

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

MEASURE Evaluation PIMA supports the rollout of the electronic OVC Longitudinal Management Information System (OLMIS). OLMIS helps United States Government (USG)-funded OVC programs to capture, report on, and track accurate data and, subsequently, to use the data for decision making. This thematic update focuses on peer-to-peer support on the use of OLMIS.

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Using Social Media to Provide Feedback and Peer Support to Improve the Quality of Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Children and households affected by HIV and AIDS face many life challenges. Data are crucial components for successful planning and decisions about programs designed to help them cope. In order to respond appropriately to changing needs over time for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), both aggregate data and data on services provided for individual cases over time are essential.

Getting these data, however, can be difficult. Often, standard tools are lacking, staff responsible for data collection have limited skills, and protocols on data quality may not exist to guide collection and transmission of OVC data.

To address these obstacles, MEASURE Evaluation PIMA (MEval-PIMA), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), was asked to support the rollout of OLMIS. OLMIS helps USG-funded OVC programs to capture, report, and track accurate data and, subsequently, to use the data for decision making.

After OLMIS was deployed to 187 sites across 12 USG OVC projects in 40 countries in Kenya, a need emerged to develop an innovative and efficient feedback and support mechanism to respond to user comments and enquiries. A WhatsApp social networking group for the 12 projects was formed to achieve three objectives:

1. Ensure sustainability, by building the capacity of partner monitoring and evaluation (M&E) teams and community-based organizations (CBOs) to respond to emerging issues and to use the system with minimal support from MEval-PIMA
2. Encourage peer-to-peer support and learning among CBOs
3. Strengthen the capacity of users to capture accurate data for decision making through the system

Issues identified by CBO end users are handled in two ways. First, other CBOs are given a chance to respond to the matter (peer-to-



As organizations deliver services, they also collect huge volumes of data from individuals. Management of such data is a challenge without an electronic system.

peer) in the general forum on WhatsApp. If this does not work and the issue can only be addressed beyond the peer level, a partner project M&E team helps the CBO to address the issue. In the event that the M&E team can't solve the problem, MEval-PIMA's technical team and the project's M&E team come together in an administration forum. This forum gives MEval-PIMA an opportunity to clarify complicated issues and builds the capacity of the project M&E team to respond to CBOs with minimal support from MEval-PIMA.

MEval-PIMA has noticed that use of the social media app has increased the volume of targeted interactions within the forums and reduced the frequency of support calls from end users. In turn, calls for MEval-PIMA's technical assistance have declined—an indication of the system's maturity and sustainability. The 12 projects are now using OLMIS to capture data, improve services, and accurately report to the USG. The OVC projects are able to provide real-time support to users and conduct spontaneous checks to track progress, to learn, and to celebrate best-performing users.

This use of a simple online platform shows that networking on social media can encourage knowledge exchange and learning and improve the sustainability of information systems.

A partner in the OVC project reports that the platform helps improve reporting rates and timely feedback.

“Through the group interactions, the local implementing partners not only found a platform for discussing their OLMIS-related issues but also received instant technical support in addressing gaps in implementation, troubleshooting OLMIS problems, and providing peer-to-peer learning and support in data quality management of the OVC program. For example, the overall Data for Accountability, Transparency, and Impact Monitoring (DATIM) reporting rate for Samburu County was at 98 percent for the July–September 2016 quarter and at 99 percent for the annual target for the number of OVC served within the program.”

—Aphiaplus Soudie Okwara, Imaarisha M&E officer, Samburu County

For more on MEval-PIMA's work on OLMIS visit: <https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/fs-16-184>

To read more about MEASURE Evaluation PIMA, <http://www.measureevaluation.org/pima>

Photo: Yvonne Ofiena, MEASURE Evaluation PIMA



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