Institutions for Inclusive Development (I4ID)

GUIDANCE NOTE

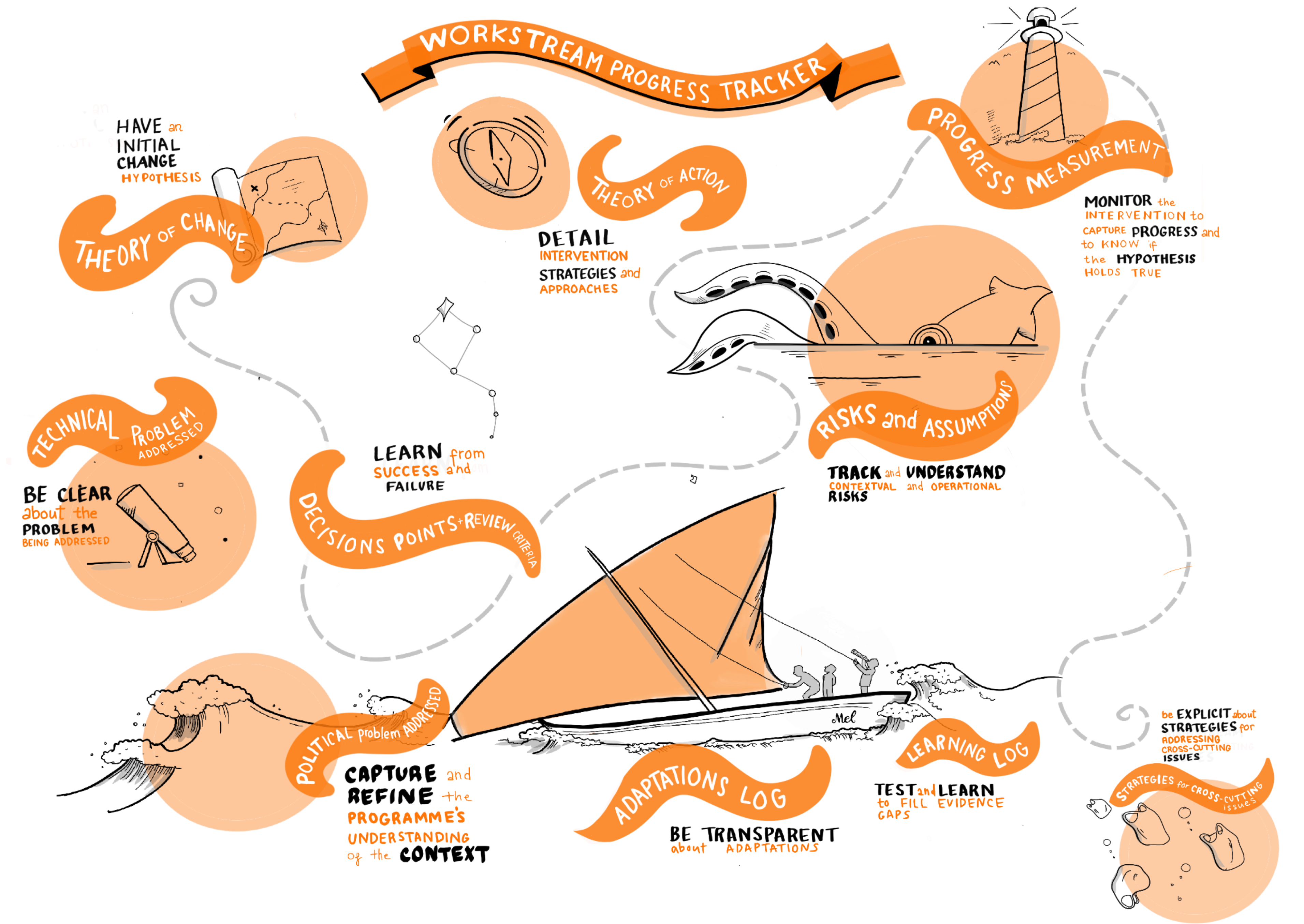
MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL)

Workstream Progress Tracker - Guidance Note

July 2021

This learning tool was developed by Integrity, Triple Line and NIRAS Tanzania

I4ID was funded by UKaid from the British people, Irish Aid Department of Foreign Affairs An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha


