



KDAD LEARNING:

Evolution of KDAD Internal Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

2018

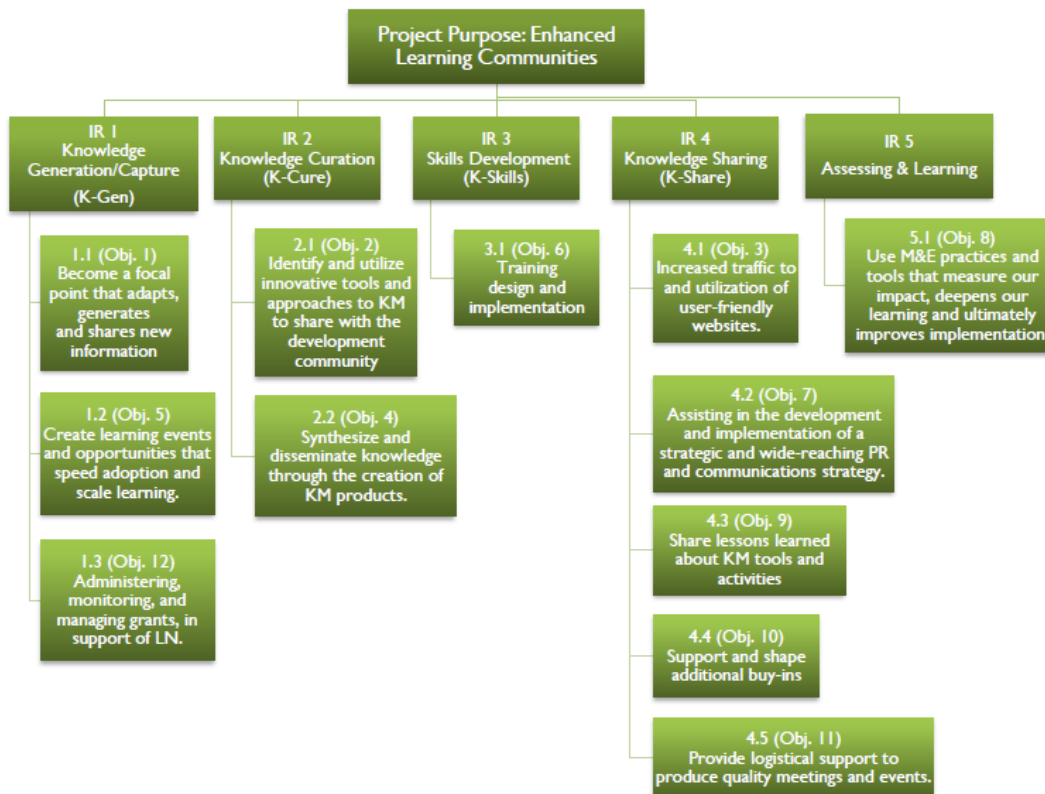
Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development Project
Assessing & Learning Portfolio

Evolution of KDAD Internal Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

One of Feed the Future Knowledge Driven Agricultural Development (KDAD) project’s core principles is evidence-based program management. To monitor and learn throughout the KDAD Performance Management Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMMEP) which serves as the primary framework for providing timely and insightful data measuring progress. The PMMEP was a collaborative vision across KDAD’s portfolios and was guided by numerous strategic planning sessions, industry standard research and review or KDAD’s predecessor contract.

The core component of the PMMEP is KDAD’s Results Framework which was constructed based on the 12 objectives in the original scope of work. The 12 objectives were clustered into five larger intermediate results which loosely aligned with USAID’s knowledge cycle and culminate to meet the project’s purpose of enhancing learning communities.

