



DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION PILOT FAMILY CARE FIRST IN CAMBODIA

Final Report May 2018

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PILOT SUMMARY

The Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity (DEPA-MERL) was engaged with Family Care First (FCF) in Cambodia from November 2016 to March 2018, conducting a developmental evaluation in service of FCF in Cambodia's goal of increasing the number of children living in safe, nurturing family-based care.

The primary purpose of this final report is to provide utilization-focused, end-of-program reflections to the diverse stakeholders engaged with FCF in Cambodia and with the developmental evaluation. These stakeholders include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Global Development Lab, including the Office of Evaluation and Impact Assessment; the USAID Cambodia Mission; the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance's Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, especially the Center on Children in Adversity; as well as local civil society, international non-governmental organizations, and donors that are continuing to work in Cambodia with the FCF initiative and in the child protection and social work sectors.

THIS REPORT

This report includes a **Pilot Summary**, which provides an overview of FCF in Cambodia and DEPA-MERL's purpose and engagement. This summary is followed by more detail on the **Outcomes and Adaptations** within the initiative and includes narrative and visual depictions of the intended, unrealized, implemented, emergent, and realized outcomes, as well as key adaptations the FCF in Cambodia initiative made throughout the period of support from the developmental evaluation.

BACKGROUND ON CHILDREN LIVING OUTSIDE OF FAMILY BASED CARE

Decades of research have confirmed the importance of nurturing family care for a child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Stable and protective family relationships are a child's best chance to receive individualized care and attention that is matched to their developmental needs, to avoid violence and exploitation, and to develop lifelong social connections that promote resilience. The lack of these protections and supports in childhood and adolescence leads to immense loss of cognitive, economic, and social potential—not only for individuals but also for communities and nations.

Many interconnected challenges face children without parental care, their families, and the systems that serve them, making it difficult to enact large-scale, sustained change. In Cambodia, specific challenges include a rapidly growing sector of residential care facilities that often operate as profit-making businesses, well-documented problems associated with "orphanage tourism" and international sponsorship, and poor tracking and oversight of the numbers of residential facilities or children in them. These and other barriers to change must be addressed in order to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce the number of children living in residential care facilities nationally;
- Reduce the number of residential care facilities nationally;
- Increase the number of vulnerable families provided with effective support services to prevent child separation; and

- Increase the number of children who are successfully reintegrated into family- or community-based care (family of origin or alternative care).

INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY CARE FIRST IN CAMBODIA

FCF in Cambodia is a multi-stakeholder initiative launched by USAID (the Center on Children in Adversity and the US Global Development Lab, together with USAID/Cambodia) and supported by the GHR Foundation in response to interconnected and complex challenges facing children without parental care, their families, and the systems that serve them. FCF in Cambodia responds to the objectives of the U.S. Government Action Plan on Children in Adversity. Cambodia is a priority country for the Action Plan.

First launched by USAID in 2014, FCF is an initiative that seeks to uncover and advance transformational solutions that considerably reduce the number of children growing up outside of safe, nurturing, family-based care. Efforts focused on maintaining children’s places in families and communities apply both to preventing first-time separation and to maintaining long-term reintegration. The initiative focuses on supporting and preserving children at risk of family separation (due to poverty, poor access to needed services, and/or safety concerns) and reunifying children currently living in orphanages and other long-term residential care settings into their families/communities of origin or placing them in alternative family-based care. The initiative has the potential to limit the number of children entering or returning to residential care facilities and to greatly reduce the broader population of children outside of family care over time.

FCF in Cambodia is a first-of-a-kind effort. It uses open innovation and the Collective Impact approach to create and support a platform through which multiple layers of stakeholders across different sectors can build the necessary evidence and trust required to strategically and collectively contribute towards a significant increase in the number of children living in safe, nurturing, family-based care.

What is Collective Impact?

A framework for organizations to work together to tackle complex social problems, Collective Impact initiatives are characterized by five core characteristics:

- 1) A **Common Agenda** that is a mutually accepted vision for change;
- 2) A **Shared Measurement System** with common indicators to track progress and maximize transparency and accountability;
- 3) **Mutually Reinforcing Activities** that employ each organization’s strengths;
- 4) **Continuous Communication** to develop trust; and
- 5) A **Backbone Support Organization** that plays the role of key advocate and coordinator, helping partners interact positively and effectively.

