Managing Language Programs

Perspectives, Processes, and Practices

Thomas Marmor and Eric Bartels

Pike Center
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Pike Center for Integrative Scholarship is an initiative of SIL International that builds capacity for language development through scholarship. Our Agile Publishing program uses the Lean Publishing platform to incubate in-progress ebooks using lightweight automated tools. These tools are placed in the hands of our scholars so that they can iterate and act on reader feedback to improve their work. Many of our titles are works in progress that are not yet ready for conventional publishing, but nonetheless have content that is worth sharing in its current state.

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Preface

This volume is the result of over ten years of reflection, discussion, and experience teaching, conducting workshops, and consulting managers of language development programs in Africa, Eurasia, Asia, and North America. It brings together two broad developments that affect minority language communities. One, in the field of language development, focuses attention on the necessary conditions for sustainability of heritage languages. The other, in the domain of community development programs and projects, focuses attention on (a) the roles that communities fill in their own development efforts, and (b) planning and implementing result-oriented programs and projects.

This is the second volume in a two-volume series that focuses on community-based language development. The first book, *Sustaining Language Use: Perspectives on Community-based Language Development* (Lewis and Simons 2017) describes principles and perspectives of community-based language development, provides a model a community can use to determine the current sustainability of their heritage language and guides them in the process of describing changes they may want to make for its future use and sustainability alongside the use of other languages in their repertoire.

Over the past thirty years, community development projects have demonstrated that the results are more sustainable when the community identifies the change(s) they want to bring about in their community and families, and then is fully involved in designing one or more programs to bring about these changes. This approach contrasts with earlier approaches in which an outside organization consulted with the community to identify a problem, and then designed a stand-alone project to produce a product or service for the community with the hope that this would resolve the problem. Frequently, such an approach has not led to sustainable results in those communities.

This observation along with the experiences of others involved in community development projects and language development programs convinced the authors, along with many others, that language development programs are most effective and sustainable when they are owned and managed by community-based organizations. Other stakeholder organizations, particularly those from outside the country, collaborate with and work under the leadership of these community-based organizations.

This book presents a comprehensive approach for planning and managing programs, called *Managing for Language Development Results (MfLDR)*. It is written as a practical guide and resource for future and current managers in community-based language development programs whether they are sponsored by a local community organization, or a national or international organization.

Managing for Language Development Results (MfLDR) builds on the philosophy and theory of community-based language development described in *Sustaining Language Use* (Lewis and Simons 2017), on Results-Based Management (RBM), and on the disciplines of Program and Project Management.

Lewis and Simons (2017) make the following points:

- Local language communities must manage multiple identities, multiple languages, and multiple bodies of knowledge.
- Language shift impedes language communities' ability to transmit life- crucial knowledge to succeeding generations.
- Language development is a collaborative, holistic effort by which local language communities manage their use of one or more languages in their repertoire.
- Language development programs and projects take place within a complex set of sociolinguistic and organizational factors that exert varying degrees of influence on those programs and projects.
- Successful language development programs and projects work towards collaboratively-identified and agreed-upon results.

This volume adds these points adapted for language development from Results-Based Management (RBM) and the disciplines of Program and Project Management:

- Language development is best carried out as a participatory process led by members of the local language community.
- Stakeholders can engage in the process at multiple levels.
- Agreed-upon results are critical for sustainable language development.
- An effective methodology for planning and managing community-based language development programs incorporates a focus on results.
- Language development efforts are carried out by programs; programs are implemented through short-term projects.
- The probability of success is improved by clear program designs and support from healthy organizational structures.

MfLDR addresses the broad range of participants and activities for an intentional, planned, community-based language development effort. It presents practical methodologies that a community-based organization and its co-stakeholders can use for the different phases in an organized language development effort: (1) the engagement of the appropriate stakeholders, (2) identification of the desired changes in a community, (3) planning results-oriented programs and associated projects to bring those changes about, and (4) management of the implementation of those plans. This book also explains how an organization or partnership of organizations can manage its participation in several language-development initiatives at the same time.

