SESSION 16 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will...

✔*...Be able to differentiate between monitoring and evaluation*

✔*....Be able to define Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation (PM&E)*

✔*...Apply their knowledge of PM&E in an analytical exercise*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Monitoring and Evaluation Reflection

Present definitions of **"monitoring"** and **"evaluation"** (M&E) and ask participants if there is anything they would add. Ask them to brainstorm about different types of indicators for both monitoring and evaluation and give examples of each.

#2 Making M&E "Participatory"

Have participants divide into pairs and ask them to answer the following questions for an evaluation that they have been a part of: *Who was the evaluation conducted for? Who designed it? Who collected and analysed the information? What happened to the information after it was collected?* Bring the group back together and invite a few volunteers to share their responses. Write each of the four questions listed above on flip chart paper. For each question, ask participants how the responses would change if the community was more involved in the M&E process. Ask the group to produce a definition of "participatory monitoring and evaluation" (PM&E).

#3 PM&E Exercise

Have participants divide into small groups of three to four people and refer to the PM&E exercise in their handbooks. Ask each group to describe the monitoring system that they would use and examples of process, outcome and impact indicators. Then ask each group to think of how the PLA techniques that they have learned could be used for monitoring and evaluating the project. Bring the groups back together to share their responses.

TRAINER'S NOTES

CONTEXT: Once a community begins to implement activities outlined in its action plan, it will need to begin monitoring and eventually evaluating them. The plans for monitoring and evaluation should be developed before the activities begin.

#1 Monitoring and Evaluation Reflection

Although they are very similar, it is important to distinguish between **monitoring** and **evaluation**. **Monitoring** is an ongoing process of data collection that allows project managers and the community to examine positive and negative trends and readjust their strategies accordingly. Monitoring focuses on measuring <u>outputs</u>--process and products related to the project implementation. It is done on a regular basis throughout the life of a project and helps ensure that the project stays on track. One way to monitor a project is to track <u>process indicators</u> or <u>output indicators</u>. Examples of these types of indicators include:

- ✦Number of latrines constructed
- ✦Number of condoms distributed
- ✦Percentage of households that attend awareness-raising meetings
- ✦Number of women joining a garden cooperative
- ✦Amount of money raised for an emergency medical fund

The term "evaluation" is used in many contexts. It can be used to describe...

- The initial assessment or appraisal of a situation;
- The monitoring of the progress of a project; or
- The measurement of the overall impact of a project.

For the purposes of this course, the term evaluation will refer to the measurement of project outcomes (short-term effects) or <u>impacts</u> (long-term effects). In other words, evaluation measures whether the project has met its objectives. Examples of <u>outcome indicators</u> and <u>impact indicators</u> include:

- ✦Percentage of girls who complete primary school (outcome)
- ✦Percentage of men who remain faithful to their wives (outcome)
- ✦Percentage of children who are immunized (outcome)
- ✦Level of maternal mortality (impact)

✦Incidence of diarrhoea-related deaths among children (impact)

In practical terms, monitoring and evaluation are very similar. In fact, monitoring is sometimes referred to as "on-going evaluation." Both monitoring and evaluation can be conducted using the same methods, which will be discussed below.

#2 Making M&E "Participatory"

While monitoring and evaluation of development projects have traditionally been done for the benefit of donors or sponsoring agencies (SAs), the main goal of **participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)** is to build the community's capacity to track the progress of its own development. Data are collected about the progress of activities so that the community can make its own decisions about...

- What is working well;
- What is not working well; and
- How to proceed next.

Community members are the key players and decision-makers in the PM&E process, although this does not exclude outsiders from the SA or donors. On the contrary, successful PM&E requires the support from the highest levels of these organisations. Staff of the SA only play only an advisory role, however, and leave the actual monitoring to the community members.

In many development programmes in the past, M&E has not been conducted with the full participation of community members. This does not mean that the M&E has not been valuable or valid. The information gathered through traditional M&E has improved programmes and provided valuable lessons. While traditional M&E may still be appropriate in certain situations, it is not ideal for measuring the progress or outcomes of projects that have been created by communities through PLA.

<u>How is PM&E conducted?</u>
PM&E is a *continuous process*, and not a one-time event. During the PLA workshop, the PLA team and the community work together to come up with a list of indicators which can be monitored on a regular basis by the community members. The action plan committee (APC) is responsible for ensuring that this monitoring takes place, in collaboration with the SA.

The same participatory techniques used during the initial PLA workshop can be used for PM&E.

