

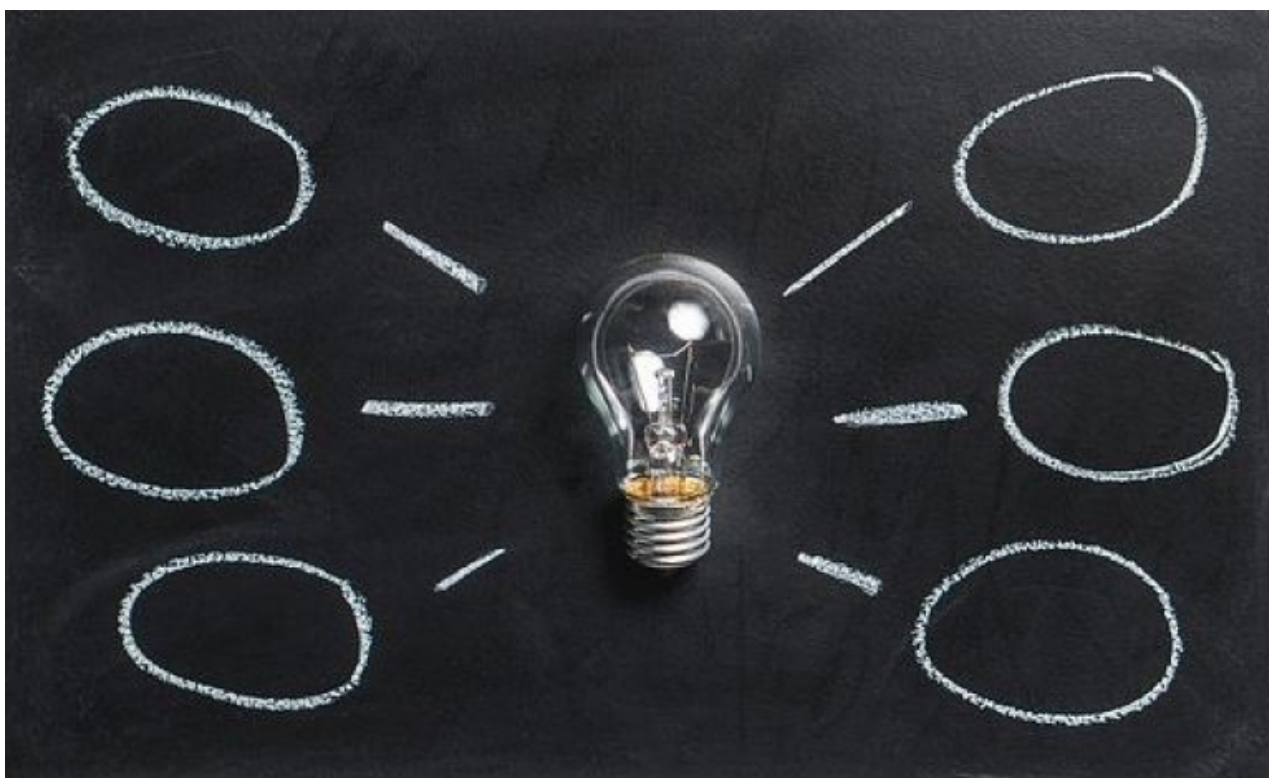
News

Key elements for an effective project assessment



12/27/2017 - 13:16

Author: Suport Associatiu



Plan the assessment and clearly define the goals set - Photo: Pixabay.

-



Ensure the participation of the people involved and other actors - Photo: Pixabay.

Which are the key points an organization should pay special attention to in this process? We present a series of recommendations to improve the quality of assessments and avoid the most common mistakes.

Based on the advise and proposals by Núria Camps, the director of [Avaluem](#), Maria Bruno, head of the social action department at [Fundesplai](#), and Xavier Vallvé, member of the [Gabinet d'Estudis Socials](#), we bring to you a list of points to follow during a project assessment.

1. Plan the assessment and clearly define the goals set

Defining the questions is the key: we will only get the information we're interested in if, beforehand, we have asked the **questions that we really want to answer**. In this regard, it is also important to set out from the start those **outcomes we want to achieve** and, if we're undertaking a mid-term or continuity assessment, also the operational recommendations for the next phase.

In fact, one of the most common mistakes in assessments is precisely the **lack of planning**. In some cases, this entails that organizations don't realise the need for an assessment until it's too late and they don't have the tools or the resources to carry it out in time nor to implement it.

2. Turn assessments into an ongoing process

Assessments **shouldn't be left for the end** of a project; rather, it should be a process that accompanies the project throughout its duration. Therefore, assessments must be **continuous in time and gradual** during the entire life of the project; this allows to correct any mistakes that may be detected, ensure that we're on track to achieving our goals more easily and, whenever necessary, include **corrective mechanisms**.

3. Using assessments as learning tools

Besides being a tool that is often associated to **accountability** or to **justify grants**, assessments should be a learning tool that contributes to “**improving the quality**, in terms of efficiency, efficacy and transparency”, according to Maria Bruno. Carrying out assessments allows generating knowledge from the projects, from their conception, implementation, impact and, ultimately, whether or not they **really respond** to the needs leading to these assessments.

In this regard, one key element in assessments is to include the lessons learnt in the decision-making process.

4. Ensure the participation of the people involved and other actors

We must bear in mind all of the actors intervening so that the assessment is participatory by including the teams implementing the project as well as the population that is directly and indirectly affected.

In this regard, it is also important to **share the outcomes** of the assessment with them all, since the conclusions and recommendations will be included by them as long as they contribute to improve their learning opportunities and access to decision-making.

5. Commitment to transparency and credibility

Transparency during the assessment is essential for its results to have **legitimacy and credibility**, and also determines to a large extent its power of transformation for the future, according to Núria Camps. Some of the factors that contribute to transparency are explaining to the parties involved the nature and conception of the assessment process, including its scope, purpose, methodology... In this regard, explaining the **strengths and weaknesses** in the process will bring additional credibility.

Furthermore, in the assessment report, it is important to clearly outline the **reasoning and analysis** that leads to the **conclusions** of the assessment to the parties involved. Additionally, it is interesting for the results to be available to citizens both in the North and the South.

It is also important to bear in mind that **autonomy** in terms of the action that is assessed brings impartiality to the outcomes obtained and legitimacy and credibility to the recommendations and lessons stemming from them.

Tags: [Avaluem](#)
[Fundesplai](#)
[assessment](#)
[process](#)
[Strategic planning](#)
[organisation](#)

Links of interest

- [About us](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Legal terms](#)
- [Cookies policy](#)

Follow us



[Visit us on Twitter](#)



[RSS](#)

Source URL: <https://nonprofit.xarxanet.org/news/key-elements-effective-project-assessment>