**Overview:** The M&E Priorities Form is designed to help guide and develop your M&E approach by identifying what questions you are aiming to answer, who will use the outputs and what your key measures of success (outcome indicators) will be.

A useful way of defining your M&E priorities is to ask a series of questions that you would like to answer. These are likely to include questions about the impact of your work, such as:

- Have we delivered the changes we intended to?
- How much progress have we made against our outcomes?

You should also include questions about the things you want to learn about the effectiveness of your approach or intervention:

- Was the approach we chose the most effective?
- How could we improve the impact of our investment in future?

Identifying the audience for your M&E is critical, as it will shape the data collection and reporting requirements. If you’re unsure what is required, speak to the M&E audience (e.g. the investment committee) to find out what they want.

Don’t forget to think about yourself or your team as an audience; if done properly, you stand to benefit as much as anyone.

Outcome indicators are things that can be measured which show progress towards your planned outcomes. They are usually quantifiable i.e. expressed as a number or percentage.

Completing an ‘Outcomes Hierarchy’ (see Step 2) is a good way to define indicators for your funding stream or project.

**Tip:** Work hard with stakeholders to identify and agree the key priorities - it’s better to answer a few key M&E questions well than to try and measure too much and end up doing it badly.
Identify M&E priorities

Outcomes Hierarchy

Overview: An outcomes hierarchy helps you to define a set of ‘indicators’ that are appropriate for measuring the impact of your project. Indicators are things we can measure to assess whether a project’s outcomes have been achieved.

CASE STUDY: Community Sport Activation Fund (CSAF)

STEP 1: Start with the primary aim(s) or objective(s) of the project. If you have more than one key objective, you may need to create an outcome hierarchy for each of your objectives.

STEP 2: Next, think about what changes you would expect to be observable in the medium-term. For this funding stream this included increasing regular sport participation, improving local provision, as well as non-sport outcomes such as improved subjective wellbeing and community cohesion.

STEP 3: Finally, you need to identify a series of measurable outcomes that will be evident during or after your programme which are good indicators of progress towards achieving the secondary and primary outcomes above. In the example above, ‘average number of days participating per week’ has been chosen as the indicator for regular sport participation and a range of self-report measures – physical health, mental health, self-esteem and social trust – have been selected as indicators for improvements in wellbeing and community cohesion.

Primary outcome(s)

Secondary outcomes

Outcome Indicators

Evidence of causation