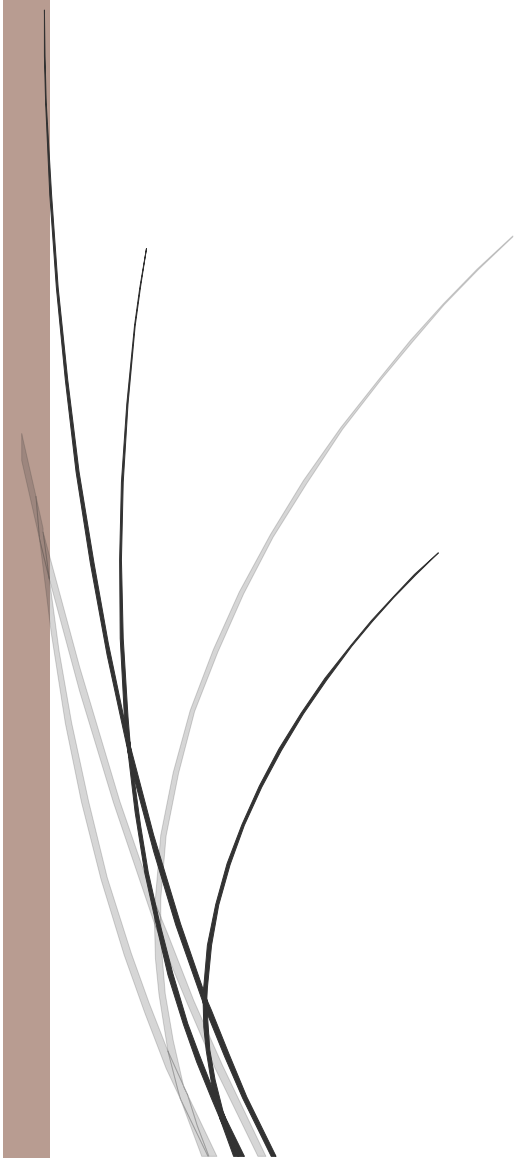
8-5-2017

# Resource package on Monitoring and Evaluation

Developed for ISSA



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# 1. INTRODUCTION – SCOPE OF THIS RESOURCE PACKAGE

This package offers an introduction to the main concepts and approaches to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). n Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). It aims to provide a background to the concepts and principles of M&E, as well as approaches and links to resources that may be useful for ISSA members. Moreover, in the annexes some frameworks and templates are provided that can guide you in your M&E work.

While the focus of the package is not on the evaluation of a specific type of organisation, or project or programme, it can be of use to networks and NGOs alike. Theoretical background is illustrated with practical examples that are based on real cases.

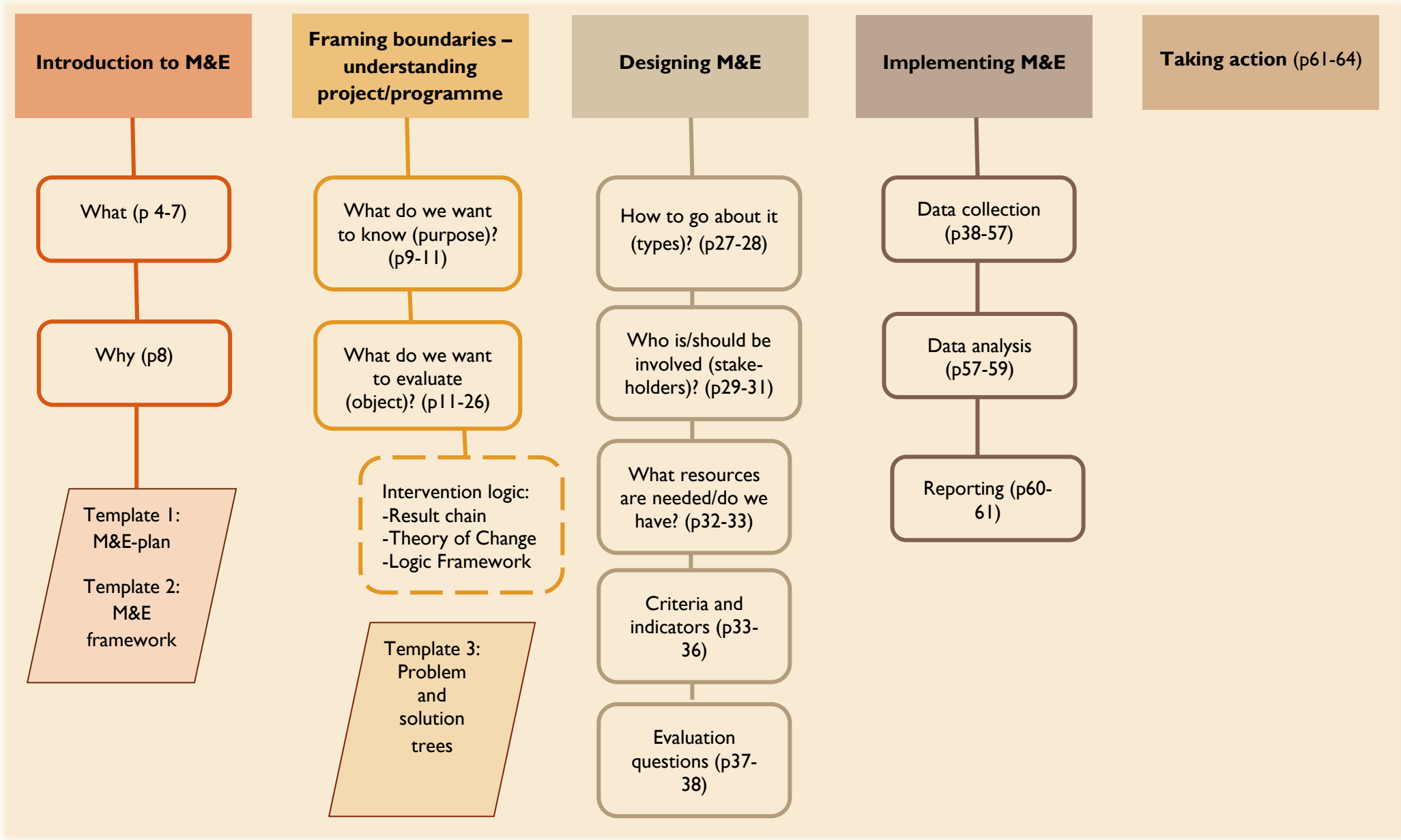
Many books, reports, articles and blogs have been published on M&E for and of networks and NGOs for social change. This resource package is developed, based on literature and many years of working with and for networks and NGOs by the authors.

**Your experiences with the resource package as well as your remarks are most welcome at:** d.danau@sagoonderzoek.nl or florence.pauly@btinternet.com

**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| **ISSA** | International Step by Step Association |
| **M&E** | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| **NGO** | Non-governmental Organisation |
| **SPSS** | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| **SROI** | Social Return on Investment |
| **ToC** | Theory of change |

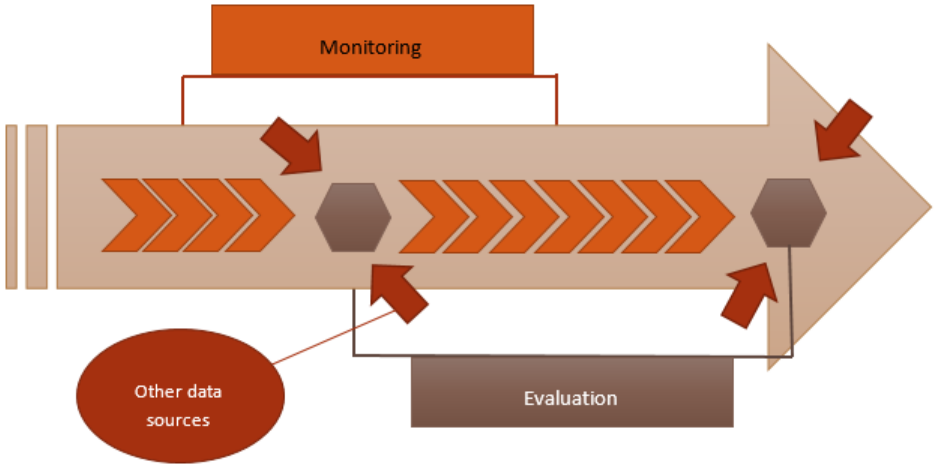
**Figure 1**: **Overview of the resource pack**



## 2. WHAT IS MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Both monitoring and evaluation are important management tools that enable you to track progress and to guide your decisions. While both are often understood as the same process, monitoring and evaluation are quite different. **Monitoring** is the **systematic** collection of information (from projects, programmes, etc.). It takes place throughout the implementation of a project or programme and it tracks progress against set plans. Monitoring leads to corrective actions at operational level. It is through the continuous monitoring of performance of a project or programme that opportunities are created to learn about what is working well and what challenges are arising. It is an essential part of day-to-day management and should be integrated into project or programme management. Therefore, job descriptions of staff involved in the implementation and management of projects, should include M&E responsibilities[1]. Monitoring is a reflective practice that assists learning to take place.

**Figure 2: Evaluation and monitoring in project and programme implementation**

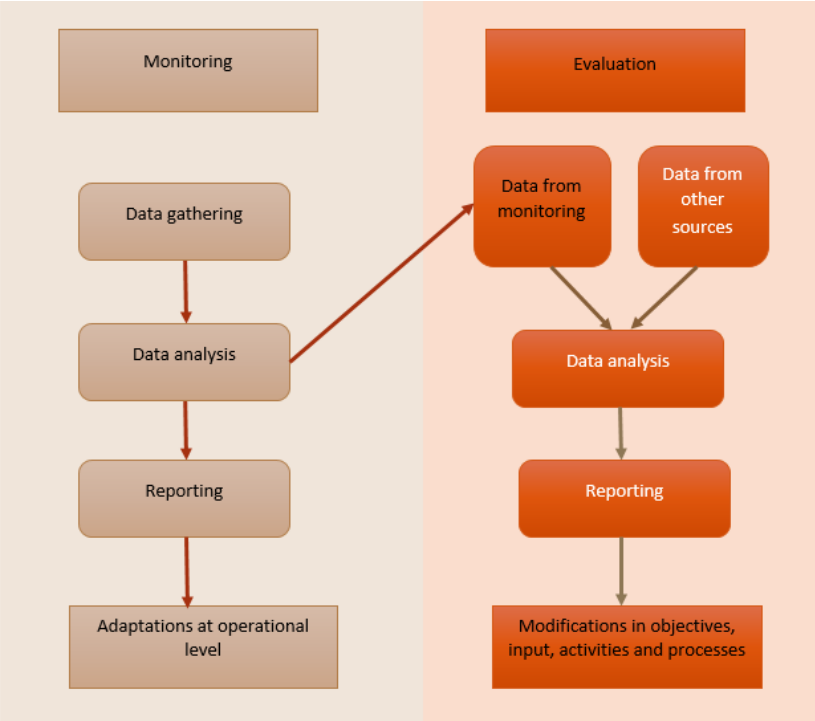



*Source: SAGO Research*

**Evaluation** is about assessment and judgements; it is an analysis of the collected data in terms of defined **criteria** like effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, sustainability (see chapter 5). Evaluation is more **episodic** than monitoring. It takes place at pre-determined points in time during implementation. Data gathering through monitoring is used as input into evaluation. Evaluation leads to recommendations and (possibly) to modifications in any of the components of the project or programme (objectives, inputs, activities, processes).

1 Sera, Y., and S., Beaudry, (2007), *Monitoring and* Evaluation. Tips for civil society Organisations, World Bank, Gebremedhin, B., et al, (2010), *Results-based monitoring and evaluation for organizations working in agricultural development: A guide for practitioners*, International Livestock Research Institute; Catholic Relief Services, (2011), *Institutional Strengthening: Building strong management processes. Chapter 10: Monitoring and Evaluation*, Baltimore; Council for International Development, (2014), *Fact Sheet 17. Monitoring versus Evaluation*, June 2014, Wellington, New Zealand

**Figure 3: Relation between monitoring and evaluation**




*Based on:* http://www.slideshare.net/skzarif/monitoring-evaluation-presentation

**Example of relation between monitoring and evaluation:**

Within the implementation of a programme on early childhood development, a conference is organised twice a year. The objective of conferences is to raise awareness about emerging trends in early childhood development amongst these distinct groups. The aim is to have at least 100 participants per event with a composition of 1/3 policy people, 1/3 academics and 1/3 NGOs. One of the indicators established for monitoring purposes is the number and background of participants.

Based on the information related to this indicator, the aim in relation to the number and composition of the target group was not achieved: in the group of participants, there were less policy people than expected. After the first conference the approach is adapted: a specific activity is launched to contact policy people before the conference and to explain them the purpose of the event. At the end of the first year (after two conferences) the *assessment* is made to what extent the objective (raising awareness of the different groups) is achieved. For this purpose, data about the indicator are used (*monitoring*) as well as data coming out of the evaluation forms distributed during the conferences and follow-up interviews with a selection of participants.

**M&E systems and frameworks**

A clear framework is essential to guide the monitoring and evaluation process; it is like a **roadmap** telling you where to go, when, with whom and for what purpose. Therefore, it is sensible to invest the necessary time in the beginning of the M&E journey in the development of such a framework. The framework is part of a wider M&E system, bringing together all tools, resourcing and processes (such as planning) related to monitoring and evaluation.

The M&E framework presents:

- The indicators to be used for monitoring purposes.
- Why information is needed on that indicator; for what purpose information on that indicator will be used (e.g. to inform the Board, to inform beneficiaries).
- The frequency of data-gathering on that indicator.
- The means of verification, i.e. how will you verify whether progress is made in relation to the indicators? Where and how to get information on that indicator? What data collection tools will be used?
- Responsibility for data collection: who gathers the information and who is responsible for this?
- How the data will be stored.
- Responsibility for data analysis and sense-making.
- Responsibility for reporting.
- Baseline information on the indicators, i.e. information on that indicator at point $t_0$ in time.
- Target for year x in relation to that indicator.
- Result for year x in relation to that indicator.

*An **M&E system** entails the complete process of data collection, data analysis, reporting, resourcing and planning; it comprises all indicators, tools and processes that will be used to measure if a project or programme has been implemented according to plan and is having the expected results. A M&E system will often be written down in a M&E plan (http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-create-an-monitoring-and-evaluation-system/) .*

See for a **template of a M&E plan in annex 1**.

See for a **template of a M&E framework** in **annex 2**.

*An **M&E framework** or table describes the indicators the baseline, the target value of the indicator, the means of verification (how the indicator will be measured, how the data will be collected), the frequency of measurement, the responsibilities in measurement and reporting.*

**M&E in social change networks**

ISSA is a membership association serving as a learning community as well as a network. In the 1990s, networks became increasingly important actors of social change[2]. Various interlinked factors have contributed to this: the outstanding increase in the visibility of problems of global nature (e.g. human rights, women's rights, environmental protection), the widespread diffusion and use of technology (e.g. decreasing costs of trans-boundary communication, development of new forms of organisations) and the globalisation of education and knowledge (e.g. the growth of cross-border partnerships between universities and think tanks, mobility programmes for students and teachers) to name a few.

Increased investments are put in the evaluation of non-profit organisations and their networks[3]. While this resource package does not focus on monitoring and evaluation of networks, it is useful to consider the specificities of evaluating transnational associations and networks aiming for change.

1. These associations and networks invest in tackling complex social issues. Evaluating related interventions in terms of changes that can be identified is challenging. Results are likely to occur later in time, as the impact of an action provokes a 'wave' effect of changes and responses over time. Some effects might be visible in the short term, while others become only apparent after a longer period. For example, the time horizon of advocacy effects to occur is long-term and uncertain. Depending on when the impact is assessed, the results of the impact assessment will be different. After the first year of implementation of a project or programme, the impact will be close to zero, since impact (structural and sustainable changes) is usually visible in the longer term.
2. An association or network is composed of multiple (national) members, pursuing their own missions and objectives. The missions and objectives of individual member organisations might not be completely in line with the mission and objectives of the network.
3. Measuring social change is a demanding task. Results depend on factors that cannot necessarily be controlled or whose influence can be unpredictable. E.g., the political situation may influence outcomes more than anything within the control of an organisation. While it may be challenging to identify outcomes and impact, progress can certainly be measured which makes monitoring and evaluation all the more necessary.
4. ISSA is not operating in a vacuum; various actors operate in the same domain and can claim ownership of changes. Attributing change to a single actor is tricky and may even harm cooperation with other stakeholders. Who can take credit for the change that happened?
5. There is no universal set of indicators to measure complex and often intangible results.

2 Wilson-Grau, R., and M. Nuñez, (2006), *Evaluating International Social Change Networks: A Conceptual Framework for a Participatory Approach*, in: Development in Practice, Volume 17, number 2, INTRAC. See also the work of the Oversees Development Institute (ODI) on networks for social change: https://www.odi.org/publications and of Network Impact: http://www.networkimpact.org/our-services/

3 Innovation Network, (2016), *State of Evaluation 2016. Evaluation Practice and Capacity in the Non-profit Sector*, Washington

# 3. WHY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Very often civil society organisations engage in M&E to **respond to a demand of the funder**, i.e. to demonstrate whether the work has been carried out as agreed and in compliance with the set standards and other donor requirements (accountability and compliance).

While accountability is of course a valid reason for M&E, there are other reasons to invest in M&E. Monitoring and evaluating how activities are implemented and the extent to which planned results (changes) are achieved, enables to understand, analyse and articulate the performance of an organisation, project or of ISSA learning community. It is assumed that ISSA wants to bring about lasting change in society and therefore is looking for an answer to the question 'Are we making a difference'? Monitoring and assessing results deliver very **valuable management information**.

M&E are particularly useful when a better understanding is needed of how the investment of resources lead to results, when results are difficult to observe especially in cases where work is focused on behavioural change or catalyse change in systems, policies and/or structures.

> *"Monitoring and evaluation can sometimes seem like an unaffordable luxury, an administrative burden, or an unwelcome instrument of external oversight. But if used well, M&E can become a powerful tool for social and political change" (School of Geography and the Environment, (2014), A step by step guide to Monitoring and Evaluation, Version 1.0)*

Another main purpose of M&E (if not the main purpose) is **learning**. While in many cases accountability tends to be favoured over learning, learning linked to evaluation services a greater goal. It contributes to the understanding of how the intervention has made a difference (or not). If a M&E system is designed with learning in mind, it becomes part of the project or programme cycle, providing unique opportunities to learn throughout the management cycle of a project or programme.

There are particular challenges for M&E in non-profit organisations. In general, non-profit organisations are good at 'doing' but find if often difficult to do and reflect at the same time. Staff often feel too busy to pay attention to monitoring and evaluation that is perceived to come 'on top'. Furthermore, funders and donors are often reluctant to invest in M&E processes[4]. A main message when designing a M&E system is to **keep it simple and feasible!**

[4] Garbutt, A., (2013), *Monitoring and Evaluation. A Guide for Small and Diaspora NGOs*, The Peer Learning Programme for Small and Diaspora Organisations

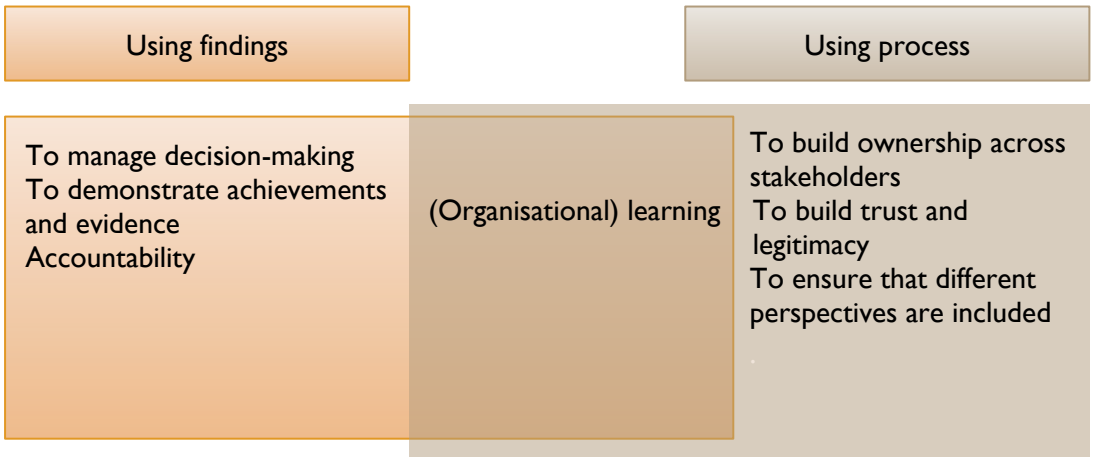
# 4. DECIDING KEY ISSUES (FRAME BOUNDARIES)

## 4.1. PURPOSE OF M&E

One of the first key decisions to make is to decide on the purpose of M&E, since this will determine how to implement the M&E process: the timeline, the resources, the stakeholders to be involved and the tools to be used. While it is possible to address multiple purposes in a single M&E design, often a choice will have to be made about where to primarily concentrate resources as the use of M&E may differ at various levels and for different actors. If the project actors are interested in the quality of services delivered as part of the project, the funders may have a larger interest in the extent to which the resources have been used in an efficient way.

**M&E systems can be designed to use the findings and/or to use the process[5].**

**Figure 4: Purposes of M&E**




*Source:* http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/frame/decide_purpose

**Using findings:**

a. To provide useful management information by supporting implementation of projects and programmes with data to guide and improve the performance, continuation or termination of projects and programmes. M&E can **augment** in this way the **quality of management decision-making**. An example of the use of M&E for this purpose is to inform decisions on resource allocation to activities implemented within a project or programme.
b. To **demonstrate achievements and evidence to** a wider audience (for advocacy, lobbying and fundraising). M&E results can help to make arguments for giving attention to an issue or problem or for soliciting support for an initiative.

5 http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/frame/decide_purpose; Public Service Commission, (2008), *Basic concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation*, Branch Monitoring and Evaluation, Pretoria; Wongtschowski, M., Oonk, L., and R., Mur, (2016), *Monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning*, Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, Amsterdam

c. To demonstrate **accountability upwards** to the donor or funder and **downwards** to the beneficiaries. "'*Accountability' means explaining what you have done and taking responsibility for the results of your actions. This includes explaining how you have used funds"*[6]. Upwards to the donor, M&E is often an obligation to demonstrate that the contracted work has been implemented in compliance with agreed terms of reference or agreed standards. Downward accountability involves making accounts and plans transparent to the clients/beneficiaries.

**Using process:**

d. To build **ownership across stakeholders**. The process of designing the M&E system, collecting and analysing data can be used to build a wide evaluation ownership amongst those involved in and/or affected by the project or programme. The consequences of a narrow evaluation ownership can be a lack of cooperation, a lack of access to information, a lack of use of results and ultimately that the project or programme itself will not sufficiently benefit from the M&E.

e. To build **trust and legitimacy**. The process of engaging stakeholders in the evaluation process is also used to give legitimacy to the M&E process. At the same time the M&E process in which various actors are engaged will contribute to develop a better understanding of each other and of each other's expectations.

f. To **ensure that diverse perspectives are included** in the evaluation and in the project or programme. There are likely to be many different interests involved or implicated in any project or programme, and therefore also in its evaluation. The process of M&E offers the opportunity to be responsive to the questions of stakeholders when shaping the M&E agenda, to involve them in data collection and analysis and to pay attention to their needs in the report.

Engaging in M&E processes can be very effective to foster **learning**, though learning from M&E does not happen automatically. While often a difference is made between M&E for accountability and M&E for learning, striking a balance between M&E for accountability (more backwards looking) and M&E for learning (more future oriented) is a more relevant and effective approach. Yet, one of the most important challenges for M&E is to help to create **organisational learning**: translating M&E findings into learning challenges most organisations, "*even the most sophisticated ones*"[7].

> *"If an organisation doesn't have a culture of learning, it is extremely difficult for individual learning to inspire organisational learning" (The Barefoot Collective, 2011, p36)*

Every organisation has its unique culture. The learning culture of an organisation is composed of those aspects of the overall organisational culture that affect learning (positively or negatively).

