3) Evaluation methods

Evaluation methods are the criteria for evaluating the success of a program or project. This tells if you've achieved your goals and objectives.

Personal methods

Personal methods are activities in which, the actors involved in the evaluation make their own judgements and draw their own conclusions concerning the progress of the activity, the learning process, the outcomes, their personal feelings and involvement, etc.

Some examples of personal evaluation methods are:

Surveys and Questionnaires

Put simply, surveys are a method for collecting qualitative and quantitative data. Comparable information is gathered by using standardised methods, such as questionnaires.

Questionnaires are unfortunately the first thing that comes to mind when we speak about evaluation. Unfortunately, because in some projects the team simply distributes a questionnaire on the last day, and feels that they have done the job of evaluating. It is true that a well-designed and well administrated questionnaire can provide a lot of useful information.

However, as we have argued before, questionnaires alone can only provide part of the overall picture.

You may administrate questionnaires in three basic ways:

- Self Administrated questionnaires may be completed by the respondents61 themselves;
- In structured interviews interviewers may administer questionnaires in face to face encounters
- Reading the items to respondents and recording the answers; or interviewers may conduct telephone surveys.

When you are designing a questionnaire, you should pay attention to three very important issues:

Content

Question type

Question structure

Content is related to the overall purpose of the questionnaire. You should make sure that the subject can indeed be measured through a questionnaire. To see if the participants were satisfied with the logistical aspects of the organisation of the activity such as the food may be easy to measure through a questionnaire. However, if you want to measure the degree of intercultural learning achieved during the activity, due to its complexity and to its group dimension, you may need other methods, in addition to a questionnaire.

When designing a questionnaire, you should also check if you need more than one question to evaluate the aspect that you are investigating. The respondents should be able to remember the context of each question and they should also have the necessary information to be able to reply. That is why it is a good idea to review the program with the participants before distributing the questionnaire, if you wish to evaluate the program on the last day of a project.

Regarding the **question type**, you have to be clear if what you need to measure is better measured using open-ended or closed-ended questions. If a question is closed-ended, you have to make sure that the responses you provide cover all possibilities. You should not overly limit the options of the respondent. For example, if evaluating the food, you can ask: How satisfied are you with the food? But, to provide the respondent with the options to answer only I love it or I hate it is too limiting. Maybe some people think it was good, but did not fall in love with it. Often when filling out questionnaires, participants tend to focus on scale or score questions, as they are easier to answer and take less thinking effort. Open-ended questions are often replied to without a lot of detail.

Question structure is another important dimension of designing a good questionnaire.

Designing clear and well-written questionnaires is a real art. Unfortunately, there are no magic rules for how to do this. However, there are some simple things that can help you to improve your questionnaires.

When writing your questionnaire:

DO:	DO NOT:
Use clear and short questions	Use double negatives
Put your questions in a logical order	Use technical jargon and abbreviations
Try to be positive and motivate a reply	Use emotionally loaded words (i.e. frustrating, exciting, annoying, fantastic)
Give clear instructions (i.e. tick, circle a number, check the box, etc.)	Use leading questions (i.e. "Name the innovative elements of this course")
Be consistent: clear, direct, precise.	Use long complex questions
Give the questionnaire a title (i.e. participant evaluation questionnaire of activity X?) Give a short introduction to the questionnaire explaining what you will use the information for (i.e.: the information collected will be used to compile the evaluation section of the final report to the funding institutions)	Use idioms or culture specific expressions (i.e.: "it's a piece of cake", "green light", "fire brigade", "cup of tea"; burning issues")
Present it in a user-friendly manner and give it an attractive layout and appearance	Use biased questions (i.e. "How did the group process contribute to your learning?")
Provide an adequate variety of options for answering closed-ended questions	Present two questions in one
Consider the language, literacy and written expression capacities of those who will answer the questionnaire	Put important questions at the end of the questionnaire

A letter to oneself (also known as "letter to yourself ")

The "letter to yourself " is one of the simplest and most commonly used personal evaluation methods. It is also one of the most efficient. The "letter to yourself " can achieve some very interesting and in depth results about the impact of a program. As it is a personal method, it can also assist the participant to become aware of certain progress made as a result of his/her participation, which s/he would not realise otherwise.

If you are planning to use this method, you should keep in mind that the "letter to yourself" is a very personal method. The facilitator does not have any possibility to intervene, influence or interact in the process as s/he does not read the letter. After all, it is a letter to "yourself ", the participant may write in their own language and what they write is totally between the participant and, well, themselves.

