# Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning (MEL) Capacity
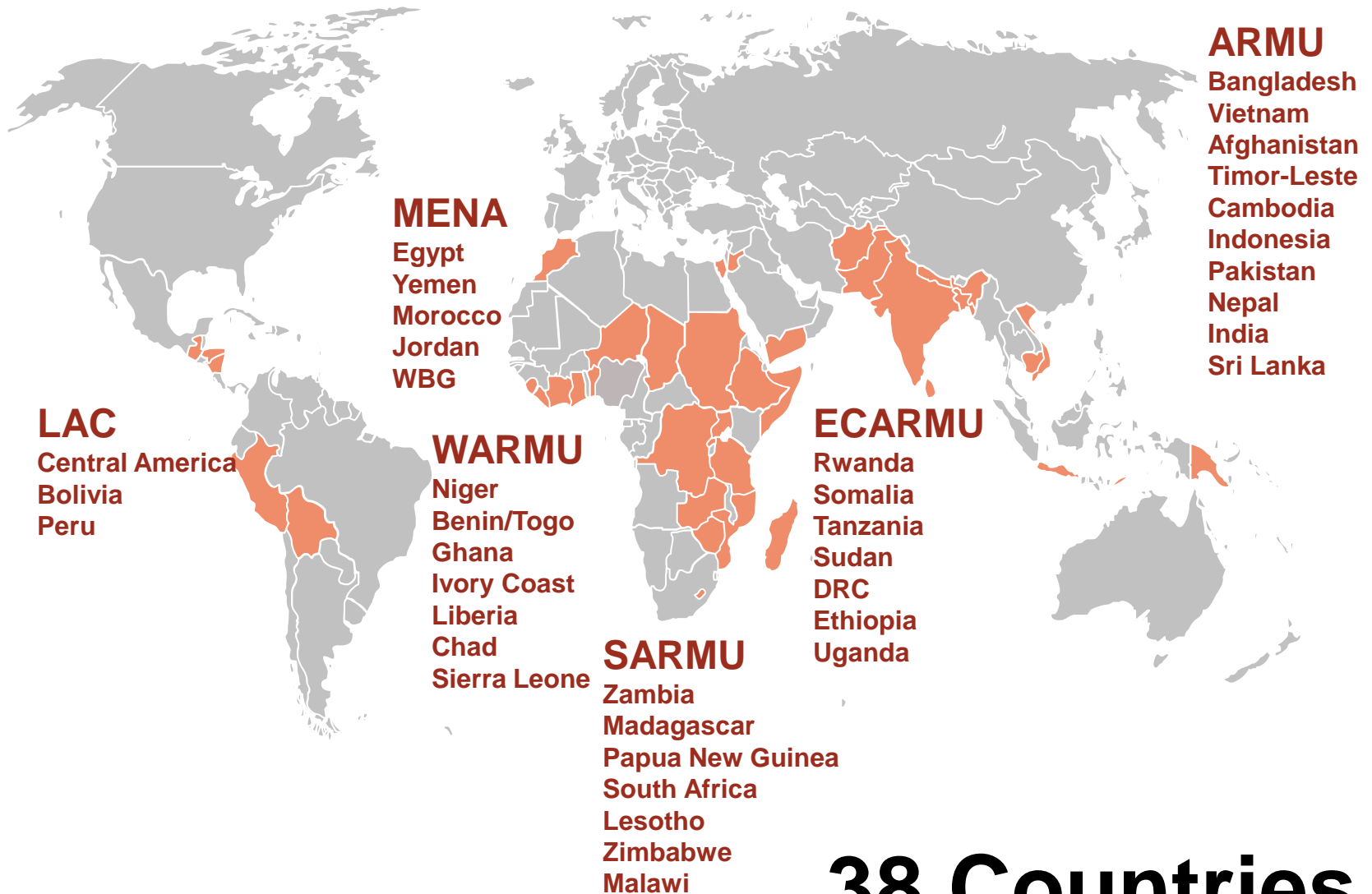## Panel Discussion

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED

AND

WHERE DO WE NEED TO GO NEXT?

