Outcome Harvesting

Captures outcomes predicted/unpredicted, positive/negative, AND

Works backward to describe & verify contribution FOR monitoring and evaluation (developmental, formative and summative) USING Either internal or external staff, or a mix.

Participatory method to identify, formulate, verify, analyze and interpret outcomes to answer actionable questions.
OH is well-suited to projects where

› Activities are likely to contribute to **unpredicted** and **unpredict-able** outcomes

› Pathways to achieve desired results are **not well understood**

› Flexible management **continually adapts** to new information or changes in the context.
OH is not intended for projects where

× The pathways to achieve desired outcomes are known and agreed upon.

× Little value is placed on capturing outcomes not included in the original design.
Six Iterative Steps

1. **Design the Outcome Harvest**: Focus on actionable information for primary users

2. **Gather data and draft outcome descriptions**: Collect data by document review, interview, & surveys

3. **Engage change agents in formulating outcome descriptions**

4. **Substantiate**: Knowledgeable, independent individuals validate outcome descriptions

5. **Analyze and interpret**: Provide evidence-based answers to harvesting questions

6. **Support use of findings**
Essence of Outcome Harvesting

**Principles-driven**: Implementation adapts to context & new information

**Participatory**: Key stakeholders participate with the evaluator in the OH.

**Utilization-focused**: Each stakeholder has an important role.
Intended Users

**Who?** Require findings to make decisions or take action.

**Role:** Make informed decisions about design and implementation throughout the harvest to ensure that the OH will meet their needs.
Change Agents

Who? Individuals or organizations that influence outcomes

Role:
› Serve as key informants
› Document outcomes and contribution pathways
Outcome Verifiers

Who?
Third-parties both knowledgeable and objective about outcomes

Role:
› Review descriptions of outcomes and project’s contribution
› Comment on significance of outcomes (optional)
› Verify by email or other means
## Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captures outcomes in complex and knowledge scarce situations</td>
<td>Negative outcomes are difficult to capture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation offers opportunity for rich learning for stakeholders</td>
<td>Participatory methods are not feasible in all situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tailored to each project &amp; context</td>
<td>Findings not necessarily comparable across evaluations or interventions</td>
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**Ongoing development of Outcome Harvesting through a vibrant community of practice.**
For more information

www.outcomeharvesting.net