An impact framework is a data-driven approach to track progress toward impact goals, incorporating data from goals, indicators, and targets. All together, this information allows you to understand and communicate your impact.

Each element of the framework has its role. The **goal** is the important objective you want to achieve and track progress toward as part of your mission. **Indicators** are the specific activities, outputs and outcomes that indicate progress toward your goals over time. These are crucial as each indicator tracks to a certain **target**, which allows you to keep a pulse on how you’re doing overall.

If you are collecting information by location or demographic variables, you can also consider setting up separate indicators to track progress by location, age or gender identity of participants, etc. Setting up for tailored indicators in this way can allow you to quickly see overall progress towards the goal while also studying each group’s unique level of progress at the indicator level. Gaining insight into a specific group that is excelling or struggling can inform program design and strategy.

**What are you trying to learn?**

When establishing goals, it is important to start with a wish list of information that would help you to achieve your desired outcomes. This wish list guides the creation of questions, and you can align your goals to answer these questions.

**How are you tracking progress towards goals?**

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**Are you sharing your goals externally?**

Sharing your progress, challenges, and lessons learned can strengthen stakeholder relationships and decision making. With many indicators, you can aim to add new progress updates bi-weekly or monthly. Some indicators might only be able to be updated once or twice a year if you’re utilizing certain academic or financial data. Whatever your schedule, make sure to keep the following in mind each time you share progress internally and externally: **what is the story of impact you’re trying to tell with these goals and indicators?**

**Tips from the UpMetrics Team:**

Organize goals by program, initiatives, or even different internal departments. It will make it easier to break down key indicators.

Start with indicators for which you have historical data. Once you’ve established these baselines, use them to set future targets.

Don’t just share positive progress toward your goals. Provide the context needed for delays; it likely speaks to the need for the work you’re doing.

- Greg, Client Services

Learn more about developing an impact framework with UpMetrics.