July 17th 2014

# Agenda

- **M&E CAPACITY SURVEY – KEY FINDINGS**

- PANEL PRESENTATIONS
  - Pranati Mohanraj – CARE India & CARE USA
  - Fatima Jahan Seema – CARE Bangladesh
  - Tefera Mekonen - CARE Ethiopia

- BRIEF DISCUSSANT REMARKS – Kaia Ambrose

- QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION
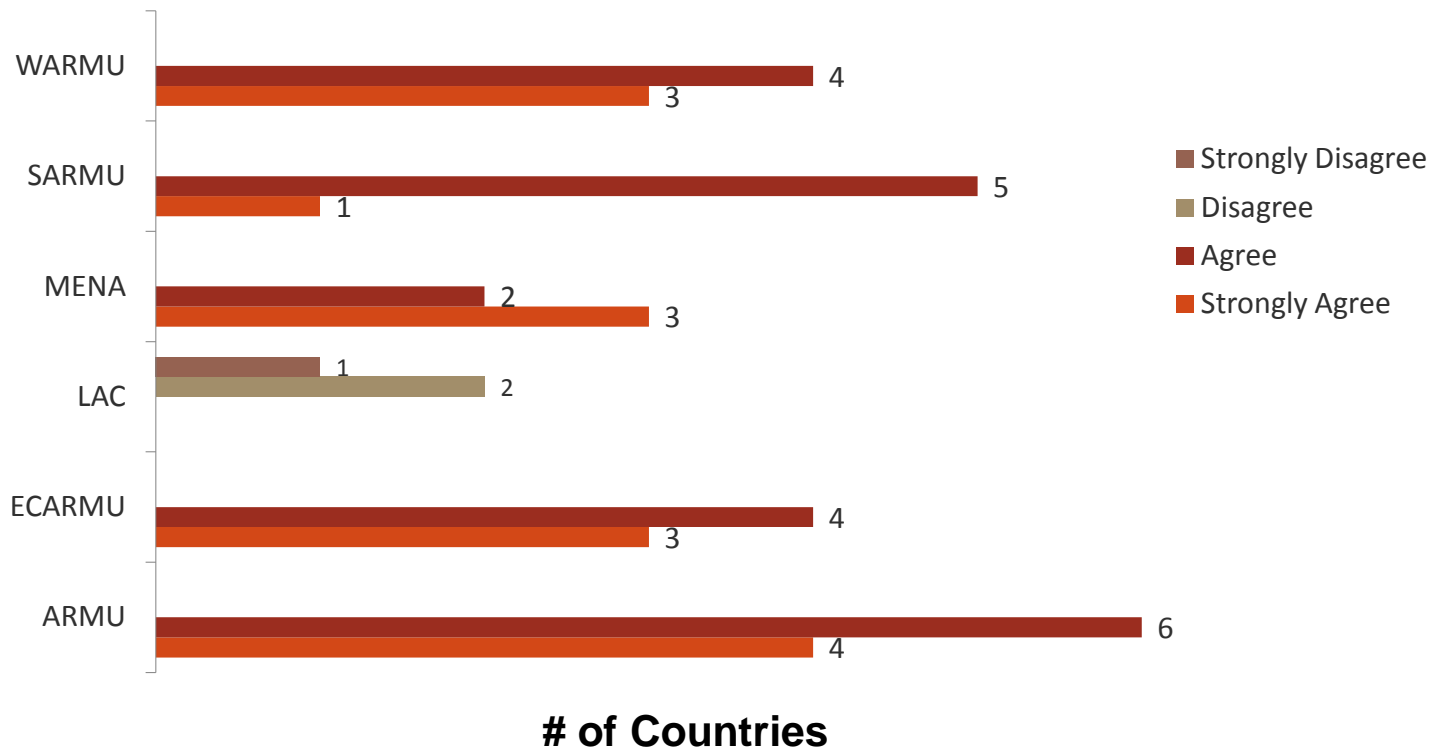
# M&E Capacity Survey Respondents

**ARMU**
**Bangladesh**
**Vietnam**
**Afghanistan**
**Timor-Leste**
**Cambodia**
**Indonesia**
**Pakistan**
**Nepal**
**India**
**Sri Lanka**

