

C4D: Frame

Frame is one of the seven clusters of R,M&E tasks in the Rainbow Framework.

Framing R,M&E involves being clear about the boundaries of the R,M&E. Why is the R,M&E being done? What are the broad R,M&E questions it is trying to answer? What are the values that will be used to make judgments about whether it is good or bad, better or worse than alternatives, or getting better or worse?

There are four tasks associated with frame. Each task includes C4D specific methods, advice and resources on establishing the boundaries and focus of the R,M&E

C4D: Identify primary intended users

What is it?

Intended users are the specifically identified people who will use the M&E findings; primary intended users are those whose needs the evaluation will particularly try to meet. Primary intended users have a desire, responsibility or role in doing things differently (e.g. make decisions, change strategies, take action, change policies, etc.), because of their engagement in the R,M&E process and/or with the R,M&E findings. Therefore, to make sure the R,M&E is used, it is important to identify and engage with these people. The [stakeholder engagement task](#) is a good starting point for identifying users. It is useful to think about the primary intended users while also thinking about the [primary intended uses \(or the purpose\)](#).

General information

General advice and additional resources about [identifying intended users](#) are available in the Rainbow Framework - this page is recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Participatory

Because the C4D Evaluation Framework suggests a participatory approach, this should influence thinking about primary intended users. For example, in C4D key members of the community can often be primary intended users, especially for collective action and social mobilization.

Accountable

We often assume that the primary intended users of RM&E are the manager and donors. In C4D we to think more broadly about who might use the RM&E. Key users in C4D usually include community groups, partners and others with roles in planning and implementation. The C4D and the R,M&E should be accountable to all of these groups.

Critical

It is important to bring a critical lens to this process, and ensure that the primary intended users are not only those with formal, hierarchical power. The processes for engaging with primary intended users should address issues of power and control to ensure the needs and values of the less powerful are not excluded.

Complex

There may be different views about who to include, there may be multiple users. Primary intended users may have different information needs because of their different roles and priorities.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

- Below are some ideas about primary intended uses and users. You can find further discussion about uses (purpose) on the ['Decide purpose'](#) page.

Primary intended uses

Incremental adjustments and improvements?
Revisions during annual planning or end-of-cycle changes?
Accountability? (consider to whom - eg funders, local community, peers)
Contributing to evidence base about what works for whom in what context and how?
Informing subsequent investment decisions
Advocacy on behalf of the community?

Primary intended users

UNICEF program managers?
UNICEF staff?
Implementing partners? Local community? Civil society?
Government partners – central agencies? Line agencies?
Joint funders and donors?
Civil society?

C4D: Decide purpose

What is it?

The purpose of the R,M&E, and the key driving questions is one of the three key components that should determine the M&E methods and processes that are used. The other key issues are [determining and securing resources](#) and understanding the nature of the initiative (for which it may be useful to read about [developing program theory or logic model](#) with [complexity](#)). This discussion about uses is also associated with the task of [identifying primary intended users](#). It is important to be specific about purposes (i.e. more than grand statements about 'learning and accountability'). It is also important to understand potential conflicting purposes.

Diagram of methods and processes

General information

The Rainbow Framework includes detailed information on [deciding purpose](#), including more information about common purposes, and resources on, for example, potential conflicts between learning and accountability. This page is recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Learning-based

The approach advocated by the C4D Evaluation Framework is to use R,M&E processes for adaptive and learning based process, so that findings can be fed into ongoing C4D activities. This is because most C4D activities are complicated or complex (to understand the nature of your activity see [Complexity](#)).

Accountable

R,M&E can be useful for accountability purposes, because it can be used to report back to all people and groups connected to the C4D initiative (including donors, managers, partners, community groups, 'beneficiaries' and others).

Complexity

The evaluation's purpose might need to change to support emerging findings and learning. How programs are implemented may change as a result. The primary intended users and their needs should be reviewed and revised to accommodate change.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

- Here are some ideas about common intended uses. It can be useful to think about this in conjunction with [Identifying primary intended users](#).

