

From seed to success

A guide to evaluating Conservation with Communities Projects

Anna L. Johnson and Mariska Wouters

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Anna L. Johnson¹ and Mariska Wouters²

¹ Principal Researcher (Social Science), Opus International Consultants, Opus House, 197 Rattray Street, Private Bag 1913, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand

² Social Researcher, Research, Development & Improvement Division, Department of Conservation, PO Box 10-420, Wellington 6143, New Zealand. Email: mwouters@doc.govt.nz

ABSTRACT

There has been increasing demand from New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC) staff and people working with DOC for guidance on how to evaluate Conservation with Communities projects (CCPs), to ensure they are working towards DOC's goal that 'people are aware of, understand and make valued contributions to conservation'. CCPs are activities or programmes that aim to encourage, support and build the capability of communities and individuals to contribute to conservation. This guide introduces a six-step methodology for designing a project or programme evaluation. It includes a series of templates that can be used for designing an evaluation. A fictional scenario is also provided to illustrate how to use the templates. The guide aids the incorporation of evaluation into project planning; the use of evaluation to 'learn as we go' and to decide on future action; and community participation in evaluation. At the end of the guide there is a toolkit, which includes the templates, examples of data collection tools and indicators, and other supporting information. Training on these guidelines has been piloted in two conservancies. This guide has been designed to be used with existing departmental resources on CCPs. Effective evaluation of CCPs will enable DOC to ensure that current and future projects are carefully targeted to meet the needs of DOC and the community, and to make good use of the resources available.

Keywords: evaluation, Conservation with Communities, guidelines, programme evaluation, evaluation framework, programme logic, Department of Conservation

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1. Introduction

1.1 WHAT ARE CONSERVATION WITH COMMUNITIES PROJECTS?

Conservation with Communities Projects (CCPs) are activities or programmes of activities that aim to encourage, support and build the capability of communities and individuals to contribute to conservation. CCPs were included in the Department of Conservation's (DOC's) 2005–2008 Statement of Intent under the output groups '*Education and communication*' and '*Participation*', both of which contribute to the Intermediate Outcome of '*People are aware of, understand and make valued contributions to conservation*' (DOC 2005) (see Fig. 1).

Five main activities are involved in CCPs¹:

- Partnerships
- Information and awareness-raising activities
- Events and functions
- Consultation activities
- Volunteering opportunities
- Conservation education

Each of these is explained in detail below. This spectrum of activities will be used as a basis for developing case studies and examples in section 3 of this guideline.

1.1.1 Partnerships

Partnerships are short- to long-term shared enterprises or formalised groups that have been formed between DOC and other interested parties (e.g. iwi, community groups/members, businesses, schools, local authorities or other government agencies) to support or undertake conservation activities. They include trusts, Friends groups, councils and other established but less formalised groupings where shared and ongoing commitment is jointly agreed².

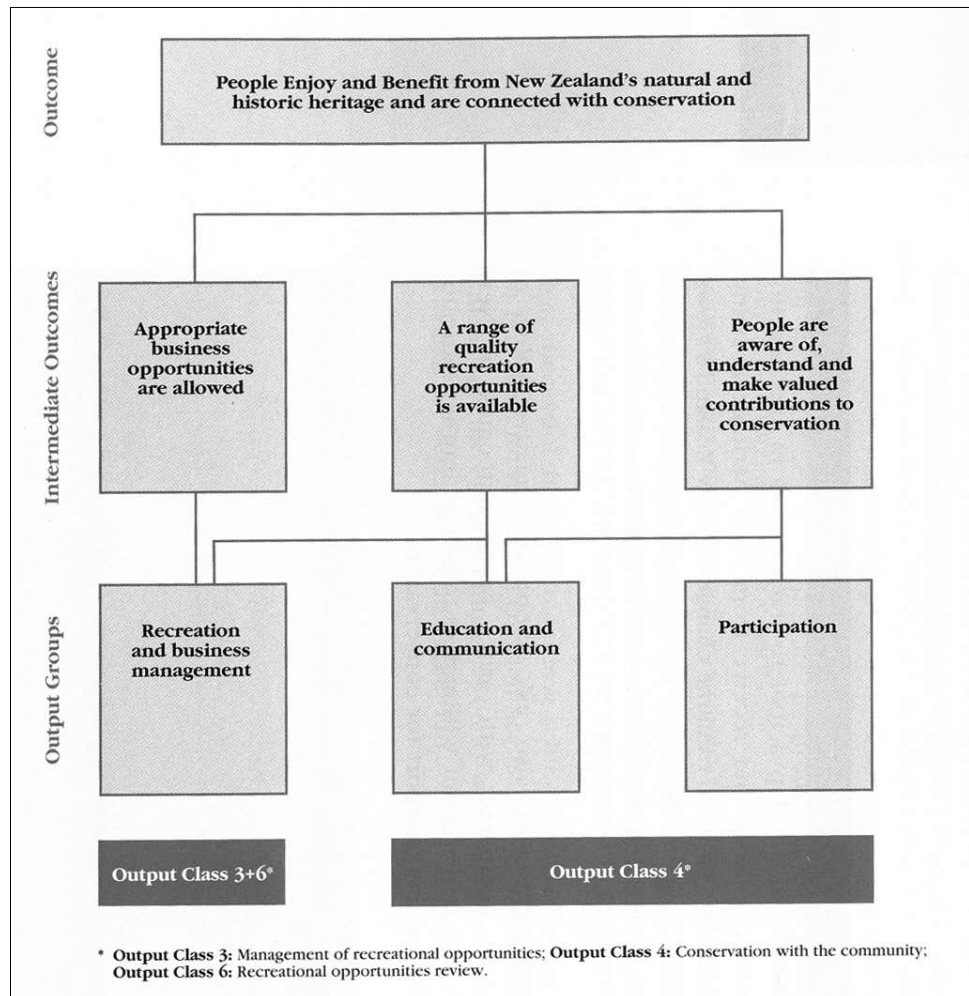
Community partnerships can be involved in a number of conservation activities, including:

- Fundraising activities
- Recreation facility projects
- Restoration projects (marine and terrestrial)
- Re-planting projects
- Conservation education
- Awareness-raising activities

¹ These groupings are broader in scope than those used for output measurement (DOC OC4 Output performance measures summary information: work planning 2005/06, performance reporting 2005/06) (DOC 2005).

