

SMC CoP on Outcome Mapping and Outcome Harvesting

On 30 September 2022, approximately 15 people met together for a full day at the Ecumenical Centre in Stockholm. Annex 1 shows the agenda, which was basically followed. Together, we explored the tools, listening to each others' experiences, insights and questions and sharing our own. The concept of a Community of Practice supports us having opportunities to both address challenges that we have in common and those issues that we are personally facing in our practices. This brief report focuses on some of the *main discussions and conclusions* made per topic and about the day in general.

Some notes were also taken on individual questions, feedback from market place discussions and from the OM-OH blending session. These notes are incomplete but some traces or glimpses of these can be found in Annex 2.

Blending OM and OH

It has become common practice to combine the tools of OM and OH or to blend the tools to meet the needs of an organisation and context. Mariam briefly shared a presentation delivered with Richard Smith at the OMLC training in June 2022, showing five different ways of blending OM and OH. This is shared in a separate file and should not be shared beyond this group. It was decided that the topic of blending OM and OH could be written up further and Learning Loop will try to start a draft piece of communication regarding this to support the SMC CoP on Outcome Mapping and Outcome Harvesting.

World Café discussion: Different kinds of data and how they can be used

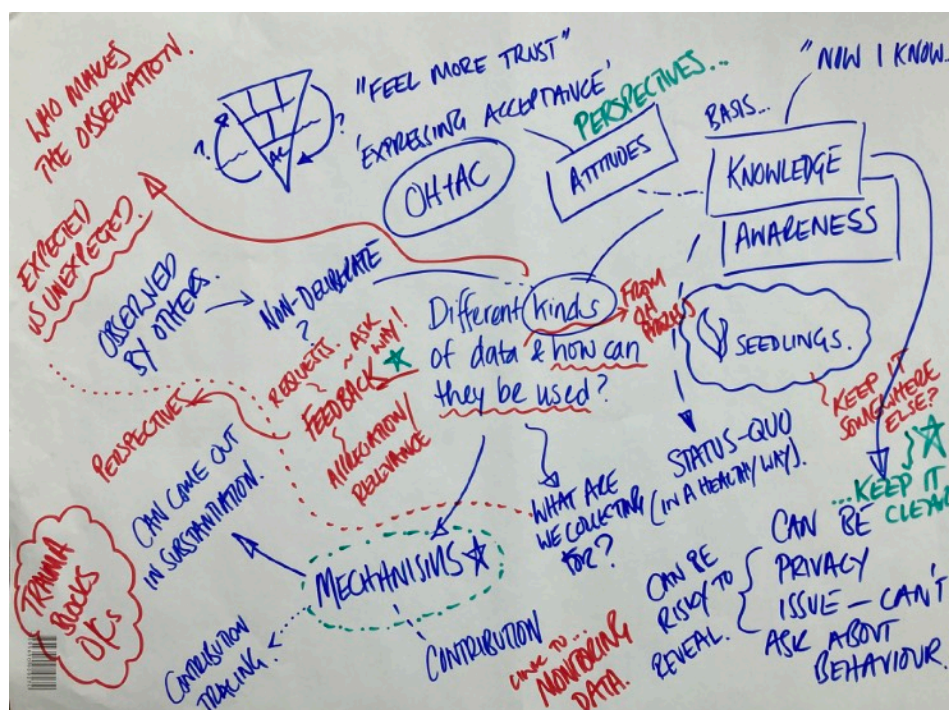
We discussed the need for clarity about what **kind of data** we have collected. Some data are in the form of complete outcomes. Other kinds of data are not verifiable outcomes, but important and can be kept elsewhere and marked as such. For example:

- **Seedlings / incomplete outcomes** - potential changes which may develop into an outcome
- **Perspectives** - Statements such as "I feel the youth are engaging more than they used to" and "I'm feeling more trusted" may be expressing acceptance, showing changes in attitudes and can show a basis of knowledge and awareness "Now I know...". In some contexts collecting attitudinal changes can be important. Tearfund has developed a tool for use in peacekeeping circumstances, collecting evidence of attitude, knowledge and awareness. These can link to outcomes. There is a question how much attitude changes are foundational or not. Asking why is important in relation to general perspectives as they can help us identify more concrete outcomes.
- **Evidence of status quo** (in a healthy way, for example not giving in to the high social pressure to follow majority norms)
- **Feedback** - comments from stakeholders of appreciation or need for change, give insight into the relevance of the program and practical changes needed.