The MfLDR approach presented in this book can be used in any community development program, though it is particularly offered to those who include a component of language development in their programs.

This volume will hopefully speak well to leaders and managers at every level within organizations and to the field personnel responsible for planning and managing development programs and projects.

Your comments and suggestions for improving this book are welcome. Email them to SIL's International Language Program Management Development at lpmdev_intl@sil.org

January 12, 2018 Thomas W. Marmor and Eric P. Bartels

Chapter 1 Managing Language Programs: Perspectives, Processes, and Practices

Big Idea

The Management of Language Programs is accomplished through implementing specific processes and practices. They are designed to enable minority language communities to improve their well-being, in part, through sustainable changes in the use of the languages in their repertoire.

1.1 Introduction

> Social change is an elusive concept. It is inevitable, and yet, paradoxically, it depends on the will and the actions of ordinary individuals. …As sociology has adapted a less deterministic approach …the emphasis has shifted from the causes of change to the conditions that are most conducive to change. As sociologist Bruce F. Ryan puts it, 'if cause is to be sought for change, it is to be found through the analysis of the conditions and processes giving rise to the particular sequence of events' (London 1996).

Social change can occur on many levels—cultural, social, institutional, and individual. London (1996) lists some of the changes in conditions that tend to precipitate social change. Among them are:

- a lack of cohesion among the various constituents of a social system
- the inability of groups or individuals to adjust to their larger social or physical environment
- creativity and innovation within the community

Members of minority language communities[1] frequently live in an environment or context that is changing. Consequently, they and their communities make changes as they adjust to changed or new conditions. These changes include: (a) easier travel/transportation, (b) greater availability of goods, (c) introduction of schools into their communities, (d) greater communication from within and from outside of their community through new media, (e) new ideas introduced by outside agencies through development projects,[2] and (f) the spread of national and international religious organizations.

These new conditions result in greater contact with those from outside of their community and situations where the use of another language is the norm or expectation. As a consequence, in some situations, community members make changes to their heritage language[3] to describe new items or activities, or express new ideas.[4] In other situations, they learn and use another language primarily because it is essential for communicating with other people.

Sometimes a speaker may decide to use a language other than his/her heritage language for other reasons such as:

- The other language is considered to be more prestigious and the speaker believes it gives him/her greater status.
- His/her previous education or training in the subject matter was in the second language, and he/she does not feel competent expressing new subject matter in the heritage language, or does not feel comfortable trying to do so.

[1]"Minority language" is the term generally used in the literature for the languages which have a numerically smaller number of speakers than those of another group within a country or defined area. Minority language is also used for languages in a country that do not have status or official roles such as for use in government or education, even though they have a numerically large number of speakers.

[2]Development projects have as their goal improving the well-being of a particular population or group of people. They typically address such chronic problems as hunger, poverty, disease, joblessness, and powerlessness.

[3]A heritage language is the "language of a person's ancestors or ethnolinguistic group" (UNESCO 2007:4).

[4]There are three ways in which speakers can adapt their heritage language to express new ideas in a given domain: (1) add new meanings to existing words or phrases, (2) borrow words from another language, or (3) create new words or phrases.

Choosing to use French instead of Kabiye

A Kabiye church pastor, fluent in his heritage language, regularly used French with his Kabiye-speaking congregation because French had been used in his pastoral training and he didn't know or feel comfortable trying to express biblical concepts in Kabiye. In addition, he considered French to be more prestigious and using it demonstrated that he was educated. A third factor was his desire to practice using French in the hopes of being assigned to a town or city church where French was necessary (Tchala, personal communication, c. 2000).

In many minority language communities, speakers are abandoning the use of their heritage language. When that happens, they also suffer a loss of some part of their cultural identity as individuals and as a minority people group. Language, culture, and identity are closely linked and the loss of a language is also a loss of access to a body of knowledge which is contained in the words and concepts expressed in that language.

