

Starting
shortly

Please
wait!

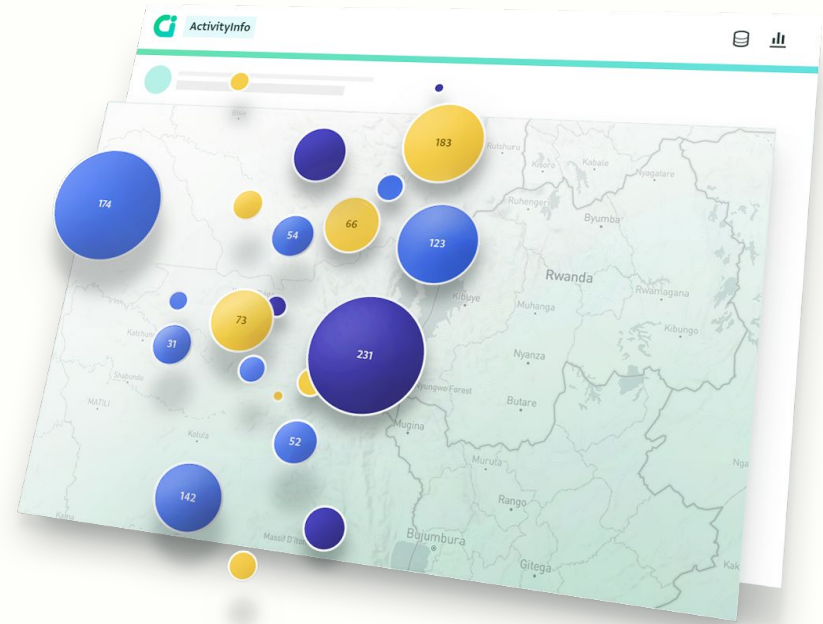
ActivityInfo

From Theory of Change to Database Design for
evidence-based decision making: How to develop a
MEAL plan

Presented by the ActivityInfo Team

Software for Monitoring & Evaluation

- Track activities, outcomes
- Beneficiary management
- Surveys
- Work offline/online



Webinar series structure



Today's session outline

- Recap
 - Indicators and measurement methods: Key messages
- MEAL Plan Development (PMP: Performance management plan)
 - What is the MEAL plan
 - Why do we use the MEAL plan
 - What are the components of use MEAL plan
- How we use ICT4D to enable the operationalization of the MEAL Plan?
 - Examples using ActivityInfo
- QandAs

What did we mention in the previous webinar?

The importance of indicators and measurement methods

***Indicators** ensure evidence - based decision making, support adaptive management, learning and accountability*
***Measurement methods** enable the data collection process for the indicators*

Strongly associated with the purpose of the MEAL system design which enables project success

How?

Via the following:

- The continual and systematic collection of data to provide information about project progress (**Monitoring**)
- The systematic assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project (**Evaluation**)
- The response to the needs of relevant stakeholders (**Accountability**)
- Intentional reflection on project results to enable efficient decisions (**Learning**)

Indicators

Key messages

- Qualitative or quantitative?
 - **Quantitative indicators** help us understand **how much** of something is happening while we know or hypothesize from TOC what that something is.
 - **Qualitative indicators** help us investigate the “why” and the “how” - for those instances that we are not sure what to expect
 - Few donors require qualitative indicators
- How to determine indicator quality?
 - **SMART**: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound
 - Is the indicator sufficiently defined so it is clear what is being measured?
 - Can data be collected and analyzed in a timely manner?
 - Is the nature of the change measured through the indicator achievable, given the duration and resources of the project?
 - Is selected indicator the most appropriate measure of progress toward output, IR and/or SO?
 - Does the indicator include information on when the target change is anticipated to take place?

Measurement methods

Key messages

Qualitative or quantitative?

- ❑ **Quantitative methods** collect data that can be counted and subjected to statistical analysis. Enable comparisons and clear measurement
- ❑ **Qualitative methods** capture participants' experiences using words, pictures and stories. They trigger reflection, ideas and discussion and are analyzed by identifying themes, topics and keywords. Track changes in participants' attitudes and perceptions. Identify why and how change is happening, and are analyzed by organizing emerging themes
- **The Use of mixed methods:** Using both quantitative and qualitative measurement methods offers the potential to answer very different questions about the same indicator. The use of mixed methods enables triangulation by collecting data using a mix of methods. This allows teams to crosscheck and reinforce results

ICT4D are powerful tools!