² In terms of monitoring ecological characteristics, measures are sometimes expressed as parameters, where more than one measure may be appropriate (see DOC 1999).

Figure 1. How Conservation with Communities Projects contribute to the Department of Conservation's vision (from DOC 2005).



While partnerships might undertake any number of the other activity types listed below, they are also an important activity in their own right, providing opportunities for relationship-building, skill development and learning.

1.1.2 Information and awareness-raising activities

Information and awareness-raising activities include activities primarily designed to raise awareness and understanding of New Zealand's natural, historic or cultural heritage and support for conservation. They include DOC's major campaigns and awareness programmes, including Conservation Week, World Wetlands Day, Sea Week and Arbor Day; creative projects; summer nature programmes; openings; and significant contributions to local community events or celebrations. They do not include conservation education programmes, which are considered as a separate activity below.

There are a number of different methods and tools for information and awareness-raising, including:

- Training workshops
- Open days
- Skill-sharing projects
- DOC's website
- Media launches
- Publications and audio-visuals
- Interpretation material
- Summer nature programmes
- Magazines and documentaries

1.1.3 Consultation activities

Consultation activities include efforts made to gather information that will be useful to DOC and its partners as part of their programme planning, e.g. identifying key issues of concern for a community, identifying the level of community interest in a programme area, or seeking feedback on a proposed programme.

There are a number of different methods and tools for consultation. These are outlined in *From seed to success: a guide for Community Conservation Projects* (DOC 2003) and include:

- Phone trees
- Consultation stations (e.g. setting up outside a local supermarket)
- Open days
- Site visits
- Small-group meetings
- Public meetings
- Talking to people directly where they live or work
- Information and feedback forms in the local paper
- Talk-back radio
- Asking for submissions or feedback on discussion papers
- Community surveys

1.1.4 Volunteering opportunities

Volunteering opportunities include programmes that provide community members with opportunities to participate in conservation activities by giving their time and/or expertise.

There are a number of different volunteering opportunities provided or supported by DOC, including:

- Hut Warden volunteer programmes
- Volunteer recreation and species programmes
- Conservation Corps

1.1.5 Conservation education programmes

Conservation education programmes include activities with a conservation focus that are developed for schools and their related communities. This includes work with schools, educators and organisations with an environmental education role, and the development of educational resources.

1.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THESE GUIDELINES

This resource has been developed to assist Department of Conservation (DOC) staff and other individuals working with DOC on CCPs to evaluate their projects. These projects will often be referred to as 'programmes' in this guide, in recognition of the fact that they generally involve a collection of different types of activities

that are implemented at different times, for different purposes and using different methods.

Various evaluation and research terminologies are used throughout the guide. These terms are indicated in italics the first time they are used and are defined in the Glossary (section 7). In some cases, the terminologies and definitions used in this guide differ from those used in other DOC publications (e.g. DOC 1999) and other evaluation resources. This reflects the general lack of agreement on key definitions and terminologies within the field of evaluation rather than a lack of reference to these sources.

Regular evaluations by staff will help to ensure CCPs stay focused on achieving the desired *outcome*—that people are involved and connected with conservation. The aim of this resource is to provide staff with guidance on:

- The purpose and benefits of evaluation
- How to develop an evaluation framework as part of project planning
- *Research* methods and tools for undertaking evaluation
- Methods of interpreting data and reporting results

Programme evaluation has become an increasing focus of social science research within DOC and across government in general. Evaluation is useful for ‘learning as we go’, reflecting on how effective a project has been, and deciding on future action.

Across DOC there has been an increasing demand for guidance on how to evaluate CCPs to ensure that they are working towards DOC’s goal that ‘people are aware of, understand and make valued contributions to conservation’ (DOC 2005).

These guidelines are intended to be the first step in an overall CCP evaluation capacity-building toolkit for DOC. They are supplemented by a range of templates, examples and ‘case studies’ of evaluation, and include a toolkit (Appendix 1). The guidelines and supporting material will be trialled and opportunities for training on use of the guidelines will be developed. The additional resources will form part of an evaluation ‘toolkit’ for DOC, which will be developed and added to over time.

These guidelines focus on the evaluation of CCPs in terms of how they contribute to social outcomes for participants, organisations and communities. They have not been designed to evaluate the specific ecological outcomes of projects; however, the principles outlined can be used to evaluate virtually any type of programme against any number of outcomes. Other resources that provide guidance on monitoring and evaluating the ecological outcomes of DOC’s work are listed in the ‘References and further resources’ section (section 6).

This guide has been designed to be used in conjunction with the existing departmental resource on Conservation with Communities Projects (DOC 2003), which is separated into the following three parts:

- Part one: a guide for DOC staff
- Part two: a guide for Community Conservation Projects
- Part three: tool kit for Community Conservation Projects

It builds on the information provided in Part two, Section 6 (Checking Progress and Taking Stock).

2. The purpose and application of evaluation

2.1 WHAT IS EVALUATION?

There are many different approaches and methodologies in the field of programme evaluation, each with its own set of principles, definitions and methods. This often makes programme evaluation a difficult subject for many practitioners, who can be overwhelmed and confused by the different advice that is available.

Not all of these approaches can be covered in this guide. Instead, it provides a suggested approach for the evaluation of CCPs that is based on a combination of evaluation approaches discussed in the international literature, most notably Patton (1986), Taylor-Powell et al. (1998), Wadsworth (1997), and Woodhill & Robbins (1998). This approach was originally developed and tested for the evaluation of similar community engagement programmes by the Queensland Government in Australia (Johnson 2004). It emphasises that:

1. Evaluation design should reflect the purpose for the evaluation and audience
2. Evaluation should be part of a process of learning that can be used to improve programmes as they are ongoing, to improve future similar programmes, and to develop the general evidence and skill-base for CCPs

This approach is generally consistent with and complements the evaluation guidance that has been provided in the DOC *From seed to success* series.

As part of its functions, DOC is involved in three related activities that include the evaluation of information about DOC's activities and their outcomes or results. These are:

1. Monitoring
2. Performance monitoring or measurement
3. Programme evaluation

There is often confusion about how these activities interrelate. Therefore, a brief introduction is provided below.

