



MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE EVALUATORS WORKSHOP

Amman, Jordan, December 4-5 and 6-7, 2017

USAID Monitoring and Evaluation Support
Project (MESP)

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— Session I: Introductions

Agenda – Day I

Time	Sessions	Learning Objectives
9:00	Session 1: Introductions	Share expectations and challenges; Set workshop norms and expectations
9:30	Session 2: Values Clarification	Probe beliefs and assumptions about different types of M&E methods and data
10:00	Session 3: Introduction to M&E of complexity and overview of MSC	Participants can understand MSC's components and when and when not to use the technique for either M or E
10:45	Break	
11:00	Session 4: Development of the Evaluation Question	Develop a shared understanding of what we mean by change
12:00	Lunch	
13:00	Session 5: Story Telling	To experience the process of writing and telling MSC stories
14:30	Session 6: MSC Story Selection	To set priorities, criteria, and procedures for selection of the most significant change story.
15:30	Break	
15:45	Session 7: Inclusion-attention to the narratives of different stakeholders	To understand different sources of power and how they might be manifested in change stories and whether the stories are about people from empowered or disempowered groups.
16:45	Reflections on day and evaluation	
17:00	End of day	

Impromptu Networking

- Form pairs
 - Find one person who you do not know
- Each person in the pair takes 2 minutes to answer the following questions:
 - What challenges do you have in your monitoring and evaluation work?
 - What do you hope to get from and give to this group over the next two days?
- Find a new partner and repeat!

Session 2: Values Clarification

Vote with your feet

Quantitative data is always more valid than qualitative data.

If you agree with
the statement, move
to your left



If you disagree with
the statement, move
to your right

Vote with your feet

The problem with qualitative data is that it is inconsistent.

If you agree with
the statement, move
to your left



If you disagree with
the statement, move
to your right

Vote with your feet

Logic models are sufficient for understanding all project outcomes.

If you agree with
the statement, move
to your left



If you disagree with
the statement, move
to your right

— Session 3: Introduction to M&E of Complexity and Overview of MSC

What makes a project complex?

Skills, resources, and actions are dispersed across many actors

Actors have different perspectives about a problem and how to address it

Incomplete knowledge or uncertainty about how to achieve desired outcomes in a particular context

How can Complexity- Aware methods help?

- Identify More context-specific indicators
- Provide a means of defining both individual and group measures of outcomes
- Collaborative and non-hierarchical
- Facilitate cooperative processes to interpret joint problems through participatory actions
- Promote learning and adaptation with feedback loops, consensus building, and social validation

Examples of Complexity-Aware Methods

- Photovoice
- Outcome Mapping
- Most Significant Change
- Outcome Harvesting
- Sentinel Indicators



Photo credit: Meena Soren, Karijhāl, India

The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique

A Guide to Its Use

by

Rick Davies and Jess Dart



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CARE International, United Kingdom
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Lutheran World Relief, United States of America

<http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>

Version 1.00 April 2005

A participatory monitoring and evaluation methodology that involves:

What is the
Most
Significant
Change (MSC)
Technique?

- Telling of significant change stories to peers
- Collecting and validating significant change stories in communities
- Developing of domains of change
- Selecting the MSC stories—written by staff or other stakeholders
- Providing feedback to participants and staff

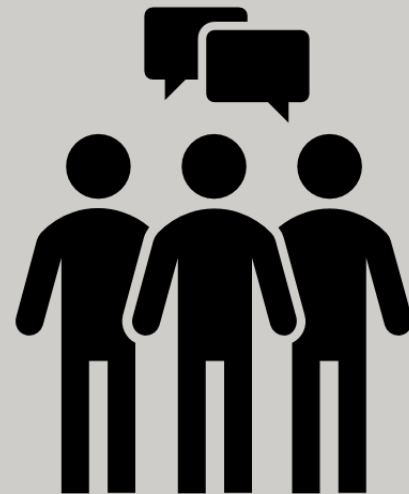
A participatory monitoring and evaluation methodology that involves:

What is the
Most
Significant
Change (MSC)
Technique?

- Capturing discussion about selection of the MSC stories
- Categorizing and analyzing MSC stories by domains and analysis of meaning
- Sharing stories with communities and selection of MSC stories by communities
- Capturing discussion with communities

What Can We Learn from an MSC Process?

- Understanding of significant changes in women's and men's lives
- Understanding of social and economic impacts on individuals, institutions (e.g., producer and self-help groups), and on communities or municipalities
- Identification of key domains and areas of focus for the evaluation



When to Use MSC?

MSC is a useful M&E technique when programs:

- Have multi-components and diverse stakeholders
- Focus on social change
- Are participatory
- Have repeated contact between field staff and participants
- Don't have linear or well articulated relationship between interventions and outcomes

What MSC is not?

