

STEP 6: TRACK YOUR IMPACT



While you are planning your objectives, strategies, and tactics, it is important to think about how you will know if your initiative is successful. Developing your monitoring and evaluation plan early, especially before your initiative starts, will not only save you time and money but will make sure you are collecting valuable information along the way.

What is monitoring? Monitoring is the ongoing, routine tracking of key elements of your tactics. For example, the monitoring phase could track the audience reach (how many audience members view digital content); number of impressions (number of times a message is viewed); number of retweets (number of times a person reposts a tweet that another user created) or shares, and number of likes of Twitter messages on Twitter and other sites that Twitter links to such as, Facebook. As another example, digital communication initiatives that rely on celebrities or other well-known figures to promote the initiative on their social media sites (for example, YouTube, Twitter) would need to monitor whether those spokespeople promoted messages as planned and whether those messages achieved adequate audience reach and sharing across audience members. If these tactics are not working as planned, new ones should be developed or existing ones should be modified.

What is evaluation? Evaluation is the assessment of change associated with your initiative. Ultimately, evaluations should measure whether the outcome changed during or after the initiative and whether those changes can be attributed to the initiative. Does the audience, for example, report seeing social media advertisements about cancer prevention, or do they share social media messages regarding the campaign with others in their social network? Do audience members' beliefs about cancer screening change after exposure to those messages? Do they engage in desired behaviour changes after exposure to the initiative?

Read on to develop an effective monitoring and evaluation plan for your digital health initiative using the following three steps: 1) define your evaluation question; 2) create your data collection approach; and 3) implement your plan.

Step 1: Define your evaluation question

First, define the question you want your evaluation to answer. Developing a logic model can be a helpful way to narrow down your evaluation question. A logic model outlines the resources and activities needed to accomplish your intended outcomes and impact. Figure 3 is an example of a logic model.



Figure 3. Example Logic Model

- **Inputs:** The resources used to implement your initiative. These can be staff, partnerships, money, materials, your digital platform, and so on.
- **Outputs:** The activities you do to implement your initiative. Often, outputs will mirror the tactics you use.

- **Outcomes:** Your audiences' responses to your inputs and outputs. For instance, outcomes can be changes in awareness, knowledge, beliefs, or behaviours. Outcomes can also be changes to policy. Evaluations aim to answer questions about these outcomes.
- **Impact :** Usually assesses changes at the population level. For instance, impact could be a reduction in cancer cases or quality of life improvement for patients with cancer. Impact is often the most costly and complicated item to evaluate.

Mapping out your logic model will help you narrow down the question you want to ask. For instance, are you interested in understanding whether all the activities you planned were completed in the way you intended? If so, this evaluation would be focused on your outputs (a process evaluation). Or are you interested in seeing whether people who were exposed to your campaign changed a particular behaviour, such as scheduling a cancer screening appointment. If so, that would be an outcome evaluation.

Step 2: Create your data collection approach

Once you have defined your evaluation question, the next step is to plan how you will collect the information, or data, needed to answer that question. You will often need to use more than one approach. Here are some common examples of types of data you can collect for evaluations:

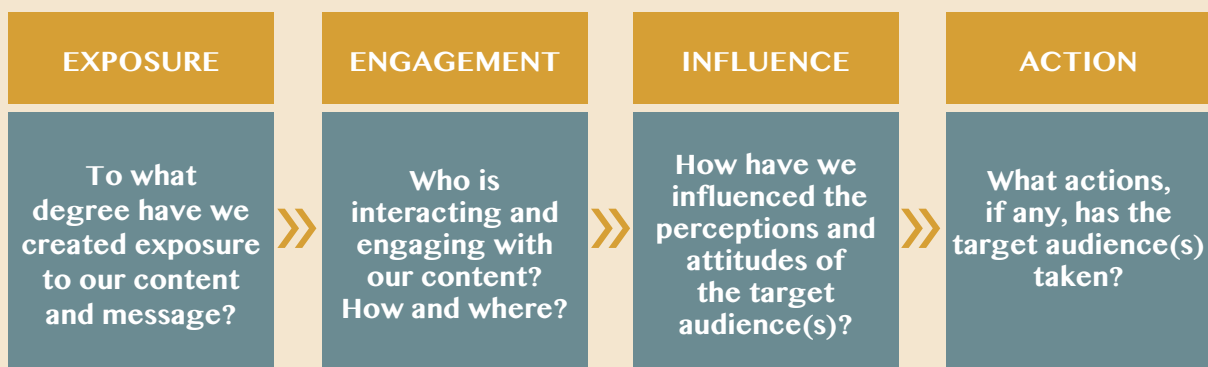
- **Digital monitoring/organisation records:** Routine information collected by organisations, or monitoring data, can be helpful if you are trying to understand how your initiative was implemented. This information could include the number of staff members who worked on the initiative, the number of visits to an organisation's website, or the cost associated with carrying out intervention activities. Digital tools like [Social Studio](#), [Hootsuite](#), and [Social Mention](#) make monitoring your social media activities simple.
- **Qualitative surveys:** Qualitative data is often information you get from asking open-ended questions to understand experiences, opinions, or thoughts. Qualitative surveys can use methods such as individual interviews or focus group discussions to gather these open-ended data. For example, someone could hold a focus group discussion to ask how the digital campaign affected their perspective on cancer.

