Outcome Mapping:
“Those Who Dream Make a Difference”

Contents

What is Outcome Mapping?

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The Challenges of Assessing Development Impacts

As development is essentially about people relating to each other and their environment, the focus of outcome mapping is on people and organizations. The originality of the methodology is its shift away from assessing the products of a program (e.g., policy relevance, poverty alleviation, reduced conflict) to focus on changes in behaviours, relationships, actions, and/or activities of the people and organizations with whom a development program works directly.

In its conceptual and practical work over the past few years, IDRC's Evaluation Unit has encountered fundamental challenges in assessing and reporting on development impacts. While development organizations are under pressure to demonstrate that their programs result in significant and lasting changes in the well-being of large numbers of their intended beneficiaries, such "impacts" are often the product of a confluence of events for which no single agency or group of agencies can realistically claim full credit. As a result, assessing development impacts, especially from the perspective of an external agency, is problematic. Yet many organizations continue to struggle to measure results far beyond the reach of their programs.

To address this problem, IDRC has been working with Dr Barry Kibel, of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, to adapt his outcome engineering approach to the development research context. A methodology, outcome mapping, has evolved which characterizes and assesses the contributions development programs make to the achievement of outcomes. It takes a learning-based and use-driven view of evaluation that is guided by principles of participation and iterative learning, and encourages evaluative thinking throughout the program cycle by all members of the program team. With adaptation, outcome mapping can be used at the project, program, organizational, or community level although it is presented in this brief introduction as though for the program level.

The paradigm shift demanded by outcome mapping significantly alters the way a program understands its goals and assesses its performance and results. Outcome mapping establishes a vision of the human, social, and environmental betterment to which the program hopes to contribute and then focuses monitoring and evaluation on factors and actors within its sphere of influence. The program's contributions to development are planned and assessed based on its influence on the partners with whom it is working to effect change. At its essence, development is accomplished through changes in the behaviour of people; therefore, this is the central concept of outcome mapping.

Outcome mapping provides a development program with the tools to think holistically and strategically about how it intends to achieve results. Ideally, monitoring and evaluation would be integrated at the planning stages of a program. However, this is not always the case, so outcome mapping has elements and tools that can be adapted and used separately. The full outcome mapping process includes three stages and twelve steps. For each stage, tools and worksheets are provided to assist programs to organize and collect information on their contributions to desired outcomes.

The first stage, *Intentional Design*, helps a program clarify and reach consensus on the macro-level changes it would like to support and to plan the strategies it will use. Outcome mapping does not help a program identify programming priorities. It is only appropriate and useful once a program has chosen its strategic directions and wants to chart its goals, partners, activities, and progress toward anticipated results. After clarifying the changes the program intends to help bring about, activities are chosen that maximize the likelihood of success. The Intentional Design stage helps answer four questions:

- Why? Vision Statement
- How? Mission Statement, Strategy Maps, Organizational Practices
- Who? Boundary Partners
- What? Outcome Challenges, Progress Markers

The second stage, *Outcome and Performance Monitoring*, provides a framework for ongoing monitoring of the program's actions in support of its boundary partners' progress toward the achievement of outcomes. The program uses progress markers, a set of graduated indicators of behavioural change identified in the intentional design stage, to clarify directions with boundary partners and to monitor outcomes (Outcome Journal). It uses a Strategy Journal (to monitor strategies and activities) and a Performance Journal (to monitor organizational practices) to complete a performance monitoring framework. This framework provides the program the opportunity and tools both to reflect on and improve performance and to collect data on the results of its work with its boundary partners. Whereas with the monitoring framework in Stage 2 the program gathers information that is broad in coverage, a strategic evaluation examines a strategy, issue, or relationship in greater depth.

The third stage, *Evaluation Planning*, helps the program set evaluation priorities so that it can target evaluation resources and activities where they will be most useful. An evaluation plan outlines the main elements of the evaluations to be conducted.

Methodological collaboration with the organizations represented in the following articles has greatly informed the development of outcome mapping. Each of the papers represents a different way that outcome mapping has been adapted for use at either the project, program, organizational, or community level. In some cases outcome mapping has been incorporated easily whereas in other cases it has been more complicated to adapt it to serve the needs of the implementing group. In all cases, however, the fundamental principles on which outcome mapping is based have been consistent with those of the local organizations and therefore they have deemed it to be appropriate to their needs and context. Outcome mapping is not about the terminology, the rigid application of its tools and methods, or forcing recipient organizations to comply with an externally imposed planning, monitoring, and evaluation system. Outcome mapping embodies ways of working that are consistent with an empowerment and learning oriented approach to social transformation whether that be through direct development interventions or applied research. It provides a systematic process for planning, monitoring, and evaluation that also engages groups in discussions of dreams, values, and power relationships.

Each of the organizations represented in these articles felt that outcome mapping provided a means by which their planning, monitoring, and evaluation work could be made consistent with their participatory programming approach.

What We Have Learned from Using Outcome Mapping in Nagaland

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The State of Nagaland is situated in Northeast India along the border with Myanmar. The population of 1.9 million, mostly Tibeto–Mongoloid peoples, belong to 17 main tribes who reside in 1056 villages that are perched on high to medium hills (600 to 3800 metres above sea level). The climate varies from sub-tropical to sub-temperate, and the 250 cm of annual rainfall supports a vast diversity of flora and fauna. The Nagas are a traditional agrarian society that commonly practices shifting or slash-and-burn (swidden) cultivation, locally known as “jhum.” As the name implies, swidden involves slashing the natural vegetation, burning it to create ash manure, and planting food crops.

Jhum cultivation can be productive and sustainable. Honed over thousands of years, it is a system well suited to the needs of traditional subsistence farmers because it allows multiple intercropping of up to 60 foods in one field. After 1 or 2 years of use, fields go into fallow, the farmers move to the next plot, and forest land returns to protect the soil and allow for a buildup of nutrients. When the cycle lasts 15–20 years, jhum is sustainable, but an increasing population in Nagaland has led to a shortened jhum cycle (to as low as 5 years) and to land degradation. A possible alternative to jhum cultivation is terrace cultivation. But this too has its limitations because extensive parts of Nagaland are too hilly for economical use of terracing. When jhum cycles fall below 10 years there is not enough time for nutrients to build up and yields are reduced. As a result, farmers must cut down more and more primary forest to access the land they require to meet their food needs.

NEPED Project

The NEPED project was implemented in two phases. The first phase, which started in 1995 and ended in March 2001, was called the Nagaland Environmental Protection and Economic

Development project. The second phase, which started in April 2001 and will run until 2006, is called the Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development project. Both phases of the project are funded by the India–Canada Environment Facility (ICEF), a joint venture of CIDA and the Government of India, with research support provided by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). (See http://www.idrc.ca/saro/research/neped/ for more details about NEPED)

Since 1995, the project has sought to introduce sustainable management of the natural resource base for the benefit of the people of Nagaland. The project did not reject jhum, rather it aimed to improve the fallow period by encouraging agroforestry in the jhum fields. Fourteen officials from different government departments form a team to implement the project. Headed by a Team Leader, this team is called the Project Operations Unit (POU). Team members are responsible for the training of village councils, village development boards, and farmers. In addition, they monitor test plots and nurseries and are the main links between the insights gleaned from farmers and the technical expertise of agricultural researchers.

The principle themes underlying NEPED are sustainable livelihood, environment protection, and development that puts rural people first. The project's goal is to achieve sustainable management of the natural resource base in ways that will benefit the people of Nagaland. Specifically, the project seeks to improve lands under jhum cultivation and to involve the jhum farmers in the selection, development, and testing of agroforestry technologies.

A key component of NEPED is the establishment of test plots in villages. Farmers experiment with different agroforestry systems by planting trees in jhum fields and testing soil conservation measures. Technical assistance is provided by agricultural researchers, but the research strategy includes the farmers as equal stakeholders. Farmers provide land and local knowledge, while NEPED underwrites risk of on-farm experiments and provides technical assistance. This approach differs from traditional agriculture research centres, which usually conduct tests on experiment stations and then deliver "recommended" technologies through extension services. Although this research–extension model has enjoyed many successes, the solutions are not always appropriate for traditional agriculture under unfavourable conditions. Many such solutions have failed to be adopted by farmers. Farmer-led testing increases the likelihood of developing technologies that suit the farmer's needs.

One of the problems with jhum cultivation is sheet erosion. Some Naga tribes have developed an intensified form of jhum by using extensive land shaping combined with terracing and the planting of alder trees. Other tribes practice soil conservation by laying bamboo, which is left over from the slash component of the jhum operation, across the contours of the land to trap rich topsoil. Experiences in test plots have shown that investing in land shaping is often too costly, and the farmers have opted to attempt to extend and replicate the lower-cost indigenous technology using bamboo.

Naga society is patriarchal; however, a women's dimension was incorporated into the project to improve gender integration and promote a new role for women as joint beneficiaries, participants, and decision-makers. Women's groups have been formed at the village level and trained to manage nurseries and test plots. These groups have now established 93 test plots and more than 80 tree nurseries. State-level workshops have also been organized to enhance women's awareness of their role in sustainable development.

Replication of tree planting in jhum fields was expected to be undertaken by individual farmers and also village groups. The popularity of tree plantation in jhum fields wildly exceeded initial expectations and has become a "mass movement." The aim of the project to shift attention of farmers from just harvesting annual crops to planting economically viable perennials during the fallow period is being realized. Naga farmers know that shifting cultivation is not necessarily destructive but they now recognize that it can be made regenerative and more productive. Over the course of the project, training has been imparted to more than 2000 farmers and 600 field officers and staff. Farmers have learned to do selective weeding in the field to preserve the tree sprouts. This practice eliminates the need to plant saplings. Propagation techniques for most of the indigenous species of trees were initially unknown. By implementing this project, the researchers have now learned the techniques, mostly through interaction with farmers and more specifically through the use of local experts. These experts are village elders who have vast knowledge of indigenous species and planting methods. Their contribution is substantial. Some villages are investing their locally based development funds in replication, and in a few villages so many trees have been planted that the village councils have had to ban tree planting for fear that there will be no more areas for cultivation.

In some areas of Nagaland, jhum farmers traditionally plant and manage nitrogen-fixing alder trees along with annual food crops both to improve soil fertility and provide fuelwood. The alder leaves decompose and add to the regeneration of soil fertility, and the root nodules fix nitrogen. The alder grows to a minimum height of 6.5 m and a girth of more than 1 m in 10 years. When harvested before the next jhum cycle, each tree yields approximately 0.5 cubic metres of sawn timber, besides the fuel wood from the branches. The alder system is completely sustainable and highly productive and allows for sustainable jhum cycles as short as 4 years. (Sarah: it's from NEPED website hosted by SARO — http://www.idrc.ca/saro/research/neped/alder.htm)

NEPED and Outcome Mapping in Phase I

NEPED was the first project funded by the principle donor, ICEF, and this presented some problems, such as frequent changes in management, reporting procedures, management information systems, monitoring and evaluation formats, and strategy. These changes disoriented the project team and caused confusion. As well, the team did not have the capacity needed to evaluate the impact of the project.

An external midterm evaluation mission in late 1997, while sympathizing with the constraints faced by the project, stressed the lack of documentation, the need for systematic monitoring and evaluation, the necessity of more timely reporting, and the paucity of baseline data. It was too late in the project cycle to address these admitted shortcomings. However, with the end-of-project external evaluation fast approaching, there was a need to address the recommendations of the midterm evaluation. We turned to outcome mapping for help.

NEPED was one of the first IDRC-supported projects to field-test outcome mapping. Toward the end of phase one, outcome mapping was used as a tool for self-assessment, for collecting and organizing data for the end-of-project evaluation, and for retrospective monitoring and evaluation to assess results. Subsequently, the team also used outcome mapping to identify major strengths and gaps in the first phase and use this information to help design the second phase.

While we were implementing phase I of the project, we could see that positive change had been created because of our activities but our lack of knowledge and capacity to fit these observations into a monitoring and evaluation framework was frustrating. With the external end-of-project evaluation fast approaching, this frustration turned to desperation. IDRC's Evaluation Unit work on outcome mapping, which uses behavioural change to gauge development effects, attracted our attention. We knew we had done well, and our downstream partners corroborated this claim, yet we had little to show in quantitative terms. We felt that outcome mapping might help us document our project's successes and we used it to prepare for the external evaluation.

Our Use of Outcome Mapping

Because NEPED was the first externally aided project in Nagaland, we had little or no expertise in documentation and reporting, and the scanty and disorganized documentation often raised the ire of the donors. As well, part of our frustration in measuring "results" was the vast reach of NEPED (working in almost 900 of the 1056 villages of Nagaland), which had made it impossible to conduct a baseline survey at the inception of the project, although we had carried out a few sample studies. Outcome mapping helped us take a retrospective look at the project and to collect and organize data from the previous 5 years that could be used in lieu of a baseline to evaluate our performance.

