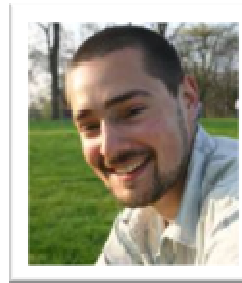## In this Issue…

- OM in uncertainty
- Join the debate
- Ask the authors
- LAC community
- OM Research
- Meet the stewards

Welcome!

Welcome to the second newsletter of the Outcome Mapping Learning Community. We hope this will be interesting for our members and also others who are interested in Outcome Mapping. These bi-annual newsletters are meant to keep our members informed of community activities but also provide a launch pad for disseminating the wealth of experience and knowledge created by the community.

In this issue we introduce a new discussion for the community – *applying OM in uncertain and complex situations*. We present two opinions and invite you to join in an online debate early in 2009. We also present the results of our Ask the Authors competition and hear from Sarah Earl, Fred Carden and Terry Smutylo.

We are always looking for articles to publish, particularly cases of OM application. If you have an interesting story about applying OM in your project, programme or organisation, please write up your experiences in a short article and send it to the community mailing list. We will add the most interesting and relevant story to the next newsletter.

Simon Hearn, Community facilitator

The Outcome Mapping Learning Community is a global group of over 1000 individuals dedicated to collective learning and sharing of knowledge around Outcome Mapping. It was formed in 2005 and has been steadily growing since then. It is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and managed by the Overseas Development Institute in London.
www.outcomemapping.ca

Outcome Mapping in Uncertainty

Is Outcome Mapping useful in situations of uncertainty or complexity? We asked this question to two active community members to gather their opinions. Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Harry Jones explore the challenges of planning, monitoring and evaluating in complex circumstances. We also invite you to join this debate. See below for details.

When is intentionally designing your work not useful?

Op-ed by Ricardo Wilson-Grau[1]
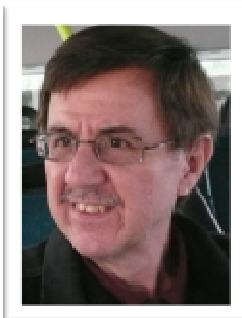
Social change and development organisations that operate primarily in complex – versus simple or complicated – circumstances face major obstacles to use Outcome Mapping as a tool for strategic planning.[2] Why? Because their results, and even their activities, are often difficult or impossible to intentionally design. I am referring to organisations that are what Michael Quinn Patton calls "non-linear, dynamic social change agents"[3]. These organisations are based more on values than hypotheses. Their activities take place in situations in which the results are impossible to predetermine, predict or control. Even the "right" inputs-activities-outputs equation is often uncertain, because what works and does not work sometimes only emerges as their efforts unfold. I will exemplify comparing organisations with three different missions.

First of all, not all organisations face complex circumstances. If you are a builder of rural provincial schools, the challenge of building a new school is not complex but relatively *simple* because the relationships of cause and effect are <u>known</u>. You can calculate with confidence the labour and material inputs you will require and the time construction will take. You can plan activities and outputs with relative certainty that you will be able to act on them. With information at your disposal about what has happened with other schools you have built in the province, you can formulate reasonable outcome challenges and progress markers for the

numbers of heads of households who will decide to send their children to the new school[4].

In contrast, if your work is building the first separate boys' and girls' latrines for all the rural schools in the province, the challenge is partially "simple" – the building of the latrines – but above all *complicated*. The greater number and diversity of actors (workers, teachers, students) and factors (distances, topography, schools being in session, socio-cultural views on hygiene, gender socialisation and education for girls) involved means that many of the cause and effect relationships are not known. Nonetheless, they are <u>knowable</u>; after the experience of equipping a few schools you

will be able to figure out what works and what does not. You will also be able to formulate outcome challenges and progress markers about how many more parents will decide to send their girls to school because of the separate latrines.

A third case is if you are an advocacy organisation that campaigns to create public support for girls schooling, or lobbies the national and provincial governments for funding of rural schools or for separate latrines in those schools. The challenges you face are of another order. They are "complex" because the relationship between what you will do and its effects is <u>unknown</u>. In fact, what you will do month to month – never mind over multiple years – to campaign and lobby will probably change. In these circumstances, because of the lack of known cause and effect relationships, formulating multi-annual and even annual outcome challenges and progress markers tends to be an exercise in pseudo-planning, in predicting the unpredictable.

