PLANNING FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Chapter 2 illustrated how a shared vision coupled with an inclusive planning process could produce a realistic results framework or a 'development plan' to bring about desired development changes. Monitoring and evaluation play critical roles in realizing the results envisaged in this development plan. Planning for monitoring and evaluation should be part of the overall planning process. It concerns setting up the systems and processes necessary to ensure the intended results are achieved as planned. This chapter provides guidance on the planning and preparations for effective monitoring and evaluation of such development plans in the UNDP context: country, regional and global programmes.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

WHY MONITOR AND EVALUATE?

Monitoring and evaluation serve several purposes. In the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation, it would be difficult to know whether the intended results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action may be needed to ensure delivery of the intended results, and whether initiatives are making positive contributions towards human development. Monitoring and evaluation always relate to pre-identified results in the development plan. They are driven by the need to account for the achievement of intended results and provide a fact base to inform corrective decision making. They are an essential management tool to support the UNDP commitment to accountability for results, resources entrusted to it, and organizational learning. Furthermore, both feed into the overall programme management processes and make an essential contribution to the ability to manage for development results.[22]

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22 Adopted from: UNDP, 'The Evaluation Policy of UNDP', Executive Board Document DP/2005/28, May 2006, available at: http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf; and UNEG, 'Norms for Evaluation in the UN System', 2005, available at: http://www.unevaluation.org/unegnorms.

Monitoring, as well as evaluation, provides opportunities at regular predetermined points to validate the logic of a programme, its activities and their implementation and to make adjustments as needed. Good planning and designs alone do not ensure results. Progress towards achieving results needs to be monitored. Equally, no amount of good monitoring alone will correct poor programme designs, plans and results. Information from monitoring needs to be used to encourage improvements or reinforce plans. Information from systematic monitoring also provides critical input to evaluation. It is very difficult to evaluate a programme that is not well designed and that does not systematically monitor its progress.

The key questions that **monitoring** seeks to answer include the following:

- Are the preidentified outputs being produced as planned and efficiently?

- What are the issues, risks and challenges that we face or foresee that need to be taken into account to ensure the achievement of results?

- What decisions need to be made concerning changes to the already planned work in subsequent stages?

- Will the planned and delivered outputs continue to be relevant for the achievement of the envisioned outcomes?

- Are the outcomes we envisaged remaining relevant and effective for achieving the overall national priorities, goals and impacts?

- What are we learning?

Like monitoring, **evaluation** is an integral part of programme management and a critical management tool. Evaluation complements monitoring by providing an independent and in-depth assessment of what worked and what did not work, and why this was the case. After implementing and monitoring an initiative for some time, it is an important management discipline to take stock of the situation through an external evaluation.

The benefits of using evaluations are multiple. A quality evaluation provides feedback that can be used to improve programming, policy and strategy. Evaluation also identifies unintended results and consequences of development initiatives, which may not be obvious in regular monitoring as the latter focuses on the implementation of the development plan. Information generated from evaluations contributes to organizational learning as well as the global knowledge base on development effectiveness.

In fast evolving development contexts or in emerging, ongoing or post-crisis environments, the development plan needs to be dynamic and revised and improved over time. Whenever development plans are updated during implementation, it is necessary to document the rationale for such changes. Effective monitoring and evaluation is important as it provides evidence to base such changes through informed management decisions.

WHY PLAN FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION?

Effective and timely decision making requires information from regular and planned monitoring and evaluation activities. **Planning for monitoring and evaluation must start at the time of programme or project design, and they must be planned together.** While monitoring provides real-time information on ongoing programme or project implementation required by management, evaluation provides more in-depth assessments. The monitoring process can generate questions to be answered by evaluation. Also, evaluation draws heavily on data generated through monitoring, including baseline data, information on the programme or project implementation process, and measurements of progress towards the planned results through indicators.

Planning for monitoring must be done with evaluation in mind: The availability of a clearly defined results or outcome model and monitoring data, among other things, determine the 'evaluability'[23] of the subject to be evaluated.

3.2   MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

A clear framework, agreed among the key stakeholders at the end of the planning stage, is essential in order to carry out monitoring and evaluation systematically. This framework serves as a plan for monitoring and evaluation, and should clarify:

- What is to be monitored and evaluated
- The activities needed to monitor and evaluate
- Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluation activities
- When monitoring and evaluation activities are planned (timing)
- How monitoring and evaluation are carried out (methods)
- What resources are required and where they are committed

In addition, relevant risks and assumptions in carrying out planned monitoring and evaluation activities should be seriously considered, anticipated and included in the M&E framework.

