

Afghanistan Organization for Civil Society (AICS)

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Policies and Procedures Manual**

**Compiled by:**

Maxwell Saungweme

**April 2019**

This policy reference manual was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of its Associate Cooperative Agreement Number 306-A-14-00001 (Afghan Civic Engagement Program) implemented by Counterpart International and its partners. The contents and opinions expressed herein are the responsibility of Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society (AICS) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, Counterpart International, and Aga Khan Foundation.



Table of Contents

1. [Introduction 4](#_Toc6203482)

[About Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society](#_Toc6203483)

[Why this policy reference manual?](#_Toc6203484)

[Copyright](#_Toc6203485)

[Purpose of this policy reference manual](#_Toc6203486)

1. [Chapter 1: Monitoring and Evaluation Concepts 7](#_Toc6203487)

[1.1 Monitoring](#_Toc6203488)

[1.2 Evaluation](#_Toc6203489)

1. [Chapter 2: Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle, and Roles and Responsibilities 12](#_Toc6203490)

[2.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203491)

[2.2 The Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle](#_Toc6203492)

[2.3 Roles and Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation](#_Toc6203493)

1. [Chapter 3: Project Design for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning 14](#_Toc6203494)

[3.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203495)

[3.2 Design tasks and coordination](#_Toc6203496)

[3.3 Responsibility for following this policy at project design](#_Toc6203497)

[3.4 Key questions to ask during project design](#_Toc6203498)

1. [Chapter 4: Project Start-up and Monitoring and Evaluation 17](#_Toc6203499)

[4.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203500)

[4.2 Project start-up M&E tasks](#_Toc6203501)

[4.3 Responsibility for following this policy at start-up](#_Toc6203502)

[4.4 Key M&E related questions to ask during project start-up meeting](#_Toc6203503)

1. [Chapter 5: Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Plans 18](#_Toc6203504)

[5.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203505)

[5.2 Why having an M&E plan?](#_Toc6203506)

[5.3 When should an M&E plan be developed and by who?](#_Toc6203507)

[5.4 Steps in developing an M&E plan](#_Toc6203508)

[5.5 What to include in an M&E plan](#_Toc6203509)

[5.6 Indicators and their types](#_Toc6203510)

[5.7 Responsibility for M&E plan](#_Toc6203511)

[5.8 Key guiding questions in drafting M&E plan](#_Toc6203512)

1. [Chapter 6: Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Database 25](#_Toc6203513)

[6.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203514)

[6.2 What must be done?](#_Toc6203515)

[6.3 Responsibility for developing and use of tools](#_Toc6203516)

[6.4 Key questions in developing and use of monitoring tools](#_Toc6203517)

1. [Chapter 7: Use of Monitoring and Evaluation Results for Decision Making 27](#_Toc6203518)

[7.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203519)

[7.2 What must be done?](#_Toc6203520)

[7.3 Responsibility for use of tools and findings](#_Toc6203521)

[7.4 Key question is monitoring-based decision making](#_Toc6203522)

1. [Chapter 8: Researches, Baselines and Evaluations 28](#_Toc6203523)

[8.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203524)

[8.2 The process of preparing for studies](#_Toc6203525)

[8.3 Responsibility for preparing for studies](#_Toc6203526)

[8.4 Key question when preparing studies](#_Toc6203527)

1. [Chapter 9: Learning and Reflection Procedures and Practices 29](#_Toc6203528)

[9.1 Introduction](#_Toc6203529)

[9.2 Weekly and Monthly Meetings](#_Toc6203530)

[9.3 Project reflections and learning sessions](#_Toc6203531)

[9.4 What is involved in project reflections and learning sessions](#_Toc6203532)

[9.5 Responsibility for project reflections and learning sessions](#_Toc6203533)

[9.6 Key questions to consider for project reflections and learning sessions](#_Toc6203534)

1. [Annexes 31](#_Toc6203535)

[Annex 1: Sample Logframe](#_Toc6203536)

[Annex 2: Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#_Toc6203537)

[Annex 3: Sample Participant List/Register](#_Toc6203538)

[Annex 4: Sample Training Evaluation Form](#_Toc6203539)

# **Introduction**

## About Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society (AICS) is a concept that has been incubating for several years amongst Afghanistan’s civil society community, following the 2007 Enabling Environment conference convened by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Aga Khan Development Network, in partnership with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program and the Asia Development Bank. One of the key recommendations from the conference was to establish independent certification bodies for civil society organizations (CSOs) that are recognized by Government, the private sector, donor agencies and civil society. The AICS establishment program was launched by AKF-A in January 2014 through a partnership between AKF and Counterpart International under a wider USAID funded Afghanistan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP) with the long-term goal of enabling CSOs to realize their potential in support of the development of Afghanistan. Behind this initiative are key CSO networks, civil society professionals, and representatives from national and international CSOs with an interest in Afghanistan.

**Mandate of AICS**

The mandate of AICS is to support a credible and competent civil society sector in Afghanistan by linking CSOs, donors, government and capacity building services through culturally appropriate certification schemes. The Institute will encourage the growth of a vibrant civil society, promoting pluralism and participatory, non-discriminatory development in Afghanistan.

**Objectives of AICS**

* Raise credibility of the civil society sector by certifying local organizations against locally defined and internationally recognized standards;
* Systematize capacity building efforts of local organizations by coordinating initiatives against measurable performance indicators;
* Strengthen the role of civil society in Afghanistan’s development through collective efforts of policy dialogue and active engagement with government, donors, the private sector and the broader civil society sector; and
* Provide a channel for resources for civil society by strengthening philanthropic and corporate social responsibility efforts.

**AICS’s Certification Program:**

AICS’ certification program is the organization’s flagship program, which raises the effectiveness and credibility of the civil society sector by certifying CSOs against locally defined and internationally recognized standards. The certification program enables CSOs to align their policies, processes, structure, programs and activities in accordance with the international best practices, contributing to the growth of a competent, transparent and effective civil society sector.

The CSOs’ performance is assessed against five broad sets of parameters as follow:

* Internal Governance and Strategic Planning;
* Project Management and Program Delivery;
* Financial Management;
* External Relations, Communications and Outreach; and
* Human Resources

This reference manual is one of several generic manuals developed with support of AICS to aid CSO’s under the certification program to adapt and adopt and customize these manuals and internalize them as part of their policies. Apart from this manual, other generic reference manuals developed to support CSOs in this regard include: **Financial Management policy reference manual; Procurement Management Policy Reference Manual; Project Management Policy Reference Manual; Human Resources Policy Reference Manual; External Communications and Advocacy Policy Reference Manual; and CSO Governance Handbook**.

## Why this policy reference manual?

Recent analysis of strengths of CSOs done through AICS’s Certification Program, revealed that while CSOs under its program had monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and policies in place some were struggling in developing and institutionalizing M&E practices and policies.

Thus, this handbook is informed by the foregoing issues and the realization that for CSOs to succeed they need a framework and policy for best practices in reflection and learning for the organizations and guide teams, regardless of size, to continuously set new goals for program excellence, efficient and effective implementation of M&E and learning practices

## Copyright

This generic policy reference manual is offered to Afghan CSO’s as a public good. CSOs under the AICS certification program and beyond are free to copy, adapt, customize and adopt this manual for their own organization in a manner they deem appropriate. CSOs that develop their policies out of this reference manual, must take this just as a guide and template. What is important is for the CSOs to develop out of this reference manual, policy documents that apply to their organization’s mandate and size and take ownership of the policy manual they develop out of this and internalize and operationalize the same.

## Purpose of this policy reference manual

This document is a general policy for {Name of CSO} regarding result-oriented M&E. This policy document sets out a normative framework for M&E system for {Name of CSO}. It sets out the general principles, guidelines and protocols regarding M&E {Name of CSO} has committed to follow. In addition to this policy document {Name of CSO} will have other practical guidelines that adhere to the policy. A number of processes, templates and tools have been included as Annexes to this policy document. The M&E policy and other guidelines will adhere to definitions, norms, and best practices and standards of Organization for Economic Cooperation’s- Development Assistance’s Committee (OECD-DAC)[[2]](#footnote-2)

This policy reference manual covers nine chapters as follows:

* Monitoring and evaluation concepts;
* Roles and responsibilities for M&E;
* Project design for M&E and learning;
* Project start-up and M&E;
* Developing an M&E plan;
* Developing of M&E tools and databases;
* Use of monitoring and evaluation results for decision making;
* Researches, baselines and evaluations;
* Learning and reflection processes and procedures;

# **Chapter 1: Monitoring and Evaluation Concepts**

## Monitoring

**Monitoring** is the systematic process of collecting, analyzing and utilization of information to a project’s progress toward attainment of its objectives and guide the management in decision-making[[3]](#footnote-3). Monitoring focuses on when and where a project’s activities have occurred, who delivered them and how many people (beneficiaries/ participants) and entities or organizations were reached. Monitoring is done during program design, start-up, and continues during implementation.

