Part Seven: Monitoring and Evaluation

Photo: Community video team members conducting a SWOT assessment (Liberia, 2008).

Part Seven: Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure that community video programs are implemented effectively and achieve their intended impact, it is vital to build in processes for monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Since local involvement drives the planning and implementation of community video projects, community members should be centrally involved in M&E processes. These include identifying important "signs of change" and making decisions about how program information should be collected and used.

This section begins with an overview of monitoring and evaluation, with a focus on participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E). These concepts are then integrated into recommendations on tools and methods for monitoring and evaluating a community video program. The section concludes with ethical considerations for monitoring and evaluating community video programs that involve people living with HIV/AIDS, survivors of gender-based violence, and refugees.

Overview of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The term "**monitoring and evaluation**" refers to processes that help (a) ensure that a program is making progress toward its objectives and (b) provide lessons for future programs. Ultimately, monitoring and evaluation methods provide information for improving programs and ensuring accountability (Frankel & Gage, 2007). While monitoring happens continuously, evaluation activities generally occur during implementation (mid-term evaluation) and at and the end of a project (impact or endline evaluation). In many projects, evaluation findings are compared with information gathered through "baseline" assessments carried out prior to the start of activities. (See also "**Formative Evaluation**," below).

Monitoring refers to routinely collecting and using information on how a program is implemented. Monitoring helps gauge whether or not planned activities were completed, and how well were they completed. Monitoring also helps implementers make real-time adjustments to program activities (Frankel & Gage, 2007).

Impact evaluations are carried out to determine whether a program achieved its intended results and whether they occurred because of the program. "Evaluation can facilitate sustainability and scale-up by identifying key factors that contributed to success," (Salem, Bernstein, Sullivan, & Lande, January 2008). Results can be short-term (changes in knowledge or attitudes), intermediate (changes in behaviors), or long-term (changes in health status). Often, short and intermediate-term results are referred to as **outcomes**, with the term **impact** generally being reserved for long-term results. **Process evaluations** differ slightly from impact evaluations in that they focus on how well the program was implemented and less on outcomes and impact (Bloom, 2008). While they rely heavily on monitoring data, they also collect data through interviews and other means.

Monitoring and evaluation belong to the same learning system. Monitoring data help evaluators understand why and how the program led to the outcomes and impacts that were achieved. As a result monitoring and evaluation activities should be planned from the beginning.

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E)

There is no one definition of **participatory monitoring and evaluation** (PM&E). In general, PM&E differs from conventional M&E in that it emphasizes including stakeholders in decision-making at all steps of the process. According to this approach, community stakeholders should be involved in monitoring changes, determining indicators, and "arriving at a common evaluation of their communication for social change efforts," and like participatory communication, PM&E strives to be educational and empowering (Parks, Gray-Felder, Hunt, and Byrne, 2005). PM&E is based on 20 years of experience with approaches such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory learning and action (PLA). (see **Figure 3, "Core principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation for social change"**).

Participatory monitoring and evaluation can help increase communities' commitment to and

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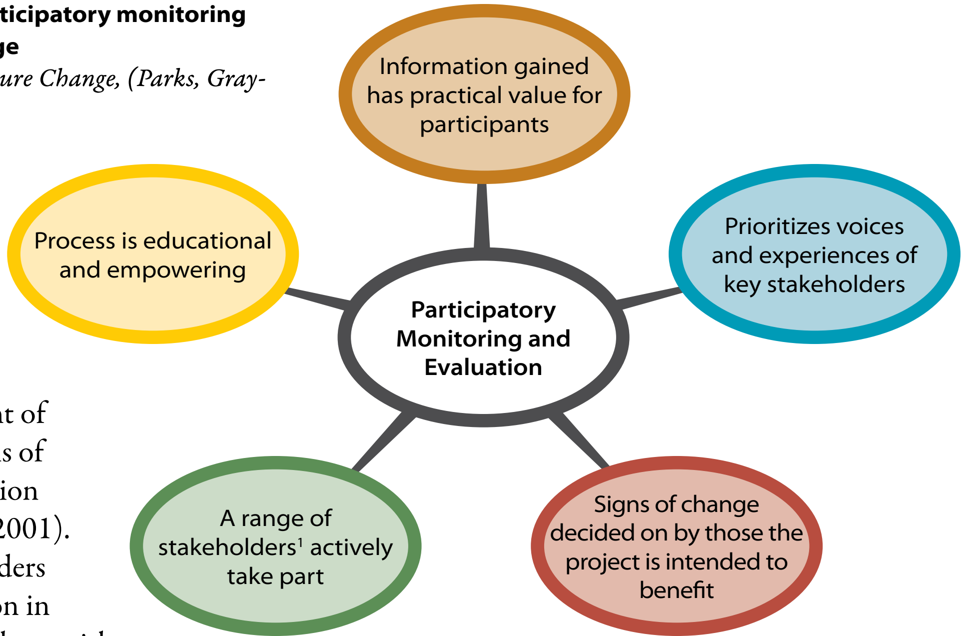
Figure 3. Core principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation for social change
(adapted from Communities Measure Change, (Parks, Gray-Felder, Hunt, and Byrne, 2005).



understanding of how to plan and improve programs. Additional benefits can include deeper understanding of local and program dynamics, shared expectations, the development of common goals and definitions of progress, and increased cohesion (Booth, Ebrahim, & Morin, 2001). Furthermore, keeping key leaders involved through participation in M&E processes can provide them with continued encouragement to work toward social change (Bradley, Mayfield, Mehta, and Rukonge, 2002).

