VALUE for MONEY to MANAGE ADAPTIVELY

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIONAID’S PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY

Francesca D’Emidio
www.obconsulting.co
November 2018
CONTENTS

1 VFM: What does it mean in practice?
2 The methodology
3 VfM and Adaptive Management
The problem

Value for Money

- Meaning in practice
- Outsourcing
- One-off exercise
- Methodologies hard to apply
- 4Es framework = costs and numbers
- Divorce from reality / repetition
- Donor compliance = burden
The opportunity

ActionAid

Openness to look at things differently

Commitment to learning

LRP structure

Commitment to participation - PRRPs

Planning processes

Funding to test (DFID)

Flexibility
Value for Money (VfM) in our programme is about *maximising the impact* of each pound spent to improve poor people’s lives.

The purpose of the VfM drive is to develop a better understanding (and better articulation) of **costs and results** so that we can make more **informed, evidence-based choices**. This is a process of continuous improvement.

*DFID’s Approach to VfM (2011)*
Building ActionAid’s VfM Approach

Value for Money (VfM) in our programme is about maximising the **impact** of each pound spent to improve poor people’s **lives**.

**What investments are working and which ones are not?**

**What have we learnt about what should be done differently in the future and/or in other similar programmes?**

**People** living in poverty at the centre of the VFM judgement

**Action-focus:** VFM enabling **adaptive management**

**VFM** as part of organizational **ways of working**
Mainstream: we question the resources

Radical: we question the outcomes
Highlights of the Approach

**WHO**
Communities, with a focus on the most marginalized of the targeted groups

**WHAT**
The change generated and whether the resources are allocated in the right places

**WHEN**
Yearly or in line with participatory review and planning exercises

**WHERE**
On the ground where programmes are happening

**WHY**
To learn and change strategies and budgets based on the evidence
Preparing for the VfM Analysis

1. Break down the programme into its different components (4 or 5)

2. Associate an investment level to each component: high, medium, low
In the communities

Significant Changes
Moderate Changes
Limited Changes

Investment
High  Medium  Low
Participatory VfM Analysis

- If you were to go back would you suggest that these actions were done again?
- How could we have achieved more results?
- Are the changes we have achieved good enough?
- What could we do more in the future?
- How would you plan the money?
Analysing the VfM

High Value

Programme Area 1

Programme Area 2

Low Investment

Programme Area 3

Programme Area 4

Low Value

High Investment
The concept of adaptiveness refers to the capacity of an intervention to **adapt to changes** happening in the context where it operates, or when planned actions do not lead to the expected effect.

Adaptiveness requires **flexibility, reflectiveness** and the capacity to **learn** and, even more importantly, ‘**unlearn**’ what no longer works.

VfM for adaptive management

- Question what is working and what is not
- People at the centre – Value for them
- Simple and usable methodologies
- Light touch but regular exercise
- Learning and Action focussed
- Strategic and analytical
- Fostering better understanding of contextual factors

“After analyzing all your data, I think we can safely say that none of it is useful.”

Conclusions

The reality:
• Private sector un-adapted concept
• Omission of those who really can value
• Focus on costs and savings
• Attempting quantitative comparisons
• Based on linear methodologies
• Fostering the same power imbalances

The opportunity:
• Give voice to people
• Simple tools that can be used internally
• Foster learning about what is changing
• Integrate in planning cycles
• Use to make strategic decisions
• Question ideological models
THANK YOU

For more information:
www.obconsulting.co
Francesca@obconsulting.co