OECD defines monitoring as a continuous process of collecting and analyzing data to compare how well a project is being implemented against expected results. Essentially monitoring is a **measure of performance[[4]](#footnote-4)**. Most NGOs use a logical or results framework as a management tool to track progress against targets and improve interventions. Results frameworks require a minimum amount of information to measure performance against results:

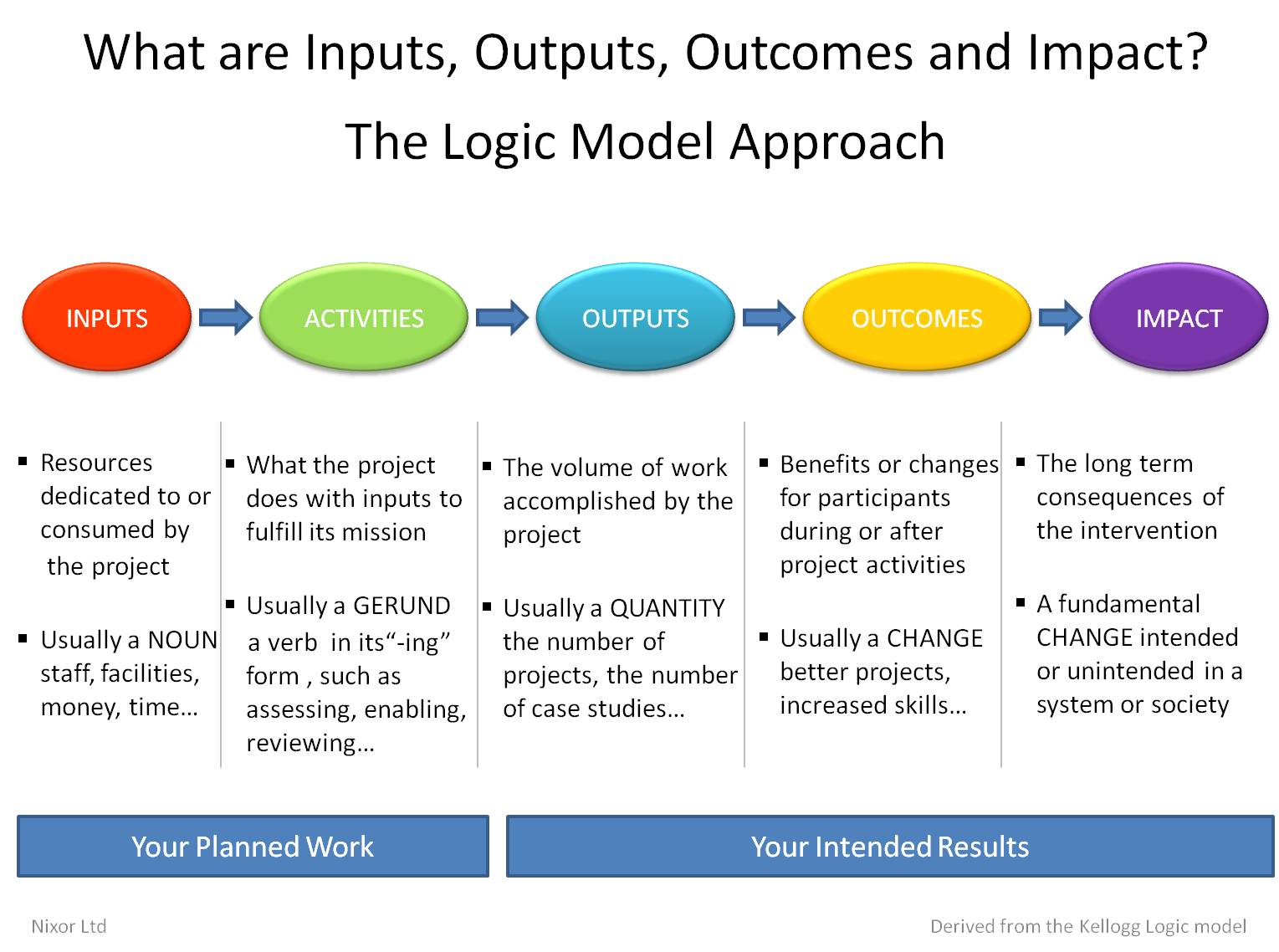
* Clear articulation of the results;
* Starting point or baseline detailing what the situation is at the outset;
* Targets against which to measure progress towards the attainment of the results; and
* Indicators to measure progress (quantitative and qualitative)

Monitoring is sometimes referred to as *process*, *performance* or *formative evaluation*.

At {Name of CSO} monitoring is done for these main purposes:

* **Learning effectively** from programming experiences to adjust current practices and improve practices and activities in the future;
* **Ensure internal and external** accountability of resources used and results obtained and help ascertain value-for-money derived from {Name of CSO}’s resources;
* Help management of {Name of CSO} take **informed and evidence-based decisions** on future projects and programs;
* **Empowering of beneficiaries** or participants of our programs; and
* **Sharing evidence if real change and impact** from {Name of CSO}’s projects and programs.

Monitoring focuses on measuring these aspects of a project or program:

* **[[5]](#footnote-5)Outputs:** quantity and quality of implemented. Key questions are: *what do we do? How do we manage our activities?*
* **Outcomes:** processes and changes from the project. Key questions is: *what were the real effects and changes as a result of implementation of activities and projects?*
* **Impact:** processes external to the project. Key questions are: *which broader, long-term effects were triggered by activities implemented in combination with other external and environmental factors?*

**Common types of monitoring:**

* **Results monitoring:** thistracks the effects and impacts of activities.This is where monitoring overlaps with evaluation to determine if the project is on target toward meeting intended outputs, outcomes and impact- the **results**. For example in a community cohesion project, monitoring may focus on determining if community activities are leading to increased trust among different community groups and local government or leaders. It also reveals if there were **unintended results**- either **positive** or **negative**.
* **Process/activity monitoring:** this tracks the use of resources and inputs, the progress of activities and achievement of outputs. It looks at the efficiency in time and resources in delivering activities. This normally happens together with compliance monitoring and feeds into evaluation of the project’s impact.For example in a winterization project, the team may monitor if beneficiaries receive project materials before the onset of snowfall and as per project schedule.
* **Compliance monitoring:** this ensures adherence to donor regulations and meeting of conditions set in the award/grant agreement. This also include ensuring activities comply with movement regulations.For example in a project delivering medical supplies and drugs, monitoring can be to ascertain if national and international protocols and standards for administering the drugs are being followed.
* **Context monitoring:** this is sometimes called **situation monitoring**.It tracks the environmental setting in which project activities are being implemented looking at aspects or developments that affect the project risks and assumptions and unexpected considerations. This includes field context, political, institutional, funding, policy, legal, cultural and natural context that have a bearing on project activities.
* **Beneficiary monitoring:** this is sometimes called beneficiary contact monitoring (BCM). It aims at tracking beneficiary perceptions about the project. It includes beneficiary complains, satisfaction with the project- including their participation, treatment, access to resources and overall change experience.
* **Financial monitoring:** this is normally done together with compliance monitoring. It seeks to account for costs by input and activity within predefined expenditure categories.
* **Organizational monitoring:** tracks the sustainability, institutional development and capacity building in the project and its partners. It looks for examples of activities being done to make the staff and beneficiary partners better placed and capacitated to implement the project.

**Some best practices in monitoring:**

* Monitoring data should be **well focused to specific audiences** and uses (only what is necessary and sufficient);
* Monitoring should be **systemati**c and based upon pre-determined project indicators and assumptions;
* Monitoring should also **look at unanticipated changes** in the project – changes in its context and assumptions and risks;
* Monitoring must be **timely** so that information obtained can be used to make decisions that can lead to adjustment and improvement of the project implementation;
* As much as possible, monitoring should be **participatory-** involve key stakeholders. This can reduce costs and build community understanding and ownership of the project activities; and

**Different Roles of Monitoring and Evaluations**

**Monitoring:** is a continuous function that uses systematic collection of data on specific indicators to provide management and stakeholders of an on-going project with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.

**Evaluation**: is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, its design, implementation and results. It differs from monitoring in that **it involves a judgment of the value of the activity and its results.**

* **Feedback mechanisms**: monitoring findings must also be shared with other stakeholders- beneficiaries, donors, government and other CSOs.

## Evaluation

**Evaluation** is assessing methodically and objectively in a systematic way to judge the quality or **worth of a project**, providing evidence that can be used to improve it or improve the design of future interventions[[6]](#footnote-6). According to OECD evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of a current or completed project, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors[[7]](#footnote-7).

