

# Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning at CDS

## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT (CDS)

The CDS project (2014-2019), funded by USAID/South Africa, contributes to the goal of mitigating the impact of HIV, STIs and TB by providing capacity strengthening to civil society organizations and the South African Government, increasing their effectiveness in achieving expanded and high-quality services.



CDS prioritizes MERL to ensure that its programs are responsive and effective, providing high-quality services to beneficiaries such as Londeka Mbambo (above)

Vast quantities of funding have been invested in public health globally. For example, The Global Fund invests nearly \$4 billion each year to address HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, and the U.S. government has committed nearly \$65 billion toward these conditions over the past decade.

However, how do we know that funding, or particular programs, have made the intended impact? The urgent need to answer that question has contributed to the exponential growth of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a discipline and key component of every development organization.

## BEYOND M&E: A BROADER INTERPRETATION

The USAID-funded Capacity Development and Support (CDS) project, implemented by FHI 360, has established a Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) unit to ensure the project monitors its progress at every stage and in every program area – from service provision to priority populations, to Technical Advisors seconded to the South African Government. CDS is committed to using its programmatic data to improve its performance, conducting analysis and further research to develop and share sustainable models for capacity development and service delivery.

## PARTNER CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

CDS provides M&E capacity development to its partners as part of its overall technical and organizational support. CDS developed an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool for M&E Systems to assess the following critical areas:

- Resources and technical capacity
- Plans, guidelines and operational documents
- Data collection and management
- Data verification and quality assurance systems
- Data quality systems
- Data analysis and use
- Evaluation
- Alignment and leadership

## COUNTRY OVERVIEW

For more than 25 years, FHI 360 has been working as a strategic partner to the Government of South Africa and South African civil society. We have implemented a wide range of technical assistance projects at national, provincial and community levels to strengthen policies and programs that prevent the transmission of HIV, provide high-quality HIV care and treatment, strengthen nutritional assessment and counselling and support, improve reproductive health, increase access to family planning, and strengthen partners' technical and organizational capacity.



## About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing – creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 70 countries and all U.S. states and territories.

After assessment, CDS and its partners develop tailored capacity development plans to address areas of weakness. CDS provides individual coaching and mentoring as well as standardized training. The project developed M&E curriculum, with four modules guiding participants from basic to advanced concepts and application.

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

CDS is responsive to USAID requests for specific research and evaluation projects to inform delivery of evidence-based programming. These include:

- A situational analysis and community-based approach to address alcohol-related gender-based violence
- Data quality assessments of nine organizations implementing programming for orphans and vulnerable children and youth
- Mid-term evaluation of the Department of Social Development's Isibindi project serving vulnerable children across South Africa
- A study of the male sexual partners of adolescent girls and young women to inform DREAMS<sup>1</sup> interventions

The role of MERL throughout the project cycle



<sup>1</sup> DREAMS is an acronym for Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe, a PEPFAR-led initiative to significantly reduce HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women in 10 African countries. *This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of the Capacity Development and Support project and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.*

## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

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