6 https://www.mango.org.uk/guide/accountability

7 Public Service Commission, (2008), *Basic concepts in Monitoring and Evaluation*, Branch Monitoring and Evaluation, Pretoria; The Barefoot Collective, (2011), *The Barefoot Guide 2: Learning Practices in Organisations and Social Change*, http://www.barefootguide.org/

These aspects can be summarised as[8]:

- A future and external orientation of the organisation: be open to external feedback, support and challenges.
- Free, horizontal exchange and flow of information: individuals need to be supported to network across organisational boundaries to further develop their knowledge and expertise.
- Commitment to learning and personal development: learning requires support from management; to encourage learning it has to be rewarded e.g. through affirmation and encouragement.
- Valuing people and their creativity: there should be sufficient room to challenge views.
- A climate of openness and trust.

Developing a learning culture also means 'letting go' aspects that undermine learning, such as competition between staff, leadership that values ideas of some over others, climate of insecurity.

## 4.2. WHAT IS TO BE EVALUATED

The following step in defining boundaries of a M&E system is to identify what exactly will be monitored and evaluated. For example, if within a programme, the courses delivered have to be evaluated, it is necessary to further specify this 'object of evaluation': all courses or only the face-to-face courses, which aspects of the courses, etc. In defining what is to be evaluated, three tasks can be distinguished:

- The description of a project or programme: what is the project or programme about?
- The development of the intervention logic: why is the project or programme constructed in a particular way?
- The description of potential unintended results. Not only intended results are important, unintended results, whether they are positive or negative can be significant too. Data collection should remain sufficiently open to include also the unanticipated. This can be done by incorporating open-ended questions to identify possible negative results and/or to identify potential negative impacts, the likelihood that they might occur and how they can be avoided.

In the next paragraphs (A) en (B) the description of the project or programme under evaluation and especially the development of the intervention logic will be further detailed. Despite the preconceptions that readers might hold about Theory of Change and Logical Frameworks, the authors believe that they are useful tools for supporting project or programme development, management and evaluation. Furthermore, Theory of Change and logic models are becoming increasingly important for funders.

8 Farago, J., & D., Skyrme, (1995), *Learning organisations*, Internet article; The Barefoot Collective, (2011), *The Barefoot Guide 2: Learning Practices in Organisations and Social Change*, p40-41

## A. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT OR PROGRAMME UNDER EVALUATION

In the beginning of the M&E process, it is helpful to make an initial description of the project or programme in question. This can be an opportunity to engage with stakeholders involved early enough in the process. Checking information with different stakeholders can be helpful to identify where there are disagreements or gaps in the available information. The description of the object of evaluation (what is being evaluated) can include information on:

- The rationale of the project or programme: why was it developed or installed?
- The time frame of the project or programme.
- The scale, i.e. resources allocated.
- The stakeholders involved.
- The intended benefits for the final target group(s).
- The significance of contextual factors interfering with the project or programme (social, political, geographical, etc.).

## B. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERVENTION LOGIC

An intervention logic is simply an explanation of why you do the things you do, given what you expect to accomplish. It explains how a project, a programme or a policy is understood to contribute to outcomes that will eventually lead to the expected impact[9].

*Intervention logic is also referred to as:*
*- Programme logic*
*- Theory-based evaluation*
*- Theory-driven evaluation*
*- Programme theory*

*(Roger, P.J., 2008)*

When you design a project or programme, you are choosing among many options. E.g., if you want to raise awareness about the importance of quality in education, you can do that via various channels. How do you decide which ones to include? Since you probably cannot do everything conceivable to raise awareness on this issue, which channels do you consider to be the most valuable and why? The intervention logic explains how and why a project or programme is supposed to achieve the expected results and finally impact, developing a rationale on how the intervention is likely to work.

An intervention logic provides also a conceptual basis or framework for M&E. It is based on the elements of the intervention logic (as outcomes, activities, etc.) that the indicators necessary for monitoring will be defined.

In every project or programme, there are ideas of why certain choices are made for activities and expected results. These choices are not always made explicit, nor necessarily recorded. For example, why in phase 2 of a project a conference is planned and not two focus groups to raise awareness in the community involved. Sometimes these choices are made in a rather intuitive way, e.g. because it

9 Roger, P.J., (2008), *Using programme theory to evaluate complicated and complex aspects of interventions*, in: Evaluation, Vol 14 (1): p29-28

worked out fine in the past. If the rationale behind decisions is not documented, tracing back why things happened how they happened, and perhaps not the way they were intended to happen, may be difficult.

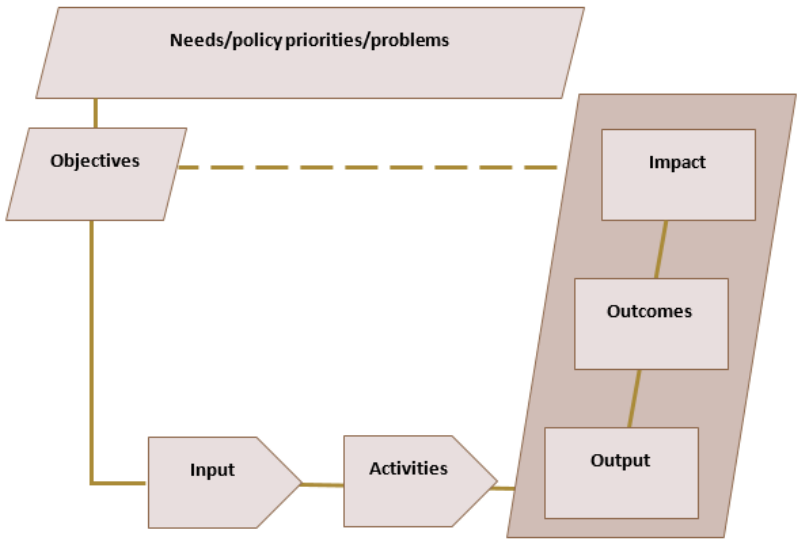
There are several ways to represent the intervention logic. In this resource package, we will look into three representations most used:

- The result chain.
- The theory of change.
- The logic framework.

## THE RESULT CHAIN

The result chain is a representation of a simple intervention logic, i.e. it represents a *linear* process with inputs, activities and results. It helps to clarify the objectives of a programme or project and the relations between these objectives, the inputs needed to realise these objectives, the activities to be undertaken and the results, where a distinction can be made between outputs, outcomes and impact.

**Figure 5: The result chain**




*Source: SAGO Research*

- A programme or project wants to formulate an answer to **needs** or **problems** that have been perceived concerning a specific group or **priorities** that have been identified **by policy makers**.
- These needs, priorities or problems are translated into objectives of the programme or project. **Objectives** are what you want to achieve with your programme or project. These objectives are related to the impact that you want to bring about in society.
- **Input:** the resources necessary to produce the results. These are human resources (the staff, the staff of member organisations and external experts), financial resources and technical resources.
- **Activities/processes:** actions undertaken through which input (resources) are used. Activities are about 'us': 'we' develop a manual, 'we' organise an event.

- **Results**:
  - **Outputs:** immediate results of activities (products and services). In general you **control** your outputs. E.g. a manual is produced.
  - **Outcomes:** short- and medium terms effects of the use of outputs. In general you **influence** your outcomes. Outcomes are changes in relation to behaviour, knowledge, skills, motivation, relations between people/groups/organisations. Outcomes are about 'them': 'they' (member organisations, policy makers, other NGOs, beneficiaries, etc.) use are outputs, 'they' have changed their discourse as a result of the use of 'our' outputs, 'they' have changed their behaviour.
  - **Impact**: long-term changes in structures and systems. E.g. changes in legal systems, changes in social protection, education systems, etc.

**Example of a results chain:**

A programme is developed and implemented to support visually impaired (VI) school children enabling them to fully use their potential in life through an improved access to education (*objective*). This programme responds to both a need in society and more specifically in the community of parents of children with a visual impairment and of children with visual impairment themselves. Furthermore, it also responds to a policy priority in this area (*needs in society and priority in policy).* The input consists of the financial resources allocated to this programme by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health, as well as the human resources of professionals involved (*input)*. Additionally, the facilities used will be a national expertise centre for blind and visually impaired children and adults (*input*). For the implementation of the programme, various *activities* will be developed related to the main domains identified: expertise development of professionals, awareness raising of parents and socio-emotional and cognitive development of VI school children.

The results of this programme are expected at various levels: at the level of *outputs*, amongst others a method for teachers to measure twice a year school performance, social-emotional development and participation of the VI children, a protocol for screening, referral and follow up of the VI children, x number of professionals who have followed a training programme based on their identified needs and x number of parents who have followed the awareness raising programme that has been developed and implemented. Some examples of results at the level of *outcomes* are: after 3 years 90% of the identified VI children received proper screening, assessment and appropriate devices, after 3 years 60% of the identified VI children show progress in relation to their school performance, socio-emotional development and participation in extra-curriculum activities.

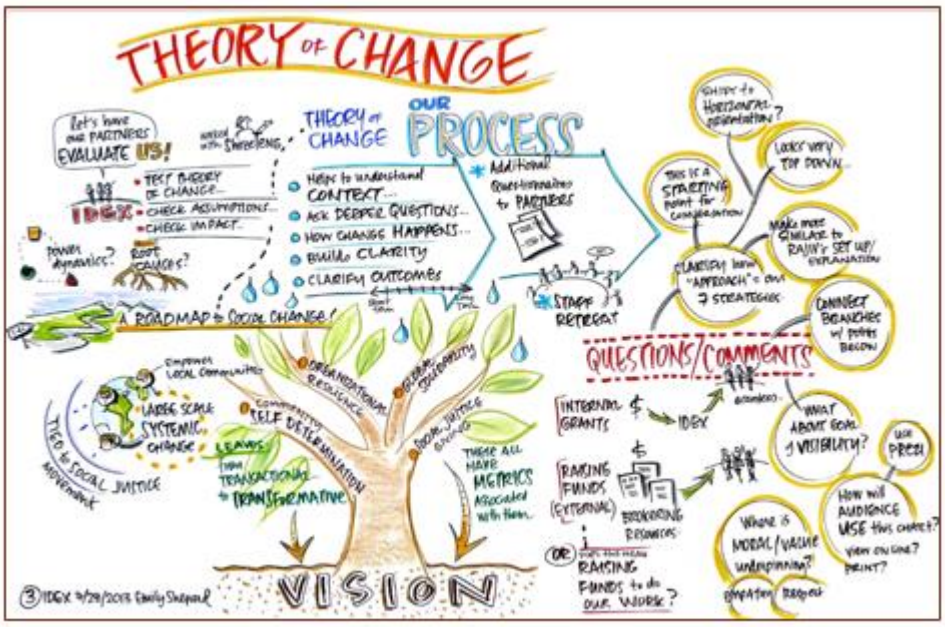
To be able to fill in this result chain you need to clarify the underlying assumptions: why do you think that activity A will lead to result B? Why do you think that by doing A (activity) you will achieve B (result)?

It is important to make these underlying assumptions explicit to learn from implementation. When a programme or project does not lead to the expected results, donors or clients may assume that the team involved did not implement the activities well enough, while in reality the underlying assumption that activity A would lead to result B may not have been accurate in the first place.

A result chain is to be developed before starting to design a M&E plan and ideally even before starting with the design of a programme or project. If the project or programme has been implemented as planned but did not lead to the expected results, you should be able to examine what assumptions were not valid, to make adaptations if necessary. Also, the result chain will play an important role in the development of indicators for monitoring and show the meaning of the criteria used for evaluation (see chapter 5 of this package).

To make underlying assumptions explicit, you can use a theory of change approach. The theory of change can go further in making underlying assumptions explicit whilst explaining the logic behind a programme or project

## THEORY OF CHANGE




Source : https://www.idex.org/about/academy/3-theory-of-change/

Theories of change (ToC) can be set at various levels: organisational level, programme level and project level. It tells the story of an organisation, a programme or project, of why and how society will be different because of the implementation of planned activities and the achievement of the expected results. It explains how activities are understood to contribute to a series of results that will produce the final intended impact. A ToC is both a process and a product: those involved in the development of a ToC go through a process of reflection, discussion and learning, resulting in a concrete output being a paper, a set of diagrams, etc.

A ToC can be used for different purposes[10]:

- For **strategic planning**: to reflect on long-term outcomes and eventually impacts and on how to achieve these. It forces those involved to reflect on how the resources will be used as inputs into activities and which activities are to be developed to achieve the desired results (change).
- For **monitoring and evaluation**: the definition of indicators for monitoring will be based on the identification of results (outputs, outcomes and impact). Furthermore, eventual differences between actual and intended results might be explained using the underlying assumptions that have been made explicit through the development of the ToC. Among the many assumptions underpinning a project, programme or any intervention, there are probably a few that are critical: if these assumptions are not valid, the project or programme will most probably not work as planned. It might well be that the activities have been implemented as planned, but that the activities assumed to lead to the defined results, were not the right ones or that risks were miscalculated.

> *"A theory of change helps avoid implementing mistakes". (Anderson, A.A. (2005) – p8)*

- For **learning**: the development of a ToC helps those involved to develop a shared understanding (learning) of what they are trying to accomplish; of the implementation process leading to results.

*Young school-age kids from 6 – 12 years achieve learning and other skills to participate in life according to the full potential of their capabilities.* The development of a ToC can be divided into five steps:

1. **Identifying the long-term outcome or goal to achieve:** It seems obvious that the relevant individuals involved in a programme or project have the same understanding about the ultimate goal to achieve. However, what we often see is that different people involved in the programme or project have different ideas about the ultimate purpose of their work. It is important to make sure that those involved share a same definition of the long-term outcome and that this definition is precise enough.

2. **Conduct 'backwards mapping' or definition of the pathway(s) of change:** A key component of constructing this ToC is the **'**backwards mapping'[11]. You start with the outcome that you want to achieve to define what is necessary to get there (= the pathway). Most interventions have multiple pathways to achieve long-term outcome or various pathways might be necessary to achieve the outcome but cannot all be part of the programme or project. For example, the HOPE project aims at supporting children in underprivileged districts to become happy and

10 Stein, D., and C. Valters, (2012), *Understanding theory of change in international development,* JSRP Paper 1, The Asia Foundation; Anderson, A.A., (2005), *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change. A practical guide to theory development*, The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, New York; Vogel, I. (2012), *Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development. Review report*, UK Department of International Development

11 Rogers, P., (2014), *Theory of change*, UNICEF Methodological Briefs. Impact Evaluation No. 2; Anderson, A.A., (2005), *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change. A practical guide to theory development*, The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, New York

fulfilled in school, family and life and to make positive contributions to society. The various possible pathways for the project contributing to this are: (1) an educational pathway, (2) a civic mindedness pathway and (3) a health pathway. The HOPE project management made the deliberate choice to focus on the educational and civic mindedness pathway. For the health pathway, a follow-up project would be designed.

*'Backwards mapping' means that you start at the end of the journey of the programme or project and that you walk back to the beginning. This is almost the opposite of how we usually think about planning since it starts with questions like: 'What is needed to achieve the long-term outcome of this programme?' instead of 'what activities are needed to achieve our goals?'.*

*(Rogers, P., (2014) and Anderson, A.A., (2005))*

3. For the backwards mapping, **outcomes** are identified that should be brought about to achieve the long-term outcome. Participants involved in the development of a ToC are often inclined to focus on what they must do or what others should do. A way to avoid this trap is to express the outcomes as 'nouns' and to avoid verbs; the outcomes should be defined in terms of results, accomplishments, changes, etc. For example: the improved ability to organise his/her homework, instead of improving the ability to organise his/her homework; an improved demonstration of self-awareness rather than improving self-awareness.
   In defining outcomes, it is important to concentrate on the outcomes that those involved can influence. For example: a NGO defined one of its outcomes as 'an increased level of successful project applications of member organisations under European programme X' while the success of project applications of its members was out of the remit of this NGO, based on the activities that were developed for their members. The NGO developed training activities for its members to increase their success in writing project applications and being awarded. The assumption was that through this training, members would increase their skills in writing successful project proposals, which would eventually lead to an increase level of successful project applications. Yet, many other factors, which are not under the control of the NGO co-determine whether a project proposal is awarded by a funder. In this case, the NGO could have developed complementary activities for its members, like e.g. reviewing with them the project proposal before sending it to the funding organisation. However, probably most sensible would have been to redefine the outcome, e.g. 'members demonstrate an increased level of capacity (skills) of writing project proposals of good quality'. After each training session delivered to members, the NGO can organise a follow-up on the basis of 'homework' for participants of the training, to monitor progress in their skills.

   The defined outcomes (except the long-term outcome) are also preconditions: they are conditions that are necessary for the next outcome in the pathway to be achieved. There is no hard rule saying how far down to go in this backwards mapping process (the scope of the ToC): those involved should decide how many pathways will be taken into account and how many levels of outcomes/preconditions should be taken into account. In general, the definition of the pathway stops when it appears clear that there are no more necessary preconditions to an outcome. A more practical guideline is to go three or four steps down from the first row of outcomes; this is often sufficient to understand the pathway[12].

12 Rogers, P., (2014), *Theory of change*, UNICEF Methodological Briefs. Impact Evaluation No. 2

4. **Operationalise outcomes by identifying suitable outputs and activities:** Activities are all the things that are done in a programme or project for and/or with the beneficiaries. Also at this stage the causal links between the activities and related outcomes need to be made visible. In general, it is likely that some of the activities will lead to more than one outcome and some outcomes will have more than one activity leading to them. Outputs are those results which are achieved immediately after implementing an activity.

5. **Showing the causal links:** The links explaining the causality between outcomes and between outcomes and activities have to be made explicit.

6. **Make the assumptions explicit:** When defining the pathway(s) and the causal links between activities and outcomes, assumptions are (implicitly) used that A will lead to B. For example: one of the assumptions in the theory of change of World Vision is that "to achieve sustained child-wellbeing, World Vision's change strategies need to address different life cycle stages of children. Therefore, from 0 to 5 years, WV's focus includes health, nutrition and early childhood development; from 6 to 11 years the focus includes education and life skills; from 12 to 18 years our focus includes life skills, active participation and entrepreneurship"[13].

   Different types of assumptions can be distinguished:
   - Assumptions about why specific outcomes are necessary to achieve the long-term outcome/to achieve impact.
   - Assumptions about why the set of outcomes/preconditions defined is sufficient to bring about the long-term outcome.
   - Assumptions about why these specific activities will lead to these sets of outcomes.
   - Assumptions about the context in which the programme or project operates.

   Assumptions may be based on empirical knowledge or on research evidence.

**Examples of assumptions in ToC:**

"Our partnership is based on the belief that community members know best what is needed in our community". (assumption about context)

"Skill training is a critical factor in employment, but so are supportive communities and employer workplaces". (assumption about activities)

"Child care quality will improve if providers have access to accurate information, parents care about the quality of child care and licensing regulations reinforce quality standards". (assumptions about relation between outcomes and long-term goal)

(based on: Organisational Research Services, (2004), *Theory of change: A practical tool for action, results and learning*, prepared for Annie E. Casey Foundation, p24)

13 World Vision, (2013), *World Vision's Theory of Change*, Summary, p6

## LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A logical framework (or "log frame") is a programme or project design and management methodology: it brings structure and logic to the relations between the project objectives, the planned inputs, planned activities and expected results[14]. A logical framework has a similar purpose as a theory of change, i.e. to describe how the results are achieved in a programme or project. While a ToC shows a more 'messy' picture, with various pathways leading to the expected change and the underlying logic why this will happen, a logical framework illustrates only one specific pathway, i.e. the pathway that the programme or project is dealing with. Some differences between a ToC and a log frame:

**Table 2: Differences between a Theory of Change and a logical framework[15]**

| Theory of Change | Logical framework |
|---|---|
| Gives you 'the big picture'. | Gives a detailed description of the project or programme: how inputs are used for activities and how activities will lead to results (outputs, outcomes and impact). |
| Shows different pathways that might lead to the change that you envisage, even if those pathways are not (directly) related to your programme or project. | Includes space for risks and assumptions, though often these are only defined at a basic level. |
| Describes how and why you think that change happens: "if we do A, then B will happen, because….". | "We plan A, B en C, which will result in X, Y and Z". |
| The diagram is flexible without a specific format. It could include feedback loops and one box (e.g. activity) could lead to multiple other boxes (e.g. results). | The diagram used has usually the format of a matrix. |

There are different steps to follow to develop a log frame which can be grouped into an analysis of the actual situation on the one hand and building the logical framework matrix on the other hand.

The analysis of the situation comprises an analysis of the problem(s) of the stakeholders, of the objectives and of the strategies.

14 BOND, (2003), *Logical Framework Analysis*, Guidance Notes No. 4, Networking for International Development, London; Jensen, G., (2010), *The logical framework approach. How to guide*, BOND, Networking for International Development, London

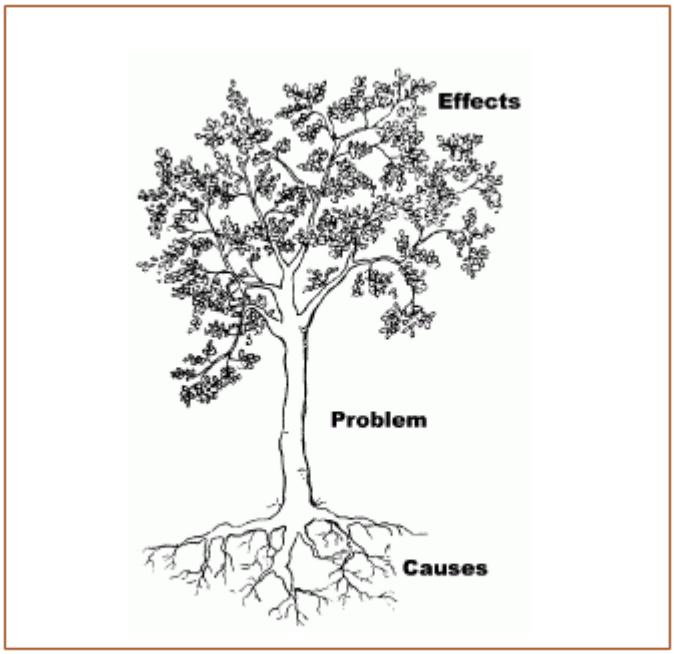
15 http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/theory-of-change-vs-logical-framework-whats-the-difference-in-practice/ and https://www.annmurraybrown.com/single-post/2016/03/20/Theory-of-Change-vsThe-Logic-Model-Never-Be-Confused-Again

1. **Analysis of the problem(s)**:

The problem analysis is usually undertaken by identifying the main problems and analysing their causes and effects. A tool often used for this purpose is a **problem tree**[16].
The problem tree consists of three parts:

- The trunk, representing the core problem.
- The roots, representing the causes of the core problem.
- The branches, representing the effects of the problem.

An essential part of the development of the problem tree is that it is generated in a participatory way. Practice shows that it is best carried out in a small group of six to eight people using visual techniques like flip charts and colour cards.
Firstly, the problem or issue to be analysed should be discussed and agreed upon. At this stage, the problem can still be broad, as the problem tree will help to break it down into manageable 'chunks'. The problem is written in the centre of the flip chart and becomes the trunk of the tree. Secondly, the causes of this focal problem have to be identified. These become the roots of the tree. Thirdly the effects have to be ascertained; these will be the branches of the tree. Causes and effects can be written down on post-it notes or cards to re-arrange them in a cause-effect logic.