Primary intended uses

Incremental adjustments and improvements?
Revisions during annual planning or end-of-cycle changes?
Accountability? (consider to whom - eg funders, local community, peers)
Contributing to evidence base about what works for whom in what context and how?
Informing subsequent investment decisions
Advocacy on behalf of the community?

Primary intended users

Program managers?
UNICEF (or similar agency) staff?
Implementing partners? Local community? Civil society?
Government partners – central agencies? Line agencies?
Joint funders and donors?
Civil society?

Resources

- [Monitoring and evaluation of participatory theatre for change](#)

This guide states very clearly that monitoring and evaluation should be for both learning and accountability (p10, 26), and argues that designing the monitoring and evaluation frameworks and tools is critical to achieving these objectives. This resource is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Learning-based:** the guide suggests involving theatre actors in data collection and management (particularly in community scans) so that this can inform programming.

- **Accountable:** the guide frames monitoring and tracking as responsibilities to ensure accountability, which is important because 'Unless the PTC programming is implemented with sufficient quality and rigour along PTC standards, it cannot be expected that the programme would result in the desired change' p 28.
- [Terms of reference for an action research approach to evaluation of She Can project - ActionAid](#)

This TOR is an example of an evaluation that is specifically aimed at achieving learning outcomes. Although the term 'C4D' is not used in this TOR, the activities include campaigns, mobilisation, coalition building, and women's groups and school clubs: all relevant to C4D. The approach and the TOR are consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Learning-based:** learning is the primary objective of this evaluation (see page 2). This is justified on the basis that the evidence base on theories of change and what works in tackling violence against women and girls is weak, and the donors, program staff and 'beneficiaries' all prioritise learning and contributions to evidence and lessons. This is achieved through a phased, adaptive, and learning-based process above where findings are built into the change theory and implementation over time, the users (specified on page 9) are the program staff and partners who will use the findings to improve implementation, the 'beneficiaries' who will use it to better understand effective strategies for change, and DFID who are interested from a policy point of view.

C4D: Specify the key R,M&E questions

What is it?

R,M&E Questions are the small number of broad questions that R,M&E are intended to answer, not the many specific questions that might be on a questionnaire or an interview schedule. Deciding which questions should be answered is one of the most important and often the most difficult parts of designing M&E (Catley et al. 2008: 12). The approach advocated here is a questions-driven approach, where key users first agree on what they need to know and use that as the basis for selecting methods and indicators. The evaluation part of R,M&E systems, by definition, should answer truly evaluative questions: it must ask not only 'What were the results?' (a descriptive question) but also 'How good were the results?' (an evaluative question). Depending on the type of M&E, causal questions also need to be addressed (to what extent were the results due to the intervention?).

Diagram of methods and processes

General Information

The approach advocated on this page draws heavily from the following pages in the Manager's Guide to Evaluation:

- [Develop agreed key evaluation questions](#)
Evaluation, by definition, must answer truly evaluative questions: it must ask not only 'What were the results?' (a descriptive question) but also 'How good were the results?' (an evaluative question). Depending on the type of evaluation, causal questions also need to be addressed (to what extent were the results due to the intervention?).
- [Consider important aspects of the evaluation](#)

Evaluations are designed to answer the Key Evaluation Questions. Different types of questions need different methods and designs to answer them.

This particular resource brings clarity to the task of articulating questions and understanding the type of question being asked (descriptive, causal, evaluative and action), and therefore the kinds of methods that can be used to answer them. Other key generalist advice includes:

- Limit the number to 5-7 high level questions
- Understand the kinds of [questions](#) asked at different points in the program cycle
- Use the [purpose](#) to guide the selection of questions

The [Specify the Key Evaluation Questions page](#) of the Rainbow Framework similarly offers generalist advice, and presents the task in a slightly different way. It includes some good links to guide on engaging with stakeholders to develop evaluation questions, which is useful for taking a participatory approach to specifying questions. These pages are recommended background reading before considering options to apply to C4D.

