

## Can you show how you will manage risk?

Some risk-taking can allow an organisation to make the most of opportunities and run truly innovative, effective services. However, risks do need to be well managed. Tenders should clearly identify potential risks of a service and show what systems and plans are in place to manage those risks.

Some examples of risk that can impact on the successful delivery of a project:

- The cost of delivery greatly exceeds what the contract provides for.
- Unforeseen obstacles, such as your building not meeting inspection requirements.
- The project does not meet the needs of the client group, for example, starting an afterschool football club which young people do not want.
- Difficulty recruiting the right staff or volunteers.
- Income drops suddenly, for example if expected income from fees does not come through.

Risk should be evenly shared between the procuring agency and the contracting organisation, and the contract needs to explicitly state how risk is to be shared by each party.

It will be important to show your experience managing risk, including having good systems in place for identifying, exploring and mitigating risk and having an evidence-based track record of risk management.

**Health Warning:** There are added risks to the contractor when procurers offer either short-term contracts or contracts that only provide payment in the case of specific occurrences, over which the contractor may have no control. An example of this is a child care provider

setting up a day nursery and only being paid for the number of places taken up or being decommissioned at the end of a year's contract. In both cases the provider will have had to invest more to set up and deliver the service than is covered by the procurer's payment; it is important to recognise these increased risks and negotiate to have them mitigated. See page 43 for more on negotiation.



### Activity:

#### Risk assessment

(See appendix 7)

### Resources

The Health and Safety Executive has a useful short guide, *Five steps to risk assessment*.  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm)

NCVO has produced a toolkit on managing risk, which can be found at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

## Showing impact and evaluation

An important aspect of preparing a tender is to show how you have already worked successfully with the particular client group the procurer is targeting, or how other work you have done has given you a transferable expertise that will allow you to successfully deliver the service if you win the tender. You will need to show how you can effectively meet the procurer's *outputs* and *outcomes*.

- **Outcomes** are all of the changes that actually happen as a result of your project, whether welcome or unwelcome, expected or unexpected.
- **Outputs** are the products or services an organisation offers or provides.

The outputs that are being requested should be found in the tender specification documents; the outcomes, what the procurer is hoping to achieve by a programme of work, may not be specifically mentioned. You should look into what priorities are written into the Local Area Agreement, children's trust arrangement or the Children and Young People Strategic Plan to have a better understanding of what the procurer is trying to achieve with the services it commissions and then think of how you can add value to those plans. (See page 20 for more about local priorities.)

In order to be transparent and accountable to your stakeholders, as well as to have a robust body of evidence that demonstrates the impact of your work, it is important to monitor, evaluate and document any project's achievements, whether or not the project was successful or its outcomes intended.

Further, to increase the potential of your project or service becoming sustainable or mainstreamed, it is essential to be able to prove that it is successful. Demonstrating success is dependent on having effective monitoring systems in place.



### Activity:

#### How are you keeping a record of what you achieve?

Keeping track of what you achieve as you go along will avoid the nightmare of trying to remember the details a few months later, plus it's less likely you'll miss out some of the juicy bits! Having an ongoing record will make it easier to keep funders and commissioners up-to-date, seek new funding or support, and give members evidence of their achievement.

Keeping track – some can be done with your members as part of your activities.

- Take lots of photos!
- Save any adverts, flyers, posters you produce (you might want to make a scrap book of the project).
- Write down what people say about it, maybe have a comments book/wall/box.
- Get other partners to write testimonials.
- Get participants, staff and volunteers to write a headline saying what they've achieved/loved best.

Keeping records or monitoring how many people attend what, their ages and other such information is useful for evaluating whether you're meeting your aims as well as funders' targets.

## Getting into good habits

People often see monitoring as a burden imposed by others, especially funders. But you need to know how effective your project is; things like how many people are involved, where they come from, what they think of the project and what has changed for them because of it.

- Collect monitoring information according to what you (or partners or funders) need to know. This might be total numbers, or more detailed.
- You might collect details of the age, gender, and ethnicity of participants, how many disabled people access your service, how many people come from a certain area or other factors related to your aims and objectives.
- Evaluation helps to improve practice during the project and for future projects, and it shows what happened as a result of the project.
- Evaluation should be open to everybody involved in your project.
- Use questionnaires, or suggestion boxes, or interview people – or just count them.
- Include activities like video box sessions (where people speak privately to camera) or discussions, or a graffiti wall.
- Build in time to monitor into any service you are developing; monitoring allows you to evaluate work in an informed way and should be a key part of any service, not simply an afterthought.
- Above all, do it regularly and make it a habit, not a chore!

