

We are doing well....aren't we?

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Consider the nature of the community and voluntary sector

- Multiple stakeholders
- Diverse activities
- Huge range of sizes
- 97,000 organisations in New Zealand
- Mixture of service and expressive functions

.....***community owned and driven***

Making a difference in the world

This is reason for being of all community and voluntary organisations.

Continual development of meaningful ways to express how we do this:

- Surveys of members & clients
- Strategic and business planning processes
- Reporting to stakeholders

Outcomes focus become language of last few years

Outcomes focus

Driven by 1990s language of business and economic models.

Scepticism:

- On whose terms?
- Long term nature of change
- Multiple factors involved

Nonetheless we are engaging in the dialogue - NZFVWO involved in two outcomes focussed exercises.

Value Added by Voluntary Agencies – VAVA project

Two stage project.

We commissioned PwC for a study to identify and measure inputs, outputs and outcomes.

Case studies demonstrated that:

- Between \$3 and \$5 worth of services are delivered for every dollar that government invest.
- Over 15 – 30 year period there is at least a 14 x return on investment in terms of outcomes achieved by the sector.

Even more valuable was the management and planning experience of being involved in the process.

Results Based Accountability

Government focus on outcome related funding.

MSD worked with Mark Friedman to develop practical framework.

Running workshops and developing their own practice, rolling out as part of their work with contracted organisations.

Useful practical questions:

- Who are your clients?
- How are they better off as a result of your work?

Clear lessons from this work:

Involve considerable costs, time and effort.

Provide clear measures of some aspects of work of voluntary organisations

The focus or processes are also extremely useful:

- Staff understanding of the value of their work
- Focus for planning and reviews
- Developing learning organisation culture

Are not one –off events:

- To provide significant benefit need to be part of iterative, ongoing processes

The only real failure is the failure to learn

Evaluation as a continuous improvement process

Useful within grant making organisations as well as grant seeking ones

Keep the sceptical questions from community and voluntary organisations at fore:

- From whose position?
- For what purpose?

Developmental evaluation

Rather than traditional approach of independent evaluator collecting objective data about pre-set questions:

Recognise evaluation as a complex process

- That the act of collecting data is itself an intervention
- Is multi factored, over time
- Values innovation and development
- Setting some goals and also being open to new factors

.....walking & talking at the same time

Recognising paradoxes

Irony in the titles that are my references for this presentation

- “We are doing well.....aren’t we?”
(Department Internal Affairs, 1990)
- “Trying Hard is not Good Enough”
(Mark Friedman, 2005)
- “Getting to Maybe”
(Westley, Zimmerman & Quinn Patton, 2006)

***Questions Answered.....
.....Answers Questioned***