Making an Impact
Introduction to impact tools and dissemination

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What is Impact?

‘A marked effect or fundamental change’

It’s the difference your project makes:

• to knowledge and skills
• to behaviours and attitudes
  • to systems
• to ways of thinking
  ...etc!
What is Dissemination?

It’s **sharing what you’ve learned**, so that other people can benefit

**NB:** Neither one is the same as **promotion**
(‘Check out our great project!’)
What Studying Impact Shows

- If a project is working
- How it is working
- Areas where we can improve
- Essential evidence for dealing with funders, decision-makers, policy influencers etc

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Objections to Impact

But how do we know the difference until we do the project??!!
Where are you heading?

What impact do you hope or expect to have?
What would make you celebrate?

Get as specific as you can!
Objections to Impact

But...

Our project is too small
to make any difference!
Contribute to Bigger Change
Making an Impact: A Tip

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE
a.k.a. your project goal(s)

(This is not as simple as it sounds!)
THANK YOU!

2000 FOLLOWERS

Many thanks to our 2,000 followers. We’re excited to grow our online community and to share your experiences and insights! Mention #Leargas

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Is Your Goal **Actually** Your Goal?

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**fiverr**

i will give You 12000 Twitter Followers Only 5$

*sticoeur16*  Report  Contact Me
15th Oct 2015 at 4:59 PM

I Will Add PERMANENT 12000 TWITTER Followers

✓ You may divide this amount to more than one profiles
✓ No Password Access Required
✓ More Users Have Profile Pictures Uploaded
✓ Get Quality TWITTER Followers for the Best Possible Results
✓ There is no risk for your account to get banned for that! You should not worry at all!
✓ 100% Safe
Refining the Goal

Channel your inner toddler: Why are you doing what you’re doing?
“we want to develop a new e-learning course”
Why?
“because it will improve teaching skills”
Why?
“so teachers better prepare learners for work”
Why?
“to increase learners’ employability”
The Key

- Impact
- Project Goal
- Dissemination

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Impact is part of a ‘Results Chain’

All stages should relate closely to your project goals

Activities
Actions you take

Outputs
Direct products

Outcomes
Immediate results

Impacts
Fundamental changes

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Activities are the **actions you take** to progress towards your goal. e.g. forming partnerships, planning, filming, designing, sending people on mobilities…
Outputs are the **direct products/results of activities** you carried out e.g. attendance at a course; a Website; a conference.

Outputs contribute to impact; but producing - or even sharing - them isn’t automatically ‘a fundamental change’.
Not if I don’t read it!
Outcomes are the immediate effects or results of outputs e.g. more confidence; more skills; more knowledge.

ACTIVITY Writing, Photography

OUTPUT ‘Fight the Beast’ Cookbook

OUTCOME Readers know how to make nutritious food

IMPACT ?
Impacts are the marked effects or fundamental changes that happen (usually, over time)

**ACTIVITY**
Writing, photography

**OUTPUT**
‘Fight the Beast’ Cookbook

**OUTCOME**
Readers know how to make nutritious food

**IMPACT**
Readers save money; less plastic waste produced; reduced risk of heart disease...

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Examples of a ‘Results Chain’

**ACTIVITIES = Actions taken**
- VET organisations develop eLearning course
- Volunteers teach service users how to make cards
- Young people communicate with policy makers

**OUTPUTS = Direct Products of Activities**
- Dedicated website, support materials
- Cards made
- Consultations held, papers produced

**OUTCOMES = Immediate benefits/learning due to outputs**
- VET teachers increase their knowledge and skills
- Service users have better art skills
- Young people feel heard, policy makers learn new information

**IMPACT = Fundamental change**
- Trainees increase their chances of getting a job
- Service users’ self-esteem improves
- New policies made
Let’s Play: ‘Output, Outcome or Impact?’

Tip #1: Can you clearly identify the project goal i.e. the why of the activity?

Tip#2: Look for changes stated in terms of quality or quantity over time e.g. Improved, enhanced, reduced...
Example 1: English Language Training Programme for Healthcare Professionals

Our innovative approach to combine the development of professional and personal knowledge, skills and competences (working on medical, linguistic, intercultural, ethical and social content, using motivating methodical approach) guarantees the intended impact on progress in Higher and Further Education.

All our results are freely available to improve formal and informal learning options in Higher Education and to improve access to education and further learning.