During evaluations information from monitoring activities done is used to ascertain and understand the ways in which the project progressed and stimulated desired change. Based on the OCED-DAC criteria[[8]](#footnote-8), evaluations should help draw conclusions about the projects on the following:

* **Relevance:** The extent to which the project is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. In evaluating the relevance of a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: *To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid? Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives? Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?*[[9]](#footnote-9);
* **Effectiveness:** A measure of the extent to which a project attains its objectives. In evaluating the effectiveness of a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: *To what extent were the objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?[[10]](#footnote-10)*
* **Efficiency:** efficiency measures the outputs—qualitative and quantitative— in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the project uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. When evaluating the efficiency of a project or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: *Were activities cost-efficient?* *Were objectives achieved on time?* *Was project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?[[11]](#footnote-11)*
* Impact; The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators. The examination should be concerned with both intended and unintended results and must also include the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes in terms of trade and financial conditions. When evaluating the impact of a program or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: *What has happened as a result of the program or project? What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries? How many people have been affected?[[12]](#footnote-12)*; and
* Sustainability: Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. When evaluating the sustainability of a program or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: *To what extent did the benefits of a program or project continue after donor funding ceased? What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program or project?*

**1.2.1 Types of evaluations**

Evaluation types can be identified based on **timing**, **who conducts** the evaluation, and **evaluation technicality** or methodology.

**According to timing:**

* **Formative evaluation:** is done during project implementation to improve performance and compliance;
* **Summative evaluation**: is done at the end of a project implementation to assess effectiveness and impact;
* **Mid-term evaluation:** occurs mid-way in project implementation and is formative in nature. In most cases for a project of 24 months or above, the donor requires some mid-term evaluation after the first 12 months of implementation;
* **Final evaluation:** is summative in purpose. Is conducted at the end of the project. Is often conducted by external evaluators. It assesses if the project achieved its objectives; and
* **Ex-post evaluations:** conducted sometime after implementation to assess long term impact and sustainability.

**According to who conducts the evaluation:**

* **Internal/Self-evaluations:** are conducted by staff of the organization. These are often cheaper to do than external evaluations and help in learning lessons more than accountability. They may lack credibility in the eyes of donors or government as they are seen as subjective or biased towards those that implemented activities under the project;
* **External/independent evaluations** are done by external people who have technical expertise. They are more objective and focus more on accountability;
* **Participatory evaluations:** are conducted with beneficiaries and key stakeholders. They are empowering and build their capacities and promote their ownership of the project; and
* **Joint evaluations:** are conducted collaboratively by more than one implementing partner CSO. They help build consensus at different levels, credibility and joint support.

**According to technicality or methodology:**

* **Real-time evaluations:** are undertaken during project implementation. They provide immediate feedback for modifications to improve implementation. They focus more on lessons learnt over impact. They are normally useful during emergency response operations;
* **Meta-evaluations:** are used to assess the evaluation itself. They help take inventory of evaluations to help inform future evaluations, combine evaluation results, check compliance with evaluation policy and good practices; and assess how well evaluations are disseminated and utilized for organizational learning and change;
* **Thematic evaluations:** these focus on themes such as gender, youth, environment etc., across a number of projects or the whole organization**;**
* **Cluster/sector evaluations:** focus on set of related activities, projects or programs across sites and implemented by various organizations. For example, evaluation of primary education programs funded by Ministry of Education in Afghanistan; and
* **Impact evaluations:** focus on the effect of the project rather than the management and delivery. Normally occur after the project completion during final evaluation or ex-post evaluation. Please note that impact can also be measured during project implementation for longer duration projects of say three to ten years.

**Table 1: Comparison between monitoring and evaluation.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Questions | Monitoring | Evaluation |
| When is it done? Time | Continuous- throughout the project | Periodic review at significant points of the project. Mid-point, end, ex-post/change phase |
| What information is collected? Scope | Activities, outputs, indicators of progress. Day-to-day | Assesses overall delivery of outputs, and progress towards objectives and goal |
| Who does it? | Project staff | External evaluators, project staff, donors |
| How is it done: process | Regular reflective meetings, interviews, weekly, monthly, quarterly meetings | Extra-ordinary meetings, additional data collection exercises |
| What is produced: outputs | Reports and updates to project staff, management, Board and donors | Report with recommendations for changes to project. Presented mainly at a workshop with key stakeholders |
| How are the results used | To improve the quality of implementation and adjust planning. It’s like an input evaluation. | To judge the impact on target population, adjust objectives, decide on future programing. |

# **Chapter 2: Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle, and Roles and Responsibilities**

## 2.1 Introduction

An M&E system provides information relevant for the assessment of and guidance on the project strategy to ensure effective operations, meet internal and reporting requirements and inform future programming. An efficacious and functional M&E system provides continuous flow of information that is useful both internally in the organization and externally.

## 2.2 The Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle

The M&E cycle mirrors the project life cycle. It provides information about activities and processes to be done at each phase or stage of project management cycle. The project cycle normally has multiple phases that include project conception, project design, project start-up, project planning, project implementation, project mid-term, project end. The M&E processes and activities also follow the project cycle. Below is a schematic representation of the M&E cycle imbedded in the project cycle to show what M&E activities are done at different stages of the project management cycle.

Project Conception

Project Design

Project

End

Project Planning

Project Implementation

Project Middle

Project Planning

Project Implementation

Source: Author, Saungweme, M. 2019

The M&E cycle follows through the logical sequence of activities accomplish the project’s goal and objectives.

## 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

The table below outlines the roles and responsibilities for M&E tasks at all phases of the M&E cycle at {Name of CSO}.

**Table 2: Roles and Responsibilities for M&E**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WHO?** | **DOES WHAT?** |
| **Executive Director:**  (This is can be any position of the head of the management of the organization depending on the size of the CSO) | * Overall accountable for all M&E tasks as outlined in this policy document. * She/he ensures that all tasks and processes are completed timely and to highest level of quality. * Coordinates with the M&E staff and Board as required to address any high level tasks and issues of quality and performance. |
| **Proposal Champion:**  This is the main person leading the development of a new proposal. It may be a Program Director, Program Coordinator, Project Manager, Business Development Officer or anyone the organization nominates to be lead in developing a particular proposal | * Accountable for ensuring quality design of the project that incorporates good M&E aspects and feedback from M&E specialists in the organization. * Ensures budgeting, project logic, M&E narrative, innovative methods and indicators proposed are logical and relate to each other; * Coordinates with M&E and all involved in proposal design to ensure M&E and learning strategy for the project serves the needs of the team and the organization. |
| **Project Focal Point:**  This can be a Project Officer, Project Coordinator, Project Manager or anyone nominated by management to be the focal point for the project | * Facilitate roles and responsibilities for data collection with M&E focal points. * Ensures data for their projects are collected in line with reporting and decision-making deadlines and requirements. * Coordinate with staff implementing the project activities to ensure result are captured. |
| **M&E Focal Point:**  This can be an M&E Officer, Manager or Coordinator dedicated to look at M&E aspects of the proposal and new project. | * Primary lead in ensuring quality M&E framework design, M&E planning, monitoring roll out, planning and execution of researches and studies, data quality and managing reports and other M&E documents; * Report M&E requirement the management; * Coordinate with donor M&E focal point. |

# **Chapter 3: Project Design for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

## 3.1 Introduction

{Name of CSO} takes project design seriously. {Name of CSO} ensures that quality M&E is done throughout the project design process to ensure that teams are able to make evidence-based decisions throughout the project, learn effectively from programming experiences, reflect on the learnings and share convincing evidence of the changes and impacts the project is achieving.

## 3.2 Design tasks and coordination

The project design stage involves determining the nature and scope of the project, generating, evaluating and framing the business case for the intervention. It also involves determining the general approach to performing the project and agreeing on a detailed project plan. The design process entails consultations between the Executive Director, [[13]](#footnote-13)Proposal Champion, M&E Focal Point, and Project Focal Point to ensure that the design uses evidence from previous evaluations and lessons, and new methodologies show learning from experience. This stage also ensure that clear and cogent theories of change[[14]](#footnote-14) are developed that connect well to the goals, objectives and results of the project. This link provides a step-by-step guide to developing a theory of change: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7syACRQ\_kJ0 Best practices in ensuring project designs are done with M&E frameworks that will enable effective learning from the project include:

**Theory of change:** is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context? It is focused on mapping out what a project or program does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved.

* M&E Focal point and other staff participate in all project design calls, meetings or workshops. They should also review the design documents and final version of proposals and concept notes before they are submitted to donors. For all projects above $30,000, it’s a must that M&E focal points are involved in all processes;
* For bigger projects that include significant amount of researches including baselines, evaluations and other studies a dedicated M&E officer must be hired. For any project above $100,000 of value, a dedicated M&E officer must be hired.
* A rule of the thumb in most NGOs is that at least **five percent** of the budget should be dedicated for M&E. Thus for {Name of CSO} the M&E budget must not be below five percentage of the total project budget. Below are some of the M&E budget lines to be considered while designing a project budget.

