

Digital Dialogues @ toolbox INDIA Foundation

Data Driven Decision Making



27 March 2020



Vijaya Balaji, CEO and MD,
toolbox INDIA Foundation

Purpose: COVID 19 and its repercussions on organizations has catalyzed the adoption and leveraging technology for key organization functions and program operations.

Key takeaways:

1. Available Technology for data collection process, tracking and monitoring

- Open access platforms like Excel support and can be used for organization's MIS Tracker,
- Limitations to this include potential data corruption, data loss and inefficiencies generated due to human input errors.
- G suite for small enterprise solutions is on offer for free for registered nonprofit organizations and offers multiple features of storage, email and chat, virtual calling among others.
 - a. Google sheets: Features similar to Excel, allows for cloud storage and ideal for storing program data, financial data and other repositories that include volunteer and donor data.
 - b. Allows for analysis and sync features of bulk mails for campaigns, newsletters etc.
 - c. Google Forms allow administration of surveys and eases analysis across data, tables that have multiple choice and scaling based questions.
- Majority of go to market solution apps require customizations which have associated costs attached which may be appropriately identified based on the organizations needs and degree of customization required. Subscription based software like Salesforce and ZOHO support last mile data collection.
- The size of data records (*last mile data collection, aggregation, analysis, dashboard and reporting*) plays a contingent role in identifying the technology solutions required. IT solutions such as Track your metrics, M Form, OCAT supports last mile data collection and M4i supports bulk uploads and generates a dashboard based on predefined

impact indicators) which can be navigated through. B Spoke IT Solutions are expensive, and it is important to spend time on the error and trial method to understand the best solution.

2. Importance of Data & Dashboards:

- Data is very essential and depending on the data collected, it can be used for reporting, improving the program, decision making etc.
- The donor reporting dashboard may be different for each donor. Apart from the donor dashboard it is important to have an internal dashboard for internal use which will allow organizations to function more efficiently.
- A standardized dashboard allows capturing of the key nuances of programs and key expenses should ideally be adopted as a discipline and good practice. This allows donor reporting as per stipulated reporting timelines and frequency.

3. Logical Framework Approach, Monitoring & Evaluation and MIS

- Developing an LFA is the first step towards building an M & E system for the program.
- The LFA is a step by step framework for conversion of the goal into activities, output, outcomes and identifying the relevant indicators to measure the impact of program outcomes.
- The LFA is a planning tool that allows organizations to identify resources and resource allocation for planned activities, identify the risk involved and must be developed with the program teams.
- Monitoring and Evaluation system allows organizations to analyze data points collected and track achievement of program goals from both operational progresses as well identifying course correction measures at operation and program levels.
- It is important to ensure that the MIS is linked to all activities and how they are helping in achieving the goals. Impact indicators allow the designing of a desired ongoing monitoring program system and understanding which type of MIS is required to amalgamate all data from different sources.

Digital Dialogues @ toolbox INDIA is a virtual round table facilitated by toolbox INDIA Foundation on topics of interest and relevance curated for NPOs operating in India.

DISCLAIMER: This is only a summary of the principal issues discussed in our conversation with the Session Facilitator on 2020 (the *Dialogue*). This is not and should not be construed as formal advice and all participants must seek such formal advice prior to progressing any matter which is summarised in this Note or which is not so summarised but was discussed during the Dialogue.

Neither toolbox INDIA Foundation, the Session Facilitator, nor any other participant present at the session, together with their respective organization, office bearers, employees, and agents, will be liable for any action which any person takes on a matter summarised in this Note or which is not so summarised but was discussed during the Dialogue.