Before selecting learning activities, ask yourself:

- How many learning activities are required to adequately answer your learning questions? Perhaps one learning activity isn’t sufficient and needs to be paired with others to adequately answer your learning questions. Consider timing here as well – Plan for the learning activities to be completed within a timeframe that enables decision-making.

- Will selected learning activities be considered valid by my target audience? Consider what types of evidence your target audience finds most compelling – it may be that they are most likely to incorporate learning if it comes from trusted sources or if a certain methodology is used (e.g., impact evaluation, ethnographic research, etc.).

- Do you have the resources to carry out the selected learning activities to an adequate standards? Consider budget constraints and whether staff have the capacity to carry out the learning activities.

There is no one size fits all approach to answering learning questions. The purpose of this graphic is to demonstrate the variety of learning activities that exist and could become part of your approach.

For more on learning activities and MEL, see also the USAID Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting toolkit cluster on Learning Agendas and M&E for Learning, the USAID Monitoring toolkit and the USAID Evaluation toolkit.
Different Ways to Address Learning Questions

- Site Visits
- DQAs
- Workplan
- Periodic Review
- Indicator data collection and analysis
- Risk monitoring
- Indicator development and selection

- Portfolio Review
- Mid-Course Stocktaking
- After Action Review or Hot Wash

- Impact Evaluation
- Performance Evaluation
- Other

- Before Action Review
- Internal and/or external learning review processes and events
- Scenario planning
- FAIL/Success fests
- Learning networks, Communities of Practice

Evaluations

Monitoring Activities

Learning Activities

Pause & Reflect Activities

- Literature reviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Key informant interviews
- Meetings / Convenings

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