

# PSAM

Public Service  
Accountability  
Monitor



RHODES UNIVERSITY  
*Where leaders learn*



## PSAM Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Workshop 2018 WORKSHOP REPORT



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# PSAM

Public Service  
Accountability  
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## Acknowledgements

The Public Service Accountability Monitor would like to thank the Open Society Foundation for the funding which made this MEL workshop possible. Without the support of the Fiscal Governance Programme at the OSF, and particularly the support from Megan Colnar, this important event would not have taken place.

Special thanks also to the facilitators who worked hard to put together a relevant, accessible and interesting programme which covered a lot of material. Thanks to Beatrice Mkani, Reagan Ojok, Michael Moses, Lindelwa Nxele and Rachel Gondo for their excellent facilitation of the workshop, answering difficult questions and being able to make the participants feel heard.

Thanks to all those who participated and were willing to share honestly, openly and collaboratively about their experiences and the challenges they face in implementing monitoring, evaluation and learning in difficult contexts.

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Published: October 2018

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The Public Service Accountability Monitor forms part of the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. The long-term goal of the PSAM is to ensure accountable service delivery due to improved interaction between citizens and the state that has a particular focus on strengthening governance and public resource management systems.

PSAM's activities include research, monitoring, advocacy and capacity building. Working through Sub-Saharan Africa, PSAM generates and shares knowledge about the right to social accountability and the monitoring tools necessary to give effect to this right.

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## Workshop Objectives

This 2-day event brought together M&E practitioners in the social accountability sector in a process towards sharing experiences, gaining knowledge and peer-learning around MEL issues that are particular to the sector. The objectives of the workshop were:

- Improved functionality of MEL systems of the participants;
- Adoption of practical skills for enhancing MEL at the individual, organisational and sectoral levels;
- Peer learning amongst participants in order to engage with MEL challenges specific to social accountability practitioners;
- Build a network of MEL practitioners within the social accountability sector;
- Find better ways of implementing MEL within the social accountability sector;
- Address some of the challenges and barriers in ensuring that MEL is being implemented.



## Workshop Structure

In order to achieve the workshop objectives, the workshop included formal presentations from facilitators, smaller breakaway group sessions, plenary discussions and case study peer review clinics.

In addition, prior to the workshop, participants were asked to complete an online survey aimed at understanding their key concerns around MEL, the challenges they face in implementing MEL, their expectations for the workshop, as well as their levels of engagement with different aspects of MEL. The pre-workshop survey results were used to tailor the workshop programme to the needs of the participants and ensured that the content was able to focus on particular areas of concern or needs identified by the participants. The full survey results can be found in Appendix One. Some of the key findings that emerged from the survey in terms of challenges to MEL included:

- *Data management practices, documenting impact*
- *Capacity of organisational staff in M&E*
- *Adaptive strategies in M&E, responding to a dynamic context*

In terms of expectations, participants noted the following in the survey results:

- *Learning more on MEL approaches*
- *Data management*
- *Theory of change*
- *Building an organisational culture for MEL*
- *How to analyse information collected*
- *Peer learning*



## Workshop summary: Day One

### Learning & Documenting

The day started with a question to participants – ‘How do you learn individually and how do you learn at the organisational level?’ *Responses were varied, but the key issues raised were around the fact that while it is considered important, learning is not given the time or resources it requires. Learning also happens in a number of different ways, for example theoretical learning, practical learning, reading, through research, learning visits, team meetings, fieldwork monitoring visits, reflection meetings and personal reflection. Learning happens through trial and error, by seeing what other people/organisations are doing, looking at what works and doesn’t work at both the individual and organisational levels.* After a presentation on the challenges to learning, the participants were put into groups and asked to discuss a number of questions:

### WHY ARE WE EXPERIENCING CHALLENGES WITH LEARNING? – GROUP SESSIONS- 20 MINS

ARE WE LEARNING WHAT WE ARE SUPPOSED TO LEARN?

DO WE HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OR VISION OF WHAT A LEARNED  
INDIVIDUAL AND LEARNING ORGANISATION SHOULD LOOK LIKE?

COULD THERE BE PERSONAL, CULTURAL, ORGANISATIONAL OR SECTORAL BELIEFS OR  
PRACTICES THAT FOSTER OR LIMIT OUR LEARNING, EITHER MAKING US NOT WANT TO  
LEARN AS IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO US THEREFORE NOT MOTIVATING US TO WANT  
TO LEARN, OR THEY GO AGAINST OUR BELIEFS AND VALUES, OR DOWNRIGHT  
RESTRICTING OUR ABILITY TO LEARN?

Group 1: *The purpose of learning is to improve the gaps that you have in the work you do. We are learning what we are supposed to learn when we are improving the work we do. If you are motivated to learn, then you grow organisational learning. Failure to document is the basis for failing to learn.*

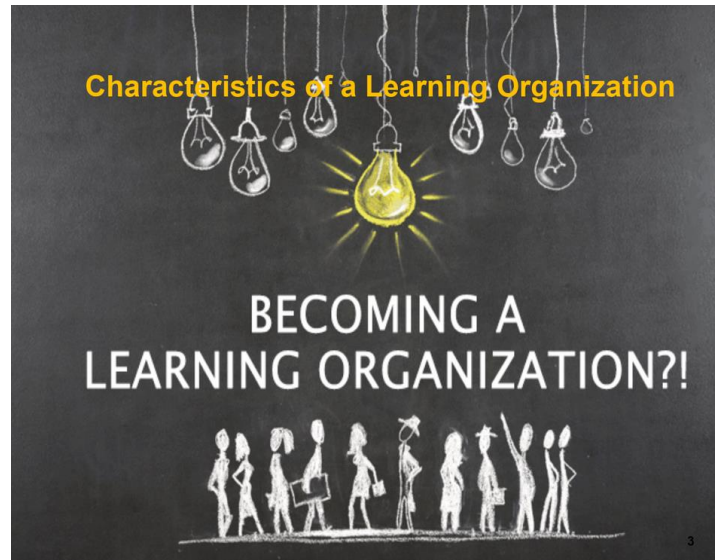
Group 2: *You are always learning, it is revolutionary, there is always more to learn and you can never learn enough. As individuals we learn a lot, but can we apply this at the organisational level and if we are not applying the learning, then can we say we are learning? Social and cultural norms are barriers to learning and these norms come from home to the workplace and it becomes difficult to crash those barriers and difficult to change people because they are closed by their beliefs.*

Group 3: *For most of our organisations, we have donor imposed programming and timing, which doesn’t promote learning. We need to look at organisational learning needs and not just donor related needs. Most organisations are good at M&E processes and reporting, but are not doing much learning. We have a culture of implementing, but not really learning.*

Group 4: *Challenges are bureaucratic and administrative due to a lack of understanding of the processes. Organisations are learning what others want, rather than what they need. Learning can have a low priority in our organisations and MEL projects are put aside in terms of budgets and project resources.*

A presentation followed on the characteristics of a learning organisation, which drew on the work by Peter Senge, The Fifth Discipline.

The key points made during the presentation included understanding what a learning organisation is, the role of leadership in establishing a learning organisation, the importance of continuous learning, incentives for learning, how to foster an enabling learning environment and learning processes and practices. *The importance of leadership to foster learning was highlighted by participants, who noted that if there is resistance from top structures to learning, that pressure can be created from the bottom to create consent and a culture of learning. M&E officers need to get buy-in from all team members, both top and bottom, and show team members how they add value to the work they are doing.*



### **Adaptable M&E**

This session focused on key issues around making M&E adaptable, the importance of adaptable learning, understanding when it is important to adapt your M&E and when you should stay the course, and the complexities of the contexts we work in as social accountability practitioners. When asked what some of the complexities of their contexts were, *participants noted high turnover of political staff within public offices, the lack of citizen engagement in projects that should be led by citizen action, limitations set by regulation and legislation, lack of institutional memory within government institutions, building citizen knowledge and literacy, which enables effective demands from citizens, and the fact that often social accountability work means engaging and relying on people rather than institutions and the complexities of that kind of engagement (e.g. high turnover of staff, but a lack of trust in institutions because of corruption).*

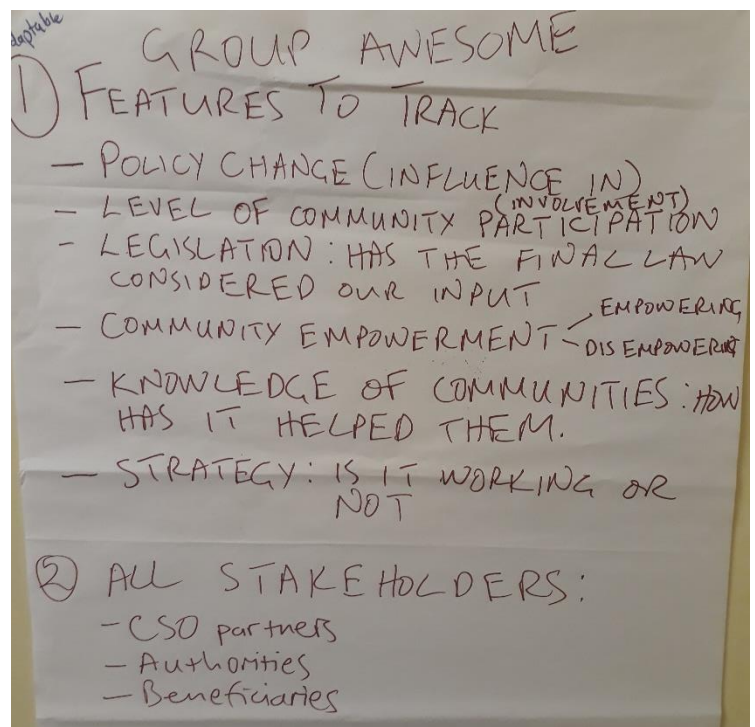
Key characteristics of traditional vs adaptive MEL were highlighted by the facilitators. These included, for example, that traditional MEL is focused on reporting on whether we have delivered what was in our log frame, but adaptive is more focused on achieving goals. Traditional MEL learning is about demonstrating accountability to donors, but adaptive MEL learning is to improve effectiveness of what we are doing. Participants were asked whether their current MEL systems were more adaptive or traditional? *Participants noted that it is possible to design a log frame that has both traditional and adaptive elements/indicators. Traditional indicators are still important because not all donors understand adaptive MEL – donors can be very focused on activities and outputs. One participant noted that they are adaptive in their MEL and the way they achieved this was because in the design stage, programme staff were very critical in what they wanted out of the project. One of the biggest challenges to adaptive MEL is that at the design stage there is not much thinking about it and often we start before we have indicators or a baseline – we have to think about these things at the design stage. One participant noted that the question is not whether we are adaptive, but what makes organisations fail to adapt? For example, some organisations design their adaptive MEL at the early stages of projects but these remain on paper and the question is why? Part of the reason may be that MEL systems are seen as extra, programme staff and beneficiaries are not involved in their design, so are not invested in implementing them.*

The facilitators took the discussion further noting that regardless of what system of MEL one is using, all adaptive MEL systems share three characteristics: 1) Action – the system should promote gathering information that is useful to implementation, tracking progress towards outcomes, interrogating assumptions, seeing gaps and then being able to revise your strategy. 2) Participation – adaptive MEL systems should not just be designed by a donor or someone sitting in an office, they should be designed by implementing staff and beneficiaries. 3) Iterative – focused on collecting relevant information on a regular basis, reflecting on that information and adapting your strategy and documenting what adaptations have taken place and why.

