MODULE-III
MONITORING

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING

The third stage of the project cycle covers the implementation and monitoring of the project. To a large extent, the success of this stage is dependent on how well stages one and two were managed (= conceptualisation and planning, see Module I). A well planned project based on a sound and appropriate needs assessment with good quality community involvement should encounter fewer challenges and problems than a poorly planned project or a project not built on a need assessment. This stage of the project cycle is about making sure the project is implemented in an organised and coordinated way and there is a regular monitoring system in place with sufficient space for reflection, problem solving, learning and plan adjustments.

Monitoring is a systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of a project and its induced changes over time in relation to its planned activities and inputs as well as its outputs, use of the outputs, outcomes and impacts. Indicators identified in the project planningmatrix are used for monitoring. The monitoring framework includes both process monitoring and situation monitoringwhich includes the achievements and the changes, with their corresponding indicators. Process monitoring considers only whether the planned activities were implemented; monitoring the situation analysis comprises the outputs of the work implemented, its use and the outcomes and impact of the project on the life of the people and organisations in relation to the stated (planned) objectives, outputs and activities.

In line with the long-term goals (E.g. poverty reduction, peace, sustainable development, gender equality and integrity), projects strive for sustainable changes in the lives of the community. Changes are the outcomes and impacts that occur directly or indirectly by the project intervention, but in some cases the project is also trying to maintain the “status quo” or the hindrances of deteriorations (Which is also a change as in the case of “mitigation of climate change”).

Monitoring processes: Performance, progressand activities

- Progress of planned interventions
- Arrangement and utilisation of inputs
- Process and quality of interventions / activities carried out
- Performance of community based organisations and staff

Monitoring the situation: Outputs, use of outputs, outcomes and impacts

- Products and services generated by the project / outputs
- Changing trends of the beneficiaries in relation to behaviour changes, attitudes and practice, applying the learning's.
- Effects of interventions in people's empowerment processes
- Changes in the lives and living conditions of the beneficiaries

There is **no "one approach"** to monitoring and evaluation that, by definition, varies according to context and local needs. Traditional, externally driven evaluations, however, have been widely criticised for their neglect of the voices of people and communities most affected. This has lead to a growing interest in participatory monitoring and evaluation in recent decades, across sectors. While the definitions vary, a core set of principles guide the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation.

1.1. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION IN PME

Community consultation is important for a number of reasons including: To identify real needs, to identify causes of problems, to find out what has already been done to address needs, find out who has skills and expertise in the community to help address the needs, to select the strategies that are most likely to work, to understand social and material obstacles to ways of addressing the needs etc and many more reasons. Making sure that our work involves the community means involving them at all stages - in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

This does not mean that the community needs to try and write objectives and indicators (We can do that in our organisations!!!) - but it is important that the community understand and agree the strategies and plan of action for the work.

Community consultation and community involvement help the work to have a sustainable outcome and impact. If ideas and activities seem to come from outside the community, the project risks the outcomes being short lived and forgotten when the project has phased out or the project finishes. Sometimes the community provides the key resources to keep a project running (Human, material and sometimes even financial resources) and they know best why certain changes have occurred or why outcomes are not reached to a satisfying degree. They understand the reasons for weaknesses and deviations and should be involved in analysing these factors. These will be the most sustainable projects - where the community has collectively identified and 'own' a need and have been supported to actively address the need and monitor the changes.

Participation of the community can be a learning experience - helping to develop skills and analysis through participation in the project cycle. This also increases the chances of success and sustainability by developing the capacity of individuals and organisations most directly involved in the work. Finally, involving the community in the design of monitoring tools will be important if you need to gather sensitive information or if they will be responsible for collecting data. A clear understanding makes data collection worthwhile.Special effort is needed to ensure marginalised groups (e.g. women, children, ethnic minorities, people living with HIV and AIDS) are also involved. Otherwise their interests may be overlooked, and the effects of development activities on their lives may not be understood.

A set of core principles for participatory approaches in participatory monitoring and evaluation:

- The approach stems from the belief that determination of the success of a development project should be made by those it is intended to benefit, on their own terms.
- Space is created for beneficiaries to reflect and themselves determine whether or not they have benefited, how, and what could be improved.
- Wide ranges of people are actively involved in a participatory process, from design onwards.
- The process is applied and of practical value to those participating.

- Local knowledge and experience is respected and emphasised. Inequities of power and voice are acknowledged and addressed.
- Traditional hierarchies are broken down, including those between people (different stakeholders) and between types of knowledge ("expert" versus indigenous/lay).
- Capacity development (reflection, analysis, learning, problem-solving) is central to the process.
- There is conscious attention to strengthening mutual learning, beyond the boundaries of the project.
- Understanding and mutual respect are deepened through a collaborative learning process.
- The process is educational and empowering.
- In general affected people and communities are part of the monitoring and evaluation processes, when their voices are heard staff / outsiders facilitate.
- Attitudes and openness to change are crucial.

CHAPTER-2

OUTCOME AND IMPACT MONITORING

2.1. NEED FOR OUTCOME AND IMPACT MONITORING

Despite the proliferation and increasing sophistication of management tools and methodologies, monitoring the changes of development efforts continues to remain a complex and neglected task. The projects management focus is more in favor of activity and output monitoring, sometimes in terms of outcomes, rarely on impacts. Outcomes and impacts are difficult to assess for several reasons:

- They do not always happen as per plan and schedules.
- Some changes, especially those that are unintended (not planned) or unexpected, get overlooked unless they somehow discovered and documented.
- The extent to which activities alone are responsible for the changes is not always clear since there are also external factors influencing the changes
- Changes that are intangible or qualitative are often difficult to quantify or state in numbers and therefore, difficult to assess and document comprehensively.
- Since there is an inadequacy or lack of effective, timely and practically oriented methodology to assess and document changes.

On the other side, a frequent question that is raised in failed or weak projects is why were difficulties or weaknesses not identified during implementation and addressed in time through corrective actions. Additionally, funds for development assistance are decreasing and have to be allocated between multiple claims. Therefore, it is even more important to be able to assess the changes in the lives of people the project induced to make.

Catch words such as “empowerment of women”, “capacity development”, “development from grass root”, “sustainable resource use”, “and improved livelihood base” etc. are used in many project documents to describe the intended economic, environmental and socio-cultural changes of a planned projects. These words come often with high aspirations of the NGOs but are only to a limited extent assessed, mainly through a few case studies.

World-wide developing agencies are more questioned to justify how and to what extent the development expenditures or efforts benefited the rural poor and to what degree the project has affected development processes in areas like environment and the capacity development of the target groups institutions (E.g. self help groups, farmers associations, local movements, etc.). A major concern lies in the interest of the sustainability of the project induced changes and their efforts of poverty alleviation, especially with regard to empowerment and self-reliance. A main reason for this concern follows from decreasing funds for development assistance and development agencies are more accountable for the effective utilisation of funds. Nowadays there is an emerging trend in this direction and projects stress more on outcome and impact monitoring.

Outcome and impact orientation in projects asks for a "**CHANGE IN PERSPECTIVE"**

The key questions are:

- "What has changed for the beneficiaries?" (= Outcome) and "To what extent has the project contributed to the overall broader development change?" (= Impact)

And not

- What has been provided to the beneficiaries?" (= Input) and "What has been done?" (= Activities)

Inputs and activities versus outputs

When discussing development work, inputs arte the organizational, intellectual, human and physical resources contributed directly or indirectly by the stakeholders of a project. Activities are the coordination, technical assistance, and training and other project related tasks organized and executed by the project personnel. Therefore, managing a project is in essence managing this process of transforming organisational, intellectual, human and/or physical resources through activities that will generate outputs. Carrying out or completing a project does not in itself constitute a change….

2.2. OBJECTIVES OF OUTCOME AND IMPACT MONITORING

- Monitoring intended effects and possible negative side effects provides a basis for improved project steering towards the desired objectives and overall goal. It provides relevant information as basis for plan adjustments, corrections of measures

and redefinitions of strategies. It allows the identification of weak areas, deviations from targeted achievements and / or non-reaching the beneficiaries.

- Improve continuous interaction: More awareness is created among the team members of the implementing organisation and target groups about changes occurring as a result of project activities through joint reflection. (Inclusive promotion of relationships and better communication channel)
- Promoting learning processes: By helping project staff and beneficiaries to strengthen their general ability to solve problems and to develop practical skills, mainly in the field of observing (Phrasing indicators, measuring changes, observing unintended changes, documenting data) and analysing (Interpreting observations, identifying interrelations, drawing consequences for plan adjustments). Project staff will be enabled to monitor their approaches in a cost-effective and participatory way on an ongoing basis to provide relevant information as a basis for plan adjustments and redefinition of strategies.
- Promoting capacity development: Capacity development of staff members and members of the target group will lead to an increase in their knowledge, self-confidence and ability to act jointly, responsibly and autonomously towards improving their own and the communities' conditions in a sustainable way.

2.3.USEFULNESS OF OUTCOME AND IMPACT MONITORING

Development projects are initiated because they are expected to bring about changes in the lives of people and their environment.

People who initiate development action usually desire the changes that they believe will occur from their initiatives. However, desired changed do not occur immediately:

- Change is the result of a process.
- This process is made up of many contributing pieces of action.
- Each piece of action leading to another stage in the change process.
- Sometimes only "intermediate changes" get noticed (Happen immediately), they are more visible (Cause excitement).
- In doing so, the ultimately desired change can get missed or forgotten or it may be simply being assumed to have occurred because intermediate signs were perceived good.

Outcome and impact monitoring ensures that desired changes are not lost sight of. At an early stage in its use, it defines and separates the outcomes and impacts from the pure process monitoring.

To illustrate with an example:

- The project wants agricultural incomes to improve because farmers can then have a better standard of living.
- The project focus is on improving agricultural income, but the real interest is "improving living standards of small and marginal farmers"
- Agricultural technologies are introduced; they constitute inputs from the project. They can be regarded as "set of activities" (biological best control, erosion control, binding, tree planning, soil improvement measures, manure production, farm bonds, mulching, etc.)
- The standing crops look good, plants are healthy and grains are formed well. This is the output of various project activities (= introduction appropriate technologies), the farmers have acquired new skills and knowledge (= Output). An intermediate change is that the farmers have applied all the learning's and have practiced sustainable farming - which is an intermediate change (= Use of output).
- The harvest is better than ever before (= production and productivity improved) and the surplus produce has been sold in the market. The income for the farmer is double than in the ears before. The project objective has been achieved and it can feel satisfied that agricultural incomes have improved. The project and farmer is satisfied, this the intended short or medium term change (= Outcome).
- The family eats better and has a more diverse food basket. There is sufficient produce throughout the year without stress periods of less food. From the increased income the farming family has repaired the roof and built a toilet. In the long run, they have saved money for the children's education and purchased new items such as a cycle, gold as an asset and a cow as an investment. Does this represent a better standard of living?

2.4. INTENDED AND UNINTENDED CHANGES

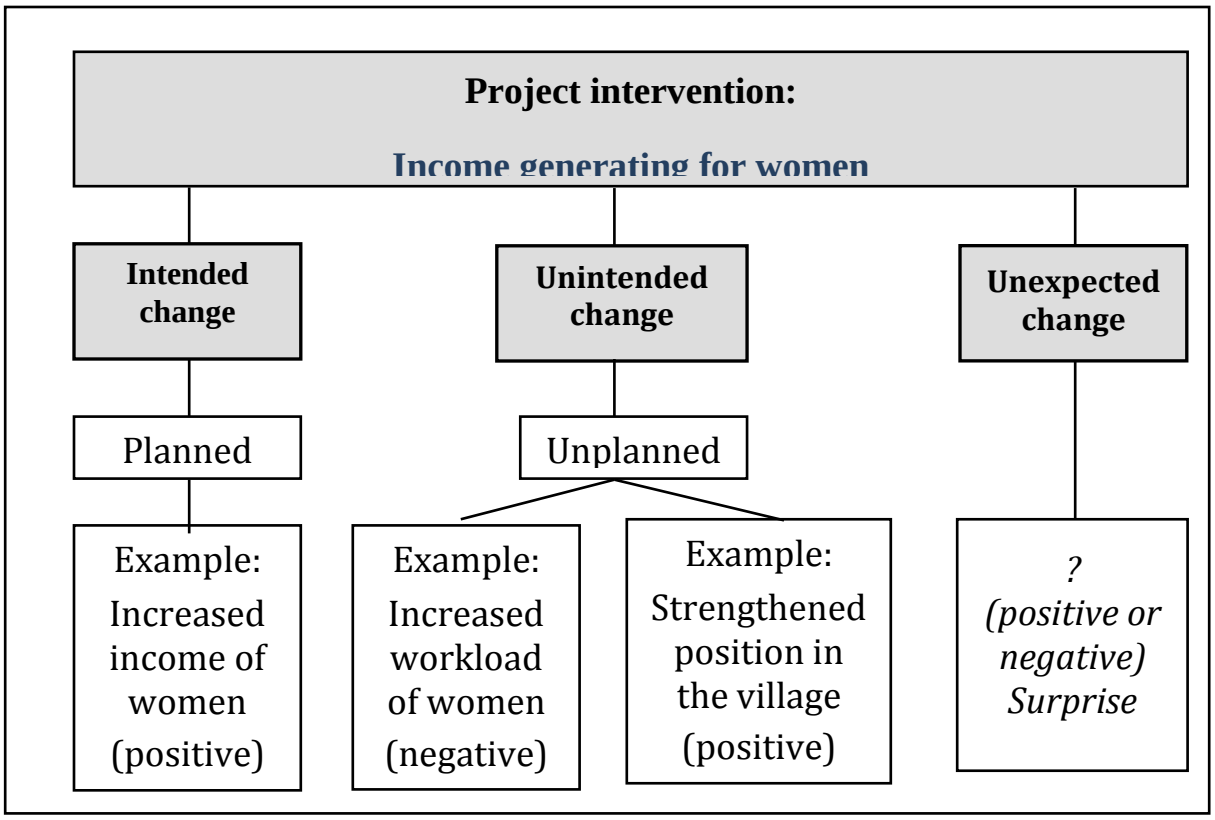
What changes did the project have in mind when it proposed certain interventions and took certain actions? What changes does the project expect or fear? Those changes then become central to monitor.

Changes of projects can be intended which simply means they are desired and planned for (= Positive); or they could be unintended which means that they were not specifically planned for though they could still be imagined or anticipated and could either be positive or negative. Certain interventions could also result in unexpected changes, neither intended nor imagined with the possibility of being either positive or negative but beyond the imagination of the actors involved (They come as a surprise or new trend).

For example:

- An income generation activity for women (Sheep / goat rearing) has unintentionally involved the children to take care of the animals, they sometimes do not go to school and take the sheep / goats for grazing when the mother attends to other work.
- The extra income generated by women was taken away by men folk and spent on liquor and other expenses (Radio, bike) but not on the needs of women.
- The extra time women spent in self help groups and other project activates such as training / meetings has increased their work burden and resulted in some conflict at home due to negligence of care taking of elderly or parents in law.
- Families build small fences for chicken rearing and used the distributed mosquito nets as fence material. The bed nets were intended as a measure for malaria control.
- Due to lack of space in a low-income area, the urban kitchen garden has taken away the small patch of land, which was initially planned for the toilet construction. The kitchen garden promoted by the project was given priority over the toilet.
- The tree plantation on common land has reduced the grazing land and created conflicts in the community.
- The giveaways / freebies from the government to the communities as a vote catching exercise has reduced the self help potential of the community, they expect free delivery from the project and they are hesitant to contribute in case and kind to the project.

To illustrate with an example: Income generation activities for women



In planning documents, for instance…

- Unplanned outcomes and impacts and likely negative side effects are rarely, if ever, incorporated into the planning document.
- The nature of expectations often becomes more clear (more realistic) after the implementation has begun, rather than at the time of planning. This does not get reflected.
- Some people (particularly field staff or even more so the target group) may have different expectations from the same project but often do not get a chance to articulate them and see that these expectations are recorded.