According to Rita Izsák (2013), UN Independent Expert on minority issues,

> Language is a central element and expression of identity and of key importance in the preservation of group identity. …Language is particularly important to linguistic minority communities seeking to maintain their distinct group and cultural identity, sometimes under conditions of marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination.

Maintaining or re-establishing the use of a heritage language in at least some domain(s) requires intentional actions by the language community itself. They may decide to address internal factors such as:

- the capacity of the language for the uses they want to add
- the attitude of the speakers toward their heritage language and other languages in their repertoire
- the means to acquire new domains of use of the heritage language or to dedicate certain domains to the exclusive use of their heritage language.
- the means for each generation to acquire the language

Lewis and Simons (2017) provide a more detailed discussion on the importance of language development for minority language communities whose heritage language is at risk. They also present a methodology that such communities can use to determine a course of action to change the future uses of both their heritage language and the other languages they use.

The process a community uses to strengthen or expand the uses of their heritage language in a multilingual environment is called "community-based language development."

This book provides an approach that a community and its stakeholders can use to manage a community-based language development initiative. "Manage" includes the broad range of activities involved from the identification of the desired changes to the planning and implementing of a program to bringing them about. The approach can also be used by an organization or partnership to simultaneously manage several language-development initiatives in several communities.

1.2 How this book is organized

This book is divided into four major parts:

Part 1 - Foundational Concepts – a brief overview of language development and the management of programs and projects.

Part 2 - Managing for Language Development Results (MfLDR) – a comprehensive, results-based approach for managing language development programs.

Part 3 - Processes and Practices Used in Managing Language Programs.

Part 4 - Appendices, Glossary, Expanded Table of Contents

1.2.1 Part 1: Foundational concepts

Community-based language development differs in one significant way from language development programs that have been initiated and organized by an agency or organization from outside of the community. The difference is the primary role the community has in defining, planning, and implementing their own language development initiative.

Language development does not occur in a vacuum. Besides the community's own institutions, there are others present in the community who may benefit from, or provide positive support for, the results of the language development. For example, a development NGO uses

English in their village projects because the local language[5] is not written. If they were to use the local language, however, it could provide additional support for the use of the language by its speakers.

A community-based language development initiative normally includes several parties, called "key stakeholders." These can include:

- influential members of the community residing either within or outside of the community
- one or more community-based institutions
- local organizations affiliated with national organizations[6] which have some interest in a language-development initiative
- the local agents or representatives of outside organizations
- the local agents or representatives of government agencies

Many minority language communities that desire to engage in language development for their language(s) do not initially have all of the capacity necessary to bring about the desired changes. In such cases, they may look to one or more organizations or agencies to assist them (a) in aspects of planning their initiative, (b) in managing the programs, (c) in providing technical support, and (d) in training.

Community institutions, other stakeholders, and those assisting them in language development initiatives must have at least some basic knowledge about sustainable language use, language development, the nature of programs and projects, and processes and practices for program management and project management.[7] Individuals with an in-depth knowledge in these domains can make an important contribution to facilitating, guiding, and carrying out various aspects of language development initiatives.

Chapters 2-4 provide a brief introduction to these domains. In-depth training in these domains is available from various institutions including SIL International.

1.2.2 Part 2: Managing language development initiatives

Koontz and Weihrich (2010:2) define management as "the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish

[5] a local language is the "language spoken in the immediate community" (UNESCO 2007:4).

[6] Government agencies and church denominations are examples of national organizations with a local representative or local organization.

[7] Management includes such functions as: planning, organizing, leading/guiding, and monitoring-controlling.

selected aims."

Managing language development initiatives includes:

- a management philosophy[8] that guides the choice of best practices for language development programs
- management processes and practices that are adapted for use with language development programs

In chapters 5 to 14, we present an approach for managing language development programs called "Managing for Language Development Results" (MfLDR). MfLDR incorporates Results-Based Management (RBM) and has been expanded and adapted to create a comprehensive approach for planning and managing language programs, particularly community-based language development programs.