Participants were then formed into groups and asked a number of questions to discuss: What features of your context would you want to track? Who would you want to participate in regulation reflection? How would you document and use evidence to inform adjustments in your project?

#### Group 1:

*Would like to influence policy change at the community level, to empower communities to demand accountability and to be able to see how much community participation increases or decreases. At the level of legislation, to be able to track whether these are empowering or disempowering communities and also show sustainability of the work once they withdraw. Track knowledge and whether this is helping them. Participations should include all stakeholders.*



#### Group 2:

*Tracking change at the political, economic, socio, cultural and environmental levels. At the political level access to information is something important to track. This could include raising the voice of citizens, understanding service delivery and good governance. For adaptive MEL we can then see how change happens in terms of behaviour and thinking. Participants to involve include policy and decision makers, beneficiaries, government officials. In order to do this, we need evidence, which means having tools to capture what we are talking about. In adaptive MEL this could include meetings for different purposes, such as finding out what beneficiaries are saying and getting participants feedback about what is working and why.*

#### Group 3:

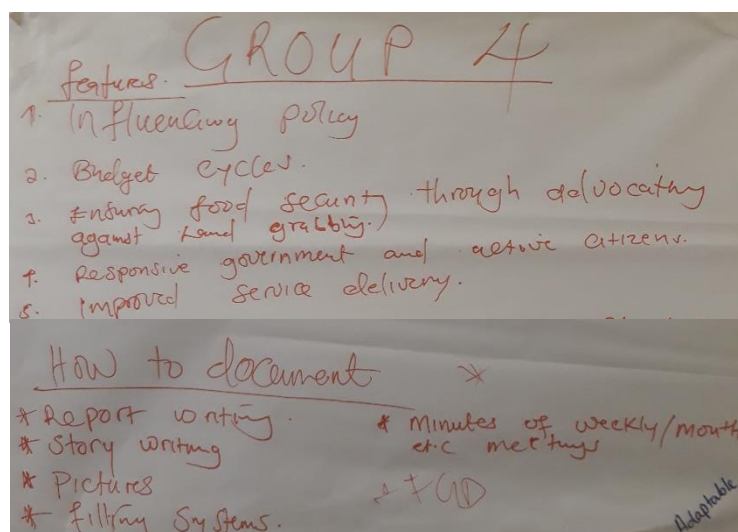
*Participants should include duty bearers, beneficiaries, other CSOs, leadership and programme staff. Some of the issues in having these groups participate include the fact that for duty bearers to be interested you have to demonstrate value and how it benefits them. For beneficiaries, it requires resources to get them to participate. For other CSOs, it may be important to incorporate social movements or grassroots movements. It is important that participants are included from the design phase, not just once implementation starts. For documenting and gathering evidence, it is important to use participatory sessions that can be used to document evidence, but also documentation doesn't mean production of paper publications, but could also expand to audio and*



visual. What is important in documenting is to have a system to identify what is the relevant information for your tracking requirements.

#### Group 4:

*This group mostly discussed documenting and evidence building, noting that these could include report writing, writing stories, filling systems, minutes of weekly or other meetings, and focus group discussions with beneficiaries. These should be used to redirect strategies where required.*



#### MEL System Design

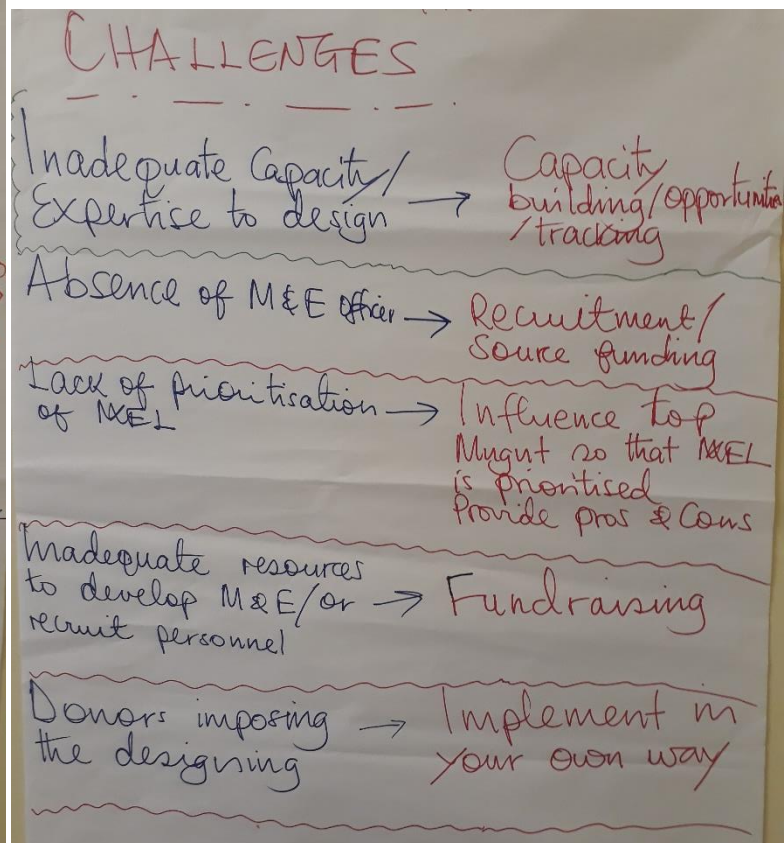
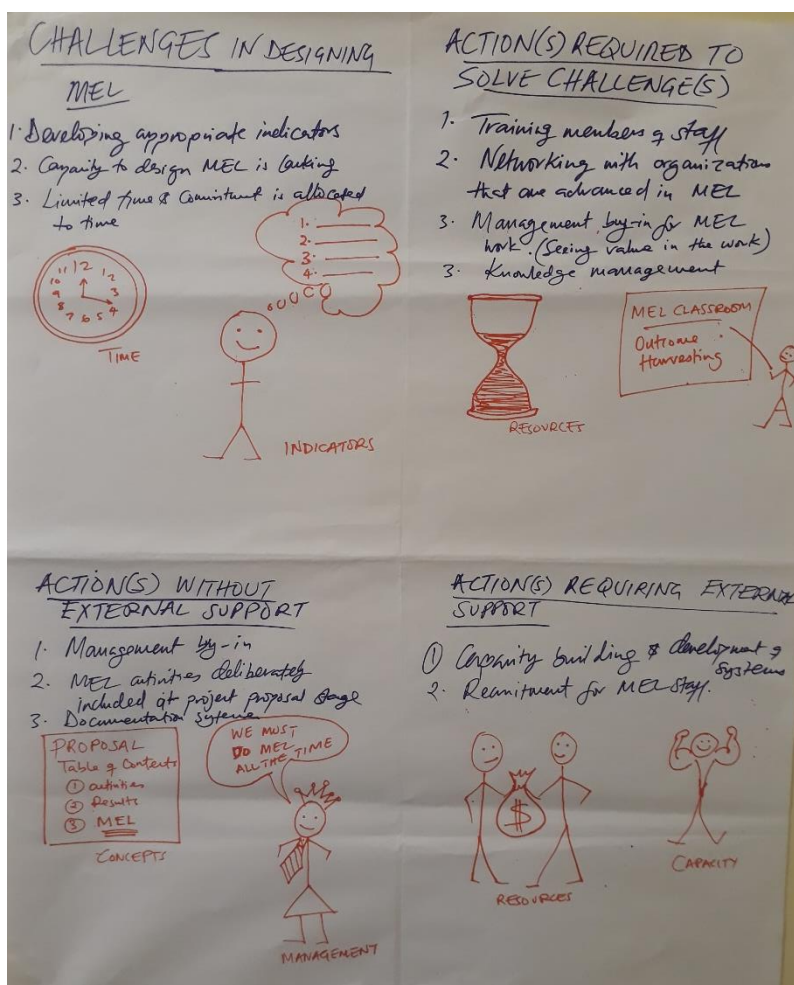
A five-minute quiz asked participants to list some of the challenges to MEL system design in their organisations. Responses included:

Participation & leadership	No MEL person	Documentation
Documentation of lessons	MEL not given priority	Capacity
Funding for MEL activities	Capacity & Expertise	MEL expertise
Development of a lessons learnt database	Using all documented data	Incomplete reports
Not knowing how to integrate Mel into our work	Implementing M&E tools	Expensive
Capacity in MEL system design	No M&E officer	Cumbersome processes
How to monitor accountability work	Having time for reflection	Our TOCs are too general
Failure by GPs to report on time	Gender data collection	Change management
Other staff think they not responsible for M&E	Engaging the government	
Reflection is not sufficient	Tracking the right things	
Structural issues, e.g. senior management support	Balance between rigour and ease of use	
Incorporating beneficiaries into MEL design	Determining the right kind of information to capture	
Having an MEL system that responds to the learning needs of our partners whilst taking into account our own needs		
Tackling quantitative indicators regarding service delivery outcomes		
Integration between finance and programme staff is hard		

A presentation was made using a case study in MEL system design. Key areas covered in the presentation included the importance of understanding the purpose of MEL, who the audience is for any MEL, how to locate MEL within the broader organisational context, challenges in implementing MEL and the influence of the development of an MEL system in the accountability context. Some important notes also highlighted the importance of understanding organisational culture before designing an MEL system, because if you understand organisational culture, it gives you the power to customise your system. Theory of Change is a useful tool because it allows you to clarify long term goals and means you are looking at initiatives from an institutional point of view. As M&E practitioners, it is important to recognise a learning moment, to harness a culture of curiosity within individuals or organisations, to explain why MEL is important, show how MEL can be fun and that, ultimately, MEL should show you why you exist as an organisation, which you can only do if you are tracking results.