With IDRC assistance, a 3-day workshop was conducted during which we were able to use outcome mapping to collect and collate the scattered bits and pieces of data that each team member had about the project. The IDRC facilitator for the workshop, Fred Carden, was familiar with the project and the project team, which helped the process. The first step, which took about a day and a half, was to retrospectively build a framework for the project. The format for building the framework followed the normal outcome mapping approach, with the exception that we did not create strategy maps. A strategy map is a 3x2 matrix that plots the causal, persuasive, and supportive strategies used by the program to contribute to the achievement of the outcome by attempting to influence either the boundary partner directly or the environment in which he/she/it operates. There were two reasons for this departure from the methodology: first, because phase I of the project was virtually complete, it would not have helped us organize activities, and second, it would have taken a lot of time and provided little benefit because the team already knew well the activities that had been undertaken. Through this modified outcome mapping process we were able to identify four boundary partners, the program`s direct partners in whom behavioural change was expected (farmers, local institutions, village development boards and village councils, and state agencies) and to create vision and mission statements (Table 1). The vision describes the large-scale development-related changes that the program hopes to encourage. It describes economic, political, social, or environmental changes that the project hopes to help bring about, as well as broad behavioural changes in key boundary partners. The ultimate achievement of the vision lies beyond the project`s sole capability; however, its activities should contribute to, and facilitate, that end. The mission statement describes how the project intends to support the vision.

After we defined four outcome challenges (one for each of the boundary partners), we started to work on organizing the data related to each. First, we agreed on how to use the ratings (High = 80%, Medium = 50%, and Low = 25%) for the progress markers. Graduated progress markers are a set of behavioural indicators that show the complexity of the change process in a boundary partner and represent the information that the program can gather in order to monitor achievements toward the desired outcome. The progress markers should advance in degree from the minimum one would *expect to see* the boundary partner doing as an early response to the program`s activities, to what it would *like to see* them doing, to what it would *love to see* them doing if the program were having a profound influence. We completed the identification of progress markers for the first outcome challenge as a group and then split

Table 1. *The vision and mission statements developed during the outcome mapping process.*

Vision Statement

Throughout Nagaland, farmers make better use of jhum fields, engage in marketing and value- added activities on their lands, leading to increased land values. Farmers and communities are less dependent on government and are generating employment locally. Environmental awareness is increased among villagers and village institutions. Capacity is increased, resulting in stronger governance structures and stronger local institutions. Groups in Nagaland play a leadership role in the North East and beyond, in support for traditional agricultural systems and enhanced environmental protection. Better use of village funds results in social improvements. Social problems are reduced as villagers are empowered and economically developed. Out-migration from the rural areas is reduced as more people are gainfully employed and the rural communities are economically viable.

Mission Statement

NEPED employs a range of strategies to create mass awareness and motivation for participation in the program. NEPED works directly with villagers and provides financial incentives and technical assistance to, and engages in experimentation with, farmers and relevant local and national organizations in order to strengthen traditional agricultural practices. NEPED supports the decentralization of decision making and the empowerment of women. To accomplish these things, NEPED continues to learn on an on-going basis and establishes and models the work culture which will support achievement of its vision.

into three groups to address the progress markers for the other three outcome challenges. The process required participants to agree on the rating for the progress marker as well as to give an indication of what data existed to back up that conclusion. If data were available during the workshop, they were included, if the data had to be collected from the office, someone was assigned that task. The results of this process for one of the boundary partners (farmers, both male and female) for the “expect to see” progress markers is shown in Table 2.

During the workshop, we presented the data back to the group and made some further changes. We brainstormed data for each of the progress markers and that became the set of data for determining the rating for each progress marker (although we recognized that more data would have been available if this had been done throughout the project).

Next, we selected three examples that could be highlighted for each organizational practice, assigned a team member to write details of each example, and had a general

Table 2. *The “expect to see” progress markers that were defined for farmers by using outcome mapping.*

Outcome challenge: NEPED intends to see farmers, both male and female, with a better understanding of traditional agricultural systems, and improving their practice using improved land use methods. Mass replication of improvements is taking place along with improvements in agroforestry techniques. Farmers are testing productive ideas and innovations. Women farmers are empowered and mobilized to participate in agroforestry activities. Value-added activities on fallow land become a viable alternative.

Progress marker	**Rating**	**Data**
1. Trees are planted on test	H (80% or more)	Over 7 million trees planted in 1808 test plots
2. Improved soil conservation measure in test plots	M (26–79%)	Approximately one-third of the farmers indicated that they would use this style of trench land shaping in the future
3. Women farmers participate in NEPED	L (25% or less)	93 women test plots and 80 women nurseries were established between 1996 and 1999
4. Nurseries are developed	H (80% or more)	Central nurseries in all district headquarters were initially developed to meet the growing demand for saplings.

discussion about what each group had learned by looking at their own performance. There are 8 organizational practices included in outcome mapping and they describe the attributes of a well-performing organization that has the potential to sustain change interventions over time. The eight organizational practices include: 1) prospecting for new ideas, oopportunities, and resources; 2) seeking feedback from key informants; 3) obtaining the support of your next highest power; 4) assessing and (re)designing products, services, systems, and procedures; 4) checking up on those already served to add value; 6) sharing your best wisdom with the world; 7) experimenting to remain innovative; and, 8) engaging in organizational reflection. Finally, each member of the group was asked to look at all the flip charts we had used and to jot down any gaps or weaknesses they saw. We then discussed these gaps as a group and considered whether they could be filled during the last months of phase I, or whether they would have to be considered after phase I was completed. The deliberations were published as a booklet that recorded the changes (mostly qualitative) that the project had identified in the boundary partners. Quantitative data and supporting documentation were used to substantiate and establish these changes. This second step took an additional day and a half. At the end of the process, team members reported that for the first time they had a good understanding of the entire scope of the project.

Women Farmers Partipate in NEPED

Initially there was no gender component in the design of the project, but as the project evolved we recognized the need to increase women's participation and became the first project in Nagaland that addressed gender issues and relationships in a participatory manner. Therefore, when we used outcome mapping to identify progress markers for the project, number 3 (Table 2), was "women farmers participate in NEPED." This was a development effect not anticipated when the project was conceived.

The start came in 1995, when the Peducha village council gave one test plot to a women's group. This led during 1995 to 1999 to women from 70 villages working in 93 women-established test plots. As we gained more experience, we altered our strategy for women's participation by evoking ideas from women. Land ownership problems were a concern with the creation of test plots, but the establishment of tree nurseries minimized land ownership concerns and created direct economic benefit for the women through the sale of saplings. Our use of outcome mapping helped us to assess how the project had responded to the need to include a gender component.

Training and study tours were added to the project strategy over time. In this regard, we assigned ourselves a progress marker on the empowerment of women and produced the following data (extracted from *NEPED Self Assessment,* September 1999) to help us understand our response to the need for gender considerations in the project:

X NEPED was the first organization to address gender based development issues in Nagaland— 213 women from 123 villages were given women empowerment training;

X A tour for women from all districts of Nagaland to Karnataka State was organized by NEPED — in a press release, the Naga Mothers' Association expressed its appreciation of the efforts taken by NEPED both to address gender issues and to create awareness among women of the need for them to take charge of their own development; and

X Ms. N. Angami, a member of the Advisory Committee, Ministry of Environment and Forests, New Delhi, during a presentation before the National Advisory Board at New Delhi made reference to the strides made by NEPED in women's empowerment and in helping women identify their role in joint forest management. Interestingly, in our own self-assessment we gave ourselves a low score (0–29%) because we felt our efforts had generated more awareness rather than changes in behaviour that reflect greater women`s empowerment.

What We Learned in Phase I

Outcome mapping proved to be an effective tool for us to prepare for the donor commissioned end-of-project external evaluation. In addition to addressing the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, there was a need to bring some order to the affairs of the project. Although each segment of the project was viewed as successful from the bottom-up, no clear links between these segments could be seen when the project was looked at as a whole. In other words, there was much to show as outputs, but not much to link these outputs to outcomes. Outcome mapping helped to establish these linkages.

The project team had gained considerable experience at the field level, but its successes had to be collated and analyzed to aid in its own internal self-assessment. The outcome mapping exercise provided this opportunity, wherein even the most minute details, that would otherwise have remained forgotten, emerged. By using the organizational practices tool and developing success markers, solid quantifiable data on best examples materialized. These examples demonstrated how the project team, as an organization, had evolved along with its partners.

During the normal course of events in implementing the project, the team made many observations and had experiences that otherwise would not have been reported because they did not apply to any column in the primary donor`s required reporting formats, e.g., farmer innovations, best practices, feedback, indigenous knowledge, and local adaptations. Here are some examples:

X In some areas, farmers deviated from the NEPED prescribed recommendation of using the soil to construct check dams on slopes to arrest soil erosion. Rather the farmers used poles and bamboo, which proved to be less labour intensive and more cost-effective and efficient.

X Despite being advised by the foresters to plant trees at evenly spaced intervals, the Naga farmers planted the trees close together because this enhanced growth rates, smothered weeds, and produced trees with straight boles.

X The need to incorporate a more complex system of agroforestry than just food crops and timber was recognized. NEPED thus began establishing special fallow-management projects in existing test plots as a lead-up to the second phase.

X When seeking feedback from NEPED farmers, both men and women, after their training, they suggested that the training should be extended to other nonparticipating groups. Many team members, therefore, found themselves being invited as resource persons in their personal capacities to seminars, conventions, and training sessions (which were not project related). Most of this information emerged from the data on organizational practices that were collected during the team's self-evaluation.

We found that the use of outcome mapping helped many such facts to materialize. This information added value to, and corroborated, the data that was also being simultaneously recorded in the donor-driven format by each team member. This made the work of the external evaluation team much easier because instead of "digging" out data at the field level, they only had to validate the findings we had gathered using outcome mapping for our self-assessment with user groups. The evaluation team was particularly impressed by the "honest" self-appraisal of the project team, and especially by the in-depth knowledge that the team had about what it had done in the last 5 years — its major achievements and gaps. This finding was instrumental in their making a recommendation that: "*the external assessment team is very supportive and recommends continued ICEF involvement in this project" – Richard Baerg et al (End of Project Evaluation Report – Feb 2000).*

NEPED and Outcome Mapping in Phase II

Our experiences with outcome mapping in the first phase demonstrated its utility and flexibility; therefore, we had no hesitation in applying it in the second phase for monitoring and evaluation activities. We should note that the outcome mapping component of phase II is in its early stages of implementation and is currently being validated by the other partners.

The project team will be using a donor-specified logical framework analysis (LFA) for reporting, and will be evaluated by the donor on this basis. However, the team has chosen to use both the LFA and outcome mapping for its monitoring and evaluation activities. Outcome mapping will be used to supplement, enrich, and gather data for the LFA. Because the LFA is designed in quantifiable terms, outcome mapping will be used both to obtain data to feed into the LFA and to enable the project to continuously assess and redesign itself accordingly.

The ways in which outcome mapping was used in the two phases of our project should be stressed. In the first phase, a “futuristic” vision and mission statement, outcome challenges, and graduated progress markers were made and then evaluated realistically in hindsight. In the second phase, outcome mapping is being used from its inception — for design and strategic planning, performance monitoring, and evaluation at 18-month intervals.

Project Design and Strategic Planning

Once again we turned to the Evaluation Unit of IDRC for assistance. A workshop was conducted at the start of phase II both to provide project staff with training in outcome mapping and to help design the project. The workshop was also a good opportunity for NEPED, the State Agricultural Research Station (SARS), and the District Support Unit (DSU) to do some team building toward a common focus and agenda because it was the first time we had worked together.

Given the size of the group (about 30 people) and its diversity, the workshop was a complex undertaking. We spent substantial time on the design components of outcome mapping — that is the vision, mission, boundary partners, outcome challenges, progress markers, strategies and activities, and organizational practices. However, the process was very participatory and the level of involvement of the participants was high.

During the workshop we asked the participants to imagine who or what would change if NEPED was to be "wildly successful" at the end of the project period. We created vision and mission statements for the project (Table 3) and identified who would need to change (our boundary partners) for the project to achieve its objectives. Our team had been actively involved in preparing the project proposal and had in-depth knowledge of all of the components of the project. This really helped us to weave the vision–mission–outcome challenges around the components of the project to come up with progress markers, strategy maps, and organizational practices. We did not map all of the boundary partners during this preliminary workshop, rather

Table 3. *The vision and mission statements developed for phase II.*

Vision: In Nagaland, communities are self-reliant and no longer subsidy oriented. Farmers practice sustainable agriculture, building on traditional practices and integrating agricultural innovations. Through the development of agrobusiness, establishment of marketing infrastructure, and entrepreneurship, both women and men benefit from increased economic return and improved agricultural production. Communities are empowered and actively managing their own affairs and resources judiciously, and women play an active role in community decision-making. Government consults with communities on policies and practices that affect them. NEPED becomes a model throughout Nagaland and in the rest of the world.
Mission: To achieve its vision, the project will have a flexible approach based on farmers' needs, involving them in the planning process. The project will develop and test models for enhancing agricultural productivity. NEPED will provide technical support to women and men farmers and village institutions. Working with village development boards (VDBs) and village councils (VCs), it will design, support the implementation, and monitor a revolving credit system that will be used by both women and men farmers to initiate agro-based income generating activities. Through the generation of market information, market infrastructure and linkages will be created and strengthened. It will create mechanisms to: build linkages and relationships with government departments and institutions to foster an open exchange on project activities; ensure transparency of project activities among farmers, VDBs, VCs, and NEPED; and continuously build the capacity of POU, SARS, and the district support unit (DSU) to effectively deliver the project.

