TOOLKIT

Getting your organisation ready to do evaluations

JUNE 2017

Using Evidence for Impact

superu

A FOUR-PART TOOLKIT

Contents

To download A3 versions of the **Organisational Planning Worksheet** and the **Implementation Plan**, go to superu.govt.nz/resources/getting-ready-to-do-evaluation
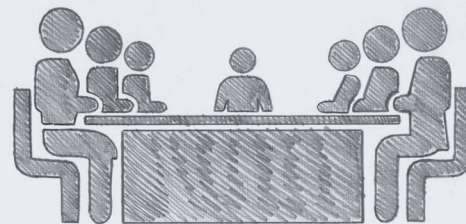
TOOLKIT

Getting your organisation ready to do evaluations

Using Evidence for Impact

superu

PART

1

How to get ready: toolkit instructions

Some context

Why is it important for your organisation to do evaluations?

Your organisation can only benefit from becoming more focused on, and ready to, do evaluation. With some evaluation capacity, it is possible to objectively assess how well your organisation is doing. However, without evaluation capacity, it is difficult to work out what you are doing right and what needs to change. In a nutshell, your organisation needs to build its evaluation capacity to perform to its potential. It may sound daunting, but it does not have to be. This guide and the accompanying toolkit will help you navigate the process.

There are four key reasons why your organisation should be more evaluation focused:

1 **Continuous improvement:** understanding what works and does not work so well in your organisation helps you and your team to take action and deliver better programmes and services to your clients.

2 **Having a positive impact on clients' lives:** being able to establish objectively how much your programme/service positively impacts on your clients' lives enables you to deliver quality services that consistently meet the needs of your community.

3 **Demonstrating your impact:** assessing your evidence to a high standard, as well as measuring and reporting on your activities, results and effectiveness, will more likely result in more compelling funding applications and stronger community support for the work you do.

4 **Planning for the future:** regularly reviewing and monitoring the work you do can help you to be more proactive, flexible and strategic when setting work priorities in a changing environment.

What is Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB)?

It is both a *process* and an *outcome*:

- The *process* entails intentionally supporting staff and leadership to gain skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to do useful evaluations.

- The *outcome* is ongoing evaluation and thinking to improve and adapt services for clients and report effectively to funders and communities.

It covers three key areas of influence:

- The *Context* that shapes your organisation and influences its operations

- Your *Organisation* itself

- The *People/Individuals* that make up your organisation.

How can you successfully build your organisation's evaluation capacity?

This toolkit will help you do this

Using this step-by-step toolkit will enable your organisation to become ready to do evaluations. It will help you and your team to painlessly become more evaluation focused in your daily practice.

Successful ECB takes time, ongoing effort and commitment to achieve

You do not have to do everything at once to build your evaluation capacity. You can start small (e.g. how do I collect better client feedback?) and grow from there (e.g. how can I deliver a better service to clients with my current level of resourcing?). The principle to bear in mind is that 'you can't run before you can walk', which means that you develop your skills, knowledge and experience little by little, but consistently and meaningfully. To build your evaluation capacity effectively, you need to monitor and potentially update your processes and activities regularly. Over time, your organisation's culture will also change from 'daily practices' to 'daily practices with evaluation'.

Flexibility is key, as not all organisations are the same

Organisations building their evaluation capacity have to go through the six steps described in the section 'How can you use this toolkit effectively?' A brief explanation of how to complete each step is also provided (e.g. fill out the questionnaire individually, then discuss the ratings as a group). However, we strongly recommend you adapt this process to fit the needs of your organisation, i.e. you need to be *flexible* in how you approach and complete each step. The uniqueness of your organisation (e.g. size, structure, employment type and services delivered) is likely to shape the ways in which your organisation becomes evaluation ready. The table overleaf provides some examples of how your organisation might be flexible.

Some examples showing flexibility in the ECB process

Your organisation works in close partnership with another separate organisation

- You may want to involve this other organisation in the process so they also build their own evaluation capacity as part of a common goal of improving overall service quality and delivery. Both organisations can then discuss and agree on the actions to take to implement the process

Your organisation is part of a national organisation or an affiliated network

- The head office of the national organisation may request that all local and regional branches grow their evaluation capacity as one, which makes it easier for all branches

- One organisation in the affiliated network may lead the process and involve those organisations willing to grow their evaluation capacity

- With limited support from the head office (national organisation) or other organisations (affiliated network), you may choose to grow your organisation's evaluation capacity 'on your own'. Despite possible constraints, your organisation will benefit from becoming evaluation ready

Some key enablers and barriers influencing ECB

There are some important factors to be aware of when you grow your evaluation capacity, as they are likely to influence the ways in which your organisation becomes evaluation ready. The table below gives you an indication of the success factors and potential pitfalls you may encounter.

Success factors	Potential pitfalls
- Having strong support for evaluation capacity building from the leadership/ management, and buy-in from all staff	- Lacking understanding of the value and benefits of the organisation becoming evaluation ready
- Allocating adequate resources to building your evaluation capacity (e.g. staff, equipment, time, effort – 'you get out what you put in')	- Considering evaluation capacity building as a 'side activity' rather than an essential aspect of delivering the right services to the right people at the right time
- Selecting an ECB champion within the organisation to monitor its implementation, uptake and maintenance within the organisation	- Some critical people in the organisation (e.g. manager or frontline staff) not valuing and encouraging evaluation capacity building, despite most staff being supportive of it
- Being able to access quality supporting resources and information to help sustain the growth of your organisation's evaluation capacity	- Inaccurate expectations of what it means to become evaluation ready, e.g. thinking that it is a one-off event rather than an ongoing process
- Understanding the constraints and choices your organisation faces (e.g. legal, financial and employment) in order to build your evaluation capacity in a way that suits your organisation	

What is this toolkit about?

