

# Outputs

## Key features

Outputs are commitments. They are results that a programme or project must achieve with the resources provided and within the time-period specified, usually less than 5 years. This makes outputs very different from outcomes or impacts, which are longer term changes that require the energy and resources of multiple partners, and are based on critical assumptions about the development environment.

**Definition: Output**

The product or service which results from the completion of activities within a development intervention.

- Approved Harmonized Terminology. UNDG. 2003.

**Outputs are deliverables.** They normally relate to operational change: changes in skills or abilities, the availability of new products and services. They are the type of results over which managers have a high degree of influence. Failure to deliver outputs is, on the face of it, a failure of the programme or project.

**Outputs should be:**

- **Tangible**
- **Deliverable, and**
- **Sufficient to achieve the expected Agency outcomes** (assuming other outputs to be achieved by the government and donors external to the UNDAF)

A key feature of outputs is that they should be **tangible**. When defining outputs, be cautious about using words like "endorsed" or "empowered". Such words may be more appropriate at the outcome level, because they depend critically on the actions of others, outside the control of a programme or project. The most important feature of

outputs is that they represent a **commitment to deliver**. Outputs are what the project or programme promises to achieve. This means that an output should always be something that is within the capacity of the programme or project to deliver.

For example, it is normally not appropriate to specify the enactment of a new law or adoption of a new policy as an output. A programme or project cannot pass laws, or guarantee the adoption of government policies – this depends on actions taken by legislatures or policy makers. However, a reasonable output in this context is the preparation of draft text. This follows from a range of activities, common to UN cooperation, to support quality policy development as well as to prepare the ground for eventual adoptions by stakeholders. These include: data collection, orientation workshops, high-level consultation meetings or other advocacy initiatives with stakeholders.

**A rule of thumb for outputs:**

***In general, if the result is mostly beyond the control or influence of the programme or project, it cannot be an output.***

There should be sufficient outputs to achieve each agency outcome, taking into account (or assuming) the results to be achieved by the government and donors external to the UN's cooperation. A single output will almost never be sufficient to achieve the institutional or behavioural changes implicit at the outcome level. On the other hand, if a programme or project has too many outputs, it can lose focus and be difficult to manage.

You may be tempted to list things like workshops and seminars as outputs. After all, they are deliverable and some workshops can be strategic if they gather decision takers in one room to build consensus. But, in most cases, workshops and seminars are activities rather than outputs. And remember that outputs are not completed activities – they are the tangible changes in products and services, new skills or abilities that result from the completion of several activities.

Outputs also need to be formulated based on the results of a rights-based analysis. Because outputs are operational, they will describe tangible changes in the capacities of these rights holders and duty-bearers: new skills or abilities, responsibility, motivation and authority or greater access to new products, services, and resources. This should lead to better performance of rights holders to exercise and claim their rights, and of duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfill these rights at the outcome level.

## **Measuring Outputs**

Indicators are needed to help describe how the intended outputs will be measured. They force clarification of what is meant by the output, and can be used for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on achievement.

Before reading the examples below, please read the **guidance note on indicators**.

## Checklist

| CHECKLIST FOR VALIDATING OUTPUTS  | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| ✓ The output is a new product or service, new skill or ability that can be developed and/or delivered by one UN agency working with its partners  |     |    |
| ✓ The most vulnerable and disadvantaged will benefit from the output  |     |    |
| ✓ The output is linked to one (and only one) agency outcome   |     |    |
| ✓ Each output is stated using change language, and in the form of a deliverable, that will be completed in under 5 years.                         |     |    |
| ✓ The scale or scope of the output is not, intuitively, beyond the control or influence of the UN agency and implementing partner                 |     |    |
| ✓ There is obvious or intuitive causality between the output and the agency outcome to which it contributes (If ...then)                          |     |    |
| ✓ The output <u>does not repeat</u> the outcome statement above it  |     |    |
| ✓ The output <u>is not</u> a completed activity (eg. Training conducted; Workshop completed; Survey implemented – these are activities)           |     |    |
| ✓ The sum of the outputs are sufficient to achieve the higher level agency outcome  |     |    |
| ✓ The output is specific, it does not combine 2 or more different types of results, and is not so general that it could cover just about anything |     |    |

