



PRiME
Program in Rural M&E

M&E FUNDAMENTALS 1

Training Manual

Table of Contents

1. IFAD-CLEAR Project Background	2
Overall Project Objectives	2
2. Participant Profile.....	2
3. Course Overview: M&E Fundamentals 1.....	3
a. Course Format	3
b. Course Objectives.....	3
c. Course Agenda	4
4. Case Study	10
5. Logical Framework (LogFrame)	14
6. Data Collection Plan	16
7. Course References.....	18
8. Key Terminology.....	19

1. IFAD-CLEAR Project Background

In November 2016, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR) embarked on a 3-year project aimed at improving monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in the rural sector. The project is being implemented through the CLEAR Center for Latin America & the Caribbean (CLEAR LAC), based at Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE), Mexico City.

The inaugural M&E Fundamentals training and certification program will encompass:

- M&E Fundamentals 1: 5 days, October 2017, Rome, Italy
- An online multi-format assessment (multiple-choice and applied case studies)
- M&E Fundamentals 2: 5 days, April 2018 (tentative), Locations TBD

The course will be delivered in English, Spanish, and French. The courses will be subsequently held in selected locations two times per year.

IFAD and CLEAR will implement the M&E Training and Certification Framework in Rural Development in phased components, to assure both quality and continuous improvement. As the project gets underway, IFAD and CLEAR will conduct pre- and post-reviews of the activities of each component, supplemented by feedback loops to improve and refine each step. Finally, the course materials and “Lessons Learned” generated by the M&E Training and Certification Framework in Rural Development will become available as public goods.

Overall Project Objectives

The overall objective of the training and certification framework is to establish a high quality, global “M&E in Rural Development” training program that will be used to certify IFAD-affiliated and other rural development professionals.

The project aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Improving the skill base for M&E in IFAD-financed client countries in the rural sector
- 2) Developing a knowledge repository for rural-focused M&E training materials
- 3) Developing a globally recognized certification program for M&E in rural development

The M&E Fundamentals 1 course is the first step in working towards these objectives.

2. Participant Profile

Participants in inaugural M&E Training and Certification will be mainly the staff of the Project Management Unit and government representatives currently involved with IFAD. In addition, training courses will include any other interested government and ministry officials, consultants, representatives of partner institutions, and staff from other international financial institutions and multilateral development banks.

3. Course Overview: M&E Fundamentals 1

a. Course Format

The course will include a combination of lectures, plenary exercises, and small group exercises. For the small group exercises, participants will work through a case study based on an IFAD project (see Section 4).

Group work is an essential component of the course. **The course is designed to be primarily workshop-based, in which participants can work through tasks and problems that mimic their daily activities.** Instructors are there to facilitate the group work, addressing real-world concerns. There will be a basic overview of M&E theory, but the course's main focus will be on how to improve M&E at the project-level.

b. Course Objectives

By the end of the M&E Fundamentals 1 Course, participants will:

- Identify the main purpose of Monitoring & Evaluation
- Learn fundamental M&E concepts and terminology
- Develop the core components of M&E: Theory of Change, LogFrames, Data Collection
- Develop an actionable M&E Plan
- Learn how to effectively link M&E to project planning & implementation

c. Course Agenda

Agenda: M&E Fundamentals 1

Content		Delivery Mode	Learning Objective
Day 1			M&E Concepts, Theory of Change, LogFrame
9:00-10:00	Overview of IFAD-CLEAR Training	<p>Presentation: Structure of Training</p> <p>Plenary Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participant introductions 2) Discussion on expectations 	Overview of course and expectations
10:00-12:00	M&E Fundamentals and Concepts	<p>Plenary Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why M&E? - Differences b/w M&E <p>Presentation: M&E Concepts – definitions and examples</p> <p>Group Exercise: Introduction to Case Study & Monitoring Exercise</p>	<p>Importance of M&E</p> <p>Defining terminology</p> <p>Understanding and applying the basics of monitoring</p>
12:00-13:00	Theory of Change	<p>Presentation & Group Exercises: Introduce ToC w/ examples and assigned case study</p>	Understand importance of ToC