There is no set formula for *which* PLA techniques to use for PM&E. Each community project will be different and will require different data to be collected. Below are examples of how some development organisations have used PLA techniques for M&E:

<u>Mapping</u>
- How many households have participated in the CAP activities

- How many people have used new health services
- Reductions or increases in disease patterns
- The percentage of girls enrolled in school

Diagramming
- Venn diagram to illustrate which projects have been most useful
- Venn diagram to illustrate new collaborations between organisations as a result of the project
- Flow diagrams to show the progress of the project implementation
- Flow diagrams to show how the project has affected the community in other ways

Ranking/Scoring
- Using matrix scoring to compare successful projects with unsuccessful projects according to various criteria

(e.g., number of people who donated labour, amount of external resources obtained, number of times the community met to work on the project)

Seasonal Calendars
- Illustration of trends in disease patterns or product outputs (e.g., number of trees planted)

Semi-Structured Interviews
- Discussions with community members about their perceptions of the project's success
- Discussions about problems with project implementation
- Discussions about the direct and indirect effects of the project on the lives of community members

Pie Charts
- Illustration of the increases or decreases in the percentage of people engaging in health-related behaviours

Communities can be confident that their PM&E will give a true picture of the progress they have made only if they are able to compare the information that was gathered in the initial PLA workshop with information that is gathered through PM&E. Therefore, the PLA team should encourage the APC to keep copies of all of the material (e.g., maps, diagrams, interview notes) that was created during the initial PLA workshop. Much of this information will be recorded in the workshop report written by the PLA team. By keeping this information, the APC will be able to refer to it later for comparison purposes.

One monitoring strategy is for the APC to convene regular community meetings to discuss the project. During the meetings, each of the activities are evaluated in a systematic manner, such as the following:

1. Review of implemented activities (using participatory techniques)

2. Problems encountered
3. Suggested solutions to the problems
4. Planning for the next cycle

Ideally, these meetings are facilitated entirely by members of the APC. If the APC does not feel comfortable enough to facilitate the participatory techniques, however, SA staff may be asked to attend and act as facilitators for the first couple of meetings, until the community members are able to facilitate the activities themselves. The frequency of these meetings will be decided by the community in collaboration with the SA.

#3 PM&E Exercise

Very few PM&E case studies exist. Therefore, this exercise takes an example of the PLA process and asks participants to brainstorm about how they would have continued the project, using PM&E. Following is a presentation of the experience of a Ugandan HIV/AIDS prevention programme which used PLA to assess community risk factors[27].

The goal of this exercise is for participants to think of some M&E indicators and how the PLA techniques that they have learned during the course could be used for M&E.

Ask the group to divide into pairs. Then ask each pair to give one example of a process/output indicator, an outcome indicator and an impact indicator that could be used to evaluate the Ugandan programme. Also ask each pair to brainstorm about how it would use at least two PLA methods in order to measure these indicators. There are no right or wrong answers, so encourage participants to be creative.

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[27] Source: Ssembatya, J. et al. 1995.

PM&E Exercise
The Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN)

Background

The Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN) is a Ugandan non-governmental organisation whose goal is to reduce the spread of HIV infection in the Rakai District. It is run and managed by health care providers, health educators, counsellors and trainers from Rakai District. The organisation's strategy is to provide integrated AIDS prevention interventions within a community-based health care framework. Its programmes include community-based health care (CBHC) which trains village health committees, community health workers, and traditional birth attendants. RAIN also runs a peer education programme for village youth and provides HIV counselling, testing and medical treatment through eight sub-clinics.

The PLA Workshop

Due to the high emphasis that it places on community participation, RAIN decided to facilitate PLA workshops in two rural areas with high HIV prevalence. The goal of the workshops was to help community members assess factors that put them at risk of HIV infection. A large group of people representing several different villages participated.

Identifying Risk Factors

The first PLA activity conducted was ***mapping****. The participants divided themselves by village, and each group drew a map of its village using locally-available materials (e.g, ash, beans, maize and stones). The participants first drew physical landmarks, such as hills, swamps and roads, and then added social markers, such as homes, churches, schools and farms. For each house, participants identified the number, age and sex of the inhabitants, and the number of deaths that had occurred during the previous year. The PLA facilitators asked the community members how many of the deaths were due to AIDS, but the villagers did not want to reveal this information due to the stigma associated with the disease.*

The village maps were transferred to paper, and then presented to the group at large. By identifying the number of deaths in the past twelve months, participants realized that there had been at least one death in each home. Although the causes of death were not identified, participants knew that many were caused by AIDS. By seeing the number of deaths, participants realized how widespread AIDS was in their community and the implications that this had for the community's survival.

