



## Terms of Reference: OM Mapping and needs assessment

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### Background

The Outcome Mapping Learning Community (OMLC) is an informal group of over three thousand members from around the world. It acts largely as a dynamic platform for sharing knowledge and experiences relating to Outcome Mapping. Members come together to solve problems, to showcase and trade their discoveries and good practices, and to support one another in applying Outcome Mapping. The OMLC is supported by a facilitator and governed by a group of voluntary stewards.

The OMLC is seeking to commission a researcher or a research team to undertake a mapping exercise to identify and present the status quo of OM application, consulting and training expertise, and capacity needs. There are three broad issues that this study is hoping to address.

Firstly, the majority of requests for information from members fall into one of two categories; requests for OM expertise, training or consultants available in a particular region or sector; and requests for examples of OM application in a particular region or sector. The OMLC website currently has a user generated database of initiatives applying OM but this is generally not updated very often and almost certainly doesn't represent the status quo and therefore doesn't assist in the majority of these requests. In addition, there is currently no facility for people to identify trainers or consultants, and members rely on broadcast emails and personal networking. There is therefore a strong case for developing or updating tools to assist with these requests.

Secondly, there is an increasing recognition that OM is rarely applied 'by the book' and often involves applying parts of OM alongside other methods or approaches, or sometimes the principles of OM are applied as an underlying approach for a different methodology. The line between what is OM and what is something else is becoming increasingly blurry and as a result it is becoming more difficult to make the case for OM. An understanding of the different ways in which OM is applied would go far in helping us understand our constituency and how best to direct our support.

The final issue we are hoping this study will help with is capacity needs. For many OM practitioners, there appears to be a gap in the support available; there are opportunities for basic training, there is the community for informal learning and exchange and there is the resource library for personal study; but there are concerns that this is not sufficient in many cases for practitioners to begin implementing OM. There is also the question about availability of OM expertise in different regions of the world and what it would take to increase this. To this end, we are interested to find out what the perceived needs are in terms of capacity to implement OM and capacity to train or provide operational support for OM.

## Research questions

This study will seek to explore the following questions:

- 1) Where is/has OM being applied (in terms of which organisations, individuals, projects, sectors, geographic regions)?
- 2) How is/has OM being applied (for example: complete, in parts, just principles...)?
- 3) Who is currently training or providing operational support for OM (where are they based, where do they cover, any particular sectors covered, types of support offered, languages...)?
- 4) What are the capacity needs of those applying or wanting to apply OM? (How) are they met?
- 5) What are the capacity needs of OM trainers and consultants? (How) are they met?

## Deliverables

- 1) An Excel database of OM applications
- 2) An Excel database of trainers/consultants
- 3) A narrative report responding to the questions

## Approach

We are open to the approach taken by the researchers but we suggest the following considerations:

- An initial scoping stage to map the information available
  - o Review the OMLC email list for relevant information
  - o Identify key people and projects to include in the study
  - o Search the internet for information external to the OMLC
  - o Develop a design for the databases to be approved by community stewards
  - o Develop a survey aimed at current and past users of OM; people interested in using OM and trainers/consultants of OM (to be approved by stewards)
- Follow up interviews to pick up on the 'how is OM applied' question – at least 20 interviews across a variety of regions
- Regular updates to the community on the progress of the study
- The community stewards will review the outputs for quality control purposes before posting to the community
- The community will provide final validation
- The report should include recommendations on how the database could be maintained and kept up to date.
- Much of the work involved is straight forward data collection, but question 2 will require some more nuanced information gathering and analysis.

## Proposal

Proposals should include methodology, timeline, detailed budget and CVs of team members, and should be sent to [s.hearn@odi.org.uk](mailto:s.hearn@odi.org.uk) no later than Monday 25 July 2011. A decision will be made within 10 days of this deadline.

Maximum budget: GBP 6000.00