



# From Results Chain to an M&E Plan

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# Objective of this session

How to plan an M&E system

This can involve

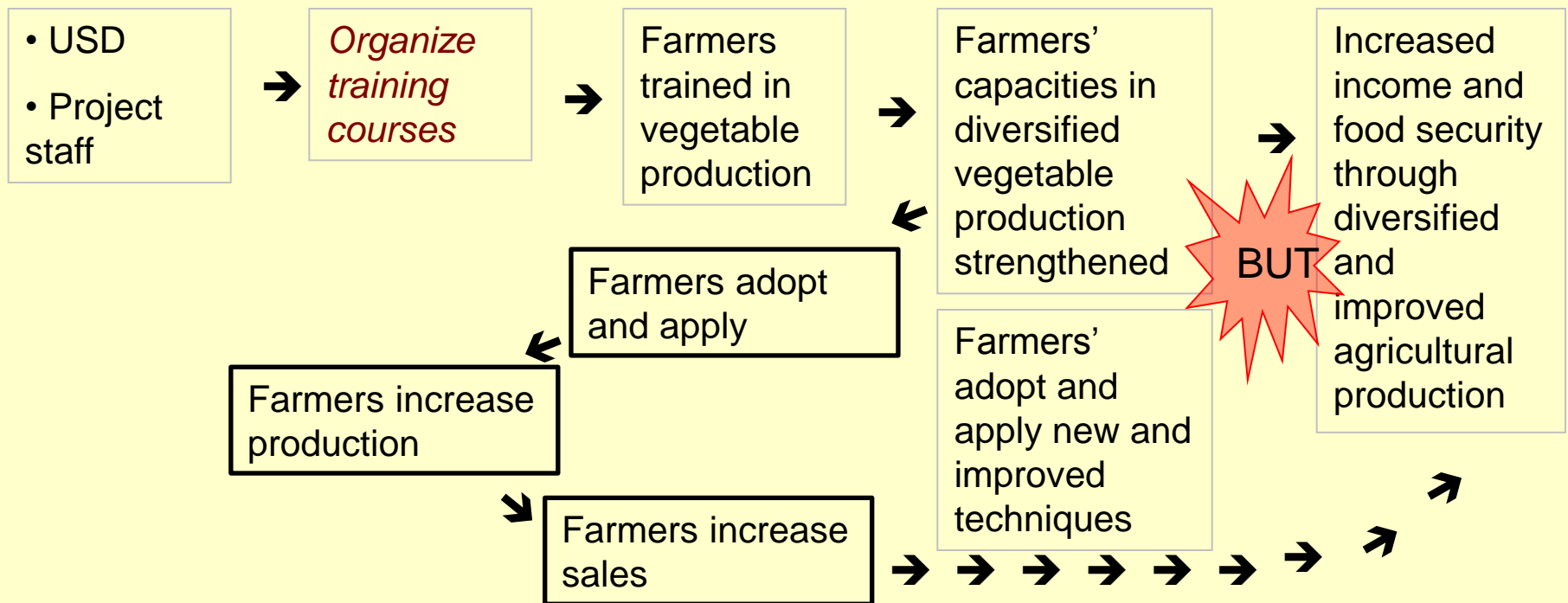
- Drawing up an M&E plan if none exists
- Completing the M&E plan as stated in the project design
- Correcting the errors in the M&E plan included in project design

# What are projects for?

- To get from A to B - in other words
- To get people from being poor to less poor  
(or even rich!)
- To do this we implement a set of activities that lead to a set of results
  - the results chain

# Results chain: Maria's example

Inputs → Outputs → Outcomes → Impact  
*(Activities)*



# Finding out if the results chain works

Narrative summary	Questions to see if results chain is working	External assumptions and risks
Farmers' income increases	Has income increased?	Have other sources of income changed?
Farmers increase sales	Is more being sold?	Are markets available? Have prices changed?
Farmers increase production	Has production increased?	Has yield been affected by weather or pests?
Farmers adopt improved methods	Are farmers using the new methods?	Are inputs available? Are prices attractive?
Farmers' capacity strengthened	Has the training been effectively delivered?	Are farmers sufficiently educated to absorb training?
Farmers are trained	How many farmers have attended training?	Has DoA allocated required staff?



