



Final report on workshops:

Measuring outcomes and the logic that supports it

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This is the final report on 30 workshops facilitated by Fams under sub-contract by NCOSS as part of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Reform Sector Assistance Strategy. An interim report was provided dated July 2019. This report contains survey results across the 30 workshops and any significant changes between the first and second 15 workshops.

Background

Development of the content

The basis of the *Measuring Outcomes and the Logic Model that supports it* workshop, was developed through a need identified by Fams and refined in outcomes workshops delivered to the sector in 2017/18. It was designed by Fams to help Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Program funded organisations understand what ‘measuring outcomes’ looked like in practice.

The workshop was intended to support the sector to start:

- developing meaningful outcomes that directly relate to the work they were doing with children, families, young people and communities;
- identify tools and resources to measure those outcomes;
- explore how to interrogate outcomes data; and
- to use learnings to inform future practice by implementing positive changes to the activities, events and programs they were facilitating.

These workshops were delivered in early stages of TEI reform and separate to, and before the rollout of, the current Sector Assistance Strategy.

Early testing of the content in a TEI reform context

In 2019 the updated TEI reform directions were incorporated and additional activities included. The revised content was piloted/tested at workshops delivered in March in Queanbeyan, Goulburn, Batemans Bay, Bega and Dubbo. The success and positive feedback of these workshops provided Fams with an understanding of overarching issues of the reform for both FACS now Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) district staff and funded organisations.

These workshops highlighted that:

- Commissioning Planning Officers (CPOs) were as unsure as NGOs of the processes and timeline of reform, including the Pathway 1 processes of Activity Mapping and the development of Program Logics;
- when CPOs and organisations attended the same workshops, valuable communication about processes, priorities and challenges from both perspectives was enabled and embraced; and
- the activities in the workshop supported practical engagement of analysing outcomes for continuous improvement of activities, programs and services.

The current content

With input from DCJ (formerly FACS) Central Office TEI team and FACSIAR, the workshop was further refined in April 2019 to ensure it was consistent with the direction of reform as it known at that time.

Content was also checked to ensure it aligned (where relevant and appropriate) with messaging and consultations driven by Their Futures Matter (TFM). TFM was not a

government initiative at the commencement of TEI reform so its appearance and heightened presence over time needed to be factored in.

Scope of the workshops

In 2017-2018 DCJ allocated funds for the TEI Sector Assistance Strategy. NCOSS was contracted to deliver certain elements of the Strategy. In April 2019, Fams was sub-contracted by NCOSS to deliver outcomes focussed workshops – one component of their broader contract with DCJ. Fams agreed to deliver 15 workshops by 30 June 2019 with the following objectives for the sector:

- Increasing knowledge of the importance of measuring outcomes
- Increasing skills in analysing and applying program data
- Increasing confidence in measuring service user outcomes
- Increasing confidence in using Program Logic frameworks for planning and evaluation

It was agreed that representatives from DCJ and TFM would attend as many workshops as possible to present and participate. This deliberate approach ensured that the opportunity was used to acknowledge the history of TEI reform, take stock of what had worked and not, and reset to allow organisations to move forward in collaboration with DCJ to 30 June 2020.

DCJ provided context and answered questions as they were being raised and the interactive nature of the workshop provided the space to have both difficult and necessary conversations and raise genuine concerns. Many of those concerns were met with a supportive response and where answers were not immediately available they were taken on notice.

DCJ acknowledged that it was a great opportunity to affirm NGOs about the excellent work they already do; discuss the limits of the current systems; and provide a chance to talk about how reform activities can better demonstrate current work and help build a TEI evidence base.

It was intended that an interim report would be provided on completion of these workshops after which a decision made about the potential to deliver an additional 15 workshops if the need was identified.

The first 15 workshops were delivered in Dubbo (for a wider group), Bathurst, Griffith, Central Coast/Gosford, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Tweed Heads, Inverell, Hornsby, Sydney (3), Campbelltown and Western Sydney.