This toolkit provides you and your team with a *logical step-by-step, user-friendly guide* on how you can build your organisation's evaluation capacity. You may want to think of it as a strategic business tool that will help you to develop the research and evaluation side of your organisation. It will also help you to think about your organisation and the business direction taken within the wider environment in which your organisation operates.

This toolkit is **not** about...

- **Telling you how to undertake an evaluation of your programme or service** – if you want to do this, specific documents can guide and tell you how you can undertake your own programme/service evaluation (see recommended websites below).

- **Replacing your business plan or strategic document**, although this toolkit contains sections that relate to these documents to some extent. As 'normal' business practice, your organisation requires a complete business plan or strategic document.

This toolkit is in four parts that are easy to follow:

1. **Instructions (Part 1):** This provides you with some context and understanding on what building evaluation capacity is about, and gives you an overview of the process.

2. **Assessment guide and templates (Part 2):** This is about identifying where your organisation is currently at.

3. **Planning guide and templates (Part 3):** Following on from the assessment, you are able to work out a plan to build evaluation capacity.

4. **Implementation guide and templates (Part 4):** This last part of the toolkit gives you some directions on how you can put your plan into practice and checks that you are achieving your ECB goals.

The diagram below shows how the different parts fit together.
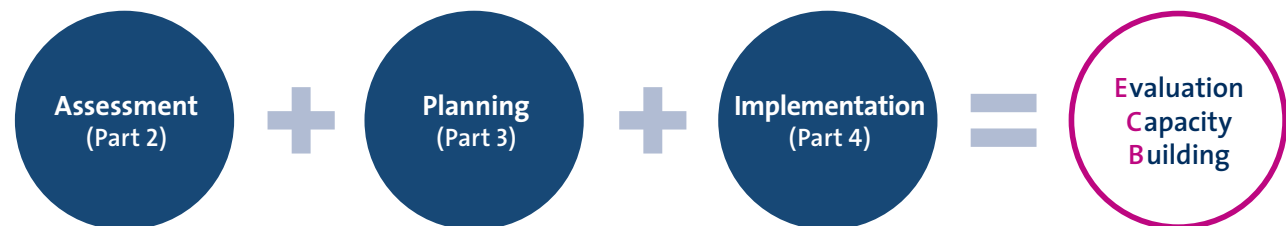
Where to find information on undertaking an evaluation

superu.govt.nz

whatworks.org.nz

betterevaluation.org

Assessment (Part 2) + **Planning (Part 3)** + **Implementation (Part 4)** = **Evaluation Capacity Building**

Who is this toolkit aimed at?

The wide range of organisations working in the New Zealand social sector can use this toolkit

All organisations can use this toolkit to strengthen their daily evaluation practice. However, some organisations may find it more beneficial than others, depending how far they are along the process of growing their evaluation capacity. This table gives you a quick overview of how useful the toolkit may be for your own organisation.

Who in your organisation should be involved in ECB?

For best results, it is important to have the buy-in of all the 'layers' in your organisation: Board members, leaders/managers, staff including volunteers, advisory groups, and anybody else who plays a role in your organisation. Everyone contributes to building your organisation's evaluation capacity. However, the role of leaders and managers is more critical in ensuring uptake.

It is best to identify a key person who can lead and manage this project to ensure the consistent and ongoing development of ECB in your organisation.

	This toolkit is *ideal* for your organisation	This toolkit is *valuable* for your organisation
Organisation size (e.g. from one person and more)	Small	Medium or large
Complexity of organisation (e.g. flat structure, multi-layered with Board/ managers/different teams)	Low level	Medium or high level
Area of work (e.g. operating at a local, regional, national level)	Local or regional	Any
Knowledge of evaluation (e.g. none, some, a lot)	None or some	None or some
Evaluation strategy in place (e.g. none, to some extent, fully developed)	Any	Any
Organisation's level of independence (e.g. on its own, part of a network, part of a franchise/ nationwide organisation)	Any	Any
Organisation's longevity (e.g. new, developing, well established)	Any	Any
Organisation's culture (e.g. hierarchical, flat)	Any	Any
Employment type (e.g. part-time, full-time, contract, volunteer)	Any	Any
Funding type (e.g. government, philanthropic, grants)	Any	Any
Complexity of programmes/services (e.g. single/multiple, separate/interdependent)	Any	Any

How can you use this toolkit effectively?

There are a few consecutive steps you have to follow

An overview of the six steps making up the ECB process is shown in the flow diagram. To build your organisation's evaluation capacity effectively, you need to follow these steps. However, you can be flexible in how you complete each one in order to suit your organisation's specific characteristics.

