

# **Man Matters Interim Evaluation Report April 2011**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Man Matters project is now in its second year. This first interim evaluation report will give: an overview of progress against the broad aims of the project, learning emerging from the work and recommendations to shape the rest of the project.

1.2 The report takes in several strands of evaluation including:

- Participants' evaluation of activity by questionnaire
- Participants' view of their distance travelled following participation in the project
- A review of the project's priorities and distance travelled carried out by Community Evaluation Northern Ireland (CENI)
- An analysis of data about learners and courses which throws light on the background of participants and communities involved
- The views of project staff and partners at this stage of the project

1.3 Other strands of evaluation will be added by an evaluator appointed by the partnership. They will concentrate on gathering qualitative information from focus groups, interviews, case studies etc.

## 2. Activity

2.1 A summary of activity at the mid way point in year 2 is as follows:

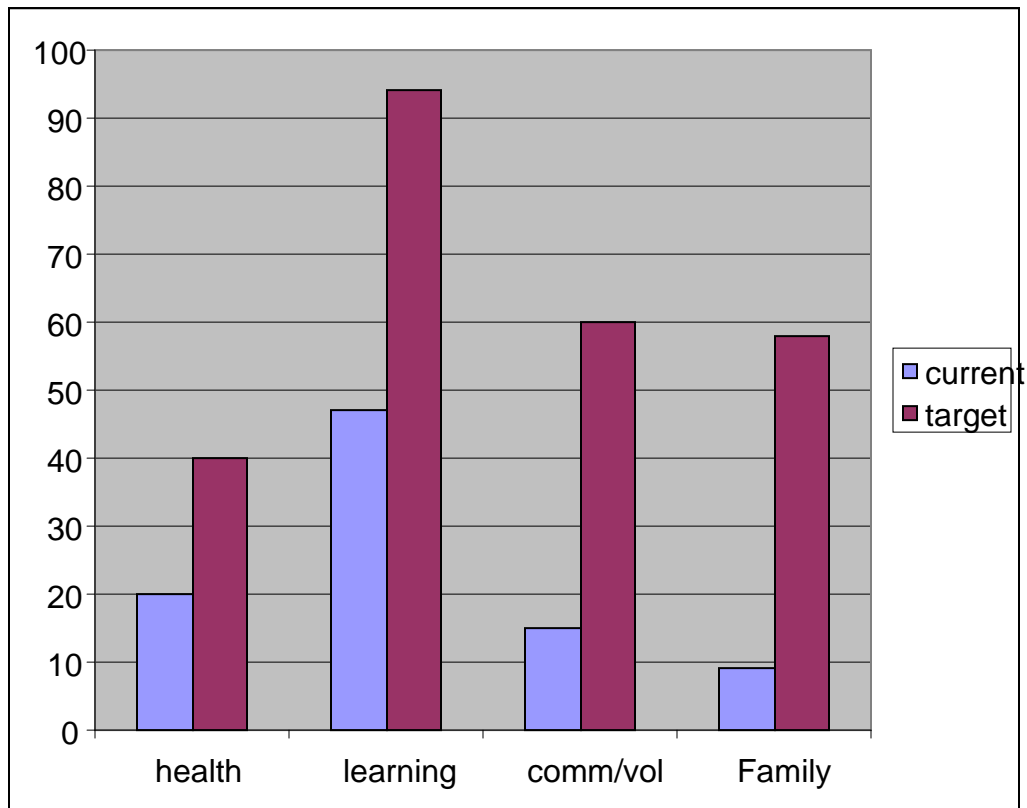
- 91 courses across the four themes of the project
- 426 individual men have taken part in those courses
- 2 events on Father's day (involving 98 men) and during men's health week (involving 300 men)
- Held one project seminar (32 attendees)
- Produced one briefing paper on men's health
- Designed and implemented mentoring processes
- Launched volunteer recruitment drive designed to recruit men to volunteer roles with Home Start and PAC
- Developed 3 new courses, Framework for Health, Men's Health Champion Training and Staying Connected (Fathers )`
- Held 4 workshops (131 attendees)

### 2.2 Outcomes and Milestones

The project produces 6 monthly reports for the lottery against the outcomes and milestones. As these are extensive the content will not be repeated here but the reports should be read alongside this evaluation.