A good monitoring system gives space to all actors to discuss their expectations (= what they want out of the project) as well as their fears (= unintended negative consequences). Based on these discussions, they can make a choice of what changes they would like to monitor. This is not just a one-time exercise; the scope to discuss can be included as a periodic event.

CHAPTER-3

EFFECT CHAIN / RESULT CHAIN

Project monitoring in the past often focused on and was motivated by the level of activities and outputs were achieved by a project (E.g. the number of wells built or trainings conducted to strengthen women's credit and saving groups). Today funders and implementing organisations place greater emphasis on monitoring the use of these outputsby the beneficiaries (Use of water, use of acquired information / knowledge / skills) and the outcomes (= benefits, e.g. reduction of illnesses, improvement of income, leadership skills) for the target groups. A project may achieve all planned outputs without these outputs actually being used by the target groups (Or applied in practice) or having a positive outcome / impact on the lives of the beneficiaries.

Why is it important to focus on monitoring the changes in a project?
Although many development projects are successfully, the organisations know less about the effects and changes of their work and only a few attempts have been made to continuously monitor the economic, social and cultural changes. Monitoring outcomes and impacts means not only observing changes in the physical conditions but also in the livelihoods and social conditions. Practitioners face a lack of user-friendly and reliable tools and suitable guidelines and on the other hand, projects are asked to prove their success and demonstrate their changes.
Outcome is a short / medium term change. Impact is a long term change

The achievements of project outcomes and impacts depend also on the activities of the beneficiaries, other stakeholders involved in the project and external factors / trends. However, the project-implementing agency is responsible for the correctness of the impact hypothesis put forward at the time of the planning process (See module II on planning)

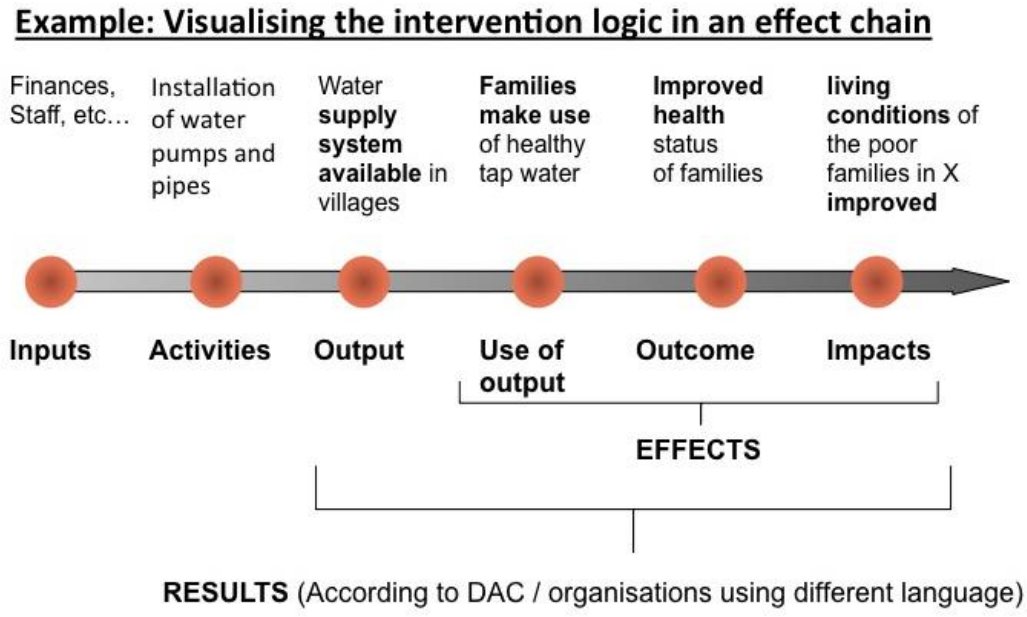
As per DAC, the term "results" refers both to project outputs and desired outcomes and impacts (as defined,for example, by the Millennium Development Goals / MDGs).By outcome and impact orientation (DAC: "Managing for development results"understands that country and regional concepts, as well as country programmes and individual projects

are designed to produce outcomes and impacts. This means that on all levels, positive outcomes / impacts are aimed at and outcomes / impacts generally (positive, negative, intended, unintended) must be observed, documented and interpreted. The findings are used to monitor on-going projects, to support institutional knowledge management, and they should be made available to all members of staff and partners.

Participatory outcome and impact orientation is characterised by its target-group proximity and orientation. The planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects therefore focus on the level of the project objectives, in other words, on the outcome for the target group (= benefit or change in the lives of the beneficiaries).

Impact hypotheses are assumptions about causal relationships between the implementation of an intervention and the occurrence of its outcome and/or impact. "If clean drinking water is provided, child mortality will decrease" is one example of an impact hypothesis. Another example is: "If women learn about their rights, they can demand their entitlements." The term impact hypothesis also describes assumptions about causal relationships between the different levels of an effect chain. An effect chain describes the logical connection between inputs, activities, outputs, use of outputs and the resulting outcomes and impacts. The logical connection between the individual links in an effect chain reveals the under lying impact hypothesis.

Figure: Effect Chain Logic



Source: Adapted from Welthungerhilfe, Outcome and impact orientation guidelines 1

Examples of an effect chain:

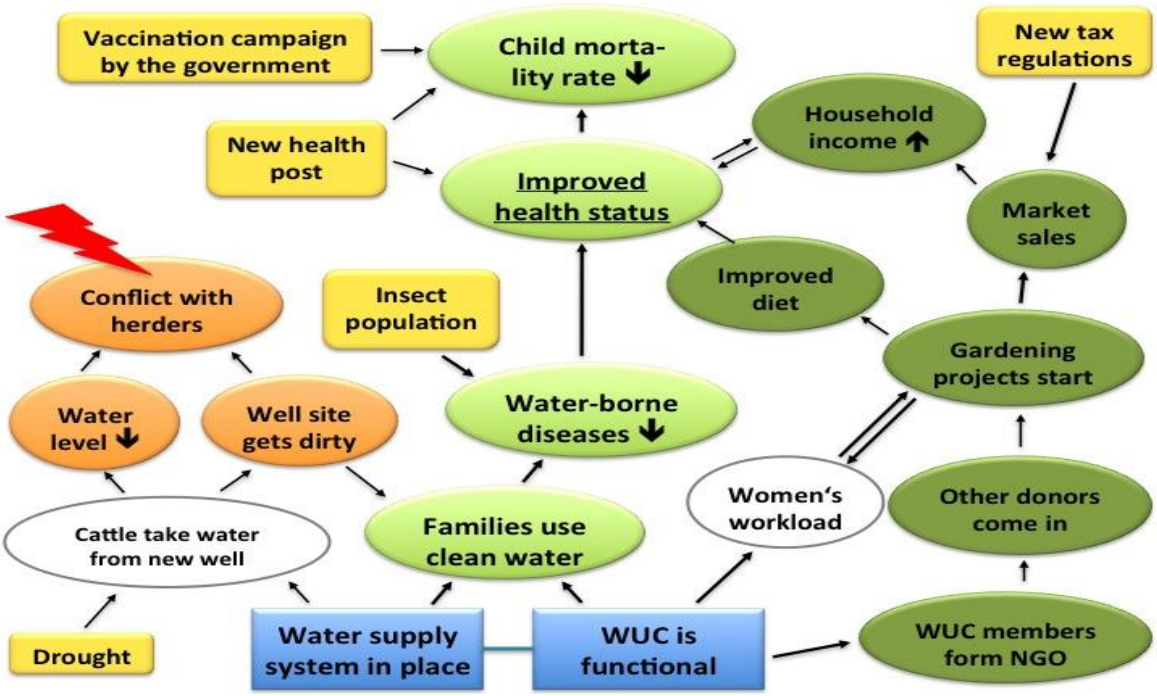
"If wells are built and clean drinking water is provided, the families will use this water to prepare food and as drinking water, illnesses will decrease, the costs of medication and doctors' visits will be reduced, child mortality will decrease and the living conditions of the population will generally improve."

"If women are trained about their rights and learn how to negotiate and speak in the village assembly / village council, they will demand their entitlements and negotiate with the village council, they the village council passes a resolution and give equal wages to men/women, the women get equal wages and earn more, their standing and respect has increased and the status of women in the village has improved."

An overview with examples of various effects chains is given in Annex 1

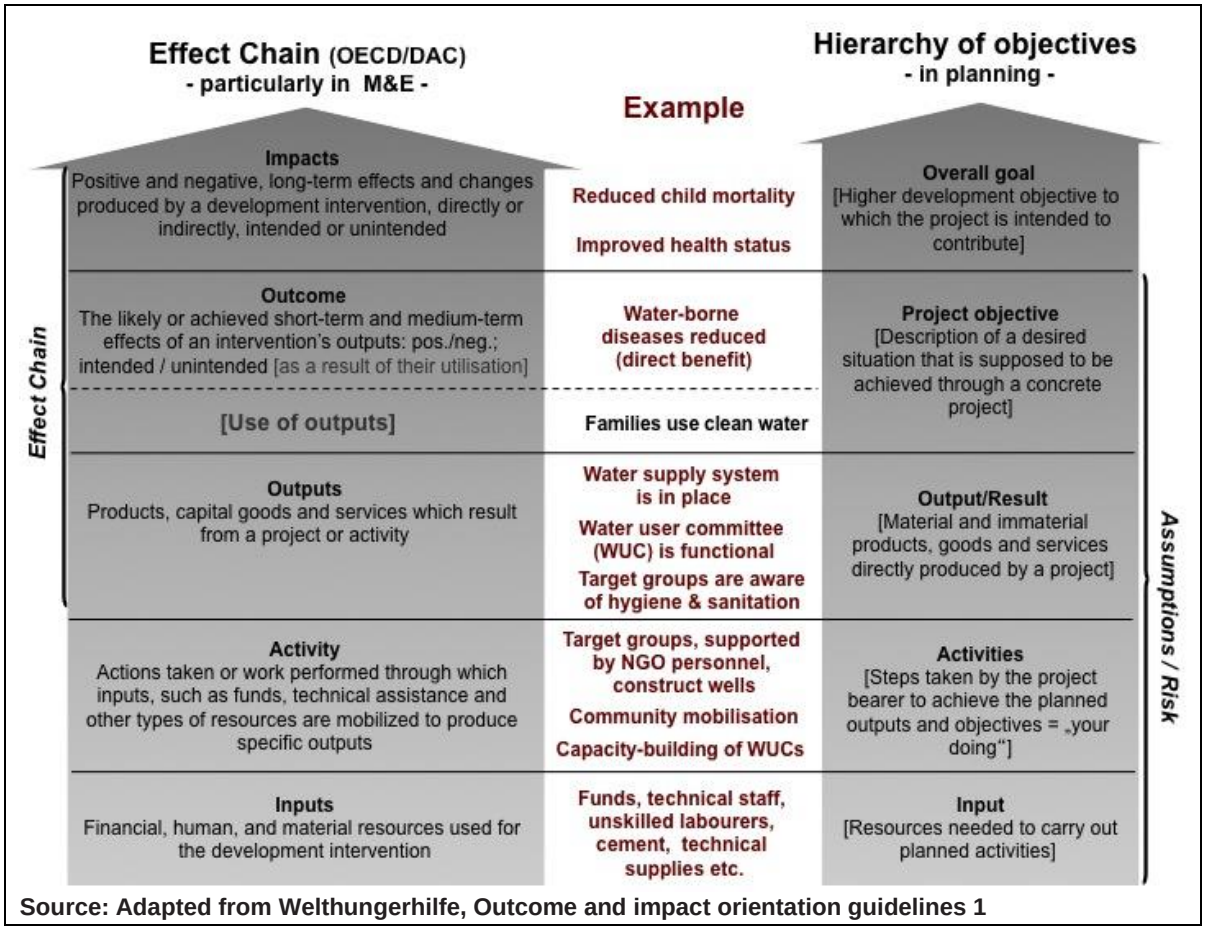
In reality, effect chains are complex and consist of numerous lateral connections and cross links so that the term impact structures or **impact map** (complex cause-effect relationships) could also beused.

Figure: Impact Map



The effect chains of development projects focus on the levels above outputs and, in particular, on outcomes. In the project planning logic, this level corresponds to the project objective (= desired change the project intends to make). Despite their similarity, effect chain logic and project planning logicare different in structure. Project planning logic has its origins in the planning of a project and reveals how individual inputs and activities help achieve a project or programme objective by providing outputs. Effect chain logic, on the other hand, has its origins in monitoringand evaluation. Although it is very similar to project planning logic, it not only takes into account planned, i.e. positive and intended outcomes and impacts, but also unintended outcomes / impacts. To avoid confusion, the terms used in effect chain logic and project planning logic are presented in an overview

Terminology of effect chain logic and project planning logic (based on DAC terminology)



Source: Adapted from Welthungerhilfe, Outcome and impact orientation guidelines 1

Closely linked to the concept of effect chains are so-called outcome and impact-oriented indicators. These are defined in order to observe the desired outcomes and impacts. If, for

example, a project aims to reduce the spread of water-induced diseases and therefore the costs of medication in a project region, the project has to consider how this can be ensured by a well-building project. Preparation of outcome and impact-oriented indicators should therefore concentrate on the project objective level. It is important that partners or target groups and other actors who contribute towards the success of the project are involved in preparing outcome and impact-oriented indicators. They have to agree on the desired outcomes and impacts of the project. They should also be involved in deciding whether these outcomes and impacts have actually been achieved.

Outcome and impact monitoring (DAC: "Results oriented monitoring") is applied systematically and regularly throughout the course of the project in order to observe and document short, medium and long-term changes on the project objective level. The purpose of outcome and impact monitoring is to monitor projects and support the learning process of all those concerned. In this way, it is possible to determine early on whether the set objectives are really achieved by the project.

Outcome and impact-oriented indicators make it possible to monitor areas of an effect chain whose outcomes and impacts can be clearly expected. Negative outcomes and impacts, i.e. those which are not planned (= unintended – either positive or negative), are not automatically detected by the outcome and impact-oriented indicators. To achieve this, the project needs to observe these trends. While an indicator can be compared with a "signal", which casts light on avery limited area as defined in the formulation of the indicator, the possible negative side effects should be observed as negative trends or "warning signals". In contrast to the indicators, the "warnings" cannot be determined very precisely but should be part of the monitoring. Any possible (negative or positive) development in the environment of the project should be part of the monitoring. Outcome and impact indicators provide funders and implementing agencies with important monitoring data for management decisions affecting the steering of a project and the organisation as a whole. More about indicators is given below in chapter 5.

Use of output in the effect chain: What is the difference between "output" and "use of output"?

Output - The primary stakeholders are:

- Able to….
- Aware of…
- Motivated to…

Use of output: The primary stakeholders make use of the outputs:

- Putting into practice the learning's…
- Applying the knowledge they gained…
- Changing their behavior…

The project management controls and monitors the provision of the project inputs, activities and outputs. However, it may also depend on the participation and cooperation of the beneficiaries the outputs are addressed to (= the primary stakeholders) and others involved, e.g. government health workers, teachers or media persons.

The project beneficiaries are responsible for using the outputs, the project management intends to generate outputs, outcomes and impacts in the sense of the project objective and its planning. However, reaching the outcomes is a cooperative process. It has to be shared with the beneficiaries and therefore also depends on them or external factors. If outputs are used and outcomes and impacts are achieved, this is usually a shared success by the NGO and the beneficiaries. The outcomes are therefore not in control but in the responsibility of the project management.

CHAPTER-4

ATTRIBUTION GAP AND TIME HORIZON

Attribution means the extent to which changes can be assumed to have occurred because of the project's actions. Change may be caused not only by the actions of one who desires it; it may also be influenced by other actions of other forces in the projects environment. Some of them may be helpful in achieving the desired changes, while some of them may hinder its occurrence. The project management usually cannot control these external influences. Nevertheless, they have to be taken into account in estimating the influence of a project.

As more factors come into play and projects do operate in complex sets of factors, the problems of attribution also increase. Similarly, as a project moves from monitoring short-term to medium term effects (= outcomes) to long-term impacts, the attribution of effects (= impacts) to causes (project activities) becomes increasingly more difficult and complex.

