

Careful monitoring and measuring of your actions ensure that the targets outlined in the action plan are being properly addressed and achieved. Besides providing feedback about the effectiveness of the actions, monitoring allows the Ekoskola committee to critically evaluate the strategy being adopted and identify possible alternative ways of proceeding.

Actively involving pupils in the monitoring process helps children develop responsibility and a sense of ownership of the whole project. This implies that the monitoring instruments chosen (or designed) should take into account the children's age group and ability. The choice of monitoring methodologies is also dependent on the type of information that needs to be gathered, for example:

- ✓ certain factual information can be gathered through simple methods ... such as weighing rubbish bags, taking regular readings from water and electricity meters, calculating the purchase of paper from receipts, etc..
- ✓ questionnaires and simple interviews are the best methods to gather information about people's impressions and attitudes.
- ✓ photographs can provide an accurate record of how a project (e.g. the embellishment of the playing grounds) is developing.

One of the most important aspects of the monitoring exercise is evaluation. After the data is gathered the Ekoskola committee needs to go through the aims of the action plan and decide:

- whether the activities were successful,
- what alternative actions need to be taken to be more effective,
- what new actions need to be taken to address emergent needs.

Ekoskola is a WHOLE school project and therefore it is very important that the results of the monitoring and evaluation exercise are shared with the whole school community. This is where an Ekoskola notice board comes in handy! Displaying charts depicting the state of the school environment can be an effective way of communicating the results of the action plan. The school community can be greatly motivated if it is getting clear and regular feedback about the impact of its efforts.

Celebration is another powerful motivating agent. Celebrate your school's achievements as widely as possible through newspaper articles, newsletters, during school functions AND within the wider local community. Besides generating a general feeling of well-being that maintains the momentum of the project going, these celebrations provide a great opportunity for the promotion of Ekoskola.

Requests for more information and queries can be referred to the *Ekoskola* national co-ordinator:

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