**Table 3: Standard budget lines for M&E**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **BUDGET LINE** | **NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** |
| **Staffing** | * Salary and benefits, housing/per diem etc. for: M&E officer ; data collection and entry people (full, part time, or temporary |
| **Assessments and baselines** | * For all staff ({Name of CSO} and partner; including drivers) involved in assessment: * Transportation, per diem, lodging |
| **Field monitoring** | * For monitoring trips beyond what is already planned by field agents (including M&E officer accompanying field agents on already planned trips), including drivers: * Transportation, per diem, lodging |
| **Real-time (RTE) and other evaluations** | * Real Time Evaluations For external evaluator(s) [external to the project, so the evaluator can be a {Name of CSO} staff person, * Consulting fees or salary •   Travel (to the country and for the field visits) • Per diem • Lodging Cost of evaluation • Per diem, travel, lodging of project staff involved in data collection (including drivers)   * Meeting costs of one day management workshop at the end of the trip (office supplies, lunch) * Other evaluations Line items are similar to an RTE but the evaluation is preferably led by an external evaluator. All other costs remain the same. |
| **Reflective and learning events** | * Per diem, travel, lodging of any staff who have to travel a long distance to the location of the event (e.g., main office staff to field office, field staff to main office) • Meals during event • Office supplies • Meeting room rental |

## 3.3 Responsibility for following this policy at project design

* The Executive Director and the Proposal Champion must be responsible of ensuring strict adherence to this policy while designing projects. This involves sticking to the budgeting guidelines and involving M&E staff at all stages of the project design- design workshops and calls and review of final proposal and concept notes;
* The Executive Director must ensure that M&E is adequately budgeted for;
* The M&E Focal Point and other M&E staff are responsible of ensuring that the current project design is informed by learning from previous studies and evaluations, provide technical support in development of the logical framework matrix, M&E sections of the proposal, cohesive overall project logic, specific evaluations and research methodologies.

## 3.4 Key questions to ask during project design

* Is the project based on best practices in the sector? If it’s a girls’ education project, is it based on current best practices in girls’ education?
* Do the best practices considered include such aspects as Do-No-Harm, gender mainstreaming, social inclusion gender disaggregated data, ethical data collection etc.;
* Do the project’s problem statement, theory of change, goal, objectives and results link together and build upon each other in a logical manner;
* Does the design link effectively with the organization’s theory of change in the organization’s strategy document?
* Are proposed M&E activities feasible, coherent and adequately budgeted for?

# **Chapter 4: Project Start-up and Monitoring and Evaluation**

## 4.1 Introduction

It is a must that a start-up meeting be called up whenever {Name of CSO} signs up a new project with a donor. The start-up meeting must be called for by the Executive Director and co-led by her/him and the Project Manager/Project Focal point. Staff representing all technical areas of the project must attend this meeting and these will include the project implementation team, finance team, procurement team, communications team, a sector specialist ( if they exist, for example an education specialist for a girls education project, if they are not the project focal point/manager) and monitoring and evaluation team. M&E is a key part of the start-up process. The purpose of discussing M&E for the project at the start-up is to ensure that key M&E requirements of the project are met and that key changes (objectives and results) that the project aims to achieve are well understood by all staff involved with the project.

## 4.2 Project start-up M&E tasks

At the project start-up meeting key obligations for M&E are discussed by all staff present and understood. The donor’s M&E requirements must also be discussed. It is important that the Executive Director, Project Manager and M&E Focal point read thoroughly and understand the M&E narrative, M&E deliverables, the Logframe (including the indicators) as defined in the proposal. The project Manager and the M&E Focal Point review the M&E budget and plan procurement and other process required.

In some cases where the project is large and {Name of CSO} is the lead partner the project start-up meeting must also include implementing partners.

## 4.3 Responsibility for following this policy at start-up

* The Executive Director ensures follow through at the start-up meetings and provides relevant inputs for planning;
* She/he chairs the start-up meeting;
* Project Focal Point/Manager co-leads the start-up meetings and ensures notes are taken;
* The M&E Focal point leads the discussions on M&E deliverables, Logframe, results chain and M&E plan development.

## 4.4 Key M&E related questions to ask during project start-up meeting

* Has the project context (including thematic issues) changed since the proposal was drafted?
* Are there programmatic and M&E related issues that need to be re-negotiated with the donor?
* Is the M&E budget as submitted at proposal stage still realistic?
* What are the donor contractual obligations for M&E?
* What are the M&E deliverables and what are the timelines?
* Which deliverables will be done internally and which ones would need external consultants?

# **Chapter 5: Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Plans**

## 5.1 Introduction

**An M&E Plan:** is a document that helps to track and assess the results of the projects throughout its life. It is a living document that should be referred to and updated on a regular basis. While the specifics of each project’s M&E plan will look different, they should all follow the same basic structure and include the same key elements.

The M&E[[15]](#footnote-15) plan provide a clear vision on how the organization is expected to learn, reflect, and understand the project’s impact and the context in which it takes place. An M&E plan also helps reflect on how the project contributes to {Name of CSO}’s organizational learning and strategic plan. This the reason why for {Name of CSO} M&E plans are a must and mandatory for all projects notwithstanding size of modality of implementation.

## Why having an M&E plan?

Develop an M&E plan **before beginning any monitoring activities** so that there is a clear plan for what questions about the project need to be answered. M&E plan helps staff decide how they are going to **collect data** to track [**indicators**](https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-monitoring-indicators), how monitoring data will be analyzed, and how the **results of data collection will be disseminated** both to the donor and internally among staff members. An M&E plan will help make sure **data is being used efficiently** to make the project effective and enable to **reporting on results** at the end of the project.

An M& E is the organization’s road-map to successful implementation of M&E activities in the project. The M&E plan gives clarity and guidance on:

* How evaluation questions directly link to programmatic goals;
* Variables needed to measure in order to provide answers to monitoring and evaluation questions of the project;
* Data collection tools for measuring variables, including timeline and responsibility for data collection;
* Processes for data collection and data management, including methods and software to be used;
* How resulting data and information will be used, including identifying the different readers or consumers of monitoring and evaluation products and how they will use these to make decisions, inform future programming, influence policy and learning; and
* Staffing needs and other resources needed to implement M&E activities

## 5.3 When should an M&E plan be developed and by who?

* An M&E plan must be developed at the beginning of the project, soon after the project startup meeting. It must developed before any project activities are done and before any monitoring activities are done.
* For project where a baseline will be done and M&E plan is developed the same way at the beginning of the project. Once the baseline is completed the M&E plan will be updated to include such changes as improvement in indicator definitions and baseline value
* The project’s M&E focal point will lead in the development of the M&E plan. In doing so the project manager/focal points and other project implementation staff will be involved. It should take about a week to develop a good M&E plan. The developed M&E plan must approved by the Executive Director.

## Steps in developing an M&E plan

For a step-by-step guide to developing an M&E plan see: <https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-monitoring-and-evaluation-plan>

For a step-by-step guide to developing a logframe or logic mode:

### <https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-logic-model-0>

### 5.4.1 Identify the project goal, objectives and results:

The first step in creating an M&E plan is to identify the project goal, objectives and results. If the project already has a [logic model](https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-logic-model-0) (see logframe in Annex 1) or theory of change, then the goal, objectives and results are already defined. If not, then try to develop a logframe or other logic model for the project first and define your indicators for the goal, objectives and results.

Questions to ask when defining a project goal:

* What problem is the project trying to solve?
* What steps are being taken to solve that problem?
* How will program staff know when the project has been successful in solving the problem?

​5.4.2 Define the indicators of progress:

Once the project’s goal, objectives and results are defined, it is time to define indicators for tracking progress towards achieving the goal, objectives and results. Project indicators should be a mix of those that measure process, or what is being done in the project, and those that measure outcomes.

[**Process indicators**](https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-monitoring-and-evaluation-plan#process) track the progress of the project. They help to answer the question, “Are activities being implemented as planned?” Some examples of process indicators are:

* Number of trainings held with girls and boys in English language;
* Number of CSOs certified by AICS;
* Number of policy briefs on NGO law developed; and
* Number of winterization packages distributed

[Outcome indicators](https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-monitoring-and-evaluation-plan#outcome): track how successful project activities have been at achieving its objectives. They help to answer the question, “Have project activities made a difference?” Some examples of outcome indicators are:

* Percentage of girls and boys who are comfortable expressing themselves in English language;
* Number of CSOs under AICS certification program who developed raised funds from private companies after a Financial Sustainability Training;
* Percentage of CSOs who developed strategic plans after AICS training on leadership and governance;

### 5.4.3 Define data collection methods and timelines:

After creating monitoring indicators, it is time to decide on methods for gathering data and how often various data will be recorded to track indicators. This should be a conversation between project staff, stakeholders, and donors. These methods will have important implications for what data collection methods will be used and how the results will be reported. The source of monitoring data depends largely on what each indicator is trying to measure. The project will likely need multiple data sources to answer all of the programming questions. Below is a table that represents some examples of what data can be collected and how.