Of course, if you work for one of these advocacy organisations, or for other types of social change and development organisations whose work is characterised by uncertainty, you will also see the grey areas. Known and knowable cause and effect relationships will be evident between some of your activities and the resultant processes, products and services that are under your control. Typically, these are short-term projects rather than programmes. Most importantly, however, the causal relationship between your activities and outputs and the results that matter most to you – outcomes and impacts – is messy, multi-level and multi-directional. In fact, these critical causal relationships are often unknowable until after you achieve the results, if they ever are. Furthermore, frequently they are not replicable because your organisation and the environment have changed in the course of your intervention.

Therefore, I suggest that Outcome Mapping's intentional design is fundamentally inappropriate for these social change and development organisations that live high levels of uncertainty. Of course, you can formulate wonderfully ambitious outcome challenges, a broad range of expected, desirable and optimal progress markers, and develop rigorously thought-through strategy maps. But the issue is if you do not know how one will lead to another, how can you plan on it? Why predefine the changes you wish to see in social actors who are beyond not only your control but also of your understanding of what you know you can do to contribute to change?

I am not alone. In a study of social change sponsored by McGill University and DuPont Canada, the authors conclude, "…to know step by step, in advance, how the goals will be attained [is] an approach doomed to failure in the complex and rapidly changing world in which social innovators attempt to work…. In highly emergent complex environments, such prior specification is neither possible nor desirable because it constrains openness and adaptability."[5] In these situations, intentional design tends to tie down the capacity to respond and innovate, above all when the social change or development organisation is bound to achieving those predefined results in order to demonstrate success to its stakeholders, notably donors.

The alternative to full-fledged intentional design, as well as to the more conventional modes of strategic planning, is for the social change or development organisation to keep its planning processes light and imaginative. Certainly use the vision, mission and boundary actors components of Outcome Mapping to reach broad agreement on which social actors you wish to influence and what will be the mix of strategies you will employ: for example, research, capacity-building, media work and lobby. Do not be concerned, however, about precisely what changes you expect to see – be they outcome challenges or progress markers. Focus instead on who will do what in the short term to influence those social actors.

Invest the time and energy you save in monitoring the outcomes to which you have contributed. While it is true that influencing significant changes in other social actors usually takes many months and often years, unless you are a start-up organisation, your work can bear fruit at any moment. Thus, periodically – once or twice a year – observe your boundary partners and be prepared to be surprised by unanticipated outcomes. Remember, the purpose of Outcome Mapping monitoring is "on improving rather than on proving, on understanding rather

> Because of the lack of known cause and effect relationships, formulating outcome challenges and progress markers tends to be an exercise in pseudo-planning, in predicting the unpredictable.

than on reporting, and on creating knowledge rather than on taking credit."[6] The sooner you understand what changes your boundary actors are undergoing and how you contributed to them – directly or indirectly, wholly or partially, intentionally or not –, the better.

In sum, I suggest that for social change and development organisations that operate in uncertain terrain, intentional design is not very useful for planning, and especially not for strategic planning. Nonetheless, Outcome Mapping principles can be an invaluable tool with which to monitor outcomes actually achieved. The validity of outcomes does not rest on whether they were pre-planned as outcome challenges or progress markers. Their importance depends on being significant changes with the potential to lead to the impact envisioned in your mission.

[1] I am an independent organizational development consultant and evaluator based in the Netherlands and Brazil. I have been using Outcome Mapping principles for the last five years, primarily in evaluations but increasingly in monitoring and planning. This experience is the basis of the views expressed in this Op-ed. ricardo.wilson-grau@inter.nl.net.

[2] For a full explanation of the differences between simple, complicated and complex, see the Cynefin framework in See Snowden, D. J. and Kurtz, C. F., The new dynamics of strategy: Sense-making in a complex and complicated world, IBM Systems Journal, Vol. 42, No 3, 2003.

[3] EVAL-SYS listserv exchange titled "Patton on Complexity", 25 Mar 2006, eval-sys@lists.evaluation.wmich.edu.