The **processes** used to collect the data is another way of thinking about types of data. Was it an outcome collected in monitoring data? Who made the observation? Non-deliberate/unexpected? This information can be useful to include with harvested outcomes, for example to help identify bias.

Other issues touched on:

- Understanding why a change happened is valuable for the programme. **Mechanisms** can help us understand contribution and can come out in substantiation processes. Outcome Harvesting helps a bit in the direction of understanding why a change happened, but other tools, such as contribution tracing can help us to understand important changes further.
- There may be some **risks** in revealing some behavioural change, so expressing simply a change in knowledge may be a safer option.
- **Trauma** blocks - in conflict areas trauma can make it difficult for people to see positive changes.



World Café discussion: Scale- outcomes are not all made equal

It was agreed that the **number of people** affected by an outcome can be different, but the importance of an individual change can still be of great value. The one individual who changed behaviour may be busy changing the world. Or the story of an individual change can be what helps a group of people move beyond established norms. It can be the tipping point.

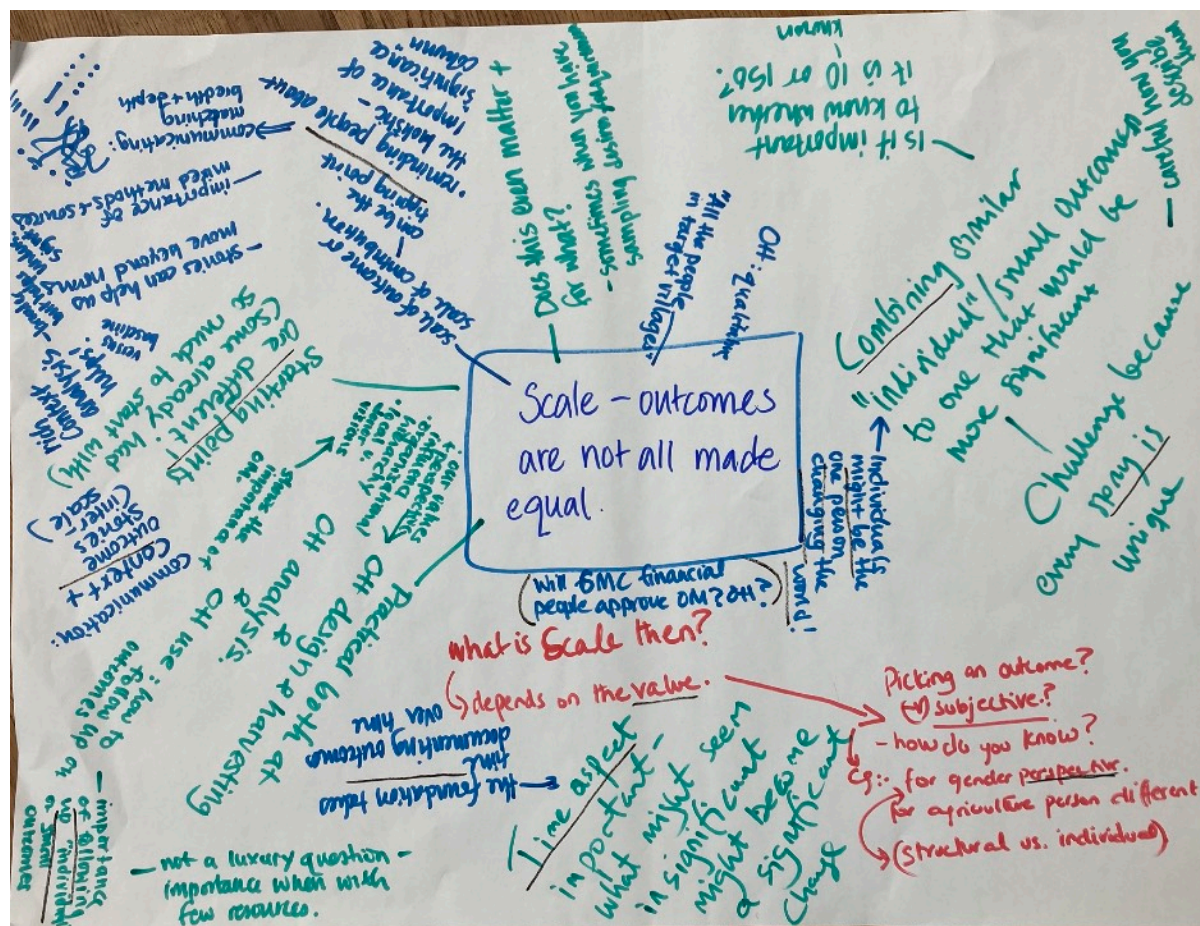
In addition, each outcome **story is unique** and is valued differently depending on the subjective **perspective** (agriculturalist, gender). As donors/partnering organisations in Sweden we may be valuing outcomes showing evidence of structural change, but even structural change may start with individual changes. Locals may see different value in outcomes than an outsider. (An Outcome Mapping process can help us understand the significance in context, what a progression of outcomes could look like. Alternatively a rich context analysis can help). Starting points are different. Don't forget that the **significance column** helps us understand the important perspectives and context!