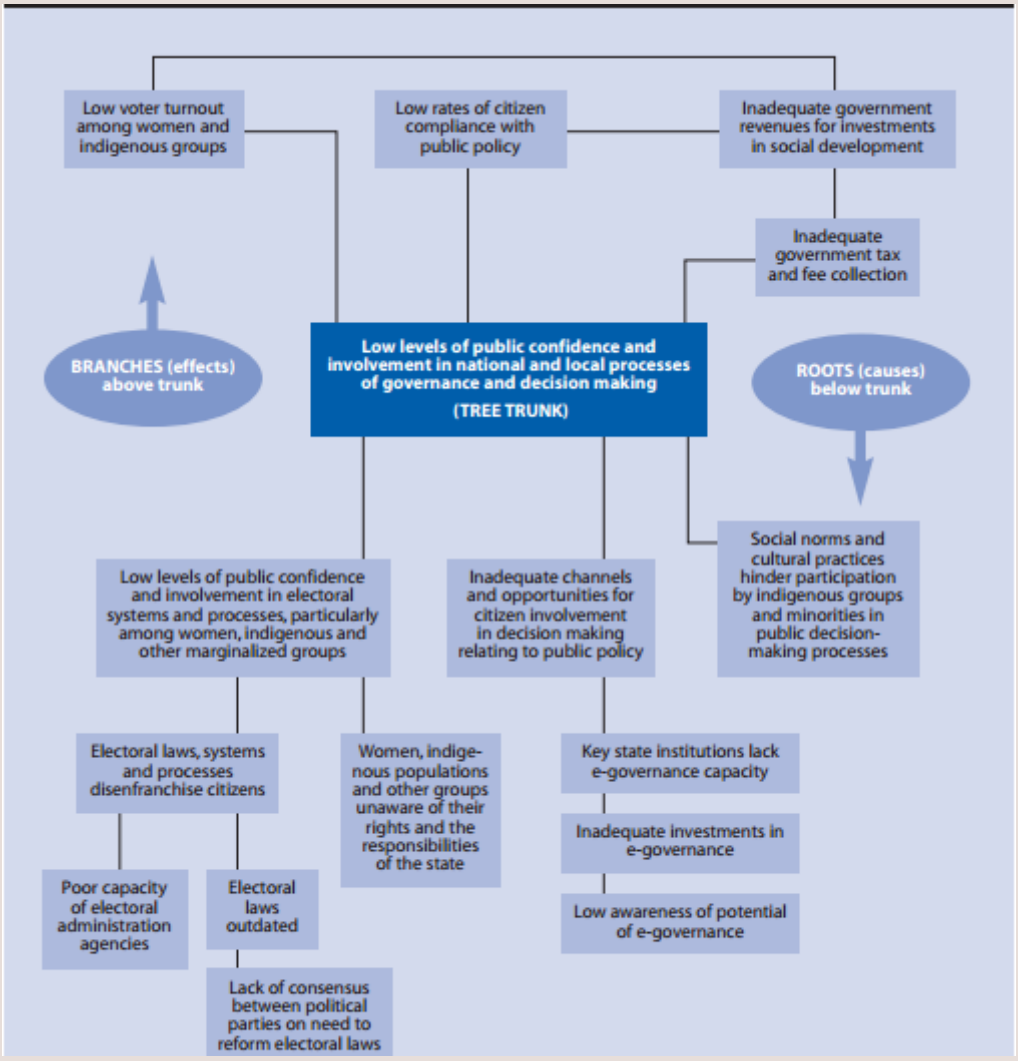

Source : http://www.comminit.com/malaria-africa/content/problem-tree

*The **problem tree** is a method of mapping out core problems, together with their causes and effects.*

See for a template of a **problem tree** in **annex 3**.

16 Wageningen University & Research: http://www.mspguide.org/tool/problem-tree; Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management: http://sswm.info/category/planning-process-tools/exploring/exploring-tools/preliminary-assessment-current-status/prob;

**Example of problem tree:**




*Source: UNDP, (2009), Handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for development results, New York, p39 (figure 6)*

2. **Analysis of the stakeholders:**

In a second step, analysis is necessary to identify the various actors having a stake in the project or programme: who identified the problems? who is affected by the problems identified? what are the roles and stakes of the different actors concerned in addressing the problems and reaching solutions[17].

> ***Stakeholders*** *are people, groups or institutions which are likely to be affected by a proposed intervention (negatively or positively) or those who can affect the outcome of the intervention (Rietbergen-McCracken et al, 1998).*

[17] Rietbergen-McCracken, J. et al, (1998), *Participation and assessment: Tools and Techniques*, Washington: World Bank

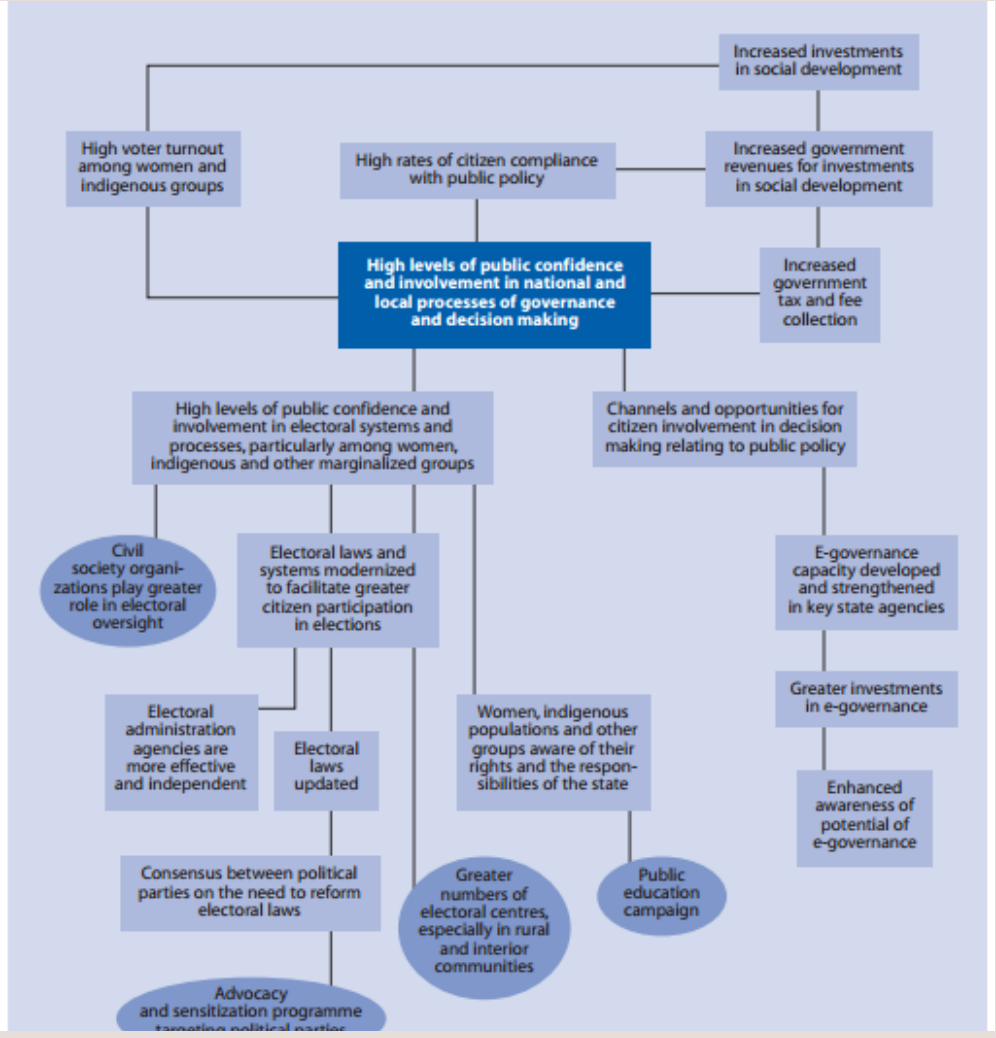
The identification of the concerned actors or stakeholders is a precondition in any participatory planning process. For the identification of stakeholders and for the categorisation the following questions can be used:

- Who are the people that are interested in the project or programme? What is their role in the project or programme?
- Who are the (potential) beneficiaries?
- Who has reservations about the project or programme?
- Who may impact the project or programme? Who has the power to influence the project or programme?

3. **Analysis of the objectives:**

The analysis of the objectives is a process of identifying, specifying and categorising objectives of the various stakeholders involved in the project or programme. This is done by transforming the problem tree into a solution tree which states the possible solutions as objectives. The solution tree will give an image of an improved situation in the future.

**Example of objective/solution tree:**



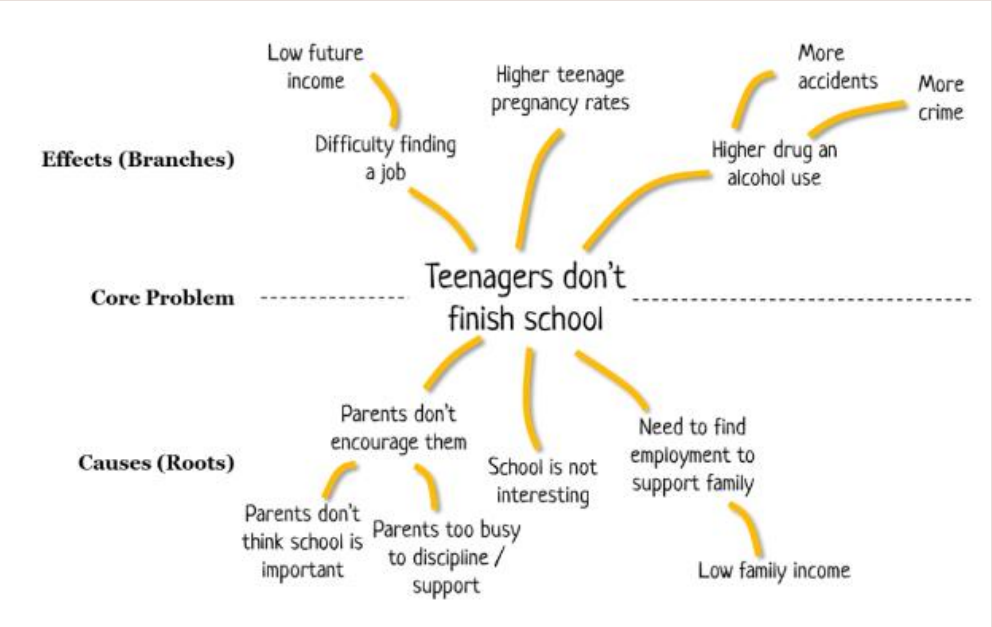

*Source: UNDP, (2009), Handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for development results, New York, p47 (figure 7)*

## 4. Analysis of strategies

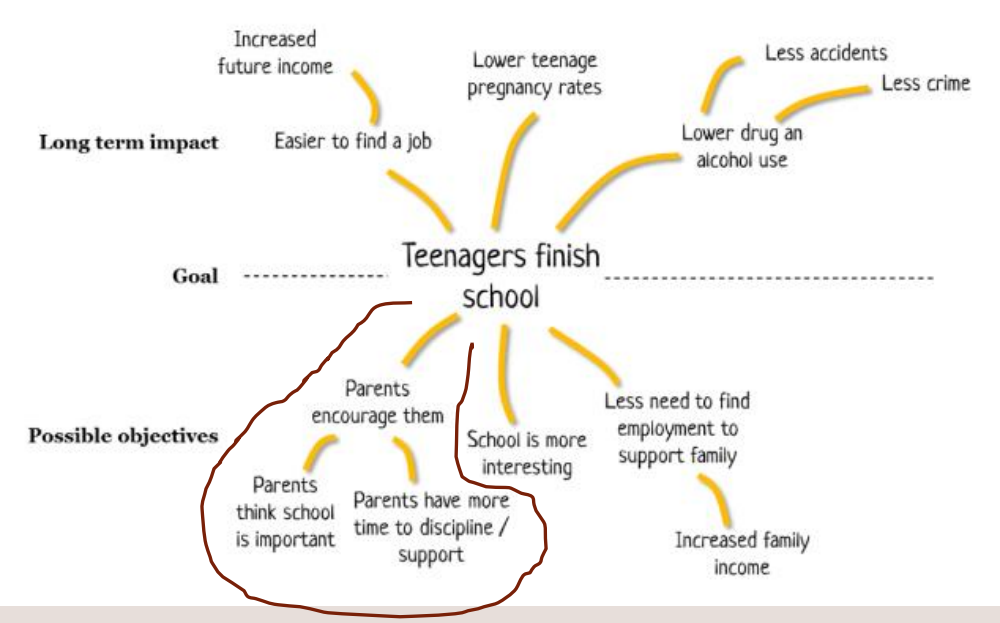
In this phase, a strategy to achieve the desired results is selected. Based on the various analyses of the situation, the problems/solutions and of the stakeholders, objectives are clustered and the feasibility of the interventions is examined. In the solution tree, the main objective becomes the goal or purpose of the project or programme and the lower order objectives become the activities and results.

**Example of problem and solution tree:**

**Problem tree:**




**Solution tree:**




The choice might be to focus on the pathway in which parents are directly involved.
*Source : (http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-design-a-new-program/)*

## Completing the log frame

The results of the various analyses are used as the basis for the development of the logical framework matrix or log frame. The matrix is composed of four columns and four (or more) rows.

**Table 3: Explanation of a logical framework matrix or log frame**

| Project or programme description | Verifiable indicators of achievement | Sources and means of verification | Assumptions and risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal:** The ultimate result to which the project or programme is contributing (impact level). | | | |
| **Purpose:** The change that is expected to occur if the project or programme has achieved its results (outcome level). | | | |
| **Outputs:** The specifically intended results of the project or programme activities (also used as milestones). | | | |
| **Activities:** The tasks that will be implemented to produce the intended results. | **Inputs:** Means required to implement the activities (human, financial) | | |

Sources and means of verification specify how, who and when the information will be gathered based on the indicators. Assumptions are the external factors (challenges or threats) that are likely to influence the results of the project or programme.

To complete the log frame[18]:

- Start at the top and work down the first column ("what do you want to achieve and what do you want to do to make this happen?").
- Work across from left to right: identify indicators for measuring progress (see paragraph 5 on criteria and indicators) and identify means of verification for each indicator ("what information do you need and how can it be gathered?").
- Work bottom-up: identify assumptions and risks (external factors) that could affect the success of the project or programme or that could prevent progress.

[18] http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-write-a-logical-framework-logframe/

***A risk analysis*** *contains usually the following questions:*

- *will this risk affect the implementation of the project or make the objectives unachievable? If the answer is no, then ignore; if the answer is yes:*
- *is it possible that the identified obstacle/risk will occur? If the answer is no, then ignore; if the answer is yes:*
- *will anyone outside the project or programme deal with the obstacle/risk? If the answer is no, then ignore; if the answer is yes:*
- *can the project or programme management deal with the obstacle/risk? If the answer is no, then the obstacles have to be managed carefully and/or alternative strategies for implementation have to be planned to avoid the obstacle. If the answer is yes, then the necessary resources need to be allocated to activities plans accordingly.*

*(Ministry of Finance, Government of the Republic of Serbia, (2008), Guide to the logical framework approach: a key tool to project cycle management, DIAL, Belgrade*

When the log frame is completed it should be checked whether the logic makes sense. This is done by following the following process:

**Table 4: If… and…. then…. in a log frame**

| Project or programme description | Verifiable indicators of achievement | Sources and means of verification | Assumptions and risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal:** The ultimate result to which the project or programme is contributing (impact level). | | | |
| **Purpose:** The change that is expected to occur if the project or programme has achieved its results (outcome level). | THEN | | |
| **Outputs:** The specifically intended results of the project or programme activities (also used as milestones). | | | |
| **Activities:** The tasks that will be implemented to produce the intended results. | **Inputs:** Means required to implement the activities (human, financial) | AND | |

IF

**Example of log frame:**

In the framework of the project 'Let's go' it was decided to develop regional summer camps to gather parents and their disabled children (6-12 years). The aim of these summer camps was to better involve parents in the education and school life of their children. In addition, a playset was developed with educational games that parents and children could take home after the camp.

| Project or programme description | Verifiable indicators of achievement | Sources and means of verification | Assumptions and risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal**: Young children from 6-12 years, with disabilities achieve learning and other skills to participate in life according to their full potential. | Percentage of children from 4-8 years participating in extra-curriculum activities. | Comparison of existing figures. | |
| **Objective 3:** Parents are increasingly involved in their children's education and rehabilitation. | Number of parents with disabled children (6-12 years) involved in activities at school. | Annual survey to schools. | Increased involvement of parents in the education and rehabilitation of their children will increase the self-confidence of children to participate in activities outside school. |
| **Output 1**: 100 children together with their parents have completed a summer camp on an annual basis.<br><br>**Output 2:** Playset (toolkit) with educational games developed with parents and children. | Number of children participating in each summer camp.<br>Number of parents participating in each summer camp.<br><br>Number of playsets distributed to parents and children. | Summer camp records.<br><br>Summer camp records.<br><br>THEN | Parents use the playset developed during summer camp, at home with their children. |
| **Activity 3:** To run 5 regional summer camps each with a capacity of 20 children and 40 parents every year. | Number of summer camps run on an annual basis.<br>Geographical coverage of the summer camps. | Summer camp records.<br>Summer camp records.<br><br>AND | Parents of disabled children are willing to participate with their children in the regional summer camp. |

IF

## 4.3. TYPES OF EVALUATION

Various typologies of evaluations are based on[19]:

- The **positioning of the evaluation in the project-, programme- or policy life-cycle**, e.g. ex-ante evaluation in the preparatory phase, a mid-term evaluation during implementation, a final evaluation when a project or programme is finished.
- The **content** of the evaluation: focused on the content of the project, programme or policy (evaluation is looking into the concept, the structure, the instruments, processes and actions) or focused on the impact of the project, programme or policy (changes induced by project, programme or policy in society).
- The **methodological position of the evaluation**: determines whether the evaluation is geared towards:
    - judging success and performance by the application of criteria,
    - explaining programme impacts and success,
    - change, seeking to bring about improvements for programmes and its participants.
- The **purpose** of the evaluation: accountability, development (improve the delivery or management of the programme), knowledge production or social improvement.

The most common types of evaluation are here presented[20]:

- **Formative evaluation**: it usually starts when a new project or programme is being developed or when an existing one is being modified. The purpose is to provide feedback to project or programme actors and other stakeholders on whether any changes are needed for improvement. The main purpose is **development** and **learning**. Formative evaluation is analysing and interpreting what is happening. Formative evaluation is similar to monitoring.
- **Ex-ante evaluation**: this type of evaluation is sometimes confused with formative evaluation, however, while ex-ante evaluation is primarily concerned with **prediction** (the feasibility of a project or programme), formative evaluation is mainly about learning based on strengths and weaknesses.
- **Summative evaluation**: it takes place after the project or programme has been established. It is mainly concerned with making judgements about the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, (or any other criteria) of the project or programme. Summative evaluation is **analysing** and **interpreting** what has happened. This type of evaluation is often referred to as outcome or impact assessment.

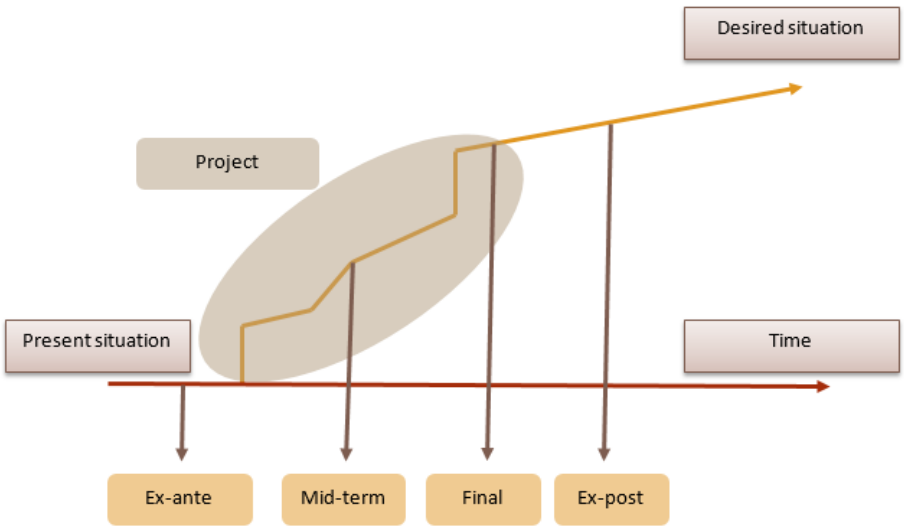
> *"When the cook tastes the soup, that's formative; when the guests taste the soup, that's summative"* (Scriven, 1991, p169)

19 De Peuter, B., De Smedt, J., & G., Bouckaert, (2007), *Handleiding beleidsevaluatie. Deel 1: Evaluatiedesign en -management*, Steunpunt Beleidsrelevant Onderzoek, Bestuurlijke Organisatie Vlaanderen; Stern, E., (2004), *Philosophies and types of evaluation research*, in: Descy, P, Tessaring, M., (eds), (2004), *The foundations of evaluation and impact research*, Third report on vocational training research in Europe: background report, Office for Official Publications of the EC, CEDEFOP Reference series, 58

20 http://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/engineering-and-technology/technology/technology-evaluation/content-section-4.2.3/ Scriven, M. (1991). *Evaluation thesaurus* (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- **Ex-post evaluation:** this type of evaluation is closely related to summative evaluation. Ex-post literally means '**after implementation'** (of the project or programme), however, for many projects and programmes it is not easy to pinpoint when they are actually finished. For some particular issues, e.g. the introduction of a technological application in a specific setting, ex-post evaluation is used to assess the situation 'before' and 'after' the technology introduction.
- **Goal-free evaluation**: Goal-free evaluation is an evaluation in which the evaluator conducts the **evaluation without particular knowledge** of or reference to stated or predetermined goals and objectives. He/she starts with data collection and tries to observe and measure all actual results (intended or unintended) without being framed by the intentions of the project or programme. A very useful overview of this evaluation approach is described in the article of Youker and Ingraham (2014)[21]. Some benefits of using goal-free evaluation is that it uncovers side-effects and can trace them in the context and in the project or programme and its goal.
- **Goal-based evaluation:** In goal-based evaluation the **achieved results are compared with the predefined objectives and goals** of the project or programme. This is the classic model used in many project and programme evaluations. However, other criteria such as efficiency and relevance are not in the focus on this evaluation. Arguably, a possible match between results and goals and objectives is not necessarily the result of a project or programme as other factors may have interfered[22].

**Figure 6: Types of evaluation**




*Source: Based on: Rengasamy, S., (2008), There is no management without monitoring, SlideShare:* https://www.slideshare.net/srengasamy/project-monitoring-evaluation-s-presentation

21 Youker, B.W., and A., Ingraham, (2014), *Goal-Free evaluation: An orientation for Foundations' Evaluations*, in: The Foundation Review, Volume 5, Issue 4, p51-61

22 Government Social Research Unit, (2007), *Magenta Book Background paper: Paper 1: what is policy evaluation*, London, UK; Kahan, B., (2008), *Excerpts from Review of Evaluation Frameworks*, prepared for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education by Kael Consulting

## 4.4. STAKEHOLDERS IN THE M&E PROCESS

It seems obvious that those who care about a project or programme, who can influence it in some way or who can be affected by the project or programme should all be involved in its M&E system. Unfortunately, this is not always (in fact often not) the case for several reasons as the lack of time or resources, or even the lack of recognition of the necessity. Still, the involvement of these stakeholders in M&E is important[23]:

- To increase the knowledge input in the project or programme, to increase awareness, commitment, support, the use of the evaluation findings, credibility and ownership and
- To reduce distrust and fear of M&E and lower the risk of M&E results being ignored or resisted.

Therefore, it is important to identify:

- Who are the stakeholders?
- What is their role in the M&E?
- What is the importance of their representation in the M&E?
- What could be their motivation to participate in the M&E?

A distinction can be made between[24]:

- **Primary stakeholders:** direct beneficiaries or those directly concerned/involved with or affected by the project or programme, like children in educational programmes.
- **Secondary stakeholders**, i.e. intermediary actors or individuals/groups indirectly affected by the project or programme but directly involved with or responsible for beneficiaries, e.g. parents, schools, social workers working with children in educational programmes.

Additionally, it is necessary to identify the **key stakeholders**, i.e. the individuals and groups with a decision-making power (e.g. policy makers, politicians) or those who can influence others (like media, but also people with a leadership position in a particular group or community). Some individuals or groups may not be involved in or affected by the project or programme, but might be willing to work on influencing its results (e.g. advocates or researchers).

Once the stakeholder groups are identified, the next step is to understand their interests and their importance for the M&E of the project or programme. Stakeholders might have various interests in M&E of the project or programme, some might use the M&E results for planning, others to support the project or programme, others still to develop future strategies or to introduce changes in a given situation. Their level of influence on the project or programme and its M&E might also be different. How to deal with the stakeholders and their various levels of influence needs also to be assessed. The following grid helps in this task.

