

Writing Measurable Performance Indicators:



Getting to the Bottom Line for Program Outcomes

Program Performance Indicators - Performance measures assess your program's progress on the implementation of your strategies and activities. They assess the results of your program's educational program and/or service delivery. Ask yourself - In the work that my program does, what do we hope to directly affect? What results can we reasonably expect to produce? What can we realistically accomplish?

There are two types of performance measures -

1. **Measures of Effort or Process**- Also commonly known as **outputs**, these are measures of the products and services generated by program strategies and activities. Ask yourself - What does my program generate (e.g., publications, training materials), what levels of activity do we produce (e.g., the number of children served or products developed).

Outputs assess how much you did, but do little in terms of explaining how well you did it or how well your program ultimately worked for the target population you are working with. These are the easiest of all the evaluation measures to identify and track (*e.g., number of children served in the program and participant demographics, number of classes/sessions/trainings held*).

Output measures can include:

- # of individuals served and participant demographics
- # of classes/sessions/trainings held
- # and type of products developed
- Measures of program cost-effectiveness (must be measurable and quantifiable)

2. **Measures of Effect or Outcome** - **Outcome measures** are changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors in your target population. Ask yourself - How will I know that the individuals, families, groups, or organizations I work with in my program are better off? What changes do I expect to result from the strategies and activities my program provides?

Outcome measures (What happens as a **RESULT** of the program) can include:

- # of program participants developing new understanding/changed attitudes
- # of program participants reporting increased knowledge of _____
- # of program participants who report intent to adopt new behaviors/practices
- # of program participants who report development of new skills
- # of program participants who report changes in _____ behavior
- Improved conditions (this needs to be quantifiable, measurable, and based on the unique program goal. This can often be obtained from secondary data sources.)