### 5.4.4 Define the indicators of progress:

This element of the M&E plan is a section on roles and responsibilities. It is important to decide from the early planning stages who is responsible for collecting the data for each indicator. This will probably be a mix of M&E staff, and project staff. Everyone will need to work together to get data collected accurately and in a timely fashion.

Data management roles should be decided with input from all team members so everyone is on the same page and knows which indicators they are assigned. This way when it is time for reporting there are no surprises.

An easy way to put this into the M&E plan is to expand the indicators table with additional columns for who is responsible for each indicator, as shown below.

### 5.4.5 Create data analysis plan and reporting templates:

Once all of the data have been collected, the M&E Focal point will compile and analyze it to fill in a results table for internal review and external reporting.

The M&E plan should include a section with details about what data will be analyzed and how the results will be presented. Questions to be asked here are:

* Do M&E staff need to perform any statistical tests to get the needed answers?
* If so, what tests are they and what data will be used in them?
* What software program will be used to analyze data and make reporting tables? Excel? SPSS?

Another good thing to include in the plan is a blank table for indicator reporting. These tables should outline the indicators, data, and time period of reporting. They can also include things like the indicator target, and how far the program has progressed towards that target. An example of a reporting table is below.

### 5.4.6 Develop and dissemination and donor reporting plan:

The last element of the M&E plan describes how and to whom data will be disseminated.  Data should always be collected for particular purposes. It is important that a plan on how the data and information from M&E activities will be utilized and disseminated be articulated in the M&E plan. The team must ask themselves the fowling questions:

* How will M&E data be used to inform staff and stakeholders about the success and progress of the project?
* How will it be used to help staff make modifications and project adjustment course as necessary?
* How will the data be used to move the field forward and make project practices more effective?

The M&E plan should include plans for internal dissemination among the project team, as well as wider dissemination among stakeholders, government and donors.

## 5.5 What to include in an M&E plan

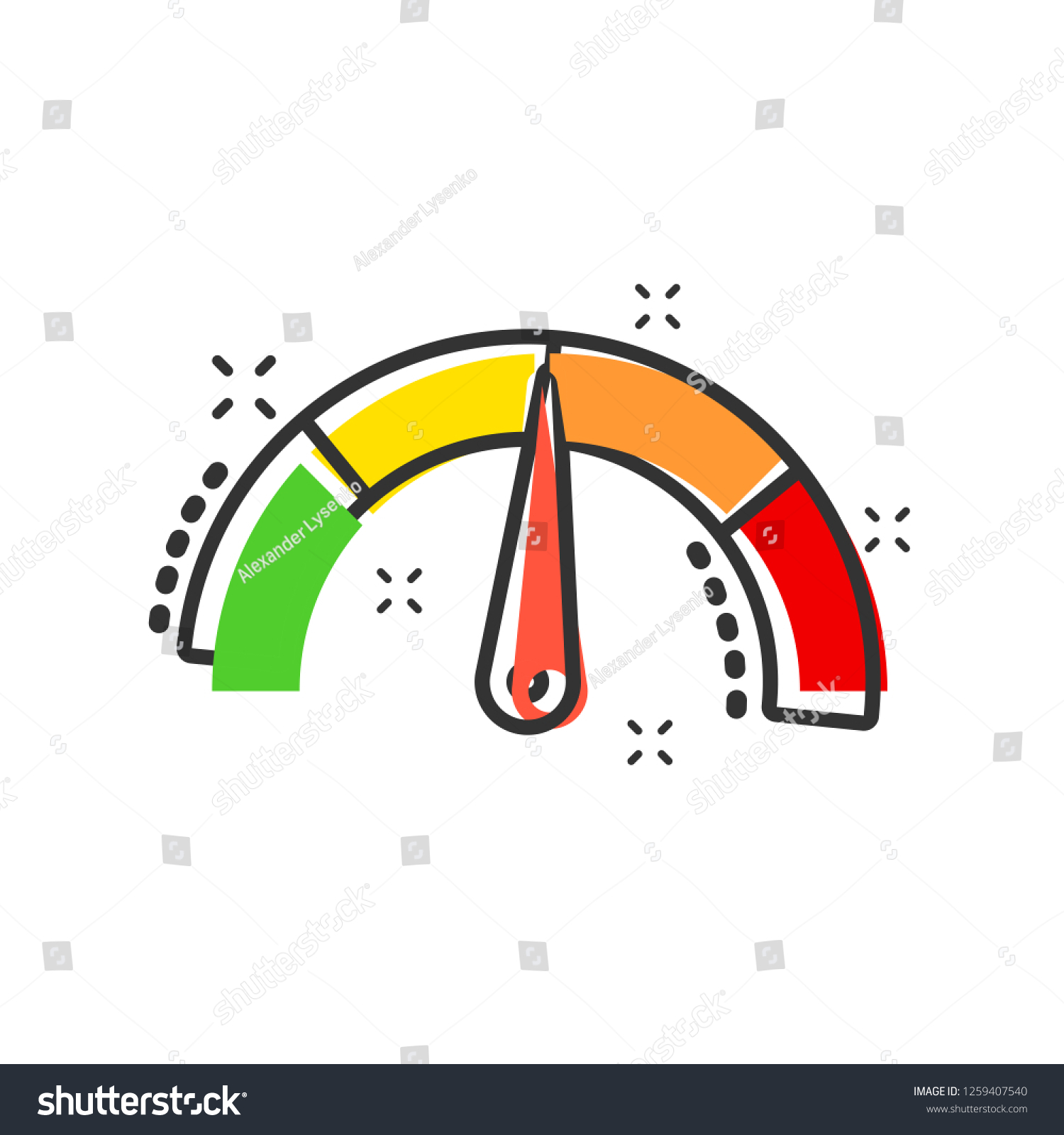
The M&E Focal Point puts all the ideas and pieces together for development of an M&E plan and then organizes a meeting with the Project Manager/Focal Point and other key program staff to agree on final version of the M&E Plan. The final plan must be approved by the Executive Director. The final M&E Plan includes the following:

* Types of change to be tracked in the project;
* Roles and responsibilities;
* Indicator definitions;
* Needs for database or how and where data will be stored;
* Production of any pieces from the project for learning that will be shared and communicated with partners, participants, external partners and donors

A template for an M&E plan is attached as **Annex 2** to this policy manual. The M&E plan is developed before baseline or any other studies done under the project. All staff involved in implementation of the project must print and always carry with them a copy of the M&E plan when implementing activities.

## 5.6 Indicators and their types

### 5.6.1 Indicators defined

An indicator in real life is something that provides a signal or pointer to that something really exists or something that shows the state or presence of a situation. For example heavy presence of security personnel and many check points than normal in Kabul may serve as an indicator of a security incident or the likelihood of such incident to happen. In project M&E an indicator is a quantitative metric that provides information to monitor performance, measure achievement and determine accountability[[16]](#footnote-16). Indicators are standardized measures of a project progress that allow for comparisons over time, over different geographic areas and/or across projects.

Indicators can be seen as clues, signs or markers that measure one aspect of a project and show how close a project is to its desired path and outcomes. Indicators are realistic and measurable criteria of project’s progress.

Indicators must be defined before project activities start so that they allow program staff to monitor and know whether there is achieving its purpose or not. Indicators link the theory and practice in project planning. Indicators allow project team and the organization to know if the project is making any difference in the communities it is implemented[[17]](#footnote-17). They describe observable changes which relate to the project interventions. Indicators help provide evidence of what happened- whether they are activities implemented and output achieved or an immediate effect realized or long term change has been observed.

### 5.6.2 Types of indicators:

Indicators can classified in these two types:

* Quantitative indicators (Output indicators); and
* Qualitative indicators (Outcome or performance indicators).

**Quantitative Indicators / Output Indicators:**

Indicators that the team if activities and actions planned are actually happening as intended are known as **Output Indicators**. These types of indicators will help to monitor whether the team is doing what was planned (outputs). These do not give any idea of the **effect** or **change** that is brought about by these outputs. An example of an output indicator is “the number of female and male students trained in English language” for a project offering English language training. This indicator won’t tell us the change in English language proficiency, new knowledge gained or pass rate. That is why it is important to monitor both the implementation of the project’s actions and the changes that the project is making- positive or negative, intended or unintended. Quantitative indicators can be expressed in a number of ways, depending on the data involved and its use. These can include whole numbers, decimals, ratios, fractions, percentages and monetary values — quantitative factors can always be expressed as a number[[18]](#footnote-18). Below are some examples of quantitative indicators:

* The number of people trained;
* Number of community collaborative activities done;
* Unemployment (By age, gender, Occupation);
* Number of CSOs certified by AICS;
* Number of under <5 children accessing vaccinations;
* The average rice harvest per hectare;
* The cost of transport to market;
* Increase in household income; and
* Infant Mortality Rate.

