**Failures Descriptions**

**HR**

* **Hiring** **Delays**: It took too long to hire a staff member (or all staff members), and this resulted in problems with the project. Possibly staff positions were left vacant for significant periods of time.
* **Turnover**: staff regularly left a particular position and/or there were many positions where staff left resulting in a gap in skills, knowledge, or ability to get work done.
* **Staff** **Capacity**: staff did not have the critical skills needed to get the job done. Staff were missing some skills related to project technical design or implementation. There was no training for required skills or tools as part of the project (i.e.: not enough rollout of financial management systems).
* **Staff Balance**: there was a lack of diversity amongst staff (not enough women, not enough local staff, not a good split between responsibilities and how many staff were assigned to particular technical areas or partners).
* **Upper leadership buy-in**: managers somewhere in the project or top-level country office leadership (or leaders of partners), were not sufficiently supportive of a critical piece of the project, so it didn’t get done, or was not done well enough. This happens most often with gender, MEL, learning, and advocacy—but is certainly not limited to that.
* **No field staff buy-in**: people doing the last mile implementation or coordinating local implementers do not believe a particular issue is important or don’t understand well enough to implement. Most commonly cited around gender equality issues, but certainly not limited to that.
* **Missing Key Staff**: the project did not hire for (or possibly fund or design for) necessary staff. Maybe we have far too few field staff to realistically carry out activities. Tend to see this a lot with gender and MEL positions, but it’s not restricted to those issues.
* **Poor performance management**: misalignment between what staff are held accountable for and what needs to get done. Anything that mentions re-setting staff goals, managerial issues, etc.
* **Miscellaneous HR**

**Budget**

* **Burn Rate:** Project did not spend its total budget in the time allocated or at the pacing planned for in the project. Most commonly labelled as spending delays, burn rate, and no-cost extension.
* **Overspend**: project spent more money than planned, or significantly overspent a specific line item for particular activities.
* **Transferring to partners**: there were difficulties getting the money to partners in time to implement activities. Possibly the financial systems didn’t match up, or the reporting cycle was delayed and partners can’t get new funds if they don’t submit a report. [This should also show up as a partnership failure.]
* **Missing pieces**: we failed to budget for particular activities or personnel that would have been important for project success (often see this in gender, MEL, communications, and advocacy)
* **Can’t reconcile**: The budget doesn’t add up. We’re not sure what happened with money, or there are significant gaps between reporting and planning. This can have happened at any time in the project cycle, even if it was corrected.
* **Budget Delay:** Delay of receipt of funding from donor that impacts the project.
* **Miscellaneous Budget**

**Partnership**

* **Coordination**: working with partners took a long time, was really challenging, or didn’t work at all. There were misalignments between the visions and/or activities between different partners.
* **Accountability**: partners failed to deliver according to their agreements (this could be financial problems, not doing activities, not submitting reports, not meeting goals, etc.).  CARE did not put mechanisms in place to see what partners were doing or did not correct problems in time. Alternatively, partners and participants had no way to hold CARE accountable to our commitments to them.
* **Delivery**: partners are not doing the activities the way they are supposed to, or are not reaching the people in the way the project set out.  To count here, it must specifically say that the partners are having a problem, and not that it’s an overarching project problem.
* **Capacity**: the partners are missing critical skills to deliver and/or did not get necessary training to do the work in the partnership agreements.
* **Missing key stakeholders**: we did not partner with everyone we should have, or there are key gaps in our partnerships and/or implementation that someone else should have filled. We see this a lot in reference to local governments as partners or private sector actors.
* **Miscellaneous Partnership**

**Implementation**

* **Targeting:** we worked with the wrong group of people (not the extreme poor, or picked people who could not invest in what we were promoting). Alternatively, we set the wrong project goals and couldn’t meet them.
* **Lack of Context Analysis:** Lack of pre-project research or misunderstanding or missing knowledge around key contextual factors, including lack of knowledge on other organizations/CARE implementing similar projects in the same area.
* **Design to implementation slip**: we had a good project design, but for some reason aren’t carrying it out. Maybe we didn’t budget for it. Maybe it took longer than we allocated.  Maybe it was a lot more complicated than we thought and we didn’t have the right staff to do it. Etc.
* **Integration**: there are a lot of components to the project and they are all (or some) happening separately in a way that compromises efficiency or effectiveness. Possibly we are putting a burden on the community by conducting too many activities at different times.  Possibly we have too many partners repeating context analyses with slightly different tools or technical focus areas. Etc.
* **Quality**: we just aren’t implementing the activities very well, or the activities we planned weren’t very good. Maybe the training quality is terrible. Maybe the staff can only go to a community once every three months because we didn’t assign enough staff, so there’s not enough support. Maybe we didn’t fund transportation, so people can’t go do the work. Maybe the activities never made a lot of sense to solve the problem.
* **Input Supplies**: We (or partners) committed to get a physical thing to the communities so they could implement part of the project and it didn’t happen or didn’t happen on time. Alternatively, we did get the inputs out, but they were of low quality. We see this a lot with seeds and agricultural tools, but might also happen with health supplies, training tools, promised grant money, construction materials, etc.
* **Missing key realities**: something about our project design went wrong because we missed a piece of the context. We forgot to factor in transport costs to a marketing scheme. We had people build stoves that were so heavy no one could move them. We supported an income generating activity that has little or no demand in the community where we promote it. We trained women over 40 in a technique that is mostly relevant for new mothers, and new mothers are on average 17 years old. Etc. This is distinct from the “context analysis” piece in MEL because it is not necessarily calling out the lack of a study, but rather that we designed a program without taking realities into account.
* **Implementation Delay**: it took too long to get activities going. As a result, they didn’t happen, didn’t happen soon enough, or got done so poorly that there was little impact.
* **Missing key necessary activities**: we didn’t factor in activities that we needed to do. Often comes up around gender, and especially engaging men and boys, but there are lots of contexts where an evaluation will say “should have done x, but it wasn’t in the project design.”
* **Miscellaneous Implementation**