[4] I am indebted to Mary Jane Real who cautions that even in this example of relatively simple relations of cause and effect, other cultural, economic and physical factors could complicate the formulation of outcome challenges.

[5] Frances Westley, Brenda Zimmerman, and Michael Patton, *Getting to Maybe: How the World Is Changed*, Random House Canada, 2007, pages 170 and 237.

[6] Sarah Earl, Fred Carden, and Terry Smutylo; *Outcome Mapping - Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs*; IDRC, 2001, page 21.

Outcome Mapping and Complexity

Op-ed by Harry Jones, Research Officer, ODI. h.jones@odi.org.uk
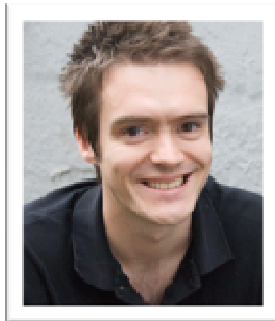
Complexity theory is emerging as a new way to understand the problems faced in development, and how to approach them. It allows us to embrace things previously seen as 'messy realities', emphasising interdependence, nonlinearity and co-evolution. Taking on board this complexity perspective, how should we plan interventions, how can we monitor and evaluate them as they go along? More specifically, what does complexity mean for using Outcome Mapping?

Uncertainty, complexity, and forecasting outcomes

Complexity has implications for certain tendencies that have become common in development policy and practice. One important aspect of complexity is about warning against approaches which are seen as 'linear' or 'Newtonian', often imported inappropriately into development as part of a push to be more 'scientific', or incorporating foreign management practices. While nobody explicitly takes a 'linear' viewpoint, these attitudes are widely visible and have concrete, real-world consequences. One aspect relates to uncertainty. It has been argued that development is "under the enchantment of delivering clear, specific, measurable outcomes"[1]. Examining the behaviour of complex systems, predicting things in such a way seems unrealistic. This is illustrated by the concept of 'sensitive dependence on initial conditions': in a complex system, characterised by interacting, interdependent forces, no matter how precise a picture you have of the current 'state of play', nonlinearity leads to 'failure of prediction'. In this context, trying to predict what will happen over the course of an intervention that will run for a number of years may well be unrealistic, possibly ineffective, or even counter-productive[2].

How can we incorporate this understanding into practice? Common interpretations of complexity theory sometimes imply that we can't foresee anything about the future or that cause-effect relationships are unknowable and we can't plan productively. But these interpretations are not entirely accurate. They would seem to contradict common sense understanding of social change and ignore centuries of work in the social sciences, as well as misreading the lesson from complexity (NB. despite the 'butterfly effect' we do still have weather forecasts, analyses of future climate change, etc). A more appropriate response would be the adoption of a different attitude to uncertainty and prediction, one that is more realistic and humble[2]. This begins from a recognition that certain levels of uncertainty are inherent and unavoidable in the interconnected, multifaceted problems we're addressing in development and this doesn't have to be 'unscientific'. It is important to simply accept that some aspects of change or some future events, can be foreseen within appropriate timescales, and some can't.

Practical lessons for PME and OM

What does complexity theory mean for how we go about planning, monitoring, and evaluating our projects? Specifically, how appropriate is OM in this context, and how can we ensure that OM is implemented in a way that is suitable for complex problems?

First, recognising that some things can and some things simply can't be forecast will mean some people need to adapt their attitudes to planning, learning and accountability exercises. One insight is with regards to the 'impact' level. The further 'downstream' we get, the greater the complexity of the situation. Therefore, in most situations, changes in final welfare of end-beneficiaries is likely to be beyond confident forecasting and certainly beyond direct control of a single project or programme. Because of this, it is inappropriate to expect projects to commit to achieving certain measures of impact in advance, as there is no way it can be known with a high enough degree of certainty what might happen: since these ideas are central to OM, it seems highly appropriate for this sort of context, while the log frame assumes higher powers of foresight than is, in fact, the case[3]. Therefore, understanding a project's impact should be an exercise about *learning* and not *accountability*[4].

> Changes in final welfare of end-beneficiaries is likely to be beyond confident forecasting and certainly beyond direct control of a single project or programme.