The second 15 workshops were delivered from July to October in Ballina, Newcastle, Tamworth, Narrabri, Penrith, Wagga Wagga, Bega, Queanbeyan, Shellharbour, Crows Nest, Albury, Liverpool (2), Katoomba and Brewarrina.

All workshops followed the same approach while being flexible enough to respond to questions from participants, in particular to new information as it was received through TEI Newsletters or the Frequently Asked Questions document link distributed by DCJ.

It should be noted that at workshop 28 the language from DCJ shifted significantly with the release of the updated Targeted Earlier Intervention Program documentation.

Who attended the workshops

The workshops were promoted by NCOSS using the TEI database provided by DCJ for this purpose.

717 individuals registered for the 30 workshops from 482 organisations. 472 participants attended the 30 workshops. Attendance overall reflected 66% of the actual enrolment. Unfortunately, registered participants at metropolitan workshops accounted for the biggest 'no shows'. This was met by frustration from organisations who had to travel out of area because their local workshop was fully booked or those who knew of others who missed out. Reminder emails forwarded to participants of the 2nd 15 workshops only increased the attendance rate marginally.

Based on a show of hands at each workshop there was a relatively even mix of direct service delivery workers and management with a small number of management committee/board members and volunteers. This was consistent across all workshops.

The services mostly represented were those funded to deliver Community Builders, Families NSW and Child Youth and Family (CYF) programs under current PLAs. Small numbers of Aboriginal CYF and Getting It Together funded organisations attended. It was perceived by Fams and DCJ that organisations funded under the previous Community Builders program were the largest group of attendees with the most concerns about the reform.

The wide range of roles attending as participants and full spectrum of TEI programs represented in sessions was acknowledged in Brett Martin's notes about the benefits and learnings for our interim report.

What we learned and now understand

Our learnings from the first 15 workshops (and highlighted in our interim report) were reinforced in the second 15 workshops. These included:

- Communication and dissemination of information to the right people within organisations remains a challenge.
- Every organisation attending has been able to easily and quickly align themselves to the TEI Outcomes Framework and NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework.
- Organisations need to feel confident that early intervention and prevention work has a home in the TEI Program.
- The overarching reach of the TEI Program is all vulnerable children, young people, families and communities. The three NSW priority groups remain: children 0-3, young parents under 20, and Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities. This does not prevent organisations from working with other groups in need. Locally, there will be other priority groups that should not be excluded from receiving a service. This requires a discussion between individual NGOs and DCJ district staff.
- TEI funded organisations services must be able to articulate who they are working with, why and what outcomes they are achieving. The sector must be accountable for the Government money that they receive.
- Organisations never fail to demonstrate they can speak to the outcomes they are contributing to. The challenge of how they efficiently measure and report this is part of the Pathway 1 learning process between now and June 2020.
- Activity mapping is the first piece of work that needs to be completed. Activity mapping is an exercise in:

- identifying which of the five funded service options organisations will deliver/report to;
- re-thinking how the activities/programs/events delivered might fit together in a different way to be most responsive to the people they work with.
- Program logics, while an incredibly useful internal tool, are mandatory only for Pathway 1 services, have no hard timeline for completion and do not need to be submitted to DCJ for approval or otherwise. Fams has a Program Logic for each of the five funded service options available on our website.
- There are many questions about the new DSS Data Exchange (DEX) platform that cannot be answered until the sector starts using it. However:
 - A single platform will be more efficient than the current multiple reporting mechanisms
 - While some have strong views about DEX based on their experience through Commonwealth funded programs, the sector only has a gut-feel and suspicion of how this translates to a DCJ funded TEI space
 - If the sector doesn't start using DEX they won't be able to identify the real issues and build appropriate solutions
 - DCJ acknowledge they don't have all the answers and want to work with NGOs to build a better data collection and reporting system
 - The period between now and June 2020 will focus on try, test, learn rather than heavy compliance

Most interestingly, we learned that NGOs attending the second round of workshops were, more often than not, encouraged to do so either by other organisations who had attended the first group of workshops or by their local DCJ staff.