How can we make monitoring and evaluation participatory?

1. Be willing to have less control over the M&E process

Program planners and researchers/evaluators should accept that they will have less control over participatory M&E processes than over conventional ones. Useful roles for non-community members include fostering collaborative dialogue and decision-making, and providing technical support and resources. In addition, they play an important role in ensuring that data is collected and managed in ways that ensure their reliability and that meet ethical standards for the protection of participants. It is also essential that program personnel help ensure that communities benefit in practical ways from the information and lessons gained through monitoring and evaluation activities.

2. Assemble an advisory group

One way to engage community members is to assemble an advisory group (Parks, et al., 2005) (Estrella, et al., 2000). The advisory group can help select approaches and indicators, identify and engage key partners or participants, validate findings, and assist in using the findings for community development.

Ideally, an advisory group should represent a true cross-section of community members and stakeholders. However, inclusion does not necessarily ensure that all voices will be heard, especially in settings where power hierarchies and imbalances persist. To help ensure equitable participation and foster dialogue, leadership and consensus-building, consider dividing participants into working groups that present suggestions to the larger group. This approach also creates flexibility for participants, allowing them to choose areas where they can be more or less involved.

3. Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan through dialogue

The planning stage is the most critical part of establishing a participatory M&E process. During planning meetings, important topics to discuss include:

- Stakeholders' information needs: Who wants to know what, and why?
- Program framework: Who are the target audiences, what should the program try to change, what activities will the program

[1] Including, but not limited to, implementing and partner organizations, program beneficiaries and staff, community leaders, and representatives of diverse community groups, including minority and marginalized groups.

conduct, and what processes of change will achieve the desired impact?

- Indicators: For monitoring purposes, what are the characteristics of a community video program "that functions well?" For evaluation purposes, what "signs of change" in individuals, families and the community might occur as a result of the program?
- Targets for indicators
- Resource needs and availability
- Data collection and analysis methods
- Potential ethical and logistical challenges and solutions.
- Who should receive findings and in what format
- Assigning responsibilities

The advisory group should also consider to what extent and in which ways other community members could participate. Lack of time and low literacy are challenges that should be considered at every step of the process. Additional community members can be involved as data collectors, interviewees, and analysts (see **"Cross-Cutting Data Collection Methods,"** below). Many community members and advisory group members themselves are often volunteers, so the issue of compensation, travel assistance or per diem may emerge.

4. Review findings regularly as a group.

It is important to meet regularly with video team and advisory group members to discuss trends in M&E findings. This process helps reveal issues in the quality of data collection and data management, and can help ensure that timely adjustments to M&E and other program activities can be made.

> *Consultation, mobilization or participation? True participation is not only getting people together. They must be able to contribute to a decision-making process.*
>
> Guy Bessette, 2004

Applying M&E and PM&E to Community Video Work

The following section provides specific suggestions on activities, indicators, methods, and data sources for monitoring and evaluating a community video program. It is based on the premise that monitoring and evaluation for such programs can be collaborative, accessible, and "user-friendly." The Through Our Eyes teams used a combination of methods that utilized the skills of community members, program personnel, and communication and research professionals. Different community video programs can use different combinations of approaches as time and resources allow. Methods that tend to be more participatory are indicated.

Formative evaluation

Formative evaluation, also known as needs assessment or situational analysis, refers to collecting information for initial program design. This information can be gathered from multiple sources, such as census or public health datasets, conducting a study, media ratings, and service statistics. Usually,

Gihembe refugee camp, Rwanda, has a population of 19,936 and is divided in 24 sections, called quarters (February 2011 census). For the Through Our Eyes evaluation, the advisory group included local leaders, such as the camp president, women's leaders ("condifas"), health educators, and representatives from youth groups and mothers' groups. Generally, each Through Our Eyes evaluation site had 10-20 advisory group members.

Gihembe refugee camp (Rwanda, 2011)

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How participatory?

There are challenges involved in participatory M&E approaches, as with any methods of monitoring and assessment. Time, resources, and skilled facilitators are needed to enable PM&E processes. Based on inclusion and dialogue, these include gathering and engaging participants; reaching consensus on program goals and desired outcomes; identifying key indicators of change; reviewing options for measuring program effectiveness; and maintaining cycles of reflection and feedback.

Different perspectives on methods and measurements may emerge. For example, local stakeholders may want to emphasize indicators that reflect their specific situation, while program managers may seek indicators that apply to multiple sites and enable comparisons across communities.

As a result, compromises may be necessary. Especially if time is limited, it may be advisable to focus on key indicators and a few complementary assessment methods. When initiatives seek to compare findings across different sites, a combination of local and global indicators may be included. As an example, the Through Our Eyes evaluation included questions that were posed at all five sites as well as questions that each community advisory group developed based on their community's specific experiences and context.

the data collected from the formative phase has a dual purpose. In addition to program design, it can also be used for impact evaluation. Since it provides information on the pre-intervention state of the community (baseline), it can be compared with data collected in the middle (mid-term) or end of the program (endline) to understand if the program achieved its desired impacts (Salem, Bernstein, Sullivan, & Lande, 2008).

