Candidate Outcome Indicators: Adult Education and Family Literary Programs

Implementing an outcome monitoring process enables organizations to track progress in achieving the program's mission. With this information, program managers can better develop budgets, allocate resources and improve their services. This document includes the following suggestions for starting or improving outcome measurement efforts:

1. **Outcome sequence chart** – *Identifies key outcomes presented in the sequence that are normally expected to occur*. The chart illustrates how one outcome leads to the next and identifies specific indicators that might be used to track each outcome. Intermediate outcomes tend to be on the left, and end (or final) outcomes are on the right. The program description at the top of the chart is meant to encompass a range of similar programs.

2. **Candidate outcome indicators –** *Lists outcomes and associated indicators as a starting point for deciding which outcomes to track*. They were chosen based on a review of the program area and consultation with program experts. Only outcome indicators are included (not physical outputs, such as number of classes held; not efficiency, such as cost per counseling session; and not organization issues, such as success in fundraising or staffing). The focus is on program beneficiaries (clients, customers, citizens, participants) and what has been accomplished for them. A data source or collection procedure is suggested for each indicator.
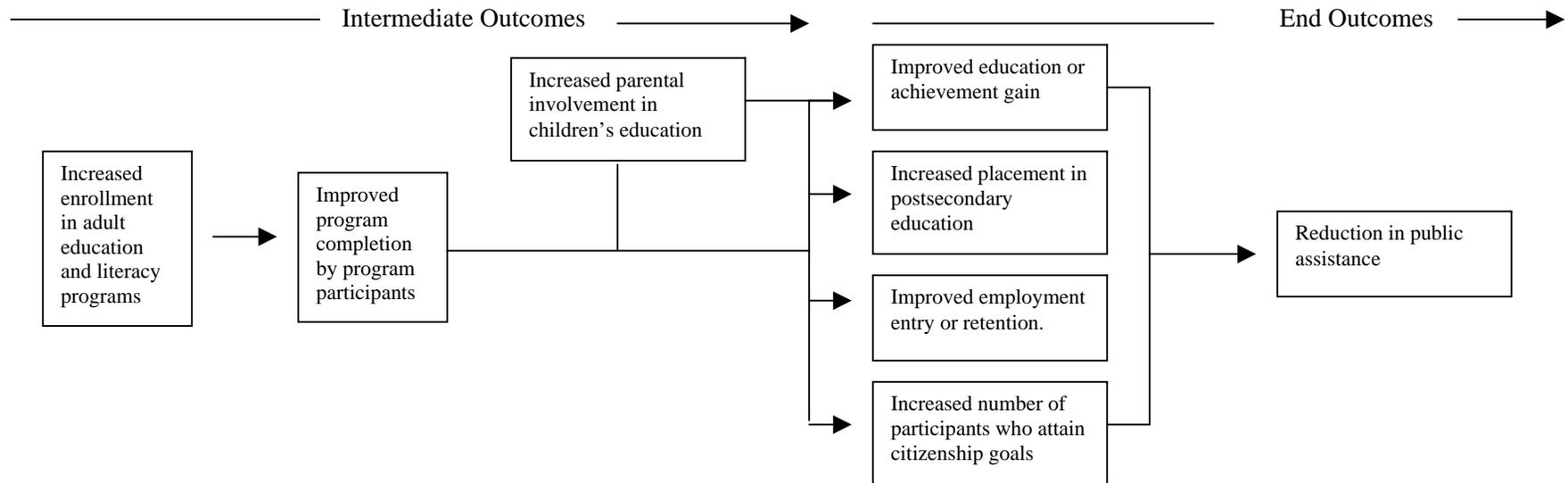
Suggestions and Limitations for Use of the Materials

- Involve others in deciding which outcomes and indicators to track. Obtain input from staff, board members, and clients. As an early step, prepare your own version of an outcome sequence chart–one that you believe fits the needs of your program.

- Review the project report for additional ideas on relevant indicators and additional resources: *Building a Common Framework to Measure Nonprofit Performance*.

- Tabulate the outcome information by various categories of clients to see if outcomes are different for different clients (e.g., gender, age group, income level, handicap level, and race/ethnicity). Use that information to help better target your efforts.

- Start with a small number of the indicators, especially if you have had only very little experience with such data collection and have very limited resources. Add more outcomes and indicators to the performance measurement system later, as you find that information is likely to be useful.

- Outcome information seldom, if ever, tells *why* the outcomes have occurred. Many internal and external factors can contribute to any outcome. Instead, use the outcome data to identify *what* works well and what does not. Use the data to determine for which *categories of clients your* procedures and policies are working well and for which they are not working well. To the extent that the program is not working as well as expected, then attempt to find out the reasons. This investigation process leads to continuous learning and program improvement.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Program Description
To enable adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school, enhanced family life, attaining citizenship and participating in job training and retraining programs.