Effects also differ according to the time of their occurrence. An income generation intervention can result quickly in an increase in workload for the people involved. Sometimes later it can bring in an increase of income (Short-term outcome) since it takes some time to invest money, produce the products and a find a market for it. A few years of such sustained increase in income can result in people becoming more confident and achieving better social status (Long term change). The bigger the time lag between project activities and the effects the more they are subject to other external influences. As in the case of aggregation levels, the timing also influences attribution difficulties – with attribution gaps.

To summarise, there are two major challenges:

- The highly aggregated level on which many effects occur (= **Attribution gap**).
- The time lag between project measures and the perception of effects (= **Time horizon**).

The influence of a project on the occurrence of effects is limited:

Example 1:

- The achievement of the project use of output (utilisation of outputs) cannot be fully guaranteed or controlled by the project management since it needs also behavioural changes of the target group.
- Tailoring skills by women requires not only the finishing of a training course but also their **willingness** (and possibility) to carry out the learned skill for at least a few years.
- Increased income and eventually a higher living standard depend not only on skills learned in an income-generating project but also on **other factors (existence of a market for the products, availability of credit for investment and willingness to take risk).**
- **Did the income increase because of the training and the credit provided by the project?** To what extent have they improved because of the presence of a new entrepreneur who has started a small factory in the neighbourhood where the husband / elder son found employment.
- If a highly aggregated condition like an 'improved living standard' of the target group can be observed in the project area, the extent to which the project measures have contributed to this is very difficult to assess.

If no improvements can be observed, it still remains unclear whether the project measures have been for nothing or whether the situation would have been worse without the project.

DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS... AND INCORRECTLY ATTRIBUTE CHANGE ONLY TO YOUR INTERVENTION.

Example 2:

- The project desires to reduce the new infection rate of HIV-Aids cases through an improved HIV-AIDS awareness campaign in its area of operation. It uses a well-planned multimedia approach of street plays, funky poster campaigns, discussion groups among adolescents, training courses for high risk groups and collaborate with the community resource centre.
- Around the same time, the government introduces a frequently re-played radio and television spots on the same subject.
- To what extent can a decreased HIV-AIDS rate and increased awareness on HIV-AIDS be attributed to the projects' actions? To what extent can they be attributed to the government's action?

Possibility to minimise the attribution gap

- Select lower level effects or short-term outcomes rather than highly aggregated impacts.
- Take a target group from one limited geographical area where conditions are common and they are exposed to very similar outside factors (climate, prices, services, regulations etc.).
- It is possible to judge at least approximately by asking other project actors as well as knowledgeable outsiders about their subjective assessment of the extent to which project measures influence effects selected for analysis.
- In integrated rural development projects it is more difficult to trace back observed changes to certain activities. Such projects tackle development problems by bundles of interconnected measures and carry out multi-sectoral interventions.

CHAPTER-5

INDICATORS

5.1. QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE INDICATORS

What is an indicator? Different definitions of an Indicator exist:

- An indicator delivers a detailed description of a projects output, use of output, outcome or impact in order to assess it.
- An indicator is a fact which can either be **measured** or **described** and which is closely related to the output, use of output, outcome or impact.
- An indicator provides a standard against which to measure a progress.
- An indicator is something against which to measure or assess a change.
- In development projects, indicators are used as tools to tell us "how we are doing".
- Indicators are used to provide benchmarks for demonstrating the achievements of a project.
- Indicators are signs, pointers or markers that measure one aspect of a project and show how close a project is on its desired path towards changes.
- **Measurable indicators** are useful to make information comparable for analysis = quantitative indicators.
- Indicators can also be **narrative descriptions** (using criteria) = qualitative criteria.

5.2. HOW TO FORMULATE A GOOD INDICATOR?

Phrase an indicator that answers the following questions: Start asking: "Which are the signs we can observe when we monitor a change? How do we recognise that the change has happened? For example the youth have become strong leaders in the village. What are the signs? How do you recognise that they are strong leaders?

Answer could be: They have helped to solve a social conflict or they have supported smaller children with tuitions and motived young boys and girls to go for higher education.

What exactly should be measured or observed? An indicator should have five important elements:

1. What is the subject of change / parameter (Youth leadership, women's negotiation in a village council, parliamentarians sensitised on policy)

2. Who is the target group or about which group of people we want to collect information (Farmers, foresters, women, landless, media, etc.)?
3. Which area/region is meant (Village, forest area, watershed area, river bank, slum, etc.)?
4. What is the direction of observable or measurable change to be achieved (low / high; increase / decrease; remains constantly low / high, etc.)? The value of an indicator changes from baseline level (Start of a project) to a new value after its activities have made a change.
5. At what moment/when will be measure or collect the data? What is the value of the measurement (Percentages to be collected every year, numbers to be taken every 6 month)?

5.3. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR A GOOD INDICATOR

The indicator has to be independent which means that it must not just summarise the activities or inputs that should lead to the effect.

The indicator has to be meaningful which means it must be related as closely as possible to the output, use of output, outcome or impact.

The indicator has to provide accurate, reliable and valid data. On the other hand, it should permit an efficient data collection with regard to use of time and money.

It is important that a consensus is reached within the project team on the selection of indicators so that everyone is monitoring and evaluation the same aspect by the same standard. This requires in-depth discussion with all members of a team to agree on how to measure or assess an aspect. For example, if the team observes the "participation of the community in the village assembly" it is important to have a set of criteria so that staff uses the same criteria and applies the same way of rating (= poor, moderate, satisfactory, very good, etc).

Example of stating an indicator from a women self help group

…which aspect/parameter?	The percentage of women who decided that their girl child should attend school
…for which subject of	All women who are members of the village self help group

change?	set up and strengthened by the project
…in which region?	In State KAR, District CH, Taluk HOL
…at what moment?	…which value?
December 2014	25 % before the project start (baseline)
December 2015	32 %
December 2016	48 %
December 2017	70 % at the end of the project (actual at the end)

The full formulation of the indicator is: The %age of women who have sent their girl child to school, out of all women that have participated in the village self help group, in the Dirstict CH, Taluk HOL, increases from 25 % in 2014 to 75 % in 2017 (Plan / targeted achievement). It is advisable to include the "starting value" and the "target value" in the indicator formulation.

Quantitative and qualitative indicators

Quantitative indicators measure concrete or tangible aspects

- Number of…
- Frequency of…
- Ratio (%) of…

Qualitative indicators assess judgements or perceptions

- Quality of…
- Level of…
- Satisfaction with…

There are four ways of measuring or describing values of indicators. It is possible to choose different forms of measurement or descriptions for one indicator.

1. Measuring / counting: Give exact numbers; e.g. prices of goods, quantity of trees, rice yield, weight of new born babies, enrolment of children, drop out rate, girl child school attendance, change in production (kg) or yields (kg/ha) or sales (Rs), number of trainees in the course, number of farmers using drip irrigation.

2. Scaling / rating / scoring: Is recommended where there is no material change. A scale gives a gradual description, rating gives categories and scores gives marks / points; e.g.:

Quality of life (Life line or trend analysis)

Degree of satisfaction: How useful was the skill development course you attended? Quality can be scaled from very good / good / average / bad / very bad

Perception: How strong is your self-help group, you can give 0 to max 20 scores.

3. Classifying: Is made where measuring does not make sense or where it is difficult. Informs us on non-gradual categories; e.g.

Is credit available: Yes / No

Who takes the decision on the purpose of a loan: Man / Woman / Jointly

Where does the pregnant woman deliver the baby: At home / in hospital

Social groups: Poverty status or by caste

Type of house: Thatched or brick / cement

4. Describing qualitatively: Is recommended where quantitative indicators do not make much sense or cannot be used. Indicator can have defined criteria or are answers to explorative questions, stories and experiences.

How is a micro business running (Village enterprise / shop)?

Leadership, purchases, sales, communication with customer, stock register, orders taken, quality of products, special offers

How is the youth club functioning? They take up social issues among youth and debate instead of applying violence, they support the village in its development, they tutor younger children / dropouts from school, they become change makers and role models in the village for peaceful conflict resolution.

How women have come together and helped each other in setting up a social enterprise.

There are different formulas to check the quality of an indicator: SMART and SPICED

The indicators should be S M A R T - an acronym that stands for:

- **S = Specific** = Clearly specified, should focus on a single aspect or attribute of a project (Validity).

- **M = Measurable** = Can it be quantified, measured or described? The collection of data always leads to the same result, irrespective of who makes the observation (Reliability)
- **A = Acceptable** = The data collection is feasible and the respondents do not feel that their feelings or privacy, religious beliefs are impaired or hurt.
- **R = Realistic** = Can it be achieved with the available resources? Do the costs for the data collection stay in budget?
- **T = Timely** = In what time period will it be measured? Indicator needs to be related to a time moment, it reacts flexibly to changes of the monitored aspect / attribute.

(Note: Different practitioners have come up with different definitions of the five letters. For example "acceptable" could be also seen as attributable = are the changes observed with the indicator meaningful and related as closely as possible to the use of output, outcome and impact?)

The indicators should be S P I C E D - an acronym that stands for:

- **S = Subjective** = The informants have a specific position or individual experiences which allow them to form unique opinions and insights that are very valuable for data collection.
- **P = Participatory** = Indicators should be developed together with the beneficiaries or stakeholders who can judge them the best. The primary stakeholders of the projects have to be included in the indicator formulation, also the staff and other stakeholders.
- **I = Interpreted and communicable** = Locally defined indicators are important but not always self-explanatory for other stakeholders. Therefore, they need to be interpreted and communicated.
- **C = Crosschecked and compared** = The validity of the assessment has to be verified by comparing different indicators and developments and by including different informants, methods and researchers (= triangulation).
- **E = Empowering** = The process of defining and appraising indicators should be empowering and it should allow the groups and individuals to reflect the caning

situation critically. Therefore, it is not sufficient to appraise only indicators for the level of activities and outputs.

- **D = Diverse and disaggregated** = The choice of different indicators for a diversity of groups should be well-considered, especially when it comes to distinguish the situation of men and women. The information can be assessed in a way that documents the differences over a considerable period of time.

(Note: The SPICED criteria are very much adopted to the participatory approaches of NGOs, it make sense to use them as additional quality criteria and not only as an alternative to SMART criteria.)

Illustration with three examples of indicators for output, use of output and outcome

1. The project makes a claim about its output: The rice yield has doubled after the introduction of new agricultural technology. How can this claim be supported with actual proof?
    a. Comparison of rice yield (quintal / acre) before and after the technology was introduced (Under comparable conditions).
    b. Comparison of yield (quintal / acre) of users and non-users of the technology (Under comparable conditions)

Notes: In this case the claim relatively easy to verify since the indicator requires hard data that is quantifiable and measurable.

2. The project makes a claim about its use of output: The skill training offered by the project is better than the courses by Government institutes since trainees find employment in the job market easily (= putting their learning's into practice).
    a. The institute receives more applications per year than the Government.
    b. Families of trainees are willing to pay more fees.
    c. Potential employers are in touch with the institute to get graduating students on campus recruitment.
    d. Students from projects get jobs quickly after graduation.

Notes: Are these indicators good and convincing measure of the project claim? Here again the indicators are quantifiable.

3. The project makes a claim about its outcome: The self-help groups are very effective because the women members are more confident and more empowered than non-members. How can this claim be taken to be correct?
    a. More women sending their girl-child to school.
    b. More women standing for elections in local bodies (Village council).
    c. More women are taking decisions in their families on the purpose of loans.
    d. More women initiating village development programmes on their own.
    e. More women come together and solve social related problems in the villages.

Notes: What would be the indicator of "more self-confidence" as compared to "less self confidence" or "more empowered" to "less empowered"? What is a suitable indicator? If the project develops indicators, would they be convincing enough? Even if the indicators are convincing and acceptable to all parties would it be possible to collect data that can substantiate them?

5.4. FREQUENCY OF MONITORING

When and how often an indicator has to be monitored depends on the followingcircumstances:

- When or how often are project decisions taken (Internally) for which the latest status of the indicator has to be known? (E.g. every 6 to 12 months; but this mayalso be much more frequently, for example in the case of health indicators such as access to pre/postnatal care, immunisation, school attendance, enrolment and dropout rates)
- What is the speed of occurrence of the changes? For example: "Increased workload of women" can be seen as a short-term negative change since a higher amount of work is a direct result of taking up additional activities. The indicator for this should be assessed after establishing a micro business. An "increased income" will be a medium term change and might be assessed sometime after taking up a business or getting employment. Effects on the power of people such as "empowerment of women" are likely to occur only in the long run since social processes are usually slow and does not need to be monitored more than once per year or every two years.

The project needs to make a realistic assessment of how the indicators will develop between the beginning and the end of the project:

- In a linear manner: The same changes in the same intervals.
- Progressively: Given the same intervals, there will initially be small changes, but they will become bigger later on.
- Regressively: Given the same intervals there will initially be bigger changes, but they will become smaller later on.
- Irregularly: Either because, owing to external influence, changes could progress in this way.

- How often do internal supervisory committees or external project members (as wellas the public) have to be informed about the status of the indicator?
- How often and when does the nature of the parameter generally allow it to be measured? (E.g. harvest yields, seasonal data)
- What effort does research and reporting require?
- The time at which each individual indicator that the project has chosen for monitoring should be set latest at the beginning of the project if not before at the planning stage.

Monitoring plan

It is recommended to make a **monitoring plan** for the team to be used as working document with an overview. A monitoring plan is a tool used to plan and manage the collection of data and sometimes include plans for data analysis, reporting and use.

At minimum a monitoring plan should include:

- A detailed definition of each indicator.
- The source, method, frequency and schedule of data collection the team or individual responsible for ensuring data are available on time.

An example of a monitoring plan is given in the Annex 2.

CHAPTER-6

GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING

6.1. IMPORTANCE OF GENDER SENSITIVE INDICATORS

Programme and project interventions have not always led to sustained and sustainable development. Benefits and costs that accrue from an intervention are also not always disaggregated by sex and socio-economic class; consequently, it becomes difficult to understand the effects of those interventions on different target groups. A monitoring process that has gender-sensitive indicators and involves men and women not as informants but as participants will result in a better understanding of who in the community has benefited, who bears the costs and what motivates different groups to act. Furthermore, a monitoring process that involves men and women ensures that monitoring becomes a self-management tool rather than a policing instrument, thus leading to collective action.

If data collection is not disaggregated by sex, it will be difficult to assess the positive or negative effects and changes of the programme or project on women and men, young and old and rich and poor. For example, if water provision in an urban slum has lessened the burden of water fetching for women and girls, this could free more girls to go to school. This positive result cannot be assessed without sex-disaggregated data collection, which can assist in measuring the scope of the change, i.e., the increased enrolment and retention of girls in school. If water provision services have freed poor women's time to engage in income generating activities, without sex-disaggregated data, the positive outcome will lack empirical evidence and will remain anecdotal.

Additionally, the following issues cannot be measured or monitored without gender-sensitive indicators:

- The impact/effectiveness of activities targeted to address women's or men's practical gender needs i.e., new skills, knowledge resources, opportunities or services in the context of their existing gender roles.
- The impact/effectiveness of activities designed to increase gender equality of opportunity, influence or benefit e.g., targeted actions to increase women's contribution to decision-making; opening up new opportunities for women/men in non-traditional skill areas.

- The impact/effectiveness of activities designed to develop gender awareness and skills amongst policy-making, management and implementation staff.
- The impact/effectiveness of activities to promote greater gender equality within the staffing and organisational culture of development organisations e.g., the impact of affirmative action policies.