DEPA-MERL BACKGROUND

Programs in complex settings or with untested theories of change often face a challenge when trying to use traditional mid-term or end-term evaluations to assess their impact. In such programs, traditional evaluations may fail to provide useful information in a timely fashion or capture important outcomes not defined at the outset. To help address this issue, the Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity (DEPA-MERL) mechanism formed under the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Innovations Program (MERLIN) to test the effectiveness of a developmental evaluation approach in measuring impact

of programs that are characterized by innovative interventions, untested theories of change, and/or implementation in complex contexts.

The members of the DEPA-MERL consortium are Social Impact (SI, prime), Search for Common Ground (Search), and The William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan (WDI). DEPA-MERL is funded by the USAID Global Development Lab. Search led the developmental evaluation of FCF in Cambodia, and funding for this developmental evaluation came from the Empowerment and Inclusion Division within the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Office.

Traditional approaches to monitoring and evaluation focus on making existing processes, structures, and systems more effective. Developmental evaluation:

- seeks to improve not only program design, but also takes into account the entire complex dynamic system in which the program, project or activity is taking place;
- provides an approach to evaluation that is quick, ongoing, and takes an iterative approach to data collection, analysis and feedback that contributes to timely changes throughout the project cycle and allows for system changes as well as changes in targeted outcomes;
- is highly flexible and well-suited for projects under flexible contracting mechanisms in which implementation is likely to change in response to emerging conditions on the ground;
- is particularly useful in projects with untested or incomplete theories of change and where implementers and/or program managers are "building the plane in the air" (MERLIN, 2016); and
- is methodologically agnostic. It does not prescribe a single methodological design, tool, or framework. The evaluation approach taken is based on emerging needs—methods might include network and outcome mapping, contribution analysis, or other approaches.

Developmental Evaluators are “embedded” within the program, project, or activity to contribute to modifications in program design and targeted outcomes throughout implementation.

RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION FOR FCF IN CAMBODIA

FCF in Cambodia requested DEPA-MERL's support in its pursuit to build cross-sector alignment and a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across community, government, non-profit, philanthropic and corporate sectors. In response to the request for support from FCF in Cambodia, DEPA-MERL proposed a developmental evaluation approach designed to enable the FCF in Cambodia initiative to better understand how partner relations impact the work, specifically what is working and what is not working for management, coordination, and collaboration amongst all partners. Most importantly within the developmental evaluation approach was the ability to adapt to shifting circumstances and iteratively modify the approach based on contextual and policy changes to best achieve stated objectives of FCF in Cambodia over time. DEPA-MERL launched the developmental evaluation of FCF in Cambodia in November 2016. DEPA-MERL hired a Developmental Evaluator to live and work in Cambodia from January 2017 to March 2018 in order to fully embed with the partners in the FCF in Cambodia Initiative.

EVALUATION RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The developmental evaluation sought to answer three research questions, identified in collaboration between the Developmental Evaluator and members of FCF in Cambodia at different times:

RESEARCH QUESTION 1 THAT EMERGED FROM THE ACCULTURATION WORKSHOP *What are the roles and responsibilities of the core FCF in Cambodia members with regards to the FCF in Cambodia structures to facilitate the Collective Impact Model? How effective are the organizations in executing those roles and responsibilities? What actions can be taken to improve? (And what are the implications of those actions?)*

PRIORITIZED SUB-THEME *Roles and Responsibilities: What are the Assigned roles and responsibilities and the Realized roles and responsibilities at this point?*

RESEARCH QUESTION 2 THAT EMERGED FROM A WORKSHOP WITH FCF LEADERSHIP

What is the role that FCF plays in [the child protection sector] in Cambodia and what are the opportunities for FCF to maximize the initiative's ability to play an effective and beneficial role within the sector/space/system?

RESEARCH QUESTION 3, DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE INTEGRATING PARTNER AND USAID

What systems, tools, and strategies enable Family Care First's Integrating Partner to execute its expanded role and responsibility within FCF? Are these approaches conducive to improved knowledge sharing, evidence-based decision making, and collaboration among Family Care First members? How can they be adapted and improved?

The Developmental Evaluator used a range of methods and approaches to answer these research questions, including: documents reviews, a formal literature review, stakeholder interviews, Terms of Reference (TOR) sessions, an assessment rubric, a partner survey, and case studies to collect and analyze data in order to provide evidence-based findings and recommendations for the initiative.