Overview of the ECB steps

step 1

SETTING THE SCENE

Discussion
Purpose: Share why ECB is important and obtain buy-in from everyone in the organisation

step 2

INSTRUCTIONS (PART 1)

Reading
Purpose: Understand this structured and easy method to build your organisation's evaluation capacity

step 3

ASSESSMENT (PART 2)

Fill out the 'Questionnaire'
Purpose: Individually take stock of your organisation's current evaluation capacity (i.e. strengths and weaker areas)

step 6

IMPLEMENTATION (PART 4)

Fill out the 'Implementation plan'
Purpose: Put your plan into practice and monitor its implementation

step 5

PLANNING (PART 3)

Fill out the 'Organisation planning worksheet'
Purpose: Establish a realistic ECB plan to reach your organisation's goal, as set out in Step 3 (baseline)

step 4

PLANNING (PART 3)

Fill out the 'Organisation worksheet summary'
Purpose: Collectively set an objective benchmark of your organisation's current evaluation capacity

Following is a set of more detailed instructions to help clarify how to go about each specific step in the ECB process.

step 1

SETTING THE SCENE

- Discuss generally what evaluation capacity building is about, the benefits of formally and consistently building evaluation capacity, and what the toolkit aims to achieve.

- Obtain support for evaluation capacity building from all levels of your organisation.

step 2

INSTRUCTIONS (PART 1)

- Access the four-part toolkit on the Superu website which you can download, save and print (colour or black and white).

- Fill out the templates electronically or manually – note that if you fill out the templates electronically, the cell size is fixed. The reason is to get you to focus on a limited number of key ideas. Group discussions are fundamental in helping to decide and agree on common goals.

- Parts 3 and 4 are available in both A4 and A3 formats for convenience – the content is the same.

- Decide who is going to be part of the session (e.g. Board members, leaders, managers and staff members) and plan the logistics of the session (e.g. flipchart or whiteboard for group discussions). A day-long workshop may be more effective than two half days, as the latter is more likely to cause repetition of introductory sessions and mean different people participate in the different steps. Organise an invitation from a senior person in the organisation to signal the priority and importance of the work.

- Appoint an internal and/or external facilitator (advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed later in this document) to run the group discussions. The facilitator has to be able to make the session(s) a full, frank, open, safe space for discussion in which participants feel able to contribute openly and honestly. They have to be familiar with the toolkit prior to facilitating the process.

step 3

ASSESSMENT (PART 2)

- Individually fill out all the questionnaire's sections assessing your organisation's current evaluation capacity (i.e. *Context*, *Organisation*, and *People/ Individuals*). Rate each statement overall – it is based on your own knowledge and experience, as you think it applies to your organisation most of the time. There are no right or wrong ratings.

- Identify how participants feel about having their name attached to the questionnaire. They are invited to discuss their general thoughts about the statements. This initial discussion does not yet focus on participants' individual ratings. Depending on the size of the group, it may be more practical to discuss general thoughts in pairs and then have a group discussion. Notes need to be taken (e.g. using post-it notes or a flipchart) to capture thoughts, ideas and learnings. These initial thoughts (e.g. similarities and differences in perceptions about the organisation's evaluation capacity) are then presented back to the group.

- The discussion may focus on participants' perceptions of the organisation's overall current level of evaluation capacity, and what would be a realistic development goal for the organisation for the next one to two years. For example, you may get the sense that your organisation's evaluation capacity is 'Emerging' and your goal will be to move it to the next stage which is 'Developing'. This general baseline needs to be realistic and will guide the following discussions, such as where do you want the organisation to be in the short term, how will you get there and what will you do to get there?

step 4

PLANNING (PART 3)

- Split participants into three groups: one focuses on *Context*, another on *Organisation*, and the third on *People/Individuals*. Each group discusses the statements related to their topic and selects one rating that best relates to each statement. Clear rationales are essential for understanding each rating's selection. These ratings are reported in the 'Organisation worksheet summary', which now becomes the objective reference document for ECB in your organisation.

- Each group reports back a summary of their discussion to the other two groups.

step 5

PLANNING (PART 3)

- Following agreement on the ratings, each group now thinks about and discusses planning with regards to *Context*, *Organisation* and *People/Individuals*. Each group identifies the organisation's stronger and weaker areas related to evaluation capacity and then agrees on up to three critical areas that become priorities to build the organisation's evaluation capacity. Do not reach for the moon – choose goals you can realistically achieve in the timescale.

- Once these priorities have been identified, fill out the 'Organisation planning worksheet' by indicating the strategies and resources you will use to reach your evaluation readiness goal, and how you will decide how well you have achieved your goal.

- This document is 'high level' (strategic) and does not need to be detailed. Using only key words to explain ideas is appropriate.

step 6

IMPLEMENTATION (PART 4)

- Determine, as a group or in your work teams, how the 'Implementation plan' can become a reality and be executed. Specific milestones, timeframes and resources have to be identified. Scheduling this planning session for a few days after completing Step 5 gives participants some time to process and think through ideas before finalising the plan.

- This document is operational and specific – it provides targeted information (e.g. names and amounts) using key words. It is also a living document that can be reviewed and updated (e.g. monthly informal review and six-monthly formal review). It needs to be referred to and used regularly by the organisation in order to track progress and achieve the specified evaluation capacity goal.

9

External versus internal facilitation

When holding a group discussion, it is essential to have a good facilitator to enable participants to contribute fully and constructively. The facilitator does not need to be an evaluation specialist – it can be someone with strong facilitation skills or from an organisation you know who has already used the tool. There are some pros and cons to having an internal or external facilitator. Both options are reviewed in the following table to help you to make the best decision for your organisation.

