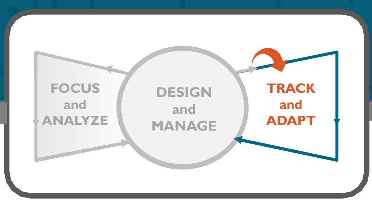
Think | BIG

Behavior Integration Guidance

Assess the Quality of Behavioral Outcome Indicators

www.thinkbigonline.org



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OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Think | BIG prioritizes the use of well-designed metrics for behavioral outcome and factor-level indicators.

Too often programs select or develop performance monitoring indicators without the time or resources to assess their ability to measure program effort and influence. Some indicators are only critically assessed after a year of data collection or if the data are being reported to a donor or other external entity.

In addition, users of Think | BIG sometimes have professionals who are external to the team that prioritized the behaviors and developed the Behavior Profiles propose or establish indicators for them. (In such cases, the team should share the background information and appropriate documents with the person developing the indicator.) The team will then need to critically review the proposed indicators against their own understanding and research of the behavior and ways to measure it.

This document provides high-level guidance, rooted in widely-accepted best practices in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and behavior change, for assessing the appropriateness of and strengthening indicators that measure the progress of strategic behavior change investments. Early assessment offers teams the opportunity to ensure the appropriateness of the indicator prior to collection of M&E data.

INTENDED USERS

Anyone who wants to assess behavioral indicators proposed for measuring their results can use this guidance. **M&E and technical experts should jointly make final decisions about indicators.**

HOW THIS FITS INTO THINK | BIG

Assessing the quality of behavioral outcome indicators is part of Step 3 of Think | BIG: Track and Adapt.

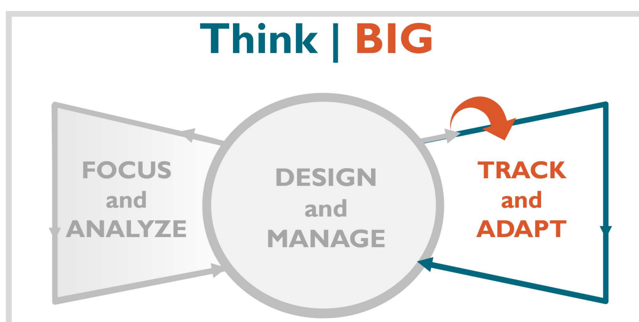


Figure 1: How This Fits into Think | BIG

ESTIMATED TIME NEEDED

1 hour per indicator, in addition to external consultations and indicator research

TEMPLATES INCLUDED

Appendix A: Behavioral and Factor-Level Indicator Assessment Worksheet

SAMPLES INCLUDED

Appendix C: Sample Completed Behavioral and Factor-Level Indicator Assessment Worksheet

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Appendix B: Indicator Assessment Worksheet – Evaluator Guidance
- Your Behavior Profiles, corresponding Research Tables, and other research as needed
- Proposed Behavioral Indicators (Illustrative or Actual)
- Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) or any comparable document that elaborates the details of the indicators under consideration

BEFORE YOU START

Behavior Integration is a way to design and implement programs that defines outcomes as specific behaviors required to achieve the development goal. It ensures that strategy, project, and activity design are behavior-led rather than intervention-driven. Behavior Integration means ensuring that the behaviors required to achieve your goal - for example, a reduction in maternal and child deaths—are at the center of program planning and implementation. Think | BIG (Behavior Integration Guidance) is the process for doing this.

Think | BIG offers several opportunities to measure changes in prioritized behaviors and in those behaviors' contribution to the overall goal. The online and offline Prioritize and Behavior Profile tools at www.thinkbigonline.org/tools invite users to include a behavioral outcome indicator in the Priority Behavior List, and factor-level indicators in the Behavior Profile.

