

Outcomes

Key features

Outcomes describe the intended changes in development conditions resulting from UN supported programmes and projects. These normally relate to changes in **institutional performance**, or **behavioural changes** among individuals or groups. Achieving outcomes often requires the collective efforts of several UN agencies and their development partners.

Definition: Outcome

The intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners. Outcomes represent changes in development conditions, which occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact.
- Approved Harmonized Terminology, UNDG, 2003.

The UN is using two separate, but linked, outcome level results: **UNDAF outcomes and agency outcomes**¹.

UNDAF outcomes are the **strategic, high level results** expected from UN system cooperation with government and civil society. A strategic UNDAF outcome is one which:

1. Makes a substantive contribution to the achievement of selected priorities of the national development framework; and
2. Demonstrates the comparative advantages of the UN at country level.

UNDAF outcomes are produced by the combined effects of the lower level agency outcomes. But these institutional and behavioural changes depend critically on the commitment and actions of stakeholders and beneficiaries, as well as on results to be achieved by government and partners outside the UNDAF. We need to make **assumptions** about these commitments and actions. Please refer to the **guidance note on assumptions & risks** for additional detail.

Both UNDAF and agency outcomes must be achievable and measurable. Having agency outcomes enables agencies to aim for high level change from their development interventions. And because agency Outcomes are necessarily means for achieving the collective UNDAF Outcomes, the UN system in any country stays focused on **a few strategic priorities**.

Using a **human rights based approach**, outcomes should show changes in the performance of rights-holders to exercise and claim their rights, and of duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfill these rights. The performance of these roles depends on the legal, institutional and policy environment, as well as on the actual capacities of rights holders and duty-bearers. For example:

- **The UNDAF outcome** could reflect the behavioral change expected of rights holders and duty bearers to perform their respective roles.

¹ Agency outcomes include the outcomes from specialized agency programmes and projects.

- **The agency outcome** could show the closing of the legal, institutional and policy gaps that prevent rights-holders and duty-bearers from performing their roles.

Real life provides many examples whereby institutional or capacity developments do not translate automatically into behavioral or performance changes. For example, a National Human Rights Commission is created, but it does not get the minimum budget required to fulfill its mandate.

To the extent possible, the most disadvantaged or vulnerable rights-holders should be reflected in the UNDAF and agency outcomes. This will also help to mainstream gender and other types of considerations related to the principle of equality and non discrimination. For example, enforcement of a policy to prevent human trafficking, that focuses on indigenous girls from poor, rural areas.

UNDAF Outcomes are high level results and have a high level of ambition. They are the collective priorities of the UN system at country level, and they usually require the contributions of two or more agencies working together with their government and civil society partners.

Agency Outcomes: Two or more agency outcomes contribute to the achievement of an UNDAF outcome. Agency Outcomes are usually the results of the programmes of cooperation or larger projects of individual agencies. They may be driven by agency mandate and comparative advantages. The achievement of agency outcomes depends critically on the commitment and action of partners.

Ideally, the UN system in any country will have from 3 to 5 UNDAF outcomes.

More than that, and the UN risks trying to do too much with limited resources. Each UNDAF outcome will then have a limited number of contributing agency outcomes. In practice, **most countries are moving towards a situation where agency outcomes are shared between two or more agencies.**

There must be sufficient agency outcomes to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the UNDAF outcome, but too many agency outcomes may fragment resources or duplicate efforts.

Outcomes often reflect a **choice about strategy or policy**. These choices are made in collaboration with government and civil society partners. Because they represent choices, **outcomes are often debatable or even controversial**, especially if they are based on human rights considerations. After all, while stakeholders may be ready to agree on what needs to change (impacts), they may have quite different ideas on how to carry it out (outcomes). In other words, an outcome represents a statement to the effect that, if we want to achieve the impact, then we need to choose this or that policy or strategy proposed at the outcome level. By implication, there are other policies or strategies that are not chosen.

Measuring Outcomes

Indicators are needed to help describe how the intended results will be measured. They force clarification of what is meant by the outcome, 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 UNDAF OUTCOMES	YES	NO
✓ The UNDAF outcome conveys high level institutional and/or behavioural changes (The performance of rights-holders to exercise and claim their rights, and of duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfill these rights)		
✓ It conveys change rather than on-going services (eg. support provided to improve)		
✓ There is obvious or intuitive causality between the UNDAF outcome and the lower level agency outcomes (If ... then) (The closing of the legal, policy and capacity gaps contributes to behavioral change among rights-holders and duty-bearers)		
✓ The UNDAF outcome <u>does not repeat</u> the National goal statement/ MDG or contributing agency outcome statements		
✓ The UNDAF outcome includes a subject of the intended change (a “who”), and wherever possible these are the most vulnerable or excluded groups		
✓ The UNDAF outcome addresses one or more underlying or root causes of problems identified in the CCA (ie. A strategic niche for the UN)		
✓ The UNDAF outcome 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		
✓ Each UNDAF Outcome statement is a result that two or more agencies, with their national and local partners, will contribute to achieving		
✓ It is realistic - the UN system is likely to achieve it over a five year period		
CHECKLIST FOR VALIDATING AGENCY OUTCOMES	YES	NO
✓ The agency outcome conveys institutional and/or behavioural change (The closing of the legal, institutional policy and capacity gaps that prevent rights-holders and duty-bearers from performing their roles)		
✓ The agency outcome is NOT a discreet product or service, but a higher level statement of institutional or behavioural change		
✓ The agency outcome contributes to one (and only one) UNDAF outcome, and there is clear ‘if-then’ causality		
✓ The agency outcome <u>does not repeat</u> the UNDAF outcome or contributing output statements		
✓ The agency outcome includes a subject of the intended change (a “who”). Wherever possible this ‘who’ is identified as a claim bearer or duty holder and by socio-cultural group and gender as appropriate		
✓ The agency outcome addresses one or more underlying or root causes of problems identified in the CCA		
✓ The agency outcome 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		
✓ The agency outcome specifically addresses a gap affecting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable segments of society		
✓ The agency outcome derives from the mandate of one or more UN agencies		
✓ The agency indicator describes a change which one or more UN agencies is capable of achieving over a five year period,		

