DPMI+

Deliverables Presentation

Abstract

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OneVILLAGE PARTNERS

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Introduction

OneVillage Partners (OVP) works as a catalyst to transform rural villages into empowered, self-reliant communities. We partner with villages long-term to improve productivity, quality of life, and the systems and skills that make these changes sustainable. Currently we work in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Our vision is engaged and thriving communities throughout rural Africa and our mission is to inspire and equip rural villagers to transform their lives and communities.

Benefits of the OVP model through a 5-year period of engagement with a community include:

1. **Self-defined basic needs are met and quality of life greatly improves.** Whole villages meet basic needs such as gaining access to clean water, basic sanitation, better education, new business opportunities and more productive agriculture.
2. **Long-term Impact.** Villagers learn how to maintain and manage new community assets and plan for the future.
3. **Improved Leadership.** Through an intensive and specialized curriculum, volunteer "change agents" learn skills to lead change, such as planning, group facilitation, and budgeting. Change agents often start new projects on their own.
4. **Community Mobilization.** Villagers report a greater sense of unity and ability to work together to accomplish common goals.
5. **Empowered Women**. Through OVP's unique curriculum, illiterate women learn to budget, save and manage their money. They meet new financial goals, send their children to school and raise the status of women in their communities.
6. **Inclusion of Marginalized Groups**. OVP's process demands that projects benefit everyone in the community, especially those who are disadvantaged – including women, children, ethnic minorities, and the mentally challenged. Villagers gain new respect for differences.

OVP accomplishes these benchmarks through two signature programs – the Community Action Program (ACT) and Nurturing Opportunities for Women (NOW).

OVP is different from many NGOs operating in Sierra Leone. The approach is entirely community-led where villagers determine their own goals and how to accomplish them. As a grassroots organization, OVP works closely with communities by building trust and partnership. OVP is dedicated to working with communities long-term through a period of engagement that lasts around 5 years and includes ongoing support. Sustainability is one of OVP's overarching goals, they work to address the needs of the entire community with long-term solutions that can be locally managed once OVP leaves.

Disclosure: The deliverables contained in this document were developed for OneVillage Partners and therefore remain the property of OneVillage Partners. Any use of the deliverables contained in this document is acceptable, but OneVillage Partners should be notified prior to their use.

1. Monitoring & Evaluation Staff Training

Rationale

Field staff at OVP have a basic knowledge of monitoring and evaluation. They can adequately express the difference between monitoring and evaluation. They facilitate trainings with the Community Action Group (OVP's trained group of change agent volunteers) to develop indicators and plans for monitoring progress on Community Action projects. The purpose behind further developing their M&E capacity is in line with strategic growth plans for the organization. OVP strongly believes in hiring up instead of hiring out, therefore building staff capacity to take on more technical roles in the organization is crucial as they grow. This curriculum (see Appendix 1) was implemented over a two-day period, led by the Monitoring, Evaluation and Communications Manager, Sophie Dresser and co-facilitated by Country Director, Jennifer Artibello. The curriculum was designed with objectives set forth by the senior management team.

Figure 1: M&E Staff Training Day 1

Figure 2: M&E Staff Training Key Day 2

Explanation

I felt it was important for our staff to receive training on Appreciative Inquiry because it aligns well with our organizational values and would be a skill they implement in the field right away. Additionally, field staff work with volunteer change agents to develop monitoring processes and indicators. Prior to my arrival, they were trying to train volunteers on very technical indicator development, which I felt was not productive. Instead, I looked back at lessons learned in DPMI and did further research on developing participatory monitoring indicators. We developed a training on using SPICED (see figure 3) indicators. These two topics might seem a bit disjointed but my goal in developing this initial training soon after I joined the team was to set the tone for how we are going to monitor and evaluate our work – that being in a non-extractive, appreciative and participatory way. This training led into other trainings on Most Significant Change and participatory monitoring.

Figure 3: SMART versus SPICED Indicators[1]

SMART indicators	SPICED indicators
Specific (to the change being measured)	Subjective
Measurable (and unambiguous)	Participatory
Attainable (and sensitive)	Interpreted (and communicable)
Relevant (and easy to collect)	Cross-checked
Time bound (with term dates for measurement)	Empowering
	Diverse and disaggregated

DPMI Curriculum

One section of DPMI that really resonated with me was the training we received on Appreciative Inquiry. While this was not the focus of DPMI Rwanda – this was a crucial step in understanding the context and the work of Partners in Health to be able to develop our social marketing campaign in a way that it had the potential to be influential with the target population. Without the Appreciative Inquiry training, I'm not confident that our team would have gathered the necessary information that led to the development of our campaign. Furthermore, we had to develop indicators for our social marketing campaign. This was my first academic introduction to developing indicators, which was later expanded on in courses on program evaluation. During DPMI I realized what an iterative process developing indicators was. It takes patience and brainstorming – all takeaways that I tried to communicate with our staff during this training.

2. Results Frameworks

Rationale

The results frameworks were created using existing logic models developed by OVP. While the logic models have been useful in the programs' strategic development, results frameworks for each program take the level of programmatic understanding deeper, to associate intermediate, intended results with the strategic objective. Essentially, the results frameworks are showing a casual roadmap for how OVP sees the programs being successful. Senior management agreed that this was a helpful exercise and led to deeper understanding and discussion on the objective of both programs.

DPMI Curriculum

The results frameworks were developed directly from my knowledge of developing results frameworks in DPMI Rwanda. I referred to a course reading, "USAID Performance Monitoring & Evaluation TIPS for Developing Results Frameworks" for guidance. OVP utilizes problem trees and logic models, both of which I consulted in developing this results framework. OVP has not used results frameworks in the past, but now both program-specific results frameworks will help us to engage in strategic discussions.

[1] Lennie, June & J. Tacchi, B. Koirala, M. Wilmore, A. Skuse. "Assessing Communications for Social Change: Equal Access Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit." 2011.

Community Action Program Results Framework

Figure 4: Community Action Program Results Framework

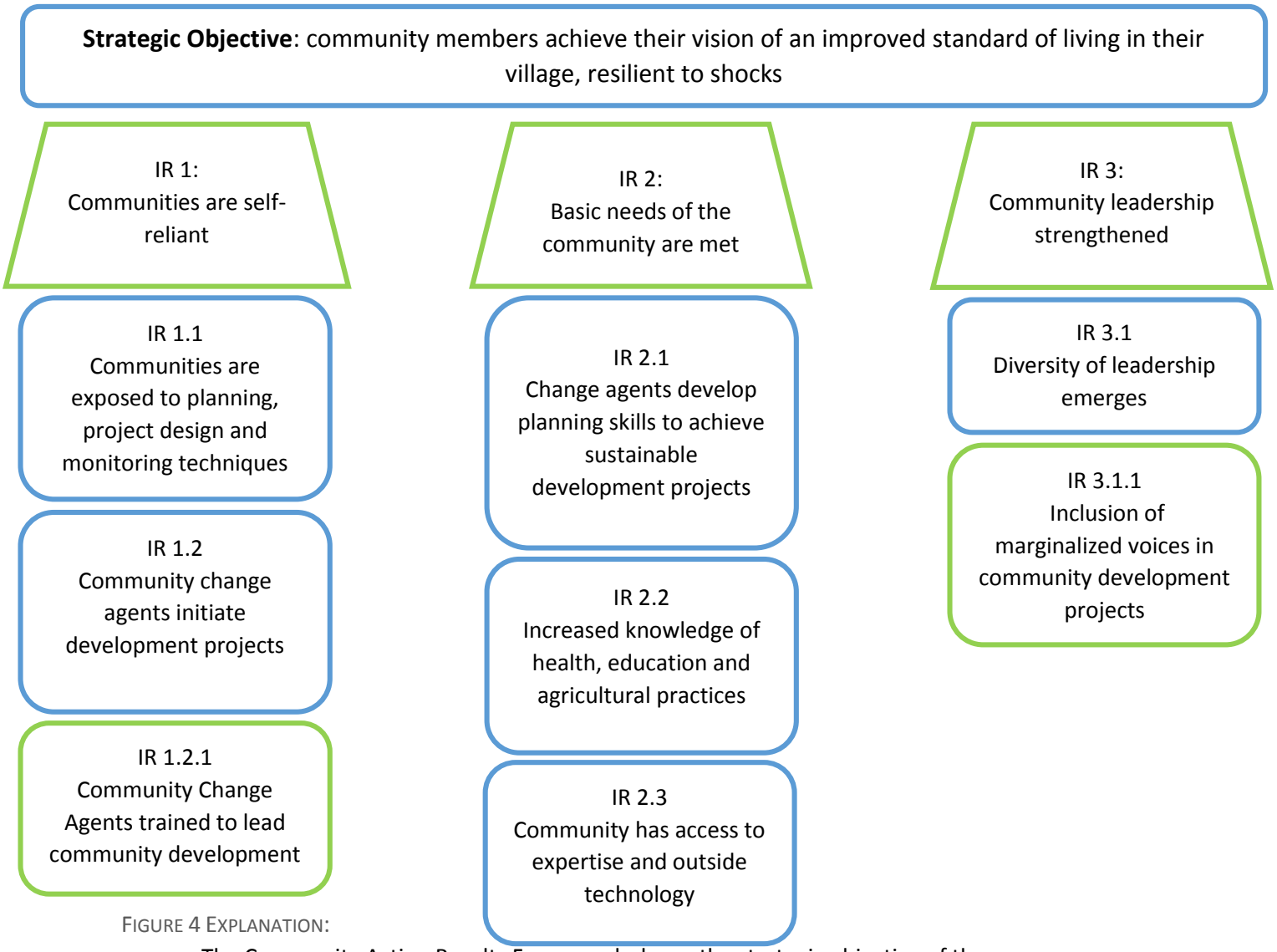


FIGURE 4 EXPLANATION:

The Community Action Results Framework shows the strategic objective of the program, inferred from the program logic model. The strategic objective of the Community Action program is that community members can plan, act and achieve their vision of an improved standard of living in their village, resilient to shocks (e.g. the 2014 Ebola Virus Outbreak).