**MENA**
**Egypt**
**Yemen**
**Morocco**
**Jordan**
**WBG**

**LAC**
**Central America**
**Bolivia**
**Peru**

**WARMU**
**Niger**
**Benin/Togo**
**Ghana**
**Ivory Coast**
**Liberia**
**Chad**
**Sierra Leone**

**ECARMU**
**Rwanda**
**Somalia**
**Tanzania**
**Sudan**
**DRC**
**Ethiopia**
**Uganda**

**SARMU**
**Zambia**
**Madagascar**
**Papua New Guinea**
**South Africa**
**Lesotho**
**Zimbabwe**
**Malawi**

**38 Countries**

# Findings: Organizational Commitment
## Leadership Support



**Key leaders such as CDs and ACDs in our CO support M&E**

Legend:
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

WARMU: Agree 4, Strongly Agree 3
SARMU: Agree 5, Strongly Agree 1
MENA: Agree 2, Strongly Agree 3
LAC: Strongly Disagree 1, Disagree 2
ECARMU: Agree 4, Strongly Agree 3
ARMU: Agree 6, Strongly Agree 4

**# of Countries**

# Findings: Organizational Commitment
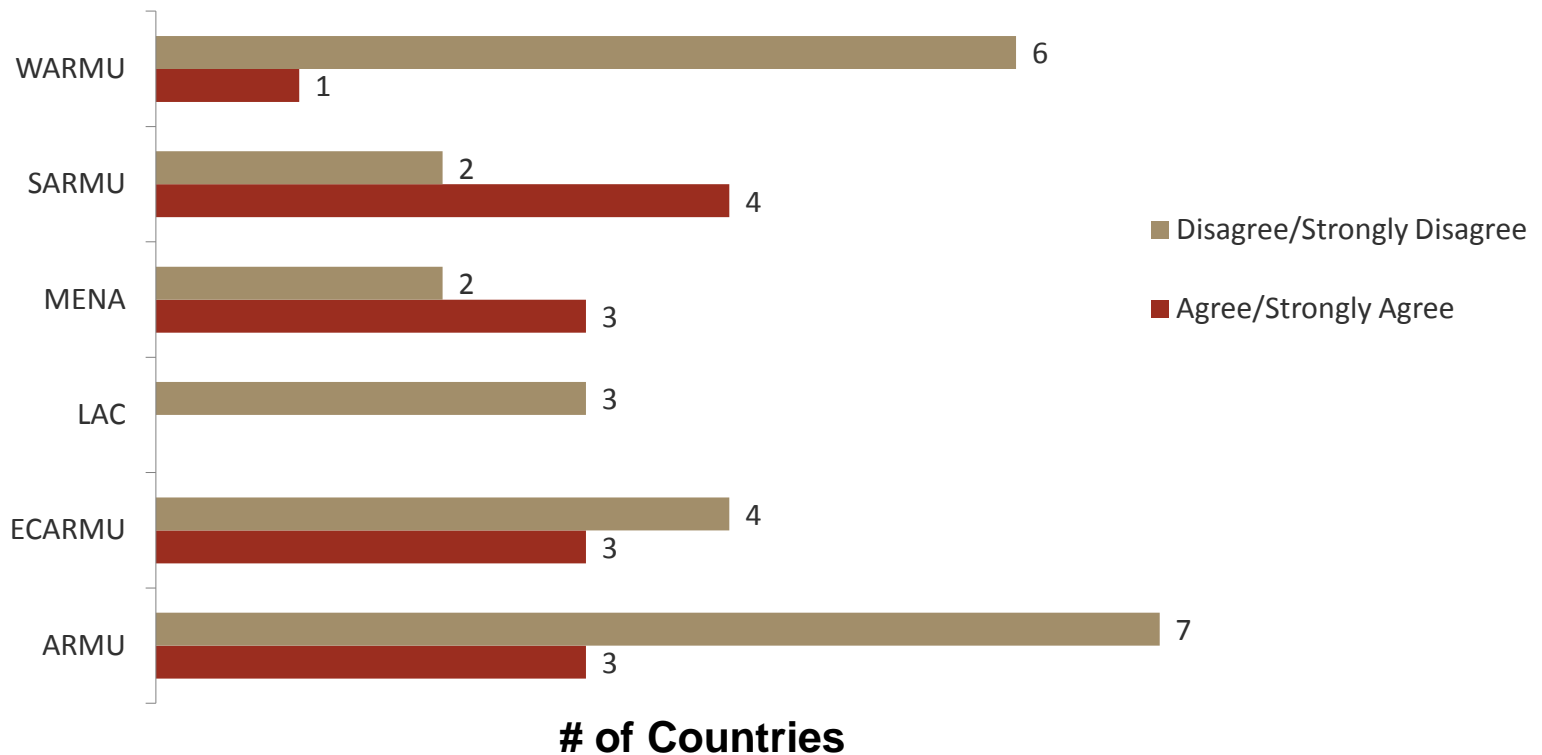## Support for Staff



**Our CO ensures that staff have the information and skills that they need for successful participation in monitoring efforts (e.g., access to monitoring resources through Web sites and professional organizations, relevant training)**

| Region | Disagree/Strongly Disagree | Agree/Strongly Agree |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| WARMU | 3 | 4 |
| SARMU | 2 | 4 |
| MENA | 3 | 2 |
| LAC | 2 | 1 |
| ECARMU | 3 | 4 |
| ARMU | 2 | 8 |

