



Monitoring and Evaluation of Accelerated Learning Programs in Afghanistan

Jo Ann Intili, Ph.D.
Edward Kissam, Ph.D.

Aguirre International/CAII APEP Consortium
April, 2004

Understanding the diverse impacts
of accelerated learning for
Afghanistan's children.....

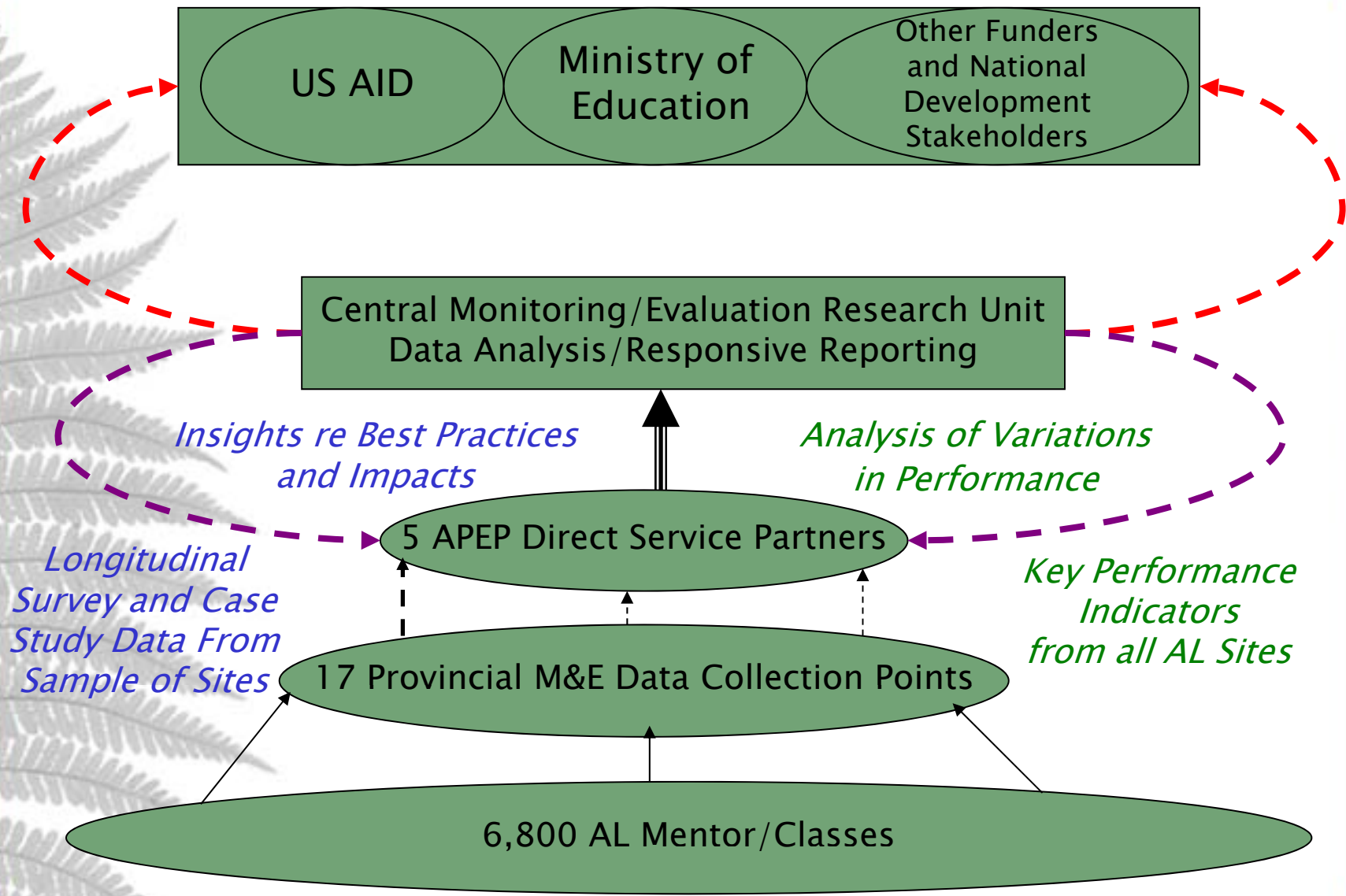


General Principles for Effective M&E Design

- **Validity:** The M&E system must generate data which is both valid and relevant to practical program management and planning priorities
- **Impact:** The M&E system must support analyses which not only document activities and processes but, also, which measure cumulative impacts
- **Flexibility:** M&E analysis and reporting format must be flexible in order to respond to multiple stakeholders' needs and to an evolving program design
- **Monitoring:** Monitoring must provide surveillance for early identification of problem areas and to identify effective innovative techniques
- **Evaluation research:** Evaluation must provide insights as to the dynamics of program effects, types of impacts, and outcomes
- **Stakeholders:** The M&E system must acknowledge program implementers as stakeholders and make findings accessible at all levels