MSC is not applicable when there is a clear and linear causal relationship between project interventions and outcomes

- MSC is not a communications strategy for developing success stories.
- MSC also should not be used to collect the same information you already have from other sources

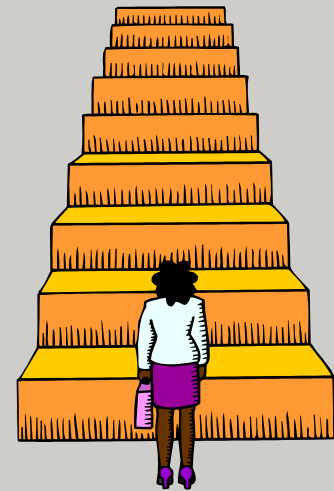
MSC Process



Steps in the Story Telling Process

In response to an open-ended question about change:

1. **Think of a story** about an individual, group, or institution that illustrates the change
2. **Tell and share** stories in a small group
3. **Identify the different domains** that the stories are likely to illustrate (can be done before or after story collection)



Steps in the Story Telling Process

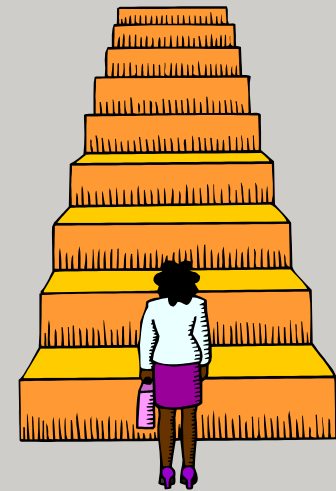
4. **Sort the stories by domain** and decide how the group will select stories—criteria and process
5. **Select the story** that the small group believes best illustrates the most significant change
6. In plenary, **Small groups share their MSC stories**
7. **Repeat steps 4 and 5 in the plenary**
8. **Reflect** on the stories, the selection criteria, and process
9. **Validate** the MSC stories
10. **Identify common themes** and how frequently they occur. Reflect on the story chosen by the group as indicative or representative of the MSC



Steps in the Story Telling Process

11. Analyze:

- How many stories about a particular type of change?
- What the stories tell you about the project?
- Who the stories are about?
- Whose stories were selected?
- Which stories were not selected and why?
- Are the stories about negative or positive changes?
- How do these changes compare to the project objectives?



12. Feedback to participants and project staff

— QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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— Session 4: Development of The Evaluation Question

Formulate a Question About Change

Elements	Definition	How it is Expressed
Timebound:	Defined reporting period	From when to when?
Specific	Focused topic area	The what?
Perspective	Ask for an opinion	What do you think?
Change	Compares two points in time	What is different now?
Location	Specify the Place or setting	Where?

Initial vs. Revised MSC Question

What is the most significant change experienced by men and women in the communities of _____ as a result of your project?

In the last three years, what do you think is the most significant change in the roles of women compared to men as a result of your project?

- Specific
- Timebound
- Comparative
- Opinion-Oriented

Change Exercise

- Break into 2 groups each of men and women.
- Women should make a list of the activities that their mothers engaged in during a 24 hour period on a typical work day when you were children.
- Men should make a list of the activities that their fathers engaged in during a 24 hour period on a typical workday, when you were children.
- After completing the first list, each group should make a list of the activities they currently engage in during a typical workday.

You have 20 minutes for this exercise

MSC Questions

In the last three years, what do you think is the most significant change in opportunities for young women compared to young men in rural areas supported by the SHEP project ?.

In the three last years, what do you think is the most significant change in grantee organizations receiving support from the Civic Initiatives Support Project?

