



CHRC M&E Training Strategy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	4
GOAL OF THE TRAINING STRATEGY	7
THE TRAINING STRATEGY.....	8
ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY	8
TRAINING METHODOLOGIES	13
TARGET COUNTRIES/AUDIENCES	14
RESOURCES & MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS	15
THREATS AND CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS	16
SCHEDULE /REVIEW.....	17
APPENDIX: COURSE OUTLINES FOR THE BASIC AND ADVANCED M&E	
WORKSHOPS.....	18

Background

The Caribbean Health Research Council has been integrally involved in HIV/AIDS monitoring and evaluation training in the Caribbean since 2003. Over that time, approximately 500 health professionals and other persons involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS from over 20 Caribbean countries have benefitted from a number of capacity development activities. These include training workshops, technical support and an internship programme. CHRC's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) work was initiated under the Strengthening the Institutional Response to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean (SIRHASC) project that was funded by the European Union. Other funding partners including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Global Fund have since made valuable contributions to this work. Various Caribbean countries have also invested in capacity development to strengthen their national M&E systems.

CHRC has been tasked by the CARICOM Secretariat, the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) and other partner agencies with serving as the lead Regional agency for monitoring and evaluating HIV/AIDS programmes. Consequently, CHRC has made several notable accomplishments such as:

- The conduct of training workshops for Ministries of Health; National AIDS Programmes; Civil Society Organizations and other multi-sectoral partners in the following areas:
 - Fundamentals of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
 - Specialized workshops (e.g. Informatics, Research Methods, Data Analysis, Data Use, Impact Evaluation)
- The development of a Regional Framework for M&E of HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean
- The conduct of national M&E system assessments

- The provision of technical support to Ministries of Health, National AIDS Programmes, Civil Society Organizations towards strengthening M&E systems;
- M&E support to the OECS, PANCAP, Suriname and CRN+ with their Global Fund grants
- The chairing of the Caribbean M&E Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG comprises all the agencies involved in M&E capacity development in the Caribbean and has a critical role in harmonizing M&E training and technical assistance efforts in the Region.

CHRC has been providing M&E training and technical capacity development for the past eight years. Driven by a need to strengthen health systems and to make them more outcomes driven, a basic level training programme was developed by CHRC, the first agency to do so in the Caribbean region. It was felt that M&E capacity building would provide government employees, program managers and civil society actors with better means for learning from past experiences, improving service delivery, planning and allocating resources as well as demonstrating results within an accountability framework. Indeed, feedback from stakeholders at country level including Ministries of Health identified M&E training for stakeholders throughout the Health sector as a means of strengthening national health systems.

The development of an M&E training strategy has also become critical in recent times given the increase in the number of agencies providing M&E training throughout the Caribbean. While CHRC was one of the first institutions in the Region to provide M&E training, many other institutions are now engaged in this activity including:

- Caribbean HIV/AIDS Alliance
- Caribbean HIV/AIDS Regional Training Network (CHART)
- Trinidad & Tobago Health Training Centre (TTHTC)
- The US Government (CDC, USAID and USG contractors)
- The OECS HIV/AIDS Programme Unit (OECS HAPU)
- UNAIDS

This increase in the range of service providers necessitates standardization in the content and delivery of training as well as agreement on training outcomes in order to ensure consistency in training and to avoid confusion at the country level. CHRC has therefore engaged in collaborations with the Caribbean M&E Technical Working Group in an effort to develop a common training strategy.

The M&E Training Strategy is couched within the context of HIV/AIDS information needs but explicitly incorporates capacity development of personnel working in all areas of the HIV response. The Strategy outlines the plan for a five-year M&E training programme to be led by the CHRC and is based on developing a package of services consisting different elements that build on and complement each another. For example, CHRC will focus on the training workshops and providing technical support/mentorship but appreciates the importance of engaging tertiary level training institutions to develop Degree programmes in M&E as well as to incorporate M&E courses in existing health sciences programmes. When the Strategy implemented, it is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of functional monitoring & evaluation systems throughout the Caribbean.