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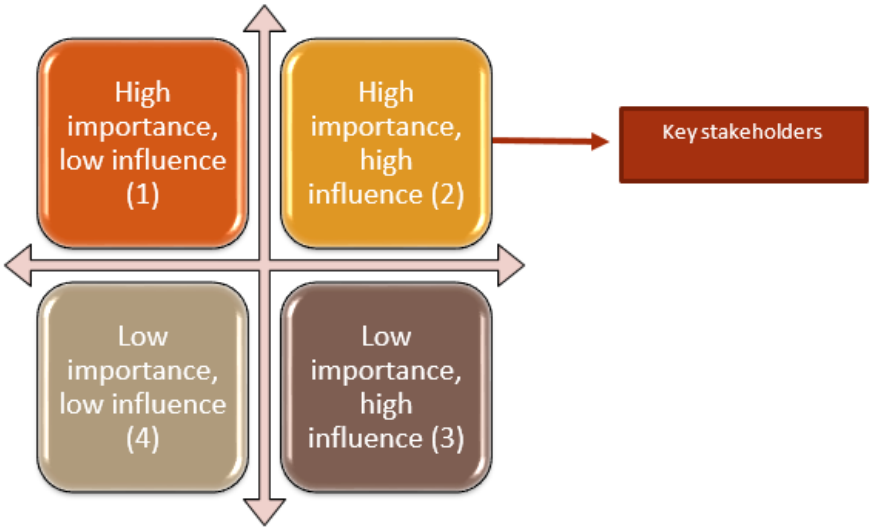
23 Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, (2013), *Engaging stakeholders in evaluation*, webinar October 29, 2013 held by Jana Kocourek, Program Associate – Evaluation and Research

24 http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main

**Figure 6: Stakeholder mapping**




*Source : Based on: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main and http://bigpushforward.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/sroi_practical_guide_context_international_cooperation.pdf*

The level of **influence** indicates how much power stakeholders have over the project or programme. An example of stakeholders with high influence are funders. The level of **importance** indicates how significant stakeholders are for the project or programme. For example, in educational programmes, children and teachers are very important groups of stakeholders.
Understanding the influence each (group of) stakeholder(s) has on the project and or programme and what their importance is for the project or programme and the related M&E may help in deciding how to deal with different stakeholders[25]:

- (1): these are the primary stakeholders and therefore, they need dedicated attention to best integrate their views in the project and programme and to involve them in the best way in the M&E processes. These stakeholders have to be at least consulted and ideally involved. It should be ensured that their needs and concerns are taken into account and that their feedback on what is happening in the project or programme (e.g. on choices made) is scrupulously collected.
- (2): it is important to build good working relationships with these stakeholders to ensure effective support to the project or programme. These stakeholders have to be considered as collaboration partners involved in the co-design and co-production of the project or programme.
- (3): specific attention is needed for these stakeholders as they might be a source of significant risks. They have high influence and can therefore affect the results but their interests are not necessarily aligned with the project or programme goals. An example of this group are financial administrators.
- (4): while these stakeholders are not of high importance to the project or programme, nor do they have high influence, it is useful to keep them informed. Their level of influence might change or their importance for the project or programme (potentially changing role in the future).

25 https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/policy/oct2011stakeholderengagement.pdf

Once the stakeholders are identified and their level of importance and influence is analysed, the most appropriate method of engaging them has to be decided upon. There are different reasons to engage stakeholders[26]:

- **To gather support for the project or programme and its M&E**: in this case those with high influence and a high interest should receive specific attention, to engage them in the project or programme and M&E processes. People with high influence but low interest need to be convinced by demonstrating how the project or programme might have a positive effect. Also this group needs to be kept on board of the M&E process. Those with low influence but high interest need at least to be kept informed. This is a group likely to be affected by the project or programme (positively or negatively) and therefore may have good reason to contribute to or support the project or programme (or not). Those with low influence and low interest need the least specific attention; keeping them informed, e.g. through a newsletter might be sufficient.
- **To develop a participatory approach to the project or programme and its M&E**: stakeholder management in this case is about keeping the attention of all stakeholders in all categories. Most attention will be need to be paid to the lower quadrants, since they will need 'empowerment'. The individuals and groups in the upper quadrants might help in this process.

The stakeholders level of engagement can vary from providing them with information, consulting them, involving them in the process, collaborating with them as partners or to empowering them[27].

**Table 5: Stakeholders' engagement**

| | Inform | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stakeholder engagement role | To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist stakeholders to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. | To obtain feedback from stakeholders on analysis, alternatives and/or outcomes. | To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered. | To partner with the stakeholder including the development of alternatives, making decisions and the identification of preferred solutions. | To place final decision-making in the hands of the stakeholder. |
| Methods of engagement | Fact sheets<br>Websites<br>Newsletters<br>TV commercials<br>… | Focus groups<br>Survey<br>Public meetings<br>… | Workshops<br>Forums<br>… | Reference groups<br>Projects<br>… | Joint planning<br>Facilitation of direct dialogue between stakeholders and government<br>… |

*Source: Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum (2007). See www.iap2.org in: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (2011), Stakeholder Engagement Framework, East Melbourne, Victoria, p14*

26 http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main, consulted on 30.03.2017

27 Bryson JM, , Patton MQ, Bowman RA., (2011), *Working with evaluation stakeholders: A rationale, step-wise approach and toolkit*, in: Evaluation and Program Planning, Feb;34(1), p1-12.

## 4.5. M&E RESOURCES

To effectively manage, carry out evaluations and make use of their results, regardless whether the option is taken for internal or external evaluation, different kinds of resources are needed: human resources (knowledge and skills), organizational resources (organisational infrastructure and processes), financial resources and time. The availability of resources is one of the main determinants of the scope of an evaluation and of its design (e.g. data collection options, number of interviewees, etc.).

The extent to which these resources are available needs to be determined and the resources secured:

- Human resources: specific expertise is needed both to design and develop M&E, to implement M&E and carry-out the follow-up.
- Organisational resources: an organisation can be conceived as an entity structured and managed to achieve collective goals, or as a temporary organisational setting like a project or programme. Organisational resources include the structure of the organisation, the coordination and management processes, the organisational culture. Organisational resources will be necessary to support and secure M&E.
- Time: the time available for the evaluation and when the evaluation needs to be carried out are relevant resources. The timing of the evaluation will depend on various factors such as the purpose of the evaluation (e.g. mid-term or ex-post) and the object of evaluation (what will be evaluated, e.g. impact). An impact evaluation can only be undertaken some significant time after the completion of the project or programme.
- Financial resources: common evaluation budget estimates for M&E vary between 5% to 20% of the project or programme budget. There are different aids to calculate the necessary financial resources for M&E. An example is the matrix developed by USAID. The table below is based on this USAID matrix[28]:

**Table 6: Developing a M&E budget**

| | M&E team leader | | M&E officer | | Total days per task | Cost per task |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Tasks** | **Days** | **Costs** | **Days** | **Costs** | | |
| Design and planning of the M&E | | | | | | |
| Management of the M&E | | | | | | |
| Preparation of the fieldwork | | | | | | |
| Fieldwork – data collection | | | | | | |
| Analysis | | | | | | |
| Reporting | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | | |

When considering the resources for M&E, the incorporation of M&E into the daily routine of the project, programme and organisation has to be considered. Therefore, attention needs to be paid to **building evaluation capacity,** i.e. the ability to use M&E to learn from it and to improve results.

[28] http://usaidprojectstarter.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/Developing%20An%20Evaluation%20Budget.pdf

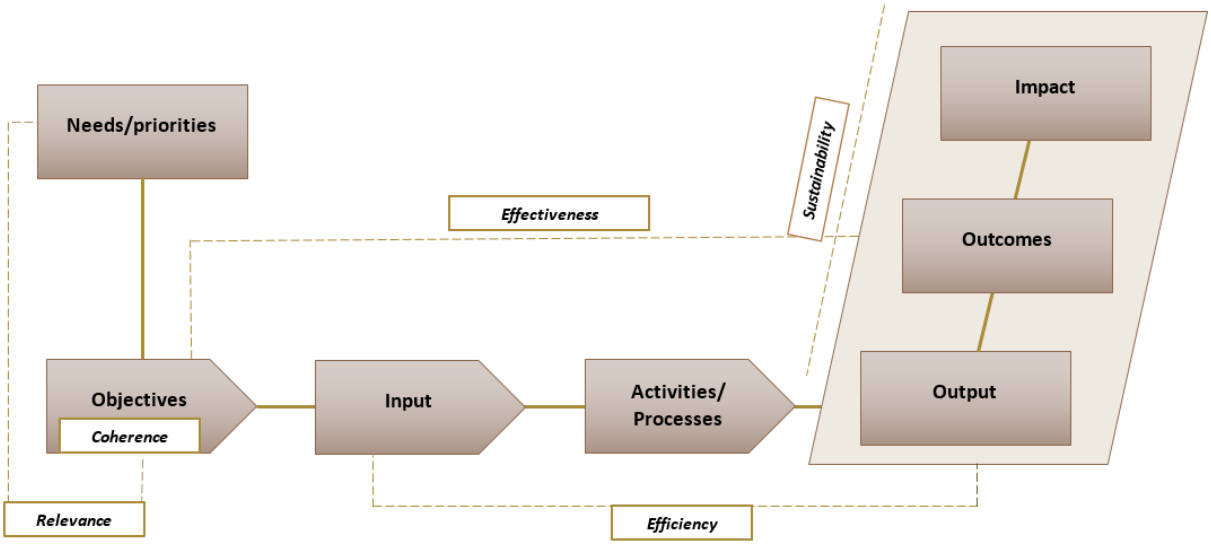
This is not only about improving the knowledge and skills of individuals in the domain of M&E, but also to strengthen effective mechanisms within an organisation to support M&E[29]. Various checklists can be found on how to build evaluation capacity in an organisation, based on field work and literature review data[30]. A very interesting framework has been developed by King and Volkov (2005), based on research. This framework consists of three components, i.e. organisational context, evaluation capacity building structures and resources. The framework is focused on not-for-profit organisations interested in improving quality and quality of their evaluation.

See **annex 4** for article on framework of **evaluation capacity building.**

## 5. CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

The evaluation **criteria** together with the **evaluation questions** will frame the content of the evaluation. Evaluation criteria are necessary for assessment/judgement.

**Figure 7: The results chain and evaluation criteria**




*Source: SAGO Research*

29 Morariu, J., (2012), *Evaluation Capacity Building*: *Examples and Lessons from the Field*, Developed for Building Non-profit Capacity to Evaluate, Learn, and Grow Impact, a workshop presented by Innovation Network, in partnership with Grantmakers for Effective Organization's Scaling What Works initiative.
See also work of INTRAC on evaluation capacity building: Simister, N., and R., Smith, (2010), *Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity Building: Is it really that difficult?* Praxis Paper 23; INTRAC

30 Volkov, B.B., and J.A., King, (2007), *A checklist for building organisational evaluation capacity*, retrieved (28.03.2017) from http://www.wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u350/2014/organiziationevalcapacity.pdf; Stufflebeam, D.L., (2002), *The institutionalising evaluation checklist,* retrieved (28.03.2017) from http://www.wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u350/2014/institutionalizingeval.pdf

The evaluation criteria say something about the relation between two components of the results chain or between aspects within one component:

- **Relevance** is about the relation between needs/priorities to respond to and objectives: the extent to which ISSA appropriately responds to the needs and priorities of its members (and wider society) it was supposed to address (is what ISSA is doing relevant to the needs, problems and issues raised by members and other relevant stakeholders?).
- **Effectiveness** says something about the objectives and the results: the extent to which the objectives of ISSA have been achieved.
- **Efficiency** is about the relation between the inputs and the results: the extent to which the resources (inputs) have been used in the most optimal way to achieve the results.
- **Coherence** is about the relation between the objectives of ISSA: the extent of consistency between these objectives.
- **Sustainability** is about the relation between outputs, outcomes and impact: the extent to which the results/effects of ISSA are sustainable in the longer term (outcomes leading to impact).

**Indicators** are necessary for monitoring purposes and help to understand whether we are moving into the right direction to reach our final goal/destination. Indicators are measures that demonstrate whether a goal has been achieved. For example, when we drive a car with a clear destination in mind, how do we know that we are on the right track? We will use e.g. the distance already driven, the cities that we pass, the time that we are driving, etc. The name of the city on a road sign will be an indicator that we are going into the right direction; a tree on the road will not be a good indicator. We do not only want indicators to show whether a result has been achieved, but to help check on progress along the way and to show whether we are getting closer to our destination.

Indicators can be both quantitative and qualitative:

- **Quantitative indicators** are metrics that measure results in terms of:
  - Number
  - Percentage
  - Rate
  - Ratio (e.g. number of members who have *successfully* submitted a project proposal/number of members having submitted a project proposal).
- **Qualitative indicators** reflect judgments, perceptions, opinions, attitudes in relation to a situation. These can reflect changes in sensitivity, satisfaction, influence, awareness, understanding, attitudes, perception, etc. These indicators measure results in terms of:
  - Compliance with…
  - Quality of…
  - Extent of…
  - Level of….

Indicators do **not** specify a particular level of achievement; words like 'improved', 'increased, etc. should be avoided when defining indicators. Indicators are **not** objectives. They help measure progress.

Ideally, indicators should be **SMART:**

- Specific: Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the results?
- Measurable: Is the indicator a reliable and clear measure of results?

- Attainable: i.e. Can data about the indicator be gathered, given the available resources?
- Relevant: Is the indicator relevant to the intended outputs and outcomes?
- Time-bound: Are data available in the set time frame?

**When defining indicators, always check:**

- Why and who will need the information. **Make a difference between 'nice to know' and 'need to know'.**
- The existence of a baseline. A **baseline** is a state of affairs at point $T_0$ in time; it is a study at the beginning of a project or programme to establish the current situation before the enrolment of a project or a programme.
- Can we really collect information in a relatively **easy** (cost-effective) way?

Usually, indicators are defined at the level of results and more specifically outcomes and impact (to help understand that an intervention is moving in the right direction to reach the defined outcomes and possibly have an impact.) Indicators at output level are mainly about progress made in relation to the output. For example: the output is a new policy document on educational reform based on evidence gathered from member organisations. One of the indicators might be 'progress made in drafting new policy'.

**Examples of indicators:**
Outcome: Increased uptake of health services at the community and district level.
Indicators:

- Number and % (if possible) of new users accessing services at the health centre.
- % of new users in relation to the catchment population living within walking distance of health facility.
- Number of individual cases of malnutrition / pneumonia / diarrhoea/ malaria detected and treated.
- Number of respondents reporting satisfaction with health services provided.

(Source: Save the Children UK (2008), *Menu of outcome indicators*)
Outcome: Women and girls are able to safely report crimes without fear of intimidation.
Indicators:

- Number of incidents reported to Specialised Gender Desks.
- Nature of incidents reported.
- Number of women and girls experiencing some form of gender-based violence who file a report with the police.

Impact: A reduction in the overall rates of gender-based violence in the area.
Indicators:

- Number of gender-based homicides.
- Changes in the perceptions of risk of violence amongst women and girls.
- Rates of gender-based violence for at-risk or vulnerable groups such as girls and young women and rural residents.

(Source: Parsons, J., Gokey C., and M., Thornton, (2013), *Indicators of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts in security and justice programmes*, Institute of Justice, VERA)

Once the indicators are defined, **baselines** and **targets** have to be outlined for the level of change expected to happen. These baselines and targets are aligned with the indicators and are the foundation on the basis of which change will be measured. In this way, progress can be measured against the situation before the intervention through the project or programme.
For the first year, it might be more difficult to define indicators at outcome level. A number of actions may need to be taken in the first year before follow-up actions that start in the second year eventually produce outcomes. The target for the indicator can therefore be '0' in the first year. The narrative column should in this case be used to explain the target[31].

**Example of indicators, baseline and targets:**

| Outcomes/outputs | Indicators | Baseline | Target | Results year 1 | Narrative |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| By 2017: boys and girls regardless of social status, ethnic group, cultural or religious affiliation and place of residence (urban/rural) have expanded access and increased opportunity to complete a basic, quality education up to at least secondary level. | % of trained and certified teachers and pre, primary, secondary schools and caregivers.<br><br>Net enrolment rate to primary and secondary schools. | Pre: 52,2%<br>Primary: 42,5%<br>Secondary: 29,7%<br><br>Pre: 33,7%<br>Primary: 84%<br>Secondary: 40,7% | Pre: 70%<br>Primary: 75%<br>Secondary: 60%<br><br>Pre: 50%<br>Primary: 100%<br>Secondary: 90% | | |
| Technical support and advocacy is implemented to increase number of disadvantaged children (with disabilities, drop-outs, poor, rural) remain in school at the primary and secondary levels. | Completion rate.<br><br>Repetition rate. | Primary: 47,3%<br>Secondary: 61,9%<br><br>Primary: 6,5%<br>Secondary: 9% | Primary: 60%<br>Secondary: 60%<br><br>Pre: 5%<br>Secondary: 5% | | |
| Research is conducted and reports drafted and made widely available to policy-makers, civil society and NGO's to inform legislative reform and policy development with respect to international human rights standards. | Number of national development plans adopting a human rights approach.<br><br>Number of research/reports disseminated. | Human rights not well articulated in planning.<br><br>0 | Human rights well-articulated in planning and policy documents; cases of progress reported by international human rights mechanisms. | | |

*Source: Excerpt from UNDAF 2013-2016 results matrices: https://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/BLZ_UNDAF_result_matrix_(Rev5)_070212.pdf – only a few outcomes/outputs and indicators are selected from the various matrices. Narratives column and results are added.*

31 UNDP, (2009), *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results*, New York; http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/handbook/english/documents/pme-handbook.pdf

# 6. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation questions are an important guide throughout the evaluation process; they will help you to focus the evaluation and should reflect the purpose of the evaluation as well as the priorities and needs of stakeholders. There is no specific formula for developing evaluation questions, however vagueness and complexity should be avoided.

Overall, there are four overarching evaluation questions that guide an evaluation:

- "Are we doing what we said we would do?" - The evaluation criterion related to this question is effectiveness.
- "Are we making a difference?" - This is about impact and sustainability.
- "Are these the right things to do?" - The evaluation criterion related to this question is relevance.
- "How did we do it?" - This question is related to efficiency and coherence.

In most cases, these overarching questions are further specified according to the objectives and purpose of the evaluation as well as the needs of stakeholders.

**Examples of evaluation questions:**

Questions related to effectiveness:

- To what extent have planned benefits of the project been delivered according to key stakeholders involved?
- To what extent did beneficiaries participate in the project (when and how)?

Questions related to relevance:

- To what extent have the defined objectives addressed the identified problems and social needs?
- To what extent has the nature of the problems originally identified, changed?

Questions related to efficiency:

- To what extent have the costs of the project been justified by the benefits?
- How is the quality of daily management of the project assessed by the different project partners?

Questions related to coherence:

- To what extent are the different instruments developed in the framework of the project coherent?
- What is the likelihood that these instruments will reinforce existent instruments developed in this domain?

Evaluation questions are not the same as the questions that will be used e.g. in a survey for data collection or in a checklist for interviews. Those research questions will be more specific.

**Example of an evaluation question and its related research questions:**

Evaluation question: To what extent has the project been implemented as planned?
Research questions:

- To what extent are project members consistently implementing the project with the same target population across all sites?
- To what extent are different models used for community partners' participation in each of the sites?

See example in **annex 5** of **evaluation questions linked to evaluation criteria and the related survey with research questions.**

Answers to evaluation questions need to:

- Help improve the project or programme.
- Show the success of a project or programme.
- Voice the concerns of various stakeholders.
- Be answerable, given the timeframe and resources (expertise and financial means).

## 7. DATA COLLECTION

While data collection seems to be a trivial activity in the M&E process, well-chosen and well implemented methods for data collection (and analysis later on) are essential in all M&E systems. The data are the basic material to work with, therefore data collection methods should be selected carefully. An overall recommendation is to adopt a **pluralistic approach** in the selection of data collection methods, i.e. using a variety methods in a single piece of evaluation research. Furthermore, different objects of evaluation will require a different method of data collection.

**Example of a data collection methods:**

For the analysis of power relations within a group of people (e.g. Board of an organisation) it would be interesting to combine interviews with observation, while for the analysis of the use of e.g. an application or tool a questionnaire survey is more suitable. For the analysis of impact of an intervention, a case study is a good way to gather data.

In the framework of this resource pack, not all possible data collection methods will be described, but rather those that are most used in the context of M&E in the social sector. Firstly, four main clusters of data collection methods will be presented, followed by the presentation of four specific methodologies used[32]. See also Table 8 for a comprehensive presentation of the various methods.

- Data collection from individuals: interviews, questionnaires/survey, storytelling.
- Data collection from groups: group interviews, focus groups, fish bowl, Work Café.
- Observation.
- Secondary data analysis.
- Specific methods of evaluation research: case-study, outcome mapping, Most Significant Change, Social Return on Investments.

## 7.1. DATA COLLECTION FROM INDIVIDUALS

In this cluster three data collection methods are presented:

- **Interviews**[33]: individual interviews are one-to-one discussions between an interviewer and an interviewee or informant, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics. The interview can be face-to-face, online or via the telephone. The advantage of face-to-face interviews is that verbal and non-verbal language can be captured, indicating discomfort, surprise or enthusiasm, which is useful to contextualise the data gathered. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews are more 'in the moment'; online and telephone interviews are often during other tasks such as answering mails, writing and reading. It is always useful to communicate the questions to the interviewee before the interview to give him/her the possibility to think about the answers. There are several kinds of interviews:
  - **Structured interviews**: mainly used for quantitative data collection. The interviewer uses a set of standardised questions, usually with pre-set answers from which the interviewee can select his/her response. All questions included in the questionnaire are asked in each interview.
  - **Semi-structured interviews**: in this form, the interviewer uses a mixture of closed and open questions, which can be adapted according to the context of the individual interviews. The interviewee has the freedom to leave questions out and to mix the order of the questions, depending on what is happening during the interview.
  - **Unstructured interviews**: these interviews are more like a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee, including only qualitative 'issues'. Closed questions are avoided and the interviewee might be asked to identify the information that he/she feels is the most important for the conversation.

  Cost is a major disadvantage for face-to-face interviews.

32 http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/describe/collect_retrieve_data

33 https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/advantages-disadvantages-facetoface-data-collection/, consulted on 29.03.2017; Alshenqeeti, H., (2014), *Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review*, in: English Linguistics Research Vol. 3, No. 1; 2014, p39-45; http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/%20view/959/2094, consulted on 29.03.2017

- **Questionnaires/survey[34]:** a survey is used to collect data from a group of people. The main instrument used in a survey is a questionnaire. A questionnaire is an instrument used to gather data that can be expressed in numerical or descriptive terms. Questionnaires can be paper-based or electronic, using specific software tools, e.g. Google Forms or Survey Monkey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/). The latter includes a service with templates and explanation on how to run a survey, to analyse results, etc. One of the main advantages of web-based questionnaire distribution and collection is that the data (responses) are automatically gathered in a database; manual input of data is not necessary and input errors are avoided.
  The questions and the responses in questionnaires can be constructed in various ways: responses can be kept open-ended (allowing respondents to provide narratives) or can be predetermined (closed questions). Surveys are useful when researching e.g. patterns of use of a tool or service, user needs, user satisfaction, shifts in opinions and trends if the survey is repeated over time.

  Another considerable advantage of a questionnaire is that a large sample of a given population can be reached at relatively low cost. Furthermore, respondents or informants have time to think about their responses; they do not have to give a reply immediately.
  The main disadvantage is that is sometimes difficult to obtain a sufficient number of replies to questionnaires. Moreover, the sample might be biased since it might be mainly those who have an interest in the subject who may be more likely to respond. Another potential difficulty is that respondents may not always understand the questions correctly, which might lead to 'wrong' or incomplete answers. There is also the danger of questionnaire fatigue if surveys are carried out too frequently.

- **Story telling[35]:** this is a flexible way of collecting data for various purposes, e.g. understanding complexity, establishing common grounds, creating ownership. There is no universal way of implementing the method, although in literature a variety of procedures can be found for using storytelling[36]. An individual story or narrative can be considered as a fragment of data that provides the perspective from a particular point of view at one specific point in time. These stories provide qualitative information that is not always easy to categorise or analyse, but they reveal experience-based knowledge that can be important e.g. in problem-solving.
  Stories can provide insights into programmes processes or unravel impact or demonstrate innovative practices. The method has been successfully used to gain insights into children's discourse[37].

