Workshop Report: Learning from the ImGoats Outcome Mapping Experience

imGoats project

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1. Background

imGoats is the short name for a three-year project undertaken by ILRI, CARE and BAIF, coordinated by ILRI and funded by EC/IFAD on small ruminant value chains as platforms for reducing poverty and increasing food security in dryland areas of India and Mozambique

The goal of imGoats is to increase incomes and food security in a sustainable manner by enhancing pro-poor small ruminant value cains in India and Mozambique (I/M). The project has two objectives: 1) to pilot sustainable and replicable organizational and technical models to strengthen goat value chains in I/M that increase icomes, reduce vulnerability and enhance welfare amongst marginalized groups including women; and 2) to document, communicate and promote appropriate evidence-based models for sustainable, pro-poor goat value chains.

The project aims to transform goat production and marketing from an ad hoc, risky informal activity to a sound and profitable enterprise and model that taps into a growing market. There are few demonstrated, working models of organizational and capacity development to sustainably increase the productivity and livelhoods from small ruminant production among resource poor livestock producers.

The project employs aims to introduce Innovations Systems (IS) approaches rather than relying on traditional methods of technology transfer. Key IS principles include:
1) involvement of stakeholders in joint problem identification
2) integration of expert/research knowledge with local/indigenous knowledge, market intelligence, consumer demands and prevailing regulatory and policy involvement
3) capacity buiding
4) negotiation and brokering of solutions.

IS approaches are characterised by the use of *innovation platforms* (IPs), which are spaces where individuals and organizations can come together to address issues. IPs are facilitated by innovation brokers (IB) and respected NGOS who facilitate and support the platform. IBs serve functions such as promoting networking, negotiation of roles and responsibilities, integration of different types of information and knowledge and promoting a culture of continuous learning and capacity building.

A main research component of the project is to determine what adaptations are required to an approach based on value chain analysis and IPs that have proven useful in dairy value chains elsewhere, to enable this approach to work effectively to support strengthening of goat value chains in selected areas of I/M.

The donor required the use of a logframe as a planning and reporting tool. The logframe and imGoats proposal focus on the objectives of model development and dissemination as a means to bring about changes in food security and income amongst resource poor goat producers (and presumably other actors in the value chain). ILRI's approach involves the integration of Outcome Mapping (OM) with the logframe as a way to to take advantage of OM's strengths. OM is people and outcome-oriented and focuses on one type of change: behavioral change within those partners that a project or programs aims to influence directly. Without these behavioral changes, other changes that depend on them, such as improvements in animal health, increased household incomes from goat sales, are unlikely. An additional rationale for a hybrid M&E approach is is that OM can be used to develop a map of what success and progress towards success would look like in terms of changes in behaviour of goat producer hubs and other actors in the value chain, aspects which are not easily handled through the logframe.

ILRI inaugurated it's M&E activities with a 5 day workshop held in Udaipur from 14-18 Feb 2011. The workshop convened key staff from ILRI and the partner organisations, BAIF and CARE to:

- create a framework for an M&E system that focuses on the key value chain actors and desired production and marketing-related outcomes that imGoats wishes to influence and contribute towards
- Link to or embed this in the broader project goal (increasing incomes and food security) and logframe objectives related to the piloting and dissemination of organizational and technical models

2. Purpose

In July 2012, ILRI convened a smaller workshop with CARE and BAIF partners to explore and systematize what has been learned through the experience of implementing *imGoats* in India and Mozambique.

The purpose of the five-day workshop held in Udaipur from 2 to 6 July in Udaipur, India was to:

- Draw out learning about what worked and what didn't, focusing on key primary and some secondary processes. The use of Outcome Mapping for monitoring and as an input into project management was one of the main primary processes covered in the workshop
- Develop raw material for targeted communication products by capitalizing upon key insights
- Develop a clear plan for developing and disseminating these products and for engaging targeted audiences around them.

Two of the five days were devoted to the Outcome Mapping component of imGoats.