KEY OUTCOMES AND ADAPTATIONS

The developmental evaluation successfully documented a variety of different outcomes and enabled FCF in Cambodia to adapt based on evidence of what worked, what was successful, and what should be scaled. There was a great deal of variety in the level and nature of adaptations prompted by evidence collected by the developmental evaluation. The largest adaptation was the restructuring of USAID awards to the Backbone organization and Integrating Partner based on information and evidence documented by the developmental evaluation. This was a significant adaptation to FCF's initial design that was made in order to better serve FCF's partners and achieve its programmatic objectives. Several other key adaptations occurred: The Integrating Partner adapted meeting and event formats in order to better meet the desires and needs of FCF partners in response to developmental evaluation data that captured a desire among FCF members to emphasize knowledge sharing and deepen and expand their networks. These included:

- The quarterly All Thematic Sub Groups¹ meeting became a quarterly “Learning Summit”;
- Quarterly provincial meetings were established to better respond to stakeholders’ needs outside of the capital; and
- Monthly Thematic Sub Group meetings became bimonthly programmatic and strategic meetings.

The developmental evaluation documented these outcomes over its period of performance. This should not be interpreted as the definitive set of outcomes from the FCF in Cambodia initiative. There will be additional outcomes as the FCF in Cambodia initiative moves forward and as the complex environment in which it operates evolves over time.

¹ All FCF in Cambodia members, organized by programmatic theme, meet quarterly.

OUTCOMES AND ADAPTATIONS

DEPA-MERL adapted the graphic below from Mitzberg’s “Strategy Model” to show how the Family Care First (FCF) in Cambodia Initiative adapted over time based on evidence generated by the developmental evaluation and other contextual factors.

THE GRAPHIC INCLUDES:

- A timeline of the FCF in Cambodia Initiative during the DEPA-MERL developmental evaluation period of performance, from November 2016 to March 2018, delineated by developmental evaluation Research Questions; and
- A graphic representation of the FCF in Cambodia Initiative Outcomes during the developmental evaluation period of performance.

Within the graphic, click on the words WHY?, RESULT?, and MORE for direct links to the additional information related to particular outcomes that follow the graphic.

WHAT ARE INTENDED, UNREALIZED, IMPLEMENTED, EMERGENT AND REALIZED OUTCOMES?

INTENDED OUTCOMES The initial intentions of a program as they are articulated and designed in accordance with the reality as it exists during the design phase of the initiative.

UNREALIZED OUTCOMES Outcomes that are initially articulated in a program’s design, and intended to be implemented, but, for a variety of reasons, are not implemented. Unrealized outcomes may result from: 1) intentional adaptations, such as activities that are removed from a workplan; 2) unpredicted issues in implementation due to the complex, changing reality the program is operating in; 3) the way in which actors work together that cause changes in implementation structures; or 4) various other reasons.

IMPLEMENTED OUTCOMES Also called “Deliberate” outcomes, these outcomes are those remaining from the intended outcomes, as they align with and benefit the contextual reality of the program, and are implemented.

EMERGENT OUTCOMES Over time, as the Intended Outcomes “collide with and accommodate to” a changing reality and other factors in a complex context arise, additional outcomes come to light as organizations learn what works *in practice*.

REALIZED OUTCOMES Outcomes that have been achieved in actuality and are comprised of both Implemented and Emergent Outcomes.

FCF Intended Outcomes:
FCF would be led by a Backbone organization and an Integrating Partner, each with clear roles and responsibilities, guided by the collective action model. **MORE.**

