

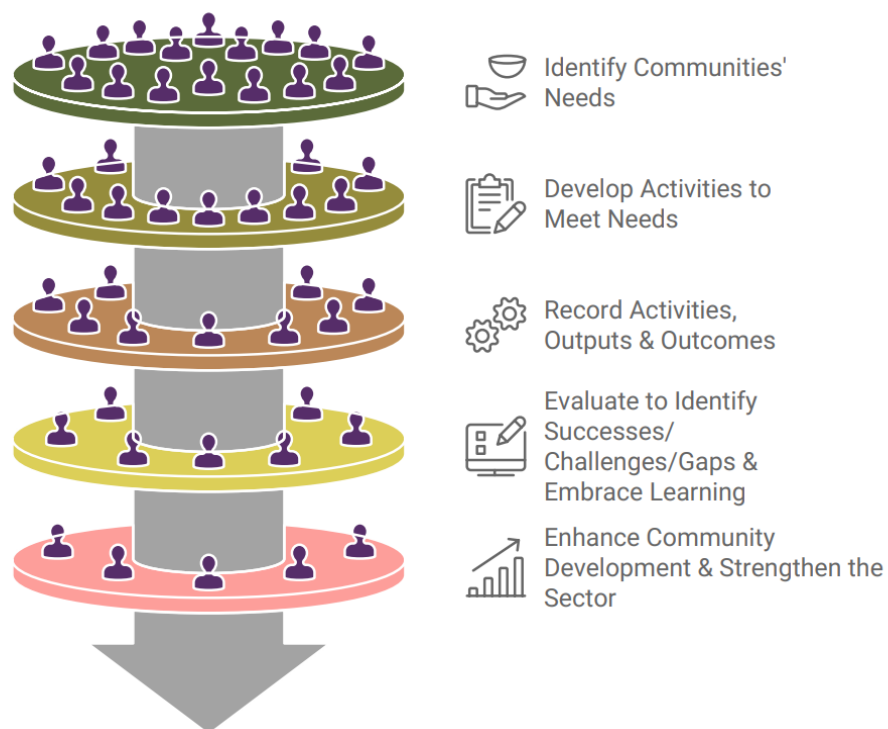
Evaluation Framework for ‘Building a strong and vibrant VCSE sector in North Devon and Torrridge’

Introduction

This evaluation framework for the NDVS and TTVS *Building a strong and vibrant VCSE sector in North Devon and Torrridge* is designed to assess the outcomes and impacts of the project over three years. The framework is for core Project staff, Community Developers, Community Connectors, the Project Impact Evaluator and the External Evaluators to use to evaluate the project’s activities and learning. The framework involves collecting data around quality, quantity, outputs, outcomes, impact and learning of/from project activities.

The process and flow of the project *Building a strong and vibrant VCSE sector in North Devon and Torrridge* is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Building a strong and vibrant VCSE sector in North Devon and Torrridge



The evaluation framework employs a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a robust evaluation process, capturing both measurable outcomes and deeper impacts of the activities and learning over time.

The **stakeholders** for the project can be separated into four groups:

1) Community

- a) Community members
- b) Community organisations

2) Project staff and support staff

- a) Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- b) Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- c) Other TTVS/NDVS staff

3) VCSE Sector in North Devon & Torrington

- a) VCSE organisations supported
- b) VCSE Leadership Hub
- c) Other key VCSE partners and contacts

4) Wider stakeholders

- a) Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- b) One Northern Devon Community Partners
- c) One Northern Devon One Community Steering Group
- d) Local Government (e.g. Town Councils, District Councils)
- e) Attendees at corporate meetings
- f) Funders

The role of the project stakeholders is to carry out the project activities and/or learn from the project activities to ensure that community development approaches can be sustainably embedded across the area.

Steps in Project Evaluation

There are seven steps in the evaluation of this type of project.

