

## ***Monitoring and evaluation***

The case studies utilised monitoring and gathered feedback by various means. It was very common to follow, for example, the distribution of various materials, number of participants, web-site visitors, subsidy applications, contacts with advisors, market changes and user opinions/satisfaction. Monitoring results were used for marketing control and ex-post evaluation.

An effective tool in helping to reach the programme goals is to establish performance indicators which can be monitored during programme implementation and help in ex-post evaluation. The terminology “performance indicators” was rarely explicitly mentioned but it was clear from the programme descriptions that they had been formulated quite many cases. However, what remains more unclear is, have any target levels been established for the performance indicators.

Although mentioned only in one programme as a success factors, daily monitoring in the launch phase of a campaign may be worth considering depending on the programme type. In the case, conscientious monitoring allowed to detect flaws quickly and to respond accordingly.

Some kind of evaluation was carried out for most of the programmes because it was a selection criterion the case studies. It was most common that evaluation was carried out ex-post but in longer programmes also mid-term evaluations or in permanent programmes periodical evaluations were conducted. For simplicity, all these evaluations taking place during or after programme implementation are here referred to as ex-post evaluation. In few cases ex-ante evaluations were carried out, e.g., to establish the base-line for the activities. However, no attempts to evaluate the programme impact ex-ante were reported.

Process evaluation (25 cases) was slightly less common than impact evaluation (29 cases). Commonly mentioned problems included difficulties in the co-operation and motivation of the different implementing parties, problems in the communication channels and messages and lack of or excessively negative feedback. It was also recognised in some cases that planning should have been better (lacking e.g. background studies and needs assessment) and more time should have been allocated.

Evaluation of cost-effectiveness (which also could be classified under impact evaluation) of the programmes was a rarity. This is somewhat surprising given the importance of cost-effectiveness in justifying financing decisions. The likely explanation is the difficulty of quantitative evaluation of the impact of behavioural change programmes.

A multitude of different ex-post evaluation methods for programme impacts were reported. These ranged from participant surveys, testing and comparison with control groups to top-down method evaluating the impact of several programmes focusing on the same target group. However, the methods managed to capture much more frequently the outcome (e.g. energy saved) than effect (change of behaviour).

The choice of impact evaluation method depends on numerous factors such as evaluation objectives, programme characteristics, resources (money, personnel and skills), availability of data, institutional structure and infrastructures. The most common method appeared to be participant surveys conducted various ways (questionnaire, telephone, internet etc.), sometimes before and after the programme.

One difficulty faced by several programmes was the attribution of an observed market impact or survey results to a given programme. Another challenge was related to the reliability of results as in surveys people tend to exaggerate their energy efficiency actions.

The findings related to monitoring and evaluation have been summarised in the following list.

- Summary of monitoring and control:
  - o Plan monitoring from the outset keeping in mind the needs of control during implementation and the needs of ex-post evaluation.
  - o Keep the risk analysis and back-up plan in mind when planning monitoring.
  
- o Summary of evaluation:
  - Define the evaluation objectives, i.e., what you want to evaluate regarding the process and/or impact.
  - Decide the evaluation method and plan data collection accordingly.

Balance your evaluation objectives with the resources and needs (take account of the programme size, replication of the concept etc.)