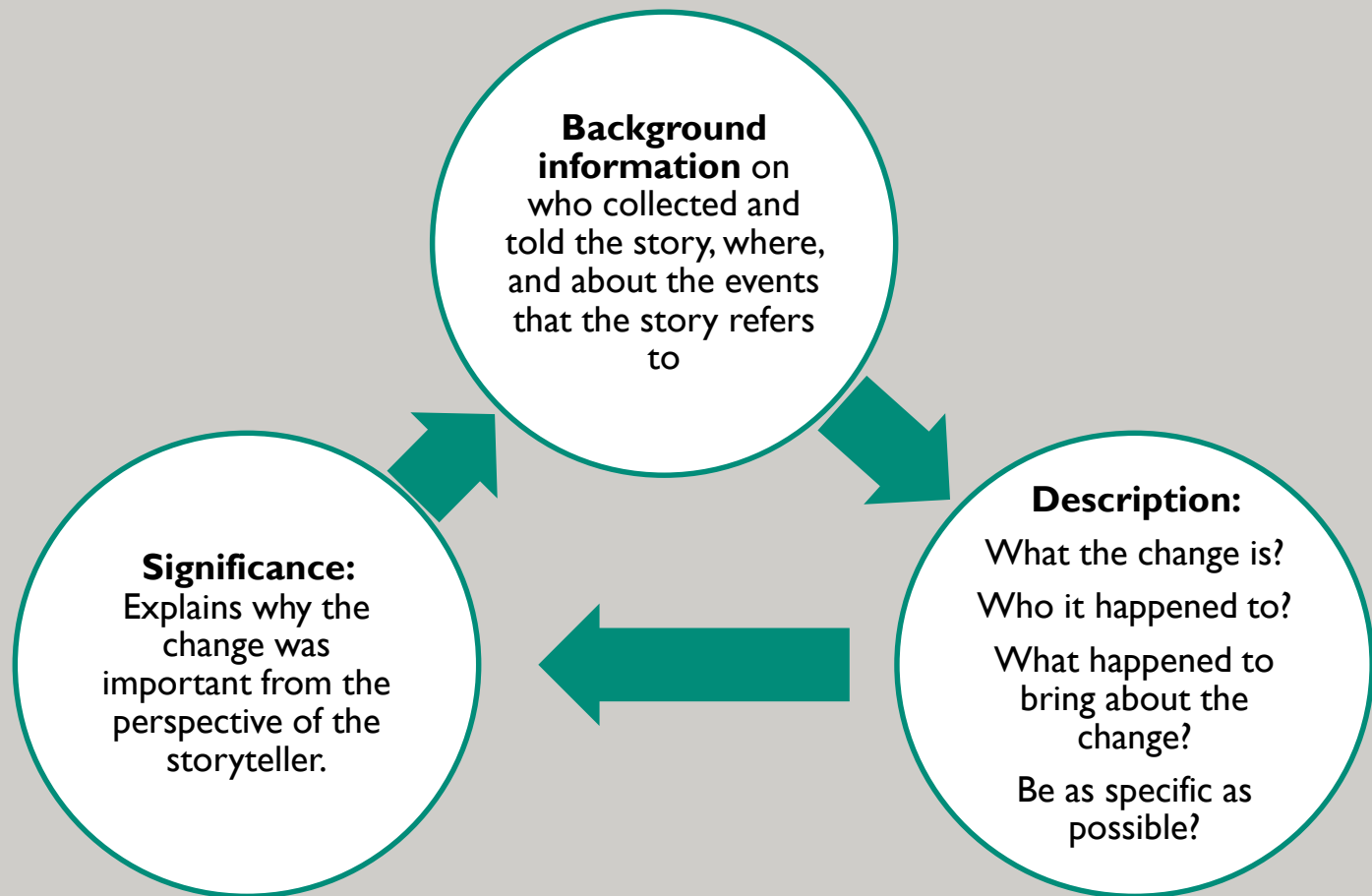
In the last two years, what do you think is the most significant change brought about by the integrated care approach to healthcare introduced by the Health Services Delivery Activity?

Develop Evaluation Questions

- Divide into groups and develop and evaluation question
- Components of a good question:
 - Specific
 - Timebound
 - Comparative
 - Opinion-Oriented
- Example:
 - In the last five years, what do you think is the most significant change young women's employment compared to young men's as a result of the Youth with Potential project?

— Session 5: Storytelling

Elements of a Good Story



Write and share stories

1. Divide into groups
2. Make a drawing of or make some notes on a story you think illustrates the most significant change in your project in the last year (5 min)
3. In pairs, tell your story to another person who will write it down as you tell it (5 min)
4. Switch roles with your partner and repeat step 3 (5 min)
5. Share stories in group (30 min):
 - Tell both of your own stories to the whole group
 - As a group, discuss the changes represented by the stories

— Session 6: MSC Story Selection

Instructions for Story Selection

- As a group, discuss the changes represented by the stories
 - Two people take notes about the discussion
- Decide as a group, which two stories are most significant
- You can make decisions in any way you want to, including:
 - Developing criteria to score the stories
 - Discussing what you think are the most important expected and unexpected changes that have happened as a result of the project
 - Open or closed voting
 - Discussing until reaching consensus

Group members must be able to explain why you chose the story, why it is most significant, and what kind of selection process you used

— Session 7: Inclusion-Attention to The Narratives of Different Stakeholders

Power Exercise

- Divide into 2 groups of men and women.
- Fold the flipchart paper in half
- On the top half draw a picture of a situation in which you felt empowered
- On the bottom half draw a picture of a time when you felt disempowered
- After you finish, share stories in your groups
- On the flipchart, identify similarities and differences among the different stories
- Share you list of similarities and differences in plenary