The Community Action program is unique in that it not only focuses on priority problems defined by the community themselves, but also builds capacity of trained change agents to promote sustainable, long-lasting change from within the community. As Figure 4 shows, change agents are central to achieving the strategic objective as capacity building amongst them leads to intermediate results like the shared vision of community development being achieved and basic needs within the community being met.

Nurturing Opportunities for Women (NOW) Results Framework

Figure 5: NOW Program Results Framework

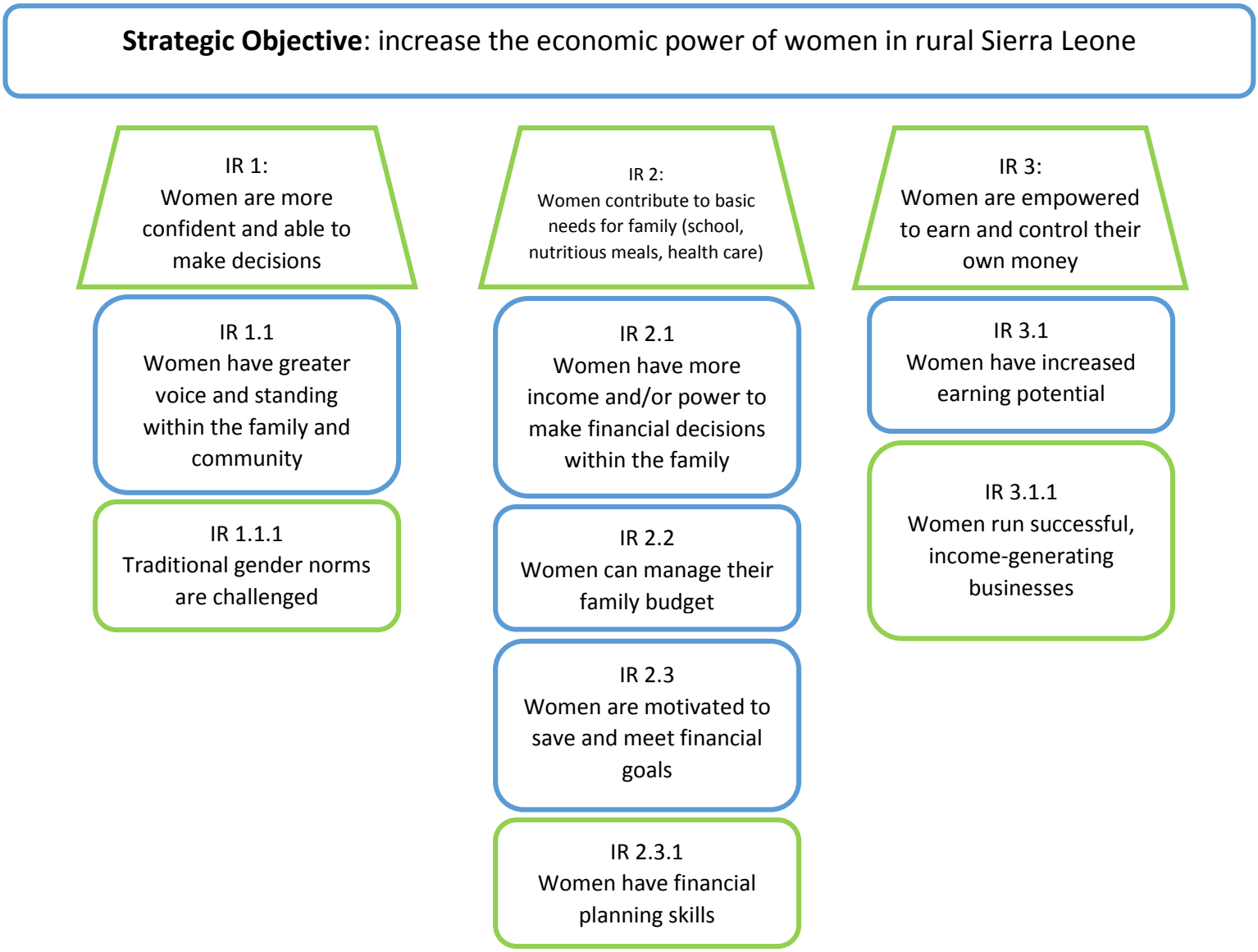


FIGURE 5 EXPLANATION:

The NOW Results Framework shows the strategic objective of OVP's financial literacy program for women – to increase the economic power of women in rural Sierra Leone. The NOW program recognizes the many challenges that women in rural communities face, such as traditional gender norms that often make it difficult for women to gain an education or participate in income generating ventures. Despite these challenges, the program recognizes the power that exists within women in these communities to be transformative change agents within their own families.

The NOW program is unique because it requires no literacy – women engage with a picture-based workbook to learn financial planning skills. Trained facilitators use a specified system of counting and marking so that participants do not even need to know how to write down a number. The program has two phases. IR 1 and IR 2 define the results of Phase 1 of the program – focused on generating

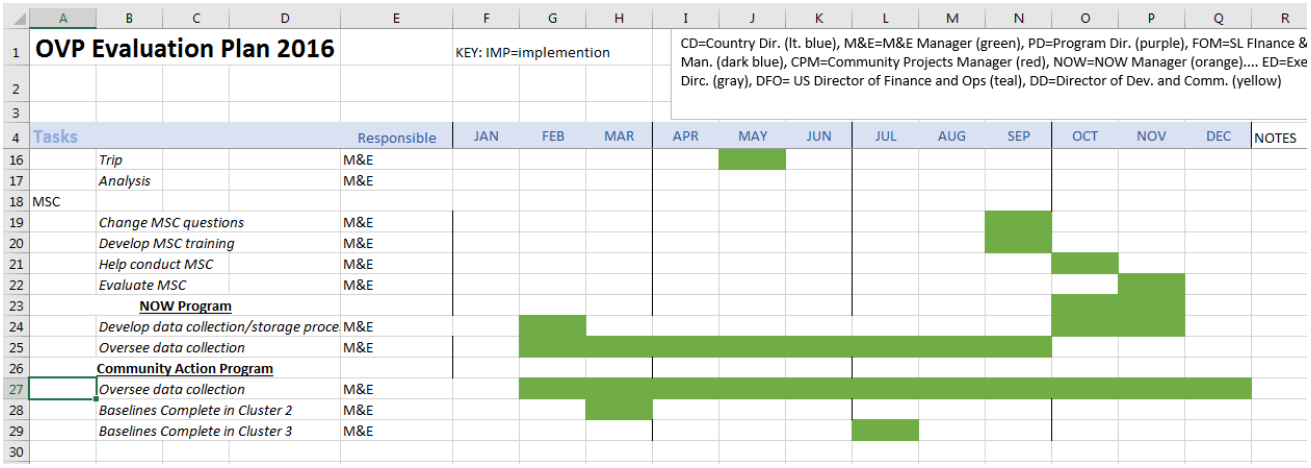
confidence and voice amongst participants and teaching skills that can aid in planning for the future to meet a woman's specific goal – whether that be sending their children to school, improving their home or starting a business. Phase 2 is illustrated by IR 3 and is focused on starting and growing a business.

3. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and Timeline

Rationale

The monitoring and evaluation plan and timeline (see Figure 6, Appendix 2, 3) was developed to provide a snapshot of our year-long process for monitoring and evaluating our programs. Staff in the US use this information to inform the board and support fundraising efforts. Prior to my arrival at OVP, monitoring and evaluation was managed by other senior staff dedicated to either overall operations or management of specific programs. This plan and timeline will help to organize processes and define the new role of the Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager.

Figure 6: Evaluation Timeline Sample



Explanation

Due to the length of the evaluation plan and timeline, these sections are in located in the appendix (see Appendix 2, 3). These documents will guide my role as the Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager and inform the Board of Directors and HQ staff. This plan and timeline will be revised annually by the person in the role of Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager. Eventually, as the organization moves to scale, the plan will become more robust and will include roles of supporting M&E staff, managed by the Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager.

DPMI Curriculum

OVP already uses a work plan template in Excel and preferred to be consistent with the Monitoring & Evaluation timeline. Therefore, I did not use GANTT charting software to develop the timeline, rather I employed the lessons learned during this section of DPMI Rwanda to complete the

evaluation timeline in Excel. The experience of completing a year-long plan for OVP was obviously much more in-depth than what we were able to accomplish in DPMI Rwanda. This experience allowed me to really understand the complexity that comes along with monitoring and evaluation for an entire organization and how difficult it is to set up a process for monitoring and evaluation from the ground up.

4. Indicator Book

Rationale

The indicator was developed primarily to support field staff as they facilitate the change agents to develop indicators to monitor their projects within the Community Action Program. The indicator book is organized by priority areas that communities will prioritize during the PRA portion of our Community Action Program. These priority areas are bound to change over time, with new additions as communities move to tackling more intricate development challenges. Thus, this book is a work in progress. The book also contains a section for our women's empowerment program, Nurturing Opportunities for Women (NOW). This particular section is geared towards our financial literacy program and contains components for all relevant outcomes we expect to see the program generate. The indicator book is a fusion of many different formats developed after a period of research and adaptation. This format fits the utility of OVP's field staff best.

Explanation

Due to the length of the indicator book, the finalized section (Sanitation & Hygiene) is contained in the appendix (see Appendix 4). Subsequent sections of the indicator book are a work in progress as communities decide to move into other priority areas. The indicator book is divided into eight (8) priority areas. Each section contains expected outcomes given the projects that OVP assumes the community will likely tackle. Indicators are further organized within each section into outcome indicators and impact indicators. Outcome indicators are divided by subsection, unique to each priority area depending on the types of projects that are projected to take place. It is important to note that this book is not exhaustive. There may be indicators not listed in this book that could be successfully employed to monitor OVP projects. Overtime, this book will be adapted to include new and relevant indicators given the project areas that communities choose to move into.

DPMI Curriculum

During DPMI Rwanda we were trained to develop SMART indicators for our social marketing campaigns. The facilitation of this part of the training was intensive – we were required to look at every single word and detail contained in our indicator to ensure that it was correct and could properly measure our campaign's progress. This training served as the backbone for the creation of this indicator book. While the indicators themselves required much research and understanding of the priority areas that communities select, compiling the indicators and ensuring that each was SMART or an adapted version, SPICED – was a skill derived from my DPMI experience.