## 2.3 Courses



2.3 The chart illustrates the spread of courses across the four themes. Progress has been made in all areas. However it is clear that progress has been slower under the family and community/volunteering themes whilst health and learning courses are ahead of target. There are several reasons for the current imbalance:

- The family theme has fewer courses due to problems getting Home-Start volunteering courses started and delays in rolling out the Flatpack Guide courses. The Flatpack guide courses are now rolling out well and should be on track. Measures are being taken to address the problems with volunteering but there may be a case for reviewing these targets
- The community/volunteering courses have not proved as popular as anticipated and this may require a review if remedial measures do not result in an increase

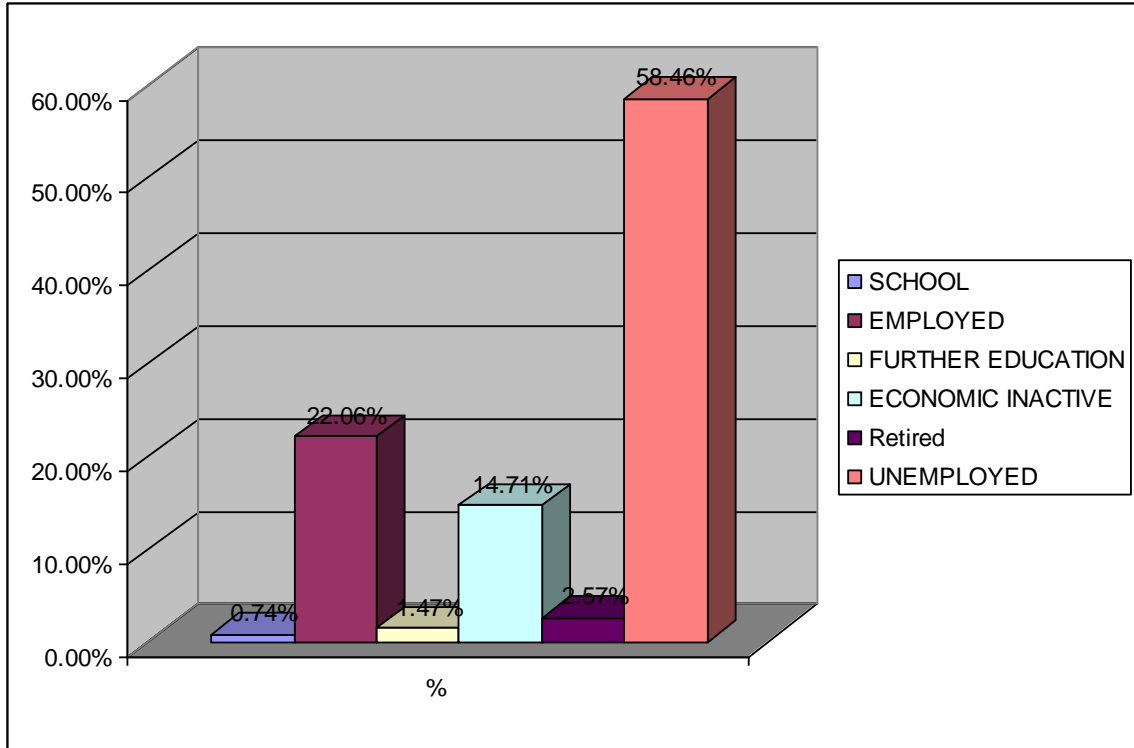
- The health courses have proved popular partly due to men's health being very topical and partly due to the efforts of our partners in the Mens Health Forum
- The learning courses have proved extremely popular, with introductory ICT courses of particular interest, though the Total Football course has also been much in demand. The courses offer a safe route back into learning on topics that are of interest to men which helps explain their popularity.