WORKSTREAM PROGRESS TRACKER
HAVE an INITIAL CHANGE HYPOTHESIS
THEORY OF CHANGE
THEORY OF ACTION
DETAIL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES and APPROACHES
PROGRESS MEASUREMENT
MONITOR the INTERVENTION to CAPTURE PROGRESS and to KNOW if the HYPOTHESIS HOLDS TRUE
TECHNICAL PROBLEM ADDRESSED
BE CLEAR about the PROBLEM BEING ADDRESSED
LEARN from SUCCESS and FAILURE
DECISIONS POINTS+REVIEW CRITERIA
RISKS and ASSUMPTIONS
TRACK and UNDERSTAND CONTEXTUAL and OPERATIONAL RISKS
POLITICAL problem ADDRESSED
CAPTURE and REFINE the PROGRAMME'S UNDERSTANDING of the CONTEXT
Mel
ADAPTATIONS LOG
BE TRANSPARENT about ADAPTATIONS
LEARNING LOG
TEST and LEARN to FILL EVIDENCE GAPS
be EXPLICIT about STRATEGIES for ADDRESSING CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES
STRATEGIES for CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING - Workstream Progress Tracker Guidance Note

INTRODUCTION

Why is a Workstream Progress Tracker being recommended?

Evidence from monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) is critical for effective and rigorous adaptive management. However, it can be challenging for adaptive programmes to put in place robust programme-level MEL frameworks at the outset. In practice, developing a results framework can take a long time, often over 12 months, as expected programme-level outcomes and areas/issues of focus are frequently unknown at the programme's inception. Results frameworks also tend to be the subject of lengthy politicised negotiations between donors and implementing organisations, who each have their own expectations and vested interests. In the meantime, 'quick-win' interventions might have already started and need to be monitored for both learning and accountability purposes.

Once agreed, results frameworks in adaptive programmes tend to set outputs and outcomes at a higher level than standard guidelines on definitions. For example, outputs are typically understood as the direct results of programme interventions that are in the full control of implementers; but in adaptive programmes they are often defined as the results of the efforts of key government or civil society stakeholders. This is to incentivise implementing organisations to focus on the delivery of high-level programme results. However, this approach creates a 'missing middle' between inputs and outcomes in the monitoring of change processes supported by adaptive programmes. This missing middle can not only hinder the evaluation of programme performance but also the generation of critical evidence and learning needed for programme adaptation.

The Workstream Progress Tracker aims to address both of these challenges by providing an easily customisable framework for robust workstream-level MEL. This bridges the gap between inputs and outcomes and can be launched from the start of implementation. The term 'workstream' is used here to capture the different strands of work of adaptive programmes, also referred to as 'issue-based projects', 'interventions' or 'work packages' in some programmes.

While many adaptive programmes already document information on the different components of the Workstream Progress Tracker proposed here, these are typically scattered over various, often very lengthy documents, some of which are rarely (if ever) updated. The advantage of the Tracker is that it brings together all the critical MEL information about a workstream in an accessible document that is easy to keep up to date.

Who is the Workstream Progress Tracker Template and Guidance Note for?

The Workstream Progress Tracker (template provided in Annex 1) and this Guidance Note are primarily meant for the implementers of donor funded adaptive programmes. However, funders of adaptive programmes might also find them helpful in setting out MEL expectations for prospective suppliers during programme design and procurement, and in the day-to-day management of adaptive programmes.

How should the Workstream Progress Tracker Template and Guidance Note be used?

The Workstream Progress Tracker Template and Guidance Note aim to outline the components of a robust workstream-level MEL framework, with explanation of why each component is needed and some broad guidance on how the different sections of the Tracker should be used. Rather than providing an overly prescriptive framework, the intention is to create a standard tool that can be easily customised by adaptive programmes working in any sector to fit their evidence and documentation needs for learning and accountability purposes.

Developing the Workstream Progress Tracker should not be a one-off exercise. Rather, it should be treated as a live document that is reviewed and updated regularly (ideally every one to three months) to reflect what the workstream has learned and capture implementation progress. Programmes should update the Tracker in a way that creates an auditable trail of revisions.

COMPONENTS OF THE WORKSTREAM PROGRESS TRACKER

1. Technical problem being addressed

Why is this needed?