Table 4. *The outcome challenge and progress markers we developed for farmers and subsequently validated during a field visit.*

Boundary partner: Farmers directly partnering with NEPED within the project (i.e., in the revolving credit mechanism and action research components)

Outcome challenge: NEPED/SARS intend to see farmers who are less dependent on the government. They introduce local innovations and use research findings to experiment with new ideas and challenges with a business mind set. They engage in more economically productive activities by effectively using local resources, agro-based income generating schemes, knowing proper outlets for their products, and cooperating to create market mechanisms. Farmers use credit facilities and repay loans. Farmers establish a means to ensure equitable sharing of benefits between women and men farmers. Women participate in community decision-making. Farmers encourage others to adopt new practices. In summary, farmers have access to the resources and the skills to use them to build stronger, healthier communities.

Progress markers:

Expect to See

1. Farmers are receptive, capable of working with NEPED.
2. Farmers establish nurseries of planting materials.
3. Women participate in project decision-making and accrue benefit from their 25% share.
4. Farmers identify proper outlets for produce.

Like to See

5. Farmers are confident in what they are doing. They are eager to learn more and seek NEPED's help.
6. Farmers take up new research findings in the field.
7. Farmers share success stories with other villagers.
8. Farmers put more area under cash-crop cultivation as market demand is increased.
9. Farmers establish market networks.
10. Women utilize their 25% share appropriately and fully.
11. Farmers ensure that the revolving fund mechanism keeps moving on through peer pressure.
12. Farmers are reducing traditional Jhum cultivation.

Love to See

13. Farmers accept innovations in the farming system across Nagaland.
14. Farmers start their own income generating schemes.
15. Women are empowered to participate in community decision-making.

we worked through the outcome mapping framework for farmers (Table 4) and validated the results through a field visit. The balance of the mapping was conducted in a later workshop.

The highlight of the outcome mapping workshop was a visit to the village of Viswema to validate the results of the workshop, particularly those assumptions that had been made about farmers. During this visit we had to modify our intended mode of operation. We initially started to work in Nagamese, the common *lingua franca* in the state, but somehow the villagers preferred switching over to Angami, the tribal language. This required us to change our approach because the designated facilitators did not speak Angami, and hence a new role, that of "interpreter" emerged. But the change was worthwhile to gain the confidence of the villagers, who said they were not used to being consulted in this participatory manner by development workers. As the outcome challenges were discussed and the village needs and interests were itemized, two team members drew the vision on a large sheet of paper at the front of the room. This picture became the vision statement *by the villagers* and formed the basis for further discussion in co-relating with *our* vision statement for *them.* Facilitation tools like card sorting, colour coding and direct inquiry were used to elicit participation and to bring about a lively and interactive atmosphere of exchange.

Performance monitoring

The next step was for the team to identify monitoring priorities and put together outcome, strategy, and performance journals for the next 18 months (ending Feb 2003) to better inform itself. Taking advantage of the flexibility of outcome mapping, the team decided to use progress markers to monitor change in three of the boundary partners (farmers, village authorities, and self-help groups), and to use the strategy maps for support. For the remaining boundary partner (the state government), change will be monitored through the strategy map and be supported by the progress markers — a reversal of roles. The reasoning for our choice of monitoring and evaluation tools was based on the fact that the first three boundary partners are “directly” involved with the project proponents, and hence we had “control points”; whereas, the state government needed a more “indirect or strategic” approach, being gargantuan and seemingly omnipotent and therefore beyond our “direct control” albeit within our “reach”.

Evaluation

We have prepared an evaluation plan within the framework, but this was not an easy task. The second phase of NEPED is very broad because it is based on activities that range from revolving microcredit and agromarketing to agroforestry and research. We are working with a wide range of partners and for an even wider audience. When we asked the question “who will use the evaluation data?” we were able to generate a long list of presumable recipients. By trying to meet everyone’s needs, we greatly broadened the number of issues we wanted to evaluate. Only after we realized that it was the project that was to be evaluated, not others expectations of it, were we able to focus on more project-specific issues (reduced from 27 to a more manageable 4) and make the evaluation plan more feasible. The issues will be evaluated on 4- to 6-month intervals.

What We Learned from Outcome Mapping

In the early days of mid-1999, outcome mapping was a new methodology that was being evolved by the Evaluation Unit of IDRC. We expected that there would be advantages to having a monitoring and evaluation system that fed into and enriched donor-dictated frameworks and also provided indicators for sustainability. As well, we believe we have benefited from outcome mapping in several other respects.

Outcome mapping provided the team with conceptual clarity about the project. We graduated from being stereotype input–activity–output supervisors to being able to link project activities to outcome level issues. We are now able to map our progress into the future, recognizing the major actors and forces, predict possible gaps and threats, and strategically plan in advance.

A human dimension was introduced to the project. Outcome mapping works on the premise that development brings about change in people, especially their behaviour. Outcome mapping presents real life pictures of human beings — their perceptions, their aspirations, their environment, and the challenges they face in realizing their dreams. The oft repeated and echoing question in outcome mapping “what or who needs to change?” raised us from being providers of development who achieve outputs to actually believing we were agents of change.

Outcome mapping was empowering. The process is highly participatory and consultative. Although discussions are initiated within the project team as a unit, validation by all partners broadens the canvas and acknowledges the presence of each partner as an indispensable unit of the whole. This feeling of empowerment produces positive energy toward successful and sustainable implementation of the project.

Outcome mapping increased capacity and skills. One of challenges we faced when using outcome mapping was validating with boundary partners, especially at the village level. This approach was so different from the normal top-down government development that is usually thrust upon Naga villagers. When we consulted them it raised suspicion. It took a while to break down these barriers and to gain their trust and give them the feeling that we were indeed partners. The team had to be trained in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and facilitation skills. With government officials, who consider participation a threat to their authority, the approach had to be different. Building a key informant base to feed into the system required adeptness in conflict resolution and in making trade-offs.

Outcome mapping brought cohesion to the team and its partners. The outcome mapping process ensured the active participation of all team members and partners and enabled everyone to see the “big picture” and define their own role or contribution. Moreover, the plan to validate monitoring and evaluation findings with downstream partners will provide invaluable inputs from farmers and village groups and help us to constantly redesigning project delivery targets to sustain the program. These inputs enhance both the team’s and the partner’s feeling of ownership of the project.

Learning from the Use of Outcome Mapping in Senegal

Thierry Barreto Fernandes and Adama A Ndiaye, West Africa Rural Foundation (WARF), Dakar, Senegal

The West Africa Rural Foundation (WARF) is the only regional foundation in West Africa managed by an all-African staff. As a non-profit international organization headquartered in Dakar, WARF makes grants, provides technical assistance, does research, and builds networks in Senegal, Mali, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau. and Guinea. These five countries are linked by trade, history, culture, administrative structures, ethnicity, language, agricultural systems, and through the natural movements of their populations.(see http://www.frao.org)

WARF grew from a 1989 meeting of leaders of farmers' organizations, researchers, and donors who were concerned that research and development projects were failing their intended beneficiaries in rural Africa. These leaders decided that a new approach based on active participation and collaboration among farmers and researchers and on local institution building and strengthening was timely. WARF has grown to combine the functions of a FLO with the technical assistance provided by a nongovernmental organization (NGO).

WARF helps rural communities transform themselves in ways that will not lead to them becoming dependent on an outside agent. This transformation rests on two cornerstones: a better appreciation by the community of the value of their local resources, both human and natural; and an enhanced capacity of the community to act effectively to realize that value. During its first 5 years, WARF tackled the problems facing rural communities by strengthening local organizations, promoting and supporting participatory technology development in agriculture and natural resource management, and training and sharing of participatory methods.

WARF finalized its second 5-year plan through a participatory process that involved both its Board of Directors and its partners. Through this process, four themes were identified: making the most of opportunities created by decentralization across the sub-region to build strong local governance capability; (re)defining what gender and development mean for local development, particularly with regard to marginalized groups such as women and youth; promoting rural entrepreneurship by experimenting with innovative ways to build on the entrepreneurial pulse in most rural communities; and supporting sub-regional integration by working with governments and local organizations to create links across national borders.

Our Introduction to Outcome Mapping

We were introduced to the concept of outcome mapping by the Evaluation Unit of IDRC in 1999. After some initial staff training, a project to enhance WARF's institutional capacity was financed by IDRC to further strengthen staff capacities with regard to monitoring and evaluation and to allow for experimentation with the methodology by WARF and some of our partners. This project was launched in July 2000.

There are a number of reasons why outcome mapping, with its focus on measuring social change, interested WARF:

- Outcome mapping is concerned with social transformation, and this objective matched our mission of seeking to bring about behavioural change among our partner communities;
- WARF has a keen interest in the process of learning and experimentation both with regard to its own activities and those of its partners;
- Being a hybrid institution (FLO and NGO), WARF must regularly adjust its functions and structure based on its experiences and the needs of its clients — we expected outcome mapping to help systematize our approach to evaluation, analysis, and experimentation;
- Certain working principles of WARF, which has been derived from its field experience, correspond to those encouraged by outcome mapping. For example, we have found that: project objectives must remain flexible and be readjusted based on user feedback throughout the project; grants are an instrument, a resource, not the end objective of support; and organizations must develop a learning culture that allows them to be bearers of technical and methodological innovations;

- X The principles of outcome mapping were expected to allow us to better understand the behaviours and results we observe in our partner organizations and communities and to develop better intervention strategies; and
- X Outcome mapping offered a chance to change the balance within our appraisal system from one that gave absolute importance to figures, techniques, and objects to a new system that placed value on social and qualitative aspects — a focus on the individuals who are the principal targets of any development action.

As we have gained more experience with outcome mapping, we have broadened our use of the technique. We started by applying the methodology to our own organizational restructuring, and then adapted the techniques of outcome mapping to help us with our work with women in rural communities.

Organizational Restructuring and Outcome Mapping

To meet the challenges associated with our 5-year strategic plan, WARF's Board of Governors endorsed a plan to launch an endowment fund drive. Given this display of willingness to tackle new institutional challenges, we felt encouraged to develop WARF's capacities in several areas:

- X Consolidation of the Board of Governors — we are committed to reinforcing the Board's ability to provide stewardship to the institution's mission and to offer financial guidance, including assuming enhanced responsibility for fundraising;
- X Consolidation of organizational restructuring and staff development — we intend to ensure that we foster the conditions that are necessary to meet the challenges we have set for ourselves. We are committed to remaining innovative and entrepreneurial, and have already made moves to improve the quality of our interventions and our operations.

As we looked to achieve our goal of building an endowment fund, we realized that we had to be as sophisticated as any organization, either for profit or non-profit, that currently operates in West Africa. To achieve this goal, we recognize that WARF had to transform how it operated. We had to adopt a new system to manage our day-to-day and long-range operations, as well as our workflow, staff time, and relations with partners and donors. The change that was needed was analogous to the kind of transformation we support among our clients in rural communities. WARF needed to be led through a process that would help it understand the value of its own resources (both human talent and institutional knowledge) and allow for a collective plan to be developed that was agreed on, and supported, by its staff and management.

We turned to outcome mapping to facilitate the changes that were needed both in the structures and working culture of our organization. This process was coordinated by the Programs Department and involved several steps:

- A planning workshop among a restricted group that included a facilitator and a few members of the Programs Department;
- The elaboration of vision and mission statements concerning the restructuring that we felt was required within WARF;
- The identification of the "boundary partners" or principal actors of change that were critical to the transformation of the organization, i.e., the Board of Governors, the Committees, the Chief Executive Office, the Program Department, and the Administrative and Financial Department;
- For each boundary partner, an outcome challenge was envisaged and progress markers were developed (Table 1). This grid allowed us to monitor and evaluate the progress we were making. Because the majority of the key actors were members of our Board, we used the frequency of meetings of the Board as a measure of progress (we were hoping for meetings at least twice a year).
- The data we gathered were shared with the members of the Board as well as with the Chief Executive Officer and the Administrative Department.

Table 1. Outcome mapping grid used to evaluate our progress toward organizational restructuring.

Outcome Challenge for the Board of Governors
The Board of Governors has matured and has sufficient members (11 at least) who are dedicated, available, and have the necessary profile (attributes, competences, and regional, if not international, status). The Board has more concern for the long-term viability of the institution.
Each member is actively involved in representing WARF and in promoting our activities to institutional partners and to authorities in the countries in which we work.
Individual members develop appropriate initiatives to secure additional resources for our endowment fund, and also find the time and means to interact with other members of the Board in committee work ("roving challenges") and to interact with staff during site visits or working sessions to better understand the work WARF does in the field.
Board meetings become an opportunity to: assess our progress toward making the changes needed to achieve our new vision and mission; develop policies and strategies to make optimal use of our resources; and define policies and procedures to better govern our institution.