5. Incorporating MSC into OVP Monitoring & Evaluation Practices

Rationale

OVP is a community-led development organization, where communities elect to plan and implement projects around priority areas they define during a PRA/PLA adapted process we call, LEARN. Due to the participatory nature of OVP's programming and the fact that villagers are at the heart of everything we do, Most Significant Change is a natural choice for expanding our monitoring and evaluation methodology to be more participatory. The OVP Strategic Plan (see Appendix 5) states a key objective is to "test and refine the OVP model and get ready to grow." Within this objective, OVP intends to "capture the full impact of our work" through gathering, storing and analyzing data on outcomes and impact. MSC will allow us to take a step back from a year of work that has already been done in 3 villages (known as Cluster 2) and assess directly from our participants, how our Community Action and Nurturing Opportunities for Women programs have affected their lives. This will allow us to better understand both intended and unintended outcomes from our work, learn from those lessons and continue to build our community-driven model for development in rural Sierra Leone.

Explanation

When I joined OVP in February 2016, there was knowledge of MSC across the entire staff. Even field staff had heard of the process and everyone was excited to try it here. MSC is known as an innovative, participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation, fitting perfectly with the unique nature of the work that OVP does. With some basic knowledge of MSC, I designed two short module trainings (see Appendix 6, 7) on conducting MSC semi-structured interviews and the process of MSC for our organization overall. The trainings served as a basis for revising our Monthly Reflection process in March 2016. I worked with field staff to identify stories of significant change they were seeing in the field and report on them monthly during an all-staff meeting. The goal of these trainings and adaption of the Monthly Reflection process is to prepare our field staff to begin implementing Most Significant Change with project participants in September. While the reporting they are doing for the Monthly Reflection exercise is not Most Significant Change, it does use story-telling techniques and story-selection protocols in order to generate greater understanding of the process when we do move forward with full implementation of Most Significant Change later this year. As an organization, we are still very much adapting and outlining our Most Significant Change process. We continue to meet with other organizations in Sierra Leone who utilize Most Significant Change and network with our contacts in the US for advise on how to move forward.

DPMI Curriculum

While Most Significant Change was not a topic of our work in DPMI Rwanda, we did cover this topic in courses I took following DPMI Rwanda. In many ways, our experience using Appreciative Inquiry during our interview with a Partners in Health Community Health Worker and new mother reminds me of the most important components of Most Significant Change. We talked a lot in DPMI Rwanda about building trust, finding common ground, asking open ended and engaging questions – all keys to making Most Significant Change work in the field. I find this aspect of the DPMI curriculum to guide my work in many ways beyond just being a good listener and knowing how to implement semi-structured

interviews. Being *appreciative* in this type of work as well as highly intentional with interpersonal interactions is paramount.

6. Developing the OVP Exit Strategy

Rationale

OVP's innovative community-led model puts project participants at the forefront of planning and implementation of development projects within their own communities. After realizing that while externally-led programs are often effective in the short-term, these types of programs can actually prolong poverty and worsen aid dependency, OVP sought to develop a model that engaged communities to build skills and utilize their own agency to realize self-reliance (OVP Strategic Plan 2016, Appendix 5). OVP expects the model to last anywhere from 3-9 project cycles (5-8 years of engagement with the two OVP programs, ACT and NOW) but have yet to develop the parameters for what a village looks like when OVP's work is done. The exit strategy helps to define these parameters and give a more concrete expectation for how long the model needs to be active within a village in order to deem it a success. The exit strategy is of particular importance to the US-based Board of Directors and grant writing team who will utilize the parameters to apply for funding.

Explanation

I worked closely with our Country Director and Community Projects Manager to develop the OVP Exit Strategy. Together, we were able to meld expertise in evaluation and program management and program curriculum design to better understand what we expect the model to achieve and in what timeframe. Central to OVP's exit strategy is the understanding of the period of engagement with each village. We expect each round of both programs to take around 9 months. Since a key value at OVP is to decrease donor dependency and not contribute to it – we were careful in our strategizing with the exit strategy to ensure that we were mindful of this risk. Given that communities identify five priority needs in the initial PRA process in Round 1 of ACT (and revisit these priority needs before each subsequent round), it seemed fitting that OVP engages with the community for 3 ACT projects to address one of these priority needs during each round. It is our working assumption that after 3 cycles of engagement with OVP where we step back more and more after each round, that the community will be able and mobilized to address other priority needs once OVP exits. We were also mindful that an engagement period longer than 5 years may led to donor dependency – a factor we try to mitigate with the approach we take to our work.

OVP enters a village with Round 1 of ACT, which lasts about 18 months. One year after entering a community, OVP brings the NOW program to that same community while the community continues to monitoring their ACT project. NOW brings in new participants who may or may not have been key actors in Round 1 of ACT. This staggered approach continues for a total of 3 rounds of ACT and 2 rounds of NOW. As a team, we developed expectations for each program round. The summary of the expectations is listed here:

- **ACT Round 1:** Program Coordinators focus on leadership development, planning skills, mobilization through motivational coaching and basic budgeting skills. This round aims to challenge traditional leadership norms in the community and emphasizes communication through information sharing and transparency. OVP covers all financial costs for external resources needed to complete project implementation. Community provides all local materials and skilled labor.
- **NOW Round 1:** Program Coordinators continue to build capacity within the community by sharing planning skills with women specifically related to a financial goal. This round

also challenges traditional gender norms and encourages family and community-wide discourse, information sharing and transparency. Traditionally marginalized women are encouraged and supported to use their voice in family, group and community-wide settings through which we expect to see an increase in decision-making ability and empowerment. OVP covers the limited expenses to run the program.

- **ACT Round 2:** Program Coordinators continue to build capacity with the trained group of change agents from Round 1 and we expect that the community will begin to recognize the facilitation, planning and project implementation skills of the change agents. The community begins to take over more responsibility within the project cycle. OVP covers 50% of costs for external materials needed to complete project implementation. Community provides the remaining 50% of external material costs, all local materials, and skilled labor.
- **NOW Round 2**: Program Coordinators focus on amplifying planning skills within the smaller cohort of continuing women interested in running their own enterprise. Participants can complete a mini-market survey, run a profitable business and recognize profit and profit loss. Financial management and planning is a skill that is recognized and admired community-wide. OVP covers the limited expenses to run the program.
- **ACT Round 3**: Trained change agents lead the process through the project cycle. The community recognizes leadership outside the traditional village authority structure and development is understood to be achievable without external support. OVP is confident that there are trained change agents to lead further development projects, addressing the priority needs of the entire community. The community covers 100% of costs associated with project implementation.

If a community does not achieve the expected outcomes from each round, the senior management team will work with Program Coordinators to better understand where the challenges are and how to rectify them. It is one of the many benefits of the OVP approach – that we are able to be constantly adapting and addressing unique challenges that present themselves in the communities where we work. Organizational learning and adaptation is crucial to the success and growth of the model.

DPMI Curriculum

Much of the development of the OVP Exit Strategy relied on understanding our evaluation processes and indicators for success. I used knowledge on interpreting logic models and developing indicators that I gained through DPMI Rwanda to work with the team to come up with a set of realistic expectations for success with our model. We also found that referring back to our results frameworks (see Figure 4, 5) was very helpful in understanding how we expect to reach our strategic objectives, and what interim successes we can expect on the road to getting there. The foundation that I gained through DPMI in critically thinking about activities, objectives, outcomes and long-term impact have been instrumental as I've transitioned into my role at OVP. This is especially important given the time where the organization finds itself, where strategic planning and thinking about long term expectations is crucial.

7. Heritage Village Evaluation Design

Rationale

OVP began its work in 2004 in three villages (Cluster 1) in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone. After 12 years of working with the same three villages on a variety of different projects, OVP realigned as an organization. Under the 2016 Strategic Plan (see Appendix 5), OVP moved forward with plans for two programs – Community Action and Nurturing Opportunities for Women in a new set of villages (Cluster 2). It was important for OVP to look back on 12 years of successful project implementation in Cluster 1, the Heritage Villages, and identify key factors in success and lessons they could learn as they scale to move into new clusters of villages.

Explanation

The summative evaluation design (see Appendix 8) for Cluster 1 was developed over a period of two months. I worked closely with our Country Director (CD) and our longtime Senior Logistics Officer who had the deepest insight into our work in the Cluster 1 villages. The evaluation design was complex in that we tried to evaluate 16 different interventions over a very broad period of time (12 years). I simplified the evaluation design by separating the interventions into three intervention areas – health, education and livelihoods. With these three distinctions, I was able to capture areas in which we could actually measure success or failure. I worked with our CD and the founder of the organization to better understand the intended outcomes of the organization's activities at this early stage in their existence. Stemming from these conversations, I developed three key questions (see "Heritage Village Evaluation Design", Appendix 8, Page 31) to guide the data collection, analysis and reporting of the evaluation once it is implemented later this year.

DPMI Curriculum

Immediately after I returned from DPMI Rwanda, I was enrolled in Professor Levinger's Program Evaluation Seminar. Often times, I feel the lessons from these two courses run together in my mind as many tools were used across both experiences. I utilized basic knowledge about developing indicators from the DPMI curriculum. To develop the evaluation design, I relied heavily on the Program Evaluation Seminar, which trained me to be proficient in designing complex evaluations. This evaluation was no different – it featured many different interventions over the course of a very long time period. The Board of Directors was keenly interested in knowing successes from this work and also how to best inform our future work in other clusters of villages. Through a summative evaluation design, I was able to meet the needs of all key stakeholders, including the Board of Directors and the in-country staff in Sierra Leone.

8. Case Study: Getting to Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation

As a community-led development organization, the work of OVP is inherently participatory. A holistic, participatory approach, like the one OVP takes, is uncommon in Sierra Leone, especially in the NGO-saturated Eastern Province. A lot of international assistance here comes in the form of delivering a good or service directly to village authorities without ever engaging key stakeholders or primary users. This has cultivated a culture of dependency that OVP recognizes throughout its work, especially in early stages of working with new communities. Therefore, being wholly participatory can be challenging, as communities are not used to nor do they expect this type of engagement from NGOs. OVP has to work diligently to sensitize and educate communities on why they take a participatory approach – key components of that being that villagers have their own agency and development will be more sustainable when it is led by people closest to the priority needs.

