



UNIT 5



Title of the Podcast: Effectiveness of a fundraising strategy: Are you ready to monitor and evaluate?

Hi everyone, welcome to the e-Patterns podcast series, the European Fundraising Platform for small non-profits. Today's session is on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of a fundraising strategy. How many times, you end up donating and no one informs you? How many times you are not sure if you are doing well or not with your online presence?

Small non-profit organisations usually face development challenges and fundraising is a core activity to overcome such challenges. Fundraising means to plan ahead and clearly define steps to put in place the vision of your organisation. Once your vision is there, you can start to build a fundraising strategy for your non-profit.

If everyone focuses on reaching the goals and reach the fundraising pot, sometimes it is possible to get lost with monitoring and evaluation. With this podcast, we want to have a quick talk on how to measure the performance of fundraising and why it is so important.

Monitoring and evaluation are separate practices dedicated to the assessment of the non-profit organisations' overall performance. Those practices ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources, so you can better assess whether you are spending money wisely.

First, let's try to understand their meaning by some basic facts. Monitoring can be defined as a continuous process of data collection done once the fundraising has been initiated and allows the person to see in real-time what is going on.

Instead, evaluation usually comes after monitoring and requires the collection of outcomes' data.

Before the actual fundraising starts, it is very important to dedicate enough time on basic data to define indicators of success and failure. The combination of basic data and actual results from the fundraising will allow you to evaluate how effective your fundraising work has been.

When carried out correctly and at the right time and place, monitoring and evaluation ensure the success of your strategy and your capacity to really define whether a channel you are using is worth or not and what is not working.

For many non-profit organisations, it can be difficult to measure fundraising effectiveness when it comes to strategy. The main duty of non-profits is to demonstrate development success to donors in a clear, comprehensive and compelling manner. Some typical challenges for the effective use of monitoring and evaluation are lack of experience, limited financial and staff resources, gaps in technical knowledge and inefficient monitoring and evaluation practices.

So, it happens that small organisations usually don't have resources, staff and skills for monitoring and evaluation. Besides, being faced with so many more urgent demands, it is almost a prerequisite for their existence and operation not to make monitoring and evaluation a priority.

Instead, what we want to prove you is the opposite. Monitoring and evaluation can become easier and much more affordable if you use digital tools and if you make evaluation and monitoring not

simply as add-ons. What we want to say is that you should embed monitoring and evaluation in anything you do.

A monitoring and evaluation plan is necessary for NGOs. It is a guide that explains the goals and objectives of a monitoring and evaluation strategy and its key elements. It includes everything that needs to happen from the planning phase until the campaign reaches its goal and creates the intended impact.

The value of monitoring an organisation's fundraising performance increases exponentially over time. Data, covering just a few months, highlight short term trends, but data spanning several years can highlight important long-term trends, that can have a significant impact on organisation and fundraising strategies.

Let us clear one final reason about monitoring and evaluation. Such actions are not only about control, but about the transparency you want to ultimately communicate with your donors. If you ask for money, you have to report what and how you have spent it. This is some common understanding you have to make sure your evaluation and monitoring strategy should aim for.

Consequently, if you spend money well, you will be able to do greater good and improve your working performance!

Finally, bear in mind that developing and monitoring are flexible and you need to react to improve how your fundraising campaign is working! So, always leave some space for constructive uncertainty. It will make you grow!

For more information, examples and tips about monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of a fundraising strategy, please go deeper on our European Fundraising Learning platform. By the way, do not miss the rest of the e-Patterns podcast series. Happy fundraising, folks!