

FUNDAMENTALS OF MEASUREMENT TOOLS USED TO MEASURE COMMUNITY ACTION OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

WHAT ARE MEASUREMENT TOOLS?

DOCUMENTS THAT PROVE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES.

For each indicator or service we are pursuing, we need data to support and provide evidence:

- of what we have done (activity, service, **output**) and
- what has happened (change, progress, **outcome**)

| OUTPUT MEASUREMENT TOOLS document the services/processes provided by the agency or done by the customer. | OUTCOME MEASUREMENT TOOLS document the change that has happened and the progress made towards a goal. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>An intake form documents how many people are enrolled (output) in a program, but it does not prove what happened to them.</p> <p>A log of payment shows an individual received a rent payment (output) but does not prove that the individual maintained housing for 30 days.</p> <p>A roster of individuals receiving food boxes (output) documents the service provided does not show increased food security.</p> | <p>Pre- and post-tests document the change in skill or knowledge (outcome).</p> <p>A follow up call to see if an individual was still in the housing unit provides data regarding the status of maintaining housing (outcome).</p> <p>A survey could be used to show if the food services they received had increased food security (outcome).</p> |

MEASUREMENT TOOLS VS SCALE/MATRIX

A scale or matrix by itself is NOT a measurement tool, but rather can store the information from the measurement tool. A measurement tool is needed to determine where the client falls on the scale/matrix, which can then be used to track client progress.

EXAMPLE: A survey to determine whether a client is “in crisis”, “safe”, or “thriving” is the measurement tool being used to determine the placement of the client on a scale. A follow-up survey would show the movement of a client from “in crisis” to “safe” on the scale after six months of service, which demonstrates client progress.

You must make sure the measurement tool is appropriate for the indicator. For example, attendance records for a class would not be a good measurement tool if the indicator is "getting a job." Below is a list of examples of measurement tools:

MEASUREMENT TOOLS VS STORAGE

A measurement tool is NOT the place where you enter and store data. A database or file cabinet is where you keep documentation about what you found after you have used a measurement tool to determine if an outcome was achieved. Then you enter the number of people who achieved the outcome into your database.

EXAMPLE: A report card is the document that would show a child's grades and that would allow you to determine whether they improved. The data from the report card is entered into your electronic data system, so you can retrieve, aggregate, and analyze it later. The report card is the measurement tool. The database is the storage system.

Outcome vs Output Measurement Tools Examples

| OUTCOME | OUTCOME Measurement Tools | OUTPUT | OUTPUT Measurement Tools | Data Storage |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Attain a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) | Copy of Diploma or Certificate | HSED Classes | Enrollment form at HSED Classes | File cabinet |
| Attain a job | Employment records | Resume workshops | Sign-in sheets in resume workshops | Case files |
| Increased school readiness | Pre-post tests | Early childhood education classes | Intake forms for early childhood classes program | Agency program database |
| Increased nutrition skills | Self-reported surveys | Cooking classes | Participation records at cooking classes | File cabinet |
| Increased physical health | Health records | Fitness and wellness classes | Activity log | Individual case records |

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