

**CCAA's Capacity Development Activities:
"Training on Research Project Management (Project Monitoring and Evaluation)".**

Final Report on CCAA Outcome Mapping Workshop (September 10th – 14th., 2007)
Prepared by Kevin Kelpin

1) Background to Workshop

The Climate Change Adaptation in Africa Programme (CCAA) aims to significantly improve the poor adaptive capacity of African societies through research and other interventions such as mentoring, education and training in order to support the efforts of the poor to cope with climate variability and change.

CCAA has strong commitment to capacity development. Its aims are (a) to support research that is African-led, relevant, and that translates improved understanding into appropriate policies and action; (b) to enhance the capacity of individuals and institutions, as well as for learning, development and governance. These efforts should help in creating a pool of climate change researchers and integrate the institutions in to the wider international academic community.

CCAA education and training activities will be delivered through workshops, hands-on training awards and Fellowships. The training workshops are conducted at regional levels. One of the CCAA training activities is on "Training on Research Project Management". As part of this specific training activity, the consultant was hired to facilitate a workshop on the monitoring and evaluation methodology "Outcome Mapping". The workshop was undertaken in Cairo, Egypt. Pre-workshop discussions were held between the consultant and CCAA staff (both through international conference calls and in-country discussions) defining expectations of the workshop and the process through which it would take place.

2) Purpose of the Workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to provide technical support to both the CCAA project team and CCAA project counterparts (partner organizations) to integrate an Outcome Mapping approach in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their CCAA supported projects.

3) Workshop Process and Timeline

The Outcome Mapping workshop took place over five (5) days. Due to there being both English and French speakers among the CCAA workshop participants, the workshop provided simultaneous translation facilities. In addition, two facilitators were contracted to lead the workshop. Kevin Kelpin was responsible for the English section (24 participants) and Abdou Fall was responsible for the French section (13 participants). Some sessions within the workshop were held in plenary and the simultaneous translation facilities were utilized. Most of the workshop, however, was undertaken with each language group working with their dedicated facilitator in separate rooms. All effort was made by the two facilitators to coordinate the instruction given concerning the OM process so that all participants would be on the "same page" at most times during the workshop encouraging cross-language sharing of ideas and issues during informal or non-workshop related times.

The workshop process consisted of having each of the CCAA partner (recipient) organization team members work together in groups to produce an OM framework specific to the their CCAA supported project. The facilitation approach used by the consultant was focused on group work with a minimum of “lecture” style instruction. A brief overview of a specific OM step was given by the consultant/facilitator followed by instructions as to how the group should work together to accomplish that step. The facilitator then moved from project group to project group giving individual help. This allowed for maximum interaction among group members supported by the facilitator. Each day was finished with the workshop participants completing an evaluation of the day focusing on both process and content. The consultant then responded to any problems or suggestions the following morning.

4) Outcomes and Comments on Workshop Process and Content

Overall, the process used to facilitate the workshop was a success. While the first day was difficult with minimum interaction from the participants and, at times, some hesitancy concerning the way forward, each day became increasingly more interactive and positive as the group began to understand the new format and terminology associated with Outcome Mapping.

In general, the daily evaluations were of a positive nature. By the second day, most participants felt the workshop process was proceeding well and that they would like to see (and were very happy with) the interactive group work continue throughout the rest of the workshop. Most participants saw the interactive group work on their own projects as very beneficial and critical to their understanding of OM. Participants were also happy with the access to and work of the facilitator during the group work sessions within the workshop. While some participants expressed a desire to have the initial overview of the OM framework explained more thoroughly, this was couched in the recognition that there were time constraints that needed to be respected. The participants did ask for more frequent reviews during the day summing up material already covered in the effort to provide a more tangible link to the new material to which the were being introduced. This process of review and summation was then integrated into the ongoing process of the workshop. Lastly, there was general dissatisfaction with the translation services hired by CCAA.

In terms of workshop content, there were fewer direct comments from the participants. However, if we look at the final evaluation, the OM “Learning Target” we can get some idea of the comfort-level of the participants with the OM methodology by the end of the workshop. The final workshop evaluation asked participants to rate on a scale of low-medium-high, their relative comfort with each of the following three questions:

- i. I think that OM is useful
- ii. I have the knowledge to use OM
- iii. I will use OM in my work

Twenty five (n=25) questionnaires were returned. The following table shows the results of the participants’ responses.

Questions	Rating (n=25)		
	High	Medium	Low
I think OM is Useful	20	5	-
I will use OM in my work	18	7	-
I have the knowledge to use OM	4	15	6

The results show that the workshop participants had a high regard for OM and would like to use it within their projects, but questioned their ability to implement the process on their own. In fact, within the comment box attached to the “learning target” evaluation, many of the participants commented on their need for follow-up support from CCAA in order to effectively use the OM process within their project M+E systems. Therefore a critical step for CCAA regarding its wish to have project partners use OM within their projects would be to have an active and comprehensive support process that CCAA project partners could access as needed.

5) Workshop Outputs

The participants in the workshop completed all of the intentional design steps of the Outcome Mapping framework except for the Organizational Practices step. The Organizational Practices step was dropped from the workshop due to pre-workshop discussions with CCAA staff.