Many activities associated with planning a community video project could be viewed as part of a formative evaluation. During the planning phase, meetings with stakeholders are held to identify prospective partnerships, project goals, expectations, and logistical considerations. Through Our Eyes also collected baseline information through a survey, focus groups, and key informant interviews (see below, **"Cross-cutting Methods for Data Collection."**)

The initial two-week Through Our Eyes training includes an exercise in identifying both helpful and harmful traditional practices. (This activity is described in detail in **Annex C, "Resources on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation".**)

Participants are asked to think of one or more practices that relate to the lives of men, women, boys or girls in their community, and to write them on sheets of paper that they post on a wall. Next, these are grouped, by consensus, as "traditions that are helpful to most people" and "traditions that can be harmful to some people". "Neutral" practices that are neither helpful nor harmful remain between the two headings. Through discussion, participants identify the three practices that are most harmful, explore the reasons they persist and who benefits from them, their consequences, and who is most affected. Participants then propose ways in which the video project can address these detrimental practices and promote beneficial ones. This exercise can help lay the groundwork for important video themes, key audiences, and potential messages. At the same time, it helps participants come to consensus on defining local forms of beneficial and harmful practices.

Developing a framework

Frameworks usually take the form of diagrams or tables that show the links between components of a program and its desired outcomes. Frameworks can help the community video team and advisory group come to a common understanding of what activities can achieve the desired outcomes, how change occurs, as well as the internal and external factors that could affect the program's success (Frankel & Gage, 2007). Planning meetings, which can be part of a formative assessment, can also be used to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework.

To develop a framework, use mapping and ranking exercises to create a working draft for discussion with the advisory group. Conducting a literature review and key informant interviews can help inform facilitation questions. Ask the advisory group

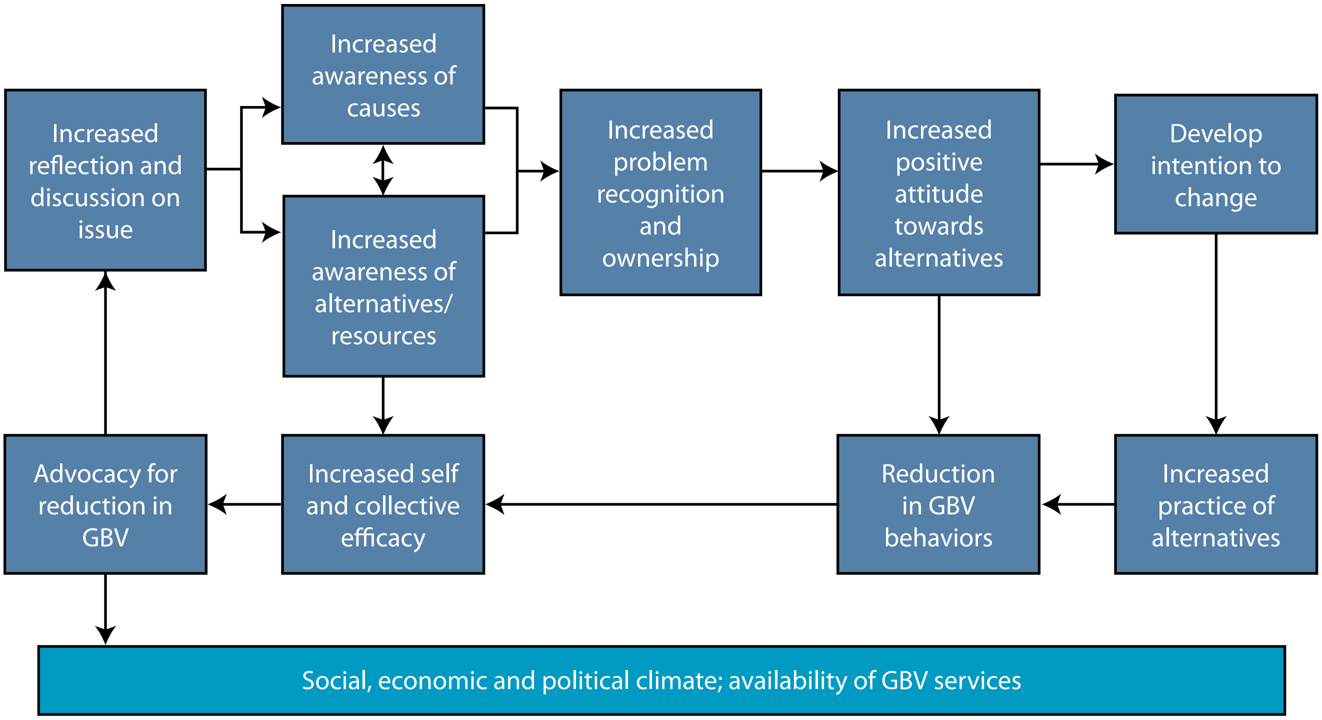

Figure 3. Sample framework for a community video program on gender-based violence

to identify the components that best fit the local context. The final framework should show no more than the 15 most important components.