3. Expected outputs

- A series of lessons from the first phase of imGoats
- An action plan based on the communication products identified

4. Expected facilitation outcomes:

- Engaged participants
- Coverage of issues in the set time
- Meaningful and participatory exploration of key issues

5. Overall workshop structure

The overall workshop structure is detailed in the Workshop Agenda available on a project wiki set up by Ewen LeBorgne.

Participants
The list of participants can be accessed on the wiki.

Facilitation Plan for the Outcome Mapping Component

Time block	Key Facilitation Questions (KFQs)	Activities and Guiding Questions
Pre-workshop engagement	See below	• Facilitation plan sent to participants with a request to meet in advance as teams to explore the key questions and prepare to respond to them

Day 1 PM (1:30 – 3:00 & 3:30 – 5:00)	How did you put outcome mapping into practice?	• Intro (by Ann): <u>OM and its purpose in *imGoats*</u>
		 • Guiding questions
		    o How did you envision the role/importance of OM as a monitoring methodology in your subproject?
		    o What modifications did you make to the common set of progress markers (PM)?
		    o What were your OM implementation plans for gathering information on your sets of PMs and what actually happened in practice?
		    o What were your plans for managing and analysing the information from OM and what actually happened in practice?
		 • Presentations by Moz and India teams and Q&A/discussion
		 • Key points summed up by a volunteer

Day 2 AM (9 - 10:30 & 11-12:30)	What went well and less well in your application of the OM methodology?	• Guiding questions:
		    o What went well in data collection, management and analysis and use of the information?
		    o What went less well in data collection; management, and analysis and use of the information?
		    o What did you do to meet the problems/issues/challenges that arose?
		    o What did you do to take advantage of your positive experiences with OM?
		    o What have you learned about using OM for monitoring progress in imGoats?
		 • "Radio Program" format. Reps from Moz and India teams interview one another about what went well and less well, taking questions from the audience.
		 • Key points summed up by a volunteer and closing reflections

Day 2 PM (1:30 – 3:00 & 3:30 – 5:00)	What did you learn about changes in the behaviour, through application of OM?	• Guiding questions
		    o Carry out a global analysis of PMs for each boundary partner using the low-med-high scale. How much progress has there been towards each?
		    o How much progress overall has there been in achieving intended changes? Is your subproject on track?
		    o How relevant were your PMs? Mark relevant/useful PMs with a check; Identify irrelevant PMs; Identify PMs that with the benefit of hindsight, you consider should have been part of the set.
		 • Moz and India teams share flipcharts of their global analyses and respond to questions
		 • Fishbowl: What do today's exercises tell us about how change happens?
		 • Key points summed up by a volunteer and closing reflections

Day 3 AM (9 - 10:30 & 11-12:30)	What is the way forward with the use of OM in *imGoats*?	• "Clinics" (consultations with Kees Swans & Ann Braun) on key challenges identified in previous sessions
		    o Data analysis (India team with Kees; see summary on wiki)
		    o Use of rating scores for global analysis of PM sets for each boundary partner (Moz team with Ann)