The management philosophy used in MfLDR includes the following core beliefs:

- Programs and projects provide a good way for communities to plan, organize, and implement an intentional effort to improve some aspect of their well-being.
- Community members are the ones who best understand their desires for the use(s) of their heritage language and the other language(s) in their repertoire. Therefore, they are the ones who should be making the decisions about the desired results of language development. They are the ones to take the lead in planning and implementing programs to achieve those results.
- A results-oriented approach to programs is the best method for planning and implementing language development programs. By focusing on 'results' rather than 'activities', MfLDR helps a community better articulate its vision and the expected results. It provides a means to monitor progress and provide results-based reports which help the stakeholders to better understand the impact that a given program is having on the local population.
- Participation by the beneficiaries through their community institutions and community-based organizations and by other stakeholders in the identification, planning, and implementation of programs is essential for achieving sustainable results.
- Developing greater capacity of those directly involved in or associated with a program is an essential aspect of every program. That is, the plan includes activities that increase the knowledge and skills of those participating in the language development initiative.

[8] Philosophy of management is a perspective or set of beliefs an individual in a management position uses to guide his/her decision-making process. (http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/management-philosophy.htm)

- Hands-on learning during program planning and implementation is important for:
  - the development of capacity (knowledge and skills) of program planners and implementers (staff and stakeholders)
  - making informed adjustments to the program plan and/or implementation in response to a variance in program performance as compared to the plan.

MfLDR can be used by small or large organizations, partnerships, and individuals to manage single or multiple programs.

1.2.3 Part 3: Processes and practices used in managing language programs

In part 3 of the book, we discuss management structures, processes, and practices for managing community-based language development programs. We also discuss working with multiple stakeholder organizations to plan and implement these programs.

Stakeholder organizations have their own internal management structures and procedures. Likewise, a development program has a management structure and procedures. If an NGO decides to join an existing program, it (implicitly or explicitly) agrees to work within the structures and procedures established for that program. This does not mean that the NGO is obligated to change the management structure and procedures it normally uses for other programs or projects. Instead where necessary it adapts them in order to be able to work with the other stakeholders in this particular program.

There are four major factors that must be present in a successful initiative:

- The initiative is organized to facilitate good management of the activities, personnel, resources, and risks.
- Those assigned to manage the initiative have the necessary competencies in management.
- The staff and volunteers have the competencies to fill the roles that they take on.
- The leaders of community institution(s) and other key stakeholders engage in the identification, planning, and implementation of the initiative.

The above four factors are important whether it is a single program in a single language community or a coordinated effort of several programs in several communities. The first three points speak to things that affect the efficiency and effectiveness in implementing a program. The fourth point speaks to the appropriateness of the program and to maximizing the probability that the results will be sustainable.

In chapter 15, we provide some guidelines for organizing the management of a single language development program by a local community institution as well as multiple programs by a single organization or partnership of organizations.

The person who is responsible for managing a program is often called a manager. In actual practice, an organization may use a different title, such as: director, administrator, coordinator, team leader, etc. This is done sometimes to highlight or focus on a particular aspect of management and/or because of negative connotations associated with the term “manager” held by some people.

The manager or management team uses certain competencies, processes, and practices to manage a program or project. Many of these are specific to the type of program and the requirements of the sponsoring organization(s).

The competencies needed by an individual or individuals for managing language programs, projects, or at the administrative level are listed in the self-assessment tool in Appendix H.

In chapters 16 to 20, we suggest some processes and practices for use in managing language development programs at the level of (a) a project, (b) a portfolio[9] of projects, (c) a program, (d) a portfolio of programs, and (e) the organizational administrative level.

Managers in language programs encounter many issues and challenges requiring them to make difficult decisions. Some of these decisions may be followed by negative consequences. In chapter 19, we address several of the more common issues that may arise. For each issue, we discuss the factors a manager or management team needs to consider and the possible consequences of their various possible choices.