Secondly, recognising uncertainty heightens the importance of building flexibility into projects, and adapting to the available signals about performance and progress as you go along[2]. OM is set up to help with this; emphasising ongoing learning, reflection, and adaptation. In order for this to be implemented there may first need to be a change in attitude in the donor's office, where there is often a tendency to try to tie projects in to multi-year plans, but there is also a clear challenge for those implementing projects (in terms of KM, attitudes and capacities), as was highlighted by a recent review of OM experiences[5].

Thirdly, the project team needs to understand the relevance of exercises such as vision, outcome challenges, and progress markers. These elements do require looking into the future, and if these are used in the wrong way then OM will fall into the same trap as the log frame – while choice of tool is important, the way it is applied is the crucial factor. How is it that these elements of OM can be useful in an uncertain context and how can we ensure we are applying them in the right way?

- **Vision**: The vision statement should not be something to be held to account for, but rather to serve as a space for the team to test their understanding of their aims. It then serves as a shared communication tool to help individual and team decision-making. You need to know how you want the future to evolve in order to understand how to act in the present, and the vision provides the normative base against which other goals, objectives, strategies, etc, can be judged[6].
- **Outcome challenges and mission**: Developing outcome challenges will lead to an understanding of the theory of change. By examining the real-world behaviours that would be required to achieve the vision and how they could be promoted, the team is able to explore ideas about how things work, how change happens, what assumptions are being made, and so on. To do this requires being as realistic as possible, grounding things in concrete understandings of how boundary partners function and what influences their behaviour.
- **Progress markers**: Rather than laying out the way things will definitely happen, these could be approached as a foresight activity like 'scenario planning'. These are detailed pictures of how things could be in the future. They serve as a 'fire drill' for the future to help you anticipate possible problems, challenges and opportunities, and that will provide signposts to help the team sense incoming signals and adapt to changing circumstances[6].

So, OM seems to be devised with complexity in mind in a number of ways. However, it is important to recognise that it is just a tool, and it can't do the work for you. It is important for both donors and project teams to adopt right attitude to uncertainty. Finding the space to use OM, or to implement it as intended, may require a shift in attitude on the part of donors. But also, understanding the appropriate use of each element and implementing them in a useful way may require attitudinal shift in your own team, and is likely to be a process that intensively draws on the creativity and knowledge at your disposal.

[1] Westley, F., Zimmerman, B. and Quinn Patton, M. (2006) *Getting to Maybe: How the World is Changed*, Toronto: Random House.

[2] Ramalingam, B. and Jones, H. with Young, J. and Reba, T. (2008) *Exploring the science of complexity: Ideas and implications for development and humanitarian efforts*. London: ODI.

[3] Gasper, D. (2000) Evaluating the Logical Framework Approach towards Learning-oriented Development Evaluation, Public Administration and Development 20(1): 17 - 28

[4] Smutylo, T. 2001. Crouching impact, hidden attribution: overcoming threats to learning in development programs. Ottawa, Canada: International Development Research Centre

[5] Jones, H. (ed) *Making Outcome Mapping Work 2006*. Toronto: IDRC

[6] Ramalingam, B. and Jones, H. (2007) *Strategic Futures Planning: A Guide for Public Sector Organisations*. London: Ark Group.

Join the Debate!

What do you think? You've heard two opinions on this issue; we are now providing the opportunity for you to have your say. This debate will continue on the Outcome Mapping Learning Community discussion list in January 2009. We want to invite you to join this debate. Come with questions for Harry and Ricardo, come with your ideas, come and be part of this debate.

Question Time: Ask the Authors

Back in October, we gave you the opportunity to ask any question to **Sarah Earl**, **Fred Carden** and **Terry Smutylo**, the authors of the first OM manual. Out of many responses, we picked three questions for the authors to respond to. The winning entries will be receiving their copy of "Getting to Maybe" by Westly, Zimmerman and Patton soon. The questions and selected responses are summarised below:

1. **If you were to re-write the book, what is the single most important item (step, stage, chapter) you would add to it and why? (Ziad Moussa, Lebanon)**


Terry Smutylo

Aside from a chapter dealing with the "Step 0" concerns, such as: developing relevant knowledge about the operating environment; identifying stakeholders and potential "boundary partners"; and formulating strategy options, I would add a chapter or two at the end on managing the data. At this point, based on experience at recent workshops, I see at least five areas which could be covered.

