

Project Evaluation Protocol

The following pages contain detailed guidelines for executing the nine indicators in the indicator set. Each indicator is discussed in terms of the following parameters:

- * Required Team Members (Number and Skills)
- * Necessary Tools and Support
- * Total Time Required to Use the Indicator
- * Frequency for Use
- * Sequence of Use
- * Sampling
- * Procedures and Methods
- * Data Matrixes and Questionnaires
- * Presentation of Results

This detailed protocol is a modified version of the preliminary PEP, which was originally designed to help structure pilot evaluations in Arki RWS, Himachal Pradesh and Kattery RWS, Tamil Nadu. The PEP has since been modified in the light of these field experiences. It is presented here in a manual format so that others may quickly and easily use it as a rough guide for organising their own evaluations. ¹

Preparing to Carry Out the Evaluation

ASSEMBLING AN EVALUATION TEAM

1. Assistants should have rural development or social science backgrounds.
2. Assistants should have experience conducting interviews, and participatory evaluations.
3. Choose team members with local language needs in mind. There should be a native speaker of every language in which a participatory evaluation will be conducted.
4. Team members do not need any medical background to conduct the stunting study.
5. Since much of the work to be done is qualitative (and does not require repetitive survey work), the team should be kept as small as possible.

Please note : The sample data matrixes and questionnaires listed in the PEP are not intended to be used in a recipe-like fashion. Instead, the protocol has been designed with a probing, sceptical, observant investigator in mind. The investigators should use the protocol as rough guides for the formulation of their own evaluation.

It is also important to realise that the sample questions are not to be taken literally; they are only guides to the questions that need to be answered. In the field, investigators should ask these questions as they see it. They will need to observe their surroundings with a critical eye. In addition, these questions should be administered as open-ended interviews, not structured surveys. For example, an investigator may ask beneficiaries how often a particular hand pump is used. For whatever reasons, the answer given may be, "Every day". Yet, an observant investigator may see that the hand pump is frozen with rust. In such an instance the investigator will not simply note down that the hand pump is used regularly. Instead, he will pursue the issue further in order to uncover the clearest possible understanding of actual level of use of the hand pump. In the end, the investigator may have to disregard answers that are obviously false and proceed with his own observations. The investigator must be similarly inquisitive when conducting key informant interviews and/or participatory sessions.

PURCHASING NECESSARY TOOLS

Executing the Evaluation Protocol requires the use of very few specialised tools. Those tools which are required should generally be available in most international capitals. Given the sometimes remote nature of field sites, all tools should be purchased prior to the actual visit. The following is a list of tools (see the individual guides for details):

- * Poster paper
- * Coloured Pens/Markers
- * Record books
- * Height or length boards
- * Floor scale for measuring weight
- * Flat board (along with 4-6 wedges and a level)
- * Stunting software (i.e., EpiInfo6)
- * Statistical software (i.e., SPSS)
- * Still camera
 - 5 automatic rain gauges
 - Water level sensor
 - Data logger
 - Current meter
 - Stop watch
 - Set of stick gauges
 - Turbidity sensor
 - Punjab bottle sampler
- * Hydrological Data collection form sheets
- * Silt Laboratory Equipment
 - Set of sieves
 - Electronic balance
 - Drying oven
 - Record books
- * Data Processing Equipment
 - PC plus printer
 - Data reading unit (for the hydrological data)
- * Miscellaneous Equipment
 - Dumpy level

SELECTING VILLAGES TO EVALUATE

1. If random sampling is not possible, let the NGO and state government department select the villages.
2. Upon arrival in the watershed, ask the NGO and state government department to choose one or two villages where they believe their work has had the most positive impact.
3. Make preliminary visits to these villages to determine if they are suitable.
4. From the pool of villages selected by the NGO and state government department, choose the number of villages which the evaluation team has time to survey.

WORKING WITH PARTNER NGOS AND STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

1. Partner organisations are concerned that evaluations show their work in the best possible light.
2. If they are relied upon too closely, they will (even if only unconsciously) bias the data collection in their favour.
3. Thus, partner organisations should not be overly relied upon and should be worked with cautiously.

4. Partners must be used as liasions for entering the villages, but after this they may need to be kept at a distance.
5. When gathering data indirectly related to the partner's work (for example, the stunting study), the partner may be asked to give assistance.
6. When a partner's work is being directly evaluated (especially while executing the indicator *Use*) the parnter must be kept away.
7. In order not to offend anyone, attempt to give partners alternative task to do, instead of dismissing them.
8. Ask them to help gather more objective data, which is not easily manipulated. For example, partners could help gather school attendance figures.
9. It is important that the results of the evaluation be shared with the partner organisations.

SETTING UP A RESEARCH ITINERARY

1. It is a better use of resources to make one long visit to the watershed, instead of two or more shortvisits.
2. The visit can be broken up into five component phases: Gearing up, Field Stundy, Stunting Study, Participatory Sessions, and Wrapping Up.
3. The five compoennts should be executed in this order.
4. One or two extra days should be built into the research timetable to compensate for unexpected holidays, bad weather, equipment breakdown, etc.
5. The initial evaluation should be significantly shorter than successive visits because the indicators *Use* and *Outsiders* are omitted.
6. With an extra day built in, the baseline evaluation should taken about ten days and follow-up evaluations take about fourteen days (exclusive of travel time).