

Annex To Indicator Guidance

Indicator: Changes Resulting from Joint Initiatives ([see here](#))

Indicator wording: Evidence of changes in [define: policy / service delivery / community engagement practices] resulting from joint initiatives between [specify actors]

If your project wants to assess the degree of change for this indicator - rather than document evidence - consider reformulating the proposed indicator to *Extent of citizens active participation in local decision-making processes in target communities*. To assess the extent of participation, **establish clear criteria and standards for different levels of citizen participation, informed by baseline findings**.

Projects may **use a rubric-based rating** (e.g. on a 1–5 scale or qualitative levels) to show progression over time (*see the guidance in documents below*). **Users should always formulate their own project-specific rubrics at the inception** in line with baseline findings. Ideally, formulation should take place during a joint workshop with project partners. An illustrative example of a simple rubric scale and the description of each level can be:

- **None (=1)** – Citizens are not involved in local decision-making. Decisions are made exclusively by authorities or elites.
- **Emerging (=2)** – Citizens begin to engage occasionally in decision-making activities, often with external facilitation. Participation is limited, irregular, and mostly consultative.
- **Moderate (=3)** – Citizens participate more regularly and actively contribute ideas, though influence on outcomes remains partial. Participation is recognised and somewhat structured.
- **Significant (=4)** – Active citizen participation has become routine and visibly influences decisions. Citizens engage confidently, authorities respond, and inclusion improves.
- **Institutionalised (=5)** – Citizen participation is embedded in local governance systems, supported by formal procedures, resources, and social norms. Engagement continues independently of external facilitation.

Assign a level or score (e.g. none, emerging, moderate, significant, institutionalised) to each community at baseline and then at the planned assessment point(s) and/or endline. Compare the performance of each community and their shifts on the scale throughout your intervention to assess change. If desired, aggregate results to show how many communities are at each level of progress. Using numerical scores (e.g. 1–5) can make data aggregation and year-to-year comparison easier.

If you want to promote community participation and **increase community ownership**, design rubric levels, conduct scoring, and validate progress together with citizens, local leaders, and project staff in a participatory manner.

Outcome Harvesting or **Most Significant Change** methodologies (*see resources below*) can help explain shifts between levels, collect concrete examples, and provide deeper understanding of *how and why* citizens' participation has evolved.

If using rubrics is too resource-intensive or if sufficient data cannot be collected to reliably justify scores (e.g., due to project scale or partner coordination constraints), you may **use Outcome Harvesting or Most Significant Change independently** without rubric scoring, while still maintaining a results-based and evidence-driven approach.

Consider engaging an external expert or evaluator to substantiate/validate your results during project's evaluation.

Indicators that assess extent are **methodologically more complex and may be challenging** to inform, particularly where project partners have limited ownership of the data collection process or where coordination costs are high. To mitigate these challenges, projects should support partners through training and practical tools, involve them in the formulation of rubrics and scoring, and provide clear guidance on how to report on the indicator (e.g. through a dedicated section in the narrative report template). Where outcome-focused data is not systematically collected during implementation, external evaluators may be engaged to harvest and substantiate outcomes as part of the project evaluation.

Links:

<https://outcomeharvesting.net/>

<https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/approaches/most-significant-change>

<https://www.intrac.org/app/uploads/2017/01/Most-significant-change.pdf>

<https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/methods/rubrics>