Addressing the world’s most urgent health challenges demands rigorous analysis of the impact of various solutions. Limited health resources and a heightened donor focus on accountability, transparency, and “value for money” are increasing the pressure on global health and development organizations to operate efficiently and provide good stewardship of funds. By objectively measuring the effectiveness and outcomes of their work, organizations can provide evidence about the impact of investments in global health solutions and make data-driven decisions that maximize their influence.

At PATH, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has been central to our work since the organization’s inception in 1977. Initially, our M&E efforts were limited to individual projects. More recently, we have focused on developing a comprehensive picture of the broader impact and relevance of the organization’s work as a whole.

Building on our existing culture of measurement, PATH created a cohesive organizational framework to guide our approach to M&E and build our capacity to measure and analyze our work. Since 2010, we have used this framework to annually assess our progress and generate data to help align our strategic objectives and activities with defined organizational goals.

Using a carefully designed set of strategic indicators, we annually measure the work of our programs and our overall progress as an organization, including our geographic reach and influence, the number of people we reach and health workers we train, the pace at which our new health products and technologies are developed and introduced, and our success rate in winning competitive grants. This paper describes PATH’s approach to M&E, our top-level results, and how we use the data to inform our work and amplify our impact.
MEASURING OUR PROGRESS IN IMPROVING HEALTH

PATH’s commitment to M&E is informed by three core beliefs:

• M&E allows PATH to harness data and best practices from across our individual projects and programs to strengthen the organization’s overall effectiveness.
• Systematic reflection informed by the data improves our ability to achieve our goals and illuminates the most effective ways for PATH to help improve global health, shaping our responses and future actions.
• Data about our outcomes, influence, and impact help donors and partners see the connections between their investments and changes in health and development.

This commitment led PATH to launch our M&E Strengthening Initiative to build organizational capacity and strengthen the role of M&E in informing and guiding our work. Through a collaborative process, we developed a set of cross-program indicators and organizational effectiveness indicators to assess our annual performance across four strategic objectives: accelerate technologies, expand reach, achieve scale, and operational excellence. We also administered stakeholder surveys to donors, partners, and PATH staff to measure PATH’s perceived effectiveness in collaborating internally and externally to achieve our goals.

Together, these indicators allow us to assess our collective progress, distill lessons learned across individual projects, build on synergies and efficiencies created across programs, and develop an evidence-based platform for our work.

GATHERING THE DATA

PATH uses our cross-program indicators and organizational effectiveness indicators to measure outputs and outcomes across our programs and projects.

Each year, PATH project administrators and team members complete an online survey to provide information about their work over the previous 12 months. Shared services teams representing Corporate Services, External Relations, and support teams for our field and global programs also provide an annual snapshot of their work.

The data are aggregated, analyzed, and shared across the organization, informing leadership discussions and business planning to help PATH allocate resources and track progress. Collecting these data as well as feedback from stakeholder surveys provides PATH with a nuanced view of the organization’s effectiveness and allows for cross-program comparisons.
The annual process of measuring and evaluating the outcomes of our projects and programs is important for informing our work. We have built in a continuous learning and action cycle—a feedback loop carefully designed to encourage evolution and flexibility in PATH's work and to create a pathway for the results to guide our approach to improving global health.

We use a four-step process to infuse our M&E work into our annual cycle of program and organizational review.

**PATH’s annual cycle of learning and action:**

1. **Set program objectives.** PATH’s leaders review the previous year’s achievements and progress toward organizational objectives. Goals and objectives are revised or updated as needed for the coming year, ensuring they are aligned with organizational strategy.

2. **Review program performance.** Leaders assess the performance of individual programs and shared services using key indicators and set the tactical direction for each program for the coming year.

3. **Allocate resources.** Staff and resources are deployed as needed based on the program performance review and tactical planning.

4. **Collect performance data.** PATH measures annual program performance using key indicators and stakeholder surveys. Data inform strategic direction for the following year.

