



Monitoring & Evaluation Resource Group (M&ERG) Meeting

Report on Key Discussion Highlights

Tuesday - May 8, 2018
Hotel Best Western, Islamabad



RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMES NETWORK



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KEY DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

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The RSPN hosted the RSPs Monitoring & Evaluation Resource Group (M&ERG) meeting workshop on Tuesday May 8, 2018 at Hotel Best Western, Islamabad. The main aim of the workshop was to review RSPs monitoring, evaluation and research related initiatives and sharing learning and experiences. The following is a brief description of the presentations delivered, ideas shared and key discussion highlights:

Agenda Item # 1: Welcome note and strategic importance of the M&E resource group meeting:

The meeting was opened by Mr. Khurram Shahzad, M&E Specialist at RSPN who stated that the objective of this platform is to share experiences, learn from each other and be inspired by one another in the line of work. M&E is an inherently cross-cutting field, which needs to take this role in any organisation or programmes. The resource group plays an essential role in sharing of best practices among all RSPs. Moreover, Mr. Shahzad also explained that the M&ERG platform is successfully providing critical strategic support to the M&E component of RSPs in creating harmonised strategies and mainstreaming monitoring, evaluation and research across the RSP programmes.

Agenda Item # 2: Follow-up on actions from the last resource group meeting workshop:

Mr. Shahzad updated the group members on the follow-up actions from the last M&ERG meeting workshop, which was held in December 2017. He explained that the feedback of the group members on the research study being conducted by RSPN, under the SUCCESS Programme on the relationship among women-empowerment and poverty alleviation was successfully incorporated. He also updated that the RSPN has hired the services of “Enclude Pakistan” a management consultant firm to carry out the Women’s Empowerment Research Study. Mr. Shahzad also updated on the action research component of EU-funded BRDECP, which has been operationalised after incorporating most of the feedback of M&ERG members in last meeting. Under the framework, the first study on poverty dynamics in Balochistan is expected to start next month. He also shared the update on the discussions on NRSP’s initiative of “International Training on Impact Evaluation Design” for their head office and regional M&E teams was held in last meeting. He explained that subsequent

With reference to the agenda item # 4 of the last M&ERG meeting where we had discussion on the NRSP’s initiative of “International Training on Impact Evaluation Design” for their head office and regional M&E teams. Mr. Shahzad told that the training was successfully held in October, 2017 in Mannheim, Germany. The international training was in collaboration with the University of Mannheim, Germany, with which NRSP and RSPN have professional relationship of around four years. It was decided in the last meeting about how other RSPs can benefit from this initiative. He further explained that RSPN had follow-up with University of Mannheim and NRSP and they agreed to hold next round of training in Germany in August/September 2018, however the training dates along-with training agenda/schedule to be discussed in today’s meeting. In this regard the RSPN

management emailed to all CEOs and respective M&E heads for the nominations to get benefits from the opportunity.

Agenda Item # 3: Sharing of key findings from the research component of SUCCESS programme focusing on a paper titled “Challenges of research in rural poverty: Lessons from large field surveys” accepted in an international journal:

Dr. Abdur Rehman Cheema, Team Lead Research, SUCCESS - RSPN, presented a paper titled “Challenges of research in rural poverty: Lessons from large field surveys” accepted in a credible international journal. The presentation included the challenges faced while conducting field surveys. So far, RSPN has undertaken two major surveys; Poverty Scorecard (PSC) - data collection for a population of 5,691,953 in 2016; and Socio-economic Baseline Survey - covered a population of 14,822 in June-August 2016.

The five main challenges that Dr. Cheema pointed out included; language barriers, education status of the households, dealing with people’s expectations, dealing with refusals, and harsh weather. These five challenges made it difficult for the survey teams to gather data timely and in an effective manner. Finally, Dr. Cheema also shared the strategies and techniques about how we can overcome these challenges proactively during implementation of the complex socio-economic baseline and impact assessment surveys along-with undertaking poverty targeting census.



Comments by Participants:

Munawar Kapri - Tribal conflicts in northern districts of Sindh province are obstructing surveys. Migration in these areas also affects surveys.