- The first would offer some processes for working through the choices of what monitoring and evaluation data to collect. Asking the questions: what information? for which user? for what purpose? for what event? by when? - is extremely complex and we need to think about processes to make it make manageable and practical.

- Second, we need to present some options (with examples) for aggregating and analyzing data generated - for both macro- and micro-level uses. What to do if you need information to apply to individual, or clusters of, cases or if you need to report on patterns emerging across all cases.

- Third, I would have a section on interpreting and packaging the M&E information. This is what Irene Guijt calls "sense-making" and it would cover linking M&E outputs to existing management processes - Irene's "rhythms and spaces".

- Fourth, this chapter would explore (with examples) how to use OM-generated information for constructing project narratives or 'stories'.

- And finally, how about some consideration, with illustrations, on how to use software to collect, aggregate and access OM information as an ongoing function? Maybe we should see what Barry Kibel and others have re this.

If I were re-writing the book, the single most important item that I would add relates to gender and social analysis. Soon after we published the book, I was interacting with colleagues from the Association of Progressive Communications (APC) who work on gender evaluation and I realized we had left implicit too much in regards to this important lens for planning and assessing social change. It`s a mistake that is made too often and I regret that we didn`t see it before we published the book. Since that time, I`ve always asked groups about their intentions regarding gender transformation when I`m facilitating the development of a vision, outcome challenge, and progress markers. I`ve also encouraged deeper thinking and more differentiated data collection on social cleavages when considering or assessing boundary partners.
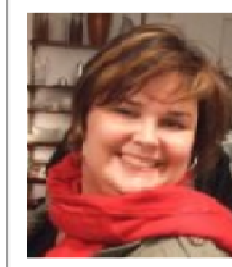

Sarah Earl
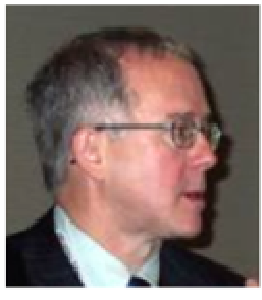
Fred Carden

This is tough as there has been so much experience put forward on the use of OM through the community. So the first thing I would like to say is thank you to the members of the community who have been so open with their experiences and so willing to mentor others. This is wonderful to see!

For me, I think we could add a good deal more on the evaluation side. We did not deal effectively (yet!) with how you address different evaluation challenges and how you make choices. We side-stepped to some extent with the argument for mixed methods. While I still hold to mixed methods as the best starting point for a utilization-focused approach, I think we need to give more guidance and give more clarity on some of the core issues that affect the legitimacy of evaluation. For example, *counterfactuals* are often presented as essential in evaluation but I would argue that they are artifacts of a certain set of methodologies and are not by definition essential; *causality* is usually treated as a simple one-to-one relationship: often – and certainly in OM – it is not. It is through these and related concepts we need to treat the issue of evaluation in Outcome Mapping. Because these issues are not treated, we often find ourselves in defensive mode against the clearly articulated positions put forward by others, such as in the log frame discussions. So those who seek to apply alternatives – as evidenced in the recent discussion on log-frame-OM on the community list – are in a tough position because they do not have all the elements in place. So we need to build that part of OM into a more coherent and well articulated argument. This is the case not only for OM but for many methods that focus on qualitative tools.

2. Why do you consider that outcome mapping as a tool is most used in developing countries and is not used to such a great extent in such countries as those in Europe considering that the concepts are potentially universally applicable? (Marianne McGee, France)
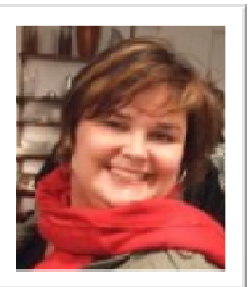
I`ve been awed by the reaction to outcome mapping since we published the book. It never ceases to amaze and humble me that such smart, committed people who work so hard to make the world a better place find it useful. I agree that it seems to have potentially universal applicability because we`ve heard from so many individuals using it in diverse cultures, contexts, and sectors. Perhaps OM is more widely known and used in developing country contexts simply because of the title of the book, the fact that it was written and published by IDRC, the original developers and users of OM were from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, etc. This is a simple answer to what I think is a more complex problem. Too often, we don`t reach beyond our own sectors for ideas and resources and therefore we miss the opportunity for cross-fertilization and learning. OM was born from a collaboration with Dr. Barry Kibel, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), who worked primarily with the US social service sector. What brought us together was a commitment to social change but I`ve always thought that it was partially our grounding in different geographic and sectoral contexts that made all of us think more deeply, be clear about our assumptions, and be open to each others' ideas.

