



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Local Works Discussion Guide:

Developing a Monitoring Approach Using Program Logic

Question 1: What is the problem (or problems) that your activity is helping to solve? Please describe the problems here in a few sentences or bullet points.

Example: Our activity is addressing the problem of poor water and sanitation practices and facilities in Dalit communities. Poor sanitation leads to more health problems in these communities, especially diarrheal diseases for children.

Question 2: What is your activity planning to do to address these problems? Add a few bullet points describing the main solutions that will be implemented by your activity.

Example: We will train people in these communities in better sanitation practices, including handwashing and use of latrines. We will also help communities advocate for government funding to build better sanitation facilities, like latrines.

Question 3: Build an “IF / THEN” statement. An IF/THEN statement represents what you will do and what you think it will achieve.

Example:

“IF we:

- *Provide training on sanitation practices, including handwashing;*
- *Help people advocate for government funding to build better sanitation facilities*

THEN:

- *Households will have better knowledge of good sanitation practices*
- *People will practice better sanitation*
- *Communities will learn to advocate for resources from the government*
- *Communities will access government funds for sanitation facilities*
- *Better sanitation facilities will be built in communities*
- *Rates of diarrheal diseases will go down”*

*Note: the “THEN” items can include intermediate-level results (like improved skills and knowledge) as well as longer-term outcomes (changed practices, better health outcomes).

Question 4: Based on your “THEN” statements, what can you measure to know if you are achieving those things? Brainstorm 5-10 indicators that will help you understand whether your activity is achieving what it intends to achieve. This should include indicators that measure short-term and long-term results. While indicators must be expressed in terms of a number or percentage, they can represent both quantitative data (i.e. numbers, percentages) or qualitative data (anything that isn’t a number).

Example: *You might measure indicators such as:*

- *“Dollar value of local government funding for sanitation facilities:” This indicator reflects quantitative data (i.e. you can measure the amount of government funding with a number).*
- *“Number of households with improved handwashing practices:” This indicator reflects qualitative data (you are observing improved handwashing qualitatively), which you can then quantify (by counting the number of households with improved handwashing practices).*

- *“Percent of people who feel better equipped to engage the government:” This indicator reflects qualitative data in the form of feedback from community members that they feel better equipped to advocate for resources from the government. You could then quantify this indicator by asking people to rate their level of preparedness on a 1-5 scale.*

Question 5: Think about how you will collect data for these indicators. Here are some options:

- Direct observation (directly observing changes in the number of new sanitation facilities, for example)
- Interviews with activity participants or other stakeholders in which you ask them questions about any changes in their knowledge, skills, behaviors, or attitudes, or any changes in their community or relationships.
- Surveys (going door-to-door to a sample of households with specific questions, or conducting a survey of participants at a training or meeting)

Example: We will collect data to measure the “Percent of households with improved handwashing practices” by conducting interviews in each target community two months after the sanitation training. In the interviews we will ask questions such as, “Has your household made any changes in handwashing since the intervention? If so, how? If there haven’t been any changes, why? What problems do you face that make it hard to make this change?” (Be sure to ask questions in a way that makes it comfortable for people to say ‘no’ and explain why!) Based on the answers among the sample of community members, we will calculate the percentage of households with improved handwashing practices.

*NOTE: You can use the same data collection method or event (e.g. observation during a field visit, an interview, a survey) to collect data for multiple indicators.

Question 6: Based on your list, choose no more than **five** indicators to measure. You should consider which ones are most important for understanding the results of your activity, and which ones will be easiest to measure. (For example, there may be an indicator that is important, but it requires a survey to measure which will take too much time and money to carry out. In that case, you should **not** choose that indicator.)

Question 7: Not everything can be measured with a number or percentage, so it is likely that your activity has important processes and results that **cannot** be measured with an indicator. What are your “THEN” statements from Question 4 that cannot be measured with an indicator? How will you measure these short-term and long-term results? Here are some options:

- Focus group discussions with activity participants/community members (this is like an interview, but with 8-10 people in which they discuss questions together)
- Workshop (hold a workshop toward the end of the activity in each community, and invite participants to tell stories of change that the activity brought about.)

Example: Helping community members learn to advocate for resources from the local government is an important result. We will measure this by having a community feedback session every quarter, in which we ask the community to share their successes and challenges in advocacy. We will ask them both about their own confidence and skills, and about the government response. Our team will take notes and reflect on the discussion every quarter to understand whether and how things are improving, and we will include this information in our quarterly reports to USAID.

Question 8: Feedback loops are important to USAID. When we collect data from a community, we need to share back with them what we learned. How do you plan to share your indicator data (or other learning from your activity) back with the activity participants, community members, or other stakeholders? Some ideas include:

- Short written products or slide decks (these are often good for government stakeholders or other stakeholders with whom you have a more formal relationship)
- Interactive presentations or workshops, with lots of time for discussion and answering questions (these may be a good fit for community meetings, for example).

Next steps!

Now that you have developed your theory of change, selected indicators, and made a plan for collecting data on results that cannot be measured with an indicator, you are ready for these next steps:

- Ensure this information is in your [Activity MEL Plan](#).
- After discussing indicators with your USAID Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), develop a [Performance Indicator Reference Sheet \(PIRS\)](#) for each indicator you have chosen. The PIRS is USAID's template for defining performance indicators, and helps ensure consistency and reliability in indicator data.
- Ensure any data collection activities, including collecting stakeholder feedback, are in your Work Plan.
- Discuss any questions you have about resources (time, money) needed for data collection with your AOR, to ensure you do not run into budget challenges later.