From *A slice of the cake* published by Growing Up in the West Midlands.



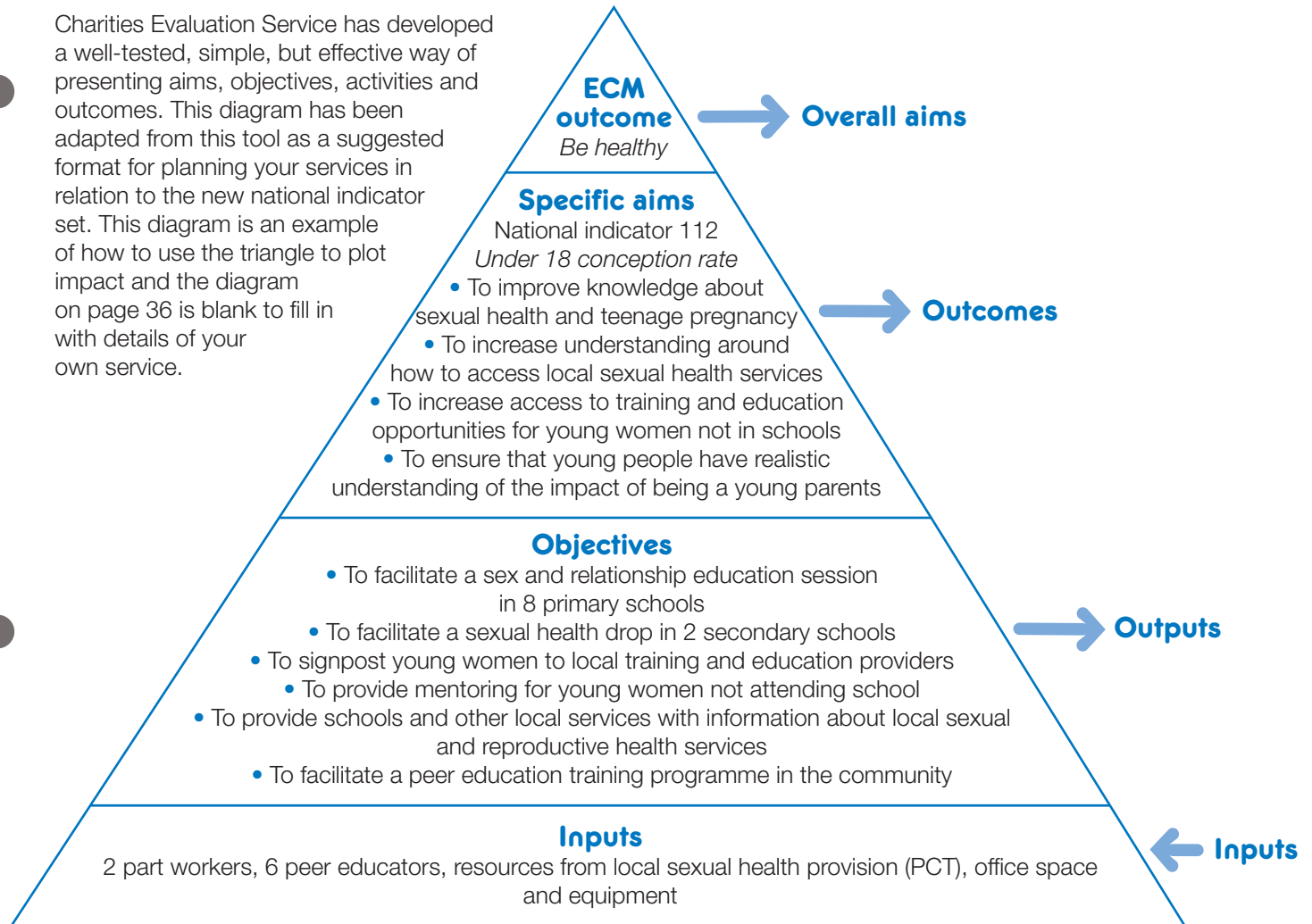




## Activity: Showing impact case study

**Teenage pregnancy outreach project in primary and secondary schools (Adapted Charities Evaluation Service Planning Triangle).**

