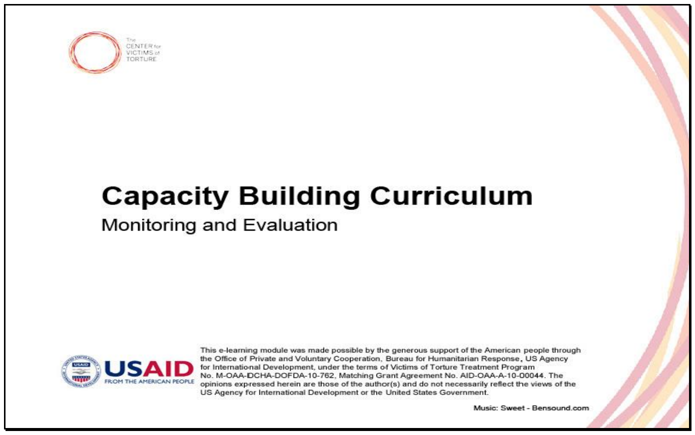

Slide 1 - Curriculum Title

Text Captions: Capacity Building Curriculum

Monitoring and Evaluation

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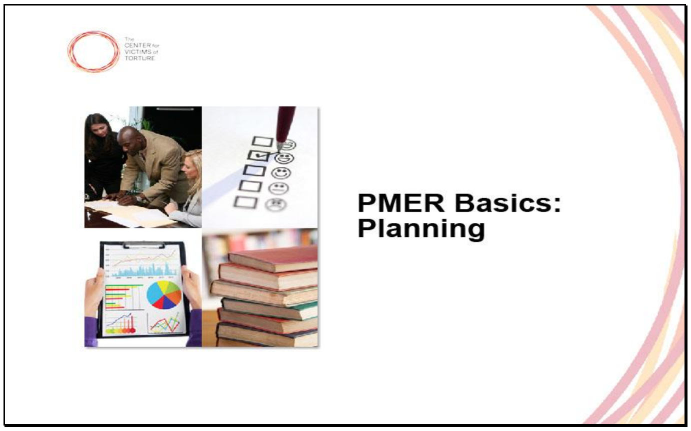
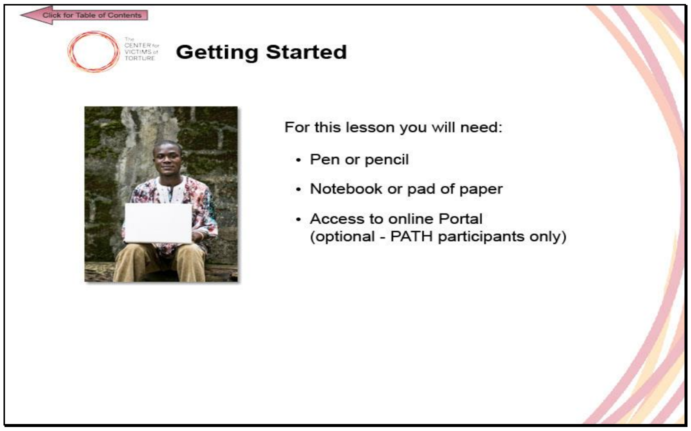


Slide 2 - Lesson Welcome

Slide notes: Welcome to the Planning lesson in the PMER Basics Unit of the Monitoring and Evaluation curriculum.

Text Captions: PMER Basics: Planning



Slide 3 - Getting Started

Slide notes: As you go through these lessons, you should be prepared with a pen or pencil and a notebook or pad of paper that you can use to write down your thoughts, or for any journal activities during the lesson.

If you are taking this lesson as a part of the PATH program or a course within another specific capacity building program, you may also be invited to access additional resources, take part in discussion forums, or take part in other activities, assignments or presentations with other participants through an online portal.

Remember, at any time you can click the Table of Contents links to the left of this screen to jump ahead or go back to other screens in this lesson. Also, be sure to click the Complete button on the Resources screen at the end of this lesson.

Text Captions: Getting Started

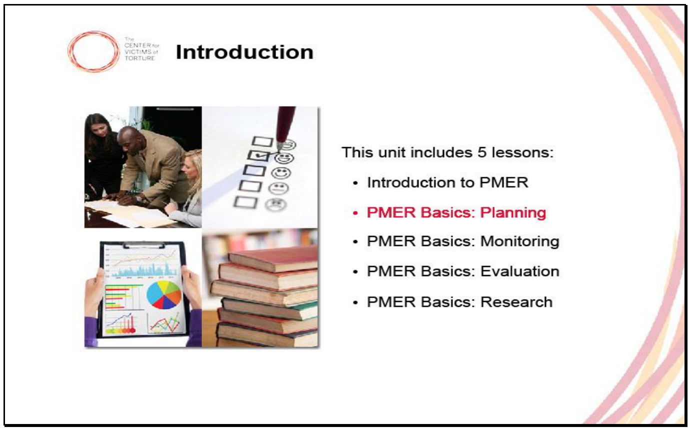
For this lesson you will need:

Pen or pencil

Notebook or pad of paper

Access to online Portal (optional - PATH participants only)

Click for Table of Contents



Slide 4 - Introduction

Slide notes: PMER is widely recognized as an important set of practices to ensure quality programs, enhance program impact, and even secure funding. This lesson is the second of five in the PMER Basics Unit.

The unit begins with an introductory lesson and includes lessons on each of the four PMER components:

- Planning
- Monitoring,
- Evaluation and
- Research.

In this lesson, we will delve deeper into the P of PMER – Planning. We will take a closer look some of the important concepts around planning, how it works, and why it is important.

We will also introduce some processes and tools you and your organization may find useful to help in your own evaluation planning.

Text Captions: Introduction

This unit includes 5 lessons:

Introduction to PMER

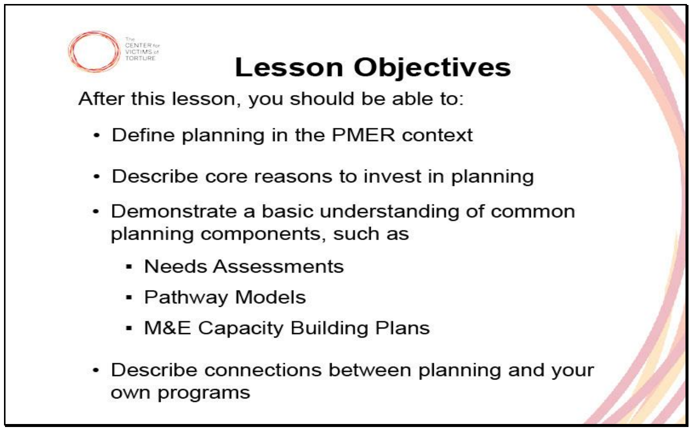
PMER Basics: Planning

PMER Basics: Monitoring

PMER Basics: Evaluation

PMER Basics: Research

PMER Basics: Planning



Slide 5 - Lesson Objectives

Slide notes: After this lesson, you should be able to:

• Give a basic definition of Planning in the PMER context;

• Describe the core reasons to invest time and energy in planning;

• Demonstrate a basic understanding of common and core components of planning, including specifically:

Needs Assessments, Pathway Models, and M&E Capacity Building Plans; and

• Describe some preliminary ways in which planning relates to—or could relate to—your own organization's programs.

