# How to develop IMM objectives and learning questions

inFocus IMM Guides

**Impact measurement and management (IMM) objectives** are broad statements that outline the overall goals and purposes of monitoring, evaluation and learning, which then lead to **learning questions** that help us to gather information and evidence to address the objectives. These are not the questions we use to directly collect data from the people impacted by products or services, but instead are the top-level questions that we will seek to answer through data collection and analysis.

1. The first factor that will define your objectives and learning questions will be the **level at which you are applying your IMM approach**. Are you designing an approach for an individual service or product, for your organisation as a whole, or for a network of organisations you are funding or supporting?

2. Used around the world, these six evaluation criteria developed by the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** can help you to think through and categorise your IMM objectives and learning questions: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

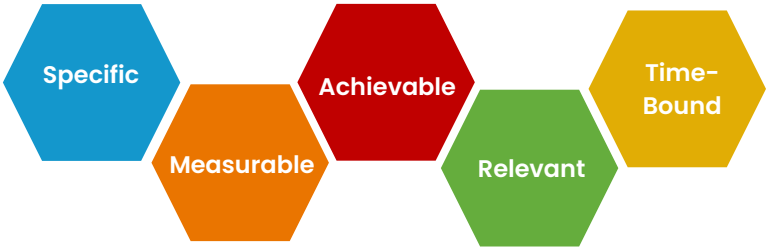
| | |
|---|---|
| Coherence | How well does the intervention fit? |
| Effectiveness | Is the intervention achieving its objectives? |
| Efficiency | How well are resources being used? |
| Impact | What difference does the intervention make? |
| Sustainability | Will the benefits last? |
| Relevance | Is the intervention doing the right things? |

OECD library (oecd-ilibrary.org)

3. Your IMM objectives and learning questions should be influenced by your **theory of change** (or similar document such as a logic model) and **strategic and operational plans.** This will ensure that the data and learning generated is relevant and useful.

4. **Involving internal and external stakeholders** in the development of your IMM objectives and learning questions is critical to ensuring that the resulting monitoring, evaluation and learning is reflective of the needs of key individuals and groups. Internally you could involve senior management, and any staff directly related to the products and services you are focused on, while externally you could develop or validate your objectives and learning questions with participants or members of the communities in which you work.

5. Similar to organisational objectives, your IMM objectives and learning questions should be **SMART** – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

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