

Community energy efficiency toolkit

Monitoring and evaluation part 4:

Evaluating change and impact

Impact evaluation

True impact assessment is a tricky business and measuring it often involves:

- Independent evaluators for objectives assessments
- Establishing a control group to compare against the project group
- Measuring changes over extended (sometimes very long term) periods of time

Often this is not fully possible with short time lines and budgets.

Understanding change as a result of the project (attribution):

- What influenced the change?
- Do respondents show change unprompted or only when prompted?
- How did the project influence them?
- Are there other influences to consider?

Using control groups to measure change

- An identical group of participants to the project participants group should be used
- Before the project starts data should be collected and compared to data either or both during and at the end of the project
- The baseline data should be identical. The after data should (if the project is causing change) show differences.



Attribution and control groups- issues

Control groups are, however:

- Difficult to set up
- High cost
- Time-consuming

If you are not able to set up a control group you can try the following:

Issue	Solution
No control group	Compare baseline and after data from participants
No baseline data or control group	Compare the <i>perception</i> of 'before/baseline data' from participants with after the project Use comparisons with other established/accepted market data sources