

**Changes that matter: A participatory approach to monitoring and evaluating community level changes**

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As a strengths-based primary prevention approach to child abuse and neglect, the Pacific Childrens' Program (PCP) has achieved much in its first four years of work in Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu. The logical framework model has enabled accountable monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to be conducted and has informed the development of the first phase of this program. However, staff, community members, partners and donors are now seeking to answer the harder evaluation questions: *how and why is this program making a difference* and *how can we understand and demonstrate the changes that are happening for individuals, families and communities*. This paper will outline the collaborative process and activities that PCP is developing to further enhance M&E. We will share how we are enhancing the empowerment evaluation process through a participatory approach which includes the World Café and a staged approach to the collection and analysis of narratives. These activities enable participants to work together and analyse in their own language whilst still sharing the key findings in English, the language of the other stakeholders involved in development projects. We believe that the most important part of such evaluation is that 'lessons learned' are analysed in the community, owned by the community and progress forward is decided by the community— and yet we still gain rigorous data to feed on to other stakeholders and donors.