

Performance Measurement

Key Points

An **output** is a type of measure that tabulates, calculates, or records the actual products or services delivered by a program, such as students receiving tutoring or houses built. In other words, outputs are the amount of service provided. They measure the completion of activities and document the fact that individuals received services, products were created, or programs were developed. They answer the question, “How much service did we perform?” or “What products did we develop?”

An **outcome** is a type of measure that indicates progress toward achieving the intended result of a program, which usually represents a change in the situation of beneficiaries of service, such as educational achievement or housing. In other words, outcomes reflect the changes or benefits that occur. Outcomes answer the question, “What difference did our service make for beneficiaries?” or “How did the new system or product enhance the capacity of the organization to serve the community?”

Outcomes may be changes in attitude or belief, knowledge or skills, behavior, or condition. Understanding the type of outcome will help to determine how to measure it.

- “Attitude” outcomes involve a change in thought or feeling.
- “Knowledge” outcomes involve a change in understanding or ability - what a person learns or is able to do.
- “Behavior” outcomes involve changes in actions, such as conduct or habits, often in a specific context.
- “Condition” outcomes involve a change in situation or circumstance.

Practice Activity #2

Your Intervention: Briefly describe your own intervention. (Who is doing the intervention and who will be served? What will occur? Where and when will the intervention take place? How often and for how long?)

What outcomes do you expect to see? What types of outcomes are they, and when are they likely to occur?

Outcome	Type of outcome (attitude, knowledge, behavior, or condition)	When is this likely to occur? (in the short term, medium term, long term?)

Of the outcomes you listed, which represents the most meaningful change? Which most directly addresses the need or problem? _____

How will the outcome (change) reduce or mitigate the need or problem? _____
