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**Operationalizing Theory of Change to Create Impact**

**Presenting Author**

Kasia Kedzia

**Affiliation**

Chemonics

**Country of residence**

United States of America

**Objectives/aims**

Decisions and adaption ultimately comes down to choices and understanding, with confidence, that the data you are looking at provides a sound basis to adjust and invest resources. As evaluators, we often deal with data captured by monitoring systems which are designed to collect data but not always designed to enable adaptation and learning. If the program is not grounded in at least a basic theory of change, we grapple with how to utilize data when conducting an evaluation. The intent of the session is to impart practical advice and tools for operationalizing M&E system and tips on implementing systems that facilitate learning. In essence, this is how to operationalize a theory of change to track progress, create buy-in from non-M&E staff, and adapt according to learning.

**Methods**

Imparting skills to 1) operationalize a theory of change, by establishing the right procedures to capture data using simple tools, templates and checklists. Tips on training all project staff, not just the MEL officer with these simple tools and templates to help equip them in collecting higher quality data and creates buy in.We are in an era of seemingly boundless data and constant calls for more and better analysis; regardless of funding source, almost all international development projects develop some guidelines for collecting data and conducting evaluations. While the plans exist, operationalizing and using these plans to systematically and consistently to capture high quality data that is useful for evaluation, adaptation, and learning still eludes many projects. These skills demonstrated in this session will expand participant skill set to enable them to work with stakeholders and clients to move from a project-centric focus to learning-centric focus in data collection. Participants will receive easy to use tools, templates, and resources on both creating buy-in from all project staff in collecting the right data, as well as cheat sheets on how to set up structures, what questions to ask to capture learning, and how to collect the optimal data for learning in the absence of having formal power to influence staff to use the systems that are set up.

**Main findings**

We have shared these tools with our project staff and have seen the results of collaboration, buy-in and an increase in adapting implementation based on these approaches.