



SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND QUICK GUIDE

Understanding how we use outcomes

The Social Investment Fund (the Fund) partners with organisations to deliver social services that make a positive difference in the lives of New Zealanders.

Understanding this difference will be a shared journey – one that combines local knowledge, insights, and data with government-collected information.

This quick guide outlines:

- What an outcome is and how this differs from outputs and measures,
- Why outcomes are important for social investment, and
- The agreed priority outcomes and measures for the New Investment (Round One) funding pathway.

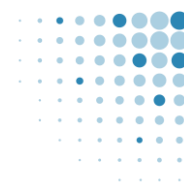
What is an outcome?

For the purposes of the Fund, we think about an **outcome** as a measurable change that occurs because people receiving support achieve a goal or make a change in their lives.

Outcomes are different from outputs. Outputs are direct and quantifiable activities or services (e.g. the number of workshops held, the number of client sessions run). Outcomes represent the change that happens as a result of those activities. Measures are how we will track and see whether outcomes have changed over time.

Here is a simple example for an initiative supporting young people not in education, employment, or training through weekly group mentoring. It shows the difference between an output, an outcome, and a measure:

Element	Example
Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of participants attending weekly sessions• Number of weekly group meetings held
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting people into work
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of participants in employment• Fewer people on the benefit



Why outcomes are important for social investment

Clearly defined outcomes are key to social investment. They:

- Enable the use of outcome-based agreements, which give funded organisations the flexibility to learn and adapt
- Facilitate local and national collaboration
- Enable robust evaluation - including estimates of financial benefits that can support investment decisions
- Focus partnership conversations on what matters.

Priority outcomes and measures

Social Investment Fund Ministers agreed the following outcomes and measures for the first round of the New Investment pathway of the Fund:

Outcomes	Measures
Improved health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced serious health events• Reduced potentially avoidable hospitalisations
Greater safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced need for children to be placed in state care• Reduced violent crime• Reduced youth crime• Reduced family violence• Reduced sexual violence
Ensuring stable and secure housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced demand for emergency housing
Improving knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved attendance in education• Improved qualifications
Growing income and wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher incomes
Supporting people into work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased employment• Fewer people on the benefit

When we assess proposals, we will consider how strongly they contribute to these priority outcomes.

Other outcomes and measures

We recognise that the organisations we work with will often have their own outcomes frameworks and ways of defining success. As will the people and families receiving support. We also recognise that government administrative measures are often 'deficit-focused'. Our outcome-based agreements allow for organisations to define and focus on the goals and outcomes they include within their own theory of change. However, the agreements will also include the priority outcomes that the Social Investment Fund will focus on when reporting on outcomes to government.