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34 http://www.evalued.bcu.ac.uk/tutorial/4a.htm, consulted on 29.03.2017; http://libweb.surrey.ac.uk/library/skills/Introduction%20to%20Research%20and%20Managing%20Information%20Leicester/page_51.htm, consulted on 29.03.2017;

35 http://designresearchtechniques.com/casestudies/storytelling/, consulted on 29.03.2017; http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0013188070136969 3, consulted on 29.03.2017; http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/stories, consulted on 29.03.2017

36 E.g. Mitchell, M., and M. Egudo, (2003), *A review of narrative methodology*, Australian Government, Department of Defence and Technology Organisation, DSTO-GD-0385

37 See e.g. Davis, P., (2007), *Storytelling as a democratic approach to data collection: interviewing children about reading*, in: Journal Educational Research, Volume 49, 2007 - Issue 2, p169-184. See for an overview of papers on this issue: http://www.storynet-advocacy.org/edu/quantitative-studies.shtml

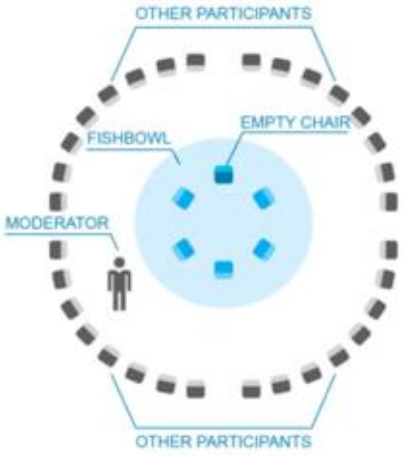
## 7.2. DATA COLLECTION FROM GROUPS

Other methods include data gathering from groups of people. Here are four of them.

- **Group interview**[38]: this method of data gathering involves the use of probing techniques to gather information from several individuals in a group. They can serve a wide range of information collection purposes, like helping to generate ideas for project or programme design, but also providing feedback on interventions. Group interviews can also be used for interpreting available data.

- **Focus group**[39]: a focus group could also be considered as a form of group interview, although in a focus group the role of the facilitator or mediator is more in the background ensuring that the group stays on track. In the group interview, the interviewer or facilitator has a more prominent role asking specific questions. A focus group is a small group of six to 12 people discussing a specific topic; the participants have something in common (e.g. parents, members of the same professional group, etc.). Focus groups can be useful to solicit views, opinions and recommendations. This method is not suitable for gathering in-depth individual responses, nor when the volume of issues to cover is extensive. Potential problems with group interviews include the danger of response bias originating from the influence or dominance of group interactions by individual participants.

- **Fish bowl**[40]: this method is used to manage group discussions. From a larger group of participants (max. 50 people) a smaller subgroup (four to eight people) is selected for discussion while the rest of the participants observe without interrupting. The method can be used for a variety of purposes: as an alternative to panel discussions, to avoid lengthy presentations, but also to address controversial topics. The method is named after the seating arrangement: i.e. a goldfish bowl, where two circles of participants are sitting around each other. The discussion is taking place in the inner circle, facilitated by a moderator. If a participant from the outer circle wants to contribute to the discussion, he/she exchanges seats with a member of the inner circle (in an open fish bowl is this the reason why one chair is left empty, i.e. to show that there is room for an additional contribution). The results can be discussed with the entire group at the end.




Source: UNICEF Knowledge Exchange Toolbox
https://www.unicef.org/knowledge-exchange/index_82053.html

38 http://www.eiu.edu/ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017; Kumar, K., (1987), *Conducting group interviews in developing countries, U.S. Agency for International Development*

39 http://www.nuigalway.ie/cisc/documents/17_focus_group_interviewing_krueger__casey.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017; https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017

40 http://www.kstoolkit.org/Fish+Bowl, consulted on 29.03.2017; http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/fishbowltechnique, consulted on 29.03.2017; https://www.unicef.org/knowledge-exchange/files/Fishbowl_production.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017

- **Work Café**[41]**:** this is an effective format for hosting larger group discussions (more than 15-20 people). There is a basic model based on a set of components but complexities and nuances can be factored in. The method is named after the setting to be created, i.e. a café with small round tables covered with a 'tablecloth' on which participants can write/draw. Questions are identified that will lead the discussions: these questions can be different per table or can vary per round. Each round takes about 20 minutes. The process starts with a first round of discussion; at the end of the round each member moves to a different new table. One person stays as the 'table host' for the next round and briefly fills the new participants in on what happened in the previous round. After the different rounds, participants are invited to share insights supported by the 'table cloths' that are put on the wall. The method can be used to explore a topic, a question or a set of questions, but should be avoided when an agreement or decision is needed by the end of the discussion. It is particularly useful when exploring a topic from multiple perspectives.

## 7.3. OBSERVATION

Data might also be gathered through observation, either directly or through photographs or videos. This data gathering is about observing and documenting the incidence of objects and/or the behaviour of people[42]. Participant observation has been for many years a method of data gathering in both anthropological and sociological research, while in more recent years the field of education has seen an increase in the number of studies including this method of data collection[43].

**Example of use of observation for data collection:**

Evaluators of an educational project may observe the physical attributes of a school, the accessibility, the availability of learning materials, of a playground, of a library. He/she may observe the number of boys and girls and how the children interact, the teaching techniques, etc.

This approach to data collection in evaluation serves as a good complementary source to what participants report about their understanding of the context, relationships and activities. Furthermore, it enables the evaluator to develop familiarity with the setting of the project or programme and provides a nuanced understanding of that setting. However, a major drawback is that the observed behaviour may be atypical.

41 http://www.betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/worldcafe, consulted on 29.03.2017; http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/, consulted on 29.03.2017; The World Café Foundation, (2015), *A quick reference guide for hosting world café*, The World Café Community Foundation; http://www.click4it.org/images/a/a5/World.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017

42 http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/describe/collect_retrieve_data, consulted on 29.03.2017; https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/ParticipantObservationFieldGuide.pdf, consulted on 29.03.2017

43 Kawulich, B.B., (2005), *Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method,* in: Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Volume 6, No. 2, Art. 43 – May 2005

## 7.4. SECONDARY DATA SOURCES

An essential part of the data gathering for evaluation purposes is the use and review of existing material like project or programme documents, available statistics, etc. Relevant project or programme material may include project or programme descriptions, strategic plans, annual work plans, documents related to budgets, minutes of meetings, evaluation forms of activities, progress reports.
For monitoring purposes, logs and diaries can be used with recorded data over a longer period.

## 7.5. FOCUS ON SOME SPECIFIC METHODS OF EVALUATION RESEARCH

In this section, some specific methods used for research purposes in general and M&E more specifically are presented. The characteristics of each method are summed up in Table 8.

### CASE-STUDY[44]

A case study is a research design method that involves an intensive study of one or more cases rather than an extensive study of many; often a combination of qualitative and quantitative data is used. It enables the researcher/evaluator to closely examine the data within a specific setting. Case-studies can be particularly useful for understanding how different elements fit together and how different elements (implementation, context and other factors) have produced the observed impacts.
In evaluations, a case-study can be used as an illustration to add in-depth examples to other information about the project or programme. Using case-studies is not so much about proving theory or statistical generalisation, but rather generating theory or expanding on theory. But then again; this is depending on the type of case-study[45]:

- Explanatory: the purpose is to explain the relationship among components of a project or programme.
- Descriptive: these cases-studies can be illustrative or exploratory (generating hypotheses). Another type within this category are case-studies examining one single instance of a project or programme.
- Combined methodology: findings from many case studies are brought together to answer an evaluation question, whether descriptive or normative.

The work of R.K. Yin on case-studies in social research is well-known and is recommended for the reader wanting to have further background about this research method[46].

[44] http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/blog/better_use_of_case_studies_in_evaluation, consulted on 29.03.2017; the work of Robert K. Yin on case-study research methodology is well-known and very useful: e.g. Yin, R., K, (2011), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, SAGE

[45] Morra, L.G., and A.B., Friedlander, (1999), *Case Study Evaluations*, The World Bank, Washington D.C.

[46] Yin, R.K., (2013): Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Fifth edition, Sage Publications Inc.

**Example of the use of case-studies for data collection:**

In the evaluation of a programme ran by a European network on social inclusion, the choice was made to include case-studies from a combined methodology perspective. A range of activities and themes implemented in the programme were used as case-studies. Findings from eight case-studies were brought together to answer various evaluation questions. One of the cases was on the theme of 'child poverty'.

The activities developed around this theme were part of this case-study: a policy paper, a seminar with a variety of stakeholders and the set of recommendations formulated based on the seminar. Another case-study focused on 'quality of social services'. Here again, the activities developed in the framework of the programme on this theme were part of the case-study (a policy paper with recommendations and a seminar with members of the network).

Both case-studies delivered input to answer the following questions:

- To what extent are the policy themes identified by the network (with its members) relevant with regards to context (other players, trends and challenges, EU policies) and objectives and needs of members?
- To what extent is there a strategy at the network level and for each policy issue elaborated (including steps, planning, stakeholders, lobby targets, etc.) and to what extent is this coherent with the values of the network?
- To what extent is the way of working within the Secretariat of the network and with the members efficient: clear task division, monitoring system, use of inputs in relation to results expected, etc.?
- To what extent have the political messages have been broadly distributed and have enhanced the reputation of the network?
- To what extent is the network able to engage in effective partnerships with other actors in the execution of its advocacy interventions?
- To what extent did the interventions of the network. on different policy issues (such as child poverty, quality in social services) have effects at EU and national level?

## OUTCOME MAPPING[47]

Outcome Mapping is an approach for planning and assessing social change initiatives developed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada. There is an online Outcome Mapping Learning Community offering a wealth of information about background and use of the methodology: https://www.outcomemapping.ca/. It was first introduced in 2001 in international development work, but the methodology continues to develop, also outside the development sector.

47 https://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/outcome-mapping-a-method-for-tracking-behavioural-changes-in-development-programs, consulted on 29.03.2017; Smutylo, T., (2005), *Outcome mapping: A method for tracking behavioural changes in development programs*, the Institutional Learning and Change Initiative; Jones, H., and S., Hearn, (2009), *Outcome mapping: a realistic alternative for planning, monitoring and evaluation*, Background note, Oversees Development Institute; Smith, R., (et al), (2012), *Ten years of outcome mapping adaptations and support*, Outcome Mapping Learning Community

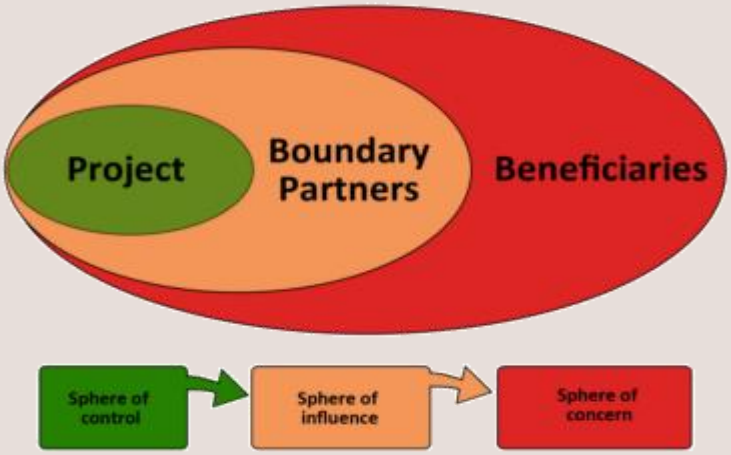
It entails a set of tools and guidelines to identify desired change to be accomplished through a project or programme and to work collaboratively to bring this change about. Results of the project or programme are measured by changes in behaviour, actions and relationships of those individuals, groups or organisations with whom the project or programme is working directly and whom the project or programme is seeking to influence.

Outcome mapping is based on the following key concepts:

- **Focus on outcomes rather than impact**: while impact is the ultimate goal towards which an intervention works, the complexity and long-term nature of many changes still to happen makes it difficult to link impacts to specific interventions. When focusing on impact, the kind of feedback necessary to improve the project or programme during its implementation might be lacking.
- **Development [change] is accomplished by and for people:** outcome mapping represents a shift from assessing the impact of a project or programme towards changes in the behaviour, relationships, actions or activities of people, groups or organisations with whom a project or programme interacts directly.
- **Outcomes as behavioural change:** outcomes are measured as "changes in behaviour, relationships, activities or actions of people, groups and organisations with whom a program works directly". In doing this, people are put at the heart of the change process.
- **Boundary partners, spheres of control, influence and concern**: many projects and programmes work with intermediary individuals, groups and organisations (like NGOs, research institutes, private organisations) who in turn work directly with beneficiaries; projects and programmes are seldom directly concerned with end-beneficiaries. These intermediaries constitute in outcome mapping the boundary partners, i.e. those individuals, groups and organisations with whom the project or programme interacts directly and with whom the project or programme anticipates opportunities to influence the intended change.
  There are things you can control with your project or programme and things that you will be able to influence, and many other things that will remain in your circle of concern, but that you will not be able to address directly. Only a few actors will be in the sphere of control (project or programme staff, close strategic partners, people supporting the project or programme). Other actors will be in the sphere of influence and still others in the sphere of concern.

**Example of outcome mapping scheme:**

In a project about access to primary education, an educational NGO (sphere of control) will be concerned about the children (sphere of concern) but will work with their parents (sphere of influence) to convince them to send them to school. At the same time, the NGO might try to influence local politicians (sphere of influence) to lobby national politicians (sphere of concern) to approve laws protection children from child abuse.




*Example taken from Herrero, S., (2012[48]) – figure on p25.*

- **Focus on contribution rather than attribution**: multiple actors and factors are essential to achieve impacts. Therefore, instead of focusing on cause and effect attribution, outcome mapping focuses on the contribution of an intervention towards outcomes.

Outcome mapping is composed of three stages and twelve steps[49]. These steps will be briefly presented in the figure below. For a more elaborated explanation, the online Outcome Mapping Learning Community can be consulted. This is a very vivid community where experiences and cases are regularly posted and commented on, and where training opportunities are announced.

48 Herrero, S., (2012), *Integrated monitoring. A practical manual for organisations that want to achieve results*, InProgress

49 Earl, S., Carden, F., and Smutylo, T., (2001), *Outcome mapping: building learning and reflection into development programs*, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada

**Figure 8: The stages and steps in Outcome Mapping[50]**


- **Stage 1**: Intentional design: helps to define the changes towards which the intervention seeks to contribute, to identify the boundary partners that the intervention seeks to influence and the changes in these partners that will help to build sustainable social changes:
  - Step 1: Vision: the large scale social change to which the intervention seeks to contribute (goal).
  - Step 2: Mission: how the intervention can contribute to the vision (goal).
  - Step 3: Boundary Partners: the identification of those social actors that the intervention will directly target and work with to influence positive change of their actions and relationships.
  - Step 4: Outcome challenges: description of the ideal changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities and/or actions of a boundary partner.
  - Step 5: Progress markers: a set of indicators of the behavioural change. Progress markers describe changes in behaviour or relationships of those individuals and groups that a project or programme directly supports (they do not describe a change in e.g. a level of income).
  - Step 6: Strategy maps: a matrix of strategy types that an intervention uses to influence a boundary partner.
  - Step 7: Organisational practices: practices to ensure that the intervention remains relevant, innovative, sustainable or connected to its environment.

50 Smith, R., (et al), (2012), *Ten years of outcome mapping adaptations and support*, Outcome Mapping Learning Community, p15

- **Stage 2**: Outcome and performance monitoring: this provides a framework for monitoring actions and boundary partners' progress towards outcomes:
  - Step 8: Monitoring priorities: identification of the type of information to be regularly collected.
  - Step 9: Outcome journals: these monitor actions and relationships of boundary partners.
  - Step 10: Strategy journals: these monitor intervention strategies and activities.
  - Step 11: Performance journals: these monitor the organisational practices.
- **Stage 3**: Evaluation planning:
  - Step 12: Evaluation plan: outlines the main elements of the evaluations to be conducted.

Outcome mapping works best when[51]:

- Working in partnership: it helps to clarify the different roles of actors involved, i.e. beneficiaries, partners, strategic allies, etc.
- Building capacity: it is a very effective method when capacity building is important. Capacity building is a complex process and it can be difficult to produce meaningful monitoring data. By presenting the overarching objective as a series of behaviour changes of the actors involved, project or programme staff can track progress towards the goal.
- A deeper understanding of social factors is critical: outcome mapping is particularly useful when the focus is on human-centred development, rather than e.g. on technical development.
- Influencing policy: its logic suits changes at the level of knowledge, ideas and decision-making.
- Tackling complex problems.

51 Jones, H., and S., Hearn (2009), *Outcome mapping: a realistic alternative for planning, monitoring and evaluation*, Background note, Oversees Development Institute

**Example of use of outcome mapping:**

**Vredeseilanden (VECO)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Country: | Belgium, Western Europe |
| Implementing organisation(s): | Vredeseilanden (VECO) |
| Donor(s): | Belgium Development Cooperation (main donor) |
| Summary: | VE wants to contribute to viable livelihoods and empowerment of organized family farmers, male and female, in South and North by:<br>- Improving their position in the whole agricultural chain, from production to consumption.<br>- Improving policies at national and international level.<br>- Stimulating consumer buying practices for more sustainable consumption" |
| Why was OM chosen? | To adopt OM to move from a system that is mainly to meet the accountability needs of the main donor to one that facilitates a more learning-oriented planning, monitoring and evaluation with mutual accountability. OM was adopted as an organisation-wide practice, i.e. at Head Office and in the Regional Offices and 13 countries in which VE operates. |
| How was OM used? | Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation |
| What was the experience of using OM? | Through its particular logic and set-up, OM facilitated critical self-reflection on the previous and existing programme objectives, approach, structure and assumptions on which the programme was built. This in itself was already a valuable process for many country offices. The concept of boundary partners turned out to be very helpful in establishing a greater variety of partners as well as to explore a wider scope of strategies for capacity development of its partner organisations.<br><br>OM also inspired the assessment of its internal organisational processes. Seeing the country offices as boundary partners of the management & support services of VE head office resulted in an outcome challenge (+ progress markers) for the country office for the management & support services of the VE head office (e.g. finance, HR, communications) which will be used as the basis for an intra-organisational planning, learning & accountability system.<br><br>Difficult to aggregate material for annual reports - but OM has helped the process of aggregation since working with 'outcome challenges' has made the information more coherent. |

Source : https://www.outcomemapping.ca/projects/project.php?id=87

## MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE[52]

The Most Significant Change technique (MSC) is a qualitative and participatory form of M&E based on the collection and systematic selection of stories of reported changes from development activities. It was originally developed by Rick Davies in the mid-nineties to meet the challenges of M&E of a complex development programme in Bangladesh. Since then, the technique is used in many different settings and has gone through various adaptations. A very useful resource, with linkages to e.g. updated bibliographies is: http://mande.co.uk/special-issues/most-significant-change-msc/, a website managed by Rick Davies himself.

Essentially, the process of MSC involves the collection of stories about significant changes that emanate from the field level and the systematic selection of the most significant of these stories by panels of designated stakeholders or staff. It is most useful where[53]:

- It is not possible to predict in detail or with any certainty what the outcome will be.
- Outcomes will vary widely across beneficiaries.
- There may not yet be agreements between stakeholders on which outcomes will be the most important.
- Interventions are expected to be highly participatory, including any form of M&E of the results.

The technique is highly participatory: the people most directly involved collectively assess the impact and it can build capacity to analyse data and to understand impact. At the same time, it requires good facilitation skills to guide the process. MSC is certainly not a quick option: it takes time and resources as well as skills to understand the method and to gather the stories. As part of the technique no indicators are used.
The technique is applicable in many different sectors, including education but especially in development contexts. Practice shows that it works best complementary to other methods rather than as a stand-alone method.

The process involves ten steps (see table 7):

**Table 7: Steps in Most Significance Change technique**

| | Step | Explanation |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Start-up and raise interest and identification of champions. | Stakeholders need to be informed and involved: the process has to be explained, issues of resistance need to be discussed. In this early stage 'champions' or 'catalysts' will be identified; they can be involved in designing the roll out of the process across the project, programme, organisation. |
| 2 | Establish domains of change. | Identify domains in which to expect changes: in the quality of life of people, in the nature of people's participation in development activities, in the sustainability of activities or organisations, or other. Three to five domains are manageable in this approach. |

52 Serrat, O., (2009), *The most significant change technique*, Knowledge Solutions, Asian Development Bank; Davies R., and J., Dart, (2005), *The Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use*; Willetts, J., and P., Crawford (2007), *The most significant lessons about the most significant change technique*, in: Development in Practice. 17 (3): p367–379.

53 http://mande.co.uk/special-issues/most-significant-change-msc/, consulted on 29.03.2017

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Defining the reporting period. | In most cases MSC is considered as a form of monitoring, involving periodic collection of information. The frequency of collection of stories varies from fortnightly to yearly (most frequently three-monthly), but that depends on the time period covered by the entire process. Low frequency reporting (once a year) runs the risk of staff and participants forgetting about how the MSC process works. However, frequent reporting might lead to the rapid exhaustion of cases of longer-term significance. |
| 4 | Collecting stories of significant change. | The main part of this method is to ask participants what they think was the most significant change in the quality of the life of people, in the nature of participation, etc. in the community. The collecting of stories is done by the researcher/evaluator through interviews, group discussions, or in a written format from those who tell the story. Information is needed about who collected the story and when the event(s) occurred; a description of the story itself (what happened) and the significance of the events described in the story by the storyteller. A story is about 1 or 2 pages long. |
| 5 | Reviewing the stories within the organisational hierarchy. | A central part of this method is the use of a hierarchy of selection processes. When a story is selected, it is pooled with other significant change stories identified by others. Then the most significant of these stories is selected and again pooled together with other stories selected on the same basis. This process of iteration helps to reduce the large volume of locally important stories down to a number of widely valued significant stories. This selection process is done by using existing hierarchical structures in an organisation (or temporary organisation like a project or programme) or by new structures. The creation of new structures for selecting stories can be useful when a broader perspective is needed, or when the perspectives of different stakeholder groups need to be highlighted. |
| 6 | Providing stakeholders with regular feedback about the review process. | Feedback is important about what was selected, why and how. This to inform participants' further searches for significant changes in the next reporting period. Furthermore, it can inform participants about what is significant in this process. It also enables participants to gain insights into the process of collective judgements and it shows that others have read and have engaged with the stories provided. |
| 7 | Setting in place a process to verify the stories if necessary. | While verification of stories might be necessary to avoid misunderstandings (e.g. exaggeration or underestimation of significance, or misinterpretation of situations), it may have negative consequences. If not managed properly, participants may feel that they are not trusted and may disengage with the further process. |
| 8 | Quantification | While qualitative data are central to this method, quantitative information can be complementary. The quantitative data can be related to each of the stories, e.g. the number of people involved or the number of activities undertaken. Another kind of quantitative data might be looked for in the stories not selected. These can be examined and instances can be counted of any type of change that is of concern. |
| 9 | Conducting secondary analysis and meta-monitoring. | This involves the analysis of a complete set of significant change stories, including stories that were not selected. This part of the analysis is usually not done in a participative way, but by the M&E officer. This includes content analysis of the stories, as well as analysis of the number and origins of the stories, who identified them, who selected them, etc. (meta-monitoring). |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Meta-monitoring can be done periodically, while secondary analysis will be done less frequently, e.g. once a year. |
| 10 | Revising the MSC process | Revision is useful to take into account what has been learned as a direct result of using the method and the findings from that. |

*Source: Davies, R., and J., Dart, (2005), The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique. A Guide to its Use, Version 1.00*

**Example of use of Most Significant Change:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Title of story* | Woman community facilitator voted as president of community network. |
| *Who was involved and what took place?* | A local woman who has received capacity building support and training on leadership skills, has been voted as president of the community facilitator network representing 5 villages. |
| *What change took place?* | A local woman is now representing her community as a leader in local development issues. She had the confidence to put herself forward and was voted by her community to play a leading role in the community's development process. |
| *Why is story significant?* | The story shows that women in communities where the NGO works are playing an increased role in local politics and decision making as a result of capacity building and training from the NGO. |
| *Lessons learned / recommendations for the wider program* | Training and capacity building can help build women's confidence to participate in local politics. If women are given the opportunity to become involved in local politics they will. The beneficiary can be a role model for other local women. |

*Source : http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/the-most-significant-change-msc-technique-tool-review/*

## SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT[54]

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a method for measuring and communicating a broad concept of value that incorporates social, environmental and economic impacts. It originated in the US from social enterprises interested in new ways to value the contributions they were making to society. It is about:

- Talking with stakeholders involved in the project or programme to identify what social value means to them.
- Understanding how that value is created.
- Finding appropriate indicators to know whether and what kind of change has taken place.
- Putting financial proxies on those indicators that do not lend themselves to monetisation.