Special Considerations in Design of APEP's M&E System

- Scalability: The system was designed to grow and keep pace with accelerated learning program expansion (15,000→170,000 learners)
- Comparison: The design is consistent with UNESCO's Education for All framework and examines each major component in the program model (community mobilization, "cascade" of master trainer-provincial trainer-mentor training, in-service coaching and supervision).
- Multi-Level: The system has been designed to generate analyses at multiple geographic and organizational levels—district, province, partner organization, project-wide—to build local know-how and experience in data-based program management and planning
- Strategic: System reporting tracks progress in relation to key MOE, USAID, and project strategic objectives (e.g. gender equity, pace of student learning, balanced development; Afghanistan's National Development Framework – Pillars 1–3)
- Replicability: The architecture for data collection, management, analysis, and reporting provides a model which can be easily replicated by the Ministry of Education school/program management.



APEP's Monitoring Component Tracks and Reports:

- Project productivity: # of – trainings, learning center classes, provincial trainers and mentors trained, in-service coaching provided, students served, student grade level gains
- Trainer recruitment and progress: demographic and educational characteristics of trainees, levels of training, deployment/utilization, retention/promotion, and support needs
- Mentor recruitment and progress: demographic and educational characteristics, levels of training, deployment, retention/promotion, and support needs
- Student characteristics and progress: demographic characteristics, classroom experiences, retention rates, and skills gained, including analyses of student sub-populations (e.g. older/younger students, remote rural/built-up community)
- Targeted monitoring and review: Patterns of performance will be analyzed to identify outliers—both under-performing sites and high-performing sites with potentially promising practices.

