

DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY

Learning objectives:

- I. The dimensions represent the multi-faceted characteristics of quality
- II. The important roles that the dimensions of quality serve

Content and resources: Facilitator’s Guide (pages 19-21) and the www.ovcsupport.net website

- I. The Dimensions of Quality are: explicit aspects of quality such as safety, access, effectiveness, technical performance, efficiency, continuity, compassionate relations, appropriateness, participation and sustainability
Refer to the table below for a definition of each of the dimensions:

Dimensions of Quality	Definition
Safety	The degree to which risks related to care are minimized: do no harm
Access	The lack of geographic, economic, social, cultural, organizational, or linguistic barriers to services
Effectiveness	The degree to which desired results or outcomes are achieved
Technical performance	The degree to which tasks are carried out in accord with program standards and current professional practice
Efficiency	The extent to which resources needed to achieve the desired outcomes are minimized and the reach and impact of programs are maximized
Continuity	The delivery of ongoing and consistent care as needed, including timely referrals and effective communication among providers
Compassionate relations	The establishment of trust, respect, confidentiality, and responsiveness achieved through ethical practice, effective communication, and appropriate socio-emotional interactions
Appropriateness	The adaptation of services and overall care to needs or circumstances based on gender, age, disability, community context, culture, or socio-economic factors.
Participation	The participation of caregivers, communities, and children in the design and delivery of services and in decision-making regarding their care.
Sustainability	The degree to which the service is designed so that it can be maintained at the community level, in terms of direction and management as well as procuring resources, in the foreseeable future

II. The main roles of the **dimensions of quality**:

- Serve as ***an analytic tool*** for the development of service standards. They provide a systematic consideration of the multi-dimensional aspects of quality for a specific service. It is essential during the development of the standards, that stakeholders first reach consensus around the application of the dimensions of quality to the specific services. For example, stakeholders need to agree on what would constitute a “safe” food and nutrition service, before even defining the processes of care. It is also important that after standards have been drafted, that stakeholders go back and cross-walk the dimensions of quality with the standards, to ensure that they are in fact addressed within the service standards.

Note: an example of how the dimensions of quality are applied to a specific service standard can be found on page 21 of the Facilitators’ Guide.

- Serve as ***a tool for evaluation or self-assessment***.
 - Can help program managers to assess the care that their programs provide, to anticipate problems, correct errors and service children and families better
 - Assist direct service providers to reflect on how the services they provide meet the agreed dimensions of quality

3 key points:

- Defining the dimensions of quality allows for a more systematic, objective and transparent analysis of the quality of a service.
- Dimensions of quality serve as an important foundation for defining and implementing service standards. During the development of service standards, the standards should be cross-walked with the dimensions of quality to ensure that they are addressed within the standards.
- When the dimensions of quality are used for evaluation and self-assessment purposes, it is important to reflect on which of these dimensions are ***essential*** to making a measurable difference for children, and prioritize based on which are deemed essential