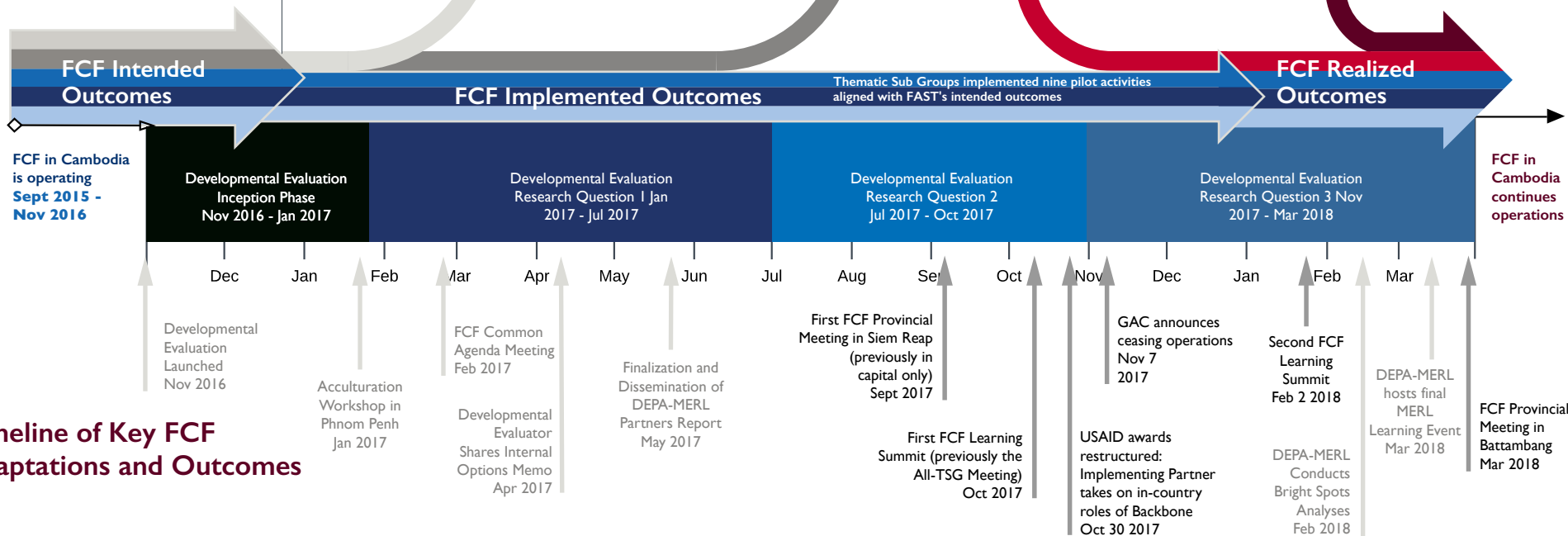
FCF Unrealized Outcome:
The funding of the Management Information System, planned to be executed by the backbone. **WHY? RESULT?**

FCF Unrealized Outcome:
The creation of a shared measurement system, a Technical Working Group for Implementation, and a donor steering group, originally planned to be funded or led by the backbone. **WHY? RESULT?**

FCF Emergent Outcome:
FCF restructured the format of meetings to prioritize knowledge-sharing activities and Khmer voices. **WHY? RESULT?**

FCF Emergent Outcome:
USAID restructured both cooperative agreements. Integrating Partner assumes in-country roles of the Backbone. **WHY? RESULT?**

FCF Realized Outcomes:
The Integrating Partner established quarterly Learning Summits and provincial meetings, and is bringing forward actions on government engagement and a technical working group. **MORE.**



Timeline of Key FCF Adaptations and Outcomes

OUTCOMES: THE FCF IN CAMBODIA INITIATIVE

INTENDED OUTCOMES

FCF in Cambodia was designed as an initiative led by two organizations: a Backbone organization and an Integrating Partner. Each organization had designated roles and responsibilities that were intended to be complementary. The intended outcomes of the Backbone organization were aligned with the Collective Impact model.

The Backbone organization's role was to attract private funding for the sector, promote knowledge sharing, develop a shared measurement system, and facilitate FCF's governance structure. The intended outcomes of the Integrating Partner's role were to oversee and manage funding awards, provide technical assistance, co-chair the initiative's technical working group, and ensure implementing organizations adhered to child protection practices. Under the leadership of these two organizations, and guided by the Collective Impact model for collaborative action, FCF in Cambodia articulated the intention of the program as increasing the number of children living in safe, nurturing family-based care. These were FCF in Cambodia's intended outcomes for the initiative's leadership.

UNREALIZED OUTCOMES

FCF in Cambodia's unrealized outcomes related to two activities: 1) Foundational activities to support the Collective Impact model, such as the development of a shared measurement system; and 2) Additional actions designed to be funded and led by the Backbone, such as the Management Information System.

