



## OUTCOME MAPPING

CARE's Tipping Point initiative focuses on addressing the root causes of child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), by promoting the rights of adolescent girls through community level programming and evidence generation in Nepal and Bangladesh, and multi-level advocacy and cross-learning efforts across the globe. Phase 1 (2013-2017) of this three-phase project used participatory feminist and developmental evaluation approaches as the basis of the monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. In line with these approaches, the principal tool enlisted by Tipping Point in Phase 1 for monitoring, reflection, and learning was Outcome Mapping. This brief describes how Tipping Point used the outcome mapping approach to drive programmatic learning, with the aim of helping practitioners and researchers to adapt and apply this methodology to other evaluations. You can find the Phase 1 evaluation's full Outcome Mapping report [here](#) for a detailed methodology and analysis.

### Methodology

Outcome Mapping (OM)<sup>1</sup> is a methodology for planning, monitoring, and evaluating development initiatives that seek to bring about sustainable social change. This method embraces the complexity of change in people and societies, recognizing that change has many drivers. Therefore, rather than seeking to isolate one program's impact, OM maximizes the opportunities for learning about what is, and what is not, helping to facilitate change in communities.

### Overview of the Process



OM monitors incremental changes in individuals and groups with whom the program interacts (termed “boundary partners”), towards a desired behavior (termed “outcome challenge”). Progress towards these changes is gauged using progress markers, which signify the type and extent of change anticipated for each boundary partner. Progress markers fall under three categories: expected, desired, and ideal and are thus labeled as “expect to see,” “like to see,” and “love to see,” with the latter being the most desirable. In both Tipping Point implementation countries, the boundary partners consisted of Tipping Point’s adolescent girls’, adolescent boys’, and parents’ group members. Additionally, other boundary partners were selected in each country specific to that context, such as religious leaders in Bangladesh, and school management committees in Nepal.

To establish Tipping Point’s outcomes and progress markers, the project staff conducted a community participatory analysis (CPA) in target villages in Bangladesh and Nepal to understand the root causes and surface-level behaviors that drive the practice of CEFM. From this analysis, the team was able to identify the types of change in certain behaviors that would signify a shift in underlying norms.

Following the CPA, OM was used to monitor the incremental changes brought about in project areas, utilizing the outcomes, progress markers and boundary partner identified using CPA results (Table 1).

**Table 1. Program Outcomes or “Outcome Challenges”**

<b>OUTCOME 1A</b>	Girls have critical awareness of gender and rights, and strengthened confidence, skills and social capital to make progressive choices in their lives.
<b>OUTCOME 1B</b>	Boys reflect critically on how society’s expectations of “what it means to be men” affect their lives and relationships; advocate for their own rights to freedom of choice in life. specifically about marriage and education; and become role models for gender-equitable values and behaviors. (Boys in both countries are organized in groups to be role models and express their opinions; in Nepal, boys as well as girls are vulnerable to be married off, CEFM is a particular focus for programming).
<b>OUTCOME 2</b>	Parents/guardians value the voices, opinions and aspirations of adolescent girls.
<b>OUTCOME 3</b>	Social norms related to marriage – dowry expectations, perceptions of girls’ potential, and perceptions of marital relationships that promote hegemonic masculinity and ignore girls’ rights – are changing to be more supportive of girls and against early marriage.
<b>OUTCOME 4</b>	Networks, solidarity groups and organizations collaborate together (laterally and vertically) to take actions for girls.
<b>OUTCOME 5</b>	Staff Reflection and Transformation: Staff members continue to reflect on and take up value practices and action that model anti-oppression (based on gender, caste and other group identities) and reflect critically on their beliefs about sexuality.



Data collection occurred through story collection conducted by field-level project staff through discussions and documentation journals. Analysis was done through coding and categorizing the stories that emerged (Table 2). From December 2015 to January 2017, Tipping Point project staff narrated and discussed stories of change during monthly and quarterly reflection meetings, indicating or “tagging” different factors about each story: whether it represented positive or negative change; expected or unexpected change; minor or important change; and an estimated percentage of the change that could be attributed to Tipping Point’s work.