# Fitting the results chain into a logframe

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verifications	Assumptions/ Risks
<b>Goal</b> Reduce poverty	Poverty indicators		Food prices, disasters etc.
<b>Development Objective</b> Increased income and food security through diversified and improved agricultural production	Farmer's income Food security Sales of vegetable		Other sources of farm income not reduced Market available
<b>Outcomes</b> Increased production of vegetables using improved methods	Vegetable production Use of new methods		Weather, pests not a problem Inputs available Prices attractive
<b>Outputs</b> Farmers capacity in vegetable production strengthened	Farmers have gained knowledge		Farmers sufficiently educated
<b>Activities</b> Training courses held	No. of courses		DoA allocates required staff

*New level added in latest IFAD guidelines*

# Fitting a results chain into a logframe with 4 rows

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verifications	Assumptions/ Risks
<b>Goal</b> Reduce poverty	Poverty indicators Food security Farmer's income		Food prices, disasters etc. Other income
<b>Development Objective</b> Increased vegetable production and sales along with diversified and improved agricultural production	Sales of vegetable Vegetable production Use of new methods		Weather, pests not a problem Inputs available Prices attractive
<b>Outputs</b> Farmers capacity in vegetable production strengthened	Farmers have gained knowledge		Farmers sufficiently educated
<b>Activities</b> Training courses held	No. of courses		DoA allocates required staff

# Real life example: Pehur High Level Canal, Pakistan

- Engineering works completed
- More irrigation water available at the farm level
- Yield of sugar-cane increases
- Profitability of sugar cane increases
- Area of sugar-cane increases
- Farm income increases
- Yes - works completed
- Yes - more irrigation water available
- No - increase in irrigation only offset reduced rain
- Yes - but because of price increase
- Yes - cane more profitable
- Yes - farm income up



# The M&E Plan

- A *systematic* plan for the collection and analysis of all data needed for proper M&E
- Defines:
  - Data to be collected
  - Data gathering methods
  - Who's responsible for primary data collection
  - Frequency of data collection
  - Who's responsible for data analysis
- Data gathering tools should be annexed:
  - Staff and groups records templates
  - Survey questionnaires

# How to make an M&E plan

Need to decide on:

- What information do we need to collect?
- How should it be collected?
- What should we do with it?



# The M&E Matrix

Start with the logframe

Add extra columns (or information to existing columns). This can include:

- Performance questions
- Sources of baseline data
- Information to be collected
- Frequency of collection
- Who is responsible

# Performance questions

Explain why we need the indicator, and what is the key information we need?

Examples:

- Has the project reduced poverty?
- Have farmers adopted new technology?
- Have roads resulted in economic growth?



# More performance questions

Need to think beyond the immediate objective:

- Has the project reached the target group? And have they benefited?
- Have women participated and benefited?
- Would benefits have occurred even without the project? (attribution)
- Are benefits going to be sustained?
- Are there environmental consequences? (+/-)
- Has the project had a wider policy or institutional impact?
- Are logframe assumptions valid (or risks avoided)?



# Example of an M&E Matrix

**CDSP-IV** (Char Development and Settlement Project 4)

Columns are:

1. Objective hierarchy and targets (narrative summary) - as per logframe
2. Performance questions
3. Performance indicators (indicators from logframe)
4. Data to be collected - exact information for each indicator
5. Sources of information (method used to collect data and frequency of data collection)
6. Baseline & control data (may be different source)
7. Responsibilities for data collection & analysis

# Examples of indicators and information to be collected

Indicator	Information (data) to be collected (evidence)
No. of hh with access to improved water and sanitation	No. of hh within 500 m of potable water No. of hh with own sanitary latrine <i>Need baseline data to show an impact</i>
Increase in crop production and sales	No. of farmers report increased production No. of farmers report increased sales Change in area of crops (before/after) Change in yield of crops (before/after) <i>May want to analyse by size of farm</i>
No. of farmers trained	No. farmers attend training courses No. farmers recall key information from training
No. of sustainable marketing groups	Number of groups graded as “A” or “B” using a multi-criteria rating system.