- The design of the shared measurement system, to be led by the Backbone in support of the Collective Impact model, did not occur during the period of performance of the developmental evaluation. The developmental evaluation documented that this outcome went unrealized because of the Backbone's inexperience operationalizing the Collective Impact model and lack of relevant technical capacity. **Significance of unrealized outcome:** In a Collective Impact model, collecting data and measuring results consistently ensure efforts remain aligned, tracks progress toward the shared goal, and enables course correction as participants learn from each other's successes and failures.² **Result of unrealized outcome:** FCF partners lacked a common understanding of how success would be measured and reported within the Initiative.
- The creation of a Technical Working Group for Implementation (TWGI) and a donor steering group did not occur during the period of performance of the developmental evaluation. These outcomes were unrealized because of the Backbone's inexperience operationalizing the Collective Impact model and lack of relevant technical capacity, documented over time in evidence from the developmental evaluation. **Significance of unrealized outcome:** The TWGI was important because it was meant to hold a formal space for Cambodian government representation, and for

² <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/shared-measurement/>

strategy setting within the initiative. **Result of unrealized outcome:** Without a TWGI, FCF partners did not have a forum to discuss technical and strategic issues. Further, the Cambodian government lacked a clearly delineated space to provide input and stay abreast of FCF activities. While this outcome is unrealized to date, FCF leadership has continued discussions to clarify the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation's (MoSVY) role within FCF's governance structure with the creation of a Terms of Reference.

- The Backbone organization decided to delay funding for the Management Information System (MIS) proposal developed by FCF's Thematic Sub Group (TSG) I. This outcome was unrealized because the Backbone was not willing to fund the existing proposal and other actors could not immediately step into the funding gap nor the coordination role that was necessary to set-up the MIS. **Significance of the unrealized outcome:** The proposal ultimately received a "green-light" from the Strategic Review Committee comprised of technical experts and FCF leadership and was a deliverable for FCF's key Cambodian government counterpart, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY). **Result of unrealized outcome:** The decision led to loss of relationship capital with MoSVY. Efforts to re-initiate planning to develop a proposal for the MIS were attempted over the following nine months. These efforts proved unsuccessful because the Backbone did not have the necessary technical coordination ability, as documented by the evaluation. While various actors attempted to continue the proposal development process, they were unable to do so during the period of performance of the developmental evaluation.

EMERGENT OUTCOMES

Significant adaptations to FCF were made as information about what worked in practice came to light through evidence generated by the developmental evaluation. Emergent outcomes for FCF included: 1) Restructured USAID awards to the Backbone organization and the Integrating Partner and 2) Restructured regular meetings and events for FCF.

- The line of inquiry established by Research Question I led to data collection around roles and responsibilities of core FCF members. Based on evidence gathered, DEPA-MERL prepared a Partners Report to present findings and recommendations that highlighted the realignment of the roles and responsibilities of FCF's Backbone and Integrating Partner. The Partners Report leveraged the developmental evaluation's mixed methods approach, drawing on data gathered from January through April 2017. Data sources included an FCF performance assessment completed by 14 FCF members from different partner organizations, 14 additional semi-structured interviews with other FCF members, 235 hours participating in FCF meetings, phone calls and workshops, daily conversations with FCF members and leadership, and a review of FCF documents and email correspondence between FCF lead partners.

Report recommendations included having the Integrating Partner assume key in-country roles and responsibilities originally designated to the Backbone, including facilitating knowledge exchange activities; establishing and supporting FCF's governance structures; and developing a shared measurement system. **Significance of emergent outcome:** The report prompted high-level discussions and meetings between USAID, the Integrating Partner, and the Backbone organizations' leadership staff and Board of Directors. These discussions led to the realignment of roles and responsibilities in line with the recommendations in the Partners Report. **Result of emergent**

outcome: USAID decided to restructure the awards to the Backbone organization and Integrating Partner, a significant adaptation to FCF's initial design that was made in order to better serve FCF's partners and achieve its programmatic objectives. After a series of communications with FCF partners, the Integrating Partner assumed in-country responsibilities of the Backbone in October 2017.

- Throughout the research on its various research questions, FCF stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction and described inefficiencies with respect to the format and objectives of FCF's periodic TSG meetings and FCF's learning events to the developmental evaluator. Specifically, there was a desire among FCF members for the meetings to emphasize knowledge sharing in order to enable members to learn about effective practices, the challenges other members faced, and to deepen and expand their networks.

Additionally, the developmental evaluation identified an opportunity to prioritize Khmer voices. FCF restructured the format of its quarterly Learning Summits in a number of ways in response: translating written documentation and presentations into Khmer, putting the Khmer language projection screen larger and centered, with English language projection screens smaller and on the sides (it had previously been the other way), incorporating a Khmer master of ceremonies for the February 2, 2018 Learning Summit to host the event and introduce speakers, and increasing the number of Khmer staff of international organizations to present at the events. The restructuring of FCF meetings and events occurred incrementally and are described chronologically below.