Each story was later coded by identifying the most relevant boundary partner, project outcome, and progress marker reflected in the story and entered into an online database by monitoring, evaluation and learning staff members.

A major advantage of the OM method is the ability to contextualize what is being learned: while each country was pursuing the same set of outcomes, the progress markers differed for Bangladesh and Nepal as the pathway to change inevitably looks different in these distinct settings.

**Table 2. Change stories collected in Bangladesh and Nepal**

<b>BOUNDARY PARTNERS</b>	<b>BANGLADESH</b>	<b>NEPAL</b>
	Stories collected (and translated)	Stories collected and translated
<b>ADOLESCENT GIRLS</b>	169 (78)	155
<b>ADOLESCENT BOYS</b>	149 (55)	91
<b>PARENTS</b>	28 (13)	110
<b>OTHER ACTORS</b>	417 (≅ 95)	94
<b>TOTAL</b>	763	450

## Outcome Mapping as an Evaluation Tool

During Phase 1 of Tipping Point implementation, change stories were primarily used as a monitoring tool to identify activities that did not seem to be helpful. The compilation and analysis of data over the course of implementation provided a snapshot of the social processes, human interactions, and personal development that served as points of reference for the final evaluation of the project.

To shift from a monitoring or continuous learning tool to an evaluative method, Tipping Point engaged a consultant for the final analysis. This final analysis sought to provide a richer picture of the change over time, and thus categorized stories by boundary partner and theme instead of project outcome. Themes included marriage, social norms, collective action, and education. By focusing on the outcomes and progress markers in relation to time and boundary partners, it was possible to develop a more accurate picture of the change that occurred. Basic descriptive statistics for each country’s main boundary partners also proved useful in OM analysis, such as percentage of stories gathered for each progress marker, revealing the prevalence of various themes.

Unfortunately, the final OM analysis also revealed several issues with Tipping Point’s OM data. In each country, the progress markers for the adolescent boys’ groups had been tagged as “expected to see,” but represented positive change (“like to see”) and thus were adjusted by the external consultant to correctly represent such changes in behavior. For Nepal, some of the stories lacked progress markers or were incorrectly coded as “unexpected” even though progress markers indeed already existed for those boundary partners. Additionally, due to time and budget constraints, some of the stories were not translated by the time the data was being analyzed. Because of this, the analysis included the coding of stories in all languages, but the discussion was limited to the stories that had been translated by January 2017.



## Lessons Learned

**Outcome mapping is particularly effective when used in conjunction with other methods of formative research.**

Tipping Point's OM process benefited from the initial CPA conducted – this helped Tipping Point focus on specific changes targeting the underlying causes of child marriage, and the project was able to identify boundary partners, outcomes and progress makers based on the context.

The cyclical learning within the project, facilitated by OM, **enabled the project to make timely adjustments to program interventions and address expected and unintended changes.**

**OM empowers project staff by actively engaging them in the monitoring and evaluation processes,** firmly departing from the notion that monitoring and evaluation are external to programming.

Since coding of the change stories is made individually on a monthly basis, **the chances of incorporating unintended bias and erroneous or subjective coding are considerably high – as evidenced by the final OM analysis.** Similarly, it could have potentially affected the quality of monthly and quarterly monitoring systems.

For more information on Outcome Mapping, or the other [Tipping Point Methods Briefs](#), please contact Anne Sprinkel, Tipping Point Project Director, at [anne.sprinkel@care.org](mailto:anne.sprinkel@care.org).

### ENDNOTES

1 Smutylo, T. (2005). Outcome Mapping: A method for tracking behavioural changes in development programs. ILAC Brief 7. Retrieved from: <https://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/outcome-mapping-a-method-for-tracking-behavioural-changes-in-development-programs>

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