- **Quantitative surveys:** Unlike qualitative data, quantitative data often use closed-ended questions with specific categories to get a reliable estimate of change. For example, if you wanted to know whether your initiative changed screening rates, you could send a survey to a random sample of people in an area and ask whether they have gone for cancer screening. The response categories would be ‘Yes’ and ‘No.’

Digital monitoring

As you are planning your digital strategy tactics, it is important to keep in mind how you plan to monitor your progress through these tactics. Think of it like this: I will know I am successful by _____, and I can measure this by _____. For instance, you are developing a campaign to raise awareness about cervical cancer in India using Twitter. You will know you are successful by lots of Twitter traffic for your campaign, and you can measure this by the number of retweets of your posts, the number of posts using your hashtag, and the number of comments under your posts. The type of monitoring data you collect can be grouped among the following categories: exposure, engagement, influence, and action. You want to monitor the information you are sending out (exposure), who is interacting with your tactics (engagement), the kind of interaction with the tactics (influence), and how that interaction led them to perform one of your chosen outcomes (action), Figure 4 presents some key questions to ask for each category of monitoring data.

Figure 4. Categories of Monitoring Data



Note that you will often need to collect data at several time points to measure change. This could be before, after, or during your initiative. Creating a defined plan of what data collection approach you will use, when you are going to use it, and why you are using it will keep you on track to implementing a successful evaluation.

Table 4 displays an example of the kind of information you could gather for your digital monitoring plan.

Table 4. Gathering Information for a Digital Monitoring Plan

Metric	Data	Definition	Purpose	Hypothetical Baseline	Target
Web Performance (Websites, Blogs, Video Marketing, etc.)					
Engagement	Average number of unique visitors	Unique visit is one person (or IP address) who visits the site at least once during a designated period	Provides high-level information on breadth of traffic and content use	Average 1,300 unique visitors per month	At least 1,600 unique visitors per month
	Bounce rate	Percentage of visitors who looked at only one page and immediately left the site	Measures depth and quality of a visit	30% bounce rate from homepage	Less than 25% bounce rate from homepage
Influence	Page shares	Number of times a webpage is shared using the social media share buttons along the top of each page	Measures the number of users who are sharing the site with their social networks	800 per month	Varies monthly by content but ideally 1,500 shares
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)					
Exposure	Average monthly posts	Average number of an account's posts or tweets	Provides high-level information on digital presence	75 posts per month	At least 80 posts per month
Engagement	Followers	Number of accounts following your social media account	Provides high-level information on your reach and visibility	3,500 followers	10,000 followers
Influence	Interactions of followers	Average number of likes, shares, retweets, or posts with hashtag	Provides high-level information on your followers' level of engagement	30,000 likes, 5,000 shares, 350 posts with campaign hashtag	50,000 likes, 10,000 shares, 1,000 posts with campaign hashtag
Action	Website information seeking	Number of materials downloaded from the companion website, looking for patterns between posts and downloads	Provides insight on the impact of social media tactics on information seeking from website	55 materials	Varies monthly by content pushes but ideally around 150 materials

In addition to tracking exposure to digital media messages for specific members of a priority audience, it is possible to access general audience exposure and sharing data from social media websites. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter provide data on reach (for example, the number of individual people who have viewed content), impressions (for example, the number of individual times content is viewed), clicks (for example, clicking on a post to get more information or to visit a campaign website), likes, shares, or comments on a specific page, post, advertisement, or other content posted to the social media platform as part of a digital media campaign. These social media platforms also provide basic demographic information (for example, age, gender, location) about people who are viewing or engaging with campaign content in these social media spaces. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram also provide data on the type of device that a person is using—such as an iPhone, Android phone, desktop computer, iPad, Android tablet, laptop computer—when they are exposed to, share, or engage with campaign content on these social media platforms. Additional tools, like Google Analytics, are also available and allow for tracking audience reach and impressions of digital campaign content across any website or mobile app.

Step 3: Implement Your Plan

Outlining a clear data collection approach before your initiative starts is important so that you are getting the information you need at the right time. For instance, if the question you want to answer is ‘Are people more likely to talk to their friends and family about cancer after my Facebook campaign?’ it will be important to measure people’s willingness to talk about cancer before and after the campaign. If you do not collect these data before the campaign, it is hard to know whether the campaign made any change.

Continue to refer to your data collection plan and use it as your guide. Note changes if you move away from your plan and why you did it. Keeping good records will help you when you are justifying your approach and the results of your evaluation.



Complete the following activity to identify what monitoring and evaluation activities are best suited to track the success of your initiative.

BUILD MY INITIATIVE: TRACK YOUR IMPACT

My digital communication initiative so far...

AUDIENCE: _____ (e.g., youths aged 18 to 24)

Based on what you learned in the **Step 1: Understand Your Audience** section, write your priority audience here.

OBJECTIVE: _____

Based on what you learned in the **Step 2: Define Your Objectives** section, write one of your objectives here.

STRATEGY: _____

Based on what you learned in the **Step 3: Select Your Strategies and Tactics** section, write one of your strategies here.

CONTENT: _____

Based on what you learned in the **Step 4: Craft Your Messaging and Content** section, write your priority audience here.

TOOLS: _____

Based on what you learned in the **Step 5: Select Your Tools** section, write your priority audience here.

Key Question(s) or Objective	Indicators	Data Source	Data Collection Time Frame	People Responsible
Example: Are our social media messages being shared across audience members as intended?	Average number of likes on Facebook posts	Monitor likes, shares, and comments	Weekly	Social media coordinator