1.2.4 Part 4: Appendices

The appendices provide definitions, guides, tools, and other information referred to in one or more chapters. They include:

[9] A portfolio is a group of separate projects or programs. It is created as a management unit to obtain or facilitate coordination of the project or program activities in a way that there is greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of personnel and resources over several projects or programs. A portfolio of language programs is sometimes called a “language cluster.” The languages are included in a particular cluster based on similarities in linguistic, cultural, socio-cultural, religious, or other factors.

Appendix A - EGIDS and FAMED Conditions presents two summary tables from Lewis and Simons (2017:99-100;162-183): (1) a table which shows the levels in the EGIDS[^Cfnt10] with a brief description of language use at each level, (2) a table which shows the five FAMED conditions[10] with a description of the situation at each EGIDS level.

Appendix B - Components of a Complete Program Plan includes a list of the documents, tools, and plans developed during the program planning process using MfLDR.

Appendix C - Initiating Community-Based Language Development includes a way a trained facilitator can assist a community to develop greater capacity for planning and implementing their own language development. It uses *A Guide for Planning the Future of Our Language* (Hanawalt, Varenkamp, Lahn, and Eberhard 2016) for the steps in the discovery and analysis process. At each step it includes training for community members and other potential local stakeholders.

Appendix D - Guide for Collecting Information on the Context of a Language Program provides a series of questions arranged by domain. It serves as a guide for discussion with stakeholders and for collecting information about the context where a language development initiative or program is being considered or planned.

Appendix E - Stakeholder Roles and Participation in Each Phase of the Program Management Cycle

Appendix F - Resources for Program Evaluations provides a list of print and on-line resources for designing the Evaluation of a program.

Appendix G - Job Descriptions presents three job-related descriptions. These are a Standard Job Description, a Position Description (PD), and a Position Results Description (PRD). This appendix provides two examples of Standard Job Descriptions: one is for a program manager such as a Manager of Programs and Partnerships (MPP); the other is for a Project Manager (PM).

Appendix H - General Competencies Assessment Tool for Managers of Language Programs is a self-assessment tool. It is used as a basis for developing a professional growth plan for those assigned to positions in the management of language programs.

Appendix I - Guide for Project Performance Reviews provides a suggested outline that a project manager can use to guide a project performance review with staff and key stakeholders.

[10] FAMED = Functions, Acquisition, Motivation, Environment, and Differentiation.

Appendix J - Guide for Program Performance Reviews provides a suggested outline that a program manager can use to guide a program performance review with staff and key stakeholders.

Appendix K - Guide for Drafting an Agreement with a Consultant or Expert provides a list of proposed topics as a guide for the contents of an agreement between a program manager, and a consultant or an expert invited to work with one or more programs or projects.

Glossary of Terminology provides definitions of terms used in this book. Most entries also include a cross-reference to the chapter and section in the book where the term is used.

References

Expanded Table of Contents is a more detailed list than the Table of Contents at the front of the book. It provides chapter titles, section titles, and all levels of subsections.

Chapter 10. MfLDR Part 5: Monitoring (Performance Measurement)

Big Idea

Good planning and design alone do not ensure that a program or project will achieve the intended results. It is essential that a manager monitors progress towards achieving those results and uses the information obtained to improve implementation and plans.

Monitoring also provides important information for the Evaluation Phase. It is very difficult to evaluate a program that is not well designed, and that does not systematically monitor its progress. (adapted from UNDP 2009:81).

10.1 Introduction

> *In the absence of effective monitoring and effective evaluation, it would be difficult to know whether the intended results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action may be needed to ensure delivery of the intended results, and whether initiatives are making positive contributions towards human development.* (UNDP 2009:80).

Program managers are expected to always ask how the program is doing at any given point in time as compared to the plan. Monitoring is the process that provides the information necessary to answer that question.

A program manager monitors two primary aspects of a program's implementation: the results that are being achieved and the implementation (Operations) compared with expected.