3. What is the best way of developing and measuring progress markers to describe behaviour change over a series of three ICT training sessions? (Mudasir Mustafa, Pakistan)

Here I would say there is not much difference. I am not much in favour of developing (sub-) progress markers for single events such as a workshop. For this, I think one should think about strategy maps, because the training workshop should be thought about as part of a larger change one is trying to create. One of the fates indicators have suffered is that they have been used sol liberally that one gets caught in a maelstrom of indicators and gets so busy managing these that the big picture gets lost. Progress Markers should help illustrate change over time and should help you manage for change over time. Hopefully each workshop will see movement along the set of progress markers to higher and higher levels is the training is good and the uptake is there. So I would advocate developing one set of progress markers for the change you are working to support. They become guides for workshop planning because they allow you to assess where you stand before the activity and help then to plan what should be done in the training to move forward.

It depends who wants to use the PM info for what purpose - and on what your theory of sustained change is. Assuming 'learning' rather than a 'reporting' purposes, the two overall questions that PMs could help address are: 1) Are the training workshops influencing behaviours of the participants during and after the workshops? And 2) Are the combined results of the trainings contributing to getting the local population engaged in using ICTs? (i.e. are you doing the right trainings well enough to influence the wider population?).

If your training and expectations see the students as playing an ongoing social development role in fostering and maintaining community ICT use, then you can have one set of PMs which reflect them gradually growing into that role starting during and after the first training. If not, if they are just supposed to melt into the wider population as ICT users, then you could have a little set of say 3 PMs specific to, and tracking what they do after, each workshop. These could be used in sort of a checking in exercise at the beginning of Workshops 2 &3

Community News

Latin America and Caribbean Community

In June 2008, we started a Spanish forum, to gather Spanish speaking OM users, and focus on Latin American OM applications. This forum is facilitated by Lucia Battegazzore, and the help of the Latin American Centre for Outcome Mapping (CLAMA). It started with a structured discussion with the OM steps, similar to the series recently completed on global community forum. In an attempt to integrate the two forums, key documents from both discussions will be made available in both English and Spanish.

It is in this way that LAC community is forming, people are starting to write and share about their projects, and new threads are starting with members interests.

We are planning to continue with the structured discussion, and new themes, as the community grows and becoming a useful support for new users and a useful resource for experienced ones.

Please contact Lucia Battegazzore (lbattegazzore@iifac.org) if you would like to join the LAC community.

Pushing the Boundaries of OM

Earlier this year we commissioned three short research studies to explore new areas for Outcome Mapping. The aim of the studies were to push the boundaries of OM, to engage the community and to develop new knowledge around the subject. Each of the studies included a facilitated discussion on the community forum in order to include the experiences and opinions of our members.

1. The first study is examining how OM can be integrated with the **Log Frame Approach**, with the aim of creating guidelines for a fusion model of OM and LFA.

2. The second is about the idea of a **Step-Zero** in OM as a kind of pre-intentional design toolbox.

3. The third is looking at the **M&E stages of OM** and some concrete ways in which OM, together with other tools and approaches, can better support M&E.

Kaia Ambrose, one of the researchers involved in the latter study, has this to say:

"OM has mainly been used for planning, however, discussion and experiences around OM for monitoring and evaluation has been increasing. Many have concluded that the information and guidelines currently available regarding OM for M&E could be enriched and strengthened. We are currently compiling some of the opinions, experiences and discussions from a variety of sources (including the discussion and the survey we had in July on the learning community) to produce a resource 'brief' to serve as a discussion and reference piece, for OM users and facilitators, which will contain tips and considerations for using OM for M&E. The resource brief will be shared with the virtual community in draft form for any further contributions and discussions before going to print."