**MEL**

* **Need More Context analysis**: something wrong with baseline, gender analysis, market analysis, and/or stakeholder analysis. Possibly we didn’t do some of the analysis at all. Possibly we focused on the wrong thing (ie: took national data but only worked in one district that’s an outlier, looked at where people can sell their goods, but not where they buy the supplies they need)
* **Partnership**: didn’t get the right MEL partners. Group/consultant/partner who was working on MEL did not do it effectively.
* **Data Analysis**: we collected a lot of data but left it sitting in databases and didn’t do anything with it. We can’t articulate the key lessons out of the data or what the data said. Includes sampling (i.e., we didn’t collect data on enough people or the right breakdown on participants vs non-participants to make claims on what did or didn’t work).
* **Adaptive management**: we found problems during our MEL work (like at mid-term), but didn’t do anything to fix them. This is especially true if the final cites a continued problem carried over from mid-term.
* **MEL planning**: we didn’t plan for MEL at all, or not enough. We picked the wrong indicators (or didn’t set any indicators). We changed indicators partway through the project. Our baseline data collection tool has nothing to do with our endline one. We can’t find baseline data to compare to endline, or we can’t find the tools we used the last time. Etc.
* **Staff:** Something wrong about who we recruited for MEL or we didn’t have staff in place at all (this is a connection to the HR bucket and should reflect in both).
* **No follow through**: we had a decent MEL plan, and then didn’t do it. We recognized a problem with MEL but didn’t correct it. We invested in tools and didn’t use them.
* **Data quality**: data is inconsistent between tables and narrative. Numbers don’t add up in columns. Someone has averaged averages. We can’t tell where the data came from or verify any of it. The sample sizes are too small to be relevant (usually anything under 100).
* **No budget**: we did not budget for MEL, or didn’t budget enough.
* **Need more gender analysis:** we didn’t do a gender context analysis or we missed a critical piece. We misunderstood something about the context as it related to gender (ie: we helped women increase incomes and their husbands thought that meant they were prostitutes).
* **Need more risk analysis**: we did not plan for predictable risks in a situation. This comes up most often around climate change in agriculture projects, but might also refer to floods in a flood-prone area or political changes during election years, etc.
* **No crisis modifiers**: we knew that there were risks (like climate), but made no provision to change what we were doing in case those risks happened (like re-allocating money to emergency response in case of a flood.)
* **No learning processes**: there is not enough (or no) attention paid to how people learn from the work and/or data collection. This is usually cited specifically as a learning problem.
* **No KM systems**: data is not easy to find, is not being shared, and/or is not being produced in a way people can consume. There are no common platforms for staff to access and use information.
* **Miscellaneous MEL**

**Scale**

* **No structural partnerships:** we didn’t do anything to work with organizations that could scale—like the government or private sector—or we did it too late in the project to be effective.
* **Too expensive**: the project had an impact, but at a cost no other actor can replicate. This is usually called out specifically as the program being too costly. Look for cost-per-participant/beneficiary or cost-per-impact numbers.
* **Sustainability**: the project didn’t have a sustainability plan and/or exit strategy. Alternatively, project tried to add one in the last six months of the program, which is too late.
* **Miscellaneous Scale**

**Gender:**

* **Engaging women and girls:** We didn’t work with women (at all, or enough).
* **Engaging men and boys:** the project focused primarily or exclusively on women and did not focus on how men and boys are gatekeepers to power, so the men and boys held women back. This often comes up around mobility, resource use and GBV issues, but might be a lot of other things.
* **No gender analysis:** overlap from above
* **No gender advisor:** overlap from HR section above
* **No GBV plan:** the project didn’t have a referral system in place to help women who suffered from violence in conjunction with project activities.
* **Did not look at structure:** project focused on training women, but didn’t look at limitations beyond just the skills women have. Often see this in market connections, representation with government, mobility, etc.
* **Miscellaneous Gender**

**Other Categories**

* **Repercussions:** the project participants experienced negative effects as a result of participating. Women suffered more violence because there was not enough effort engaging men andboys. People lost money because they invested in a technology that didn’t work. The project didn’t do a cost analysis and so people had to pay to do what the project encouraged. General lack of ethics and consent, ect.
* **Technology:** technology failed in some way. It wasn’t targeted toward the people we try to reach (or they couldn’t access it). Connectivity was too bad to sustain using the tools. Men used women’s cell phones to track them. Etc.

**Miscellaneous**

* **Miscellaneous:** Anything that doesn’t fit above but is specifically listed as a failure.