Does scale even matter and for what?

- Yes, sometimes if you want to understand the extent to which change has happened geographically or among types of people.
- It may be a donor/government requirement.

Practically:

- Understanding scale can be part of different stages of OH: at design stage, while harvesting, in analysis, in substantiation and in supporting use of an outcome harvest.
- Some outcomes may need a variety of sources to help us understand scale.
- You may also choose to complement an Outcome Harvest with another method.



World Café discussion: Types of behaviour

Changes in behaviour can take place among relations, practices, action, and in relation to policy. They can also be in cultural and religious practices and behaviours. Each of these types of changes are interlinked and can occur at different levels of individual, community and institutional level, taking different expressions at each level. Community and institutional levels are often indicators of structural change.

- **Individuals** don't normally have the power to change policies, but a variety of behaviours, practices, and initiatives can be taken about the environment, farming, health (for example using mosquito nets), non-discrimination, participation, transparency, FoRB, and children/youth.
- The nature of **relational** changes are different in the short term versus the mid-or longer term relationships. Relationships may be changing before joint action, policy, and practices are changed at a wider level.
- At **community** level, initiatives are taken by communities or groups. They can be about inclusion, meaningful participation, changes in relationships, organisation, and tolerance.
- At **institutional** level, authorities create policies, open up for participation, transparency, and react to advocacy.

There was a discussion on the types of outcome behaviours (relationship, policy, practises, and actions), that also cultural practices and behaviours (such as Freedom of Religion and Belief)can be looked for: e.g menstruation, witch hunt, child marriage, female genital mutilation, albinos, rite of passage, circumcision, boys more food than girls, dowery/bride price, sharia law.

Sometimes our outcomes data can show that a type of action/behaviour is missing. There can also be a gap in our data collection.