Next, participants identified specific locations where they might be at risk of HIV infection. For example, they identified bars where men took casual sex partners. They also identified isolated areas, such as wells and wooded lots, where women were at risk of being raped.

After mapping, a group of community members created a ***seasonal calendar*** *on the ground in order to examine the patterns of various diseases. For each of the twelve months of the year, participants identified the prevalence of malaria and diarrhoea.*

After they had finished and transferred the map to paper, some of the more educated participants related the occurrence of the two diseases to the presence of sunshine or rain.

Many of the participants were surprised by this relationship, because they had previously associated malaria and diarrhea with eating certain foods that were present at specific times of the ear (e.g., maize and mangos). The PLA facilitator then asked the participants whether HIV had a transmission season. Surprisingly, the villagers said that yes, HIV transmission was highest during the harvest season (June, July and August), when men had more money. Because the men had more money, they could drink more alcohol and pay for casual sex. In addition to the harvest season, the villagers pointed out that HIV transmission was higher in March and December, when men sold their stored crops to prepare for the Christmas and Easter holidays.

The final exercise involved the creation of ***twenty-four hour activity clocks*** *(daily schedules), to allow the villagers to identify the differences in the amount of work performed by men and women and to identify leisure time that might lead to risky behaviours. The men and women conducted the exercise separately, and members of each group discussed what they did for each hour of the day. The exercise revealed that women engaged in many more activities than men during the day, and men had more leisure time than women. The exercise also revealed that women were frequently asked by their husbands to have sex as much as three times a day, and that the women were often too tired to comply. Because of their extra leisure time and their tired wives, many men took on additional sex partners. Both sexes realized that this behaviour was putting men and their wives at risk for contracting HIV.*

Proposed Solutions

After each activity, participants were asked to think of solutions to the problems that were identified.

After the mapping activity, participants realized that men were at risk of contracting HIV at bars (where they would pick up casual sex partners) and women were at risk of being raped in certain isolated places. As solutions, the men proposed that all drinking be done during the day and that they come home early in the evening. To protect themselves from attack, women decided to go in groups to collect firewood and water, and some of the men offered to accompany their wives.

When it became evident that HIV transmission was greatest at the times of year when men had the most money, the RAIN staff decided to increase their condom distribution efforts and health education activities during these months. The village women also realized that they needed to protect themselves more during the harvest and that they needed to encourage their husbands to take extra precautions during this time.

As a result of the creation of the twenty-four hour activity clocks, the villagers proposed that husbands and wives decide together how to better share the workload. This would make the women less tired and keep the men more occupied.

Questions

1. *If you were a RAIN staff member, what system would you suggest to the villagers for monitoring the implementation of their proposed solutions? How could they determine whether they were successfully protecting themselves from HIV?*

2. *Come up with one example for each of the following: a PROCESS/OUTPUT INDICATOR, an OUTCOME INDICATOR, and an IMPACT INDICATOR.*

3. *For each indicator, identify a PLA technique that the villagers could use to measure it.*

<u>Following are some examples of indicators that could be used by RAIN:</u>

PROCESS INDICATORS:

Number of condoms distributed during the harvest
Number of health education activities conducted

OUTCOME INDICATORS:

% of men accompanying women to isolated places
% of women going in groups to collect firewood
% of couples that have discussed how to share the workload
% of men helping their wives with chores
% of men using condoms during the harvest

IMPACT INDICATOR:

Number of AIDS deaths during the past year

At the end of the session, emphasize that there is a great need for the dissemination of **lessons learned** from PM&E. Encourage the participants to share their experiences using it when they go back and to use it in their own organisations.

SESSION 17
Field Work Preparation

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will...

✔*...Have a basic understanding of the field site and the agency sponsoring the field work*

✔*...Prepare themselves as teams for the first day of field work*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Presentation by Sponsoring Agency

Have a representative from the sponsoring agency (SA) give a presentation about his or her organisation, the field site, the local culture and key phrases in the local language.

#2 Strategy for the First Day

In the large group, ask participants to brainstorm about what kind of information they would like to collect during the field work (for all of the days). Based on their feedback, have participants select one or two tools to implement the first day.

Also brainstorm about how participants can introduce themselves to their communities.