2.5 The partners and project workers are aware of the balance of courses and any issues this brings up. It is being kept under scrutiny and we have agreed to review it when necessary

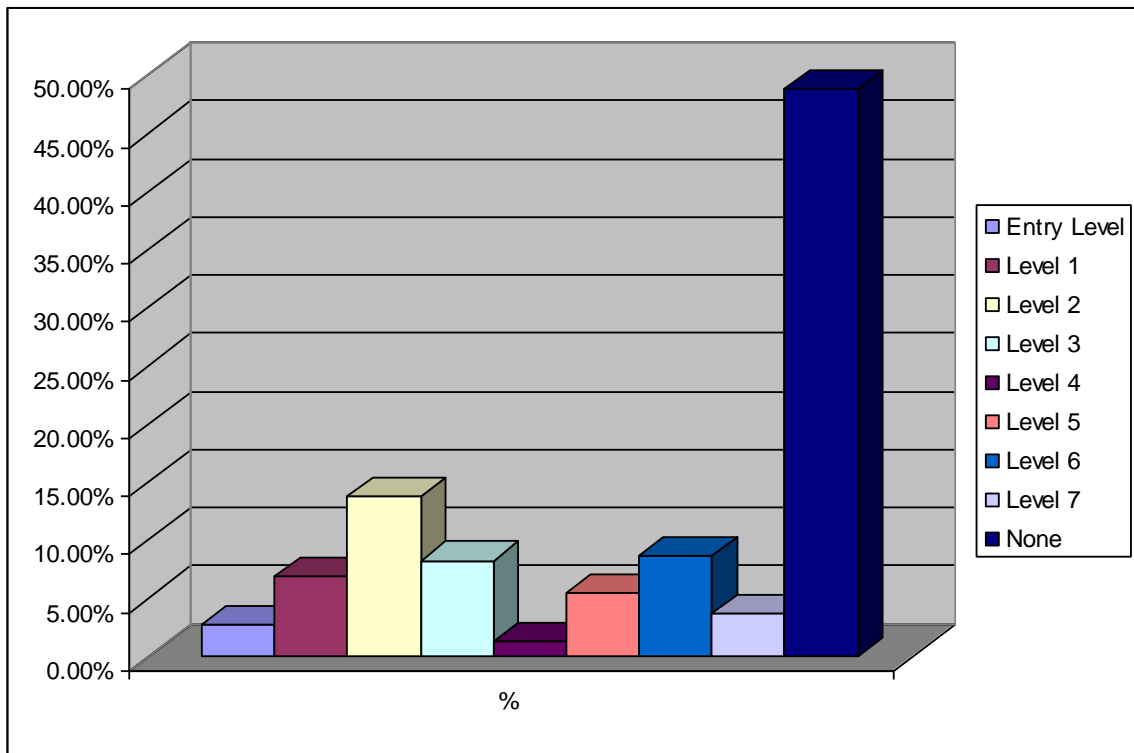
### **3. Participation**

3.1 The business plan said that "*The project will work with 800 men over 5 years from disadvantaged areas and groups who face significant barriers to learning and well being.*" Monitoring information from 426 participants who have taken part so far gives the following information

3.2 Economic status information demonstrates that over 58% of the men involved are unemployed with a further 15% economically inactive. Although the correlation cannot be exact, given the employment status of most participants, it seems fair to assume that the project is working mainly with more disadvantaged men



### 3.3 Level of educational attainment on enrolling on courses



The information displayed shows that nearly half of the participants have no qualifications with a further 9.5% below level 2 (which is the aspirational target across the EU). The percentages at 5,6 and 7 mostly represent attendees at workshops and the Framework course which by their nature attract employees of organisations rather than men at grassroots level. It is our view based on this data that we are succeeding in targeting men with low educational attainment. It would be useful to be able to disaggregate data from organisational activity from grass roots courses