- 1) Define Objectives and Outcomes
 - Clearly articulate the objectives (or aims) of your project and the specific outcomes you aim to achieve. This forms the basis of your evaluation framework. Your funding application to the National Lottery outlined your objective and intended outcomes. These can change overtime – evaluation processes help to identify what has changed/what needs to change.

- 2) Engage Stakeholders
 - Involve community members and stakeholders in the evaluation process to ensure it reflects their perspectives and needs. This helps to ensure that the project outcomes align with what is needed (having changed from originally proposed if necessary).

- 3) Data Collection
 - Reflective Practice – this involves all project staff involved in delivery of activities to think deeply about their project experiences, actions, and decisions in order to learn from them and improve future actions.
 - Quantitative Data – numerical data such as the number of beneficiaries, attendance figures, and measurable changes in behaviour or conditions.
 - Qualitative Data – narratives, case studies and testimonials to capture personal experiences and the project's impact on individuals.
 - Baseline Data – this helps to establish initial data at the project start and is used to measure progress over time.

- 4) Monitoring Progress
 - Regular Updates – these provide progress updates detailing spending, impact, learning, partnerships, challenges, and any changes. This aligns with the National Lottery Community Fund's requirements.

- Financial Monitoring – you must use the agreed budget spreadsheet to track expenditures, noting any variances and securing additional funds as needed.
- 5) Analysing Data
- Outcome Measurement – this is used to assess the extent to which intended outcomes have been achieved using both qualitative and quantitative data.
 - Reflective Analysis – this is used to identify what has worked well, challenges/barrier encountered, and unexpected outcomes to inform future practice.
- 6) Reporting Findings
- Structured Reporting – you can use templates provided by the National Lottery Community Fund to report on project activities, roles, outputs, outcomes, reflections, and next steps; you can provide supplementary information and reports as well.
 - Sharing Learning – it is important to disseminate findings with staff, stakeholders and the wider community to promote transparency and collective learning.
- 7) Continuous Improvement
- Feedback Loops – you can implement mechanisms to incorporate feedback into ongoing project development.
 - Capacity Building – you can utilise evaluation findings to strengthen organisational practices and community development activities.

By following these evaluation steps, we can all effectively evaluate the funded activities, ensuring it meets its objectives and delivers meaningful outcomes and impact.

Evaluating the Project Objectives and KPIs

The overall approach to this project evaluation is outlined in Figure 2. It can be described as both a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation. This means it involves examining both the processes and the results of the project.

A process evaluation focuses on how the project is being implemented. This includes looking at activities, procedures, and resources to ensure they are carried out as planned. It helps to identify what is working well and what might need adjustment to improve project delivery, maximise project learning and support a lasting legacy.

An outcome evaluation measures the results of the project. It assesses whether the project has achieved its objectives and KPI and measures the impact it has had on the communities and stakeholders involved. This type of evaluation looks at the effectiveness of the project in delivering its intended outcomes.

The KPIs for this project, as outlined in the original funding proposal, are:

1) Community Engagement and Development

- Expanding into wider areas, including rural and 'hidden' communities.
- Developing a framework for community voices, ensuring representation in alliances.

2) Evaluation and Evidence-Based Outcomes

- Use of portfolios mapped against Community Development National Occupational Standards.
- Quarterly assessment of submitted evidence, tracking quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