**Performance Indicators / Qualitative Indicators:**

**Quantitative indicators** are **numerical** while **qualitative indicators** convey **information in textual** or **descriptive form**, which can include both statements of fact as well as statements of opinion.

Qualitative indicators are usually indicators of **change (outcomes).** These indicators help the team and organization have information on whether the project is leading to changes in people’s lives, power dynamics, rights or community relations and trust etc. These are people’s judgments and perceptions about the project, such as the confidence of girls and boys in expressing themselves in English language after the training. Qualitative indicators are non-numerical factors for determining level of progress towards a specific goal. Qualitative data is based on opinions, feelings or viewpoints rather than hard facts or numbers.

The term ‘qualitative indicators’ is made up of two very important research concepts. Qualitative and quantitative information make up the two types of discoverable information[[19]](#footnote-19). Quantitative is generally the easiest to understand and manipulate since it is based on numbers and hard facts. When information can’t be measured or reproduced, then it is typically qualitative. Examples of qualitative or performance indicators are as follows:

* Greater freedom of expression
* Ease of access to a health facility
* Participation in youth Groups
* Women’s participation in decision making
* Improved working relations among staff
* Level of satisfaction with the services

**Setting SMART indicators**

In is must that in {Name of CSO} indicators set for project results and outcomes are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant** and **Time-bound (SMART):**

* **Specific:** a specific indicator is one that is clear in operational terms. While the output, result or outcome can be broad, the indicator must be specific in terms of telling **who** will be changed by the project, **what** will be changed, **where** the change will occur, **how** it will change, and **when.** An example of specific indicator will be something like this, *“Girls and boys* ***(who)*** *in targeted by the project in Kabul* ***(where),*** *will have increased confidence* ***(how)*** *in expressing themselves in English Language* ***(what)*** *by the end* ***(when)*** *of the project;*
* **Measurable:** the indicator must be helpful to tell team about change. It must be able to be observed, counted, analyzed, challenged or tested. If an indicator cannot be measured or can to be used to be able to see movement or change then progress cannot be determined. An example of an indicator being measurable or analyzable is : “**90 percent** of *girls and boys in targeted by the project in Kabul****,***

*will have* ***increased confidence***

*in* ***expressing themselves*** *in*

***English Language*** *by the* ***end of the project”***

* + It’s easy to measure, analyze, observe, test or challenge this indicator during and after the project.
* **Achievable:** here the team ensures that the indicator is achievable, id the target actually specifics the amount or level of what is to be measured in order to achieve the result or outcome. Example is, is the **90 percent** of girls and boys targeted by the project achievable in terms of them having confidence to express themselves in English;
* **Relevant:** Here the team should ensure that the indicator they are setting is relevant to measure changes in the intended result or outcome. For example the indicator of **90 percent of girls and boys having increased their confidence in English language expression** must be tied to a project result or outcome **about increased in English language literacy** not a result or outcome talking about a different thing such a reduced levels of malnutrition. The indicator should be meaningful and important to the outcome to certify that the results are actually showing a related impact. Broad outcomes or results must have numerous specific and applicable indicators through which progress can be assessed. An indicator is relevant to the extent that it captures or measures an aspect of the outcome that it is intended to measure. The best way to think about relevance is to ensure that there is a relationship between what the indicator measures and the theories that help create the outcomes.
* **Time bound:** the indicator must be **bound by time**. It should tell us **by when it will be achieved**. For example in this indicator the time is **by end of project**: “*90 percent of girls and boys in targeted by the project in Kabul, will have increased confidence in expressing themselves in English Language* ***by the end of the project****”*

## 5.7 Responsibility for M&E plan

* M&E Focal Point drafts the M&E plan and organizes meetings for its finalization, reviews and revisions;
* Sends final draft to the Executive Director;
* Organizes meeting to review and update the M&E plan after a baseline or project study;
* Project Manager/Focal Point participants in reviews and updating of the M&E plan and ensures other project implementation staff participate in the meetings;

## 5.8 Key guiding questions in drafting M&E plan

* Has the donor provided a template? If yes, as it being used? If not, use the {Name of CSO}’s M&E template.
* Area there any other specific donor requirement for the M&E plan?
* Do all staff involved agree that the M&E plan directly links to reporting needs in the logframe and other team learning needs?
* Does the plan allow for measurement of intended and unintended outcomes and impacts?
* Does the plan links with learning efforts of other projects?
* When does learning and reflection take place in the project? Who participates?
* Is the M&E aligned to the project’s work plan?
* Is there a role for implementing partners? If yes, how will their activities be monitored?
* Do all staff agree to the information dissemination strategy to support reflection and learning outside the project team. Which other stakeholders get reports?
* How are the reports utilized?

# **Chapter 6: Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Database**

## 6.1 Introduction

Having the right tools and databases for a project ensures that the correct information related to outputs and outcome is collected stored and utilized. All timelines and processes for developing of tools and databases must be included in the M&E plan.

## 6.2 What must be done?

The M&E Focal Point in collaboration with the Project Manager must determine how sensitive different tools will be and who should do them. There may be need for external consultancy support to develop some tools. Internally, the M&E Focal Point develops the tools.

Once data is collected it needs to be analyzed into usable information. The analysis is done by the M&E Focal Point or designated project implementation members noted in the M&E Plan. This must be done well in time to meet reporting deadlines or reflection meeting cycles.

The M&E Focal point collects and consolidates information, lessons learnt and relevant documents on a regular basis for sharing in internal meetings. The Executive Director must organize and facilitate reflective meetings to celebrate project successes, challenges and failures and reflect on learning done in the period. The Executive Director must also ensure that those that write donor reports are included and also get lessons learnt and results achieved to reflect these in reports. The M&E Focal point must ensure that selected tools match the activities. For example pre and post test tools would match a training and not social cohesion sporting event.

## 6.3 Responsibility for developing and use of tools

* M&E Focal Point works closely with Project Manager to finalize development of tools;
* Reviews the tools;
* The M&E Focal Point maintain indicator trackers a stores data in secured database and analyses results and objectives on a regular basis.
* Project Manager/Focal Point ensure that all project implementation staff are collecting date regularly as required as per M&E Plan
* Executive Director takes a leading role in facilitating project reflection meetings with support from the Project Manager/Focal Point

## 6.4 Key questions in developing and use of monitoring tools

* Are there standard monitoring tools to capture outputs?
* Do the tools allow for collection of disaggregated data and as per indicator definitions?
* Is data disaggregated as required based on gender, age and other social inclusion factors?
* Are qualitative data collection tools developed and used in way that allows systematic analysis? Are these developed to capture quotes, narratives, photos, video, audio etc.?
* Has monitoring data benne entered into the database within two weeks after collection?
* Has the data been analyzed in time to inform reporting and reflection sessions?
* Are reflections and learning organized timely and as per the M&E plan? Are they structured to foster high quality and honest discussions?

# **Chapter 7: Use of Monitoring and Evaluation Results for Decision Making**

## 7.1 Introduction

One of the most important part of M&E is being able to generate data and information that used make evidenced-based decisions. Evidence-based decisions in CSOs drive creativity, innovation and help the teams in solving problems. It’s also crucial to stakeholders and donors to understand that adaptation of projects is coming from a combination of changing contexts and analysis of project strategies within the shifting operating environment.

## 7.2 What must be done?

At M&E development stage, it is crucial that an in-depth discussion to be done on how data be analyzed and utilized (used). It’s important to develop a process by which the project implementation is adapted based on evidence gathered from M&E data analysis. The M&E plan should note how these discussions will be held. And provide a calendar as to when these will be done so that they are not overlooked during implementation. As noted, earlier monitoring data should be inputted within two weeks of it being collected to enable timely analysis and learning from the analysis given the fast paced environment in Afghanistan. A mechanism and process should also be noted in the M&E plan how key results learnt area highlighted to different audiences, donors, and partners and internally with staff and Board.

## 7.3 Responsibility for use of tools and findings

* The Project Manager/Focal Point uses findings to adjust activities;
* M&E Focal Point stores and analyzes data and facilitates discussions on findings;
* Executive Director supports discussions and ensures that monitoring data is used for decision making.

## 7.4 Key question is monitoring-based decision making

* Are we identifying success stories and lessons leant clearly from the monitoring results?
* Has a reflection meeting to share the analyzed results from with the program team and management teams been organized?
* Has an action plan been developed for future improvements and who is responsible for implementation of the actions plan? Are timelines clearly defined?
* Has monitoring data been clearly integrated into donor and internal reports
* Have the results been shared with the Board?

# **Chapter 8: Researches, Baselines and Evaluations**

## 8.1 Introduction

From time to time {Name of CSO} will conduct researches, baseline studies and evaluations. It is important that in the M&E plan clearly state expectations about timelines and utilization of findings from these studies as well as get team agreement on leading questions or questions the studies would focus on exploring.

