Identifying Outcomes

One of the key sections of a logic model is the outcomes section. The outcomes are the results or benefits that the participants get from a program. Outcomes focus on what difference is made. When you are trying to identify the outcomes for a program ask yourself: What is or will be different as a result of this program? What will be changed or improved? What do or will the participants say is the value of the program? What do or will they say about why they came to the program?

If you are trying to identify outcomes for an existing program, look at the program’s major activities. Ask yourself: Why are we doing that? The answers to this “why” usually identify the outcomes for that program.

Here are some examples that can help you identify outcomes:

- **What difference does it make that youth are involved in a community service program?**
  Some outcomes of this activity might be that youth increase knowledge about the local community, or youth increase decision making skills, or youth take action that benefits the community and selves.

- **What difference does it make that farmers attend an annual field day?**
  Possible outcomes could be that farmers increase knowledge about the latest research, or farmers increase ability to assess recommendations for their own farms, or farmers adopt research recommendations as appropriate.

When you are writing the outcomes for your program, keep the idea of SMART outcomes in mind.

- **S** = be specific or concrete, who or what is expected to change?
- **M** = Measurable, can you see, hear, count, smell it?
- **A** = attainable, what is likely to be achieved?
- **R** = results oriented, is it meaningful, valued?
- **T** = Timed, by when or what target date?

Use a target subject (who/what), action verb (change/desired effect), expected results (in what), and target date (by when) as you write outcome statements. For example, teenage youth aged 13-17 years attending camp (who) improve (change) their leadership skills (expected results) by the end of camp (by when).

Using the SMART format for your outcomes will help you communicate your outcomes as well as help you determine what you will need to measure to see if you have achieved the outcomes.