Figure 3 shows a sample framework for a community video program on gender-based violence. During playbacks and video production, community members discuss the issue, learn about resources and the causes of the problem, recognize that the problem exists locally, change their attitudes about gender-based violence, and develop an intention to change. This intention eventually leads to increased use of positive alternative practices, and a reduction in gender-based violence. The decrease in gender-based violence increases community members' sense of self and collective efficacy, both of which can lead to advocacy. Similarly, increased problem recognition can lead to advocacy, which can explain why those who are not in perpetrator-survivor relationships can still contribute to reductions in gender-based violence. Advocacy can involve participating in a video, contributing to playbacks, and can take other forms that influence factors outside the video program. The box at the bottom shows that the concepts in the framework are affected by economic and political situations and the availability of gender-based violence services. Inherent in the framework is the sense that change occurs at both the individual and collective consciousness.

If the project plans to address multiple issues, a template can be adapted to each issue or a general framework can be used. The sample framework used the term gender-based violence because Through Our Eyes, on which it was based, addressed multiple behaviors related to gender-based violence, such as rape, wife beating, forced marriage and widow inheritance. If the community video project is embedded within a larger gender-based violence project, the framework may need to reflect this relationship. The more specific the framework is, the easier it is to ensure that key signs of change are not overlooked.

While the example above uses one type of framework, called a conceptual framework, different organizations and donors will have their own preferred types of frameworks (See **Annex C, Resources on Monitoring and Evaluation**, for examples of frameworks).

Using theory for social change

Theories can help the advisory group identify key short, intermediate, and long-term impacts, processes of change and target audiences. After the initial mapping activity, consider introducing one or more theories and ask the advisory group to identify framework components that best fit the local context. Below are some theories that can serve as useful references:

- **Theory of Planned Behavior:** This theory is useful for understanding the process of change at the individual level. It states that people who intend to practice a behavior are more likely undertake (or "adopt") it. This intention is affected by their attitudes towards the behavior, the extent to which they think they have control over the behavior, and whether they believe that their society would support the behavior. (Azjen, 1991) .
- **Social Cognitive Theory:** According to this theory, people learn by observing themselves, others, and their environment. These factors interact with one another. Just as individuals can influence others, so can environments affect individuals and groups. The concept of modeling behaviors for others is reflected in Social Cognitive Theory, as is the concept of self-efficacy, or the belief that one's own actions can produce the results that one desires. (Bandura, 1977).
- **Social-Ecological Model:** This model posits that individuals' behavior can be affected by multiple levels of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The version used by both the Centers for Disease Control and by the Inter-Agency Gender Working Group shows that factors at the individual, relationship, community and societal level play a role in gender-based violence. Individual-level factors can include age, education, and previous experience of abuse; relationship-level factors can include marital conflict and control over decision-making; community-level factors can include family isolation and acceptance of violence, while societal-level factors include gender norms and laws (Heise, 1998).

Selecting Indicators

Data collected by monitoring and evaluation activities are usually summarized as "signs of change," or **indicators**. Indicators measure one aspect that is supposed to change as a result of the program. It is generally far more important to identify a few meaningful indicators than a lengthy, complex list. Indicators should be specific and easy to understand and explain. A community video program indicator, for example, may keep track of **inputs**, such as how much time and how many individuals were involved in creating a video. It may keep track of **outputs**, such as how many videos were produced. Indicators can also track key **outcomes**, such as the change in the proportion of adults who consider wife-beating an acceptable way for husbands to discipline their wives. **Impact** indicators can help measure such factors as the proportion of adults who would assist a woman who was being beaten by her husband. It is recommended that community video programs collect information for at least one indicator for each input, output, outcome, and impact.

Tip: To ensure that planning for sustainability is built into the life of the program, include output indicators that measure such factors as mobilizing resources, capacity-building, cross-sharing, and advocacy.

It is useful for indicators to be based on the program framework, so that key components of the program can be effectively measured. Keeping the number of indicators small will help make the work of collecting and recording information more manageable. It will also help ensure that indicators are relevant and practical. Qualitative data collection methods are especially useful for identifying "signs of change" that are not easy to measure, such as "participation" (Frankel & Gage, 2007).

Information should be reported in terms of the whole population reached by the intervention and by sex and age groups (and other characteristics such as ethnic group, risk group, or location, if appropriate), since different members of the population can be affected very differently (UNHCR, 2003).

It is important to consider existing indicators for gender-based violence programs. Using these will help with making comparisons to different programs, years and locations, and advisory groups may welcome having sample indicators to choose from. (See **Annex C, "Resources on Monitoring and Evaluation,"** for resources on indicators for gender-based violence.) At the same time, these indicators should be adapted to the local context to ensure their relevance. The concept of intimate partner violence, for example, might need to be defined as "wife beating" in specific communities. When indicators do not exist for community-identified "signs of change," advisory groups can develop their own specific and measurable definitions of these key signs.

Examples of desired "signs of change" identified by Through Our Eyes advisory groups and community participants have included the following:

- Community members will become aware that things that they were doing [without realizing it] were forms of gender-based violence
- More people will make use of gender-based violence response and prevention services
- Many people, especially girls, will take part in the community team's video productions
- More people will seek HIV counseling and testing

After the advisory group selects indicators, it is important that they choose a realistic target or goal for each indicator, and ensure that these goals are reflected in the video teams' action plans.