Expect to see progress markers

3 new members recruited (A list of prospective members is being compiled. The chairman is exclusively responsible for identifying new members for appointment to the Board.)

Like to see progress markers

All 11 members are aware of the programs, partnerships, procedures, and staff of WARF. (In response to the wishes expressed by the Governors, a guide was prepared to describe all of WARF's projects, and elaborate an approach to lobbying and fundraising that was based on stressing the distinctive competences of the institution and our the modes of intervention.)

Members are able to identify potential sources of funds and likely partners for WARF.

Love to see progress markers

All 11 members actively participate in fundraising and in the promotion of the institution.

How to explain such results

This initiative has generated the dynamics necessary to stimulate the Board Governors to be more actively involved in WARF's activities. The rating system we developed was High (H) = 80–100%; Modest (M) = 50–79%; Weak (W) = 0–49% .

Results

We have found that allowing the members of the Board to examine this grid (Table 1) has enabled them, either in their capacity as members of a committee or individually, to undertake a degree of self-criticism of their contribution toward the advancement of our institutional restructuring process. Our use of outcome mapping has also made it easier to identify the factors (both favourable and unfavourable) that affected our progress toward institutional change, but that, until now, had somehow been minimized. For example, we became more aware of the affects of changes that occurred in other donor agencies. We also found that members of the Board were more aware of the value of regular evaluation of their activities and of the various groups within WARF to stimulate discussion about the future of the institution. It has now been recommended that these evaluation activities be institutionalized and that the Board be advised of the results as a basis for their discussions.

Lessons Learned from Organizational Restructuring

As we applied outcome mapping to help us with our organizational restructuring, we learned some valuable lessons.

X With regard to the methodology, our "boundary partners" did not participate in the definition of their outcome challenge and progress markers. Therefore, these groups might consider the exercise as external and not feel accountable for the progress expected. This potential loss of ownership in the process could have been avoided if we had: conducted the first steps (identification of outcome challenges and progress marker) in a more participatory way; and decentralized the application of the process throughout the organization (to all units and divisions).

X Although our experience is just starting, we recognize that it is not easy to monitor the process when the organization is "busy being busy." When you are busy processing projects, you often neglect to take the time to listen, discuss, reflect, or plan within the type of framework we evolved by using outcome mapping. Being "busy" creates a mindset that is not conducive to innovation and creativity. Without interaction, there is no innovation. Time to discuss, reflect, and generate new ideas is the ransom that outcome mapping demands for innovation.

X We believe that the use of external facilitators to monitor progress helps guarantee that there is regular follow-up. The facilitators should be responsible of encouraging and organizing meetings and exchanges to assess progress. They should also act as the catalysts needed to create the conditions necessary to raise collective and individual awareness, generate new ideas, and take action.

- X Because of our method of using outcome mapping for organizational change, the higher levels of the organization had to be receptive to the analysis of the results, be aware of the constraints or opportunities that are presented, and appreciate their implications in terms of organization's behaviour. Therefore, the effectiveness of the methodology depended on the receptiveness, willingness, and commitment of senior managers to appraise the facts emerging from the framework and take appropriate action.

WARF plans to continue to reinforce the application of outcome mapping to organizational restructuring by involving all organizational units. Each unit will build from work that has been done to date and develop outcome challenges, progress markers, and appropriate grids for monitoring progress. To guide this process, the recently created evaluation unit will have responsibility for coordinating the outcome mapping process, collecting data of the different units, and interacting with each unit in a systematic way. The results of these interactions will be shared with the Program Department, the Regional Executive Office, and the Board for appraisal and decision-making. We also plan to ensure that there is a clearer link between the application of outcome mapping and the different tools used to measure institutional performance (such as audit, evaluations, and strategic reflections). This should provide additional direction to our strategic decision-making.

Adaptation of Outcome Mapping for Field Use

Our exposure to the benefits of outcome mapping to help address our own institutional needs prompted us to work with the methodology in a field setting. The revised outcome mapping methodology that is discussed here evolved from our practical experience of holding a 2-day workshop in Banjulinding in September 2001. This workshop, attended by 12 members of a local women association, 2 researchers from WARF, and 2 local facilitators, was designed to introduce women farmers to the outcome mapping approach.

We started on the first day by having the facilitators explain the objectives of the workshop. This session was followed by a brainstorming session during which the local women were invited to express their vision and expectations about the WARF project in which they were involved. This was their opportunity to point out the constraints they faced and to identify the successes that had been achieved since the beginning of the project. The second day was to be devoted to the definition of outcome challenges and strategies that could be expected to generate progress.

We had found in earlier workshops that women farmers often have difficulties in thinking in abstract terms around the concepts of vision and mission that are part of the outcome mapping methodology. Therefore, our strategy has been to allow the women to express all their feeling first and only afterward channel discussions in ways that can lead to an understanding of the concepts of outcome mapping.

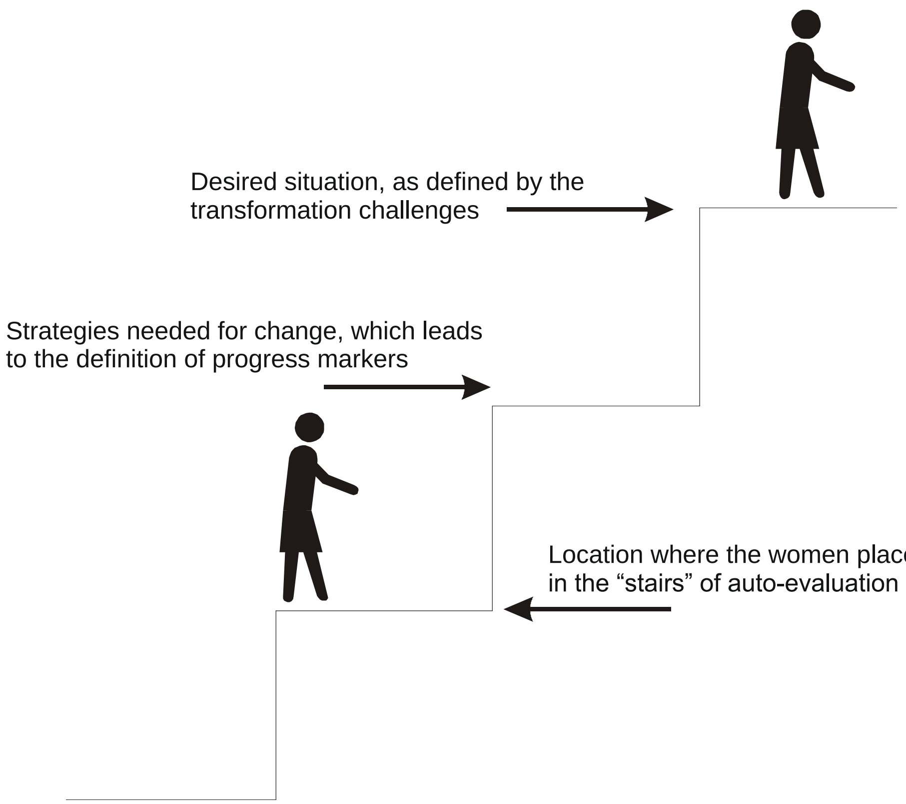
After the auto-evaluation session on the first day, we decided we needed to depart from the usual steps of outcome mapping. We needed to design a tool that could better illustrate the concepts of the outcome mapping approach we wanted to teach the participants. That is why we designed the tool we call "the stairs." This tool (Figure 1) uses the image of a set of stairs to illustrate the type of self-evaluation and reflection that are required to monitor progress within a project.

Our Use of the Stairs Tool

The exercise starts by having the women do a self-evaluation of their level of participation in the project. They are asked to report on what they consider to be the successes of the project and the constraints they have faced. This session enables them to indicate on the stairs where they are with regard to the project — near the beginning, the middle, or the end. In our case, they pointed out the second step from the bottom because they thought that some progress had been made but that most of the work of the project remained to be done. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the women have:

X increased their knowledge of how to prepare and use compost to increase soil fertility and also how to control pests by using vegetable solutions and animal urine;

Figure 1. *The model of the "stairs" concept applied to outcome mapping.*



- seen two members of the committee trained in basic book keeping, which has allowed them to report on project accounts; and
- set up a credit committee to design and manage a credit system for the members of the association.

Once the women identified where they were in the “stairs” of the project, in the second step of the exercise, we shifted the discussion by asking the women to imagine what would be the ideal situation at the end of the project. Their answers lead to the definition of an outcome challenge:

- An organization within which each committee member fully understands her role and is capable of exerting influence in a way that adds value to, and diversifies, local resources (rewording OK?);
- An organization that has a high level of technical skill, the needed equipment, and more land available for exploitation;
- An organization that receives a sufficient amount of market information with regard to selling of organic foods; and

X An organization that has designed an adequate credit system.

By describing the ideal situation, the women were able to measure the gap between the present situation and the ideal situation they wanted. This allowed them to define what had to be done to fill the gap. We found that the women typically gave two types of responses: those that started with “we need more…” and those that started with “we have to…”. The first type of response generates strategies that see the women as passive subjects. For example, we need more:

X training for women in roles and responsibilities and in organic food-production techniques;

X technical assistance for women in market studies, commercialization, and credit-system management; and

X financial assistance for women to acquire equipment and implements.

The facilitator has an important role at this stage. It is crucial to clarify the strategies and actions that result from this type of request (we need more…) cannot be considered as successes until they are followed by proper initiatives by the beneficiaries. For example, training in “roles and responsibilities” is simply like a pen you might give to someone for writing. If she just puts it in her pocket without using it, she gains no value from the tool — so no progress is made. However, responses of the second type (we have to…) generate strategies that can easily and directly lead to the development of effective progress markers because the women are active participants. Such responses would include those that state that we have to have women who:

X invest money to diversify their activities and to acquire implements and other inputs for their project;

X undertake reforms and elaborate new procedures to organize human resources and develop their association;

X design an adequate micro-credit system;

X request authorities to increase their land holdings; and

X build partnerships with other institutions such as the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI).

Our experimentation with the stairs model ended, in this workshop, with the definition of the strategies. But the next step in the process would be to plan periodic evaluation workshops to allow the women to elaborate specific progress markers, plan future actions, and report on progress over the last 3 months. The format we propose to use for the action plan and progress report are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The columns in Table 1 for recording the progress markers are left blank because it is up to the women farmers to define how they would implement their strategies and, on the bases of these choices, to determine what progress they would expect to see, like to see, and love to see. The choice of column for each progress markers depends on the time needed and the degree of

Table 1. *The format used to record the action plan (WFA – Women Farmers Association).*

		Progress markers			
Strategies	Actor	Expect to see	Like to see	Love to see	Activities
Investments	WFA				
Reforms and new procedures	WFA				
New micro-credit system	WFA				
Requests (for what?)	WFA				
Partnerships	WFA				
Training	???				
Technical assistance	???				
Financial assistance	???				

Table 2. *The format used for the progress report.*

	Progress markers								
	Expect to see			Like to see			Love to see		
Outcome challenge	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
1									
2									
3									
4									

difficulty anticipated. Table 2 allows the women to report, in terms of low, medium, and high, their assessment of the progress they have made toward reaching their outcome challenge.

Lessons Learned from Field Use of Outcome Mapping

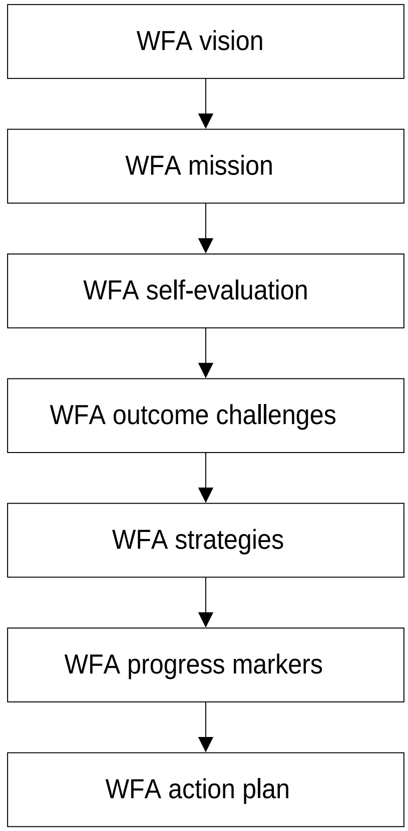
Helping women farmers to go through the process of outcome mapping so that they can understand its concepts is not easy. The facilitator must constantly categorize the information that is presented and lead the discussion toward the concepts of outcome mapping while retaining sufficient flexibility to allow the participants to express themselves.

When the participants have to identify the transformation challenges, the facilitator must avoid the risk of defining the challenges in a mechanical way, like a set of specific objectives. It is important at this point for the facilitator to deepen the discussion to allow the participants to come to a holistic understanding of the outcome challenge. As well, when the group is defining what needs to be done to bring about change, it is important that the facilitator help participants think in terms of strategy and not in terms of specific actions.

