

Explanation of terms

Aims: describe why the organisation exists and the difference it wants to make. Aims can be overall or specific. (See **Overall aim**; **Specific aims**.)

Assessment: judgements about the organisation's or project's performance.

CES planning triangle: a visual tool which can be used to develop and distinguish between the aims and objectives of a project.

ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Evaluation: involves using monitoring and other information to make judgements on how an organisation, project or programme is doing. Evaluation can be done externally or internally. (See **Self-evaluation**.)

Indicators: well-defined things to measure to show how well an organisation or project is performing. For example, outcome indicators are used to assess whether expected outcomes have occurred. Output indicators are used to assess whether outputs have been delivered. Indicators can be qualitative or quantitative.

Inputs are the resources you put into an organisation to carry out an activity. Inputs may be human, material, financial or expressed as time

Intermediate outcomes, also called interim outcomes, are steps along the way to end outcomes. They are often smaller changes that happen before the final, desired outcome can be reached

Monitoring: the regular, systematic collection and recording of information about a project, mainly to check its progress against its plans.

Mission: describes why an organisation or project exists and the broad effect that it wants to have. A summary of the overall difference it wants to make. (See **Overall aim**.)

Objectives: describe the planned areas of activity by which a project is going to achieve its aims.

Outcomes: the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen as a result of services and activities provided by an organisation.

Outcome indicators are things you can use to assess whether your expected outcomes have occurred. This will demonstrate progress towards meeting your aims

Outputs: the activities, services and products provided by an organisation.

Output indicators are things you can use to assess whether you have delivered your outputs. This will demonstrate progress towards meeting your objectives

Overall aim: describes why the organisation exists and the broad effect it wants to have. It summarises the difference that an organisation wants to make. It is often linked to the mission of an organisation. (See Mission; **Specific aims**.)

Plan: a written description of the steps an organisation will take to achieve certain things.

Profile: the characteristics of a group of people such as age, gender, ethnic background, or of an organizations, such as size, type.

Qualitative: about qualities or characteristics; descriptive information rather than numerical.

Quantitative: about numbers or quantity; can be measured or counted.

Self-evaluation: a form of evaluation where people within an organisation make judgements about their organisation's performance towards meeting its aims and objectives, usually against a set of indicators.

Services: all the goods and information supplied, and all the things an organisation does for its users.

Service users (See **users**.)

Soft and hard outcomes: The term 'soft outcomes' is commonly used for changes in attitudes, self-perception or certain skill areas. These are often, but not always, intermediate outcomes. 'Hard outcomes' are often more easily assessed, such as getting a house. The terms 'hard' or 'soft' outcomes are not used in this training because it can reduce the importance attached to so-called 'soft' outcomes and can lead to confusion with intermediate outcomes

Specific aims: statements about the particular differences an organisation hopes to make to its user group. These usually stem from the needs of the user group. (See **Overall aim**.)

Target: a defined level of achievement that a project or organisation sets itself to reach in a specific period of time. For example, you could set a target to do ten, one-to-one interviews each day.

Target group: the people or organisations you hope will use your services. They are the people that will benefit from your project.

Users: all the people who use the organisation's services. Also called 'service users'.