The following Outcome Mapping framework steps were completed (in draft form):

- Vision statement
- Mission statement
- Boundary Partner(s) defined
- Outcome Challenge(s)
- Progress Markers defined
- Strategy Maps

In addition, monitoring journals (outcome and strategy) were discussed and templates provided to guide the process of data collection and the use of this data.

6) Proposed Post-Workshop Recommendations and “Next step” Strategies

There are a number of recommended “next steps” that should be followed to increase the usability of OM within the CCAA program.

i. **Ensure that the CCAA partner organizations finalize all aspects of the OM framework.**

The CCAA project partners all left the workshop (English portion) with a draft OM framework for their project. Some recipient partners, however, did have more than one Boundary Partner and therefore would need to complete the following steps – outcome challenge, progress markers, strategy maps for these additional partners.¹ There should also be a revising and “refinement” of the OM frameworks that each of the partners produced within the workshop. This process should require a review of the revised framework by CCAA staff.

In addition, two additional steps need to be completed – the monitoring plan and evaluation plan (although templates have been provided for these processes). These two steps are often done post-

¹ Due to the time restrictions within the workshop, each CCAA project partner only completed one Boundary Partner (and steps associated with the BP - outcome challenge, set of progress markers, strategy map) even if they had more than one. By this process, the partner was able to experience first hand, the drafting of an OM framework for a specific BP that would provide them with a template for the drafting of subsequent OM frameworks for each of their other BPs.

workshop due to the fact that they incorporate further thinking on how the OM framework, designed in the workshop, will be used in the field. The monitoring plan is especially important as it helps to clarify what info is to be collected, how often, for what purposes and, critically, who will be responsible for collecting the data. The evaluation plan is also important, but uses more of an iterative process whereby possible “evaluation” topics or issues related to the program’s work emerge and are added to the evaluation plan as issues that require special attention. These “evaluations” are often undertaken to capture additional and/or in-depth information that program managers deem is needed to better understand the progress and/or process of the ongoing program.

While the workshop went well and a functioning OM framework was produced, the CCAA staff will need to be diligent in making sure that the partners put this process into action as soon as possible. As discussed with CCAA staff at the workshop, there needs to be an active follow-up with partners making sure the monitoring and evaluation plans are completed within a desirable time from the workshop’s end.²

- ii. Within three to four months time from the end of the initial workshop (but also dependent on early implementation of the OM framework by project partners), a second smaller workshop should be held that includes CCAA staff and the CCAA project partner participants from the workshop, to discuss how the OM process has worked in the field.**

The objective of this second smaller workshop is twofold. First, it is to provide the opportunity for CCAA staff and program partners to discuss and revise if necessary project OM frameworks in recognition of changes that have arisen through implementation of the process in the field. The various OM steps - vision, mission, boundary partners, outcome challenge, progress markers, and strategy maps - should all be re-examined and questioned as to what revisions might improve the content and focus of the OM framework. Most often this will mean small changes to content, the adding of additional information or the re-wording of sentences to better express intentions. It will also allow for revisions based on the interactions between program partners and the communities with which they are working. As an example, perhaps the community in question feels that the OM framework as designed by the CCAA project partner team (within the workshop) is much too ambitious. This follow up process will allow for an adjustment to the OM framework incorporating this alternative perception so that any “planned for outcomes” also have a foundation that is set in the realities of the field and with those who are doing the work.

The second objective of the smaller follow-up workshop is to ensure the monitoring journals (both outcome and strategy) are utilized in a way most beneficial to both the CCAA program and to program partners. There are two main “monitoring journals”, one for outcomes and the second for strategies, which were discussed in the workshop. It is these two journals that form the backbone of the documentation system tracking the achievement of outcomes as defined by the OM framework. While time was given within the workshop to explaining the form of the journals and the process by which they are to be used, there is a need to hold follow-up discussions where initial experiences with the use of the journals are brought to light. These “data collection” discussions are critical to keeping the framework relevant and therefore useful. This second workshop should be part of an iterative “evaluative thinking” process where initial experiences with the OM process are used to enhance content and process in ways most beneficial to ongoing data collection. As an example, these revisions can often include such things as the adding of categories to the journals deemed important by CCAA partner organization staff or the addition of information that should/could be entered within each category within the two journals. It is a time to critique what has been done initially with the

² As of the present date I have received one OM framework for review from a workshop participant.

framework and to discuss how it can be revised to enhance both the learning and accountability aspects to which the framework must respond.

7) Further Contributions from the Consultant

There are a number of areas where I can contribute to the ongoing use of OM in the CCAA program (if desired).

- Provide ongoing support to CCAA partner organizations on planning for future OM workshops.
- Review future iterations of OM framework(s) (at all levels).
- Review monitoring data and data collection methods of CCAA partner organizations.
- Participate in follow-up OM framework “revision” workshop at 3/4 month time period.
- Provide comment on the use of OM at multiple levels and among multiple partners within a single program to provide/produce a comprehensive data collection and reporting structure.