IMPACT FRAME –RESEARCH PAPER

1.1 Concept

In our maiden effort on "Impact Frame: in the eyes of who" we attempted to synergize log frame and impact frame to develop a comprehensive tool. The core objective was to track change in the eyes of beneficiary and help implementing agencies to comprehensively manage the project, without much workload. In fact this enabled a small group to come together to discuss on the nitty-gritty of Planning Monitoring Evaluation [PME] cycle. This brought out insightful discussions on the approach, method and framework apart from development of a frame of reference encompassing PME.

Our continuous effort to prune, field test, validate and encourage organizations to adept to impact frame sparked good insights. One significant felt-need was to develop a comprehensive framework with PME and documenting tools. PME remain as a trinity for development project while, we believe that, the success is complete, only when the documentation and managerial decision is inbuilt into it. The physical distance between the ultimate donor and ultimate beneficiary has certainly slimmed due to effective reporting by the change agents and post-funding-field-visits by the donor. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive framework to guide one to generate a comprehensive Impact Oriented Project Management Information System [IPMIS] for an organization to get guided, to take stock and to plan for future.

The end line evaluation reports of the projects have contributed to check the alignment of the input, activity, output, outcome, imminent change, progressive change and sustained changes. The focus gets magnified when we talk about impact of one's intervention. Because here the differences spring from the concept, through approach, method, logic, stages, and halts at what and how to go about for a fruitful conclusion in a convincing manner for all the stakeholders interests. All the multiple players and controllable and uncontrollable drivers encourages one to look in for the time, direction, rate and dynamism involved in assessing impact. In this research we opine that Impact should be from the eyes of all primary stakeholders to understand their meaningful role in the intervention. By this we also believe that there will be more criss-cross of information flow between stakeholders and the degree of attribution gap will be minimized.

Thus, we attempt to construct a comprehensive framework with significant information on target populace at the starting point of intervention, involve them in planning process, develop monitoring tools with reliable participatory techniques, assess impact from primary stake holder's eyes, built in for significant trackers of change and provide guidelines to validate reports. All these as a complementary effect will yield a IPMIS to make suitable decisions and plan.

1.2 Purpose of second edition

At first our earlier approach has not attempted to capture quantity, corresponding time and dynamism through the indicators developed.   Here we will be able to initiate so and this can be visualized in the section titled on uniqueness of this approach.

Second when we initiated to start the research various concepts, terminologies and nomenclature were prevalent and we landed up in chaos. We decided to give the freedom of choice and

interpretation with the user to adept to any given definitions or approach no matter Gtz, OECD, etc.

Third, as a project holder, we were utilizing NGO-IDEAs toolbox for monitoring with the plan to qualify the planning tool. By this we feel that we were losing our focus from developing a common frame of reference for PME to qualifying participatory monitoring tool. In this second attempt we would like to look at a comprehensive framework to assess change from all dimensions with minimal attribution gap and maximizing information for decision support.

Fourth, in our earlier approach we were not able to design a loop and locate impact in the total project cycle. In this second phase we intend to address this through Input-Output-Outcome-Impact cycle where in all the above factors are to be connected.

One of the serious discussions in all the impact workshops are how do we go about measuring when we do not have a baseline. Hence our nine step formula given in the earlier version is redesigned to start from the people and end with the people. Fifth, we would like to start with the mapping of the need of the people; then identify the changes that one contemplates; look in for multidimensional changes and end with mapping of improvement and need for next intervention.

Sixth, our earlier attempt addressed change from individual to group through monitoring tool. But here we would like to define what change is? What do people mean by change? Define the time required to create such change! Define the trackers of change precisely from the eyes of primary stakes; identify if the changes are linear or curvilinear or multi linear etc.; develop indicators of monitoring evaluation and measurement.

1.4 Uniqueness of current approach

- This edition is going to lay emphasize and importance of a some starting pole no matter it is baseline, participatory wealth ranking, combined wealth ranking etc.

- This edition is attempting to develop a framework merging PME cycle so as to contribute for project MIS.

