

**A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers**

## **Module 5**

# **Monitoring and Evaluating a CED Strategic Agenda**





## **MODULE 5**

# **MONITORING AND EVALUATING CED PROJECTS**

### **A PEACE CORPS TRAINEE'S STORY**

*Peace Corps trainees in the Dominican Republic learn about monitoring and evaluation and perform a valuable service for the Water Sanitation Project at the same time.*

*As part of their Pre-Service Training, trainees visit a village where a previous Volunteer worked with a village water committee to design and install a potable water system. Using a set of predetermined questions the trainees gather monitoring and evaluation information. Examples of the questions: Is the water system still functioning? Is the water committee active in maintaining the system? What problems, if any, has the village experienced with the water system? What changes has the potable water system made in the lives of villagers?*

*This is a creative way one Peace Corps post systematically gathers information on the impact of Volunteer's projects, collects learnings to improve future water systems, and trains future Volunteers in monitoring and evaluation techniques.*

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Monitoring and evaluation have changed over the years. In the past, outside experts were called in to make judgments on the success of projects. Today, participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) is the preferred methodology—PME involves project stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation processes.

This module gives an overview of monitoring and evaluation, and explores your role in monitoring and evaluating community economic development (CED) projects. The word project will be used to refer to “programs” and “activities” as well.

By the time you complete the module you should have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to:

- Distinguish between monitoring and evaluation by giving examples of each.
- Describe the principles, characteristics, and objectives of PME.
- Discuss why PME is important for a project and to a community.
- Discuss and demonstrate the use of three information-gathering methods.
- Explain the role(s) that Peace Corps Volunteers can play in PME.
- Demonstrate how to plan and/or conduct an evaluation.

## **HOW ARE MONITORING AND EVALUATION DIFFERENT?**

The words *monitoring* and *evaluation* mean different things to different people—the words can be loaded with memories. Some view them as adversarial processes: thumbs-up or thumbs-down judgments. Throughout life we are monitored and evaluated: in school we receive grades, at work we are given performance appraisals, and we evaluate relationships and monitor our health. Although there are more formal definitions of monitoring and evaluation, in the Peace Corps we tend to use no-nonsense definitions:

Evaluation asks the question “Are we doing the right thing” or “Do we have the right plan?” and

Monitoring checks to see if we are following our plan.

Monitoring is either ongoing or periodic observation of a project’s implementation to ensure that inputs, activities, outputs, and external factors are proceeding according to plan. It focuses on regular collection of information to track the project. Monitoring provides information to alert the stakeholders as to whether or not results are being achieved. It also identifies challenges and successes and helps in identifying the source of an implementation problem.

In a CED project the group decides what to monitor. By collecting data regularly on activity inputs and outputs, processes, and results, the community can monitor the progress toward the group’s goals and objectives (e.g., income generated by the sale of a cookbook, how many people sold how many books over what period of time). In managing a CED project indicators are indispensable management tools. They define the data needed to compare the actual versus the planned results. Monitoring is useful because it tends to highlight little problems before they become big ones.

An evaluation is a systematic examination of a project to determine its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and the relevance of its objectives. The dictionary defines evaluation as a systematic investigation of the worth or merit of an activity. Traditionally, evaluation has been the last step in the project life cycle and in the project development process. However, it does not make sense to wait until the project is finished to ask the question “Did we do the right thing?” Indeed, you could evaluate the effectiveness at each stage of the project life cycle.

Evaluation is different from monitoring. Monitoring checks whether the project is on track; evaluation questions whether the project is on the right track. Monitoring is concerned with the short-term performances of the project, and evaluation looks more at long-term effects of project goals.

Frequently, evaluation is perceived as an activity, carried out by an expert or a group of experts, designed to assess the results of a particular project. This is a common misconception. It is vital that evaluation is carried out with the

participation of all project stakeholders, including beneficiaries. The results of a periodic evaluation are fed into the project planning process as quickly as possible to enhance the project's effectiveness.

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### **A LEARNING MOMENT**

Think about a time when you were involved in an evaluation process. What kind of evaluation was it? What was the evaluation trying to find out? Was the evaluation participatory? Did the information gathered and reported get used?