In general, the M&E framework has three main components:

1. Narrative component—This describes how the partners will undertake monitoring and evaluation and the accountabilities assigned to different individuals and agencies. For example, at the UNDAF or national result level, it is necessary to engage with national monitoring committees or outcome level groups (e.g. sector arrangements) as well as with UN interagency monitoring working groups. If these do not exist, there might be a need to establish such structures for effective monitoring and evaluation. In addition the narrative should also reflect:

   a. Plans that may be in place to strengthen national or sub-national monitoring and evaluation capacities

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23 Evaluability can be defined by clarity in the intent of the subject to be evaluated, sufficient measurable indicators, accessible reliable information sources, and no major factor hindering an impartial evaluation process.

b. Existing monitoring and evaluation capacities and an estimate of the human, financial and material resource requirements for its implementation

2. Results framework—This should be prepared in the planning stage as described in Chapter 2.

3. Planning matrices for monitoring and evaluation—These are strategic and consolidate the information required for monitoring and evaluation for easy reference.

The planning matrix for monitoring in Table 14 is illustrative for UNDP and could be used at the country, regional and global programme level to determine what needs to be monitored. (A completed example of Table 14 is given in Table 15.) This matrix should be adapted as determined by local circumstances and conditions. In some cases, the columns could be modified to cover results elements such as outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines, risks and assumptions separately.

The need for an M&E framework applies for both programmes and projects within a programme. Therefore both programmes and projects should develop M&E frameworks in their planning stages. The project-level M&E framework should cascade from the programme level M&E framework and could contain more detailed information on monitoring and evaluation tasks that apply specifically to respective projects. Conversely, the programme-level framework builds upon the project-level frameworks. Monitoring and evaluation activities should be seen as an integral component of programme and project management. They take place throughout the programme and project cycles and should be reviewed and updated regularly (at least annually, for example at the time of annual reviews).

Table 14. Planning matrix for monitoring[24]

Expected Results (Outcomes & Outputs)	Indicators (with Baselines & Indicative Targets) and Other Key Areas to Monitor	M&E Event with Data Collection Methods	Time or Schedule and Frequency	Responsibilities	Means of Verification: Data Source and Type	Resources	Risks
Obtained from development plan and results framework.	From results framework. Indicators should also capture key priorities such as capacity development and gender. In addition, other key areas need to be monitored, such as the risks identified in the planning stage as well as other key management needs.	How is data to be obtained? Example: through a survey, a review or stakeholder meeting, etc.	Level of detail that can be included would depend on the practical needs. In UNDP, this information can also be captured in the Project Monitoring Schedule Plan from Atlas.	Who is responsible for organizing the data collection and verifying data quality and source?	Systematic source and location where you would find the identified and necessary data such as a national institute or DevInfo.	Estimate of resources required and committed for carrying out planned monitoring activities.	What are the risks and assumptions for carrying out the planned monitoring activities? How may these affect the planned monitoring events and quality of data?

24 The format in Table 14 primarily applies to programme-level monitoring. UNDP country offices are expected to attach a table with the above information to their CPAP, which is needed to operationalize the country programmes.

Table 15. Illustrative example of planning matrix for monitoring: Enhanced capacity of electoral management authority

Expected Results (Outcomes & Outputs)	Indicators (with Baselines & Indicative Targets) and Other Key Areas to Monitor	M&E Event with Data Collection Methods	Time or Schedule and Frequency	Responsibilities	Means of Verification: Data Source and Type	Resources	Risks
Outcome 1: Enhanced capacity of electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections 1.1. Advocacy campaign aimed at building consensus on need for electoral law and system reform implemented 1.2. Electoral management authority has adequate staff and systems to administer free and fair elections 1.3. Training programme on use of new electoral management technology designed and implemented for staff of electoral management authority	Public perception of capacity of electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections (disaggregated by gender, population group, etc.) **Baseline:** 40% of public had confidence in electoral management authority as of 2008 (50% men, 30% women, 20% indigenous populations) **Target:** 70% of overall population have confidence in electoral management authority by 2016 (75% men, 65% women, 60% indigenous populations)	1. Surveys 2. Annual Progress Reviews 3. Joint field visits to five regions 4.….	1. All surveys will be completed six months prior to the completion of activities 2. Progress reviews on achievement of all connected outputs will be held jointly in the fourth quarter 3. Two field visits will be held prior to the final survey and three more afterward 4.….	1. National Office of Statistics will commission survey; external partners, UNDP, and the World Bank will provide technical resources as needed through their assistance for capacity development 2. Progress Reviews will be organized by Elections Authority 3. Field visits will be organized by Elections Authority; Elections Authority will ensure meetings with a representative cross section of stakeholders; at least two external partners will participate in a given joint field visit 4.….	1.1 Data and analysis of surveys will be available in (a) report for public And (b) on websites of National Office of Statistics and Elections Authority 2.1 Annual Progress Reports 2.2 Minutes of Annual Progress Reviews 3. Records of joint field visits will be available on website of Elections Authority 4.….	1. Resources estimated at USD 0.2 million for the survey will be provided by the European Union 2. Resources for M&E activities will be made available in World Bank assistance project 3. Cost of external partners' participation will be met by each respective partner. Other logistical costs will be funded from World Bank project 4.….	1. It is assumed that capacity development activities within National Office of Statistics required for carrying out the survey will be completed one year in advance to actual survey; if there are delays, then a private company could be contracted to carry out the survey
Outcome 2: Increased participation by women and indigenous populations in national and local electoral processes in five regions by 2016 2.1. Revised draft legislation on rights of women and indigenous populations to participate in elections prepared	Percentage of eligible women registered to vote in five regions **Baseline:** 30% of eligible women registered in the five regions as of 2008 **Target:** 60% registration of eligible women in the five regions by 2016						