Why it is useful to analyse the types of questions within key questions for C4D

Observations as part of the *Evaluating C4D* project with UNICEF have revealed two problems:

- People often think that indicators come first, and questions are developed based on these
- Relatedly, R,M&E work tends to mostly focus on describing situations, and it is assumed that from there it is easy to infer contribution and causation, and decide on actions.

In particular, questions about contribution and attribution in C4D are common themes in discussions about needs, but causal questions and methods are rarely incorporated in C4D R,M&E designs. If questions about C4D contributions are important for stakeholders, it is vital that causal questions are reflected in the key questions (most likely as sub-questions) selected.

When deciding on key questions for C4D R,M&E the following steps are recommended:

1. [Use the Program Theory or Logic Model](#)
2. Consider the types of key questions
3. [Analyse each Key Question](#)

Applying the C4D principles

Participatory

The C4D Evaluation Framework advocates for a participatory approach. In the context of specifying key questions, a participatory approach would mean engaging (at least) with [primary intended users](#) and other stakeholders to decide on key questions.

Holistic

C4D initiatives usually respond to problems strongly connected with different social, cultural, economic, political, geographic and structural contexts. This means that in C4D R,M&E it is important to ask questions about underlying causes and social, cultural economic, political, geographic and structural contexts - from the situation analysis right through to the monitoring and evaluation.

Critical

In C4D it is important that questions are framed in such a way that allows for multiple and diverse voices to contribute answers. This is important for descriptive questions, causal questions and evaluative questions.

Realistic

In C4D the questions should be written in a way that calls for need for various methods and tools that will capture people's voices.

Complex

It is likely that there will be differing views that need to be taken into account about what the key R,M&E questions should be. In addition, the boundaries may need adjusting as situations change, particularly with the emergence of new understandings, stakeholders and ideas.

Resource

- [Monitoring and evaluation of participatory theatre for change](#)

This guide sets out six key evaluation questions around the concept of 'Relevance' (where monitoring questions are structured according to 'Reach, Resonance, Response'). These questions directly relate to the Theory of Change, though are broad and forward-looking. Although it is written with reference to Participatory Theatre, the resource can be easily adapted to a range of C4D approaches, especially participatory C4D approaches. This resource is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:

- **Complex:** the strong use of a theory of change to guide the selection of evaluation questions
- **Realistic:** the six questions are specific. There are not too many questions, but there are no major gaps.
- **Learning-based:** the evaluation questions will not just check what happened, but seek out new insights and practices that can be used to inform future programs.

Example

Retrospective Analysis study of Open Defecation in Nadia District, India

- The Retrospective Analysis of ODF in Nadia District, India is an example of a study that was framed by questions about underlying causes and contexts. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in relation to this task in the following ways:
 - **Realistic:** the questions bind the focus to the needs of the stakeholders, based on gaps in the knowledge.
 - **Participatory:** the first phase of the study engaged with key stakeholder to find out what their key questions are.

[C4D Hub: Analyse each key evaluation question](#)

Embedded within broad key questions for R,M&E there are often different types of smaller questions.

Main types of questions

Descriptive questions

Asking what is the context/situation and what has happened.

Answer by:

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Sample](#)

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Use measures, indicators or metrics](#)

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Collect and/or retrieve data \(methods\)](#)

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Manage data](#)

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Analyse data](#)

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Visualise data](#)

Causal questions

Asking about what has contributed to the changes that have been observed.

Answer by one or a combination of the methods for:

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Investigate causal attribution and contribution](#)

Evaluative questions

Asking about whether the program is a success or the best method.

Answer by:

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Synthesise data from a single study or evaluation](#)

See also [Determine what 'success' looks like](#), part of FRAME.

