

Toolkit Guide Nine: SMART projects

Topic 1

The working group, having decided the way forward, need to check that the projects will be easy to monitor for the future.

The best tool for this is the SMART test.

S - Is the project specific?

The project you have chosen should not be too vague. It needs to be actionable

M - Is the project measurable?

Will you be able to identify when you have achieved the project

A - Is the project adequate?

The project chosen needs to contribute in a substantial way to accomplishing the overall aim you agreed in the beginning

R - Is the project realistic?

The action taken must be within the resources (or potential resources) of the community/community facility, within the community and facility capacity, and environmentally possible. Are there individuals and organisations that will take responsibility for the goal to happen? (the reality check will provide this information)

T - Is the project set within a reasonable time frame?

Is the project chosen realistic, and can it be carried out within a time frame that all participants can manage and will be beneficial. When will it be able to start? When does it have to be finished?

Example

A vague goal is 'for community buildings to function better in the community'. A **specific** goal would be 'to advertise the facilities of each building in the local paper to see whether they could increase the usage'. It would be **measurable** because after the advertisement, you could see whether the use had increased. After a period of time, you could see whether advertisement has had a substantial impact on the use of the building, and this in turn would enable you to assess whether the goal was **adequate** enough. Is it **realistic** that the buildings have the money to pay for advertisement; will someone take responsibility for putting the advertisement in local news; is there a local outlet for advertisement such as local newspaper/church magazine/notice board; has anyone ever done it before; is there spare capacity for the buildings to accommodate increased use of the facilities; is there someone to contact to find out about using the facilities. Has a **time** frame been set, such as the advertisement will run for four weeks, and the increased use and awareness of the facilities in the building can then be assessed.

Topic 2

Once a goal is chosen and followed through, it can be helpful to do an exercise where you evaluate the gains for all the parties in the goal chosen goal by doing a cost/benefit exercise

What are the gains/losses for each party

What will be gained by carrying out the goal.

List these things.

Find ways of increasing positive awareness of carrying out your goal.

What will have a negative impact on carrying out the goal.

List these things.

Find ways to minimise the negative influences on taking action to change things

Topic 3

Moving forward and keeping an eye on progress

Action planning needs to be established with manageable steps, and with responsibility and accountability built in

If the outcome of the goal is not what we were hoping or expecting, and if it looks like the goal is going to be abandoned, need to go back to planning

Are we there yet?

Once the goal is chosen and work underway to achieve it, who will take responsibility for monitoring progress?

Keep an eye on progress

What will happen if no progress is made

What incentives can be put in place to keep everyone involved

Keep talking and keep the goals in view.

Ask people involved ..how is it going...

What should be done next

