Training Terminology – Toolkit

Developing an Outcome Mapping

Definition

Methodology of evaluating a program that takes into consideration one specific type of result: Outcomes as behavioral change. Outcomes are defined as changes in the behavior, relationships, activities, or actions of the people, groups, and organizations with whom a program works directly. Outcome mapping concerns only the results that can be considered as direct effects of the program. This methodology is a way of monitoring the activities of an organization and helps to evaluate them in a more organized way, making people conscious of the effect of their job. For instance, in the case of a program meant to supply communities with clean water, an outcome mapping will consider whether the persons involved use the filters properly, monitor the contaminant level and ask the experts when needed. On the contrary, a method based on changes in state will take into account the number of filters installed and measure their efficacy in terms of contaminants reduction. Outcome mapping can be used at the program, project, or organizational level and it is divided into three main stages:

Stages	Content
Intentional Design	On a macro level, this stage helps to build consensus on the changes the program has provoked.
Outcome and Performance Monitoring	This step concerns the monitoring of the program's actions and of the boundary partners' progress. It is based mainly on systematized self-assessment
Evaluation Planning	This step helps to develop an evaluation plan, through the identification of evaluation priorities.

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Step by Step

Stage 1: Intentional Design

This first stage deals with the following main issues: Why is the program designed in a specific way? Who are its boundary partners? What are the expected and wished outcomes the program is supposed to reach? Which strategies need to be developed to achieve these outcomes?

- **Describe the Vision**. The vision reflects the broad outcome the program aims to reach. Questions the facilitator could ask are: Which are the expected results of the program over the next 3-5 years? How will the partners' behavior change? Which situation could be considered as a total success of the program?

- **Identify the Mission**. The mission statement is the part of the vision the program is going to focus on. The mission statement illustrates how the program is going to support the achievement of the expected outcomes. Facilitation questions can be: How can the program contribute to achieve the results mentioned in the vision? What areas need to be focused on?

- **Identify the Boundary Partners**. Boundary Partners are the individuals, groups or organizations the program works with, in order to achieve the wished changes. Facilitation questions can be: Which boundary partners the program addresses in order to make them contribute to the achievement of the expected outcomes?

- **Identify the Outcome Challenge**. Outcome Challenge statements need to be identified for each boundary partner. An outcome challenge illustrates the changes that will occur in the individual or collective behavior if the program succeeds. Outcome challenges should stress that the program is developed by and for people. Therefore, the boundary partners themselves have the ultimate responsibility of the behavioral changes. A facilitation question can be: Ideally, how should boundary partners change their behavior, actions and relationships in order to contribute to the vision?

- **Develop Graduated Progress Markers**. Graduated progress markers need to be identified for each outcome challenge, since they are a change model for the boundary partners. Graduated progress markers should illustrate the expected and wished outcomes of the program. Facilitation questions can be: Which changes in boundary partners' behavior would you expect to see? Which changes would you like to see? Which ones would you love to see?

- **Complete a Strategy Map for Each Outcome Challenge**. A strategy map need to be developed to illustrate the strategies the program should use to achieve the outcomes. Strategies can concern specific individuals, groups or organizations or the environment in which they work. Questions the facilitator could ask are: how will the program achieve the outcome challenge in the next "x" months? What need to be done to produce "x" outputs?

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• **Articulate Organizational Practices**. Organizational practices portray an organization that has the potential to perform well. Focusing on data concerning organizational practices allows to reflect on the process that are going on internally and also on the unintended results that might occur. A facilitation question can be: What should the organization do to contribute to achieve the expected and wished changes in the boundary partners?

Stage 2: Outcome and Performance Monitoring

This second stage is meant to develop a framework to monitor the ongoing program.

• **Set Monitoring Priorities**. In order to avoid wasting human and financial resources, it is necessary to place monitoring priorities. Outcome mapping focuses on three types of information: organizational practices (registered on a performance journal); changes made by the boundary partners towards the achievement of the expected results (registered on an outcome journal); and strategies developed by the program to support these changes (registered on a strategy journal). Facilitation questions that can help setting monitoring priorities are: who will use the information? What is the purpose of the information? When is the information needed?

• **Set up Outcome Journals**. An outcome journal needs to be set up for each boundary partner considered as a priority. The outcome journal is based on the graduated markers described above. Facilitation questions can be: Has the change occurred at a low, medium or high level? What is the reason for the change? Who are the people or the context responsible for the change?

• **Set up a Strategy Journal**. A strategy journal is meant to track the strategies developed to foster the expected changes in the boundary partners. Questions the facilitator could ask are: Which resources have been allocated? Which activities have been undertaken? What are their outputs? How can the implemented strategies be improved?

• **Set up a Performance Journal**. A performance journal deals with data concerning the way in which the organization is operating to achieve the expected outcomes. A performance journal which records the practices developed by the organization to make the program effective should be created for each program. The information can be collected through quantitative indicators and examples. Facilitation questions can be: Which activities need to be changed or improved? Who is responsible for them?

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Stage 3: Evaluation Planning

Both monitoring and evaluation aim to foster the organization to base its management on data, rather than on perceptions. Since it is impossible to evaluate everything, evaluation priorities need to be set.

> • **Develop an Evaluation Plan**. An evaluation plan is meant to describe the main elements of the evaluation process. It provides information concerning who will use the evaluation, how and when; who will carry out the evaluation process; the information's sources; the evaluation methods; how long will the evaluation last and how much will it cost.