FOOD AND
NUTRITION
TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE

Monitoring and
Evaluation Workshop
For Title II PVOs
May 29 – June 2, 2000
Bamako, Mali

Workshop Summary

Thirty-seven members of Title II private voluntary organizations (PVOs) participated in a five-day workshop on monitoring and evaluation held in Bamako, Mali from May 29 to June 2, 2000. The workshop was organized by the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA) and sponsored by USAID (Office of Food for Peace and the Global Bureau's Office of Health and Nutrition).

PVOs operating Title II programs in West Africa attended the workshop: Africare, ACDI-VOCA, CARE, CRS, World Vision, Winrock International, OICI, ADRA, and TechnoServe. Staff from regional and country USAID offices also attended.

The primary objectives of the workshop were:
- to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) skills of Title II PVOs; and
- to establish a network of M&E specialists in the West Africa region.

Based on suggestions from PVOs, five technical topics were selected for the workshop:
- Designing an M&E plan
- Developing indicators
- Understanding data validity, reliability and replicability
- Managing for results
- Developing an evaluation scope of work

Technical presentations on each topic were followed by group exercises. A case study based on current Title II projects allowed participants to apply the skills they learned in a program context. Each PVO presented information about monitoring and evaluation in their programs and shared their experiences. Staff from the USAID/Regional Food for Peace Office (RFFPO) briefed participants on the office's role and activities. In addition, representatives from Africare discussed the Community Based Information System (CBIS) used for participatory data collection in their programs. The workshop also included question-and-answer sessions and opportunities to provide feedback and share experiences.

The main outcomes of the workshop were:
- improved understanding of M&E strategies and systems,
- identification of some technical areas where further capacity-building is needed,
- recommendations for next steps to improve networking and
- suggestions for future workshops and other capacity building activities.

Presentations and Exercises

Technical presentations were prepared by FANTA for each of the five technical topics. A set of exercises and small group discussion followed each technical presentation.

Technical Presentations
- *Designing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Indicator Development*: The presentation provided an overview of M&E plans and their key components. The emphasis was on developing indicators and setting targets.

- *Designing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:* The presentation covered the differences between monitoring and evaluation; quantitative and qualitative methods for monitoring and evaluation and also provided information on how to prepare an evaluation report. .
- *Issues of Data Validity, Reliability and Replicability:* This session focused on data analysis. The presentation discussed how to improve baseline survey data collection through improved survey design, sampling methodology, staff training and implementation procedures.
- *Managing for Results:* The presentation outlined USAID's shift from process to results reporting. USAID uses a two-tiered results framework of intermediate results leading to strategic objectives. The implications for monitoring and evaluation were discussed.
- *Developing an Evaluation Scope of Work (SOW):* The presentation detailed the elements required in an evaluation scope of work (SOW) including questions to ask when developing an evaluation SOW.

Exercises

Participants worked together in small groups on a series of exercises that were developed for each technical topic. The exercises were based on a fictional case study of a typical Title II program. Each group performed the following four tasks: 1) developed impact and monitoring indicators; 2) designed a brief M&E plan and a results framework; 3) solved various problems that occur in the course of project implementation; and 4) developed an evaluation scope of work.

Following the exercises, each small group presented the output of their work to the other participants. Different groups approached the exercises differently and the advantages and disadvantages of each approach were discussed. The group exercises allowed participants to apply what they were learning to project situations, to work with members of different organizations and to observe and learn from different approaches.

Lessons Learned

Participants shared many lessons they had learned from their experiences monitoring and evaluating Title II programs. Key lessons and recommendations are listed below.

Planning for an Evaluation
- Use existing data and tools.
- Translate all monitoring and evaluation terms into the local language.
- Involve community members in survey design, pre-testing and indicator selection.
- Allow sufficient time and resources to train staff in data collection.
- Be aware of and adapt to circumstances that may impede M&E: village structure, nomadic communities, spread effects, political pressures, natural events.
- Maintain communication with partners. Need to explain what kinds of communication and what partners you are talking about.

Implementing Baseline Surveys and Evaluations
- University students and staff from NGOs can help in data collection.
- Data from qualitative research methods can add important information for the survey results.
- Local M&E staff should be carefully chosen and trained.
- Results from surveys and evaluations should be shared - with communities, staff, other projects and donors.

- For each survey, choose someone (a data monitor or supervisor) to verify data validity and encourage community participation.
- The data collection methodology and the software for analyzing need to be compatible.

Scope and Content of an Evaluation
- The evaluation plan should be developed early in the project and include a mid-term evaluation.
- The evaluation needs to correspond with activities in the proposal and reflect management needs
- Members of the evaluation team should be selected in advance and include some people whose skills match project interventions and an outsider for an independent opinion. Field and headquarters team members can work together to ensure data validity.
- If possible, conduct joint evaluations, taking project differences into account. (This isn't clear- could you explain)

Participant Feedback

Daily feedback sessions were held and participants completed an evaluation on the last day of the workshop. Overall, participants found the workshop to be useful and they expressed strong interest in more activities to build M&E capacity and for regional networking. Some of their recommendations are:

Format of Workshop
- Use only one language for future workshops.
- Distribute technical briefings, case studies and presentation materials before the workshop to enable participants to become familiar with them beforehand and to save workshop time. Workshop sessions could focus on clarifying technical issues, hands-on practice of applications and experience-sharing.
- Include more participatory sessions such as group work, question-and-answer sessions, discussions and experience-sharing.

Additional Comments
- Focus on fewer technical topics - no more than three in a one week workshop.
- Link individual program presentations to the various technical topics where possible to show the practical application.
- For some technical topics, it might be useful to organize the small group sessions by sector.