Different types of facilitation are available

	External facilitation (e.g. independent evaluator)	Internal facilitation (e.g. CEO, Manager)
Advantages	• Neutral facilitator who can steer and stimulate the discussion as required (potentially limited awareness of internal politics) • All the staff can participate equally in the process • Professional facilitator who knows what they are doing and takes charge of the entire process	• Relatively cheap • Very good knowledge of the organisation, its processes, its culture etc
Disadvantages	• Relatively expensive • May not understand the context of your organisation and why ECB is important for you	• Facilitator is unable to participate in the discussions • Facilitator may be biased in moderating group discussions • Facilitator may not be an expert at moderating group discussions • Participants may hold back their feedback and ideas

Collective versus individual process

Some steps in the ECB process are designed to be undertaken individually (e.g. questionnaire in Step 3) while others are aimed at groups (e.g. 'Organisation planning worksheet' in Step 5). A combination of both approaches makes the overall process more meaningful and synergetic. However, some organisational factors (e.g. size and structure) may constrain your approach and you may have to be flexible in how you choose to complete the process. The following table highlights some advantages and disadvantages of going through each step as a group or individually.

Different approaches to undertaking ECB

	Collectively	Individually
Advantages	• **Synergetic thinking:** more, and potentially better, ideas are expressed by participants, as long as they feel 'safe' and 'free' to share their thoughts • **Shared baseline and focus:** opportunity for staff to agree on key concepts, values, principles and work together to reach a common goal	• **Process efficiency:** staff execute most process steps at their own pace, in their own time and only come together at critical points
Disadvantages	• **Time intensive:** meetings must be organised to get all participating staff together	• **Difficult decision-making:** a lack of understanding of the organisation's strategy and management may make it tricky for staff to complete all steps of the process • **Lack of staff buy-in:** without group discussion, the decisions made run the risk of being implemented poorly due to lack of understanding and/or buy-in from staff
In a nutshell…	Collective thinking and doing may work best with **larger, more structured organisations**	Individual thinking and doing may work best with **smaller, more flexible organisations**

How much time does the ECB process take?

This is a tricky question, as the answer depends on how much time, effort and other resources are available for this process. The process involves reflecting on and discussing the results of the assessment and subsequent planning. However, to help you develop realistic timeframe expectations, the diagram below shows you one example of how long each part of the process might reasonably take.

Read Parts 1 to 4 of the ECB tool and become **familiar** with it

step 1 & step 2

2 WEEKS

Undertake the **assessment** of your organisation using Part 2

step 3

4–6 WEEKS

Undertake the ECB **planning** in your organisation using Part 3

step 4 & step 5

4–6 WEEKS

Undertake the **implementation** of ECB using Part 4

step 6

DEPENDS ON YOUR PLAN

Assumptions:

This example timeline is drawn with the following organisation in mind:

- A small organisation (few staff working part-time and/or full-time)
- Limited knowledge of, and experience in, evaluation capacity building
- Limited access to a support network
- A stable environment and/or circumstances (e.g. no staff or funding changes)

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PART 2

Assessment guide and templates

What is Part 2 about?

Quick overview

Part 2 is about *assessing* your organisation's current level of evaluation capacity. This is done in two consecutive activities:

1. Set your baseline

2. Individually fill out the questionnaire and then reflect on the ratings.

There is no right or wrong baseline, or right or wrong ratings. The value of this toolkit comes from you and other participants discussing your understanding of the organisation and providing a rationale for the ratings you attributed to each statement.

Once you have completed these two activities (i.e. the assessment) you will be able to answer the following questions:

- What does your organisation know about evaluation?

- How well is evaluation embedded in your organisation?
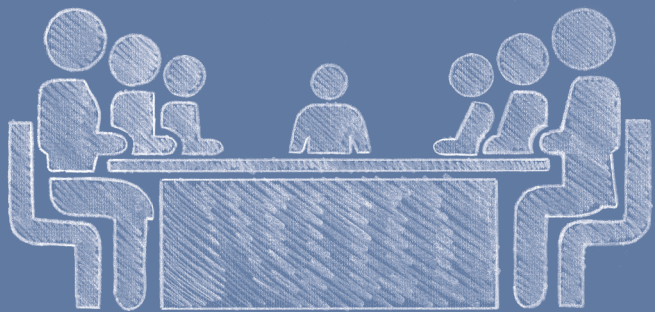
How do you set your baseline?

Setting an 'evaluation baseline' for your organisation will help you to steer and progress your Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB). This baseline is important for you to be able to trace your evaluation journey: it sets out where you are starting from and makes sure everyone agrees.

Organise a meeting with everyone involved in the ECB process to discuss the topic of 'evaluation and our organisation'. Some of the key questions to talk about are:

- What does evaluation mean? What is evaluation about?

- How important is evaluation for your organisation?

- How much evaluation does your organisation do? And how well?

- What do you want to achieve for your organisation in the area of evaluation? Why?

These questions may be circulated to participants prior to the meeting.