54 Rauscher, O., (et al), (2012), *Social Impact Measurement and Social Return on Investment (SROI)-Analysis. New methods of economic evaluation?* Working paper, Vienna University of Economics and Business, NPO; Cabinet Office, (2012), A *guide to Social Return on Investment*, the SROI network; Brouwers, J., (et al), (2010), *Social Return on Investment. A practical guide for the development cooperation sector*, Context, International Cooperation; NEF, (2008), *Measuring value: a guide to Social Return on Investment (SROI)*, the New Economics Foundation; Sinzer, (2015), *Step by step guide to SROI analysis. A set up guide on how to measure impact*

- Comparing the financial value of the social change created to the financial cost of producing these changes.

There are two types of SROI:

- Evaluative, which is conducted in a retrospective way, based on actual outcomes that have already taken place.
- Forecast, which predicts how much social value will be created if the project or programme meets its intended outcomes.

Various guides are available on how to conduct a SROI. The SROI Network, now called Social Value UK, also developed an online tool to help organisations evaluate their social impact (http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/news/the-sroi-network-launches-assessment-tool-for-social-value).

The method is split in a series of steps, although how these are defined and which activities they include vary across different guides. The main elements are the following:

1. Defining the **boundaries** (objectives and scope): clarification about what will be measured and who the audience is as well as what you want to learn from the SROI. In this first step the time period and the geographical scope of the intervention to be measured have to be defined.
2. Identification and selection of **key stakeholders:** stakeholders are defined as "people, groups or organisations that will experience change as a result of the intervention, negative or positive; or will contribute to that change"[55]. When the list of potential stakeholders is ready, an analysis has to be made in terms of their importance and level of influence. The level of influence gives an indication of how much power stakeholders have over the project or programme. The level of importance indicates the importance that stakeholders have for the project or programme (see paragraph 4.4.). By mapping the stakeholders, a clear overview is given of the diversity of possible actors in the project or programme. The next step is to decide which stakeholders to involve in the SROI analysis. In most cases, these stakeholders will be the ones found in the categories of high importance.
3. **Theory of change**: this is one of the most important steps within the SROI framework as it tells how stakeholders were (are) involved in the project or programme and their perception and belief of how their lives have changed or will change (see paragraph 4.2.B).
4. **Identifying inputs**: in this step, the various resources that were brought to the project are described: money, material and human resources.
5. **Identifying results (outputs, outcomes and impact):** in this step, stakeholders are asked about the achieved or intended results of the project. Stakeholders are invited to reflect on what the results of the project or programme are or to recount how the project or programme has affected their lives and their environment (positively or negatively).
6. **Valuation or monetisation:** this is about attempting to translate social or environmental values into monetary values. Most authors and practitioners with experience in this agree that not everything can be quantified; some things should be valued for what they are.

55 Brouwers, J., (et al), (2010), p19

7. **Calculation of the SROI ratio:** in this step, a comparison is made of the investments (or inputs) and the financial, social and environmental returns (outcomes and impact). In the simplest form, the different types of value being created are added and divided by the total inputs.
8. **Verification and narrative:** in the last step, the obtained data has to be verified by confronting it to other sources (documents, interviews, etc.). The data may also need to be refined. Furthermore, the SROI ratio should be embedded in the larger context to be meaningful. This can be done by explaining the process leading to leading to the ratio and the narrative that led to this result?

**References to examples of use of Social Return on Investments:**

A useful example is 'Measuring social return on investment for community schools' - a practical guide published by the Finance Project and the Children's Aid Society in 2013: http://www.nccs.org/sites/default/files/resource/NCCS_SROI_Guide.pdf.

In 2012, UNICEF published a literature review: A brief review of the social and economic returns to investing in children: https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Investing_in_Children_19June2012_e-version_FINAL.pdf

EUROCHILD is coordinator of the 'Childonomics' research project aiming at developing a tool to determine the long-term social and economic return of investing in children. The tool includes an economic model informed by the costs of different services and approaches to supporting children and families in vulnerable situations. By using existing longitudinal data, it explores expected outcomes for children, families and society:
http://eurochild.org/projects/childonomics/

## 7.6. COMBINING DATA

Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data can improve an evaluation by ensuring that the limitations of one type of data are balanced by the strengths of another. It will improve understanding by integrating different perspectives. Most evaluations will collect both quantitative data (numbers) and qualitative data (text, images), but it is important to plan ahead how these will be combined.

Each data gathering methods has its own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, **triangulation** is necessary, i.e. the use of a variety of methods and instruments in a single piece of evaluation research to check the reliability and validity of the findings. This triangulation presupposes a pluralistic approach to data collection. This should not only be done for complementary purposes, but also for compensatory purposes. Using a mix of methods and instruments should not only be done in view of reinforcing but also to make up for deficiencies of using one methodology by adopting the strengths of another[56]. A typical mixed-method approach starts with exploratory focus groups, then based on the

[56] ARTICULATE, (1992), *Evaluating learning technology innovation: Guidelines*, Guidelines prepared for the DELTA programme by the ARTICULATE consortium coordinated by the Tavistock Institute, London UK

results, develops a questionnaire to be used for a survey and then, to further deepen survey results, carries out individual interviews as follow-up research. In this design, multiple data gathering instruments are used as well as a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data[57].

**Table 8: Overview of data gathering methods and instruments and their main characteristics[58]**

| | Key characteristics |
|---|---|
| Interviews | – Individual interviews can be used in any stage of the evaluation process.<br>– They can be face-to-face, online or via the telephone.<br>– Interviews can be structured (using a set of standardised questions to be asked to all interviewees, allowing to gather also quantitative data), semi-structured or unstructured (more like a conversation with open-ended questions).<br>– In-depth interviews are in particular appropriate in situations of complex subject matters or highly sensitive subject matters or/and when looking for detailed information.<br>– In general, interviews are time consuming.<br>– Flexibility, which is an advantage, can also result in inconsistencies across interviews. |
| Questionnaires | – Questionnaires used in surveys are suitable when gathering information from large groups.<br>– A wide range of topics can be covered through surveys.<br>– Surveys are relatively inexpensive in use.<br>– Questionnaires can be paper-based or can be distributed and collected using web-based online software applications.<br>– A main disadvantage is that it is not always easy to collect a sufficient number of replies. The sample might be biased since it might be mainly those having an interest in the subject who are likely to respond. |
| Story-telling | – Flexible way of collecting data in the form of narratives.<br>– Provide qualitative information that is not always easy to analyse, but it reveals experience-based knowledge important in e.g. problem solving and understanding complexity.<br>– Interesting development of the method through the use of social media. |
| Group interviews | – To gather information from several individuals at the same time. These individuals are selected on the basis of pre-defined criteria. These criteria depend on the objective of the interview (homogeneity or heterogeneity of the group).<br>– Is useful to explore group dynamics.<br>– Beware of bias originating from the influence or dominance of group interaction by individual participants. |
| Focus groups | – Small groups of (six to 12) people discussing a specific topic. The participants have something in common.<br>– Used for soliciting views, opinions or recommendation – it is not a problem-solving session, nor a decision-making group.<br>– To be avoided when soliciting in-depth individual responses or when the number of issues to cover is rather large. |
| Fish-bowl | – To manage discussions with a larger group of participants (max. 50 people).<br>– A smaller subgroup (four to eight people) is selected for discussion; the rest of the group are observers. Participants can change from 'observer' to 'active participant'. |

57 https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02057/nsf02057_4.pdf, consulted on 31.03.2017

58 ibidem

| | |
|---|---|
| | – To be used as an alternative for lengthy presentation or as an alternative for panel discussions.<br>– A practical limitation is the physical movement of people from one place to the other during the discussion. |
| World Café | – Format for data-gathering from larger groups (more than 15-20 people – here is no real upper limit).<br>– Smaller sub-groups discuss questions. At the end of a set period (e.g. 20 minutes), individual participants move to the next table. One person stays as 'table host'.<br>– Discussions are shared through the 'table cloths'.<br>– The method can be used to explore a topic or one or several questions.<br>– Should be avoided when an agreement or decision is needed by the end of the session. |
| Observation | – Good source to provide additional information about a particular group (besides other data sources).<br>– Allows for the study of the dynamics of a group, a situation.<br>– Observer needs to be well-qualified.<br>– Selective perception may distort data.<br>– Observed behaviour may be atypical. |
| Secondary data | – Inexpensive and very flexible way of gathering information.<br>– May be incomplete or inaccurate, therefore recommended in combination with other data gathering methods.<br>– Analysis may be time consuming. |
| Case-study | – Allows to closely examine data within a specific setting.<br>– Can help to explain results or situations that might otherwise not emerge from the data.<br>– Can be costly in terms of time and resources.<br>– Individual cases may be overgeneralised. |
| Outcome mapping | – Participatory approach for planning and assessing social change interventions.<br>– A methodology in full development, supported by a lively online community.<br>– Focus is on outcomes rather than on impact.<br>– Change is accomplished by and for people, therefore results are assessed from changes in the behaviour, relationships, actions or activities of people, groups or organisations.<br>– Time consuming, but that is related to the core of the technique, i.e. assessing social change.<br>– Consists of 12 steps clustered in three stages. |
| Most Significant Change | – Participatory approach of data collection and analysis based on the gathering and systematic selection of stories of reported changes resulting from interventions.<br>– Very useful when it is not possible to predict in detail what the outcome will be or when outcomes may vary widely across beneficiaries.<br>– Not a quick option, but again this is linked to the very nature of the method and the focus of what is assessed, i.e. social change.<br>– Works best complementary to other methods.<br>– Involves ten steps. |
| Social Return on Investment | – Method for measuring a broad concept of value, incorporating social, environmental and economic impacts.<br>– Used to assess value in a retrospective way based on outcomes actually achieved or as a forecast to predict how much value will be created if the project or programme meets its intended outcomes.<br>– A method in full development.<br>– Consists of various stages, not precisely defined (number of stages is varying according to author). |

# 8. DATA STORAGE AND MANAGEMENT[59]

Data management includes effective collecting, recording, storing, backing-up, cleaning and modifying data and is linked to processes and procedures to ensure quality of data. The authors also would like to draw attention to the importance of **data cleaning**: the detection and correction of errors and inconsistencies in the data set due to the corruption or inaccurate entry of data. Incorrect or inconsistent data can create problems leading to drawing the wrong conclusions. Data cleaning includes amongst others:

- Having a list of all variables with labels and codes.
- Deciding which variables are crucial for the analysis in order to avoid that questions related to these variables are skipped (or not asked in interviews).
- Looking for encoding errors.
- Check for logical consistency of answers.
- Decide (and record this decision) on how to deal with missing or incorrect values.

An important issue related to the quality of data is the **consistency** in data collection and recording. Staff and team members involved in data collection and recording should receive the same information and guidelines on how to do it. Having checklists for these tasks (for interviewing, but also recording and writing down data) are helpful but also keeping track about data collection (who was involved, methods and processes followed by data collectors, problems that data collectors encountered) is useful in view of reporting.

# 9. DATA ANALYSIS

When the data for the M&E are gathered, it is time to do the analysis. Through this analysis, an answer can be given to the evaluation questions.

## 9.1. ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The aim of this paragraph is not to give a full overview of different ways to analyse quantitative data. This would go beyond the aim of this resource package and various good guides are available ready to be used. Quantitative data are numeric data such as costs and frequencies. The analyses vary from rather simple (e.g. frequency tables and cross-tables linking two variables) to more complex (multi-variate analyses researching relationships between more than two variables). Various software tools are available to enable these analyses varying from 'basic' (like e.g. statistical analysis in Excel) to

59 http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/describe/manage_data, consulted on 30.03.2017

sophisticated statistical packages like SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). When Survey Monkey is used for data collection, there is the possibility to do some basic quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses. Usefully, the raw data can be exported to Excel and SPSS.

## 9.2. ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

For the analysis of qualitative data, content analysis, discourse analysis and time lines are presented as possible methods.

- **Content analysis[60]:** through this method textual material is interpreted and coded based on a list of 'codes' e.g. activities, relationships. Textual material can be websites, content of social media, books, interviews, journals, etc. The coded content can then be quantitatively analysed for trends, patterns, relationships, etc. On YouTube, a series of interesting videos is available on content analyses, delivered by Prof. Graham R. Gibbs of the University of Huddersfield[61].
  A major decision in the implementation of this method is to decide on the unit of text that will be classified during the coding (coding unit). Examples of coding units are words, phrases, images, etc. The choice of the coding units is based on the research/evaluation questions and the concepts to be identified in the analysis. A next step is to develop the coding scheme, i.e. assigning coding units to particular categories of concepts. For example, assigning the numerical code '0' to an advertisement (coding unit) if the central figure is the image of a boy and '1' if the central figure is a girl. All codes are gathered in a code book or manual which helps to ensure systematic and replicable coding of data. In addition, there are several existing content analysis dictionaries which are available to support the analysis of written text. When the coding scheme is finalised, coding can begin. Final analysis involves the application of quantitative techniques.

  Content analysis can be both quantitative and qualitative. For qualitative content analysis, units of analysis have to be identified, i.e. the basic unit of text to be classified during the content analysis. The coding unit is an important decision also in this process. Codes are then assigned to a chunk of text representing a single theme or issue relevant to the research/evaluation question(s). Also in the qualitative variant of the analysis a coding scheme needs to be developed. In qualitative content analysis, a unit of text may be assigned to more than one category at the same time. Even so, the categories in your coding scheme should be defined in a way that they are internally as homogeneous as possible and externally as heterogeneous as possible[62]. Qualitative content analysis does not produce counts but it reveals patterns and themes.

  There is software available for the qualitative analysis of data, e.g. Atlas.ti.

- **Discourse analysis[63]**: this refers to the analysis of written, vocal, or sign language. It is used in various disciplines in social sciences (sociology, anthropology, social work, etc.). While in everyday life, the word 'discourse' usually means 'talk' or 'discussion', for scholars it is far more than this and can encompass all forms of communication. The 'father' of discourse analysis is the French

60 http://www.betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/content_analysis, consulted on 30.03.2017; http://documents.routledge-interactive.s3.amazonaws.com/9780415628129/Chapter%206%20-%20Quantitative%20content%20analysis%20final_edited.pdf, consulted on 30.03.2017

61 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_YXR9kp1_o

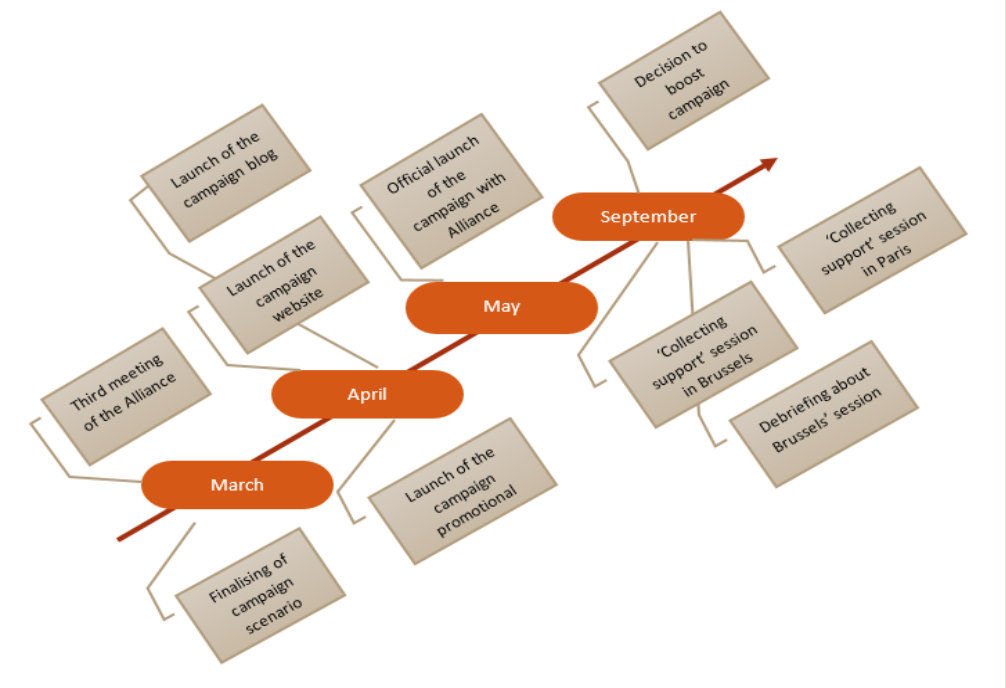
62 Lincoln, YS. & Guba, EG. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry,* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications

63 Jørgensen, M., and L., Philips (2002), *Discourse analysis as theory and method*, SAGO Publications

philosopher and sociologist Michel Foucault (1926-1984) who was convinced that the world is structured by knowledge. Individuals and groups create and formulate ideas about our world, which under certain conditions turn into unquestioned truths and become the norm[64]. Discourse analysis is a form of content analysis but it is very labour-intensive. It helps in learning how specific actors construct an argument and how this argument fits into wider social practices.
How to do a discourse analysis is described in detail on the following webpages: http://www.politicseastasia.com/studying/how-to-do-a-discourse-analysis/

- **Timelines[65]**: creating a timeline can help to clarify key moments, events and sequences in a project or programme. By involving various stakeholders in developing and analysing the timeline, a participatory way of evaluating a project or programme can be created. Stakeholders are asked to mention events in the history of the project or programme, which have significantly advanced or hindered the process.

**Example of use of timelines in data analysis:**




*Source: SAGO Research*

64 http://www.politicseastasia.com/studying/getting-the-hang-of-discourse-theory/

65 http://www.betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/timelines, consulted on 30.03.2017; http://www.transitiepraktijk.nl/en/experiment/method/learning-history-timeline-method; http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTOPPSISOU/Resources/1424002-1185304794278/4026035-1185375653056/4028835-1185375678936/6_Time_line.pdf

# 10. REPORTING

Possibly at various stages in the M&E process, there will be reports to be delivered, whose readers/users must be identified as different target audiences might need distinct types of reporting. E.g. beneficiaries might be more interested in a verbal presentation backed up by a summarised document using visuals, while for donors it is more important to receive a full written report with an executive summary. Some examples of possible products of evaluation, other than the usual mid-term and final reports are:

- Executive summary: to be used as a stand-alone document for a wider audience of stakeholders.
- Evaluation briefs: a 3-5-page non-technical summary with key-messages in a user-friendly format. See for example: https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_81766.html
- Infographics: usual visual messages for easy comprehension.

**Example: of use of infographics in reporting:**


*Source: DEPAUL, New evaluation shows Night stop emergency housing services prevent youth homelessness and improve health and wellbeing, on webpages of Better Evaluation: http://www.betterevaluation.org/blog/infographics_to_make_your_eval_results_go_viral, consulted on 11.04.2017*

In many cases, reporting consumes a considerable amount of the resources of M&E processes, while the report is only an input into the learning process which is far more important.

> ***"The challenge:** cut reporting, increase learning" (The Barefoot Collective, (2011), The Barefoot Guide 2: Learning practices in organisations and social change, p78)*

## 11. TAKING ACTION[66]

While reporting might take up an important part of the resources of the M&E process, learning and improvement are probably the main reasons for M&E. Therefore, linking M&E to organisational processes is of utmost importance. It should not be assumed that learning will happen automatically based on the M&E results. Follow-up is an essential part of supporting the use of M&E results, but this remains often a management responsibility rather than the evaluators'. What can an evaluator do to ensure that the main target audience reads the report and avoid that after that everything goes back to being business as usual? The evaluator can work with the project or programme management team to provide a list of options for follow-up but in the end, **resources** have to be available to account for support beyond report delivery. Follow-up actions will have to take place internally and externally.

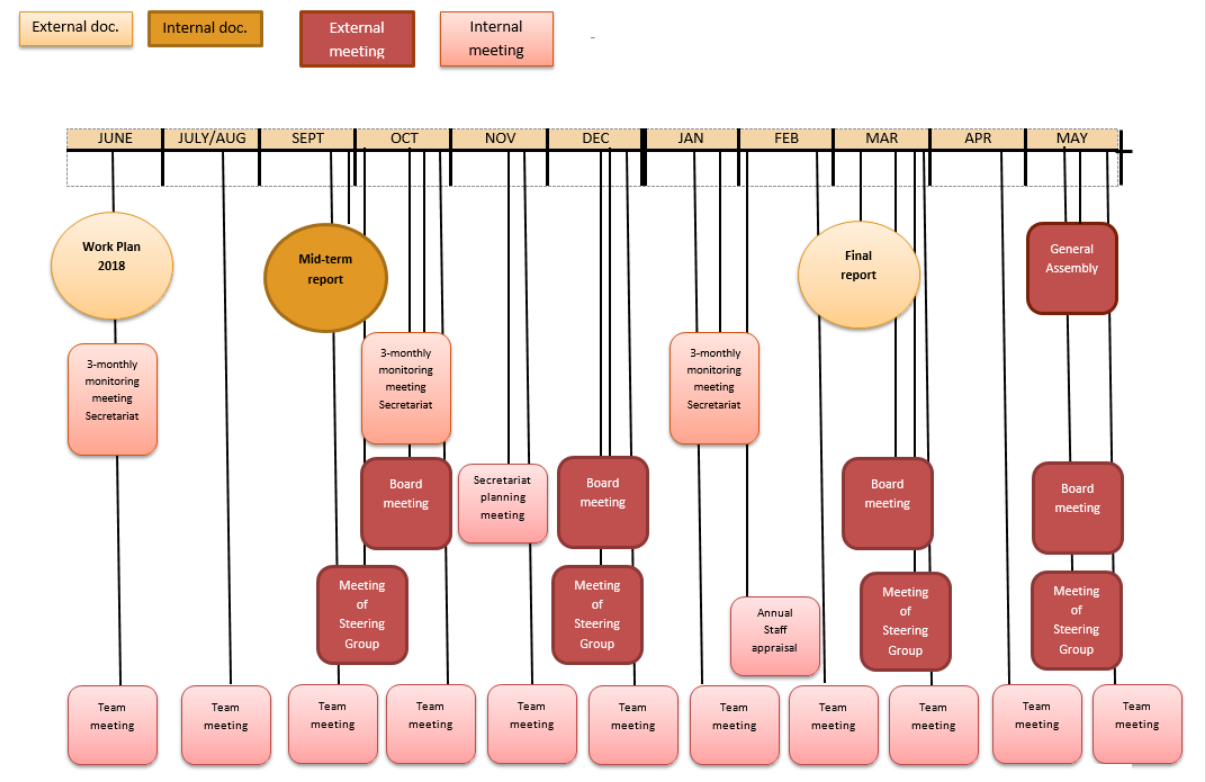
- **Internally: implement recommendations**.
  - M&E results have to be discussed within the project or programme team and on the basis of the discussions, concrete proposals will have to be formulated on how to implement which recommendations. The agreed recommendations are then entered in an **action plan** with expected results, actions planned, responsibilities, timing and allocated resources.
  - Follow-up of this action plan should be a **regular item on the agenda** of the project, programme and/or management team.
  - **Spaces and rhythms** have to be identified to share the learning. Organisational spaces are all formal and informal occasions crucial in the implementation of the project or programme (activities, meetings, events). Rhythms are the timing and frequency of the organisational spaces. Creating learning spaces does not have to be a complicated system: "*experiment and find out what works for you*". For example, dedicate an hour a month during a (team) meeting to talk about experiences and feelings, leaving activities and results aside[67].