Community-based monitoring workshop (Kuruhiira, 2007)

Monitoring

As noted, gathering information about project implementation on an ongoing basis can help ensure quality and enable necessary changes to be made in a timely way. It would be ideal if data was collected on the kind and number of activities that are conducted. In the Through Our Eyes project, for example, key indicators included the number of playbacks conducted and the number of people reached. It is also vital tocollect data on the quality of program activities. Another key indicator, for example, was the proportion of playbacks with 35 or fewer audience members. The aim of this type of monitoring was to help ensure that audience sizes were kept small enough to enable in-depth discussion of video themes. Monitoring data can be qualitative or quantitative (Academy for Educational Development, 2010). Through Our Eyes, for example collected quotes or stories from audience members that provided details on how the program helped led to changes, the forms these changes took, community members' satisfaction with program activities, and their suggestions for future activities.

Table 4 summarizes how program activities can be monitored. It describes sample indicators, and how data can be collected and shared. Note that these are primarily output indicators and that there is at least one indicator for each type of activity. Methods that tend to be more participatory are followed with a "(P)."

Helpful and harmful practices exercise (Southern Sudan, 2009)

Activities	Sample Output Indicators	Data Sources	Dissemination
Identify and recruit local partners	# of videos co-produced with local partners # of trainings co-facilitated by partners # of playbacks co-facilitated by partners # of partners trained in video production # of partners trained in playback facilitation	Training reports Video summaries First videotapes made by team (P) Workshop materials and group process-based outputs (P)	Summary monthly or quarterly reports Quarterly advisory group meetings (P) Publicly posted summary charts or other visuals (P) Video festivals or community review meetings (P)
Initial 2-week training Follow-up 1-week trainings 1-day trainings for playback-only partners Sustainability training/ planning workshops for local partners	# trained (disaggregated by gender and training type)	Training reports Videotaped/written comments by training participants, community members, others (P)	
Video production	# of videos produced (optional: disaggregated by sector/theme) % of videos with accurate gender-based violence prevention & response/health information Acceptability of videos produced Clarity of messages in videos	Production checklists Review by service providers Playback reports (P) Project videotapes (P)	
Community screenings and discussions ("playbacks")	Reach: # of community members who have attended a video playback within a given time period, disaggregated by age, gender, (optional: target group such as community leaders, married men, etc) # of playbacks conducted in a given time period % of playbacks with less than 35 participants	Playback reports (P)	

Table 4. Monitoring community video activities
(P) = more participatory

Community video programs can be monitored through diverse sources and using various methods. Details on production and playback activities can be documented with the use of simple **reporting forms** (see examples in the Source sheets of the accompanying **Practical Guide to Community Video Training**). Team members can use these to review their efforts, identify needs, and strengthen their future work. During **playbacks**, community members provide feedback on content and recommendations for new themes and audiences. As a result, each playback helps assess the clarity and relevance of the videotape shown, and how it can be used to greater effect. Incorporating questions about the project in **police and provider forms** and creating **referral tracking sheets** can help track whether the program facilitates utilization of services. However, this may require willingness by partner agencies to allow their forms to be modified, to keep good records, and to share data on a regular basis. If this is possible, incorporating data-sharing language into Memoranda of Understanding with partners is recommended. If doing so is not possible, qualitative methods can help reveal the link between the program and service utilization.

Information gathered through monitoring activities should be regularly reviewed with stakeholders, advisory groups, and other program partners. Such reviews can be inter-active and participatory when, for example, video team members and community representatives facilitate presentations and offer visual summaries.

Internal monitoring and review are also key. Each Through Our Eyes site submits a monthly report for feedback by program managers (see sample Monthly Report in **Annex C, "Resources on Monitoring and Evaluation"**). Information gathered from monitoring field activities is also shared with donors every quarter.

Valuable insights from monitoring data can be gained by comparing performance with targets, looking at trends over time, and comparing current performance with activities undertaken during the same period in previous years (Academy for Educational Development, 2010). Were as many people reached by playbacks during last year's rainy season? Are there changes in the types of groups being reached, in terms of language, demographics, health needs or vulnerability? Have there been changes in the nature of messages and themes, or in production and playback quality? How can video activities be improved or modified to meet emerging needs? It is important to use the resulting answers to modify

Reflecting the changing nature of community video activities

Community video programs evolve. The Through Our Eyes project, for example, was originally designed to address gender-based violence prevention and response. Over time, however, videos and playbacks have also increasingly addressed HIV, reproductive health, harmful and beneficial practices, and gender norms. As video teams and steering committees discuss changes in direction or scope, it is important to re-visit monitoring and evaluation methods to ensure that they reflect shifts in program activities and goals.

M&E activities should also explore the factors that stimulated these changes. Shifts in program focus and theme may reflect a growing understanding of how issues are interlinked. They may also indicate growing ownership of the program by community members, or increasing interest from partner organizations with activities in complementary areas, or factors outside stakeholders' control. Other changes may reflect adaptations to resistance from existing power structures. Asking the question "What led to this change?" can help identify unexpected but important signs of change.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is an iterative process. New questions and dimensions of interest will emerge as the community video team and advisory group reflect, observe, learn, and share (Aubel, 1999).

the project's action plan and ensure that it responds to these needs. Last but not least, it is vital that the accuracy and completeness of data are discussed and improved on an ongoing basis.