As mentioned previously, by workshop 28 DCJ Central Office had released new information and updated documents including:

- Letter to TEI Service Providers regarding Targeted Earlier Intervention program recommissioning by Simone Walker, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy & Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice.
- Targeted Earlier Intervention – Fact sheet
- Program Guidelines 2019 dated 30 September 2019
- Targeted Earlier Intervention Program Outcomes Framework dated September 2019
- An updated, simplified Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Program Logic Template

These documents changed language meaning that where common understanding had been reached on certain phrases there was a new potential for confusion because;

- the three priority groups became the four key groups;
- the five funded service options became five program activities;
- flexible activities became service types

Also, the high level detail on the four flexible contract terms was released but DCJ were unable to answer the (obvious) specific questions that were asked about what their individual NGO could expect to be offered and what the negotiation process would look like.

Information was also distributed through some districts about the Earlier Intervention Evidence and Evaluation fund (EIEE), Information for Targeted Earlier Intervention Services, Expression of Interest process dated September 2019.

Outcomes against learning objectives

A link to a Survey Monkey questionnaire was emailed to all participants post workshop with the following information:

- Workshop PowerPoint
- Program Logic examples for each of the five funded service options
- Program Logic Example for a parenting program
- Program Logic Examples for a Supported Playgroup
- TEI Activity Mapping template
- User Guide TEI Activity Mapping
- NCOSS PowerPoint
- FACSIAR Logic Template
- TFM – TEI Presentation

This was the most engaging TEI related workshop that I have attended and provided great insight. It was also helpful to have FaCS, TFM, NCOSS & FAMS in the same space to provide the different perspectives but also to provide clarity in how they 'fit' together. It was particularly helpful having Fams facilitate the session to bring valuable context, and clarity of content from FaCS & TFM so that this can translate this at a service delivery level.

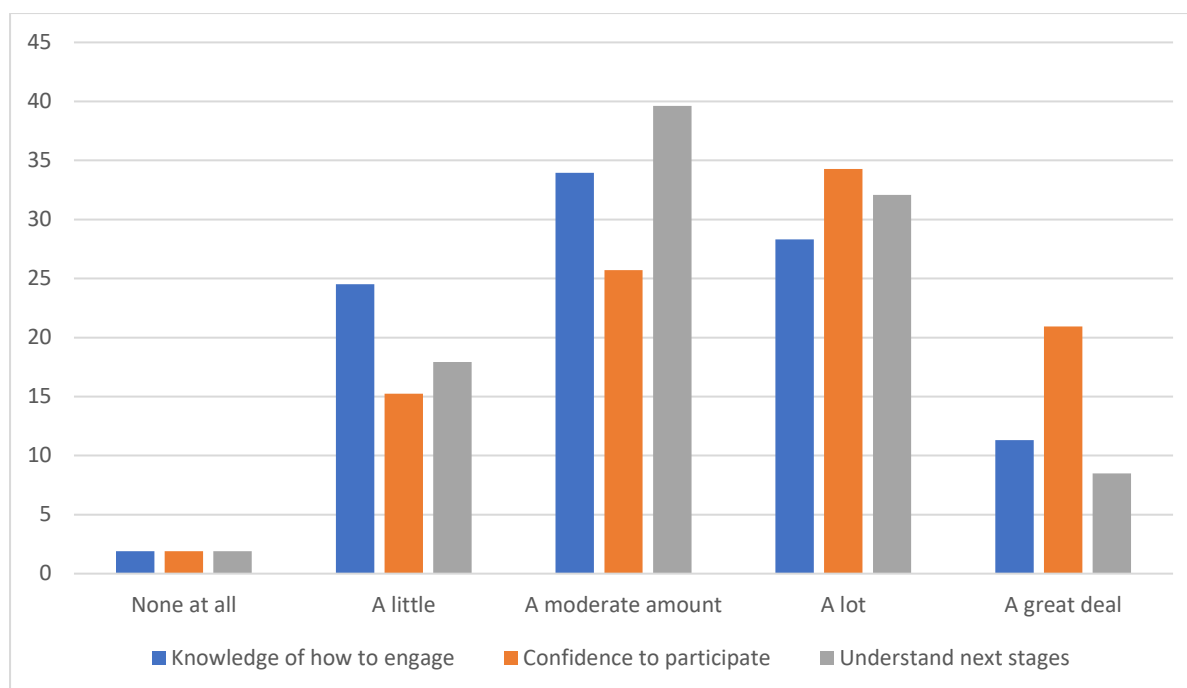
The original survey developed and used for the first 15 workshops was not specific to TEI Reform and it was identified early in the rollout that conversations about reform, and the relevant processes and timelines expected of NGOs, was the most useful for the sector to help them both engage in reform and move forward in the next 3, 6 and 12 months. A second survey was designed and emailed to all the participants in the first 15 workshops and was used solely for the remaining workshops. Results of the initial survey can be found in the Interim Report.