By the end of the group discussion, you will have a better sense of, and some agreement on, the following areas:

- Where your organisation is currently at in terms of evaluation (it is important to be realistic – this is not about judging you)

- Where your organisation wants to go.
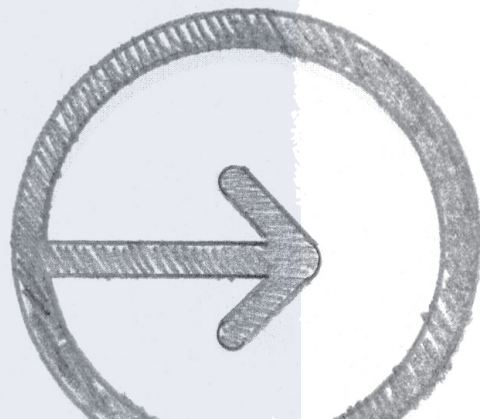
How do you complete the questionnaire?

How is the questionnaire structured?

The questionnaire is designed to be challenging and provoke discussion, and covers three sections that complement each other:

- Section 1 is about the *Context* that shapes your organisation and in which it operates
- Section 2 is about your *Organisation* itself
- Section 3 is about the *People/Individuals* who make up your organisation.

Each section contains four different dimensions that focus on specific aspects of the *Context*, *Organisation* and *People/Individuals*.

The diagram below represents how the three sections fit in with their associated dimensions.

14

1 CONTEXT

2 ORGANISATION

3 PEOPLE/INDIVIDUALS

1. Values and principles

2. Purpose and history

3. Enabling environment

4. Evaluation capacity building purpose

5. Commitment of leaders to developing evaluation capacity in the organisation

6. Learning culture

7. Communication and information sharing

8. Resources and infrastructure

9. Readiness

10. Skills and knowledge

11. Level of involvement

12. Opportunity

How do you fill out the questionnaire?

You need to fill out the whole questionnaire, which you can do over several sessions. You can start with the section of your choice (e.g. *Context*, or *Organisation*, or *People/Individuals*). You may want to follow the order in which the 12 dimensions are listed, for simplicity, but this is not compulsory.

Focusing on one dimension at a time, read each statement and think about how it relates to your organisation. Then rate each statement by writing one of the four letters that best represents how you think your organisation is doing. Continue with the remaining dimensions in each of the three sections.

The questionnaire's ratings are based on four specific letters (E, D, C and H). Select one letter to rate each statement.

The letters mean the following:

- **E** for **EMERGING**
  (there is very little or no evidence of this in your organisation)

- **D** for **DEVELOPING**
  (there is some evidence of this in your organisation – it happens sometimes but is not well embedded in routines)

- **C** for **CONSOLIDATING**
  (this is seen occurring regularly in your organisation, however not everyone is yet on board)

- **H** for **HIGHLY DEVELOPED**
  (this is evident at all levels of your organisation and appears strongly embedded in your organisation's governance, leadership, systems, structures and practices)

Once you have all completed your questionnaire, have a discussion on everyone's ratings and perceptions. This discussion is important, as it creates a common platform of understanding.

Section 1: Context

This section focuses on aspects of the context which influence your organisation (e.g. how it operates). These are, for example, history, values, principles, purpose and the presence of enabling factors in the environment. These aspects of the context potentially impact on how your organisation can develop its evaluation capacity.

If you need more copies you can download the document from our website: superu.govt.nz/resources/getting-ready-to-do-evaluation

1. Values and principles

Successful NGOs have strong values and principles that sustain and guide a supportive organisational culture and way of working. These values and principles need to be taken into account when seeking to build evaluation capacity.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
1.1 We have solid cultural values and principles that anchor and guide our decision-making process				
1.2 We realise our vision and mission through our policies and practices, which are grounded in our values and beliefs				
1.3 We take careful consideration of the diverse needs of the communities we serve				
1.4 We apply our principles by having cultural processes in place when working internally and externally				
1.5 Our values and beliefs help to provide a shared sense of direction				

2. Purpose and history

Building evaluation capacity is a process of learning from an organisation's history and using this to inform its future. It requires a whole-of-system approach, where everyone is on the same page about where the organisation has come from and where it is heading.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
2.1 We have a clear understanding of where the organisation is going, as well as where it has come from and why it exists				
2.2 Desired outcomes have been negotiated with our stakeholders				
2.3 The outcomes we want to achieve are clearly stated and linked to our understanding of why they will happen (that is to say, our theory of change)				
2.4 We have a good understanding of what is required to support the performance of our organisation (e.g. policies, procedures, practices)				
2.5 We understand the key dynamics of our programme or service, and what difference it will make to those we work with				
2.6 We have a future-focused strategy in place that ensures the organisation will be resilient and can be sustained into the future				

PART 2: ASSESSMENT GUIDE AND TEMPLATES

3. Enabling environment

Building evaluation capacity is supported by an organisation being well networked and credible to its community and funders.

Our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
3.1 Is well respected and trusted, and its services are valued within its community				
3.2 Is strongly positioned with funders				
3.3 Has a good understanding of the policy and legislative environment it works in				
3.4 Has high-quality relationships with diverse external stakeholders who matter to the organisation				
3.5 Systematically looks for a range of funding and resources				

4. Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) purpose

Widespread knowledge and understanding in the organisation about the benefits of having evaluation capacity supports increased motivation and commitment to building evaluation capacity.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
4.1 We understand how developing our evaluation capacity will help us to achieve our vision, mission and goals				
4.2 We understand the importance of developing our evaluation capacity as a mechanism for capturing our organisation's way of working				
4.3 We understand how developing our evaluation capacity in our organisation will empower us in our own role				
4.4 We understand the value of demonstrating the difference we have made for clients and/or whānau				

17

Section 2: Organisation

This section asks questions about organisational factors, such as leadership, infrastructure and learning culture, as well as the sharing of information and resources. These speak to organisational commitment and resourcing to build evaluation capacity.