Goal of the Training Strategy

In keeping with the fluid nature of the M&E landscape in the Caribbean and driven by the increase in M&E technical assistance needs, and an increased number of National AIDS Programmes scaling-up their HIV/AIDS responses, the Goal of the Training Strategy is to facilitate and promote the development of monitoring and evaluation knowledge, skills and competence of HIV programmes leading to health systems strengthening in the Caribbean.

The increase the cadre of persons with the requisite M&E knowledge, skills and competencies to support functional national M&E systems is expected to:

- Increase the availability and quality of strategic information
- Increase evidence-based decision making.

The Training Strategy

In developing this M&E training strategy CHRC solicited the input of selected key stakeholders at the regional and country level on the overarching vision and future directions for M&E training in the Caribbean. Technical input was also provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The strategy covers the types and levels of M&E training that will be delivered to stakeholders throughout the health sector. CHRC is aiming to create a pool of well trained, competent individuals who can contribute meaningfully to the generation, interpretation and application of strategic information to make evidence informed decisions.

CHRC will lead the implementation of this strategy and will be supported by other partner agencies that share its goals. Key partners include senior and technical staff of Ministries of Health; National AIDS Programme staff, staff of partner agencies such as UNAIDS, Caribbean HIV Alliance and CHART.

Elements of the Strategy

There are ten (10) critical elements of the M&E Training Strategy:

1. **Development of Standardized M&E Training Materials**

In conjunction with M&E Technical Working Group, CHRC will develop, disseminate and conduct training utilizing:

- a. Standardized Basic M&E Training Materials
- b. Standardized Advanced M&E Training Materials

The standardized training materials are informed by training needs and are in-keeping with international best practice. In developing the training materials, Caribbean M&E experts reviewed available training materials, which were customized for use. The materials produced were then reviewed by an international M&E expert.

CHRC has already collaborated with the TWG with support from CDC to developed standardized a Basic M&E Workshop and an Advanced M&E Training course. Their course outlines are presented in the **Appendix**.

The Basic Research Skills and Data Management and Analysis Workshops that form part of CHRC's training package for the last 15 years will complement the M&E training materials.

2. Development of a Cadre of Skilled M&E trainers through a Train-the-Trainer (TOT) Programme

CHRC will design and conduct train the trainer sessions with staff of selected partner agencies (UNAIDS, PAHO HIV Caribbean Office, The Caribbean HIV/AIDS Alliance, CHART, and PANCAP) as well as carefully targeted M&E Officers in countries to enable them to deliver the training materials that have been developed.

3. Facilitate Structured and Sequenced M&E Training

CHRC will utilize its M&E training database (*TrainSmart*) to ensure that relevant, targeted individuals access the package of M&E trainings. In an effort to systematically develop participants knowledge, skills and competencies to become fully functional M&E practitioners in their respective countries, participants will be encouraged to access a package of training opportunities

Level I: Basic M&E Workshop

Level II: Basic Research Skills Workshop

Level III: Data Management and Analysis Workshop

Level IV: Advanced M&E Workshop

Level V: M&E Internship Programme

4. Implementation of a System for the Strategic Selection of Participants

Countries will be invited to nominate participants for the Level I i.e. Basic M&E training. All other levels of training will be based on an application rather than an invitation-based system. Interested persons will be invited to complete an application form which will be reviewed and suitable candidates will be accepted into the programme. Successful applicants must meet pre-defined selection criteria and have necessary training pre-requisites.

5. Implement training using an Expanded Range of Capacity-Building Modalities by Staff trained through the TOT Programme

CHRC will deliver its training package utilizing different training modalities. These include:

- a. In-country M&E training
- b. Regional M&E training
- c. Distance learning training modules based on basic and advanced curricula
- d. M&E internships at CHRC
- e. M&E exchange programmes between countries in the Caribbean

6. Develop and implement a system for in-country, post-workshop follow up

Training workshops will be complemented by in-country support from CHRC M&E professionals who will work with local staff on specific M&E systems development tasks. These will take the form of:

- a. In-person, in-country technical co-operation sessions and consultations

- b. Web-based/on-line meetings and consultations
- c. E-mail and phone follow-up support on specific activities/deliverables

7. Review M&E training conducted

CHRC will use the CHRC-customized *TrainSmart* database to continuously review and analyze M&E training in an effort to strategically and systematically build M&E capacity in the Caribbean. The database will facilitate monitoring of the number of persons trained, their profiles and will allow for periodic analysis of training outcomes, particularly the application of learning.