2.1.1 Monitoring

Monitoring involves the regular and systematic gathering and analysis of information. It is often defined according to the way in which the information is used. For example, Blakeley et al. (1999:63) defined monitoring as 'the systematic gathering and analysing of information that is needed to measure progress on an aspect of a strategy, programme or activity'. However, this type of monitoring is more specifically referred to as *outcome monitoring*—where a particular characteristic of interest, for example 'a student's understanding of X conservation issue' or 'species numbers', is measured over time to see whether expected changes are occurring after an intervention (DOC programme). In

some cases, these expected changes may be articulated as targets or benchmarks, where a:

- *Target* is a statement of an *objective* in terms of a measurable outcome or output, e.g. to increase awareness of X conservation issue in community Y by 20%, or have 200 people attend an event.
- *Benchmark (or standard)* is a reference or measurement standard for comparison. This performance level is recognised as the standard of excellence for a specific process, e.g. international or national water- or air-quality standards, or past achievements.

Outcome monitoring can involve direct or indirect measurement of the characteristic of concern. Direct measurement uses outcome *measures*³, e.g. possum numbers. Indirect measurement uses *indicators*—measures that provide information about a characteristic of interest that cannot be measured directly. For example, to measure the success of DOC's aim to have people connected to and involved with conservation, a number of indicators have been developed, including the 'change in people's satisfaction with their involvement in conservation'. In practice, the term indicator is often used to refer to both direct measures and indicators.

2.1.2 Performance monitoring or measurement

When outcome monitoring is used to help make judgements about the success of DOC's programmes, it is called *performance monitoring or measurement*. Along with monitoring outcomes, performance monitoring usually also involves the measurement of actions and *outputs*, e.g. the number of volunteers that participate in departmental volunteer programmes, or kilometres of new walking tracks constructed. Performance monitoring may also track progress against a *milestone*—a statement of an output objective in terms of a key point in a project's life that indicates that a specific stage in the project has been reached, e.g. 100 volunteers recruited by December, or Memorandum of Understanding signed with iwi by end of October. The measurement of outputs focuses on the level of activity regardless of its ultimate effect or outcome.

The purpose of performance monitoring is to increase the accountability of programmes and government activities by reporting on what has been achieved with the money spent.

Performance monitoring occurs at two levels:

1. The departmental level:
 - Involves monitoring and reporting against key indicators of DOC's broad outcomes, e.g. under the Appreciation outcome area, an indicator is 'New Zealanders' understanding of important conservation issues'.
 - While this is a form of 'outcome monitoring', because of the broad level of these outcome areas actual trends in the characteristics will be influenced by a number of factors and changes, and will not be directly attributable to individual DOC programmes.
 - Monitoring at this level is reported on in the Annual Report.

³ DOC OC4 Output performance measures summary information: work planning 2005/06, performance reporting 2005/06 (DOC 2005).

2. The programme level:

- Involves monitoring and reporting against key indicators (or direct measures) of intended programme outcomes.

Section A1.1 (Appendix 1) provides the key performance monitoring requirements for DOC's CCPs.

Monitoring is also undertaken to track the condition of characteristics of interest in the absence of deliberate interventions, e.g. regular measurement of possum numbers in a Forest Park, or regular surveying of public opinion about conservation topics. This is sometimes referred to as *surveillance monitoring* (DOC 1999). This type of monitoring helps in policy and programme development by monitoring trends and flagging areas of concern.

2.1.3 Programme evaluation

Programme evaluation or *evaluation* also uses output and outcome monitoring information and involves a process of judging the value or success of programmes. However, it differs from performance monitoring in that one of the purposes of evaluation is also to improve ongoing programmes and/or to improve the design and implementation of future programmes. Therefore, evaluation has a learning function.

For the purposes of this guide, evaluation can be defined as:

Critically assessing how an activity or programme of activities is established and implemented as well as what its outcomes are.

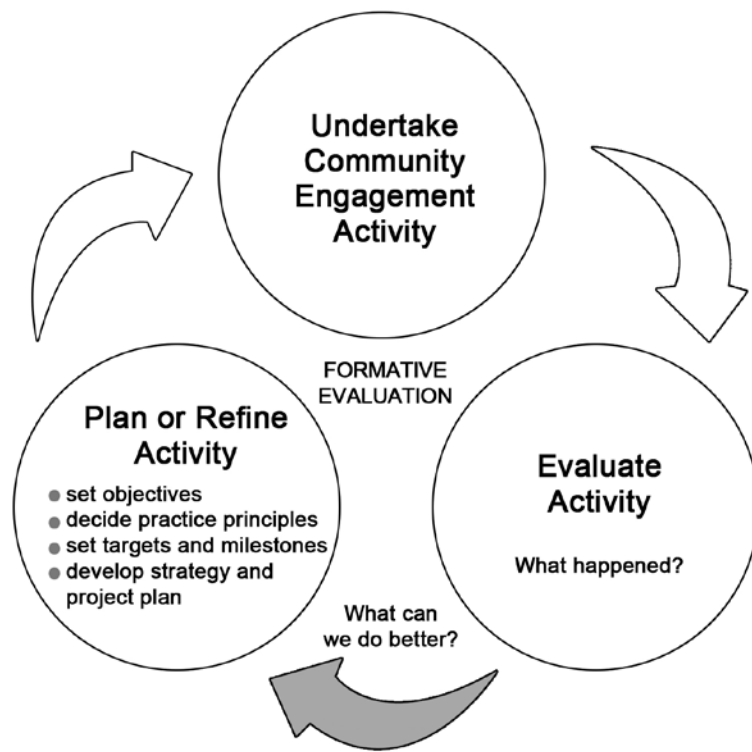
Evaluation generally involves the collection of information about the way in which an activity or programme of activities is undertaken (process) and the results of the activity or programme (outcomes), in order to judge success and learn about how to improve practice. As discussed above, the collection of information is sometimes referred to as monitoring, whereas the use of that information as part of the critical *assessment* process is called evaluation. In this guide, both of these processes will be referred to collectively as evaluation.

Evaluation is not a separate activity, but rather part of continuous improvement within the overall project cycle (see Fig. 2).