Text Captions: Lesson Objectives

After this lesson, you should be able to:

Define planning in the PMER context

Describe core reasons to invest in planning

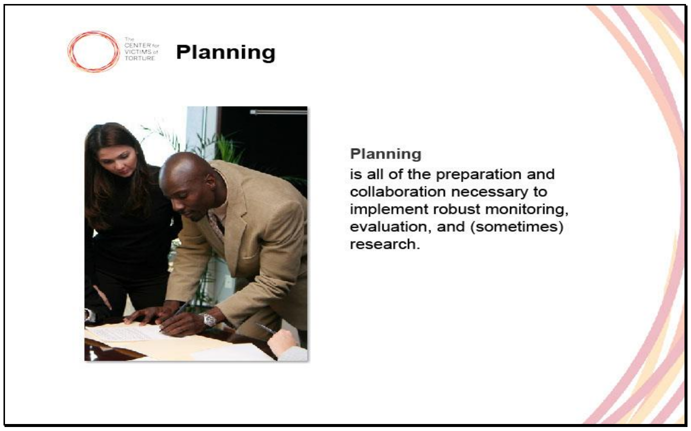
Demonstrate a basic understanding of common planning components, such as

Needs Assessments

Pathway Models

M&E Capacity Building Plans

Describe connections between planning and your own programs



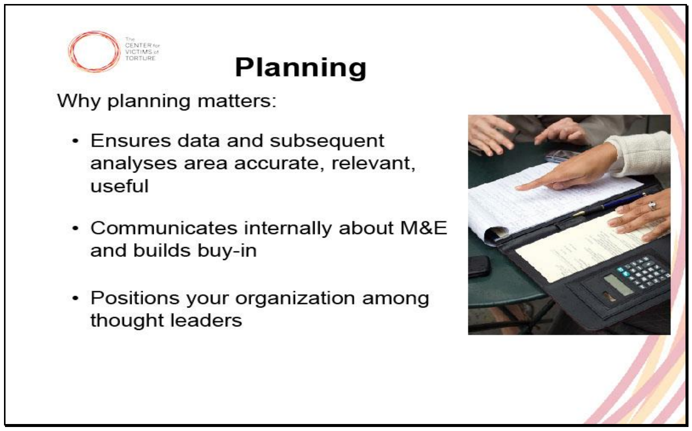
Slide 6 - Planning

Slide notes: Remember, planning refers to all of the preparation and collaboration necessary to implement robust monitoring, evaluation, and (when appropriate), research.

It can include activities such as deciding on core indicators, developing or selecting assessments, selecting data platforms, drafting a methods section, collaborating with project team members to assign tasks, budget planning, and other activities.

Text Captions: Planning

Planning is all of the preparation and collaboration necessary to implement robust monitoring, evaluation, and (sometimes) research.



Slide 7 - Planning

Slide notes: Often, organizations neglect planning. They overlook important steps in the planning process or skip planning entirely. However, planning is the foundation for strong monitoring, evaluation and research.

Planning helps ensure that the data you gather, and the analyses you make based on that data, are accurate, relevant, and useful to your organization's work.

Also, a good planning process can help communicate to others in your organization about the benefits and processes for gathering and evaluating data, which in turn can increase buy-in.

Finally, committing to deliberate planning processes puts your organization at the forefront of thought in this area of practice.

In summary, thoughtful, methodical planning at the start of a project or program is always a good investment. So, let's get started!

Text Captions: Planning

Why planning matters:

Ensures data and subsequent analyses area accurate, relevant, useful

Communicates internally about M&E and builds buy-in

Positions your organization among thought leaders

Slide 8 - Know Your Program

Slide notes: Before you can begin to think about measurement, data or analysis in a meaningful way, you first need to make sure you know your program.

Right now you might be thinking, “Of course we know all of our programs! We do this work every day!” It is true—no one knows your work better than you do. You and your colleagues know your programs and your clients; you know the reason your organization exists, and you know the context in which you work. But when we say “get to know your program” in the M&E sense—when we start to talk about measuring and analyzing the work—we refer to something specific.

We are talking about a methodical approach to examine specific questions and types of information related to the work.

We are talking about framing the questions that are essential for meaningful and useful M&E before the start of any new program, or perhaps when a program is being reviewed and revised.

Two key and critical approaches to get to know your program in this way are: needs assessment, and definition of program theory and content.

These activities are key steps in planning that prepare you and your organization for effective, meaningful M&E. They result in information that is essential to plan and implement good monitoring and evaluation practices.

Furthermore, staff who work on M&E have an important role in these two steps, and should be deeply involved in the process.

Text Captions: Know Your Program

Knowing the program in the M&E sense involves a specific, methodical approach

Looks deeper to define and describe what will be measured and analyzed

Two key, critical processes:

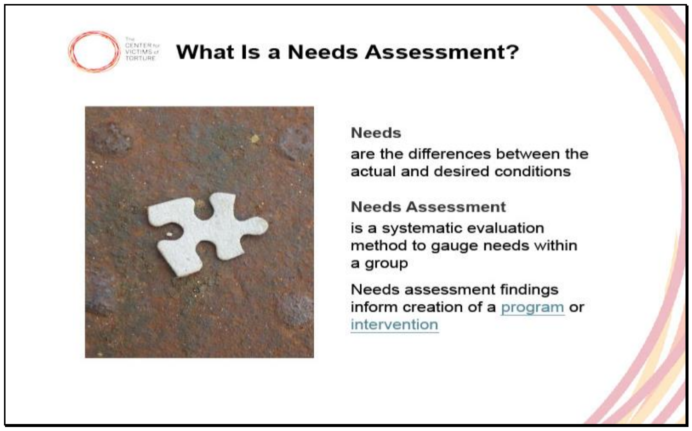
Needs Assessment

Definition of program theory and content

Slide 9 - Needs Assessment

Slide notes: We will begin by taking a closer look at needs assessment.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment



Slide 10 - What is a Needs Assessment?

Slide notes:

In the M&E context, need refers to the difference between the actual condition for a specific population or group, and the desired states or conditions.

A Needs Assessment is a systematic evaluation method to gauge the requirements or “needs” of that group.

Needs assessment is an evaluation method designed primarily as a tool to support planning an intervention or program that is specifically relevant to the group or community you are trying to serve.

The population’s needs—as they appear in findings from the needs assessment—should directly inform the design of the program. Therefore, ideally, a needs assessment should be done before an intervention or program is designed and implemented.

Text Captions: What Is a Needs Assessment?

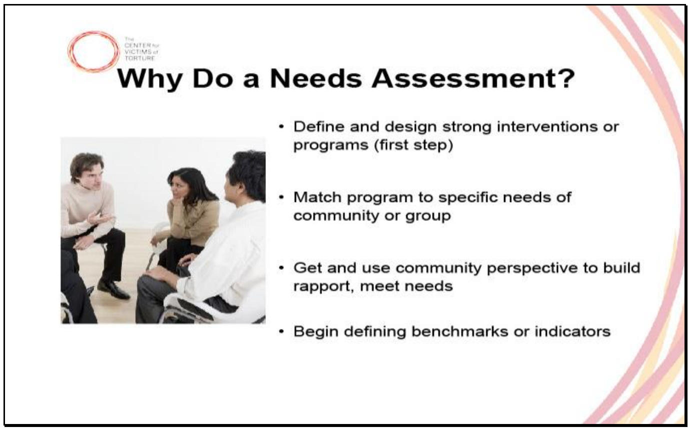
Needs

are the differences between the actual and desired conditions

Needs Assessment

is a systematic evaluation method to gauge needs within a group

Needs assessment findings inform creation of a program or intervention



Slide 11 - Why Do a Needs Assessment?

