

# Ripples of change



To assess the levels of change resulting from a programme or project.

A stone dropped in water creates ripples outwards. This image serve as a metaphor for the different levels of change achieved as a result of a particular programme or project.

## Steps in the process

1. Discuss the programme intervention to be assessed, including timeframe and implementing partners. Remind participants of the ultimate goals of the partnership (for example, in the case of ActionAid this would include: i) advancing the situation of people living in poverty; ii) advancing women's rights; iii) strengthening local organisations; iv) tackling unequal power and influence at local and regional levels). Confirm interest in contributing to an assessment of progress made toward these goals, and seek approval to proceed.
2. Create three concentric circles on the floor.
3. Ask each participant to write a few words or draw a picture on a card representing one change they have seen as a result of the programme intervention(s).
4. Ask each person to present their idea and place it the circle appropriate to the level of change they have seen so far, from a small change (inner circle), moderate change (middle circle) to a major change (outer circle).
5. Ask if others have the same or very similar observation and pile these together.

6. Facilitate discussion of any differences in change level ratings and resolve these through consensus or a majority view (do not create an average).
7. Take notes on the reasoning and evidence for the final ratings given to each change.

## Facilitation tips

- Adjust facilitation to different sized groups and levels of literacy. For example, ask people to sit in pairs or threes to first share their idea among themselves and help each other write a few key words.
- Alternatively, go around the circle of participants, asking each person to state a change they have observed, without repeating an idea that has been said already. Facilitators prepare a card for each as they proceed. After one round, review the cards and rate and pile sort in the concentric circles.

## Related tools

- This tool is often used as part of the Value for Money Assessment process in conjunction with the [Value for Money Grid](#).

## References

- *[Handbook for Participatory Action Research, Planning and Evaluation](#)*, by Jacques M Chevalier and Daniel J Buckles, SAS2 Dialogue, Ottawa, 2013.