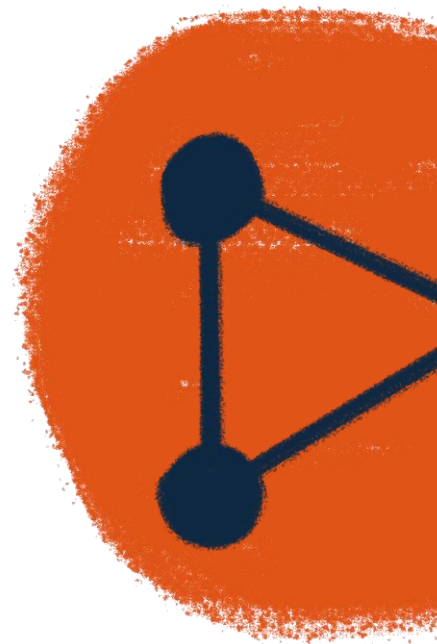


OPEN Quick Guide: Design Step 2

- Design your outcome measurement approach

This quick guide is part of a suite of technical resources developed by OPEN on behalf of The Centre.

For more resources, go to www.outcomes.org.au



OPEN Quick Guide: Design Step 2

Design your outcome measurement approach.

Step 1: Design your program, objectives and theory of change (see OPEN Quick Guide: Design Step 1)

Step 2: Design your outcome measurement approach

At the end of working through these Quick Guides you will have defined your program model and measurable outcomes, established the scope and methods you will use to measure your progress, and planned for effective implementation and processes to reflect, learn and improve as you go.

You can work through the design phase if you are developing a new program, adapting an existing evidence informed program or adapting an evidence based program.

Design your outcome measurement approach

You will have already designed your program and its outcomes using a program plan and a theory of change or logic model (See OPEN Quick Guide: Design Step 1).

The next step is to design your outcome measurement approach. This involves identifying your measurement focus, questions and the data you will collect to monitor your implementation, progress towards your outcomes (the difference you've made) and how you can improve. This data should be collected throughout implementation and can be assessed and reported on at any time, to inform development, to make improvements and demonstrate effectiveness and impact at key milestones or the end of the program.

Key features of planning your outcome measurement approach

Designing your outcome measurement approach, uses key evaluation¹ tools, and acts as the '**roadmap**' for how you will measure your success:

¹Evaluation can be defined as the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming. AIFS provides a good discussion of the role of evaluation, why to evaluate and how evaluation relates to monitoring – see <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/expert-panel-project/what-evaluation>

- It sets out the information that you will collect to track your progress during implementation, determine if your objectives have been met and how to improveⁱ.
- It is important to plan for measurement as early as possible and to use this plan to inform your data collection while you implement the activity or program.

Key steps in planning your outcome measurement approach:

Step 1 – Clarify your purpose and questions **A common purpose for outcome measurement** is to assess whether implementation is occurring as expected, whether improvements can be made and track progress being made to achieve objectives and outcomes. This information will be used to inform decisions by your team, managers, decision makers and funders, during or at the end of the program.

Planning for data collection and analysis is driven by the key questions you want to answer. Common questions of interest include one or more of:

- What did we deliver and well did we deliver it? (focus on outputs and processes)
- What difference did we make? Was it the difference we expected (focus on Outcomes)
- What's next – What worked and how can we improve overall? (Focus on success factors and improvement)

Step 2 – Plan for data collection Multiple simple data sources can be identified to answer these key questions. This data should be gathered by program teams during program delivery often called implementation. Data needs to be collected systematically, and impartially. It is best if you have multiple methods that are both quantitative (focussed on numbers) and qualitative (focussed on words, description and narrative). Easy data which can be collected to measure your outcomes includes:

- Service delivery or activity data – who participated and how often, was participation as expected, what was their feedback about the activity.
- Pre and post survey tools – survey of clients or participants to assess changes in personal circumstances, or features pre involvement in a service or activity, and after a service or activity.

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- Interviews or focus groups with clients, participants and key stakeholders to obtain insight about the outcomes achieved by the service or activity, what was identified as providing benefit and what could be improved. This can be closed or open questions.

Data collection, timelines and responsibility should be planned and monitored during implementation. The data should be periodically analysed against the questions you have identified and used to regularly inform learning and improvement (See [OPEN Reflect and Review tools](#)) and formally reported to key decision makers when required.

Use the attached [Outcome Measurement Planning Template](#) to determine what data collection methods/sources you need to answer each of your questions. (forthcoming)

To get you started, find:

Further resources are forthcoming on the topics below

- **OPEN Fact Sheet: Design – Steps to plan your outcomes measurement approach.** Provides further details on the basics of planning for outcome measurement and tips to avoid some of the common pitfalls. (forthcoming)
- **OPEN Template: Design - Outcome Measurement Planning Template.** Provides a Cheat Sheet, instructions and a template to tailor your evaluation questions for your program and identify the data sources/methods suitable to answer these questions. (forthcoming)
- **OPEN Fact Sheet: Design – Using Validated Outcome Measurement Tools.** Provides an overview of key considerations in using and selecting validated tools to measure changes in clients and participants features (forthcoming)
- **OPEN Fact Sheet: Design: Getting started with Data Collection** and **OPEN Resource – Common Data Collection Methods** Provides an overview of evidence types and data collection methods. (forthcoming)

What are some of the tools that can help?

Designing for outcomes measurement – Planning your evaluation approach

<p>The Australian Institute of Family Studies</p> <p>https://aifs.gov.au/resources/practice-guides/planning-evaluation</p>	<p>This resource provides detailed guidance on creating an Evaluation Plan including a webinar</p>
<p>The TasCOSS How to Library</p> <p>http://www.tascosslibrary.org.au/</p>	<p>The TasCOSS 'How To' Library provides short, easy to understand instructions to assist community sector organisations and individuals to meet Outcome Measurement reporting requirements.</p>
<p>Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, NZ: Making Sense of Evaluation – A Handbook for everyone</p> <p>https://thehub.swa.govt.nz/resources/making-sense-of-evaluation-a-handbook-for-everyone</p>	<p>Provides a plain English explanation with everyday examples of program logic development. A great place to start.</p>
<p>For more detailed information on all things outcome measurement and evaluation</p>	
<p>Better Evaluation</p> <p>https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/start here</p>	<p>Better Evaluation is a global collaboration aimed at improving evaluation practice and theory. The site includes each step of the evaluative process, with tools and instructions.</p>
<p>W. K. Kellogg Foundation – The Step by Step Guide to Evaluation</p> <p>https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/WKKF_StepByStepGuideTo Evaluation smaller.pdf</p>	<p>If you want more detail on evaluation planning, and the whole process this is for you.</p>