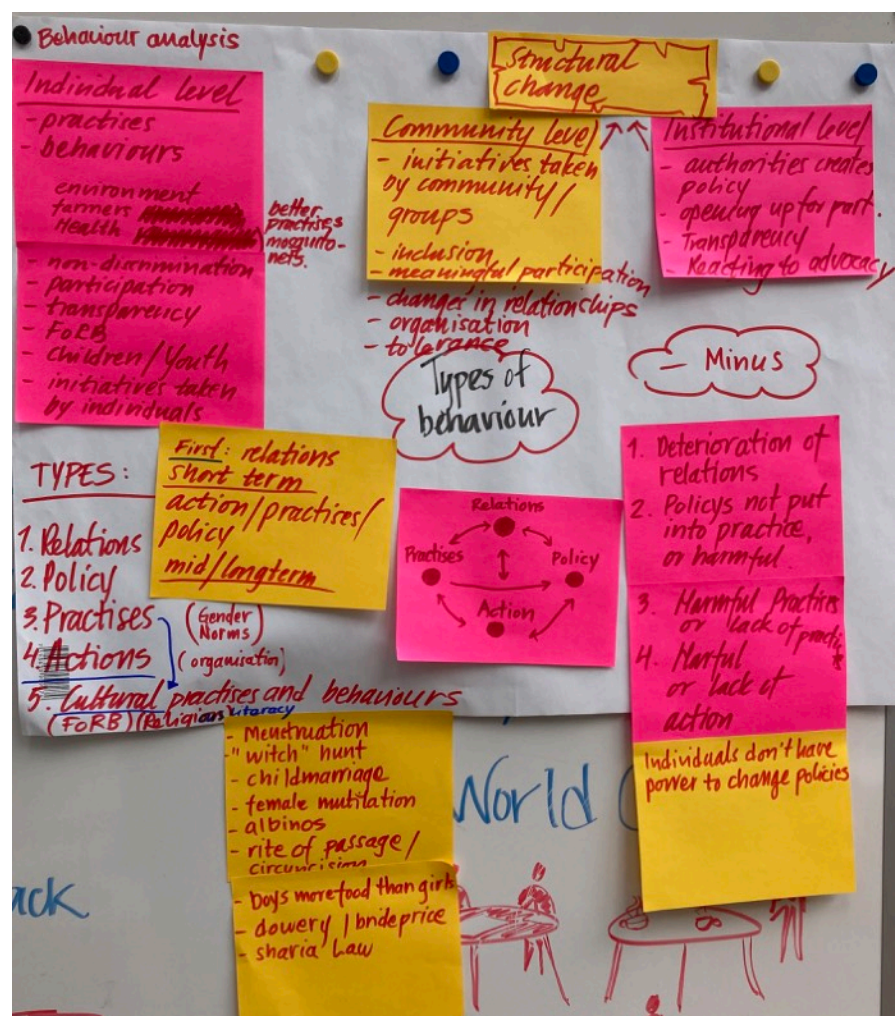
Negative change and challenges

Do we need to keep a look out for:

- deterioration of relations
- policies that are not put into practice or are harmful
- harmful practices or lack of practice
- harmful action or lack of action

There was also mention of the hypothesis of bringing people together is usually seen as good, but can also lead to deepening conflicts.

A lot of long term development cooperation is preventive. How do we capture this prevention!?



Final reflections on the day

Participants posted post-it notes in three categories as outlined below.

Loved/affirmed:

- It's important to MEET physically
- Blending and validation no one has all the answers
- Discussions
- World Café opened up the discussion in a good way
- Sharing struggles and questions was encouraging
- Coming together discussing OH
- Many good opportunities to share views and ideas
- Today led to new contacts and idea to connect partners
- Very interactive

Questions and concerns:

- Work session on practical examples
- Expand the CoP to local partners- how can that be done well?
- Looking deeply into OM and OH blends
- Would like to see a complete plan on OH and OM

What we take with us:

- Youth and kids perspective explored- next step
- OH data/scale
- Flexibility of blending methods

Action points:

1. We did not have time to explore the topic of **children and youth**. We felt that this was an important topic which requires a lot more time and can be the topic of a future CoP session.
2. Participants requested a write-up of the presentation on **OM and OH blends** which could be developed further by CoP members. (Learning Loop will try to start on this)
3. The group agreed that an invitation to the CoP can be extended to **local partners**. How this is done and language and time zone issues will need to be considered.
4. New staff among SMC members have requested **basic information** about OM and OH. SMC can ensure that relevant links, connections to networks, and basic information is available for those who need.

