



*TOOLS YOU CAN USE*

## Outputs + Outcomes = Impact

*Understanding how nonprofit activities translate into meaningful change.*

Look at your organization’s mission statement—the one you, your staff, and board created with passion and a vision for the future. It likely reflects your commitment to meeting needs, expanding opportunities, and helping individuals and communities thrive. As you reflect on your progress, understanding the difference between **outputs** and **outcomes** is key to creating meaningful impact, strengthening effectiveness, and securing funding.

### Outputs vs Outcomes

Outputs show what you did. Outcomes show what changed.

**Outputs - *What we produce***

- Immediate results of activities
- Specific and activity-based
- Easy to measure (usually numbers)
- Short-term results

**Examples**

- Number of workshops or programs delivered
- Number of people served
- Resources distributed

**Outcomes - *What changes because of the work***

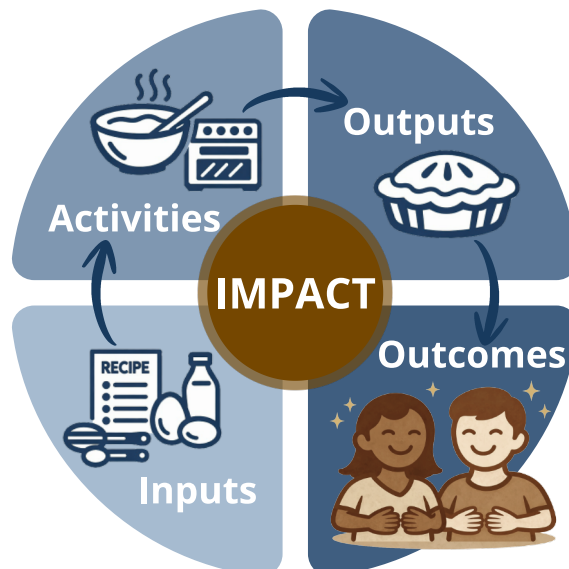
- Changes resulting from outputs
- Broader shifts in behavior or systems
- Harder to measure (often qualitative)
- Develop over time

**Examples**

- Organizations adopt new or improved practices
- Increased stability or well-being
- Improved quality of life or safety

### A Simple Way to Think About Impact

Resources and activities produce outputs. Outputs lead to outcomes that create lasting impact.



Impact happens when outputs lead to meaningful outcomes for the people and communities you serve.

### Learn More About Measuring Impact

[Outputs vs. Outcomes: Measuring Your Impact Effectively](#)

Nonprofit Hub

[Evaluation and Measurement of Outcomes](#)

National Council of Nonprofits