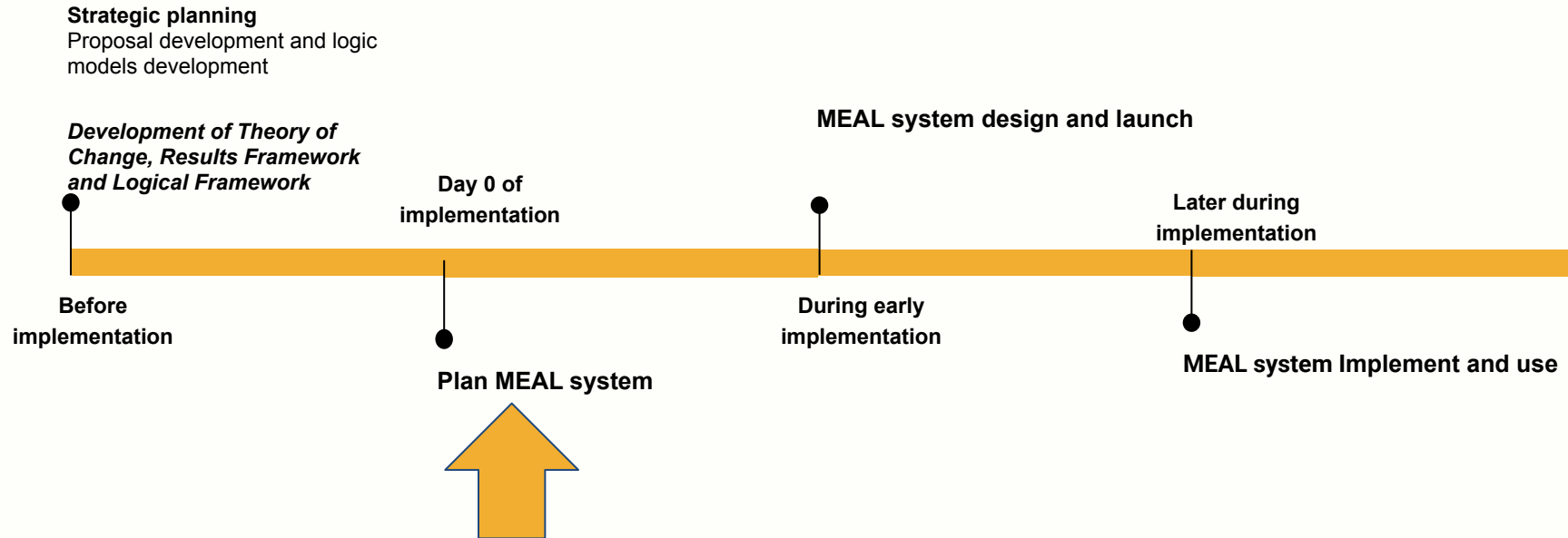
Consider your secondary data sources!

Consider context! purpose of data collection! resources!

MEAL Plan developmen

When do we start the development?

Case Study



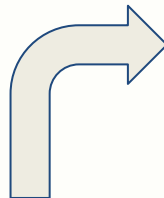
MEAL Plan

MEAL Plan

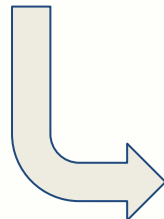
MEAL Planning Tools

“How will we collect, analyze, interpret, use and communicate MEAL information through the life of the project?”

- *The use of MEAL planning tools facilitate the answer to this question.*
- *MEAL planning tools help your project meet the information needs of all project stakeholders, including project team members, community members, project participants and donors*



The primary planning tool, also known as Monitoring and evaluation plan or performance management plan (PMP)



Examples of other planning Tools :

- *Indicator performance tracking table (IPTT)*
- *Feedback and response mechanism flowchart*
- *Stakeholders communication plan*
- *Learning plan*

MEAL Plan

What?