For interventions to be effective, delivery teams need to have a strong, shared understanding of the technical details of the problem being addressed. Having this problem stated in the Tracker ensures that the programme team does not lose sight of the problem they are addressing as the interventions evolve and are adapted. For donors, it provides assurance that the programme has a clear rationale for intervening and a good enough initial understanding of the problem it is addressing, which is constantly being refined as learning emerges.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should provide a short (about two paragraphs) summary of the problem being addressed from a technical perspective, the reasons why this problem persists, its link to the overarching objective of the programme, and the key known challenges to tackling it. If the programme has produced an issue/intervention scoping report or similar documentation, the findings of this should be summarised here with a link to the full report embedded in the Tracker. This section should be amended regularly during implementation to reflect the delivery team's evolving understanding of the technical details of the problem.

2. The political problem being addressed

Why is this needed?

The solution of almost all development problems requires engaging with politics and power to a certain extent. Therefore, programmes need to understand the structures, formal and informal institutions, and actors that might help or hinder their efforts to solve a given problem. As with the technical aspects, capturing and continuously refining the programme's understanding of the political economy context surrounding this problem is important to design and implement effective interventions, and reassure donors that it is politically possible to tackle the issue.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should include a short summary of the structural and institutional drivers of the problem being addressed, as well as the key enablers and hinderers of change and their interests, motivations and capacities. The analysis should consider a wide range of formal and informal stakeholder groups, including public sector stakeholders, military, civil society, private sector, donors, political movements, traditional leaders etc. If a political economy analysis was conducted for the workstream, this section should summarise its key findings, with the link to the report embedded in the Tracker. As the rest of the Tracker, this section should be regularly reviewed to reflect the delivery team's most recent understanding of the political economy context.

3. Theory of Change

Why is this needed?

Due to the complex and political nature of the problems being addressed in adaptive programmes, the solutions and pathways of change often cannot be predicted. However, it is important that delivery teams have an idea of what change (at least in broad terms) their interventions seek to achieve, and an initial best guess of the likely path(s) to this change. Having this initial hypothesis which is then being deliberately tested and refined or adapted based on learning from implementation is what differentiates adaptive management from 'making things up as you go'. Additionally, a well-developed Theory of Change (ToC) gives donors assurance that the implementation team has considered how the individual workstreams fit in with the wider portfolio of work to translate into programme-level outcomes.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

1. The change – i.e. expected outcome – that the workstream seeks to bring about. This can initially be defined in broad terms (e.g., what the problem looks like solved) or at a high level, with more concrete definition of the outcome or lower level outcomes added within 6 to 12 months after the launch of the workstream and then refined as needed. Alternatively, a menu of change options can be included, which is refined as the implementation progresses. The key point here is that that the delivery team needs to have a good enough idea where the workstream is heading – a North Star if you wish, with a clear relevance to the overarching programme objective – to ensure that they are adapting delivery and not the objectives of the programme.
2. Initial hypothesis (or various alternative hypotheses) of how change will happen, including a list of expected outputs which are refined as the implementation progresses.
3. Initial hypothesis of how the change the workstream seeks to bring about will contribute to programme-level outcomes.

These should be captured both visually and summarised in a short accompanying narrative. If available, the link to a more detailed ToC should be embedded in the Tracker.

4. Theory of Action

Why is this needed?

In addition to a ToC that describes how change is expected to happen, delivery teams should also detail the concrete strategies and tactics – i.e. Theory of Action (ToA) – they plan to use to solve the problem in question, and then record adaptations to these as their understanding of the technical and political problem and how change happens evolves during implementation. Capturing the ToA of a workstream is important to help teams reflect and learn about which delivery strategies and approaches are working and which are not.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

A narrative – and if appropriate a visual – summary of the intervention strategies and tactics used to address the technical and political problem the workstream focuses on. These should consider:

- The stakeholders the workstream is partnering with to deliver interventions
- The key stakeholders the interventions aim to influence and through what tactics (e.g. capacity building, technical assistance, grants, advocacy)
- Delivery strategies and approaches
- Entry points for workstream interventions
- Technical solutions and how they will support the change processes foreseen in the ToC
- Routes to scale or transformational change.

Some adaptive programmes are experimenting with various different approaches to solve a problem, which are being implemented simultaneously. In these cases, all the different ToAs should be captured in the Tracker.

5. Risks and assumptions

Why is this needed?