OVP has entered 3 clusters of villages in the Eastern Province, the 2nd and 3rd clusters using a new model that includes the ACT program. Cluster 2 finished project implementation in May 2016 and will begin monitoring the projects soon afterwards. Prior to the identification of the problem outlined in this case (the need for a participatory monitoring scheme), Program Coordinators were using a highly sophisticated indicator development workshop that was far too complicated for the change agents to fully grasp. Therefore, the senior management team felt that the current monitoring scheme was actually going against their organizational value and mission to be highly participatory because they were asking change agents to complete tasks which they did not fully understand. Due to this problem, the senior management team identified that a participatory monitoring scheme would solve several organizational challenges and more directly align with their mission as a holistic, community-led development organization. This case study explores how the organization moved towards more participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation.

Primary stakeholders in this case are the facilitators (OVP Program Coordinators) and the change agents involved in the ACT program. OVP works with 12 change agents during each round of the ACT program – engaging these volunteer change agents through training and facilitation, project implementation and monitoring. Secondary stakeholders include OVP's senior management that is directly involved with monitoring and evaluation – the Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager, Community Projects Manager and Country Director. Together, the senior management team developed a participatory monitoring scheme that aimed to build the capacity of the Program Coordinators to facilitate the change agents to develop indicators and to act as trained data collectors to monitor their own projects.

The needs and priorities of the primary stakeholder group (Program Coordinators, change agents) are foremost an efficient way to monitor the projects given that OVP Program Coordinators are managing 3 villages with active projects at a time. The priority of this efficient monitoring scheme is that it be participatory despite the challenge of the education or experience level of many of the change agents. The secondary stakeholders' needs and priorities differ in that they require not only efficient monitoring practices but valid data collection that will produce accurate reports of project progress. There does not appear to be any conflicts among the two stakeholder groups at the initial stages of implementing the participatory monitoring scheme, however it did take some capacity building to reach an understanding of what accurate and valid data means and why it is important that we collect data in a very cohesive manner. Trainings led by the Monitoring, Evaluation & Communications Manager with the Program Coordinators helped to create more understanding about why this is crucial in monitoring. There is of course, the potential for conflicts to arise. The senior management team is operating under several assumptions that if they do not continue to be valid, could create conflicts moving forward. For example, the senior management team is assuming that change agents will continue to be engaged and

motivated even after project implementation and the training workshops have concluded. If change agents do not remain engaged, this participatory monitoring scheme will not succeed.

The priority problem within this case is that OVP has identified a component of their work that is not participatory and that they feel should be adapted to be more participatory however, the capacity of change agents poses a significant challenge. The issue with the current way that OVP monitors its projects is that it is not participatory but it also does not serve the change agents – going against their value of putting the villagers first (OVP Strategic Plan 2016, Appendix 5). Prior to piloting the participatory monitoring scheme, Program Coordinators facilitated workshops for the change agents to develop SMART indicators, which often involved math far beyond their education level to develop percentages and terminology that both doesn't translate well into the local language in which we work and doesn't mean much to them given their proximity to the issues at hand. Due to this problem, the senior management team identified a way to mitigate this challenge and create a more participatory way for change agents to be involved in the monitoring of their own development projects.

As mentioned above, the capacity of the change agents poses a significant challenge. While they are willing to be involved in the monitoring of their own projects, it was up to OVP to develop a way for them to be involved in a productive manner. Facilitating complicated workshops on SMART indicators that the change agents surely do not have the capacity to measure was neither participatory nor in line with the values of OVP. Furthermore, since OVP Program Coordinators are managing so many villages and projects simultaneously, they also do not have the time to oversee and build capacity with the change agents to be able to monitor these complex indicators. OVP also had to address the issue of data validity and ensure that even with a participatory monitoring scheme, the data collected is still done so in a cohesive manner and remains valid throughout several data collection periods. We do anticipate the need to hire an external evaluation team for more extensive evaluations in order to verify and triangulate data collected by the change agents. For monitoring purposes, we expect the data they collect to be sufficient.

The key issue at hand is that OVP realized a gap in their participatory approach and needed to rectify the fact that the current approach to monitoring and evaluation was not participatory enough to reflect the values and mission of the organization. Through extensive research on participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches, the senior management team defined which areas of participatory monitoring and evaluation are most important to OVP and to meeting the priority problem as stated above. The areas identified as keys to the new approach were:

- A flexible, learning process approach to monitoring and evaluation that allows for our model to grow and adapt overtime while building off already participatory aspects of our current work (PRA, facilitation vs. teaching, etc.) [2]
- Better use of evaluation findings and outcomes including more utility and understanding for communities and program staff about evaluation findings and recommendations
- A fully participatory approach to building capacity and developing indicators with Change Agents to ensure that they are active participants in monitoring and evaluation, not just sources of information[3]
- Better use of qualitative information being collected in the field by building capacity with Program Coordinators to interpret stories and impacts they are seeing in their work[4]

[2] Aubel, Judi. "Participatory Program Evaluation Manuel: involving program stakeholders in the evaluation process." 1999.
[3] Rietbergen-McCracken, Jennifer and Deepa Narayan. "Participation and Social Assessment: Tools and Techniques." 1998.
[4] Lennie, June & J. Tacchi, B. Koirala, M. Wilmore, A. Skuse. "Assessing Communications for Social Change: Equal Access Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit." 2011.

Given the priorities, needs and challenges presented above, the senior management team developed a picture-based monitoring workbook for change agents to collect data on SPICED indicators (see Figure 3) that they develop through a much less complex workshop, facilitated by the Program Coordinators. Through this workshop, the change agents will work to develop indicators that they can actually understand and assist with monitoring them. With the indicators that the change agents develop, OVP will contract an artist to draw photos that depict a positive or negative association with the given indicator. For reference, an excerpt of the picture descriptions for the picture-based monitoring workbook for a latrine project is included:

Figure 7: Sample Picture Description Chart for Picture-Based Monitoring Workbook

Village: Gbeka **Project: Latrines for Children** **Goal: Reduce Diarrheal Disease among Children**		
Indicator	**Picture TRUE**	**Picture FALSE**
# of latrines with a tippy tap within 10 paces of the latrine	Latrine with tippy tap next to it	Latrine with no tippy tap
# of households that can produce keys to a usable latrine	Adult holding latrine keys	Adult near latrine with no keys
# of households that report using the latrine to defecate	Adult entering latrine to defecate	Adult defecating in the bush

The picture-based monitoring workbook is just the first step to addressing the goals of making OVP's monitoring and evaluation approach more participatory. We recognize that this will be a long process of taking steps to accomplish the keys we identified as important as we move forward. As the capacity of our M&E team grows, we will be able to address other aspects of our process in order to make them more participatory. There are still gaps in information that need to be explored. Due to the unique nature of the way that OVP works, it can be difficult to source solutions to problems. However, as the M&E team grows and we are able to work with evaluation consultants (namely, The Improve Group), it is expected that the participatory approach of monitoring and evaluation within OVP will develop.

Personal Reflection

I feel very fortunate to have had the experience that I did working with OneVillage Partners throughout my DPMI+ experience and as my first job in the field of M&E. OVP is the type of organization that I always hoped I would have the opportunity to work with – I feel my personal values related to development work are consistent with theirs and the work that they are doing. When I first arrived at in Sierra Leone, I remember sharing with the staff how refreshing it was to see an organization not just saying they do community-led development, but actually *doing it*.

I learned a lot over the course of my DPMI+ experience. There were successes and challenges that presented themselves at what seemed like exactly the right time – to get me back on track and still feeling competent in my role. I think a valuable lesson I gained coming out of this experience is how

important it is to be true to yourself and honest with yourself. As I entered this role, I found myself a bit overwhelmed as the only monitoring & evaluation person on-staff. I felt that I could accomplish the job, but I was missing the collaboration that I grew very used to during my time at MIIS. Personally accepting this challenge and recognizing it took some time but once I came to terms that this was challenging, I was able to ask for help – which I realized was a big hurdle that I'm glad I overcame early. Asking for help is not always easy, but I think the most difficult part is not the asking but the being honest with yourself that sometimes you don't have all the answers. Along with that, I was able to recognize that I really value collaboration and was able to pass that along to my supervisor in order to make our working relationship more fruitful.

A success that I encountered during my experience was working with our front-line staff who work directly with primary stakeholders in the communities where we work. They have grown to be my most valuable source of information when reporting on the impacts of our work. I thought a lot about our discussions of Appreciative Inquiry during DPMI Rwanda and the importance of building trust and relationships in this type of work. I took that seriously as I grew into my role here. I think the fact that I acknowledged the importance of this step is what helped me to achieve success early on with the team – because I took the time to get to know them, build a relationship and gain their trust. They trusted me with trying new processes even when they might not have seen the overall vision or understood why I was making their work so much more complicated. I hope this is something I take with me into the later parts of my career and something that I don't lose even as I grow into higher-level roles.

Working with OVP over the past four months has taught me a lot about myself and where I want to go with my career. I'm a firm believer in the "everything happens for a reason" notion, but also that drive and motivation will take you where you truly want to go. When I think back to applying for DPMI placements, discussions with my mentors and a lot of personal contemplation about what I wanted out of this experience, I am grateful that it worked out as it did. I think back to other options I had at the time and I do not think I would have experienced the academic, professional or personal growth had I accepted one of my other options. I learned that I really thrive working in a small environment and that I'm motivated most by the people around me. The front-line staff at OVP are some of the most motivated and motivational people I have ever met. They are steadfast and dedicated to the communities in which they work and I'm constantly inspired by their commitment to igniting change from within. My peers and supervisor are collaborative thought-leaders who I look up to as my mentors. I'm thankful that my first professional experience in this field can shine in my mind as an opportunity to be involved in something so unique and impactful.