Planning the “what to monitor” and “how to monitor” is the third step in the Design/Planning phase of the Program Management Cycle (see Figure 10.1).

This chapter introduces Monitoring and discusses planning how to Monitor the Results described in the Results Chain for a program. The preparation of instruments for collecting data for Monitoring the Results is discussed in § 13.2. Planning the Monitoring of Operations (Implementation) is presented in Chapters 12 for tasks and Chapter 13 for other aspects of the implementation.

10.2 Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators as well as other relevant information throughout the Implementation Phase of a program or project (Figure 10.2). Monitoring provides the program/project managers, program and project teams, and the Key Stakeholders with indications of the current state of progress and achievement of planned results alongside the use of allocated resources (OECD 2002 p.80).

In preparation for monitoring a program’s performance, the manager and Key Stakeholders develop a plan for collecting and processing specific data on program/project performance. This data provides them with the information they use to make timely management decisions that will increase the program’s maximum success.

“Without data, you’re just another person with an opinion.”
Anonymous

Program success is clearly dependent upon the Operations (Resource allocation and Activities) and is influenced by the response of the beneficiary-stakeholder, actions of other stakeholders, and by factors in the context where the program takes place. Monitoring the Operations and the Context helps a program manager discover possible hindrances, and take timely action to mitigate them or their effect. Monitoring Operations and the Context are discussed in Chapter 13.

Monitoring – Example in daily life

I use monitoring whenever I take a trip by automobile. Before starting the trip, I plan the route I will take and make sure my car is ready for the trip. When I am driving, I frequently look at the instruments on my car's dashboard. They tell me the temperature of the motor, the condition of the battery, the oil pressure, and the speed of the motor. I check them so that I will be able to respond whenever they indicate that there is a problem with the motor. I listen to the sound of the motor and car as it moves along and I am aware of any new odor that might indicate something wrong. I do all of this to avoid having a break down somewhere far from town or causing serious damage to the motor.

While driving, I also check the fuel gauge periodically to decide how much further I can travel before I have to stop to purchase gasoline.

There is another thing that I monitor as I travel on the trip. I look for and check the names of towns and route numbers to make sure I am following my planned route. It also lets me determine the progress I am making toward my destination and determine how much farther I have to go to reach my destination.

Monitoring Results is the principle means of determining whether a program is achieving its goals or whether it has encountered something that is hindering the expected progress towards those goals. When a program is not progressing toward the desired results as expected, the manager and Key Stakeholders seek to identify the causes and decide on actions to take to keep the program progressing.

10.3 Monitoring Results

Key Concept:

Results Indicators provide evidence of a program's progress toward achieving the Outputs, the desired Outcomes, and the Impact.

Monitoring of Results focuses on periodically measuring the actual results occurring as the plan is implemented. Comparison of the actual results with the desired or expected results informs the program/project manager and Key Stakeholders of the extent to which the program/project is progressing toward the intended results as planned.

For this reason, the manager and Key Stakeholders identify a means to measure each result stated in the Results Chain. These are called Results Indicators or just Indicators for short. They are intended to indicate the actual results being achieved at any point in time during the implementation of the program/project.

When proposing Results Indicators, the manager and Key Stakeholders also develop a plan for collecting and processing the raw data[11] from those indicators, so that they have the information they use in managing the program/project implementation. A template, called the Performance Measurement Framework, is a tool for recording and displaying this plan (see § 10.4 below).

[11] Raw data (also known as primary data) is the data collected from a source that has not been subjected to processing or any other manipulation.

10.3.1 Indicators

> *Indicators are signposts of change along the path to development. Indicators are what we observe in order to verify whether – or to what extent – it is true that progress is being made towards our goals, which define what we want to achieve.* (Sandhu-Rojon 2015).

An Indicator is used to assess the state or level of something at a particular point in time. Comparing the indicator values over time shows what change, if any, has occurred.

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10.3.2 Results Indicators

Key Concepts

Writing indicators helps bring greater clarity to the results statements in the Results Chain.