Appendix 1: Workshop Agenda

Monday, 29 May, 2000
08:00-10:00	Welcome and purpose of the workshop
	Pre-test
	Introductions, expectations and skills matrix
10:15-01:00	Program presentations: overview and discussion of country programs
02:00-03:30	Designing a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) plan: overview and indicator development
03:45-05:00	Small group work: introduction to the case study and developing indicators

Tuesday, 30 May, 2000
08:00-9:00	Small group work: developing indicators
09:00-10:00	Feedback and report out
10:15-01:00	Designing an M&E Plan: components, capacity building, report requirements
02:00-03:30	Discussion of M&E problems and solutions
03:45-04:30	Presentation by the Regional Food For Peace Office

Wednesday 31 May, 2000
08:00-09:00	Data validity, reliability and replicability: Research design considerations in the real world
09:00-10:30	Africare: Community-Based Information Systems and implications for monitoring and evaluation
10:45-12:00	Managing for results: program management, M&E and problem solving
12:00-01:00	Discussion: problem-solving strategies
02:00-03:30	Small group work: M&E plan components
03:45-04:30	Report out on small groups

Thursday 1 June, 2000
08:00-09:00	Feedback on workshop, suggestions for changes to format, materials, etc.
09:00-10:00	Developing an evaluation scope of work (SOW)
10:15-01:00	Lessons learned from experience: directed discussion from participant case studies
02:00-03:30	M&E questions and answers
03:45-05:00	M&E questions and answers

Friday 2 June, 2000
08:00-09:00	Skills matrix, post-test, workshop evaluation
09:00-10:00	Next steps for M&E and M&E training in the region
10:15-11:00	Closing ceremony and presentation of certificates

Appendix 2: M&E Skills and Practices Questionnaire Results

Workshop participants completed questionnaires about the levels of difficulty their organizations face with a range of M&E technical areas and about their organizations' existing M&E practices and sectoral strengths. Gross findings of technical problems from 25 respondents are presented in the following table.

Technical Area	No Problems	Occasional Problems	Frequent Problems
Sampling Frames	13	9	2
Questionnaire Design	13	12	0
Qualitative Methods	14	11	0
Quantitative Methods	11	12	2
Data Collection	14	10	1
Data Entry/Cleaning	9	10	6
Data Analysis	15	5	5
Testing Hypotheses	7	9	5
Use of Monitoring Information to Affect Management Decisions	14	10	1
Developing Indicators	9	15	0
Reports to Donor	18	7	0
Understanding Donor Requirements	13	10	2
Evaluation Design	7	15	2
Evaluation Management	7	15	3
Project Monitoring	10	15	0
Incorporating Evaluation Recommendations	14	6	2

Participants were asked what methods their organizations use for evaluation. Responses indicate that the most common methods used are document reviews, focus groups, interviews, and direct observation. Least common was multivariate statistical analysis, which ranked below surveys, rapid/participatory appraisals, and questionnaires. Given that information from these methods may be analyzed most effectively using a multivariate statistical analysis, responses seem to indicate a lag between data acquisition and application of methods for analysis.

Almost all of the PVOs provide on-the-job training in monitoring and evaluation, either through in-house training or attendance at workshops. CRS, Africare, CARE and World Vision all have in-house training materials on monitoring and evaluation.

Most participants (17) identified agriculture as their PVO's strongest sector. Health ranked second, followed closely thereafter by income generating activities and education.

Appendix 3: Workshop Participants

Benin

CRS
Aidi, Mourad: crsbxacr@intnet.bj
Gohy, Gilles: crsbxacr@intnet.bj

Burkina Faso

Africare
Adama, Toni: africare.org@fasonet.bf
Konda, Issa: africare.org@fasonet.bf

CRS
Hien, Constantin: crsbf@fasonet.bf
Taoko, Adama: crsbf@fasonet.bf

Cape Verde

ACDI/VOCA
Schwoebel, Suzanne: acdivoca@cvtelecom.cv

Chad

Africare
Malloum, Ousmane Abakar: africare.outman@intnet.td
Ousmane, Abraham: africare.tchad@intnet.td
Radjab, Mahamat Salat: africare.outman@intnet.td

The Gambia

CRS
Aubee, Ernest: jtrucker@gamtel.gm

Ghana

ADRA
Abu-Bonsrah, Seth: dameyaw@compuserve.com
Asante-Mensah, Samuel: dameyaw@compuserve.com

CRS
Aker, Jenny: crswaro@ghana.com

OICI
Manyo, Kwassi: hstcline@cafe.tg
Pul, Florence: victor.pinga@oici-ghana.org

World Vision
Asare, Sam: sam_asare@wvi.org

Guinea

Africare
Colas, Carine: africare@eti-bull.net
Sidibe, Sidikiba: africare@eti-bull.net

OICI
Diallo, Haissatou: oicigui@mirinet.net.gn
Diallo, Oumar Faragou: oicigui@mirinet.net.gn

Mali

Africare
Armstrong, Avril: africaremali@cefib.com
Miago, Oumar: africaremali@cefib.com

Winrock
Hanssens, Niels: N.Hanssens@afribone.net.ml

World Vision
Koumtingue, Djimadoum: Mansour_Fall@wvi.org

Niger

CARE
Madougou, Zackeri: zakmadougou@yahoo.fr

Senegal

Winrock
Diouf, Amadou: amdiouf@telecomplus.sn
Surgi, Mary Lou: surgi@wpoff.wcu

USA

Africare
Bryson, Judy: jbryson@africare.org

FANTA
Bergeron, Gilles: gbergero@aed.org
Willard, Alice: willard@aed.org

OICI
Carla Denizard: carla1@icdc.com