

Introduction of Results Based Accountability for Mission Committee funded initiatives

It is proposed that a Results Based Accountability (RBA) Framework be used to support the implementation of initiatives that receive funds from the Mission Fund, as well as be available for other churches to use to help them monitor, communicate and evaluate progress of a particular initiative or development.

RBA is a simple framework that helps to know whether or not an initiative is progressing well and a positive change is being achieved. It involves designing a small number of qualitative and quantitative measures for each initiative. RBA has been successfully used for many years in New Zealand by community groups, government agencies and social services. For details about RBA refer to <https://whatworks.org.nz/rba>.

The following outlines three examples of how an RBA framework could be used to monitor, report, evaluate and so help achieve goals, or outcomes. Importantly, it is not intended that all churches use this RBA framework, but to have it available if a church wants to use it to assist them evaluate an initiative. The Presbytery's Survey Monkey can be used to collect at least some of the information required.

Example A: Goal is to increase people engaged in worship

How to achieve this (Initiative): Introduce a Messy Church Friday nights (or a Friday Night Worship) with a particular focus on families. In outline, Messy church is a way of being church for all ages. It involves a warm welcome, followed by an hour of Bible-based hands-on activities, followed by a celebration featuring story, song and prayer, and finishing with a meal. As part of establishing this as a new initiative would be the determination of how to monitor progress, which would have the following two parts:

How well is the Church introducing Messy Church?

Suggestion would be to ask a set of questions at three months, six months and 12 months after its establishment as the first stage of monitoring. This will enable changes if feedback indicates this is warranted. It is likely that to be successful it would need the support of the congregation, including some who actively assist, some who attend, many who would promote it to their friends, neighbors (thus being advocates).

Using Survey Monkey the following could be some of the questions to ask congregation members, with each question having a range of responses:

- i) How confident are you of understanding our new Messy Church? (not at all, a little confident, reasonably confident, very confident)
- ii) Do you support (name of church) introducing Messy church as an additional form of worship? (not really, a little, mostly, highly supportive)
- iii) Would you recommend Messy Church to a friend or neighbor? (no, maybe, sometimes, all the time)

The following could be some of the questions to ask those who attend Messy church

- i) Do you enjoy coming to Messy Church? (no; sometimes; often; all the time)
- ii) Are you learning more about the Gospel? (not at all; sometimes; often; all the time)
- iii) Are you getting to know others more? (no, a little, yes, all of the time)
- iv) Would you bring a friend or neighbor to Messy Church? (no, maybe, sometimes, all the time)

Are we on track to increasing people worshipping?

Monitoring whether or not introducing Messy Church increases worship attendance could be in the first year recording and reporting the number of people attending each Messy Church, including a break down btw adults, children, youth, families. This could be done each week for the first three months, then reviewed to determine if it is showing signs of success, or some changes are required. If going well then the focus on numbers attending would shift from weekly to each month, with another evaluation at six months from beginning and again at 12 months.

Example B: Goal is to develop faith of members and for them to put this into action.

How to achieve this (Initiative)?

Starting a fortnightly bible study group that is open to both congregation members and people from the community. This is organized through Home Groups, which are usually formed around cultural, life-stage and/or age groups to encourage a welcoming environment. Studies are led by a Home Group leader.

How well is the Church introducing Home Groups?

Suggestion would be for the Minister to meet with the Home Group leader about two months after introducing Home Group (s) to gauge what is occurring, assuming a record of the number of people attending is kept. If more than one Home Group is introduced then additionally it would suggested for the minister to hold a meeting of all Home Group Leaders to share their experiences thus far – thus learning from one another.

At approximately four months and again at 12 months after commencement several questions could be asked of each person who attended over the period of time using Survey Monkey. This would include those who may have left which would include a variation of how a question is asked. Questions could include the following:

- Do you feel comfortable attending Home Group? (no, a little, most of the time, all the time)
- Are you getting to know others who attend Home Group? (no, a little, yes, all of the time)
- Does the format and selection of passages suit you? (no, a little, yes, all of the time)

The Survey Monkey report of the responses could then be discussed at a Home Group meeting to identify what is going well and identify possibilities for improvement.

Are we on track developing members' faith and for them to put this into action?

The questions asked at 4 and 12 months could focus on informing whether this goal is being achieved, such as:

- Are you learning more about the Gospel? (not at all; sometimes; often; all the time)
- Are you confident in sharing your faith with others? (no, a little, yes, all of the time)
- Are you likely to seek an opportunity to share your faith with a neighbor? (no, maybe, sometimes, all the time)

Example C: Goal is to outreach to the community (Mission)

How to achieve this (Initiative)?

Introduce the holding of a regular Community Dinner, perhaps monthly to begin with. The purpose would be bringing people together, helping families and those challenged by isolation, such as the elderly or those living alone. This also helps grow an understanding of the surrounding

community. The dinners contain some simple elements of thanksgiving, embody God's grace and hospitality, and include an activity programme for children and youth.

How well is the Church introducing a regular Community Dinner?

One way of measuring this is a handout questionnaire, confidentially completed, at 4 months and at 12 months after its introduction. The data would be entered into Survey Monkey, with some of the questions possibly being the following:

- Have you felt welcomed at the Community dinner? (no, a little, most of the time, all the time)
- Have you felt comfortable at the Community dinner? (no, a little, most of the time, all the time)
- Have you enjoyed the organized activities? (no, a little, most of the time, all the time)
- Have you enjoyed the meal that has been provided? (no, a little, most of the time, all the time)

Are we on track in outreaching to the community (Mission)

One way of exploring this is to include questions at 4 months and at 12 months, such as:

- Have you become friends with others who have attended the Community dinner? (not at all, one or two, several people, quite a few)
- Have you become more interested in learning more about the Gospel? (no, a little, yes, very interested)
- Have you learned more about the local community and what's available? (no, a little, quite a bit, a lot).

If it is agreed to introduce this RBA Framework, this would mean the following:

- i) Initiatives that receive funds from the Presbytery's Mission Fund

It will be required by the Mission Fund that an RBA framework is developed as part of the final planning of the implementation of an initiative that receives funds from the Mission Fund. The Executive Officer will offer to facilitate the creation of a small number of measures, unique to each initiative. The Strategic Budget has provision for meeting costs of an administrator to assist with data collection and reporting, if this would be helpful.

- ii) Churches may opt to use the available RBA Framework

Churches who assess that an RBA Framework may help them progress a particular initiative will be supported to introduce it, including the possibility of providing some administration support if this is required.

Note: Please note that included in the Action Plan is to work with the other presbyteries and the National Office to revise the annually collected statistics so that they are more useful.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Presbytery agree to the introduction of Results Based Accountability.