The result of this exercise is that the question of who defines the outcome challenges and progress markers become clearer. WARF as a support agency, can define, inside its rural entrepreneurship initiative, its own vision, mission, outcome challenges, and progress markers. However, these must be wide, general objectives so that each boundary partner, particularly the beneficiaries, can recognize themselves within these objectives. When the outcome mapping

Figure 2. *Steps we used in the modified outcome mapping process.*

process is applied to the boundary partners, it is up to them to elaborate their own definitions (just as we did with women farmers). Consequently, WARF will not be placed in the position of



having to negotiate with its boundary partners outcome challenges and progress markers that were elaborated earlier and without their input.

The progress markers have not yet been elaborated in our example, although the strategies that have been defined are expressed in a similar way. However, we must not forget that the self-evaluation held in the beginning of the exercise produced some success markers.

We did not use the six strategies defined by the outcome mapping approach because we think that they are more appropriate for support agencies like WARF. In our case, we let the participants define their strategies themselves because the progress markers will derive from them. Figure 2 summarizes the approach to outcome mapping we have used to date with the women farmers. Our plan is to continue to evolve our approach to the use of outcome mapping for field work.

Certain lessons can be drawn with respect to the application of the methodology to community programs:

1. a situational analysis should be conducted before applying the EPC, in order to determine the main problems and build a relationship of trust and dialogue required for the implementation of EPC principles by the population;

2. applying the methodology in a rural area requires facilitators to have significant teaching and communication skills, as without these skills, conveying concepts in local languages and statement formulation would be pointless (the results would be very general and immaterial);

3. some questions remain: who must define the community progress markers? Progress markers should be defined through participation in order to more fully involve the population. Once this issue is resolved, local resources capable of monitoring progress must be identified;

4. finally, it is essential to find links between the EPC and other methods, which assumes that users are sufficiently familiar with the various monitoring and evaluation methods.

To put it clearly, using this methodology to evaluate a community program requires more knowledge and skills than simply mastering the tools recommended by the EPC. The overall situation must first be evaluated to achieve good participatory planning.

In terms of training follow-up, work groups were formed based on their membership in a network or in a WARF partnership program. Their goal is to identify the actions to be taken by the individual, the organization or the network to which they belong in order to promote the methodology, apply it to a sector or project, or even organize a WARF-sponsored workshop on the introduction to the methodology. WARF has announced it will hold a seminar at the end of this year or at the beginning of the next, where participants who have applied the methodology will be invited to prepare a report and information in cooperation with WARF.

This seminar will shed new light on the use of the methodology, as courses conducted by WARF at an institutional level and in relation to certain projects have not been able to develop as quickly as planned.

For the most part, information on the methodology had already been gathered at a workshop for women horticulturists in Banjulnding in September 2001, to outline the vision and mission statements, as well as the progress markers. At this workshop, facilitators noted the following facts:

- the women had difficulty with abstract reasoning when it came to discussing "outcome mapping" concepts such as project or program vision and mission;

- there is a need for new teaching tools to help participants understand and apply the methodology; for the charts, facilitators introduced the "steps" tool;

- it is important to conduct an analysis or preliminary evaluation before doing any statement formulation to allow participants to characterize their situation (success and main problems);

- facilitators must be able to engage participants sufficiently in the discussion and particularly in specifying the progress markers, otherwise, the markers could be defined mechanically, or even imposed by facilitators, causing participants to become passive listeners;

progress markers cannot be stated beforehand, as the complexity of the expected changes is not always apparent at the start. Subsequent follow-up sessions may be required to refine progress markers.

Improving the Health of Women and Girls in Rural India

Swayamsiddha, which means *capable* in Sandskrit, is a 5-year project that began in June 2000 to improve the health and empowerment of women and girls in rural India. The project involves nine partner organizations in six Indian states and is co-funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Overall coordination of project activities is provided by the BAIF Development Research Foundation, an Indian NGO (see http://www.baif.com for more information on BAIF).

The Swayamsiddha project builds on a 10-year history of collaboration between IDRC and BAIF and is designed to reach about 75 villages and provide benefits to the female members of community-based organizations as well as their families. By the conclusion of the project, it is anticipated that there will be an improvement in the health of rural women and girls as a result of their empowerment to address their own socioeconomic and development needs. To support the changes that are needed for these improvements to occur, the project has specific objectives:

X development and strengthening of networks among concerned organizations;

X improved availability of reproductive health care information within the villages;

X greater awareness of the need for gender equity and changes in the allocation of work that is traditionally based strictly on gender;

X improved access by women to physical and natural resources and financial services; and

X better understanding of how to plan and implement sustainable programs that will improve the health of women and girls. [adapted from Project Implementation Plan, 30 April 2001]

Monitoring and Evaluation in Swayamsiddha

From the beginning of the project, it was agreed that a system of monitoring and evaluation was required both to fulfill the project's learning needs and to provide credible data for project accountability. Therefore, improving the monitoring and evaluation skills of project managers, partner organizations, and community members has always been an important component of the project since the outset. The process of monitoring progress, reporting results, generating learning, evaluating processes, and reflecting on performance focuses on strengthening the management and implementation of the project. Monitoring and evaluation has now become an integral part of the project and extends well beyond what would be needed to meet donor accountability requirements.

The Central Project Coordinating Team (CPCT), representatives of two partner organizations, and two external evaluation experts make up the Monitoring and Evaluation Cross-Cutting Group (M&E CCG). The M&E CCG is responsible for designing, coordinating, and implementing most of the monitoring and evaluation activities in the project. IDRC provides technical support and advice, but the monitoring and evaluation agenda and budget is controlled by the project team and is integrated throughout various project activities. Swayamsiddha's monitoring and evaluation system includes two complementary elements that have different purposes and involve different activities: first, the logical framework analysis (LFA) reporting; and second, the reflection for learning processes. The separation between the two elements indicates that some activities will fulfill accountability requirements to CIDA; whereas, others will help the project team to capture information that aids reflection on results and performance to improve effectiveness.

The LFA developed by Swayamsiddha was revised considerably as the focus of the project was defined, developed, and refined. Based on need assessments conducted with selected communities, the LFA now reflects the broad results anticipated by all nine partner NGOs. The project team does not view the LFA as a tool to be used simply to meet donor requirements, but rather as an integral management tool for the project. The output and outcome statements relate not only to changes in rural women and their communities but also to changes within the implementing organizations. This was done purposefully to reflect the importance of organizational capacity development as an expected result of the project. The reflection for learning processes include: evaluation studies, learning loops, and self-assessment processes. Although there will be on-going monitoring throughout the course of the project based on the LFA-indicators, it was decided that some topics were better suited to more in-depth evaluations that will be conducted by the CPCT, implementing organizations, and the communities themselves. The learning loops involve carving out space (i.e., time and opportunities) in the project for the various actors to receive, and give, feedback on the methods, strategies, and processes by which results are achieved. Because capacity building is an integral part of the project and the LFA-indicators cannot capture the change process in the detail desired by the project team, four key areas of the project have been identified in which to conduct self-assessments: monitoring and evaluation, gender, health, and research.

The Swayamsiddha project team has been using outcome mapping in two distinct ways that are described in the papers that follow. The first by Savita Kulkharni, a member of the CPCT, describes how Swayamsiddha's CPCT is using outcome mapping for its own self-assessment in the major areas of the project (health, research, gender, and monitoring and evaluation). The second by Kalpana Pant illustrates how Chaitanya (one of the project's partner organizations) has applied outcome mapping to its work with women's self-help groups in the Pune district of Maharashtra. Each summarizes the learning that has occurred to date with regard to the use of outcome mapping.

The Application and Challenges of Using Outcome Mapping in Swayamsiddha

Savita Kulkarni, Swayamsiddha, BAIF Development Research Foundation (BAIF), Pune, India

The Swayamsiddha project is a complex undertaking because of the processes of social change and women`s empowerment involved. It is also organizationally complex because each of the nine partner organizations works in five to ten villages in remote areas of India. The stakeholders in each area differ, and each of the partners has a different approach to project implementation as well as different strengths. The project uses a logical framework analysis (LFA) to manage its key components, which are gender integration, health, research, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, and learning. Planning, monitoring, and evaluation have been designed to be participatory since the start of the project.

The goal of Swayamsiddha is to bring about behavioural changes at different levels: within the community at large; among the women with whom we are working directly; through the establishment and strengthening of community-based organizations; and among the implementing teams and within their organizations (the nine partners plus BAIF). These hoped-for changes were documented in the LFA that, in keeping with the vision of the project, evolved in a participatory manner with development, validation, and refinement.

To achieve these sought-after behavioural changes, five main activities were built into the design of Swayamsiddha. These activities included: needs-based, participatory planning at the community level; capacity-building among the implementing teams in terms of gender, health, research, participatory monitoring and evaluation, and project management; encouragement of collective community action by rural women; expanded linkages and networking between the Government of India and development agencies; and, capacity-building for community representatives, especially with regard to health, gender sensitivity, and communication skills.

Our Introduction to Outcome Mapping

In June 2000, the implementing teams along with the BAIF project team and IDRC met in Pune to review the concepts of the project and evolve consensus about the project strategies that should be used. Monitoring and evaluation was one of the areas in which the project team and partner organizations wanted more input. IDRC introduced outcome mapping to the teams as one way of identifying meaningful and realistic indicators of progress toward project goals. Many of the results sought by the project depended on being able to change individual and organizational behaviour and relationships. Consequently, the results of capacity building were seen as progressive changes in the way community groups acted and interacted.

During the meeting, the participants experimented with outcome mapping by applying it to the existing project design. Those in attendance at the meeting were split into groups, and each group took one outcome from the project's draft LFA to work on. They identified the key stakeholders for each outcome and the desired progression in their activities and relationships. Progress markers for four boundary partners (traditional birth attendants, families, women's organizations, and self-help groups) were identified and discussed in a plenary session. Boundary partners are the individuals, groups, and organizations with whom the project works directly and with whom it can expect opportunities for influence. Graduated progress markers are a set of behavioural indicators that show the complexity of the change process in an individual, group, or organization that the project is working with directly. They represent the information that the project can gather in order to monitor achievements toward the desired outcome. The progress markers should advance in degree from the minimum one would *expect to see* the partner doing as an early response to the organization`s activities, to what it would *like to see* them doing, to what it would *love to see* them doing if the project were having a profound influence. At this stage of planning Swayamsiddha, outcome mapping was seen as a way to flesh out the activities, outcomes, and indicators sections of the LFA for the project. During the inception meeting, a lot of interest and enthusiasm was created among the partners. Everyone was talking in terms of “love-to-see” and “like-to-see”.

Field Testing of Outcome Mapping

Our use of outcome mapping within Swayamsiddha has been somewhat limited. Outcome mapping includes three stages. Stage 1 is *intentional design*, which includes vision, mission, boundary partners, outcome challenges, progress markers, strategy maps, and organizational practices; stage 2 is *outcome and performance monitoring*, which includes setting monitoring priorities and outcome, strategy, and performance journals; and stage 3 is *evaluation planning.* Our experience with outcome mapping has focussed on stage 1 and has been restricted to the identification of boundary partners, outcome challenges, and progress markers. Although we have discussed the concept of strategy maps, we have not really used them.

Our introduction to outcome mapping created a lot of interest and enthusiasm among the partner organizations. Two of Swayamsiddha’s partner organizations (Chaitanya and DHRUVA) have begun to apply it in their work. During the June 2002 meeting, Chaitanya invited IDRC to immediately introduce outcome mapping to its staff in the nearby town of Rajgurunagar. Through this activity, they created vision and mission statements as well as outcome challenge statements for their primary partners, women’s self-help groups (SHGs). By using role playing and animated discussion, they also defined appropriate progress markers for the SHGs. Subsequently, Chaitanya used outcome mapping to identify the results that were desired to respond to educational needs within a community in which they were working. (Kalpana Pant explains Chaitanya's experiences in more detail.)

The other partner organization that used outcome mapping to meet its specific needs was Dharampu Utthan Vahini (DHRUVA). DHRUVA was established in 1995 and works with tribal communities in southern Gujarat primarily on health, livelihood, and natural resource issues. A member of the CPCT introduced a group of workers from DHRUVA (including non-Swayamsiddha staff) to outcome mapping. DHRUVA members then used the outcome mapping process to define a vision statement for their own organization: to build a happy, healthy, clean, literate, and prosperous community. At the same time, DHRUVA members identified their key boundary partners to be self-help groups (SHGs); traditional birth attendants (TBAs); village health guides (VHGs); a primary health centre (PHC) (run by the government); the local action committee (Ayojan Samittee); the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) (government department); banks; and men in the community. Progress markers were then identified for each boundary partner in terms of behavioural change. For example, for the SHGs, DHRUVA expected to see women starting to come to SHG meetings, taking part in the meetings, and demanding to know more about SHGs. In terms of the SHGs themselves, they were expected to initiate such changes as starting regular savings, making rules and regulations, opening a bank account, and starting income-generating activities. Like-to-see and love-to-see markers were also defined.

