

## M&E: Case Study

*This tool is included in the Participant Guide and can be adjusted to reflect your context.*

As we get started, try to get a sense of what your big and small questions are about M&E. *Where do you feel most confident and where do you most need to develop skills or acquire information?* This case study exercise is meant to help you highlight questions and areas in which you specifically need to develop knowledge and skills, and it will also help the facilitator(s) to evaluate how successful the workshop is at supporting participants in developing their competencies. This case, and the accompanying questions, appear here and will also be presented through the learning community by the facilitator(s).

### Let's start with a scenario.

Maria is an Associate Scientist with the Institute for Research ("The Institute"), where she has worked for about 10 years, ever since her first contract as a post-doctoral researcher. She was initially attracted to The Institute because of its mission: to reduce the impact of poverty-related infectious diseases through research and development of clinical products, which fit well with her vision for her career. When she started at The Institute, there was a total staff of just 40 members – including scientists and administrative staff. But the organisation has grown quickly, taking on researchers, project managers, and administrators to develop a team of nearly 150. And, in the midst of this expansion, Maria has learned that her team was selected to lead the Institute for Research's participation in a large multi-site Phase III vaccine trial funded by The Foundation, starting in a three months' time.

This is an important moment for The Institute. Although they have participated in trials before, this one will be the largest and the most high-profile trial they have worked on. Additionally, they have recently moved to a new campus, with expanded office and laboratory space and there are plans to grow even more. In fact, The Institute has included becoming a regional centre for clinical trials in their most recent strategic plan, capitalising on their growth to take on a more important role at the national level and advance their core mission. Nevertheless, this rapid growth has left The Institute with relatively little time to focus on the professional development of staff.

So, perhaps it is fortunate that, as part of the preparation for the trial, The Institute has been awarded funding from The Foundation (the donor that is, in part, funding the study) to train 50 staff members from diverse backgrounds on Good Clinical Practices. This seems like an ideal opportunity for The Institute, providing funding and incentives to advance the professional credentials of their staff and strengthening their relationship with The Foundation, which could be a key partner for future projects. In some sense, this is a test of The Institute's new staff and facilities. The top administrators are enthusiastic and, in consultation with department heads, select the 50 staff members who will participate. Maria, who has a strong background in Good Clinical Practices, is asked to design and lead the training.

Maria has always enjoyed teaching and has mentored several master's and PhD candidates in recent years, but given her workload, designing, and running the course will be challenging. In addition, The Institute has informed her that The Foundation has included a results-based evaluation of the workshop in its reporting requirements for the overall project. As a funder, The Foundation is well-known for its focus on results – and for demanding that funded institutions and programmes be able to articulate and back-up their results using hard data. The Foundation is insistent that all 50 workshop participants should be assessed and that at least 80% should pass the course, but they also want to know to what degree the training changes staff capacity at The Institute. Maria is aware of pressure for the training to go well, and for the reporting requirements to be met scrupulously. There's a sense that The Foundation is testing The Institute to see what capacity they have for moving quickly and that, if the training, goes well, there is a possibility that The Foundation might fund a repeat workshop, or additional new trainings in the future.

Given that she has little time to plan and launch the workshop, Maria gets to work right away on Monday morning. Her priority is to work out the agenda. She has been given just three days for the workshop, and her department head needs to know what she needs to budget in terms of faculty member hours, classrooms, and materials. Then, on Monday afternoon, Maria gets an email: The Foundation has called and has asked for the training, and its M&E plan, to be on the agenda for their next meeting with The Institute – on Friday! Maria will need to attend this meeting and be prepared to present a Results Framework for the training, including the goal, objectives, input, output, outcome, and impact indicators, and data sources. It looks like the next three days are going to be busy.