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### **EVALUATION MODELS AND APPROACHES**

The monitoring and evaluation process has gone through various stages of development. In the early 1900s, evaluation was measurement oriented, and its approach was scientific. Tests were used to measure progress, time and motion studies were conducted, and the role of the evaluator was technical, as the provider of instruments for measurement. As evaluation progressed it centered on describing the achievement of objectives and the analysis of a project's strengths and weaknesses. The evaluator then moved into the role of judge and added judgment to the process of evaluation. Today, there is a major shift away from the evaluator as a technical expert, judge, measurer, and describer to that of the evaluator as a facilitator. The shift includes the stakeholders as key participants in the process and the evaluator as orchestrator of the process. Stakeholders, then, are the judges, measurers, and describers; they participate in the design, implementation, and interpretation of the results. Stakeholders are viewed as participants rather than objects of a study.

CED leadership often presumes that there is only one proper way to carry out an evaluation. However, there is no single, correct approach to evaluation. Indeed, several different models and approaches exist, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. We first look at a goal-oriented evaluation and then a learning process approach. For both of these we recommend the PME approach to evaluation, which is gaining recognition as a means of counteracting negative perceptions of the evaluation process.

#### **GOAL-ORIENTED EVALUATION**

In this model, the evaluator assesses progress toward the specified goals and objectives of a project and the effectiveness of the process used. In this instance, the evaluator asks the following question: "To what extent have project goals and objectives been achieved?" Primarily it is quantitative information that is collected to verify the number of activities and objectives accomplished. This approach is frequently carried out by program managers and/or outside consultants who are

considered experts in the field of evaluation. This is the most common type of project evaluation. The success of this type of evaluation depends on a clearly written project plan. When the plan is unclear it is difficult to determine to what extent the goals and objectives were achieved.

### **LEARNING PROCESS APPROACH**

In this model, the evaluation activities are concerned not only with the extent to which the planned activities are carried out but also with how they are being carried out. In this approach, mechanisms are developed to help program staff learn from both the successes and challenges of implementing the activities to improve the program in the future. Both quantitative and qualitative information are gathered. Based on the information gathered, lessons learned are formulated and then fed into the project planning process. The evaluators act as facilitators of the process, and the stakeholders provide the knowledge.

### **PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PME)**

The concept of participatory evaluation has gained recognition in recent years, primarily to counter the idea of dispassionate, external critiques of projects, which are perceived as overlooking the ideas and feelings of project stakeholders. It should be recognized, however, that no evaluation that alienates and ignores project stakeholders is likely to succeed. Thus, in a sense, all evaluations must be participatory, or at least inclusive, to be successful.

PME values and recognizes the contribution of the community and empowers it to become more involved in CED. In monitoring, consider these questions: Is the project on time? Within budget? Is the number of people served on target? In evaluation, consider: Is this the best plan? Should we change the plan? Monitoring and evaluation do not happen after the project is underway or finished; the process begins in the project-planning phase.

**When planning a PME consider the following:**

- Why are we monitoring and evaluating?
- What specifically will we monitor and evaluate?
- When should the project be evaluated?
- When—how frequently will we gather information and feedback?
- What are our indicators? Objectives written in measurable terms help define indicators.
- How will we gather monitoring and evaluation information? What methods will we use?
- Who will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation tasks?
- What questions are we seeking to answer?

**Some principles of PME are:**

- Involve project stakeholders;
- Involvement is vital to participation;
- Keep the process and approach simple;
- Learn from the process;
- Include key findings, insights, and understanding in future projects.

**The characteristics of PME are:**

- Draws on local resources and capacities;
- Recognizes the innate wisdom and knowledge of the community;
- Demonstrates that the community is creative and knowledgeable about its environment;
- Ensures that stakeholders are part of the decision-making process;
- Uses facilitators who act as catalysts and who assist stakeholders in asking the right questions;
- Contributes to improved communications between project participants and key stakeholders at different levels in the project implementation process.

**The goals of PME are to:**

- Analyze the successes and challenges of the project;
- Measure the progress in meeting the project goals, objectives;
- Review the strategies and timelines;
- Assess the impact of the project on the individuals and community;

- Develop recommendations for improvement based on lessons learned;
- Create a common understanding of the project objectives, timelines, and deliverables for all stakeholders.

Two alternatives exist for conducting a participatory evaluation:

1. An external evaluation facilitator may be employed to drive the evaluation process. In this instance, the evaluation team is made up of a combination of external and internal evaluators. Sometimes a Volunteer serves as the external evaluation facilitator and organizes the evaluation process.
2. The entire evaluation can be steered and carried out by the project staff and beneficiaries.