18

5. Commitment of decision-makers (i.e. leaders and/or managers) to developing evaluation capacity in the organisation

Supportive leadership is essential for evaluation capacity building.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
5.1 Leaders and/or managers demonstrate a clear commitment to ongoing learning that is based on regularly using evidence to review our performance				
5.2 Leaders and/or managers set clear expectations of the performance and results they seek				
5.3 Leaders and/or managers think creatively and encourage innovation				
5.4 Leaders and/or managers bring together stakeholders to support the use of evidence				

6. Learning culture

Evaluation capacity building is an ongoing process of learning and examining current practices to identify ways to improve. Therefore, functioning as a learning organisation is an important pre-requisite for developing evaluation capacity.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
6.1 Regular evaluation and presentation of evidence drive service improvement and organisational development				
6.2 Data collection systems are in place to track and regularly report on performance				
6.3 Time is available to reflect on the evidence we gathered and come to an understanding of what we have learned from it				
6.4 We are open and able to adapt and respond to changing external opportunities and challenges				

7. Communication and information sharing (internally and externally)

Communication and information sharing are important for understanding context and the factors that impact an organisation, particularly changes in these factors, as well as facilitating peer learning and networking with communities.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
7.1 Information and communication systems are timely and relevant				
7.2 The quality of the information we have available contributes to effective decision-making				
7.3 Clients and/or whānau have regular opportunities to provide us with feedback about the quality and value of our services				
7.4 We have regular opportunities to share our skills and knowledge in interpreting and using data				
7.5 We effectively communicate our successes to internal and external audiences				

8. Resources and infrastructure

Realistic resourcing and robust infrastructure are critical for developing sustainable evaluation capacity.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
8.1 We use evaluation to be accountable to our funders and community				
8.2 Our Information Technology (IT) systems are fit for purpose and capable of producing good-quality reporting for decision-making				
8.3 Systematic monitoring and evaluation occurs at all levels of our organisation				
8.4 We have the tools and processes in place to collect the data we need				
8.5 Staff have sufficient time to collect the data required				

Section 3: People/ Individuals

The individuals that make up an organisation have a substantial impact on the development of evaluation capacity.

20

9. Readiness

All staff and decision-makers (i.e. leaders and/or managers) need to be ready to participate in developing evaluation capacity. Readiness relates to practices as well as attitudes.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
9.1 We (decision-makers and staff) reflect on evidence to understand how well we are doing				
9.2 We (decision-makers and staff) are clear about the data and systems we need to undertake evaluation				
9.3 We (decision-makers and staff) can safely share reflections about good and not-so-good practice with others, inside and outside of the organisation				
9.4 We (decision-makers and staff) are motivated to know the difference we are making in our work through applying evaluation practice				

10. Skills and knowledge

The skills and knowledge of an individual can influence the process and outcome of developing evaluation capacity.

| In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
10.1 We have the skills and knowledge we need to collect and record data				
10.2 We have the skills and knowledge we need to understand and use data				
10.3 There is help available to collect, analyse and make sense of data				
10.4 We are supported to put into practice what we learn from the data and evidence				

11. Level of involvement

Ideally most, if not all, staff and decision-makers (i.e. leaders and/or managers) are regularly involved in evaluation and developing evaluation capacity.

| In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
11.1 We (decision-makers and staff) regularly use data to talk about the quality and value of our work				
11.2 We (decision-makers and staff) have opportunities to involve a wide range of people in evaluation				
11.3 We use multiple sources of evidence to make judgements about clients and whānau outcomes and achievements				
11.4 We use direct feedback from clients and/or whānau to inform judgements about client or whānau outcomes and achievements				
11.5 We use reflection and action to improve our performance and keep up with change				

12. Opportunity

For successful evaluations and development of evaluation capacity, time and resources need to be available for decision-makers (i.e. leaders and/or managers) and staff to actively participate in the process.

In our organisation...	Emerging	Developing	Consolidating	Highly developed
12.1 We know about the kinds of support and resources available to support data collection and analysis				
12.2 We embrace opportunities for coaching and peer learning about evaluation				
12.3 Networks or learning from others about evaluation are a feature of our organisation's culture and practice				
12.4 We have opportunities to reflect on our practice and contribute to evaluation				
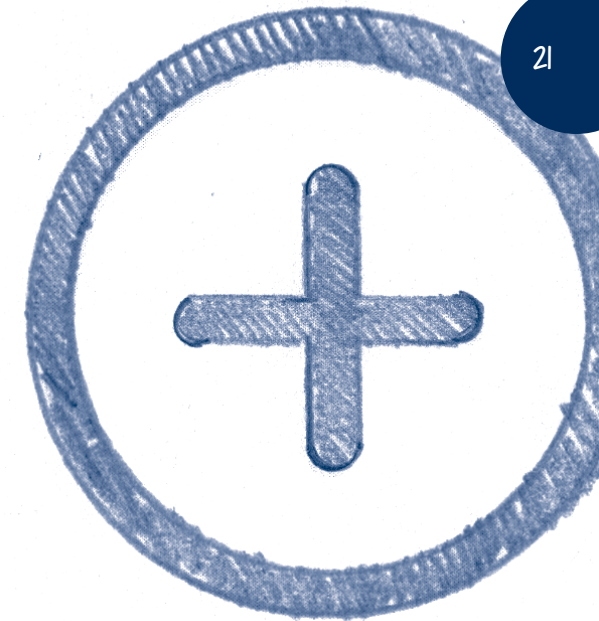
21

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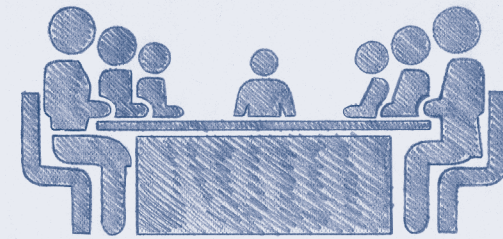
PART
3

Planning guide and templates

What is Part 3 about?