Adaptive programmes are working on complex problems where the pathways to change are uncertain at the onset of interventions. This means that the delivery team inevitably relies on a number of critical assumptions about change processes, which need to be tested and monitored. As any other development programme, workstreams also face contextual and operational risks, which need to be tracked. Finally, understanding the risk level of different workstreams and interventions is important for programme managers and leaders – as well as donors – in order to effectively manage risks at the portfolio level.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should list:

- Critical assumptions in the ToC or ToA that are based on a weak evidence base, or considered by the delivery team as being at significant risk of not holding up
- Contextual risks (e.g. political unrest, elections)
- Operational risks (e.g. partners not delivering according to expectations, risks associated with technical solutions).

These risks should be reviewed and updated regularly, noting where risks materialised and any mitigating measure that needs to be taken.

Programmes might also wish to rate the probability and impact of each risk listed, and/or establish the overall risk rating of the workstream.

6. Progress measurement

Why is this needed?

To decide whether workstream interventions need to be adapted or not, delivery teams must know whether their hypothesis in the ToC, looking at how change happens, held true. If so, delivery teams need to understand what progress they have made along the pathway of change, and if change hasn't happened, why this is the case. Donors also need reassurance that workstreams are being monitored in a robust manner and want to understand the progress project interventions have made towards expected outputs and outcomes.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

Monitoring adaptive programmes can be more challenging than traditional development programmes as: i) the exact scope of work, pathway of change and expected results are not always known in advance, and tend to change over time; ii) the availability of evidence and data needs to match the pace of change; and iii) monitoring information needs to meet the unique learning (i.e. not just accountability) needs of implementing organisations and donors. Luckily, there are a number of tried and tested MEL methods, both narrative- and indicator-based, that can effectively support flexible and adaptive programmes working on complex development programmes. Box 1 provides a brief overview of five selected methods.

Box 1: Monitoring methods for adaptive programmes

Examples of indicator-based methods

Outcome mapping is a method that is particularly well suited to monitor behavioural changes in stakeholders the programme directly interacts with (called boundary partners). It uses progress markers, a set of graduated indicators of changed behaviours – often framed as changes the programme 'expects to see', would 'like to see' and would 'love to see' – of boundary partners that focus on the depth or quality of the change.

Resources: Terry Smutylo. *Outcome mapping: A method for tracking behavioural changes in development programs*; Sarah Earl, Fred Carden & Terry Smutylo. (2001) *Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs*

Process monitoring of impact is a method that focuses on monitoring results-producing processes. Results-producing processes describe how a result at one level is used by specific individuals or organisations to achieve results at the next level, essentially unpacking the change process between outputs, immediate outcomes, outcomes and impact in the ToC and results framework. Indicators (qualitative and/or quantitative) are then introduced to monitor whether the processes are taking place in the implementation.

Resource: Richard Hummelbrunner. (2006) *Process of Monitoring of Impacts: Proposal for a new approach to monitor the implementation of 'Territorial Cooperation' programmes*.

Adopt, Adapt, Expand, Respond (AAER) framework or the Systemic Change Framework is typically used by market system programmes to monitor whether systemic change has happened, is happening, or requires further programme action in order to take hold. The framework breaks down the status of 'pro-poor change' within the system into four distinct components: adopt, adapt, expand, respond. Each serves to describe market player ownership over, and responsiveness to, behaviour and practice changes at different levels. Indicators corresponding to each component of the Framework are then developed to monitor systemic change processes.

Resource: Daniel Nippard, Rob Hitchins and David Elliott. (2014) Adopt-Adapt-Expand-Respond: a framework for managing and measuring systemic change processes

Examples of narrative-based methods

The **Most Significant Change** method is a participatory MEL technique that involves the collection and systematic analysis of stories from delivery teams and beneficiaries describing the most important project results.

Resources: Intrac. (2017) Most Significant Change; Rick Davies and Jessica Dart. (2005) The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique - A Guide to Its Use

Outcome Harvesting is another participatory method to identify, describe, verify and analyse changes brought about by programme interventions, with or without reference to predetermined objectives. It is designed to collect evidence of change first, and then work backwards to establish the programme's contribution to that change.

Resource: Intrac. (2017) Outcome Harvesting

What MEL method programmes choose will ultimately depend on their unique evidence and data needs for both accountability and learning purposes. The key is that they have a robust MEL system in place at workstream level that is able to measure change and progress towards change in policies, stakeholder behaviours and institutions as foreseen in the ToC, while also providing enough flexibility to accommodate adaptations. Consequently, what the progress measurement section of the Tracker looks like will be different depending on the MEL method chosen, but should include:

- The most current statement of expected change(s)
- Indicators of success that signify whether the workstream is on track to achieve or already achieved the expected change(s)
- Means of verification (i.e. how the indicators of success will be evidenced)
- Timeline of achieving the expected change(s)
- The baseline situation.