- In our earlier approach when we started to link log frame and impact frame we depended upon the statements in the place of indicators and superimposition of statements in the place of escalation. This research is going to focus on participatory stock taking of current situation and develop trackers of change, a kind of merger of indicators and sectors. This will throw insights for statistical validation of the change indicators.

- This approach focuses on collective stock taking of what people status is and what each stake can contribute to change and where have they landed up finally. This will also enable one to visualize the sustainability quotient of the interventions beyond the project period.

- This frame work can be applied to any project no matter the intervention is planned for individual, group or community.

- In our earlier version, concepts of toolbox and log frame were merged but this edition aims to develop a comprehensive framework merging qualitative- quantitative indicators, project cycle, log frame matrix, output-outcome and impact continuum and alignment of baseline and end line. All this only enable one to benefit multiple forms by generating PMIS.

- The crux here is escalation of indicators which are termed as trackers. In this research we focus on the relationship between the attributable trackers and for its consistency between the baseline, midline and end line with due escalation of individual changes. Here by in this approach a suitable IPMIS will be created with less extra effort with a meaningful means of verification.

- More insights will be gained in project application. In longer run we will be able to develop bench marking for such interventions among the required stakes.

- The template proposed by us will enhance the visible dynamism across the chain of change, chance to govern and enhance accountability of participating stakeholders.

- This frame work enables us to visualize the need chain. By using this, one will be able to visualize the link between the need of the target, NGO wants/abilities, donor philosophy, and empowerment of the target, sustainability of the change and credibility of the project by enhanced governance, transparency, and accountability and attain impact.

- In this research we are attempting to look into the fixed/common drivers and varying drivers of change and will be able to give a meaningful progression.

- This research still holds good with the propounded uniqueness of our maiden research such as: do all stakes know if they travel willingly and meaningfully in a right direction; enhance and balance both quality and quantitative dimensions; know the exact causes of the result and unwound the visible gaps; minimize subjectivity; discuss about efficiency and effectiveness; enhance visibility quotient; all stake centric toolkit

- The scope of this project is to avail the IPMIS and develop framework for all type of projects, apply the framework at any point of Project time; easy fixation of trackers of PME; etc.

1.5   Methods and setting of current research

The modified impact frame is developed out of a project discussion workshop of two organizations. The framework at the first level will be pretested with the two of KKS projects before applying it to the two child centered projects. These organizations work for children development with a focus on eradication of child labor in the districts of Andhra Pradesh. There are bridge schools constructed to plan mid term intervention.

We are to choose select groups of children, parents and schools to conduct this study. Here in we will be linking indicators that would yield direct and indirect results.

Impact is to be measured through the eyes of children, parents, organization, schools and tertiary stakes. As per the project proposal the change anticipated is to bridge them to regular schools and discourage them to become a child labor.

1.6 Conceptual flow and Impact frame

As mentioned over in our first publication we go by the definition of impact as "the systematic analysis of the lasting and significant changes- positive or negative, intended or not – in people's lives brought about by a given action or a series of actions".

One of the lingering questions for any new method is where to start and how to proceed with? In due course of action one tends to get a doubt if the direction of path is right and what is the breakdown mechanism for malfunctioning.

When this idea of super-composite model was proposed to the partners, in one of our workshop, they got convinced with the direction but were equally unclear as how to proceed with. The confusion can be attributed for two reasons: one how to insert this frame in the mid of the project process? And two how do get all in one IPMIS?

The conceptual framewor and the modified impact frame

PME	Planning	Activities begin with Monitoring			Review / Evaluation		
Stages	Stage 1 A kind of baseline	Stage 2 A kind of proposal	Stage 3 A kind of monitoring tool designed	Stage 4 A kind of reporting of work	Stage 5 A kind of evaluation begins	Stage 6 A kind of system set to track changes	Stage 7 A kind of sustained change in society
Components of Impact frame II	Situation/ problem analysis or baseline	Input planed by the NGO	Output- desired or attained	Outcome- gained by stakes	Imminent change recorded	progressive change - a practice	Sustained change yielding new direction for project
Project Life	Project Intervention period				End line or stock taking		
	Impact Time frame						
	Sustainability Quotient						