Reflections on Day 1

Day 2



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MSC Process



Agenda – Day 2

Time	Session	Learning Objectives
9:00	Welcome and Recap of Day One	
9:15	Session 8: Sharing in plenary of Stories selected in small groups	To reflect on content in stories
10:15	BREAK	
10:30	Session 9: Identification of Domains of Change	To learn how to identify and use domains of change for story selection and analysis
11:30	Session 10: Story Selection in Plenary	To expose participants to different criteria and selection process
12:15	Lunch	
13:15	Session 11: Active Listening	To appreciate the importance and challenges of active listening and interpretation in storytelling
14:00	Session 12: Validation of Change Stories:	To understand the validation process
14:45	Break	
15:00	Session 13: Data coding and processing	To understand how to analyze the change stories for the evaluation
15:45	Session 14: Data Analysis	
16:45	Session 15: Closing and Evaluation	
17:00	End of Workshop	

— Session 8: Sharing in Plenary of Stories Selected by Small Groups

Sharing Stories

- Groups read selected MSC stories aloud
- Explain how the stories were selected
 - Criteria
 - Selection Process

— Session 9: Identification of Domains of Change

Domains of Change

Domains of Change are different areas in which change is expected or unexpected.



Instructions (in plenary)

- Identify the domains within which change has taken place
- List the domains on a piece of flipchart paper
- Come to agreement on the domains
- Categorize the stories by domains

— Session 10: Story Selection in Plenary

Story Selection Instructions

- Decide on criteria and procedures for selecting the MSC story
- Select MSC story
- Reflection

— Session 11: Active listening



Picture 1



Picture 2

— Session 12: Validation of Change Stories

Story Validation: Instructions for Validation

- First, write up your version of the story. It should be a page or less in length.
- Then, look at the form for validating the stories.
- Practice interviewing using the form for validating the stories.
- Ask the interviewee about:
 - Information in the stories and about the events that are described
 - Sequence of events—what happened and in what order
 - What the story means to the person who it is about. This can be different than what it means to the storyteller.

— Session 13: Data Coding and Processing

What is Qualitative Data Analysis?

- Qualitative analysis responds to evaluation or research questions.
- Quality of the data depends on:
 - How consistently and systematically methods have been applied for data collection
 - Systematic analysis with clear definitions of analytical categories and consistent application in the analysis
 - Iterative comparisons of cases and observations, within the data collected for the evaluation, and with data from other similar evaluations
 - Conscientious documentation of the process used to categorized and interpret the data—how and why you made the choices you made.
 - Exploration of alternative ways of categorizing the data and alternative interpretations or explanations
 - Careful attention to context (“thick description”)
 - Credibility of the evaluators/researchers---are they trained well?

What is the process or sequence of steps for qualitative data analysis?



Immerse yourself in the data by reading through the data to identify recurring categories and to become familiar with content and context.



Categorize data by similar domains and categories within domains



Identify patterns, or consistencies and differences within and between categories.



Interpret meaning of the patterns, and what they tell you about changes in peoples' behavior, relationships, and beliefs in relation to evaluation question and context.



Data Coding and Processing

- Get in small groups of 6 people
- Individually, read through a story and make marginal annotations of categories of behaviors or beliefs related to a domain of change
- As a group
 - Write the Domain at the top of the Flipchart
 - write the list of categories from everyone's stories that pertains to a particular domain of change identified earlier today
 - Eliminate any overlap in categories, and agree on a final list
 - Write the name of each category at the top of a column on the flipchart paper
- On post-it note, write the information in the story that you labeled with a category, and stick it in the correct column. Include enough information about the context.
- Is there information that does not fit in any category?
- Circle any category that only has one entry. What can we say about these?

— Session 14: Data Analysis

DOMAINS FROM MSC	BASELINE		MIDLNE		
	Baseline Survey	Baseline MSC	Midline Monitoring Data	Midline MSC	Klls for Midterm Evaluation

Data Analysis

- Analytical questions
 - What questions did we use?
- Identification of patterns
 - Examine the information you came up with yesterday. Are there any recognizable patterns in the categories or across categories within each domain?
 - What are the patterns? Write them out on Flipchart paper.
- Triangulation with other M&E data
 - How might this information be similar or different than the monitoring data for your project?
 - Do MSc findings provide any useful insights into explaining trends visible in your monitoring data?
 - Do MSC findings give you insight into why the monitoring trend is occurring?
 - Does it explain why the trends you are seeing are occurring in certain groups and not others.
 - What else do you see/

What, So What, Now What?

— Session 15: Closing and Evaluation

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Social Science Expertise in:

- Agriculture and Food Security
- Climate Change and Environment
- Economic Growth
- Gender 360
- Health and Nutrition

CP Approach:

- ❖ Understand the **relationships** among the stakeholders in different sectors
- ❖ Contribute apt **analytic and evaluation methods** that build on existing research and insights
- ❖ Offer **practical context specific recommendations**
- ❖ Promote innovations that draw from **diverse cultural knowledge bases**



PV Uganda: Sharing Household Tasks

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