The Tracker should be periodically updated with progress against the indicators of success, and reviewed to reflect workstream adaptations. Programmes might also consider designing a simple programme-level dashboard that captures the progress against expected results in each workstream over time, with short narratives of workstream progress.

7. Strategies for addressing cross-cutting issues

Why is this needed?

In addition to specific issues tackled by individual workstreams or interventions, most development programmes also aim to address issues that are relevant to all workstreams and interventions. The most common of these cross-cutting issues are gender and social inclusion (GESI) and climate change, but programmes are likely to have additional cross-cutting issues (e.g. partnerships, capacity building etc.) relevant to their project objectives, donor requirements and delivery contexts. The mainstreaming of these cross-cutting issues requires that they are integrated in all dimensions of the programme, which includes the design, implementation and MEL of workstreams. While all other sections in the Tracker need to reflect considerations for cross-cutting issues, reiterating and summarising how they are being addressed helps to keep them at the forefront of the delivery team's mind and reassure donors that they are adequately mainstreamed.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should summarise the strategy of the workstream to mainstreaming cross-cutting issues. This should also include the definition of key terms and a brief overview of how cross-cutting issues have been reflected in the problem analysis, the ToC, the ToA, risks and assumptions, progress measurement and learning questions. Boxes 2 and 3 include a sample of questions (by no means an exhaustive list) that delivery teams might want to consider when developing the workstream's GESI and climate change strategy.

Box 3: Sample questions to consider for workstream GESI strategy

- Which vulnerable and marginalised groups are most relevant to the issue(s) addressed by the workstream, and thus expected to benefit from workstream interventions?
- How have the perspectives of the most relevant excluded or marginalised groups been represented in the problem analysis, issue identification and definition of expected results?
- What are the opportunities for GESI impacts, and how are the workstream interventions taking advantage of these?
- What are the constraints for GESI impacts, and how are the workstream interventions addressing these?
- What approaches are required to make and maintain gender and social inclusion visibility in workstream interventions?
- How is it ensured that the workstream delivery team and partners have adequate access to GESI expertise?
- How is progress on GESI-related outputs and outcomes being measured?
- What are the key evidence gaps that need to be filled to allow the workstream to deliver on its GESI commitments and outcomes?

Box 4: Sample questions to consider for workstream climate change strategy

- What are the most significant climate-related risks in the context in which the workstream interventions are being implemented?
- What are the opportunities for climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience impacts, and how are the workstream interventions taking advantage of these?
- What are the constraints for climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience impacts, and how are the workstream interventions addressing these?
- How are the proposed technical solutions of the workstream taking into account environmental factors, as well as climate change adaptations and mitigation?
- How is it ensured that the workstream delivery team and partners have adequate access to climate change expertise?
- How is progress on climate change–related outputs and outcomes being measured?
- What is the workstream doing to minimise its negative impact on the environment?
- What are the key evidence gaps that need to be filled to allow the workstream to deliver on its climate change–related commitments and outcomes?

8. Learning questions and lessons log

Why is this needed?

An adaptive management approach is typically chosen for programmes that are working on complex problems where evidence is lacking on what will work in solving them. An important feature of adaptive programmes is that they consciously aim to fill these evidence gaps through testing and learning to inform delivery decisions and adaptations. Capturing evidence gaps as learning questions that are regularly revisited helps focus MEL processes and formal and informal reflections within the delivery team on generating operationally relevant evidence and learning. The lessons log ensures that the emerging learning is accessible to the wider implementation team, including the management and leadership team, and also reassures donors and external evaluators that the programme has a robust approach to intentional learning.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should list a set of learning questions that focus on the most critical knowledge and evidence gaps impeding informed decisions on workstream design, implementation and adaptation. These can focus on the most uncertain pathways of change in the ToC, unknown information about the context or stakeholders (e.g., their interests, behaviours, motivations), or evidence gaps in the ToA (e.g. which approaches and interventions will work best in the given context). Given the resource constraints adaptive programmes and their delivery teams likely face, they should limit the learning questions of each workstream to a maximum of four or five and ensure that they are sufficiently focused. These questions can then be reviewed periodically to ensure they are still relevant, and replace those that have been adequately answered. The Tracker should also record the learning emerging on each question as the workstream progresses.