Slide notes: So, what is the value of a needs assessment?

Overall, a needs assessment helps you define your program. It is a critical first step toward designing a powerful intervention or program.

A needs assessment also helps you match your program to the specific needs and desires of the community or group that the program is intended to serve.

It can also help you gather and use the perspectives of the community or group served. This is critical—it builds rapport, and increases the likelihood that your program will truly meet your beneficiaries' needs and work within the specific context.

A needs assessment also helps you begin defining your goals—including meaningful benchmarks or indicators—which are essential before you can conduct monitoring and evaluation.

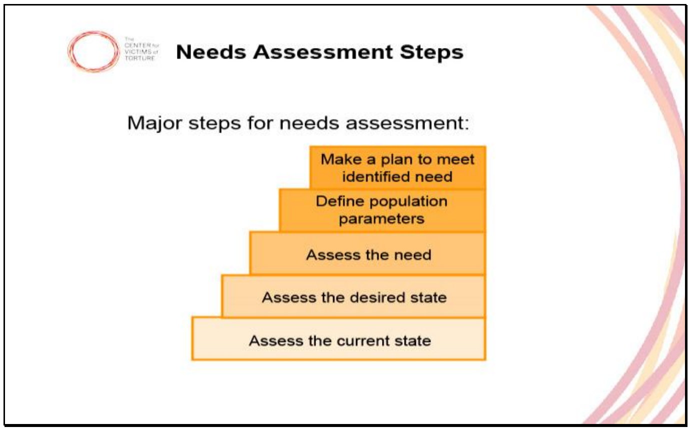
Text Captions: Why Do a Needs Assessment?

Define and design strong interventions or programs (first step)

Match program to specific needs of community or group

Get and use community perspective to build rapport, meet needs

Begin defining benchmarks or indicators



Slide 12 - Needs Assessment Steps

Slide notes: When you perform a needs assessment as part of the process of planning a program or intervention, there are five key, overall steps:

• First, assess the current conditions or state of affairs. In this step, carefully gather information about the situation to ensure that your understanding of the circumstances and issues surrounding the current state match the realities.

This step might include tasks such as reviewing public documents, interviewing individuals in the affected community, conducting focus groups with key stakeholders, or collecting survey data from a large number of people in the community.

This information will help you identify needs and program opportunities, and account for potential barriers.

• Second, assess the desired conditions or state of affairs. In this step, you want to verify that you understand what the affected population perceives to be most helpful or most important.

This helps ensure any program or intervention you create is aimed at a meaningful outcome.

Some ways you may gather this information include, again, conducting interviews, conducting focus groups, or collecting survey data from the community.

• Next, assess the need. Again, need means the difference between current and desired state of affairs. Analyze the information you identified in the first two steps, and define the gap between the current state and the desired state.

Your program will focus on the ways in which your organization can realistically help to close that gap.

• Then, define your population parameters. Who will receive services or benefit from your program? Will you serve a particular age group or geographic area? What experiences, diagnoses, or circumstances define the group of people you will see?

Give this careful thought, and apply some specific parameters. This will help you define the focus and scope of your program or intervention.

• Once a need and population are clearly identified, create a plan for your program to meet the identified need. This plan should address how your organization can strategically help close that need gap within your defined population.

A needs assessment is a powerful tool to design and understand your programs and interventions. To explore this idea further, let’s consider an example.

Planning can include activities such as deciding on core indicators, developing or selecting assessments, selecting data platforms, drafting a methods discussion, collaborating with project team members to assign tasks, budget planning, and other activities.

Often organizations forego important steps in the planning phase. In response to time and other practical constraints, it is very tempting to rely on informal, ad-hoc planning or skip the planning phase entirely.

Another possible barrier to good planning practices can be a shortage of resources on planning within monitoring and evaluation literature, as compared with other PMER topics—a significant gap.

However, deliberate planning at the start of a project or program is always a good investment and is worth the challenge.

Planning helps ensure that the data you gather and the analyses you make based on that data are accurate, relevant, and useful to your organization's work.

Also, a good planning process can help communicate to others in your organization about the benefits and processes for gathering and evaluating data, which in turn can increase buy-in.

We will talk about this in greater depth in the PMER Basics Lesson on Planning.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment Steps

Major steps for needs assessment:

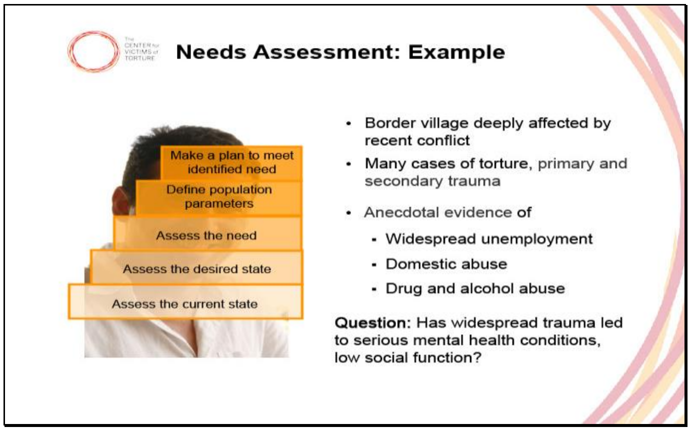
Assess the current state

Assess the desired state

Assess the need

Define population parameters

Make a plan to meet identified need



Slide 13 - Needs Assessment Example

Slide notes: Adam is a manager with Monitoring and Evaluation responsibilities. He works for an organization that is located near a border region where there was recent conflict. In particular, a nearby village was deeply affected by the conflict.

Individuals who live in the village—plus many who fled to the village during the conflict—experienced primary torture. Many other individuals are secondary trauma survivors who live with someone who experienced primary torture.

Adam and his colleagues have heard anecdotal evidence—that is, individual stories—of people in the community losing their jobs or businesses, hearing rumors of spousal abuse,

witnessing public intoxication, and other factors that suggest that social functioning in this community is low.

As members of a mental health organization, Adam and his colleagues think that widespread primary and secondary trauma may have led to serious mental health conditions in this community which lead to low levels of social functioning.

The team thinks that the organization should consider providing mental health services to this village community.

To help ensure good planning, monitoring and evaluation, Adam suggests the organization should conduct a needs assessment. He helps lead the team through the five needs assessment steps.

PMER stands for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research.

Note that sometimes the R in PMER refers to reporting. But, for our purposes, R refers to research, and reporting is integrated into each component of PMER.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment: Example

Border village deeply affected by recent conflict

Many cases of torture, primary and secondary trauma

Anecdotal evidence of

Widespread unemployment

Domestic abuse

Drug and alcohol abuse

Question: Has widespread trauma led to serious mental health conditions, low social function?