The effectiveness of the Training Strategy will also be periodically evaluated utilizing the Kirkpatrick model. This is perhaps the best known and most widely used model for assessing the effectiveness of training programs and includes four levels of evaluation i.e. Reaction (Level 1), Learning (Level 2), Behaviour (Level 3) and Results (Level 4).

8. Development of a Caribbean Network of M&E Professionals

CHRC will establish a network of M&E Officers aimed at facilitating targeted mentorship, training, information sharing and collaboration around common M&E issues faced by Small-Island Developing States (SIDS).

9. Continuing Professional Development of CHRC staff

Given their leadership role, it is important for CHRC staff to continuously develop their capacity and remain up-to-date on recent international developments in M&E and in training methodologies. CHRC staff members will therefore be part of a training programme which will allow them to receive training in M&E content as well as training strategies. The latter includes techniques consistent with adult teaching as well as in the area distance learning.

10. Collaborate with Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning

CHRC will build on its existing relationships with Universities and institutions of Higher Learning to:

- a. Institutionalize M&E training in the Caribbean. CHRC intends to support the development of Diploma and Masters training programmes starting with the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).
- b. Mainstream M&E training through incorporating an Orientation to Basic M&E Principles into existing programmes/courses. This has already begun in programmes such as the M. Sc. Degree in Demography and Masters Degree in Public Health (MPH) at the UWI; and the Masters in Health Administration at the UTT.

11. Mentorship – Development of a Network of M&E Professionals

The current state of M&E as well as the M&E culture in the Caribbean can be described as being in an adolescent phase where the organizational structures, appreciation/culture and human capacity for M&E require maturity. One strategy for growth in is the development of a Regional Network of M&E Professionals to cultivate a vibrant community that will provide support and guidance and strengthen the development of M&E as a profession and an instrument for empowerment and accountability in the region.

CHRC has been working with the M&E Officers throughout the Caribbean who will be invited to participate. Terms of Reference for the Network are to be developed and sources of funding identified.

Training Methodologies

The training will be conducted by a team of CHRC technical staff including M&E Specialists and Senior M&E Officers. However, trainers at country level as well as M&E Officers and Specialists from partner agencies are encouraged to utilize the training materials to conduct workshops.

Workshops

There will be three (3) day in-country and five (5) day regional workshops utilizing a mix of adult learning strategies involving:

- ⊗ Lectures
- ⊗ Discussion sessions
- ⊗ Case studies
- ⊗ Practical sessions where participants work in groups, aided by facilitators.

The purpose of these workshops is to develop participants' capacity to improve the management of strategic information in relation to the nature of programmes/interventions and their results.

Ideally, training of the targeted cohort of participants should follow a logical flow from the Basic M&E to Research Skills, Data Management then the Advanced M&E workshops.

Technical Support

The overall aim of the technical support is to assist stakeholders at the country level to develop and strengthen national M&E systems i.e. to improve data collection, data analysis, data management as well as the use of M&E and surveillance data. This will result in improved programme design, implementation and the quality of services provided. It will also involve M&E planning and M&E system strengthening.

Post-workshop follow-up will take the form of technical assistance delivered virtually utilizing email and telephone communication and via in-country missions by CHRC M&E staff. This activity will be guided and driven by the country's specific circumstance, the level of development of their M&E system as well as their readiness to receive technical assistance. Support would be provided around specific issues such as the development of M&E Plans; M&E Components of National Strategic Plans; M&E System Assessments.

Internships

Although limited by the number of persons that can be accommodated at one time, the Internship programme is a valuable method of building M&E capacity in the Caribbean.

The internship comprises various types of learning opportunities and is aimed at providing participants with a mix of theoretical and practical experience over an intensive eight (8 week) period. Sessions will be adapted to match the training and experience of the individual intern.