The second survey specifically related to the sector's improved knowledge of and confidence to engage in the reform and resulted in 69 responses at the interim report and a combined total of 106 as at the close of business on 24th October (a 23% response rate).

Almost 91% of respondents confirmed that as a result of the workshop they know where to go if they have questions about reform. 41% felt more informed to engage in reform processes for the next three months, with 30% feeling they were now informed to get through the next 6-12 months. The graph below represents the questions:

- Has your knowledge of how to engage with reform increased?
- Has your confidence to participate in Pathway One increased?
- Do you have a better understanding of the next stages of reform?

Across all questions, less than 2% found the workshops had not contributed at all to their knowledge, understanding or confidence.



Discussion

In keeping with Fams' role as the leading peak in TEI reform we deliberately structured the workshops to allow open and robust discussion about what is and isn't working as well as the challenges and fears NGOs face in continuing to engage with TEI reform. Consistent feedback is that NGOs leave the workshop with a greater sense of clarity and confidence.

Having DCJ and TFM in the room proved advantageous in providing both context for NGOs and in answering questions and concerns about the reform process to date and expectations moving forward and reassuring organisations about how closely they were aligned approaching the recommissioning process. DCJ was able to reinforce the reform environment of try, test and learn. This was most evident during discussions about DEX and the opportunity for organisations to have early conversations about the platform challenges especially in measuring outcomes for community development activities.

Reinforcing an environment of try, test, learn between now and June 2020; acknowledging that many services would be working with a new reporting platform; and a genuine understanding from DCJ that change management was always difficult, are the early conversations that form the initial stages to identifying issues and working on co-design solutions together. TFM also contributed to those conversations and spoke about how the TEI and TFM reform agendas align.

Where there were CPOs in the room this also contributed to valuable conversations about district plans and priorities, the function of and requirement by services to complete the activity mapping template and processes and timing around program logics. There were consistently more CPOs attending regional over metropolitan workshops. CPOs who attended also indicated that when Fams return, they will encourage organisations who missed out (or didn't think they need to come) to attend. DCJ also acknowledged the importance of having District staff attend workshops to help generate discussion and to affirm that organisations and Districts should move forward together.

It was acknowledged by all parties that lack of and miscommunication about the reform processes was the greatest challenge to be overcome. A situation where communication from DCJ reaches organisation contract managers but not frontline workers was a common theme raised. This is especially the case around the (former) three state-wide priority groups with many services believing they could only work with those three client groups. DCJ was able to steer conversations to reassure services that TEI reform was not about shifting their client base so significantly that all organisations would be solely working with the priority groups. Fams cannot predict how the changes in the latest Program Guidelines to four key groups will be communicated locally, interpreted or implemented.

Learnings identified by DCJ include:

- the need to keep messaging the TEI client group is all vulnerable children, young people, families and communities
- the different awareness among CPOs is leaving some NGOs confused and frustrated for example, time pressure on services to develop program logics and pressure to change service delivery leading to clients being turned away
- the lack of local and central governance arrangements has made it harder to communicate and build internal and external capacity
- the need for further messaging that the 30% Aboriginal investment is a state-wide target, not a District or service target
- a reminder of how good work leads to more work through increased referrals without extra resources, and the need to count unmet demand

Fams reminded services of the overarching TEI target group of **all** vulnerable children, young people, families and communities as well as the TEI reform aim set out by DCJ in *Targeted Earlier Intervention Program Reform: Reform directions – local and client centred*:

1. Improve outcomes for clients of TEI services
2. Create a service system continuum grounded in evidence-informed practice
3. Target resources to those with the greatest needs
4. Facilitate district decision-making on the design and delivery of local services
5. Increase flexibility so that clients are the centre of the system.