Annex 1 - Agenda

9:00 am	Coffee and Set Up displays
9:10 am	A brief welcome , and a reminder of the plan for the day. Brief intros. Each participant writes a note to answer: <i>"Is there one question that you would like answered that could help you move forward in your work?"</i> We share questions / posts on wall.
9:30 am	Guided tour of the marketplace: Timed 3-5 minute introduction/interview to each gallery display: - what you are displaying? - three highlights /interesting points. - one challenge you are facing (link to today's topics?)
10:00 am	Fika + explore the marketplace Focus on - How did you practically capture (e.g. workshops, interviews etc.) and store outcomes/evidence (data management)? - Did you use digital approaches and if so how?
11:00 am	Group Feedback - What ideas are standing out? Anyone getting answers?
11:20 am	OM-OH blends and combinations - what are common blends? Group discussions on own experiences (pros, cons, and alternatives)
12:00 m	Lunch
13:00	World Café 20 min x 3: The diverse world of outcomes! Categories of outcomes: what are the different kinds of outcomes and how can we use them? 1) Types of behaviour / useful frameworks 2) What about the things that aren't outcomes (yet?) but are still useful data? 3) Scale - outcomes aren't all made equal Each group produces something physical as documentation (some kind of
14:00	Sharing main results and synthesis with the large group.
14:30	Peer consultancy and support: Revisit the questions from the beginning of the day. Still have unanswered questions? We'll take some time to help each other address any specific OM/OH related issues you are facing
15:15 - 15:30	End of day reflection, thanks and bye!

Annex 2

Individual questions we came with:

- How can I strengthen the capacity of analysis of local field teams?
- When to do the 7 steps of initial OM if the application is turned down by the back donor? The trust between especially partner organisation and you will be damaged.
- How can OH outcomes be meaningfully aggregated across programmes?
- Is there a tool or some ideas from this CoP that needs to be written up to support others?
- Analyse data/following up on outcomes
- Collecting outcomes over period of time- what to do with data?
- The HOW-question? Also, time versus resources to do OH properly? Possibility to continue with other methods? OH-ish?
- Combining Outcome Harvesting and Mapping- how does it work? What is the added value?
- When entering the world of OM alongside OH - to what extent can we apply that to just one boundary partner (duty bearers)?
- A challenge: how to sustain partners' commitment to OH over a longer period? To see a chain of significant outcomes takes time.
- Bring the theory parts into practical steps and implemented
- How to avoid getting into a 'monster database' over eg. 5 years programme in relation to OH as monitoring tool!
- How do you work OM/OH with children or youth? Any tips?
- How to integrate the youth-and child perspective in programming?

Group feedback from market place discussions:

- Nice to know that we are not the only ones that struggle
- Sustaining the use of OM&OH in an organisation may require training and resources, with donors buying it.
- Can politicians (with little shared vision) be boundary partners? (strategic partners? turn over? expectations on framework)
- Evaluations: power dynamics in collecting outcomes
- These tools help us with a more ethnographical approach to learning and evaluation.
- Using secondary data: substantiating outcomes, experience using secondary data in regards to policy change.
- Experiences from sharing outcomes with other collaborating partners.
- Experiences with contribution tracing? Yes, for big policy changes, mapping out the contribution also of other actors.
- Merging logframe and Outcome Harvesting can be a way to introduce this way of thinking. LPI mentioned having a ToC based M&E (left RBM after an interaction, using OH). PMU with partner took 1 significant outcome and worked backwards- informed the ToC.
- Baseline (in peace building it is often conflict analysis)

Blending OM and OH Comments and questions:

- How to capture the status quo behaviour or "don't like to see" changes
- How to work with BPs who maybe are difficult to influence. Does it work to use progress markers?
- Does OM/OH capture assumptions?
 - No, but negative and positive outcomes
 - ToCs can help, risk analysis.
 - use of OH for reflection (significance and contribution)
- How do you convince partners to use OM?
- How is OM different than proper participatory LFA? (We discussed linearity, actor focus)