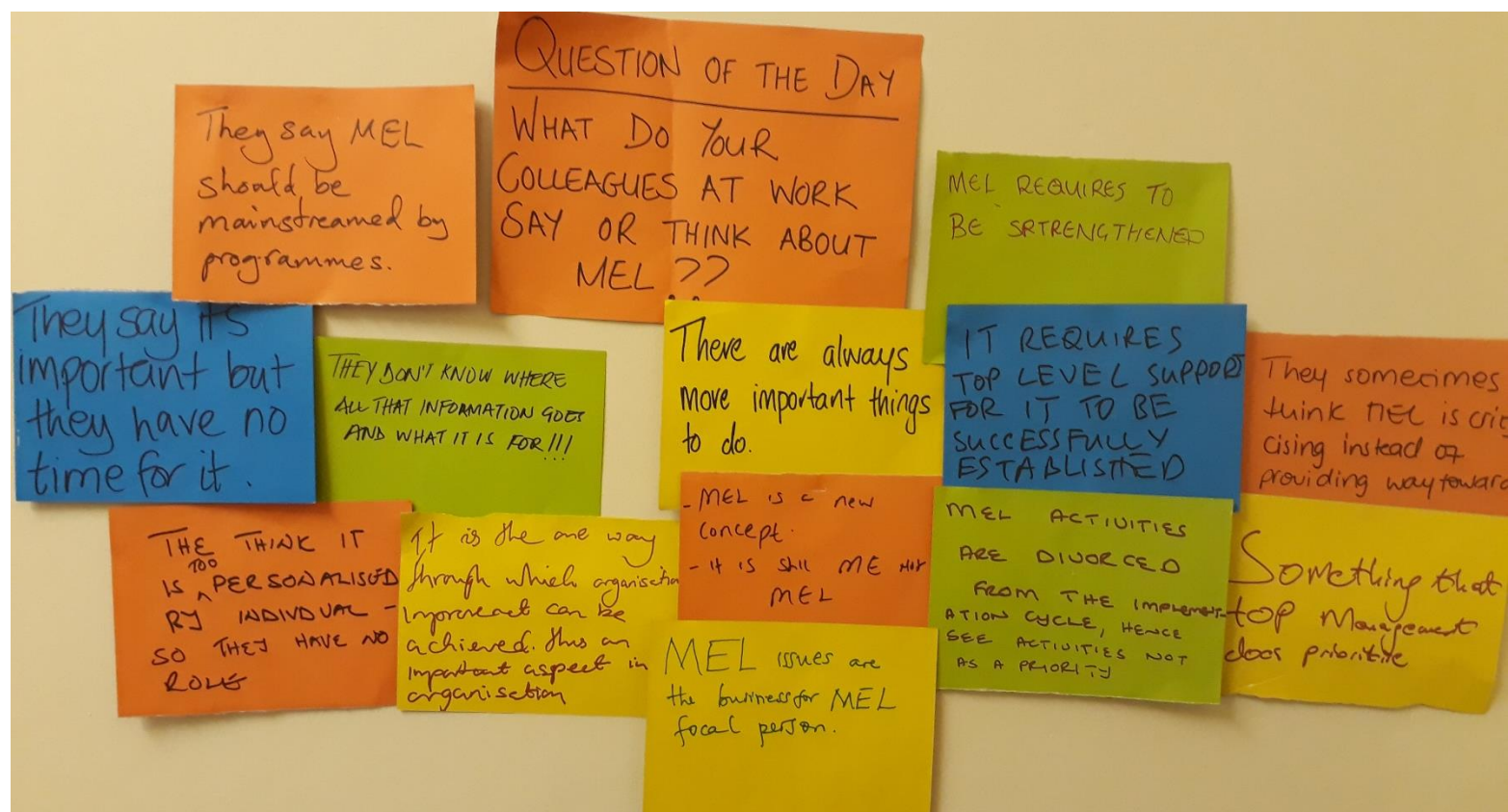
The participants were then asked to break into groups and answer a number of questions: 1) What are the challenges in designing MEL for social accountability? 2) For each challenge, discuss the action required to solve it? 3) What can be done without external support? 4) What aspects require external support?



Participants were asked how they understand 'reflection'. Responses includes that reflection can be individual, departmental or organisational, where one asks: where are we, what do we want to achieve, have we achieved what we want to achieve? Reflection is something that we do to ask how we are doing things and why we are doing them that way. You cannot reflect alone. Collective is more important because there are other challenges that as an individual you cannot see but when you are with others you can see those gaps. There is more openness and honesty with individual reflection because when you are in groups people tend to be defensive. In a group there might be political correctness – that is why projects might always be doing the same thing because you are just saying the same thing. Whether individual or collective, the intention is to improve and achieve a higher level. At the individual level you might not be as critical as others might be in a collective environment. We encourage our partners to report on their failures because as much as we want to report on positive results, we believe it will improve the project to report on failure. Failure is a question of perspective. Whether for internal or external purposes, failure is how I learn. Through a process of reflection and strategy changing, you can turn failure into success. Success is good because you can use it to scale up projects, but failure is critical because it makes you think differently. Reporting on failure depends on the type of failure, the type of organisation you are and it depends on the type of donor.

Being honest when you reflect is important. You might have a lot of reflection but are you being self-critical about the work you do? Substantial reflection generates a lesson or set of lessons and substantial lessons only count if they inform our actions. Good reflection is about generating actionable lessons.

The day ended with further discussion on a research project to be undertaken by PSAM on the perception of MEL by social accountability practitioners and particularly the role of reflection in learning and implementation. Participants were also encouraged to answer the 'Question of the Day', which asked: What do your colleagues at work say or think about MEL? See the responses below.



## Workshop summary: Day Two

The day started with a recap of the final session of Day One, where participants were challenged to think about reflection. It was noted that three key issues were raised by the participants in relation to reflection:

- Individual VS Collective
- Reflection for accountability VS for effectiveness
- Fostering spaces for honest reflection

Participants were then invited to participate in a research project being conducted by the PSAM, which will focus on one of these key aspects identified by them. The research will be completed by end 2018 – early 2019.

### Measuring Results

This session highlighted the importance of indicators, what they mean, what is a good indicator and how they can be used as part of a wider MEL plan. *One participant questioned whether it was possible to develop indicators for advocacy, particularly whether you can develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant & Time-bound) indicators for advocacy given that change is less certain, the pathways for change are less certain in advocacy – so how do you develop indicators that reflect the change you are working towards, but that are also context specific? The participant also questioned whether it was possible to have SMART indicators in advocacy because in this kind of work the indicators are mostly qualitative (for example, measuring policy change)? There was acknowledgment*



*by another participant that not all indicators are the same and that indicators at the organisational level will be different to those developed at the project level. Operational level indicators tend to be more quantitative because you are measuring operational work, but at the organisational level they are strategic so there would be fewer of them and they would measure different aspects. It was suggested that the nature of the project will determine the kind of indicators you come up with and that the job of the MEL officer is to develop indicators that will measure different aspects of work, at different levels and to help project staff to implement those.*

### **Key Issues to consider when developing an Indicator**

- Critical to understand what is being done, why it is being done, and how the ultimate objective will be achieved.
- Third party data that helps information sharing.
- The number of data source one uses is critically important.
- Determine the strategic importance of each data point.
- Important to understanding the interplay and involvement of the various stakeholders.
- No need to reinvent the wheel e.g SDGs Indicators.

*Another question arose around how to respond to emerging issues in measuring results. Due to the fact that accountability work takes place in changing and dynamic contexts, how can we develop indicators in that context?* It was suggested that all M&E frameworks are flexible and should not be stagnant, but you should be able to adapt it. Further facilitator responses noted you should also create room for emerging issues when designing your MEL framework. What is important is to adapt as a result of reflection rather than responding to all changes without further reflection. You need to ensure your adaptations are relevant. It is important to be clear about your end-goal and this will guide your adaptability and your structures. If we start with problems we want to solve, then generate outcomes, these should stay constant, but the strategies we are using to achieve those outcomes should change. And the principles of good indicators are what should be used to guide the collection of good evidence to justify adaptation and form reasonable, strategic adaptation. The key principles are that strategies might change, but outcomes should not and you should use indicators to measure the change and explain those changes.

### **Indicator Clinic**

Participants were asked prior to attending the workshop whether they would be willing to volunteer their organisations indicators to go through a process of peer review and peer learning. Two organisations – African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) and the Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF) - volunteered to have their indicators reviewed by fellow participants in the indicator clinic. This proved to be a valuable session for participants, where other participants were not only able to see gaps in the indicators of those participating organisations, but also identify gaps in their own indicator development as a result.



Some of the key findings of the clinic generally were that the organisations had too many indicators, making it difficult to track all of them. It is important that indicators are time bound and have a time frame. Organisations can think creatively about means of verification, such as using beneficiary stories and case studies to balance more internal sources of data. One of the common issues was that often indicators did not adequately address the level of implementation. So indicators at output, outcome, activity and strategy levels should be different and directly related to each of those levels.

### Institutionalising MEL

Participants were asked at the start of this session on institutionalising MEL to individually consider 3 things that relate to their own work: What are their **NEEDS** in terms of MEL? What are their **BIASES** in terms of MEL? What **QUESTIONS** do they still have about MEL?