6. Outcomes

6.1 Session 1:

Summary of Key Points

	Mozambique	India
Role/Importance of OM	• What's going well and less well is discussed at monthly team meetings; changes to activities are made based on the OM work	• Monitoring of progress of field activities and basis for making changes after monthly review meeting • Provides a means of monitoring of Field Guide (FG) performance
Modifications made to progress markers	• Some progress markers reformulated • Some removed	
Information gathering: what was planned/what happened in practice	• Based on an overview of CARE's data gathering system (producer group register, group participant registration, paravet training, register of producer trainings, register of goat sales at fairs, productivity tool, IP report) an outcome journal was designed for PMs not covered by existing tools • Rather than recording observations for Outcome Journal progress markers in the field, monthly meetings tested where field staff are debriefed and CARE project/extension staff record the data • Has now been carried out 5 times • Initially information was verified in the field by M&E officer [this position is currently vacant] • Four outcome journals merged into one Facilitator's Guide (for debriefing field staff)	• Existing data collection tools/methods used (FG monthly reports, group meeting registers, goat weight records, buck service records, baseline survey info, IP reports) used as source for PM information with changes to group meeting registers for easy compilation [long narrative in local language grouped in to key topics, making it easier to compile later] • FGs collect all the data (training is important) • Not yet collecting PM info on post production actors and enabling agencies • Jharkhand intends to follow the same system as Rajasthan, but don't have yet have the system fully in place; Jharkhad also does not have a full IP
Management/Analysis/Use of information: What was planned/what happened in practice	• Not currently assessing extent to which individual progress markers are achieved nor carrying out a global analysis of the set of progress markers for each boundary partner • Monthly analysis is a lot of work; need to assess/decidewhat is an appropriate frequency	• Critical to the process is the availability of a data entry operator; • Tracking of goats sold by producers is continuous, but whether producers are selling more goats can only be assessed annually • Considering whether to carry out data compilation only at village level or whether to go to household level. Local Field Officers have HH level information but entering the information is time consuming • For some PMs, achieving the change in 50% of the population (e.g. of producers) should be considered a high level of achievement • Not currently assessing extent to which individual progress markers are achieved nor carrying out a global analysis of the set of progress markers for each boundary partner • Monthly analysis is a lot of work; need to assess/decide what is an appropriate

| | | frequency |
| | | • Info flows from field/IP to project but not the other way around; want to find a way to change this |

Participant Reflections
- Interesting differences between Moz and India related to different scales and styles of operation (oral debriefing of field staff in Moz vs detailed record keeping and database entry in India)
- Questions arising in both countries about how frequently to analyse the data
- Data collection and other activities currently has a strong focus on producers in both countries
- Involvement of boundary partners in analysis/reflection? How important is this to imGoats?

Reflections by Ann
- Both subprojects have hybridized OM with already-existing monitoring systems. In India the use of the OM's Outcome Journal approach has not been taken up because all the progress markers can be tracked through the existing system, which depends on data collected through various recording forms and from meeting reports. Critical for this system is the availability of staff to enter the data in an Excel database. In Mozambique, the hybrid consists of using data collected through existing recording forms and reports supplemented by outcome journals for PM that are not covered through these. An additional innovation is the use of oral debriefing of field staff instead of expecting them to keep written OM journals in the field.
- Neither team is presently carrying out regular global analysis of the four progress markers sets (for production actors, post production actors, input and service providers and enabling agencies). This is due both to 1) the time it has taken to actually hybridize or embed the use of OM within the existing systems, a complex task requiring considerable effort and 2) questions/uncertainties about how to actually carry this out

6.2 Session 2:

Summary of Key Points:

	MOZAMBIQUE	INDIA
What went well in application of OM?	• OM is flexible enough to permit use of existing information systems • Use of the data to assist activity review, adaptation and planning • Systematic collection of valuable data • Follow-up field visits by M&E offider raised awareness about imGoats among goatkeepers • Increases accountability among project staff	• OM is flexible enough to permit use of existing information systems • Use of the data to assist activity planning • Collection and use of qualitative data is new for BAIF
What went less well?	• More information on producers relative to other boundary partners • Gender and capacity building not clearly included in progress makers • Long meetings in which order of covering the four boundary partners affected the quality of the data colleted • Too much focus on positive change • Haven't yet resolved how to continue the follow-up visits formerly conducted by the M&E officer (no longer with the team) • Staff not always well prepared for meetings	• Managing the volume of data has been a challenge (2700 entries per month)
What did you do to meet problems/issues that arose?	• Towards end of long monthly meetings staff are tired, so information gathered at the end is not as high quality as near the beginning. To deal with this, the order of discussion of the four boundary partners is rotated (this way, enabling partners is not consistently left last, resulting in consistently poor capture of information relating to this partner) • Have included questions on gender and capacity building (in the facilitation guide) • Began to pay more attention to buyers through follow up visits when it was noticed that most of the information was on producers	• Found ways to working with narrative (qualitative) data by classifying into categories and counting frequencies • Have not tried sampling; for this need to get clear first about intended use of the information
What did you do to take advantage of positive experiences with OM?	• OM meetings are an opportunity for the entire team to meet – this didn't happen before • OM helped us look beyond/widen scope the producers to other important actors	• Using OM data to review performance of field guides
What have you learned about applying OM?	• OM focuses on information (behaviour change) that other M&E systems don't capture. • We may have missed a group that should have been included among the post-production actors (women who sell meat at the markets)	• OM creates the opportunity to interact and communicate better with all the boundary partners; not just producers. • OM leads to better preparation for interaction with boundary partners

