



Society for International Development  
Washington Chapter

# FY 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT

Monitoring & Evaluation Workgroup

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## MONITORING & EVALUATION WORKGROUP

The SID-Washington (SID-W) Monitoring and Evaluation Workgroup is a group of individuals actively engaged in the processes of data monitoring and program evaluation. With events ranging from the consultation process of the SDGs to performance monitoring webinars, this Workgroup aims to inform on the evolving practices and strategies of monitoring and evaluation.



## Dear Members of the Monitoring & Evaluation Workgroup,

We are happy to report that we had another productive year, with programming that was entirely virtual! As we reflect on the past year, the Workgroup produced several great events, such as **A Year Into COVID-19: Transformation & Best Practices in MEL** and a planning meeting. We are currently working on a new and exciting slate of events for FY 2022, so stayed tuned for more information!

We would like to thank outgoing Co-Chairs **Josh Mandell** and **Erica Holzaepfel**, who put on many fantastic events during their tenure. We wish them well in their future endeavors! We would also like to welcome new Co-Chairs **Erkin Yalcin** and **Lee Sutton** who join us this year.

After 5 years with our team, **Paul Sherman**, our Director of Programs, will be stepping down from his role to pursue graduate studies. Paul is still involved with SID-Washington as a Consultant. Thank you, Paul, for your effort and commitment to the Workgroups and their programming!

Stepping into Paul's role, we would like to welcome **Malavika Randive** as our new Program Coordinator. Malavika will be working closely with our Co-Chairs in planning events for the Workgroup.

Thank you for your continued interest and support of the Workgroups. We hope to see you at future SID-Washington events! If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to send an email to [events@sidw.org](mailto:events@sidw.org).

Best regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine Raphaelson".

Katherine Raphaelson



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malavika Randive".

Malavika Randive



**Erica  
Holzaepfel**

Senior Director of Programs,  
The QED Group, LLC

As Senior Director of Programs, Erica provides leadership, strategic direction, contractual and budgetary oversight, quality assurance, technical support, and supervision to a portfolio of projects, programs, and staff.

Erica A. Holzaepfel is a senior strategy, research, and learning professional with more than 15 years of experience acquired through both management and technical positions. She is committed to enhancing client strategies and learning to strengthen the design, implementation, and effectiveness of investments that seek to improve the lives and livelihoods of marginalized and vulnerable populations. As a leader and mentor of diverse staff, she excels at problem solving, guiding teams to develop and deliver high-quality solutions, building and maintaining relationships, and formulating strategic recommendations to improve client performance. Erica has served as Team Leader, Primary Investigator, and Director on more than 40 evaluations, assessments, and studies conducted in over 30 countries around the world. Through these assignments, she has honed her technical expertise in forced migration, humanitarian emergencies, counter-trafficking, nutrition, food security, livelihoods, conflict, human rights, agriculture, youth, and gender.

Erica received her B.A. from St. Lawrence University and holds dual master's degrees from Tufts University Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy as well as a Graduate Certificate in Impact Evaluation from the School of Public Policy at Georgetown University.



**Josh  
Mandell**

Lead for Global Development,  
IBM Services

Josh Mandell is an international development specialist and executive at IBM Services on the Foreign Affairs team. He leads IBM's effort to partner with development institutions and bring the best of IBM to solve global development challenges. Prior to IBM, Josh led strategy and business development for DevResults, a technology company focused on data management and MEL software. Before DevResults, Josh was on the delivery side, where he focused on global education and training. He has an undergraduate degree in Middle East and African Studies from Trinity College, as well as an MPA from NYU Wagner School of Public Service.

**Thursday, August 6, 2020**  
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM ET | Online via Zoom

Monitoring & Evaluation Workgroup Planning Meeting

**Tuesday, February 16, 2021**  
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM ET | Online via Zoom

A Year Into COVID-19: Transformation & Best Practices in MEL



# Monitoring and Evaluation Workgroup Planning Meeting

Workgroup: **Erica Holzaepfel**, Senior Director of Programs, The QED Group, LLC  
 Co-Chairs: **Josh Mandell**, Lead for Global Development, IBM Services

**Event Description:** The Monitoring & Evaluation for Development Workgroup met on Thursday, August 6th at 12:00 PM to plan events for the group in the next year. In recent months, the group organized events on topics such as *Emerging Technology in MERL - What is out there, and how is it being used?* All members were encouraged to join and to bring ideas for event formats and topics.