# of Countries
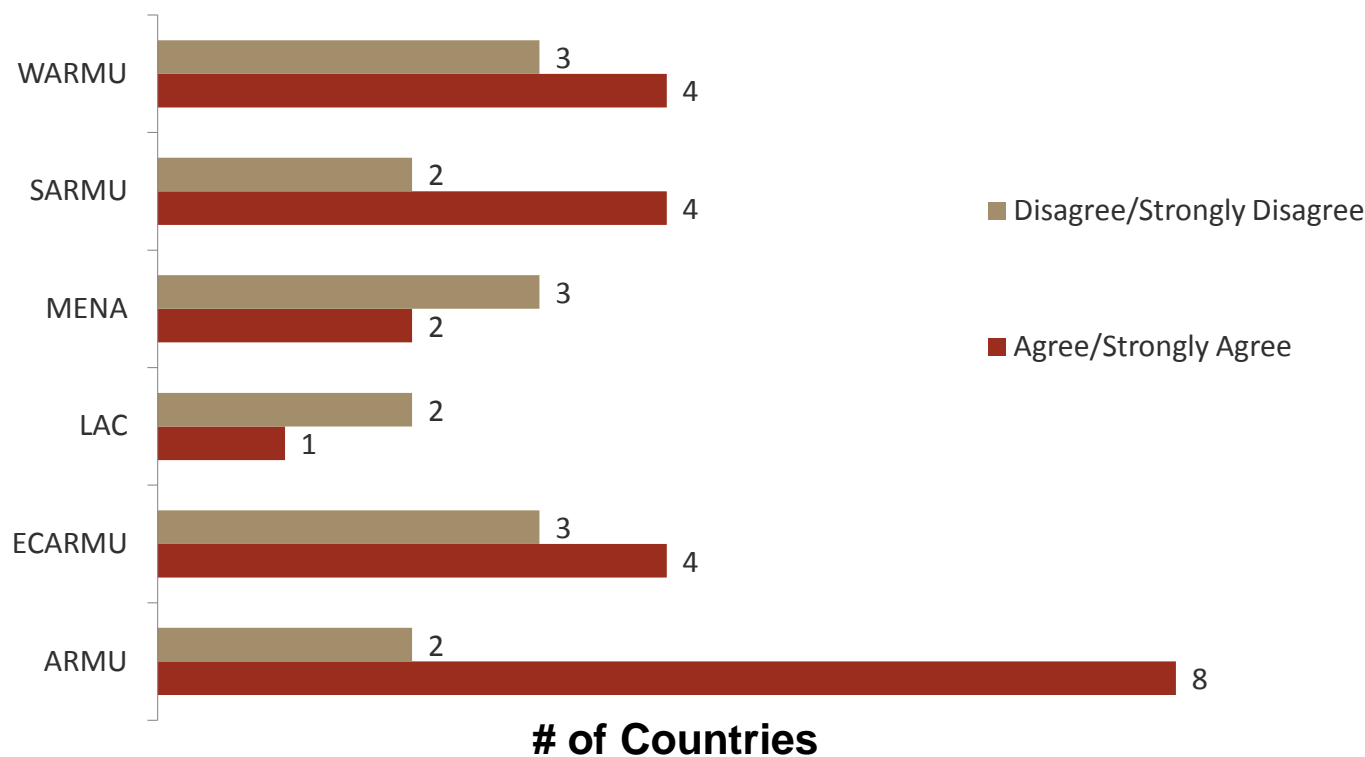
# Findings: Organizational Commitment
Financial Support



Our CO provides financial support (beyond what is allocated through project specific grants) to integrate monitoring into project/program activities

| Region | Disagree/Strongly Disagree | Agree/Strongly Agree |
|--------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| WARMU | 6 | 1 |
| SARMU | 2 | 4 |
| MENA | 2 | 3 |
| LAC | 3 | |
| ECARMU | 4 | 3 |
| ARMU | 7 | 3 |