Needs: Here most participants noted gaps in their capacity that required practical solutions such as how to design an MEL system, what an MEL framework looks like and step by step guidelines on developing an MEL plan. These are seen in the picture below. Some of the other responses also included:

*I need to understand how beneficiary feedback can be used for measuring performance in social accountability in politically volatile environments without causing any consequences in operational areas.*

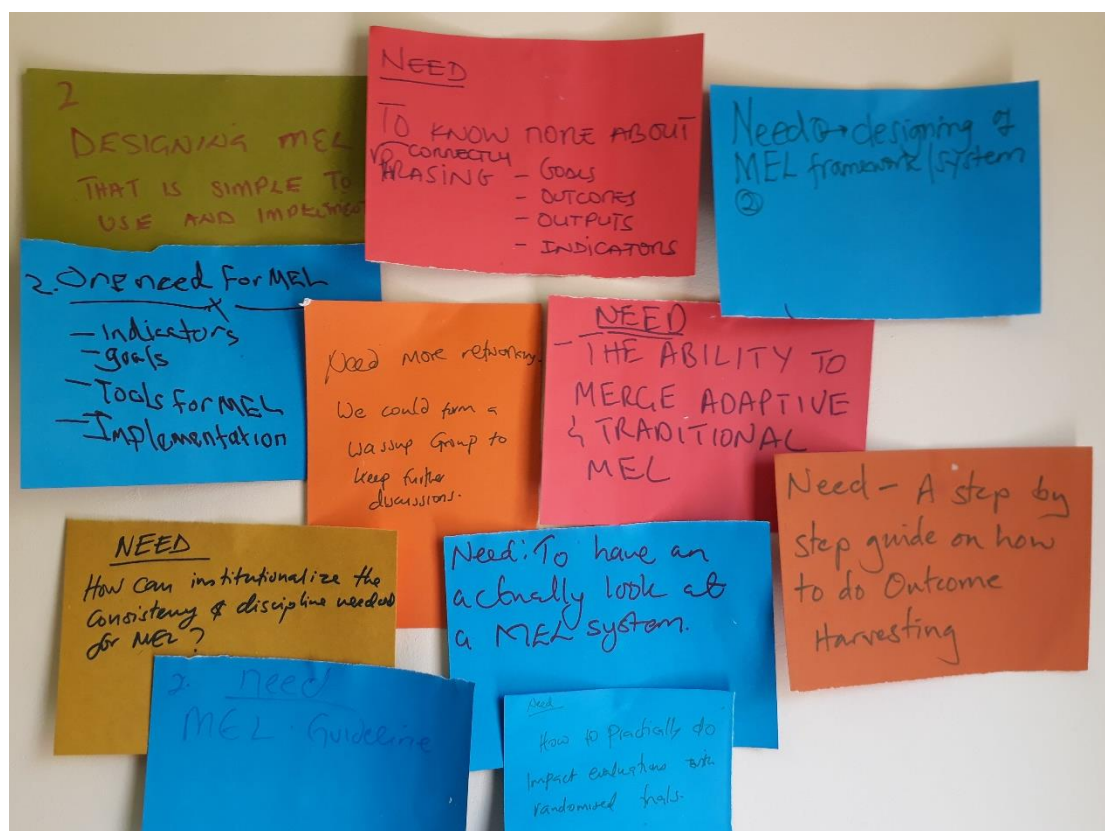
*I need MEL for evaluating the impact of my work.*

*Theory of change.*

*How to design a good MEL or a sample of a good MEL?*

*I need to learn in-depth the MEL process from how to design an MEL process, implement and improve. I would like to learn different types of MEL systems and how they are done.*

*Improve documenting & tracking; Integrating MEL into advocacy initiatives; Developing indicators for advocacy initiatives.*





Bias: There was great enthusiasm from the participants towards MEL, but they recognised a number of challenges they face in perceptions around MEL such as that it is time consuming or difficult to integrate into project work or that it is the “preserve” of the M&E officer. Other reflections noted:

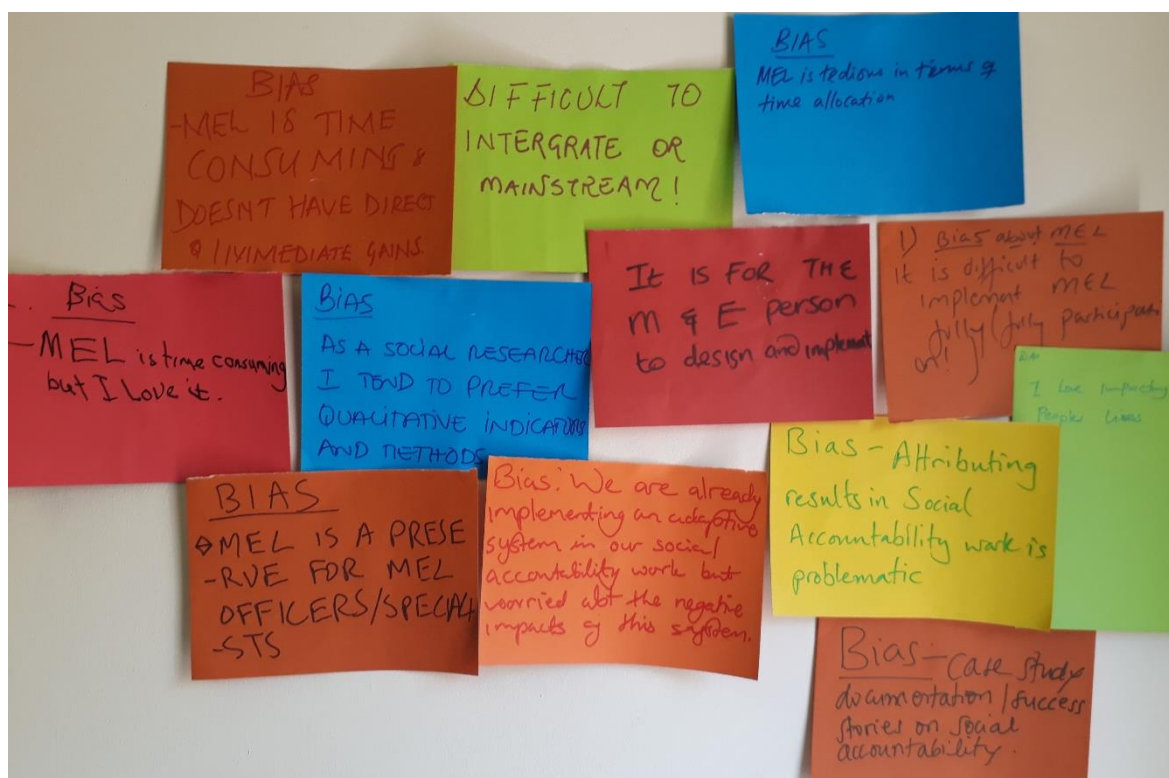
*I think M&E is more demanding than colleagues realise but it's quite enriching and very important if an organisation is going to realise its goals.*

*Much team work and coordination of every team player which brings diversity to my work.*

*MEL is important for achieving/tracking the change being advocated for.*

*When I came to the workshop, I had not bias towards MEL. I now like MEL.*

*I had a bias towards Most Significant Change methodology. However, through this workshop I feel there are other approaches that I would like to learn. I understand that a mix of these approaches could achieve better results.*



#### Questions:

Many of the questions highlighted further gaps identified by the participants in terms of practical training and learning, and again pointed to the reflections by participants that they feel the need for capacity building which translates theoretical knowledge into practical skills in their workplace. Other reflections noted:

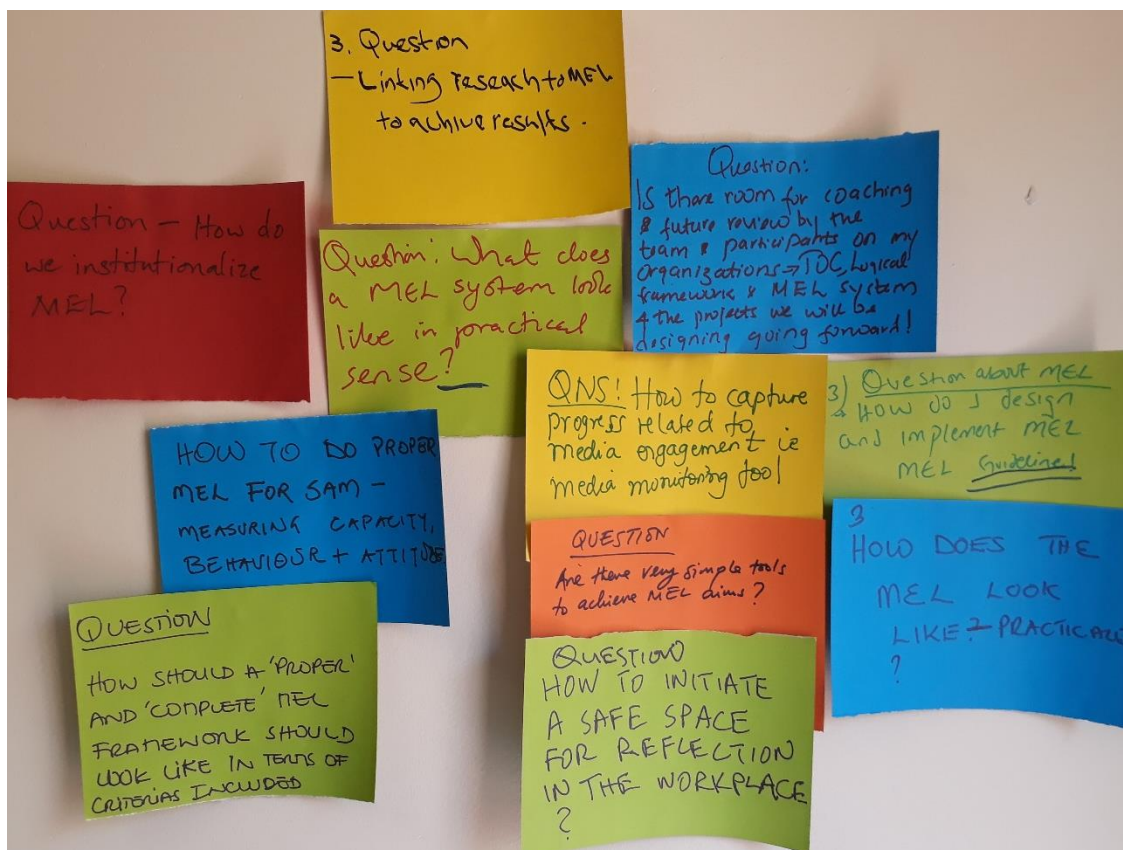
*What are the disadvantages and advantages of having MEL personnel in an organisation as opposed to every member of the organisation involved in MEL work?*

*How can I standardise data collection tools for different initiatives to ensure consistency in data collection over time?*

*How can lessons learnt be used to improve on the way an organisation functions?*

*How to develop MEL / M&E plans for the advocacy initiative?*

*I am very eager to know how to track lessons learnt and how to understand that something is a lesson learnt?*



When asked what 'institutionalising MEL' meant for the participants, they noted that it meant making M&E part of the institution or organisational systems. That it meant integrating MEL into the work so that it becomes a culture or a gene of the organisation. It also means that MEL is more than part of the systems in an organisation, but also part of the processes in a system. It should not be independent from implementation. It also meant standardising your MEL system across all programmes.

A presentation followed on key aspects of institutionalising MEL and also some key tips for the M&E officers to assist in their work. It was noted that the M&E person has a responsibility to set up the MEL structures and systems that become mainstreamed and embedded into the organisation. It is also important that the MEL framework suits the culture of the organisation and the interests of the organisation, as this will help in implementation. Some of the key tips were: create demand for MEL; create partnerships for MEL; make MEL fun; develop a knowledge management system; the importance of documenting; and understanding the importance of customising dissemination.

There were some concerns from participants who asked that an MEL framework or plan template be distributed to them and it was noted by the facilitators that while templates are useful, it is important to add your own context and to customise those tools for your organisation and its needs.

