

Evaluation of Pilot Action – Background

Why evaluation?

The purpose of pilot actions is to test new approaches to solving problems of sustainable urban transport. It is also to understand how pilot projects can become full scale programmes. Each city is monitoring the implementation of the Pilot actions. From this monitoring information we are carrying out an evaluation- these are the 'lessons learnt'. Evaluation helps us understand how and why the pilots worked or did not work. A successful pilot action produces an evaluation; a successful pilot does not need positive outcomes.

A pilot action which did not achieve its objectives is a success if the evaluation helped to explain the reasons why. The evaluation identifies mistakes and where future improvements can be made before a pilot is expanded to a full scale programme.

A pilot action that is successfully in achieving its objectives is not a successful pilot action if the reasons for success are unknown – we cannot repeat the success if we do not understand why it was a success!

Evaluation is more than monitoring and measuring indicators. It includes the process of planning and implementing the pilot action.

We need to know about all the pilot actions which have been implemented, whether they went to plan, did not ever get started, or had to be changed half way through. All the pilot actions need to be evaluated. All pilot actions provide valuable 'lessons learnt', even though they are delayed, not finalised, cancelled, etc. With this in mind and a thorough evaluation all pilot actions can be successful.

Example: Why evaluation?

The following example provides an extremely short summary of an evaluation of a not-finalised pilot action to show why evaluation is useful.

A pilot project in a city aimed at coordinating freight deliveries into the city centre by helping shopkeepers cooperate in deliveries. The shopkeepers were contacted and invited to take part in the project and to coordinate their deliveries. The objective was to reduce the total number of freight deliveries. In the beginning there was a big interest among shopkeepers to take part. During the pilot the shopkeepers lost interest and the project was terminated due to lack of participants.

In the evaluation process, conversations with the shopkeepers have discovered the reasons for losing interest. Some shopkeepers don't see any problems with freight transport in the city centre or don't see the benefit of cooperation. Some do not see any incentive to cooperate. Others do not appreciate that they may have the opportunity or possibility to alter their delivery arrangements.

The evaluation discovered the reasons for the lost interest of the participants. It also identified that for future pilots and main programmes it is important to support shopkeepers' and improve their awareness about the impact of their freight deliveries. More effort and more time spent informing the shopkeepers is probably needed. Furthermore, without incentives or obvious benefits it is hard to convince shopkeepers to take part.

These lessons learnt can be used by this city and others to improve their pilot action approach in order to be more successful. Without evaluation the mistakes could be repeated and could lead to the same failures. Furthermore some cities would not even try this approach since it has been 'proven' to be a generally wrong approach.

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How to evaluate?

This template provides the framework for evaluating the pilot actions. It follows the structure of the Pilot Action Planning Report (PAPR). In the evaluation the actual implementation process should be compared with the planned implementation process - as it is described in the PAPR. Deviations in the implementation from the plan and the underlying reasons should be identified and reported. A complete PAPR is a prerequisite for a successful evaluation.

The template provides guiding questions for each section of the PAPR which gives support for the evaluation. The questions should not be answered only with yes or no. It is not required to strictly follow the provided questions, but it is necessary to complete all sections in the template. All deviations, obstacles, delays, etc. and how they were treated are important to mention.

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Pilot Action definition

Purpose and scope

Was the mission of the pilot action clearly defined from the start?

- Yes.

Were the defined objectives in line with the overall mission?

- Yes.

Have the objectives been defined as SMART (specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic and timed) objectives?

- As the pilot action was mainly an awareness-raising project, it became difficult to measure the impact. It remains easier to say what was done than what change there was in attitudes

Target group

Has the correct target group for the objectives of the pilot action been identified?

- There are some problems to identify the target group. In many of the activities, the participants were mainly city or other public officials, politicians and NGO's related to the environmental sector. It remained difficult to contact the business sector. Also, while many of the activities were satisfactorily popular, it remains a question whether the public participating was mainly those with already rather sustainable transport behaviour.

Activities

Were the chosen activities of the pilot action suitable to reach the objectives? Did they meet the needs of the target group?

- Activities were partly not focused or popular enough. The activities connected with other major events such as Turku Day and Turku Book Fair attracted far more people than "stand-alone" activities
- Some publications such as "Outdoors Aurajoki" map and "Most beautiful everyday trip" competition and the posters featuring "Cats of the City Library" comic strip were quite popular. See for reference: www.turku.fi/pyoraily and www.turku.fi/arkimatka

Were the activities clearly from the start defined as SMART activities?

- No. Awareness raising events are difficult to measure. The concept of measuring impact by questionnaires was a failure, as even in the most formal event only one or two participants returned the questionnaire.

Pilot Action Implementation

Stakeholder

Identification

Were all relevant stakeholders identified?

- Walking and cycling affects all citizens, so all relevant stakeholders could not be identified. Instead, some key stakeholders were identified

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Were those stakeholders affected by the PA the same as those that were foreseen?

- Other difficulty was that in co-ordinating the events, only the interested stakeholders were reached. However, co-operation with them was more than sufficient
- Business leaders proved difficult to reach

Did the stakeholders affect the PA as foreseen?

- Stakeholders impact was slightly smaller than foreseen due to limits of time resources

Consultation

What is your view of the stakeholder consultation?

