Monitoring & Evaluation of Community-based Services for Orphans & Vulnerable Children

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POINT OF DEPARTURE

"Everything that can be counted
does not necessarily count;
everything that counts
cannot necessarily be counted"

❖ Albert Einstein

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Main concerns

❖ Macro context
  ➢ No overall M&E policy and guidelines
  ➢ Lack of indicators to monitor the implementation of the developmental approach in child welfare
  ➢ Fixation on outputs & justification of funding

❖ Agency level
  ➢ No organisational policies & guidelines for M&E
  ➢ Poorly crafted M&E plans to give direction for OVC programmes
  ➢ No budgets for M&E
  ➢ No indicators being tracked
  ➢ Bureaucratic organisational structures without M&E units

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Main concerns

  ➢ No expert staff to guide M&E, rather M&E function is embedded into agency programmes
  ➢ No M&E tools (e.g. computer-based software)

❖ Management
  ➢ Significant lack of M&E skills
  ➢ Inadequate knowledge of the developmental approach, indicator development
  ➢ Unequal commitment to M&E
  ➢ Non-participation of staff in M&E planning
  ➢ No utilisation focus

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Main concerns

❖ Staff
  ➢ High staff turnover, fatigue & high caseloads
  ➢ Non participation
  ➢ M&E function perceived to be peripheral
  ➢ Negative attitude towards M&E
  ➢ M&E perceived as a mechanism to monitor individual performance
❖ Training
  ➢ Focus on CPD i.e. enhancing professional skills other than M&E
  ➢ Targeted at managers (top, departmental & middle)

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Reality?!

GET ALL THE INFORMATION YOU CAN, WE'LL THINK OF A USE FOR IT LATER.

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Main concerns

❖ Data collection, analysis & use
  ➢ No uniformity of data collected
  ➢ No mechanisms to ensure data integrity
  ➢ Collection of mainly, quantitative data at the expense of qualitative data
  ➢ No analyses of data collected
  ➢ No feedback on how data is being used to inform service delivery improvement
❖ Reporting
  ➢ Reporting structures designed for external purposes
  ➢ M&E is not topical in the reports
  ➢ One way reporting to government & funders without feedback
  ➢ Reporting on outputs that cannot transcend this level to incorporate outcomes and impact

Framework for Monitoring & Evaluation

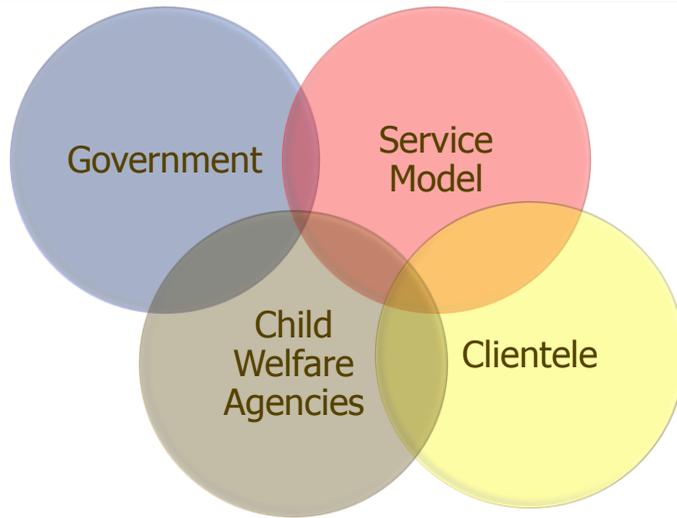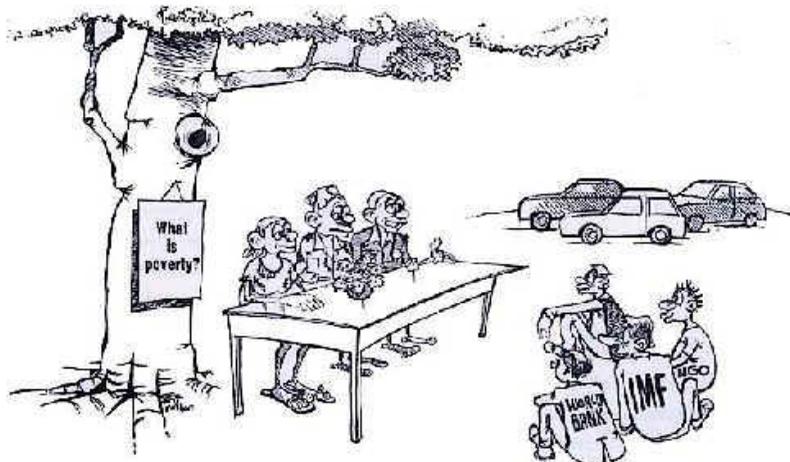| Impact	• Long term changes that result from the achievement of specific outcomes (e.g. poverty reduction, job creation)
Outcomes	• "medium-term results for specific beneficiaries that are the consequence of achieving specific outputs."
Outputs	• The tangible and measurable products or services delivered as a result of the activities
Processes	• The actions or activities that translate inputs into desired products
Inputs	• What is used to do the work in a project or a programme

National Treasury. (2007). *Framework for managing programme performance information*

Effective M&E Systems

- Government
- Service Model
- Child Welfare Agencies
- Clientele

The Case for M&E in Child Welfare

| Theory-based | Participatory | Utilization focused | Management tool |

Challenges with PM&E

Bottom-up Approach

Recommendations

- ❖ Develop M&E policies to guide how community-based services for OVCs are to be monitored and evaluated on the whole;
- ❖ Build capacity and ensure that appropriate training is offered for the implementation of M&E policies within the child welfare field;
- ❖ Develop a child welfare M&E system that provides the basis for M&E planning;
- ❖ Enhance cohesion between the DSD (funder/ policy maker) and the child welfare agency (policy implementer)
- ❖ Adopt participatory approaches in the design of data collection tools and strive for uniformity in the tools and data required on a monthly basis;

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Recommendations

- ❖ Allocate budgets for the child welfare agency to specifically finance the budget for M&E;
- ❖ Establish M&E units that are funded & have expert staff
- ❖ Channel resources towards the development of context-specific & efficient M&E tools
- ❖ Train social workers and social service professionals in evaluation research so that there can be a shift towards the evaluation of outcomes and impacts in the child welfare field;
- ❖ Align social work education to equip students with skills to effectively execute M&E duties in the workplace
- ❖ Develop indicators to measure overall performance & report on outcomes and impact

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