

**A Place for Everyone -  
Hackney Voluntary and Community Sector Grants  
Programme**

# **Guide to Selecting and Measuring Outcomes**

## **Guide to selecting and measuring outcomes**

### **1. Introduction**

Outcomes are increasingly important for understanding and measuring the success of grant aided and commissioned activity. This short guide has been designed to support you to understand what the aims and outcomes of your project are and then to select what you will report to the Council to show how you are moving towards achieving these.

This is only a short guide. If this is a new way of planning and measuring the work of your organisation we would recommend that you refer to guidance and attend relevant training provided HCVS and other infrastructure support organisations.

### **2. Understanding outcomes and outputs**

#### **a) What are outcomes?**

Outcomes are the actual **changes, benefits or other effects** that happen as a result of your organisations activities.

#### **b) How are they different to outputs?**

Outputs are the **activities and services** that you deliver that help you to achieve your desired outcomes.

#### **c) How are outcomes different to aims?**

Aims are the changes that you are trying to achieve that are **broad and 'big picture'**.

#### **d) How to identify the outcomes for your project?**

What are the **most important short term and longer term changes** you aim to bring about?

#### **e) Where can outcomes happen?**

- **Individual**
  - Example – improved attendance at school
- **Family**
  - Example – more positive relationships and reduced conflict
- **Community**
  - Example – reduced fear of crime
- **Environment**
  - Example – increased recycling and reduction in littering

#### **f) What are outcome indicators?**

Steps along the way to reaching the final intended outcomes are called outcome indicators.

These are important when your final outcome is long term, ambitious or complex so progress may appear slow. They are a way of making sure that you are on the right track and more likely to achieve your final outcomes.

### **g) How to identify the outputs for your project?**

Outputs can include **services you offer, products you provide or give away (for example, booklets), and facilities you provide. They are what you “put out” as a result of your activity.** Outputs are not the benefits or changes you achieve for your users – they are the activities you deliver and interventions you make to bring about those achievements.

### **h) How can we measure that we are achieving our outcomes?**

Consider a range of methods to measure your results.

There are four main ways to gather outcomes information and evidence

1. Record Keeping - Baseline information, Membership / profile forms, case notes, attendance registers
2. Observation,
3. Self Completion Forms, Surveys, Questionnaires, diary logs
4. Individual and group focus groups

Tip - When choosing the data collection method ensure at least one method involves the user. Choose up to two methods for each outcome (see page 6 ‘Ways of collecting data’).

## **3. Examples of Aims, Outcomes and Outputs**

The following **examples are only to guide** and help you to think about what the overall aims of your project are, describe the outcomes you hope to achieve and the ways in which you could measure them. They should also help you to describe the most important outputs that will help you deliver your outcomes.

### **Example 1 – demonstrating outcomes for individuals - a youth project**

#### **a) Aim – the high level, broad objective(s) for your project**

**Example** - To improve youth cohesion and community safety

#### **b) Outcomes – the change, benefits or other effects that you want to make happen**

**Examples** -

- Reducing offending by young people attending the project by X% by the end of the project
- Increase by xx% young people completing accredited activities
- Young people feel they are listened to

#### **c) Outcome indicators – steps along the way to help you achieve an overall outcome**

**Example**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Final Outcome</b>
XX of attendees are Young offenders engaging with the project	Reducing offending by young people attending the project by X% by the end of the project
XX% of young offenders develop trust in the youth workers within X months	
XX% of young offenders distance themselves from their offending peer group within X months	
XX% of young offenders have developed new aspirations within X months	

**d) Outputs that will help you to deliver your outcomes**

**Examples**

- Number of young offenders participating in the project
- Number of hours of youth activity provided
- Hours of peer mentoring sessions
- Number of young people completing surveys

**e) Ways of measuring that the outcome indicators are being achieved**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Ways of Measuring progress</b>
Young offenders engage with the project	Record of attendees who are young offenders
Young offenders develop trust in the youth workers	Number of personal safety issues dealt with by youth workers
Young offenders distance themselves from their offending peer group	Number of young offenders socialising with other attendees outside of project hours
Young offenders have developed new aspirations	Number of young offenders completing accredited activities

**Example 2 – demonstrating outcomes for families – a family project**

**a) Aim – the high level, broad objective(s) for your project**

**Example** - To improve the lives of the parents and children affected by poverty

**b) Outcomes – the change, benefits or other effects that you want to make happen**

**Examples**

- Children are generally happy and their emotional needs are being met
- The family have positive routines that they stick to
- Social networks have been developed

**c) Outcome indicators – steps along the way to help you achieve an overall outcome**

**Example**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Final Outcome</b>
The majority of parents are setting boundaries and adhering to them within x months	During the project lifetime XX children attending the project demonstrate a change in X vital indicators that show that their emotional needs are being met
There is regular play at home involving one or both parents by the end of xxxx	
X% of children are exhibiting fewer signs of stress by XXXX	
Interaction between xxx siblings has improved by XXXX	