The process of evaluation can range from a small-scale reflective process by those conducting and/or participating in the activity, based around the question of 'What worked, what could be done better?', to a large-scale evaluation study conducted by external evaluators involving intensive data collection that utilises multiple methods to examine a number of evaluation questions.

The scale and scope of evaluation should reflect the purpose of evaluation, the audience, and the scale and significance of the programme to be evaluated.

Figure 2. The role of evaluation as part of the project cycle.



2.2 WHY DO WE EVALUATE?

There are many reasons we evaluate our programmes, including the following:

- It is a departmental requirement to undertake performance monitoring of our programmes
- We want feedback on our activities so we can learn how to improve them
- We want evidence about the usefulness of a new programme and how it might be improved
- We want to improve the skill-base within DOC by collecting evidence about how to do things better
- We want to have evidence of the success of our programme to ensure future funding
- We want to share our successes with others

Overall, these reasons can be categorised into three purposes or functions of evaluation:

1. Contributing to performance monitoring and reporting for public sector accountability and future programme decision-making

- Focuses on the question 'Was the activity successful?'
- Used by governments to report on achievements through processes like the Annual Report
- Often used to make decisions about future programme funding
- Increases accountability within the public sector
- Relies on clear performance objectives and identified outcomes
- Often referred to in terms of *summative evaluation*

2. Contributing to programme management and development

- Focuses on the question ‘What can we do better?’
- Used by practitioners to examine progress towards targets and milestones
- Integrated into a continuous improvement cycle
- Identifies unexpected barriers and unintended outcomes, and allows for project adjustments
- Focuses on learning as we go
- Often referred to in terms of *formative evaluation*

3. Contributing to future skill development and the development of a shared evidence-base

- Focuses on the question ‘What have we learnt?’
- Used by practitioners to improve their skills and decisions about future programme design
- Used to explore and develop an evidence-base on key areas of uncertainty within programmes
- Explores questions such as ‘What information provision is most effective in recruiting volunteers/getting people to come along to an event/raising people’s awareness of a programme?’
- Often referred to in terms of *evaluation research*

Each of these different types of evaluation often involves different audiences for the evaluation, as well as requiring different types of information. The use of these three types of evaluation is explained further in Step 2 of the six-step evaluation framework (section 3.3).

2.3 WHAT DOES EVALUATION INVOLVE?

Regardless of the approach or methodology for evaluation, the steps involved are generally the same. The following steps have been adapted from a four-step model for evaluation presented in Blakely et al. (1999: 68):

1. Design the evaluation

Evaluation works best when it is an integral part of project management. Develop an evaluation strategy, including key questions, indicators and activities, when planning a project.

2. Collect the information

As a project proceeds, monitor what is occurring and what is being achieved. Use this information to improve project management.

3. Analyse and interpret the results

Make sense of all the information—identifying issues, trends and themes will help to reach conclusions. Sometimes there may be gaps or contradictions that require further investigation for clarification.

4. Share and respond to results

Evaluation results should feed back into improving future project planning and management, as well as promoting the project.

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION

To be effective, evaluation should follow five key principles:

1. Evaluation should be an integrated part of the planning and management of CCPs

Evaluation should be designed at the time of project planning and should be part of a process of continuous improvement. Plan your evaluation process at the beginning of a project, not once it is finished!

2. Evaluation should be a structured and planned process

While an informal process of reflecting on the successes and failures of a completed project provides some learning opportunities, good evaluation should be purposeful and focused, and should include:

- Measurement against clear performance criteria derived from the clearly articulated goals and objectives (process and outcomes) for the project
- Rigorous and systematic data collection

3. Evaluation design should reflect the purpose and audience of the evaluation, and the scale and significance of the project

The design of the evaluation should reflect its end use and pay particular attention to the type of information about the performance of the project that is required by different *stakeholders* (internal and external). The evaluation design should also reflect the available resources to conduct the evaluation: in general, it is preferable to evaluate fewer aspects of the programme well rather than more aspects superficially.

4. Evaluation should, whenever possible, be a participatory activity

To improve the learning potential of evaluation, key project stakeholders (internal and external) should be involved in the evaluation process. At a minimum, they should be involved in the design of the evaluation; however, they can also be involved in data collection, analysis and interpretation, and the sharing of results.

5. Evaluation needs to be respectful of the values, perspectives and rights of those involved

Evaluation is not a value-free process and can present some risks that need to be considered, such as:

- How the evaluation may reveal information that can be interpreted as being critical of the actions, skills or motives of programme managers or participants
- How the evaluation might be interpreted as a 'threat' to the future of a programme or alternatively raise expectations about improvements
- What indicators or measures are politically, culturally and socially appropriate
- How different values and perspectives will be included and contradictory perspectives treated
- How and when privacy and confidentiality will be ensured
- Whether ethics approval is required for any of the data collection methods used

3. How to design an evaluation framework

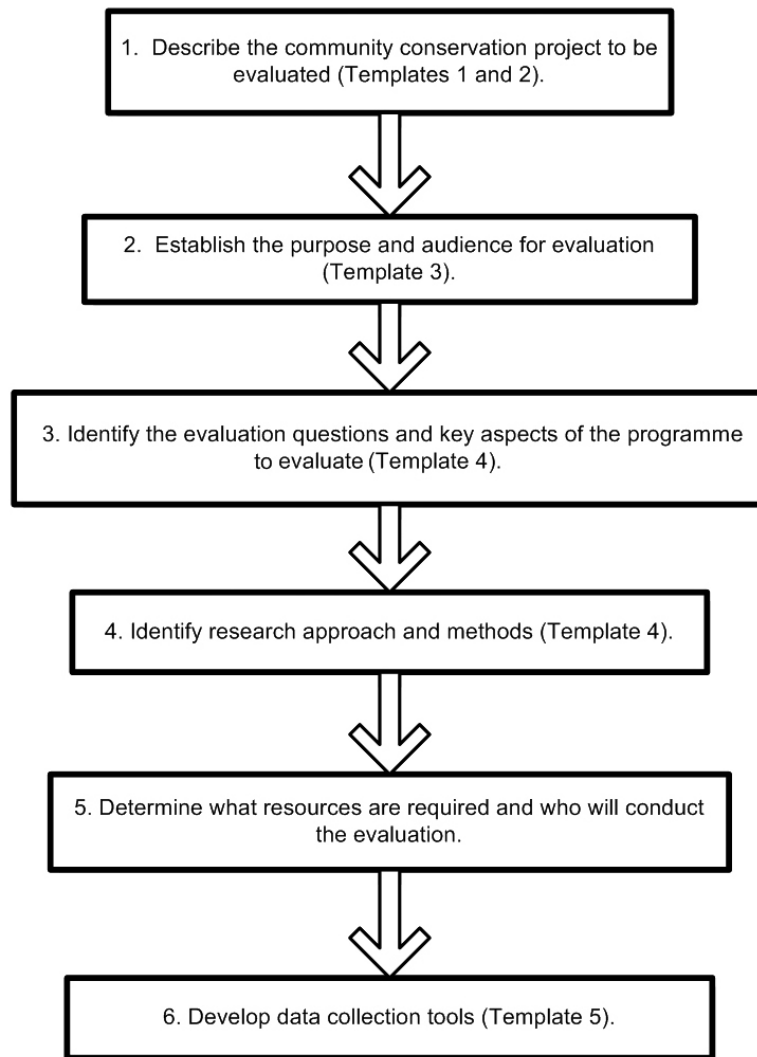
Designing an evaluation can be a complex and difficult process for some practitioners, and sometimes key components of the design process can be missed or completed inadequately.