Design and assess indicators after prioritizing and analyzing behaviors using the Think | BIG online or offline Prioritize and Behavior Profile tools. Learn more about Behavior Profiles at https://thinkbigonline.org/behavior_profile_p. Learn more about establishing behavioral outcome indicators in the Track and Adapt section of https://thinkbigonline.org/tools.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Review the Behavior Profile** for critical information that could be used to better understand howto measure the behavior or factor. Behavioral outcome indicators help monitor the progress towards long-term, sustainable change in the conditions and behaviors of people, functionality ofsystems, and effectiveness of institutions. If you are reviewing a behavioral outcome indicator, besure to review the steps in the profile. If you are reviewing a factor-level indicator, be sure to review the factor column of the Behavior Profile. For additional specifics and understanding of the factors, review any research or research tables that were consulted during prioritization andBehavior Profile creation.

2. **Collect and review any supporting documentation or research about the indicator.** All indicators should be developed by first thoroughly reviewing existing indicator sources. Be sure that you have a general understanding of how the behavior or factor could be measured. Establish Behavioral Outcome Indicators provides more guidance on this step and will be useful for improving or replacing proposed indicators.

3. **Reviewthe indicator** using Appendix A: Behavioral Indicator Assessment Worksheet, providing comments as well as edits to the proposed indicator. Appendix B: Behavioral Indicator Assessment Worksheet – Evaluator Guidance provides advice to help the person evaluating the

indicator properly critique the indicator. Appendix C: Sample Completed Behavioral Indicator Assessment Worksheet provides an example of a critique of a proposed indicator.

4. **Consult with other global or national M&E or technical experts** if you or your team members are unfamiliar with measuring the behavior or factor, to validate your assessment.

5. **Collaborate with the person developing the indicator to finalize the indicator (and PIRS).**

APPENDICES

The following appendices are included with this document:

Appendix A: Behavioral and Factor-Level Indicator Assessment Worksheet

Appendix B: Behavioral Indicator Assessment Worksheet – Evaluator Guidance

Appendix C: Sample Completed Behavioral Indicator Assessment Worksheet

APPENDIX A: BEHAVIORAL AND FACTOR-LEVEL INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

SAMPLE COMPLETED BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET	
BEHAVIOR OR FACTOR: Circle or underline one	
PROPOSED INDICATOR	

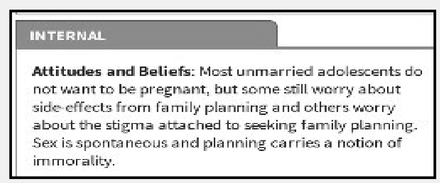
QUESTION	YES / NO	FEEDBACK
Is the indicator properly structured? [percentage/number/proportion of] + [who/what] + [verb (did, received, used, have access to, etc.________)] + [optional: when, where, how long, disaggregation]	YES / NO	
Does the indicator capture the <u>entire</u> behavior or factor?	YES / NO	
Is the indicator a direct measurement of the factor or behavior?	YES / NO	
If the indicator is a proxy, is the assumption or rationale for it sufficient to allow its use?	YES / NO	
Does the indicator (or PIRS) reflect the most appropriate <u>specific</u> primary actor(s)?	YES / NO	
Is the behavior measured by an outcome indicator? Note: If 'no' the indicator should not be accepted without changes. If you are reviewing a factor-level indicator, it does not have to be measured by an outcome indicator.	YES / NO	
Is each word of the indicator unambiguous?	YES / NO	
Is there an existing indicator that can be used?	YES / NO	

General feedback and edits to the indicator for the indicator developer:	
◻ **Accept with no changes** ◻ **Accept with changes**	
◻ **Reject indicator**	
Reviewed by:	**Date:**

Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) are tools USAID uses to provide detailed definition to performance indicators, including descriptive data collection methods, rationale, and limitations.

APPENDIX B: BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET-EVALUATOR GUIDANCE

INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET – EVALUATOR GUIDANCE	
BEHAVIOR OR FACTOR: Circle or underline one	Insert the behavior or factor here. The behavior or factor may be written as a result, if taken directly from a results framework. Cross-reference the result with its Behavior Profile {wwe.thinkbigonline.org/tools} to be sure that you thoroughly understand the behavior or factor before attempting to assess the corresponding indicator.
PROPOSED INDICATOR:	Insert the proposed indicator here.