6.2.LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCES - NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (NRM) PROJECTS

a. Gender equality is internationally recognised as both a basic goal of development and fundamental to sustainable growth. Many agencies are strongly committed to the full and equal involvement of all people, regardless of sex in the sustainable development of their communities and societies, but gender equality is often treated superficially or not addressed at all in project planning and monitoring.

b. The effects and changes of NRM projects (Land, water, forest, community resources) are often not linked to women's unequal access and control over productive resources. They are also not linked to women's roles and responsibilities (Subsistence, household, productive work), work load, income and livelihood options. Often these connections are not clearly understood due to class and gender differences in dependence on natural resources for sustenance, livelihoods and food security.

c. The institutions created for community-based management of natural resources do not generally address the problems of gender inequities. The complexity and heterogeneity of the term 'community' and divergent interests and conflicts based on class, caste, ethnicity and gender needs to be considered in monitoring.

d. Community is not a harmonious entity. Conceptualisation of community as an undifferentiated social system results in exclusion of women from the most marginalised group.

e. NRM projects are often aimed at communities, households and farmers. It is assumed that 'communities' and 'households' would automatically include women; hence most NRM projects target households and men as their primary beneficiary.

f. The term 'farmers' often exclude women. In most of the organisations the term 'farmer' often excludes female farmers, as most of them do not own land.

g. Gender as an '*add on*' in NRM. Gender is missed in planning and not seen as an integral part of NRM: The components on women are 'added on' to what is essentially perceived as a NRM project aimed at farmer's households. Women are 'only' considered primary 'agencies' of self-help groups (SHGs) / women societies, in NRM activities women are seen through the lens of households rather than as individuals.

h. One-off opportunities are often provided to women to undertake agricultural activities like kitchen garden, herbal garden, medicinal plants promotion, however in the main agricultural interventions women are not the main target group. Women are excluded from technology adaptation and dissemination. The term "technology" is mainly associated with men.

i. Undifferentiated category of 'women' can exclude the most marginalised women. Just like the term 'community', similarly the use of the category 'women' in an undifferentiated manner, can also exclude the most marginalised among them in terms of access to resources and benefits. Women within the household are not benefited equally; the most marginalized women within the family are widows, single women, girl child, and daughter in law, etc.

j. Gender in Self Help Groups (SHGs): These groups are seen as vehicles of women's empowerment. It is important to monitor gender sensitive outcomes and impacts of SHGs, especially engaging in issues related to gender and micro-credit and the assumption that is helps in reduction of poverty and strengthens women's voices in decision making processes within and outside the household. SHG's have often failed to emerge as collective forum for women's struggle against inequities, injustices and violence. SHG's cannot only be the vehicles for disbursements of loans to women. Larger social and economic outcomes and impacts of these groups need to be monitored.

6.3. PUTTING GENDER INTO CONTEXT

To monitor change, some practical advice and food for thought is given below:

a. A gendered perspective at all stages of the project cycle is needed: Pre-planning, planning, implementation, participatory monitoring and evaluation inclusive outcome and impact orientation.

b. Give more focus on gender outcome and impact analysis (intended & unintended changes) during project cycle. Gender sensitive outcomes impacts to be monitored and assessed at all stages of the project cycle.

c. Gender disaggregated data and analysis should be undertaken: It becomes difficult to understand the effects of those interventions on different groups. Monitoring outcomes and impacts that have gender-sensitive indicators and involves men and women not as informants but as participants will result in a better understanding of who in the community has benefited and what motivated different groups to act.

d. This includes also putting in place appropriate data collection and analysis methods to measure and assess project outcomes and impacts for women and men (data information management).

e. To effectively assess specific outcomes and impacts on women and their access to resources accruing through project intervention, intra-household level analysis must be undertaken. Benefits to households do not necessarily translate into benefits to the women therein.

f. Need to view women as a heterogeneous group: It is important to recognise social and economic differentiation among women. Caste and class differences that exist in society also operate within women's groups. Interventions should aim to bring a prominent change in the existing power relations.

g. Women need to be pro-actively involved in the monitoring and analysis (In a participatory way, most important in drawing conclusions in joint reflection). On the household level, the analysis needs to be carried out along gender issues. NGO staff and / or external experts mostly assess outcomes and impacts. Women should assess and reflect on changes themselves and make use of this reflection. The use of participatory methods can help to ensure their continued involvement.

h. Creating the right conditions to assess gender changes: Finding appropriate consultants with the capacity to integrate gender equality concerns into findings, conclusions and recommendations. Staff members at the organisations needs to have sufficient gender expertise and / or a gender specialist is included in the team.

Practical steps of a gender analysis is given in module II on planning, Annex 1.

6.4. SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

Beside gender differentiation, it is often necessary to also differentiate the data that the indicator provides by the primary stakeholders or regions. It is interesting to differentiate the "subject of change", which means differentiate the primary stakeholders or compare them to other groups in society. The subject of change can e grouped according to:

- Gender
- Wealth, poverty criteria
- Social aspects (Culture, ethnic, profession, age)
- Others such as participation in the project activities

CHAPTER-7

BASELINE DATA

A project cannot be planned unless it has analysed the situation and have identified problems and challenges to be solved, in combination with the existing potentials and strength (*See Module II: Planning*). This analysis gives the project information and ideas for the action to be taken, it may then be formalised in a project plan or proposal. This initial analysis lays the ground for monitoring. It is crucial to carefully investigate the situation at the start of a project and to measure or to describe as precisely as possible all aspects that need to be changed during the course of the project. In the course of the project implementation, the project can then control to what extent the situation of the stakeholders or of the environment is changing.

A base line study is sometimes difficult to do before a funder approves a project. It is often a time consuming and intense process. It is recommended to use a smaller sample and use earlier experiences and general knowledge. The final selection of the beneficiaries takes may not be completed at the time of approval and measuring the baseline may also require some additional expertise which is often only available once the staff is hired. Therefore, it might be more practical to carry out a detailed baseline once the project has started. This may allow more detailed and defined data collection, documentation and analysis. At an early stage of project implementation it is highly useful to establish the baseline and based on its results, correct the indicators and its targeted achievements that were once defined during planning.

The primary beneficiaries should be involved in the data collection and analysis as early as possible, for instance as it is done with the Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) approach. Moreover, the field staff can integrate continuous situational analysis into the daily work with the beneficiaries combined with a regular reflection on how the situation is at the start of the project. Thus, the establishment of baseline can in practice be combined with even the micro planning of the activities for the first year.

Baseline answers the basic question: What is the starting point or what is the situation at the start?

- The initial situation of the context and the specific problem the project wants to address is often backed up with statistical data on macro level (e.g. HDI, debt) or micro-level (Usually done through household surveys or participatory appraisals).
- Baselines for the indicators are often forgotten component within design, monitoring and evaluation, but they are key to proving that change has truly taken place.
- A baseline of each indicator simply defines the initial situation for the set of indicators that will be used to report on the level of achievement of the outcomes expressed in the project plan.

Example 1: Advocacy

Outcome	Indicators	Baselines	Target value
Increased support from the people living with HIV/Aids	1. Increased funding from donations for campaigns	In 2015: Euro 200.000	By 2018 an increase of 50%
	2. Number of people signing the upcoming petition	0 (No petition signed yet at the start of project)	By 2018 the petition will be signed by at least 150.000 citizen

Example 2: Gender equality

Outcome	Indicators	Baselines	Target value
Women experience more equality	1. Percentage of women receive equal wages in comparison to men	In 2015: 10 % of women in 25 villages receive equal wages	By 2018 an increase from 10 to 25 %
	2. Percentage of women elected for village council	In 2015: On average 10 % of women are member of in 25 village councils	By 2018 all 25 village councils will have 33 % women members

Example 3: Employment of youth

Outcome	Indicators	Baselines	Target value
Disadvantaged youth have found meaningful employment and earn increased incomes	1. Percentage of young men / women appreciate the skill development course as useful and found employment after max 3 month course completion	In 2015: 80 % of men / women are underemployed or have no employment	By 2018, 80 % of trainees completing the skill course are employed 3 month after the course and relate this to the learning's in the course
	2. Percentage of	In 2015: On	By 2018, 80 % of the

	young men / women report increased income	average men / women earn 5,000 Rs per month	employed youth earn between 10,000 Rs and 15,0000 Rs (depending on the skill/job)

One way to make meaningful comparison in the absence of baseline data is by using control groups. Control groups are groups of people, businesses, families or other constituencies which have not had input from the project or organisation but are, in most other ways, very similar to the groups with whom you are working. For example: The project is working with parents to encourage them to prioritise the education of the children, in particular the girl child. The project wants to know the difference it has made after it focused on quality education being received by those children. If there is no baseline on the quality of education prior to the intervention, the project can set up a control group. Groups of children in the same geographical area from families similar the ones with whom the project have been working. By asking both sets of children and parents questions about the children's knowledge, motivation to learn and other life skills taught, the project may be able to determine the change it made by comparing the results from the two groups.

When setting up a control group, it is important to ensure that: a.) The profiles of the control groups are very similar to those of the groups the project has worked with and b.) There are no other obvious variables (Confounding factors) that could affect the findings or comparisons.

CHAPTER-8

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

"It is better to be roughly right than precisely wrong" - John Maynard Keynes

There is a range of approaches and tools that may be applied to monitoring project's outputs, outcomes and impacts. Those who manage projects must determine the correct mix of monitoring tools and approaches for each output, outcome and impact. Data collection is sometimes a huge effort and it requires observation and listening skills and may take lots of time. Data collection can be qualitative or quantitative. The most obvious distinction between the two is that quantitative methods produce numerical data and qualitative methods result in information which can be best described in words.

Many methods used in PME come from participatory research and learning methodologies, like Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). These include a range of audiovisual, interviewing and group-work methods. They also include quantitative methods like community surveys, adapted and made more accessible to local people. Other methods include oral testimonies and direct observation, visual tools (Charts, maps, calendars, timelines, murals, photos, voice recording – cameras, video) and dramatic forms (Story telling, songs, dances, role plays) of data collection. More standard methods include diaries, case studies, focus group discussions, workshops and documentary analysis.

A brief overview of data collection methods is given in Annex 3.

8.1. UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

a. Quantitative data: This is numerical information (E.g. numbers of working children liberated; percentage of pregnant women delivered with trained midwife or in hospital; proportion of youth who are in conflict with the law reduced; number of farmers converted to organic; number of newspaper articles the campaign against land grabbing published;

percentage of manual scavengers and sewerage workers identified in the national survey have received the compensation amount and rehabilitation).

Advantages: More structured; more precise answers / measures; perceived as more reliable; 'objective'; easier to analyse; based on statistically sound methods for analysis; allows for generalisations; collected through formalised processes and standardised tools; strict definition of sample allows comparability of final results.

Disadvantages: Can be hard to develop rigorous, standardised tools; implementing solid and sustainable data collection systems can be relatively complex and expensive; can 'simplify' the reality in the effort to provide hard, objective, numeric data; at the expense of understanding the reality and complexity of a situation: For example the effective rehabilitation of manual scavengers is a long and challenging process towards a gainfully employment in other occupations and the indicators "*reduces this to just only a number/percentage in the indicator.*"

b. Qualitative data: This is 'narrative' information (E.g. quotations from stakeholders; results of individual interviews; personal opinions; testimonies: Quotes: "From the extra money I have earned, my children can have a better education"; from the knowledge I gained on women rights, we as women are coming together and negotiate with the village council on women's needs; "In our village is no child marriage anymore, this is a victory of our rallies and convincing the village council to support the rights of children"; "I diversified my crops and use indigenous seeds, this has helped withstanding drought and we are less in stress to migrate to town for labour").

Advantages: Gives an in-depth understanding of a situation; captures differences and provides a more holistic approach to the reality; easier to collect; costs are relatively low; gives reasons behind the numbers.

Disadvantages: Less structured; challenging to analyse; 'subjective'; perceived to be less reliable; generalisation from results is not possible; data may not be comparable to other findings; requires 'interpretation'. For example "women coming together and negotiate with the village council to include women's needs into the village development plan is not comparable to other women and requires interpretation on the "negotiation struggle".

c. Advantages of combining both (Qualitative and quantitative, soft/hard data): Increases overall reliability and validity; increases confidence in conclusions (Richer scope and detail); allows for complementarity and triangulation, balancing the limitations of each method. Example: At the end of the project a minimum of 1,000 indigenous rice seeds is preserved in 20 community managed seed banks based on quality criteria (Such as space, hygiene, documentation: inventory, records, germination test, etc.). This is a combination of quantity / numbers and quality / criteria on how the seed bank is managed.

8.2. HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION?

Below are a few hints:

- How complex is the project? As project complexity increases, so too does the need for triangulation.
- What is already known about the project? What experiences do you have from previous projects / areas of intervention?
- What information is needed? Make sure to collect the right data (Check the indicator – they tell us which data to collect!). Less is more!
- When a tool is used to collect information or data, it often comes along with a few questions: Is the set of questions asked in an empowering way? This means, are the questions put across creating awareness on the changes and self-effectiveness? Data collection should not be intimidating or overburden the respondents but rather simulate reflection and thinking.
- How much time and money is available? A tool might be impressive but not useful. Make it small & beautiful!
- Can the data collection be integrated into on-going work of the community or NGO? For example some women self-help groups could keep a record on required data or the farmers could write a diary.
- How difficult will it be to access the data? Are there any geographic constraints? Or beneficiaries very isolated? Alternatively field workers can write their observations into their weekly / monthly reports.
- What is the capacity and skill set of the persons who collect data? How skilled is the field staff? Does the data collector have a clear understanding of how to

proceed? Can the task be shared among stakeholders, e.g. could some stakeholders provide the information more easily?

- Can data collection be distributed over the year? For example agricultural data is collected after the harvest, data on health and sanitation and women empowerment is collected from women when there is an off-season.
- Does the project need to collect data from all the primary beneficiaries / stakeholders or is it sufficient to survey a small part of them and have only a sample? If the project decides to take a sample: What are the selection criteria in order to make sure that the findings will be representative for all the beneficiaries?

8.3. QUALITY OF DATA

Some data quality issued to be considered:

- **Coverage:** Will the data cover all of the elements/aspects of interest?
- **Completeness:** Is there a complete set of data for each aspect / subject of interest?
- **Accuracy:** Have the methods / tools been field-tested to ensure validity and reliability of the data?
- **Frequency:** Are the data collected as frequently as needed?
- **Reporting schedule:** Do the available data reflect the time period of interest?
- **Accessibility:** Are the data needed collectable or retrievable?
- **Power:** Is the sample size big enough to provide a stable estimate or detect the change?

Throughout the data collection process it is essential that data quality be monitored and maintained. Data quality is important to consider when determining the usefulness of various data sources; the data collected are most useful when they are of the highest quality. It is important to obtain good quality data, but this often requires a trade-off with what it is feasible to obtain. The highest quality data are usually obtained through the triangulation of data from several sources. It is also important to remember that behavioural and motivational factors on the part of the people collecting and analysing the data can also affect data quality.

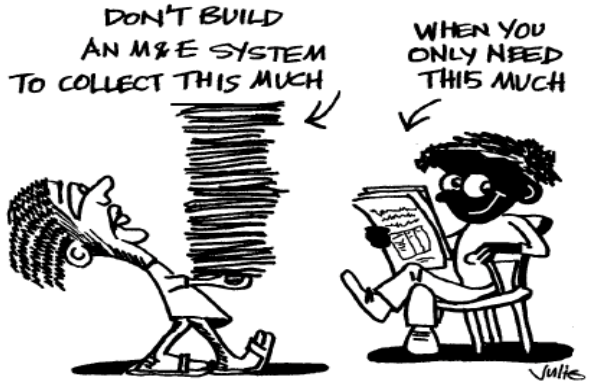
Sample size

What is a sample?- Is is a part of the entire statistical population whose aspects / indicators are studied to gain insight information about the whole. It is a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey.

What is sampling?- Sampling is a process or technique of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of a total population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population.

Defining a minimum sample size is not so much a matter of theoretical considerations of the data necessary to achieve statistical reliable results. Instead, a basic decision on the degree of accuracy aimed at has to be taken and this should be based on practical considerations. If the sample size is increased, the precision of the measurement results will increase only up to a certain point. In view of the costs for monitoring outcomes and changes, in particular data collection, any further increase of sample size will not be worth the extra precision achieved. The expenses for the data collection and the need to have statistical power should determine the discussion at the project level about sample size. Most development project decides for a smaller sample size with good quality data showing. The project needs a valid trend of its development of the outcome and impact indicator rather than statistical reliable results.

When data is collected for the entire population than the sample size is equal to the population (The census data). But this data may not be practical and is almost never economical. There are several reasons for sampling instead of doing a census: Economic reasons, timeliness, large size of many beneficiaries / stakeholders, inaccessibility of some of the stakeholders and accuracy.



