The Concept of Positive Deviance

In every community there are certain individuals or groups whose uncommon behaviors or strategies enable them to find better solutions to a problem than their peers, while facing similar challenges and constraints & having access to same resources.

Outcome Status Good Not Good "Worse Off" Risk Status "Better Off"

Positive Deviance: The Key Steps

There are 5 steps to the Positive Deviance method carried out by members of the community:

- 1. **D**efine the problem
- 2. **D**etermine presence of PD individuals
- 3. Discover existing uncommon behaviors & strategies
- 4. **D**esign and develop initiatives to leverage these solutions to the whole community
- 5. Discern the effectiveness of initiative (M & E)

Positive Deviance in Organizations

Step 1:

Identify "positive deviants ", i.e., organizations that consistently demonstrate exceptionally high performance in an area of interest.

Step 2:

Study organizations in-depth using qualitative methods to generate hypotheses about practices that allow organizations to achieve top performance.

Step 3:

Test hypotheses statistically in larger, representative samples of organizations.

Step 4:

Work in partnership with key stakeholders, including potential adopters, to disseminate the evidence about newly characterized best practices.