			Learn the key steps to construct a ToC Understand the pathway from project implementation to results (Why is ToC important for achieving results?)
13:00-14:30	Lunch		
14:30-15:30	Theory of Change (continued)	Presentation & Group Exercises: (continued) Group Exercise: Design a ToC for assigned Case Studies	Apply ToC concepts and key steps
15:30-17:00	Logical Frameworks (LogFrames)	Presentation & Group Exercises: How to convert a Theory of Change to a LogFrame	Learn the basic components of a LogFrame
Day 2			Indicator Development, Intro to Data Collection
9:00-10:30	LogFrame (review)	Plenary Discussion: Report-back on LogFrame exercise,	Understanding the challenges of creating a LogFrame,

		challenges in creating LogFrames, integrating LogFrames into own projects	addressing real-world concerns in creating a LogFrame
10:30-13:00	Developing Indicators to Monitor and Measure	<p>Presentation + Plenary Exercises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What indicators should we monitor & measure? - SMART Indicators - RIMS Indicators <p>Group Exercise: Developing Indicators for Case Study</p>	<p>Understand the importance of measurable indicators</p> <p>Apply to processes of converting a concept/objective into an indicator</p> <p>Construct indicators for an agricultural project</p>
13:00-14:30	Lunch		
14:30 – 17:00	Introduction to Data Collection	<p>Plenary Discussion: Challenges from own projects</p> <p>Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For what indicators should we be collecting data? At what point in the project cycle should we collect data? 	<p>Understand the importance of collecting data that will inform project implementation and design</p> <p>Address the challenge of multiple reporting requirements</p> <p>Develop protocols on how to choose</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What types of data should we be collecting (quant/qual)? - Secondary vs. Primary Data Collection (time, cost, quality) <p>Group Exercise: Data Collection for the Afghanistan Case Study</p>	<p>data sources, based on time, cost, and quality</p> <p>Understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative data, including their complementary roles in the project cycle</p>
Day 3			Primary Data Collection: Quantitative
9:00 – 13:00	Quantitative Data Collection	Presentation and Exercises: Quantitative Data collection tools, structured observations, and surveys	<p>Gain knowledge of quantitative data collection methods</p> <p>Learn how to apply best practices in primary data collection to observations & surveys</p>
13:00-14:30	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:30 – 15:30	Quantitative Data Collection (continued)	Presentation and Exercises: (continued)	
15:30 – 17:00	Quantitative Sampling	Presentation and Exercises	Learn the basics of quantitative (probability) sampling

Days 4			Primary Data Collection: Qualitative
9:00 – 13:00	Qualitative Data Collection	Presentation and Exercises: Qualitative Data collection tools, interviews, and focus groups	Gain knowledge of qualitative data collection methods Learn how to apply best practices in primary data collection to interviews & focus groups
13:00-14:30	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:30 – 15:30	Qualitative Data Collection (continued)	Presentation and Exercises: (continued)	
15:30 – 17:00	Qualitative Sampling	Presentation and Exercises	Learn the basics of qualitative sampling
Day 5			M&E and Data Collection Plans
9:00 – 10:30	Integrating Data Verification into LogFrame	Group Exercise: Data Means of Verification	How to integrate data collection into a complete LogFrame
10:30 – 11:30	ICT for Data Collection and Management	Presentation	Learn how IFAD is using technology for data collection and management

11:30 – 13:00	Developing a Data Collection Plan	<i>Group Exercise</i>	Apply best practices in M&E and data collection to develop an actionable plan
13:00-14:30	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:30-15:30	Integrating Monitoring & Data Collection into the Project Planning	<i>Presentation + Group Exercise: AWPB</i>	Integrate data collection into project planning
15:30-16:30	Assessment - Instructions	<i>Presentation:</i> Assessment instructions, Q&A	Understand the steps needed to complete the certification assessment
16:30-17:00	Reflections	<i>Plenary Discussion:</i> Learning from course, expectations on how to apply course learning to everyday work	Review how/when learnings from the course can be used in daily tasks

4. Case Study

This is the case study that will be used for all of your groupwork throughout the course. Each group will be assigned one of the components by the instructor. Groups will work through their respective components during the week. Each day, participants will have 1-2 group assignments, in which you will apply the material learned during the lectures and classroom activities. The case study is a summary of an IFAD-funded project, which has been modified slightly for training purposes. If you would like to consult the full project reports, they are available in the “case study” folder shared with you.

RURAL MICROFINANCE & LIVESTOCK SUPPORT, AFGHANISTAN

Problem and Development Context

Overall Problem: High levels of poverty, concentrated in rural areas

- Poverty in Afghanistan is pervasive, with an estimated 42% of the population living below the poverty line and an additional 20% living very close to the poverty line.
- Poverty is highly concentrated in rural areas, particularly among households dependent on livestock and agricultural activities.
- There are two major groups vulnerable to higher levels of poverty:
 - Kuchis, a group of ethnic minority nomadic pastoralists (estimated 1.5 million people), who are heavily dependent on livestock and migration patterns for their livelihoods.
 - Female-headed households, who are often subject to discrimination, as well as limited employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Contributing Factor 1: Decline in Livestock

- Over the last 20 years, livestock numbers throughout Afghanistan have reduced considerably.
- The reduction in livestock has been attributed to persistent droughts, ongoing conflict, and the rise of disease.
- Small poultry flocks, that were almost exclusively owned and managed by women, have almost disappeared.
- Additionally, rural households often do not have the means to provide adequate healthcare to livestock.