Source: Julie Smith, IFRC M&E Guide, 2011

Projects tend to take large sample size causing a burden to the collector, data overload in the system and in many cases, these data is lying idle without being used or analysed. On the other side, sometimes data is required for the entire group of beneficiaries (E.g. working children liberated, rehabilitated and expatriated into the families or manual scavengers liberated and alternative employment opportunities created). Here every child and every manual scavenger is important to track and trace and the NGOs deal with larger data sets stored in a custom tailored software or database.

Example 1:

An NGO works in one district with a total of 300 women self help groups (Representing approximately 6,000 women / families. Each SHG has on average 20 women members)
For a group interview to assess the "influential power of SHG's on community affairs" a sample size of 60 was selected which is 20 % of the total number of SHGs. The groups were of different age. The data was clustered from SHGs one year old, three years old and five years old and no control group (3 clusters). The data collection was stretched over 15 field days by a team of 5 data collectors who integrated the group interviews into ongoing work in the community. The one-year-old SHG cluster was seen as the baseline.

Example 2:

For individual interview with women on their gained knowledge and increased awareness on certain topics the self help groups deal with in their capacity development process, a sample size of 20 individual women were selected and interviewed three times (Baseline, mid-term, end line): 1st monitoring comprises 20 interviews with women who have not yet undergone any training but just formed the SHG; 2nd monitoring comprises of the same 20 women after a time period of 1,5 years in which they have participated in various capacity development measures. The 3rd monitoring conducts the same 20 individual interviews at the end of the project to gain an insight into the increase in knowledge and awareness.

Some types of errors or biases common in data collection include:

- **Sampling bias:** Occurs when the sample taken to represent the population of interest is not big enough.

- **Non-sampling error:** These are all kinds of mismeasurements such as courtesy bias, incomplete records, incorrect questionnaires, interviewer errors or non-response rate.
- **Subjective measurement:** Occurs when the data are influenced by the data collector.

The term **"data"** refers to raw, unprocessed information while the word **"information"** usually refers to processed data or data presented in a context.

Collecting data is only meaningful and worthwhile if it is subsequently used for evidence-based decision-making. To be useful, information must be based on quality data and it also must be communicated effectively to all stakeholders and decision makers.

Monitoring data need to be manageable and timely, reliable and specific to the indicators defined before. Additionally, the result of data collection need to be well understood.

The key to effective data use involves linking the data to the decisions that need to be made and to those making the decisions or users of the data (= Evidence for change).

8.4. METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The choice of methods is very broad, below are some of the most common methods.

- Direct (systematic) observation
- Focus group discussions
- Semi-structured interviews
- Structured interviews
- Case studies
- Informal conversations
- PRA tools such as social mapping, seasonal calendar, time line, transect walks, storytelling, venn diagram, trend analysis, influence matrix other participatory tools such as "most significant change" technique
- Multi-media such as sms, radio, film
- Collection of secondary data
- External evaluations

Smart phone is a tool for data collection

Gathering data from remote locations can be very time consuming, using paper based collection methods may mean it takes a long time for the data to reach those who are going to use or analyse it. Collecting accurate data (E.g. on health, water, nutrition, etc.) is essential to get a true picture of the situation of beneficiaries for baseline, resource planning and monitoring as well as field research. With the growth in availability and decline in cost of smartphones (Even in some of the poorest, most remote communities), these seem an ideal technology to help to improve the accuracy of data collected and vastly reduce the time taken for the data to reach those who need it. More NGOs explore how these devices might be used effectively as part of the data collection efforts in many sectors.

A few hints for collection data

- Ensure that the tools / methods are collecting the **right amount of information** (Not too little or too much) and **appropriate information which is relevant to the monitoring aspect and the specific indicators**.
- Data collection tools and reports should be **useful to those filling them in / use them, as well as to senior management** in order to show the value of data collection.
- Make clear the **level of disaggregation required** for specific data collection tools. Any of the following - by age, sex, education, region, ethnic and social origin, etc.

Source: Julie Smith, IFRC M&E Guide, 2011

Asking good questions

Good questions are key to unlocking good learning. The ability to ask good questions in an area that interests the project can produce high levels of thinking and engagement. The way staff asks questions can make a difference to the responses one will get. Good questions are more likely to lead to good answers while badly formulated questions are more likely to mislead the thinking and discussions. Therefore, careful construction of questions is necessary for questionnaires, whether they are facilitators or participants. The project needs to choose questions that suit the purpose of the inquiry (See link to the data required in the indicator).

Some types of questions to think about

Closed questions are useful when one want specific information that is already known to the person being questioned. A closed question is seeking either a "yes" or "no" answer or more details. For example: "Are you employed? How many days per week do you work?

An open question does not invite a specific answer but is rather open to new information, thinking and discussions. It encourages respondents to engage further. For example: "Can you say more about what happened when you found employment?" How do you cope with this additional burden? How do you feel about managing a family and a household and carrying out an income generation activity?"

Closed and open question work well together. Here one can start with a close question and then opening up the discussion with an open questions: "Are you self employed?"; "What do you like about your business?"; "What is a challenge for you?"

What, when, where, who, why, how questions help the interviewer to analyse and understand what has occurred or the reasons for it. For example: "When did that occur?"; "Why was it helpful?". However, be careful not to use the question "Why?" inappropriately, e.g. "Why do you think you are struggling to run the business?" or "Why is there a conflict?" People often feel interrogated and judged by this kind of question.

There is a range of questions that can help people to gain greater insights into their own situation, create a vision of a preferred situation in future and start planning to change. The following is a list of the type of questions that can facilitate this process. These are only examples. The user should devise their own questions that are appropriate to the situation and culture.

Type of questions

Focus question	What aspect of the life in your community concerns you?
Observation question	What do you see? What is your observation?
Analysis question	What do you think about…? What are the reasons for…?
Feeling question	How do you feel about the situation?
Visioning question	How would you like it to be?
Change question	How can the situation change for it to be, as you would like?
Explore alternatives	How could you reach that goal? Are there any other ways?
Considering the consequences	How would each of your alternative ideas impact on others?
Considering obstacles	What keeps you from doing what you intend to do?
Personal involvement and support	What will it take for you to participate in the change? How can I support you?
Personal action question	Who do you need to talk to? How can you get others to work on this with you?

CHAPTER-9

DOCUMENTATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF DATA

When data is collected it needs to be consolidated, stored and documented in order to secure the information according to the needs of the project holder. Arrangements and formats for data management should be agreed upon in advance inorder to meet the needs of the different actors who need the data (Coordinators, management, funders, etc.).

Common monitoring formatsshould be adopted by all who are engaged in data management in order to minimize the workload, especially for different field areas, in various project locations, various offices (Sector offices or field offices), and to meet the commitments of simplification and harmonisation agreed upon at the beginning of the project. Data management and record-keeping are essential for monitoring and evaluation. A certain level may be required by the organisations legislation, policies and procedures

- **Data management** refers to the collection, storage, processing / analysis, dissemination and efficient use of information in the context of monitoring and evaluation. Data collection may take place on an on-going basis, at regular intervals, or as part of a one-off evaluation.
- **Record keeping** refers to the systematic recording of information in standardised formats. It is sometimes also understood to mean the storage of such information.

9.1 WHY IS DATA MANAGEMENT AND RECORD-KEEPING IMPORTANT?

- They form the essential basis of monitoring, implementation and evaluation.
- They safeguard against violations of rights.
- Process and outcomes of diversion and alternatives must be clearly documented to ensure transparency, accountability and follow-up where necessary.
- Systematisation and clear documentation of policies and procedures are essential to draw clear lessons from projects and facilitate scaling-up or replication.
- Quality data collection for diversion and alternatives projects can help to stimulate / improve the collection of reliable statistical data for the child justice system as a whole

Example for documentation

Primary stakeholders can keep information in diaries, minutes, posters, tables or pictures

The NGO team can keep information in reporting forms, case studies, registers, files, photos, videos, posters, excel sheets or databases.

Annex 4 gives an example of a project in Tamil Nadu and how it has documented the first monitoring data in an overview as per indicators set in the logframe.

9.2 DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- Data management requires the **establishment and maintenance of sustainable data management mechanisms** across the project (E.g. sections/ field units) and stakeholder groups and project holder (E.g. departments/units). Data management must be an integral part of the project design. It must *not* be limited to the one-off collection of data; it should be inbuilt into the project and organisation.
- **Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy**.
- Make **existing systems** more efficient where possible rather than creating new systems (= avoid reinventing the wheel or even collecting data in double).
- **Document the data management process** for clarity and consistency: E.g. how the information will be gathered, analysed, presented, disseminated and fed back into the programme cycle for the benefit of current and future projects.
- **Roles and responsibilities** of each stakeholder in the project must be very clear regarding data collection and record keeping and these should be built into job descriptions, MOUs and project agreements. Who needs to be collecting what data, how (Methodology and reporting format), when and how frequently (Encourage regular time set aside in work plans).
- **Who will coordinate** within and between projects / agencies?
- Ensure that **everyone understands *why* such data is being collected**: Prove its usefulness and relevance to people in their everyday work and link it back to benefits, outcome and impact.
- ***How* is data to be captured, stored, analysed and passed on?** To whom? (*Taking into consideration confidentiality*). Devise a flowchart for dissemination.

- Enforce **strict timelines** so that information is not out of date or being collected in a stressful and rushed manner so that it is always seen as a burden.
- Develop criteria for the opening and closing of **case files**, as well as preserving closed case files for a specified period of time.
- Who will ***check*** **the data is being captured**? How? When? And how frequently?
- Who will check that the **project cycle is taking into account and being responsive** to data collected?
- Develop, from the outset, a **system for *compiling* data** (E.g. monthly reports from different sources) by setting up folders or files such as excel spread sheets, databases and electronic and physical filing systems (*Taking into account confidentiality of information storage*). Files would need to be labelled or named with dates on it. Staff needs to find the data in the system easily.
- Are there **opportunities to review and improve data collection systems in a participatory way**? Build in reviews of data collection and data management into regular reviews.

Documentation and reporting

- **Avoid long narrative reports** that are time consuming to fill out and difficult to conclude data from.
- Make sure formats are **efficient, consistent and easy** to fill out.
- Make sure formats are **accessible** (In terms of language), and that they are physically available and well stocked / re-stocked on a regular basis).
- **Pilot test and amend** new formats as necessary.
- Ensure that **'template' documents** provide enough flexibility to be adapted to individual circumstances.
- **Data presentation**: Develop standard formats for easy comparison of monthly, quarterly and annual data. Don't keep re-inventing the wheel.

Training on data collection

Initial capacity development may be required for people not used to filling in forms or who are not familiar with new methods, especially participatory appraisals.

There is a need for careful supervision and review by line managers during a **'test period'** to pick up on any problems and redirect as necessary or coach the person who facilitates a PRA tool.

Consolidation

Sometimes data needs to be consolidated before it is entered into files for documentation. This means the data gets compiled and is entered as information in the records of the project (= Aggregated). If the collected information consists only of descriptive data (E.g. personal opinions/perceptions from an explorative question or focus group discussion), it is difficult to consolidate or aggregate them. A solution to this is to choose the most important or remarkable aspect or category from the open answer (personal statement / opinion) and then count the aspects that are most frequently cited by the respondents. After the consolidation, information can be further analysed.

Example for consolidation of qualitative data from a group discussion with women

Explorative question asked: "Since you become a member of the women self help group, was has changed for you with regard to empowerment?		
	Answers received by 10 women: Their opinions are written here in brief statements.	Aspect of "change" with regard to empowerment = consolidation into "categories"
1	…my small enterprise runs well and I feel more confident	More self confidence Own income
2	…I am respected more by my family / in laws	More respect by family
3	…I know my rights and feel confident to defend them	More knowledge More self confidence
4	…as a women group we are strong and reach a lot more together	Confidence in solidarity as a group
5	…my husband respects more since am contributing additional income to the family	More respect by family Own income
6	…I have learned a lot and this makes me more self	More knowledge

	confident	More self confidence
7	…I am much more confident to plan for my future	More self confidence
8	…with my gained knowledge and my own income, I can care for myself and my family	More knowledge Own income More self confidence
9	…I feel good that I am listened before decisions are taken in my family and express my opinion	More respect by family More self confidence
10	…Alone we cannot do so much, but as a group of women we have strength and confidence	Confidence in solidarity as a group
Results of the group discussion: Qualitative data (Personal statements of 10 women) was categorised as per the "most important change aspect", these aspects were then counted. The calculation requires only counting and does not need specific expert knowledge		6 x More self confidence 3 x Own income 3 x More respect by family 3 x More knowledge 2 x Confidence in solidarity as a group

Source: Adapted from NGO-IDEAS "monitoring self-effectiveness"

This is the consolidation for only one group discussion. In reality these information will come from several groups, and in each group the same procedure can be followed. The end results of several groups could be collected in a summary sheet (Giving an overview of the counted aspects in each group). The consolidated data could be also clustered as per different age of the self-help groups (Young groups formed 1 or 2 years ago and older groups already strengthened of 3 years age and more), different regions or female groups and male groups.

CHAPTER-10

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND REPORTING

How projects actually use the information generated through the monitoring process to make decisions and inform future action is critical. Effective data analysis and synthesisis a crucial step and an important learning experience. Analysis of data is a demanding task that requires careful thought, technical expertise and effective training and support. Data analysis generally involves identifying and organising the material under key themes or categories, and synthesising (summarising) the key points in eachcategory. If the data collectors have asked open questions, selecting representative direct quotes (in respondents' own words) canbe valuable.

The questions below highlight the learning potential of data analysis. Please consider them in the analysis:

- How will the data be analysed?
- Who willbe involved?
- How will project ensure that data analysisis of a high quality?
- Who is best placed to coordinate, facilitate and support this process?
- How could the project cross check (Triangulate) data?
- How will the project know that the"findings" are accurate?
- How will staff document the findings?
- How will the project use the findings to inform further data collection, as appropriate?
- What will the project do with findings that are unexpected or seem to be undesirable?
- Who will have access to what information?
- Are there issues of confidentiality to consider?
- When data analysis is in progress think about the following: How do does the project know what they are claiming to know?
- What main points and themes are emerging?
- Who has identified these and how?

- How representative are the"findings" and any direct quotes cited?
- How is the project recording unexpected issues, or points that they do not deal easily withthe general findings?
- Are there any surprises and what arethey?
- What should the project do with this information?
- Are thereany sensitivities that impact on who the project can share particular findings with and how (issues of confidentiality for example)?

Data (Aggregated or disaggregated) is not self-exemplary or independent of the context. The data makes only sense when compared to reference data. The project has to compare the findings with the target set in the indicator and the baseline at the start of the project as well as with previous monitoring findings to assess the progress towards the change.

Analysing data means compared the measured results with:

- Past / staring values / base line (**Before – after** comparison): For example crop yield

- The expected / intended values (**Set –actual** comparison)
- The situation of a group that has not made use of the projects output or change (**with-without** comparison): For example, decision making at household level, participation of women in village assembly.
- The situation of a group that has made use of another projects output or change (**benchmark** comparison). Skill acquired by youth and start up businesses or their employment status
- The regional / national average (Literacy, girls school enrolment, soil fertility, cropping pattern)
- International standards / norms (Nutrition and health indicators by UNICEF/WHO: Stunted, wasted, undernourished, low birth weight below 2,000 gram, MUAC = mid-arm circumference to decide about supplementary or therapeutic feeding of babies)

Before – after comparisons allow assessing facts about the situation at different points of time (e.g. before and after the project was implemented). For this purpose generally a baseline survey needs to be made, to state people's situation with regard to relevant indicators before the start of the project. This is important for identifying the 'factual' change. However, these **factual designs** have a limitation in assessing whether the changed was caused by the project because there are usually many influences that contribute to change. Before – after comparisons cannot distinguish between outputs and changes caused by other development interventions, processes or unintended events and changes exclusively by the project.

With and without comparisons compare the changes for the addressees with a control or comparison group not affected by the project activities. The comparisons are based on the assumptions that the situation of both groups was identical in the beginning of the project. But this is often not the case. Therefore, project outputs or changes are usually over- or underestimated.

