



Exploring Measurement of Performance Outcomes and Work Requirements in Programs Promoting Economic Independence (EMPOWERED)

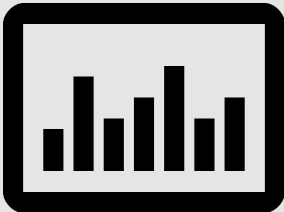
PROJECT SUMMARY

EMPOWERED Performance Measures Study


The EMPOWERED study is examining the use of performance measures, work requirements, and child support cooperation requirements across federal human services programs with a self-sufficiency focus. The study's **performance measurement component** explored how alignment of federal performance indicators across human services and workforce programs with similar goals might improve accountability and facilitate efficiencies in program management and service delivery.

DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

Environmental scan of policies and regulations 

 Reviews of federal program administrative data

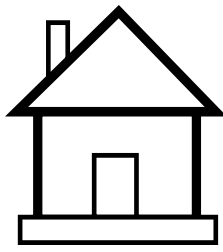
Discussions with program experts, federal stakeholders, state administrators, and local staff 

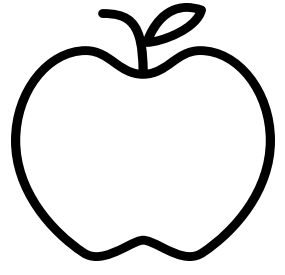
 Case studies of local approaches to performance measurement

FOCAL PROGRAMS

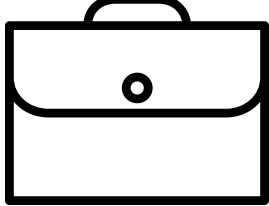
The focal programs promote self-sufficiency and employment, serve low-income populations similar to those served by TANF, and rely on established performance indicators at the federal level.


Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)


Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS)


Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)

Jobs Plus


Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs


WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program

WIOA Title I Youth Program

WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program

Two issue briefs present the findings and examine the challenges and opportunities for cross-program alignment of performance measures for two primary groups— federal and state policymakers and federal, state, and local program designers and administrators.

PRODUCTS

A third brief summarizes the perspectives of local administrators, supervisors, and front-line staff on coordinated performance measurement.

Access these briefs at: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/empowered>

KEY FINDINGS & HIGHLIGHTS

Local Perspectives

Five themes from discussions with local administrators, supervisors, and front-line staff about coordinated performance measurement across federal programs promoting self-sufficiency:

- There is general agreement that programs share a common goal of improving self-sufficiency but the connection of services to specific federal indicators varies.
- Local practices in the collection and use of data reflect the intentional use of indicators that connect to the goals of federal measures.
- Differences in program requirements and the inability to integrate or share data were identified as critical challenges to coordinating services or aligning performance measures across programs.
- Multi-level staff engagement is important in the development and ongoing use of data to inform service delivery and program performance.
- Cross-program relationships contribute to information sharing and services coordination.

Considerations for Policymakers

Four key considerations for creating a framework of performance indicators that aligns with program goals and can be used across human services and workforce programs:

- **Create a flexible framework** of performance indicators from which programs can select those that best reflect their needs, services, and definition of progress toward self-sufficiency.
- **Develop methods** for setting performance targets that account for differences in program services.
- **Align performance indicators** of similar concepts and then create consistent definitions within those indicators.
- **Provide funding, guidance, or technical support** that can promote accurate and consistent collection and reporting of performance indicators across programs.

Action Steps for Program Design and Practice

Five actionable steps to define shared goals and measures and help build a performance measurement framework that encourages the use of information to manage, improve, and coordinate programs and services:

- **Develop common indicators** within and across programs that supplement high-level federal performance measures.
- **Build or improve a data infrastructure** that can provide information to guide program management, coordinated service delivery, and aligned performance measurement.
- **Leverage shared administrative structures** or shared locations to coordinate services and align performance measurement.
- **Increase connections** with programs that share federal performance measures (or common goals) to build on specific program strengths.
- **Engage different levels of staff** within and across programs in the process of identifying and using indicators and data that will guide services and continuous improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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