Outputs from all three studies will be presenting to the community in the New Year.

New resources in the community library

A Structured look at OM

A set of discussions summaries exploring the experiences and opinions of community members around each of the intentional design steps of OM

Selected summaries available in Spanish

Mentoring and Monitoring - How to Build a Reporters' Network Using the Outcome Mapping Framework

Jan Lublinski, Nadia el-Awady

Meet the Stewards

The community stewards are the core group of members who run the OMLC in collaboration with the secretariat. They are involved in planning community activities, advising and supporting our members and providing strategic direction for the community. In the first newsletter, we met Kaia and Daniel. This time we're hearing from Heidi and Julius.

First up is Heidi Schaeffer…

Who are you? Heidi Schaeffer, Rhythm Communications, Independent Consultant in Development Communications specializing in planning, monitoring and evaluating social development projects and programs in health, violence prevention, gender and community development. I am also a trainer and facilitator for the YWCA and runs a training centre specializing in organizational learning and culture change processes with public service and community service organizations.

One interesting fact about yourself… I worked for many years as a documentary radio producer and helped start a number of community radio stations in Canada.

How did you get involved in Outcome Mapping? Since my initial training in 2005, I have been involved in training and implementation in Canada, Asia and Africa. In Canada, OM has been a hard sell and I have learned to use OM by stealth. One OM implementation was with a large public health department in 2006. OM tools and processes supported an organizational shift in the delivery of health promotion services toward equity and social determinants. I have used OM for strategic planning and M&E with union organizations, community foundations and an environmental business network.

If you could take just one aspect of OM what would it be? I would keep asking the question: What does the change look like in terms of actions and interactions? and also I would take the aspect of sphere of influence (if I could have two aspects). With OM we look at change from a very specific perspective (because of sphere of influence) and therefore we are more effective at supporting measurable change.

What advice would you give to someone just starting out with OM? I would advise them to develop strong facilitation skills. In my view you can't use OM without strong facilitation skills. I would also advise them to engage with the OMLC. There is a wealth of knowledge there and openness to share and learn from each other.

Next we have Julius Nyangaga…

Who are you? I am Julius Nyangaga, working as a Research Associate at the International Livestock research Institute, Nairobi Kenya. I also provide support services to teams interested in understanding and applying concepts of outcome mapping in various aspects of programme planning, implementation and reviewing (M & E), and report development.

One interesting fact about yourself… I can describe myself as a professional tourist and probably available to offer expert (and maybe un-invited) advice to just about anyone. Consider starting from an animal health technician to an agricultural extension coordinator to innovation system scientist. I have developed some skills in monitoring and evaluation, especially the qualitative development better presented through outcome mapping. Now I am a student of Strategic Management, especially with a business focus and confident that one (and especially I) can achieve their business objectives through strategic oversight and influencing of outcomes. Need assistance? Try me.

What is your interest in OM? I learnt about outcome mapping when I was studying innovation systems, trying to understand how actors in a system influence dynamics to their favour. I fully understood the concepts and got hooked to the framework as a way of planning and implementing strategies. I have been working with various research teams, NGOs and other development agents in formulating plans using outcome mapping. The diversity in these applications is so rich it is a thrill worth getting out of bed for. Any time, any day.

If you could take just one aspect of OM what would it be? The most fascinating aspect of OM for me is looking at change through developments in actors – people, groups, organizations and/or institutions. Change just doesn't happen. It is made and observed through changes in the behaviours of these actors. And target behaviour will always be change in knowledge, attitude, culture, practice, policies, and relationships. These are the resultant outcomes that eventually effect impacts. The second most important is the potential of strategy maps in developing very diverse approaches to influencing those outcomes. Everyone should be skilled in the meaning of and use of the strategy matrix to most effectively use them to review ways of influencing outcomes.

What's the most interesting application of OM you've come across? The use of OM in the St^{2}eep educational project in Zimbabwe, lead by Jan Van Ongevalle. The team's conscientious use of OM concepts and monitoring tools is a wonderful dedication to a process, and it has yielded fantastic lessons to anyone interested in using OM anywhere.

We'll be introducing the rest of the Stewards group to the community in January. Keep an eye out on the community mailing list.