Discipleship Groups

"...We must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..."

Ephesians 4 v15

Overview

This outcome explores how churches are "becoming communities and hubs for initial and ongoing formation". It looks at numbers of a worshipping community attending discipleship groups and provides a way to gather stories to help churches and dioceses understand the difference these are making. The approaches need to be proportionate to the work and the way that the learning will be used.

Examples include:

- Small groups
- Pilgrimages
- Lent courses
- Mentoring
- Spiritual direction
- Missional communities
- Theological seminars
- Rules of life
- Confirmation classes
- Digital engagement
- Workplace groups
- Youth/school groups (involving bible study and prayer)

*For work funded through SMMI (Strategic Ministry and Mission Investment), this is an "Amber shared outcome", which means that where this is an integral part of funded work, the below tools **or** alternative tools can be used to measure this.*

Support with the Shared Outcomes can be requested through contact Us.

What you'll find in this document

- A recommended way to share numbers of individuals attending
- A simple table for collecting and reporting data
- Guidance on gathering stories of change
- Frequently asked questions
- Links to related Shared Outcomes

Recommended approach

1. Track attendance numbers at community activities.

2. Collect stories of change from participants and volunteers.

3. Reflect, pray and discuss to understand what is working and where adjustments are needed.

What is measured?

Regular attendance in discipleship groups

✓ Record the number of individuals who **regularly** attend any kind of discipleship group.

✓ Do include members of the worshipping community who attend discipleship groups beyond the church

✓ Do include people who have attended a **seasonal** group this year, even if it was outside the reporting period

✗ Don't record any individual more than once, even if they attend multiple groups.

✗ Do not include volunteers in the figures.

Tool

Churches collect details from those running discipleship groups, or may use a church management app. They share this with the diocese, along with any other figures and stories, on a quarterly or annual basis.

Discipleship Group	Year 0	Year 1	Y1 Target	Year 2	Year 2 target	Year 3	Year 3 target
St Thomas' church	27	53	50	67	65	78	75

Stories and learning

Understanding the difference activities make

Attendance figures tell you how many people are engaging. Stories help explain what has changed because of that engagement.

A useful approach is Most Significant Change, a structured way of gathering and reflecting on stories. Participants share:

- What changed
- Why it mattered
- What contributed to the change

Churches, dioceses and programmes then discuss the stories together and use the learning to inform future decisions.

Visit the Monitoring and Evaluation page for guidance about Most Significant Change.

Link with other Shared Outcomes

• Individual discipleship

To access information about this, and the Shared Outcomes as a whole, see the page on Church Support Hub.