You ask the participants to write themselves a letter. When you ask them to prepare the letter depends on the program of your project. This may be on the very first day of the program, in the middle or on the last day, before departure. The decision will be made in function of what you want to achieve with the letter. In all cases, it is important to provide enough time and space for writing this letter and its importance should be made quite clear to all participants.

If the participants are writing the letter on the first day of your activity, you may ask them to write about a large variety of issues, for example, their expectations, fears, why they have come to the activity (their motivations), their first impressions of the team, other participants or the country (if they have travelled abroad to the activity).

If the exercise is taking place on the last day, the letter may include similar issues, but focus on different aspects, for example, are they satisfied with the activity, what have they learned, what are they taking back home with them, which part of the program have they enjoyed most/least, what is their plan of action for implementing the things they have learned once they get home?

Once they have finished writing the letter, they seal it in an envelope on which they write their full name and postal and address. The team sends the letters to the participants after a period of time after the project has ended, for example, 2 months after. This allows the participants to make a comparison of their initial perspectives and feelings with the ones they have 2 months after the project.

<u>Diary</u>

Another way of giving participants the opportunity to reflect on the process they are going through is to ask them to write a diary. The team provides the participants with a notebook (the diary), in which they can note down the experiences of each day during the activity. This is, of course, very suitable to projects that last more than just a few days.

In residential seminars, the experiences accumulated outside of the “official program” are also very rich. A diary can be also useful for documenting and evaluating these activities.

Of course a diary is something personal and therefore is not to be read by youth leaders, mentors or facilitators! But, aspects of what the participants might note down in their diaries can be discussed in particular group settings such as for example “reflection groups”.

One approach to this activity is to provide an empty notebook for participants to use at their discretion, but another and one which is often appreciated by participants as they receive some guidance, is to give some guiding questions.

For example:

Describe what happened today in your own words

Were there any remarkable moments?

Are there things/questions still buzzing around in your head?

Is there anything ‘new’ you learned today?

Is there anything you want to pay further attention to?

Remember that participants may need to be motivated to use their diary on a daily basis.

A diary that looks nice or that is presented in a creative way can motivate.

Interpersonal methods

In interpersonal evaluation methods more than one individual actor share and discusses their judgments and conclusions, often in a pair or small group. The value and purpose of those methods is to share, to confront opinions and to learn. This takes place because participants have the opportunity to evaluate from more than one point of view. Just two examples of interpersonal methods of evaluation are interviews and focus groups.

<u>Interviews</u>

There are two types of interviews, in depth interviews and structured interviews. The main difference between these types is the amount of flexibility allowed to the interviewer and to the respondent.

• **Structured interviews**

In a structured interview both interviewer and respondent have very little flexibility because there is a questionnaire that has to be followed. The interviewer has a questionnaire and reads out each question to the respondent. The majority of the questions will be open-ended, for example: "How did you feel during the simulation exercise?" Even though the answer of each respondent will be different, the question remains the same.

- **In depth interviews**

In an in-depth interview there is no pre-set questionnaire, just a list of important issues that the interviewer must cover with each respondent. The interviewer has much more autonomy and flexibility in the development of a conversation with the respondent.

However, in both types of interviews, what is important is that the interviewer acts in a neutral manner and tries not to direct or influence the responses of the person being interviewed. The participant should feel comfortable with and have trust in the interviewer.

Before starting an interview we should always be clear about what we want to evaluate. For example, if our aim is to evaluate the recruitment of participants, it is possible that we will want to collect information about where participants heard about the program and what motivated them to get involved. As we see, conducting interviews requires some experience, knowledge and competences. We should ask ourselves if we are the right person to conduct the interview or if it is appropriate for us to do so at all.

For an ideal interview, the participant should feel comfortable with and should trust the interviewer. As in other interpersonal situations, in an interview, the "race", socio-economic background, gender and even accent of the interviewer can influence a respondent's answers.

It is important to record the answers of the respondent during the interview. This is a practical issue. Trying to write everything down at the same time as conducting the interview is very complicated and may even be impossible. It is not appropriate to ask a respondent to slow down, as this would interrupt their thought flow.

It can be useful to record the interview with a hand held tape or digital recorder. It might also be relevant to take notes about the non-verbal communication that takes place during the interview. Recording the interview can liberate us to note down such behavioural observations on paper.