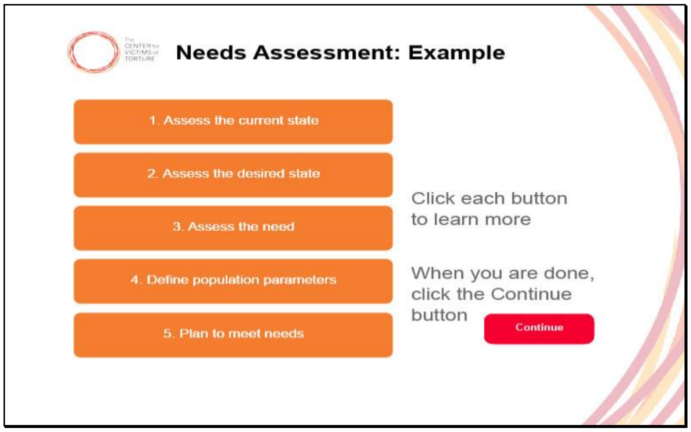
Assess the current state

Assess the desired state

Assess the need

Define population parameters

Make a plan to meet identified need



Slide 14 - Needs Assessment: Interaction

Slide notes: Click each of the buttons to learn what Adam and his team do at each step in their needs assessment process. When you have finished, click Continue.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment: Example

Click each button to learn more

When you are done, click the Continue button

Continue

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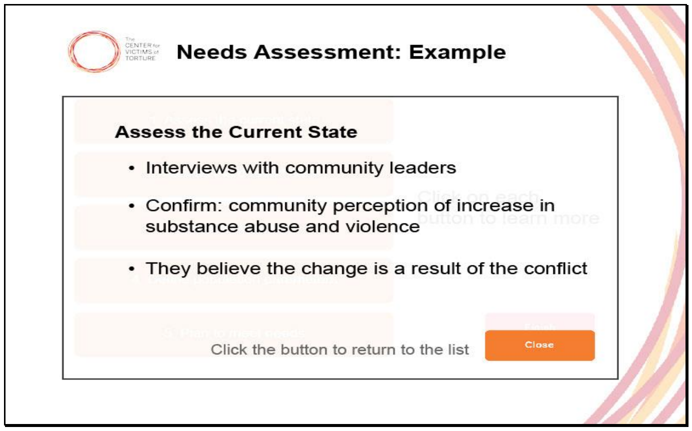


Slide 15 - Assess the Current State

Slide notes: Assess the current state. The organization begins by trying to get some more tangible evidence of the situation in the village and to in some way quantify or verify the circumstances.

Adam and his team conduct interviews with community leaders to assess these social factors—unemployment, spousal abuse, substance abuse and so on—since the conflict.

They find that many residents and heads of household are indeed currently unemployed. During the conflict, many residents lost their businesses.

Others had to flee from places where they had employment, and have been without good work or income. Some households lost their primary wage earners or other family adults, and the remaining adults cannot work because they need to care for children.

Also, Adam and his team confirm that, among the population, there is a perception that substance abuse and violence have increased. The community leaders believe that these changes are the direct result of the conflict and traumas.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment: Example

Click on each button to learn more

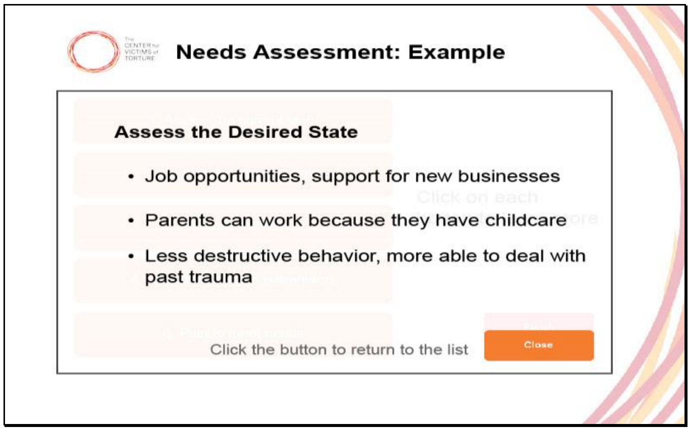
Assess the Current State

Interviews with community leaders

Confirm: community perception of increase in substance abuse and violence

They believe the change is a result of the conflict

Click the button to return to the list



Slide 16 - Assess the Desired State

Slide notes: Assess the desired state. The team also conducts additional interviews with individuals affected by the conflict to learn what they would like to have happen in the community. Through these interviews, Adam learns that:

The residents of the village want to have job opportunities or the chance to start new small businesses to help support their families.

Since many households in the village have small children, and the main caregiver is also the potential wage earner, they say they need safe, reliable childcare. This would allow the adults to work and earn a living.

Many people in the village feel—or say they live with someone who is—distressed and “not themselves.” They want to see their family members and friends get better.

They want help for people to deal with the experiences that have caused the distress and changed behaviors.

Text Captions: Click on each button to learn more

Needs Assessment: Example

Assess the Desired State

Job opportunities, support for new businesses

Parents can work because they have childcare

Less destructive behavior, more able to deal with past trauma

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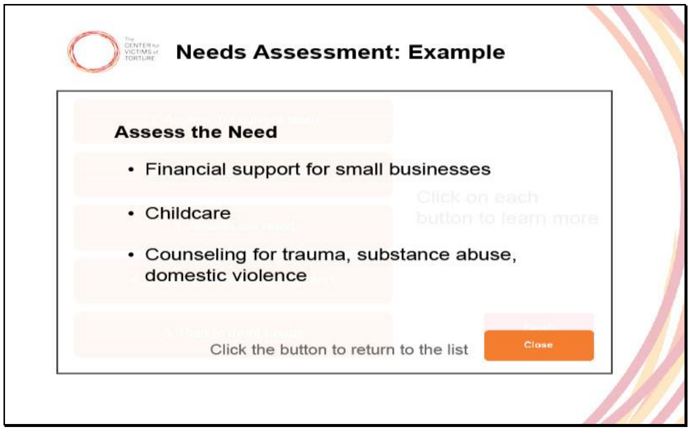


Slide 17 - Assess the Need

Slide notes: Assess Need: Once Adam and his team have a good understanding of the current and desired states, they can assess the need—the gap between the current and desired state.

They can see there is need for financial support to: start up small businesses; childcare so that the parents can work and get treatment; and counseling that addresses trauma, substance abuse and violence.

Before proceeding, Adam and the team consider—how do these identified needs match with their capacity as an organization?

Remember, not every organization can meet every need, so it is important to consider what is within the capabilities and mission of your organization. In this case, Adam's organization determines that they have the capacity to provide mental health services.

They also determine that, through a recent economic development grant and collaboration with local partners, they can help address the other two identified needs.

Text Captions: Click on each button to learn more

Needs Assessment: Example

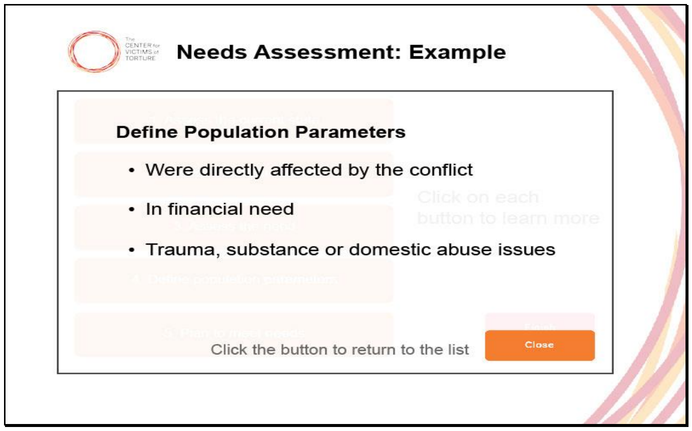
Assess the Need

Financial support for small businesses

Childcare

Counseling for trauma, substance abuse, domestic violence

Click the button to return to the list



Slide 18 - Define Population Parameters

Slide notes: Define your population parameters. Based on the interviews, the analysis of the need, and the organization’s capacity, Adam’s organization defines the population for the program.

They decide the program will work with individuals who were directly affected by the conflict, are in financial need, and have a trauma-related diagnosis or issues related to substance abuse or domestic violence.