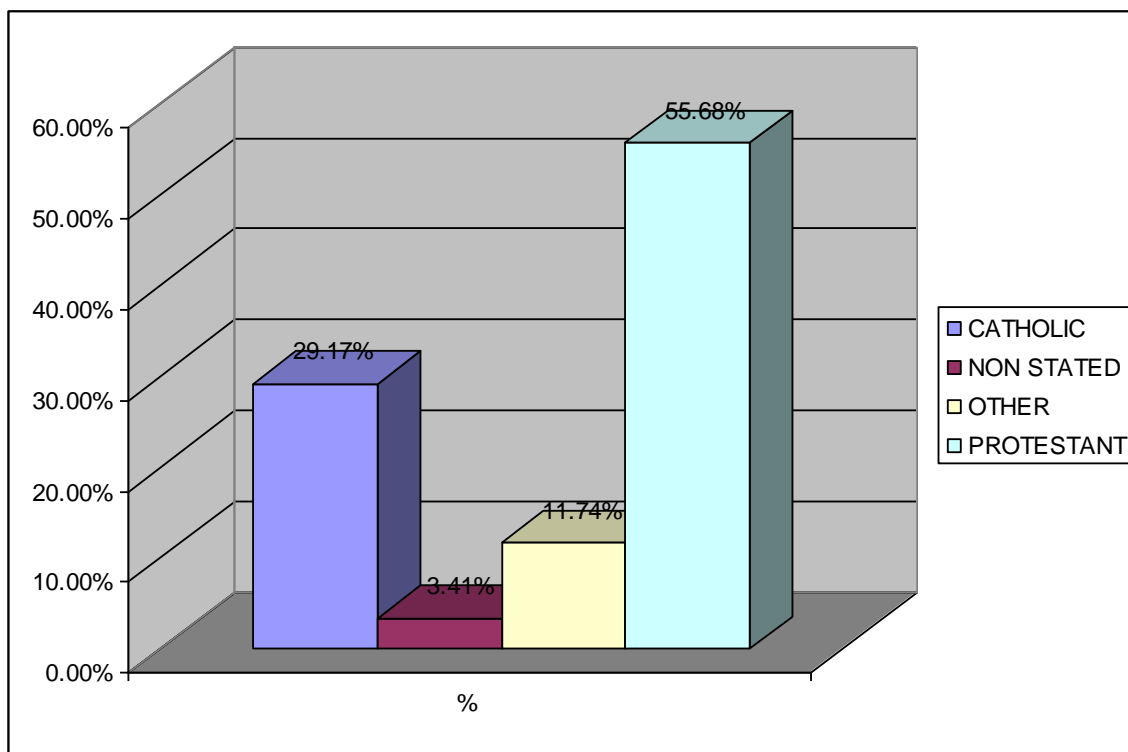
3.4 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA): NRAs are the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. The following tables use the postcode of participants and course venue to calculate participation rates from NRAs. The population of NRA's make up roughly 16% of the total population of Northern Ireland therefore we have participation rates of nearly double that rate participating in the programme. Again once if information from workshops and courses not aimed directly at gross roots communities was taken out this rate would probably rise. The course venue also reflects a high degree of activity in NRAs. Interestingly the NRA with the largest participation and activity rate, Greater Shankill, is also the area with the highest percentage of people with no qualifications

Participants from NRA	%
Not in NRA	67.95%
Andersonstown	0.19%
Ballyclare	1.73%
Colin	3.45%
Crumlin / Ardoyne	1.34%
Downpatrick	0.19%
Enniskillen	0.38%
Falls / Clonard	4.41%
Greater Shankill	5.95%
Inner East Belfast	3.65%
Inner North Belfast	4.41%
Lurgan	0.19%
Newry	1.92%
Omagh	0.19%
Outer West	0.38%
Outer West (Lenadoon)	0.19%
Rathcoole	0.96%

South West Belfast	0.38%
Triax	0.38%
Upper Ardoyne	0.77%
Upper Springfield /	
Whiterock	0.38%
Waterside	0.58%
	32.05%

Courses ran in NRA	%
Not in NRA	56.47%
Colin	1.57%
Falls / Clonard	5.29%
Greater Shankill	10.39%
Inner East Belfast	10.39%
Inner North Belfast	3.53%
Inner South Belfast	1.37%
Newry	2.94%
Rathcoole	5.10%
Triax	2.94%
	43.53%