Self-Assessment in Swayamsiddha

Within Swayamsiddha, we decided to use outcome mapping for self-assessment because we consider capacity building at the partner level to be an integral part of the project and we found that the LFA indicators could not capture the change process in sufficient detail. There are four major areas in which we are trying to build capacity in the project (gender, health, research, and monitoring and evaluation). At this stage, self-assessment of gender sensitivity and capacities is the most developed process. Enhancing the capacity of project staff in gender programming is critical for the gender cross-cutting group (Gender CCG). The success of these efforts will be reflected in behavioural changes of staff in terms of their approach to gender-sensitive programming and their ability and willingness to tackle sensitive gender issues in their workplace and in the project. The gender CCG developed a set of progress markers (Table 1) to monitor and assess change. The self-awareness process will identify both challenges and successes, involve periodic reflection, and capture the process of change for internal learning.

The role of self-assessment is not just to facilitate the development of a tool to guide project implementation. It is a means to motivate staff and to help establish an understanding of the need for gender, research, health, and monitoring and evaluation components in a development project. It was envisioned that self-assessment would provide project teams with the opportunity to honestly reflect on their progress and also help the Central Project Coordination Team (CPCT) better meet training needs in this multi-site project. As a starting point, one group has defined progress markers for gender. Although these markers are currently being revised by the central team, they are presented here to illustrate the outputs of the exercise (Table 1).

Table 1

The following are some of the guidelines the CPCT has developed for engaging in a self-assessment:

- CPCT members should fill the forms individually. All the persons should give the filled forms to Savita.
- Savita will compile the forms and give a score to the 'team'. The result of this compilation will be discussed in a CPCT meeting.
- Savita will not share the individual forms with other members of the CPCT. However, if members are interested in looking at the forms of others, they are free to do so. The forms will be kept with Savita. The individual information should not be compared with others, should not be criticized. It should not be taken as a performance appraisal.
- There will not be any debate if the perceptions of the team members differ about each others' tick marks
- Individual forms would be on the sheet of paper. Only compiled information would be fed in the computer.
- The forms should be filled out quarterly.
- Focus group discussion related to this should take place six monthly.
- If members of the CPCT want to discuss their performance with Savita, they should take initiative. Savita is not expected to take initiative for discussing individual performance.

- For all the progress markers, only the tick marks in the fourth column will be counted for scores. Tick marks in any other columns will not be counted but they will help the member to know where s/he is at the moment and whether s/he is making progress or not.
- Share the information with management only if asked by the management. While sharing, individual sheets would not be shared but the position of the team would be shared.
- Do not share the information with others. The process could be shared but the scores should not be shared.

Table 1. Outcome mapping applied to self-assessment by the Central Project Coordination Team (CPCT) for Gender (related to gender analysis and programming):

Outcome Challenge: The project intends to see CPCT asking questions on gender differences and inequities in health and other issues from the outset of planning and throughout implementation. CPCT is capturing and analyzing gender-disaggregated data at the community and partner levels and using it for better project delivery. CPCT using gender sensitive language in all its formal (trainings, workshops and reports) and informal conversations. CPCT is finding creative and innovative tools to try assist partners in analyzing and reflecting on their planning and activities (e.g. checklists). CPCT is establishing network with women's movement - with academicians as well as activists, to create a space for learning and sharing. CPCT discussing gender-related issues amongst themselves. CPCT keeping themselves updated about national and international discourse/events related to gender and development. CPCT helping BAIF teams, beyond the project, for gender sensitivity training approaches in all BAIF programs. CPCT is evolving gender strategy with all project teams to have a shared understanding and vision for the project.

(Low = 1 or 2 members; Medium = 3 to 5 members; High = more than 5 members of CPCT)

Progress Markers Expect to See:

1. CPCT is using gender sensitive language in all formal and informal communication

Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Always

1. CPCT sharing and evolving gender strategy with all the cluster teams

I was not involved in sharing with CPCT	I was involved in sharing it and contributed to it at the CPCT level	I was involved at the CPCT level but I have not at all discussed gender strategy with PCTs	I was involved at CPCT level and I have discussed gender strategy with PCTs

1. CPCT participating in gender-related trainings and workshops organized by other NGOs.

Never thought about such training	I planned but there were no training programs available	Training program was available but did not participate due to project commitments (specify)	Yes, I participated (Mention date, NGO and Place)

1. CPCT presenting gender related issues (at least once in a month) in the formal CPCT meeting

I rarely discussed	I sometimes discussed	I discussed quite often	I always discussed

Like to See:

1. CPCT helping the cluster teams in planning to address practical and strategic gender needs in the area.

I am not aware about PGN and SGN	I know PGN and SGN but I have not helped PCTs in planning to address these needs	I have sometimes helped PCTs in planning to address PGN and SGN	I have always helped PCTs in planning to address PGN and SGN

1. CPCT is documenting the gender differences and gender disaggregated data, which they come across during their visits to partners

I rarely documented	I sometimes documented	I documented quite often	I always documented

1. CPCT is evolving checklist for integration of gender in planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the program

I am not aware about the checklist	I have read the checklist but not contributed to it	I have contributed to the checklist at CPCT level	I have shared the checklist with PCTs

1. CPCT is documenting the various gender related issues and efforts to address these issues.

I rarely document	I sometimes documented - either issues or efforts	I documented quite often and partially - either issues or efforts	I always documented and fully - issues and efforts

1. CPCT is using gender analysis while planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

I do not know about gender analysis	I used gender analysis only while preparing workplan for 02-03 for my component but not with PCTs	I used gender analysis with some of the PCTs but not for workplan for 02-03 for my component	I used gender analysis while preparing workplan for 02-03 for my component and with some of the PCTs

1. CPCT is identifying gender gap inequity issues in project planning/review meetings

I did not identify	I identified but kept quite	I identified and raised it in the meetings	I identified, raised and saw to it that proper strategy/ action was planned

1. CPCT collecting information from other NGOs and feeding back it to the cluster teams so that the cluster teams are trained in using the information.

I did not collect information from other NGOs	I collected information from other NGOs and shared informally with CPCT members	I collected information from other NGOs to share formally with CPCT	I collected information from other NGOs to share formally with PCTs

1. CPCT is facilitating gender training programs for the staff (non-Swayamsiddha staff) of the partner organizations (going beyond the project)

I did not facilitate	I facilitated for Swayamsiddha staff in a central program	I facilitated for Swayamsiddha staff of partner organizations (on invitation) at the cluster level	I facilitated for non-Swayamsiddha staff of partner organizations - at Partner organization level (specify)

Love to See:

13. CPCT attending apparently non-gender/gender neutral issues and able to highlight related gender aspects effectively.

I was able to identify issue but could not raise it	I was able to identify issue and tried to raise it	I was able to identify issue , tried to raise it, and was able to initiate discussion	I was able to influence the group

14. CPCT is working as gender consultants in other projects of BAIF.

I was not involved	I was involved in informal consultations	I was involved in formal consultations for at least one non-Swayamsiddha project	I was involved in formal consultations for more than one non-Swayamsiddha projects

14. CPCT is documenting and publishing its gender-related experiences in the project.

I did not document	I documented but did not share/publish	I documented , shared formally but did not publish	I documented and published at least one article

What We Have Learned

Although our usage of output mapping has been limited, we believe we have learned some valuable lessons over the last 15–18 months. Most of our learning has arisen through our own experiences with self-assessment; some has grown out of work with communities. Our experience has also suggested times when perhaps it is better not to use outcome mapping. We believe the following areas of learning have emerged from Swayamsiddha's experiences with outcome mapping.

We have found that *outcome mapping can improve planning and monitoring*. Those who have been introduced to outcome mapping can now see the various steps that are involved in planning and monitoring. The process of defining progress markers has helped some of the implementing teams to better plan and monitor their program. For example, they might now ask: If we want to see members of self-help groups behave in a particular way, what should we do to encourage that change? This sort of questioning has helped evolve various new ideas for project interventions.

Community women can use outcome mapping. Progress markers can be defined by rural women — especially with regard to self-help groups. Our observations indicate that although there are initial challenges, once the idea is clear, rural women can define progress markers for their groups. Because these progress markers are defined collectively, they instil a common dream and a sense of the need for teamwork to achieve this dream. Once the dream has been defined through the development of progress markers, the women try collectively to achieve their dream. We found that the roles and responsibilities of all the members of the group, as well as the leaders, come out naturally during the process. Illiteracy is a problem that must be faced while defining the progress markers; however, this problem can be minimized by combining many statements into one and by reducing the number of progress markers.

Outcome mapping is a useful tool for seeing the process of change as a continuous chain of many smaller changes. In Swayamsiddha, our LFA depicts an array of behavioural changes that are expected to occur at many levels. During the initial stages of a project, these changes are generally not visible. However, by the end of project activities, certain changes seem obvious. This can sometimes lead to confusion or over-exaggeration — we sometimes claim that the observed changes are brought about by project interventions alone. The use of outcome mapping has helped us see the various phases of change. We realized that if we want "A" to happen, many small a's have to happen first — A is the cumulative effect of many small actions. For example, when we defined the progress markers for the central team for gender (see Table 1), we saw that becoming gender sensitive entailed many things. To really change, all members of our team would have to adopt a number of new behaviours. Only then could our team be truly called gender-sensitive. Because all team members share the same vision, we can see the direction in which we need to go. Outcome mapping has helped us change our behaviour, and the progress markers have motivated individual team members to make changes.

The use of the concept of boundary partners has reinforced our view that *for any behavioural change to occur, many actors and factors must come into play*. Development is not a linear process; it is very complex. We now think about the limited impact of specific interventions that cumulatively can lead to a larger development effect. Thinking about boundary partners has also clarified the need to form networks and linkages with other local actors to help ensure the sustainability of development interventions.

Although as an organization, we are all engaged in the formation of people's organizations and in ensuring representation of community members in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities, the logic of our actions has become clearer. The process of outcome mapping brought with it a clearer understanding of the concept behind the project and a broader perspective on approaches that might be taken during its implementation.

Challenges

We have started to accept outcome mapping within our organizational culture and appreciate its potential. However, as the project has made progress, several challenges have also become apparent with regard to the outcome mapping process.

Through our work we have found that an important challenge in the use of outcome mapping is ensuring that *those involved in the process have appropriate experience.* This essential experience includes an understanding of the principles of monitoring and evaluation as well as the factors affecting behavioural changes. If these prerequisites are lacking, they must be provided before outcome mapping can be introduced successfully to a heterogeneous group — their experience should not be assumed, it must be ensured. Differences in experience are often reflected in varying abilities of team members to differentiate between awareness, attitudinal change, and skill and behavioural change. A secondary problem in our case, was that the project concept itself was not very clear because the group that participated in outcome mapping discussions was not the same group that had been involved in the earlier discussions about development of the project.

Our experiences also suggest that *it can be difficult to relate outcome mapping to a LFA.* This was partly the result of our constantly evolving LFA, which has changed as many as seven times and resulted in changes being made to our approaches to project implementation. However, frameworks generally evolve over a considerable time, so the choice of when to apply outcome mapping is a challenge. Another consideration was that we are not very sure about what changes the project's interventions would bring. Therefore, the progress markers that were defined were often not directly related to the project's interventions. The two partner organizations within Swayamsiddha that applied outcome mapping limited themselves to the outcome statements in the LFA. Their application was related more to organizational vision and mission than to the outcome statements of the framework, which also illustrates the need for each stakeholder to share a common vision–mission statement.

While working with outcome mapping we found that *we were trying to deal with too many boundary partners*. Listing all of the boundary partners for the 12 project partners (9 partner organizations, BAIF, IDRC, and CIDA) became a huge task. Although some of the boundary partners were common, many were not. Defining outcome challenge statements for each of these boundary partners became a tedious and unmanageably large job.

We also came to realize that *the boundary partners are very heterogeneous*. Even for a single boundary partner such as women's self-help groups (SHGs), there are many SHGs in a single project area or even a single village. We are working in nine project areas with 162 SHGs. Each SHG is at a different stage of progress and empowerment. Therefore, we found it difficult to use outcome mapping for SHGs because you cannot treat SHGs as a single boundary partner. It was impossible to have a single set of progress markers for all of these different SHGs. Although we were not thinking about centralized and standardized progress markers, there is a real need for some things, at least at the village level, that can be compared and related to each other. We encountered the same challenge when trying to deal with other boundary partners within a single project area.

Our experience has also shown us that *it is a very complex and time-consuming process to define progress markers for all boundary partners and for all outcome statements*. Because new boundary partners may need to be added as the project progresses, the process of defining progress markers can become even more time consuming. Our experience suggests that more care needs to be taken when compiling the list of boundary partners to ensure that the project can reasonably be expected to influence behavioural change within the selected boundary partners. As well, there is a need to clarify whether it is necessary to define one or many outcome challenge statements for each boundary partner. With our project spread over nine areas, project staff expressed concern about the time needed to apply outcome mapping. Health and empowerment issues are the project's focus, and the teams want to spend their time on these issues. Their concern was that if outcome mapping was fully applied in Swayamsiddha, the focus of the project would be on monitoring and evaluation rather than on gender integration.