To help simplify the evaluation design process for CCPs, a **six-step design methodology** has been developed (adapted from Johnson 2004). This methodology is summarised in Fig. 3 and is supported by a series of templates, which can be found in section A1.2 of the CCP Evaluation Toolkit (Appendix 1). Instructions on how to complete each step using the templates are provided in this section, along with examples of the type of information you may wish to include. An example scenario for a fictional project follows the explanation of each step, to show you an example of each template in action and give you ideas for developing your own evaluation framework.

By following this methodology, you will develop an evaluation framework that includes:

1. Details of the programme to be evaluated:
 - The specific activities to be evaluated
 - The practice principles or *critical success factors* for these activities
 - The intended short-, medium- and longer-term outcomes
 - The context of the programme and identification of external factors that might affect the process and outcomes of the programme
2. The purpose of the evaluation and its intended use:
 - The audience for the evaluation
 - What they need to know
 - When they need the information
 - What form they need the information in
 - How they will use the information
 - Who will be involved in the evaluation and how
3. The approach and methods for evaluation:
 - The key evaluation questions and aspects of the programme to be evaluated
 - The information required to address the questions
 - Any performance criteria (targets, milestones and benchmarks)
 - Any indicators to be used
 - How any new information will be collected, analysed and interpreted

Figure 3. A six-step methodology for evaluation design.



3.1 WHEN SHOULD THE EVALUATION DESIGN PROCESS BE STARTED?

Ideally, evaluation design should be done at the time of project planning. This will ensure that appropriate resources and time are set aside for the evaluation, and that any required data collection is designed and implemented in time. However, projects do change over time, and the evaluation needs to be reviewed regularly.

The evaluation design methodology described in this guideline is also a useful tool as part of the project planning process, and can help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes before they begin.

Nonetheless, if you are just starting the evaluation design process and your programme is already underway or nearly completed, you can still use the steps described.

3.2 WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE EVALUATION DESIGN PROCESS AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

Many evaluation guidelines argue that stakeholders should be involved in evaluation (Woodhill & Robins 1998; Blakeley et al. 1999; Johnson 2004). For example, it has been stated that:

If you design, develop and implement the evaluation in partnership with stakeholders, you are more likely to get meaningful and useful information from your evaluation exercise. Similarly, the stakeholders are likely to accept the evaluation, and pick up relevant aspects for improving things themselves. (Blakeley et al. 1999: 79)

It is most important that stakeholders are involved in the first two stages of the evaluation design process.

3.3 HOW TO DESIGN A SIX-STEP EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

This section explains how to design a six-step evaluation framework using the templates that are provided in section A1.2, Appendix 1. An example scenario (see box) is used to illustrate how to fill out these templates.

Step 1 Describe the Conservation with Communities Project to be evaluated

The first step in developing an effective evaluation framework is to define the activity or programme of activities to be evaluated, keeping in mind that most CCPs include a range of different activities. For the purposes of evaluation, activities need to be listed separately if they involve actions that will occur at different times, or that have different methods or objectives.

This step involves two parts and uses two templates:

- Template 1 involves deciding which aspects of the programme (individual activities in the programme) are to be evaluated and then reviewing and/or discussing with programme stakeholders the goals of the programme as a whole and the objectives of the individual activities to be evaluated.
- Template 2 uses this information to develop a *programme logic model* for the activity, which will describe how the programme is intended to work.

Example scenario: Moana Nui 'Fish-4-Eva' programme

Moana Nui is a growing provincial city on the popular east coast. It developed from its small-scale coastal shipping origins, which are still ongoing, albeit less significant. It is now becoming more popular as a tourist destination, particularly from the local and international yachting community, who enjoy sailing around the cluster of nearby offshore islands. The city has a small marina and the waterfront area is being developed. Nearby, there is also a base for a small number of fishing vessels, which export their goods and supply local shops, as well as operating fishing cruises for tourists. The region has a strong cultural history and there is a large urban marae on the coast. The city is growing quite quickly and there is significant development and subdivision planned on the coast. Although unemployment increased when coastal shipping declined, things are changing with increased tourism and property speculation.

Surveys over the last 10 years have shown that the marine area of Moana Nui has been severely degraded. Locals confirm that fish stocks are not what they used to be. The area has been identified as a place of significant underwater diversity, particularly the nearby offshore islands; it has significant areas of rocky ecosystems and pods of dolphins are still sighted from time to time. Friends of the Sea have been advocating for many years to get some protection in place.

The Department of Conservation decided that it was a priority to raise awareness of the need for some form of marine protection for Moana Nui.

At first, DOC held a public information evening and provided an exciting presentation of the underwater life around the bay and associated islands. After that first meeting, interest was sufficiently high to support more community discussions about what marine protection could

mean for the city. As a next step, DOC facilitated a meeting at the local marae with some of the key stakeholders. This included representatives from the port company and marina owners, regional and city councils, the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish), iwi, fishing vessel owners and recreation clubs, a fish and chip shop owner, a university scientist, local residents, and students from a couple of local high schools.