	EVALUATOR GUIDANCE
Is the indicator properly structured?	Ensure that ach indicator has the following key components: **[percentage/number/proportion of] + [who/what] + [verb (did, received, used, have access to, etc.________)] + [optional: when, where, how long, disaggregation]** The order of these components can differ, but all components should be included. Some global indicators (e.g., "Life expectancy") will not follow the indicator equation above; the indicator description in its PIRS should provide more detail.
Does the indicator capture the entire behavior or factor?	Behaviors and factors can have several specific details. Be sure that the indicator accurately reflects all details. The proposed indicator in Appendix C is an example of a metric that does NOT capture the entire behavior.  INTERNAL **Attitudes and Beliefs:** Most unmarried adolescents do not want to be pregnant, but some still worry about side-effects from family planning and others worry about the stigma attached to seeking family planning. Sex is spontaneous and planning carries a notion of immorality. If a factor as written contains multiple factors (as seen in the image on the right), indicators should be proposed to measure **each** of the included factors. In this example, two indicators are necessary to measure the two factors: 1) fear of side effects of modern contraceptives and 2) fear of stigma attached to seeking family planning.
Is the indicator a direct measurement of the factor or behavior?	A direct indicator measures the **exact** behavior or factor. In the sample behavior on the right, adolescents should **USE** modern contraceptives; therefore, the corresponding direct indicator should measure **use** (and not access or knowledge, for example). It is easy to think of things that must happen before an adolescent can use contraceptives, or the things that may happen as a result of using contraceptives. For example, an adolescent needs access or appropriate knowledge before s/he is able to use modern contraceptives. However, having access or knowledge doesn't directly measure utilization. If the Behavior Profile lists access or knowledge as a factor, it should be measured separately to provide critical information about changes in barriers or facilitators to the behavior over time.  Adolescent First Birth Sexually active adolescents use a modern contraceptive method to delay first birth until after age 18

If the indicator is a proxy, is the assumption or rationale for it sufficient to allow its use?	A proxy (or indirect) measurement should only be used if directly measuring the result compromises the safety and security of the respondent, would produce biased data, or is impossible to collect with given resources. When it is necessary to use a proxy metric, the rationale for use and any assumptions should accompany the indicator. Consider employing efforts to triangulate the data if a proxy indicator is being used. Triangulation is a form of verification that involves using more than one data collection method to gather the same type of data. For example, you could triangulate your survey data by collecting the same information through observations and focus group discussions. As appropriate, ensure that the PIRS identifies multiple data collection methods for proxy indicators.
Does the indicator (or PIRS) reflect the most appropriate <u>specific</u> primary actor(s)?	The primary actor in a behavior and of the factor might be specific enough to adequately understand the behavior or factor, but not specific enough to properly measure it. The factor example below refers to "targeted community members". The indicator or PIRS should specifically define targeted community members. For example, the indicator could read: % of mothers age 15-49 who were able to describe proper disposal of feces. **Knowledge**: Targeted community members do not understand how to practice the behaviors, e.g.how to prepare, when to give, etc. proper foods for children; properly dispose of feces, etc. (B) (Feces, ENC, C Fd)
Is the behavior measured by an outcome indicator? Note: If 'no' the indicator should not be accepted without changes. If you are reviewing a factor-level indicator, it does not have to be measured by an outcome indicator.	Behavioral indicators should be measured as outcomes. Outcome indicators measure changes over time—including conditions or behaviors of systems, people or institutions—as a result of the program's outputs, for example: • % of primary teachers who consistently teach using the international best standard teaching curriculum for one academic year. By contrast, input indicators measure the contributions necessary to enable the program to be implemented (i.e. funding, staff, key partners, infrastructure), such as: • # of USD allocated to enhancing primary education programs or provision of USAID staff, either operating expenses or program-funded

Is the proposed indicator measurable with existing resources?	In the example above, to measure "% of primary teachers who consistently teach using the international best standard teaching curriculum for one academic year" would require a standardized method for evaluating whether or not teachers used the desired curriculum for a full year and a means of obtaining those data. Assess each indicator against practical data collection resource, time, and data availability constraints. For example:
	• Are these data the Ministry of Education or the World Bank already collects?
	    ○ If so, can you access the data at the time interval needed?
	    ○ If not, would it require a unique on-the-ground data collection effort at a sample of schools across the country?
	        ▪ If so, do you have resources to collect data properly with a sufficient sample size (consult an M&E expert)?
	If you cannot collect data on the indicator as written with existing resources or data sources, propose or request a revision that achieves the strongest, most unbiased data within given constraints.