Participatory evaluation has certain strengths as well as weaknesses. Strengths include: It is less threatening; it is possible to get to the deeply held thoughts of staff and beneficiaries and it gives staff a clearer picture of the work they do. Weaknesses include: It is disruptive and time-consuming; it is difficult for staff and beneficiaries to be objective about their project; and, if the project is experiencing major tensions and problems, it will be difficult to extract useful insights and information from staff members.

From the view of the Peace Corps, a major strength of PME is its potential for building the capacity of staff and beneficiaries. PME promotes self-confidence, self-esteem, and independence within the community and it helps build project ownership.



**ACTIVITY 5:1**

**THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

What role can a PCV play as a member of a core group in monitoring and evaluating a CED project? Reflect on the following questions.

- What impact could your involvement in monitoring and evaluation have on a community group? What skills can you bring to the group?
- How could the monitoring and evaluation process help the group? What value can it provide?
- Who might play the lead role in the process? Why?
- What are the advantages of having the community involved in the process? Are there disadvantages?
- What can the participants learn from the experience?

Once you've reflected on your role, discuss these questions with other training participants, language instructors, technical trainers, and Peace Corps staff.

## EVALUATION TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

If you have a well-written project plan with clear goals and objectives, if you have implemented the project, and if you have decided what type of evaluation to use and what types of questions the evaluation needs to answer, it is time to identify indicators that will help the evaluation team answer the evaluation questions. The next steps are to gather the information, analyze information collected, and, finally, report the results. This section of the module provides some tools and techniques to help you through the evaluation steps. We start with identifying indicators.

### INDICATORS

In a successful CED project, clearly defined indicators are essential for accurately and realistically measuring progress toward the group's goals and objectives. Remember that projects include both process and product results, and therefore indicators are needed for both.

Indicators vary from project to project. They include many tangible factors: signs posted, trails blazed, seminars held, knowledge gained. They also include indicators of the capacity-building process: developing new leadership, enhancing the group's public speaking skills, developing more group facilitators, etc. The indicators are determined by the objectives established in the project. The key is that all process indicators have elements of participation and capacity building.

Examples of Product Indicators	Examples of Process Indicators
Town market erected and open.	A market association established and new leadership formed.
Computer center open eight hours a day and five computers busy and working.	Training available and technicians able to troubleshoot easily.
A business newspaper is published four times a year—advertising has increased by 10 percent.	Increase in the awareness of what CED is and the impact on the community.
Attendance at community fair or festival.	Number of people who volunteer has increased from last year.
Organized and conducted five business seminars.	Number of participants who return to other seminars and bring friends or colleagues.

Indicators organize your thinking in terms of what type of information is important to whom and why. Indicators also organize thinking in terms of capacity building, project accomplishments, and lessons learned. It is important to keep the number

of indicators to a minimum, keep the indicators simple and relevant to the project objectives, and focus only on the information needed to solve problems and identify successes.

## **ACTIVITY 5:2**

### **DEVELOPING INDICATORS**

Choose five of the CED projects listed on the next page and develop two indicators for each. Try to develop both product and process indicators. When you've completed the task, share your indicators with other training participants and discuss the following questions:

- Which product or process indicators were the easiest to write?
- Did you repeat an indicator in any of the projects?
- What information was missing?
- What process would you use to develop indicators in a participative way?
- How would you go about ensuring that the group was involved?
- What information-gathering methods might you use for the indicators you selected?

Continued

Activity 5:2, continued

**CED PROJECT IDEAS**

Start a business newspaper.	Develop a market area.	Design new signs for your town or community.
Provide job training for local business employers.	Create a program to attract new businesses to your community.	Establish a trade fair to showcase local products and produce.
Start a computer learning center.	Establish a computer resource center.	Organize a village bank or credit union.
Create an art exhibit featuring local artisans.	Begin a career day for businesses and schools.	Renovate Main Street.
Create a CED educational program for the community.	Conduct a “gap” analysis for retail stores in your community.	Begin a farming cooperative.
Establish a continuing education center.	Promote and create awards for the best business practices.	Start a recycling program in your community.
Build a community historical trail.	Start a natural trail, walkway, and exercise path.	Organize a 5K race for your village or town.
Begin a community housing project.	Organize an apprenticeship program between students and artisans.	Build sidewalks in the town shopping area.
Establish a town business association.	Organize monthly business seminars.	Conduct a consumer expenditure survey.
Form a block watch group.	Develop an annual “sales” event for local businesses.	Develop a local cookbook to be sold as a fundraiser for a CED project.
Start a community beautification project.	Begin a local junior achievement program.	Open a senior center and/or daycare center.
Sponsor a progressive business dinner.	Assist schools in setting up canteens.	Build a sports field. Organize sports leagues.
Create a community business directory.	Start a food cooperative for the community’s needs.	Begin to “bulk” buy products, such as fertilizers, seeds, etc.
Hold block parties.	Start a community festival.	Begin a community alumni association.

