Performance Measures
Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

• Describe key performance measurement concepts
• Identify high quality performance measures
Performance measurement helps you:

• Manage your program
• Tell your story
Performance measurement is a systematic process of tracking outputs and outcomes:

Outputs

- Amount of service provided (e.g. people served, products created, or programs developed) through your planned intervention

Outcomes

- Reflect the changes or benefits that occur as the result of the intervention
- Can reflect changes in individuals, organizations, communities, or the environment
- Address changes in attitudes/beliefs, knowledge/skills, behavior, or conditions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences: Key Areas</th>
<th>Performance Measurement</th>
<th>Impact Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Causality</strong></td>
<td>Assumes causality; does <em>not</em> “prove” theory of change</td>
<td>Seeks to show causality and “prove” theory of change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation</strong></td>
<td>Tracks outputs and outcomes on a regular, ongoing basis</td>
<td>May occur from time to time, but not on a regular, ongoing basis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Time Focus</strong></td>
<td>Shorter term focus; what can be measured within one year</td>
<td>Longer term focus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Alignment:

Logical flow and connection between the different elements helps you:

- Strengthen your theory of change
- Articulate your performance measures
- Measure more accurately
- Clearly report changes
Alignment within Theory of Change

- Strong alignment among the theory of change elements sets the stage for identifying quality performance measures

Diagram:
- Community Problem/Need
- Specific Intervention “cause”
- Intended Outcome “effect”
Theory of Change: Veterans Example

Community Problem/Need

Young veterans have high rates of unemployment

Specific Intervention

Assistance in finding programs and financial aid; tutoring resources and internship placement.

Intended Outcome

Veterans find or are placed in jobs.
Identifying a High Quality Outcome

The Outcome should:

• Be meaningful
• Be ambitious yet realistic
• Reflect the type of change (attitude, knowledge, behavior, or condition) you want to measure
Meaningful Outcome

Criteria for a meaningful outcome. Consider:

- **Community Need/problem:** Is the outcome addressing it?
- **Compelling/powerful.** Is the outcome central or peripheral?
Meaningful Outcome

Criteria for a meaningful outcome. Consider (continued):

- **Beneficiaries.** Is the target audience identified in the outcome?
- **Scope of the outcome.** How many will benefit?
- **Magnitude of the outcome.** How much change will occur for beneficiaries?
- **Evidence.** Is the outcome supported by evidence for the intervention?
Ambitious yet Realistic

Is the outcome too modest?
Consider:

• Outcome should reflect an ambitious change expected from the intervention

• Outcome resulting from full “dosage” of intervention
Ambitious yet Realistic

Is the outcome too ambitious?
Consider:

• Program timeframe
• Scope of the intervention
• Severity of the problems being addressed
• Program resources
Mentoring Example

**NEED**: Documented high rates of chronic absence from school lead to other problems, e.g. low school engagement, poor academic performance (Social Work Practices, 2010).

**INTERVENTION**: Weekly individual and group mentoring to 6th grade students with attendance problems over 10 months. Focus on promoting re-engagement with school through social development and leadership skills.
Reflect the Type of Outcome

Has the outcome type been identified: attitude, knowledge/skills, behavior or condition?

- Outcome type should be same as theory of change
- Outcome type will inform instrument
NEED: 35% of young veterans (18-24 year olds) are unemployed (Department of Veteran Affairs, 2011). Economists cite a lack of marketable civilian skills and the need for education degrees, vocational certifications...

INTERVENTION: National service participants support veterans in completing training programs by assisting in locating appropriate programs, securing financial aid, and by providing tutoring resources and internship placements.

1. Veterans report increased confidence employment. (attitude)

2. Veterans demonstrate new technical skills. (knowledge/skills)

3. Veterans are placed in jobs. (condition)
Alignment of Outputs and Outcomes

- Intervention produces output
- Output leads to the outcome
- Output and outcome measure the same intervention and beneficiaries
## Housing Example: Output-Outcome Alignment

**INTERVENTION:** Construction teams assess housing request, plan and execute housing upgrades and repairs and complete inspection requirements for individuals with disabilities.

**OUTPUT:** Individuals with disabilities receive housing service (upgrades and repairs).

**OUTCOME:** Construction team members improve construction skills.

**Do the intervention and output align?**

**Why or why not?**
**INTERVENTION:** Construction teams assess housing request, plan and execute housing upgrades and repairs and complete inspection requirements for individuals with disabilities.

**OUTPUT:** Individuals with disabilities receive housing service (upgrades and repairs).

**OUTCOME:** Construction team members improve construction skills.

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**Do the output and outcome align?**

**Why or why not?**
### Examples of Aligned Output-Outcome National Performance Measures

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<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Number of individuals served (ED1A)</td>
<td>Number of students with improved academic performance (ED5A)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of Aligned Output-Outcome National Performance Measures

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Futures</td>
<td>Number of individuals served (H4A)</td>
<td>Number of individuals who report increased food security (H12)</td>
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Summary of Key Points

• Performance measurement is a systematic process of measuring progress (outputs and outcomes)

• Performance measurement does not seek to “prove” a theory of change, but can provide snapshots.

• Impact evaluation can determine if results occurred because of the intervention.
Summary of Key Points

• Strong performance measures align with the theory of change (need, intervention and outcome)
  – The intervention is based on evidence that supports a cause-and-effect relationship between the intervention and an intended outcome.
  – The theory of change helps identify an appropriate outcome to measure.

• Quality outcomes should:
  – Be meaningful
  – Be ambitious yet realistic
  – Match the type of change you want to see (attitude, knowledge/skills, behavior, condition)
Summary of Key Points

• Strong performance measures are aligned
  – Output comes from the intervention
  – Outcome is likely to result from output
  – Output and outcome measure the same intervention and beneficiaries
Questions?