Interviews are very work intensive and time consuming. A lot of resources are required to do and analyse them. But, they have the advantage that they can give a better insight into why a participant thinks that, for example, the energisers should get 4 points out of 5.

Preparing and making in depth interviews

It is a good idea to prepare some questions or prompts before starting any interview. If we are conducting a structured interview, we have already prepared a questionnaire. But for an in-depth interview it is also very important to prepare in advance. Even if you do not formulate the questions, make sure to list the items you want to discuss with the respondents.

When preparing and making in depth interviews, it is important to take following points into consideration:

Try to avoid closed or dichotomous (YES/NO) questions. Imagine asking: "Did you enjoy the programme?" The participant will say "Yes", and that will be it. The questions should trigger the respondents to think. We are aiming to get as much information as possible. For example, you can ask: "In your opinion, which aspects of the programme were most useful?", instead of "Did you enjoy the programme?".

Before asking a question, we should consider if the respondent will answer the question truthfully. We recommend not to get too personal and not to ask questions that would put the respondent in the position of lying out of politeness or for legal reasons. For instance, the trainer asking participants in an activity: "Do you think I am a good trainer?" is not very appropriate. Participants may feel under pressure to say even yes if they do not think the trainer is good.

Interviewers should be neutral: their presence should not have any effect on the responses given to questions. In case the responses given to an open-ended question are unclear or not sufficient in the opinion of the interviewer, a probe (a neutral, non-directive question) can be used.

Some examples of probes include, “Anything else?”, “What do you mean?”, “Can you explain in more detail?”, “In which ways?”

Focus Groups

In very simple terms, a focus group is “a group of people sharing similar characteristics who talk about a subject they have in common”.63 Focus groups are one of the most efficient qualitative and interpersonal evaluation methods. Their small size and relaxed atmosphere allow for deep and frank evaluation.

In a youth project, the young people themselves are the “group of people” that forms the focus group and their common subject are aspects of the project that need to be evaluated.

Even though it sounds quite similar, focus groups differ extensively from interviews. The main difference between focus groups and interviews is that an interview is a one on one activity that takes place between an interviewer and an interviewee. Focus groups, however, are a group activity, as the name implies.

A focus group is made up of a group of young people and a facilitator or moderator. In a focus group, interaction between the participants, leads them to think out loud and form opinions during and as a result of the process. Focus groups have some important advantages and disadvantages. The first and most important advantage of using focus groups as a method for evaluation is that they allow you to explore the way in which young people form their opinions as well as finding out what their opinions are. In a focus group, the reason why a participant is thinking in a particular way is as evident as the opinion they hold. The participant reaches an opinion as a result of the discussions with other participants in the focus group.

Another major advantage of focus groups is that they encourage participants to speak in public. Many participants feel more secure expressing themselves in a small group of their peers than sitting alone in a corner with an interviewer. As a result they tend to express their opinions more openly and more bravely in a focus group situation. But, this does not hold true in all cases.

Group pressure may also negatively affect the sense of security of participants to honestly express themselves. Thus, extreme care should be paid to group dynamics and the amount of peer pressure that exists in any group when deciding how to approach the evaluation or when deciding whether to use focus groups.

But, forming focus groups also has certain difficulties. It is very difficult to make sure that all participants will participate with the same level of concentration and attention.

If we are going to form a focus group during the programme of a given activity, we should help participants to stay focused and be ready to allocate enough time for them to express their opinions.

It should also be noted that during a focus group, it is very difficult to record the information and to keep track of what is being said at the same time. To overcome this is good to collect all together, at the end, the main conclusions or simply a mechanism of rotation for taking notes.

One final but nevertheless important disadvantage of the focus group can be the eventual generalisations that can take place in the discussion. We should check if the opinions raised are representative of all the participants in the group, as it is not rare to have one or two outspoken members who speak in the name of others in an activity.

For example, the first day, several participants who have already been in similar activities might express their “impatience”. But, the silent majority of the group might have another opinion.

Here we have collected some general recommendations for facilitating focus group:

Keep the group small (ideally 4 to 6 people)

Take into consideration the language skills of the international participants as it affects the time they need to communicate their opinion

Keep your questions neutral and avoid manipulating the discussion with biased questions. This can create a negative reaction from the participants

Be very patient, as it takes time for the discussion to build up and for all members to feel invited and comfortable enough to join in. It is counter productive to interfere in the discussion too much and to constantly offer your own opinion. It can make the participants feel pushed

Make clear at the beginning what you want to achieve by holding the focus group discussion. Tell participants what the aims and expectations are. If the facilitator is clear with the participants, it is very likely that the participants will be clear too.