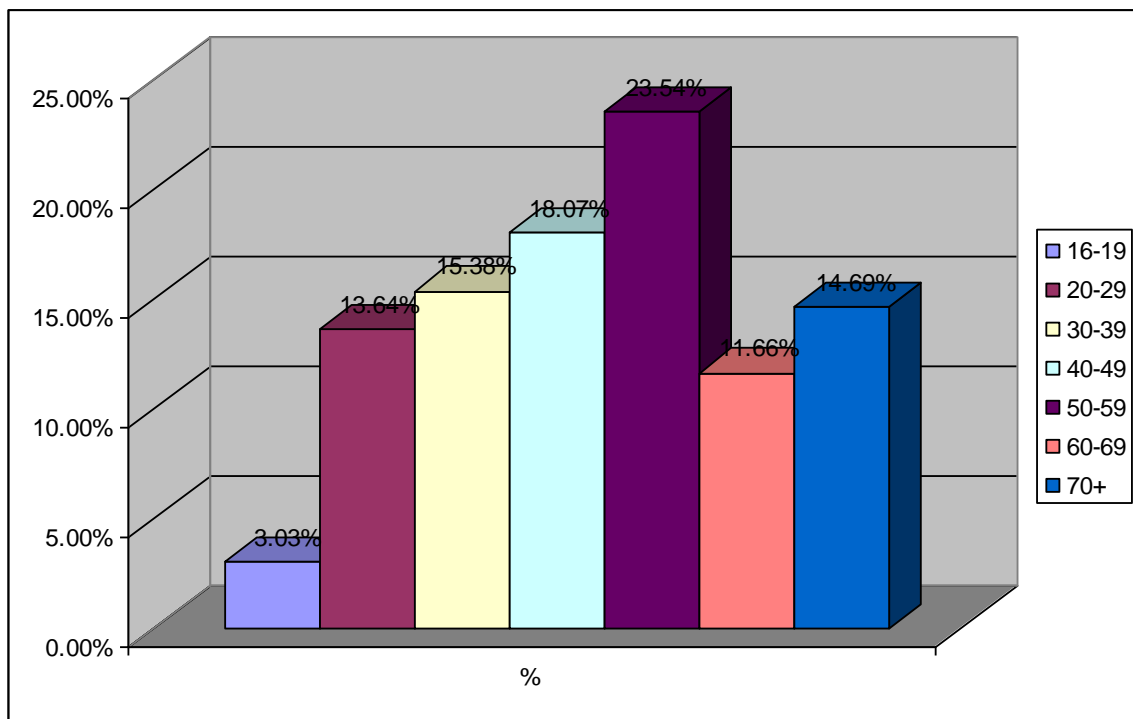
### 3.5 Religious breakdown





The religious breakdown of 55.68% Protestant and 29.17% Catholic is significant. Traditionally adult and community education has been stronger in the Catholic community so it could be seen as a positive that the project is reaching such a high percentage of men in the Protestant community. This is mainly due to good links with grass roots groups in predominantly Protestant areas. At the same time the project would not want there to be any further significant imbalance and should continue to monitor religious breakdown.

### 3.6 Age



The age chart demonstrates a good spread across the age brackets of adult males. Although again there is no specific driver for particular age targets it may be interesting to work with more young males and the partnership could consider a targeted push.

## 4. Evaluation

### 4.1 Evaluation

The following information is taken from participant evaluations of courses.