6.3 Session 3:

Each team carried out a global analysis of the set of progress markers for each of the four boundary partners.
Based on their familiarity with the OM data each team collectively assessed whether the level of achievement of each PM was low, medium or high. In a second phase, each team reviewed the set of PMs and indicated whether each was relevant, needed to be changed and what other PMs they would include if the framework were being developed today, with the benefit of the project experience to date.

The analyses are posted here on the wiki.

Summary of Key Points:

	Mozambique	India
How satisfied are you with progress?	Implementation started in March 2011 with first IP meeting in May 2011. The global analysis shows our progress after a year. Team is happy with the progress. A big surprise: Didn't expext goatkeepers would enjoy IP meetings or that they would take action on communal grazing areas, market access etc. Also imGoats has made more progress than expected with the issue of goat commercialisation.	The first IP meeting was in August 2011. Still in an initial phase so there are some questions, and it's too early to say much. Producers are attending meetings, progressively taking more decisions in IP meetings, and at their own meetings. Little happening related to addressing value chain issues. As expected, traders came to the first and second IP meetings and asked "What can you offer to us? Until then we won't come."
Messages from the global analysis	Message: Progress with utilizing shared info and engagement among post-production actors (PPAs) is low. Response: Only one joint activity so far with PPAs, aside from IP meetings. The communal grazing area work also involves other actors but don't yet see many things happening. An important & unexpected change is about communal grazing areas: 4 women made a borehole together, and built a fence around the grazing area. The latter is new in Moz and it was introduced by IP participants themselves. Other communities now intend to work on this and one has developed another borehole. Oxfam is now interested in engaging with ILRI to learn from the IM Goats project on IP work and various other work areas.	Perhaps development of better drinking water facilities should become a focus, involving district level authorities. The progress markers for the enabling agencies are not realistic, not achievable in the timeframe envisioned.
Thoughts on taking this analysis forward	Need more clarity about criteria for assessing a progress marker as low/medium/high	Should focus on carrying out global analysis in the next 3 months, and develop a training program to help build the capacity of people who would like to build on this work.

<u>Reflections by Ann</u>
- The team reflections on the full set of progress markers indicated that with a few possible exceptions (e.g., for Enabling Agencies in India), the sets are relevant, useful, and given the actual implementation time (18 mo. In Mozambique and 1 year in India), both teams consider that the level of progress is satisfactory.

6.4 Session 4:

To ensure concrete outcomes for the session on the way forward, the two most important issues that surfaced during the workshop (data analysis in India and how to carry out the regular global analysis of progress markers in Mozambique) were chosen as the focus for this final session. Kees Swaans consulted with the India team on data analysis and Ann with the Mozambique team.

Clinic with Indian team - Data Analysis

What's the problem? Large amount of data.

Why is that a problem?

- It is difficult to analyze the data.
- We have two clusters with 1000 families, and we collect this data regularly. It is difficult to enter this much information and to then analyze it, without the right people.
- After the baseline survey, we can collect data accordingly. We took 10% of the 1000 families and made a baseline

The question is*: if data is being collected, you expect that data to be used. If you don't enter it into the system, why collect it in the first place? What do you want to do with the data? Why collect it?*

- We want to find out more about these families.
- Production, marketing, diseases, servicing, breeding
- We collect it to , to feedback to field guides and to make policy recommendations
- In the long-term it may be used in the research world
- Data may show changes in society, to measure change
- Data can show us changes in behaviour and we can keep track of practices and adoption
- It helps us track progress of the project

Summary: Data is collected to measure change, to give feedback to the field guides, to make policy recommendations and in the long-term to contribute to the wider research community

How important is it for you to capture data from <u>all</u> of the individual households? In which case it's worth appointing someone to deal with the data (fulltime)... Or are you happy to measure trends from a sample of households?