Try through everything you want to discuss in just one session. Remain focused, and limit the number of topics and issues for discussion to the most important and relevant ones. Otherwise you risk that the participants lose interest and you may end up with very little information.

Group interactive methods

Group interactive methods of evaluation can be used to check what the feelings or views of the group are at a particular stage of the program or to evaluate a certain session. Of course we can do that in an informal way by observing the group and the activities and by asking questions. These observations would be valuable but at the same time subjective to the team or the observers.

Personal or interpersonal evaluation methods like questionnaires or interviews with participants might be time-consuming, depending on the program. Shorter interactive group methods, which include elements in addition to verbal and written expression, are a good option. These methods not only inform us about the views and feelings of the group, but also create the possibility for participants to reflect and to learn about how others experience the activity.

Group evaluation methods have an additional dimension. Since the group in non-formal education is source of learning, group evaluation methods can specifically deal with group dimensions of the learning process including for example, group life, the atmosphere in the group, the co-operation among participants…

<u>Checking expectations</u>

What are the expectations of participants towards the program? What do they want to take home as a result of their participation? Are there things that they absolutely do not want to do? For different reasons it is good to ask participants to take some time to reflect on what their expectations are at the beginning of the activity. To formulate what you want helps you to remain focused on your needs during the program.

For participants it is interesting to find out about the needs and wishes of the others. This is essential for the team. The team has every interest in understanding how participants view their purpose in participating in the activity. It helps the team to refocus the program or clarify to the participants what they can and cannot achieve in the context of the activity by the team and by the group. The expectations should be carefully considered to discern which ones can be fulfilled in the activity and they should to the extent possible be integrated into the different program elements.

At the end of the activity, one can return to the initial expectations of participants and to reflect on the extent to which participants have got what they wanted out of their participation. A very simple and visual method to do this is to invite participants to go to the "clothes line" or to the "posters" and to remove their fulfilled expectations. They should leave behind the ones which have not been fulfilled. Then participants should explain the reasons why some expectations were fulfilled and others not. Another way to return to the initial expectations is to group them and discuss their fulfilment or not in small discussion groups. Often unexpected outcomes arise at this point, something which is interesting for both participants and team to know about.

<u>End of the day reviews</u>

In a programme that lasts more than a few days, it can be advisable to make sure there is a regular moment to look back on the experience of the participants in the activity part of the programme. This regular moment for evaluating can take place everyday (end of the day review) or at regular intervals during the programme, and is often done in small groups of 5 to 7 persons. For the participants this can be a valuable moment to share experiences about the programme of the day or of several days, to express their feelings and to hear how others have experienced that same part of the programme. For the facilitators, it provides an effective means for staying in touch with the way the group develops and to take up any problems and challenges that may be communicated by the group. It is important to plan appropriate time for these reviews. This is not always easy at the end of the day. But, rushing through such a group evaluation just before dinner begins does not allow you or the group to reflect properly and runs the risk that participants feel they are not being taken seriously.

End of the day reviews with the whole group have the advantage that participants learn about the impressions of everyone in the group and can create a sense of common responsibility for the group life and the programme in the group as a whole. But, large groups can have the disadvantage that only some few participants take the floor. Therefore, if undertaking an end of day review in a large group, it is important to propose methods that make it possible for all the members of the group to express themselves. We propose below some of those methods: "The Three Word Review", "The Telegram" and "The Living Dartboard

<u>The Three Word Review</u>

A simple method at the end of the day, for the whole group, is the "Three word review" where participants are asked to write down for themselves three words that describe their feelings about the day. Then participants are invited to call out their words which are noted down on a flip-chart. After that, a discussion about the meaning and relevance of the words can be initiated. This commonly leads to a lively discussion. The "Three word review" involves all the participants from the start which makes it often easier for those who are usually not the first to speak, to contribute to the discussion.

<u>The Telegram</u>

A variation on this is the "Telegram" in which participants give a general impression about a day or session. This activity is very appropriate after a tiring day or session when there is no energy left for a thorough evaluation. Participants are invited to think for a few minutes about the day or session and then to share their opinion with the group in three words: a positive word – a negative word – a concluding word.

