Tips for Tracking and Targets

- An important part of evaluation is understanding the level of activity taking place and how many people are taking part in those activities (sometimes called program tracking or performance measurement)
- It can be helpful to develop systems for that upfront and to make sure that everybody is trained in using the systems
- Tools that can be useful include:
  - A place to track information on paper during a program session or event: could be a notebook or a binder with printed tracking sheets included
  - An online form where staff can write down their information immediately following a program session or an event
  - A shared online spreadsheet with various tabs where staff can input batch information
- Type of information to capture includes:
  - Date of activity
  - Type of activity: what happened
  - Location of activity
  - Number of participants
  - Partners involved
  - Reflections on what worked well and what was challenging and what could be changed for next time around
  - Number of volunteers
  - Volunteer hours
- This information can then be analyzed to understand and report on the following sorts of measures:
  - Events (total and by activity type)
  - Unique individuals impacted
  - Average number of participants per event
  - Number of volunteers and total volunteer hours
- At the beginning of a project, you can set targets for program activity (e.g. Participant target: 25 unique individuals; 12 skills-building workshops; Average attendance: 10 participants per workshop)
- Targets can be based on your experience offering the same or similar programs, the experience of other organizations in your community or other communities running similar types of activities, or in most cases a best guess will do
- Then once a program has been up and running for a while and you have gathered some initial information (also called baseline data), you can start to set more informed targets that are customized to your specific program and community
- Review and refine targets on a periodic basis (e.g. annually)