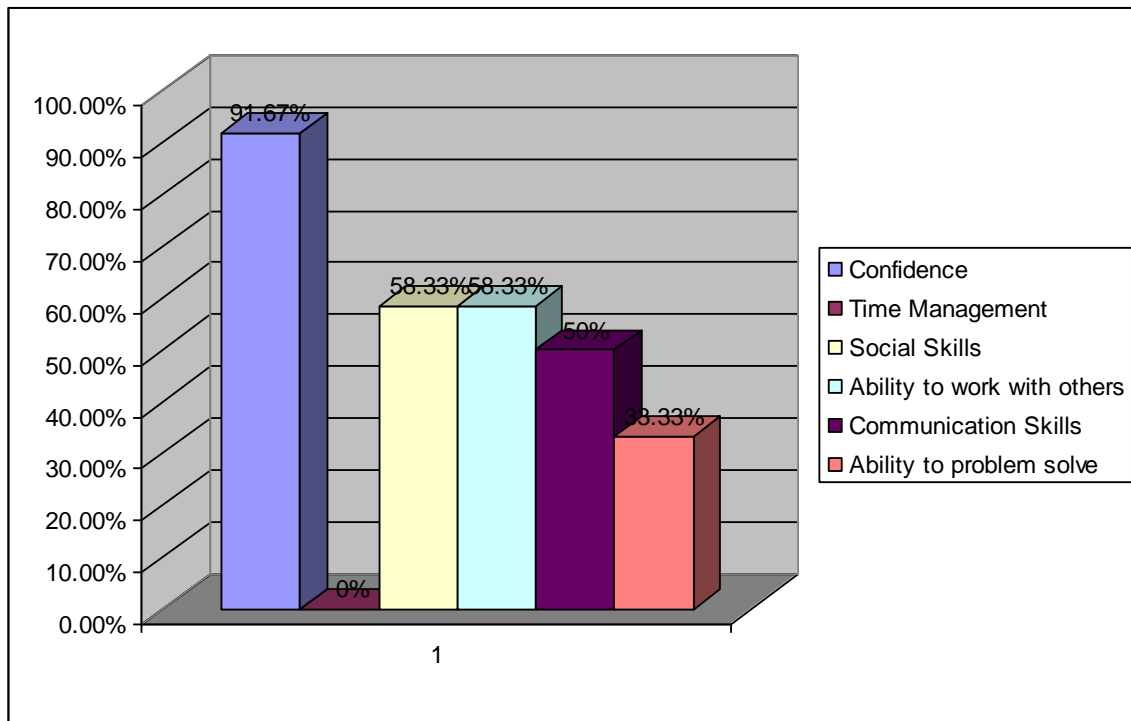
#### Percentage of ratings selected

6 = best 1 = worst	6	5	4	3	2	1
The course overall?	67%	26%	6%	1%	0%	0%
The clarity of the course objectives?	61%	29%	9%	1%	0%	0%
The degree to which the course met your learning needs?	55%	32%	13%	0%	0%	0%
The flexibility of the tutor to meet your learning needs?	72%	22%	6%	0%	0%	0%
The tutor 's skill and knowledge?	84%	11%	5%	0%	0%	0%
The pace of the learning?	63%	26%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Average	67%	24.3%	8.3%	0.3%	0%	0%

4.2 The evaluation statistics indicate an exceptionally high level of satisfaction with the courses with 91.3% placing their rating of the course at 5 or 6 and only .3% at 3 or below. The quality of the tutors is marked out as particularly high and we believe this is down to the type of tutor we employ and the methods they use. WEA tutors are experienced community practioners many of whom were past learners and they often come from the same communities as the participants they teach. Experiential and Negotiated learning is core to our delivery i.e. the course takes into account the life experiences of the learners and style and content are negotiated with participants.

4.3 Whilst not significantly low the question - *the degree to which the course met your learning needs* is rated lower than some of the other responses. We do not have any rationale for this as yet and may ask the evaluators to look into this to see if there actions we can take to improve on this criterion

4.4 The evaluation sheet also asked learners what they had got out of the courses (participants can select more than one area so each answer is out of 100%). The chart below illustrated that nearly all men gained in confidence which is a stated aim of the project. Many others gained skills such as social skills, ability to work with others and communication skills which are also important to the project as they contribute to our overall aim of helping men re-engage in areas such as health, family and learning