While using outcome mapping for self-assessment, *we were not clear about how to monitor a specific progress marker*. Is it the number of members (quantity) who achieve the particular behavioural change or the quality of that change that is important? Suppose five members of the team arrive at a particular behavioural change, but two do not. How do we assess the current position of the team? Do we have to define progress markers for a particular progress marker? If so, the process has no end.

We also believe *there are some limitations when using outcome mapping for a team*. Progress markers give a direction to behavioural change by taking into consideration the present roles and responsibilities within a program or a project. However, members of the same teams can have different educational and cultural backgrounds. Their baselines for a particular expected behavioural change might be quite different. Defining one set of progress markers for a team means compromising at a minimum level of expected change. The progress markers that are chosen may not motivate a person whose baseline is high; therefore, the markers could loose their value for such team members.

Our discussions about outcome mapping also raised some *ethical issues with regard to roles and responsibilities*. Can we really impose our love-to-see progress markers on other boundary partners? Who should define the progress markers? For whom? Who should monitor the progress markers? How should the progress markers be monitored? By whom? If the boundary partners were to define the progress markers for the implementing teams and other boundary partners, what would happen?

In spite of the challenges we have faced, we believe that outcome mapping is a good tool for monitoring and evaluation and have found ways to use it that make sense in our context. It emphasizes the principle that monitoring is not for proving but improving. It generates learning, which is a key factor in monitoring and evaluation. Outcome mapping also motivates and gives direction for behavioural change, which is the ultimate goal of any development intervention. We would like to continue to learn more about the process and to see whether we can use outcome mapping in a more focussed way — for certain aspects, for certain implementing teams, for planning at the community level, or for self-assessment.

Chaitanya's Experiences with Outcome Mapping

Kalpana Pant, Chaitanya, Pune District, Maharashtra, India

For the past decade, Chaitanya, an Indian NGO located in Maharashtra has worked to find ways to make women's self-help groups a more effective medium of women's empowerment. Working with rural women primarily from tribal and landless sections of the community, its focus has been on field studies that could enhance local capabilities, increase networking among like-minded groups, impart training, and develop appropriate training materials. Chaitanya has been involved in the Swayamsiddha project promoting women`s health and empowerment since its planning in 1999. Swayamsiddha has given Chaitanya an opportunity to augment its capacity to enhance women's capabilities, a process that has been enriched by interactions with representatives from eight other organizations working in different states and addressing somewhat different development issues and problems.

An Evolution in Thinking about Monitoring and Evaluation

Projects are invariably monitored and evaluated. Usually the implementers of the project, be they NGOs, government departments, or individuals, see such assessments as a requirement of whoever is financing the project. In this light, monitoring and evaluation are seen as part of the donor's agenda and remain external to the project because the implementing agency has not integrated planning, monitoring, and evaluation into the project. Often seen as an imposition, these conventional approaches to evaluation focus on examining only the outputs or the impact of the project without examining the environment in which it operates. The potential of these activities therefore remains confined to the project — or even more accurately to the monitoring visit of donors and the regular submission of reports.

This does not mean that NGOs like Chaitanya do not monitor activities or have well-developed management information systems (MIS). However, internal monitoring is usually ad hoc and focussed on assessing staff performance (primarily on the basis of an individual's reporting). NGOs often invest a lot of their resources in developing MIS, but because often they deal with a number of donors that require different types of information about their projects, hence, the information systems do not tend to concentrate on their own information needs. Data and data collection are based on formats developed by funding organizations, and because the NGO does not have time for analysis, much effort is exerted collecting information that is not used either to improve performance or generate new learning. There is too much emphasis on the present, to manage the current, with little focus on planning for future challenges. We in NGOs must ask ourselves why we should be undertaking monitoring and evaluation.

We regard monitoring and evaluation as a self-assessment tool that helps us reflect on our performance and the results achieved whether the implementation or action was in accordance with the desired objectives. As a by product, it should generate learning about innovative ways of doing things and help us design new strategies, make changes in the current plan of action, and reflect on whether or not the available resources, the objectives, and the activities are complementary. Therefore, participatory monitoring and evaluation is a continuous system that allows an individual, project, or organization to think holistically and strategically about how it intends to achieve its desired results and provides the tools needed to construct and tell the story of its performance.

If we focus on monitoring and evaluation as a tool for improving our performance standards, and integrate it into our planning processes, it can be used to enhance program efficiency. There is a need for implementing agencies, as well as donors, to shift their focus from proving whether a program works or not to improving the effectiveness of their initiatives.

Outcome Mapping Takes a Different Approach

Outcome mapping was introduced to Chaitanya by IDRC at a time when we were growing disenchanted with the quantitative reporting that we were receiving from the field. Our search for a different style of reporting was influenced by our desire to consolidate our learning so that we could be more effective women’s self-help groups with which we were working. It also occurred at a time when the organization was thinking of rapid expansion — in terms of both outreach and intensification of efforts.

In the past, our major thrust was on monitoring of staff and not of outputs. Therefore, innumerable reports were generated that highlighted little about staff performance or program achievements. Reporting focussed on completion of proposed activities, e.g., number of training activities completed and awareness programs undertaken. But, the output of these activities was never clear.

We were reporting only on the activities and not the results. Consequently, the reports were not comparable, the set of activities undertaken in one month were totally different from the activities completed in the next month. This made it extremely difficult for our staff to assess their own effectiveness, efficiency, and the reports had no utility for either staff or management. Activity-oriented staff complained of being over stressed and over worked and management did not get the results it expected. This situation also inhibited the growth of the organization because our in the absence of proper performance standards, there was no mechanism for incentives or disincentives. The only reliable criteria of performance were comments from outsiders, positive or negative.

Moreover, there was complete lack of coordination between field activities and training needs, which were required to identify and file in the gaps, follow up and review. The training coordinator worked in isolation and training plans based on monthly reports of field staff were never prepared. Consequently, some groups were given regular training, while others received no training for 2 years.

When introduced to our staff, outcome mapping evoked enthusiasm because:

- their learning, which had emerged from their experience in the field over 5–6 years was used to develop progress markers;
- there was flexibility, because outcome mapping recognized that at the field level things could happen differently under different circumstances; and,

X decentralization of planning and monitoring is built into the outcome mapping process and as a result there is greater local ownership of the process.

Since it was introduced to Chaitanya, the framework for outcome mapping has been used to: assess community needs (especially of women in rural Maharashtra); plan at the village level; and develop our organizational capacities in monitoring and evaluation. We are happy to share the learning that has emerged from our experiments in using the outcome mapping methodology. However, it is important to note that we are still at the stage of experimentation.

How We Have Used Outcome Mapping

We started by involving the head of Chaitanya as well as senior executives in the framing of the objectives of entire programme in the context of progress markers — how we would monitor expected changes in attitudinal behaviour of the members of SHGs. This required us to identify the partners with whom the SHGs were going to work and to correlate this to the vision and mission of the organization. Graduated progress markers are a set of behavioural indicators that show the complexity of the change process in an individual, group, or organization that the organization is working with directly. They represent the information that the organization can gather in order to monitor achievements toward the desired outcome. The progress markers should advance in degree from the minimum one would *expect to see* the partner doing as an early response to the organization`s activities, to what it would *like to see* them doing, to what it would *love to see* them doing if the organization were having a profound influence. At the same time, we used the outcome mapping methodology to revisit the organization's vision and mission (Table 1).

Table 1

Chaitanya`s Vision Statement

Empowerment of Women and girls to enable them to lead the process of development for better quality of life

Chaitanya`s Mission Statement

- Building local capacities of rural poor, especially poor women to form effective self reliant and sustainable people's institutions working towards better quality of life
- To evolve strong sustainable partnership of these institutions with local govt. machinery & other local institutions to facilitate greater accountability and effectivity in service delivery in a gender equitable manner
- To work towards evolving consensus in the formulation of gender equitable village level development plans in the areas of education, health and credit
- To network with other partners (ZP/Banks/NGOs) in the development process to enhance collective dev. efforts and advocate changes in government policies & programmes
- Effective gender sensitive learning oriented, participatory P M & E systems, which is regularly fed into planning
- Developing Perspective and undertaking research and documentation on natural resource management health and women's empowerment

- Efficient management of all projects.

Our next steps were to conduct an outcome mapping exercise with field staff who possessed field-level experience of between 6 months and 10 years in order to develop progress markers for our main institutional partner — the self-help groups. The results of this exercise outlined the following progress markers for the SHGs.

Expect to See

Good community support to the SHGs- reflected in attendance,
Expression and articulation
Leadership
Participatory decision making, majority aware about their roles as well as responsibilities

Like to See

Demanding services information
Better linkages accessing schemes
Good records
IGA
Joint village level initiatives

Love to See

Cluster level initiatives and gradually need to federate formally
Profits from group enterprise shared equally
Outside institutions recognising the group, creation of cadre of local resource persons
Moving beyond SHGs and village level

However, it was considered important to identifying and develop progress markers with the community members as an essential step. Otherwise, we may run the risk of imposing our own "love-to-see" progress markers on them. The depth and breadth of involvement by stakeholders is important for achieving outcomes. It is also important to note that data collection is an exercise not so much in gathering information but in sensitizing the community to its own problems and the need for planning and action at the community level.

To develop progress markers for the entire village, we conducted an exercise with the village action committee of Bhivade — a remote tribal village in the Pune District in the State of Maharashtra, India. The first stage in the process was to identify the different boundary partners — those individuals, groups, and organizations with whom the village action committee interacts directly and has opportunities to influence. Initially, we had the committee do a free-listing of possible partners. Once this was completed, we asked the VAC to create a short-list of partners by focussing on those boundary partners upon whom the success of the program most depended. We then shared the action committee's vision with the village and used outcome mapping to prioritize the problems they identified.

The outcome mapping exercise in Bhivade identified two types of boundary partners. Some were essential only in relation to a specific service, e.g., the State Transport Department for bus facilities and the Revenue Department for caste certificates. For the second group of boundary partners, sustained interactions were essential in light of the objectives of the project. These partners were identified as: the Health Department; women's self-help groups (SHGs); the Education Department; and Panchayat Samiti.

**Panchayat Samiti is the middle level tier in the three tier structure of local self Government for decentralisation. At the district level we have the Zillah Parishad, which is the first tier, the second tier is the Panchayat Samiti which is at the block level covers 100 – 300 villages and Gram Panchayat at the village level is the third tier in this entire structure. Panchayat Samiti has elected representatives as well as Government officials appointed for different departments related to health, education, water, and so on . They report to the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).*

The VAC identifies the following progress markers for the entire village, which helped us to identify the community needs as well as ensured their participation in developing strategies for the same.

Expect to See

High frequency of state transport buses in the village.
Each individual of the village would be thinking about the progress of the village
Youth are aware of various schemes available in Panchayat samiti and implement it.
All women are part of the SHGs

Like to See

Villagers get good quality seeds and all agriculture related products
The government functionaries at the village level work more responsibly so that all the issues are tackled immediately without any delay.
People are organised- there is unity in the village no fights

Love to See

Local CBO, has its own corpus of 10 lakhs
There would be no unemployment in the village
Setting up factories for production of medicines from a herb available locally
Political representation of the village representatives at the state level
Lift irrigation- all the fields are irrigated
People trust each other
Everyone is healthy and happy in the village all health facilities are available.
Village has a high school and a college and the standard of education has improved.

Prioritisation of problems that we need to focus on:

SHG
Health services
Employment generation
Water lifting
State transport facilities
Education

For monitoring, an initial review with the boundary partners was planned after 6 months. Subsequently, this will be systematized into quarterly reviews with the community representatives and the concerned government departments.

To develop progress markers with the community for a specific partner, we conducted a 5-day planning exercise with the Education Department in the village of Sonawale, in Pune district. Here, a team of youth (mostly local), was asked to collect data on the status of education in Sonawale with the assistance and guidance of school teacher. They used a series of participatory rapid appraisal (PRA) methods to find out: the previous state of education; the current state of education; the reasons for the change; and villager's opinions of what needed to be done.

Several PRA tools were used in the process. *Time line* — the older generation was involved in identifying the major events in the field of education. *Trend analysis* — the leaders and opinion makers of the village were involved in determining the changes that had occurred in enrollment, facilities, girls education, and methods of teaching over the past 10 years, identifying the reasons for these changes, and noting the consequences of these changes. Before developing realistic progress markers, it is important to understand the history of the village. How the villagers perceive the changes that have occurred and what they attribute these change to must be understood before we start a process of having them dream about what they would love-to-see in the education sector in the village. Moreover, in this process, it is also important to involve all of the stakeholders, because the extent of their involvement has an impact on the achievement of the outcome challenge. *Village mapping* — to identify school drop-outs. *Seasonality chart* — women's self-help groups were involved in charting the months of the year in which there was lower attendance and the reasons for the decrease. Any number of such tools can be used in the analysis.

The next step was to have the parents prioritize and rank the problems on either a quantitative or qualitative basis. What is it that the parents feel is the cause of deterioration in the standard of education? What are the problems that need to be addressed? We conducted village meetings at the end of every day to provide feedback to the community. It is important to discuss the findings of the data in the village meetings to increase a sense of ownership to the process.