## **INFORMATION-GATHERING METHODS**

Evaluation information gathering needs to be efficient and cost-effective. The list that follows is not all-inclusive. At times, you will need to think of creative ways to gather information. One Volunteer was able to determine the results of a nutrition project to encourage families to grow and eat spinach by asking schoolchildren how many of their mothers had served spinach to the family in the last week. She incorporated the spinach question into health classes she taught at the school.

### **COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Equipped with well-thought-out questions the CED project team conducts the first community meeting. Provide the participants with a brief presentation on the scope and purpose of the meeting. Take a few questions from the group to clarify the meeting. Decide how many small groups you will need and who will facilitate them. Then break the community into small groups for discussions, using the questions as a guide. After a specified period of time, reconvene the large group. Ask each small group to present their findings using flip charts. Decide how to end the meeting. It is important to explain what will be done with the data gathered. Also, let the stakeholders know how they can involve themselves further and how they can get a copy of the final report or action plan and/or a list of the lessons learned. Here is a list of the pros and cons of using this method.

#### **Pros:**

- Inclusive, interested community members can attend.
- Community ownership of the project is broadened.
- When a wide variety of people are involved, it provides a “reality check” for views and recommendations.

#### **Cons:**

- Community conflicts may develop and go unresolved.
- It may be difficult to bring closure to the meeting.

### **OBSERVATION**

Seeing and listening are the key words in defining observation. As a monitoring and evaluation tool, observation means viewing the results of a project or participating in some project activities. Observation can be obtrusive or unobtrusive. Because observation is fairly simple and a natural part of field experiences, it is often overlooked as a monitoring and evaluation method.

#### **Pros:**

- Easy to do, requires minimal preparation.
- Tends to be holistic; many factors and influences are taken into account.
- Aids in identifying unintended as well as intended project outcomes.

**Cons:**

- Depends heavily on perceptiveness of observers and their biases.
- People may change their behavior if they know they are being observed.

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

A questionnaire is a set of printed questions organized in a systematic way for the purpose of eliciting information from the respondents. A CED questionnaire may be developed to gauge the community's response to a new market; another might to measure the interest of farmers in starting a cooperative. Questionnaires are often seen as a self-report mechanism, although questionnaires are used in personal or telephone interviews.

**Pros:**

- Questionnaires are relatively inexpensive to administer since they can be completed without an interviewer.
- The questions are standardized so each person is asked the same questions in the same way.
- Questionnaires allow for more privacy, particularly if distributed by mail.
- Well-designed questionnaires are easily tabulated.

**Cons:**

- Questionnaires are overused; people are tired of filling them out.
- Illiterate people cannot use questionnaires without assistance.
- The response rate is low.
- There is little opportunity to verify people's responses.

**SECONDARY OR PREEXISTING DATA SOURCES**

Varying widely, this information can take the form of quantitative data (e.g., a group's earning history, the number of meetings held, or projects completed), or it can be past evaluations or project plans. Review this information and the documentation that is available for history patterns, changes, and trends.

**INTERVIEWING**

Interviewing, or conversation, is the oldest and most respected method of gathering information. Interviewing styles range from informal and conversational to closed and quantitative. The objective in all cases is to provide a framework for interviewees to express themselves. There are various types of interviews with different styles and purposes. Interviewing provides the richest source of data in the shortest time. The interview is more reliable than any other form of information gathering from individuals because of the face-to-face communication. Interviewing is a skill, therefore basic training is important.

In interviewing, the primary tool for collecting data or information is the question. There are different types of questions that elicit different types of responses. Certain types of questions are more appropriate for in-depth interviewing than others.

**Closed questions** provide finite responses, either yes or no or quantitative information (use should be limited). For example:

How many participants did you have at the seminar?

**Leading questions** lead interviewees to the answer you would like to have (avoid these types of questions). For example:

Would you agree that everyone thinks the CED project was a great success?