Evaluation

Evaluations are designed to help understand whether program activities achieved their intended impacts. Sometimes, participatory evaluations are not prioritized because donors and development "experts" are concerned that program participants do not have the skills to design and implement evaluations. They may believe that participants cannot be neutral; i.e., that their perspectives and wishes will affect the findings (Bradley, et al., 2002). However, as suggested by the **"How participatory?"** textbox above, it is possible to find ways to address the varied needs of stakeholders. Program managers and evaluation facilitators, along with advisory groups, have a vital responsibility to discuss and decide how community members and external evaluators can collaborate to meet their various needs.

Selecting outcome and impact indicators

Standard social and behavior change impact indicators can be applied to community video, as long as they are rooted in the specific cultural context of the program setting (See **Selecting Indicators**, above). Many impact evaluations measure individual-level changes in knowledge, beliefs, attitude, intentions, and behaviors, and self-efficacy. Evaluations can also examine social-level changes in collective efficacy, community ownership and response to the problem, leadership and visibility by groups affected, and effect on organizations, networks, or coalitions. As noted, community representatives, such as local advisory group members, can provide guidance on identifying key indicators based on the outcomes and impacts that they have prioritized.

Study Design

Findings from evaluations generally become more reliable when they:

- collect data from individuals or communities where the program was not conducted (to enable comparison)
- collect data from multiple time points (for example, prior to program activities, quarterly, and at the end of activities)
- increase the number of individuals or communities from whom data is collected (also called "sample size")
- use more data collection methods (enabling "triangulation," or agreement on findings across methods)

(Hornik, 2002)

Each of these elements, however, increases the cost, length, and complexity of the evaluation, which can make it difficult for community members to participate. Evaluation planning meetings should consider time and resource limitations, prioritize the participation of community members at each stage of assessment, and determine the role of external resource people.

Evaluations for community video programs supporting social and behavior change goals should gauge how key impact indicators have changed before and after the program, or between groups who were exposed or not exposed to the program. Specific details on the strengths and limitations of various study designs, as well as examples of participatory communication evaluations, can be found in **Annex C, "Resources on Monitoring and Evaluation."**

Measuring reach or exposure.

There are many ways to define and measure "exposure" to a community video program. Exposure, for example, can be defined as having participated in a playback discussion on (topic) within the past (#) of months. Exposure can also be defined as having **discussed** community video program themes with another person. Individuals exposed to the program may have actively **participated** in the planning and production of videos, in hosting playback sessions, or in planning, monitoring and evaluating the program. "Reach" is defined as the proportion of the target population that was exposed to the program.

Cross-cutting methods for gathering information

Information or data for the evaluation of community video programs can be collected in numerous ways. Overall, participatory approaches should be prioritized, in keeping with the participatory nature of this communication approach.

It is important to note that it is the way a given evaluation method is implemented, rather than the method itself, that makes it participatory (A. Byrne, 2008, personal communication). As with monitoring activities, community members should be involved in deciding on what methods to use in evaluation activities, and what questions to prioritize. During data collection, it might be worthwhile to consider limiting the amount of written materials, or to pair team members with higher and more basic literacy skills with one another, so as to make the process more inclusive. Regular group reflection during data collection can help participants come to a shared agreement on important findings.

Role-play on good and bad interviewing skills (Nu Po refugee camp, Thailand, 2011)

The following methods can be useful when evaluating community video programs; they can also be used for collecting monitoring data.

In-depth interviews use a flexible interview guide that is chiefly composed of open-ended questions for one-on-one interviewing. The aim is to collect detailed information on the individual's beliefs and attitudes related to the topic being studied.

Key informant interviews are a type of in-depth interview in which the respondent has extensive experience and knowledge on the topic of interest (Byrne, Parks, Gray-Felder, and Hunt, 2005). In the Through Our Eyes evaluation, key informants included service providers, video team members, partner agency representatives, community members who have participated in video productions, and community members who have taken part in playback discussions. Most sites also sought input from community leaders.

In **exit interviews**, program participants or beneficiaries are interviewed on-site immediately following an activity. In the Through Our Eyes project, playback participants have been interviewed at numerous sites, usually on video, offering their thoughts on the video that was just shown and the discussion that followed, their comments on relevant themes and concerns, and suggestions for the project team.

Focus groups are useful for identifying social norms (areas of agreement around local society/culture) and the range of opinions in a given group (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). In the Through Our Eyes evaluation, focus group respondents chiefly included older men (over 35), younger men (under 35), older women (over 35), and younger women (under 35). Local advisory groups also identified other groups of interest, such as widows.

Observation involves recording an activity or a context by using a checklist, form, or by taking descriptive notes. Data collected can include information on the setting, how people act and what they say (Parks, et al., 2005). During playback sessions, for example, team members count how many men, women, boys and girls attend and they record important quotes.