## Examples of Outcomes, Outputs and Indicators<sup>1</sup>

### Example 1: Poverty reduction

| Result  | Indicator  |
|---|--|
| <p><u>UNDAF outcome:</u><br/>By 2011, there is greater economic growth in targeted poor rural and urban areas</p>   | <p><i>No growth data available</i><br/>Proxy: Unemployment rate decreased from X% to Y% in targeted areas</p>  |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>New businesses and jobs are created <u>in targeted</u>, poor rural and urban areas</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N° and type of new businesses registered</li> <li>- N° new jobs created</li> </ul>  |
| <p><u>Outputs</u><br/>Market-based vocational training programmes are developed</p> <p>Disadvantaged groups including youth and PLWHA have access to improved employment services and preferential credits for business development.</p> <p>Local business development funds piloted in selected areas</p> <p>Private public partnerships (PPP)s are created in poor rural and urban areas for infrastructure development and service provision</p> | <p>N° training programmes developed and offered by Vocational Institutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase in use of employment services by young people/ people with low incomes</li> <li>- Amount of credits offered to young people/ people with low incomes as proportion of total business development credits</li> <li>- Qualitative assessment about service access from CSOs working with PLWHA</li> <li>- N° LDFs operational</li> <li>- Increase (%) in LDF capitalization</li> <li>- N° PPPs</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Local public administrations operate in a more effective and transparent manner, and receive larger fiscal transfers from central government</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N° LPAs with public official plans</li> <li>- Approval rates in citizen report cards (% increase from baseline)</li> <li>- Increase (%) in resources allocated to LPA budgets by central government</li> </ul>  |

<sup>1</sup> Examples have been adapted from CCAs, UNDAFs, CPAPs, and other guidance materials as follows: 1 - Moldova; 2 - Kyrgyzstan; 3 - Afghanistan; 4 - Yemen; 5 - Namibia.

| Result   | Indicator  |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>                     Legal and regulatory framework is improved with particular emphasis on (1) delegation of authority, (2) decentralization of services, (3) costing of local services and budget needs of LPAs</p> <p>Administrative procedures and systems are simplified and streamlined to provide better services</p> <p>Targeted departments of LPAs plan, implement, and monitor in a participatory manner</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft reform proposals developed</li> <li>- N° procedures and systems re-designed</li> <li>- N° public consultations conducted by LPAs</li> <li>- N° local development plans</li> <li>- Plans incorporate needs assessments and budgets lines related to children, youth, women, and PLWHA (qualitative)</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>                     Communities and CSOs participate in local development planning, implementation and monitoring</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N° / quality of public consultations</li> <li>- N° CSOs reporting active participation in civic and municipal events</li> </ul>   |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>                     Network of CSOs are better able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- monitor social service quality, particularly for children, youth, women, PLWHA</li> <li>- influence policy-making</li> </ul> <p>Mechanisms and fora, such as youth councils, are developed at local level to better engage children and young people in policy development</p>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N° CSOs that report improved capacities in monitoring and advocacy</li> <li>- Quality and reach of CSO reports (qual.)</li> <li>- N° / type of mechanisms developed</li> <li>- N° local councils involving children and young people in planning and decision-making</li> </ul>                                     |

## Example 2: Good governance

| Result   | Indicator   |
|--|---|
| <p><u>UNDAF outcome:</u><br/>Good governance reforms and practices institutionalized at all levels</p>   | <p>N° and type of governance reform laws enacted and policies introduced at National and Ayil level</p>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Governance bodies have greater capacity at central and local levels to carry out governance reforms</p>  | <p>- Legislative framework and code for local self-governance adopted<br/>N° recommendations from functional reviews implemented</p>  |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u></p> <p>A legislative framework and code for local self governance is drafted</p> <p>Transparent decision making processes for select state bodies are developed with public consultation</p> <p>Municipal Civil Servants, and “Ayil” Councilors ,from targeted areas, are able to formulate and implement dev plans that are gender sensitive and use human rights principles</p> | <p>- Draft framework document and code</p> <p>- Draft guideline for Ministerial decision making<br/>- Draft guideline/ mechanism for public consultation processes</p> <p>- N° and quality of draft local official plans</p>                            |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Institutional capacity of Parliament strengthened to better perform legislative, representational and oversight roles</p>  | <p>- Procedures and management system adopted<br/>- Change in public perception of parliamentary effectiveness</p>  |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>Legislators and parliamentary staff have improved skills to draft and propose legislation</p> <p>A strategy and action plan developed to improve Parliamentary relations with constituencies, Local Kenesh, and the media</p> <p>Improved Parliamentary oversight mechanisms are drafted</p>  | <p>- N° of private members bills drafted</p> <p>- Constituency relations strategy and action Plan drafted<br/>- Parliament Web Portal activated<br/>- N° of constituency newsletters developed</p> <p>- Draft guideline for Parliamentary oversight</p> |