For example: Intensive – Headache – Exhausted

Make sure to write down on a flipchart what participants say and it can be useful to make a short summary of what the general group feeling is at the end. When time is limited, the exercise may be concluded by asking participants to read each others' telegrams.

Another way of sharing outcomes is to invite participants to write the telegrams on sticky pieces of paper and to put them on the wall for everybody to read.

<u>The Living Dartboard</u>

An energetic way to evaluate the day is the "Living Dartboard", in which participants are invited to move around the room according to their position towards statements that are read out about the programme, or other aspects being evaluated. You need an empty, rather large room for this activity. In the middle of the room is an object (e.g. chair, paper, flower, etc.). This object represents the centre of the dartboard (also known as the "bull's eye").

The facilitator reads out statements about the activity and participants choose a spot in the room according to their opinion about that statement. The more you agree with the statements that the facilitator reads out, the closer you move to the middlepoint.

The more you disagree, the farther away from that point you should move.

After everyone has chosen their position participants can be asked to explain their reasons for standing where they are.

Towards the end, participants may be invited to come up with their own statement/s about the activity. This way they have a chance to check how the rest of the group feels about it.

Some examples of statements are:

The rhythm and timing of the programme was well planned

The methods in this activity were monotonous

Being in an international group helped me a lot to understand what Intercultural

Learning is about

I missed theoretical inputs

The food was fabulous

…

Visual group evaluation methods

Visual group evaluation methods give a clear overview about how other participants value a certain part of the activity. They do so, not so much by using words, but by taking advantage of the potential that non-verbal communication can offer. Many people feel much more comfortable when they can express themselves without using words, especially if the activity is taking place in a foreign language. Many such methods exist.

The “River” is a method which stimulates participants to use their creativity when evaluating. It is a method that focuses on the process of an activity rather than on its contents or other aspects commonly evaluated. The metaphor of a river can help people to reflect on their experience during the activity.

Another more process-oriented method is called “Boats on the Sea”. This activity can help participants to take stock of what has been done and what still lies ahead of them in the activity. Participants are invited to use their creativity by evaluating through the use metaphoric symbols: the sea, boats, sea animals, islands, other ships, etc.

A useful metaphor for looking towards the future is that of the “Train with different wagons”. Each wagon represents a different element of the program that participants should reflect on. Participants are asked to write down ideas related to each of these elements for follow-up to the activity in the appropriate wagon.

And of course you can develop and adapt all these methods using the idea of a trip or a journey to represent a process.

When using this kind of method, it is useful to create a nice and relaxing atmosphere.

This can help to make people feel comfortable and to evaluate more effectively. This can be done using some background music.

Another visual way of helping participants to find out about how they feel at a given moment is called “Puppets in a Tree”. Images help participants to think about how they feel. Pictures of little figures or puppets are shown in different positions in a tree. Participants think about how they feel and decide which of the puppets in the tree best symbolises their mood or state of mind at that given moment.

The River

The river is a very versatile evaluation method. It can be used on the last day of the programme, for mid-term evaluation and for daily evaluation. It offers participants the possibility to express, in a creative way, how they see their development during the programme.

Participants are divided into small groups (5 to 7 participants). Each group is provided with the picture of a River drawn on a large piece of paper. The beginning and the end of the river should be marked on the paper. Each group receives paper (different colours), scissors, glue, pencils and markers. Participants are asked to work individually on giving creative expression, using the material provided, to their personal development during the programme and to place the results of their creative efforts onto whichever part of the river they consider appropriate.

When everybody has finished participants are asked to explain their creations.

Boats on the Sea

This exercise can be done in small groups as well as individually.

Prepare a large drawing of a sea with two harbours (one on the top and one on the bottom) in advance. The sea between the two harbours stands for the period of time between two moments of the programme. For example, this could be the beginning and the end of the project, but any other programme part could also be chosen.

Ask participants to design their own boats and to put these boats somewhere in between the two harbours. Within the sea, islands or rocks or other symbols can be drawn. Participants are free to add anything they feel helps them to clarify the position of their boat in this metaphor.

This method can be used in many different ways. You can give participants different kinds of boats representing different elements you want to evaluate (for example, the boat of "my learning" or of "the group process" or of "my participation in the programme", etc.).

Puppets in a Tree

This method can be used for the end of day review as well as for a final review in smaller or bigger groups. The advantage of this method is that you can easily adapt it to different situations or needs.