(Source: http://help-theproject.eu/wordpress/?page_id=966)
Example 2: Adult Education Staff Development Plan

“This staff member was introduced to WEB2.0 and learned how to create blogs, Wikispaces, Twitter, Pinterest and Edmodo accounts. This training also gave this staff member the inspiration to find out more about Edmodo and how to use it in the classroom with students. All staff members have increased their language skills and have a greater awareness of different cultures. They all made contact with peers from different European countries.” (Source: Final Report)
Example 3: Tweet from European Commission

#ErasmusPlus VET alumni are 20% more likely to have a job 3 years after graduation... Discover more opportunities @ ec.europa.eu/programmes/era ...
Tools for Recognising Impact

Why do you reset your milometer before you start a long journey?
Recognising Impact

To see ‘a fundamental change’ we have to compare

With and Without

or

Before and After
Recognising Impact

Consider where you are now, and where you want to go
Sources of Evidence

Before and after:
Interviews, Surveys
Number of downloads/engagements
Peer observation (video/work)
But but but ... ‘Long term’!!

Track progress to your goal:

• Know where you started
• Know where you are now
• Know where you are heading.

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Measures that track progress towards a goal are called Indicators
‘The Results Chain’

IMPACT = Fundamental change

Trainees increase their chances of getting a job

Service users’ self esteem improves

More funding and support for projects

Possible INDICATOR = how we know we’re getting there

Number of trainees in related employment after project conclusion

More willing to contribute to group discussions

Increase in number of projects funded since impact studies began
Good indicators are:

• Precise/Well-defined
• Reliable
• Valid
• Practical/Affordable
Using Evidence

Get specific:
Who will do the work? When? How? What questions will you ask?

Use common sense:
Why design a survey for five people, when you could just record a discussion?

Open questions:
✓ “What changes have you seen since the project started?”
✗ “How has motivation changed?”
Results Chain Explainers

https://evaluateblog.wordpress.com/about/

https://erasmusplus.org.uk/erasmus-uk-logic-model
Impact+ Exercise

https://erasmusplus.org.uk/impact-assessment-resources

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Impact+: What is it?

An exercise designed by UK and Slovenian NAs to help people/organisations understand impact.

It has three stages:

FIRST STAGE: Identifying project goal and impact
SECOND STAGE: Selecting indicators and data sources
THIRD STAGE: Designing your ‘impact plan’
What is it not?

A solution to all problems.

A tool to deliver a fully formed impact plan.

Set in stone: Impact+ is a process. It’s designed to be changed by those who use it, and to evolve along the way.
What’s been learnt

It is difficult to clearly and simply say what a project’s intended impact is supposed to be!

Partners will have different ideas about what is important to measure and how.

No-one cannot collect, process and analyse data on everything they would like to. You need to prioritise.

You already have lots of data – make sure to use it.

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to share the results of your project outside your organisation/consortium and partners?

Literally, ‘Dissemination’ means ‘scattering seeds’
Plant your seeds in prepared soil!

Make a Dissemination Plan

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Dissemination Plan

• Decide **who** you want to reach

• Decide **what** you want them to know

• Decide **how** best to reach them
  (Are they on Facebook or YouTube?
  Do they read the local newspaper?
  Do they hold meetings you can go to?)
Prioritise your Audience

Easy to reach

High value

Low value

Hard to reach
What to share

• Has someone or something really changed because of the project?

  Tell the story!

• What do you wish you’d known before you started?

  Pass on the advice!
Get (really) Social

- Social media is for conversation, not just announcements
- Choose 2-3 platforms max; interact often
- Build networks with similar interests
- Recruit partners & participants to join in
  - Tag Léargas, @EUErasmusPlus
  - Use #ErasmusPlus
Make it Snappy!

- Get consent
- Take active shots
- Challenge stereotypes
- Shoot in high quality
- Use authentic situations
- Create a sense of the project
What can you tell?
What can you tell?
Tell us what you’re doing!

Quick way to reach and inspire a relevant audience!

- Contribute to our blog
- Come to the Léargas Forum (28.11.17)
- Invite us to your events!

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Last Word: You **Must** Credit Erasmus+

- The money is from the European Union (not Léargas)
- Others deserve the chance to apply for it! So...
- Download this logo from our homepage:
  ![Erasmus+](logo.png)
- Write: “(Co-)funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union”

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Find Out More

http://www.leargas.ie/blog/dissemination_sharewhatyoulearn/
& www.leargas.ie/blog/dissemination-2

Practical Dissemination: Share What You’ve Learned

Practical Dissemination: Connect with Your Audience

Making the Connection

The two steps to connect with your audience is to present your message and to move on to the next stage of communication. You can use the "Making the Connection" strategy to help you engage with your audience more effectively:

- Audiences who benefit from your knowledge
- Messages that you want to share
- Methods that can reach them

Practical Dissemination is a key part of any international project, and has particular importance in education. In fact, when it comes to dissemination, it is not an easy task and the first step is to understand what you want to share and then plan how to share it effectively. Here is a recent blog post on the importance of practical dissemination, which you can read and learn from:

http://www.leargas.ie/blog/dissemination_sharewhatyoulearn/
& www.leargas.ie/blog/dissemination-2

Practical Dissemination: Share What You’ve Learned

Practical Dissemination: Connect with Your Audience

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