# of Countries

# Organizational Commitment
## Staffing



Approximately how many staff in your CO are fully dedicated to M&E (i.e. 100% of their LOE is for M&E activities)?
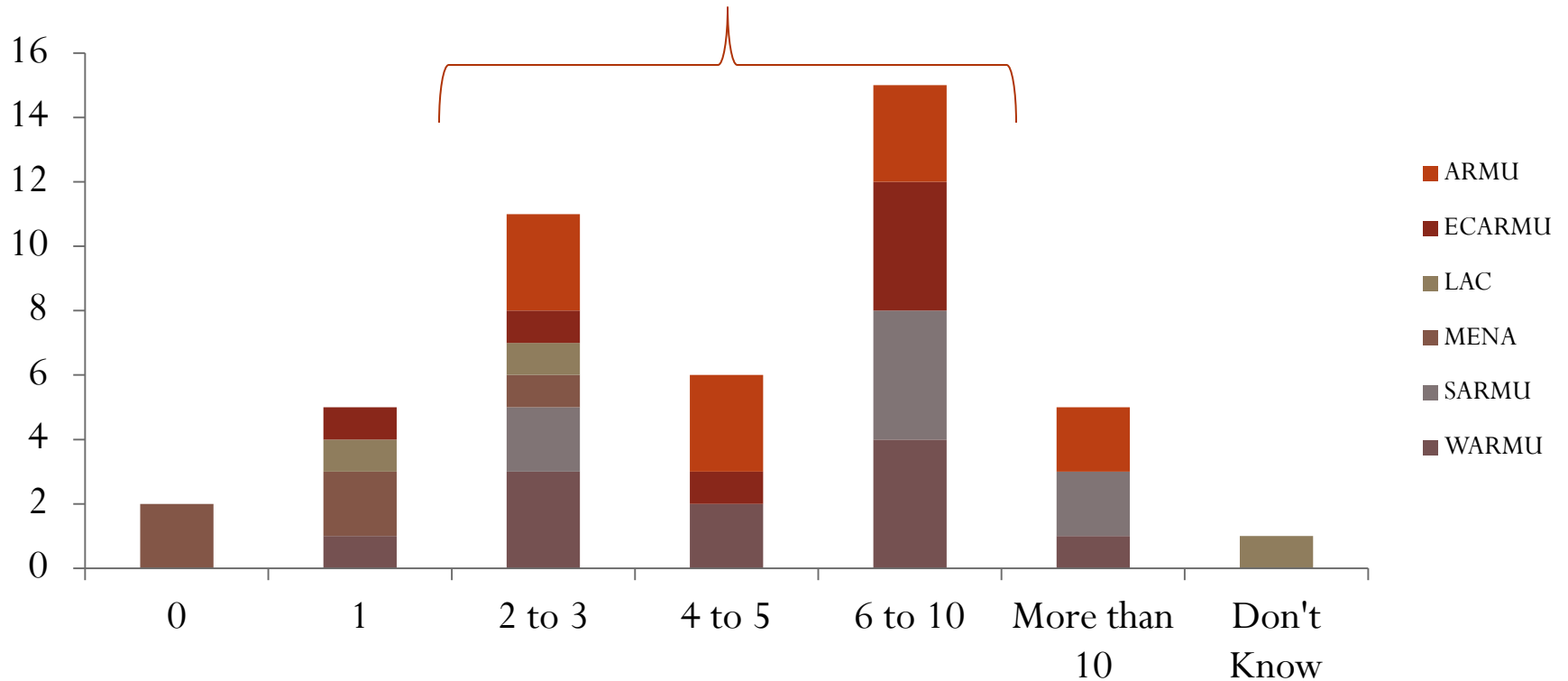
# What people said....

*"Our biggest challenge is finding competent M&E staff that can design/develop M&E frameworks and think more strategically instead of solely data collection/analysis, the more traditional M&E role."*

*"COs tend to own monitoring and leave evaluation for external consultants. This limits ownership of evaluation findings because staff do not know how the consultant came up with them."*

*"It is not enough to have some [MEL] specialists for the [MEL] function to be optimized in all its dimensions within a CO. We must find resources to ensure that 75-80% of all staffs in all sections of the CO have internalised the basic minimum of [MEL] function in terms of its importance in increasing the quality and the impact of a program. One of the awaited consequences of such a configuration is a better program development and a better programmatic and financial viability..."*

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# Best Example of MEL at CARE

**Pathways project**

- Well defined TOC, learning theme, and learning questions
- MLE plan designed to facilitate continual review of results and enable programmatic course corrections where necessary.

