

INDICATORS AND OUTCOMES

Indicators are used to measure the outcome of a project or activity – they give you the info to help determine whether you have made the differences that you hoped to make. Your indicator list gives you your evaluation plan.

The overall aim / impact of a project may not be achievable right away, and several small steps may need to happen before it is achieved.

So sometimes a **series of outcomes** is required to focus on the short term targets for the project - with each stage being a meaningful and realistic step on the way.

For Example - Anytown Young Carers Project

Impact – Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

Short term outcome: Young carers know where to go for support & are confident to do so

Medium term outcome: Young carers are less isolated and better able to cope

Longer term outcome: Young carers participation and attainment at school is improved

Using the example above think about each outcome:

What would it look like if it was achieved? Come up with one measurable indicator for each outcome.

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

Tips for getting it right:

1. Make sure your indicators are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-scaled
2. Measure indicators **more than once** to show change.
3. What is your baseline (the starting point) for the service and for individuals (from referral info, assessment, evidence of need etc.)
4. Don't collect information on all outcomes all the time.
5. Do you need to ask everyone or can you sample?
6. Follow up some users if you can to find out what happened next.
7. Use one system – but a range of methods.
8. Build into planning – and if possible activities.
9. Test your methods.
10. Be honest and involve clients.
11. Record unexpected outcomes (e.g. 6 volunteers got a job as a result of the skills they developed when volunteering)