- Quarterly Learning Summits: The Integrating Partner adopted recommendations made by the Developmental Evaluator regarding the format of what used to be known as the All-TSG Meeting, including re-branding from programmatic update-focused "All-TSG" meetings to "Learning Summits" in October 2017. In the new format of the Learning Summit, presenters highlight key challenges that they face and activities are designed to elicit direct input, resources, and/or contacts from attendees in an effort to increase the interactive nature of the summit. **Significance of emergent outcome:** The new format emphasizes promoting activities that facilitate resource and knowledge sharing to enhance participant engagement: sharing effective practice amongst practitioners; updates on new research, policies, or efforts that affect or inform FCF partner's activities in Cambodia; and opportunities for partners to draw on the experience of the FCF network to troubleshoot challenges. This adaptation occurred because FCF partners expressed their desire for a forum for such discussions to the Developmental Evaluator, who then presented this data to FCF leadership. The Integrating Partner, in response to the feedback, wanted to adjust the format in order to better meet the desires and needs of FCF partners. **Result of emergent outcome:** Continuing to build on a protocol that was established in the first "FCF Learning Summit" in October 2017, FCF leadership incorporated further adaptations in hosting and logistics for the February 2, 2018 Learning Summit. Further adaptations included the incorporation of a breakout session in order to workshop responses to complex social work and child protection challenges that FCF member organizations face regularly.
- Monthly TSG meetings: Beginning in April 2018, TSG meetings are scheduled as bi-monthly half-day working sessions, instead of monthly two-hour meetings. Further, each TSG meeting will now be driven by a specific purpose or agenda. Administrative issues will be discussed at

separate administrative sessions open to all TSG members (previously, administrative issues were discussed at TSG meetings). **Significance of emergent outcome:** This outcome occurred because FCF partners in the provinces expressed to the Developmental Evaluator the challenges and inefficiencies connected with traveling to Phnom Penh each month for meetings that only lasted two-hours and were often administrative in scope. The Integrating Partner, in response to the data from the developmental evaluation, wanted to adjust the format in order to better meet the desires and needs of FCF partners. **Result of emergent outcome:** TSG meetings will be lengthier, less frequent, and focus on programmatic and strategic - not administrative - issues.

- Quarterly provincial meetings: The Integrating Partner held quarterly provincial meetings and added staff to provide more support to the needs of provincial partners and communities. FCF members in the provinces are currently discussing the possibility of creating provincial Thematic Sub Groups (TSGs). **Significance of emergent outcome:** This was because partners in the provinces communicated the need to shift away from a Phnom Penh-centric initiative. Stakeholders have since expressed appreciation for these provincial meetings, showing improved buy-in to the co-creation process and FCF more broadly. **Result of emergent outcome:** The provincial TSGs also are likely to result in the development of actions that better address challenges that are unique to these regions of the country.
- Additional knowledge sharing activities have also led to the creation of a Knowledge Sharing Specialist role for FCF to focus on data sharing amongst partners.

IMPLEMENTED OUTCOMES

FCF's TSGs 1 - 4 successfully executed nine pilot activities as part of the intended set of 'pilot, learn and grow' activities led by the Integrating Partner. Several of these activities exceeded initial expectations. One of note is the Online Case Management and Record-Keeping system (OsCAR), iteratively and collaboratively developed by Children and Families with FCF funding. Twelve Cambodian organizations are at different stages of adoption, and uptake is underway in Lesotho, Myanmar, and Thailand. Additionally, a new co-creation³ round took place between October 2017 and January 2018, producing a new set of actions to be implemented between March and December 2018. Some actions from the initial round of co-creation, including OsCAR, will enter a second phase of funding to sustain their growth and consolidate their progress.

REALIZED OUTCOMES

The realized outcomes are the combined Implemented and Emergent Outcomes described above.

³ The process that was used in the FCF Cambodia Co-Creation Workshop allowed participants to come together with USAID and other donors to work collaboratively on defining the challenges and designing comprehensive solutions to the problem of children outside of family care in Cambodia.

The categorization of Outcomes within the FCF initiative provides a framework for understanding adaptations within the initiative over the course of the developmental evaluation. The FCF initiative will continue to adapt as it moves forward and as the complex environment in which it operates evolves over time.