This continuous learning cycle ensures that information about PATH’s performance is robust and dynamic. The annual data refresh our understanding of our effectiveness, help the organization refine and adapt our health strategies and interventions, and pinpoint the most effective use of limited resources. Performance metrics help spotlight the relative effectiveness and merits of PATH’s projects and approaches and guide strategic decisions about which ones to continue, scale up, or drop.

PATH has been careful to avoid compulsively measuring everything. Instead, we strategically identify indicators that can both demonstrate how PATH is progressing toward organizational objectives and highlight programmatic challenges that need to be addressed.

**Top-level results**

Top-level 2011 findings across the four objectives of PATH’s strategic framework are outlined below.

**Accelerate technologies**
PATH had 199 technologies and products in our development pipeline in 2011. Fifty-one products moved forward one or more phases in the pipeline. Six products were registered, three were licensed, and two were prequalified by the World Health Organization.

**Expand reach**
PATH had activities in 68 developing countries. We trained more than 91,000 people in 2011 and worked on 101 policies, strategies, and guidelines. At the global level, eight guidelines and one strategy supported by PATH’s work were approved by global decision-making bodies. At the country level, 36 policies, strategies, and guidelines supported by PATH’s work were approved.

**Achieve scale**
More than 74.5 million people benefitted from PATH’s work. More than $100 million in funding was mobilized to scale up PATH-championed interventions.

**Operational excellence**
For the eighth year in a row, PATH earned the highest possible rating for our financial stewardship and organizational accountability and transparency from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent evaluator of nonprofit groups.
Evaluating a school-based vaccine delivery approach

Peru

Goal: Measure the level of vaccine coverage achieved through a school-based delivery strategy in northwest Peru for a vaccine to prevent cervical cancer.

Approach: Following a school-based vaccination campaign supported by PATH, data were collected from a household survey to determine how many eligible girls received the three-dose vaccine series to prevent infection with human papillomavirus (HPV), the primary cause of cervical cancer.

Results: More than 82 percent of eligible girls in the region were vaccinated, demonstrating that high vaccine coverage is feasible with a school-based strategy. The results helped build the evidence base for HPV vaccination and influenced Peru’s decision to launch a national HPV vaccination campaign in 2011.

For more information, please see the detailed case study available at www.path.org/publications/detail.php?id=2237.

ACCELERATING PROGRESS THROUGH M&E

Our M&E framework helps PATH capture and quantify our achievements across more than 130 projects and programs and allows us to evaluate our overall progress as an organization. These data are used for multiple purposes across the organization as well as with external stakeholders.

Internally, PATH uses the results to inform our decision-making, identify areas for cross-program collaboration, and share best practices. The data are increasingly important to strategic planning and leadership decision-making on field expansion strategy, development assistance trends, advocacy, and program analysis and review. We also use the data as part of our decision-making process for the allocation of flexible funding, a competitive process in which program teams submit proposals for internal grants that can help them launch new approaches or scale up successful innovations.

Externally, the results help link PATH’s work to specific improvements in access to health products and interventions, strengthen bids and proposals, meet expectations for organizational transparency and accountability, and quantify PATH’s contributions to improvements in global health.

PATH continues to clarify and refine the data we collect and the ways we analyze and use the data. We carefully monitor the information, looking for trends and patterns, and we are working to build our level of sophistication in data analysis and reporting. A new interactive data visualization tool allows review of the data by strategy, program, geography, health area, and more. Over time, PATH expects to provide quarterly program snapshots, subnational data, and other enhancements.

The results will increasingly inform PATH’s decision-making by providing a more comprehensive picture of the organization’s overall performance. Our M&E work will provide consistent data to guide organizational practices and help identify the ways in which PATH can add the most value to global efforts to bring health within reach for everyone.

Photos: page 1, PATH/Laura Newman; page 2, David Jacobs; page 3, PATH/Gabe Bienczycki; page 4, PATH/Amynah Janmohamed