Developing An Evaluation Budget

An evaluation budget should accommodate the labor and other direct costs needed to complete the evaluation described in a evaluation SOW. In this sense it should not be an arbitrary number, i.e., some amount an operating unit has available, but rather a number rationally constructed from information in the SOW about the evaluation. When evaluation budgets do not correspond to the resources USAID has available, expectations may need to be lowered, i.e., by dropping evaluation questions or changing the criteria for how questions are to be answered.

Budgets for USAID evaluations, like budgets for projects, are divided into two major components: (a) labor and (b) other direct costs. Each of these components may have several subcomponents.

Labor

Labor budgets indicate the number of days of professional time to be allocated to an evaluation. If the evaluation is contracted out, the contractor will, in turn, submit a budget that shows not only days of professional time, by personnel category, but also the daily rate for each individual or categories of professionals.

When evaluations are to be done by USAID staff, labor costs are not usually a part of the evaluation budget, though some annotation concerning the number of days allocated to USAID staff for the evaluation should be noted.

For either an internal or external evaluation, one of the best aids in estimating labor costs is a task by time by category of personnel table, as illustrated below.

Tasks	Team Leader	Education Specialist	Assistant	Total Labor
Planning	15	20	10	45
Preparations	20	20	20	60
Fieldwork	30	20	40	90
Analysis	15	25	15	55
Report preparation	20	15	15	50
Total	100	100	100	300

When budgets are prepared based on tables like this, hours are multiplied by daily rates for individuals or professional categories. These are expressed in one of two ways, depending on the contracting vehicle USAID uses. One way is to show the daily rate in the way it is paid to an individual and then list the fringe benefits, other costs and profits (in the case of a for profit firm) elsewhere in an evaluation proposal or budget. Another way is to "load" daily rates, meaning add fringe benefits and other costs to the daily rate, though profit is usually retained as a separate line outside of this calculation. This distinction is only offered here to alert M&E Officers to this difference. USAID program and contract officers will be familiar with various contracting vehicles and they way in which they require costs to be displayed.

Other Direct Costs (ODCs)

The first component of ODCs in most evaluation budgets focuses on travel and per diem, for both local and expatriate staff. Generally, international travel is separated from local air travel, which in turn is separated from ground transportation around the country where the evaluation will take place. Local travel for trips to and from offices in a major city may also have a separate line in an evaluation budget. Technical staff engaged in the development of an evaluation SOW should develop an estimate of the number of trips and per diem days needed to carry out an evaluation, to ensure that USAID contract offices include enough in the overall budget for this kind of movement.

The second component of ODCs includes a variety of other costs, including required insurance and medical assistance for overseas trips, pre-departure and exit taxes, communications, printing and other services, including translation in some cases. Overhead and G&A will be normally charged by firms on all ODCs, as will a profit if the firm is a for profit organization. USAID pre-negotiates the rates for these costs, as does the General Services Administration for U.S. Government MOBIS contracts.

Estimating Costs

Technical officers working on evaluation SOWs should focus primarily on the amount of labor and travel and number of reports needed and their lenght when drafting an evaluation SOW. USAID's program office and contract office staff will be able to help with more detailed aspects of evaluation budgets.

