

Most Significant Change (MSC) Survey Template¹

International Programme 2025 – 2028

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Context

[ONG name] would like to collect stories of significant changes that may have resulted during the [project name] in the [region name]. This will help us improve our actions, celebrate successes together, and provide feedback to our partners, especially donors. Feel free to share positive or negative stories.

The stories and information collected during these interviews will be used for various purposes, including:

- Reviewing the progress made collectively by the teams and beneficiaries in the area.
- Helping teams understand what beneficiaries value, to generate more positive results.
- Recognizing and communicating what has already been accomplished.
- If possible, uncovering unintended and/or negative outcomes

Confidentiality

Your stories may be shared with our partners or with other people in the region—for example, during review sessions with local authorities. Would you like:

- Your name to appear with the story (check one): Yes No
- To authorize us to publish your story (check one): Yes No

Contact Information

Respondent's Name: ...

Name of the Person Collecting the Story: ...

Name of the Village/City: ...

Date of Recording: DD/MM/YY

¹ This document is primarily based on: Davies, R. & Dart, J. (2005). [Most Significant Change \(MSC\) Guide](#), as well as on the pilot MSC project led by Morija in Burkina Faso in 2023 and the first MSC conference organized, among others, by the technique's creator, Rick Davies. This document should be regularly updated.

Signature:

If the respondent wishes to remain anonymous, do not record the name or contact details, but only use "landholder" or a similar description.

Survey Questions

- 1) Could you tell us (addressing the person reporting the story) how your involvement with the [project name] began and what your current level of involvement is?
- 2) **From your point of view, could you describe a story that embodies the most significant change that happen during the [project name] in the area?**
- 3) Why is this story particularly significant to you?
- 4) How (if at all) has the work of the facilitators and/or project team contributed to this change?

If you need recommendations or suggestions, you can ask:

- 5) *Thinking back at your story, do you have any recommendations or suggestions to improve the [project name]?*

Comments:

This questionnaire should be adapted to the local context. For example, in some cultural backgrounds, the word ‘story’ might be associated with something made up or imaginary. In such cases, consider replacing ‘story’ with ‘narrative’ or another term that conveys a more truthful and real-life meaning.²

If the storyteller seems to struggle with answering any question, the interviewer should provide additional questions or explanations to help the storyteller share an in-depth MSC story.

Participants can be given the freedom to share any significant change they consider important or to share a story related to predefined domains of change (e.g., community participation, quality of life, environmental change, negative change, WASH, etc.). For the second option, you could ask the following question instead of question 2):

- “Looking back over the last year, what do you think was the most significant change in [particular domain of change/ Outcome]?”

If you would like to obtain specifically negative insights, you could ask the following question instead of question 2):

- From your point of view, could you describe a story that embodies the most significant **negative** change resulting from the [project name] in the area?

Examples of MSC Stories³:

1) *From your point of view, could you describe a story that embodies the most significant change that happen during the [project name] in the area?*

The change I can mention is regarding water. Our borehole has been broken for two years, and the project was able to rehabilitate it, making water accessible again in the neighbourhood.

2) *Why is this story particularly significant to you?*

Because it ended the long distances we had to walk.

² Davies, R. & Dart, J. (2005). *Most Significant Change (MSC) Guide*, p.25

³ These examples are adapted from the stories collected by Morija in 2023.

In the example above, while the story is clear and focuses on one key change, it lacks depth and does not provide much new insight beyond what quantitative indicators could reveal. The information primarily highlights output-related results that were expected. To make the story more informative and insightful, the enumerator(s) could have asked follow-up questions such as:

- How do you use the time saved thanks to the borehole?
- How has the rehabilitation of the borehole affected your daily life beyond reducing the distance and waiting time?
- Have you noticed any changes in your household's health or hygiene since water became more accessible?
- How has the availability of water impacted the community as a whole?
- Have there been any new initiatives or activities in the community due to easier access to water?
- Were there any unexpected/negative changes as a result of the borehole rehabilitation?

1) *From your point of view, could you describe a story that embodies the most significant change that happen during the [project name] in the area?*

From our point of view, students used to relieve themselves outdoors, to the extent that local residents complained about the bad odours. Since the construction of the latrine and the installation of the handwashing facility, all the students use the latrines, and the complaints about odours have stopped.

2) *Why is this story particularly significant to you?*

The elimination of odors is very significant for school health. This is because conflicts with local residents have ended, and the health conditions of the students have improved.

This story highlights a positive and tangible output of the project: the construction of latrines and a handwashing facility in a school. It underscores some important outcomes as well:

1. **Behavioral Change:** Students have effectively transitioned from open defecation to using latrines.

2. **Community Impact:** Complaints from local residents about bad odors have stopped, reducing conflicts and improving relations between the school and the surrounding community, an outcome that was slightly unexpected.
3. **Health and Hygiene:** The narrative implies better health conditions for students, though specific health improvements are not detailed.

While the story provides clear evidence of the project's success, it focuses on observable outputs and immediate outcomes. It lacks detail about the underlying factors that enabled this change. To gain deeper insights and enhance the usefulness of this story for learning and adaptation, the following follow-up questions could be asked:

- Are students consistently using the handwashing facility alongside the latrines, and what impact has this had on their hygiene practices?
- How specifically have relationships between the school and local residents evolved since the project was implemented?
- Has the reduction in odors and improved sanitation contributed to other changes, such as increased school attendance?
- What other factors have encouraged students to use the latrines and handwashing facilities consistently?

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