Target Countries/Audiences

CHRC Member Countries will be targeted. These include the following PEPFAR II countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago. CHRC will have to identify alternative sources of funding to conduct training in Non-PEPFAR CHRC member countries such as Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guyana, Montserrat, and Turks & Caicos Islands.

The timelines for training is critical and requires consideration of country readiness to receive training when CHRC is available to deliver. CHRC is aware of the need to work

with countries to develop training schedules, given the many demands on the time of personnel working in HIV/AIDS.

The primary focus of M&E training is to strengthen M&E system development within the health sector. The secondary focus is capacity and systems development at the Regional, sub-national and organizational levels. Consequently, the persons targeted for training will be persons in countries who contribute to the National HIV/AIDS and Health Sector M&E systems. These persons include:

- ∅ M&E Officers
- ∅ HIV Programme Managers
- ∅ Surveillance Officers
- ∅ Epidemiologists
- ∅ Health Planners
- ∅ Statisticians
- ∅ Data entry Clerks
- ∅ Data Analysts
- ∅ Research Assistants & Research Officers
- ∅ Service Providers
- ∅ Nurses
- ∅ Counsellors
- ∅ Staff of Regional Health Institutions

Resources & Material Requirements

Considerable financial, human and material resources are required for the implementation of this capacity building strategy. Though most of the funds available for this activity originate from HIV and AIDS sources, the opportunity presents itself to use the strengthening of the HIV/AIDS sector as the impetus to build M&E capacity of staff

working in other health areas. While development partners have been making an important contribution, in order to ensure sustainability there is a need for governments and the private sector to increase their investments in capacity development in M&E.

CHRC, with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the M&E TWG, has developed a standardized set of Basic and Advanced M&E PowerPoint training slides and participant manuals to facilitate roll out of this strategy. These are based on the course outlines presented in the **Appendix** and are ready for use by regional and national training partners.

Although the current focus of the training workshop is on in-person sessions, CHRC intends to develop a version of the training materials that can be accessed via distance learning facilities. This will necessitate the development of CD ROMs and the use of on-line software for the conduct of the workshops. Special facilities will be needed to access such training in target countries.

Threats and Critical Success Factors

Threats

The following are threats to the successful implementation of the strategy:

- ⊗ availability of funding to support the production of training materials
- ⊗ availability of funding to support the conduct of the training
- ⊗ Availability of suitably trained persons to deliver the training
- ⊗ Country participation in the training through the nomination of appropriate participants

Critical Success Factors

One of CHRC's core functions as the lead M&E agency in the Caribbean is to produce a cadre of competent M&E personnel in the Caribbean. It is therefore critical that the CHRC staff be strengthened to deliver the required training.

Investments in increasing CHRC's capacity to deliver training is advisable as it is clear that the strategy to develop basic, intermediate and advanced knowledge and skills in M&E will lead to the region producing the necessary information that stakeholders require when deciding on policy formulation and programme development/operations.

Other agencies that conduct training in the Caribbean also have an important role to play.

Schedule /Review

Basic level M&E training will be delivered in-country at least once per quarter. The Advanced level training will be offered one or twice annually and will be a regional training.

The goals of the strategy are to be achieved over a five-year period starting in 2010. This strategy will be reviewed and updated annually and an assessment of its accomplishments/progress will be conducted in 2013.

Appendix: Course Outlines for the Basic and Advanced M&E Workshops

Basic M& E Training Workshop

This training is particularly targeted to persons with little or no background in monitoring and evaluation methodologies. At the end of this training, participants should be able to:

- ∅ Develop an improved understanding of the fundamentals of monitoring and evaluation.
- ∅ Apply these principles to the work of their institution in order to facilitate increased efficiency and effectiveness
- ∅ Participate in their country's essential M&E functions

The workshop includes 11 modules:

Module 1: Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

At the end of the module participants should be able to:

- Define monitoring
- Define evaluation
- Provide a rationale for M&E in the context of health related outcomes
- Understand the main activities for Implementing an M&E System (preparation, routine, integration, renewal)

