

Ministry Insight

How Does Compassion Evaluate Projects?

Evaluation ensures that what we think is happening in a project actually is happening. Because integrity is at issue, Compassion's evaluation includes careful monitoring, reporting, and responding. Project monitoring and evaluation ensure that learning activities occur and Compassion-assisted children develop spiritually, economically, socially, and physically. Compassion monitors and evaluates our impact on children to continually maintain and improve our program integrity.

Project and country staff are responsible for monitoring program activities, which requires continuous observation and information-gathering about project and child performance. Children are monitored for:

- Health education
- Spiritual growth
- Project attendance
- Learning opportunities
- Social development activities

Evaluation compares program intentions with our actual results. Evaluation affects program planning and implementation, and documents our impact in the lives of children. Country offices, area offices, and headquarters staff are responsible for conducting program evaluations. Country offices evaluate their projects annually, and area and headquarters staff evaluate smaller samples of projects within different countries each year.

Each of the above areas are evaluated in:

- Content (uniqueness, balance, application, relevance, materials, linkage, quality vs. quantity, nurturing).
- Methodology (age-appropriate child involvement, active involvement, developmental, planning, and implementation).
- Monitoring (consistent, systematic, complete, regular record-keeping)
- Capacity building/training (appropriate, planned, inclusive, timely).
- Stewardship of resources (direct application, partnering, maximization).

Compassion monitors and analyzes key results areas (KRAs) and the specific key results indicators (KRIs) within those areas. KRAs are achievements and contributions that best reflect our business performance. For example, program design is an important KRA. Some of its indicators (KRIs) of success are:

- Based on local needs.
- Planned and age-graded learning activities for all children.
- Outcome-oriented.

Compassion requires an annual report from each local church project. The report includes:

- A completed Compassion Report and Evaluation form.
- Five stories of individual children with photographs.
- An annual Opportunity Plan for children.

Our project evaluations enhance ministry integrity, credibility, and quality of care. Evaluation enables us to reflect on our shared vision for child development with local church partners.

A variety of groups at Compassion benefit from our efforts at maintaining and improving program quality. Compassion-assisted children receive quality care and participate in holistic developmental activities. Project partners are recognized for their efforts and encouraged to understand their role in our work. Families realize the importance of participation in their children's lives. Country and area office staff are made aware of their influence on program and ministry quality. Our board of directors, partner countries, and corporate staff receive more reliable, local information to guide corporate decision-making. Finally, program monitoring and evaluations help donors and external audiences to verify the value of our programs.