Is each word of the indicator unambiguous?	If any words in the indicator could have multiple meanings, flag them for the indicator developer and propose definitions or unambiguous wording. Be sure to reference the PIRS, if one has been developed.
	In the indicator, % of **caregivers** who **have access** to a **health facility**, all bolded wordsare ambiguous and would need further definition. Consider defining the age and sex of the caregivers or the age, sex or health condition of their child. Confirm whether "have access" means permission to visit or proximity or hours of operation.

	Consider defining health facility by the types of services they offer or the qualifications of the service provider. A revised indicator might say: % of all mothers of children (under 5) who have had a fever in the last 30 days, who live within 10km of a primary health facility. Alternatively, the details can be included in the PIRS.
Is there an existing indicator that can be used?	The strength and quality of measurement can be improved by using existing **direct** or **proxy** (only when using a direct indicator is not possible) indicators that have been globally or locally tested and validated. If a newly designed indicator is being proposed, is there validated indicator that could be used instead? If you are unsure, ask the indicator developer for a list of sources that they referenced for indicators. Also consider asking other technical experts for indicator sources.
General feedback and edits to the indicator for the indicator developer: (Write here any other feedback that you have that you feel would help in revising the indicators)	
◻ **Accept with no changes** ◻ **Accept with changes** ◻ **Reject indicator**	
Reviewed by:	**Date:**

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE COMPLETED BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

SAMPLE COMPLETED BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET	
<u>BEHAVIOR</u> OR FACTOR: Circle or underline one	Caregivers immediately seek and appropriately provide care for acute malnutrition (wasting)
PROPOSED INDICATOR	% of mothers who visit healthcare provider when children are malnourished.

QUESTION	YES / NO	FEEDBACK
Is the indicator properly structured?	<u>YES</u> / NO	
Does the indicator capture the <u>entire</u> behavior or factor?	YES / <u>NO</u>	This behavior suggests that the caregiver seek AND appropriately provide care. The indicator only measures care seeking and does not capture caregiving. The indicator also does not capture acute malnutrition, specifically wasting. In addition, 'immediately' and 'appropriately' are not reflected in the indicator.
Is the indicator a direct measurement of the factor or behavior?	YES / <u>NO</u>	The indicator attempts to directly measure the behavior. However, portions of the behavior are missing. See above.
If the indicator is a proxy, is the assumption or rationale for it sufficient to allow its use?	YES / NO <u>NA</u>	
Does the indicator (or PIRS) reflect the most appropriate <u>specific</u> primary actor(s)?	YES / <u>NO</u>	The indicator measures a specific primary actor (mothers). However, consider whether other primary actors should be captured. For example, fathers and mothers-in-law can also be caregivers (which is who the behavior targets), but the indicator, as written, would not capture them. Consult the behavior profile and appropriate technical experts to determine the most accurate primary actor(s).
Is the behavior measured by an outcome indicator? Note: If 'no' the indicator should not be accepted without changes. If you are reviewing a factor-level indicator, it does not have to be measured by an outcome indicator.	<u>YES</u> / NO	
Is each word of the indicator unambiguous?	YES / <u>NO</u>	The age of the children of interest should be quantified in the indicator or in the PIRS. Should any health care provider be counted? If not, be sure to define health care providers.
Is there an existing indicator that can be used?	YES / NO <u>UNSURE</u>	Consider exploring indicator suggestions from the USAID FANTA archives, USAID Advancing Nutrition, World Food Programme (WFP), or Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)

General feedback and edits to the indicator for the indicator developer: This indicator is on the right track. In addition to the feedback above, explore peer-reviewed articles to be sure that ‘immediately’ and ‘appropriately’ are measured according to global standards. Also, since this is a newly designed indicator, please explain your process for testing and validating this metric in order to reduce data quality issues. Please resubmit, addressing all concerns noted.	
☐ **Accept with no changes** ✖☐ **Accept with changes**	
☐ **Reject indicator**	
Reviewed by: Jane Blue	**Date:** 6/5/19