

As an organization with the mission for learning and adapting, Counterpart International has developed a framework for situations when the cause and effect are not fully understood. Complexity Aware Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (CAMEL) framework, adapted from USAID's Complexity-Aware Monitoring (C-AM) approach is used to assess what is working / needs improvement, and adapt our approach accordingly. While complexity is not a new term, and complexity-aware monitoring is not a new approach, it has been gaining more visibility in development programming, particularly in peace and security programs where traditional monitoring and evaluation approaches alone are not sufficient to track the unpredictable. To address complexity in its programming and focus on contribution not attribution, Counterpart's framework selected existing C-AM approaches such as sentinel indicators, stakeholder feedback, and most significant change approach, and added a complexity checklist to address the evaluation and learning.

It is complexity checklist that completes the CAMEL framework as it serves as a barometer to measure program complexity. Through its four dimensions and twenty-five indicators, the Checklist dissects the nature of intervention, interactions between the institutions and stakeholders, causality and change, and how the project is integrated into the context (embeddedness). The Checklist serves as evaluative tool designed to evaluate the program implementation in complex environments to assess changes in context. The complexity checklist allows Counterpart programs test their Theories of Change and assesses Collaboration Learning and Adapting (CLA) indirectly by drawing the links between the factors under each dimensions within the checklist and the sub-components under each component of the CLA framework providing a full picture of various parts of programming varying from training to advocacy to service delivery and decision-making and various stakeholders and their involvement and inform our adaptive management. Complexity checklist will be analyzed in Counterpart's Self Reliance Multi-Assessment Toolkit Database linking complexity sub-indicators to the such organizational assessment tools such Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Assessment, Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), Data Quality Assessment (DQA), and Organizational Performance Index (OPI).

It is important to remember that CAMEL is complimentary to traditional Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activities where together they can further promote collaboration, adaptive management and learning, creating a circular framework of each component reinforcing and complimenting each other. CAMEL also serves as a useful tool for Shock-Responsive Programming guiding teams to make final determination if a situation has crossed a threshold (shifted along the normal, stress, and crisis spectrum) and calls for operationalizing the crisis modifier funding.