Each Indicator is linked directly to a specific Output, Outcome or Impact so that the proposed (planned) results at each of those levels can be measured and compared with the expected progress as reflected in the plans.

A manager is tasked with managing how well the project or program is performing. Thus, one of the questions a manager asks is:

> *What information do I need to determine how well the program/project is achieving the proposed results?*

This question helps the manager and Key Stakeholders propose indicators that generate the necessary information to answer that question.

The Results Chain is like a road map in that there is a progression from the Activities to Outputs to Outcomes to Impact. To be able to make timely decisions during program/project implementation, the manager and the management team seek information that tells them what the specific results are as compared to the expected results stated in the plan. "Indicators make it possible to demonstrate results. . . . By verifying change, indicators help us demonstrate progress when things go right and provide early warning signals when things go wrong." (Sandhu-Rojon 2015).

At least one indicator is necessary for each result statement in the Results Chain –i.e., at least one Indicator is proposed for each Output, each Outcome, and the Impact. Each indicator is carefully chosen to provide data over time which can be used to indicate the extent to which the results statement is being achieved and to show the change in the result being achieved. Figure 10.3 is an example of choosing an indicator for a Result Statement.

Definition – Indicator

A quantitative or qualitative variable used to verify changes produced by a development intervention relative to what was planned.

(UNDG, 2003 Approved Harmonized Terminology)

Figure 10.3 Example of Choosing an Indicator

One of the Results Statements in a literacy project reads:

"Several new literacy facilitators organize and teach literacy classes."

The change in this results statement is:

"facilitators organizing and teaching."

In order to manage this result, the Project Manager searches for Indicators that will provide specific data for measuring the change over time:

- the number of new facilitators who are active in organizing
- the number of new facilitators who are actively teaching

The Project Manager uses that data to assess the extent to which the result in that statement is being achieved.

The Project Manager could choose to look at other data which indicates the number of participants in each class, or the length of time they remained in the class, or their level of success in the class, etc. While these are important pieces of data, yet they are not in focus in the specific results statement itself. In other words, they are not central to this particular results statement.

Point to Ponder

When a program/project has a large number of indicators, the data collection and processing of raw data becomes cumbersome, expensive, consumes excessive time, and increases the workload of project personnel. A manager and Key Stakeholders have to choose a limited number of indicators for each result statement to keep the Monitoring system at a manageable size.

TIP

It is not necessary to measure everything nor to measure it overly accurately. However, a manager does want to know whether or not the program/project is progressing toward the desired results and at what rate as compared to the planned rate.

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10.3.3 Types of Indicators

Fundamentally, there are two different types of Indicators because some changes can be observed directly, and some changes cannot be observed directly. The manager and Key

Stakeholders understand the Context, and the types of change envisioned in the plan and can be presumed to know which of these two types of indicators is the most appropriate for each Result statement.

Direct and Indirect (Proxy) Indicators

Direct Indicators measure precisely the state (level or condition) of something or instances of a behavior. Some examples of direct indicators in a literacy project are the number of literacy booklet titles published; the literacy rate among women, the attendance in literacy class.

Indirect or Proxy Indicators are used when it is impossible or not feasible to use direct measures. They measure something that provides related data that is used to infer a change over time in a condition or behavior. An example of a result statement with an indirect indicator follows.

Result Statement:	Children are experiencing fewer accidents in the home.
Indirect indicator:	The decrease in clinic visits for preventable injuries to children.
Comment:	The Indicator does not measure directly every instance in which a child has some accident. As an Indirect indicator, the manager uses it to infer that there is a direct correlation between the number of clinic visits for such injuries and the number of preventable injuries to children.

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10.3.4 Selecting Indicators

Identifying good indicators—ones that provide reliable data about the results being realized—can be a challenging task. The manager and Key Stakeholders use the following question to help them identify Indicators:

> What information does the manager need to have to be able to decide whether or not the program or project is achieving this desired result?