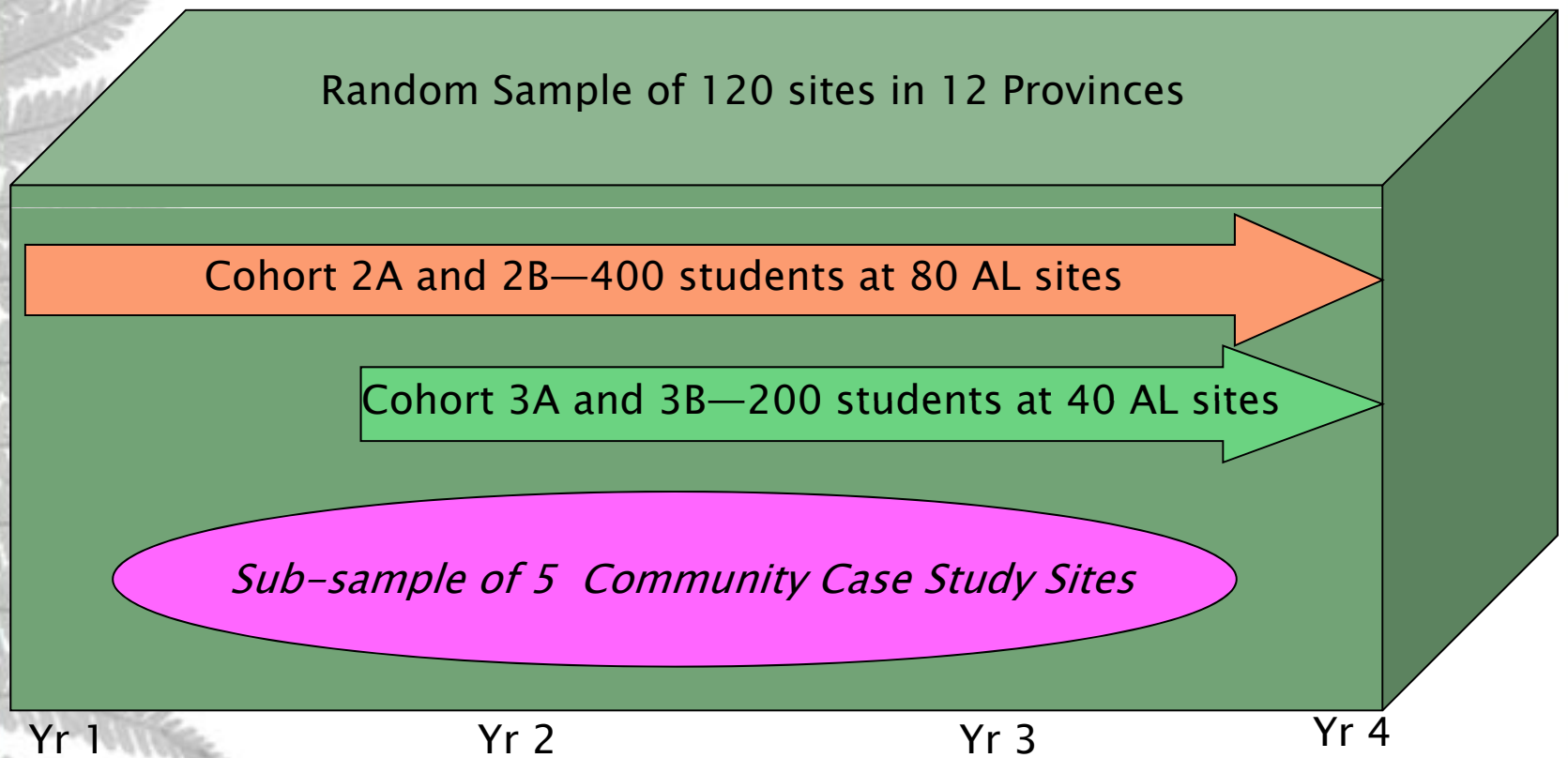
Monitoring Data Collection

- Form 1 secures basic data on all classes to generate a sampling universe for the Accelerated Learning Longitudinal Survey (ALLS)
- Form 2 secures contextual information on approximately 5,000 villages where AL classes are offered
- Forms Series 3 secures background information on master trainers, provincial trainers, and mentors as a basis for characterizing the cascade model.
- Forms Series 4 elicits trainees' assessment of training and Form 5 captures trainers' reports of trainee outcomes and reflections on ways to improve training
- Form 7 secures end-of-term information on AL classes (including dropout rates for key sub-populations of students) and AL teachers' reports on their implementation of AL techniques. It also provides additional contextual data on communities.
- Forms 6 and 8 provide data from structured observations (provincial trainer coaching visits and monitoring visits) on mentor/teacher's instructional style, classroom activities and documents types of coaching provided as input for enhancing future training.
- Form 10 captures mentor/teachers' final reflections on their ability to implement AL techniques, and problems faced during the term, as well as future skills development priorities and personal interests

APEP's Evaluation Research Component Incorporates Both Quantitative and Qualitative Data

- Accelerated Learning Longitudinal Survey (ALLS) provides data and analysis of student learning experiences, skills gains, and outcomes over a period of 2 years (Interim Reports Yr 1 and Final Cumulative Report at end of Yr 2). The survey also interviews teachers, parents, and shura representatives at sample sites.
- Case Studies of Program Implementation and Trainer Development—5 community studies using a combination of ethnographic and survey methods to gain an in-depth understanding of key factors in successful program implementation
- Case Studies of Learner Experiences and Outcomes —This linked research initiative will track the learning experiences, skills development, and emerging personal/career aspirations of a diverse sample of 60 AL learners (and, if feasible, a control group of regular school system students)

Sample Design for the Longitudinal Survey of AL Student Experiences and Outcomes



ALLS Design Details

- Multi-stage probability sample: Random sample of 12 of 17 provinces and 10 sites out of 400 per province, 5 students from a typical class of 25 AL students, stratified to assure representation of oldest and youngest students
- Frequency of data collection: At end of 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade, and 4th grade (4 data points over 18 months)
- Content: Student demographics, family composition, learning experiences, skills gains, outcomes, evolution of career aspirations and employment (students who drop out will still be tracked)
- Contextualization Because the ALLS is a sample of program sites for which there is monitoring data, ALLS and monitoring system data can be merged to enrich the ALLS data set (and deepen understanding of monitoring data)
- Continuation: The NLS will permit expansion and continuation as a panel study of AL learners and, if desired, a comparison group from formal schools

Using M+E as a Management Tool: A Systems Approach to Managing AL →

- The AL monitoring and evaluation research findings can be used to develop strategies to confront key issues such as: dropout from the AL program, leveraging village contributions to AL, helping parents support their children's learning progress
- The AL evaluation research studies on student experiences and outcomes can be used to develop improved strategies for individualizing instruction for AL students of different ages (e.g. 12–15 yr. olds vs. 7–8 year olds, and responding to the special needs and interests of teen mothers in the AL programs)
- The AL evaluation research studies can identify skills development priorities for followup training and suggest approaches for enhancing in-service training and supervision
- The AL evaluation research studies can suggest priorities for expansion of educational services in rural areas and ways to enhance local capacity to manage educational programs