All members of the group are invited to express their current feelings and / or their satisfaction with the programme or on other aspects such as their learning, the group dynamic and so on.

To do this participants are asked to choose one of the figures (or puppets) on the picture that they consider most representative of their present mood or state of mind in relation to the aspect being evaluated. When everybody has chosen is their puppet, participants explain to each other the reasons of their choice.

In all these visual group methods of evaluation, it is important to take notes of the comments and discussions. The written notes are a necessary complement to the visual information: they help to explain, understand and conceptualise it. Altogether the visual information and the notes can be organised and used by the team and the whole group to draw conclusions and identify possible changes in the programme. On a practical note, they can be used in the evaluation report.

<u>Snap-shots</u>

Snapshots are useful when you do not have a lot of time left but you still want to get a picture of the general feeling in the group. There are some short visual methods that can be used for this. These methods give you an impression: a snap-shot. They are certainly not as thorough as other some of the methods already described, but they can be helpful for facilitators and participants to see how the others feel.

A simple method for checking the atmosphere in the group is to use the "Thermometer" for "taking the temperature" of the group. This metaphor allows you to how people are in the group. With a little creativity you can easily adapt it to create other metaphors to fulfil the same purpose, for example, a sunny beach, under the umbrella on a rainy day, freezing in the snow, etc.

In the same logic, you can ask participants to evaluate how they feel about the pace of the programme by using the "Speedometer". Here you can also replace the speedometer with animals or means of transport going at different speed to diversify the metaphor.

A quick and easy way to test how people feel about different elements of the programme is to use "Applause". It can also be used as an energizer to warm people up to evaluating. And, again you can be creative and make your own version using other sounds instead of applause.

The combination of several of these methods can be used to carry out a lively mid-term evaluation half way through the programme.

The Thermometer

A simple method for "taking the temperature in the group" is the "Thermometer". The thermometer can be drawn on a flip chart and participants are invited to put a personalised mark (their name or initials) on the temperature they feel best represents how they view a particular part of the programme or how they feel the group is.

Participants can also be asked to share their evaluations and to discuss how things can be improved.

The flip chart depicting the group evaluation can be posted on the wall and at a later stage of the activity can be used again, to see how things have developed.

The Speedometer

How do participants feel about the pace of the programme? The "Speedometer" offers participants to express their feeling about the rhythm of the activity and can be used as an ongoing (daily) evaluation method.

Draw the speedometer on a flip chart and ask participants to put their personal mark according to their opinion about the pace of the programme.

Further instructions needed to understand how this can be used, for example, let all the participants take a look at the other participants' opinions and discuss as appropriate.

Remember to mention what the team will do with the information.

Applause

This is a very simple method to evaluate different elements of the activity at the end of or during the programme. Ask participants to form a circle. The facilitator reads out different elements of the programme and according to their satisfaction with that element participants clap their hands.

The higher the level of satisfaction, the louder and longer the applause should be. As this activity is only intended to measure the satisfaction of participants with a particular programme element (in other words, whether they liked or disliked it), it can be used as a warm up activity before moving to the business of more serious evaluation activities.

The last round in an activity offers participants the possibility to express the things that they consider as the most important elements or those issues "which have not yet been mentioned" before the end and before everyone leaves. This is sometimes an emotional moment before the programme really ends.

Last round

This is as simple as giving every participant, one by one, the possibility to speak and to say anything they feel is appropriate. Just remember that this can easily end up in a long and tiring session. To avoid this and to help participants to focus on the most essential, you can limit each intervention, for example, to one sentence.

A very dynamic variation on the last round is known as "The Matchbox". Its dynamism comes from tension and speed. You need one or two boxes of matches (one match per person is enough) and a plate or a bucket. One by one, participants are asked to burn a single match and to speak only for the time that the match is burning. When it burns out you have to end your point immediately!

Another way to deal with the last round is to take an object, preferably one that somehow represents the project, and to send it around the circle of participants.

The one who has the object in their hand speaks and when finished hands it over to another person in the group who is then invited to express themselves.

A variation on this is to use a ball of string. As participants express themselves and pass the ball from person to person, a spiders' web of links emerges between the members of the group.

The ideas expressed in the last round are, sometimes, not very well developed or may seem not to be very relevant. But, these feelings and impressions expressed are usually very revealing and can help us to understand the outcomes of other evaluation methods. For this reason, it is important to note down the main ideas expressed in the last round.