The most important comparison in order to analyse outcomes and impacts is the "before – after" comparison:

Example: Before – after comparison with baseline data and targeted achievements

Indicators:	Baseline 2008	Actual 2010	Difference	Targeted achievement
75 % of small farmers having sufficient yield and income to provide healthy food to all household members throughout the year	10	50	40	75
50 % of small farmers having a kitchen garden with vegetables, fruits and herbs	0	20	20	50
75 % of small farmers sending all children (boys/girls) in school age to school	30	80	50	75
60 % of small farmers support to solve social conflicts in the community	5	30	25	60
50 % of small farmers participating actively in community development activities in the village	25	40	15	50

Adapted from NGO-IDEAS "monitoring self-effectiveness"

The data in the table above can further be compared with averages differentiated by other locations or regions or by persons and social groups.

Questions for the analysis for this information are:

- What can be learned from the measured results?
- Do the achievements correspond to what the project has expected?
- What has changed?
- How much has changed?

- To what extent are the results of the measurement different from other reference values?

For the interpretation the project needs to reflect on the causes of the changes. It is important to discuss whether the changes have been caused by the specific project intervention or by other actors and outside factors in the project environment (E.g. the district or state, local banks, private business enterprises or press, TV, media (See above "attribution gap")

Guiding questions for interpretation are:

- What was favoring the change? Who or what has caused the change?
- What was hindering the change?
- What were the influences from the project?
- What were the contributions from the primary stakeholders?
- Which other influences have played a role in the occurrence of the change?

Regarding the consequences, the project should discuss:

Which are the positive consequences of these changes? (To reinforce results)

Which are the negative consequences of these changes? (To do better)

These questions allow stakeholders and the project holder to analyse their own contributions to the changes and this leads to a clear understanding of each particular self-effectiveness.

Learning and reflection

This stage is an important step of disseminating findings, learning from the process and learning from others'experiences. Project team members should seek agreement with participants on how the findings might be used, by whom and for whose benefit. Meetings involving different participant groups can be organised to stimulate deeper understanding of the changes, critical reflection and dialogue on achievements and weaknesses, and constructive action on the basis of what has been learned. Workshops, meetings, photograph or video footage and the distribution of briefs and/or reports (As appropriate) is some ways of feeding back and validating findings. Different documents and media may be required to share the findings with diverse participant groups. For meaningful communication, the project team can develop simple, user-friendly documentation or presentation about the projects changes tailored to relevant audiences, e.g. communities, children, parents, village council, students, other development professionals, donors, and the general public or media to participate in the reflection.

PME teams should also clarify whetherthe monitoring process needs to be sustained and, if so, how. Moreover, it needs to be discussed whether the methods and tools need to be evaluated.

The most important and overarching lesson is: Monitoring is best achieved as a "learning enterprise" for both the implementing organisation and donor. It involves a paradigm shift

moving from a rather intimidating "proving that the project did what it were supposed to" to a more collaborative "lets learn together. The question for the organisation is to see how they can best link monitoring a projects change with organisational learning. Data needs to be connected to an open dialogue and reflection. The often rigorous thinking about what information and data is useful, needs equally thinking about "how to digest it and "what data tells us / organisation and its degree of certainty. Good practices require investment in learning than controlling. The organisation needs to define its space for open assessments which are beyond the narrow bureaucratically protocols that assume guaranteed predictable achievements and outcomes (Details are in Module V institutionalising PME).

Blame versus gain behaviours

'Defensive reasoning' is one that may have particular relevance to the development sector, with its high levels of personal and professional commitment. Often in reflection sessions, individuals develop defensive routines to protect themselves from threatening situations such as 'critically examining their own role in the organisation'. These routines limit their ability to discover "how they go about defining and solving problems can be a source of problem in its own". In short they block the ability to learn to see or do things differently. The culture of an organisation can serve to reinforce 'defensive routines' and inhibit learning. If learning is to persist, managers and employees must also look inward. They need to reflect critically on their own behaviour, identify the ways they often inadvertently contribute to the organisation's problems, and then change how they act.

Often skilled professionals were particularly good at using defensive reasoning because they had never learned how to learn from failure. At the point that mistake happens, people become defensive, express criticism, and put the 'blame' on anyone and everyone but themselves. This stands in clear opposition to the need for openness and self-critical analysis that is required for effective learning. This is also true for reflection of monitoring sessions, a defensive organisation cannot learn from the findings of weaknesses and deviations.

Blame and gain behaviour

Blame behaviour	Gain behaviour
You were wrong You should have You should never have let this happen What could have been done differently This is going to cause enormous problems for me You only have yourself to blame This must never happen again	What is happening Lets take this one step at a time What could have been done differently What I want to focus on is all the things that enabled to let this things happen to all of us This must be difficult for you but don't forget this has happened to us all What are the main lessons for us? We can learn a lot from this.

Reporting

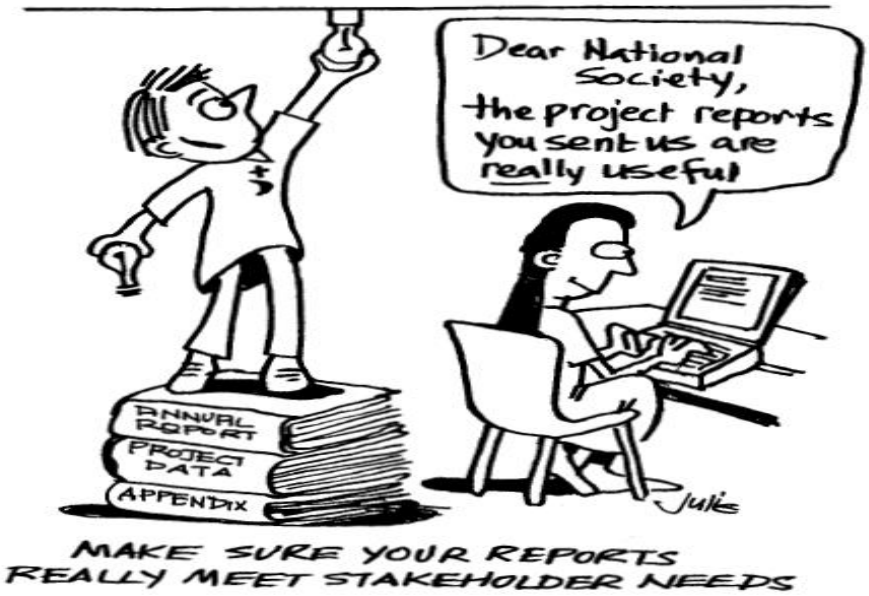
A report is an official record of a given period in the life of a project that presents a summary of project implementation and performance reporting as well as changes occurred. The main reasons for reporting are the following:

- To formally inform the management: Reporting ensures that management knows about successes and is aware at an early stage of actual and potential weaknesses and deviations and any remedial action taken;
- To validate requests for further funding: Reporting ensures that the donor is kept informed of all aspects of project implementation.
- To serve as an audit and evaluation trail: Reporting maintains a record of all actions taken during project implementation. It therefore constitutes a vital resource for auditors and evaluators in assessing whether a project has been implemented in accordance with the rules and regulations and as efficiently and effectively as possible;
- To serve as a reference for future projects: Reporting serves as a vital resource for ensuring that lessons learned (Changes, project successes, failures, best practices) through project implementation are available for consideration when formulating and implementing future projects;
- To report to the donors on the project's progress and induced changes: Often, donors request reporting as they have shared interests with the implementer in the

success of projects. Donors sometimes fund projects contingent upon satisfactory progress. They increasingly ask for reports at the outcome and impact level rather than at the level of output or activity delivery.

Reporting on projects is a balancing act between donor requirements and the implementing organisations own internal requirements. Most donors require reports that are meaningful and capture performance and implementation issues and changes occurred. Donor reports should therefore be reflective yet focused keeping in mind the reader and the interest of those the report is addressed to.

Internal reports can be from community-based organisations to the NGO and also internal reporting within the NGO. For reporting adequately, it is necessary to design a format depending on who is the information addressed to. To motivate reporting, the organisation can custom-made its own formats and add analytical questions to motivate analysis and reflection on data. Additionally, concrete instructions may be necessary to write the correct information. The structure of reporting is often on several levels: Field staff, project managers, coordinators and director. Often internal reports focus on activities and outputs. If outcome and impact orientation is taken up by the organisation, it should be reflected in the reports. It could be part of half yearly or annual reporting.



A frequent mistake in the development sector is the big fat report that no one reads. It's a waste of time, resources and paper. It is – in short – a mistake – and it is an easily avoidable one. On the other side, the task of writing clearly and simply has never been either clear or simple. Clear and simple writing is an art to which many aspire and few achieve. Unclear or confusing is a barrier to all readers.

Language and cultural differences matter: To complicate matters, the "rules" of clear and simple writing in English may not apply at all in other languages, or even between cultures that speak the same language. Many English-speaking countries value directness and explicitness in written communication. Other cultures feel that this style is too blunt, and perhaps even too negative.

The ABC of documentation is:

- **Accuracy**
- **Brevity (= crisp / brief)**
- **Clarity**

Accuracy: Be accurate with facts and do not underestimate or overestimate. Do not carried away by the own personal analysis and opinions. Do not point out unusual things. Give the reader the facts they need to know, reflect on reality and conclude realistically. Good news or best practices should not be manufactured. Even the negative facts can be reported and documented with sensitivity.

Brevity: In today's world nobody has time to read bulk reports unless forced to. What has to be communicated has to be brief and crisp as well as precise. Avoid asides, meaning to say leave out all what the reader does not need. Keeping reports brief with core statements make people read it.

Clarity: Whatever is clear to the writer or person who has an insight into the project need not to be clear for the reader. Use short sentences and simple words. The objective of a writer is to make the readers understand what is written and not to scare them with words they do not know or are not of their interests. Be careful with jargons and clichés. Explain most complex ideas in simple words and do not use bombastic language. Development

language does not need to be flowery or the wealth of the dictionary. Use words to communicate and not to impress.

"KISS MII – keep it short and simple, make it interesting"

CHAPTER-11

CHALLENGES IN MONITORING ADVOCACY AND LOBBY WORK

Influencing political processes and decisions is often a component in projects either as supplement of grassroots work or as an independent field of work.

The general field of monitoring and evaluation offers a range of theoretical and practical frameworks and methods to assess and measure changes that occur in individual and families' lives as well as changes at community level. With advocacy and lobby work, however, there are not such commonly agreed upon guidelines. The question "what to measure or assess" has challenged those interested in monitoring advocacy and policy change efforts.

How to monitor the effectiveness of advocacy and policy work is an emerging question of interest in the NGO sector, in particular questions such as:

- What can we learn about the changes of a political dialogue, lobbying and campaigns?
- How can projects improve their lobbying activities towards achieving more outcome and impact?
- How can the changes be observed and contributions analysed? How to apply outcome and impact orientation?

Public opinion making, representation of group interests, influencing of political decision-making is geared towards governments, parliamentarians, local government units, multilateral institutions and private sector companies (Globalisation)

If stimulating social change is the aim, the general or a specific public has to be mobilised with media as an intermediary (E.g. through campaigns, interface to public relations and education). In times of globalisation, private sector companies have become a growing target group for advocacy work (E.g. on themes such as genetically modified seeds/crops, privatisation of water, ground water use for Coca Cola, patenting, etc.).

Advocacy is frequently conducted by coalitions of different organisations or networks, the "dialogue goal" is getting very important for developing and maintaining a shared motivation and working on a common agenda with the same goal. This dialogue has to be

conducted with the necessary sensitivity since strategic contacts or political influence could be also jeopardised.

11.1 CHALLENGES OF OUTCOME AND IMPACT ORIENTATION IN ADVOCACY

Advocacy processes call often for fast and flexible actions (Activist behaviour), meaning the overall goal should be kept in mind while constantly adapting strategies and tactics to current needs. Classical goals are long term and it is a challenge to define objectives to be reached within 3 years (E.g. the implementation of the right to food is a long term goal and advocacy needs to define rather sub-goals which could be reached within three to five years. Success in advocacy can also be if the situation does not deteriorate (E.g. a new law ratification which criminalises homosexuality).

Lobbyists and campaigners reach their objective by influencing intermediates (E.g. the media/educators) that on their part influence decision makers. This happens in a highly complex framework with various factors playing a role (inclusive external forces or conditions). It is highly challenging to attribute results to a specific intervention and the attribution gap further widens with networks and coalitions (Long term time frame needed for changes to occur, shifting strategies and milestones).

Theories of social change– while applying outcome and impact orientation to PME, it can be helpful to keep some of the advocacy strategies in mind:

1. The right people (Power politics): Fostering contacts to politicians, senior officials and civil servants. This is based on C. Wright Mills (Mills 1956), an American sociologist who says that a few powerful people make important decisions.
2. Right moment: Introducing an issue into public discourse and winning relevant actors for change (Window of opportunity). As per Baumgartner et al. 1993, systems and institutions do not change in a linear mode but rather in sudden leaps. Once the right factor coincides, large leaps become possible.
3. The right message: It is like advertising; it depends on the "psychological decision making of people". As per Kahneman et al. 1979 in his psychological prospect theory states that individuals do not always react and decide in a rational way but

accept new solutions if these are promoted in an attractive way. Media work is here a central strategy that results from this theory.

4. Broad support base and effective network and coalitions are two theories build on cooperation between like-minded people who have the same interest. Masses can be mobilised if large numbers of people are affected by the same problem and civil society takes on a facilitation role (Biklen 1983 and Sabatier et al. 1993).

11.2 OUTCOME AND IMPACT AREAS IN ADVOCACY AND LOBBY WORK

Before outcome and impact orientation is applied, a reflection needs to take place in which area changes are being expected. Classical lobbying aims at political change; campaigns and capacity building processes pursue different objectives. One of the key challenges in monitoring and evaluation of advocacy and policy work is the identification and definition of short / intermediate term outcomes – that is – what changes might occur on the way to longer-term impacts. These changes could be described either as performance measures or as incremental achievements or conditions that indicate progress towards a long term policy change goal.

1. Policy change (E.g. a law is under way which has political concerns)
2. Expansion of democratic freedom (E.g. prevention of human right violations)
3. Shift in social norms (E.g. campaign for awareness and more support for HIV Aids infected people
4. Empowerment of groups (E.g. Struggles about participation and access to resources)
5. Capacity development of civil society organisations (E.g. groups who are not able to defend their interest themselves and need to be strengthened)
6. Building supporter base and setting up networks (E.g. in case of a new topic which needs to be anchored in public awareness)
7. Improving corporate practices (E.g. wages are too low in production units, labour rights, exploitative working conditions / ILO labour standards / compensation payment)

11.3 OUTCOME AND IMPACT ORIENTED PME OF ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

- It is still in its early stages and there are hardly any ready-made tools.
- Not as in "classical" projects, effective advocacy work never strictly sticks to the plan but has to continuously adapt strategy and tactics to changing conditions.
- A motive for taking up advocacy lies in the detection of social grievances, political shortcomings or tangible injustice.
- Research as a solid basis: What was triggered by „outrage" should then be based on comprehensive description of the problem and substantiated by facts and figures and the presentation of a possible solution strategy (= Can be baseline data) can provide a base for "before – after" comparison.
- Advocacy is like "playing billiard": Once set in motion, the ball can only achieve its goal of pushing another ball into the pocket by hitting other balls or via the rail. By doing so, a number of other balls will be set in motion, necessitating a well planned hit. This means for outcomes and impact in advocacy that it deals with a complex change frameworks with narrow systems of boundaries, after which the direct control of project actors ends.
- Many effects take place at the "use of output level", even though they cannot be directly influenced, they will have to be well planned and closely monitored because if they do not take place, new activities and outputs have to be designed.

Effect chain: Effects of advocacy and lobby work take often place at the use of output level; even though they cannot be directly influenced, they still have to be well planned and closely monitored because if they do not take place, new activities and outputs need to be planned.

EXAMPLE: Time line of various events of advocacy work on "violence against women" from 2011 onwards (= Time line as data collection tool)

2011

- Fact-finding mission took place after several women were assaulted in public spaces in the city with a media appeal.