Would you say that all community members appreciate the historical trail?

**Double-barreled questions** ask two questions at one time (should also be avoided). For example:

Did the community group successfully organize a business newspaper and involve students in the process?

**Open-ended, probing, and follow-up questions** elicit the most information from the interviewee and allow the free flow of information (use this type of question extensively).

What are your impressions of the CED project?

Why do you think it was effective or ineffective?

What do the others in the group think about the project?

Take time to develop good questions that lead the interviewee to relate the challenges and success of the CED project. Unlike a questionnaire, which is fairly rigid, interviews are more flexible. For example, during an interview, if a stakeholder does not understand one of the questions, the interviewer can reformulate the question until the meaning of the question is clear. Many times the interviewer will ask additional probing and follow-up questions to assure that precise and detailed information is gathered. The aim of the interview is to collect information that answers the monitoring or evaluation questions. The interview is a tool in the PME process that the interviewer can use in flexible and creative ways.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The value or strengths of a project are often revealed through analysis. Analysis is the process by which you divide the whole into component parts—who, what, where, when, how, why—to determine the nature and function of, and relationship between, the parts. The collection and analysis of information is necessary to improve the planning and implementation of a project, improve decision making, learn from experience, and provide accountability and transparency in a project.



The central questions in analysis are:

What happened?	Who did it happen to?
Why did it happen?	When did it happen?
How did it happen?	Where did it happen?

In PME there are lessons learned on at least two levels. The project participants learn lessons as they evaluate their own progress; and the monitoring and evaluation team learns lessons about the project as well as the evaluation process. For example, the monitoring and evaluation team may learn how to reduce facilitator dominance in sessions, and which kinds of questions evoke a participatory response and which ones do not, as well as how to improve the project.

### **ANALYZING QUANTITATIVE DATA**

There are many approaches to the analysis of information, from quantitative to qualitative and from simple to complex. In most cases simple is the best option. The simple option relies on the straightforward arrangements of numbers and other indicators along a timeline using simple mathematical operations. It also uses the common sense and experience of the people involved in the evaluation.

Most quantitative indicators will generate numbers that can be analyzed in a few ways:

- By noting their direction up or down over time.
- By using simple statistics, such as means or averages.
- By determining what percentage of a whole certain factors represent.

For example, sales went up in the months of November and December this year, the average attendance at the monthly meetings has increased over the past six months, and the number of participants in the seminars has increased by 15 percent this year.

### **ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA**

The main technique for analyzing qualitative data is content analysis. Through content analysis of the information collected, conclusions are formed for each of the evaluation questions. Analysis involves identifying the categories of responses in the data.

For example, information was gathered through an interviewing process on a project that started a business newspaper. The categories of responses may be the length of the paper, the advertising, the quality of the articles, or the topics of the editorials. By developing the categories and recording responses you begin to develop an understanding of what is important to the stakeholders, what is working, and where some change needs to take place.

### **THINGS TO REMEMBER**

While analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data, be careful to avoid the following pitfalls:

- Do not assume that the project is the only cause of positive or negative changes. Several factors, some of which are unrelated to the project activities, may be responsible for changes in the project's participants or in a community. It is usually not possible to isolate impacts. The evaluation report should at least acknowledge other factors that may have contributed to change.
- Do not forget that the same evaluation method may give different results when used by different people, or with different groups, or that respondents may tell the evaluator what they believe he or she wants to hear. For example, two interviewers may ask the same questions but receive different answers because one was friendlier or had more patience than the other. Real problems or difficulties may be ignored or hidden because people want the project to succeed or appear to be succeeding.
- Do not choose the wrong groups to compare, or try to compare groups that are different in too many ways. For example, gender, age, race, economic status, and many other factors can all have an impact on project outcomes. If comparisons between groups are important, try to compare those with similar characteristics.
- Do not claim that the results of a small-scale evaluation also apply to a wide group or geographic area. The evaluation report should reflect only the data analyzed.