Is the amount of data really a problem or not? Could you employ someone to enter that data, and what are the costs? You need to think about how you are going to use this data. Don't throw away data at an early stage if you are not sure what you're going to find useful and what is not. It might be that you want to keep a record of everything, or you may reach the conclusion that sampling is best and there is no need for so much information to be collected and stored.

- Here in Udaipur there is experience in entering data, every month
- Bit more difficult to find someone to work on data in Jharkhand
- Data entry is not an issue, but someone is needed for data analysis
- If data base is set up, it shouldn't matter how much data you have (all households or sample) for the analysis stage

Summary: For the rest of the project, get the right people to manage the data (i.e. someone to input data, and someone to analyze the data). Keep your data, try to enter it, give it some time, take a step back at the end of the year to review the process and see whether it was the best way to do this.

- Somebody does coding, and then another person will enter the information afterwards
- After seeing the initial narrative, coding has been simplified
- It could even be simplified further and the field guide may reach a stage where he doesn't even need the form anymore
- There is a supervisor for every 5 field guides, who supports the guides and monitors what they are doing
- Field guides are part-time staff. They are getting an incentive of 1000 Rs. Is it enough?
- There was a problem with consistency of data
- When it comes to sampling, there is a question over doing the same households each time, or using random samples. It is not straightforward. For that reason, there is an argument for looking at the same individual households. E.g. you can see the changes affecting one farmer and his goats (easier info. to standardize)
- There's a need for careful input of data on each household, so as it doesn't get mixed up
- Quality of data is OK

Summary: Data entry is not the problem (although in Jharkhand someone is needed to do this). Data analysis is the problem. Need to reflect on what you really want to do with the data.

Holding monthly progress meetings is too often, so every 3 months or so is best.

Clinic with Mozambique Team

The following advice was provided on technical issues of concern to the Moz imGoats team related to the carrying out regular global analyses of the progress marker sets for each boundary partner

Frequency of team meetings
- Balance project management needs with practical considerations.
- For information gathered verbally from extensionists consider whether asking them to recall information over a longer period than one month is likely to yield accurate information. Over how long a period do they feel they can accurately recall information?
- Consider the advantages (identified by Amosse) of monthly meetings: Even though changes usually don't occur that rapidly, monthly meetings are contribute to team building and coordination, thereby making an important contribution to the effective management of the project

Frequency of global analysis
- Considerations: How will you use the information? Possibilities: for reporting to IFAD, for management. How often do you have to report to IFAD? Carry out a global analysis in conjunction with your reporting cycle. In between consider practicalities. With only six months left, it's likely you'll want a global analysis in time for a final report. Will an additional global analysis in 3 months be useful for management purposes? If not, it may not be worth the effort involved.
- If you use the global analysis carried out at this workshop as the basis for your first global analysis and then carry out one more at the end of the year, Mozambique will have carried two global analyses of the set of progress markers for each boundary partner in a period of two years. Considering that the first year was the foundational phase, during which OM had to be adapted to existing data collection systems and culture, this is, pragmatically speaking, a reasonable outcome.

Use of scales:
- Balance concern for precision against pragmatics. Ask yourself, what is good enough for your needs?

What is credible information from your point of view, for the point of view of your target audiences?

