Innovative ways of collecting data: Lessons from Winning Start/G-United

September 2018
There is a gap between what researchers believe is effective in development and what is implemented on the ground. We fill that gap.
Evidence Action's in-house incubator, responsible for building the next generation of at-scale, cost-effective programs. Our incubator works by identifying promising, research-backed ideas, then designing scalable prototypes that can be pressure-tested and tested-at-scale.
Winning Start and G-United

**Winning Start** is designed around TaRL evidence showing volunteer-led, after-school support models to be one of the most effective.

Winning Start offers an innovative way to invest in youth while simultaneously achieving important gains in education.

In 2014, Evidence Action partnered with the Government of Kenya to pioneer the TaRL model through **G-United** - a national youth volunteer program.

Implemented by the Government of Kenya, G-United recruits youth volunteers to serve as facilitators of remedial sessions in select schools across the country.
G-United is executed in FIVE key phases: county activation, recruitment and selection, training and deployment, volunteer service and closure.

**County Activation**

Schools are selected by county committees to participate in G-United and local homestays for volunteers identified.

**Recruitment & Selection**

Volunteers apply to join the program and go through various stages of the selection process.

**Training & Deployment**

Volunteers are trained in waves and deployed to participating schools.

**Volunteer Service**

Volunteers facilitate remedial sessions and engage in community service, gaining professional skills in the process.

**Closure & Alumni**

Volunteers are given a Certificate and a Letter of Recommendation from the Government of Kenya, then join Alumni Connect.
G-United Scale

2019 Cohort 5
1,600 volunteers
800 schools
22 counties

2018 Cohort 4
1,228 volunteers
650 schools
20 counties

2017 Cohort 3
500+ volunteers
285 schools
19 counties

2016 Cohort 2
140+ volunteers
80+ schools
10 counties

2014 Cohort 1
140+ volunteers
70+ schools
7 counties

Aspire. Inspire. Connect
Innovation: An iterative process vs a eureka moment
The Iterative Process: What to collect?

1. Start with ‘what do you want to know? (theory of change; key indicators)

2. Reduce your list ‘what will be critical in decision making? what can be acted on?’ (prioritization)

3. Ask ‘who will make the decision?’ (level of disaggregation in data collection)

4. Decide ‘who needs to collect the data?’ (data source)

5. Get into the details ‘when and how much to collect?’ (sample size, frequency, timing with implementation)
What is your Theory of Change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUT</th>
<th>OUTPUT</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular funds for volunteer and homestay stipends</td>
<td>Trained _____ _____ _____ _____ and _____ level of learners assessed</td>
<td>Learners improve in literacy and numeracy levels</td>
<td>Education outcomes of the class improves _____ _____ _____</td>
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<td>Tools for recruitment and placement of volunteers</td>
<td>Volunteers retained in the program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trainers and training material on TaRL</td>
<td>____ _____ conduct regular TaRL sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>_______ and monitoring tools and processes</td>
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What do you want to collect?

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<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Timing and Frequency</th>
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</table>
The Iterative Process: How to collect?

1. Consider your context ‘what options are available to collect data?’ (mediums of data collection)

2. Ask ‘what will the data quality be for each option?’ (quality tradeoffs)

3. Consider your budget ‘how much money do you have for data collection?’ (cost tradeoffs)

Right size the data collection method for you!
What is the right medium for your data collection?

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<th>Mediums</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>Paper (and data entry)</td>
<td>Diaries, Record books, Paper surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government MIS systems</td>
<td>EMIS, DHIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone Call (and logging)</td>
<td>Phone survey, Hotline</td>
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<td>Call logging systems: Google forms, google sheets, LiveAgent</td>
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<td>SMS survey platform</td>
<td>Echo Mobile</td>
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<td>Pull SMS platform</td>
<td>SMS Leopard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online survey (free and paid)</td>
<td>Google forms, SurveyGizmo, Typeform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smart phones/Tablets survey tools</td>
<td>CommCare, Survey CTO, ODK</td>
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Select the right combination of mediums for your context
The Iterative Process: Testing the ideas

Example: SMS surveys
- **Echomobile** platform selected to collect data after piloting with volunteers
- Volunteers receive the survey on Friday evenings. Those who don't complete the survey by Friday, receive an automatic **reminder SMS** on Saturday morning to complete the survey.
- **Surveys are kept short**, of a maximum length of 8-10 questions

**Iterations resulted in:**
- Increased volunteer response rate - weekly response rate at 89%
- Decreased data errors in responses - 92% of volunteers’ surveys are error free
The Iterative Process: Further refinement
Takeaways!

1. Define your Theory of Change: what do you want to know?

2. Think through the details of data collection: who? when? how much?

3. Identify your options: what are the quality and cost tradeoffs?

4. Start collecting: test your ideas, get feedback and keep iterating