66 http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/reportandsupportuse/supportuse, consulted on 30.03.2017

67 The Barefoot Guide Collective, (2015), *The Barefoot Guide 4: Exploring the real work of social change*, p127

**Example of use of rhythms and spaces in follow-up of M&E findings:**

*Source: SAGO Research*




- **Externally: dissemination of M&E findings.**
  - Dissemination of M&E findings should ideally be part of the M&E plan. Reflection is therefore needed on the **use of the findings**: should the findings be available for all stakeholders, readable for all stakeholders, will a summary be necessary for external use?
  - To make a difference, M&E results should be communicated in a way that **meet the needs of the different groups of stakeholders** in/for the project or programme (see stakeholder's analysis in chapter 4.4.).
  - Also for the dissemination of M&E findings an **action plan** is recommended with the actions to be taken, responsibilities of those involved in these actions, timing of actions and resources allocated.

**External or internal evaluation?**

A common question faced by organisations wishing to evaluate their project or programme is whether to hire an external evaluator. A general guideline that is often used, is that monitoring is carried out by internal staff and that for evaluation external expertise is hired. However, there are various factors to consider when making this choice. The table below gives an overview of the main factors to consider and how they can inform the choice to be made.

**Table 1: Factors influencing the choice for internal or external evaluators**[68]

| Factors | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Availability | Internal evaluators are likely to be readily available: they are in the organisation and able to do the work whenever needed. However, in some cases the same might be true for external evaluators, depending on the relation that has been built with the external evaluator. |
| Knowledge of the context and the programme/project | An internal evaluator may be more familiar with the programme or project and the environment in which the programme or project operates. They have inside information about the organisational culture, procedures, staff, leadership, etc., which can often be mainly a time advantage. An external evaluator should also be able to obtain this kind of knowledge, when sufficient time is given. This time however, can be considered as a cost factor as the organisation will be paying the evaluator to gain this background information. |
| Expertise | External evaluators are most probably selected because of the specific experience and skills they have in relation to evaluation. At the same time, they might be viewed as too remote or "too ivory tower" and too abstract[69]. A compromise can be to have an internal evaluator who has built up evaluation expertise or an external evaluator with expertise in relation to the specific area being evaluated. |
| Objectivity and perceived objectivity | "Many people believe that external evaluators come to an evaluation unbiased and with an open mind in contrast with internal evaluators who are part of an organisation with its own history and models of behaviour"[70]. No matter how neutral an evaluator attempts to be, he/she will always have implicit, unconscious values. This is both true for internal and external evaluators. However, perceived objectivity can be a key factor in choosing between an internal and external evaluator. An external evaluator may be perceived as having more credibility and the appearance of impartiality may be a strong argument for the use of an external evaluator. |
| Ability to collect information | External evaluators might be more able to collect information that could be difficult to obtain. People might be more willing to give sensitive information to a 'stranger'. Furthermore, data collection is a two-way process: by asking questions, people might gain a new perspective. |

68 This table and explanation of the factors are based on the following article in which many references can be found in relation to this issue: Conley-Tyler, M., (2005), *A fundamental choice: internal or external evaluation?* in: Evaluation Journal of Australasia, Vol. 4, N0s 1& 2, March/April 2005, pp 3-11

69 Weiss, C.H. 1972. Evaluation Research: Methods of Assessing Program Effectiveness. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

70 Conley-Tyler, M., (2005), *A fundamental choice: internal or external evaluation?* in: Evaluation Journal of Australasia, Vol. 4, N0s 1& 2, March/April 2005, p7

| | |
|---|---|
| Willingness to criticise | External evaluators can often raise issues that would be uncomfortable for an internal evaluator to raise. There may be pressure on an internal evaluator and a negative evaluation could have implications for him/her both professionally and socially. Yet, many of the same arguments count when an external evaluator has hopes of additional work or when he/she takes a highly participative approach. In this case, it can also become uncomfortable to formulate criticism. |
| Use of evaluation | The utilisation of the evaluation results is key in the whole process. Some argue that for internal evaluators it is easier to come up with recommendations that are more likely to be used since he/she knows the organisation and understands the context very well. Internal evaluators might be particularly useful for the institutionalisation of M&E in the organisation's programmes and projects. Still, this issue can be solved by external evaluators working closely together with the client and other stakeholders in a participative mode. |
| Costs | Internal evaluators might have an advantage over external evaluators in terms of costs. Still, it can be more expensive to maintain idle evaluation capacity if the internal evaluator is not needed and not involved in other activities. At the same time, the availability of an internal evaluator can be seen as a longer-term investment that an organisation makes. Whether this is a reasonable investment, depends on the size of the organisation and its future evaluation needs. |

When making a final choice, it is important to consider the different roles that both internal and external evaluators can take regarding the use of the evaluation (and importantly, of its results): an external evaluator might be in a better position to facilitate the use of the evaluation compared to an internal evaluator who would need to take a directing role to follow up on the evaluation results.
**Ownership** is crucial in M&E to be able to draw learning from it. External evaluators can be valuable partners in asking the right questions to enable this learning.

## ANNEX 1: TEMPLATE FOR A M&E PLAN

# Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

*Instructions to fill out this template are shown in italics.*

**Date:**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**1.1. Purpose of the M&E plan** [*Describe the purpose of the M&E plan of your organisation, project or programme. If this plan is for a specific project or programme, this can be described in paragraph 1.2.]*

### 1.2. Summary of the project or programme:

- Duration (starting and ending date)
- Main objective
- Partners
- Beneficiaries
- Activities to be developed
- Budget
- Funder(s)

### 2. PURPOSE OF M&E

*[Describe what and how you want to use M&E in your project or programme: use findings and/or process]*

### 3. INTERVENTION LOGIC

*[Describe the intervention logic of the project or programme based on a Theory of Change or a Logic Framework to identify what you will evaluate]*

### 4. TYPE OF EVALUATION

*[Describe the type of evaluation you want to use: ex-ante, mid-term, final or ex-post]*

### 5. STAKEHOLDERS IN M&E

*[Identify, based on a stakeholders mapping, who will be involved in what role in the monitoring and evaluation]*

## 6. M&E RESOURCES

*[Determine the resources allocated to M&E activities]*

## 7. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

*[Formulate the questions that will guide the evaluation based on the criteria that you want to use (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, etc.]*

## 8. M&E FRAMEWORK

*[Fill out the M&E framework – you can use the template proposed in annex 2 for this purpose]*

## 9. REPORTING

*[Specify how you will report for which target audience]*

## 10. FOLLOW-UP ACTION PLAN

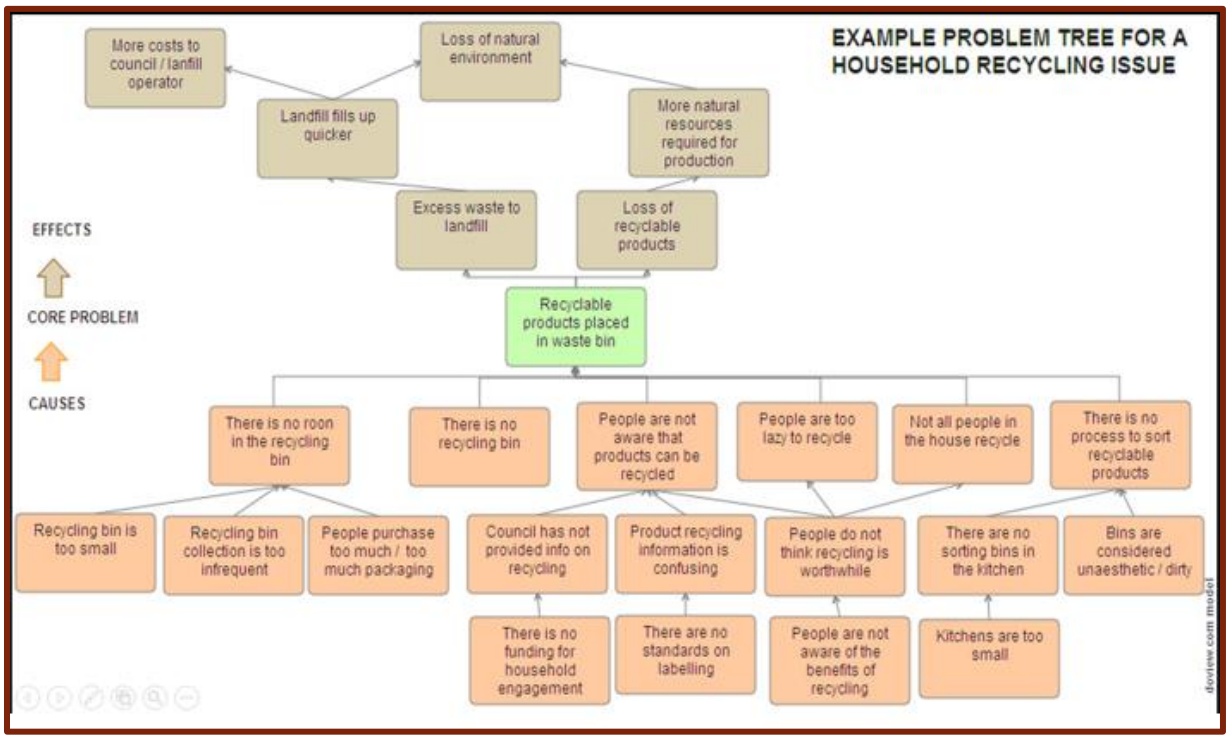
*[Specify the actions that will be taken on the basis of the results of the M&E – this part of the template can be filled out in a later stage when the findings are known]*

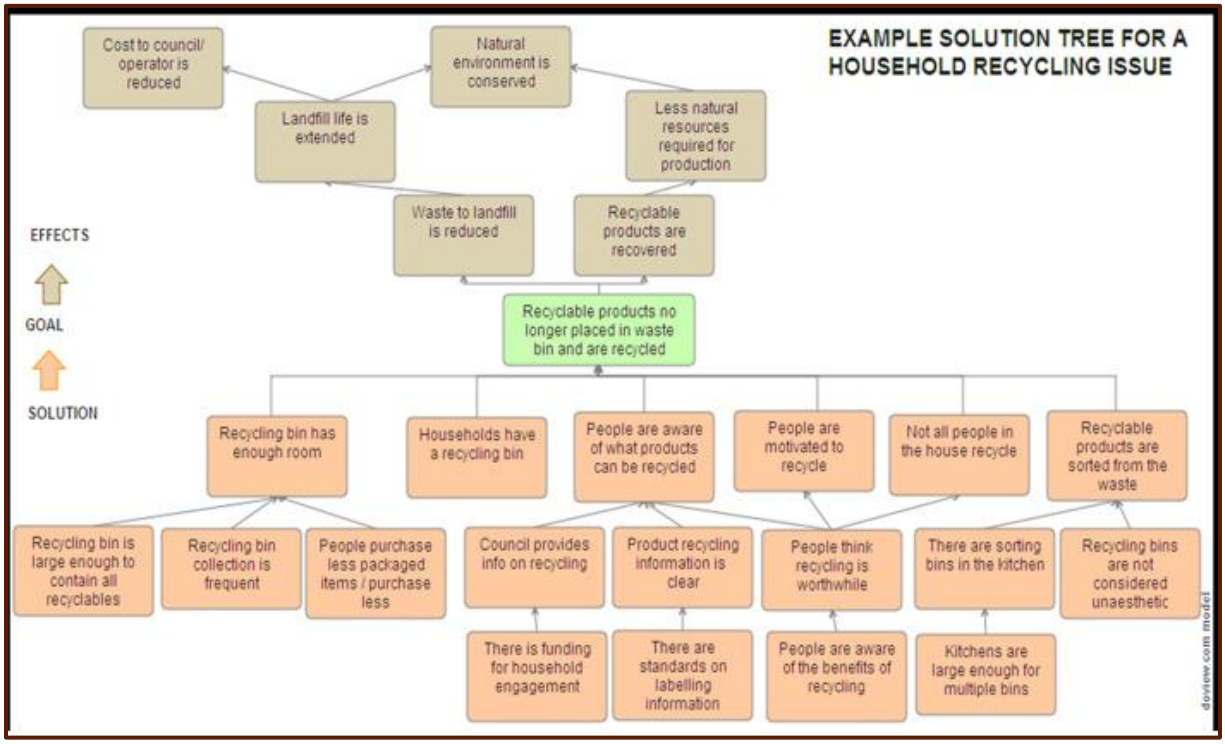
## ANNEX 2: TEMPLATE FOR A M&E FRAMEWORK

| | Indicators (A) | Information needs (B) | Frequency (C) | Means of verification (D) | Responsible for data gathering (E) | Data storage (F) | Responsible for data analysis & sense making (G) | Responsible for reporting (H) | Baseline (info on the indicator at point $T_0$) (beginning of 2017) | Target 2017 | Results 2017 | Narrative |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Description of the indicator* | *Why do you need information on this indicator? What will be the use of it?* | *How frequently do you need information on this indicator?* | *Where to get the information from? Through which means will you retrieve the info? In what way?* | *Who gathers the information?* | *Where to store the data to be used for reporting? Folder hierarchy to be decided* | *Who analyses the information and how?* | *Who does the reporting (column B)?* | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## ANNEX 3: EXAMPLE A PROBLEM TREE AND A SOLUTION TREE

Example from:
http://www.evaluationtoolbox.net.au/index.php?option=com_rubberdoc&view=category&id=29&Itemid=139 : How to develop a Problem/Solution Tree?



## ANNEX 4: A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY (JEAN A., KING AND BORIS VOLKOV)

# A Framework for Building Evaluation Capacity Based on the Experiences of Three Organizations

*by Jean A. King and Boris Volkov*

Program evaluation is a form of applied research—a systematic, data-based process for judging the value of a program, helping to make decisions, or creating information about key activities or processes. During the past 40 years, the field of program evaluation has developed simultaneously in two directions. One branch has focused on accountability, requiring proof that money has been well spent and that staff have implemented programs with fidelity. This approach typically requires outcome measurement, performance assessment, or cost data, providing summative evaluation information for audiences beyond agency staff or administrators. Another branch of evaluation has focused on collecting information that will enable staff (and sometimes clients themselves) to improve programs. This approach focuses on collaborative inquiry and may couple professional evaluators with program staff or participants to engage in ongoing, bottom-up, participatory activities that, through the acts themselves, teach people evaluation skills. In its fullest form, the evaluator's role changes from that of outside expert to coach and quality control manager, guiding organization members in their own evaluative work.

Because external funding in the form of grants and contracts routinely comes with accountability strings attached, many administrators have accepted the self-evaluation challenge, and staff in agencies and schools regularly engage in annual improvement processes involving data collection and analysis. However, the focus on accountability has also created serious problems for such organizations. First, the demand for evaluation information has created many "accidental evaluators"—individuals with little or no training in program evaluation who are nonetheless required to conduct evaluation studies. In general, few practitioners have formal training in evaluation procedures; many exhibit negative attitudes toward program evaluation; and most would prefer to serve

Photo by Joe Treloven, courtesy of the Science Museum of Minnesota

***The demand for program evaluation creates a dilemma for not-for-profit agencies such as the Science Museum of Minnesota, which must provide accountability evidence to satisfy funders and policy makers, while at the same time generating information that can help staff improve services for museum visitors.***

additional clients rather than devote precious fiscal resources to evaluation. The demand for program evaluation also has created a dilemma for not-for-profit agencies: They must provide accountability evidence that satisfies funders and policy makers, while at the same time generating information that can help staff do a better job serving people. These two types of evaluation information are rarely the same and, when push comes to shove, outcome requirements typically dominate evaluation activities. Where there are limited resources available for the work, outcome measurement may unavoidably overwhelm formative efforts.

Evaluation capacity building (ECB) is a fairly recent conceptual development that attempts to address some of the problems inherent in program evaluation. Although the practice is sometimes considered distinct from program evaluation, the goal of ECB is to strengthen and sustain effective program evaluation practices by increasing an organization's capacity to

- design, implement, and manage effective evaluation projects;
- access, build, and use evaluative knowledge and skills;
- cultivate a spirit of continuous organizational learning, improvement, and accountability; and
- create awareness and support for program evaluation and self-evaluation as a performance improvement strategy in the internal and external environments in which they function.

Building on the collaborative inquiry approach, ECB is halfway on a continuum, with user-focused evaluation at one end (where an evaluator acts to increase the likelihood that someone will use the results of a study) and organization development or continuous quality improvement at the other (where people within an organization engage routinely in data collection, reflection, planning, and action). Evaluation capacity building simultaneously addresses demands for accountability and for interactive participation. In theory, it is both timely and cost-effective.

Our study, which was conducted during 2003 and 2004 with support from a CURA Faculty Interactive Research Program grant, had a dual purpose: first, to examine the development and overall status of program evaluation in three Twin Cities not-for-profit organizations that had a long-term interest in the process; and second, to study the viability of evaluation capacity building as a policy outcome that could generate quality data in a timely and cost-effective manner. This article will briefly outline the study's methods, identify the common features of program evaluation across the three organizations we studied, present a grounded framework for evaluation capacity building, and consider the implications for institutionalizing program evaluation in organizations large and small.

## Study Methodology

We used three criteria to identify potential organizations to study: (1) The organization had to be a Twin Cities–area not-for-profit organization or school district with an external mandate for accountability information; (2) there had to be an ongoing, routine program evaluation function in the organization; and (3) one or more high-level administrators in the organization had to be committed to institutionalizing or broadening the evaluation function. Many agencies and districts easily met the first two criteria, but the third criterion narrowed our subject pool. We ultimately selected three organizations where one or more leaders understood the potential of program evaluation and were either interested in institutionalizing the process more broadly or were actively doing so: Neighborhood House, a social service agency that began as a settlement house for immigrants more than 100 years ago; the Science Museum of Minnesota, a community resource to teach science to Minnesota's citizens informally; and Anoka-Hennepin Independent School District (ISD) 11, which is rapidly becoming one of the largest school districts in the state.

Although they differ on many dimensions, the three organizations we chose to examine have certain similarities. They are all large organizations with a governing board and a bureaucratic hierarchy; they are well-known community entities, having existed for at least 50 years (and in two cases longer); they have an educational mission that includes a commitment to serving society; and they share the collective challenge of conducting program evaluations and demonstrating to their boards, funders, and staff the value of their work, their efforts to improve activities, and their achievement of outcomes.

At the same time, because we wanted to study program evaluation in distinct contexts, we chose organizations that differed from each other in terms of mission, activities, clientele, and structure. Not surprisingly, their evaluation structures differed as well. At the time this research was conducted, the Science Museum had no one designated as the internal program evaluator, and staff either hired external consultants or conducted evaluations themselves.[1] Neighborhood House had a full-time internal evaluator who coordinated certain activities, but staff hired external evaluators for some projects or were responsible for completing others themselves. Owing to its size, tradition, and the accountability mandates it faced, Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 had no single individual with the role of program evaluator, but rather had a number of people connected to its evaluation function: a student assessment office with a full-time professional and three staff members, other staff who worked on mandatory and targeted evaluation projects, and external evaluators who completed evaluation contracts. Our intention was to study the status of program evaluation and the prospects of evaluation capacity building across these organizations, seeking commonalities and identifying the components of successful evaluation capacity-building efforts.

During the study, we were participant observers in more than 25 evaluation-related meetings across the three organizations, sessions in which people framed evaluation questions, worked on instruments, interpreted data, reacted to reports, and so on. We collected organizational documents for analysis, including evaluation reports, instruments, descriptive materials, and accountability mandates. Finally, we conducted a series of formal interviews with more than a dozen leaders or evaluation champions, supplemented by informal interviews with numerous other individuals engaged in evaluation activities.

## Commonalities of Program Evaluation

Despite the differences in evaluation structure across the three organizations, the status of program evaluation within them was fairly similar. Absent leadership and a purposeful focus on doing something different, mandated evaluations clearly drove the evaluation agenda in all three organizations. Not surprisingly, respondents reported that

[1] The museum hired an internal evaluator in the spring of 2005.

Photo by Courtney Markuson, Anoka-Hennepin School District

***Administrative staff at Anoka-Hennepin Independent School District 11 routinely structure evaluations of major district programs and initiatives, including in the past several years a major focus on literacy instruction, middle grades programming, and elementary support services.***

external grants, an important source of funding for each organization, typically required evaluations. As an administrator from Neighborhood House put it, "The circumstances under which [program evaluation] is done is often in response to funding requests or reports to funders. . . . They are mandated." A program director from the Science Museum noted, "It is accountability to the funder, but not to the museum." Given federal funding requirements, an Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 coordinator said, "We need to really understand where our kids are at and the impact of [state tests] on our students and the funding for [federal programs]. It's become much more on the radar screens since No Child Left Behind [a federal testing requirement] came through."

If mandated evaluations were the first commonality, a second commonality made it difficult for staff to respond to such mandates. In each of these organizations, the key internal resource for program evaluation—time—was extremely limited, with people reporting few available hours for evaluation activities. Comments from across the organizations document this frustrating similarity. In the words of one museum administrator, "Whatever it is that we come up with investing more time on evaluation, I honestly don't know . . . [H]ow are we going to juggle things around so that we can give time to evaluation?" Another museum administrator added, "We don't have a lot of evaluation resources, so this comes on top of everything else that program directors, program managers do, and their staff." An Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 official observed that "evaluation resources basically come and go . . . definitely, with the wind," and a colleague concurred: "The biggest challenge is resources, which is always money, because money will buy time, money will buy people; funding, budget will buy materials, access, training, everything you need to change and to implement [program evaluation] and to have it become systemic." A top administrator at Neighborhood House lamented, "Because of our growth over the last couple of years, it is so easy to get caught up in your own programs. . . . [W]e have so much work that you don't ever step back and breathe and see the big picture."

With the reported pressures of mandated evaluations and the lack of time to conduct them, the viability of evaluation capacity building in organizations like these seemed an obvious concern. Happily, the efforts of staff and administrators in the organizations we studied pointed to ways that capacity can be built, slowly and systematically over time, through procedures that make sense even for small organizations. The next section describes the framework that emerged from our case study data, an outline that organizations can use in their efforts to build evaluation capacity.

## A Grounded Framework for Evaluation Capacity Building

What we learned from the three organizations we studied helped us develop a conceptual framework for understanding and developing ECB. Based on the experiences of evaluation champions in these organizations—and each organization had several—the framework provides a common and consistent approach to developing a practical evaluation function when planning and implementing organizational performance improvement strategies and accountability mechanisms. It is intended as a resource for a wide range of stakeholders in not-for-profit organizations seeking to increase their long-term capacity to conduct and use program evaluations in everyday activities. This framework encompasses findings from work in different settings and, with minor adjustments, can cater to the needs and circumstances of both large and small organizations. Although the framework is focused on not-for-profit organizations, we believe it also provides a viable approach for other organizations interested in improving the quantity and quality of their evaluations.

The evaluation capacity building framework we outline here consists of three major categories—organizational context, ECB structures, and resources—each of which we will describe using examples. Some components of our framework may at first seem rather generic, and there is a simple reason for this. Evaluation capacity building has been developed through research from several intersecting fields, notably evaluation studies, human resource development, organization development, adult learning, and social and industrial psychology. Accordingly, the components of the framework are derived from the theories and practices of these participating disciplines. One of the strong points of the ECB framework is that, while unequivocally centered on promoting and institutionalizing evaluation in organizations, it is also applicable to a number of other organizational interventions—for example, creating a

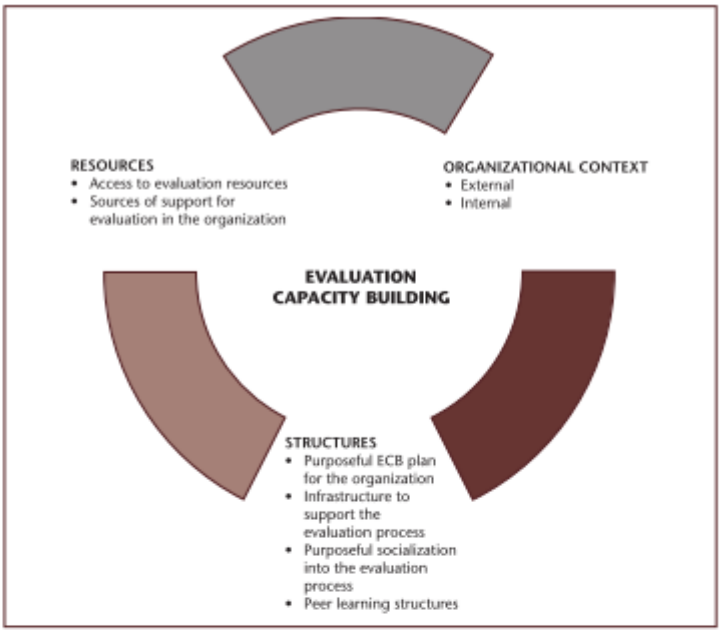
learning organization; reengineering; total-system, planned change efforts; continuous quality control, assurance, and improvement; benchmarking; and Total Quality Management (TQM) processes.