Outcome Sequence Chart

Intermediate Outcomes ⟶ End Outcomes ⟶

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Increased              Improved            Increased parental      Improved education or     Reduction in public
enrollment             program             involvement in          achievement gain          assistance
in adult               completion          children's education
education              by program                                  Increased placement in
and literacy           participants                                postsecondary
programs                                                           education

                                                                   Improved employment
                                                                   entry or retention.

                                                                   Increased number of
                                                                   participants who attain
                                                                   citizenship goals
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Indicators

1. Number of participants who enroll in adult education program.

2. Number and percent of participants who completed the program.

3-5. Number and percent of parent participants who (a) regularly help children with their school work, (b) attend parent meetings or school activities, (c) read to their children daily.

6. Number and percent of participants who complete or advance at least one educational level. 7. Average number of educational levels advanced per program participant. 8. Number and percent of participants who receive a secondary school diploma or GED.

9. Number and percent of participants who enroll in postsecondary education or occupational skills training program.

10-11. Number and percent of participants who (a) obtain a job within 3 months of program completion, or (b) remain employed 12 months after program completion.

12-13. Number and percent of participants who pass citizenship exam. Number and percent of participants (who at time of enrollment are not registered to vote) who register to vote or vote for the first time.

14. Number and percent of participants (who upon program entry were enrolled in TANF) whose grant is reduced or eliminated due to employment or increased income.

Participant satisfaction

Satisfaction with program services is an outcome that occurs within almost every program area, yet does not necessarily have a sequential placement. The indicator may be: Number and percent of program participants satisfied with adult education training and services.

Sources Consulted: Sustainable Measures (http://www.sustainablemeasures.com); National Reporting System for Adult Education Implementation Guidelines (Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Office of Vocational Education, USDOE) 2000; Kids Count Data Book: 2003 (Annie E. Casey Foundation); America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being (Annual) (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics), 2000.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY
Program Description: **To enable adults to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school, improved employment opportunities, enhanced family life, attaining citizenship, through participation in adult education services and programs.**

	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage
1	Increased Participation/Attendance	Increased enrollment in adult education and literacy programs.	Number of participants who enrolled in adult education program.	Program records		Intermediate
2	Increase Graduation/Completion Rate	Improved program completion by program participants.	Number and percent of participants who completed the program.	Program records		Intermediate
3	Increased Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased parental involvement in children's education.	Number and percent of adult participants who regularly help children with their school work .	Follow-up survey of participants.	This is a secondary indicator, particularly for programs focused on family literacy.	Intermediate
4	Increased Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased parental involvement in children's education.	Number and percent of adult participants who attend parent meetings or attend school activities.	Follow-up survey of participants.	This is a secondary indicator, particularly for programs focused on family literacy.	Intermediate
5	Increased Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased parental involvement in children's education.	Number and percent of adult participants who read to their children daily.	Follow-up survey of participants.	This is a secondary indicator, particularly for programs focused on family literacy.	Intermediate
6	Client Gain Skills/ Knowledge	Education improvement or gain.	Number and percent of program participants who complete or advance at least one educational level.	Program records		Intermediate/ End
7	Client Gain Skills/ Knowledge	Improved education or achievement gain.	Average number of educational levels advanced per program participant.	Program records		Intermediate/ End
8	Client Gain Skills/ Knowledge	Improved education or achievement gain.	Number and percent of program participants who receive a secondary school diploma or GED.	Program records; follow-up survey of participants.		End
9	Increased Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased placement in postsecondary education.	Number and percent of program participants who enroll in postsecondary education or occupational skills training program.	Follow-up survey of participants.	This indicator is intended to track progress of participants in between receipt of high school diploma and entry into employment.	End

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	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Notes	Outcome Stage
10	Create Jobs/Employment Opportunities	Improved employment entry or retention.	Number and percent of program participants who obtain a job within 3 months of program completion.	Follow-up survey of participants; Unemployment insurance or wage records.		End
11	Create Jobs/Employment Opportunities	Improved employment entry or retention.	Number and percent of program participants who remain employed 12 months after program completion.	Follow-up survey of participants; Unemployment insurance or wage records.		End
12	Increase Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased number of participants who attain citizenship goals.	Number and percent of participants who pass citizenship exam.	Follow-up survey of participants.	This indicator is likely to be limited to programs or participants for whom this was stated as a program goal.	End
13	Increase Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Increased number of participants who attain citizenship goals.	Number and percent of participants (who at time of enrollment are not registered to vote) who: (a) register to vote, or (b) vote for the first time.	Follow-up survey of participants.	This is a secondary indicator, particularly for programs or participants focused on citizenship attainment.	End
14	Increase Incidence of Desirable Activity or Condition	Reduction in public assistance.	Number and percent of participants (who upon program entry were enrolled in TANF) whose grant is reduced or eliminated due to employment or increased income.	Follow-up survey of participants; data matching to welfare records.		End

Sources Consulted:
Sustainable Measures (http://www.sustainablemeasures.com)
National Reporting System for Adult Education Implementation Guidelines
  (Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Office of Vocational Education, USDOE) 2000.
Kids Count Data Book: 2003 (Annie E. Casey Foundation).
America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being (Annual) (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics), 2000.