**ACTIVITY 5:3**  
**CONDUCTING AN EVALUATION**

Use the following case study:

*As a Volunteer you are working with a group of craftspeople who produce baskets, linen, dresses and many other items. One of the challenges the craftspeople face is that the local and regional communities are unfamiliar with their work and their products. The group decides to hold a craft fair. The local government has given its blessing and is providing assistance, the local business merchants are participating, and even the schools are pitching in with volunteer assistance. There is an advertising plan, and all craftspeople are busy working on different committees. You are assigned to the monitoring and evaluation committee. Along with your group members, design a plan to monitor the fair's preparation and evaluate the fair once it is completed.*

In pairs, design a monitoring and evaluation plan for the craft fair. Use your imagination and the tools you have learned in this module. Once you have developed the plan, present it to the rest of the group and ask them to provide feedback. As you are developing your plan think through the following questions:

- Is the monitoring plan simple? Does it cover all aspects of the project?
- Does the evaluation plan ask key questions?
- Are there relevant indicators?
- Is it appropriately timed?
- Is the process participatory, does it engage people?

## REPORTING EVALUATION RESULTS

For years, project accountability most often was centered on how funds were spent; financial reporting was considered adequate. The next generation of reporting included reporting on programmatic aspects: who received services, how many people got services, and what activities beneficiaries participated in. These indicators measured implementation and outcomes.

Financial and programmatic reporting provided a clear picture of what was done, but did not answer questions such as what difference the project made in the lives of participants and the community. Today, many CED stakeholders, including municipal managers and funders, want to know “what happened, what changed because the activity took place.” This higher level of reporting, impact reporting, is more ambiguous and difficult to measure, and therefore more costly in time and money.

### Impacts

(So what?) \_\_\_\_\_

### Outputs

(What got done?) \_\_\_\_\_

### Inputs

(Resources) \_\_\_\_\_

### Concept Planning

(Opportunities/needs and proposed interventions)

You may ask, “Why bother with impact reporting?” Because policymakers, agency boards, foundations, and citizens want to know, “What difference did a project make?” But more important, impact reporting leads to better project management because it focuses organizations on “what difference the projects make.” And, with impact data, you can demonstrate the credibility and effectiveness of your projects and therefore your organization. The focus is on the purpose of the project—on the desired changes resulting from the project.

## WHY MONITOR AND EVALUATE?

Experience in the development community over the past 10 to 15 years has shown that participatory evaluation improves project results. Listening to those most closely involved in the project and learning why the project is or is not working is critical in making improvements. In addition, the more involved people are in all aspects of the project, including the monitoring and evaluation process, the more ownership they have in the project and the more committed they are. The involvement of the group in such activities as formulating key questions, collecting

data, analyzing the data, providing recommendations, and planning activities will improve the project and its outcome. It also provides a common framework and opportunity to act on the knowledge gained in the evaluation process.

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## KEY TERMS

Key terms are defined as they are used in this module. A space is provided to write the translation of a word or phrase into the local language. Building a local language vocabulary of terms related to CED prepares you to function effectively in this area of development. Work with your language instructor to find the appropriate translation and definitions in the local language and build your technical vocabulary as you study this module.

**Criteria** are standards on which a judgment or decision may be based.

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**Empowerment** is to enable people to make choices.

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**Evaluation** is a systematic examination of a project to determine its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and the relevance of its goals and objectives.

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**Goal** refers to the target of a project or program, the aim of which is economic, social, and/or political. It may be identified through qualitative and behavioral criteria.

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**Impact**, in evaluation, refers to the changes that result in people's lives as a result of projects.

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**Indicators** are an explicit and objectively verifiable measure of the project or program's results.

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**Input** includes the resources, funds, personnel, and materials of a project that are necessary to produce the intended output.

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**Monitoring** is ongoing or periodic observation of the implementation of a project to ensure that inputs, activities, outputs, and external factors are proceeding according to plan.

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**Objective** refers to the predetermined aim or target of a project or program. Objectives should be observable, measurable, and time bound.

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**Participatory** refers to the processes in which people are encouraged to share and cooperate.

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**Reliability** is the degree to which a measurement or instrument can be depended on to give consistent results.

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## **RESOURCES**

*PACA: Participatory Analysis for Community Action.* (Peace Corps ICE.) 1996. 350 pp. (ICE No. M0053)

Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) is an approach used to facilitate communities' exploration of their own realities in order to take action for changes they desire. Based on earlier participatory analysis methods, such as Rapid Rural Appraisal and Participatory Rural Appraisal, PACA turns the appraisal activity into a process where the development agent and the community develop a partnership that leads to community control of their own projects. As a defining criterion, PACA distinguishes the role of gender in development by applying the participatory exercises with separate groups of women and men, girls and boys, which allows the community to compare and analyze together the roles that shape their reality. In similar ways, PACA can be used to understand age, ethnicity, or any other source of societal differentiation that has implications for development. The tools can be used in schools, organizations, institutions, and any other group, rural or urban, where different voices need to be heard.