Programmes might also consider including what the learning on each question will be used for and through which MEL processes they will be answered (e.g., regular workstream monitoring, reflection activities, research, evaluation).

Box 5: Building a culture of learning and reflection

A key strength of I4ID's adaptive management approach was its formal and informal process of reflection, analysis and learning. Formal processes included:

- Weekly Team Meetings where teams shared updates on delivery, reflected on the political economy context and discussed ideas for next steps. In these meetings, workstream coordinators where also urged to think beyond their own workstream and consider the wider programme framework.
- Workstream Biweekly Meetings focused on progress against results, creating space for more detailed discussion on what worked, what didn't work and why. These meetings also included cross-cutting experts, bringing issues such as gender and media into the discussions; as well as managers, creating a link between reflection and strategic decision making.
- Quarterly Strategic Review Meetings, which included donors and implementing partners alongside the I4ID team, reviewed programme implementation progress, results and lessons on what worked. Given the presence of donors, these meetings tended to be less self-critical than the others, and instead focused on workstream successes.
- Regular results reports also provided an opportunity for I4ID MEL staff to facilitate reflection among workstream coordinators around the implementation process and results.

Informal reflection played a similarly important – if not more important – role in adaptive management in I4ID as formal processes. The programme consciously built and invested in a 'culture of learning' among its staff, building skills in adaptive programming through training and sharing relevant literature where needed. Recruiting a MEL expert with an inquisitive mindset and true interest in the development challenges being addressed was also important to nurture this culture. As a result, informal reflection on what was working and what did not regularly took place over coffee and lunch, in the car while travelling, in WhatsApp etc., with learning from these often finding their way back to formal meetings.

Source: Interviews with I4ID team members; Gloria Sikustahili, Japhet Makongo & Julie Adkins. 2020.

9. Adaptation log

Why is this needed?

Donors expect adaptive programmes to be transparent about adaptations and the reasons behind them. In assessing how well adaptive programmes are being implemented, external MEL providers also need evidence that programme adaptations are made based on evidence and learning, rather than on a 'hunch'.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The adaptation log should record all significant adaptations to the workstream, their timing, and the rationale and evidence base for the decision to adapt. These can include changes to activities and their implementation timelines, delivery approaches and strategies, partners, key stakeholders and beneficiaries, resources, expected output and outcomes, hypotheses on how change happens etc. Programmes should consider agreeing with their donors and external MEL providers what adaptations are considered significant to ensure that the log is useful and not too burdensome for the delivery teams to maintain.

10. Workstream decision points and review criteria

Why is this needed?

Learning from what is not working is critical in adaptive programmes. Yet many programmes struggle to make difficult decisions about scaling down or closing interventions and workstreams that are not performing according to expectations. There can be many reasons for this, including sunk cost bias, embarrassment to admit failure within the delivery team, fear of letting down partners and beneficiaries, or confirmation bias (i.e. where people unconsciously gather and pay more attention to information that supports their belief and/or theories while failing to consider alternative information and interpretation of evidence)[1]. Therefore, delivery teams might consider establishing a set of criteria to inform decisions on the continuation, adaptation, scaling up, scaling down or discontinuation of the workstream at its onset, when only limited investment has been made into interventions and the team is more objective. Being transparent about how strategic decisions will be made on the future of workstreams also provides donors with assurance that the programme is learning from both success and failure.

What needs to be captured in the Tracker?

The Tracker should document main decision points when workstreams will be reviewed to establish whether they should continue with the interventions in their current form or adapt, scale up, more closely review, scale down, or stop them. The Tracker should also include a set of criteria (e.g. repeatedly failing to meet expected progress towards change; key stakeholders failing to meaningfully engage with workstream interventions; departure of critical reform champion etc.) that will guide – rather than dictate – the review of the workstreams and decisions on their future. Programmes might want to consider working with an unbiased facilitator who has a good understanding of the programme and is in a position to ask difficult questions about the implementation – a 'critical friend' – to lead the review to render objectivity to the process.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Ownership and updating of the Tracker

The workstream team needs to agree at the outset clear responsibilities for keeping the Tracker up to date. Given the extensive documentation that is usually expected from adaptive programmes by donors and external MEL providers, there is – quite understandably – a tendency among programmes to try to minimise the burden on technical delivery staff and instead assign reporting responsibilities to MEL staff or programme managers/coordinators. This is an approach used with success in, for example, the Institutions for Inclusive Development (I4ID) programme in Tanzania.