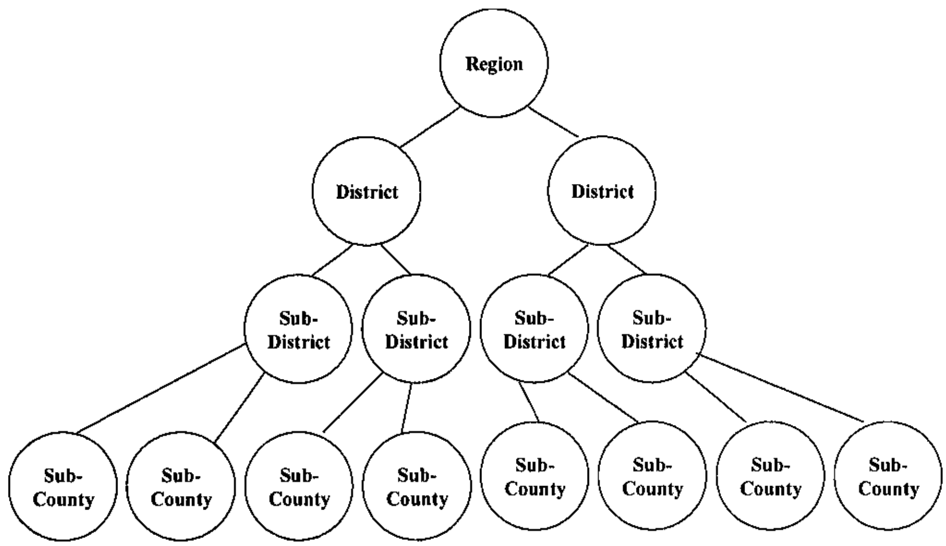
Draft

Budget Notes – HIV Networking Services Evaluation

The draft SOW for this evaluation calls for information from the sub-district and sub-county level under at least three different delivery models.

1. We assumed that information was needed from all four regions of the country: N = 4
2. We assumed 2 districts per region: N = 8
3. We assumed 2 sub-districts per district: N = 16
4. We assumed 2 sub-counties per sub-district: N = 32

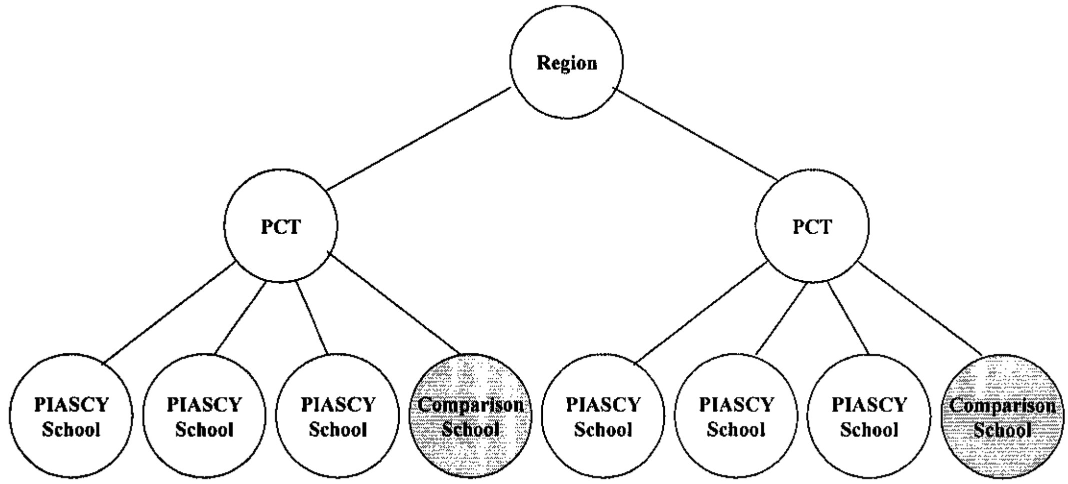
Using multi-stage sampling, that model looks like this for each region.



5. We allocated 5 days per sub-district (including sub-counties) for interviewing and moving around, or a total of 20 days per region. We made 1 field team member responsible for collecting data from each region, for a total of 80 data collection days.
6. We assumed that the Team Leader would go out for a week, possibly spending half a week in one region and half a week in another, to get a sense of what the field team members are seeing. Other than that the Team Leader and the Data Analyst would be working in Kampala, with the Data Analyst focusing on the U.S. Government EP data described in the SOW.