Text Captions: Click on each button to learn more

Needs Assessment: Example

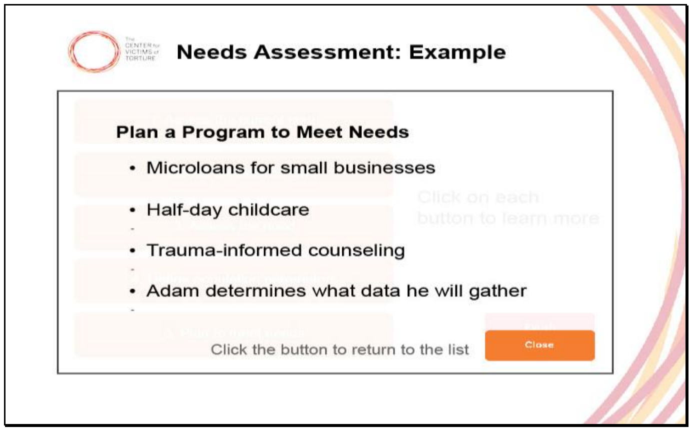
Define Population Parameters

Were directly affected by the conflict

In financial need

Trauma, substance or domestic abuse issues

Click the button to return to the list



Slide 19 - Plan to Meet Needs

Slide notes: Plan a program. Adam helps his organization design a program with three components: a microloan program to help beneficiaries start or rebuild small businesses, half-day childcare, and trauma-informed counseling.

The organization has the capacity to fund the microloans and provide counseling; they plan to work with a local partner to provide the childcare component of the program.

Conducting a needs assessment allowed the organization to confidently create a program that addressed the actual needs of the community, and it gave people in the community the chance to “buy-in” to the intervention—that is, to feel that their concerns had been heard, and that they had a role in shaping the intervention. Together, this kind of verification and community support makes a program more successful.

This needs assessment also specifically helped Adam identify the most important components of the project to measure outcomes, which helps him plan for monitoring and evaluation.

For example, Adam determined that, with respect to the microloan outcomes, he will gather data about:

- The number of microloan disbursements, and the average dollar amount per disbursement;
- The percentage of the microloans paid back within one year;
- The percentage of microloan recipients who are gainfully employed one year after the disbursement; and
- Participant descriptions of the impact of the microloan.

Text Captions: Click on each button to learn more

Needs Assessment: Example

Plan a Program to Meet Needs

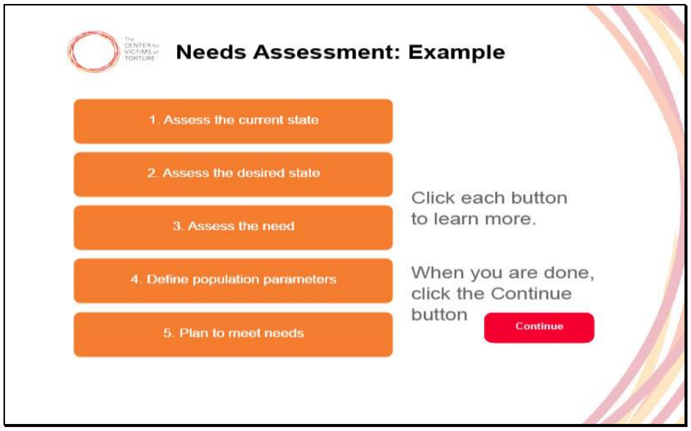
Microloans for small businesses

Half-day childcare

Trauma-informed counseling

Adam determines what data he will gather

Click the button to return to the list



Slide 20 - Needs Assessment: Interaction

Slide notes: Click each of the buttons to learn what Adam and his team do at each step in their needs assessment process. When you have finished, click the red finish button at the bottom of this screen.

Click each of the buttons to learn what Adam and his team do at each step in their needs assessment process. When you have finished, click the red finish button at the bottom of this screen.

Text Captions: Needs Assessment: Example

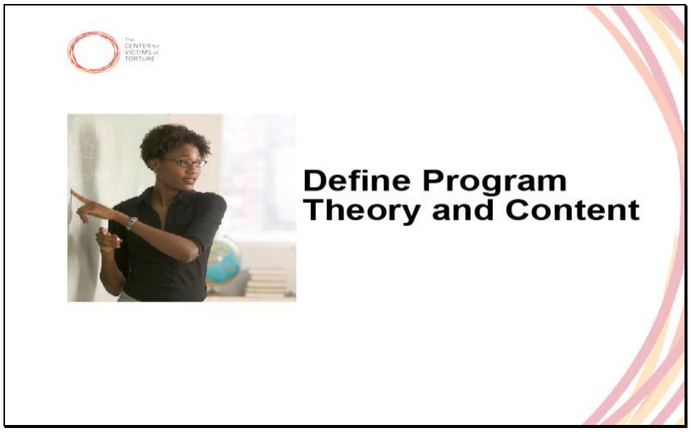
Click each button to learn more.

Continue

Continue

Continue

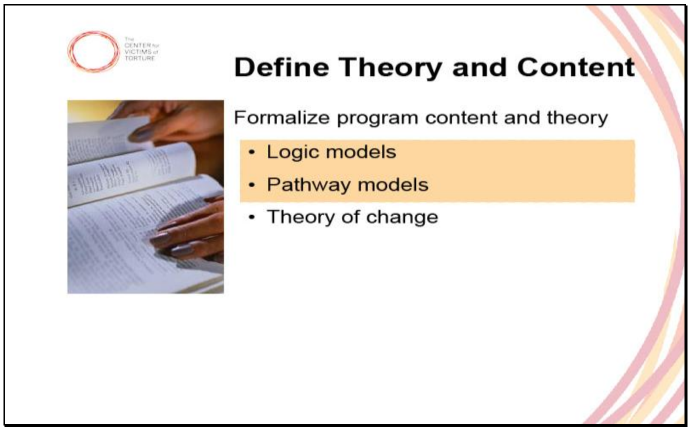
When you are done, click the Continue button



Slide 21 - Define Program Theory and Content

Slide notes: After you complete a needs assessment, the second critical process to understand the program that you are creating, from an M&E perspective, is to define the program theory and content.

Text Captions: Define Program Theory and Content



Slide 22 - Define Theory and Content

Slide notes: After the needs assessment, it is time to formalize your program. There are many approaches to help you formally define program content and theory, including logic models, pathway models, and theory of change modeling.

In this lesson we will provide focus on the first two, Logic models and Pathway models, but we will provide resources at the end of the lesson on each of these three approaches. Now let us take a closer look at these.

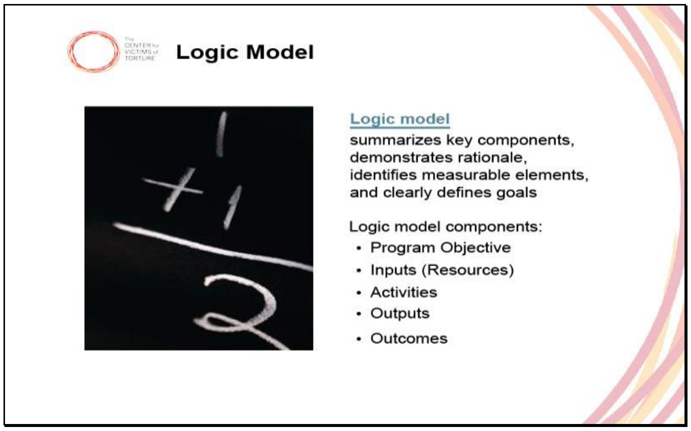
Text Captions: Define Theory and Content

Formalize program content and theory

Logic models

Pathway models

Theory of change



Slide 23 - Logic Model

Slide notes: A logic model is a worksheet or table used to represent key components of a project in a formal and systematic way. A logic model summarizes key program elements, demonstrates the rationale for why a program is designed a certain way, identifies key measurable program components, and clearly defines the goals, outcomes, and objectives of a program.