Social or community mapping can be used to understand how a group perceives their social and physical environment. In this exercise, a group of

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women, girls, men, or boys draw a map of their community and to identify areas based on specific questions. The discussion that takes pace during the activity is as valuable as the map that emerges (Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium, 2003). Questions can include:

- Are there services available to women that address domestic violence or sexual assault/rape? Where are they?
- Who do community members trust to help them deal with domestic violence or sexual assault/rape?
- Are there people in the community that the video program has not reached? Where are they? What should the program consider when reaching out to them?
- Where can videos be shown? What challenges and steps are involved in using these sites?

Problem ranking combines cards and a group exercise to rank concepts. A problem-ranking exercise used by Through Our Eyes to identify and discuss the most harmful and helpful traditional practices affecting men, women, boys, and girls is described above in the section called, "**Formative Evaluation.**"

Practice focus group (Nu Po refugee camp, Thailand, 2011)

The "Most Significant Change" approach is a systematic way of collecting and choosing important stories of change and leverages the storytelling traditions found in many cultures. In this system, stories from the field are collected using the question, "In the past __ months, what was the most significant change you saw, and why?" Stakeholders then review the stories and select what they consider the most important ones, while sharing their reasons choosing those stories. Other steps in the Most Significant Change approach include sharing stories with another set of stakeholders to further refine the number of stories of interest; conducting additional interviews to check reliability and obtain additional details; and quantifying group results, if needed. The Most Significant Change approach can yield highly detail accounts, and is useful for understanding unexpected changes and what stakeholders consider to be important indices of change (Davies & Dart, 2005).

Surveys are most often used to collect quantitative data. The textbox above, **"How participatory?"** gives an example of how advisory groups can contribute to survey development.

These are only a few of many methods available for monitoring and evaluation programs. Multiple methods can be used and combined. Mapping and ranking exercises can be incorporated into focus groups and in-depth interviews. All of the above methods can be videotaped. The community video organization, InsightShare, for example, has combined the Most Significant Change approach with community video by creating storyboards and filming stories of change. These are then viewed and voted on by community stakeholders. This process yields stories that are communicated directly, and limits the risk of having project staff speak on behalf of participants (Lunch, 2007).

Video as a tool for monitoring and evaluation

Video can be used in various ways to gather feedback on projects. Team members can tape in-depth interviews or briefer question-and-answer interviews with participants and community members. Video can show emotion, setting, body language and tone of voice, all of which are often poorly recorded in transcripts and spreadsheets. It can provide a better understanding of data collection methods, revealing, for example, whether questions were understandable to participants. Since community video teams are used to interviewing for video, adopting this approach to monitoring and evaluation builds on existing skills and can make M&E appear less intimidating to video team members.

Filming an exit interview after a video playback (Liberia, 2007)

Video is immediate and accessible to all. Those who cannot read can still review the "data" without computers or software. Because they do not have to wait for outsiders to clean, code, and analyze the data, teams can quickly review the footage and make program-related adjustments based on community feedback.

Video can be a powerful way to share findings. The tangible, on-screen presence of community members can make viewers feel that the data is trustworthy and important. If written reports are needed, findings from video can be digested into quotes or descriptions.

One possible bias with this method is that those who are articulate and present well on-screen may be more likely to be heard. For this reason, it is important that teams who use video for M&E fairly weigh the opinions of all who are interviewed on camera.

Using findings for community development

As mentioned in the **"Monitoring"** section, data collection is only part of the M&E process. It is vital that findings be used to support community development—to mobilize resources, and put gender-based violence on the public and policy agenda, improve coordination across agencies and areas, and improve the community video program itself. The process of reviewing findings together should ideally result in an action plan, and community ownership of findings should be acknowledged. Last but far from least, it is important that findings are shared and used in ways that meet the information needs of various stakeholders and recipients (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005).

Through Our Eyes evaluation findings were shared with stakeholders and community members in multiple ways. At the end of data collection, findings were discussed at the advisory group meetings. The advisory groups provided feedback on the data and on the overall implementation of the evaluation. Evaluation results were also shared through video festivals. At each site, camp leaders, local and international organizations and government representatives were invited to view community video productions and learn about program activities. Community members shared findings from the evaluation and offered testimonies on the successes and challenges of the program. Other gender-based violence programs have organized public relations launches and used action theater to disseminate evaluation results (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005).

Finally, findings can be shared through international channels. These include sharing evaluation reports online, publishing in journals, and presenting at conferences. While valuable, these are the least participatory ways of using M&E findings. Credit for findings is often attributed to the presenting organization or individual, and communities seldom have the opportunity to receive suggestions or address concerns. For this reason, it is important to emphasize communities' contribution and provide the international community with ways to access communities' knowledge. One way could be by providing opportunities for community representatives to present in person or through online, "live" discussions, creating discussion boards, providing contact information in reports, and including them in authorship.

Ethical considerations

The nature of conflict-affected settings and sensitivities around gender-based violence have important implications for M&E activities. Concerns such as perceived alliance with armed groups, security implications of confidentiality breaches, the lack of clear jurisdiction on decisions around research with refugees, shortage of confidentiality in camps, heightened sensitivities around ethnicity, and the fluidity of humanitarian settings can be important considerations in conflict-affected settings. Participants whose confidentiality is not protected may experience retaliatory violence from partners or community members, and the act of discussing experiences of gender-based violence can trigger trauma (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Leaning, 2005).