The experience working on the deliverables contained in this document was both challenging and rewarding. I remember a past DPMI+ alumnus telling me that having a fulltime job while completing the requirements of their placement was challenging, but I didn't expect it to be quite as overwhelming as it was at times. It can be difficult to balance the everyday needs that a fulltime position requires while still trying to remain in an academic mindset that requires constant critical-thinking, analysis and iteration of the deliverables. I think I was able to tackle this challenge later on in my placement, when I was in the swing of the position and had better understanding of the organization and our vision and thus translate that into the knowledge required to complete my deliverables.

My professional goals have definitely changed during my placement at OVP. Coming into this experience, I was given a 2-year contract that I thought would give me great experience to find another

job in the M&E field afterwards. My goal from the start was to become experienced and employable, not realizing that I was being handed a long-term opportunity that right now, feels like the perfect fit (while I do recognize things will change over time). What has changed since I started here, is that I have really grown to find my own beliefs and standards for the type of work that I want to do. I joined a team when I came here and now I see myself here for much longer than the two years I originally anticipated. When I arrived, I really wanted to gain experience but now I see how OVP is really doing the work that I admire and aspire to be a part of for a long time.

I think now that I have seen how successful community-led, impact oriented development can really be, this is the environment where I want to work in the near future. We are testing some really exciting and innovative participatory M&E strategies and I hope in 10 years I find my career in consulting on these strategies to help other emergent organizations and young M&E professionals find the satisfaction in leading their teams to very successful program evaluation and organizational learning. My strategy to getting there is to continue being true to myself and the vision that I have for our organization and being open to trying, making mistakes, failing and succeeding with my team using new and innovative strategies to participatory M&E. I'm grateful for a supervisor who supports my vision and is open to being completely experimental in our monitoring and evaluation processes and to the DPMI experience, which I see as foundational to where I find myself today. The environment in which I'm fortunate enough to work is what I think will ultimately be a key contributing factor into my success with the latter goals.

Appendix 1: Monitoring & Evaluation Staff Training Curriculum

Day One: Semi-Structured Interviewing Using Appreciative Inquiry

Facilitator leads discussion on the difference between structured and semi-structured interviews. Drawing distinctions through an interactive questioning session, the facilitator prompts the staff to recognize the difference between asking specific survey questions and following a semi-structured interview guide using probing questions to glean further information.

Facilitator introduces Appreciative Inquiry through an example of how we conduct home visits for our NOW program. Coordinators already use Appreciative Inquiry basics – as the home visits are conducting in a very conversational and comfortable way. Facilitator leads the staff to draw conclusions on the difference between being appreciative and being extractive in their approach to the home visit.

Facilitator leads discussion about how Appreciative Inquiry fits into OVP values (human centric, non-extractive, relationship and trust building). Facilitator guides staff to better understanding of how to implement Appreciative Inquiry practices in semi-structured interviews.

Facilitator asks staff to break into groups of 2 for semi-structured interviewing practice. Each team is given four scenarios (see Figure 8). One staff member plays the role of a project participant, the other staff member plays the role of themselves, a project coordinator. Facilitator introduces activity through a demonstration with the co-facilitator. Once the demonstration is completed, facilitator asks staff to each play the role of the project participant and the project coordinator at least once. Once everyone has finished the activity, the facilitator instructs the staff to regroup for a discussion. Facilitator leads discussion on how the role play activity went. Staff are asked to share their insights and key takeaways. Facilitator prompts staff to think about challenges they might face implementing this in the field.

Facilitator closes session with question and answer period.

Figure 8: Role Play Scenario Examples

NOW Participant #1

- You joined NOW last year
- You have finished phase 1 of the program, you attended all 28 sessions
- Your goal was to start your own business selling palm oil
- You now have a business and have started selling other goods in addition to palm oil
- The most significant change you experienced was you were able to have the voice to talk to your husband and family members about saving money for your future business
- This was significant because you now have a growing business! And you can keep using your voice and making better financial decisions for your family.

ACT CAG Member #1

- You joined the CAG last year, during the first cycle of ACT in Gbeka
- You were a leader in the group, and later you were asked by OVP to be a co-facilitator in a new village
- The most significant change you experienced was the ability to become a leader of community development in your village and neighboring villages, you found that development can happen from within the community it just takes knowledge and training
- This is significant because now you can lead development without external support

Day Two: Facilitating the development of SPICED Indicators

Facilitators opens up with discussion on what is monitoring and evaluation. Staff shares their thoughts and reviews process of developing indicators with the Community Action Group. The staff identify correctly, the definition of SMART indicators.

Facilitator introduces SPICED indicators and talks about the definition of the acronym. Using the "Equal Access Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit" as a guide, the facilitator talks about truly being participatory in our monitoring and evaluation. Instead of just involving the Community Action Group in defining the indicators, how are we involving them in the process? This leads into a discussion on making monitoring very easy for the Community Action Group as many of them are uneducated and even illiterate.

Facilitator brings the discussion to the topic of purpose – what do we want to glean from our monitoring? Staff generate ideas and facilitator leads them to identify access, behavior change/use and knowledge as three categories of what we want the Community Action Group to measure. Facilitator introduces the indicator table matrix (see Figure 9) for the staff to discuss.

Figure 9: Indicator Table Sample

Village: **Project: Community-wide Latrines** **Goal: Reduce Open Defecation**					
Activity (output)	**Objective (intended outcome)**	**CAG Indicator (SPICED)**	**Data Collection Method**	**Timeline** *Months post-implementation*	**M&E Indicator (SMART SPICED)**

Facilitator leads a discussion on how OVP's relationship with the Community Action Group can lead to the development of SPICED indicators. Since we have already built trust and relationships with them, understood the context deeply and designed the project, we can now work with them to understand how and what we are going to measure to monitor the project.

Facilitator closes with a discussion on what the staff thinks about this new process. What are pros and cons to monitoring this way? How can we ensure that CAG are involved in the process fully? Facilitator introduces the picture-based data collection method, which OVP will implement in mid-2016. Facilitator provides examples (see Figure 10). Facilitator closes with question and answer period.

Figure 10: Picture-Based Data Collection for Community Action Group

Village: **Project: Community-wide Latrines** **Goal: Reduce Diarrheal Disease in the Community**		
Indicator	**Picture TRUE**	**Picture FALSE**
# of latrines with a tippy tap within 10 paces of the latrine	Latrine with tippy tap next to it	Latrine with no tippy tap
# of households that report members washing hands after using the latrine	Adult washing hands at tippy tap after using the latrine	Adult leaving latrine without washing hands

Appendix 2: Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

2016 Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

Reporting and Communications:

1. Submit Monthly Reports to the CD that updates the SL Senior Management Team and the HQ staff of high-level accomplishments, challenges and priorities moving forward. The report will also include program-specific updates in terms of monitoring and evaluation.
2. Facilitate and report on Monthly Reflection Meetings that highlights significant impacts seen by the field staff. Train staff in story-telling and interpreting behavior change in terms of how our programming contributes to behavior change.
3. Report quarterly to the Board of Directors on annual targets, providing a high-level update on our current progress with the ACT and NOW programs.
4. Work closely with the US Development & Communications Director to support communication processes via OVP's website and social media sites.

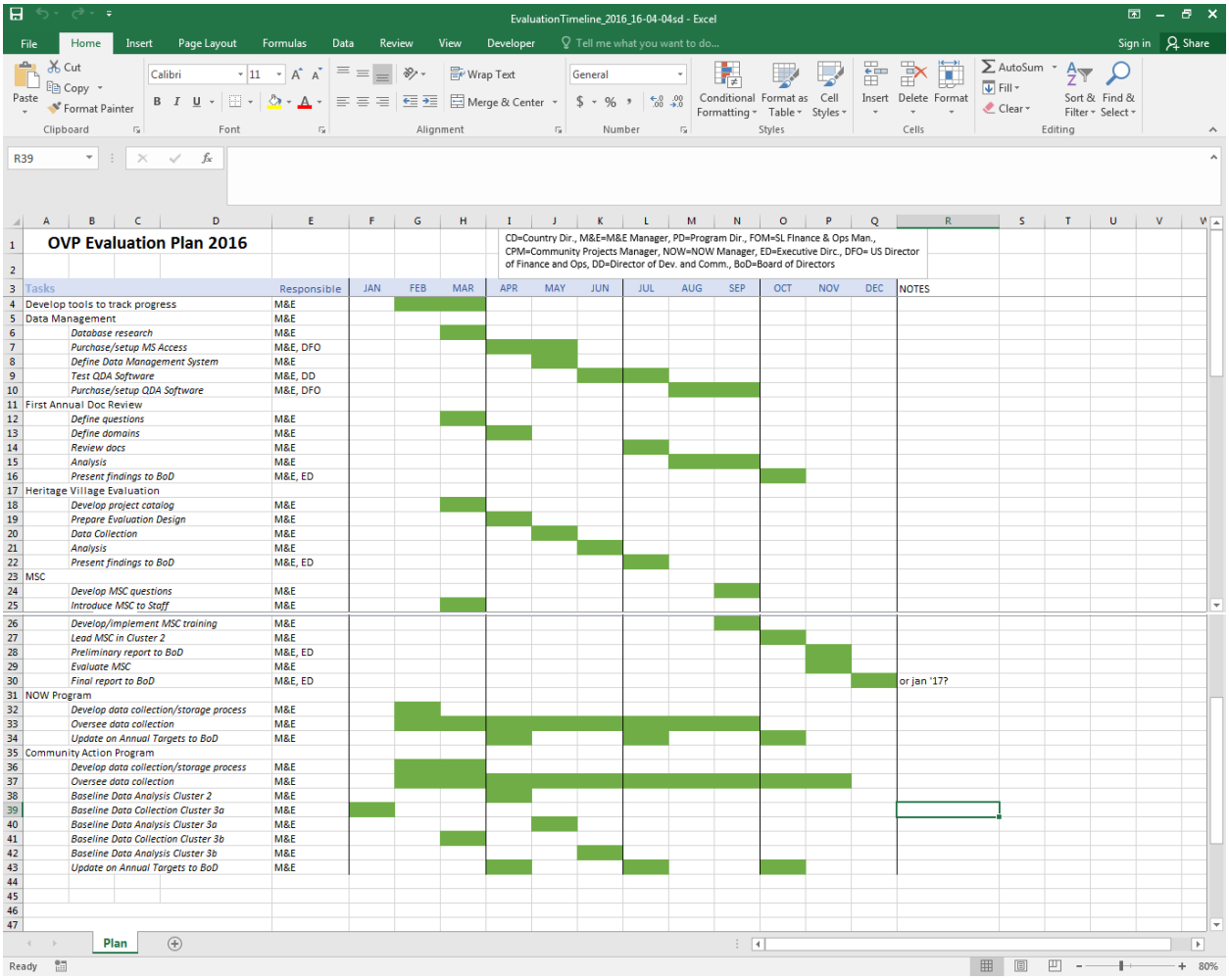
System Development:

1. Oversee and streamline data collection processes for the ACT and NOW programs.
2. Develop database and systems for entering and storing data.