## Way Forward

Participants committed to a number of post-workshop initiatives, including completing a post-workshop survey (see post-workshop survey results in Appendix Three) and participating in the MEL research being undertaken by PSAM. The purpose of the study is to explore M&E practitioners' perspectives on the dynamics surrounding the practice of MEL within the social accountability sector. It will focus on issues such as: 1) perceptions around individual vs collective reflection and learning; 2) perceptions on reflection for accountability vs reflection for effectiveness; 3) the creation of conducive safe spaces for honest reflection and adaptability; and 4) perceptions on how MEL can assist in adaptability and improvement of social accountability practice?

Participants were also asked in the final workshop evaluations (evaluation results are in Appendix Two) to list their commitments for themselves at their workplaces for the next 3 – 6 months. Some of the commitments noted by participants included:

- *Designing an MEL system*
- *Initiating regular reflection meetings with colleagues at work*
- *Foster the creation of MEL champions at their organisations*
- *Including more adaptive indicators and methods in their current practices*

In terms of achieving its objectives, the workshop proposed a number of long term objectives (improved functionality of MEL systems; adoption of practical skills; better implementation of MEL; build a network of MEL practitioners) which will need to be evaluated after a greater implementation period by the participants. It is hoped that this event, focusing specifically on M&E officers in the accountability sector, can be held annually or biennially with the commitment of interested organisations. By pooling the resources of organisations in the sector, the aim is to build MEL capacity and the importance of thinking about MEL in different ways. In addition to capacity –building, the continued interaction with M&E officers in the sector will allow for long term evaluation of the effectiveness of the workshops/events in improving those objectives above. Participants noted in the post-workshop survey: *There is need for continuous refresher workshops at regional level; There is need for further engagements; Please organize for us another workshop with more days.*

The more immediate objectives were regarded by facilitators and participants as being achieved. Many of the participants noted in the evaluations and post-workshop surveys that the interactive and collaborative nature of the workshop allowed them to engage actively with the content. It was noted that peer learning was a useful strategy of the workshop. Participants noted the following in the post-workshop survey: *The opportunity for peer learning and reflection on MEL; Networking opportunity for peer learning; Good peers ready to contribute; Participatory approach; Good engagement of people and facilitators; Breakaway sessions were great for interaction; I learnt quite a great deal about learning, which I didn't pay attention to before the workshop.*

In terms of capacity, most of the evaluation results show that participants felt that their knowledge and skills were improved by having attended the workshop. The facilitation was highlighted for its excellence, its ability to draw in active participation by attendees and for addressing some of the challenges of current M&E contexts. While it was not explicit in the objectives, one of the key outcomes of the workshop was the commitment by participants to include learning and reflection in their M&E work going forward. This highlights a keen understanding of the necessity for thinking reflectively in their practice and an awareness of being able to do M&E that challenges some of the routines currently being practiced. For example, when asked what they commit to doing in the months following the workshop, participants noted the following: *I will be able to make sure that there will be a reflection meeting in each month and review what our project needs and where we are; Conduct reflection meetings to revise the input and output; More exploration around organisational/institutional complexity in regards to learning for SAM; Propose systems for regular reflection meetings with follow up actions established; Think about how I can facilitate lessons learning of reflection sessions in my organisation.*

In addition, the post-workshop survey results also highlight some of the commitments and expectations by participants following the workshop. These include *the importance of platforms for sharing experiences, networking and peer learning amongst participants, more practical training on MEL systems, frameworks and implementation in the accountability sector.* Evaluation responses show there is still a need from participants in terms of understanding and practicing learning and reflection, particularly at the organisational level. Participants show a desire for better practical skills in integrating learning into current M&E frameworks, at the organisational level and

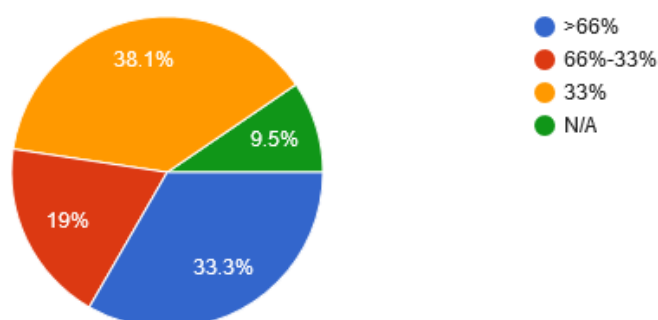
also ensuring that reflection and learning result in greater improvement of implementation at the project and organisational levels. What comes out clearly in the evaluation results is the desire for M&E officers or practitioners in the social accountability sector to have a network of support from each other, where they can learn from each other, share experiences, share challenges and successes, and tools for overcoming those challenges. M&E work in the social accountability sector can be lonely, and one of the key messages coming from participants of the workshop is that they found the participatory and collaborative nature of the workshop useful in showing them that they are not alone in the challenges they face and that they would greatly appreciate further support through other practical training, communication platforms and opportunities for networking.



## Appendix One – Pre-Workshop survey results

Please estimate the time you spend on MEL activities at any given time

21 responses



### Please provide details of your MEL responsibilities in your organisation

- Developing MEL tools, analysing and documenting results from the tools, preparation of learning session, presenting results to the annual report.
- Planning, developing work plans, developing scorecards, designing collection tools, carrying out impact assessment, training staff.
- Reviewing progress reports from partners, conducting monitoring and learning visits to partners, taking part in the design of monitoring tools.
- Designing M & E data collection tools, e.g. for administering questionnaire, FGD.
- Developing Monitoring plans that capture quantitative and qualitative data to report on performance, outcomes and results. Reviewing the organization strategic plan Conducting Monitoring visit, Coordinate the development of Management information to capture the MEL plan Organizing learning events for members Building capacity of staff on Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Coordinating the development a Participatory MEL strategy Organize program evaluation Coordinating the implementation of baseline surveys. Assisting Program team in developing quarterly, mid-year and annual reports Uploading key data into the Management Information System Assisting Program team in planning and reviewing plans during implementation.
- Track progress of the organisation interventions, document success stories and case studies together with coordinating reflection on what have worked out and what have not and proposing the action point.
- Designing MERL Frameworks and Tool kits for programmes, Capacity building, Mentoring and Coaching of Partners in MERL related issues, Facilitating Evaluations and Special Studies, Ensuring Learning is incorporated into programming at all level, designing project indicators and indicator plans, reporting project performance results.
- Planning, Monitoring and Overseeing implementation of the Social Accountability project.
- Project design, construction and monitoring of indicators and impacts, compiling success stories, periodic reports, facilitating learning, project evaluation.
- Participating in reflection meetings.
- Data quality assessment, MEL Tools development, Field monitoring visits and supervision, Reflection meetings and reporting.
- I am responsible for qualitative and quantitative research activities done by the organization. I am also responsible for writing proposals and fund raising, supervision of researchers, implementing and managing community development projects in close coordination with volunteers and Local Government Authorities. I facilitate regular production of advocacy radio and T.V programs while continuously building the capacity of various target groups in social accountability. I provide regular support to report writing and conduct monitoring and evaluation for all projects.

- Formulation of M&E frameworks, evaluation of progress towards programme impact and for purposes of shaping strategic approaches.
- Conduct monitoring of project activities both for reporting and institutional learning, participate in the formulation of M&E frameworks, evaluation of progress towards programme impact and for purposes of shaping strategic approaches.
- Design of the MEL framework and monitoring its implementations to make adjustments when it is affected by other factors.
- Report writing, data collation and submission to M&E officer.
- Designing tools and framework, analysing framework results, reflecting on new tools, evaluating impact, designing and evaluation theory of changes, use of value for money tools.
- To develop with partners and facilitate the implementation of the country strategy in enhancing social accountability monitoring for optimum use of public resources and better service delivery. Further, to track outcomes and changes in behaviours and capacities of various stakeholders in efforts to systemically address issues relating to management of resources in service delivery. Besides this tracking, to capture and learn lessons around this practice and shifts in thinking and behavioural patterns. Also, to track, report and strategically course correct implementation of this country strategy.

**Which of the above do you consider to be a priority for you and your organization? Please list starting with the most important.**

- Results and impact stories, Data Management, Network and Coalition MEL practices, Evaluation Methods and tactics, Contribution or processing tracing techniques and Capacity Building with partners in MEL.
- Building team & organizational culture for MEL.
- 1) Indicator constructs, 2) results and impact stories, 3) building team and culture of MEL, 4) Theory of change.
- Capacity building with partners in MEL, Results and impact stories, data management, evaluation methods and tactics, Theory of change, indicator construction.
- Network and coalition MEL practices, Capacity building, Results and impact stories, building team and organisational culture of MEL.
- Theory of Change Contribution or process tracing building team and organisation culture for MEL Network and coalition MEL practices Informal or formal learning methods (reflecting, story-telling, journaling, etc.) Results & impact stories Data Management Indicator construction & design Capacity building with partners in MEL.
- 1. Building team & organisational culture for MEL 2. Theory of change 3. Evaluation Methods & Tactics 4. Data management 5. Result & Impact stories 6. Informal & formal learning methods.
- Capacity building with partners in MEL, Indicator construction and design, Data Management, Results and Impact stories, building team and organizational culture for MEL, Evaluation Methods and tactics, Contribution or process tracing techniques, Network and Coalition MEL practices, Informal or formal learning methods (reflecting, story-telling, journaling, etc.), Theory of Change.
- Building team culture for M and E, capacity building with partners in MEL, Network and coalition MEL
- Building team and organization culture for MEL, Evaluation methods and tactics, Results and impact stories.
- Theory of change, Data management, Indicator constructions and Design, Informal and Formal learning methods (reflecting, story-telling, journaling etc.), Results and Impact stories,
- Theory of change, Result and impact stories and building team and organization culture on MEL.

- Building team and Organizational culture for MEL, Network and coalition MEL Practices, Contribution or process tracing techniques, Capacity building with partners in MEL.
- Result and Impact Stories Theory of Change Data Management Evaluation Methods and Tactics Informal or formal learning methods.
- Building team and organisational culture for MEL, Informal and formal learning methods, contribution tracking and Evaluation methods & tactics.
- The order of priority would be 1. Building team and organizational culture for MEL, 2. Results and impact stories and 3. Indicator Construction and design (but tends to be a problem with social accountability when it comes to qualitative indicators).
- Theory of change, informal and formal methods, results and impact stories, indicator construction and design, evaluation methods, capacity building with partners, data management, all of them.
- Building team & organizational culture for MEL Capacity building with partners in MEL Network and Coalition MEL practices Theory of change Evaluation methods & tactics Results & impact stories Informal or formal learning methods (reflecting, story-telling, journaling, etc.) Indicator construction & design Data Management Contribution or process tracing techniques.