Quick overview

Part 3 is about *planning* your organisation's evaluation capacity building.

This is done in two consecutive activities:

1. Collective agreement on the questionnaire's ratings which are then transferred into the worksheet summary
2. Identifying the priority areas to develop.

As previously mentioned, there are no right or wrong ratings or priority areas. The value comes from you and other participants discussing how you understand the current situation and therefore build evaluation capacity.

Once you have completed these two activities (i.e. the planning) you will be able to answer the following questions:

• What are your organisation's strengths and areas of improvements?

• How do you build your evaluation capacity?

How do you complete the 'Organisation worksheet summary'?

Everyone who has filled out the questionnaire (at the assessment stage (Part 2)) is invited to discuss their thoughts and comments on why and how they gave the ratings they did. Discrepancies in ratings are likely to arise – this is to be expected, as everyone experiences different situations in an organisation. Through discussion a common ground can be found. If you find large differences, try to find out what has led to them. Once the one set of ratings has been agreed on, record in the 'Organisation worksheet summary'. Next the actual planning stage can take place.

How do you develop your 'Organisation planning worksheet'?

Constructive discussion is critical

The overall group is divided into three smaller groups, if possible, so that each group can discuss one area in depth (i.e. either *Context, Organisation* or *People/Individuals*)[1]. This next round of discussion centres on the stronger and weaker aspects of each area. It is important to identify the key areas of concern that need to be prioritised and addressed in order to build your organisation's evaluation capacity. Note that your priorities may not reflect the lowest ratings. Your priorities may instead reflect your organisation's strategic needs and what you identified in your baseline.

[1].   This is to minimise the time involved, but it is fine to do it all together if that suits your organisation.

Prompts to guide the discussion

Looking at the ratings for Context, Organisation and People/Individuals:

- What do the ratings tell us we are doing well on?
- What do the ratings tell us we could do better on?
- Does this make intuitive sense?
- Any surprises, puzzles?

Looking at the *low* ratings for Context, Organisation and People/Individuals:

- How do we make sense of this?
- What do we think is going on here?
- What opportunities might this present?
- What do we need to do to improve our capacity in this area?

Priorities for our evaluation capacity building:

- What are the ratings telling us about the gaps/priorities for evaluation capacity building in each dimension?
- What could we do to improve our capacity in each area?
  1. Keep (what strengths/capacities can we build on?)
  2. Amend (what do we need to change?)
  3. Add (what do we need to introduce?)
  4. Delete (what is holding us back? What do we need to stop?)

Timeframe for building our evaluation capacity:

- What can we achieve in six months? 12 months? 18 months? 24 months?

It may not always be possible to reach a consensus within each group on the organisation's strengths and areas of improvements – this is fine. Key areas of concern can be discussed with the overall group – feedback will help to clarify which concerns should be prioritised.

Once the discussions on areas of concern and prioritisation are finished, each group then reports on up to three priorities in the 'Organisation planning worksheet' (either for Section 1 *Context*, Section 2 *Organisation*, or Section 3 *People/Individuals*), and potentially some ideas on how to address them.

An A3 PDF of the Organisation planning worksheet can be downloaded from our website: superu.govt.nz/resources/getting-ready-to-do-evaluation

Prompts to help with planning

Identifying three key focus areas:
- What are our three key positive priorities which can be achieved in the next 12 months?

Developing and implementing plans:
- What strategies will most help us achieve our results?

Working out what we need to achieve our plans:
- What kinds of resources and support do we think we will need to achieve our results?

Checking how well we are doing:
- How will we know we have been successful?
- What will our success measures be?
- What will we see, hear and feel?

At this stage, the overall group needs to agree on a common strategy to proceed, as this will become a key reference document, or asset, for the organisation's leaders and staff to build evaluation capacity.

Organisation worksheet summary: creating a common platform for Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB)