Some things that made it exceptional:

- Tools are aligned to the learning theme
  - E.g. participatory performance tracker (PPT) - adopted tool applied previously by other CARE initiatives (Strengthening the Dairy Value Chain, Bangladesh), contextualized it and passed it on to other CARE projects e.g. GRAD in Ethiopia and ALP in Mozambique.
- Developed a technical pack to be available at CARE's Food & Nutrition Security Resource Hub to be rolled out in other programs.

# Critical Technical Resources

## Staff Traits
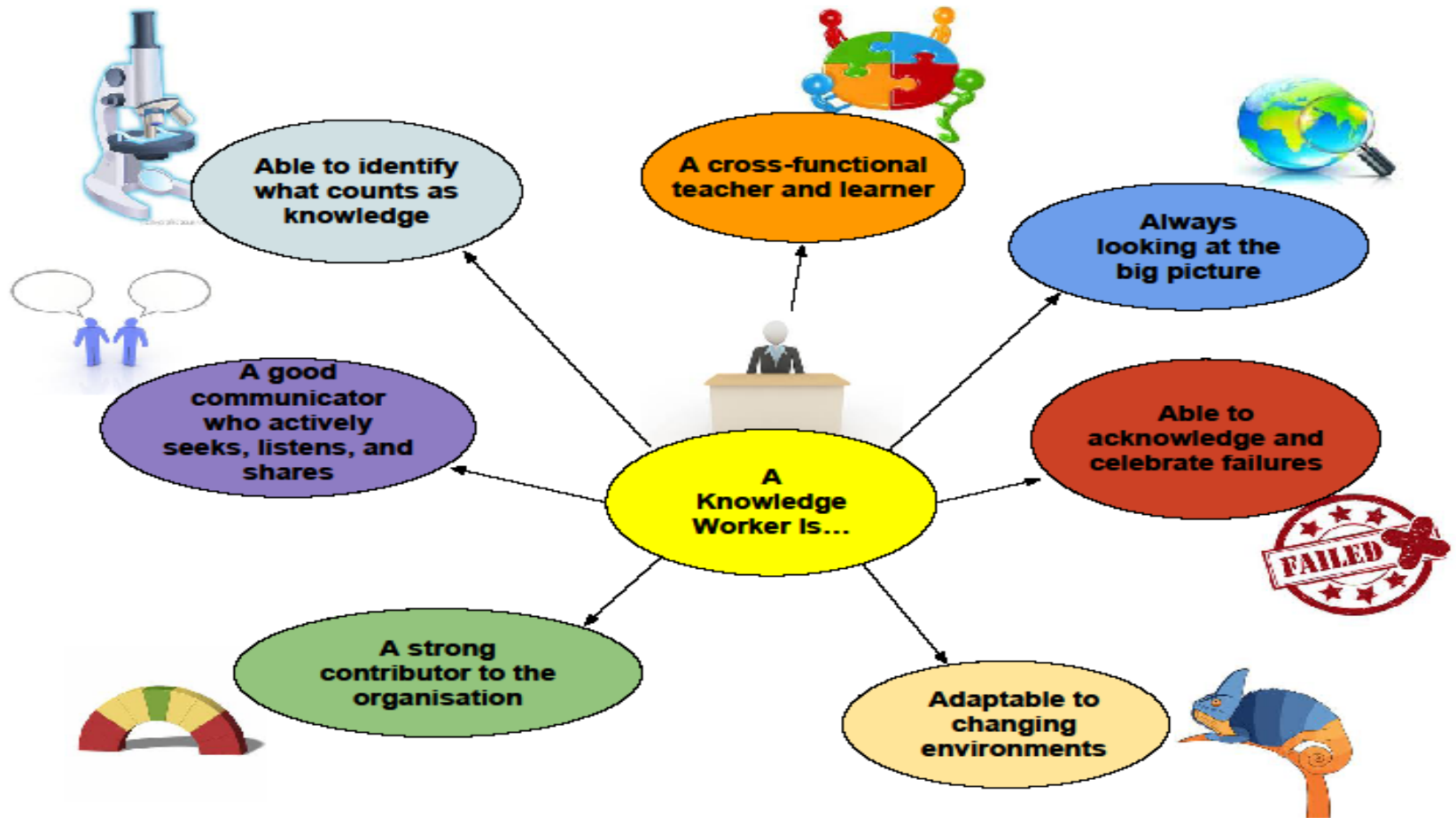
# Critical Organizational Resources

- **Creating a supportive learning environment**
  - **Appreciation of differences**
  - **Openness to new ideas**
  - **Time for reflection**