Thankfully, this is consistent with latest release TEI Program documents.

Across all workshops, addressing the concerns of organisations has contributed to them feeling less overwhelmed and more confident and they have the capacity to move forward with an understanding of where to go to seek support when needed.

Organisations were also confused about the optional choice of Pathway 1 or 2. During most workshops some participants identified they would be encouraging their organisation to shift from an earlier decision to go down Pathway 2 to embracing Pathway 1. This was purely the result of frank and fearless presentations by Fams, DCJ and TFM.

Adopting Pathway 1 as early as possible was strongly encouraged in all workshops by Fams as the only way that collectively the sector can set the environment for themselves and DCJ to progress together toward June 2020. However, there were also organisations who didn't attend the workshop because they were taking Pathway 2 and didn't see the value. Fams hopes that this has been resolved by DCJ releasing updated TEI Program documents.

Organisations have also reported in discussion at the end of workshops that their requests for individual support (also offered by NCOSS through the Sector Assistance Strategy) will be more tightly framed because of the increased knowledge gained from Fams' workshops about what is needed.

Benefits of the sessions identified by DCJ include:

- the valuable discussions about what the shift from outputs to outcomes means – less red tape, less widgets, more learning, more adaptive
- the importance of developing a useful program logic, and not just 'tick a box'
- helping organisations to recognise overlapping discussion of pathways in TEI until June 2020, and contracted requirements from July 2020

Fams (through our core funding) continues to support organisations with activity mapping and program logics where it follows directly from activities and discussion undertaken in the specific context of a workshop. Many of the conversations have involved the local CPO in the spirit of collaboration to support genuine negotiation.

This has resulted in an additional 52 organisations supported in Activity Mapping and program logic development.

Appendix 1

Comments and feedback from surveys included:

- *As a result of the trainings and information sessions I have attended I have completed the Service Activity Mapping Template and am working on a program logic template*
- *Yes, activities such as viewing the service option spreadsheet examples and even the data to analyse and the surveys provided were great activities*
- *program logic samples and discussions most helpful*
- *Yes, I learnt better ways to measure our program outcomes - it was very helpful!*
- *I definitely feel more confident now - it was explained very well and it was a very "user friendly" workshop*
- *I can develop better assessment tools and I can develop and tweak current programs so that they are better aligned with FACS' TEI priorities - extremely helpful*
- *Yes, as I said previously, I was pretty much across the Program Logic model, but the workshop was enormously helpful in showing me how to apply it to our FACS funded work. Very well done!*
- *I have always valued this approach to our work greatly, so I started at a high baseline level, but the workshop increased my ENTHUSIASM about it!! :0)*
- *The workshop was excellent at supporting those in the sector who required further information about what the process would look like, especially for those that had not previously attended other training on DEX or the outcomes and logics. The ability to benefit from the vast experience and knowledge in the room was incredibly beneficial.*
- *Thank you for the great workshop. I gained a great deal of clarity in relation to the process, the 'test-try-learn' phase and helped me gain a better understanding of data collection to capture outcomes. It was especially helpful and valuable having all three of you there so we could clearly see how TEI fits into the new landscape.*
- *As a result of the trainings and information sessions I have attended I have completed the Service Activity Mapping Template and am working on a program logic template.*
- *The training was so much more informative than anything I had been to before and felt more like the reform is working with us as an organisation rather than us having to change and fit in or have to opt out. Thank you for dispersing the myths and the information previously presented. Looking forward to the future!*
- *Well done. Great workshop*
- *The presenters were great. I have just moved into a community engagement role and so am just getting my head around the reforms.*
- *Having honest and realistic talking happen which was not in FACS speak was extremely useful.*
- *Having it explained that it is our responsibility to take charge was a great piece of advice Thank you*
- *Informative and engaging.*
- *My answers do not reflect the workshop which was very informative, but they do reflect my knowledge and understanding of the TEI reforms which I already am well engaged and have a very clear understanding of the reforms and process for moving forward*
- *This was the most engaging TEI related workshop that I have attended and provided great insight. It was also helpful to have FaCS, TFM, NCOSS & FAMS in the same space to provide the different perspectives but also to provide clarity in how they 'fit'*