However, programmes should be aware of two challenges this approach poses. First, in most programmes, the MEL and programme management team is significantly smaller than the delivery team, and there is increasing donor pressure to make these teams even leaner. Therefore, as the programmes grow and more workstreams are introduced, MEL staff or programme managers/coordinators might struggle to keep up with the volume of work. Secondly, even if the responsibility for physically updating the Tracker falls on the MEL or programme management team, delivery staff need to own the Tracker and the information in it – ultimately it is their thinking, learning and experience that needs to be captured here. Therefore, they need to be meaningfully involved in the Tracker review process, which should be reflected in their job description and time allocation. Their capacity to reflect, learn and use the different sections of the Tracker also likely needs to be built through training and mentoring.

To avoid the Tracker placing significant additional documenting burden on programme teams, it should

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[1] Kevin Hernandez, Ben Ramalingam and Leni Wild. (2019) _Towards evidence-informed adaptive management: A roadmap for development and humanitarian organisations._

be integrated with other management, reporting and MEL processes as much as possible. For example, if programmes have regular workstream team or review meetings, the agenda and/or notes from these meetings (that would likely be taken anyway) could be organised according to key sections of the Tracker, so it is easier to update at review points. Similarly, evaluation and research reports could include a section that summarises their relevant findings under each learning question.

Box 6: Learning through storytelling

To designing truly effective learning structures and reflection activities, adaptive programmes need to ensure that these are appropriate for the technical and cultural backgrounds of their delivery teams.

The Institutions for Inclusive Development (I4ID) in Tanzania programme, funded by FCDO and IrishAid and led by Palladium, experimented with a reflection activity that used a storytelling approach to capture learning from its delivery teams on how change was happening. This involved the I4ID MEL Manager and Programme Advisor meeting with Workstream Coordinators individually and asking them to narrate in their mother tongue (most often Kiswahili) what happened in the given review period, which was recorded and transcribed to English at a later stage. Coordinators were encouraged to narrate every detail of the interventions, even what they would consider small or insignificant. The MEL Manager and Programme Advisor were asking questions and probing until they felt they understood the whole story. The notes of the meeting were then sent to the Coordinator for review.

Once the notes were agreed, they were transferred into a template that only captured information relevant to the programme's learning objectives and reporting (e.g. observed behaviour change, partners engaged). The notes and the template were then shared with I4ID's Performance Advisor, who was not involved in the day-to-day implementation of the programme, to conduct an objective review and ensure that important information was not missed. The Performance Advisor's feedback and comments were then taken back to the Coordinator for a final review before the change story was shared with the wider team.

The advantage of the storytelling approach is that it is open ended, and thus can better capture the details of the change story which would likely be omitted otherwise by delivery staff in reporting. Understanding the change process at this level of detail in turn better supports learning and reporting. Asking people to tell the story in their own words also avoids the MEL lingo that technical staff might not be familiar or comfortable with. On the other hand, this storytelling approach is resource intensive. It also relies heavily on the narrative of one person, and thus can miss the insights of other team members involved in the delivery.

Inclusivity

The content of and any subsequent updates to the Tracker should reflect the views and inputs of key workstream partners. This is especially important for the problem analysis, expected results, ToC, risks and assumptions, indicators of success, and learning questions sections. Therefore, workstreams (or the programme as a whole) need to devise a process for meaningfully involving partners in the development of the Tracker, and for capturing their insights and learning for subsequent reviews.

Utilisation focused

The primary intention behind the Workstream Progress Tracker is to aid reflection and learning for adaptive management within workstreams, in a way that also meets demands for transparency and accountability from donors. Therefore, before launching the Tracker, the programme team should take time to reflect on their learning needs, and how and who within the programme plan to use the Tracker. The team should also consult funders (and if appropriate external MEL providers) to understand what needs to be documented, in what detail and when for accountability and adaptive governance purposes. This template should then be customised in a way that meets these needs, and refined and adapted during implementation if required to ensure that it keeps serving the needs of delivery teams and donors.

ANNEX 1: WORKSTREAM PROGRESS TRACKER TEMPLATE

Version Control	
Version number	<Add version number>
Review period	<Add review period>
Date of update	<Add date of update>
Editor	<Add editor>

When updating the Tracker, save it as a new file with the file name clearly indicating the version number. Use track changes or a different font colour to mark changes since the previous version of the document.