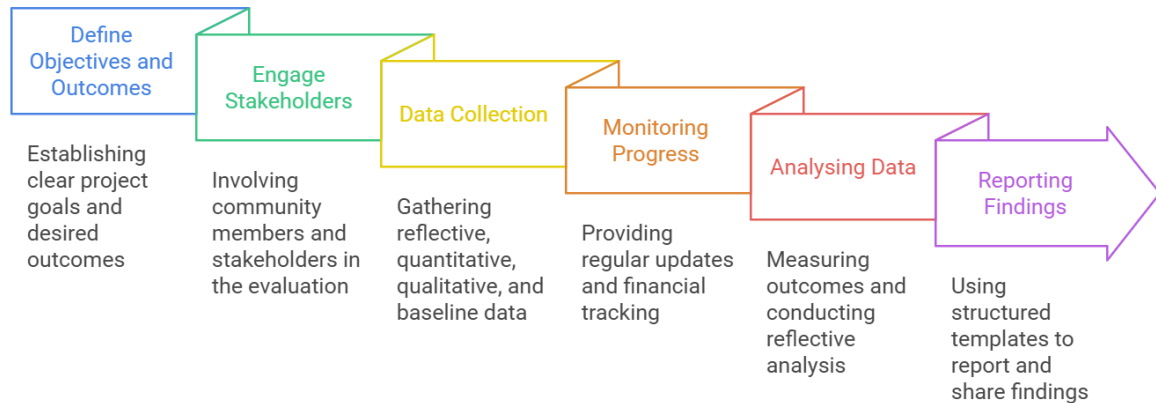
3) Capacity Building and Partnerships

- Building capacity and capability within VCSE organizations through training, funding advice, and advocacy.
- Establishing and strengthening partnerships with local and strategic organisations.

4) Project-Specific Outputs

- Producing and embedding a strategic framework for community development.
- Transitioning successful initiatives to legacy models for sustained impact.

Figure 2. Project Evaluation Approach



The methods for evaluation and analysis of each project objective (as outlined in the original bid), as the project progresses, and the stakeholders involved, are outlined below.

1. The Project

Objective 1a

Original: Using reflective practice to learn what best practice looks like for enabling and mobilising strong, thriving, healthy, self-reliant solution focused resourceful communities, subsequently feeding into a sustainable legacy enabled through this funding, and a proposed alliance framework.

Simplified: Use reflective practice to identify best practices for building strong, healthy, self-reliant communities. This will contribute to a sustainable legacy for the project and communities.

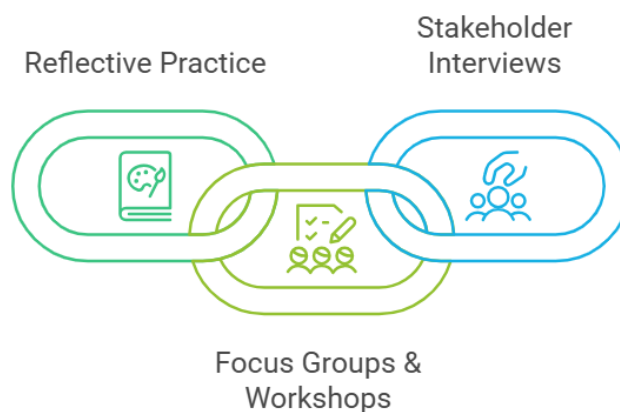
Key phrase: Identifying best practice in community development.

Relevant Stakeholders

- Community Organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project

- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- One Northern Devon Community Partners
- One Northern Devon One Community Steering Group

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Thematic Analysis and Comparative Analysis: analyse reflective logs and reports individually and in pairs; host group discussions and workshops to explore recurring themes and best practices across the activities and communities.
- Community Development Framework: synthesise analysis into a documented best-practice framework for enabling thriving communities.

Objective 1b

Original: Understanding effective ways of working to engage with, and then support, local communities, in particular disadvantaged groups so they feel heard, their challenges understood, solutions found, and their needs met.

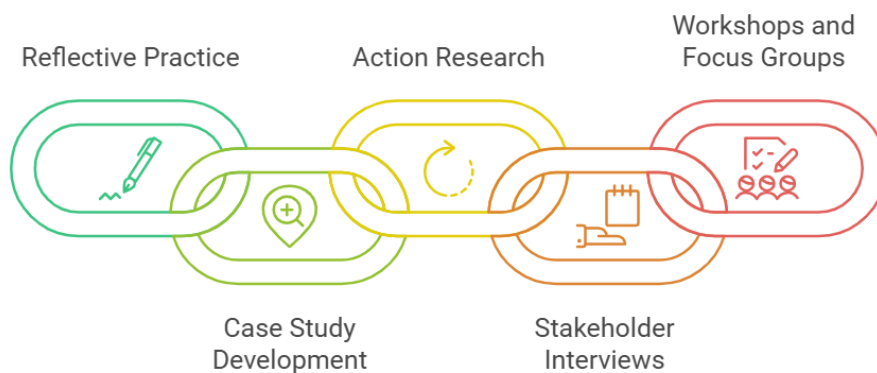
Simplified: Understand how to effectively engage and support local communities, especially groups less likely to be included so that they feel heard and have their needs met.