Contributing Factor 2: Inability to Access Effective Financial Services

- In early 2002, the banking sector in Afghanistan had completely collapsed, and no formal financial service providers were operational.
- In late 2002, a national Microfinance Investment and Support Facility (MISFA) was launched to provide funds, technical assistance, and training to new financial intermediaries. MISFA's overall objective is to provide flexible and high-quality support to help establish a healthy microfinance sector.
- However, the microfinance sector remains small and has not effectively engaged in the agricultural and livestock sectors.

Proposed Solutions and Development Objectives

- The Rural Microfinance and Livestock Support Program (RMLSP) focuses on two interconnected interventions, both aiming at improving rural incomes, food security, and the nutritional status of poor and vulnerable households in selected areas of Afghanistan. This encompasses (1) improving microfinance services in rural areas, and (2) supporting rural households to adopt and improve income-generating livestock activities. By providing both financial and livestock support services, the project works towards increasing the number and productivity of livestock-based enterprises in rural Afghanistan.
- RMLSP targets three specific groups: smallholder farmers and livestock keepers; women and female-headed households; and resettled and nomadic Kuchis.
- Program activities are implemented in ten provinces: Badakhshan, Balkh, Baghlan, Bamyán, Herat, Kabul, Kunduz, Jawzjan, Nangarhar, and Takhar.
- RMLSP is a 7-year program.
- The program is being implemented through Afghanistan's Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL).

Project Components

The project consists of:

- Rural Microfinance:** These components work towards increasing access to a wider range of microfinance products and services adapted to the specific needs in the livestock sector. The Rural Microfinance Components are specifically targeted towards women and female-headed households (Components 1 and 2).
- Livestock Support:** These components work towards strengthening the livestock production systems of poor rural households, while developing their marketing opportunities and improving local livestock production, productivity, and incomes (Components 3, 4 and 5).

Component 1: Innovation facility

This component supports MISFA partner organizations in offering a wider range of sustainable financial services in rural areas, addressing the market demands of potential rural clients.

- Traditional microfinance products do not meet the needs of Afghanistan's rural poor.
- There is a need to develop microfinance products that consider the constraints faced by RMLSP's target groups
- There is a need to develop financial products that consider the constraints faced by the project's target populations: women, nomadic kuchis, and smallholder farmers. These include products which take into account local needs: Islamic modes of financing, flexible financing for nomadic communities, and innovative products that consider local political constraints.
- This component includes the following steps:
 - MISFA partner organizations are able to submit project proposal, in which they propose innovative microfinance opportunities.
 - The projects are selected and eligible for funding. This funding would cover pilot testing of the products, developing business models for the provision of new services, and scaling-up new products. More specifically, the funding covers the costs for setting up new activities, ongoing operational costs, training and systems development, and providing initial funding for lending.
 - The microfinance products are then tested and rolled-out out in the target communities.

Component 2: Financial Graduation for the “Poorest of the Poor”

The objective of this component is to pilot test and develop a microfinance methodology appropriate for Afghanistan, which will help in providing financial support to the “poorest of the poor,” who are generally not included in traditional micro-finance programs.

- There is a need to develop a special program for the poorest, especially some of the most vulnerable sections of the population who are at the very bottom of the economic ladder and are usually excluded from traditional microfinance. Some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are experimenting with an innovative approach to cater to this section of the population, through a “financial graduation program.” The graduation model incorporates the targeting and cash-transfer elements of welfare programs, and introduces entrepreneurial activity through training and an asset grant. The key to the graduation model is the careful sequencing of several development services to facilitate consumption stability and, subsequently, enterprise development.
- The beneficiaries receive an integrated package of cash stipends, an asset (such as chickens) with training, and basic healthcare. Early into the program, clients learn strong savings behavior and the basics of financial management.
- Beneficiaries are identified through participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methodology, including social mapping, wealth ranking and interviews at the community level. Based on the PRA, the bottom 20% of households were identified, from which further selection was made to define the final target households.
- This component is implemented by BRAC, an NGO with the capacity, experience and commitment to test this approach. BRAC will use its successful experience in Bangladesh and replicate it to target the poorest in Afghanistan.

Component 3: Backyard poultry development

The objective of Component 3 is to provide poor women and women heads of households, with the skills, knowledge and initial inputs they require to engage in backyard poultry raising activities.

- In each of the communities selected, a woman trainer, well respected in the community, will be identified and trained. Afterwards, the trainers facilitate the provision of intensive training among beneficiaries and organize the supply of improved chickens, regular vaccination against Newcastle Disease (ND), the improvement of chicken coops, the preparation of mixed feed and the marketing of eggs.
- Village poultry producers’ groups (VPPGs) will also be established to enable groups of village women to maintain input supply and arrange vaccinations.
- FAO is the service provider responsible for the implementation, owing to the organizations’ experience and track records in implementing similar projects in the country. FAO report directly to the RMLSP Coordination Unit, which is responsible for assessing the extent to which FAO provides the services with due diligence, the required quality and within the agreed-upon budget.

