

Intermediate Capacity Outcomes

Capacity Development Resource for Program Design and Monitoring and Evaluation of Change Processes

An intermediate capacity outcome (ICO) is an improvement in the ability or disposition of stakeholders (or agents of change) to take actions. This improvement is considered an *intermediate* capacity outcome, because the expectation is that the stakeholders—thanks to the improved ability or disposition—will act to affect institutional changes toward the development goal of a capacity development program.

An ICO is the result of one or several steps (or deliverables) in the capacity development intervention (or initiative). These steps can involve different instruments¹ (or learning approaches), including learning-by-doing. Six standard ICOs provide a typology to guide the formulation of a capacity development program. The ICOs, their definitions and attributes are presented below:

Raised awareness	Enhanced knowledge or skills
<p><i>Increased disposition to act, through, for example, improved</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding, • Attitude, • Confidence, or • Motivation 	<p><i>Increased ability to act, through</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of new knowledge or skills, or • Application of new knowledge or skills

Improved consensus and teamwork	Strengthened coalitions	Enhanced networks
<p><i>Strengthened disposition or ability to act through improved collaboration within a group of people tied by a common task. This may involve for example, among team members, a stronger agreement or improved</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication, • Coordination, • Cohesion, or • Contributions by the team members to the common task 	<p><i>Strengthened disposition or ability to act through improved collaboration between individuals or groups with diverse objectives to advance a common agenda. This may involve, for example,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger agreement on a common agenda for action, • Increased commitment to act, • Improved trust among members, or • Improved ability of the coalition members to leverage their diverse strengths 	<p><i>Strengthened disposition or ability to act through improved collaboration between individuals or groups with a common interest but not a formal common agenda for action. This may involve, for example,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved processes for collaboration, • Stronger incentives for participation in the network, or • Increased traffic or communication among network members

New implementation know-how
<p><i>Strengthened disposition or ability to act, arising from</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of policies, strategies, or plans, or • Implementation of policies, strategies, or plans <p>This may involve, for example, discovery and innovation associated with learning by doing.</p>

¹ The relationship between capacity development instruments and ICOs is not necessarily fixed or one-to-one. One instrument may yield several different ICOs in different contexts. Conversely, achieving an ICO may require more than one instrument in certain contexts.

Development practitioners can use the typology to develop project-specific objectives for capacity development as well as identify key points to observe, monitor and measure change in the capacity areas in need of improvement. By monitoring these points, practitioners can track progress toward the achievement of measurable results. If sufficient progress has not been made, they can revise project activities as necessary in a timely manner.

Deciding on the ICOs to be achieved requires assessing what local agents need to advance a change process. Once practitioners identify these outcomes, they can plan capacity development activities in a more concrete way by:

- **Identifying local agents of change:** Who are the local agents that will drive change? For example, agents may be individuals or groups of individuals in an organization, such as senior-level officials from the ministry of finance who hold lead responsibility for budget planning.
- **Defining learning objectives:** What differences are expected after the capacity development intervention is successfully completed? Are changes expected in behaviors, relationships, processes or development actions? For example, improved consensus might be an agreement reached within the ministry of finance among the departments of budget, finance, and accounting on the process for implementing a medium term budget framework.
- **Developing an implementation approach:** What are the most appropriate activities to achieve the targeted ICOs? For example, which activities would be appropriate for enhancing skills in government to implement a medium term budget framework? A conventional approach would be to conduct a training course on budgeting for local officials. However, to achieve ICOs, semi-structured learning activities—such as peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges or an action-learning workshop—might be more appropriate. Thus, considering the outcomes to achieve helps practitioners move beyond conventional training activities toward transformational learning activities that advance results.

ICOs	Examples of Objectives	Examples of Indicators
Raised awareness	Improve participant confidence and motivation to implement budget reform	Number and percentage of staff in line ministries targeted by a program who report improved confidence and motivation to implement budget reform
Enhanced knowledge or skills	Enhance staff ability to apply new skills in medium term budget planning	Number and percentage of finance division staff trained in macro-economic forecasting who apply the tools in planning a medium term budget
Improved consensus and teamwork	Improve communication and coordination among departments of the ministry of finance on an action plan for implementing a medium term budget framework	Improved communication and coordination within the ministry of finance among the departments of budget, finance, and accounting contributed to move forward the action plan for implementing a medium term budget framework
Strengthened coalitions	Advance multiple stakeholders' common agenda for action to implement a medium term budget framework	Joint plan of action to implement a medium term budget framework moved forward by ministry of finance, planning commission, and line ministries
Enhanced networks	Strengthen the ability of stakeholders with varying agendas but connected by common interests to apply technical standards	Application of common technical standards among community of practice of local budget directors
New implementation know-how	Formulate the ministry of finance and line ministries' implementation strategy for the medium term budget framework through an experiential participatory process	Strategy for implementation of medium term budget framework developed by ministry of finance and line ministries, based on a learning-by-doing approach

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