

BENCHMARK SETTING WORKSHEET

PURPOSE

As the project team worked to develop overarching monitoring indicators for Standard Days Method® (SDM) scale-up, it became apparent that a tool would be needed to help replicate goal setting both over the project period and annually within each country. The benchmark setting worksheet was developed to guide country teams through the process of establishing their in-country targets in accordance with global project goals and indicators. The worksheet is intended to accompany the benchmark tool (See Monitoring & Supervision Tool #1).

HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED AND USED

The benchmark setting worksheet was the culmination of a series of discussions among core IRH research staff and with key stakeholders including country representatives, partner organizations, and USAID. While the research team was primarily responsible for setting realistic and measurable project goals, participatory methods were important in validating the logic and feasibility of the goals with stakeholders. Country staff was particularly key to adapting indicator definitions (especially in listing national normative documents to count in vertical scale-up) and targets to country contexts.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Participatory methods in the form of interactive, engaging discussions are critical

to the benchmark setting process. A discussion guide in the form of a worksheet are paramount to fruitful conversations that yield useful, applicable results that can be captured and disseminated in a simple manner.

- Discussion questions in the worksheet must explicitly highlight both horizontal and vertical scale-up so that participants are driven to consider scale-up holistically. As vertical questions tended to be harder to state, however, sufficient time should be included for thorough discussion among project staff and those completing the worksheet.
- In multi-country initiatives, Individual country needs need to be balanced with uniformity across the initiatives. This includes defining and operationalizing indicators in a manner that simultaneously depicts country-specific phenomena while allowing standardization for later comparison across countries. It also includes determining the appropriate and possibly individualized setting of intervals for collecting the data if annual benchmarks are not suitable.

VALUES

An inherent value of SDM is stakeholder involvement. Engaging stakeholders in all aspects of scale-up, including MLE, brings ownership to the process. Moreover, including stakeholders from the beginning in the benchmarking phase facilitates data collection and process monitoring throughout the scale-up process.



BENCHMARK SETTING WORKSHEET

Each innovation going to scale will have to its own unique set of horizontal and vertical scale-up benchmarks. To establish those benchmarks, an organization should set a final goal(s) for scale-up, identify indicators that will measure progress towards that goal, and establish intermediary benchmarks to track progress towards the goal(s).

Step 1: Establish end-of-scale-up goals and targets

Conduct a visioning exercise with key staff and stakeholders to establish scale-up goals and targets. Consider both *availability* of the innovation and *institutionalization* of the innovation.

At the end of the scale-up phase, where will the innovation be in terms of availability?

At the end of the scale-up phase, to what extent will the innovation be integrated into critical policies, organizational systems and normative structures that support the innovation's sustained availability at service sites?



Step 2: Build on the goals articulated in Step 1 to establish benchmarks

Identify quantifiable indicators that can be tracked to monitor scale-up progress. To operationalize indicators, establish an End-of Scale-up Benchmark Target for each indicator. Finally, establish intermediary benchmarks that can be used to track progress on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis.

Horizontal Benchmarks

For health products, services, and approaches, indicators are often linked to *training* of providers and to *availability of the innovation at service sites or village/district sites*, the *quality* of the offered innovation, and the *availability of promotional materials* that let consumers know that a new innovation exists.

Horizontal Benchmarks			
Indicator	End of Scale-up Benchmark Targets	Intermediary Benchmarks	
Example: Number of providers trained in innovation	500	Year 1	50
		Year 2	100
		Year 3	150
		Year 4	200
		Period 1	
		Period 2	
		Period 3	
		Period 4	
		Period 1	
		Period 2	
		Period 3	
		Period 4	
		Period 1	
		Period 2	
		Period 3	
		Period 4	



Vertical Benchmarks

For health products, services, and approaches, indicators are often linked to the presence of the innovation in normative documents such as *policies, standards, and service protocols*. Indicators are also often linked to the integration of the innovation into support systems that allow the innovation to be offered, such as its integration into *provider training programs, supervision systems, procurement systems, and reporting systems*.

To operationalize such indicators, list specific policies, protocols, and systems into which the innovation will be integrated. Identify intermediary steps involved in the process of achieving the end-of scale-up benchmark

Vertical Benchmarks				
Indicator	Intermediary Steps	End of Scale-up Benchmark Targets	Intermediary Benchmarks/Process Status	
Example: Innovation present in key policy documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry agrees to include innovation in norms Draft language approved by Ministry Updated FP Norms rolled out 	Innovation present in National Family Planning Norms	Year 1	
			Year 2	
			Year 3	
			Year 4	
Example: Innovation integrated into reporting systems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation integrated in into reporting system guidelines Innovation integrated in into service registers Innovation integrated in into district reports Innovation integrated in into central reports 	Innovation present in national reporting system	Year 1	
			Year 2	
			Year 3	
			Year 4	
			Period 1	
			Period 2	
			Period 3	
			Period 4	
			Period 1	
			Period 2	
			Period 3	
			Period 4	