Introduce the **daily activity matrix** as a way to summarize their data at the end of the day.

#3 Defining Team Roles

Have participants break into their field teams and have each team choose a leader.

Also ask participants to decide who will be facilitators and who will be note takers on the first day.

#4 Team Contract

Ask each team to develop a “contract” for its field work in order to ensure that everyone agrees on a code of behaviour. Participants may write down the contract, or it can be stated orally.

TRAINER'S NOTES

CONTEXT: Before the start of the PLA workshop, the PLA team normally makes a preliminary site visit to the community (Stage 3 of the PPD process). Because of the time limitations of this course, it is not possible for the field practice to include a day just for the preliminary site visit. This session is therefore designed to give participants an introduction to the community where they will be working and to help them prepare for the first day's activities.

#1 Presentation by Sponsoring Agency

As an introduction to the field work, the trainers should ask a representative from the agency that will be hosting the participants to come to talk about their agency's work and the local communities. At a minimum, it is helpful for the agency representative to cover the following:

- ✔The agency and its work in the community
- ✔Description of the local communities
- ✔Local customs that need to be observed by participants (e.g., dress code)
- ✔Basic phrases in the local language (e.g., hello, goodbye, thank you)
- ✔The community's expectations of the participants (e.g., what they have been told about the field work)
- ✔Whether it is more appropriate to have men and women do the PLA activities together or separately

#2 Strategy for the First Day

There may not be enough time in the field to have the participants conduct a preliminary visit before the first day of the PLA workshop. Therefore, they may have to introduce themselves and explain their purpose before the first activity. Ideally, a representative from the SA will accompany each team of participants in order to serve as a liaison with the community and, if necessary, a translator.

The participants should think about how they want to introduce themselves, and all of the teams should agree on what they will tell the community about the purpose of their activities. One suggestion is to remain as vague as possible and say that they have been invited by the SA to come to learn about the community. It is important that participants do not raise the community's expectations about receiving money or other types of assistance. While the SA may be able to offer this type of assistance, the community needs to understand that the participants themselves are not able to do so. The trainers should discuss this with the SA before this session, so that they can agree on how to best present the purpose of the PLA workshop to the community.

On the first day, a good activity to do is **mapping**, since it serves as an icebreaker and the whole community can participate. Men and women may need to do separate mapping activities if this is culturally appropriate.

If the participants have only a few hours in the community, it may not be possible to do more than one activity. Therefore, they shouldn't plan too many activities or rush in order to fit in more activities. It is better to do one activity thoroughly than to do many activities hurriedly.

Remind participants that they should meet in the evening to discuss their experiences and summarize their data. Introduce the **daily activity matrix** (see Annex) as a way of summarizing activities at the end of every day.

#3 Defining Team Roles

Within each team, the participants need to choose a leader. For the first day, they must decide who will be note takers and who will be facilitators. These roles can be switched on subsequent days, although it is helpful for the team leader to remain the same.

#4 Team Contract

Each team must agree on a code of behaviour for the field work. This can be tied in to the "Challenging Field Situations" exercise from Session 6. Ask participants to think back to the situations that they discussed, and use these as a basis for their team contract. For example, they may want to make it a rule that everyone shows up for meetings on time, or that no one dominates discussions with community members. Every team contract will be different, and the contracts can either be oral or written.

Participants should also invent signs or signals that they can use with each other to communicate messages about their behaviour (e.g., touching their right ear if a team member has talked too long).

SESSION 18 Presentations and Closure

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will...

✔*...Learn about the field experiences of the other participants*

✔*...Appreciate the challenges of implementing PLA in urban areas*

✔*...Identify institutional barriers to implementing PLA*

✔*...Be able to see how their knowledge and attitudes about PPD have changed during the course*

✔*...Evaluate this course*

Materials ✎

Bowl or basket
Small pieces of paper
Course evaluations
Self-evaluations

ACTIVITIES

#1 Field Work Presentations

Have each team make a presentation of the team's field work. Discuss the similarities and differences in the experiences of the different teams.

#2 PLA in Urban Areas and "Out of the Vacuum"

If the field practice has been done in a rural area, ask participants what challenges they might face when doing PLA in urban areas. Have them brainstorm about how to address these challenges.

Next, introduce the various institutional challenges of implementing PLA, and the dangers of working in a "vacuum." Distribute a blank piece of paper to each participant, and ask the participants to write down one obstacle that they anticipate facing when they implement PLA in their own organisation. Mix all the papers in a bowl or a basket. Read out loud as many of the papers as time allows, and ask the participants to brainstorm about how to overcome these obstacles.