Logic models are important for program planning and communication with internal and external audiences.

For M&E officers, logic models are a key tool in M&E planning and tool development. Internally, logic models provide a simple and effective way to describe, review and refine programs.

Externally, an increasing number of funders require logic models for new programs.

A logic model is framed by the core program objective. From there, logic models typically include at least four components:

Resources or “Inputs” – These are the things required in order to implement the program or intervention. This may include things like financial resources, personnel, or logistical resources;

Activities – that is, the actual things that the program and staff will do;

Outputs – the tangible items produced by the program—things such as reports, papers, or tools; and finally

Outcomes – the changes or improvements we hope and expect to see.

Some logic models also include external factors and assumptions. There are many ways to configure a logic model, but the purpose it the same: to clearly show the key components of your project in a single (and hopefully concise) table.

Text Captions: Logic Model

Logic model

summarizes key components, demonstrates rationale, identifies measurable elements, and clearly defines goals

Logic model components:

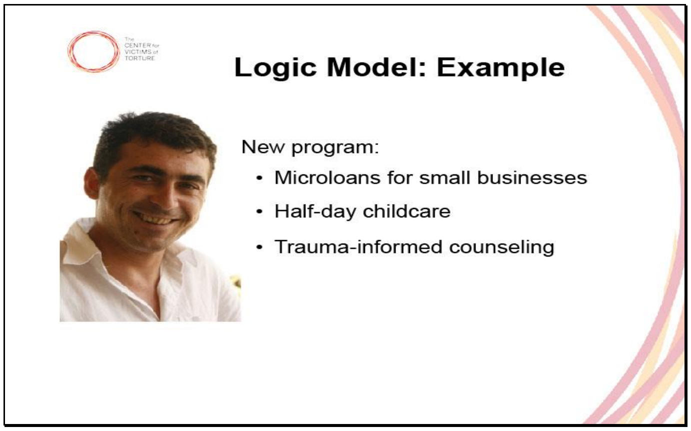
Program Objective

Inputs (Resources)

Activities

Outputs

Outcomes



Slide 24 - Logic Model: Example

Slide notes: As an example, let us consider again the new program at Adam's organization. Remember, this is a program designed to provide microloans, childcare, and mental health counseling to individuals affected by a recent conflict.

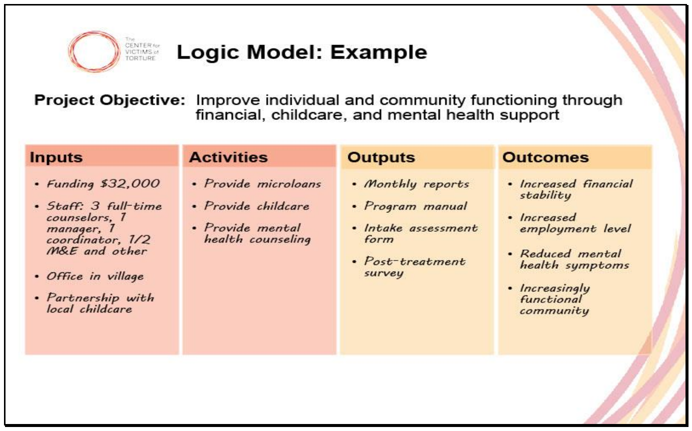
Text Captions: Logic Model: Example

New program:

Microloans for small businesses

Half-day childcare

Trauma-informed counseling



Slide 25 - Logic Model: Example

Slide notes: After completing the needs assessment, one way Adam and the team may start to formally define the theory and content of their program is to complete a logic model.

To begin, they include the core objectives of the program: to improve individual and community functioning through financial-, childcare- and mental health support.

In the Activities column, Adam enters the three main activities of the program, as determined in the needs analysis. The program activities are: provide microloans, provide childcare, and provide mental health counseling.

Adam adds the inputs—the practical resources that are required to implement the program. These include

• funding of a specific dollar amount, to be drawn from two grants the organization has received;

• staff in the form of 3 full time counselors;

• a manager to oversee the program and partnerships, and to oversee the microloans process;

• and a coordinator who will help with client intake and scheduling, coordinating the microloan application process, and coordination with the childcare partner organization.

He also accounts for the amount of time that the program is expected to need from the M&E person and from other administrative roles within the organization, estimating the equivalent of a half time person spread across those duties.

He also includes the facilities and partner needs—the organization will need a small office in the village area where they can see clients, and they will need partnership with a specific childcare facility located in the village.

The outcomes—the desired changes or improvements resulting from the program—are increased financial stability for beneficiaries, ability of beneficiaries to pursue and retain employment opportunities, improved mental well-being, and improved social functioning in the community.

Each outcome should be something that could be measured through monitoring and evaluation.

For example “reduction in mental health symptoms” could be measured with an assessment of mental health distress—such as anxiety, depression, PTSD or other symptoms—that are particularly relevant to the program’s counseling approach.

Another example, to address the “increasingly functional community” outcome, we might measure unemployment rates, violent crime statistics or public intoxication reports.

For Outputs, Adam lists monthly reports to the funder, monthly internal M&E reporting, a program manual, program intake assessment forms, and a post-treatment survey to assess change.

Recall that monitoring measures the implementation of a program or intervention.

Monitoring addresses questions such as, what activities took place, how many activities were performed, how many or what types of clients were served, how many sessions did each client attend, etcetera.

Evaluation analyzes the outcomes and impact. Evaluation asks more complicated questions, such as how useful or effective was the program or intervention.

Text Captions: Logic Model: Example

Activities

Outcomes

Inputs

Outputs

Project Objective:

Improve individual and community functioning through financial, childcare, and mental health support

Provide microloans

Provide childcare

Provide mental health counseling

Funding $32,000

Increased financial stability

Increased employment level

Reduced mental health symptoms

Increasingly functional community

Staff: 3 full-time counselors, 1 manager, 1 coordinator, 1/2 M&E and other

Office in village

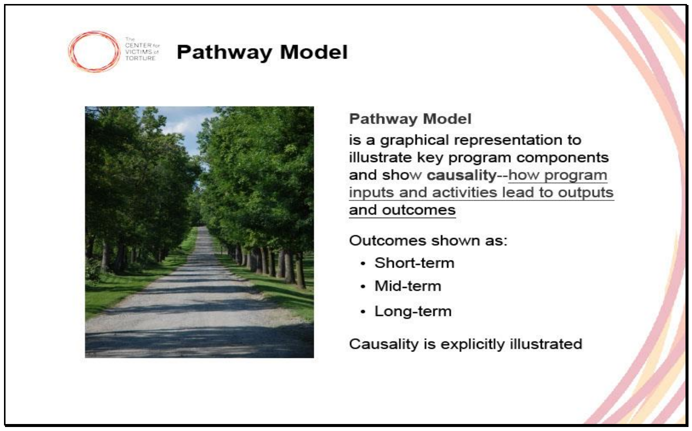
Partnership with local childcare

Monthly reports

Program manual

Intake assessment form

Post-treatment survey



Slide 26 - Pathway Model

Slide notes: A second approach that can help formally define program content and theory is a Pathway Model.