*Roles of the Volunteer in Development: Toolkits for Capacity Building.* (Peace Corps ICE.) 2002. 225 pp. (ICE No. T0005)

This unique publication is a series of toolkits that can be separated into seven booklets. The introductory booklet provides an overview of the Peace Corps' philosophy of development, introduces the capacity-building roles that a Volunteer might play, and then provides guidance for Volunteers in identifying what roles they will play. The other six booklets each address one of the roles: Learner, Co-Trainer, Co-Facilitator, Mentor, Change Agent, and Co-Planner. In each booklet, there is a chart delineating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes need for the role; background readings on the role; and activities to learn more about and gain skills in carrying out the role. The booklets can be used as self-study, or used in conjunction with training sessions.

*Participatory Program Evaluation: A Manual for Involving Stakeholders in the Evaluation Process.* Judi Aibel. (Catholic Relief Services/Peace Corps ICE.) 1995. 70 pp. (ICE No. R0094)

A manual originally produced for Catholic Relief Services staff to improve its maternal and child health programs, but useful in evaluating any project. In an easily understood format, outlines all the steps that need to be followed in planning and conducting a participatory program evaluation. Includes a list of references.

*Participatory Evaluation: A Users Guide.* Jacob Pfohl. (PACT.) 1986. 81 pp.

Based on a USAID/Sri Lanka-sponsored workshop for private agencies collaborating to improve monitoring and evaluating capabilities. Perspectives provided by the participants are presented with the aid of illustrations, pie charts, evaluation design worksheets, etc. Discusses how to establish a purpose for evaluation; think through a plan to gather information; and learn how to analyze, interpret, and use information. Concludes with a detailed training outline based on methods described. Designed to give sufficient and flexible guidance so that individual organizations can adapt these guidelines to meet their specific evaluation needs.

*Partners in Evaluation: Evaluating Development and Community Programmes with Participants.* Marie-Therese Feuerstein (Macmillan Publishers Ltd.) 1986. 196 pp.

A hands-on evaluation guide for laypersons or community organizers who are not experts in research and evaluation. Written in a straightforward manner, using common terms to explain complicated concepts. Topics addressed include understanding evaluation, planning and organizing resources, using records and existing data, employing methods, and using results. Illustrated with line drawings and photographs. Layout is in outline form for easy reference. A valuable working manual for field workers and Counterparts alike.

*Self-Evaluation: Ideas for Participatory Evaluation of Rural Community Development Projects.* Jim Rugh. (World Neighbors.) 1986. 42 pp.

Intended to help administrators of rural community development projects evaluate their projects more effectively. Explores why, when, what, and how to evaluate. Defines and explains the use of such tools as recording keeping (especially for farmers), survey forms, and community meetings.

**Internet:**

[www.mande.co.uk/news.html](http://www.mande.co.uk/news.html) — A news service focusing on developments in PME methods relevant to development projects.

[www.info.usaid.gov/pub/r4workshop/MONITOR8/](http://www.info.usaid.gov/pub/r4workshop/MONITOR8/) — USAID's website for monitoring and evaluation—lots of good information.

[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) — World Bank website with links to all its programs and publications and other international development organizations

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) — United Nations Development Programme

[www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org) — great information and linkages

Many of these sites have links to other sites that will be helpful to your work.

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## **TRAINER'S NOTES**

### **MODULE 5 MONITORING AND EVALUATING CED PROJECTS**

#### **Overview:**

To provide trainees/Volunteers with the knowledge and skills to carry out an effective participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) process for CED projects.

#### **Time to Complete Module:**

Reading	1 hour
Activities and debriefing vary	10 hours (max.)

#### **Materials:**

Flip chart paper, markers, and tape.

#### **Preparation:**

Read this module and adapt materials and activities to the local situation.

If you are conducting community-based training (CBT), create situations where trainees can practice monitoring activities. If the trainees planned a small project in and with their community, ensure that monitoring and evaluation are a part of the process. (This approach supports the other modules in terms of building participatory approaches to the Volunteers' work in CED.)

## **TRAINER'S NOTES**

### **ACTIVITY 5:1 THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **Overview:**

To provide trainees with an opportunity to reflect on their role in monitoring and evaluating CED projects.