Key phrase: Listening to and advocating for those less likely to be included (voice).

Relevant Stakeholders

- Community members
- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
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- VCSE Leadership Hub
- Local Government
- Other key VCSE partners and contacts

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Gap Analysis: identify gaps between the needs of disadvantaged groups and the support provided; identify gaps in who is/is not engaging in community activities and community development.
- Process Evaluation: analyse how engagement strategies were implemented and their effectiveness, through reflective practice of community developers/connectors.
- Equity Analysis: assess how well the project addressed disparities in participation and outcomes.

Objective 1c

Original: Improved Partnership working including how to collaborate and support and reduced silo working and waste and feed into system change supporting placed based partnerships.

Simplified: Enhance collaboration and work effectively to contribute to system changes that support place-based partnerships.

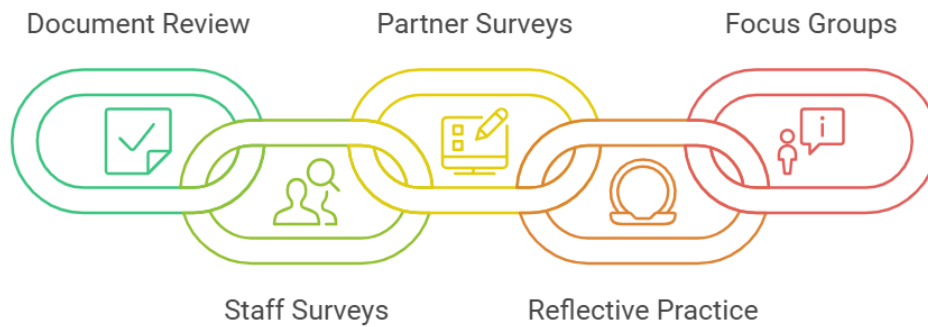
Key phrase: Improved partnership working.

Stakeholders

- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
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Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Social Network Analysis (SNA): identify strengths and weaknesses in systems and partnerships, including areas of duplication or gaps.
- Comparative Analysis: compare baseline and end-line data to assess changes in partnership dynamics and system change.
- System Thinking Analysis: evaluate how changes in partnerships contribute to broader system changes in place-based approaches.

2) VCSE sector across Northern Devon

Objective 2a

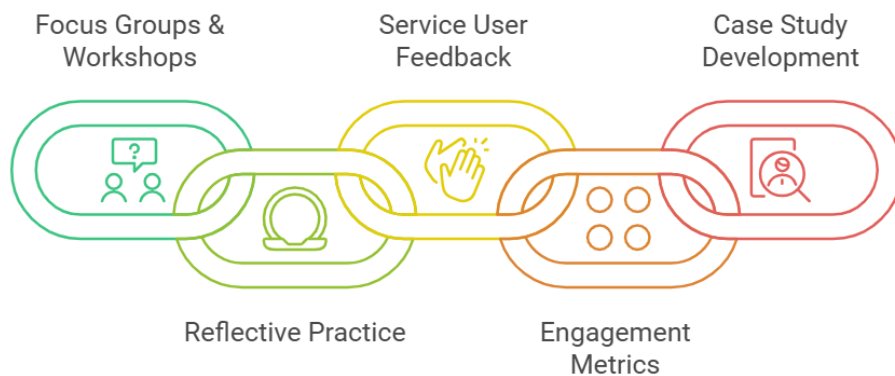
Original: Continue to make a positive impact within the community, by allowing current groups/networks to connect, flourish and grow.