***Organizational Context.*** As shown in Figure 1, organizational context consists of two components. *External* organizational context locates an organization in time and place, and itself consists of two components: (1) external mandates and other requirements stemming from required accountability measures (e.g., program or project evaluations associated with grant funding or federal or state reporting requirements), and (2) an external environment supportive of change (e.g., a professional community interested in evaluation processes or accreditation agencies that encourage innovation). The mandate to evaluate (for accreditation, legislated accountability, or grant requirements) has been key to continuing evaluation efforts successfully. Nowadays, ECB practitioners must capitalize on societal requirements for accountability without letting accountability completely define the process of building evaluation capacity in organizations. For instance, the National Science Foundation funds a number of projects at the Science Museum of Minnesota with the specific stipulation of a formal evaluation plan from the program's inception. Similarly, public and private sources concerned about the impact of their investment fund several Neighborhood House programs.

The *internal* organizational context is key to determining the feasibility of ECB. The three organizations we studied suggest that a positive, ECB-friendly internal organizational context has five components, each important to ECB efforts. Creating this internal context, however, is not an evaluation "silver bullet" that will succeed in all settings.

The first component we identified is supportive leadership that shares responsibility for ECB. Leadership is key to capacity building. In its absence, the routine demands of mandated studies and ongoing activities eliminate the possibility of capacity building. Apart from fiscal support, administrators and opinion leaders can support the ECB process by providing verbal support in public (for example, when the superintendent at Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 hosted an evaluation meeting) and by serving as role models who evaluate and monitor their own activities. Leadership at Neighborhood House, for example, had made a commitment to building evaluation capacity several years earlier. As one administrator put it, "There's a much better understanding of the need for evaluation. There's upper management support for getting evaluation done and what that may entail." Led by a superintendent with a background in research, the Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 leadership similarly strongly endorsed ECB efforts.

**Figure 1. Elements of a Grounded Framework for Evaluation Capacity Building**




The second component is an evaluation champion. The value of evaluation champions is hard to overestimate. Although leadership is critical, so too are the activities of people who champion the evaluation cause. The highly visible and engaging "Evaluation Platoon" at Neighborhood House is a good example of people voluntarily implementing evaluation activities and purposely passing their evaluative spirit and knowledge to their colleagues. Science Museum staff recognized the significance of evaluation supporters in mainstreaming evaluation. As one administrator pointed out, "Some of our program staff . . . actually are conducting evaluations and getting excited about it and telling others, so it's that sort of peer-to-peer building of the infrastructure that says this is a place where evaluation is an important part."

The third component to building effective evaluation capability is broad-based interest in and demand for evaluation information. Until organizational leaders have a vision of what evaluation can do and support is built among the rank and file, evaluation capacity building will not be fruitful. Evaluation capacity building requires a broad stakeholder base and a special concern for the representation of the ultimate intended beneficiaries. At the Science Museum, members of the management team and staff thought seriously about how to build their capacity to mine more information from existing evaluations and about how to ensure that what they learned was shared more broadly and consistently across the institution. One manager suggested an evaluation committee that would meet regularly to look at evaluation results and think about the kinds of cross-cutting questions important for a museum to investigate. Even young beneficiaries of certain museum programs got involved meaningfully by creating their own evaluation questions about their projects and collecting data from visitors and from each other.

A fourth component, linked to the internal context of an organization,

is an internal environment supportive of change. Such an environment is characterized by the following favorable conditions for successful evaluation capacity development: open mindedness, lack of fear (of being penalized), respect for each other, rewards for innovation/risk-taking/creativity, a sense of humor, and positive attitudes toward evaluation. In the ECB process, there is a strong need to develop a receptive culture in which demand for and effective use of evaluation output can grow. In Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11, district leadership has worked for several years to involve a wide range of staff and stakeholders in evaluation activities, knowing that their meaningful participation in answering evaluation questions thoroughly is more important than getting results that look or feel good.

The final component of the organizational context category, sufficient input in decision making, simply means that people in the organization must be able to use data to make decisions. This opportunity, according to one person we interviewed, helps his organization "to do a better job of assembling and corralling all of these ideas such that we decide which project ideas have the highest merit in terms of delivering on our audience goals, our learning goals, [and] our financial goals."

***ECB Structures.*** Like the first category, the second category of the evaluation capacity building framework, *ECB structures*, also consists of several components. This category has direct implications for those interested in building evaluation capacity because interested people can actively develop these structures within organizations, purposefully creating mechanisms to build evaluation capacity. These structures (see Figure 1) were either present in the three organizations we studied or, if not present, were acknowledged within the organization as necessary for moving the ECB effort forward.

The first component of ECB structures is a *purposeful ECB plan for the organization.* This implies an appropriate conception of and a tailored strategy for evaluation in organizational policies and procedures (aligned with the organization's mission, goals, and strategies); an evaluation oversight group (for example, the evaluation manager and Evaluation Platoon at Neighborhood House); and a formal ECB written document.

A second component of ECB structures is the *infrastructure to support specific components of the evaluation process.* At minimum, this includes a question-framing mechanism to generate evaluation studies; a system to measure organizational needs; the capacity to create evaluation designs and collect, analyze, and interpret data; the presence of an internal reporting, monitoring, and tracking system; and public relations capability. The evaluation infrastructure might include such mechanisms and techniques as satisfaction surveys, focus group procedures, case analyses (strengths and weaknesses), statistical analyses, benchmarking, quality circles or problem-solving groups, chart reviews, and periodic monitoring.

Photo by Mike Greco

***Evaluation champions are an important component to building effective evaluation capability in organizations. The "Evaluation Platoon" at Neighborhood House (pictured here with author Jean King, second from left) is a good example of people voluntarily implementing evaluation activities and purposely passing their evaluative spirit and knowledge to their colleagues.***

Clearly, an internal evaluation and learning system that an organization has already developed to track and reflect on its performance should be reinforced and built on. In one Science Museum youth program, for example, an informal internal system was converted and formalized to track activities and reflect on project performance more systematically. There were four components of the eventual system: journaling, an attendance tracking system, digital portfolios, and demonstrations.

Another component of ECB structures is *purposeful socialization into the organization's evaluation process.* The core ingredients of this socialization process are clear expectations of evaluation roles (that is, the notion that everyone is expected to "do" evaluation); incentives for participation; formal training, professional development, or coaching in evaluation; and learning evaluation by doing it. In the ECB process, the focus is on working with the whole organization, not just on developing the skills of individuals, by building awareness of techniques and approaches that are workable in associated contexts and by developing evaluation skills appropriate for each level of an organization through a range of training opportunities.

Literature and our own experiences have highlighted the importance of linking more formal training with "hands-on" experiential learning as an approach to building evaluation capacity. The development of evaluation capability in the organizations we studied has been promoted through customized evaluation trainings (for example, a specialized course for Neighborhood House staff, and voluntary evaluation seminars for staff of the Science Museum of Minnesota), as well as "learning by doing" activities (for example, stakeholders' involvement in defining questions, data collection, and methods). For instance, administrators and participating teachers in Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 took part in several evaluations by defining evaluation objectives, questions, methods, uses, and so on. Similarly, Neighborhood House staff learned valuable skills in

refining program goals and objectives, developing logic models, establishing standards and indicators, and developing and administering surveys.

Evaluation capacity building work should include meaningful incentives for participation in evaluation—for example, stipends and honoraria, staff recognition within the organization, and (especially) the time and flexibility necessary for people to learn to integrate the evaluation process into their ongoing work. In an interview, one Neighborhood House administrator told us about trying "to say to folks that this is important and critical work" and that this "is why I joined the evaluation Task Force and team. . . . It also sends a message to the staff that if I can make it happen in my calendar, they need to also." Research shows that the most potent motivators for adult learning are internal. In this case, it is important to emphasize to learners that participation in the evaluation process can lead to the development of valuable, lifelong evaluation/research skills and the capacity for self-critique, self-determination, and systematic inquiry.

*Peer learning structures* are the final component of ECB structures. Purposeful trust building and interdependent roles in an organization should ensure that collaboration is present over time (not just for a one-shot effort) and is not initiative-driven. Distrust of the evaluation process is surprisingly common, even in an organization with good intentions. In Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11, building-level staff in one evaluation study at first asked how the evaluation would affect them, who would see the data, and whether these evaluation activities would be "one more thing that is dropped after a year or two." Real trust, both interpersonal and organizational, can only be established over time, and it remains a fragile commodity, especially in a large organization.

There is a need to be sensitive to the perspectives held by varying nonevaluator participants and to develop strategies to boost interest and engagement. There should be ample opportunities for reflection, for example, as well as open discussions of successes, challenges, and failures. The ECB effort also must allow adequate time and opportunities to collaborate, including, when possible, being physically together in an environment free from interruptions. A feedback mechanism in the decision-making process and an effective communication system are crucial in increasing the likelihood of cooperation in the ECB process. For instance, Anoka-Hennepin ISD 11 has institutionalized a practice of summarizing key messages from important meetings and creating standardized "action minutes" that document meeting content, decisions, and who will do what next.

***Resources.*** The final category of the ECB framework acknowledges the reality that without resources, the work of capacity building must be taken from someone's hide—a difficult sell when staff may already feel overworked. There are two aspects to the issue of resource needs. First, organizations must have easy *access to evaluation resources*. These resources include (1) formal training or professional development in evaluation (which may also be included in the socialization process); (2) formal and informal just-in-time evaluation coaching; (3) personnel in the form of internal professionals and external consultants; (4) relevant research bases that contain "best practice" content; and (5) information on resources for evaluation, including books, journals, and online resources.

The second area of resource need is explicit *sources of support for program evaluation in the organization*. This support can take several forms. Fiscal support from the board or administration is both a signal and a tool. It includes basic resources (for example, copying, computer hardware and software, and the means to conduct data analysis), as well as explicit, dedicated funding for program evaluation activities. As a Science Museum vice president said, "We've got all of these projects; each one carries thirty to fifty thousand more dollars over the course of that project for evaluation. You add those pieces together, you've got some real dollars." A Neighborhood House administrator noted, "We've committed the financial resources to support [evaluation]. . . . Five percent of program revenue goes to support program evaluation and effectiveness." In that agency, every grant or contract written builds resources for evaluation and supports evaluation activities. Resources can also include time within the workday to collaborate on evaluation activities, a luxury for practitioners like social workers or classroom teachers. Revenue-generating strategies to support ECB (for example, selling materials or having staff provide evaluation consulting in other agencies) may be a creative way to enable the evaluation process to sustain itself.

## Conclusion

Evaluation capacity building is an example of a system of guided processes and practices that necessarily includes a wide variety of adult learning processes. Psychologist Carl Rogers once noted that learners want to be problem solvers, and adults are no exception; they tend to demand an immediate application of their learning. Evaluation capacity building builds on this need by requiring the active, self-directed participation of learners during the entire evaluation process. Applying the ECB framework, people learn evaluation by doing it themselves in their own programs and organizations. It is a context-dependent, learner-dependent, and learner-centered intentional action system. The wide-ranging backgrounds of participants must be taken into account, and learning materials and activities should allow for different types of previous experience. A number of lessons from the principles of adult learning are applicable to ECB, including establishing a relaxed, trusting climate conducive to learning; involving learners in an assessment of learning needs; mutual planning; and flexibility.

Why evaluation capacity building, and why now? One administrator at Neighborhood House nicely captured the importance of evaluation in his organization:

> If we cannot say clearly and effectively who we are, what we do, and how effective we are, we're not going to be able to continue to support programming or to take on new programming initiatives. It's a way to say to people, here's why you can believe what we are saying. It's not just the numbers, it's what happened in people's lives. It's the stories that go on with people.

By developing ways to help organizations assess their work, examine what is working and what isn't, and learn how to strengthen program activities and increase their impact, building the evaluation capacity of organizations can be of paramount significance. At the end of one interview, a study participant who is also an avid gourmet cook compared program evaluation to a measuring cup, noting that

> evaluation helps us measure what we do, and you fill it and empty it. . . . It reminds me [to] test it, try it, taste it, does this work, this doesn't work. How do you adjust? But something

great comes out of it if you work at it. Something great comes out of it.

Our study examined three organizations facing the central program evaluation challenge of this first decade of the new millennium: responding to accountability demands, while at the same time generating information useful for program improvement. The accountability demands were easy to document, as was the amount of time needed for organizations to accomplish this work—time that is rarely available in not-for-profit agencies or school districts. Our second purpose was to study the viability of evaluation capacity building as an outcome that addresses these dual concerns by generating quality data on an ongoing basis as part of the day-to-day functioning of the organization.

The grounded framework that emerged from our data outlines what is needed to develop ECB and is available as a template for any organization interested in mainstreaming the evaluation process. Even organizations with limited resources for this work can focus on creating structures that will, over time, support evaluation activities incrementally. Organizational leaders can develop an ECB plan and establish peer learning opportunities on a small budget and then systematically work to socialize long-time staff and newcomers alike to evaluation as a way of life. Minimal incentives—especially in the context of externally mandated evaluations—may encourage people to collaborate on evaluation activities that, taken together, can begin to foster evaluative thinking across programs. Resources can surely help with this process, but they do not necessarily guarantee its success. The two-fold challenge is first to begin and then to sustain the evaluation process using available resources. The most profound lesson we learned about building evaluation capacity from the three organizations we studied, however, is also the most straightforward: Under the right circumstances, people and organizations *can* learn evaluation by doing it. That, we believe, is a lesson worth knowing.

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This study was supported by a grant from CURA's Faculty Interactive Research Program. The program was created to encourage University faculty to carry out research projects that involve significant issues of public policy for the state and that include interaction with community groups, agencies, or organizations in Minnesota. These grants are available to regular faculty members at the University of Minnesota, and are awarded annually on a competitive basis.

# ANNEX 5: EXAMPLE OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND RELATED SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

These evaluation questions were developed in the framework of the mid-term evaluation of a solidarity fund installed by a European NGO on social inclusion for its members. The main aim of this solidarity fund is to foster sustainability of its members. The questionnaire was complemented with individual interviews to deepen the results of the survey and to gather complementary data. Therefore, not all evaluation questions were used as a basis for the questionnaire/survey.
For each of the questions in the questionnaire, a link is made to the evaluation questions (yellow box).

| Evaluation criteria | Evaluation questions |
|---|---|
| **Effectiveness** | 1. What have been the quantitative and qualitative results (outputs, outcomes and eventually impact) of the solidarity fund and the development plans at the level of the member organisations and at the level of the network?<br>2. What are the most significant benefits resulting from the solidarity fund at the level of the member organisations and at the level of the network?<br>3. What have been possible internal and external factors that have influenced the identified quantitative and qualitative results?<br>4. To what extent can these results (changes) be credited to the solidarity fund programme?<br>5. What have been good practices identified?<br>6. What have been results of the solidarity fund programme which were not planned in the first place (secondary results) at the level of the member organisations and at the level of the network? |
| **Efficiency** | 7. To what extent have the financial resources (input) enabled the programme as a whole, and the organisational development plans to achieve the expected results efficiently and in a timely manner?<br>8. To what extent have the initial budget allocation and the actual spending been appropriate for achieving the objectives? |
| **Relevance** | 9. To what extent is the solidarity fund a relevant instrument for member organisations to become competent organisations at national level?<br>10. To what extent does the solidarity fund continue to be a relevant part of the solidarity system within the network?<br>11. To what extent does the solidarity fund continue to be a relevant instrument for organisation development in the future, considering the current socio-economic situation and changes in Europe?<br>12. To what extent do the development plans (financed each year) continue to be relevant? |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Coherence** | 13. To what extent has the implementation of the solidarity fund been coherent with its guiding principles, such as solidarity between member organisations, capacity building of member organisations, cooperation between members, transparency and accountability?<br>14. To what extent have the activities within the solidarity fund been coherent with other interventions with similar objectives?<br>15. To what extent have synergies been created between the solidarity fund and other interventions with similar objectives (i.e. reinforcement of respective results)? |
| **Sustainability** | 16. To what extent are measures in place to consolidate the results of the solidarity fund so far at the level of member organisations and the CE network?<br>17. What are existing/emerging challenges to be taken into account in the 2016-2020 period for the solidarity fund implementation that could interfere (positively or negatively) with achieving results?<br>18. What are existing/emerging challenges to be taken into account in the 2016-2020 period for the solidarity fund implementation that could interfere (positively or negatively) with the realisation of the guiding principles (e.g. transparency, accountability, solidarity, etc.)? |

## Questionnaire for survey

1. To what extent did the Solidarity Fund so far contribute to the **sustainability** of your organisation? *Please rate on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a large extent)*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| It supports my organisation to be there for our beneficiaries in the long term. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| It enables my organisation to obtain a range of types of funding. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| It enables my organisation to develop activities in order to build financial reserves. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| It enables my organisation to assess and manage risks. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| It enables my organisation to strategically manage (and finance) overhead costs. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Other | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Please use this space to add further information or specification.

Evaluation questions 1 and 2.

2. Please give your opinion on the following statements on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a large extent).

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Solidarity Fund enhances the capacity of my organisation to become a more competent organisation. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Solidarity Fund supports my organisation in terms of accountability and transparency within the network. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Solidarity Fund supports my organisation in terms of accountability and transparency outside of the network. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Solidarity Fund fosters solidarity between my organisation and other organisations in the network. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Solidarity Fund fosters cooperation between my organisation and other organisations in the network. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| So far, the Solidarity Fund made a difference to my organisation. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Please use this space to add further information or specification.

Evaluation questions 9 and 10.

3. Could you provide examples of the **added value of the Solidarity Fund for your organisation** in relation to the aspects mentioned in the previous question?

Evaluation questions 1 and 2.

4. What have been so far the **most significant benefits** resulting from the Solidarity Fund at the level of your organisation? *Please rank your selection of 5 items (5 being the most important, 1 being the least important in your top 5).*

- The decision-making process became more transparent (e.g. through developing a handbook on governance procedures).
- The Solidarity Fund has contributed to strengthening the participatory approach within the organisation (e.g. involvement of staff in self-assessment).
- The Solidarity Fund has contributed to strengthening the involvement of diocesan Caritas structures (e.g. involvement of diocesan level in self-assessment).
- Work-efficiency has increased due to clarity on roles and responsibility of all staff.
- The human resources policy became more transparent and effective (e.g. through the development of a HR handbook).
- The financial procedures have improved (e.g. through the training of staff, through realistic annual budgets reflecting work plans).
- The organisation became more visible (e.g. through improved external communication means like website, annual reports being uploaded on website).
- The Solidarity Fund has contributed to a more systematic approach of organisational development in my organisation.
- The range of services offered by my organisation has expanded.
- The quality of services offered by my organisation has increased.
- The capacity/competence within my organisation to respond to humanitarian crises in the region has increased.
- The capacity/competence to respond to humanitarian crises abroad has increased.
- The competence to produce relevant policy papers by my organisation has increased.
- The cooperation with other NGOs has increased.
- Staff competencies within my organisation about monitoring and evaluation have increased.
- Other.

Evaluation questions 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

5. What have been so far the **most significant difficulties/problems** encountered in relation to the Solidarity Fund at the level of your organisation? *Please rank your selection of 5 items (5 being the most important, 1 being the least important in your top 5).*

| | |
|---|---|
| | The Solidarity Fund is too demanding in terms of resources (time, skills,....). |
| | There is not enough opportunity to learn from other organisations. |
| | There is a lack of external accompaniment on how to implement the organisational development plan and recommendations proposed in the evaluation. |
| | There is a lack of support of higher management levels in the organisation for the implementation of the organisational development plan in my organisation. |
| | Support is not easily accessible in the network. |
| | The Solidarity Fund did not meet the expectations of my organisation. |
| | Other. |

Evaluation question 3.

6. How would you assess the **complementarity between the Solidarity Fund and other instruments** related to organisational development on a scale from 1 (don't agree at all) to 5 (totally agree)?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Solidarity Fund and training programmes complement each other well. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Participation in the training programmes on organisational development has helped my organisation to advance in the implementation of activities related to the Solidarity Fund. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Solidarity Fund and accompaniment complement each other well. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The complementarity between the Solidarity Fund and other organisational development instruments could be improved in terms of timing. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| There are gaps in the current offer within the network concerning organisational development instruments/approaches. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Other. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Please use this space to add further information or specification.

Evaluation questions 14 and 15.

7. What are the **challenges** (now and in the future) to be taken into account that could interfere with the results of the Solidarity Fund rating on a scale from 1 (challenge with little impact) to 5 (challenge with a significant (potential) impact)?

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | No opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Change of staff in the organisations involved. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Change of management/governance in the organisations involved. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Slow dynamics in governance bodies of the organisations involved. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Lack of support of higher management levels for implementation of organisational development plan within the apllicant organisation. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Difficulties due to changes in reporting / budget forms of the Solidarity Fund. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Financial reporting for the Solidarity Fund is very different to some other accounting systems used by members. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Wrong timing of different organisational development processes at the level of members. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The period of three years. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Lack of sufficient financial resources to feed into the Solidarity Fund system. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Paperwork involved in the Solidarity Fund. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Disappointment of applicant members that the Solidarity Fund is not sufficiently leading to financial sustainability | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Disappointment of donor members that the Solidarity Fund is not sufficiently leading to financial sustainability | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| That solidarity is too much defined in financial terms. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Within my organisation, the Solidarity Fund is not seen as contributing to increasing our capacity to support those in need | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Participation of staff of the organisation in the self-assessment is too demanding. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Other. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Please use this space to add further information or specification.

Evaluation questions 17 and 18.

# ANNEX 6: RESOURCES RELATED TO THE VARIOUS CHAPTERS

## 6.1. GENERAL: WEBSITES AND BLOGS

- The website and blogs of Ann-Murray Brown present short useful articles on various topics related to M&E: https://www.annmurraybrown.com/blog
- The Barefoot Guides on social change – monitoring and evaluation are integrated in the Guides: these are in the first place addressing organisations involved in development work, but the Guides are very inspirational for all involved in social change processes, including monitoring and evaluation: http://www.barefootguide.org/
- The Better Evaluation webpages with numerous articles, papers, reports, guides and templates: http://www.betterevaluation.org/. There are specific pages dedicated to 'evaluation and children': http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/evaluation_and_children
- The Community Toolbox contains 46 chapters with toolkits on community development. Chapters 36-39 are specifically related to M&E as well as toolkit nr 12: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents
- The Evaluation Toolbox webpages offer various tools, templates, papers, slideshows related to M&E: http://www.evaluationtoolbox.net.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2:welcome&catid=14:home
- The website pages of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and more precisely the Harvard Family Research Project pages specifically dedicated to evaluation: http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation. The Harvard Family Research Project separated from the Harvard Graduate School of Education to become the Global Family Research Project as of January 1, 2017. It is no longer affiliated with Harvard University. Though, all publications and resources are still available on: http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/publications-resources?topic=all (consulted on 05.04.2017).
- The monitoring and evaluation pages of the Tools4Dev (Practical Tools for International Development) comprise various useful tips and tools for M&E, also specifically related to children and youth: http://www.tools4dev.org/category/skills/monitoring-evaluation/
- The monitoring and evaluation resource pages of INTRAC: https://www.intrac.org/resources/page/1?terms=23,
- The monitoring and evaluation toolkit produced by CIVICUS: http://www.civicus.org/documents/toolkits/Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation.pdf
- See also the work of the Oversees Development Institute (ODI) on networks for social change: https://www.odi.org/publications and of Network Impact: http://www.networkimpact.org/our-services/
- The Point K Learning Centre with numerous resources on advocacy evaluation and programme evaluation: http://www.pointk.org/resources/
- The evaluation website pages of UNICEF: https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/

## 6.2. GENERAL: GUIDES, HANDBOOKS, ARTICLES)


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2017

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