together. It was particularly helpful having Fams facilitate the session to bring valuable context, and clarity of content from FaCS & TFM so that this can translate this at a service delivery level.

- It was very helpful and refreshing to be in a space where open and candid conversations could take place, ably facilitated by FAMS staff. The information shared was useful, as have been told so many different things by many different people/ services/ CPOs that it has made the work required seem pointless/ overwhelming/ frustrating. The workshop helped give some clarity to the ongoing process and as a result we are already looking at re-engaging more thoroughly with the transition. Thank you very much.
- Thank you for having FACS colleagues in the room! We really appreciated the opportunity to be there and hear from the funded service partners and take this knowledge and apply it in our work.
- The Program Logic will probably be the next big thing for us. Thank you, I felt less anxious after attending the training.
- Workshop was well run and gave a good update of the various aspects of the TEI reform process.
- it was well presented and practical as Brett had told me as we were walking to the venue.
- the data workshop was good and confirming to us, we still felt challenged by the whole process. I'm sure it will come together.
- Presenters answered question in a direct manner which was very informative and easy to understand. Options of support was greatly appreciated.
- The afternoon was a bit overwhelming and confusing. Need to get started to determine how informed and competent I am in using the DEX
- The training was both informative and engaging and really demonstrated to me the importance of connecting with our peak as we move through this reform process.
- would like to have more training that is hands on for DEX so that all systems can go in line with each other. Especially for workers on the ground who do not have access to all the training or new staff entering the sector / TEI funding.
- Follow up training incorporating the next phrase of the reform would be beneficial, so everyone is on the same page, it seems different regions and provides are at different stages of the understanding, process and implementation of the reform.
- I would like to thank the facilitators of the course. They were very quick & helpful in recognising that our service had a lot of questions and found the upcoming processes challenging, though seemed confident that we could get through the upcoming changes in the next twelve months. They also reassured our service about our methods and let us know that whilst we had groups of peoples we were encouraged to target, that others could also benefit along the way, and that was fine. Our understanding is that Pathway 1 will come about eventually for all. At this stage we are opting for Pathway 2 whilst wanting to learn more about the processes of Pathway 1. We have looked at the dates for the workshops coming up though our service is unlikely at this stage to be able to attend due to workshop dates not falling on our services allocated days for our program. We would be interested in Webinars if available. Thank you.
- Thank you for providing the opportunity to have candid conversation.
- I have a number of questions that I am preparing to send to TEI.
- The content was based on 'assumed knowledge' and belief that attendees had engaged with/knew of the changes/funding etc I am in local govt and as result of restructure inherited this brief, was left confused & lots of questions

- *This training put many things in perspective for me*
- *Frustrating that our CPO isn't more informed about the process and therefor seems to know less than us.*
- *Lots of info and samples provided. I heard some participants commenting that they need to get a consultant in for the amount of work. The whole point of the training was so workers and managers feel confident they can do it themselves. Perhaps offer a Day 2 for those who haven't or don't normally measure outcomes prior to the reform. Day 2 can be very practical and hands on with lots of practice on having a go at choosing which data collection method is best for your service, collecting and analysing data, and reflecting on the whole process of measuring outcomes. Once you practice measuring outcomes as part of normal service operations, it should not be that onerous. Question 5 above did not allow to pick more than one option.*
- *It was a very well run and informative workshop.*
- *well RUN*
- *The workshop was excellent at supporting those in the sector who required further information about what the process would look like, especially for those that had not previously attended other training on DEX or the outcomes and logics. The ability to benefit from the vast experience and knowledge in the room was incredibly beneficial.*