Component 4: Dairy Goat Development

The objective of this component is to provide poor women and women heads of households, with the skills, knowledge, and initial inputs they require to engage in small-scale dairy goat production.

- The RMLSP disseminate technological packages for improving goat production systems to an initial group of poor women. The packages include information on improved local goat breeds, as well as nutritional and health information. The packages also include information on where to

obtain the inputs needed in order to implement these new technologies.

- Production of milk and dairy products are supported through the dissemination of improved and adapted dairy goat breeds, successful technologies for improved productivity, including improved feeding, management and health. Improved milk collection and processing technologies that capture the value-added are also promoted.
- Extension staff, either from NGOs or government extension services, is trained in gender-sensitive participatory approaches, technical issues and organizational change.
- ICARDA, an NGO, is the service provider responsible for the implementation of the entire component, owing to the organizations' experience and track records in implementing a similar project in another province of Afghanistan. ICARDA reports directly to the RMLSP Coordination Unit.

Component 5: Improved access to animal health services for the nomadic Kuchis

The objective of component 5 is to develop a model that allows nomadic Kuchis to access essential animal health services.

- The nomadic Kuchi possess a considerable proportion of the sheep and goat population in Afghanistan and access to veterinary services is a key concern for them, especially to control highly contagious and potentially devastating diseases through vaccination. Due to the limited educational background of most Kuchi, it might be difficult to identify sufficient Kuchi who are able and interested to successfully manage the rather intensive and highly technical six month paravet training course. The training of Kuchi Basic Veterinary Worker (BVWs) is properly more appropriate to the Kuchi situation as the BVWs can move with their families and clans, carry a small stock of necessary veterinary supplies, and get re-supplied at various Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) located along their migratory routes.
- Under the RMLSP, 20 Kuchi BVWs are selected and trained from Kuchi groups known to inhabit the northern region. In addition, under the RMLSP a pocket booklet of VFU locations, staff names and cell phone numbers is prepared and distributed through the Service Provider and the Council of Kuchis to as many Kuchi as possible so that individual Kuchi can always locate and contact the nearest VFU along their migratory routes to obtain preventive and therapeutic services or to re-equip their BVWs.
- The component is implemented by the service provider, the Aga Kahn Foundation. The service provider's staff organize, train and oversee the operations with support from the Afghanistan Veterinary Association.

Potential Threats and Challenges

- Although women are usually more involved than men in livestock activities, livestock are usually either owned by the household (jointly between men and women) or by men. As far as micro-loans are concerned, there have been reports of women receiving loans from MFIs specifically targeting female clients, but handing over the loan to their husbands or other male family members.
- There is a potential the men in the regions may prevent women from participating in program activities, particularly in more politically volatile regions.
- The country has unpredictable rainfall patterns, and often faces prolonged and severe droughts.
- The security situation of the country may not allow program implementation in certain areas.
- Religious standard setting bodies often have trouble certifying Islamic-compliant microfinance products and services.
- The program, its actors, and donors may have difficulties in being socially accepted by the local population.

5. Logical Framework (LogFrame)

	Summary/Name	Indicator	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumption
Impact/Goal				
Outcomes				
Outputs				

Activities				
Inputs				

6. Data Collection Plan

	Indicator	What are the data collection methods?	When and how often should collection occur?	Who is responsible for carrying out the collection?	How much does it cost to collect information?	Comments
Outcome 1						
Outcome 2						
Outcome 3						

Output 1						
Output 2						
Add as necessary						

7. Course References

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8. Key Terminology

Activities: The actions taken by project implementers, which are required to deliver the outputs

Evaluation: A time-specific assessment of a project; many types of evaluation questions, including: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability

Goals: A longer-term result which describes long-term improvements for the lives of the rural poor. There should be a logical link between the project outputs, outcomes, and goal.

Indicator: A measure that can be used to monitor or evaluate an intervention. Indicators can be qualitative (in which case they usually entail verbal feedback from beneficiaries) or quantitative (derived from measurements of the intervention).

Inputs: The resources needed to implement the project activities; includes: people, supplies, funds

Monitoring: An ongoing process of collecting and processing information; tracks the progress of projects, against set targets and plans

Outcomes: The changes that occur when beneficiaries or other targeted actors make use of new skills, practices, and/or resources through the project. Outcomes can describe changes in people, institutions, and or systems.

Outputs: The direct products or services delivered by the project. The project team has a high level of control over outputs