Module 2. Understanding and describing your Programme

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Define a programme according to its components
- Define goals and write SMART objectives
- Develop M&E questions

Module 3. The Logic Model

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Define Logic Models
- Explain the significance of a logic model
- Develop a Logic Model

Module 4. Monitoring & Evaluation Indicators

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Define Indicators
- Relate Indicators to programme objectives
- Distinguish between the four levels of indicators
- Describe characteristics of good indicators
- Develop Indicators and Indicator Reference Sheets

Module 5. Data Collection Methods for Monitoring & Evaluation

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Identify the various sources of M&E data
- Become familiar with the common quantitative and qualitative data collection methods used for M&E data

- Select the most appropriate data collection methods for their programme

Module 6. Data Flow

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Define data flow and discuss its components
- Demonstrate how to establish the flow of data for a project / programme
- Construct a data flow chart

Module 7. Data Quality and Data Management

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Identify the determinants of quality data
- Identify techniques to achieve better data quality
- Identify principles of good data management

Module 8. Introduction to Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Distinguish between the attributes of quantitative and qualitative data
- Identify common approaches for the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

Module 9. Dissemination of M&E Findings

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Identify reasons for disseminating M&E findings

- Identify the users of M&E findings
- Methods of Communicating M&E findings
- Uses of M&E findings

Module 10. Developing M&E Plans

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Describe the functions of an M&E Plan
- Identify the main elements of an M&E Plan
- Know how to develop an M&E Plan

Module 11. 12 Components of an M&E Plan

At the end of the session participants should be able to:

- Present, explain and discuss the 12 components of a national M&E system
- Understand how the 12 components have been used to help build functional M&E systems
- Demonstrate how the 12 components are applicable to countries

Advanced M&E Workshop

The Advanced M&E Training Workshop seeks to impart a theoretical and applied orientation to the discipline of Monitoring and Evaluation. It is designed to better equip participants to understand the terms, theory and practice of evaluation; where/when/how to use the tools of monitoring and evaluation; and be able to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of using M&E information in the context of results-based management.

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- ∅ Understand the terms, theory and practice of evaluation
- ∅ Understand when and how to use the different evaluation tools within a results-based framework
- ∅ Identify the strengths and weakness of evaluation approaches
- ∅ Solicit and manage an evaluation process in their country

The workshop comprises the following modules and topics:

1. Monitoring and Evaluation – Two tools to measure performance
 - M&E and RBM concepts
 - How can they help your organization?
 - The relationship with Results Based Management (RBM)
 - Comparing and Contrasting the M and the E – When to use one versus the other?
 - Breaking some myths about ‘Evaluation’
2. Building a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System
 - Developing a Performance Framework
 - Articulating program logic, intended outputs and outcomes
 - Developing relevant performance indicators
 - Developing a performance measurement strategy
3. Measuring Program Outcomes
 - Identifying outcomes that are key to program effectiveness
 - Monitoring as a tool to measure program outcomes
 - Evaluation as a tool to measure program outcomes
 - Identifying key outcome measures
4. Conceptualizing the Evaluation Problem

- Theory of change/Logic Model as a tool for Evaluators
 - Approaches to Evaluation
 - Framing the Evaluation – Considerations for Evaluation Design
5. Evaluability/Needs Assessment – Evaluation Framework
 - Identifying and focusing on Evaluation issues and questions
 6. Major Types of Program Evaluations
 - Process/Implementation Evaluation
 - Outcome/Impact Evaluation
 - Formative vs Summative Evaluation
 7. Determining an appropriate evaluation approach & methodology
 - Examining different evaluation approaches
 8. Appropriate Evaluation Data Collection Methodologies
 - Quantitative methods
 - Qualitative methods
 - Mixed methods
 9. Instrument Development and Data Collection
 - Designing questionnaires and other evaluation instruments
 - Managing the collection of data
 10. Planning, Managing and Budgeting for Evaluation
 - Drafting a Terms of Reference
 - Contracting issues
 - Estimating resource and skill needs and timeframe
 - Managing the Evaluation process

11. Interpreting and Reporting Evaluation Findings

- Data analysis and interpretation
- Report preparation