A Pathway Model is a graphical representation used to systematically summarize key components of a project. Outcomes in a Pathway model are often divided into short-term, mid-term and long-term outcomes.

Each outcome builds on the ones before it to illustrate the milestones of progression from the start of activities to the final outcomes over the length of the program.

Pathway models are also useful tools for identifying and developing key indicators that are tailored to the program.

As with the Logic Model, the Pathway model builds off the components of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. However, in a pathway model, each component is represented as a “box” and is connected to others by arrows.

Where a Logic Model implies causality, the Pathway Model makes causality explicit. Arrows in the model show how the activities lead to the outcomes. This way of illustrating a program makes clear the processes by which the program will create change.

It also helps highlight any gaps in program logic.

There are a few other key differences between the Logic and Pathway models. For example, while the resources or inputs are explicitly shown in the Logic model, they are not usually specifically represented in the Pathway model.

Text Captions: Pathway Model

Pathway Model

is a graphical representation to illustrate key program components and show causality--how program inputs and activities lead to outputs and outcomes

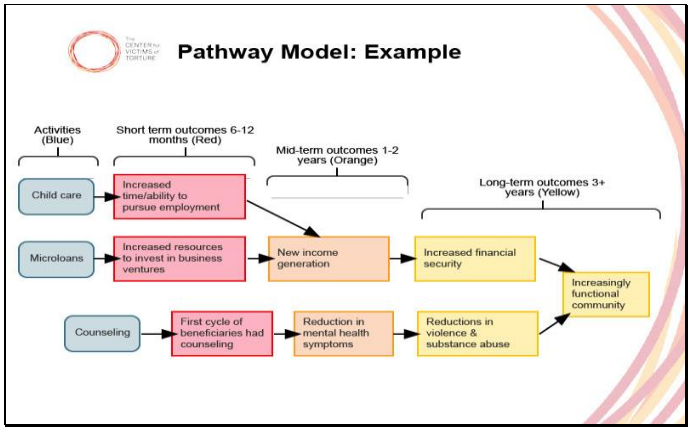
Outcomes shown as:

Short-term

Mid-term

Long-term

Causality is explicitly illustrated



Slide 27 - Pathway Model: Example

Slide notes: Returning again to the new program in Adam’s organization, let’s take a look at their Pathway Model. You see that the inputs or resources—funding, staff, partnerships, building, etcetera—are not shown in the image.

The flow begins with the activities—provide childcare, microloans and counseling.

From there, we have arrows to the short-term outcomes, shown here in red boxes:

• Childcare leads to increased time and ability to pursue employment,

From there, we have arrows to the short-term outcomes, shown here in red boxes:

• Childcare leads to increased time and ability to pursue employment,

• The microloans lead to increased resources to invest in business ventures,

• And mental health counseling leads to the first cycle of beneficiaries receive counseling.

Adam and the organization are planning for this program to last for three years, so these short-term outcomes are the changes they hope to see within the first year. Next, we have arrows from short-term outcomes to mid-term outcomes shown in orange.

In this case these outcomes the organization hopes to see from the program after the first year and a half. We see that:

• The short-term outcomes of “increased time and ability to purse employment” and “increased resources to invest in business ventures” both lead to the mid-term outcome, “new income generation.”

This happens when beneficiaries with childcare find employment and new businesses begin to recognize income.

• Also, the short-term outcome "first cycle of beneficiaries receive counseling” leads to a mid-term outcome, “reduction in mental health symptoms."

Finally, these mid-term outcomes lead to long-term outcomes by the end of the project and beyond. Specifically:

• “New income generation” leads to the long-term outcome “increased financial security,”

• “Reduction in mental health symptoms” leads to the long-term outcome “reductions in violence and substance abuse,” and

• These two long-term outcomes, shown in yellow, lead to a third long-term outcome, “increasingly functional community.”

It is important to note that for the sake of demonstration, this example is a very simplified version of a Pathway model.

Often the Pathway model would include the outputs—the tangible products that come out of the program, like the monthly reports, program manual, intake assessment and post-treatment survey—that Adam included in the Logic model.

However, for simplicity, we have not included the outputs in this example.

Once the pathway model is complete, Adam can use it to help create indicators for monitoring and evaluation. Each box in a pathway serves as a potential guide or prompt for developing indicators for the program evaluation.

For example, Adam can focus on the short-term outcome box, “first cycle of beneficiaries had counseling” and build a more specific benchmark and indicator such as “75% of the clients who begin counseling will complete the cycle.”

The indicator is the percentage of clients who complete counseling and the benchmark is 75%. There are additional resources online where you can learn more about Pathway models or find tools to help you create your own Pathway model.

Be sure to see the resources page at the end of this lesson.

Now, let’s take a look at how all of the elements of PMER come together. Planning is the foundation for all PMER.

In this stage, it is important to take the time to make deliberate, careful decisions and build consensus around how you will conduct your monitoring and evaluation or your research plan.

How well you do this will affect the quality and usefulness of both your data and analysis later.

At the end of the planning phase you should have the tools, systems, and team buy-in you need to begin monitoring—

which lets us know if our planned activities are on track—and evaluation – which gives us information about the impact or value of our programs or interventions.

Finally, with a core of M&E systems and skills in place, we open up the opportunity to do research.

Research shares and builds on the methods, systems, and ethical consideration of M&E, but research has different goals and addresses a different type of question.

Text Captions: Pathway Model: Example

Child care Microloans

Counseling Increased

time/ability to pursue employment

Increased resources to invest in business ventures

First cycle of beneficiaries had counseling

New income generation

Reduction in mental health symptoms

Increased financial security

Reductions in violence & substance abuse

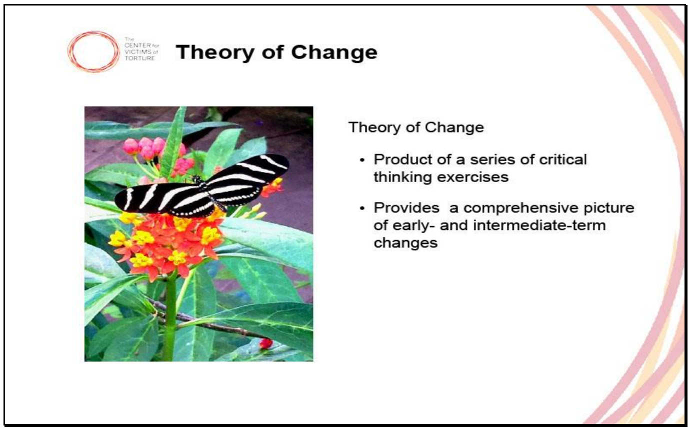
Increasingly functional community

Activities (Blue)

Short term outcomes 6-12 months (Red)

Mid-term outcomes 1-2 years (Orange)

Long-term outcomes 3+ years (Yellow)



Slide 28 - Theory of Change

Slide notes: As we mentioned earlier, there is a third approach that can help formally define program content and theory—a Theory of Change Model.

The Harvard Family Research Project defines Theory of Change as the product of a series of critical-thinking exercises that provides a comprehensive picture of the early- and intermediate-term changes in a given community that are needed to reach a long-term goal articulated by the community.

We won’t focus on Theory of Change in this lesson, but if you are interested in learning more about Theory of Change and whether it might be right for you or your organization, be sure to see the resources listed at the end of this lesson.

Evaluation in the PMER context refers to a systematic process to determine the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of a program or intervention.