Evaluations:

1. Develop and define the Most Significant Change process including staff training, defining key questions and overseeing implementation.
2. Design, plan and implement an impact evaluation in Cluster 1 villages and report to Board of Directors on key impacts and lessons learned.
3. Develop and conduct the annual document review and overall goals and process for the 2017 Outcome Harvest.

Appendix 3: Monitoring & Evaluation Timeline



OVP Evaluation Plan 2016

CD=Country Dir., M&E=M&E Manager, PD=Program Dir., FOM=SL FInance & Ops Man., CPM=Community Projects Manager, NOW=NOW Manager, ED=Executive Dirc., DFO= US Director of Finance and Ops, DD=Director of Dev. and Comm., BoD=Board of Directors

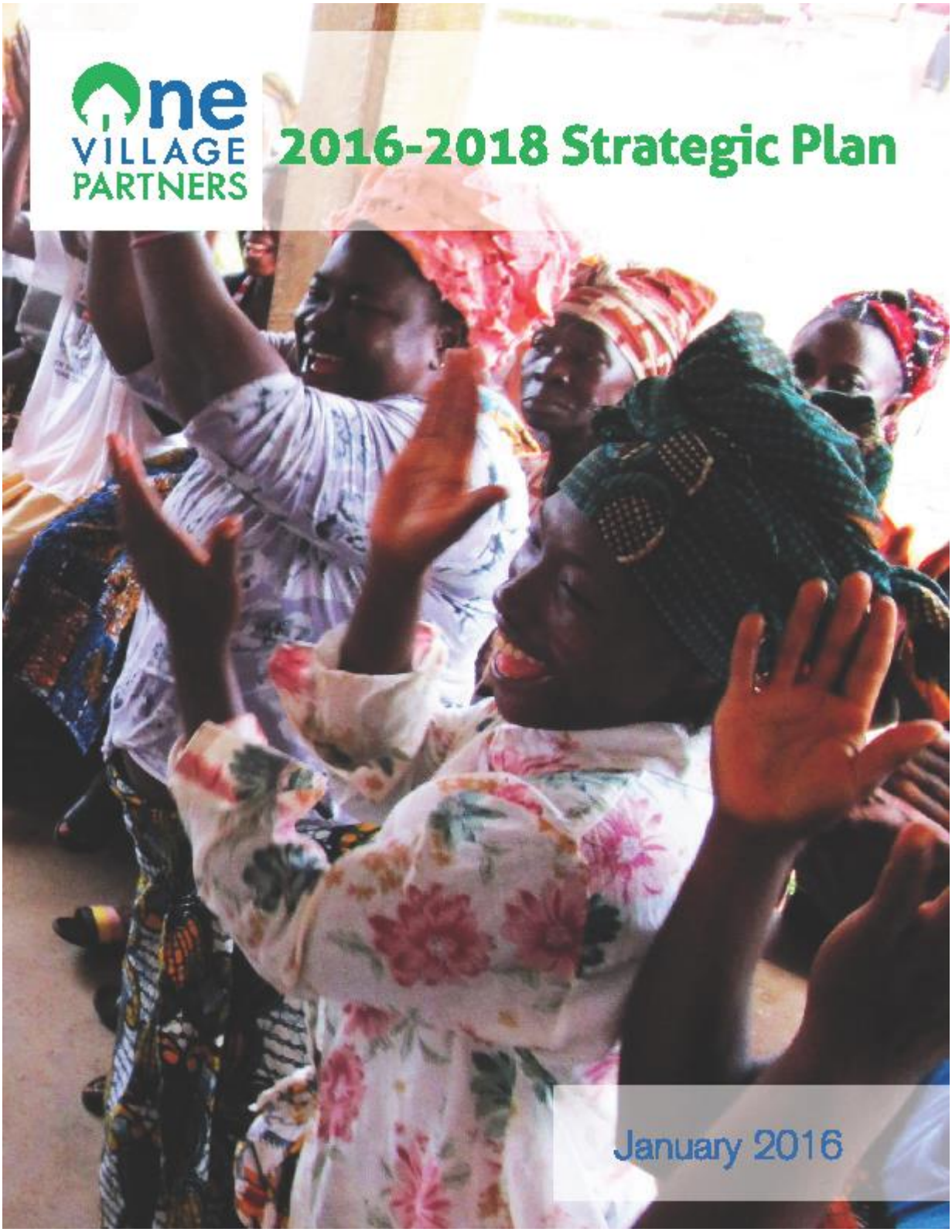
Tasks	Responsible	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	NOTES
Develop tools to track progress	M&E													
Data Management	M&E													
Database research	M&E													
Purchase/setup MS Access	M&E, DFO													
Define Data Management System	M&E													
Test QDA Software	M&E, DD													
Purchase/setup QDA Software	M&E, DFO													
First Annual Doc Review														
Define questions	M&E													
Define domains	M&E													
Review docs	M&E													
Analysis	M&E													
Present findings to BoD	M&E, ED													
Heritage Village Evaluation														
Develop project catalog	M&E													
Prepare Evaluation Design	M&E													
Data Collection	M&E													
Analysis	M&E													
Present findings to BoD	M&E, ED													
MSC														
Develop MSC questions	M&E													
Introduce MSC to Staff	M&E													
Develop/implement MSC training	M&E													
Lead MSC in Cluster 2	M&E													
Preliminary report to BoD	M&E, ED													
Evaluate MSC	M&E													
Final report to BoD	M&E, ED													or jan '17?
NOW Program														
Develop data collection/storage process	M&E													
Oversee data collection	M&E													
Update on Annual Targets to BoD	M&E													
Community Action Program														
Develop data collection/storage process	M&E													
Oversee data collection	M&E													
Baseline Data Analysis Cluster 2	M&E													
Baseline Data Collection Cluster 3a	M&E													
Baseline Data Analysis Cluster 3a	M&E													
Baseline Data Collection Cluster 3b	M&E													
Baseline Data Analysis Cluster 3b	M&E													
Update on Annual Targets to BoD	M&E													

Appendix 4: Indicator Book Sample

Improved Access		
Example of Expected Outcome	**Indicators to Measure Change**	**Data Collection Method**
Increased access to handwashing stations	% change in number of usable handwashing stations	Community Asset Survey
Increased access to handwashing stations	% change in number of usable handwashing stations within 10 paces of a latrine	Community Asset Survey
Increased access to latrines	% change in number of usable latrines	Community Asset Survey
Increased access to latrines	% of households with keys to a useable latrine	CAG Survey
Increased access to latrines	% of children age 5+ who report having access to a useable latrine	CAG survey
Decreased sites of open defecation	% change in observed number of open defecation sites	Community Asset Survey
Improved access to clean kitchens	% change in number of clean kitchens	Community Asset Survey
Improved access to safe drinking water	% change in number of safe drinking water sites	Community Asset Survey
Behavior Change		
Example of Expected Outcome	**Indicators to Measure Change**	**Data Collection Method**
Community-wide use of latrines for defecation	% of households that report no open defecation practice by any member	CAG survey
Young girls can safely defecate	% of secondary school-aged girls who feel they can defecate safely	CAG Survey
Safe disposal of child feces	% of parents who report disposing of feces from children's stool in the latrine	CAG survey
Community-wide handwashing practiced after using the latrine	% change of households that report all members wash their hands after using the latrine	CAG Survey
Community-wide use of clean cooking spaces	% change in # of observed unimproved cooking spaces in use	Community Asset Survey
Community-wide use of safe drinking water	% change in covered drinking water buckets in use	CAG Survey
Community-wide use of safe drinking water	% change in # of safe drinking water sites	Community Asset Survey
Community-wide use of safe drinking water	% change in # of unsafe drinking water sites used	Community Asset Survey
Women practice proper handwashing techniques before preparing food	% of women who wash hands with soap after contact with fecal matter before handling food	CAG survey
Women care for their cooking spaces	% of women who self-report that a clean cooking space is important for their family	MSC
Cooking spaces are free of animal feces	% change in # of animals secured	Community Asset Survey

Cooking spaces are free of animal feces	% change in # of animal pens	Community Asset Survey
Environment is free of animal feces	% change in observable animal feces within 5 paces of a cooking space	CAG survey
Environment is free of uncontained rubbish	% change in # of designated trash pits	Community Asset Survey
Knowledge Change		
Example of Expected Outcome	**Indicators to Measure Change**	**Data Collection Method**
Increased knowledge on proper handwashing practices	% of people who can identify 4 crucial handwashing moments	CAG survey
Children age 5+ have increased knowledge on proper handwashing practices	% of children age 5+ who can identify 4 crucial handwashing moments	CAG survey
Increased knowledge on hygienic kitchens	% of adults who can identify 3 aspects of the hygienic kitchen	CAG survey
Community Action Group Impact		
Example of Expected Impact	**Indicators to Measure Change**	**Data Collection Method**
CAG maintains responsibility for project upkeep	% of CAG who report maintaining or managing the project 1 year post-implementation	MSC
Marginalized voices are represented in the CAG	% of CAG who represent a marginalized voice (women, youth, disabled)	CAG entry interviews
Community Impact		
Example of Expected Impact	**Indicators to Measure Change**	**Data Collection Method**
Reduction in diarrheal sickness	% change in reported cases of diarrheal illness	CAG Survey and/or Clinic data
Entire community is included in all stages of the project	% overall attendance at planning or decision-making community meetings	Community meeting attendance data
Marginalized voices are included in all stages of the project	% of women and youth at planning or decision-making community meetings	Community meeting attendance data
Community members are satisfied with project outcome	% of community members that report the project was successful	MSC

Appendix 5: OVP Strategic Plan (click to open document)



Appendix 6: Most Significant Change Champions Training Day 1 Module (2 hours)

Most Significant Change Champions Training

- We have been working on revising the monthly reflections and in doing so, we are going to introduce a new process. Today we will start with some information about the process, called Most Significant Change and then at next week's staff meeting we will have another brief training on how the monthly reflections will work, keeping in mind this new process.
- Has anyone heard of Most Significant Change before? Can you tell me what you know about it?