Following the ranking of problems, progress markers were developed by asking the following questions:

X Who is responsible?
X Which of these problems can be resolved with the resources available within the community and within a shorter time frame?
X Which problems could be resolved through intense negotiations with one or many of the other local partners within a reasonable time frame?
X Which problems require lobbying at different levels and resources that are beyond the community's present means?

Hence it is important to focus on the imminent and the resolvable issues for which the community feels confident of taking action, within a reasonable time frame.

The list of problems that emerged can be broadly classified under the following:

- Lack of infrastructure – building, campus, toilets, drinking water
- Lack of parent's involvement – illiteracy, disinterest l
- Inadequate number of school teachers
- Burden of work over girl child

These problems were then listed as progress markers, with the easily resolvable issues requiring least time and resources being the "expect to see" and the issues requiring intense negotiations and lobbying with different stakeholders as the "love to see" of the community.

It is important to assess the capacities of the community-based organizations while the progress markers are defined. The assessment of their capacities is done by the community themselves. In answering the above questions, they also analyse their bargaining power with the other stakeholders involved. If the village school teacher is responsible for the negligence, they can probably rely on their own resources to get the work done. However, if it is a question of appointment of more staff, then it may require intense negotiation with the district government department. It is also important that the initial initiatives are successful, otherwise its possible that the community's involvement is lost and the entire activity may even collapse.

Progress Markers and Planning

When involving all members of the community, young and old, men and women, in the entire process of identifying problems specific to their village, you create a volatile situation. Within 2 – 3 days, everyone talks of the problems of a specific government department. At this juncture, it is important to channel their energies into the planning process. What are the available financial and human resources to meet the progress markers within the village?

For example, if some children are dropping out of school, would a youth group take responsibility for their enrolment? Children who are lagging behind in class could be given additional classes or tutoring by college students. Necessary facilities might be provided through local contributions and implemented by community-based organizations (CBOs). What is feasible at the local level is planned there and then. The CBOs can take responsibility for monitoring. However, it is important that the action plan with clearly defined responsibility as well as deadlines is handed over to the community leaders — preferably in a formal fashion — and that it is prominently displayed in a common meeting place as a reminder to everyone in the community. A copy of the action plan should also be given to the school, the block level Education Department, and the NGO.

Through these steps, we have also initiated planning at the department level through our meetings with the government departments and community to develop a common action plan. However, at this stage it is primarily based on fulfilling targets. In this regards a forum at the local level, involving all the government departments, the community (SHG leaders) representatives has been formed. This ensures an interface of the people with government officials to discuss their love to see. The aim is to ensure a convergence of the communities love to see with the department's love to see – which is primarily based on fulfilling targets with greater sensitization of the expectations and the constraints of each, through continuous facilitation, it would no long. Later on, we hope it will not be necessary to undertake a separate planning exercise as the government becomes more sensitive to the community's needs. We also believe that it is important to establish faith in the planning process by starting small and ensuring success before moving forward.

What We Have Learned So Far

Our learning on using outcome mapping has occurred throughout the process. We have benefited from individual visits, the monthly CBO meeting, which gives us details about the extent of progress and the problems that have occurred, and the quarterly meetings with the government departments. We have used the same PRA tools for monitoring as well. So a village map can today tell us whether the dropouts girls marked previously have started going to school or not. Based on our learning to date, we have developed some ideas about the characteristics of what we see as an ideal participatory monitoring and evaluation system (Table 2).

We have observed that the *organizational staff who engage in outcome mapping should have considerable field experience*. Otherwise, setting progress markers becomes an exercise in meaningless generalizations. For example, if an NGO staff member without any experience in self-help groups engages in outcome mapping with SHGs as a partner, the trends that have been visible in the SHG movement may not be reflected in the progress markers. Moreover, the staff member would also have a narrower vision regarding the love-to-see scenarios than a more experienced person. For example, in SHGs good savings and credit behaviour may be placed in the love-to-see category, when the general experience is that it is easier to inculcate savings and credit behaviour than bring about social changes. Therefore, the progress marker would become extremely general and not specific to the actual field experience. It would merely mean a duplication of the outcome and output exercise. For staff to effectively facilitate the discussions with the community, he/she must have considerable field experience and knowledge.

There are significant differences according to the socio-political and geographical contexts. What one community "expects-to-see" may be ranked as "love-to-see" in other communities. Moreover, progress markers can always be revised. If the community feel that the love-to-see markers have been achieved, new progress makers can be developed. What is useful in this exercise is that this monitoring tool is excellent for planning purposes. While deciding on the progress markers with the partner, one is not thinking just of the outcomes, but also of their graduated progress in terms of behavioural changes. Therefore, an effective self-help group would have women discussing their personal problems, issues of violence, and ways in which they could help each other in addition to dialogue about regular savings and credit behaviour. This can be developed into action points.

Table 2. The elements of what we see as an ideal participatory monitoring and evaluation system.

Specific The system should indicate the challenges that must be met to attain the desired objectives. Although higher goals may be set for motivational reasons, the assessment should be limited to what is practical and feasible.
Participatory To ensure that there is ownership of the monitoring and evaluation system, it must be designed with the active participation of all stakeholders. A system prescribed as an inspiration from above, or designed externally, will never be successful.
Cost Effective The benefits of the system should outweigh the costs involved in designing and implementing the system. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation should be an integral part of the organization not simply be project oriented.
Behavioural Changes: Qualitative–Quantitative The system should focus on changes in the behaviour of the institutions, individuals, and organizations with whom one is working directly. Monitoring is a graduated process — we need to move from one step to the next.
Utility Oriented The system ought to be utility oriented. It should be used for planning, developing new strategies, and finding problems with implementation.
Flexible The system should ensure that neither planning, monitoring, nor evaluation are one-time affairs. They must be part of a continuous process that is built into the systems to ensure flexibility. They must never be viewed in isolation but seen as a comprehensive management tool that promotes efficient and effective work.
Prioritize We may require information on a whole range of aspects such as class, caste composition, livelihood needs, education, and health. However, the data that are generated should be manageable because what is monitored is ultimately what gets managed. Therefore, collecting multiple sheets of information is neither feasible nor desirable. More is not necessarily better. We need to set priorities and only obtain information on those aspects that are of direct concern. Otherwise, we will be wasting human and financial resources. The focus must always be on demonstrating results and improving performance.
Comparability It is imperative that data collected are comparable for analysis

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Sustainable
The system should not be designed with the help of external resource people. It must be evolved within the organization so that it is simple to group which is using it easy to implement, less time consuming, and designed to meet our reporting requirements.

It is also important that a tentative time frame for the three stages of outputs be defined — that is for the expect to see, like to see, and love to see stages. The time frame facilitates better planning and monitoring and can be revised as and when indicated by regular monitoring. Based on our experiences, our recommendation is that outcome mapping should be initiated in one unit and for a short time to develop confidence and faith in the process. By developing a time frame for the progress markers of say SHGs we can develop some understanding of the time required for moving from one stage to the other.

Very often the problem encountered in defining a vision within the community has been that they are not accustomed to dreaming. Their vision never goes beyond their immediate needs — primarily related to better services and facilities or access to development schemes. Our fear was of raising high expectations within the community that could not be met. To avoid this it is important to help the community to identify the resource already available within them and develop strategies with them to make optimum use of them. Any hint of external support may be very damaging to the entire process.

It has also proven to be quite difficult to get a community to prioritize and political influence in making the decision is common. There is not a consensus within the community as to the common vision. Women, for example, have different interests than men and class and caste differences also play a major role. To deal with this, staff who are facilitating the outcome mapping process should have a knowledge of the dominant sectors in the community whose interest are likely to be articulated more than those of other sectors so as to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the discussions. They should also be skilled facilitators comfortable with conflict resolution and negotiating compromises The process works best in the initial phases for homogenous group like SHGs.

Therefore, progress markers should be understood both as monitoring tools as well as an outcomes themselves. If at the end of the project there is a greater degree of participation of different sections of the community in assessment and there is greater women's participation as well as influence in the deliberations, there will be greater consensus within the community. Progress markers show the way. They help to build consensus within the community. *The idea of progress markers is in consonance with our experience that there is no one unilateral path toward community mobilization.* However, in the context of Swayamsiddha, where we are working in different states that each have their own unique history and culture, it becomes difficult to have standardized progress markers and reporting across different geo-political regions.

Outcome mapping should be done before the project is started to establish the graduated changes that ought to be brought about. However, to evolve outcome mapping from the field, good rapport is required with the community. Our experience suggests that outcome mapping can only be introduced after 6–12 months, which gives sufficient time to establish the necessary rapport with the community. This is the only way to make the outcome challenges and, as a result, the entire planning and monitoring process really participatory.

To allow for this period of rapport building, *donors must be sensitive to the financial requirements for an inception phase of the project.* Otherwise, how can there be participatory planning without the involvement of the community? This approach also requires an initial investment in the development of a monitoring and evaluation system for the organization. Our experience has been that the development of this system gave a sharper focus to our program and greatly increased the efficiency and capabilities of our staff. Outcome mapping is not yet completely integrated within our system as it requires additional time and resources, which are scarce within our grass-root organization where one individual has multiple responsibilities; however, we can see its benefits already.

As part of the on-going process, *it is necessary to avoid confrontation between partners,* as monitoring by the community may not initially be a welcome prospect. Even though the government has issued regulations to ensure that all government programmes and schemes involved community representatives in monitoring, it has not yet gained acceptance at the lower levels. So a government health worker's increased accountability to community may not be welcome. Similarly, school teachers adopted a non cooperative attitude, when community leaders added reasons for non performance.

It is interesting to note that though a number of organizations engage in the rhetoric of participatory planning and decision making involving the community, it often remains mere rhetoric. A logical framework guides most projects, which simplifies the complex processes that take place in the field for the benefit of statistical reporting. But, the logical framework analysis is not developed in the field, it is a creation of people sitting in an office who are hired to establish the cause–effect relationships more clearly. In fact, *a logical framework analysis is too simplistic a tool to realistically measure the changes that a project brings about.* Instead, it should be a broad outline of the project objectives, which should be kept in mind while framing the project outcomes. In our project too, we first developed a log frame, and then conducted OM exercise for community Need Assessment. We are now thinking of minimising the gaps between the two, which is made possible because of the flexibility of the project.

We believe that one important aspect is that once established, *outcome mapping provides monitoring outputs that can be used for effective planning and implementation*. The progress markers help us understand the primary stakeholders' perceptions of progress and provide a tool for self-reflection and learning. They also help us to define strategies and chart a course of action of intervention with different partners. Well documented reports of progress markers can also be very useful tools for replicating the process elsewhere.

For Chaitanya, Swayamsiddha is not just a project. It is the consolidation of our 10 years of experience in the field of rural development and women's empowerment. We believe that *progress markers have helped us to reflect on our learning and to chart more effectively our future course of action*. They have also helped us to shift our focus from fulfilling the reporting requirement of the donors, which have traditionally been based on inputs and outreach, to reporting on learning from experience. This has resulted in a shift in focus from achievements in savings and credit to the development of greater confidence, capacity building, and other behavioural changes, as well as the exploration of new avenues to achieve these outputs.

Outcome mapping has also become an effective training tool. Initiating the training of self-help groups with a discussion of where they would like to be in the future leads to a systematic definition of the inputs that are required during the intervention process. In our training at the field level we ask the women's groups to identify where they would like to see their group after 5 years. These ideas are then concretised into stages e.g. in order to ensure access to credit to all, what are the necessary conditions that need to be fulfilled regular meetings, attendance, repayment and so on. This increases ownership to the ruler and heightens the efforts of the group to achieve the results.

Similarly we conducted a planning exercise recently with different divisions in the organisation – Training, Networking, R & D and so on. The Incharges were asked to envision what they would like their divisions to be doing at the end of 5 years and identifying the constraints in achieving these results. These were then converted into short term, medium term and long term strategies.

Our use of outcome mapping has also helped us to explore other ways in which we might experiment with outcome mapping. It need not be used only as a monitoring tool because it is easily adaptable as a tool for learning at the field level. Finally, outcome mapping is an effective tool for motivating the community, the staff, and senior executives. In reality, it can be used by anyone in any field because it urges you to dream with a purpose — and those who dream make a difference.

Acronym List

BAIF	BAIF Development Research Foundation
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCG	Cross-Cutting Group
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPCT	Central Project Coordination Team
DRDA	District Rural Development Agency
DSU	District Support Unit
ICEF	India–Canada Environment Facility
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
M&E CCG	Monitoring and Evaluation Cross-Cutting Group
MIS	Management Information System
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NEPED	Nagaland Empowerment of People Through Economic Development Project
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PHC	Primary Health Centre (Run by the Government)
POU	Project Operations Unit
PRA	Participatory Rapid Appraisal
SARS	State Agricultural Research Station
SHG	Self-Help Group
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
VC	Village Council
VDB	Village Development Board
VHG	Village Health Guide
WARF	West African Rural Foundation
WFA	Women Farmers Association