## Key Takeaways:

### I. Welcome and Introductions

**Erica Holzaepfel** (The QED Group) and **Josh Mandell** (IBM Services) began the event with introductions, inviting each participant to say a few words.

### II. Key Ideas from the Main Discussion

#### 1) Formats and best practices for holding events

In the age of COVID-19, participants want to have a virtual space that is both collaborative and engaging. Rather than only listening to panelists and a moderator, event organizers should engage attendees as often as they can. Tools to enable this include utilizing small breakout rooms, asking questions to engage the audience, and exploring alternative event platforms.

#### 2) Future event topics

Many possible event topics were discussed. To best gauge interest, a survey will be sent out, from which participants can indicate their preferences for future events. Topics included:

- What are the best practices for operating in the state of a pandemic?
- How can we logistically disseminate learning? Considerations include coordinating internationally, developing plans, and growing and working together.
- How can we do scenario planning virtually, and what is the infrastructure to do it correctly?
- Events focused on non-USAID clients.
- New monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) markets and practices.
- Real time data management.
- COVID-19 findings from monitoring and evaluation practices.

### III. Next Steps

Based on the discussion and the survey, the co-chairs will compile the feedback from the meeting and coordinate with SID-Washington staff to roll out exciting events over the course of the next year



## A Year Into COVID-19: Transformation & Best Practices in MEL

Moderator: **Samantha Levine-Finley**, Learning Advisor, USAID Knowledge, Data, Learning, and Training (KDLT), The QED Group LLC

Panelists: **Aachal Chand**, Deputy Head of Nutrition, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), South Sudan  
**Dr. Kgauhelo Lekalakala**, South Africa National Program Manager, Pact  
**Lotta Sandin**, Senior Learning Advisor, The QED Group LLC  
**Zoë Sutherland**, Senior Consultant, Inclusive Growth and Climate Change, Itad  
**Catherine Winn**, Global Development Associate, Fraym  
**Mike Klein**, Director, Digital & Data Governance and Transformation (DDGT), IMC  
**Aaron Roesch**, Senior Policy Analyst, Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning, USAID  
**Lauren Serpe (MA)**, Deputy Technical Director, Global Results and Measurement Team, Pact  
**Bann Tabara**, Senior Manager, Women's Protection and Empowerment, International Rescue Committee  
**Lemlem Zeleke Kebede**, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning Technical Specialist, World Vision Canada

**Event Description:** A year into the COVID-19 pandemic, global development organizations have adapted to operational constraints by accelerating digital transformation and in some cases, adopting entirely new ways of working. In this event with the Health & Nutrition Workgroup and the Monitoring & Evaluation Workgroup, colleagues shared best practices on monitoring, evaluation, and learning in a socially distanced world. We began with an opening by Aaron Roesch of USAID PPL to discuss findings from the Agency's Over the Horizon initiative, as well as a host of speakers in lightning talk format.

### Key Takeaways:

#### 1) Adapting to new ways of working

**Aaron Roesch** (USAID) kicked off the event with a discussion of USAID's Over the Horizon Strategic Review, which evaluated the current landscape of development and what future scenarios may look like in a world altered by COVID-19. To inform recommendations for how USAID should adapt, the strategic review included three main parts: (1) landscape analysis, (2) scenario planning exercises, and (3) policy, program, and operational data analysis. Roesch emphasized the value of the initiative's scenario planning exercises, which involved in-depth brainstorming sessions from 75 technical experts across USAID. The process of these meetings encouraged reflection on current procedures and provided structure to help build and integrate new capabilities into policy and planning.

#### 2) Digital Transformation: Virtual Data Collection

**Catherine Winn** (Fraym) discussed how machine learning at Fraym leverages cutting-edge software to address the primary data collection gaps during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fraym software used machine learning to address the expanded need for data and limited collection ability that resulted from COVID-19. Winn explained how machine learning combined remote sensed data with existing data sets gathered from professionally enumerated household surveys. Data was then used to create high resolution heat maps of hundreds of population indicators, which enabled policy makers and responders to quantify the vulnerability of localities at the square kilometer level.

