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### Improving monitoring and evaluation capacity in an organization with a global reach: A mentoring and thought leadership approach

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**Program/Project Purpose:** PATH, an international non-profit, working in over 70 countries, has initiated a program to build capacity in global Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) staff. Like many non-profits, PATH has limited funds to build capacity of its staff and partners. Tools such as orientations, trainings and e-learning courses continue to be great channels to communicate best practices. However, the challenge remains how a decentralized organization can create an active learning environment that enables professionals to assess their competencies, identify priority areas for improvement, and create opportunities to apply and eventually master new skills. The M&E Professional Development Pathway (PREP), is a structured mentoring and thought leadership cultivation initiative. PREP originated out of the experience that e-learning courses alone were failing to provide adult learners with enough information for lasting capacity building in M&E skills; and that short-term technical assistance was not enough to provide opportunities for applied learning. PREP was created to bring together multiple learning approaches. The aims of this program are to work with a cohort of professionals to increase knowledge of M&E, provide structured opportunities to build skills, and cultivate a cohesive M&E discipline by formally connecting professionals from different parts of the organization.

**Structure/Method/Design:** This new and unique approach, was a nine-month long blended learning and mentorship program. Through the program, PATH staff from 22 offices worldwide apply to participate. After acceptance, the program features monthly webinars on 10 key competencies in M&E, mentor meetings on one particular competency area, and a community of peers to support growth.

**Outcomes & Evaluation:** PREP was designed to systematically track the progress of skill development by individuals at PATH. By following and evaluating the professional development of a few individuals, the M&E Dept. was able to understand the effects of capacity building for the organization. In addition to strengthened core competencies, the program evaluated progress against a learning plan outlining the intended development of the participant. During the pilot year (6 mentees), and an implementation year (10 mentees), progress has been tracked on outcomes from these individuals. Increases in both knowledge and experience were found. Relevant outcomes include capacity built, connection across countries and projects established, and contributions to the M&E at the organization. All of these improvements contribute to establishing an M&E discipline at the organization and will improve quality of work.

**Going Forward:** The challenges include continuing to recruit the appropriate level of staff member, with some foundational M&E skills and practice, but the need to improve and invest in other competency areas or broaden experience. Related to this, M&E staff who are skilled and competent do not have a similar program that will invest in building relationships and a community to share work with.

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### Creciendo sanos (“Growing Up Healthy”): An early childhood health and development program in southwest Guatemala

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**Program/Project Purpose:** The first three years of a child’s life are a critical period for brain growth and development with significant consequences for long-term future functioning. The importance of integrated interventions to improve early childhood health and development is widely recognized at an international level with the potential to enhance a child’s physical growth, socio-emotional and cognitive development, and the overall economic productivity of a society. Creciendo Sanos (“Growing Up Healthy”) is an integrated Early Childhood Health and Development Program that was specifically designed for use in southwest Guatemala since 2013. The program combines a series of neonatal home visits, mother-child interactive care groups, and community education sessions to enhance the health and development of children from 0-3 years of age.

**Structure/Method/Design:** The Trifinio area is an impoverished region with a population of approximately 25,000 inhabitants in the coastal lowlands of southwestern Guatemala. Creciendo Sanos participants include workers and the families of workers of a local private sector agricultural corporation. The program has three components: (1) Three Neonatal Home Visits made by community health workers (CHWs) to examine neonates and screen for maternal depression; (2) A series of four Group Health Visits (at 6, 12, 24, and 36 months of age) given by CHWs to educate caregivers on age-appropriate anticipatory guidance and perform growth monitoring/promotion and developmental screening; (3) Monthly mother-child interactive Care Groups from 2 months – 3 years of age that use participatory learning to promote responsive parenting techniques, provide peer support for mothers, reinforce caregiver knowledge of health topics, and perform growth monitoring/promotion.

**Outcomes & Evaluation:** Creciendo Sanos utilizes a mobile phone data collection system using the platform Open Data Kit (ODK). Information is collected by CHWs and then transmitted electronically through the ODK database and imported into a SAS statistical database for analysis. This system will facilitate an overall program evaluation with targeted and timely programmatic responses and rapid cycle feedback. The program evaluation will rely on time series comparisons of registry data from baseline when the program begins to changes in child health outcomes at regular intervals. We will assess program inputs, i.e. Neonatal Home Visits and participation in both Group Health Visits and Care Groups. Developmental screening tools (ASQ, MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory) will be included as indicators for child development, and parent behavior scores (HOME Inventory) will be used to assess exposure to development-promoting behaviors.

**Going Forward:** Creciendo Sanos is in an early implementation phase. We currently have ~150 children enrolled. Ongoing challenges include turnover and training of CHWs and designing a cluster randomized pragmatic effectiveness trial.

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### 72hr patient follow-up as a metric for measuring outcomes and quality of emergency care provided in resource-limited settings: An outcomes study from a rural Ugandan district hospital’s emergency department

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