KDAD’s First Results Framework

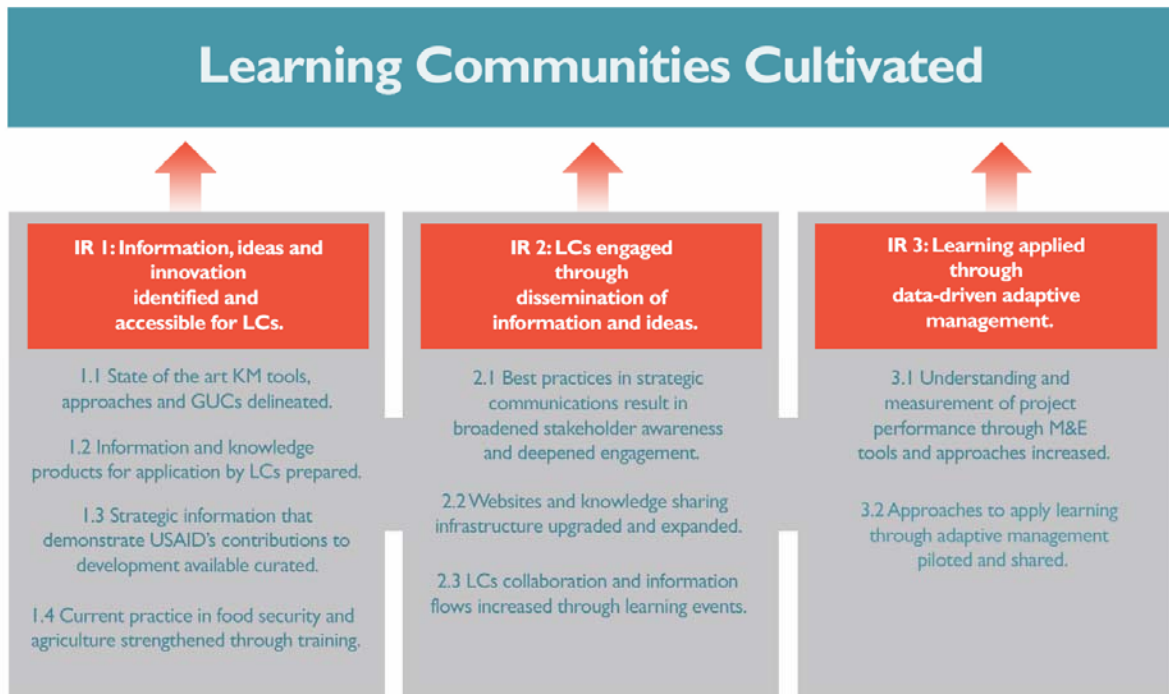


A total of 34 indicators were selected and Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) were completed for each indicator to measure KDAD’s progress. While the A&L portfolio oversaw the collection of data, project coordinators and managers assisted in the compilation of individual activity data as it relates to KDAD’s indicators.

During the first year, KDAD faced a common M&E challenge where the indicators selected did not fully reflect program activities and achievements. The orientation of the project objectives among learning cycle elements proved to be less intuitive and created challenges to array

project activities along that continuum. In response to these challenges, KDAD revised and adapted the Results Framework to reflect the content and engagement strategies needed to support project learning. This new approach was created to be more reflective of KDAD’s daily activities and enhance learning through strategic and innovative approaches.

KDAD’s Updated Results Framework



As the A&L team continued to collect and review indicator data, another challenge was observed. A number of indicators were being continuously under-reported by project coordinators and managers and this was due to lack of understanding of the indicator definition. To correct this, the A&L Portfolio actively met and coordinated with portfolios to create sharper definitions, broader guidance documents and sharing information in different venues including staff meetings and KSLams (Knowledge Sharing and Learning in the AM).

As the KDAD project evolved with more buy-ins and ad-hoc requests the indicators selected could not capture the entirety of the work conducted through the project and target setting became increasingly difficult. Through an iterative process, the team strengthened performance monitoring by engaging clients and activity leads to scope out specific needs and create M&E protocols to effectively measure and capture project output and outcome directly related to the work. This included dropping indicators that were no longer relevant and broadening the definition of other indicators to better capture and reflect activity results.

Throughout this process, A&L actively sought different methods and approaches to visually present the work that KDAD engages in and inform decision making by portfolios and clients. Data visualization was one of the major steps A&L took to accomplish engagement of portfolios and clients in using data for decision making and understanding KDAD’s progress. Klipfolio, an application that provides visualization of data, was instrumental in presenting KDAD’s indicators

and Agrilinks related metrics in a clear and cohesive manner making it effective in discussions around project learning and adaptation. The use and strength of data visualization to communicate knowledge and information centralized KDAD's performance data, ultimately leading to the elimination of quarterly reports to USAID.

Lessons Learned

Oracle Eloqua

The process of continuously learning and adapting KDAD's Results Framework and indicators to better reflect the results of the work done by the different portfolios identified important lessons learned that further guided KDAD's learning. One of the significant lesson learned was observed as KDAD grappled to answer the question "what makes a strong learning community and how can it be enhanced?" The A&L team understood that innovative approaches were necessary to answer this question. For this purpose, towards the end of fiscal year 2015 KDAD began using Oracle Eloqua to help appropriately package knowledge resources and engage with the learning communities. Additionally, Eloqua had the ability to track audience use of websites to glean insights that can contribute to crafting smarter engagement tactics. To strengthen the use of Eloqua, A&L developed new metrics in lead scoring to establish baselines and track changes and test approaches.

Unfortunately, Oracle Eloqua was only partially implemented due to staffing constraints, but a larger obstacle was the lack of clear understanding of parameters of preserving personally-identifiable information (PII). KDAD and its predecessor, the Knowledge Driven Microenterprise Development (KDMD) project collected information on audiences, which was loosely referred to in the Agrilinks Privacy Policy. The information collected was used to guide website content, including topics for various webinars, Ask Ag and online discussions. However, audience participation and information was diffused across several spreadsheets and other documents making it difficult to track engagement over time.

Eloqua offered a solution by centralizing participation data and affixing a score to contacts so that over time it is possible to track engagement. The challenge was that this approach conflicted with guidance around PII for a government-owned website.

After two years of exploring potential solutions to circumvent the PII issue, KDAD had to finally make the decision to cancel Eloqua Oracle. Partially using the system was not deemed appropriate given the high cost in staff time and licenses. During this two years, A&L was unable to collect the new indicators developed for capture through Oracle Eloqua.

Unfortunately, A&L relied on data without verifying that the needed information was within the parameters of US government regulations that govern PII and if the resources and capacity was available to collect such data.

Overview of Lessons Learned

- To avoid the disconnect between project objectives and actual work, it is important to convene the client and activity leads to clearly identify the theory of change for the project. This would lead to a creation of a Results Framework that comprehensively represents the logic and explains how the project will achieve the high level objectives.

- A&L has learned it is important to engage with activity leads and use industry standard protocols to develop measurement tools to effectively assess progress and provide evidence-base for program action. The team understands the importance of getting buy-in from project teams to ensure performance monitoring data is accurately reported and is central to learning and adapting.
- To build stronger collaboration, it's important to continuously share methodology and findings from M&E efforts in frequent structured meetings to all staff and other key stakeholders. The use of data visualization tools such as Klipfolio presents the data in a more digestible format and creates robust discussions around approaches to boost project performance.
- Activities implemented through KDAD were partly demand-driven and to account for the ad-hoc nature of the work, the results framework should be treated as a dynamic document, reviewed annually and adapted to reflect the variability of activities.