



MAKING M&E ACCESSIBLE TO CBOs

FIRELIGHT FOUNDATION – JULY 2010



OVERVIEW

- Model rationale
- Model
- Lessons learned

RATIONALE

- Community-based organizations are under-valued and overlooked in funding flows, often due to the lack of skills necessary to demonstrate the outcomes of their vital work
- Most M&E paradigms based on accountability for short-term project funding often marginalize grassroots groups.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Valuing the role CBOs and communities to make a difference
- 2. Building on existing M&E efforts
- Ensuring that monitoring requirements are useful to the CBOs
 - build capacity;
 - set realistic expectations
 - Respond to needs of CBOs

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- **Organizations are clear about the intended results of their work**
- **Organizations have control over their monitoring frameworks, tools & procedures**
- **Monitoring part of day-to-day management of programs**

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- ➔ **M&E is a process of reflection**
- ➔ **Changes are made to the organization based on learning from M&E**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- The Firelight Foundation's M&E training program reached 43 organizations in Lesotho, Zambia and Malawi in 2007 and 2008 and 2009
- Developed specifically for small CBOs, training utilized adult learning principles and practical exercises based on organizations' day-to-day work
- Special attention was given to “de-technicalizing” M&E concepts

TRAINING MODEL OVERVIEW

STAGE ONE: FOUNDATION

- Introduction to M&E training: Key concepts
- Follow-up support by in-country META facilitator



STAGE ONE: INTERMEDIARY

- Uplift M&E workshop: Review of basic concepts
- Follow-up by in-country META facilitator



➤ **STAGE TWO: DOCUMENTING FOR M&E**

- Developing tools, analysis of data
- Follow-up support by in-country META facilitator



STAGE THREE: ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS

- Addressing organizations' specific needs
- Follow-up support by in-country META facilitator



STAGE FOUR: TRAINING OF MENTORS

- Mentor training for organizations with strong uptake
- Follow-up support from Inside/Out

APPROACH

- Used everyday language as opposed to technical jargon
- Based on experiential, adult learning principles
- Built on the concept of using practical examples and having participants apply the concepts immediately to their own context

STAGE ONE

Content:

- **Cover monitoring concepts & terms**
- **Theory of program logic**

Workshop Outcomes:

- **Participants comfortable with M&E**
- **Apply concepts to their own work**

STAGE TWO

Content:

- Implementing M&E, including: collection and using data**

Workshop Outcomes:

- Participants design data collection tools and are able to analyze data and consider ways in which to apply this knowledge**

EXAMPLE

- **Why are we going on this journey?**
- **How are we going to get there?**
- **Where do we want to get to?**
- **How do we know we are on the right track?**

ONGOING SUPPORT

Role of the in-country M&E mentor:

- To provide individualized, follow-up technical support to Firelight grantee partners who participated in the Firelight M&E workshops**
- To learn more about grantees' monitoring activities, offer advice and support, and share lessons learned with Firelight Foundation**

OUTCOMES



WHAT WORKED

- APPROACH
- CONTENT
- CO-FACILITATION
- GROUPING ACCORDING TO ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY
- FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

CHALLENGES

- Staff turn-over
- Timing between workshops
- Lack of leadership buy-in
- Skill level of META Facilitators
- Frequency of mentoring visits and one-on-one support

IMPROVEMENTS

- Assessment of needs, interests, readiness
- Clarify grantee expectations
- Build leadership buy-in
- Attention to overall organizational development issues
- Increase frequency of one-on-one sessions
- Shorter timing between workshops

IMPROVEMENTS

- M&E workshop for M&E facilitators
- Mentoring of M&E facilitators
- Improve management of M&E facilitators
- Increase Joint planning

CONCLUSION

- Firelight/ Insideout/ OtherWise's approach demonstrates a means to transform M&E from an unpleasant, often confusing burden for CBOs to a tool for empowerment and organizational development.