Examples of Outcomes and Indicators²

Example 1: Poverty reduction

Result	Indicator
<u>UNDAF outcome:</u> By 2011, there is greater economic growth in targeted poor rural and urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unemployment rate decreased from x% to Y% in targeted areas - Change (%) in income disparities between poor rural/ urban and rich rural/urban settings
<u>Agency outcome:</u> New businesses and jobs are created in <u>targeted</u> , poor rural and urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N^o and type of new businesses registered - N^o new jobs created
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Local public administrations operate in a more effective and transparent manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase (%) in resources allocated to LPA budgets by central government - N^o LPAs running deficits - N^o LPAs with public official plans
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Communities and CSOs participate in local development planning, implementation and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N^o / quality of public consultations - N^o CSOs reporting active participation in civic and municipal events

Example 2: Good governance

Result	Indicator
<u>UNDAF outcome:</u> Good governance reforms and practices institutionalized at all levels	N ^o and type of governance reform laws enacted and policies introduced at National and Ayil level
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Governance bodies have greater capacity at central and local levels to carry out governance reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative framework and code for local self-governance adopted - N^o recommendations from functional reviews implemented
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Institutional capacity of Parliament strengthened to better perform legislative, representational and oversight roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures and management system adopted - Change in public perception of parliamentary effectiveness

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

Example 3: Good governance

Result	Indicator
<u>UNDAF outcome</u> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both chambers of National Assembly democratically elected and functioning - N^o Provincial and district councils established as per Constitution
<u>Agency outcome:</u> By 2008, transparent, effective and efficient legislative and policy frameworks and processes are established and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % of pending priority laws debated and passed - Basic interim legal framework approved en bloc by the new Parliament
<u>Agency outcome:</u> By 2008, an effective, more accountable and more representative public administration is established at the national and sub-national levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework for rationalisation of Ministries/ agencies developed and implemented - % of female senior civil servants at Grade 2 and above and more balanced representation of specific groups in the civil service
<u>Agency outcome:</u> By 2008, communities and individuals, especially women and marginalized groups, participate effectively in the development and political processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voter turnout in parliamentary and district elections - N^o CSOs registered with MoJ

Example 4: Gender

Result	Indicator
<u>UNDAF Outcome:</u> Improved institutional and human capacity to promote gender equity and empower women in social, political, economic and legal spheres.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UN Gender Development Index 2. Share of women in elected bodies
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Improved institutional framework ensuring that women and girls have the benefit of their equal rights.	Female-male ratio in higher education and civil service
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Increased reflection of gender concerns in allocation of public financial resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ratio of public expenditure on primary and reproductive health care to total public education and health sector expenditure 2. Percentage of female teachers
<u>Agency outcome:</u> Improved social perceptions and attitudes towards statuses and roles of women and men.	Percentage of population agreeing with the principle of equal rights between women and men

Example 5: Basic Services

Result	Indicator
<p><u>UNDAF outcome:</u> 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"> - % of the public service meeting required competency level (PEMP) - % of teachers qualified
<p><u>Agency outcome:</u> 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"> - Diphtheria Polio Tetanus (DPT 3) immunization coverage sustained at 80% in all districts - Maternal mortality (MDG 5) decreased from 271/100,000 (2000) to 120 in (2010) - Proportion of pregnant women and children under 5 sleeping under treated bednets to reach 60% - National Education Fund accessed by xx% of schools - Proportion of orphans to non-orphans attending school is equal. - % of children in Grade 7 who are promoted to Grade 8
<p><u>Agency outcome:</u> 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"> - National Statistical System & Poverty Monitoring Strategy finalised - Implementation of Integrated Household Survey Programme - Operationalisation of DevInfo in NPCCS linked to all line ministries. - % NPCCS statistical plan followed (Performance Expenditure Management Programme Indicator)
<p><u>Agency outcome:</u> Increased awareness and capacity for protecting the rights of children, women and other vulnerable groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of proportion of men agreeing that wife beating is justified for at least selected one reason - # of cases handled by Women and Child Protection Units - % of successful prosecutions of rape and child abuse cases (a Performance Expenditure Management Programme indicator)