- The OM manual uses the LMH[1] scale in global analysis of progress marker data– only three points. To help you apply the scale you developed a boundary partner profile, so for each boundary partner you know how many are involved/served by the project (e.g. goat producers, input and service providers etc.)
- Chose the shortest scale that gives you enough discrimination. With a three point scale, "high" could correspond to the high level of achievement that you identified in our July 2011 workshop; low means there is some progress but you're less than half way. Medium means you're about half way to achieving the progress marker (i.e. to the high level of achievement that you identified when we developed the framework. Note that some programs use a much less sophisticated approach than this. One of the examples provided[2] set no progress marker-specific criteria for a high level of achievement, but instead used the following general criteria in conjunction with a three point scale:

  Low: no activity or limited activity towards progress marker,
  Medium: moderate activity towards progress marker
  High: strong actions noted in favour of the progress marker

- In Mozambique you have a small population making up each of your boundary partners (see your BP profile). If you are working with 18 producer groups, you will want to ask yourselves how widespread a given change (e.g. producers joining groups) is among these 18. Does it make sense to use a 5 or 7 point scale with a population size of 18 groups? Probably not, as a 3-point scale gives a sufficient level of discrimination. To convince yourselves, you may decide you wish to test this of logic against a few progresss for each boundary partner. Is the three point scale "good enough" bearing in mind that the purpose of monitoring is to track progress and to inform management. If you were carrying out a survey on a sizeable population, using rating scales, and carrying out statistical analysis on the data then considerations such as those identified in this paper would apply, however this is not what you are doing. You are using outcome mapping as a monitoring and management tool to regularly assess whether a project is on track and to flag issues that may call for a change in strategy/approch. This is a fundamentally different from a use which relies on establishing statistically significance differences.
- Another consideration is that there is a trade off between achieving more discrimination (e.g. having one or more grades between low and medium and between medium and high) and the process of coming up with agreed criteria to enable you to make an assessment against a more complex scale.
- When you are carrying out a global assessment, include a fourth column for comments and clarifications (see example below)

Progress marker	Low	Medium	High	Comments
Goat producers joining groups			x	Women's participation is lower than expected (state why if you have information that sheds light on this)

- Global assessments should include section on unexpected/unintended changes, both positive and negative, if at all possible. It's considered good practice to include discussion and documentation of unexpected/unintended changes as a regular part of meetings where the compilation and analysis of progress marker data is carried out.
- To make the global analysis process more efficient, you could have a team member make a first draft, and then meet with the team to discuss, refine, revise.
- If you opt to add any new progress markers to the original framework, use the comments colum to note that they were added after a review of the framework.

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[1] Low/Medium/High
[2] by emaill 5 Apr 2012

7. Recommendations

The main roles envisioned for Outcome Mapping in imGoats were to enable: 1) the gathering of timely monitoring data for project management and for reporting and 2) the generation of information relevant to evaluation.

The presentations by the three subproject teams (Mozambique, Rajasthan, Jharkand) indicate that the data gathered on changes in the behaviour of boundary partners has been used as intended to track progress and make decisions about field activities. An unexpected use of the data has also emerged. In India, the quality of the information gathered is being used as an element in assessing the performance of field guides. Both the India and the Mozambique teams found that carrying out monthly meetings to discuss the monitoring data is a helpful team strengthener. OM is seen as widening the scope of the project beyond production actors and providing opportunities to engage with the full range of boundary partners.

To date, the OM data has not been used in reporting due to 1) the time it has taken to actually hybridize or embed the use of OM within the existing systems, a complex task requiring considerable effort, and 2) questions/uncertainties about how to actually carry this out. While the clinic held with the Mozambique team during the final OM session addressed the second issue, this nevertheless raises questions about the arrangements in place for providing support to the teams. After the joint workshop to introduce the OM methodology and develop the framework imGoats provided for one support visit to each team in July 2011. In addition remote support was available by email and skype, but in practice, this was rarely used by the teams. A more sustainable approach, should ILRI decide to apply OM in future work, would be to acquire or develop in-house capacity to support OM. Training in OM is available from a number of sources including from the IDRC staff and former-staff who developed the methodology, and from other organizations who have developed considerable expertise. Information about training in OM can be found on the website of the OM Learning Community [http://www.outcomemapping.ca/] and also on MandE [http://mande.co.uk/].