**Lemlem Kabadah** (World Vision Canada) outlined the process of secondary data collection while working remotely with beneficiaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Local staff were provided with hygienic materials (masks, hand sanitizer and soap);

and virtual training on how to conduct safe, socially distanced data collection. Kabeledah noted that unreliable internet was a challenge. With this in mind, a blended approach of in person and virtual is being planned for World Vision Canada's Youth in Parliament training program in Latin America.

**Lauren Serpe** (Pact) discussed how Pact's governance, civil society and peacebuilding program's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) staff have adapted during COVID-19. Digital transition makers included virtual data collection and capacity development in using secure platforms. Positive outcomes have included increased capacity of local data collectors and establishment of efficient, remote training for field professionals. Serpe noted that a challenge of virtual data collection was that staff had less direct contact with communities and had to instead rely on NGOs as proxies for information.

**Bann Tabara** (International Rescue Committee or IRC) explained how IRC adapted its Girl Shine curriculum to be delivered remotely using WhatsApp. In response to a rise in domestic violence experienced by girls aged 14-18 during the pandemic, WhatsApp became a key source of access to therapy. Tabara noted an increase in knowledge, monitoring and quality checks. Based on surveys and groups, 89% of therapy participants reported that they felt safer and better prepared to make decisions regarding their own safety. Tabara acknowledged connectivity problems associated with remote technologies, but the transition has been successful overall.

**Aachal Chand** (United Nations, World Food Program or WFP) talked about how WFP's nutrition program in South Sudan adjusted monitoring to ensure data was available to inform programmatic decisions and admissions into the treatment program. Adjustments included: (1) volunteer remote training; (2) changing health screen schedules to reduce overcrowding; and (3) coordinating with partners to put hygiene measures in place. Chand shared that creating a system of community-based monitors enabled a better flow of communication.

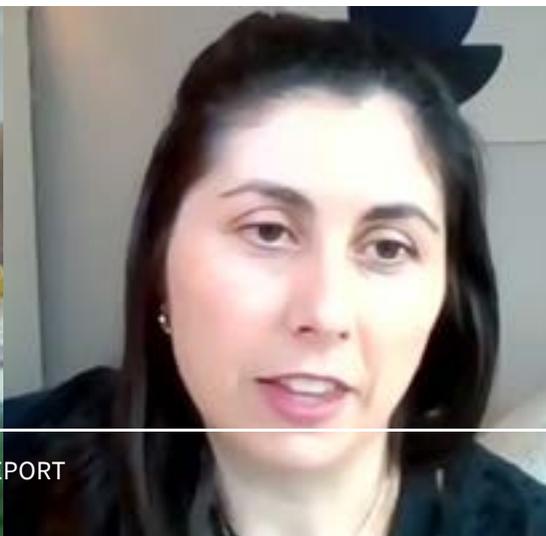
Kgauhelo Lekalakala (Pact) discussed how the Government Capacity Building and Support program (GCBS) in South Africa has swiftly adapted case management approaches and tools for remote service provision. This included developing updated case management guidelines and risk assessments; more counseling; training to upskill for COVID-19; and key counseling skills. Lekalakala noted challenges getting information to beneficiaries and that Zoom trainings and partnerships were key to solving this.

**Michael Klein** (IMC Worldwide) discussed how IMC uses cases on mapping for health facilities to support vaccinations using Facebook Population Density maps, WorldPop, and OpenStreetMap to calculate the populations that need to be served. Klein emphasized the importance of existing data sets and creating healthy data systems.

**Lotta Sandin** (The QED Group LLC) shared four lessons to take away:

- If your organization has a process for adaptive management and learning put in place, dramatic shifts in operation—such as those experienced during COVID-19—are easier.
- There is a new interest for using monitoring systems to evaluate and predict contextual shifts.
- USAID has the process in place and capability to shift quickly.
- All implementing partners can verify that leadership and collaboration is imperative during times of change.

**Zoë Sutherland** (Itad) discussed the benefits and challenges in completing a case study across four countries during the pandemic. One benefit included being able to incorporate more consultants into remote interviews, which led to updated business procedures such as ensuring consistent practices in debriefs and other operations.



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**FY 2021 Workgroup Co-Chairs**

Erica Holzaepfel - Senior Director of Programs, The QED Group LLC

Josh Mandell - Lead for Global Development, IBM Services

**Photo Credit**

Paul A. Sherman - Director of Programs  
Screenshots from various SID-W events  
Stock images from Canva

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