



Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services Inc

## **QAILS conference 2015**

### **Monitoring and evaluation workshop – SOCIAL OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT – speaking notes**

**Presenter: Cristy Dieckmann**

Introduction

Overview – 20 min presentation then workshop – questions throughout ok

#### **1. What is this session about and why?**

Navigating social outcomes and impact measurement – what is the effect of the work that we do? Budget of more than \$10 million per year in Queensland – we need to understand whether (or not) this money is making any difference:

- CLCs been around a long time now – are some service models outdated?
- Maybe just client satisfaction surveys aren't enough – need to see if we are hitting our big picture aims
- This can be challenging – even reflective practice is not necessarily enough – we may find something that challenges our assumptions

Think Outcomes conference in Sydney in 2014 – resources for this presentation:

- (a) The Compass, published by Centre for Social Impact - Muir, K. & Bennett, S. (2014) *The Compass: Your Guide to Social Impact Measurement*. Sydney, Australia: The Centre for Social Impact and available here:  
<http://www.csi.edu.au/research/project/compass-your-guide-social-impact-measurement/>
- (b) James, D. (2012) *Finding the Golden Thread: A new approach to articulating program logic statements*, SVA Consulting Quarterly, Australia and available here:  
<http://svaconsultingquarterly.com/2012/07/12/finding-the-golden-thread-a-new-approach-to-articulating-program-logic-statements/>

This session not designed to make you an expert evaluator, but instead to give you a taste of what this work can look like, and some direction/resources if you want to look at it more closely in your own organisation – let's look at the steps we will take – why, what and how?

QAILS is also hoping to have a project where we can have an evaluation expert sit within QAILS and produce a toolkit that would be useful for CLCs that want to evaluate particular services – this could be adapted for each situation, but would at least be a starting point for Qld CLCs.

#### **2. The Basics**

- (a) Firstly, some terminology:

- Outputs – products or services you provide e.g. number of advices your centre gives
- Outcomes – changes in a person/group's attitude, behaviour etc – can be immediate, medium or long-term
- (just in case) Impact – the longer term effects

(b) Benefits of measuring social impact are:

- Knowing you are making a difference;
- Creating better organisations – culture of innovation, increased transparency, sustainability (appealing to funders), accountability

(c) It's not easy - much easier just to measure outputs and activities

(d) Social outcomes measurement needs to be part of day-to-day operations and can be seen as a 3-step process:

- (i) What is our purpose – what are we trying to achieve? What are our goals and for whom?
- (ii) What is our process - how are we going to achieve our goals? What intervention do we offer?
- (iii) Our performance - what change has occurred? (can be positive or negative)

(e) This is where 'theory of change' comes in – synonyms are blueprint for change, program theory, chain of causation – it's a theory of how a service causes an outcome (it links inputs – resources - to activities – what is done – to outputs – numbers of people receiving service - to outcomes – what changes have occurred)

*This is what we are going to do in the practical part of the workshop – we are going to break into groups and try to come up with a basic theory of change for one service per group.*

### **3. What to measure?**

Using your theory of change to understand the links between what you do and the potential outcomes, need to then decide what to measure, and how you will measure

E.G. what outcomes were achieved? Did we reach our target audience? Why did a certain outcome occur?

Are you looking to measure at micro level – changes to people; or meso level – changes to the community; or macro level – societal changes?

Also need to think about your stakeholders – who are they? For CLCs, maybe it's clients/consumers, other NGOs with similar services, funders? Remember that this is all fundamentally about service improvement and doing a better job, but sometimes we need appropriate messages to give to our funders, about what great work we do.

Choose to measure that which is 'material' – significant and relevant

### **4. How to measure**

Indicators – these show whether progress is being made – can be qualitative (that’s interviews, focus groups, document analysis, participant observation) or quantitative (surveys, dataset analysis, control trials)

Choosing quality indicators – e.g. does this indicator specifically relate to an outcome area; is the data reliable; can it be tracked over time? E.g. does a person feel that their legal problem is more manageable after the advice?

The ARTD report suggests some data that could indicate outcomes – service delivery data (CLSI); structured case studies; special purpose research (e.g. collecting information on improved emotional outlook, increased confidence and knowledge, improved financial situation, prevention of deterioration of circumstances); client satisfaction data.

## **5. YouTube video**

## **6. Resources**

2 articles I found useful:

- Liz Curran’s work – Legal Workshop, ANU, March 2013: *Encouraging good practice in measuring effectiveness in the legal service sector* (available at [http://www.naccl.org.au/resources/final\\_version\\_measurementreport\\_gb\\_lc\\_reformatted\\_sf\\_21.5.13\\_1.pdf](http://www.naccl.org.au/resources/final_version_measurementreport_gb_lc_reformatted_sf_21.5.13_1.pdf))
- ARTD Consultants’ report for NACLC 2008 – *Developing a Performance Monitoring Framework for CLCs* (available at <http://www.naccl.org.au/resources/Performancemonitoringfinalreport151008.pdf>)

Other useful resources

<http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/app/7B11620ED3302A0CCA257464001880F4.html> - Law and Justice Foundation ‘What Works’ program

<http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/app/&id=550206C336A8DDFDCA257DCB001B37CC> – Law and Justice Foundation discussion paper

[http://asauk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Table\\_of\\_outcomes\\_vSep2013.pdf](http://asauk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Table_of_outcomes_vSep2013.pdf)

<http://asauk.org.uk/page/2/?s=employment+advice> – employment advice outcomes

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110216140603/http://lsr.org.uk/publications/bmr\\_b.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110216140603/http://lsr.org.uk/publications/bmr_b.pdf) - assessing impact of debt advice

## **7. Workshop activity**