After a couple of hui, several members of the group were interested in what was called the 'Fish-4-Eva' programme (the title came from local school students), which was a programme to highlight marine opportunities in the area.

The objectives of the programme were to:

- Build stronger relationships between the community and government (DOC/MFish/council)
- Help the community to gain an understanding of marine protection
- Assist the community in identifying opportunities for involvement in marine protection
- Sustain the marine environment for everyone

To help achieve these objectives, the group decided to enlist the services of a consultant to create a community engagement strategy. This consisted of three types of engagement:

1. Establishing and maintaining a collaborative process with various stakeholders to develop the 'Fish-4-Eva' programme
2. Information and consultation forums and meetings to discuss the programme more widely in the community
3. Environmental education through the experiential learning concept of 'experiencing marine reserves programme'

Template 1 *Identify the different activities in the CCP that are to be evaluated and the objectives for each of the activities*

List the activities to be evaluated in Column 1 of Template 1. Next, define the overall goals of the programme. If the programme is underway, you may wish to review any previous programme plans or other documentation to determine what the overall goals of the programme are/were. Decide whether these are still relevant and add any other goals for the programme. List these in Template 1 under the title of the programme.

Next, think about how the broad goals translate into specific objectives for each of the different activities in your programme. Think about your objectives in terms of ‘*We would know the programme was successful if these things were achieved...*’.

Objectives usually relate to three things:

1. The achievement of certain **short-, medium- and longer-term outcomes** (changes or effects that happen as a result of the programme), e.g. participants learn conservation skills
2. The execution of certain activities or production of certain **outputs**, e.g. 20 training sessions held with 100 participants attending
3. That activities or outputs meet certain **practice principles or standards**, e.g. participants felt that the training sessions were easy to follow

For the purposes of evaluation, these objectives need to be defined (or redefined) in a way that is SMART:

Specific—clearly define what will be achieved

Measurable—ensure there is some way of measuring what will be achieved

Achievable—make objectives realistic given the context and available resources

Relevant—make sure objectives are essential to the broader aims of the programme

Timeframe—identify a timeframe by which the objectives will be met

List the SMART objectives in Column 2 of Template 1, alongside each activity to which they refer.

Summary instructions—Template 1

1. Put the name of the CCP at the top.
2. List the overall goals of the programme.
3. List the activities to be evaluated in Column 1.
4. List the SMART objectives that apply to each activity in Column 2. If you have particular targets or milestones (see definition in section 2), note these down; these will need to be considered in Steps 3 and 6.

Example scenario: Moana Nui 'Fish-4-Eva' programme

Template 1—Define the different activities in the CCP that are to be evaluated

CCP Name: Moana Nui 'Fish-4-Eva' programme

Overall goals of project:

- Build stronger relationships between the community and government (DOC/MFish/council)
- Help the community to gain an understanding of marine protection
- Assist the community in identifying opportunities for involvement in marine protection
- Sustain the marine environment for everyone

ACTIVITY	SMART OBJECTIVES <i>'We would know we were successful if these things were achieved...'</i>
Public information and consultation meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public understanding of underwater life around the bay and associated islands • Increased public understanding of the potential benefits of marine protection • Raised public awareness of the proposed 'Fish-4-Eva' programme • Increased support for the programme • Sought public feedback on the proposed programme • Identified opportunities for the public to be involved in marine protection • Identified members of the public and stakeholders who are interested in being involved in the programme • Recruited members of the public and stakeholders to the collaborative process to develop the programme • Sought input into the design of the programme • Obtained financial support from the public and stakeholders
Collaborative process with various stakeholders (meetings/hui at local marae) to develop programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed an effective programme that will achieve marine protection • Built strong relationships amongst stakeholders • Gained a collective sense of purpose and shared ownership of the programme • Shared financial resources and knowledge and built collective capacity
'Fish-4-Eva' environmental education programme 'experiential learning activity'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants increase their knowledge of the marine environment and marine protection • Participants have 'hands on' experiences in the marine environment, and are more informed and motivated to be actively involved in marine protection • Participants' knowledge about marine protection is put into action, resulting in more informed and motivated communities

Template 2 Clarify how the programme is intended to work

Once you have determined what your programme is trying to achieve (the objectives), it is important to clarify how your programme is expected to work.

A useful way to do this is through the development of a programme logic model (also sometimes referred to as intervention logic). A programme logic model is a planning tool or template that helps you describe how what you do and the way you do it will contribute to the intended outcomes, and how the context of the programme has been considered and planned for.

Programme logic models are useful for determining what questions to ask in the evaluation.

Programme logic models include a description of an outcomes hierarchy—how short-term outcomes (often direct impacts on programme participants) can lead to medium- and longer-term outcomes. These are often illustrated by drawing arrows between outcomes as they are expected to occur over time. It is important to remember that as you move down the outcomes hierarchy, the outcomes are more likely to be influenced by external factors.

Programme logic models are based on an ‘*if... then...*’ logic. For example, the overall logic of DOC’s CCP work might be expressed as ‘*if we build an individual’s awareness, experience and connection to New Zealand’s unique natural, historic and cultural heritage, then we will increase their understanding of and support for the conservation agenda, which will then lead to changes in their actions to support conservation*’. This is illustrated in Fig. 4.

Keep in mind that almost all evaluations involve making a judgment about ‘success’ based on the achievement of programme objectives. Taking the time to articulate your programme logic ensures that the objectives you have determined for your programme are realistic and achievable, based on a sound thinking process.

Table 1 describes elements that are commonly included in a programme logic model. The components in the shaded rows are used in Template 2. You may wish to include some or all of the other components if they are relevant to the evaluation questions you wish to address in the next step. Some examples of elements that might be included in Template 2 are given in the Moana Nui example. Further examples for the range of DOC activities are provided in the CCP Evaluation Toolkit (section A1.3, Appendix 1) along with information about how these elements might be measured.

Figure 4. A generic outcomes hierarchy for Conservation with Communities Projects in the Department of Conservation.