Key phrase: Supporting existing VCSE organisations and networks

Stakeholders

- Community members
- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- One Northern Devon Community Partners
- VCSE Leadership Hub
- Local Government
- Other key VCSE partners and contacts

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Thematic Analysis: analyse qualitative data from focus groups and case studies to identify common enablers of growth and connection.

- Comparative Analysis: compare baseline and follow-up data to assess the progression of group/network connections and activities.

Objective 2b

Original: Recognition of the positive impact that VCSE organisations can have, alongside, savings around preventions. This includes the Council for Voluntary Services, as the infrastructure, who are the lynch pin and connectors.

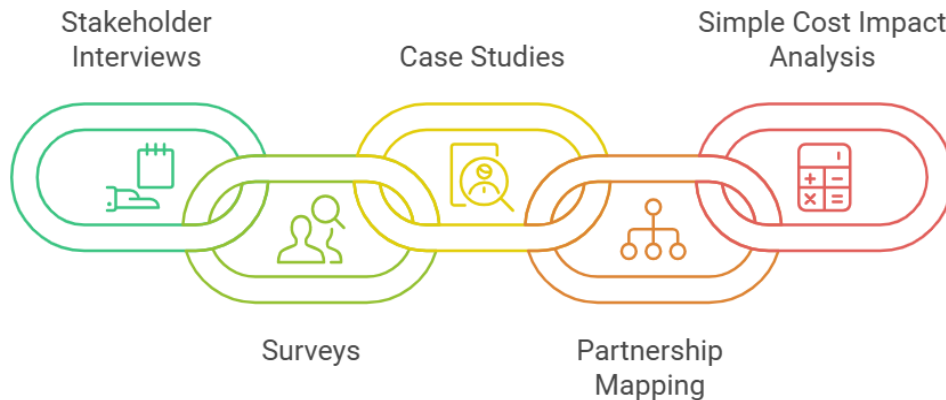
Simplified: Recognise the positive impact of VCSE organisations and the cost savings of preventative measures.

Key phrase: Increased promotion of the VCSE sector

Stakeholders

- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- One Northern Devon Community Partners
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- VCSE Leadership Hub
- Local Government
- Other key VCSE partners and contacts

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Thematic Analysis: analyse qualitative data to identify recurring themes regarding the perceived impact of VCSE organisations and CVS as connectors.
- Contribution Analysis: evaluate how VCSE organisations contributed to identified community changes or savings.
- Simple Cost Impact Analysis: quantify the financial value of preventative measures implemented by VCSE organisations compared to the costs of reactive services.
- System Mapping: illustrate the central role of community development – the impact of community developers/connectors, NDVS and TTVS, and the influence of activities and outcomes on Northern Devon’s partnerships, collaborations and community outcomes.

Objective 2c

Original: Bring about positive social change and mobilising social community action through effective engagement with communities. To support them and to identify and implement solutions which improve people lives.

Simplified: Achieve positive social change and community action through effective engagement, supporting communities to identify and alleviate problems.

Key phrase: Community development

Stakeholders

- Community members
- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- One Northern Devon Community Partners
- One Northern Devon One Community Steering Group
- VCSE Leadership Hub
- Local Government
- Other key VCSE partners and contacts

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Thematic Analysis: analyse qualitative data from focus groups and interviews, and appraise participatory sessions to identify recurring themes, focused on the effectiveness of engagement methods, barriers and enablers for community action, and perceived impacts on quality of life.
- Comparative Analysis: compare outcome data from before and after engagement efforts to assess changes in community connectedness, mobilisation rates, and community wellbeing metrics.
- Equity Analysis: assess outcome data to see whether engagement efforts effectively reached seldom heard or disadvantaged groups, ensuring inclusivity in social change and action mobilisation.

3) Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) Staff

Objective 3a

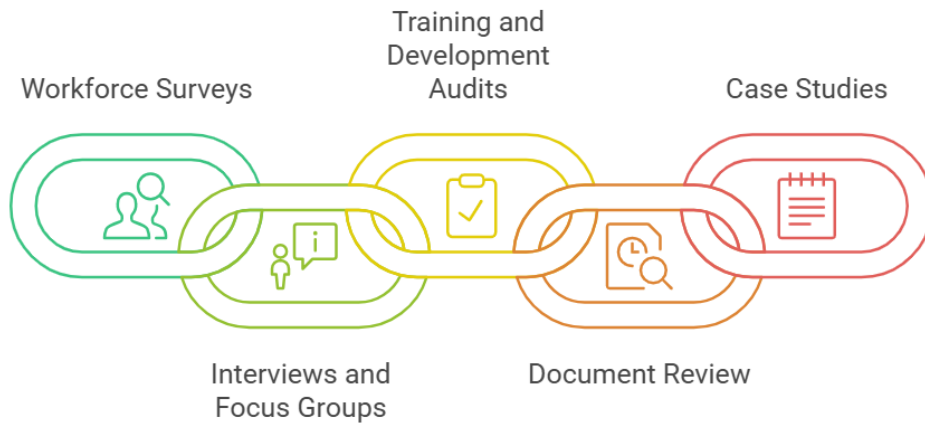
Original: A supported and recognised community development workforce.

Stakeholders

- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
- One Northern Devon Community Partners
- One Northern Devon One Community Steering Group
- VCSE Leadership Hub

- Local Government
- Other key VCSE partners and contacts

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Gap Analysis: identify gaps in the support and recognition currently provided to the workforce versus what they need.
- Thematic Analysis: analyse qualitative data from interviews and focus groups for recurring themes on workforce needs and successes.
- Comparative Analysis: compare baseline and follow-up data on workforce satisfaction and recognition levels.

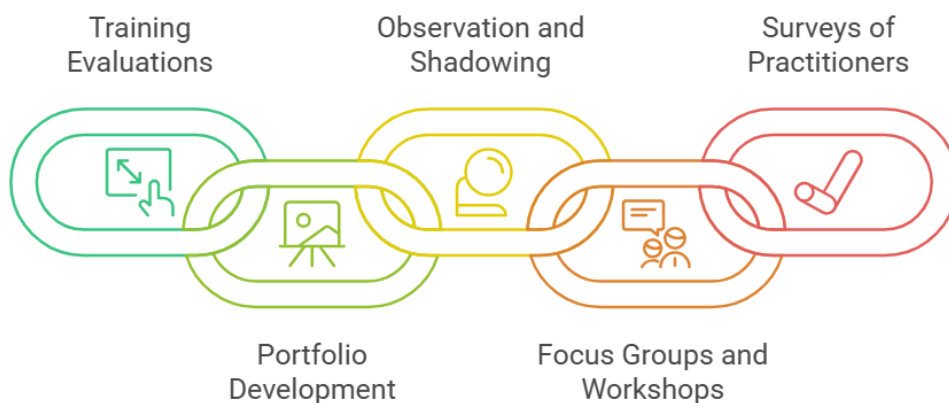
Objective 3b

Original: Understand and practice community development, aligned to national occupational standards and values.

Stakeholders

- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources

Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Alignment Analysis: map workforce practices to national occupational standards to identify alignment and areas for improvement.
- Competency Gap Analysis: identify gaps in practitioners' knowledge or skills related to national standards.
- Outcome Mapping: document how adherence to standards contributes to achieving community development goals.