## 5. Distance Travelled

5.1 The process for the distance travelled questions sits within the following mentoring process

- A mentor is appointed to each group taking on a course and they meet with the group usually prior to the first session
- At that session the mentor brings the participating men through the mentoring booklet. In this session the mentor covers the following areas with the men: understand the Man Matters project and the opportunities available, Decide what your

learning goals are for the course you are on, Work through any worries you might have about the course, Identify areas where you might need support, Plot your progress throughout the course and see where you have got to at the end, Decide what you want to do next

- Ask distance travelled questions examples including 1. Confidence “How confident do you feel about achieving things in your life?” 2. Learning “How confident do you feel about learning new things?” 3. The course, “How much do you know about the subject of the course you are starting now?”
- The mentor returns at the end of the course to complete the distance travelled questions and to look at what the man wants to do next

## 5.2 Answers to the distance travelled questions

Question	Start	End	Distance travelled	Distance travelled %
How confident do you feel about achieving things in your life?	5.71	7.32	1.61	28%
How confident do you feel about learning new things?	6.37	7.71	1.34	21%
How much do you know about the subject of the course you are starting now?	4.56	6.49	1.93	42%

The statistics above are an average across all of the men who have completed the mentoring information. There is huge variation in the answers; however, collectively they show a positive movement across all the measures.

## 6. Partnership

6.1 As part of a Lottery programme wide evaluation CENI met with the partnership in February. They carried out an exercise designed to measure stakeholder consensus on what strategic changes are to

be achieved by the project. The following tables collate the results including:

- the priority the partnership gave to various areas
- How difficult we felt it was to achieve change
- Where we believed the men we work with are at the minute
- Where we hope we can help them get to

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## People based changes

	Outcome	Priority	Change ability	Baseline	Estimated Change
1	Enhanced individual capacity/development	10	4	3	6
2	Improved Personal independence	5	5	2	5
3	Educational Attainment	8	4	2	6
4	Employability	3	7	2	4
5	Improved Healthy lifestyle Choices	8	8	2	4
6	Improved Mental Health	9	8	2	3
7	Improved Physical Health	8	6	4	5
8	Improved Family Cohesion	8	6	4	6
9	Personal /home safety	1	9	1	1
10	Enhanced engagement by hard to reach groups	10	6	2	5
11	More Active/Involved in Community	8	6	3	6
12	Enhanced Volunteering	8	9	2	3

## Place based changes

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Change ability</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Estimated Change</b>
1	Enhanced Community Development	7	6	3	5
2	Improved Access to Services	9	7	3	5
3	Enhanced Community facilities	1	4	4	6
4	Improved Physical Environment	0	0	0	0
5	Better Community Safety	0	0	0	0
6	Improved Home Safety	0	0	0	0

## Organisation based changes

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Change ability</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Estimated Change</b>
1	Enhanced partnership working within this project	10	5	5	7
2	Strategic influence of the project	9	9	2	3
3	Practice Development contribution of project	8	8	2	4

## Relationship based changes

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Changeability</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Estimated Change</b>
1	Bonding	7	6	3	6
2	Bridging	7	6	2	6
3	Linking	8	8	1	3

6.2 The exercise provided a useful space for the partnership to reflect on their work so far and how they would like it to progress. Some of the scoring would be as expected e.g. a 10 priority put against Enhanced individual capacity/development and Enhanced engagement by hard to reach groups with reasonable amounts of movement predicted. However other criteria produced a healthy debate amongst the partners; for example the strategic influence criteria was rated at a 9 priority level which is not reflected in the work of the project. The partnership is now considering ways to increase the strategic influence of the project.

6.3 Partnership review: Over the past few months the partnership has been engaged in an informal review of their work in the project. This process has not been completed yet but so far the following issues have been identified:

6.3.1 Parents Advice Centre – good roll out of Flatpack guide, development of the Staying Connected course and involvement in the upcoming Fathers seminar all indicate a very healthy level of activity and engagement. May be some difficulties in running the volunteering courses and this is under review

6.3.2 Ballynafeigh – the initial plan to base 20% of activity in the area has not worked despite intensive activity by the partner and the project development officer. This will be reviewed shortly

6.3.3 Home-Start – the plan to run volunteering courses and trustee management training has not progressed so far. The partnership is engaged in one last push to attract volunteers. If this is unsuccessful this will have to be reviewed

6.3.4 Mens Health Forum in Ireland – the forum is extensively engaged in a number of areas of the project and as the project has rolled out their role has increased. Currently they are involved in: plans for men’s health week, production of the health briefing paper, the Framework for Mens Health Course and the development of the Men’s Health Champion course.