How are the indicators defined?

How indicators are collected?

When will MEAL activities take place?

Who is responsible for MEAL activities?

How will data be analyzed?

How will data be used?

MEAL Plan

Example

Figure 30: Performance management plan template

Performance Management Plan								
Objectives statements	Indicators (with definitions as needed)	Data collection				Means of analysis		Use of information for communication and decision-making
		Method	Frequency	Person who will collect data	Respondents (who to talk to)	Type of analysis	Subgroups (strata)	
Strategic objective 1								
Strategic objective 2								
Intermediate result 1.1								
Intermediate result 2.1								
Output 1.1								
Output 2.1								
Key assumptions								
Assumption 1...								
Assumption 2...								

Our example

Country: Homeland

Context: Homeland received suddenly an influx of refugees from a neighbouring country. There were thousands of refugees crossing the borders each day for the first two years. Currently, we are on the third year of this humanitarian crisis. The priorities have changed. Incoming refugees wish to build in their future in Homeland and NGOs in collaboration with the Government need to identify the **pathways** that lead to integration and through appropriate **interventions** to facilitate this pathway.

What: We are working as part of the MEAL team for the following month, we will support the MEAL system design to facilitate the programming teams operating on the ground.

Timing: The programming team submitted the proposal and we got the approval!! So we are in the process of recapping , since activities started the previous week! we start developing our MEAL system, by using our planning tools and the PM asks us to start thinking about information use and sharing!

Logical Framework

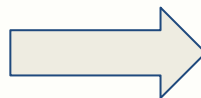
Our example

Results Framework level	Statements	Indicators	Measurement methods/MoVs
Strategic Objective	Refugees engage to legal livelihood opportunities	% of refugees employed at least one during project implementation	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 1	Vulnerable refugees are enabled to meet their urgent needs	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 1.1	Refugees have access to medical referrals	% of medical referrals conducted within a day of the request	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 2	Refugees have increased skills and knowledge	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “ vocational trainings enabled me to acquire a skill that I can use in my work”	anonymous survey Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 2.1	Refugees participate in vocational trainings	# of refugees who participate in vocational trainings	Attendance lists

MEAL Plan

In detail

Objectives statements and indicators



Example: % of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”:

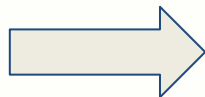
- Are referrals clearly defined?
- Medical services? which are those?
- Access: what does this mean?

- Objective statements from Logical Framework
- Goal and Activities usually are not included.
 - Goal: long term - not achieved during project implementation
 - Activities are monitored usually via the Detailed Implementation Plan
- Indicators validation:
 - Are indicators clearly defined?

MEAL Plan

In detail

Data collection: Methods, frequency, responsibility and respondents



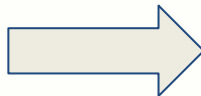
- **Methods:** as those identified as in the logical framework
- **Frequency**
 - What are the decision making needs?
 - Which are the donor requirements?
 - When I expect to identify change?
 - Do I have the resources?
 - Is there contextual factor that affects frequency?
- Who is responsible for data collection?
- Who are the respondents? (Head of household? Women?)

Indicator	Method	Frequency/Who collects/Who responds
% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement "referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services"	Survey	biannually/ MEAL officers/ Adults who accessed the service

MEAL Plan

In detail

Means of analysis



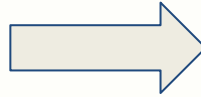
Indicator	Analysis	Sub groups
% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Representative sample	Nationality/gender

- **Type of analysis:**
 - Do we need statistical analysis? Cumulative number? average?
 - Do we need qualitative analysis?
- **Subgroups:**
 - Do we need to compare? amongst which groups?
 - Between which groups do we need to identify differences? trends? patterns?
 - Do you have the resources? Can you reach the respondents?

