TOOL 〈 11 OUTCOME MAPPING

When to use it

Outcome mapping is most often used for large programmes. It provides a structured framework for programme design, outcome and performance monitoring and evaluation. However, parts of it can be used for smaller projects where you want to think through how to influence changes in behaviour to achieve a new goal.

What it is

It is a participatory methodology to create outcome maps for organizations where monitoring and evaluation are primarily intended to support learning and improvement. Outcomes are defined as changes in the behaviours, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and organizations with whom a programme works directly. Outcome mapping introduces monitoring and evaluation considerations at the planning stage of a programme. It actively engages groups and teams in designing a learning-oriented plan and encourages self-reflection.

How to use it

The outcome mapping process is divided into three stages (A-C) and twelve steps (1-12). The process is shaped through a facilitated three-day workshop where the facilitator adapts the materials to the needs of the group.

A. Intentional design = helps establish consensus about the desired macro-level changes a programme will aim to achieve and plan the strategies it will use. It answers the following four questions:

1) To what vision does the programme aim to contribute? (WHY)

2) With whom (i.e. individuals/groups/organizations) does the programme interact? (WHO)

3) What changes are being sought? (WHAT)

4) How will the programme contribute to the change process? (HOW)

STEP 1. Vision

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 2 hours

> Topic: The group has to describe in few sentences what the programme is supposed to accomplish. The outcome is a shared vision statement about the broad development changes the programme is trying to bring about.

STEP 2. Mission

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 2 hours

> Topic: The group has to respond on how the programme can best contribute to the achievement of the vision. The outcome is a shared mission statement.

STEP 3. Boundary partners

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 1 hour

> Topic: The group is stimulated to identify all the actors the programme needs to work with and list their different functions. The outcome is a list of people, organizations and groups that will have a direct role or have an interest in programme implementation and monitoring.

STEP 4. Outcome challenges

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 30 minutes

> Topic: Each participant is asked to provide an answer to the following questions: "Ideally, in order to contribute to the vision, how will you, as a programme partner, be behaving differently?" and "What new relationships will have been built?". The outcome is that the facilitator will encourage the discussion and organize the various responses into an outcome challenges statement.

STEP 5. Progress markers

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 45 minutes

> Topic: The facilitator asks each participant to identify milestones that have to be reached by the implementing actors to accomplish the vision. Specifically: what they would expect to see accomplished, what they would like to see, and what they would love to see. The group discusses the changes in behaviours they would like to see and that are necessary for change. The outcome is that the group needs to agree about the progress markers and capture the major changes necessary for the CD process.

STEP 6. Strategy maps

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 1 hour

> Topic: The facilitator asks the group to write down 7-10 strategies that would respond to the focus question: "How will the programme contribute to the achievement of the outcome challenges in the next months?" The group then is divided into subgroups to discuss answers and come up with the five best strategies to link the three dimensions of the capacity framework – individuals, organizations and the enabling environment – and different types of strategies categorized according to causality, persuasion and building

supportive networks. The facilitator and the group review the completed strategy maps and prioritize based on the human and financial resources available. The outcome is a two-by-three matrix (strategy map) that is completed and agreed on. The first row labels individuals or groups that are going to be influenced by the programme; the second row labels the enabling environment in which individuals and organizations operate. Environment strategies are meant to indirectly influence individuals and groups by altering the setting in which they operate. The three columns report strategies based on causal influences (i.e. cause a direct effect), persuasive influences (i.e. tries to influence the drivers of change) and building supportive networks. From the strategy maps, a workplan with responsibilities and a timeline can be developed.

STEP 7.   Organizational practices

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 30 minutes

> Topic: The facilitator encourages the group to identify organizatonal practices that the programme can use to be effective. The discussion is facilitated around the following eight major practices and the key actions that can be associated with each of them: 1. prospecting for new ideas, opportunities and resources; 2. seeking feedback from key informants; 3. obtaining the support of higher–level decision bodies; 4. assessing and redesigning products, services, systems and procedures; 5. checking up on implementing partners; 6. sharing the best wisdom with the world (dissemination of lessons); 7. experimenting to remain innovative; and 8. engaging in organizational reflection. For the outcome, the facilitator writes on a flipchart the suggested actions for each of the practices and asks the group to determine which actions it wants to undertake during programme implementation. These key actions can be monitored during the next stage in step 11.

B. Outcome and performance monitoring provides a framework for monitoring a programme through a systematized self-assessment process. It is based on the following data collection tools: Outcome Journal, Strategy Journal, Performance Journal.

STEP 8.   Monitoring priorities

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 1 hour

> Topic: The facilitator describes the three types of monitoring priorities that outcome mapping can help to track: 1. the implementing partners, through the outcome journal; 2. the programme's strategy using the strategy journal; and 3. the organizational practices, through the performance journal. The facilitator stimulates a discussion about how the monitoring data will be used, as this will help to set monitoring priorities. The outcome is that a monitoring sheet/plan will be compiled, including the following information: the monitoring priorities (1 to 3); who will use the information; purpose of the information; when the information is needed; who will collect the information; how often it will be collected; how it will be collected; and proposed monitoring tools (see steps 9,10,11)

STEP 9.   Outcome journal (progress markers)

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 30 minutes

> Topic: For each implementing partner, the facilitator aks the group to complete a monitoring worksheet, highlighting the outcome challenge and the progress markers related to a working area and rating their programme contribution to the indicated outcomes (i.e. high, medium or low). The facilitator encourages discussion around the most appropriate method to gather data, responsible actors, frequency of monitoring meetings and use of data. The outcome is a compilation of the outcome journal, which includes the following elements: description of change, contribution of factors and actors, source of evidence, unanticipated change, lessons/required programme changes/reactions.

STEP 10. Strategy Journal (strategy maps)

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 1 hour

> Topic: The facilitator reviews the various components of the programme strategy with the group, i.e activities implemented, their effectiveness, outputs, required follow-up and lessons learned. The facilitator then supports the group to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their practices or strategies. The facilitator stimulates the discussion around the most appropriate method to gather data, responsible actors, frequency of monitoring meetings and use of data. The outcome is the development of the strategy journal, which includes the description of activities, their effectiveness, the outputs, the required programme follow-up or changes, the lessons and the date of the next monitoring meeting.

STEP 11. Performance Journal (organizational practices)

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 1 hour

> Topic: The facilitator helps the group to customize a perfomance journal based on the practices identified during step 7, and then reviews them with the group. The purpose is to offer a way for the programme to reflect and gather data on the proposed actions. The outcome is the development of the performance journal, which identifies for each organizational practice examples of indicators, sources of evidence and lessons.

C. Evaluation planning helps the programme identify evaluation priorities and develop an evaluation plan.

STEP 12. Evaluation plan

> Format: facilitated discussion

> Duration: 2 hours

> Topic: Discussion around a set of evaluation priorities, such as learning needs, accountability and reporting requirements or partners' information needs. The facilitator asks the group to identify who will use the evaluation findings, how and when, the key questions, the possible sources of information, the evaluation methods, who will conduct and manage the evaluation, the timeline and costs. The outcome is the development of an evaluation plan.

Source: Outcome mapping. Building learning and reflection into development programs-IDRC 2001.
Additional reference: http://www.kstoolkit.org/Outcome+Mapping