Action questions

Asking about what should be done based on the findings.

Answer by:

Communication for Development (C4D) :

[C4D: Develop recommendations](#)

You can read more about these [four types of questions](#) in the Rainbow Framework. The ways of answering your KEQs will depend on what type of question you are asking.

Example: Deconstructing a question

The section below deconstructs the Key Questions that were listed in a Terms of Reference for a C4D Assessment into smaller descriptive, evaluative, causal or action questions.

Key question 1

What has been the visibility of the campaign and level of engagement of the general public in the UNICEF-led social media portals such as Facebook, UNICEF Viet Nam and UN websites, YouTube channel etc.?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. What kind of content was posted on social media (descriptive)
2. What kind of engagement was there on the social media portals (descriptive)
3. How rich was the engagement (evaluative)

Key question 2

How effective has the outreach of the campaign's interventions in the community been, with a focus on how specific target groups of participants interpreted or made sense of media messages (with reference to teachers, parents, caregivers, children; local authorities at provincial, district and commune levels; and community-based networks (Women's Union and Youth's Union)?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. How did specific groups interpret and make sense of the messages? (descriptive)
2. To what extent did they make sense of the messages in the ways intended? (evaluative)

Key question 3

To what extent has the campaign reportedly contributed to raising knowledge and influencing positive attitudes toward ending VAC among target groups of participants across the evaluated channels of communication?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. What changes in knowledge and attitudes have occurred and for who? (descriptive)
2. What has contributed to these changes? (causal)

Key question 4

What worked well and what are areas for improvement in relation to the main messages of the campaign: violence against children is not justifiable, violence against children is preventable, speak out to end violence against children and violence against children is everyone's business?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. What has worked (and not worked) about the messages, for whom, and in what circumstances? (evaluative)
2. How can we improve? (action)

Key question 5

What factors (e.g. socio-cultural, ethical, moral, economic, etc) impeded or enhanced key attitudinal and behavioural interventions?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. What were the bottlenecks for whom? (causal)

Key question 6

What are lessons learnt from the project and recommendations for the next phase's interventions with a focus on community-based engagement for action?

Smaller, embedded questions

1. What should we keep doing, what should we stop doing, what should we do better, and what should we start doing? (action)
2. How can we improve the design and implementation? (action)
3. What is the best way to design a community-based engagement program? (evaluative)

C4D: Determine what 'success' looks like

What is it?

Evaluation, which means to assess the value or worth of something, is essentially about values. Underpinning R,M&E systems are questions such as 'Is this good? Which is better? What is best?'. Therefore, it is important to be systematic and transparent about the values that are used through the development of criteria and standards, and where these come from. Identifying what success looks like should also take into account outcomes and impacts (intended and unintended, especially possible negative outcomes), processes (in particular consistency with values about ethical behaviour and non-violence), and the distribution of costs and benefits (in particular the comparative value of initiatives that work for most people on average and those that are particularly effective for the most marginalised or disadvantaged).

It can be helpful to work through the logic of evaluation systematically - identify what the criteria are for success (for example, reduced incidence of violence against children), what the standards are (for example, a 10% reduction from the previous year; or a reduction to the national average; or a reduction to zero), and [how diverse evidence will be synthesised](#) (how different elements will be combined). Being clear about synthesis

is especially important when there is an overall evaluative judgement, such as value-for-money which takes into account both effectiveness and cost - at what point is a more expensive method better? It is also important when there is a 'hurdle' requirement which must be met - for example, a cheaper method would be not acceptable if it involved the use of child labour.

General Information

Developing an agreed statement of 'what success looks like' generally involves a combination of drawing on formal statements of values, articulating tacit (unstated but important) values, and negotiating between the relative importance and legitimacy of different values.