Atif Zeeshan - We have been observing these things from the last 15-20 years though it is good effort and will help us to guide regarding surveys in future.

Agenda Item # 4: Sharing of results and key findings from the RSPN’s internal assessments undertaken in the SUCCESS programme:

Ms Filza Nasir, M&E Officer, SUCCESS - RSPN, presented on process and results of the internal assessments undertaken by the RSPN component of the SUCCESS Programme. So far the RSPN component has started the Institutional Maturity Index (IMI) survey, in December 2017, and TVST Assessment is underway.

The IMI survey’s main objectives are to annually assess and monitor the level of organisational maturity (functionality) of community institutions (COs/VOs/LSOs), identify capacity gaps and suggest corrective measures for capacity building, and enable them to conduct self-assessment and improve organisational effectiveness and efficiency. Ms. Nasir also briefed the participants of the

methodology, which included selecting a sample of 210 community institutions includes 30 LSOs, associated 60 VO and 120 COs at random, based on a certain criteria. The data collection methodology was developed by RSPN, and the MIS Officer at RSPN developed an android application software to conduct the survey.

The IMI tool includes about 15 indicators of institutional development before assigning a rank. On the basis of the response, an institution is then allocated score on a four point scale. The indicators are then summed to give each community institution an Institutional Development Scores. With a scale from “zero to three” for each indicator, the maximum possible result was 45. Average scoring levels were classified as: Inactive, Below 25% (D); Institutional Infancy, 25% to 50% (C); Institutional Development, 50% to 75% (B); Institutional Independence, over 75% (A). After the pilot IMI assessment was conducted of 210 community institutions, Ms. Nasir shared the results with meeting participants.



Ms. Nasir also explained the TVST Assessment which is a post-training assessment of TVST graduate beneficiaries. The assessment is being carried out monthly by the M&E teams of SRSO, TRDP and NRSP. The main purpose of conducting the assessment is to evaluate the utilisation of the trainings by the beneficiaries, identify gaps/areas of improvements in the trainings, and check for the need to diversify the types of trainings. Similar to the IMI surveys, a TVST data collection application software was developed by RSPN in ODK. For the sample assessment, total 30 beneficiaries (TVST graduates) were randomly selected from each partner RSP, and the following results are based on 81 forms in total. Key findings from this internal assessment was shared by Ms. Nasir from which one observation was that the majority of the trades were Stitching and Sewing/Domestic Tailoring which results in saturation of the skill and marketability of the skill. Hence, one recommendation from the internal assessment was to focus be given on diversification of training trades. Provision of tools to training beneficiaries is critical in order to utilise their skills for income generation and have financial limitations to purchase the equipment. Another key observation was that the TVST training duration and trades needs rethinking - it should be market driven, with longer duration and only given to committed and willing participants. Mr. Mohammad Ali Azizi, Specialist - Social Mobilisation, also said that unless poor people, who get TVET training, get access or develop any linkage with market, their skills will bore no gains for them.

Agenda Item # 5: Sharing of key findings from an internal assessment by SRSP titled “Overshadowed interventions” focusing women entrepreneurs in Malakand division

Mr. Atif Zeeshan, Programme Manager - MER from SRSP presented on the design and key findings from an internal assessment conducted by SRSP titled, “Overshadowed Interventions”, which focuses on women entrepreneurs in Malakand Division under EU-funded PEACE. Mr. Zeeshan explained about the elements of male dominant religiously charged society in Malakand Division versus

significant achievements by women entrepreneurs supported and promoted through EU-PEACE programme presents an interesting case to be explored, documented and shared.

Under the EU-PEACE, one tends to think of setting up micro-hydro projects producing clean and renewable energy for benefiting, mostly, off-grid population. On other hand, other small and economical interventions e.g. women entrepreneurs and enterprise development with promising results have a rich potential to grow and sustain or even can be scaled up and replicated. Mr. Zeeshan told that an internal assessment of selected 344 out of the total 1,718 women entrepreneurs in seven districts of Malakand Division was carried out by the SRSP's M&E team. These 344 women entrepreneurs were selected through stratified random sampling technique. As a result, it was revealed that out of 75 destitute, 16 (21%) have climbed 3 steps up to be non-poor, 55 (45%) out of 122 ultra-poor have climbed 2 steps up to be non-poor and 70 (63%) out of 111 poor have climbed 1 step up to be non-poor.