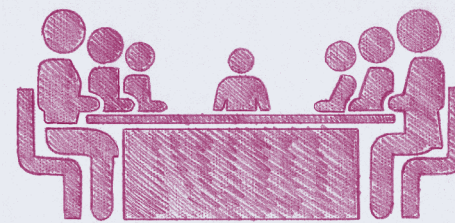| Section 1 ⟶ Context	Section 2 ⟶ Organisation	Section 3 ⟶ People/Individuals
1. Values and principles	**5. Commitment of leaders to developing evaluation capacity in the organisation**	**9. Readiness**
1.1 _____ 1.4 _____ 1.2 _____ 1.5 _____ 1.3 _____	5.1 _____ 5.3 _____ 5.2 _____ 5.4 _____	9.1 _____ 9.3 _____ 9.2 _____ 9.4 _____
2. Purpose and history	**6. Learning culture**	**10. Skills and knowledge**
2.1 _____ 2.4 _____ 2.2 _____ 2.5 _____ 2.3 _____ 2.6 _____	6.1 _____ 6.3 _____ 6.2 _____ 6.4 _____	10.1 _____ 10.3 _____ 10.2 _____ 10.4 _____
3. Enabling environment	**7. Communication and information sharing**	**11. Level of involvement**
3.1 _____ 3.4 _____ 3.2 _____ 3.5 _____ 3.3 _____	7.1 _____ 7.4 _____ 7.2 _____ 7.5 _____ 7.3 _____	11.1 _____ 11.4 _____ 11.2 _____ 11.5 _____ 11.3 _____
4. Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) purpose	**8. Resources and infrastructure**	**12. Opportunity**
4.1 _____ 4.3 _____ 4.2 _____ 4.4 _____	8.1 _____ 8.4 _____ 8.2 _____ 8.5 _____ 8.3 _____	12.1 _____ 12.3 _____ 12.2 _____ 12.4 _____

Organisation planning worksheet ➡ SECTION I: CONTEXT

Identifying our three key focus areas	Developing and implementing our plans	Working out what we need	Checking how well we are doing
Example. *Better communication of the organisation's strategic direction to all staff*	*1. Write the strategic direction down* *2. Explain it to all staff (e.g. morning meeting)* *3. Put it up on the staff notice board*	*1. Computer, printer and laminator to produce the strategic direction document* *2. Meeting room to communicate to staff*	*1. All staff understand what the organisation aims for, within what timeframe and why* *2. Our processes better reflect what we are about and where we are going*
1.			
2.			
3.			

27

Organisation planning worksheet ➤ SECTION 2: ORGANISATION

Identifying our three key focus areas	Developing and implementing our plans	Working out what we need	Checking how well we are doing
Example. *Being able to innovate (e.g. better service provision)*	*1. Awareness of what others do and subsequent discussion with staff (e.g. can we do the same?)* *2. Getting support from managers when implementing new ideas*	*1. Fortnightly time to discuss ideas with all staff* *2. Attending conferences to access information and increase our networks*	*1. Getting regular feedback from our clients about how we will provide services to them*
4.			
5.			
6.			

Organisation planning worksheet ➡ SECTION 3: PEOPLE/INDIVIDUALS

Identifying our three key focus areas	Developing and implementing our plans	Working out what we need	Checking how well we are doing
Example. *More targeted training for all staff and volunteers*	*1. Develop mentoring within our organisation* *2. Access external training when required*	*1. All staff to share their knowledge, skills and experience* *2. Budget allocation (per person) for external training (if required)* *3. External speakers to come and discuss particular issues/solutions*	*1. Improvement in service delivery (e.g. happier and better supported clients)* *2. Internal survey (e.g. ability to deliver high quality services to clients)*
7.			
8.			
9.			

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Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit

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PART 4

Implementation guide and templates

What is Part 4 about?

Quick overview

Part 4 is about *implementing* the plan you developed in the previous step of the Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) process. This plan is about being as specific, practical and realistic as you can about how you are going to put your plan into practice and monitor it.

How do you complete your 'Implementation plan'?

Along with the rest of your team, complete the 'Implementation plan'. By including accurate information you will be able to identify the level of resourcing required and available.

An A3 PDF of the Implementation plan template can be downloaded from our website: superu.govt.nz/resources/getting-ready-to-do-evaluation
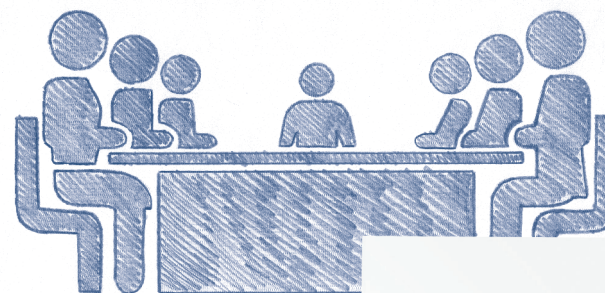
The overall plan is likely to take a few days to finalise, as the organisation's decision-makers have to work out strategic components of the action plan, such as timeframes and budget.

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Implementation plan

Key focus areas	Activities/tasks	Timeframe	Activity/task lead	Team	Budget	Anything else required?	When to review the activities/ tasks?	Comments
Example (taken from Section 2 of the Organisation planning worksheet in the Planning guide and templates (Part 3)). *Being able to innovate*	1. *Checking what others are doing* 2. *Holding regular brainstorming sessions* 3. *Updating processes*	1. *Two months to check other organisations* 2. *Fortnightly meetings to brainstorm ideas* 3. *Six months to update processes*	*Anne*	*Martin, Sione and Lisa*	*$350*	*Laptop, internet access, phone, meeting room, Board approval*	*Monthly (informally) and at the end of the six month period (formally)*	
CONTEXT								
1.								
2.								
3.								
ORGANISATION								
4.								
5.								
6.								
PEOPLE/INDIVIDUALS								
7.								
8.								
9.								

Related Superu resources:

Getting your organisation ready to do evaluations is part of a suite of resources designed to upskill New Zealand's social sector by providing tools to effectively generate, evaluate and use evidence. For more information and to view or download resources, please visit Superu's website Superu.govt.nz/using_evidence_for_impact

For more information about the work of Superu contact enquiries@superu.govt.nz