- o How did the communication with the stakeholders work?
 - Otherwise quite well, but the feedback contact channel became overwhelmed as due to other BUSTRIP commitments the backlog of unanswered feedback became too large to handle
- o How did the stakeholders show commitment for PA?
 - Those stakeholders, who participated in organising events, were fully committed
- o How did the stakeholder consultation improve the PA implementation and outcome?
 - The participatory events would not have been organized without the input of the stakeholders (public authorities, NGO's and a couple of business co-ordinators)

Ask the stakeholders about their perspective of PA

- o Do you feel well informed about the PA?
- o Are you satisfied with your involvement in the PA implementation?
- o Are you satisfied with the implementation and outcome of the PA?
- o Are you interested in a continuation of cooperation with the municipality?
 - Unfortunately, I did not ask this question in time. In the end discussion of the Cycling Year 2007 events, the participants were quite satisfied with the events, and wished to continue. However, there was a clear need to become more focused on specific issues.

Implementation steps

Did we do what we planned to do? Have all activities been implemented as described in the PAPR?

- The activities have been mostly implemented as in PAPR
- The draft Development Programme for Walking and Cycling was delayed so, that it will be published in Winter 2008
- Feedback analysis was limited

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Describe the deviations of 'activities', 'time plan' and 'others' as described in the PAPP and how they have affected the outcome!

- Deviations are mostly caused by the fact that the "promoter of walking and cycling" and "Bustrip city co-ordinator" were the one and same person. Other BUSTRIP commitments gained at times higher priority.
- The events were prioritized over the planning (which was completed within timeframe) and feedback
- Negative impact was not serious

Budget

Did the budget worked as planned?

- Yes

Describe the deviations and how they have affected the outcome!

- No real deviations, no impact

Risks

Did the foreseen risks occur? How did that affect the outcome?

- The main risk is whether the "Development programme for Walking and Cycling" is approved. It was delayed due to other reasons than foreseen

Were there any other unforeseen risks? How were they managed and how did they affect the outcome?

- There was delay in some parts due to work overload

Assessment & Results

Indicator selection

List the selected indicators and discuss:

- o Were the selected indicators relevant for the activities and objectives of the PA?
 - The surveys at citizen meetings were irrelevant and failed
- o Are there any indicators which could have been more relevant?

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring process

Did the monitoring work as planned? Describe the deviations and how they have affected the process.

- The surveys at citizen meetings were irrelevant and failed

Did you allocate skilled staff with sufficient time and resources to the monitoring and evaluation process?

- The monitoring was integrated with the pilot action itself. Allocation of time and resources to monitoring was insufficient.

Did you change the monitoring method (measurement, data source, etc.)?

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- Surveys at citizen meetings were abandoned

Indicators data collection

Present the baseline-scenario of the 'indicators of progress'.

Present the development of both 'indicators of progress' and 'indicators of activities' during the pilot action period! Add table (see below) and questionnaire/survey outcomes if suitable. Describe the results and their development.

Indicator	Unit	Start-Value	End-Value	Trend	Comment
Surveys at citizen meetings					Failed
Approved development programme for walking and cycling					Programme still waiting approval
Implemented walking and cycling improvements during the project and with link to the project					Cycle path on Brahenkatu completed Cycle path on Paimalantie started "Outdoors Aurajoki" and "Get Acquainted with East Turku" walking and cycling maps published (No numerary values)
Feedback contacts	Contacts		200		
Participatory activities	Events Participants		20 2000		Estimate of events: not counting participants of "cycle to work" – competition and spectators at Turku Book Fair (total 20000, about 1000 brochures distributed)
PR Activities	Media stories		40		15 news stories linked with Peer Review, 25 linked with promotion of walking and cycling

Conclusions and 'Lessons learnt'

Monitored results

Did the pilot action achieve its objectives? What are the reasons for the monitored results?

- The pilot action did achieve its objectives
- Results were not adequately monitored due to the "monitoring" approach being wrong approach to a PR project, which should be presented as a "description of work done".

What external factors influenced the results besides the pilot action activities (e.g. other campaigns not linked to the PA, political changes, etc.)?

- Staff resources were limited, leading to priorities according to "activity rather than monitoring"

Improvement potentials

What could we have done better? What needs to be done to avoid the identified deviations from the plan in future pilots and full scale programmes?

- o Stakeholder involvement
 - "Difficult" stakeholders should be identified and targeted more clearly
 - "Easy" stakeholders should be encouraged to act on their own initiative
- o Implementation of action
 - Time lag due to limited staff resources
- o Budget
 - No problems
- o Risk assessment
 - No problems
- o Indicator selection
- o Monitoring and evaluation
 - In a project like this, indicators, monitoring and evaluation should be done as a "description of work" rather than attempting to use numerary indicators

Lessons learnt

Describe the success or failure factors, barriers and problems for this pilot action!

- Main problem: lack of sufficient resources: one person doing two jobs
- Success factor: enthusiasm of citizens, stakeholders, NGO's and press: there is considerable interest in promoting walking and cycling

Discuss the transferability potentials of the pilot action! What are the recommendations we can pass on to others?

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- Sustainable modes should be promoted together, not picking up one or two of them
- PR campaigns are essential for promoting sustainable transport