

Measuring Outcomes

IMPORTANT: You need to complete Step 1 **before you start your interventions.**

Step 1: Record a Baseline

In order to measure outcomes, you need something to measure them against. You need to find a way of measuring how the situation stands before any intervention takes place.

This will be your “**baseline**” measurement..

Finding your baseline

How you do this will depend on the type of intervention you have chosen and the way your setting operates. For instance, you might get an accurate picture of your current situation by:-

- Looking at the setting’s planning sheets for the past year (including separate rooms/classes where applicable).
- Looking at any records of children’s involvement in the identified activity.
- Where appropriate, having 1:1 discussions with parents/carers or asking them to complete a questionnaire.

Example baselines

Different settings will have different starting situations but here are a few examples, based on an intervention of increasing opportunities for children to cook.

E.g.1: If you provide an average of 1 cookery session each term
Baseline = 1 session per term

E.g.2: If 25 children, in a pre-school of 30, children currently have regular opportunities to cook each term (perhaps because of their times of attendance)
Baseline = 25 children per term

E.g.3: If 25 children, in a setting of 100, have regular opportunities to cook each term (perhaps because only one room leader includes cookery in her planning)
Baseline = $\frac{25}{100}$ or Baseline = 0.25 of children on roll

Step 2: How to Measure Outcomes

When the interventions have been completed and reviewed you will be able to measure the outcome.

There are two parts to this step, as you need to

- (a) Measure the new situation
- (b) Compare it with your baseline to see what difference has been made

You might find the following helpful in finding your measurements.

(a) Measure the new situation

In a similar way to setting your baseline measurement, you will record a measurement - after the intervention - to reflect the current situation. You will need to use the same unit of measurement (such as 'number of sessions', 'number of children,' or 'number of families involved') as the baseline otherwise the results cannot be compared directly.

Continuing the examples of baselines given in Step 1, these might be:

E.g.1 As a result of your interventions, 3 cookery sessions are now provided each term.

New situation = 3 sessions per term

E.g.2 As a result of your interventions, all 30 children now have regular opportunities to cook.

New situation = 30 children per term

E.g.3 As a result of your interventions, 50 children now have regular opportunities to cook.

New situation = $\frac{50}{100}$ or New situation = 0.5 of children on roll

(b) Comparing with your baseline

To make the impact of your interventions clear, you need to compare the new situation with your baseline measurement.

One of the clearest ways to do this is to find the percentage of difference.

Percentage Increase (or decrease) : showing the impact of your interventions.

The Award Group finds it useful to have clear evidence of impact in the form of percentage figures included in your Case Studies. There is a tool on the DPHA website which helps calculate these figures quickly and easily. You can find it here:

<http://www.directorofpublichealthaward.org.uk/content/resources-0>

Please note:

- In some cases, as in E.g.1 (above), the increase might exceed 100%.
- If your Baseline figure is zero, a meaningful percentage cannot be calculated. In this case, you would just write your Baseline and Final measures in the Outcome box of your Case Study.
- If the final figure is a minus number, this will show a percentage *decrease* from the baseline figure.