MEAL Plan

In detail

Data use



- How the data will be used?
 - which are the donor requirements?
 - which information is needed for decision making

Indicator	Data use
% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Biannual reflection, donor monitoring report

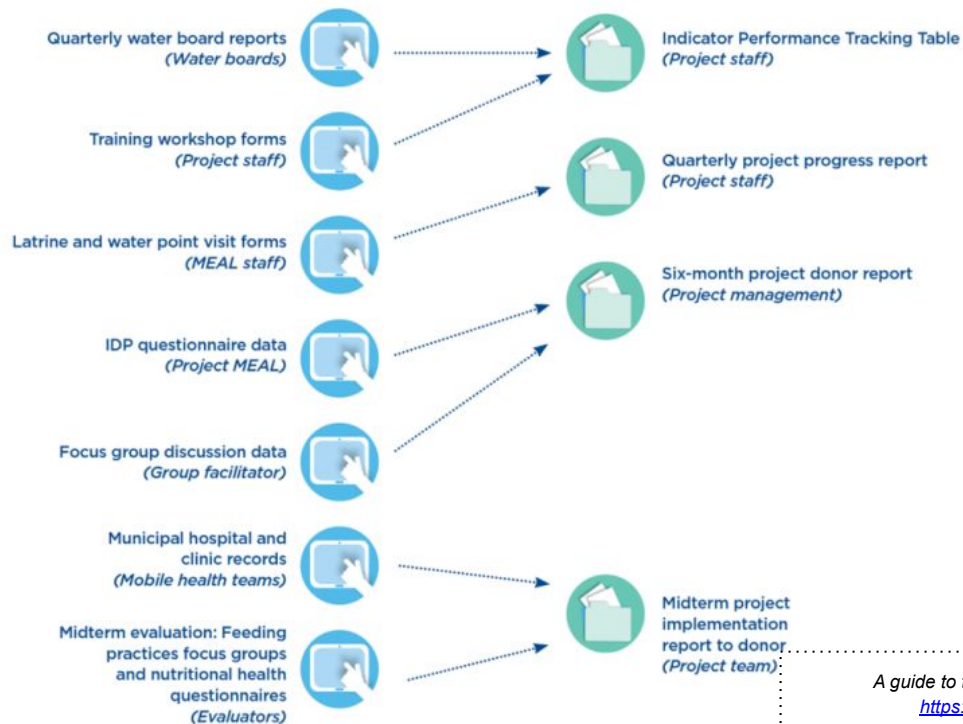
MEAL Plan

In detail: Data use

Data flow maps

- Illustrate the flow of data from each data collection form to the corresponding report.
- Identify gaps in your system; places where you may need to create a new form or report.

Figure 33: UNITAS data flow map



Using ICT4D

How to implement efficiently the measurement methods?

Example: Secondary Data collection

Results Framework level	Statements	Indicators	Measurement methods/MoVs
Strategic Objective	Refugees engage to legal livelihood opportunities	% of refugees employed at least one during project implementation	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 1	Vulnerable refugees are enabled to meet their urgent needs	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 1.1	Refugees have access to medical referrals	% of medical referrals conducted within a day of the request	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 2	Refugees have increased skills and knowledge	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “ vocational trainings enabled me to acquire a skill that I can use in my work”	anonymous survey Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 2.1	Refugees participate in vocational trainings	# of refugees who participate in vocational trainings	Attendance lists

How to implement efficiently the measurement methods?

Example: Secondary Data collection

Results Framework level	Statements	Indicators	Measurement methods/MoVs
Output 2.1	Refugees participate in vocational trainings	# of refugees who participate in vocational trainings	Attendance lists