- Handbook printed and disseminated widely to individuals and organisations on useful numbers where women can seek help in different kind of emergencies in the city.

2012

- Collective interventions with like-minded organisations made on a case of the woman who was sexually abused in a public space in the city: Joint media statements, public protest inclusive a protest march and memorandum to District Collector and Chief Minister. Solidarity letter to the victim.
- Poster drawing competition organised during "Violence against Women (VAW)" campaign on sexual harassment/VAW in public places. Several schools participated in it.
- Street survey conducted in the city to highlight various forms of harassment experienced by women in public places in the city.

2013

- Poster on "zero tolerance" towards sexual violence on women printed, a documentary on "safe city" screened in local theatres and a memorandum to the District Collector submitted during International Women's Day.
- Study conducted on different forms of harassment experienced by women in public places in the city and how women respond to these harassments. Report printed and disseminated.
- Poster on promoting safe public places printed and disseminated. The poster is visible in many prominent places of buildings.
- Media sensitisation using the study findings and the overwhelming response from public and other like-minded NGOs.

11.4 HOW THIS ADVOCACY WORK WASFORMULATED IN THE PROJECTS DOCUMENTS?

Output: A study on women's safety issues in public was conducted and results shared with the media. Public events and campaigns organised to increase awareness.

Intermediate steps (= Use of Outputs): Study presentation was well attended; results of study get cited in media and other political speeches during state legislative assembly sessions.The university and other academic institutions have taken up the study results and using it too in their work.

Outcome: Other civil society organisations have joined the coalition. Government's concern on women's safety in public spaces has increased.

Impact: More inclusive, gender sensitive urban planning by the state government

Indicators for advocacy / lobby work in general:

Some organisations have focussed on a relatively "narrow" indicator such as the number of newspaper articles printed or opinions voiced in public. These indicators describe the reach of a particular campaign or public awareness event. Other organisations have set up indicators with overly ambitious expectations such as striving for the passage of a new legislation within a three years framework.

Example of indicators for the effect chain above:

Indicator on output level:

a. The study report on women's safety issues in public is printed and a press meeting took place with journalists from TV, radio and local newspapers

Indicator on use of output level:

b. Number of incidences in which persons/institutions have used the study results such as universities, police and politicians.

Indicator on outcome level:

c. Number of civil society organisations have joined the struggle against unsafe places for women in public spaces with an agreed upon common agenda and strategy.
d. Number of articles on the topic of unsafe places for women in public in local media and radio features.
e. Number of notifications/ initiatives by government on equal and safe public spaces.

Another example of how an NGO has used a matrix to monitor their advocacy work is given in Annex 5.

Outcomes are categorised in the table below presenting the changes that result from advocacy and policy work.

Categories of different outcomes of advocacy and policy work

Shift in social norms: Changes in awareness Increased agreement on a problem (Common language to be against…) Changes in beliefs and / or values Increase alignment of campaign goal with core societal values Changes in public behaviour
Strengthened organisational capacity: Improved management of organisational capacity of organisations involved in advocacy lobby work Improved strategic abilities of organisations involved with advocacy and lobby work Improved capacity to communicate and promote advocacy messages of organisations invo with advocacy and lobby work Improved stability of organisations involved with advocacy and lobby work
Strengthened alliances: Increased number of partners supporting the same issue Increased level of collaboration (E.g. coordination) Improved alignment of partnership efforts (E.g. shared priorities, shared goals) Strategic alliances with important partners (E.g. stronger or more powerful relationships alliances) Increased ability of coalitions working toward policy change to identify policy change pro (E.g. steps of policy change based on strong understanding of the issue and barriers, jurisdic of policy change)
Strengthened base of support: Increased public involvement in an issue

Increased level of actions taken by campaigners of an issue Increased voter registration Changes in voting behaviour Increased breadth of partners supporting an issue (E.g. number of unlikely allies supportin issue) Increased media coverage (E.g. quantity, prioritisation, extent of coverage, variety of m beats, message echoing). Increased awareness of campaign messages among selected groups (E.g. general pu opinion leaders, policy makers) Increased visibility of the campaign messages (E.g. Engagement in the debate, presenc campaign message in the media)
Improved policies: Policy development Policy adaption (E.g. ordinance, ballot measure, legislation, legally-binding agreements) Policy implementation (E.g. Equity, adequate funding and other resources for implemer policy) Policy enforcement
Changes in impact: Improved social and physical conditions (E.g. poverty, habitat diversity, health, eq democracy)

Adapted from a guide to measuring advocacy and policy, Annie E. Casey Foundation, USA, 2007

CHAPTER-12

REFLECTION

Here are some questions for you to reflect on and even open up for discussion in your organisation:

- What is monitoring? How is it defined in your project?
- What is monitoring and evaluation? Explain the difference!
- Why is monitoring important? What are the objectives of monitoring?
- What is the effect chain or result chain?
- What is the difference between effect chain and logframe? For what are they used in projects?
- When should monitoring take place?
- What is a monitoring plan? And why are monitoring plans important?
- What are the components of a monitoring plan?
- What are changes? Has your project achieved changes?
- What is the difference between intended and unintended changes?
- How can changes be assessed?
- What are indicators? What is a meaningful indicator? Give some examples from your project: indicator for output, use of output, outcome and impact!
- What are characteristics of indicators?
- How can you assess or measure the indicators?
- What methods do you use in your project? Explain one or two you are familiar with!
- What does data management mean?
- Why is it important to focus on quality of data?
- What is done with incoming data from the field? How is it entered and stored in records, files or computer in your project?
- How does your project deal with analysis? Who is in charge and are findings of the analysis shared?
- Where does reflection and learning take place and is it documented or disseminated?

- How does your project monitor advocacy and lobby work? What are challenges in monitoring the changes?

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ANNEXRES

ANNEX 1: OVERVIEW EFFECT CHAIN EXAMPLES

Effect Chain/ Sectors	1. Anti-Child Labor and Trafficking	2. Primary Education	3. Sanitation	4. Organic Agriculture	5. Food Security
Impacts	Prevention of child labor and child trafficking ensured	Improved quality of primary education	Quality of life improved	Living standard improved Better nutrition and	Improved food security
Outcomes	Children in servitude are released from their present employment, and the communities are empowered to take action against child labor and retain children in schools	Primary level of education for rural children ensured Girl child education improved	Sanitation of slum dwellers improved and no open defecation Water-borne diseases decreased Environment better protected	Family income increased Demand in local market on organic produce increased Change in consumer behavior towards millets and organic	Grain availability for consumption and sale improved Diversified food basket at household level Farmers get better market prices Post harvest losses reduced
Use of Outputs	Community based monitoring system in place for school retention and anti-child labor Children's council active to attend meetings villages and express their views Gram Panchayat has recognized the children's council and supports them	Children benefit from improved services Teachers apply joyful learning methods Participation in extra-curricular activities increased Children play and engaged in sport on the school premises. Children use the toilets and have access to water	Slum community uses toilets Hygiene behavior improved Decentralized sewage treatment plant operated by community Domestic sewage reused after treatment (Flushing and gardening) No sewage goes into open nala / drain / lake	Farmers applying new skills in the field: Biological pest control Awareness on negative impact of chemicals on environment Farmers grow millets and diversified vegetables	Village committee manage grain storage Knowledge on grain storage and marketing applied Families apply nutrition skills while preparing meals

Outputs	Out of school children are identified, withdrawn from work, enrolled in school Parents sensitised on child education Awareness created in community Liaison building with Gram Panchayat, school, parents and children's council	Enhanced school curricula in primary schools Qualified teachers in schools School aids & infrastructure improved: Toilets and drinking water Parents involvement Parent teacher meetings regularly	Toilets constructed and connected to sewage treatment plant Domestic sewage treated with reuse quality for gardening and toilet flushing CBO take over operation and maintenance	Farmers trained in organic farming Knowledge on environment & organic farming increased Chemical pest control stopped	Grain storages available at individual and community level Households store yield after harvest in own / community structures Better understanding of nutrition security
Activities	Conduction survey on working children Organising community meetings IEC material produced and disseminated Formation of local groups such as children's council Conduction street plays and other events	Developing curricula Training on joyful learning methods Repairing schools, building toilets in schools Building fence and playground around school Applying for funds in local schemes to improve schools	Constructing sewage treatment plant Building slum toilets Organising technical planning and design Conducting street play on hygiene & health Attend training on toilet construction Mobilising community contribution in cash	Cultivating millets and vegetables Establishing farmers field schools Organising exposure visits to organic fields Organising market days Conduct workshops on chemical free agriculture	Training on grain storage management Training for welders on building bins / storage structures Community build grain storage structures Conduct coaching on nutritious food
Inputs	Campaign materials, IEC materials, social workers, motor bike	Finances, staff training hall, trainers, teaching aids	Cement, tools, masons, land, engineers, social worker	Seeds, tools, training, extension workers	Metal, welding, bricks, stones, cement, tools, trainers, nutritionist

ANNEX 2: MONITORING PLAN EXAMPLE

A monitoring plan is a tool used to plan and manage the collection of data and sometimes include plans for data analysis, reporting and use.

At minimum a monitoring plan should include:

- a detailed definition of each indicator
- the source, method, frequency and schedule of data collection
- the team or individual responsible for ensuring data are available on schedule

It is also advisable to plan for how the data will be analysed and how it will be reported, reviewed and used to inform decisions.

Sample format of a monitoring plan

Output / Outcome	**Indicators Outcome/ Output**	**Method of Data Collection**	**Data Sources**	**Frequency of Data collection E.g. Quarterly**				**Who is responsible for data collection / analysis**	**Who will use the information**
Outcome 1	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								
Output 1	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								
Output 2	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								
Outcome 2	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								
Output 1	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								
Output 2	Indicator 1 Indicator 2								

Source: Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results, UNDP Evaluation Office 2002

ANNEX 3: OVERVIEW DATA COLLECTION METHODS

1. Surveys - written and distributed questionnaires

1.1 Objective

The survey asks many people (respondents) about their beliefs, opinions, characteristics, and past or present behaviour. Modern quantitative surveys use sampling techniques and statistics. Surveys and questionnaires are the most commonly used method for collecting data in a large population. Surveys and questionnaires are usually administered on paper, in a structured or semi-structured format. Respondents often choose from among a set of *forced-choice*, or provided, responses. These can include yes/no or scaled responses. Surveys and questionnaires can be administered in person, by mail, over the phone, or via email/Internet.

1.2 Advantages of written (And distributed) questionnaires

- **Questionnaires are very cost effective** when compared to face-to-face interviews. This is especially true for studies involving large sample sizes and large geographic areas. Written questionnaires become even more cost effective as the number of questions increases.
- **Questionnaires are easy to analyse**. Data entry and tabulation for nearly all surveys can be easily done with many computer software packages (e.g. Excel spread sheet, SPSSS.)
- **Questionnaires are familiar to most people**. Nearly everyone has had some experience completing questionnaires and they generally do not make people apprehensive.
- **Questionnaires reduce bias**. There is uniform question presentation and no "middleman" bias. The researchers own opinions will not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner. There are no verbal or visual clues to influence the respondent.
- **Questionnaires are less intrusive than telephone or face-to-face surveys**. When a respondent receives a questionnaire in the mail, he is free to complete the questionnaire on his own timetable. Unlike other research methods, the research instrument does not interrupt the respondent.

1.3 Disadvantages of written (And distributed) questionnaires

- **The possibility of low response rates**. Low response is the curse of statistical analysis. It can dramatically lower our confidence in the results. Response rates vary widely from one questionnaire to another (10% - 90%), however, well-designed studies consistently produce high response rates.
- **The impossibility to probe responses**. Questionnaires are structured instruments. They allow little flexibility to the respondent with respect to response format. In essence, they often lose the "*flavour of the response*" (i.e., respondents often want to qualify their answers). By allowing frequent space for comments, the researcher can partially overcome this disadvantage. Comments are among the most helpful of all the information on the questionnaire, and they usually provide insightful information that would have otherwise been lost.
- **Nearly ninety per cent of all communication is visual**. Gestures and other visual cues are not available with written questionnaires. The lack of personal contact will have different effects depending on the type of information being requested. A questionnaire requesting factual information will probably not be affected by the lack of personal contact. A questionnaire probing sensitive issues or attitudes may be severely affected.
- **The selected respondents are often not the ones who filled the questionnaire**. When returned questionnaires arrive in the mail, it's natural to assume that the respondent is the same person you sent the questionnaire to. This may not actually be the case. Many times business questionnaires get handed to other employees for completion. Housewives sometimes respond for their husbands. Kids respond as a prank. For a variety of reasons, the respondent may not be who you think it is. It is a confounding error inherent in questionnaires.
- **Questionnaires are not suited for all situationsand all people**. For example, a written survey to a group of poorly educated people might not work because of reading skill problems. Additionally, some people may refuse because of the potential misuse of the data.

2. Individual interviews

2.1 Objective

- Interviews are most often used to gather detailed, qualitative and quantitative descriptions of situations, projects/programmes, satisfaction levels, perspectives and opinions of the respondents. There are structured, semi-structured and open interviews,
- Interviewing is an art and requires more than knowing to talk and to listen. Especially in open interviews, the interviewer requires skills, sensitivity, concentration, interpersonal understanding, insight, mental openness, and discipline. The interviewer has to understand the respondent's perspectives.
- Depth interviewing is an important source of relevant qualitative information by asking direct questions.

2.2 Advantages of open and semi-structured interviews

- By using individual interviews, the views of individual respondents and the reasons for this opinion can be discovered, without any influence from other participants.
- Individual interviews are especially suited for getting insight into process issues.
- Interviews are also one of the best ways to engage low-literacy populations. Structured interviews can take the place of questionnaires for clients who may have difficulty filling out forms
- Key benefit is the level of detail that can be obtained. In interview evaluators have a chance to follow-up on questions and probe for meaning.
- It can be easier to discuss an issue in-depth with one person, than to with a group.
- It helps avoid the scheduling problems of trying to arrange meeting dates with large numbers.

2.3 Disadvantages

- No use of random methods to select the participants. Subsequently, the results may not be generalised

- The difficulty to draw general conclusions may allow for an exhaustive identification of effects and possible causes, but it makes the measurement of impacts complicated.
- This practice requires a lot of time and the contribution of professionals: Specific skills are needed to plan, conduct and interpret an interview;
- Individual interviews as a method suffers from objectiveness, and relies most heavily on the integrity and intellectual honesty of the researcher,
- Documentation can be tricky: field notes often contain too much confidential information for wider circulation:
- Interviewer bias (The behaviour, body language and appearance of the interviewer influences the respondent)

How to do a personal interview?

- Greet the interviewee and appreciate his/her participation. Introduce other research staff present.
- Explain the general purpose of the interview and why the interviewee was chosen.
- Explain the presence and purpose of recording equipment and ask for permission.
- Introduce yourself and invite the participant to introduce himself.
- Agree on a time frame.
- Start with asking the questions
- Be attentive and listen actively
- Probe questions and motivate the respondent to continue/go deeper…
- When you feel the area has been explored adequately, move on to the next item,
- Once a domain has been adequately explored, move on to the next domain
- Explore the issues and check, if you got the necessary information
- Ask for still missing additional comments
- Closing remarks: That's all the questions I have. Thank you for participating in this discussion.

3. Focus group discussion

3.1 Objective

A focus group is a small group of people assembled for a guided discussion of a specific topic or issue. The objective is to get high-quality data.

In group discussions (equally called Focus Group Discussions) the interviewer guides a conversation among a small group of persons (6 – 10 persons) for ½ to 2 hours. This is generally semi-structured: there is a checklist of the main topics to be discussed. Besides, the group facilitator encourages an open and wide discussion to get as much information as possible. It is often recommended to conduct several group discussions to make sure to include a wide range of different opinions in an organisation or community. It is important to make the group members feel free to state their opinions openly. Focus group discussions can for example be used in market research and needs assessments.

3.2 Advantages

- Participants get to know each other's responses. As they hear what others say, people make additional comments. It is not necessary to reach consensus.
- Group discussions provide rich and in-depth data that paint a broad picture
- It is a highly efficient qualitative data collection technique: in one hour the facilitator gets the opinion of 8 to 10 persons.
- This method also provides qualitative control on data collection. Participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other that weed out false or extreme views.
- Easy to find out about shared views.
- Generally, (focus) group discussions are enjoyable for the participants.