Formal statements of values include:

- [Stated goals and objectives](#)
- Sustainable Development Goals
- [Standards, evaluative criteria and benchmarks](#)
(where these exist already)
- The OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

Processes that can be used to articulate tacit values include:

- [Hierarchical card sorting](#)
(HCS) a participatory card sorting method designed to provide insight into how people categorise and rank different phenomena
- [Photovoice](#)
Using cameras to allow participants (often intended beneficiaries) to take and share photos in order to identify what is important to them
- [Rich pictures](#)
Exploring, acknowledging and defining a situation through diagrams in order to create a preliminary mental model how it works (including what is valued),
- [Stories of change](#)
(Part of the Most Significant Change approach) showing what is valued through the use of specific narratives of events
- [Values clarification interviews](#)
Interviewing key informants and intended beneficiaries to identify what they value
- [Values clarification public opinion questionnaires](#)
Seeking feedback from large numbers of people about their priorities through the use of questionnaires.

Negotiating between different values can be done through:

- [Concept mapping](#)
- [Delphi study](#)
Generating a consensus without face to face contact by soliciting opinions from individuals in an iterative process of answering questions
- [Dotmocracy](#)
Recording participants opinions by using sticky dots to either record agreement or disagreement with written statements
- [Public consultations](#)
Conducting public meetings to provide an opportunity for the community to raise issues of concern and respond to methods.

Information about all of these is available in the Rainbow Framework including comprehensive information about [criteria and standards](#).

Applying the C4D principles

UN Agencies like UNICEF often use the [OCED-DAC criteria](#). While these are clear and reputable, they are also very broad and generic, and processes are needed to operationalise these for a particular initiative. The C4D Evaluation Framework would encourage the following approaches:

Participatory

Whose values are being used as the basis of the evaluation? What do stakeholders and beneficiaries consider to be good, better, and best C4D processes, practices and outcomes? How can participatory techniques (such as [hierarchical card sorting](#)) be employed to effectively engage with stakeholders about what they value, and why?

Critical

Whose criteria and standards are reflected and whose are excluded? What are the assumptions? Could the vision of success be enriched through the inclusion of different perspectives?

Holistic

An holistic approach to this task encourages us to think about how the context influences the definition of success, values, aspirations and perspectives. It can be useful to seek ways to define holistic visions of success, beyond indicators and targets (i.e. in Results Frameworks) which often only show a single dimension of success.

Accountable

Working with community groups, partners and others to find agreement about what success might look like means that everybody knows and understands what values are used to make judgements about a program. In other words, the criteria and values to judge success are shared and transparent.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

- [Hierarchical card sorting](#)

HCS is a participatory sorting and ranking process which helps to articulate participants' tacit criteria, standards and approach to synthesis. It could be used pre-implementation to describe criteria and standards and weigh them up against each other (i.e. which ones are most important?). Alternatively, it could be used post data collection to weigh up the value of different cases based on emergent, tacit values and standards. This approach is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** Hierarchical Card Sorting enables a participatory approach to describing criteria and standards and applying and weighing up different values.
- **Holistic:** Hierarchical Card Sorting is a way to develop criteria and standards that are relevant and responsive to the context, rather than starting from global and generic standards.
- **Accountable:** Because Hierarchical Card Sorting is a way of eliciting values from different groups, it is a way of ensuring social and downward accountability (especially when used pre-

implementation).

- Most significant change

MSC can be used post-implementation and involves processes of comparing and ranking to ascertain which changes are seen as most valuable by key groups. The process involves collecting stories of change, analysing and sorting these into groups, and then ranking to decide on the most significant or valuable changes. It is consistent with the C4D Evaluation Framework in the following ways:

- **Participatory:** the process involves working with groups of stakeholders to collect stories and analyse what different groups value and consider most important about a program's impacts.
- **Complex:** The strength of Most Significant Change is the way it is sensitive to unpredictable and emergent impacts (mainly positive).

Caution: in general Most Significant Change will not be sufficient as an R,M&E plan on its own, since it is mainly useful for picking up positive impacts at the extreme (less common) end.