#3 Case Study Examination and Final Evaluations

Pass out participants' responses to the Introductory Case Study from Session 1. Ask them if they would change any of their responses based on what they have learned in the course and, if so, to make those changes. Collect the responses again, and then have participants fill out the course evaluations.

#4 Course Closure

Refer participants to different PLA networks and publications (listed in the participant handbooks). Thank them for their participation and encourage them to share with others their future experiences in implementing PLA.

TRAINER'S NOTES

#1 Field Work Presentations

The presentations of the field experiences provide a good synthesis of the course and allow participants to reflect on what they have learned. The length of the presentations and their exact format are determined by the trainers, depending on the time available for this last session. The presentations do not need to be elaborate or formal; the most important aspect is the team reflection that takes place when preparing the presentations.

Following are suggested elements of the presentations:

- Summary of activities conducted by the team
- Summary of findings
- Reflections on what the participants found most challenging about the field work
- Reflections on what they enjoyed most about the field work
- Things that they would do differently during their next field experience

Encourage the teams to share at least one of the visual materials that was developed during the field work (e.g., a map or diagram).

#2 PLA in Urban Areas and "Out of the Vacuum"

See the section entitled "Urban Adaptations of PLA" at the beginning of this manual for information about challenges posed by conducting PLA in urban areas. Encourage participants to think of other challenges besides those mentioned here.

It is impossible to conduct PLA in a vacuum. Within an organisation, the participatory programme development process is affected by existing policies, working mechanisms, hierarchies and organisational philosophy. Each of these factors can either help or hinder the implementation of PLA. Therefore, the success of PLA requires more than just the training of one or two staff members. There is a need for a serious commitment to participation within all levels of the organisation. In other words, junior level field workers must be empowered to facilitate PLA, just as communities must be empowered to promote their own development. This successful institutionalization of PLA may take many years and may prove to be very challenging. Following are some factors that may pose obstacles to participants when trying to implement PLA in their projects[28]:

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[28] Absalom, E. et al. 1995. p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

- Lack of senior management's commitment to community participation
- Pressure from donors and/or senior management for "instant" results
- Emphasis on products instead of processes
- Rigid hierarchy that discourages decision-making by field workers
- Operating procedures that discourage creativity and flexibility
- Top-down planning processes
- Lack of respect for community knowledge and abilities (i.e.., belief in the superiority of "technical experts")
- Lack of local capacity building as an institutional goal
- Emphasis on quantitative evaluation indicators that may not accurately reflect the success of PLA
- Frequent changes in staff (i.e., lack of continuity)

Perhaps one of the biggest obstacles is the desire for a "blueprint" or "recipe" for participatory programme development, or a predetermined procedure and set of techniques for conducting PLA in every community. Every community is different, however, and every PLA workshop will be different. Some techniques may be appropriate for one community yet inappropriate for another. It may be very hard for some organisations to accept this need for flexibility and the lack of a blueprint or recipe.

There are several strategies that can help organisations to institutionalize PLA[29]:

- Exposing senior management and field work supervisors to PLA philosophy (e.g., through short orientation workshops)
- Rewarding staff who use participatory methods in their projects
- Placing importance on processes instead of products
- Increasing recognition of the value of qualitative indicators
- Decreasing time pressure to implement projects and allowing more time for the early development stages of projects
- Promoting continuity in job posts

#3 Case Study Examination and Final Evaluations

Pass out the answers to the introductory case study from Session 1 (since the participants have identified their papers with their birth dates, circulate the papers so that participants can take their own from the pile). Ask participants if they would change any of their responses based on what they have learned, and if so, how.

Ask participants to take a few minutes to fill in their new responses (and to distinguish somehow the new responses from the old responses on the sheet). Collect the case studies again when everyone has finished. The differences in responses will indicate how much participants have learned during the course.

[29] Absalom, E. et al. 1995. p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

Next, distribute the final course evaluations in order to assess the participants' opinions of the course content and structure. An example of a course evaluation appears in the Annex; it can be modified according to the trainers' needs.

#4 Course Closure

As explained in Session 2, one of the three pillars of PLA is **sharing**. This includes the sharing of experiences among PLA practitioners. Encourage the participants to share their implementation experiences with each other and with the wider PLA community, especially their experiences with participatory monitoring and evaluation. Distribute a list of the participants' names and addresses so that they can keep in contact with each other.