3.3 Disadvantages

- The number of questions that can be asked is limited. With 8 people in one hour, no more than 10 questions may be discussed
- Facilitating and conducting a group discussion requires considerable group process skills. The discussion should never be dominated by a few persons.
- Not easy to take notes during the discussion. It is therefore helpful to have two facilitators.

- In groups where people know each other and discuss hot topics, conflicts may arise or other diversions and confidentiality cannot be assured.
- large focus groups may intimidate someparticipants
- Documentation and analysis can be time consuming and may require the help of someone versed in qualitative analysis

3.4 Example:

PRA often uses group discussions. Responses to the following five open-ended questions formed the core analysis in one evaluation case:

1. What is the difference between rich people and poor people in your community?
2. What are the reasons for being poor in this community?
3. Are there aspects of being poor that can't be noticed?
4. What skills are important for income generating activities?
5. How can you distinguish a good small enterprise from a poor one?

4. Observation

4.1 Objective

Observations are a generally unobtrusive method for gathering information. They are often used to verify and supplement information gathered through other methods. (Triangulation)

Observations can be highly structured, with protocols for recording specific behaviours at specific times, semi-structured or unstructured, taking a "look-and-see" approach. They are most reliable when they are conducted over a period of time to minimise the chances of the observation day(s) being atypical. There a different types of observations: participant, non-participant, open and hidden observations.

4.2 Advantages

- Provide highly detailed information from an external perspective on what actually occurs in programs and projects.
- Trained observers may provide less biased descriptions than program staff, stakeholders or other involved persons.
- Direct observation of a project facilitates the understanding of the context.
- An inductive discovery-oriented approach.

- The trained observer has the chance to see things that may routinely escape conscious awareness.
- Learning even about things which the persons do not want to talk about.
- Moving beyond the selective perceptions of others.

4.3 Challenges

- Can be time consuming, labour intensive, and expensive
- Observers must be trained and be consistent with one another
- Observations conducted on a sample of days may not represent the range of program practices and experiences over time

4.4 Hints and comments

It is often important to observe what does not happen. (Absence of occurrence)!

The observer is also the observed!

5. Tests and assessments

5.1 Objective

Tests and assessments are developed or used specifically for training or program evaluations. (Technical tests, achievement tests and psychological tests, performance assessments…) They may be standardized or created by program evaluators/trainers for the specific programme.

5.2 Advantages

- Often more valid and reliable than perceptions or opinions
- Comparing scores before and after the program is a strong method for assessing whether outcomes actually changed over time

5.3 Challenges

- Can be costly and time intensive
- May require scoring by an external source

6. Some general data collection tips

Using Single versus Multiple Methods

No one data collection method is ideal for every situation. For this reason, it is preferable to use multiple methods whenever possible. Using multiple methods to assess the same outcomes (e.g., using surveys and document review to assess program management) provides a richer, more detailed picture.

Selecting Data Sources

Equally important is selecting a data source, or information provider. Data can be collected from youth, families, staff, funders, educators, and other stakeholders. It is recommended to use several data sources.

Selecting a Sample of Individuals

Some methods are well suited to collecting data from all participants (e.g., surveys), while others are better suited to a smaller group that represents the diversity of all participants (e.g., focus groups).

Collecting Data before and after Programme

Using the same data collection method to gather information before the start of the program and after its completion (also known as a *pre/post-test design*) provides the opportunity to determine whether some characteristic changed during the course of the program. (Other unmeasured factors may have been responsible too).

Cost Considerations

Conducting observations and reviewing program documents can be done with little additional funding, designing and administering a survey and analyzing its results may require the assistance of an outside experts.

An additional cost consideration is the use of management information systems (MIS) that can be used to record and store data collected from numerous methods.

Like most other components of evaluation, it is important to start small and build data collection tools over time according to needs.

7. Additional Methods of Data Collection (mainly from PRA)

This part presents four major PRA tools, each of which makes use of a combination of different methods and techniques for data collection as mentioned above.

7.1 Tim Line:

Time Line refers to a calendar of historical events from as far back as one can remember, up to the present, in the life of a person, community, village, area, or institution, depending on what we wish to construct. Such a calendar of historical events can form the basis of helping us trace trends through history and study the nature of change. Examples of events could be "the year when we had to leave the village for three months because of an outbreak of plague",.

7. 2. Seasonal Calendar or Seasonal Diagramming

Refers to the calendar of the people; it helps to understand time as the local people understand it. Drawing up such a calendar helps in locating annual occurrences and events, linking up such events to their seasonality, planning programmes on the basis of patterns that emerge and relating to people by means of a jargon that they find easier to understand.

Examples: Calendar of agricultural operations, busiest and slackest months in the year, periods of maximum stress, price fluctuations, seasonality of disease outbreaks, periods of maximum and minimum fuel availability, patterns of migration, and numerous other such things.

7.3. Participatory Mapping and Modelling

It helps us in understanding how people and resources are organised. Social Mapping of a village provides a picture of the way houses, water taps, etc., are organised and can help us see class and caste patterns. Similarly, Natural Resource Mapping can give us details of land, water, trees, and other such resources, their locations in relation to the village, and from there on to an indication of how and by whom they are used.

7.4. Transects Analysis

Transect Analysis takes us for a walk through the village or countryside - usually from a high point to a low point. It can also be a cross-country walk it gives us an idea of what the land is presently supporting, and what it has the potential to support if some interventions are made.

8.Triangulation

Triangulation refers to a process of crosschecking of data provided by various independent respondents or methods. It helps validating data.

Triangulation means:

- Looking at an issue, topic or objective from multiple positions.
- Observing something from different perspectives to get a more realistic perception of reality.

Different Types of Triangulation:

- **Triangulation of measures** (Testing students through, oral presentation, multiple choice tests, reports...)
- **Triangulation of observers** (Combination of different experts in a team: agriculturist, technician, social scientist…)
- **Triangulation of methods** (Mixture of different quantitative and qualitative methods: standardized questionnaire, participant observation, and group discussion
- **Triangulation of theory** (Using different theories/hypothesis to plan and analyse data)

Text compiled from various FAKT references, Dorsi German, Germany

ANNEX 4: TAMIL NADU EXAMPLE PROJECT MONITORING OVERVIEW

Overall Goal: Better living conditions are created for communities whose livelihoods are under complex, diverse and risk-prone conditions

Objective		Outputs		Output Indicators		Achieved so far (= Monitoring data)	Remarks
1.	Marginal / small-scale farmers and landless have improved livelihood options and their local level institutions are self-managed.	1.1	Sustained adoption new appropriate and conservation-oriented technologies especially in the cultivation of ragi, groundnut, paddy, sugarcane and turmeric	1.1.1	2000 farmers in 4 blocks of Erode District have adopted 2 or more of the following eco-friendly soil enrichment practices: * Panchagavya application, * Bio fertilizers, * Bio pesticides, * Bio fungicides, * Bio pest repellents * Vermi compost, * Green manuring	1000 farmers covered direct intervention	Conducting study for assessment of around 1000 farmers was followed. Extension activities through seminar, farmers experience sharing, IEC etc.
A	**Objective indicators (A, B and C):** 75 % of the farmers have at least 25 – 50 % increased incomes from farming / non –farm enterprises			1.1.2	1000 farmers have adopted appropriate water conservation practices such as erosion control and farm level water harvesting structures, mulching, affordable micro irrigation etc.	Erosion control: 800 farmers covered in Mulanur and Thingalorea area under IWDP program Mulching: 425 farmers followed mulching (Talavadi-150, Anthiyur-75, Sathy-100, TN Palayam-100) Micro-irrigation: 15 farmers have covered	Erosion control: 200 farmers will be covered under NWDPRA by December 2015
B							
C	75 % of the community members report on at least 3 aspects of improvements (Education, health, housing, livestock investment, savings in kind and cash, other assets) in their lives All local level institutions (40 % women members) have an annual development plan and are able to mobilise village development programmes in which their needs are addressed and implemented with their active participation.			1.1.3	10 farmers have developed as effective extensionists in the above practices.	Vermi composting and Panchagavya: Selvi, Nandeesh, Rajammal, Sadasivam, Sakthival IFD: Kalaivani,, Dryland Horticulture: Sakthivel Previous list: Sivakumar, Shivanna	Two members will be developed for soil & water conservation in Talavadi Kendra will work on documentation and develop IEC materials

Objective		Outputs		Output Indicators		Achieved So far	Remarks
1.		1.2	Increased income / profitability from farming enterprises	1.2.1	300 farmers have adopted at least 7 components of the Integrated Farm Development package.	151 farmers are covered under IFD program in which 45 farmers have adopted minimum 7 components of IFD Package.	255 farmers to be covered for which the following action to be taken. Extension activities through seminar, farmers experience sharing, IEC etc.
				1.2.2	50 farmers are practicing the SRI method of paddy cultivation	2 farmers adopted based on the direct intervention by KVK and with the association of Dept. of Agriculture, 50 farmers adopted SRI technique.	It is decided to cover additionally another 25 farmers. Publication will be released on System Rice Intensification techniques by means of sharing different experiences of farmers in the locality. Farmers experience sharing program will be jointly organized in association with Dept. of Agriculture.
				1.2.3	Crop yields have increased to the following extend in the following crops: Ragi: increase of 2qtls.per acre (from base yield of 8-9 qtls.per acre of dry land) Groundnut: increase of 30% from current yields (from base yield of 8-9 qtls. Per acre of dry land) Paddy: Increase of 30% (in the case of 50 farmers introduced to SRI method of cultivation) and 15% (in the case of other cultivators) from current yields (from base yield of 20qtls. Per acre of wetland).	Ragi : In 2004, Kendra had taken up 14 Adaptive Research Trials (ART) along with Department of Agriculture in bargur in which average of 1125 kg/acre was recorded and 50 acres in farmers field in Bargur hills in collaboration with Dept. of Millets, in which an average yield of 950 kg / acre was obtained Groundnut: 1425 kg per acre was obtained under rainfed conditions in Easaparai village of Anthiyur block.	It is proposed that 15 farmers from Ragi growing areas would be selected and a workshop would be conducted by involving them and crop production experts from ABCD to derive the location specific package of practices and to evolve strategy for dissemination of the same.

Objective		Outputs		Output Indicators		Achieved So far	Remarks
1.	…Contd.	1.2	…Contd.		Turmeric: Increase of 20% from current yields (from base yield of 17 qtls. Per acre of wetland) Sugarcane: Not yield increase but lowering of input costs and increase in profit margins.	Paddy: SRI method, refer 1.2.2, the average yield obtained was 9120 kg / acre	Paddy: KVK has already identified 5 farmers for demonstration in the next cropping season.
				1.2.4	100 farmers are using herbal extracts for the control of internal parasites in sheep; the treated sheep are showing healthier growth	200 farmers adopted using herbal extract.	Strategy to be evolved to share the experiences with other institutions like KVKs through case study. Experience sharing among farmers by organizing mass gatherings. Influence the department to recommend this treatment. Training is proposed for extension functionaries
				1.2.5	100 new families are growing fodder at household level (including IFD families)	80 families are growing fodder.	Remaining 20 families will be covered.
				1.2.6	10 Animal Husbandry (AH) Promoters (including 3 Artificial Insemination specialists) trained by the KVK and effectively servicing the area.	10 AH Promoter trained by Kendra out of which 8 Promoters are practicing. 3 promoters become AI specialists out of 8 promoters.	Preparation of IEC material and FLIP chart on disease management is proposed.
				1.2.7	25 farm ponds at individual farm level successfully growing fish.	6 farmers are growing fish out of which 1 farmer is growing fish continuously.	4 farmers planned to cover

Objective		Outputs		Output Indicators		Achieved So far	Remarks
1.	…Contd.	1.2	…Contd.	1.2.8	150 acres have been additionally brought under dryland horticulture.	50 acres covered.	40 acres proposed to cover in Anthiyur area. 60 acres planned to cover by December 2016
				1.2.9	200 families in their backyards grow minimum of 3 spices.	-	Spice Board and Horticulture Department agreed to support 200 families to grow spices: Cinnamon, clove, nutmeg (Doddi-44 families, Bargur-156)
				1.2.10	300 farmers growing potato, beans and garlic are well aware of biological pest management practices.	100 farmers have been covered in Kadambur and Basavannapuram.	200 farmers will be covered in the same place.
				1.2.11	200 farmers newly supported for scientific grain storage.	150 farmers covered in Talavadi area 250 Wonder (Rat) traps are provided to minimize the post harvest loss at the household level.	Remaining 50 farmers will be covered in Bargur area
				1.2.12	One cold storage unit and one godown established to enable more profitable marketing of farm produce.	1 godwon established for tamarind with a capacity of 10 Tones capacity at Tamaraikarai	A feasibility study was conducted on cold storage unit in which it was found out that there is no feasibility for the unit.
				1.2.13	2 quail units and 2 dog breeding units established to increase the income of poor households (through sales).	1 training conducted for quail rearing but unit not established due to marketing	Puppy rearing unit will be established in TN Palayam.

Objective		Outputs		Output Indicators		Achieved so far	Remarks
1.	…Contd.	2.1.	Self help groups are strengthened and participate in all activities with own contribution in cash and kind	2.1.1	2000 beneficiaries from 4 blocks in Erode District are members of 100 local level institutions (self help groups/farmers groups): Meet weekly and plan their involvement in the project	75 SHG established Regular meetings held Each activity in the project has a cash/kind contribution – documented in their books	25 SHGs are graded weak/slow and need extra support due to not being able to meet and participate regularly.
				2.1.2	All SHG's have their rules, regulations, vision, mission and development agenda	SHG's rules, regulations, vision, mission and monthly agenda are documented and signed by each member. Non followers of rules: Sanctioned 100 Rs	Cash from fines is used for social events Documentation of SHGs needs improvement, certain weaknesses in data
				2.1.3	All SHG's have skills in moderation, conflict resolution, monitoring, SHG approach, gender,	Training on moderation Training on conflict resolution Training on SHG approach Training on gender sensitization	Staff regular visits the SHG's and give follow up support on the mentioned aspects

ANNEX 5: MATRIX FOR MONITORING ADVOCACY WORK BY AN NGO: ADVOCATE FOR QUALITY HEALTH CARE AS A RIGHT

Outcome: The national health policy is influenced towards equitable health care for all

Indicator: Number of health advocacy issues has been taken up at various fora/platforms/events with decision making/influencing bodies at local, state and national level

Issues advocated for: New Clinical Establishment Act	Bringing based evidence from issues from meetings/voicing strong concerns by network partners	What is taken forward by the NGOs coalition/ how is it taken up? What is the product for advocacy?	Use of Output / Outcome level: Where is the advocacy work / alternative paper been spread, voiced, disseminated, used & who got sensitized?	Remarks on further dialogue
Critical core content is: A. Focus on developed urban hospitals, it lacks focus towards isolated areas in rural India B. It mentions standards/procedures which are not realistic in rural India C. It mentions human resources which cannot be hired in rural India	In Kerala, 3 meetings with 8 like minded NGO's took place: it was voiced 1…….. 2…….. 3…….. In Bihar, 1 meeting took place with 3 like minded NGOs, critical concerns were 1…….. 2…….. In Orissa, 2 meetings took place with 2 major points: 1…. 2…	A more practical document was established by the NGOs coalition with the help of network members The document addresses 4 core suggestions which are more relevant to the rural hospitals: 1 = provision of appropriate care in a resource poor setting 2 = …… 3 = …….. 4 = …….. A study was taken up in 3 states (research question….), it was found that……	1. Director of the NGO met Health Secretary (on invitation) and voiced the concerns 2. Press Meeting attended by media people, out of which 5 journalists reacted positive, 3 of them published an article in xyz media and mentioned the following content…. 3. Meeting with 2 MLA's, NGO gave them practical paper and had fruitful interaction, one of the MLA is politically willing to take it forward, he formed a committee 6 month later	• Follow up with Health Secretary • Follow up work with committee is needed to see if political will is shaping / bears fruits