4) Individual Members of the Community

Objective 4a

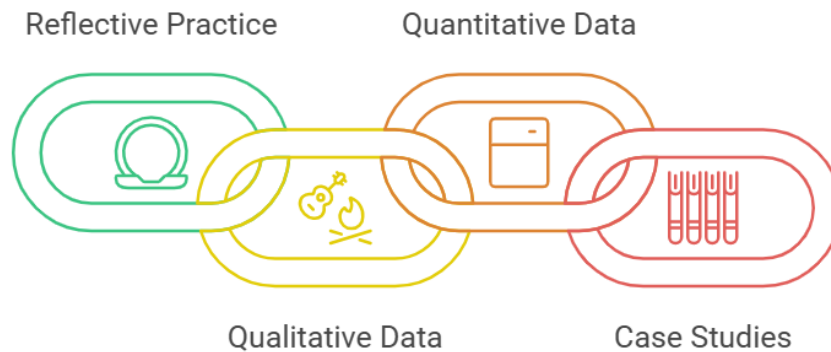
Original: Forward three years to strong, thriving, healthy, self-reliant solution focused resourceful communities with a legacy through this funding.

Key phrase: Increased resource, activity and skills within communities

Stakeholders

- Community members
- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
- Project Manager, CEO of NDVS, CEO of TTVS, CD/CC Line Managers, Impact and Evaluation Officer
- Other TTVS/NDVS staff
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by other sources
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Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

- Comparative Analysis: compare baseline and end-line data across key indicators to assess changes over the three years and project legacy.
- Thematic Analysis: analyse reflective practice data, qualitative data from interviews, focus groups, and case studies to identify themes related to thriving, self-reliance, and legacy.
- Contribution Analysis: evaluate how project activities contributed to observed community outcomes, separating project impact from external factors.
- Sustainability Analysis: assess the likelihood that community improvements will be sustained beyond the funding period, focusing on governance, resources, and leadership.
- Social Network Analysis (SNA): measure the strength and durability of community networks formed or enhanced during the project to evaluate collaboration and self-reliance.

Objective 4b

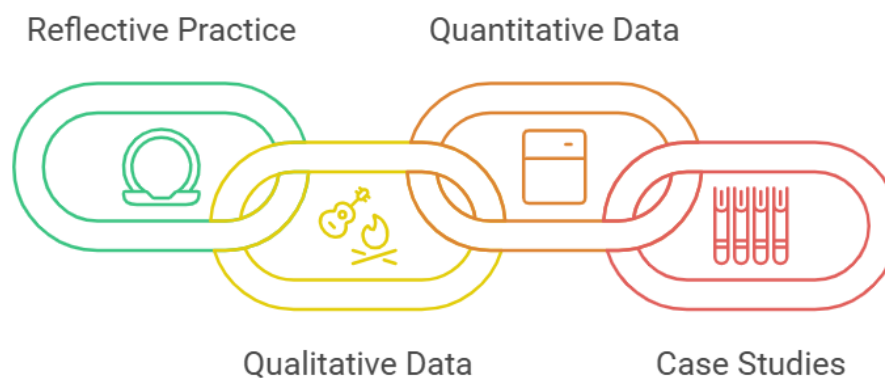
Original: A strong and empowered community who feels heard, understood, part of the decision-making process and with a strengthened confidence, set of skills and knowledge.

Key phrase: More confident communities, better able to engage with decision makers

Stakeholders

- Community members
- Community organisations
- Community Developers/Connectors funded by the project
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Evaluation Methods



Key questions

Evaluation Analysis

Thematic Analysis: analyse qualitative data from focus groups, interviews, surveys and participatory activities to identify themes related to empowerment and participation.

Comparative Analysis: compare baseline and end-line quantitative data to assess changes in perceptions of being heard, understood, and empowered.

Skills and Confidence Gap Analysis: identify areas where skills or confidence have improved or where additional support is needed.

Contribution Analysis: assess how specific project activities contributed to the community's sense of empowerment and their ability to participate in decision-making.

Outcome Mapping: document tangible outcomes linked to improved confidence, skills, and knowledge (e.g. new community initiatives, increased leadership roles).

Equity Analysis: evaluate whether all groups within the community (e.g. marginalised populations) felt equally heard, understood, and empowered.