Budget Notes – PIASCY Evaluation

The draft SOW we started with assumed that data would be collected from four regions and within each region from three PCTs. That came out way too high from a cost perspective, so we reduced it to two PCTs per region, retaining the draft SOWs idea of three schools per PCT. We also included one comparison school per PCT. The SOW's multi-stage sampling design would produce a result that looked something like this.



At each school, we found that two days would be needed to complete all of the interviews suggested in the SOW, even if we collapsed individual interviews with boys and girls into two group sessions, during which we had, for example, each of the nine girls from which the SOW wants to collect data complete a paper and pencil exercise through which some information on individual knowledge and attitudes was collected prior to holding a group discussion with all nine. We allocated two hours for this type of session with girls and three hours for a parallel session with boys. For other interviews, i.e., head teacher, one male/female senior teacher and three regular teachers we allocated 45 minutes each (meaning a ½ hour interview in a 45 minute time block.) In addition we allocated four hours for classroom observation (four classes) per school. The resulting day plan might look like this.

Day One	Day Two
Interview Head Teacher	Conduct group interview (written and oral) with group of nine girls
Interview Sr. Female Teacher	
Interview Sr. Male Teacher	
Observe a Class	Observe a class
Interview Teacher 1	Conduct group interview (written and oral) with group of nine boys
Interview Teacher 2	
Interview Teacher 3	
Observe a Class	Observe a class

We further assumed that one Research Assistant would gather all the data from two PCTs, including the comparison schools in those PCTs. To cover the four regions, we assumed four Research Assistants and two supervisors. After every school visit, the Research Assistant would stop and write up his/her report on the school site visit, so that by the time work in a PCT is done all of the data is recorded and ready for the next step.

Supervisors will move between Research Assistants in the field, collecting school site visit reports, reviewing them in the field and working with Research Assistants to ensure that any gaps in site visit reports are filled while the team is still in the PCT from which the data in those site visit reports was collected. Supervisors will also participate as data collectors for classroom observations, thus increasing the number of such observations, and can help take notes when they sit in on the group discussion sessions with students.

This plan turns into a Research Assistant schedule in one Region, covering two PCTs that looks like this:

Day #	Day of Week	Task
1	Monday	PCT 1, School 1
2	Tuesday	PCT 1, School 1
3	Wednesday	Write up PCT 1, School 1 for supervisor review
4	Thursday	PCT 1, School 2
5	Friday	PCT 1, School 2
6	Saturday	Write up PCT 2, School 1 for supervisor review
7	Sunday	Day off
8	Monday	PCT 1, School 3
9	Tuesday	PCT 1, School 3
10	Wednesday	Write up PCT 3, School 1 for supervisor review
11	Thursday	PCT 1, Comparison School
12	Friday	PCT 1, Comparison School
13	Saturday	Write up PCT 1, Comparison School for supervisor review
14	Sunday	Day off
15	Monday	PCT 2, School 1
16	Tuesday	PCT 2, School 1
17	Wednesday	Write up PCT 2, School 1 for supervisor review
18	Thursday	PCT 2, School 2
19	Friday	PCT 2, School 2
20	Saturday	Write up PCT 2, School 2 for supervisor review
21	Sunday	Day off
22	Monday	PCT 2, School 3
23	Tuesday	PCT 2, School 3
24	Wednesday	Write up PCT 2, School 3 for supervisor review
25	Thursday	PCT 2, Comparison School
26	Friday	PCT 2, Comparison School
27	Saturday	Write up PCT 2, Comparison School for supervisor review

Technically, this works out to 16 days data collection and 8 days data analysis in the field. We also allocated one extra day of data analysis back in Kampala in the form of a group debriefing for the supervisors and team leader before the Research Assistants are released.

PIASCY Evaluation

Tasks	Team Leader	Supervisors (2)	Research Assistants (4)
Planning & Pre-tests	10	6	--
Training of RAs	3	6	12
Data Collection	15	36	64
Data Analysis	10	10	36
Report Preparation	6	--	--
Total	**44**	**58**	**112**