**Time:** 1 hour

#### **Materials:**

Ensure that trainees and Volunteers have a copy of the questions listed below, flip chart, markers, and tape.

#### **Preparation:**

With the Peace Corps programming and training staff, think through key points trainees need to understand their role(s) in PME in a CED project. Each country has its own unique concerns, issues, and challenges. Some examples might be:

- Gathering information and doing an evaluation without direct permission from a central or local authority.
- The skill level of the target group.
- The level at which Volunteers work and/or the political ramifications.

Discuss with the Peace Corps staff their concerns so that they are brought out in the discussions with trainees. You may want to invite the country director and other Peace Corps staff to this session.

#### **Activity for center-based training:**

Ask the trainees to think about the role(s) they play in the PME process of a CED project. Ask them to focus specifically on the evaluation process. Ask each trainee to write responses to the following questions:

- What impact could your involvement in monitoring and evaluation have on a community group?
- How could the monitoring and evaluation process help the group?
- What skills can you bring to the group?
- Who might play the lead role in the process? Why?

Continued

Trainer's Notes, Activity 5:1, continued

- What are the benefits of having the community involved in the process?
- What is the value?
- Are there disadvantages to the community's involvement?
- What can the participants in the process learn from the experience?

Once the trainees have answered the questions, break into small groups and come to a consensus on the role a Volunteer should play in evaluating CED projects. Ask each small group to write down their findings on flip chart paper and report to the larger group. See if the larger group can also come to a consensus.

Note: If you conducted the role activity in other modules, make those flip charts available. The trainees will see their roles emerging in many aspects of a CED project.

**Debriefing the experience and processing the learnings:**

- What was said in this exercise that particularly struck you?
- What were some of the differences and similarities about the Volunteer's role within your group?
- What did you discover?
- How might you apply the information at your site?

**TRAINER'S NOTES**

**ACTIVITY 5:2  
DEVELOPING INDICATORS**

**Overview:**

Provide trainees with an opportunity to practice using evaluation indicators.

**Time:** 1 hour

**Materials:**

Paper and pens for trainees and the list of CED projects. Flip chart paper, markers, and tape.

**Preparation:**

Ask each trainee to develop two indicators for five of the CED projects listed in the table. When the trainees have completed the task, ask them to form small groups. In small groups share the indicators and discuss the questions below. Ask the trainees to write their responses on a flip chart and present them to the larger group.

**Debriefing the experience and processing the learnings:**

Discuss the following in the debriefing:

- Were the indicators easy to develop?
- Did you repeat any indicators?
- What information was missing?
- List ways or methods to develop indicators in a group process?
- List information-gathering methods you could use?

## **TRAINER'S NOTES**

### **ACTIVITY 5:3 CONDUCTING AN EVALUATION**

#### **Overview:**

Provide trainees with the opportunity to plan a PME process.

**Time:** 1 1/2 hours

#### **Materials:**

Copies of the case study, paper, pens, flip charts, markers.

#### **Preparation:**

As a trainer go through the case study yourself in preparation for the presentation to the trainees.

Use the following case study:

*As a PCV you are working with a group of craftspeople who produce baskets, linen, dresses and many other items. One of the challenges the craftspeople face is that the local and regional communities are unfamiliar with their work and their products. The group decides to hold a craft fair. They have the blessing and assistance of The local government has given its blessing and is providing assistance, the local business merchants are participating, and even the schools are pitching in with volunteer assistance. There is an advertising plan, and all craftspeople are busy working on different committees. You are assigned to the monitoring and evaluation committee. Along with your group members, design a plan to monitor the fair's preparation and evaluate the fair once it is completed.*

Ask the trainees to form small groups and design a monitoring and evaluation plan for the craft fair. Ask them to use their imaginations and the tools they have learned in this module. Once they have developed the plan, ask them to present it to the rest of the group and provide feedback. Remind the group of the guidelines for feedback.

Continued

Trainer's Notes, Activity 5:3, continued

**Debriefing the experience and processing the learnings:**

When critiquing the plans think through the following questions:

- Is the monitoring plan simple? Does it cover all aspects of the project?
- Does the evaluation plan ask key questions?
- Are there relevant indicators?
- Is it appropriately timed?
- Is the process participatory; does it engage people?
- What were the common threads in each group's presentation?
- What were the keys to participation?
- Were you easily able to distinguish between monitoring and evaluation?
- How might you use this exercise in the future?