



Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Definition

Monitoring and Evaluation = Collection, analysis and use of information to support decision making.

Regular reviews of project progress should involve the project management team, they provide an opportunity to discuss on progress reports and build a common understanding of key issues and of actions that need to be taken. Such reviews should take place regularly throughout the implementation period.

	Monitoring (regular review)	Evaluation
Who?	Internal management responsibility (at all levels)	Usually incorporates external inputs (for objectivity)
When?	Ongoing	Periodic – mid-term, completion, ex-post ongoing and upon
Why?	Check progress, take remedial action, update plans	Learn broad lessons applicable to other programmes/projects, provide accountability
Link to LF objective hierarchy	Inputs, activities, results	Results, purpose, overall objective

2. Monitoring.

Project management must keep track of how the project is progressing in terms of expenditure, resource use, implementation of activities, delivery of results and the management of risks.

This is achieved through '**monitoring**', which is the systematic and continuous collection, analysis and use of management information to support effective decision-making.

Monitoring is an internal management responsibility, although it may be complemented by 'external' monitoring inputs. These external monitoring inputs can be useful in providing objective verification of results and additional technical advice. => use Logframes and implementation plans as practical tools which directly support effective management, monitoring and review.

Planning and re-planning.

Plans must be modified on an ongoing basis to take account of what actually happens during implementation. The Logframe, Activity and Resource/Budget Schedules must therefore be periodically reviewed, refined, and updated.

While effective monitoring is primarily based on 'internal' project systems, some decisions, which then need to be made, cannot (and should not) be made by project managers themselves. A project 'Governing Body' or 'Steering Committee' is therefore required to make strategic decisions on project scope, including required changes in objectives, targets, budget, management arrangements, etc.

Reporting.

Project management must provide reports on physical and financial progress to stakeholders. The aim of these reports should be to:

- Inform stakeholders of project progress (against what was planned), constraints encountered and any significant remedial or supportive action required;
- Provide a formal documented record of what has been achieved during the reporting period, and thus facilitate future reviews or evaluations;
- Document any changes in forward plans, including budgetary requirements.

Key assessments, tools and documents

During project implementation there should be an ongoing assessment of: (i) the continued relevance and feasibility of the project; (ii) progress in achieving objectives and resources used; (iii) quality of management; (iv) prospects for sustainability of benefits; and (v) action required. Key tools that can be used to help make these assessments, and which support monitoring during the implementation include:

- Quality criteria and standards
- Logframe matrix
- Activity/work programme schedules and resource/budget schedules
- Risk management matrix
- Checklists for planning short-visits, conducting interviews and managing regular review meetings
- Progress report formats– including CRIS’s ‘Implementation Report’ window
- Guidance on promoting participation and using facilitation skills
- Terms of Reference

The key documents required/produced during the implementation stage usually include:

- Operational work plans (usually annual);
- Periodic progress reports (including regular updates to the information contained in the CRIS);
- Specific reviews/study reports (e.g. mid-term evaluation); and
- Completion report (at end of project).

Information collection and use - overview

The information required during implementation is determined primarily by the scope of the project and by the management arrangements (roles and responsibilities). At the purpose and result levels, the key indicators and sources of verification contained in the Logframe matrix provide the focus for information collection and use. In the process of monitoring and reporting it is critical to keep the different information needs of key stakeholders in mind. This will generally require a hierarchy of data collection and reporting formats, each designed to meet the information needs of different levels of management.

To support the principles of ownership and participation, it is important that monitoring and reporting systems give priority to:

- The information needs of managers on the ground;
- Using or building on existing systems rather than building parallel ones; and
- Providing feedback to key stakeholders, including target groups.

Information collected through the project’s monitoring system should be summarised and entered into the CRIS (provides a means for EC officials to access a summary about the status of an EC financed project).

3. Evaluation

Purpose and principles

The purpose of evaluation is to assess an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, impact and sustainability. Principles underpinning the approach to evaluation are:

- *Impartiality and independence* of the evaluation from the programming and implementation functions;

- *Credibility* of the evaluation, through use of appropriately skilled and independent experts and the transparency of the evaluation process, including wide dissemination of results;
- *Participation of stakeholders* in the evaluation process, to have different perspectives and views; and
- *Usefulness* of the evaluation, through presentation of relevant information to decision makers.

Distinction between Evaluation and Monitoring

Evaluation

Assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of aid policies and actions

Monitoring

Ongoing analysis of project progress towards achieving planned results with the purpose of improving management decision making

Key tasks and responsibilities

Managing an evaluation exercise usually involves the following major tasks for the Evaluation Manager:

- 1) Identifying the need for an evaluation and selecting the topics/themes to be evaluated;
- 2) Designing the evaluation, including preparing the Terms of Reference;
- 3) Drafting tender documents for the evaluation study and selecting the contractor;
- 4) Briefing the contractor and the parties involved, and supporting the evaluation mission; and
- 5) Ensuring the production of a quality evaluation report and of the dissemination of evaluation findings.

When drafting Terms of Reference it is necessary to decide the *relative importance* of each of the evaluation criteria for a given study: usually, a mid-term evaluation will rather focus on questions of continued relevance and preliminary indications of effectiveness; whereas ex post evaluations are more likely to focus on questions of impact and sustainability. *Main sections of an evaluation report:*

Outline of an Evaluation Report

1. The Executive Summary

Tightly drafted and usable as a free-standing document. Short, not more than five pages. Focus on the main analytical points, indicate the conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

2. The Main Text

Starts with an introduction describing, first, the project to be evaluated and, second, the evaluation objectives. The body of the report should follow the five evaluation criteria, describing the facts and analysing them in accordance with the key questions pertinent to each criterion.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

Should be presented as a separate final chapter. For each key conclusion there should be a corresponding recommendation. The ultimate value of an evaluation depends on the quality and credibility of the recommendations offered. *Recommendations* should therefore be realistic, operational and pragmatic.

4. Annexes

- Terms of Reference of the evaluation
- Names of the evaluators and their companies
- Methodology applied for the study (phases, methods of data collection, sampling etc)
- Logical Framework matrices (original and improved/updated)
- Map of project area, if relevant
- List of persons/organisations consulted
- Literature and documentation consulted
- Other technical annexes (e.g. statistical analyses)
- 1-page DAC summary

Evaluation Criteria Used by the European Commission

Relevance	The appropriateness of project objectives to the problems that it was supposed to address, and to the physical and policy environment within which it operated. It should include and including an assessment of the quality of project preparation and design – <i>i.e.</i> the logic and completeness of the project planning process and the coherence of the project design.
Efficiency	The fact that the project results have been achieved at reasonable cost, i.e. how well Inputs / means have been converted into Activities, in terms of quality, quantity and time, and the quality of the results achieved. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same results, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.
Effectiveness	An assessment of the contribution made by results to achievement of the Project Purpose, and how Assumptions have affected project achievements. This should include specific assessment of the benefits accruing to target groups, including women and men and identified vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and disabled.
Impact	The effect of the project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider policy or sector objectives (as summarised in the project's Overall Objective).
Sustainability	An assessment of the likelihood of benefits produced by the project to continue to flow after external funding has ended, and with particular reference to factors of ownership by beneficiaries, policy support, economic and financial factors, socio-cultural aspects, gender equality, appropriate technology, environmental aspects, and institutional capacity.