## 8.2 The process of preparing for studies

* **Terms of Reference** for the study will be developed by the M&E Focal point and reviewed by the Project Focal Point before they are signed off by the Executive Director. After this the next processes of recruiting the consultants to do the study will commence.
* After development of the Terms of Reference the M&E Focal Point hands over the ToR to facilitate advertising for calls for bids in the newspapers and online platforms.
* Inception Report: upon signing a contract to carry out the study the consultant drafts and inception report detailing their methodology, research processes, and data collection methods among others. The Inception Report must be approved by the Executive Director as a deliverable before payments are done or next activities under the study are done.

## 8.3 Responsibility for preparing for studies

* M&E Focal Point develops ToRs and shared with the Project Manager and Executive Director;
* Executive Director approves the ToR;
* Admin and M&E leads the recruitment of the consultant;
* Executive Director approves recruitment process;
* M&E Focal Point reviews inception report;
* Tools are developed by the consultant and reviewed by the M&E Focal Point;
* Studies are carried out

## 8.4 Key question when preparing studies

* Does the ToR match the M&E narrative and the lofgrame?
* What OECD-DAC criteria is going to be used to evaluate the project?
* What do we learn from the data collection process apart beyond the logframe for program decisions?
* Do the ToR enhance understanding about the intended and unintended outcomes and impacts of the project?
* Is the study being done internally or externally?
* Does the ToR take into account the resources or deliverables needed to communicate results in line with learning and sharing strategy of {Name of CSO}?
* How does the M&E focal point send all data and inform required by the consultant to draft and inception report?

# **Chapter 9: Learning and Reflection Procedures and Practices**

## 9.1 Introduction

It is important that opportunities for learning and reflection be key components of an M&E system. Weekly and monthly meetings must be done as well as project reflection and learning sessions. A results database must also be developed and study and evaluations reports shared and published where possible.

## 9.2 Weekly and Monthly Meetings

In order to continuously monitor progress after project and ensure all problems are resolved collaboratively weekly and monthly project meetings must be done. These meetings can be done in-person or if teams are geographically spaced done by phone or other online methods. The weekly meetings can be short 30-minute meetings between the Project Focal Point, the M&E Focal Point and key project implementation staff. This is done to trouble shoot any problems in the field and encountered during field monitoring and implementation visits. Soon after the meetings notes with clear action points must be send to all who attended and also copied to the Executive Director.

The monthly meeting is more detailed and can take one to two hours. There discussions on project activity implementation progress is done. This also includes identifying any project challenges and opportunities that can foster change. Discussions on the M&E plan are also done here and how it’s working and if the tools are fit for their purpose. The M&E Focal Point coordinates and facilitate these meetings and ensures that notes for the meeting reflecting agreed action points are circulated to all staff who participated in the meeting and the Executive Director is also copied.

## 9.3 Project reflections and learning sessions

Learning sessions are key in ensuring that evidence and data from M&E are being used to inform decisions the project and its implementation strategy. All project must have learning sessions outlined in the M&E plan and these must be budgeted as essential aspects of learning. They serve also as essential opportunities for teams to unpack complex issues about the project. These sessions also help to reflect on how results of the project connect to the project’s theory of change. Reflection sessions must be done quarterly and its must that one of the sessions be done mid-term regardless of whether there is a mid-term evaluation or not. These learning sessions will help the team make decisions on what aspects of the project needs adjustment.

## 9.4 What is involved in project reflections and learning sessions

These sessions must take place throughout the project cycle, on a quarterly basis. They can also be done after specific studies, evaluations or baselines are done, to discuss the results, unpack the meaning of the findings and how they will lead to adjustments in project activities and implementation strategy. As part of the M&E plan project teams are expected to outline regular meetings for decision-making based on evidence gathered from monitoring data. The meetings combine evidence and critical self-reflection. Summaries and cross-tabulations of monitoring data will be used to stimulate discussions during the learning sessions. The discussion cover the following aspects:

* Project management;
* Activities;
* Project direction and adaptation;
* Indicators (progress);
* Opportunities and challenges

Reflection meetings should be timed properly in line with timelines for monitoring data collection and design to encourage conversations about inputs, outputs and outcomes of the project.

## 9.5 Responsibility for project reflections and learning sessions

* The M&E Focal Point organizes the meeting and provides data and analysis:
* The Project Manager/Focal Point ensures all key project implementation staff attend and provide additional insights in the meetings and commit to and make plans to follow up on action points discussed in response to lessons learnt;
* The Executive Director ensures that action points are realized and provide guidance to the meetings in relation to strategy and theory of change;

## 9.6 Key questions to consider for project reflections and learning sessions

* Is the learning built into project design budgeted for and set in the M&E plan?
* Are all members regularly making themselves available for learning sessions?
* Are opportunities for responses and engagement of all project staff and partners being allowed?
* Does the learning and discussion drive the program strategy;
* Are there key lesson learnt to share with the Board, donors and other projects.

# **Annexes**

## Annex 1: Sample Logframe[[20]](#footnote-20)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PROJECT SUMMARY** | **INDICATORS** | **MEANS OF VERIFICATION** | **RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS** |
| **Goal** | 10% increase in the number of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school within 3 years. | Percentage of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school. | Comparison of primary and high school enrolment records. | N/A |
| **Outcome** | Improve reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 3 years. | Reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6 | Six monthly reading proficiency tests using the national assessment tool. | Improved reading proficiency provides self-confidence required to stay in school. |
| **Outputs** | 1. 500 Grade 5-6 students with low reading proficiency complete a reading summer camp | Number of students completing a reading summer camp. | Summer camp attendance records. | Children apply what they learnt in the summer camp. |
| 2. 500 parents of children in Grade 5-6 with low reading proficiency help their children read at home. | Number of parents helping their children to read at home. | Survey of parents conducted at the end of each summer camp. | Children are interested in reading with their parents. |
| **Activities** | 1. Run five reading summer camps, each with 100 Grades 5-6 students who have low reading proficiency. | Number of summer camps run. | Summer camp records. | Parents of children with low reading proficiency are interested in them attending the camps. |
| 2. Distribute 500 “Reading at Home” kits to parents of children attending summary camps. | Number of kits distributed. | Kit distribution records. | Parents are interested and able to use the kits at home. |

## Annex 2: Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan[[21]](#footnote-21)

<Logo>

<Organization Name>

<Project title>

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

**4 July 2019**

**Contents**

**INSTRUCTIONS: Update the Table of Contents as the final step before submitting your report.**

[Acronyms ii](#_Toc371762048)

[1 Introduction 1](#_Toc371762049)

[1.1 Purpose of this plan 1](#_Toc371762050)

[1.2 Project summary 1](#_Toc371762051)

[2 Logical Framework 2](#_Toc371762052)

[3 Indicators 3](#_Toc371762053)

[4 Roles & Responsibilities 5](#_Toc371762054)

[5 Data Flow 6](#_Toc371762055)

[6 Data Management 7](#_Toc371762056)

[6.1 Storage 7](#_Toc371762057)

[6.2 Analysis 7](#_Toc371762058)

[6.3 Privacy 7](#_Toc371762059)

[Appendices 8](#_Toc371762060)

[<Tool Title> 8](#_Toc371762061)

[<Tool Title> 8](#_Toc371762062)

[<Tool Title> 8](#_Toc371762063)

Acronyms

AIDS Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MoH Ministry of Health

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

TOT Training of Trainers

Introduction

**INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this section with background details.**

Purpose of this plan

<Describe what the purpose of the monitoring and evaluation plan is, such as who prepared it, for which audience and why>

Project summary

<Provide basic information on the project that this monitoring and evaluation plan is for>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title | <Insert> |
| **Starting Date** | <Insert> |
| **Duration** | <Insert> |
| **Partners** | <Insert> |
| **Target Area** | <Insert> |
| **Beneficiaries** | <Insert> |
| **Cost** | <Insert> |
| **Funding Source** | <Insert> |
| **Goal** | <Insert> |

Logical Framework

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | PROJECT SUMMARY | INDICATORS | MEANS OF VERIFICATION | RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS |
| **Goal** | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> |
| **Outcomes** | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> |
| **Outputs** | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> |
| **Activities** | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> | <Insert> |