**Which formal MEL methods does your current organisation apply, if any? Please explain.**

- We prepare Action Plans annually for implementing its activities as elaborated in its Strategic Plan. Then, activities are implemented after which Monitoring follows then evaluation and review is conducted thereby coming up with the lessons learnt. We also prepare reports such as annual reports, activity based reports and program reports.
- Results based monitoring.
- Planning, Data collection and reporting.
- Process and Impact monitoring where we monitor both output and outcome level of project implementation. this involves physical monitoring of visits as well as through submitting of reports. We are also starting to do Outcome harvesting which basically involves developing outcomes as the project is being implemented.
- Qualitative and quantitative impact evaluation.
- MEL strategy that guides the implementation of MEL practice, Log frame as a planning tool, Theory of Change, milestone, performance indicators, MEL plan that explains further of performance indicators and means of data collection, baseline survey which is done before a new strategic plan, activity evaluation and strategic plan evaluation, MEL tools that assist in data collection, program review.
- Reflection meetings, sharing of documented case studies and success stories.
- Adaptive Collaborative Learning- deliberate efforts are made to ensure ACL steps are incorporated in MEL plans. Performance Results measurement- MEL plans are designed with tool kits that will capture performance results adequately.
- Our MEL methods are guided by the M and E framework that stipulates or important things including the theory of change, logic framework, and tools.
- Performance indicators, Logical framework.
- Informal and formal learning methods.
- Reflecting, whereby every after the field visit and reporting there should be reflection meeting where all staff meet and reflect the report on whether we are on track or not and why, also what should be done to improve where the gap was found.

- Most Significant Change Methodology. It can bring up stories of significant change caused by an intervention/project. The stories are collected through asking 4 open questions to beneficiaries. The outcome informs us about the impact our work may have. The following stages are part of the MSC technique of monitoring: Collecting stories (as opposed to numbers) Assessing stories to see the most significant change (expected and unexpected) Learning from stories (might lead to adaptation of the project).
- Log frame, participatory, expenditure tracking and surveys.
- Using the theory of change and impact stories.
- We apply in line with donor requirements i.e. we use theory of change, outcome mapping.
- Electronic monitoring system, excel with a beneficiaries data base, indicators matrix, impact studies, case studies.
- The organization I work for has been implementing Outcome Mapping and has been exploring an approach that is Fit for Purpose.

### **What are the strengths of your organization's approach to MEL?**

- Our MEL framework and tools have helped us to identify change, recognize our contribution and position in the accountability sector, realising our potential as a think tank organization and learning. MEL has also helped us implement the Theory of change and meet the Strategic Plan objectives.
- Management commitment.
- The process is participatory allowing for all partners to be fully involved.
- M & E framework in place.
- Monitoring in line with strategic plan Flexibility to document unintended outcomes Allows contribution and process tracing Allows learning and reflection.
- Involves team work and the report are widely share (to staff, development partners & members).
- Capacity building, mentoring and coaching of partners in MEL issues, Research and publication of special studies, Knowledge Management and Learning.
- We have a framework that guides us.
- Performance indicators and log frames.
- Reflection and learning happening deliberately.
- We are good on Data Management both hard copies and Soft copies. There is a specific person only responsible for MEL activities. She has some experiences with Monitoring and Learning activities.
- It can capture unintended impacts of the project that using just indicators can't.
- The organisation uses a spectrum of tools to capture both community specific issues and perspectives of public service delivery and scientific data to strengthen advocacy.
- Our strong point is the impact stories, that the citizens(beneficiaries) share, this is evidence of the impact of the intervention. Secondly is the baseline studies undertaken at the project onset-this makes it easier to gauge progress on the indicators.
- The organisation currently focuses on M and E but the learning is not so much systemic rather it comes separately at report writing stage in the form of lessons learnt. There is need to have a more cohesive process to ensure we have a comprehensive MEL system.



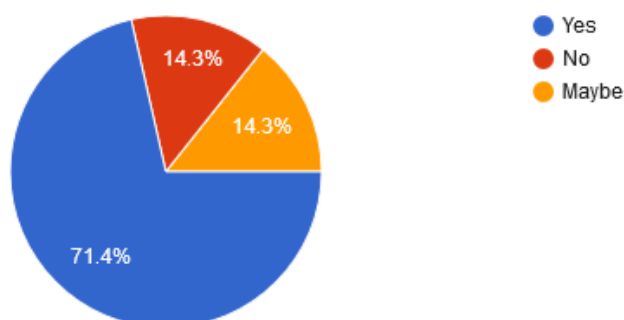
- Team Planning conducted every 3 months and planning with partners.
- The collection of a wide array of information and data as well as a pool of various boundary partners with a wealth of information necessary to monitoring.

### **What are the challenges of your organization's approach to MEL?**

- Developing MEL tools that are relevant and necessary to capture results was a major challenge. The second one is to capture concretely what has changed as a result of [our] intervention given the fact that there are other players in the field. Lastly, is engaging boundary partners effectively to demand for action consistently and call for change from time to time when need arises.
- Developing and implementing.
- 1) Change management towards measuring beyond output. 2) Time for effective planning.
- It is a challenge to aggregate results from divers sources.
- Minimal capacity of skilled personnel on M & E. Lack of detailed training on M & E.
- Unclear MEL practices within the organisation culture in MEL practices within the organisation documenting results and impact stories.
- Data management and organisational culture for put priority on MEL.
- More needs to be done around Data Management and how data contributes to organizational and programmes growth.
- Learning approaches- we have struggled to get this going.
- Not all of the organization members have been exposed to MEL practice There is no one person specifically focusing on MEL.
- How to track Lesson learnt from the field or project activities.
- It misses out on certain qualitative variables.
- Not enough emphasis has been placed on reflection and adjustment for leaning.
- Most project time frame is shorter that the time, required to harvest the projected results.
- We lack a systemic approach as an organisation. We do not have platforms to share the learning from the various projects.
- Our major challenge is to keep track of quantitative indicators in governance programs, how to prove achieved results were based on our interventions without government saying it was their own actions (not considering the pressure and work done by program), how then do we claim impact? and how do we measure our quantitative indicators?
- The use of the collected information so as to respond to the complexity in terms of the purpose/outcomes the interventions intended to be achieved at our level. Blurriness between the kind of learning useful to us and that which is useful to our boundary partners. Filtering and aggregating the right kind of information that tells a coherent story and feeds into future planning and corrective action.

## Does your current MEL system include elements that support intentional reflection and learning?

21 responses



### Please explain how your organisation encourages or restricts reflection and learning?

- Through the governing structure, learning reflection is part of program implementation. Each quarter we organise reflection sessions and once a year a learning event is arranged. These sessions then inform the next annual work plans and budget.
- Quarterly and annual reflections.
- Encouraging training needed for future engagements.
- We have strategic planning but it is not end to end.
- There is a demand for result based reporting from the board and management.
- The monitoring teams are composed of three member teams which allows for interaction in all aspects of the project that is programme, capacity development and finance. Further every quarter a programme meeting is held to discuss the various grants, the progress being made, challenges being faced and notable results.
- Our organisation encourages learning by conducting quarterly review meetings to review our implementation and assess the lessons to improve program implementation.
- Each individual staff is responsible for writing quarterly reports under his /her portfolio including success stories and monthly updates which are share to staff, donors and partners.
- Promotes through Expert group meetings which encourages brainstorming as well as thought leadership.
- We have a provision on learning but in reality it has been difficult.
- It encourages learning through weekly reflection meetings.
- Our organization encourages reflection and learning. Reflection and learning is done at individual desks and programmes and also as an organization. This is done progressively as people do their work.
- Our Organisation encourages much reflection and learning by conducting weekly and monthly meetings were we get the room to share different leanings from different projects.
- Organisation encourage reflection and learning through 1. Weekly meetings; In these meeting member of staff reflect on performance towards target and progress of activities. 2. Open Debate- the organisation allow staff to express opinion of what they feel could be the best way of doing things and as such it encouraging the culture of always reflecting on better ways of doing things (Kaizen). 3. Staff Appraisals- During appraisal management and staff reflect on performance as well and how activities where conducted.

- Reflection is relegated to strategic planning and beyond annual planning which does not have sufficient time, very little space is given towards reflection and learning.
- Our organization undertakes end of project evaluations that informs the redesigning of strategies and intervention for future project implementation.
- Although reflection and learning maybe encouraged it lacks the platform for this to happen within the organisation.
- Planning involving all team members and partner's perspective improves our learning opportunities, we also promote a lot of beneficiaries exchange experiences where they bring different knowledge from different contexts, we continuously evaluate results through studies and case studies, we conduct regular monitoring visits to implementation sites and we reunite with partners and beneficiaries annually to conduct strengthen and weaknesses evaluation.
- There are various reflection elements used within the organization that stimulate learning. Internal reflection and backstopping engagements and meetings are held regularly and as and when at program level. At organization level there are scheduled reflection meetings at various intervals (quarterly, annually, bi-weekly).

### **How does your organization apply lessons' learnt to your work, if at all?**

- Through preparation of work-plans and budgets the lessons learnt are incorporated in order to avoid similar mistakes or improve on the follow ups. We also show lessons learnt in the activity and annual reports, by using them as case studies. Lessons learnt are also used in the review of our MEL tools, organizational governance policies and strategies.
- Inculcated in follow up proposals.
- By in cooperating the learning into my work through making changes where need be and also looking for new ways to do my work better.
- Putting new ideas as informed by experiences and the lessons, into new project and programmes proposals to donors during proposal writing.
- Each staff is responsible in making sure the lessons are applied in program implementation and through quarterly review meetings each staff is responsible to give feedback on what works well what doesn't work. During the meeting, each staff present how the lessons has been applied and provide feedback to the rest of the team.
- Replicate success stories into other projects and re-planning.
- Recommendations are incorporated and changes made for optimization of project performance.
- By changing course of work.
- We share through weekly and monthly meetings though it has been a bit challenge on how to track them.
- The lessons learnt are used in developing better project designs and also in activities.
- Changes made to programming during strategic planning.
- We do share the learning across projects and programmes. We also share the learning with other CSO social accountability players, to inform their strategies.
- We re-strategize by either adding or subtracting on gaps identified during past implementation. We also add innovation to approaches.
- Testing new approaches, reflecting on constraints and results, participating in learning forums.
- Through uptake of our partner' lessons, feeding into our own, lessons learnt inform our implementation of strategy and its course correcting in a way that makes us better and more coherent as programme and organisation.