**Example 3: Good governance**

| Result   | Indicator  |
|--|--|
| <p>UNDAF outcome<br/>By 2008, Government at all levels and civil society, including communities and individuals, are better enabled to realise improved governance based on the rule of law and human rights, with particular emphasis on women and marginalized groups</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both chambers of National Assembly democratically elected and functioning</li> <li>- N° Provincial and district councils established as per Constitution</li> </ul>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>By 2008, transparent, effective and efficient legislative and policy frameworks and processes are established and implemented</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % of pending priority laws debated and passed</li> <li>- Basic interim legal framework approved en bloc by the new Parliament</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Outputs<br/>Rules, responsibilities and division of labour for the main legislative bodies are clarified and their capacities strengthened within the framework</p> <p>Procedures and mechanisms for effective functioning of the National Assembly are developed</p> <p>Procedures and mechanisms for establishment of Provincial, district, village and municipal councils developed</p> <p>National budget process more effectively incorporates inputs from local governance structures</p> | <p><i>No indicators listed in Afghanistan UNDAF at output level.</i></p>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>By 2008, an effective, more accountable and more representative public administration is established at the national and sub-national levels,</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Framework for rationalisation of Ministries/ agencies developed and implemented</li> <li>- % of female senior civil servants at Grade 2 and above and more balanced representation of specific groups in the civil service</li> </ul> |

| <b>Result</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>                     Framework for a restructured, small and more coherent Government administration is in place</p> <p>Capacities of civil servants at all levels are strengthened to function within these parameters, including awareness of their obligations under international conventions and their role in meeting them</p> <p>A structure for the National anti-corruption system developed</p> <p>There is increased public awareness about government efforts to fight corruption</p> | <p><i>No indicators listed in Afghanistan UNDAF at output level.</i></p>                            |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>                     By 2008, communities and individuals, especially women and marginalized groups, participate effectively in the development and political processes</p>  | <p>- Voter turnout in parliamentary and district elections</p> <p>- N° CSOs registered with MoJ</p> |
| <p><u>Outputs</u><br/>                     Roles and responsibilities of mechanisms for direct participation in governance, including CDCs, are clarified and their operations made effective</p> <p>Development of policy, procedures and capacity for delivery of social services through planning and participation of communities</p> <p>There is improved awareness about the rights of individuals to participate in the political processes and planning for local services</p>                                   | <p><i>No indicators listed in Afghanistan UNDAF at output level.</i></p>                            |



### Example 4: Gender

| Result  | Indicator   |
|---|---|
| <p><u>UNDAF Outcome:</u><br/>Improved institutional and human capacity to promote gender equity and empower women in social, political, economic and legal spheres.</p>   | <p>1. UN Gender Development Index<br/>2. Share of women in elected bodies</p>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Improved institutional framework ensuring that women and girls have the benefit of their equal rights.</p>  | <p>Female-male ratio in higher education and civil service</p>  |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>National laws modified in line with CEDAW provisions</p> <p>Improved access of women to both formal and traditional justice systems</p> <p>Increased active representation and participation of women in decision making political and social sectors</p> <p>Increased national and community level action to eliminate violence against women</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of articles violating CEDAW provisions</li> <li>- Number of female judges</li> <li>- Number of courts with help desks for women</li> <li>- Number of women voters</li> <li>- Number of women running for office</li> <li>- Number of women in Parliament, local councils and the Shura council</li> <li>- Number of perpetrators brought to trial and held accountable</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Increased reflection of gender concerns in allocation of public financial resources.</p>  | <p>1. Ratio of public expenditure on primary and reproductive health care to total public education and health sector expenditure<br/>2. Percentage of female teachers</p>  |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>Development of line ministries' capacity to apply, assess, and monitor gender-differentiated budgets</p> <p>Increased capacity among women's organisations to monitor and follow up gender budgeting in development activities</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of ministries using gender-differentiated budgeting</li> <li>- Number of CSOs/ women's organizations able to monitor gender budgeting</li> </ul>  |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Improved social perceptions and attitudes towards statuses and roles of women and men.</p>  | <p>Percentage of population agreeing with the principle of equal rights between women and men</p>   |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>Media, young people and CSO networks mobilised to change perception of gender roles</p> <p>Religious, political and traditional leaders and advocates engaged in promoting an improved status of women</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of radio/TV programs dedicated to gender issues</li> <li>- Percentage of women between the ages of 15-19 who marry</li> </ul>   |

