



From the Director



2009-10 was an unprecedented year of change and uncertainty in the voluntary sector. Voluntary organisations are facing greater competition for reducing funds and are being asked to effectively deliver 'more for less'. In a climate where there is increasing pressure for resources we believe that there is an even greater need for both funders and voluntary organisations to be clear about what difference they are making to the communities they serve.

Our annual review highlights some of our work in 2009/10, showcasing some successes and challenges. This year's evaluation provided us with lots of evidence that **we have been more successful than ever at helping shape the culture of evaluation in Scotland**. Our 10 biggest achievements this year of are on the next page, but we are not complacent. Here are some of the challenges we are learning about and will address in the coming year.

Time and readiness continue to be recurring themes in our work with organisations. There can be a time lag between an organisation expressing an interest in working with us to the point where they are ready to take up the service and the support itself often needs to be spread over time. The fact that these changes take time, has also led us to think about how we get smarter at using our own database to record and evaluate our long term impact.

We have had contrasting experiences with small organisations with no staff. Some have grasped the opportunities provided by training and used them to hone outcomes and put in place simple evaluation systems. Others do not have the capacity even to take up our support, never mind work on evaluation.

Understanding 'who is the client' when a funder is paying us to support a voluntary organisation and brokering effective communication between funded and funder provides us with tensions and challenges. We have better systems in place now to manage these challenges.

We have some good experiences of working with the public sector but the lack of capacity in the public sector to understand and make use of evaluation evidence continues to be a barrier. As we now have more evidence of this we can start to influence Government and others to try to address this problem.

Steven Marwick

June 2010



We worked with the Move On team through our partnership with Inspiring Scotland. They really took ownership of the monitoring and evaluation plan we worked with them on, as the Manager explains:

“Move On allocated time, imagination and energy to developing the plan. Being able to use the ESS [monitoring and evaluation] template meant that we weren't spending lots of time re-inventing the wheel, but could be really productive. As a result our monitoring, evaluation and recording has improved. I am now more confident regarding the claims we are making regarding the effectiveness of our work and the impact it can have on those who use our services. Much of what we do is to enable people to develop softer skills. We are now able to fully evidence claims such as "improved confidence" increasing reliability" etc. We are now clear about what an outcome actually is, as opposed to for example an output or indicator. Asking the "so what?" question has helped develop our recording to become much more outcome focused.”

Improved understanding between funders and funded organisations



Midlothian Fairer Scotland Fund

We ran training and tailored support for projects funded through the Midlothian Fairer Scotland Fund and for council staff.

- Positive feedback from projects and the Council showed how ESS was able to make evaluation accessible and to increase participants' ability to demonstrate the impact of their work and how it connected to council strategic aims.
- One participant said “This training is very useful. I have been funded for years and never had training on monitoring and evaluation”

“We have had many comments made to us about how people enjoyed [the ESS trainer's] style and delivery of the training sessions. What has come across most is that for many [ESS] we able to break down, what can be a very difficult task for some, to a more simplistic and enjoyable process. Many of the team found [the ESS trainer's] approach extremely professional and were very impressed with his knowledge and experience. Along with this we found [ESS] to be very accommodating with anything we brought to the table, and [ESS's] can do attitude was very refreshing”

Midlothian Council

FiSCAF – Faiths in Scotland Community Action Fund

The Fund's Trustees got support from ESS to put in place their Fund outcomes.

- They tested out their outcomes and reporting requirements with funded groups.
- They have mapped their funded projects against their outcomes and have systems in place to be able to aggregate and report on the impact of their funding.





Evaluation Support Scotland works with voluntary organisations and so they can measure their impact report on the difference they make and improve their services.

Money

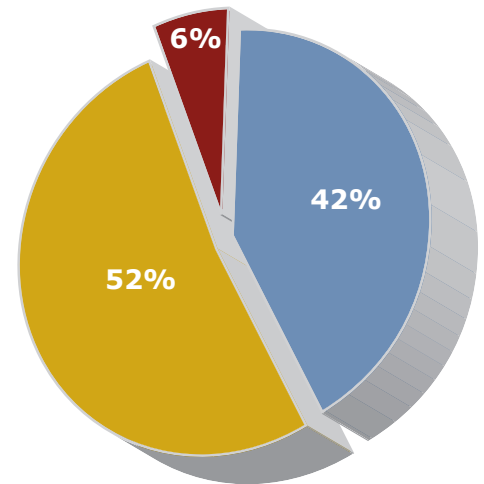
We received £279,224 in income and we spent £274,151
We received a grant from the Scottish Government.

The chart shows the breakdown of how we earned our income

- Core Scottish Government grant
- Earned income
- Other Grants

Please contact us if you would like a copy of our full Annual report and financial statements for 2008/2009.
Our auditors are Geoghegan and Co, Edinburgh

ESS Income 2009/10 (% of income)



Current Staff

Steven Marwick (Director)
Dee Fraser (Policy and Development Officer)
Jacqueline McDowell (Evaluation Support Officer)
Diane Kennedy (Evaluation Support Officer)
Graeme Reekie (Training and Support Officer)
Jennifer Challinor (Information and Marketing Officer)
Cecilia Corcoran (Finance and Administration Officer)
Priyanka Satapathy (Administration Assistant)

Current Trustees and Company Directors

John Arthur
Patrick Boase
Mary Craig OBE – Convenor
Emma Crawshaw
Fraser Falconer
Dr Sam Gardner
Kirsten Gooday
Professor Linda McKie
Rev Barbara O'Donnell
Dr Nicola Richards
Robin Sinclair – Treasurer
Keith Wimbles

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REGISTERED DETAILS

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Scottish Charity: SC036529
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