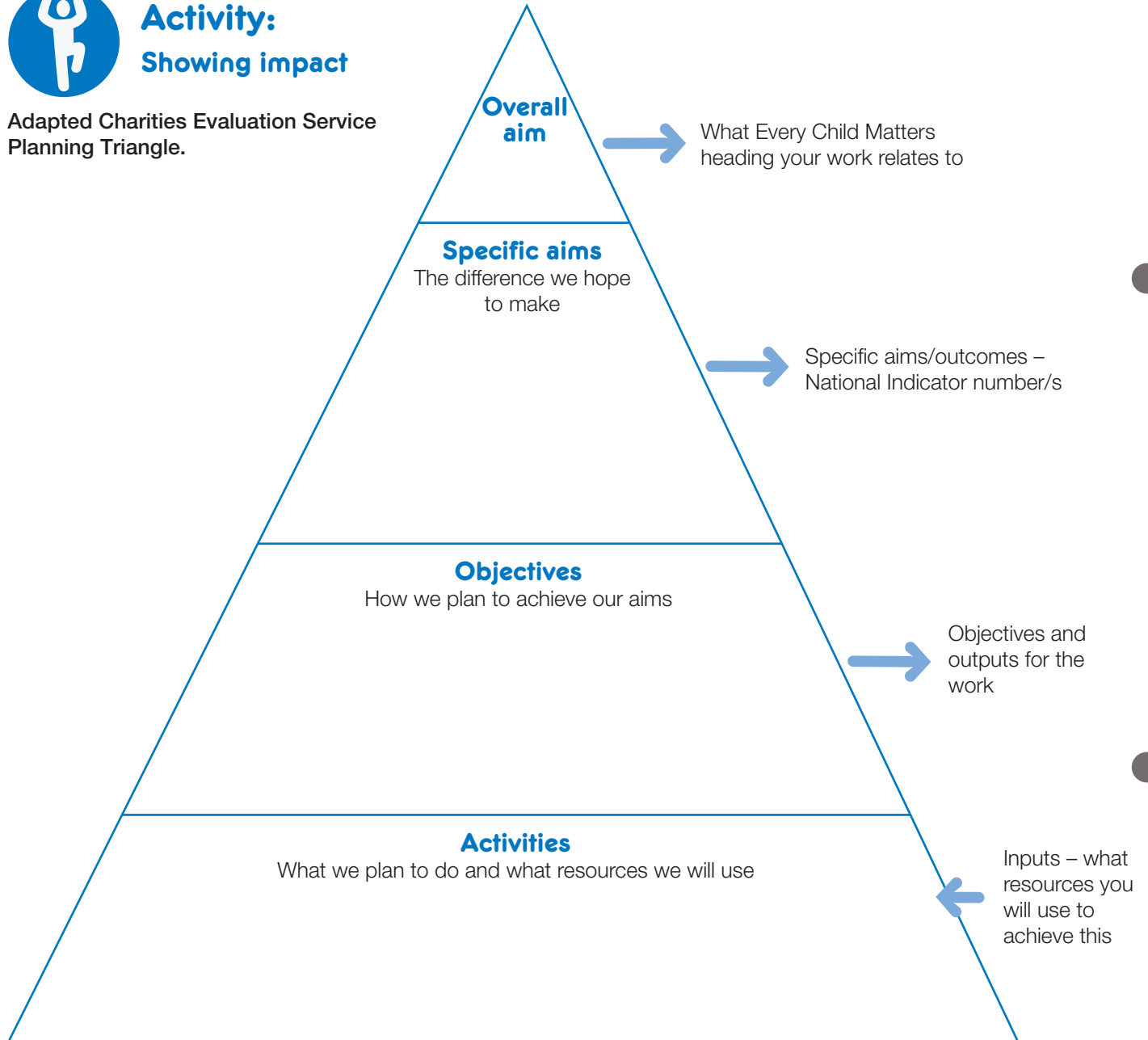
Charities Evaluation Service has developed a well-tested, simple, but effective way of presenting aims, objectives, activities and outcomes. This diagram has been adapted from this tool as a suggested format for planning your services in relation to the new national indicator set. This diagram is an example of how to use the triangle to plot impact and the diagram on page 36 is blank to fill in with details of your own service.





## Activity: Showing impact

Adapted Charities Evaluation Service  
Planning Triangle.



## Resources

A number of resources exist within the VCS to help you with monitoring and evaluation.

Charities Evaluation Service has several publications available as free downloads from their website, including *First steps in monitoring and evaluation* and *Your project and its outcomes*. Search 'outcomes online' from [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)

Children England's *Supporting Small Organisations* webpage has links to useful monitoring and evaluation resources, including a toolkit for children's organisations and a fact sheet. [www.childrenengland.org.uk](http://www.childrenengland.org.uk)

The Department of Health has a number of tools, scales and questionnaires available on their website to help measure change for harder to qualify outcomes, such as the *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* or the *Parenting Daily Hassles Scale*.