**Example 5: Basic Services**

| <b>Result</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   |
|--|--|
| <p><u>UNDAF outcome:</u><br/>By 2010, the capacity of Government and civil society institutions is strengthened to deliver and monitor essential/critical health, education and special protection services</p>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % of the public service meeting required competency level (PEMP)<br/><u>Baseline:</u> None</li> <li>- % of teachers qualified<br/><u>Baseline:</u> &gt;60%</li> </ul>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Institutional and community capacity for effective delivery and uptake of critical services, in health and education maintained and strengthened.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diphtheria Polio Tetanus (DPT 3) immunization coverage sustained at 80% in all districts</li> <li>- Maternal mortality (MDG 5) decreased from 271/100,000 (2000) to 120 in (2010)</li> <li>- Proportion of pregnant women and children under 5 sleeping under treated bednets to reach 60%<br/><u>Baseline</u> (2000): 7% (children only)<br/><u>Target:</u> 60%</li> <li>- National Education Fund accessed by xx% of schools<br/><u>Baseline:</u> no fund</li> <li>- Proportion of orphans to non-orphans attending school is equal.<br/><u>Baseline:</u> none</li> <li>- % of children in Grade 7 who are promoted to Grade 8<br/><u>Baseline (2002):</u> 76.8%</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>Strengthened PHC with focus on children and mothers.</p> <p>Improved access to and retention in quality basic education, especially for vulnerable children</p>   | <p><i>No indicators listed in Namibia UNDAF at output level.</i></p>   |
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>The national statistical system is strengthened to ensure effective development and application of tools for evidence-based decision-making, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Statistical System &amp; Poverty Monitoring Strategy finalised</li> <li>- Implementation of Integrated Household Survey Programme<br/><u>Baseline:</u> subject specific</li> <li>- Operationalisation of DevInfo in NPCS linked to all line ministries.<br/><u>Baseline</u> – not yet in place</li> <li>- % NPCS statistical plan followed (Performance Expenditure Management Programme Indicator )</li> </ul>  |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>National capacities for implementation of National Statistical Plan III and the Poverty Monitoring Strategy strengthened.</p>   | <p><i>No indicators listed in Namibia UNDAF at output level.</i></p>   |

| Result   | Indicator   |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Agency outcome:</u><br/>Increased awareness and capacity for protecting the rights of children, women and other vulnerable groups.</p>   | <p>- Reduction of proportion of men agreeing that wife beating is justified for at least selected one reason<br/>Baseline – 44%</p> <p>- # of cases handled by Women and Child Protection Units<br/><u>Baseline (2003)</u><br/>Reported child abuse cases: 894</p> <p>- % of successful prosecutions of rape and child abuse cases (a Performance Expenditure Management Programme indicator)<br/><u>Baseline-</u> (to be determined first year of programme)</p> |
| <p><u>Outputs:</u><br/>The rights of women and children and other vulnerable groups are protected through enactment and application of required and existing legislation.</p> <p>Women, children and those in other vulnerable groups are aware of their rights and how to access the services available.</p> <p>Improved capacity of service providers to offer protection from violence and abuse and care to women, children and vulnerable groups.</p> | <p><i>No indicators listed in Namibia UNDAF at output level.</i></p>  |