We wish to track indicators for internal use

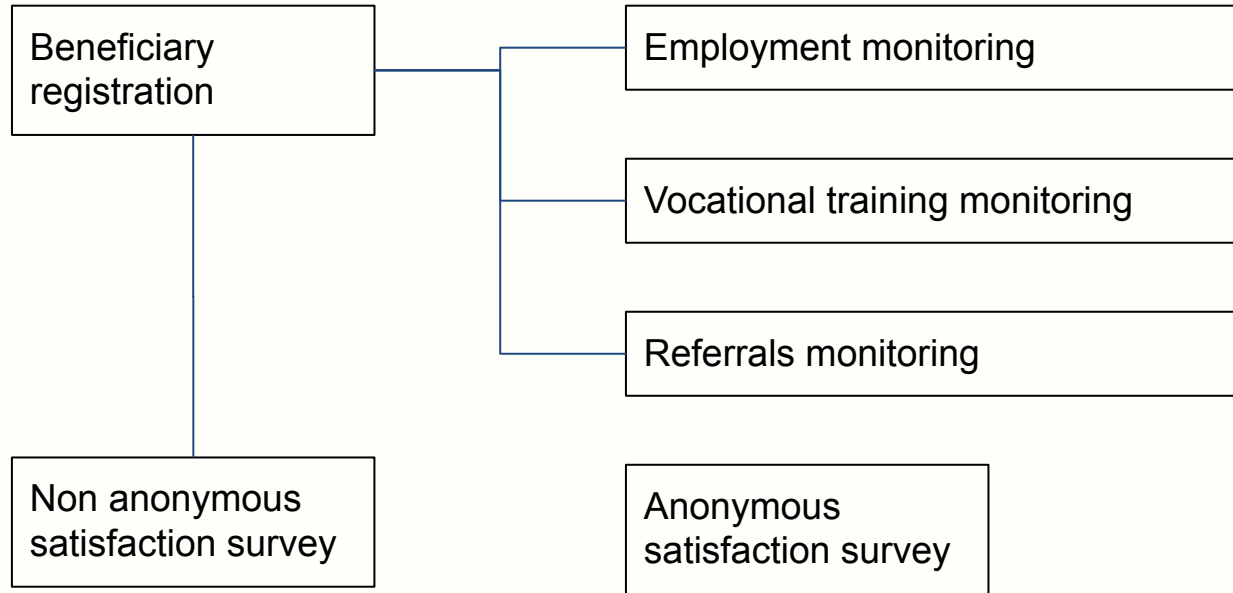
How to implement efficiently the measurement methods?

Example: Primary Data collection

Results Framework level	Statements	Indicators	Measurement methods/MoVs
Strategic Objective	Refugees engage to legal livelihood opportunities	% of refugees employed at least one during project implementation	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 1	Vulnerable refugees are enabled to meet their urgent needs	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 1.1	Refugees have access to medical referrals	% of medical referrals conducted within a day of the request	Project team monitoring records
Intermediate result 2	Refugees have increased skills and knowledge	% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “ vocational trainings enabled me to acquire a skill that I can use in my work”	anonymous survey Non anonymous survey including open ended question
Output 2.1	Refugees participate in vocational trainings	# of refugees who participate in vocational trainings	Attendance lists

How to implement efficiently the measurement methods?

First Example: Primary Data collection



Implementing partners use one integrated data collection system

How to implement efficiently the measurement methods?

Example: Primary Data collection

Indicator	Method	Frequency/Who collects/Who responds	Analysis	Sub groups	Data use
% of refugees who agree or strongly agree with the statement “referrals conducted by field team enabled me to access public medical services”	Survey	biannually/ MEAL officers/ Adults who accessed the service	Representative sample	Nationality/gender	Biannual reflection, donor monitoring report

We wish to create a monitoring report for internal and external use

MEAL Plan

Key messages

- The MEAL plan is the most important planning tool!!!!
- The MEAL plan enables actively the evidence based approach through the “data use”!
- The MEAL plan is a living document - Revise as needed!
- Having an ICT4D tool in place, such as ActivityInfo supports MEAL plan operationalization! Thus using actively the data captured!!!!

Measurement methods

Resources

A guide to the MEAL DPro

<https://mealdpro.org/>

Practical Guidance on Developing Indicators

<https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/practical-guidance-developing-indicators>

IndiKit: Rapid Guide to Designing SMART indicators

<https://www.indikit.net/userfiles/files/IndiKit/Rapid%20Guide%20to%20Designing%20SMART%20Indicators%20FINAL.pdf>

BHA: Indicator Handbook II

<https://www.usaid.gov/document/indicator-handbook-part-ii-monitoring-indicators>

Project/programme monitoring and evaluation guide

<https://www.ifrc.org/document/projectprogramme-monitoring-and-evaluation-guide>

ProPack I: The CRS Project Package

https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/propack_2019_april_16_low_res_for_web.pdf

Time for Q&A!

Thank you!