Search 'family pack of questionnaires and scales' on [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)



## Exit strategy for when funding comes to an end

If you are planning on putting in a tender, it is important that you plan for the eventual end to funding. You cannot count on being re-funded to run the same project in exactly the same way; you will need to consider what you will do at the end of the contract. Even if the work is a success, a commissioner can still put the work out to tender at the end of the original contract period (and may be obliged by EU law to do so) and fund another organisation to do the same work.

If you plan on entering the arena of tendering to run public services (often a very different experience from running a service that your users want in the way they want it) you will need to think about what you do if the funding runs out. Your stakeholders (including services users, trustees and staff) will want to know, and procurers will want to know.



### Activity: Key questions to consider

- How will you ensure the financial viability of your organisation if you do not receive continuation funding?
- What plans will you have in place, and how do you express them in your tender, if you need to stop doing work that you no longer have funding for?
- How will you ensure that your service users have some continuity?
- Are your service users on board, do they understand that the project may not exist for ever?
- Will your service users understand if the relationships you have built up are no longer sustainable and you need to pull out and let another organisation take your place?
- How will you manage the costs of closing the service, including costs associated with transferring staff through TUPE or paying redundancies?




### Resources

The Government Office website has some useful resources, including a 'How To' Guide to Project Succession or Closure and a Readiness Assessment Tool to help organisations plan for the future of their projects and help determine whether a project is ready to move on to its next stage.

A Readiness Assessment Tool to help organisations plan for the future of their projects and help determine whether a project is ready to move on to its next stage: [www.gos.gov.uk](http://www.gos.gov.uk)



## Activity: Checklist – Submitting a tender

Questions about:				What is in place?	What else needs to be done?
<p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you said how you will work with each of the partners (if any) set out in the tender document?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Managing risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you identified potential risk and shown how you will manage it (whether it is directly asked or not)?</li> <li>• Have you included an exit strategy?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Monitoring and evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you explained how you will collect, use and store data gathered from the work?</li> <li>• Have you thought about how the work will be evaluated?</li> <li>• Have you built in costs associated with monitoring and evaluation?</li> <li>• Will your systems effectively gather information on the outputs and outcomes determined by the procurer?</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Costing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you included everything in your price, including any VAT that you will incur delivering the service into the contract cost?</li> </ul>					

## Writing your tender

- Make sure you structure your submission around the evaluation criteria that it will be judged on.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short, punchy and business-like.
- Make sure you sell yourself; don't be afraid to say how great your project is.
- Make sure you have answered everything that is put out in the tender document.
- After writing your tender, summarise what you have included in the tender and why you are best placed to deliver the service. Put this at the beginning of your tender as a kind of executive summary.
- Consider carefully all the questions that are being asked. If there is a question that seems vague or out of place, try to think about why they are asking that question and what information they are looking for.
- Have different colleagues check the tender, including someone who has not seen it before and does not know much about the organisation.

## Putting together your tender

- Don't bind your document as they may want to give sections to different people or photocopy certain parts. Instead, put it in a ring binder or a slide binder, unless they say otherwise.
- Make sure pages are numbered and different sections are clearly marked.
- If you are including appendices, make sure they are well marked and be very obvious about any appendix that you refer to, e.g. 'The organisation's safeguarding policy can be found as appendix 4. Section F refers to our policy around taking young people on trips.'

## Don't forget!

- Ensure the packaging that you send your tender in is completely anonymous, including the envelope and the franking.
- Make sure you have copies of all your tender documents, just in case something goes wrong.
- Ensure that you have enclosed any supporting documents asked for.
- Ensure that you get the tender in on time; deadlines are not negotiable.
- If you hand-deliver the tender, ask for a receipt from the person who takes the tender from you. When posting, send by recorded delivery and keep the receipt as proof of having sent it on time.
- Whether you win the tender or not, ask for feedback from the procuring agency, which can help to build on what was good, learn from what did not go well and raise your profile with the agency.

**Health Warning:** Any tender you submit will be used as a legal contract if you win the tender. Be sure that you can deliver what you say you can, in the time and for the resources specified. You may not have an opportunity to negotiate conditions once you have submitted a bid.

## Resources

Mendip District Council has a useful guide available on their website, which shows how tenders are evaluated. Many authorities will have something similar. [www.mendip.gov.uk/Documents/The\\_Procurement\\_Toolkit\\_06.pdf](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/Documents/The_Procurement_Toolkit_06.pdf)