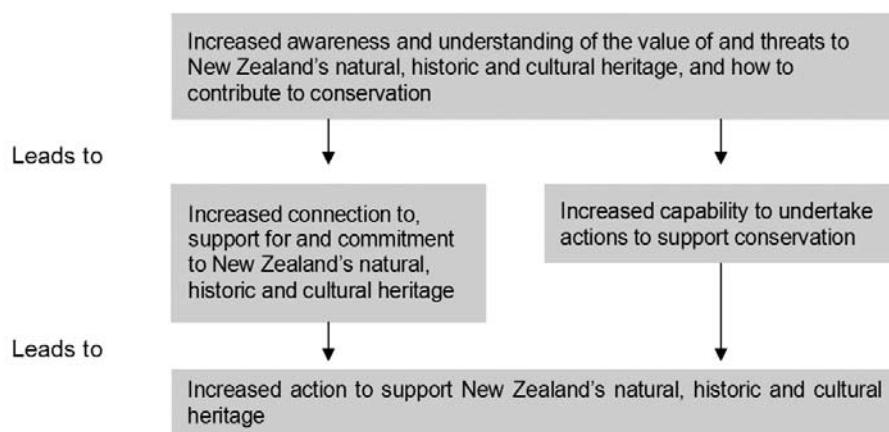


TABLE 1. TYPICAL COMPONENTS OF A PROGRAMME LOGIC MODEL.

Components in shaded rows are used in Template 2.

COMPONENT	CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLES
Initial problem or future vision	Why the programme was established The original issue, need or goal that caused the programme to be developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to improve the conservation outcomes in a particular community
Programme goals and objectives	What the programme is trying to achieve These are the stated goals and objectives of the programme, which generally include the achievement of particular outcomes and sometimes certain principles of practice (e.g. upholding the Treaty of Waitangi).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of a wide range of stakeholders including XYZ in developing a programme to improve the conservation practices of X
Inputs	What you invest Includes human and financial resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 months • \$50,000
Activities, actions or outputs*	What you do (<i>If we do this...</i>) The activities conducted and any 'products' that are produced, such as plans, educational resources and workshop notes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on conservation skills to X • Consult on conservation programme with Y
Critical success factors	How you do it (<i>in this way...</i>) These are factors that are in the programme's control and you believe are critical to the outcomes, such as how, when or with whom you undertake activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is made available to all farmers in the catchment • Consultation involves all key stakeholders • Consultation involves opportunities for creative input into the programme
External factors (risk factors)	What could intervene (<i>taking this into account...</i>) These are things outside the control of the programme that may affect the outcomes. They are often referred to as risk factors. They can exist before the programme begins or arise during the course of the project/programme. They can include background trends in an outcome area or other pressures (natural or human-induced) or responses (actions by others) affecting the outcome area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have other commitments • There is a negative feeling toward DOC amongst some stakeholders • There is negative media publicity about the programme
Short-term outcomes	What happens as a result (<i>then this will happen...</i>) These are the first-order effects of your activity and are usually immediate changes to participants in the activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants gain new knowledge about X • The relationship between DOC and X improves/grows stronger • Participants gain new skills in X • Consultation provides information that is useful to the programme manager for programme planning
Medium-term outcomes	What this leads to (<i>which will lead to this...</i>) These are the second-order effects of the activity—the effects of the short-term outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants change the way they behave in terms of X • Programme has wide support in the community
Longer-term outcomes	What this can contribute to (<i>and lead to this</i>) These are the third-order effects of the activity and may include changes beyond the participants in the activity and the impacts on conservation outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider community changes in the way they behave in terms of X • X conservation outcomes (biophysical) are achieved

* In some explanations of programme logic models (e.g. Woodhill & Robins 1998), activities are separated from outputs. For example, the activity might be carrying out a training workshop and the output would be 50 people complete training. In this methodology, for the sake of simplicity, the term 'activities' is used to refer to both the process used in an activity and any measurable outputs.

There are several tips that could help when completing a programme logic model:

- When deciding the ‘*if... then...*’ relationships in your programme, consider whether the evidence to support these assumptions is sound. These assumptions should be based on local experience or, better yet, previous evaluation or research.
- The objectives and methods of CCPs can change as the programme progresses, to adapt to changing circumstances. It is useful to review the programme logic periodically and update it if necessary.
- The outcomes in programme logic models should be expressed as **action words** (things that you expect to happen) rather than in terms of opportunities for outcomes (which are really an output rather than an outcome). For example, you would say ‘people attend workshop’ rather than ‘people can attend workshop’.

Summary instructions—Template 2

1. List the activities to be evaluated (taken from Column 1 of Template 1) in Column 1 of Template 2.
2. List the objectives of the activities (taken from Column 2 of Template 1) in Column 2 if they relate to the quality of your activities (critical success factors), or in Columns 4 or 5 if they are either short- or medium- to longer-term outcomes.
3. List any other key elements of how you undertake the activities (critical success factors) that will influence the success of these activities in Column 2.
4. List the risks that might affect the project’s success and that you need to take into account (external factors) in Column 3. Refer to any programme risk assessment, if available.
5. Add any other short- to longer-term programme outcomes you think are appropriate in Columns 4 or 5, and link the outcomes with arrows (drawing these on the template) depending on your perception of how they will influence each other and occur over time.
6. Check that your programme logic makes sense and add or remove any items until you are satisfied that your logic is sound.

Example scenario: Moana Nui 'Fisb-4-Eva' programme

Template 2—Clarify how the programme is intended to work

Instructions: Indicate the logical flow between your short-, medium- and longer-term outcomes by drawing arrows between them.