## **7. Future Evaluation**

8.1 This evaluation has been mainly concerned with quantitative analysis of information generated through monitoring information, evaluation forms and mentoring feedback. The partnership has engaged an evaluator whose main job will be to generate qualitative information. The following information has been taken from the evaluation specification and gives a good guide to the types of information than can be expected in future evaluation reports

### **7.2.1 Step One: establish baseline**

- Establish the baseline situation at the start date of the evaluation
- Understand the context the project is being delivered in particularly in relation to policy and activity that affects men
- Understand the Big Lottery Fund Objectives for this project
- Understand the partnership approach to the project
- Understand the Man Matters specific project outcomes, actions and outputs



- Together with WEA ensure the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to collect the necessary information and data.
- Take account of how this evaluation fits with the overall evaluation and monitoring framework

### **7.2.2 Step Two: collect evaluative information on:**

- The achievement of project outcomes, actions and outputs with a strong emphasis on impact at the level of individual participant. community and relevant service providers/policy makers
- Good practice/learning from the project
- The added value of the partnership approach to the project
- Make project upgrade recommendations to the delivery partnership if identified
- Make recommendations on the sustainability of the work of the project
- We would envisage the evaluator using a range of evaluation methods including, focus groups, case studies, structured interviews, surveys, facilitated meetings of partnership and stakeholders. The emphasis should be on the collection of strong qualitative data.

### **7.2.3 Step three: preparation of reports**

- Collate and analyse the data collected
- Feedback findings and discuss recommendations on an ongoing basis with WEA
- Produce the following reports
  - A brief report, after the base lining exercise, setting out findings and plans for subsequent evaluation – within two months of appointment
  - A short report capturing the views of a sample of participating groups of men on the impact of the project - within three months of appointment
  - 2 Interim evaluation reports at intervals to be decided

- A final evaluation report – draft to be completed 3 months before end of project, completed report to be submitted at least one month before end of project (August 2014).

## **8. Learning and Recommendations**

8.1 A number of areas have emerged from the project as key learning

1. It is possible with good contacts and an “on the ground” approach to engage “hard to reach” men.
2. It is also clear that once men have taken part in a learning activity that they enjoy it and want to do more.
3. Despite the cultural and socio-economic barriers the project has proved very successful in predominantly Protestant communities where educational attainment has been at its lowest
4. The Framework for Health course has proved an excellent way to engage with health service providers and raise their awareness on men’s health
5. Engagement in learning can have a positive effect in areas like confidence, learning and the subject of the course itself
6. The partnership approach is of vital importance as it builds links that adds value to the project activity

8.2 A number of specific recommendations arise out of this report including

1. The partnership and project team should look for ways to extend programme activity to geographic areas as yet untouched by the project.
2. The partnership and project team should review the balance of courses across the themes with a view to either targeting activity in the family and community/volunteering themes or

- changing the overall targets for the projects in line with demand
3. The partnership and project team should increase efforts to roll out the volunteering courses along with Home-Start and Parents Advice Centre
  4. The project team should disaggregate data from workshops and courses aimed at organisations so that those participants are not reported in statistics along with grass roots men.
  5. A report on the number of organisations involved should be generated
  6. The partnership and project team should keep the religious balance of participants under review
  7. The partnership and project team should consider whether it would be worthwhile to target more younger men
  8. Continue the review of the partnership with particular reference to Ballynafeigh and Home-Start
  9. The project team should consider why the participants score lower in the evaluation question *the degree to which the course met your learning needs* in contrast to other evaluation questions
  10. The partnership and project team should explore ways to increase the strategic impact of the project

END

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