### How do you know you are learning? Please explain

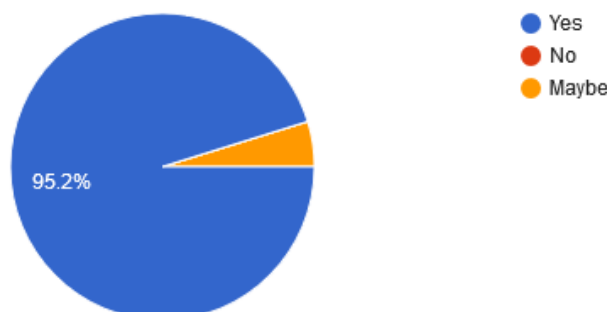
- We know we are learning from the feedback that we get from stakeholders, media and the government involvement in our programs. We also know this through improved versions of our products and change in the program approach.
- Career growth.
- Successful results based on changes.
- Past mistakes do not occur.
- When I begin to see change in my work, behaviour and interactions.
- Through failures encountered during implementation of projects, with our belief that when you fail fast you learn fast. Through feedback we get from stakeholders from our areas of jurisdiction.
- We know we are learning when we are applying the lessons from our reflection meetings.
- Through sharing the reports and reflection while doing compilation into one document.
- Through improvement of our approaches in programming.
- By applying lessons.
- Because we are continuously improving the way we conduct activities.
- When you have new ways of looking at things that you previously see differently. That result in new approach and tactics to your work.
- By tracking through different activities conducted to the field.
- Through evaluations and the way we improve on coming projects.
- When the same things or scenarios are viewed in a different light and actions are adjusted to more effectively and efficiently achieve objectives.
- The redesigning of projects, strategies to incorporate the learning.
- When we acquire new knowledge and implement new concepts. We also know we have learnt when we change how we operate.
- We are not static, we change our approaches to overcome challenges and we apply different approaches to different contexts based on different needs and realities - we consider flexibility as one of the most important elements in social accountability approach.
- We know we are learning when our monitoring fosters significant interactions, attitudes and actions amongst our boundary partners. We are also learning if boundary partners are better able to monitor public resource management processes more effectively by utilizing experiences and thinking as a result of practice to have relevant engagement that gets them closer to having their service delivery needs and advocacy issues addressed. This new thinking and experiences should also be of value in enabling them to better perform their SAM within their own contexts.
- Changes made to programming during strategic planning
- We do share the learning across projects and programmes. We also share the learning with other CSO social accountability players, to inform their strategies.
- We re-strategies by either adding or subtracting on gaps identified during past implementation. We also add innovation to approaches.
- Testing new approaches, reflecting on constraints and results, participating in learning forums
- Through uptake of our partner' lessons, feeding into our own, lessons learnt inform our implementation of strategy and its course correcting in a way that makes us better and more coherent as a program and organization.

### What have been your challenges and perceptions on reflecting and learning about your work?

- The main challenge is to organise a team into reflecting and learning process since it involves time and resources. The perception has been to conduct them in piecemeal in each quarter to reflect on the work done and an annual learning event where it is followed by preparation of the next annual plan and budget. The aim is to balance between activity implementation and monitoring, evaluation and learning. Also measuring impact from the changes occurred has been a challenge.
- Keeping the consistency of reporting with limited staff.
- I think the challenge is mostly about finding time to reflect and learn.
- Lack of effective and comprehensive documentation of success stories, challenges and successes.
- The main challenge is sometimes the lessons need you to change your strategic while at the same time it's not recommended changing your strategic plan at the middle of implementation due to donor commitments.
- Data collection tools and management is still a changes for advocacy project.
- Considering fluidity of [our] operational environment as well as the dynamics there is need to watch environment closely and adapt at lighting pace, sometimes resources constrict adapting to every rising opportunity.
- We want a robust learning strategy, and we just seem like we can't figure it out.
- Lack of journaling makes it difficult to progressively reflect and learn.
- My challenges have been on how to track Lessons Learnt and I am really eager to understand on how to track them.
- One of the major challenges I have experience in learning or reflection is the lack of enthusiasm or willingness to learn by other staff. It makes one feel like the a simply chasing the wind, like no else cares about improvement.
- Not enough space for it due to a preoccupation with churning outputs.
- Some learning has a budgetary aspect, thus using this learning in a current project will require donor approval.
- We lack a platform for learning. We do have full staff meetings that we do twice yearly but they do not fully give enough time and scope for learning.
- Program learning and organizational learning is problematic to reconcile, takes time and is complex in nature. It is very difficult to project from desk level to program level and ultimately organization level as the factors that inform reasoning and decision making at these different levels are unpredictable. Further it is complicated to convey the individual thinking and understanding behind the monitoring, evaluation, learning and decisions that lie therein to the larger organizational and program settings.
- Sometimes it is difficult to find the time and the financial support to this exercise regularly but it is essential to continue to do so because social accountability initiatives are not static, its context is always changing and requiring new approaches.

### In your opinion, can reflection and leaning be integrated into MEL systems?

21 responses





**In your opinion, what would be the most interesting topics to explore on MEL, reflection and learning? And Why?**

- Results and impact stories is important to me because this is where [we] could have much leverage. Also data management, Network and Coalition MEL practices, Evaluation Methods and tactics, Contribution or processing tracing techniques and Capacity Building with partners in MEL. These topics will help me also to understand deeper MEL systems and their effectiveness to the learning and reflection processes.
- Developing M&E plans for social accountability sectors Monitoring and evaluating work Tracking progress of the work done.
- Maintaining consistent reporting in small organisations.
- Participatory MEL.
- Topics on how to conduct reflection and learning.
- Evaluation methods and tactics. Network and coalition MEL practices. data management. Contribution or process tracing techniques. Proper identification of indicators in a project. Learning more about information collection, e.g. what are the best methods?
- Designing tools to capture SAM practices and results.
- Building a team and organisation culture for MEL, data management, evaluation methods and tactics and result and impact stories are the most things which cut across my routine assignment.
- How to design effective and efficient MEL plans that ensure performance results are adequately captured as well as being directly attributed to programme interventions.
- Informal or formal learning approaches.
- Reflection and Learning because I am really eager to understand on how to track lesson learnt.
- MEL planning tools.
- Building team and organisational culture for MEL because many organisation have MEL in their strategic plans but is not actualized, Informal and formal learning methods for application in my work and contribution tracking because attributing impact to an organisations efforts is quite difficult in advocacy work.
- The issues of attribution and contribution in as far as reporting is concerned.
- To learn 1. The core concepts and components of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system 2. The role of Program Theory and Program Logic as foundations for monitoring and evaluation functions.
- MEL tools used in social accountability initiatives by partners, innovative approaches to MEL strategies elsewhere.
- The complexities around capturing results and thinking that informs course correction in MEL. 2. How partners have integrated, if at all, learning and reflection from desk/individual level to organization level. 3. How and if partners have been able to utilize learning and reflection across various desks, programs and the organization with varying outcomes at the different levels and told a single story that is coherent.

### **What do you expect to gain from attending the MEL workshop?**

- Learning on Results and impact stories, Data Management, Network and Coalition MEL practices, Evaluation Methods and tactics, Contribution or processing tracing techniques and Capacity Building with partners in MEL.
- How much organisation can integrate MEL into its work.
- Better understanding on processes.
- 1) Theory of change 2) Building an organizational culture for MEL.
- Insight on how to improve my monitoring work and also ways to learn.
- To be able to assess and ascertain to what extent the projects our institution implements can achieve the set targets and the expected public policy impact. To learn how best to design a project. How to best analyse information collected from surveys etc. How best to tell stories on advocacy and how to use the same.
- I am looking forward to gain MEL techniques in Social Accountability monitoring.
- Learn more on team building and promoting the culture of practicing MEL.
- Current trends and practices on discussed themes and topics in relation to PSAM.
- A lot, beginning with simple learning approaches that will bring a difference.
- I expect to learn more about MEL and to share my experiences, as well as to get some answers to some of the challenges we face in MEL.
- I expect to learn more on MEL.
- My expectations are by the end of the workshop I will be able to understand and be able to track lessons learnt from the project activities.
- Increasing my understanding of M&E. Also learning other approach and best practice towards M&E.
- I expect to learn better practical approaches to MEL and how more effectively create a culture of reflection and learning in social accountability work.
- That the MEL workshop would strengthen my understanding of the MEL concepts and the current strategies on the same.
- How to strengthen the organisation's learning process?
- New experiences from other PSAM partners and PSAM itself (more specifically related to quantitative indicators), social accountability MEL trends, what is working and what's not.
- I expect to learn from various partners how significant behavioural change and capacity in SAM is captured so as to be useful, how implementers have been able to know change when they see it as well as how these lessons have been able to help enhance their MEL to enable it to respond to their learning needs.

## Appendix Two – Workshop evaluation results

1. On average, how would you rate the following aspects: (Please mark one box only)	Very Poor	Poor	Unsure	Good	Very good
1.1 Relevance of the topics discussed				44%	56%
1.2 Usefulness of group breakaways			6%	72%	22%
1.3 Effectiveness of facilitators				56%	44%
1.4 Increasing your M&E professional knowledge				67%	33%
1.5 Opportunities for networking and building a network of MEL practitioners			6%	50%	44%

2. Think about what you ***already knew*** and ***what you learned*** during this conference. Then evaluate your knowledge in each of the following topic areas **Before** and **After** this workshop. How would you rate your knowledge of the following topics/areas?