Mr. Zeeshan finally put light on one the key conclusion from the internal assessment that a programme heavily invested in infrastructure development along-with overshadowed interventions at household level leads to higher rate of graduating households from poverty and helped the programme in achieving the immediate and intermediate level outcomes. Mr. Zeeshan also informed to the meeting participants that the SRSP have started using techniques like outcome harvesting and outcome mapping and ready to arrange a seminar for other RSPs. Dr Cheema - in between baseline and end-line surveys we can do Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) and longitudinal studies for knowing the Impacts of designed interventions.

Agenda Item # 6: Follow-up on the consolidation of EU's investment in promoting RSP's SM approach to CDD in Pakistan and reporting on KPIs

Mr. Shahzad recalled the discussions was held on the agenda item of finalising the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for reporting progress against EU's rural development investment in Pakistan with RSPs in M&ERG meeting was held on August 11, 2016. Mr. Shahzad requested to the participants that only those RSPs are managing EU's portfolio and implementing CDD through social mobilisation programmes will start reporting on the template developed by RSPN as of end of June 2018 in subsequent reporting month.

Agenda Item # 7: Sharing of key highlights of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and Community-Driven Local Development (CDLD) by GoS supported by SUCCESS Technical Assistance (TA) component

Mr. Shahzad presented on the proposed Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and Community-Driven Local Development (CDLD), which has been prepared by the Technical Assistance (TA) component

of the SUCCESS Programme, EY, in coordination with the Government of Sindh. The strategy has three different components: i) CDLD; ii) Addressing Urban Poverty; and iii) Rural Growth Centres.

The first component further has three areas of focus i.e. formulation of CDLD policy, expand UCBPRP to 5 remaining/new rural districts - total programme encompassing all 23 rural districts of Sindh, and revamp whole programme to allow for specific programme interventions. Under the addressing urban poverty through focusing employment and opportunities for enterprise development through a) urban income enhancement programme - enterprise development and up-skilling, and urban economic clusters - support for co-operative economic/industrial enclaves components.

Mr. Shahzad then highlighted the key aspects of the “Rural Growth Centres” component in which the policy is focused on using principles of agglomeration to support/drive growth and consolidation of local and public services. The funding of the PRS and CDLD Policy will be mobilised through GoS own funds, donor funds, public-private partnership arrangements, private sector investments, GoS budget savings, etc. Mr. Shahzad also explained that the next steps for TA team to get approve the draft proposed PRS, present to Chief Minister Sindh, develop the roadmap for implementation.

Agenda Item # 8: Discussion on the initiative of “International Training on Impact Evaluation Design” for RSPs M&E officials announced by RSPN

Mr. Muhammad Tahir Waqar updated the participants on the “International Training on Impact Evaluation Design” for RSPs M&E officials. He gave an in-depth overview of the training and the process as well as the benefits of maintaining the productive networking and professional relationship with the University of Manheim, Germany. He encouraged the RSPs to nominate relevant individuals to attend the training.

Comments by participants:

Atif Zeeshan - what is the selling point of this training? The senior management of SRSP might raise concerns regarding taking training from abroad even though most of M&E Officers haven't taken any national M&ER related training yet. So it would give negative impression to have international training. Some RSPs like GBTI don't have research component in any of its programme so that would be big challenge for it consider such kind of trainings.

Muhammad Tahir Waqar - though this training can be arranged here with very low cost comparatively but I think giving international exposure to employees and building linkages with research centres like University of Manheim, Germany will create more opportunities of capacity development in impact evaluation designs and knowledge sharing.