What is MSC? (30 minutes)

- Most Significant Change is a type of participatory monitoring and evaluation
- Who can help me with the difference between monitoring and evaluation?
- MSC uses project participants, CAGs, coordinators and management to determine the significant impact that our projects are making on villages – this is a team effort
- MSC allows us to keep the community at the forefront of our measurement of success – in line with our value that we are here to support their visions of success
- Part of the process is:

1. Coordinators collect significant change stories from the field –much like the stories you already share in our Monthly Reflections
2. Program teams meet to discuss most significant stories monthly
3. Staff reflects on most significant stories during Monthly Reflections
4. Stories are organized by specific categories like initiative, leadership, wellbeing and gender norms
5. The ME Manager works to report on impacts on an annual basis

- Eventually, we will be going into the community to gather significant change stories directly from the participants by asking them questions like, "Since your involvement with the Community Action program, what is the most significant change you have experienced in your life?"
- Let's start with a metaphor for how MSC works… Does anyone know the name of a newspaper here in SL? OK, so SL Times newspaper summarizes what happened yesterday through stories that it puts on the pages of the newspaper. These stories are usually separated with the most interesting and important stories on the front page. This is what we want to do with MSC, we want to take the most interesting and impactful stories of change from our programs and highlight them to show the success our model is having. The newspaper is also often separated into categories, the same way MSC uses categories to organize the types of changes that our programs are contributing to.
- Let's now look at an example of how this is going to look at this month's reflection. I took a story from last month's reflection. It is from the category of initiative. I'll pass out the story so you can read along – you'll notice this form is organizing the story in a specific way. This is the form we will begin using and we will be doing more with it at next week's staff meeting.
- Sheku, can you share the story with us?

- We want our M&E to not just about reporting # of structures built or # of people no longer getting sick – we want our processes to be about learning from our model and improving
- Instead of just reporting on what is happening in our work – MSC helps us to analyze the so what, the greater meaning behind these changes, like in Sheku's story, we learned how the CAGs can motivate community members to take action

Why are we using MSC and how does it fit into our M&E? (10 minutes)

- To capture concepts and behavior change that is hard to measure
- In last month's reflection we had many, many stories and we want to narrow these down a bit so we can understand how we are affecting behavior change
- More trainings on this and more involvement from everyone during the process of deciding what impacts are significant in our work ie, inclusion of everyone in the community…

How do we use MSC? (60 minutes)

- To better understand the process of MSC, we are going to illustrate this through a role play!
- I need 2 volunteers… [give volunteers roles, project participant role gets a story of change and coordinator role gets a list of questions]
- Role play takes place
- PAUSE when coordinator asks 'why the change is significant to you'
- Ask, "What happens if the participant gives you an answer that isn't sufficient? How can you ask them in a way that gives us more information?"
- "So because of the program you were able to start your business, what does this mean to you?"
- "That sounds like an important change, could you tell me more about what this change means to you and your family?"
- Now, everyone will get into pairs and practice this. Try this twice so you each have a chance to play both the role of the participant and the coordinator. Take role sheets.
- Let's discuss… what did you think of the conversations. Do you think you can collect stories like this for the monthly reflection?

Next week: we will run a short training on how to use the story template. You will each be asked to bring two stories every month to your team meetings – these will take place on Friday morning before the reflections.

Hopefully, this means the Monthly Reflection will be shorter but still very exciting!

Any questions?

Adapted by Sophie Dresser from "Davies, Rick and Jess Dart." 2005. "The Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique: A Guide to its Use." www.mande.co.uk/doc/MSCGuide.htm.

Appendix 7: Most Significant Change Champions Training Module 2 (1 hour)

Staff MSC Training #2: Recording stories of change

- Can someone remind us all of the type of M&E we talked about in our last module?
    - MSC – getting to the root of changes; understanding the meaning behind behavior change
- This week I want to take a few minutes to talk about a new form and process for recording stories of change each month
- FIRST – it is important to understand that stories you share in the monthly reflection might NOT come from a direct interview like we practiced last week – that's ok, this can be your observations from the field
- We will be doing more person-to-person interviews when we start implementing MSC in the field
- Monthly reflection is Friday
- You will all meet in your teams Friday morning to discuss stories before the reflection for 1 hour
- TRY to get 1-2 stories recording from each of the four categories listed on the form
    - Initiative
    - Leadership
    - Wellbeing
    - Gender Norms
- In your teams - you'll decide 1 or 2 at most stories to share at the reflection
    - Discuss this, debate this, a manager will be there to facilitate
    - Talk about why the particular story in question shows GREATER initiative or UNIQUE leadership
- We will come together for the reflection and share the stories
- M&E Manager will collect the stories monthly and store them for future use
- Let's take a look at the form – you will all have blank copies in your office
    - There are some notes to help you understand what needs to go in each section

Monthly Reflection Story Template

Story Title:			
Who:	_____ Name	_____ Role	_____ Village
When:	_____/_____/_____ Date	_____ Activity	
Category:	☐ Initiative ☐ Leadership ☐ Wellbeing ☐ Gender Norms ☐ Social Cohesion		

Behavior change that was observed: _____

Description of the story: What happened?

- Key actors
- Description of the behavior change that occurred

Interpretation of the story: Why is this significant and how did OVP contribute to this change?

- Explain why the change is not a normal occurrence
- Explain how you think OVP's work contributed to the change happening

Recommendations: What can we do to support this type of change moving forward?

- Explain what we can do to promote this sort of behavior change
- Explain why we should keep doing this

Appendix 8: Heritage Village Evaluation Design

Summative Evaluation Design

Heritage Villages, Kailahun District, Sierra Leone

May 2016

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Introduction

Started by a former Peace Corps volunteer to aid the villages he once called home after they were destroyed by war, OneVillage Partners (OVP) works with African communities to inspire Change from Within. After observing many of the unintended negative effects of more traditional, externally-imposed aid, which is often short-term, unsustainable and can cause dependency, OVP developed a new model to catalyze collective action and help communities themselves take charge of their own development. The results of this model have been transformational for over 14,000 people in one of the world's least developed countries, Sierra Leone.

Background

OneVillage Partners began its work in 2004, operating as a group of motivated and concerned individuals in collaboration with the Plymouth Congregational Church of Minneapolis, MN. The organization later professionalized, adapted a new model and grew into its own 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Minnesota. The initial projects that OVP supported in were relief-oriented, where interventions focused on meeting pressing needs to individuals whose normalcy was disrupted during the civil war. For the purpose of this evaluation, the interventions are categorized into three groups: health, education and livelihoods. The table below identifies which interventions fall into each category:

Health	**Education**	**Livelihoods**
Roofs	Scholarships	Microloans
Rice provision	Community Teacher Training	Cooperative
Borehole wells	Women's Empowerment Groups	Agricultural equipment
Latrines	School reconstruction	Carpentry center
	Libraries	Animal husbandry center

Evaluation Design and Approach

OVP's model has evolved greatly since they began work in Sierra Leone in 2004. The work began in 3 villages in the Eastern region of the country, in the Kailahun District. The three villages are Foindu, Jokibu and Pujehun, henceforth referred to as "Cluster 1." While they consider the Cluster 1 villages to be a very important aspect of the work they have done in the past, they no longer operate active projects in these villages. They do not plan to re-enter these villages with active projects in the near future. The purpose of this evaluation is to summarize the extent to which the intended outcomes of the interventions were achieved, measure the impact the interventions continue to have and to inform future work of OVP.

The evaluation design will measure if the interventions are still operating and still benefiting the target population and if the interventions are not still operating, why. Additionally, the evaluation design will illustrate with supportive evidence the types of interventions that have not achieved intended outcomes and should subsequently be avoided moving forward. The evaluation is small-scale and quasi-experimental in design. Due to the nature of the interventions, there will be no comparison group but the evaluator will utilize general comparisons from village to village through semi-structured interviews. To support semi-structured interviews that are the primary data of this evaluation, the evaluator will employ a Village Mobilizer and a Translator to conduct key informant interviews and general data gathering on project progress.

Using randomized lists of direct beneficiaries of the interventions, OVP will invite selected individuals to take part in semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be facilitated in the local language, Mende, by the Village Mobilizer and will be translated in English by the Translator. The Village Mobilizer will use a semi-structured interview guide, designed by OVP's M&E and Communications

Manager. The transcripts of all interviews from the evaluation will be transcribed and later coded using qualitative data analysis software.

Key Stakeholders

The evaluation design is user-focused with the primary intention of the evaluation being that OVP gain a greater understanding of the extent to which the sixteen (16) interventions have impacted the Cluster 1 villages. This evaluation is especially important during this crucial point of growth at OVP – where the evaluation findings will inform our emergent model moving forward.

The **primary** users of this evaluation are OVP staff in Sierra Leone. OVP will utilize evaluation findings to better understand the progress that interventions in the Cluster 1 villages have achieved and the extent to which projects are no longer working, and why. Additionally, the evaluation will illustrate potential barriers or pitfalls of past projects that can inform organizational learning and adaptation as OVP grows. **Secondary** users of the evaluation include OVP's US-based staff and Board of Directors. The evaluation will provide crucial impact-level statements that they can use to inform funders of past successes and to inform strategic planning moving forward.