It may be possible to include “information to be collected in the same column as “indicators”. However a brief description of the indicator can help keep the logframe to a single page.

# Ways of reporting progress of an indicator

- Number of people reporting a change (but no idea if change significant and so will have an impact - and judgement of "significant" is subjective)
- Value of indicator (area/weight of crop, amount of money etc.). To report change need information over a period of time.
- Change in value can be reported for all HH or just for those to whom it applies (i.e. those who own cows) - in which also need to record change in no. of HH who own cows (equity issue)
- No. of HH crossing a benchmark (500 m from water, or crossing poverty line)

# Data sources

## Activities/outputs:

- Project agency/service provider records and progress reports (delivery of project outputs)
- Beneficiary group records (group activities)

## Outcomes

- Beneficiary group records (group performance)
- MFI records (micro-finance performance)
- Quantitative/qualitative surveys (adoption, production increase, sales rise, road traffic)
- Key informants (increase in use of markets)
- Technical measurements - crop transects.

Objective: outcome  
(quantitative) surveys,  
supplement by informal  
methods (FGD etc.)

Goal: RIMS and  
RIMS+(quantitative  
impact surveys). If  
women's empowerment is  
an indicator, then  
qualitative PRA may also  
be useful.





# Planning data collection surveys

- Do we want to know results for different categories of project participant? If so need a sample for each group.
- Do we need to compare change over a period? - recall questions may not give accurate answers - so need base line data "before and after"
- If compare change over time, need to be aware that external factors (weather etc.) can cause large year-to-year variations which can be larger than expected changes caused by a project.

# Evidence for change: baselines

## Panel samples

- Sample for baseline+impact survey, or other regular surveys (i.e. annual) can have a fresh random selection for each round or use the same HH ("panel sample").
- Panel samples reduce variability caused by non-project factors, & so are more accurate.
- But can be less representative if new people join who differ from those in the panel. So some projects have a separate panel for each year-group

- Baseline profiles of @ 100% of HH allow a panel sample to be used later in the project. HH profiles are also a check on targeting and a management tool, but are also a lot of work.

Some projects now aim to have continuous records on all members - like a bank or a tax office. These record all activities carried out by the member - so we get real data on things such as "number of people who have had training from the project".

# Evidence for change: control groups

- Control groups provide strong evidence for attribution - what would happen without the project? ("with and without")
- Ideally have baseline for control group (so 2 x 2 - with/without x before/after).
- Can also have before/after and without.
- Care is needed in selecting control groups - do they really match the project group? (Propensity Score Matching)
- Secondary data, key informants etc can also provide evidence of underlying trends.

# Results chains also provide evidence



Collecting data for each indicator in a results chain can also help provide strong evidence of project impact. If we know farmers who were trained, gained knowledge, adopted new technology, increased production, sold more crop, earned more income and became less poor, it is not unreasonable to claim that training reduced poverty.



# Who does the survey work?

## 1. Project staff

### - Strengths:

- know the project,
- will directly utilise lessons from results

### - Weaknesses

- Have much other work and other priorities
- May not be honest about defects in implementation



## 2. External agency/s contracted to do surveys

### - Strengths

- Should have specialised expertise
- Focus 100% on M&E work

### - Weaknesses

- Less familiar with project processes
- Project staff may see them as police and be less willing to accept findings
- Less flexibility (as per terms of contract)

### 3. Project M&E unit

#### - Strengths

- Partially independent but within the project
- May be more flexible than an external agency.

#### - Weaknesses

- Can also be diverted onto non-M&E work

SUGGEST A COMBINATION OF ALL THREE.  
WHOEVER IS CHOSEN NEEDS ENOUGH  
RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT M&E.

# Remember!

*"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."*

- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

# What to avoid: data collected but not used!





# Let's recap

- ❑ M&E helps you understand whether your project is on the right track
- ❑ There is a variety of tools and data gathering methods that can be used
- ❑ Your M&E Plan will help you organize your M&E activities



Perform a critical review of your  
project M&E Plan ...(45 min.)