Sharing views on evaluation findings during a video festival (Southern Sudan, 2011)

Two ways to protect participants include consulting advisory groups and Institutional Review Boards (IRB). Institutional Review Boards can be found at health ministries and research institutes. It is recommended that both an IRB for general (often Western-oriented) ethical review, and an advisory group for ethical review based on the unique culture of the local community are consulted a) before data collection activities and b) even during and after data collection (if any questions about ethics are raised). While obtaining these approvals may be an extra step, they can help pre-empt ethical missteps. Since journals and, increasingly, donors, now require IRB review, obtaining IRB approval can also help build a case for strengthening and scaling up programs. The country office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees or UNCHR's Evaluation Policy and Analysis Unit can provide information on which IRBs have jurisdiction over displaced communities in specific countries.

Below are a few principles that should be followed when conducting evaluations involving gender-based violence and refugees. These principles originated from the Belmont Report (1979), a ground-breaking document that laid out core principles for research ethics and subsequently defined US government regulations around research with human participants.

1. Respect for persons at all stages of the process.

It is vital that every possible effort is made to ensure that participants understand the purpose of the evaluation and that participation is voluntary. No one should ever be coerced into participating. Participants should know that they can withdraw at any time without losing access to any services. The

Part 7

Reading translations out loud to test clarity and acceptability (Nu Po refugee camp, Thailand, 2011)

advisory group and IRBs should be consulted on how to identify and deal with refugees who may have undiagnosed mental health problems. It also important to review the consent form with the advisory group and test it for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness.

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2. Minimize harm to participants

Interviews should be conducted with as much privacy as possible. This might be easier to do in community settings than in refugee camps, which are often densely populated. Using creative techniques such as distracting children, interviewing in private places outdoors, or creating dummy questionnaires in the event of interruptions, may be useful (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005). To the greatest degree possible, try not to collect any information that might identify participants. For example, the Through Our Eyes project has always provided oral consent options rather than only written consent forms; monitoring forms have only recorded demographic information such as age and sex, even when collecting direct quotes from playback participants.

Consider how certain questions can affect respondents, revise them to minimize distress, and be prepared to respond to concerns. During the Through Our Eyes evaluation, questions were more focused on changes in attitudes and intentions, which were deemed less sensitive. None of the data collection materials asked whether participants have perpetrated violence or experienced violence. Interviewers were prepared to provide referrals in case of need. Contact information for services can also be distributed in ways that participants consider safe to receive, such as a pamphlet, prescription pad, or card. (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005).

Along these lines, it may also be important to be careful about including questions on place of origin or ethnic group (Leaning, 2005). Consider whether this information would be programmatically useful and consult the advisory board and IRB. In the Rwandan camps, for example, the advisory group chose to exclude these questions due to a history of ethnic tension.

3. Maximize benefits to participants and communities

Conduct interviews in supportive, non-judgmental ways. The process of being listened to and being guaranteed confidentiality and support can help participants feel more comfortable about disclosing their true thoughts and asking for assistance, particularly around sensitive issues such as gender-based violence.

Ensure that the evaluation is scientifically sound—that the design and methods used are strong enough to allow reasonably valid conclusions to be drawn. Put simply, it is not ethical to inconvenience and put participants at risk if the evaluation is not going to generate any believable conclusions (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005).

Use results for social change. Because of the fluidity of humanitarian settings and populations, try to use and disseminate results as soon as possible (Leaning, 2005). See above, **"Using Findings for Community Development."**

4. Balance risks and benefits.

As mentioned earlier, there are high risks involved in collecting information on gender-based violence. But there are also high risks involved with continued ignorance and inaction. While it is not possible to completely eradicate risk, program planners have an ethical obligation to weigh whether there is a balance between risk and benefit and occasionally to make the difficult decision to abandon an evaluation or change it significantly (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005). By adapting the suggestions mentioned above, and by consulting IRBs and community advisory groups, making these decisions can be a lot easier.

Conclusion

Monitoring and evaluating a community video program can help ensure that it is being conducted appropriately and that it is achieving its desired impacts. Systematically involving communities in decisions around monitoring and evaluation is critical to building community ownership and implementing capacity, particularly because they play a central role in decisions around community video activities. It is vital that community video programs make a commitment to participatory M&E processes, and ensure that they sensitively address such challenges such as low literacy among community members, the lack of confidentiality in refugee camps, and differing priorities of donors and organizations (Bradley, et al., 2002). The examples outlined above show how key concepts in monitoring and evaluation can be part of a participatory learning and improvement process for community video programs.

Concerns about the rigor of participatory processes can be resolved by investing in facilitation and time, and by seeking to achieve a blend of approaches that meet the needs of various stakeholders. Strengthening relationships with advisory groups can lead to more transparent and critical discussions about findings. Documenting, in detail, the participatory nature of M&E activities can help provide insight on the depth of involvement of various concerned groups, and whether meaningful participation was indeed achieved (Sayce and Norrish, 2006).

Community video, based on in-depth local collaboration, cycles of reflection and action, and the use of an immediate, engaging medium, is uniquely congruent with participatory M&E methods. Further, the examples given here suggest that community video programs can support significant innovation in participatory monitoring and evaluation practice. As community video programs evolve and reflect new needs and contexts, so must their monitoring and evaluation methods. The lessons gained from these experiences should be shared and built upon.

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