Assumptions

This evaluation design is based on several assumptions. The evaluation design assumes that OVP can collect demographic information on project participants from all intervention areas and gain a valid, random sample of the target population. The evaluation will rely on a Village Mobilizer to collect accurate data on project participants. The Village Mobilizer will be resourceful in collecting data over a period of one month in order to glean the most information possible from the villages.

Another key assumption made is that semi-structured interviews and general intervention progress data will be factual and accurate. OVP has operated in the Cluster 1 villages for 12 years and the villages are keenly aware of the way OVP works and they have become deeply comfortable working with NGOs. Therefore, we assume that the data we collect may be biased given that many communities in Sierra Leone are used to "talking the talk" in order to realize benefits from NGOs later on. We will use triangulation of data to mitigate this challenge as much as possible, but it is assumed that this will have some influence on the validity of the data we are able to collect.

Methodology

This evaluation will use a mixed-methods approach to identify findings surrounding the key questions. The M&E Manager will work closely with a Village Mobilizer and Translator to collect data in the field through a series of surveys, semi-structured interviews with key informants and intervention participants. All data will be collected in the local language, Mende, and will be translated by the Translator. To prepare the Translator, the M&E and Communications Manager will facilitate a training with OVP staff to discuss key words and phrases that we often hear in the field when talking about successes and failures with community development. From there, the M&E and Communications Manager will develop a translation dictionary to guide the Translator in their work. This will help make reporting for the purposes of this and future evaluations, more consistent. Quantitative data will come from field surveys and semi-structured interviews, while qualitative data will come from semi-structured interviews. Records kept by OVP will be used as a supplement to support locating intervention beneficiaries, understanding baseline conditions and project history.

Key Question 1: To what extent did the target population's quality of life improve?

When OVP began its work in 2004, the objective was to help villagers get back to their lives following the Civil War. Analyzing the extent to which the target population feels they were better off because of the intervention will help OVP to understand the success of each intervention and the extent to which intended outcomes were achieved. This key question will help OVP understand, what was the impact of the project, immediately?

Operational Definitions

- *Participant:* a randomly selected participant from the most up to date list of project participants
- *Intervention*: one of the 16 outputs implemented by OVP
- *Target Population*: people who were intended beneficiaries of the intervention output

Indicators

1. *% of participants interviewed who can identify a specific change in their life that they attribute to an OVP intervention*
   A high percentage of participants who can identify a specific change in their life that they attribute to an OVP intervention will illustrate the types of individual changes that can be attributed to OVP interventions. From this, OVP can also learn what types of changes can be expected from certain interventions.
2. *% of participants interviewed who can identify a specific change in their community that they attribute to an OVP intervention*
   A high percentage of participants who can identify a specific change in their community that they attribute to an OVP intervention will illustrate the types of community-wide changes that can be attributed to OVP interventions. From this, OVP can learn what types of community-wide changes can be expected from certain interventions.

Data Collection Method

1. Project Participant Interviews
2. Key Informant Interviews

Key Question 2: To what extent is the intervention still beneficial to the target population?

When OVP implemented the interventions, they did so with the intention that there would be long lasting outcomes and benefits to the target population for many years. Analyzing the extent to which the projects are still operating and benefitting the target population will inform the design and focus areas of future projects. This key question may also provide evidence for our current model's potential sustainability.

Operational Definitions

- *Intervention*: one of the 16 outputs implemented by OVP
- *Functioning*: equipment is still intact and operational; participants are still utilizing training skills
- *Target Population*: people who were intended beneficiaries of the intervention output

Indicators

1. *% of participants interviewed who state the intervention is still functioning in May 2016*
   A high percentage of participants who state the interventions are still functioning indicates that the community still sees the interventions as operational with potential to benefit them. Since

community members are the primary users of these interventions, this will lead OVP to understanding the functionality from the community's perspective.

2. *% of participants interviewed who can identify a specific reason why an intervention is no longer functioning*
   A high percentage of participants interviewed who can identify a specific reason why an intervention is longer functioning illustrates both the extent to which interventions are not functioning and reasons why. This indicator will only be measured for interventions that are understood to be no longer functioning according to pre-data collection surveying.
3. *% of participants interviewed who can identify a specific benefit that they currently experience from the intervention*
   A high percentage of participants who can identify a specific benefit that they currently experience from the intervention indicates that the intervention is still producing valuable benefit to the target population. Additionally, this indicator will illustrate the types of benefits that the target population is experiencing many years after the intervention was implemented. This will lead to OVP's greater understanding of the project areas where long-lasting impact is achievable.
4. *% of participants interviewed that can identify who is responsible for fixing an intervention if the intervention fails*
   A high percentage of participants interviewed who can identify who is responsible for fixing an intervention if the intervention fails indicates that the community knows who can ensure that the intervention remains in good working order. Additionally, answers regarding who is responsible will indicate whether or not there is widespread belief within the target population that the community has ownership over the intervention.
5. *% of roofs that score above 5 on a 10-point scale of condition*
   A high percentage of roofs that score above a 5 on roof condition scale as assessed by the Village Mobilizer illustrates that villagers are still protected from the elements – therefore their health is at less risk than if the roof was in poor condition or there was no zinc roof at all.
6. *% of latrines that score above 5 on a 10-point scale of condition*
   A high percentage of latrines that score above a 5 on roof condition scale as assessed by the Village Mobilizer illustrates that villagers have access to a safe place to defecate, which implicates a higher level of hygiene than if there was no latrine for them to use.

<u>Data Collection Method</u>

1. Project Participant Interviews
2. Key Informant Interviews
3. Survey of Interventions

Key Question 3: To what extent is the intervention sustainable and replicable?

OVP works to engage the community in projects for many reasons, one of them being that the evidence behind our model suggests that projects where communities feel they have ownership are more sustainable. By understanding the sustainability of projects and inquiring with the target population about *why* these projects have been sustainable will lead to greater understanding on why projects have succeeded and in what context they might be successful if replicated.

<u>Operational Definitions</u>

- *Intervention*: one of the 16 outputs implemented by OVP
- *Sustainable*: still in operation without support from OVP, managed by the community fully
- *Replicable*: intervention can be easily and effectively applied to other contexts

Indicators

1. *% of interventions that are maintained by the community in May 2016*
   A high percentage of interventions that are maintained by the community indicates that the community has taken ownership over the project and therefore is more sustainable. Additionally, this indicator reveals the extent to which OVP was successful in their community-led approach.
2. *% of equipment installed that is still operational in May 2016*
   A high percentage of equipment that is still operational illustrates that the intervention is still functioning with the potential to keep benefitting the target population. A low percentage of equipment that remains operational is an indication that the intervention is no longer functioning and no longer benefiting the target population.
3. *% participants interviewed who state that they were involved in deciding what type of intervention was implemented*
   A high percentage of participants who believe their voice was heard in deciding what type of intervention was implemented can indicate a reason why projects have been sustainable overtime, because they were projects that the community saw as a need. This indicator will provide evidence for the current OVP model that focuses projects on self-identified, community priority needs.

Data Collection Method

1. Project Participant Interviews
2. Survey of interventions

Data Analysis Notes

Data analysis will be relatively straightforward. Simple quantitative calculations will be done using quantitative data gathered in participant interviews and field surveys. Once the interviews are transcribed, qualitative data analysis software will be used to code, organize and generate themes from the transcripts. No statistical software will be used because of the small sample size and because the purpose of this evaluation is to gain summative information not statistically significant results.

Evaluation Timeline (GANTT Chart)

1	Cluster 1 Evaluation Data Collection Plan May 2016			M&E=M&E Manager (green), CLO=Chief Logistics Officer (yellow), TRA=translator (blue), MOB=community mobilizer (purple), MOB + TRA=mobilizer and t							
3	Tasks			Responsible	Prep	Training	Week 1	Week 2 S Vacay	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5 Focus Groups
32	Data Collection										
33	All	*Gather names/#s of roof recipients*		MOB							
34	All	*Gather names/#s of Well users (perhaps operators could record this)*		MOB							
35	All	*Gather names/#s of latrine recipients*		MOB							
36	All	*Gather names/#s of scholarship recipients (OVP list)*		M&E							
37	All	*Gather names/#s of REFLECT participants (OVP list)*		M&E							
38	All	*Gather names/#s of OVP-supported community teachers (ask ?)*		M&E							
39	Jokibu Foindu	*Gather names/#s of agricultural equipment operators*		MOB							
40	Pujehun	*Gather names/#s of carpentry center operators*		MOB							
41	All	*Gather names/#s of microloan recipients*		MOB							
42	All	*Gather names/#s of cooperative recipients*		MOB							
43	All	*Survey # of roofs in tact, photograph*		MOB							
44	All	*Survey # of latrines (original structure, renovated, in use)*		MOB							
45	Foindu	*Update on Groundnut Grinder (when, why it stopped working)*		MOB							
46	All	*Interview 2 operators/authorities about cooperative (Yousef knows pec*		MOB/TRA							
47	All	*Interview 3 operators about borehole wells*		MOB/TRA							
48	Jokibu	*Interview 2 operators/authorities about library*		MOB/TRA							
49	Foindu	*Interview 2 operators/authorities about library*		MOB/TRA							
50	All	*Interview 3 facilitators about REFLECT*		MOB/TRA							
51	Foindu	*Interview 2 operators/authorities about animal husbandry center*		MOB/TRA							

Limitations

The greatest limitation of this evaluation design is its complexity. Evaluating sixteen (16) different interventions over a 12-year period will be challenging and can only produce very surface-level findings on impact. We will not be able to fully assess the intricacies of each intervention individually due to time and budget constraints. Rather, the focus of this evaluation is to gain an understanding on an overarching-level, the extent to which these interventions benefited the target population, the extent to which they are still benefiting the target population and how the organization can adapt moving forward given lessons learned.

Time is another limitation. Due to resource constraints, this evaluation will be designed, implemented and data analyzed over a 3-month period. With such a short time frame and limited staff time dedicated to the evaluation, it is not feasible to use a large sample size. Rather, we will use a varied but small sample size and complement participant semi-structured interview data with semi-structured interviews from key informants.

Budget

Expense	Expected Cost
Village Mobilizer – salary, benefits	380,000le
Translator – salary, benefits	360,000le
Transportation	600,000le
Recorder	300,000le