ACTIVITIES <i>If we do this...</i>	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS <i>in this way...</i>	EXTERNAL FACTORS <i>taking this into account... (potential risks out of programme's control)</i>	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (STO) <i>then this should happen...</i>	MEDIUM- TO LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES (MTO-LTO) <i>which will lead to this.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public information and consultation meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venue and time Range of people attend Gatekeepers/leaders in the community attend Appropriate iwi/hapu attend Meetings are well advertised There are good presenters Material is well targeted and informative Everyone has a chance to speak Agenda well organised Meeting well facilitated People have information to take home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other community priorities Attendees want to talk about other issues No media attend Presenters are ill Power failure Low attendance People talk off the topic Key people do not turn up The right people in an organisation do not turn up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information useful to steering committee is identified Potential supporters/funders and other stakeholders are identified Community is more aware of the programme and what it is trying to achieve Participants have increased knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Marine environment —Potential benefits of marine protection Community feels involved in decision-making and develops a sense of ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased support for marine protection in community Relationships and collaborative processes are sustained beyond the programme DOC's profile is enhanced in the community Potential for more conservation collaboration is identified Stakeholders and programme participants engage in activities to support marine protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative process with various stakeholders used to develop programme (meetings/hui at local marae) Stakeholders feel that their views were acknowledged and treated with respect All key stakeholders are identified and invited to participate All key stakeholders are involved in the programme Meetings are held at a time convenient to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme design (output) reflects the needs and values of all the stakeholders involved All stakeholders contribute to programme design Stakeholders feel that their views were acknowledged and treated with respect All key stakeholders are identified and invited to participate All key stakeholders are involved in the programme Meetings are held at a time convenient to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding partner pulls out Nobody wants to be involved Group fails to reach agreement on the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New or improved networks and partnerships are formed between government, iwi/hapu and stakeholders Steering committee has better knowledge of community needs and issues Increased capacity to deliver programme Participants have increased knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Marine environment —Potential benefits of marine protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some form of formal marine protection achieved for area

Continued on next page

Example scenario Template 2 — continued

ACTIVITIES <i>If we do this ...</i>	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS <i>in this way...</i>	EXTERNAL FACTORS <i>taking this into account... (potential risks out of programme's control)</i>	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (STO) <i>then this should happen...</i>	MEDIUM- TO LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES (MTO-LTO) <i>which will lead to this.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Fish-4-Eva' environmental education programme • 'experiential learning activity' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted schools participate in the programme • Targeted community members participate in the programme • Risk management procedures followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools cancel • Lack of school funding to participate • Health and Safety issues • Not enough parental supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants have increased knowledge of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Marine environment — Potential benefits of marine protection • Participants have increased skills in the environment • Participants are actively involved in a range of actions to support marine protection • Participants have a better appreciation of the marine environment • Participants support the need for marine protection • Participants feel inspired and enthused about their marine environment 	
<p>Invited stakeholders include representatives from the port company and marina owners, regional and city councils, Ministry of Fisheries, iwi, fishing vessel owners and recreation clubs, a fish and chip shop owner, a university scientist, local residents, and students from a couple of local high schools.</p>				

Step 2 Establish the purpose and audience for the evaluation

Template 3 Clarify the purpose and audience for the evaluation

After the programme to be evaluated has been clarified by developing a programme logic model, you need to think about the purpose and audience for your evaluation.

The different purposes for evaluation were introduced in section 2.2 and include:

1. Contributing to performance monitoring and reporting for public sector accountability and future programme decision-making (summative evaluation)
2. Contributing to programme management and development (formative evaluation)
3. Contributing to future skill development and the development of a shared evidence-base (evaluation research)

In most cases, programme evaluations are used for all three of these purposes. Table 2 shows how these purposes relate to different audiences and their needs.

Summary instructions—Template 3

1. Determine the purposes for evaluation by ticking the appropriate boxes on the template.
2. List the different audiences for the evaluation in Column 1.
3. List the information they need to know in Column 2.
4. List the type of information they require in Column 3 or by using the tick boxes provided (you may wish to come back to this step once you have completed Step 4).

TABLE 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE FOR EVALUATION.

EVALUATION FUNCTION	CORE QUESTION	AUDIENCE	AUDIENCE NEEDS
Summative evaluation	Was the activity successful?	People external to the programme who want to know whether the programme was effective, efficient and worthwhile, e.g. senior managers, the Minister of Conservation, other MPs, the media and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of performance that is <i>objective, valid, reliable</i> and quantifiable • Stories of success that are useful for illustrating the value of DOC's CCP work
Formative evaluation	What can we do better?	Programme partners and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time information on the programme's progress and outcomes, and any unexpected issues
Evaluation research	What have we learnt?	Programme partners and stakeholders, and other (internal or external) people undertaking similar activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key lessons from the evaluation about what works, for whom and in what circumstances • Both objective, valid and reliable evidence and anecdotal stories

Example scenario: Moana Nui 'Tisb-4-Eva' programme

Template 3—Clarify the purpose and audience for the evaluation

What is the purpose of the evaluation?

- To contribute to performance monitoring and reporting for public sector accountability and future programme decision-making (summative evaluation)
- To contribute to programme management and development (formative evaluation)
- To contribute to future skill development and the development of a shared evidence-base (evaluation research)

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE FOR THE EVALUATION?	WHAT DO THEY NEED TO KNOW?	WHAT TYPE OF INFORMATION DO THEY REQUIRE?
DOC programme manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the programme fulfil its objectives? • Was the programme value for money, time and effort? • Was this an effective process for achieving some form of marine protection? • Did the programme raise awareness and support for marine protection? • Did the programme improve/build relationships? • How could we improve the programme? • What have we learnt? • What could we do better? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of performance that is objective, valid, reliable and quantifiable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Qualitative information about the outcomes achieved that is useful for illustrating the value of DOC's CCP work, e.g. comments from participants or stories of success <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Real-time information on the programme's progress (outputs), success (quality) and immediate impacts
Collaborative steering group participant (regional council representative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this programme worth our investment of time and money? • Is it the best thing to do with the limited resources we have for coastal awareness/education? • Has the regional council involvement made a difference? What has been the value of our input? • Does the experiential learning programme support the council's role in coastal management? • What have been the spin-offs for the council from the collaborative process? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of performance that is objective, valid, reliable and quantifiable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Qualitative information about the outcomes achieved that is useful for illustrating the value of DOC's CCP work, e.g. comments from participants or stories of success <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Real-time information on the programme's progress (outputs), success (quality) and immediate impacts
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the programme supported the objectives of the curriculum? • What have the children learnt? • What have been the outcomes of the experiential learning process? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of performance that is objective, valid, reliable and quantifiable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Qualitative information about the outcomes achieved that is useful for illustrating the value of DOC's CCP work, e.g. comments from participants or stories of success <input type="checkbox"/> Real-time information on the programme's progress (outputs), success (quality) and immediate impacts