When selecting indicators, it is also necessary to determine: how to collect the data from each indicator, how often to collect it, what will be the cost, who will do it, etc. If it is difficult or impossible to collect the data for an indicator, or it will require a lot of time, or money, then the manager and Key Stakeholders find a different indicator.

Criteria for selecting indicators

Good indicators have the following qualities.

Technical qualities

> **Validity** The measurement represents what it is supposed to measure.
>
> **Reliability** The measurement is consistent and yields comparable data throughout the life of the program/project.
>
> **Sensitivity** The measurement can detect the expected magnitude and direction of change throughout the life of the program/project.

Practical qualities

> **Simple** The data is easy to interpret, and there is consensus among Key Stakeholders on its meaning.
>
> **Practical** Data collection is possible in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost (in personnel, time, and expense).

Useful The information yields data that support sound decision-making concerning the program/project implementation, and for improving the plans.

Good practices for selecting indicators

Key Stakeholders participate in discussions leading up to the selection of indicators. The following are some good practices for selecting indicators:

- Be very aware of the cultural norms that can affect collecting information, especially from individuals. For example, in some cultures, it may not be appropriate to conduct individual interviews, though interview of a group may be possible.
- Discuss each result statement along with several potential indicators for it. Then pick the best indicator(s).
- If possible, select indicators for which the data or information is already being collected by some organization, institution or agency. This will reduce the cost and time associated with collecting the data (see Figure 10.8 for some examples).

N.B.: Some of this data might be public information such as census data, published literacy rates, etc. Other data might be collected but is not considered public information. For example, government-run village clinics may have a log book for registering visits and the reasons for the visit. For the program/project to access and use the information in the log book, the program or project manager obtains permission from the proper authority.

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10.4 Planning the Results Monitoring Process

The manager and Key Stakeholders make a plan for the data collection and processing the raw data. Three templates help them plan the Results Monitoring process. They are:

- the Performance Measurement Framework (discussed below)
- the plan for developing the instruments to provide the indicator data (discussed in Chapter 13, § 2)
- the plan for training those collecting and/or analyzing the Indicator data (discussed in Chapter 13, § 2.)

10.4.1 Performance Measurement Framework

The Performance Measurement Framework is a table used by a program or project manager to enter the plan for collecting and processing data from the Results Indicators. The Framework has three important uses as a management tool:

1. enables a manager and Key Stakeholders to make a workable plan for collecting the data from each indicator
2. provides an instrument the manager can use for managing the implementation of the plan for Monitoring Results
3. provides information that is added to the Operational Plans[12] (i.e., expenses for the program budget, staffing, and tasks and related assignments of project personnel)

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[12]The Operational Plan is a specific plan that details the specific activities/tasks to be undertaken to implement the strategic results plan. It is a short-term plan (usually one year) for the day-to-day management of the personnel, resources, and activities. Operational plans may vary from year to year.

10.5 Summary

A plan for the Monitoring process is an important part of developing the Results Plan for a program. Making such a plan requires time and effort but is an essential contribution to the ability to manage well to achieve the desired program Outcomes and Impact.

Monitoring Results is a process using specific tools and is carried out by the program and project managers and team members throughout the implementation phase of a program or project.

Monitoring Operations helps managers recognize potential hindrances to the success of a program, and make timely decisions to mitigate them.

In this chapter, the specific tools and plans for the Monitoring of Results process have been presented. In brief, the following steps were included:

- Identify indicators for each result statement.
- Create a Performance Measurement Framework.
- Describe the data collection instruments to be developed.
- Outline the training necessary for those recording and collecting data.
- Determine the material and financial resources necessary for preparation of data collection including tables or spreadsheets, and a way to file the data as it is gathered.
- Outline the training required by those who will process the data and prepare reports for the manager.
- Add the above tasks and assigned personnel to the operational plan such as a Gantt chart.
- Include the expenses for Monitoring in the program/project budget.
- Establish the Base Values, Milestones and Target values for each Indicator as described in Chapter 13.
- Establish a system for recording and storing Indicator data and information.