



*OUTCOME MEASUREMENT:  
WHAT AND WHY?*

~ an overview ~

## Program Components

### INPUTS



### ACTIVITIES



### OUTPUTS



### OUTCOMES

- Resources dedicated to or consumed by the program

e.g.

- ✓ money
- ✓ staff & staff time
- ✓ volunteers & volunteer time
- ✓ facilities
- ✓ equipment & supplies

- Constraints on the program

e.g.

- ✓ laws
- ✓ regulations
- ✓ funders' requirements

- What the program does with inputs to fulfill its mission

e.g.

- ✓ feed and shelter homeless families
- ✓ provide job training
- ✓ educate the public about signs of child abuse
- ✓ counsel pregnant women
- ✓ create mentoring relationships for youth

- The direct products of program activities

e.g.

- ✓ number of classes taught
- ✓ number of counseling sessions conducted
- ✓ number of educational materials distributed
- ✓ hours of service delivered
- ✓ number of participants served

- Benefits or changes for participants during or after program activities

e.g.

- ✓ new knowledge
- ✓ increased skills
- ✓ changed attitudes or values
- ↓
- ✓ modified behavior
- ↓
- ✓ improved condition
- ✓ altered status

***Outcome:***

not

how many worms

the bird

feeds its young,

but

***how well the  
fledgling flies***

# **Outcome Measurement:**

The regular, systematic tracking of  
the extent to which  
program participants  
experience the  
benefits or changes intended

# **Outcome Measurement Is *NOT* . . .**

- Experimental research
- Program evaluation
- Performance measurement
- A replacement for tracking inputs, activities, and outputs
- The answer to all our problems

# KEEP EXPECTATIONS MODEST

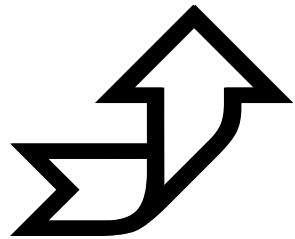
Outcome findings will not:

- Show whether this is the right outcome to measure
- Prove statistically that the program *caused* the outcome
- Explain why this level of outcome was achieved
- By themselves, tell what to change to improve the outcome

**Not everything that  
can be counted  
counts  
and not everything that  
counts  
can be counted.**

**- Albert Einstein**

# *Why Measure Outcomes?*



**Increase  
effectiveness**

**Communicate  
value**



# Uses of Program Outcome Findings by Agencies

## Internal

- ✓ Provide direction for staff
- ✓ Identify training needs
- ✓ Improve programs
- ✓ Support long-range & annual planning
- ✓ Guide budgets & justify resource allocations
- ✓ Suggest outcome targets
- ✓ Focus board members' attention on programmatic issues

## External

- ✓ Recruit talented staff and volunteers
- ✓ Promote the program to potential participants and referral sources
- ✓ Identify partners for collaboration
- ✓ Enhance the program's public image
- ✓ Retain and increase funding

# Outcome Measurement: Benefits for Programs

*(N=298 programs)*

Program execs agree or strongly agree—  
outcome measurement helps their program:

- \* Focus staff on shared goals (88%)
- \* Communicate results to stakeholders (88%)
- \* Clarify program purpose (86%)
- \* Identify effective practices (84%)
- \* Compete for resources (83%)
- \* Enhance record keeping (80%)
- \* Improve service delivery (76%)