Khurram Shahzad - we will share the detailed plan of this training in upcoming weeks so it would be good to have participation of all RSPs in this training

Agenda Item # 9: Consultation session for setting protocols for the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) and Community Institutions (CO/VO/LSO) databases created under SUCCESS programme”

Mr. Shahzad led a consultation session to set certain protocols for sharing the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) and Community Institutions (CO/VO/LSO) databases created under SUCCESS programme with Government of Sindh (GoS) for implementation of “Accelerated Action Plan (AAP). He explained to the participants that 48% of all children under-five suffer from stunting in Sindh province. To reverse the situation, the GoS has developed an AAP for reduction of stunting and malnutrition with the ambitious goal of reducing stunting from 48% to 30% by 2021 and has requested World Bank support in achieving this goal. RSPN through high-level policy advocacy has succeeded to realise the GoS to use community institutions, specifically the VOs fostered under the GoS’s UCBPRP phases and SUCCESS programme for the implementation of all level interventions. Mr. Shahzad told that the GoS has requested RSPN and partner RSPs to share the PSC and CI datasets for its use in AAP initiatives.

Comments by Participants:

Naveed Memon - Govt. of Sindh need to identify what kind of data it required for its AAP: Whether it needs e.g. data of out of school children or ultra-poor, etc.

Atif Zeeshan – ‘Right to Service’ required data for awareness purposes so we agreed to give the required data. GoS should clarify the purpose of use of data.

Agenda Item # 10: Consultation session on reviewing the overall recommendations on the BRDCEP’s logframe (BRSP version) from gender analysis exercise in context of Balochistan

Mr Ahmed Ullah, Programme Manager, BRDCEP - RSPN updated the participants on the feedback received from the EU-TA component of BRDCEP on the logframe of the programme, through a gender analysis lens.

Comments by Participants:

Khurram Shahzad - BRDCEP has been designed on the same pattern of SUCCESS Programme. EU-TA has added list of new activities which are not included in this already approved budget.

Atif Zeeshan - we had similar kind of issues regarding changes in PEACE Programme’s logframe suggested by respective EU-TA but that was in the beginning of the programme and I think in case of BRDCEP you can’t change the overall context of the programme at this stage. These all suggestions seem to be a wish list of the gender consultant. So it would be better to discuss with the EU-TA as soon as possible for further clarification

Muhammad Tahir Waqar - instead of adding these targets, EU-TA should have suggested generic changes for increased gender sensitivity of the programme.

Agenda Item # 11: Way forward

Mr. Shahzad, Specialist M&E- RSPN informed the meeting participants about sharing of the event’s report containing the key discussions and learning from the M&ERG meeting. Finally, Mr. Shahzad concluded the meeting by thanking the participants for attending and engaging in a fruitful discussion, and summarised the key points discussed in the meeting.

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Annex-I: Meeting Agenda and Schedule

Time	Session Details	Facilitator/s
1000	Tilawat	One of the participant
1005	<u>Agenda Item # 1:</u> Welcome note and strategic importance of the M&E resource group meeting	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1020	<u>Agenda Item # 2:</u> Follow-up on actions from the last resource group meeting workshop	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1030	<u>Agenda Item # 3:</u> Sharing of key findings from the research component of SUCCESS programme focusing on a paper titled “Challenges of research in rural poverty: Lessons from large field surveys” accepted in an international journal	Dr. Abdur Rehman Cheema, Team Leader Research, SUCCES
1100	<u>Agenda Item # 4:</u> Sharing of results and key findings from the RSPN’s internal assessments undertaken in the SUCCESS programme	Filza Nasir, M&E Officer, SUCCESS
1130	Tea break	RSPN Admin Team
1200	<u>Agenda Item # 5:</u> Sharing of key findings from an internal assessment by SRSP titled “overshadowed interventions” focusing women entrepreneurs in Malakand division	Atif Zeeshan, Programme Manager PMER, SRSP
1230	<u>Agenda Item # 6:</u> Follow-up on the consolidation of EU’s investment in promoting RSP’s SM approach to CDD in Pakistan and reporting on KPIs	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1245	<u>Agenda Item # 7:</u> Sharing of key highlights of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and Community-Driven Local Development (CDLD) by GoSindh supported by SUCCESS Technical Assistance (TA) component	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1330	Lunch & prayer break	RSPN Admin Team
1430	<u>Agenda Item # 8:</u> Discussion on the initiative of “International Training on Impact Evaluation Design” for RSPs M&E officials announced by RSPN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall objective and strategic significance of the capacity strengthening initiative, with training arrangements, timeline, nominations, followed by Q&A 	Muhammad Tahir Waqar, Senior Programme Manager, MER, NRSP
1500	<u>Agenda Item # 9:</u> Consultation session for setting protocols for the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) and Community Institutions (CO/VO/LSO) databases created under SUCCESS programme for sharing with GoSindh for implementation of “Accelerated Action Plan (AAP)”	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1530	<u>Agenda Item # 10:</u> Consultation session on reviewing the overall recommendations on the BRDCEP’s logframe (BRSP version) from gender analysis exercise in context of Balochistan	Ahmed Ullah, Programme Manager, BRDCEP- RSPN
1600	<u>Agenda Item # 11:</u> <i>Way forward</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documenting the key learning from the M&ERG meeting - Proposed agenda, timeline & venue of the subsequent M&ERG meeting 	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1615	<i>Closing remarks</i> and end of the M&ERG meeting workshop	Khurram Shahzad, Specialist M&E, RSPN
1630	Closing tea	RSPN Admin Team