1. Technical Problem Being Addressed
Provide a short (about 2 paragraphs) summary of the problem being addressed from a technical perspective, the reasons why this problem persists, its link to the overarching objective of the programme, and the key known challenges to tackling it.
<Add technical problem description>
Link to full issue/intervention scoping report:

2. Political Problem Being Addressed
Provide a short summary of the structural and institutional drivers of the problem being addressed, as well as the key enablers and hinderers of change and their interests, motivations and capacities. Consider a wide range of formal and informal stakeholder groups, including public sector stakeholders, military, civil society, private sector, donors, political movements, traditional leaders etc.
<Add political problem description>
Link to most recent Political Economy Analysis:

3. Theory of Change (ToC)
Describe: i) the change – i.e. expected outcome – that the workstream seeks to bring about; ii) initial hypothesis (or various alternative hypotheses) of how change will happen, including a list of provisional outputs; iii) most current hypothesis of how the change the workstream seeks to bring about will contribute to programme-level outcomes. Include a ToC diagram as well as a short accompanying narrative.
<Add ToC>
Link to most recent detailed workstream ToC:

4. Theory of Action (ToA)
Provide a narrative – and, if appropriate, visual – summary of the intervention strategies and tactics used to address the technical and political problem the workstream focuses on. Consider: • *The stakeholders the workstream is partnering with to deliver interventions* • *The key stakeholders the interventions aim to influence and through what tactics (e.g. capacity building, technical assistance, grants, advocacy etc.)* • *Delivery strategies and approaches* • *Entry points for workstream interventions* • *Technical solutions and how they will support the change processes foreseen in the Theory of Change* • *Routes to scale or transformational change* *If the workstream is testing more than one ToA, provide a brief summary of all of them*

<Add ToA>

5. Risks and Assumption			
List: i) critical assumptions in the ToC or ToA that are based on a weak evidence base, or considered by the delivery team as being at significant risk of not holding up; ii) contextual risks (e.g. political unrest, elections); and iii) operational risks (e.g. partners not delivering according to expectations, risks associated with technical solutions etc.). Consider rating the probability and impact of each risk listed, and/or establish the overall risk rating of the workstream.			
Overall risk rating of the workstream: <Select low/medium/high>			
Risk description	**Impact rating** *(low/medium/high)*	**Likelihood rating** *(low/medium/high)*	**Status and any mitigating measures**

6. Progress Measurement
Add progress measurement framework. At minimum, this should include: • *The most current statement of expected change(s)* • *Indicator- or narrative-based signals of success that indicate whether the workstream is on track to achieve or already achieved the expected change(s)* • *Means of verification (i.e. how the indicators of success will be evidenced)* • *Timeline of achieving the expected change(s)* • *The baseline situation* *Progress on indicators of success during the period*
<Add progress measurement framework>

7. Strategies to Address Cross-Cutting Issues
Summarise the strategy of the workstream to mainstreaming cross-cutting issues. This should also include the definition of key terms and a brief overview of how cross-cutting issues have been reflected in the problem analysis, ToC, ToA, risks and assumptions, progress measurement and learning questions.
<Add strategy to mainstreaming cross-cutting issue 1>
Link to full <Cross-cutting Issue 1> Strategy:
<Add strategy to mainstreaming cross-cutting issue 2>
Link to full <Cross-cutting Issue 2> Strategy:
<Add strategy to mainstreaming cross-cutting issue 3>
Link to full <Cross-cutting Issue 3> Strategy:

8. Learning Questions and Lessons Log

Add max 4-5 learning questions focusing on the most critical knowledge and evidence gaps impeding informed decisions on workstream design, implementation and adaptation. Keep a record of the learning emerging on each question as the workstream progresses.

Learning question	Lessons log

9. Adaptation Log

Record all significant adaptations to the workstream, their timing, and the rationale and evidence base for the decision to adapt. Significant adaptations might include changes to activities and their implementation timelines, delivery approaches and strategies, partners, key stakeholders and beneficiaries, resources, expected output and outcomes, assumed pathways to change etc.

Adaptation	Reporting period	Rationale and evidence base

10. Workstream Decision Points and Review Criteria

State the main decision points when workstreams will be reviewed to establish whether they should continue with the interventions in their current form or adapt, scale up, more closely review, scale down, or stop them; along with a set of criteria that will guide the review.

<Add workstream decision points and review criteria >