# Gender and MEL

Pathways MEL framework focuses on followings which make it gender transformative:

Identifying and/or understanding:

- Strategies and approaches that are effective at changing intra-household relationships, status, and communications to promote gender equality

- Leadership, access to public decision-making

- Attitudes toward women, women farmers, gender-based violence

- Control over asset (e.g. land) and decision-making

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# Best Example of MEL at CARE

- Projects that has cracked boundary and contributed to border leanings: SHOHARDO, COVAW, SEEMA

- Broader organizational initiative: Initiatives to establish COML, and WEIMI

- What made it exceptional:
  - Greater engagement at different level
  - Commitment with passion to know the detail
  - Rigor Methodology and continuity

# Critical Technical Resources

- Programmer, data analyst
- Lack  of analytical capacity

# Critical Organizational Resources

- Un-clarity/direction

- Lack of coordinated efforts

- Gap between expectation(theoretical understanding of MEL) and structural arrangement (organizational set up)

# Gender and MEL

- Better equipped both theoretically and in practice  (have number of tools, framework, experience to apply those)


- Project activity and MEL should go hand in hand but would ask not to think it as "buy one get one free"!

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# Best Example of MEL at CARE

**Graduation  Resilience for Archiving Sustainable Development [GRAD]**

**Best example of MEL in the GRAD project:**

- **PPT – Participatory Performance Tracking tool**
    - PPT enables a program to track individual and group level adoption of key behaviors/practices in order to streamline data collection and strengthen program results.
    - The PPT is both as management tool and an outcome monitoring tool.  It allows for the evaluation of **group dynamics** and **performance**, with support from group leaders and field facilitator coordinators.
    - Help to track adoption/practices level of all project clients with very minimum cost every six month – GRAD for more than 50,000 HHs
    - Very easy and supported by picture code which helps the community to easily utilize the tool
    - The PPT can used for all projects that satisfy/answer the following questions :
        - Are you working through groups?
        - Have you clearly identified and defined the capacities you are trying build or the behaviors you are trying to change?
        - Do you already have a clear capacity building or training plan and approach?
        - Would participatory review processes enrich the group capacity building approach you have already developed?

# Critical Technical Resources

- For CARE to be competitive with other major leaders in global development the most critical technical resource is **staff skills and capacities:**
  - The staff at all levels need to have a good capacity to effectively monitor, learn  and evaluate  initiatives from the angle of program quality, program impact and program support .
  - Have MEL capacities which helps  to ensure that each project contributed to achieving CARE's big picture goals apart  from meeting project stated objectives and goals
  - Staffs ( managers, advisors, officers, etc.) should have MEL capacity to trace progress, changes and result and ultimately use MEL for informed decision making.
  - Using MEL as a management tool  is an observed a gap .

# Critical Organizational Resources

- **Financial commitments**: To execute MEL activities in a well organized and efficient way financial resources are mandatory because:
  - It helps to track lessons in well a organized manner and enables sharing with different groups including donors to attract more resources
  - It helps to test different models, strategies, and approaches that can contribute to organizational excellence, can demonstrate program impact, can generate evidence based results etc.

  **Note**: In some cases managers /proposal developers tend to cut MEL budget rather than other items when a budget shortage happens.

# Gender and MEL

- GRAD project designed its own gender strategies . The strategies developed based on CARE gender and empowerment framework and the project regularly checks/ensures in the following ways:

  - Monitoring and evaluation system is collecting and analyzing sex disaggregated data to track benefits for women and men equally.

  - Build staff capacity for gender sensitive M and E

  - Regularly review and revise the DM and E system to ensure integration of gender in the project. The measurement should track changes at agency, structure and relation level

  - Conduct gender assessments and collect and analyze gender disaggregated data for decision making.

  - Set gender sensitive indicators

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