**d) Outputs that will help you to deliver your outcomes**

**Examples**

- Number of parents and children participating in the project
- Hours of parental peer learning sessions
- Number of hours of supervised play provided
- Number of parenting workshops delivered

**e) Ways of measuring that the outcome indicators are being achieved**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Ways of measuring progress</b>
Parents are setting boundaries and adhering to them	Parents reporting ability to hold boundaries they set
There is regular play activity at home involving one or both parents	Parents able to share successful tips in parental peer mentoring sessions
Children are exhibiting fewer signs of stress	Fewer children are removed from play settings
Interaction between siblings has improved	Siblings demonstrating improved behaviour together in social settings

**Example 3 – demonstrating outcomes for communities – an area improvement project**

**a) Aim – the high level, broad objective(s) for your project**

**Example** – To deliver a range of community led environmental improvements

**b) Outcomes – the change, benefits or other effects that you want to make happen**

**Examples**

- There is a stronger sense of shared pride in the area
- The area looks more attractive and littering is reduced
- Involvement in existing community led environmental improvements is more representative of the wider community

**c) Outcome indicator – steps along the way to help you achieve an overall outcome**

**Example**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Final Outcome</b>
An increase in the range of local communities represented at consultation events compared to last year	There is a % change in representation from the wider community involved in existing community led environmental improvements by the end of the project
By XXXX the community group committee includes new members that are more representative of the communities in the area	
Within XX months activities are being organised/led by different communities	
Within X months communications are being delivered through a wider variety of local media and more word of mouth than in previous years	

**d) Outputs that will help you to deliver your outcomes**

**Examples**

- Number of consultation events
- Number of volunteers engaged
- Numbers participating in clean up days
- Hours of volunteering by under-represented groups

**e) Ways of measuring that the outcome indicators are being achieved**

<b>Outcome indicator</b>	<b>Ways of measuring progress</b>
A range of local communities are represented at consultation events	Attendance sheets for consultation events
The community group committee includes new members that are more representative of the communities in the area	Register of Committee Attendance
Activities are being organised/led by different communities	Surveys and Questionnaires /Observation
Communications are being delivered through a variety of local media and more word of mouth	Survey of communications, record keeping

#### 4. Ways of collecting data

By staff and supporters			Completed by participants	
Staff Level	Records	Interviews	Self-completion	Creative
Observation	Profiles	Focus groups	Diary log	Photo
Audio	Enrolment form	Survey Monkey	Questionnaire	Vision board
Video	Register	Telephone interviews	Feedback form	Outcome star
	Case work notes	Online interview	Self-assessment test	Score card

#### 5. List of Example Outputs

Service Area	Output
<b>Play Provision - Holiday Play scheme &amp; Main Grants</b>	Total no. of Play Sessions delivered (1 day =1 session)
	Total no. of Hours of Play delivered (hours per session multiplied by no. of sessions)
	Total no. of play provision places provided (average daily attendance multiplied by total no. of sessions delivered)
	Hours of respite provided for parents/carers (for projects supporting disabled children)
<b>Youth Activities</b>	Total no. of Youth Activity sessions provided
	Total no. of Hours of Youth Activities delivered (hours per session multiplied by no. of sessions)
	Total no of young people who accessed the service (average daily attendance multiplied by total no. of sessions delivered)
	Hours of respite provided for parents/carers (for projects supporting disabled young people)
	Total no. of Hours of Peer Mentoring provided
<b>Advice Services</b>	No of Advice Sessions delivered
	No of hours of Face to Face advice provided (hours per session multiplied by no. of sessions)
	No of hours of Telephone Advice Provided
	Hours of support sessions run.
	Number of families having their income increased

<b>Education</b>	No. of classes / sessions delivered
	Total No. of people attending the classes/sessions/activities (Total attendance at all classes/sessions)
	No. of external qualifications/certs/awards achieved
<b>Employment</b>	No. of Employment Support sessions delivered
	No. of Hours of Employment support delivered (hours per session multiplied by no. of sessions)
	Total No. of people attending the Employment support sessions (Total attendance at all sessions)
	No. of people directly supported into employment
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	No. of Health & Wellbeing support/consultation/advice sessions run
	No. of Health events delivered
	No. of project service users reporting an increase in health and wellbeing
<b>Sustainability</b>	No. of Community Outreach events held
	Number of sessions promoting environmental issues
	No. of workshops/sessions to promote sustainable communities
<b>General outputs</b>	Number of Trips provided
	Number of public performances held
<b>Volunteers</b>	Total number of hours that volunteers have spent on this project.