BEFORE workshop	Topic/Area	AFTER workshop
<b>Good = 28%</b> <b>Fair = 33%</b> Poor = 11% DNA = 28%	Learning and Documenting in SAM context	Excellent = 17% <b>Good = 61%</b> Fair = 6% Poor = 11% DNA = 6%
Good = 22% <b>Fair = 39%</b> Poor = 11% DNA = 28%	The adaptability of M&E systems and practices	Excellent = 17% <b>Good = 56%</b> Fair = 11% Poor = 11% DNA = 6%
<b>Good = 28%</b> Fair = 17% Poor = 22% Very poor = 6% DNA = 28%	MEL systems design	Excellent = 6% <b>Good = 33%</b> <b>Fair = 39%</b> Poor = 6% Very poor = 6% DNA = 11%
<b>Good = 39%</b> Fair = 22% Poor = 6% Very poor = 6% DNA = 28%	Reflecting and learning to inform improvement in practice.	<b>Excellent = 22%</b> <b>Good = 50%</b> Fair = 6% Poor = 6% Very poor = 6% DNA = 11%
Excellent = 6% <b>Good = 28%</b> <b>Fair = 28%</b> Poor = 22% DNA = 28%	Measuring results	Excellent = 6% <b>Good = 66%</b> Fair = 6% Poor = 6% Very poor = 6% DNA = 11%
Good = 11% <b>Fair = 39%</b> Poor = 22% DNA = 28%	Institutionalizing MEL	<b>Good = 66%</b> Fair = 11% Poor = 6% Very poor = 6% DNA = 11%

3. Which sessions did you find most useful and which did you find least useful for your work. Please choose 3 of each:

Topic/Area	DNA	Most Useful	Least Useful
Learning and Documenting in SAM context	11%	78%	11%
The adaptability of M&E systems and practices	11%	83%	6%
MEL systems design	11%	72%	17%
Reflecting and learning to inform improvement in practice.	11%	78%	11%
Measuring results	11%	67%	22%
Institutionalizing MEL	11%	56%	33%

4. How would you rate achievement of the following workshop outcomes (Please mark one box only)	DNA	Poor	Unsure	Good	Very good
4.1 Peer learning	6%			44%	50%
4.2 Capacity building in practical skills for enhancing MEL	6%		6%	61%	28%
4.3 Facilitating different ways of implementing MEL within the SAM sector	6%		17%	50%	28%
4.4 Address challenges and barriers to MEL implementation by participants	6%		11%	50%	33%

### What would you say were the workshop's strengths?

<p>The opportunity for peer learning and reflection on MEL</p> <p>It enabled participants to better comprehend different components of MEL</p> <p>Make use of limited time to address as much content as possible</p> <p>Discussion on concepts (learning, adaptable MEL etc.)</p> <p>Good facilitation skills amongst the facilitators</p> <p>Ability to bring together various experiences from different countries</p> <p>Networking opportunity for peer learning</p> <p>Diversity of participants from different countries, experiences</p> <p>Very good facilitators who showed understanding of their fields</p> <p>Interactive platform allowing participants to express themselves</p> <p>Good engagement of people and facilitators</p> <p>Addressed a lot of challenges faced by MEL practice</p> <p>An attempt to cover a lot in a short space of time</p> <p>Relevance of topics</p> <p>Creation of safe space to discuss organizational issues</p> <p>Facilitators willingness to engage and answer questions</p> <p>Breakaway sessions were great for interaction</p> <p>Discussion on challenges faced by MEL practitioners and suggestions to overcome them</p>	<p>Group breakaways</p> <p>Energetic facilitators</p> <p>Participatory approach</p> <p>Group discussions</p> <p>Case studies</p> <p>Institutionalizing MEL</p> <p>Lively group engagements</p> <p>Adaptive MEL</p> <p>Level of knowledge</p> <p>Good peers ready to contribute</p> <p>Making progress in advocacy initiatives</p> <p>Interactive sessions</p> <p>Focused to MEL issues</p> <p>Institutionalizing MEL</p> <p>MEL system design</p>
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### **How do you think this workshop could be improved?**

Increase session times and break them down	More time to be allocated for framing, at least 3 days
Presentation of MEL plans development	Facilitators should enforce rules like time keeping
Development of advocacy indicators	Time was too tight
Increase time allocated to the training	Development of the MEL guideline
Give more time to the training as it was too packed	3 days would be better
More time and focus on specific organizational MEL tools	
Instead of being 2 days to 5 days so that the content matches with time allocation	
Build up and more interconnectedness of the sessions – each on should be building block for the other	
By introducing more practical exercises on designing a model or a MEL framework/plan (if time would allow)	
Allocate more time in order to thoroughly discuss topics	
By narrowing down on fewer aspects of MEL and going into greater detail	
A little more focus on the MEL design & structure – currently it has been treated as a by the way	
Number of days for the workshop were too short to cover all the MEL materials	
Increase depth of the MEL session. I noticed that people wanted to have a practical feel of MEL system but time could not allow for depth required to do so.	
Focusing on an MEL theme since a follow up would be expected to track progress	

### **Any other comments/suggestions/feedback you feel maybe relevant:**

The presentations and further reading material should be with participants  
It was a great learning and networking opportunity. However, we could also have done theory of change  
It was well thought of  
Need data management to include data analysis and effective reporting  
Such workshops should be done yearly with additional information on MEL  
Enjoyed the experience in general  
It was an excellent work. But going forward, I feel more time needs to be allocated to explaining the MEL system itself.  
Good facilitators. But needed more time in designing MEL system as my organization don't have a MEL  
Found the workshop very informative and useful for a person who wants to learn more  
Next time the programme to end around 5pm  
Overall the workshop explored critical aspects of MEL. Would have been good to have more case study examples from organisations  
I think there should be time to time workshops which will help us to be reminded and to continue learn from MEL systems/processes  
I would like to have more of the MEL design & structure but otherwise the workshop has been eye opening. Thank you PSAM.



### **What would you commit to do in the next 3 – 6 months as a result of this workshop?**

Design a MEL system for our northern province accountability work based on the learning from our pilot but also from this workshop. I would commit to be the MEL champion at my organisation.

I will be able to make sure that there will be a reflection meeting in each month and review what our project needs and where we are.

I will make sure the process of documentation is done well to help us do our work in a quality way.

Will discuss and give feedback to the M&E officer and work with her to develop the organisation's MEL plan.

Conduct reflection meetings to revise the input and output

Design Mel system and institutionalise in our programmes

To improve an evaluation of work progress on my desk and programme

Improved documentation

Tracking of activities

Monitoring progress towards the change we are working towards

Develop of MEL indicators for advocacy

Try to develop/sell the idea of a MEL system to my organisation

Share documents for the workshop to peers at the office

Design and implement MEL by end of 2019

Would be happy to join any platform on MEL to learn

Develop a Mel system for my organisation and also create champions in MEL within and outside the organisation

Improve documentation of MEL tools and processes

I will implement MEL framework and adjustments provided through discussions.

I will create MEL champions in our organisation

Developing the MEL plan

More exploration around organisational/institutional complexity in regards to learning for SAM

Include adaptive indicators into log frame

Assess previous recommendations vs current learning

Would definitely elaborate a proposal to introduce a new model for MEL plan and propose systems for regular reflection meetings with follow up actions established

Also will introduce much more adaptive methods to our MEL frameworks – especially interested in outcomes of beneficiaries interests

Will ask for presentations and go through them and help in building my organisational MEL system.

Revise indicators to factor in what I have learnt

Think about how I can facilitate lessons learning of reflection sessions in my organisation

Further research on MEL plans and draft one for my organisation

Commit to exploring more on outcome harvesting and how to implement it in our processes.

## Appendix Three – Post-Workshop survey results

### Going forward, what would you like to see happening as the outcome of the workshop?

Strengthened MEL practices in organizations that participate in the workshop. Improved understanding and knowledge in MEL among participants.

Keep communication on the issues related to MEL development framework, documentation of the best success stories and any refresher training opportunities on the same.

That there will be reflection meetings at Organization level, Quality MEL system which will be able to lead the Organization on the specific Project.

Built partnerships with different stakeholders.

We need a platform for sharing experiences concerning MEL.

Improved networking of MEL practitioners and idea sharing on how to continuously improve SAM monitoring.

PSAM officials should select one organisation, amongst those which came where participants can go and have practical lessons on the ground, e.g. Tanzania organisation which shared the indicators.

WhatsApp group should be formed for further discussions.

Participants being able to implement and design MEL frameworks for their organisations  
more peer learning workshops.

More networking and sharing experiences.

### Are there areas of your MEL work which you thought needed improvement that were not addressed during the workshop, please elaborate on your response?

How to merge adaptive and traditional MEL systems?

Most issues were addressed, save for theory of change.

Designing an MEL system.

More work needed on learning.

I went to the workshop with an open mind to learn more on MEL as I have not been involved in MEL processes for long. I therefore did not have specific areas of MEL that I expected to be addressed.

How to develop MEL framework on social accountability programmes?

Yes, especially on the issue of MEL system and reflection meetings which was happening quietly few.

Reflecting on data analysis and formulating conclusion. We could have tackled on analysing data and coming up with a summation of the findings, as hands on exercise.

I would have liked to see more of the MEL framework as it is being applied.

### What support from other workshop participants and facilitators do you think could assist you in improving your MEL practice and understanding?

Share more learning materials through email.

The work shop was participatory which helped me so much to concentrate and make sure I understand what was presented and what we were doing in group works, that way was very useful to me.

Their experiences i.e. successes and challenges and also the models they use.

Continuous networking would help to discuss issues that arise along the way.

As issues arise on our day to day undertakings, the WhatsApp group would be better placed to respond to emerging issues. Today I may spell out the support I need tomorrow other issues may come up. This should be an ongoing assessment and discussion.

Just sharing knowledge on how we are able to implement MEL in our various work.

The sharing of their good practice, challenges and how they have managed to do overcome them.

If we are able to share our tools, reports etc. for critical reflections.

Sharing the different experiences of MEL practice and what are the different approaches to MEL and their effectiveness.

Monitoring and reflection.

**What role can the MEL community of practice play in assisting you advocate for the practice and strengthening of MEL in your context?**

Sharing knowledge and experience in MEL helps to have alternative approaches to learning.

Develop network /platform that one can share challenges and success.

There should be continuously communications between us as MEL community where we will be able to express our challenges and success which will help us to continue learn from each other.

Monitoring and reflection.

Conduct a research that includes us and share the findings.

Human resource support in implementation of accountability programs. There should be continued interaction among the participants.

Knowledge sharing.

More workshop and technical assistance in the MEL designing and implementation.

We need to collaborate and share resources and talk to each other.

**Do you see your MEL work differently now that you have attended the MEL workshop, please elaborate on your response?**

Yes. I now see the significance of formal learning in organizations.

Yes, particularly on how to handle MEL intervention challenges and setting SMART indicators.

Yes, it is different because I have learnt much especially on the issues of quality Indicators which will help me to develop Indicators which speak, I will be able to develop MEL system, also We have started to develop a system of organising a reflection meeting at least every month.

Yes, I do, I understand MEL as an inclusive component of organisational processes rather than a reserve for MEL specialists.

Yes, I learnt quite a great deal about learning, which I didn't pay attention to before the workshop.

Yes. On the formation of indicators to achieve the objectives and goals of the projects. The lesson learnt is that the indicators should be aligned to the project goal, the two should be talking to each other.

Yes, to some extent my work will now be enhanced since to a very large extent I am already implementing MEL in my work, it's just not so structured.

Yes. The Importance of reflection and learning.

Yes, very much, got more insights.

**Please feel free to provide any further comments, that you feel might not have been addressed in this survey.**

The issue of tracking Lessons learnt and how you would know if it is a lessons learnt?

The MEL workshop was helpful, however, the time was a bit short, would have been good to discuss and explore more.

The workshop indeed was an eye opener. Learnt so much. Thank you.

There is need for continuous refresher workshops at regional level.

The workshop was very eye opening and it is hoped the information sharing will continue. Thanks PSAM.

Please organize for us another workshop with more days.

There is need for further engagements.