Annex-II: List of Participants

Sr.	Name	Designation	Organisation	Email	Contact Details
1	Abdur Rehman Cheema (Dr)	Team Lead, Research - SUCCESS	RSPN	arehman.cheema@rspn.org.pk	0333-5791777
2	Aftabuddin Shakir	Senior Programme Officer, MER	SRSP	aftabshakir@srsp.org.pk	0346-5084623
3	Ahmed Ullah	Programme Manager, BRDCEP	RSPN	Ahmed.ullah@rspn.org.pk	0300-8386016
4	Asad Ejaz Khan	Procurement & Admin Officer	RSPN	asad.khan@rspn.org.pk	0333-536 8872
5	Asmat Kakar	M&E Officer, BRDCEP	RSPN	asmat.kakar@rspn.org.pk	0334-2315117
6	Atif Zeeshan Rauf	PM-PMER	SRSP	atifzeeshan@srsp.org.pk	0300-5017693
7	Filza Nasir	Monitoring Officer SUCCESS	RSPN	Filza.nasir@rspn.org.pk	0300-5114474
8	Ghaffar Paras	Deputy Programme Manager, MER	NRSP	ghaffar.paras@nrsp.org.pk	0300-8556951
9	Habib Asgher	Communication Officer	RSPN	habib.asgher@rspn.org.pk	0333-5380166
10	Khurram Shahzad	Specialist M&E	RSPN	khurram.shahzad@rspn.org.pk	0300-5201720
11	M. Adnan Anjum	Senior Programme Officer (MER)	GBTI	adnan.map@gbti.org.pk	0301-8556687
12	M. Nadeem Akhtar	Manager F&A	RSPN	nadeem@rspn.org.pk	0300-5007908
13	Mohammad Ibrahim Alvi	Manager – PMER	BRSP	alvi.ibrahim@brsp.org.pk	0300-0500242
14	Muhammad Ali Azizi	Specialist Social Mobilisation	RSPN	ali.azizi@rspn.org.pk	0302-8555431
15	Muhammad Saad Iqbal	Senior Programme Officer	NRSP	saad.iqbal@nrsp.org.pk	0346-5318685
16	Muhammad Tahir Waqar	Senior Programme Manager, MER	NRSP	muhammad.waqar@nrsp.org.pk	051-2822319
17	Munawar Alee Kapri	M&E Coordinator, PINS	RSPN	munawar@rspn.org.pk	0333-2511142
18	Naveed Memon	Manager MER	SRSO	naveedmemon@srsso.org.pk	0341-7776655
19	Rahim Khetran	Research Coordinator	RSPN	rahim.khetran@rspn.org.pk	0335-5959070
20	Rukhsana	Coordinator M&E and Gender	TRDP	rukhsana@thardeep.org	0232-261661
21	Salma Dawar	MELD Consultant	AKRSP	salmadawar@gmail.com	051-2801161-4