Indicators

**INSTRUCTIONS: For each indicator listed in the previous logframe table describe precisely what the indicator is and how it will be measured. An example is shown below. Copy and paste the table as many times as required for completing all the indicators.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Indicator | Reading proficiency among children in Grade 6 |
| **Definition** | Sum of all reading proficiency test scores for all students in Grade 6 divided by the total number of students in Grade 6. |
| **Purpose** | To assess whether reading proficiency at the schools participating in the program is improving over time. This would provide evidence on whether the reading component of the program is effective. |
| **Unit of Measure** | Score |
| **Baseline** | Average score: 47 |
| **Target** | Average score: 57 |
| **Data Source** | Reading proficiency test |
| **Data Collection** | The class teacher will conduct a reading proficiency test for all students in the class. Each student will be assessed individually in a separate room. The teacher will ask them to read a list of words, sentences and paragraphs out loud and will mark each one that they have difficulty with. Any students not present on the day of the assessment will be excluded. |
| **Tool** | National Reading Proficiency Assessment questionnaire (See Annex A) |
| **Frequency** | Every 6 months |
| **Responsible** | Teachers |
| **Reporting** | The individual score for each student will be reported in the six monthly progress reports submitted by each teacher to the Program Manager. The Program Manager will then combine the data from each class to create full list of students and their scores. This will be used to calculate the average score for all students in Grade 6 using the definition above. The average score will be included in the report for the donor submitted every six months. |
| **Quality Control** | All teachers will attend a one day training course on how to complete the assessment. To verify the accuracy of the test scores submitted by the teachers the Program Manager will randomly select one class every six months to audit. This audit will involve re-testing all the students in the class and comparing the results to the results submitted by the teacher. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Indicator | <Insert> |
| **Definition** | <Insert> |
| **Purpose** | <Insert> |
| **Baseline** | <Insert> |
| **Target** | <Insert> |
| **Data Collection** | <Insert> |
| **Tool** | <Insert> |
| **Frequency** | <Insert> |
| **Responsible** | <Insert> |
| **Reporting** | <Insert> |
| **Quality Control** | <Insert> |

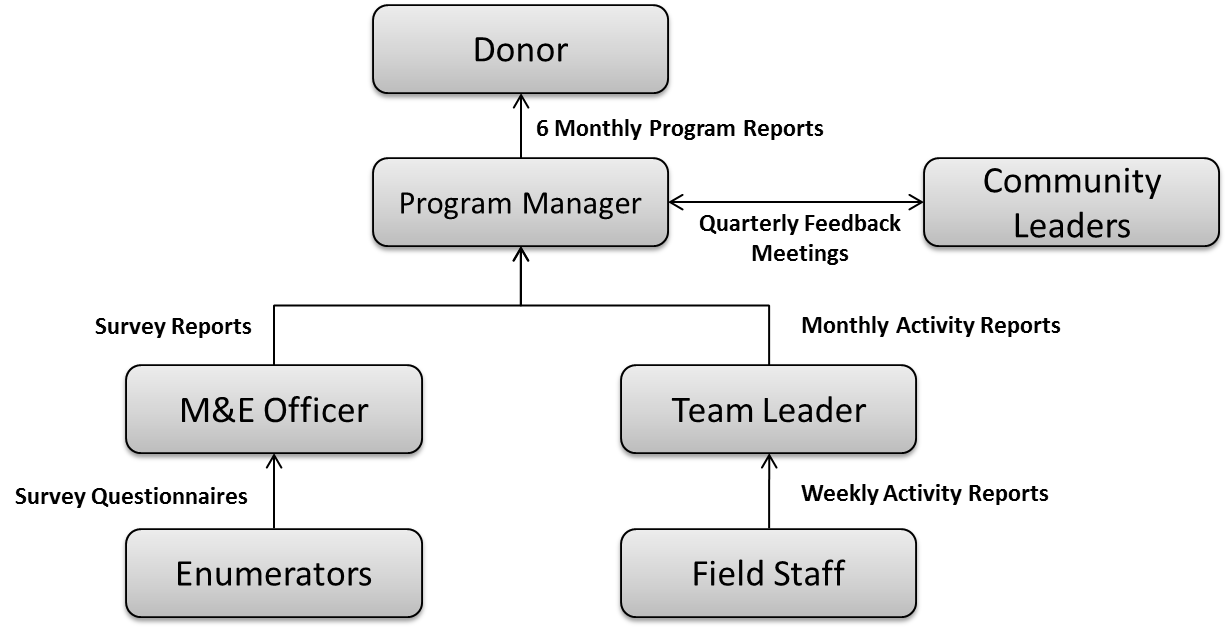
Roles & Responsibilities

**INSTRUCTIONS: List each role in the organization and their specific responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation. This may include collecting data, checking data, conducting analysis, reviewing reports, making decisions based on the data, etc. Some examples are shown below.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Role | Responsibilities |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |
| **<Insert>** | <Insert> |

Data Flow

**INSTRUCTIONS: Insert a flow chart and description showing how the monitoring data will flow from the place where it is collected up to the management team and then to other stakeholders, including the donor. An example is shown below.**

****

<Insert description of the data flow process>

Data Management

Storage

<Describe how the data collected will be stored. For example, will it be stored in a spread sheet, database, hard copies, etc. How will it be backed up? How long will it be stored for? Data for different indicators may be stored in different ways>

Analysis

<Describe which software / tools will be used to analyze the data, such as SPSS, Stata, Excel, Tableau Public, etc.>

Privacy

<Discuss any privacy issues with the data and how they will be addressed. For example, if you are collecting personal medical records how will they be kept confidential, who will have access to them, when will they be destroyed, etc.>

Appendices

**INSTRUCTIONS: Add any necessary appendices. As a minimum this should include the tools (questionnaires, interview guides, procedures etc.) that will be used to measure each indicator.**

<Tool Title>

<Insert tool>

<Tool Title>

<Insert tool>

<Tool Title>

<Insert tool>

## Annex 3: Sample Participant List/Register

Title of Activity:......................................................................................

Location..........................................................................................................

Purpose...........................................................................................................

Date: From .................................To ........................................

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Name** | **Sex (M/F)** | **Age Group[[22]](#footnote-22)** | **Position** | **Contact** | **Signature** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Selection Code** | **Age Range/Age Group** | **Selection Code** | **Age Range/Age Group** |
| A | Elderly (60+) | G | Early Youth (20 – 24) |
| B | Late Adulthood (50 -59) | H | Adolescence (15 – 19) |
| C | Middle Adulthood (41 – 49) | I | Early Adolescence (10 – 14) |
| D | Early Adulthood (36 – 40) | J | Childhood (5 – 9) |
| E | Late Youth (30 -35) | K | Early Childhood (0 -4) |
| F | Middle Youth (25 – 29) |  |  |

## Annex 4: Sample Training Evaluation Form

**Template Evaluation Form**

Q1) Man Woman  ***(✓)***

Q2) Age: <20 20-30 30-40 40-50 > 50

Q3) Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means « totally disagrees » and 5 means « totally agrees », please circle your appreciation of the following assertions. ***Only circle one number for each sentence***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Totally disagrees | Disagrees | Do not agree not disagree | Agrees | Totally agrees |
| The training attained all its set objectives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The training matched my personal expectations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The training environment was open and enabled me to learn | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The training increased my knowledge of **xxxxxxx** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The training strengthened my capacity and technical skills to work on **xxxxxxxxx** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| …………. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Q4) Are you satisfied of this training? Yes No

Q5) How would you judge the quality of this training? ***(Tick one box (✓) only)***

Weak Medium Good Very good Excellent

**Why?**

Q6) What session has been **the most useful** for you and why?

Q7) What session has been **the least useful** for you and why?

Q8) What are the **key messages** that you will share with your colleagues/peers after the training?

Q9) Are there themes that remain unclear?

Q10) What did you learn in this training that you plan to concretely put into practice in your everyday life/work after the training?

Q11) What would be your suggestions to improve this training?

1. AICS, 2018: Analysis on CSO’s capacity building strengths and areas of improvement based on CSOs’ certification assessment findings. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Gage and Dune, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/Development-Results-Note.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://instact.wordpress.com/2012/02/07/what-are-inputs-outputs-outcomes-impact-the-logic-model/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.nhsevaluationtoolkit.net/what-is-evaluation/> and OECD-DAC [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/Development-Results-Note.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/49756382.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [file:///C:/Users/User%202/Downloads/167-1-571-2-10-20080308.pdf](file:///C:\Users\User%202\Downloads\167-1-571-2-10-20080308.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [file:///C:/Users/User%202/Downloads/167-1-571-2-10-20080308.pdf](file:///C:\Users\User%202\Downloads\167-1-571-2-10-20080308.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/ [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. <https://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco_library/pdf/FiverChildrensFoundationTheoryofChangeandNarrative.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-develop-monitoring-and-evaluation-plan [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. <http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/sub_landing/files/8_2-Intro-to-IndicatorsFMEF.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. <http://www.mnestudies.com/monitoring/what-indicators-and-types-indicators> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. <http://www.mnestudies.com/monitoring/what-indicators-and-types-indicators> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. <http://www.mnestudies.com/monitoring/what-indicators-and-types-indicators> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. <http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/logical-framework-logframe-template/> [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. <http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/monitoring-evaluation-plan-template/> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. ***Please check in the appropriate age range from the age disaggregation table below and fill in against your name by indicating the selection code.*** [↑](#footnote-ref-22)