What now? Co-develop recommendations	As a plenary, discuss recommendations for community engagement moving forward.

Note: You can add further exercises or reconfigure these workshop activities, to fit your needs.

Capturing outputs

Discussion and outputs from the reflections workshop can be recorded in an evidence table (see Example of an evidence table), which contains all of the evidence, interpretations, and findings for each Key Evaluation Question. This evidence table can then be used to develop an evaluation report.

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Example of an evidence table

Key evaluation question (KEQ)	Sub-questions	Evidence to support (what happened?)[3]	Findings (so what?)[4]	Recommendations (what now?)
KEQ 1: Effectiveness (What has our community engagement achieved?)	Sub-question 1.1	•	Based on the evidence, it looks like…	We will work on…
	Sub-question 1.2	•		
	Sub-question 1.3	•		
	Sub-question 1.2	•		
KEQ 2: Process (Are we doing the right things?)	Sub-question 2.2			
	Sub-question 2.2			
	Sub-question 2.3			
KEQ 3: Learning (What are we learning about community engagement and what are we doing differently as a result?)	Sub-question 3.1			
KEQ 4: Impact (What impact is our community engagement having?)	Sub-question 4.1			
KEQ 5: Economic (To what degree did the outcomes justify the cost of community engagement?)	Sub-question 5.1			
	Sub-question 5.2			

[3] Evidence can be provided with different levels of strength/rigour, and thus have different implications on the findings. For example, anecdotal evidence or key informant interviews can be included as opinions; expert panels can be included with a higher level of rigour to validate information; large-scale surveys can be assigned the greatest strength of evidence. The evidence provided should be a composite of all available and relevant information.

[4] Findings are a consolidated analysis of the evidence to draw conclusions. This can be cross referenced through experts, advisory groups or technical reference groups as required.