

## **PROCESS DOCUMENTATION GUIDE** (Action → Reflection → Modified Action)

**Purpose:** This document is designed to facilitate lessons learning on development or change processes (action research). It emphasizes documentation of process (the ‘how’) during the planning of each development interventions or innovation, during implementation (how the plan changed during implementation, successes and challenges, lessons learnt) and prior to subsequent innovations (re-planning to overcome barriers, better align actions with objectives). Step I is used prior to any intervention (at project / program level), and Steps II and III for reflection and re-planning following each intervention/action. By documenting process after each intervention / innovation, you generate a running record of what was done at each stage of a learning process and associated outcomes. It helps to reconstruct key moments when successes were achieved or bottlenecks overcome, and trace these back to the approach used. The guide may be used by research teams directly, or by development partners who may be excellent observers of process – but often lack skills in knowing how to document it or the practice of learning through systematic reflection.

### **I. PRIOR TO ANY ACTIVITY / STEP (during planning):**

**Objective:** What are you trying to achieve?

**Approach:** What is it that you will do to achieve the objective?  
(What steps will be taken? Why did you choose these steps? Who will you involve, and why?)

**Aspects of Process Monitoring:** What is going to be observed, monitored and documented as you go? What indicators will be used to assess progress?

### **II. FOLLOWING ANY ACTIVITY / STEP:**

**Approach:** What did you actually do to achieve the objective?  
(Did you modify your approach? If so, how and why?)

**Successes:** What went well?  
(What worked? What do we need to do to find out?)

**Challenges:** What did not go well?  
(What were the stumbling blocks? Why did they occur?)

**Findings:** What did you learn that you did not know before?

**Resolutions:** What decisions were taken by participants?

**Lessons / Insights:** What lessons or insights can be derived from these experiences to share with others trying to carry out similar activities? What were you surprised to find out (about the approach *and* about the findings)?

### **III. PRIOR TO ANY FURTHER ACTIVITIES / STEPS:**

**Recommendations:** What would you do the same and differently next time?  
What will you do to overcome barriers encountered during implementation?