Text Captions: Theory of Change

Theory of Change

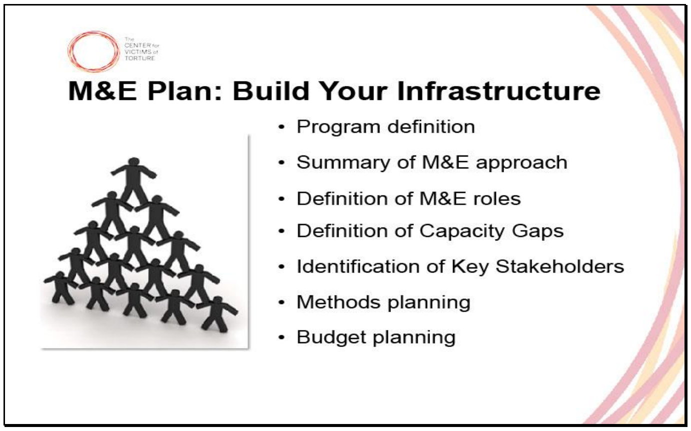
Product of a series of critical thinking exercises

Provides a comprehensive picture of early- and intermediate-term changes

Slide 29 - Create M&E Plan

Slide notes: Finally, once you have assessed needs and defined your program theory and content, it is time to create an M&E plan.

Text Captions: Create M&E Plan



Slide 30 - M&E Plan: Build Your Infrastructure

Slide notes: Prepared with a clear understanding of the needs and good definition of the theory and content for a new program, you can write the M&E plan for your program. This M&E plan should addresses key components of how the organization will conduct M&E over time.

The M&E plan will be your guide to conducting monitoring and evaluation over the duration of the project. It is a detailed document, but as an overall guideline, it includes the following parts:

Define the program. Program definition includes your Logic Model, Pathway Model or Theory of Change model. It is the basis for your M&E Plan, and it explains exactly what you are evaluating.

Provide a brief summary of your M&E approach for the project. This is one page describing what you will do to monitor and evaluate your program. Think of it as the executive summary of your evaluation plan.

It is a great way for team members, new staff and funders to get a high-level understanding of the plan.

Define all of the roles relevant to the M&E plan. Who collects data? Who analyzes the data? Who interprets the data? Who transcribes interviews? Who has final approvals?

This section ensures that all tasks and roles are addressed, and it ensures that everyone on the team knows what is expected of them.

Identify capacity gaps. Is there any part of the plan that you cannot accomplish with the available staff, skills, and expertise? Imagine, for example, if the plan required conducting t-tests and ANOVAs, but no one among current staff knows how to do that.

In this section, acknowledge that gap and briefly describe how you will gain those skills or find external support to fill those gaps.

Identify key stakeholders. These are people in the community, clients, and others in your organization who have a vested interest in the program and its evaluation. These include people can review and provide feedback to improve your evaluation.

They also include people you want to share your results with, such as current and potential donors. In this section, name those people and describe their planned involvement.

Plan the methods. This is the heart of an M&E plan. It involves some very specific concepts and specific tools, processes and skills. However, for the purposes of this introductory unit, know that at a high level, methods includes your sampling, tools, data collection, and analysis.

Plan the budget. In this section you should include the costs of the monitoring and evaluation work in great detail, including staffing, software, travel, office resources and other relevant costs.

It is good to provide evidence that this budget is integrated into the larger program budget. This assures that your plan is more than a just paper document; it is a resource for real action.

Text Captions: M&E Plan: Build Your Infrastructure

Program definition

Summary of M&E approach

Definition of M&E roles

Budget planning

Methods planning

Identification of Key Stakeholders

Definition of Capacity Gaps

Slide 31 - Reflection Activity

Slide notes: Think about your own organization. How does your organization go about planning new programs? How do you make sure that you understand the needs and the theory of the program? Do you plan M&E from the planning stages of a program right now?

What is working well, and what would you like to do differently?

Take a moment now to reflect on these questions. Write down some of your thoughts in your notebook, and when you are finished, click continue.

Text Captions: Reflection Activity

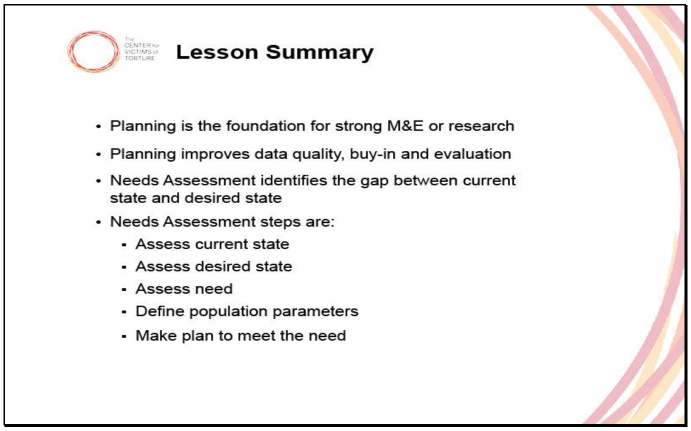
Think about your organization:

How do you plan new programs?

How do you confirm the needs and theory of the program?

Do you plan for M&E when you start developing a program?

What is working well? What would you do differently?



Slide 32 - Lesson Summary

Slide notes: In summary:

• Planning is the foundation for strong monitoring, evaluation, and when appropriate, research. It is always a worthwhile investment.

• Planning helps ensure data quality, secure buy in, and improve evaluation.

• Needs assessment is a systematic process to identify the gap between current state or conditions and the desired state, and how a program can help fill that gap.

• Needs assessment has five key steps: assess current state, assess desired state, assess need, define population parameters, and make a plan to meet the need.

Text Captions: Lesson Summary

Planning is the foundation for strong M&E or research

Planning improves data quality, buy-in and evaluation

Needs Assessment identifies the gap between current state and desired state

Needs Assessment steps are:

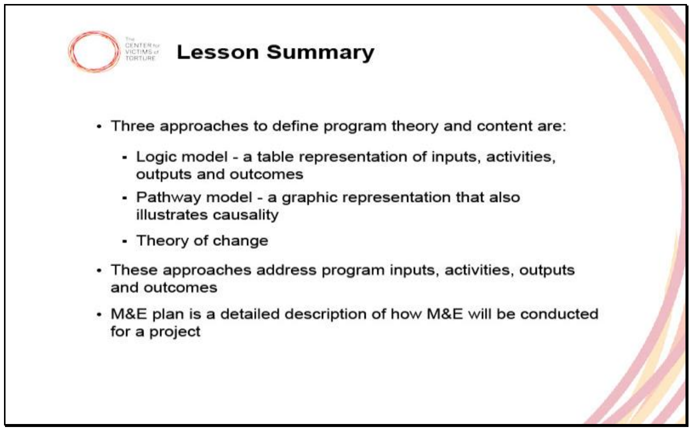
Assess current state

Assess desired state

Assess need

Define population parameters

Make plan to meet the need



Slide 33 - Lesson Summary

Slide notes: • There are three key approaches to define program theory and content: Logic model is a table-based text representation; Pathway model is a graphic “flow chart” type of representation. The third not covered as extensively in this lesson is the Theory of Change model.

• In different ways, these three approaches address program inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

• An M&E plan is a detailed description of how M&E will be conducted for a particular program or intervention.

Text Captions: Lesson Summary

Three approaches to define program theory and content are:

Logic model - a table representation of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes

Pathway model - a graphic representation that also illustrates causality

Theory of change

These approaches address program inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes

M&E plan is a detailed description of how M&E will be conducted for a project