Table 16. Evaluation plan

Evaluation Title	Partners (Joint Evaluation)	Strategic Plan Results Area	CPD/ CPAP Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Source of Funding for Evaluation	Mandatory Evaluation (Y/N)
Outcome Evaluations							
Midterm Outcome Evaluation of the Poverty Reduction Programme	N/A	Poverty Reduction & MDGs	1	June 2010	Ministry of Planning, civil society groups, donors, UNDP, communities	M&E Project	Y
Midterm Outcome Evaluation of the Governance Programme	DFID (donor)	Democratic Governance	2	June 2010	Election Authority, Parliament, Ministry of Law, DFID, UNDP	DFID, related UNDP projects	Y
Outcome Evaluation: Energy and Environment Portfolio	Ministry of Environment	Environment and Sustainable Development	3	December 2011	Ministry of Environment, NGOs, donors, UNDP, communities	Biodiversity Project, Sustainable Energy Project	Y
Project Evaluations							
Microfinance Sector Pilot Project	UNCDF	Poverty Reduction: Promoting Inclusive Growth	1.3	March 2010	Microfinance Apex Org., Ministry of Finance, UNCDF, UNICEF	Project budget	N
Biodiversity Project (Global Environment Facility)	N/A	Environment: Mobilizing Environment Financing	3.2	May 2011	Ministry of Environment, NGOs, donors, UNDP, communities	Project budget	Y
Strengthening of the Electoral Process Project	N/A	Democratic Governance: Inclusive participation	2.4	September 2009	Election Authority, donors, UNDP, public	Project budget	Y
Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction Project	N/A	Crisis Prevention and Recovery	4.2	June 2011	Ministry of Disaster Management, implementing NGOs, European Community (donor), UNDP	Project budget	Y
Other Evaluations							
UNDAF Midterm Evaluation	All resident UN organizations	N/A	All	December 2009	Government, UN organizations	M&E Project	N

Note: DFID stands for Department for International Development (UK); UNCDF, United Nations Capital Development Fund; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund.

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING EVALUATIONS

It is mandatory for UNDP to present an evaluation plan to its Executive Board with each country, regional and global programme document considered for approval. The evaluation plan is a component of the M&E framework and should include those evaluations that can be foreseen at the end of the programme planning stage. The plan should be strategic, including a selection of evaluations that will generate the most critical and useful information for UNDP and its partners in decision making.

The initial evaluation plan should, at a minimum, include **all mandatory evaluations**. For programme units in UNDP, outcome evaluations and project evaluations required by partnership protocols such as the Global Environment Facility are mandatory. The evaluation plan is not a static document. It should be reviewed as part of the M&E framework and refined as needed during programme implementation. For example, as new projects are designed and the needs for evaluations are identified, these new evaluations should be added to the evaluation plan.

After a country, regional or global programme is approved, the respective programme unit enters the evaluation plan in the Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC) for tracking.[25] As the units exercising oversight responsibility, the regional bureaux use the evaluation plan submitted by the programme units as the basis for assessing compliance. The Evaluation Office reports on evaluation compliance directly to the UNDP Executive Board in its Annual Report on Evaluation.

UNDP programme units are required to select and commission evaluations that provide substantive information for decision making. In deciding what to evaluate, the programme units should first determine the purpose of the evaluation and other factors that may influence the relevance and use of proposed evaluations. In general, for accountability purposes, at least **20 percent to 30 percent of the entire programme portfolio** should be subject to evaluation.

Evaluations generally require significant resources and time. Therefore, every evaluation must be justified and used in an optimal way. Programme units together with key stakeholders should consider the following points in developing an evaluation plan:

■ Uses, purpose and timing of evaluation—Evaluations should be proposed only when commissioning programme units and stakeholders are clear at the onset about **why the evaluation is being conducted (the purpose), what the information needs are (demand for information), who will use the information, and how the information will be used.** Such information can be derived from a shared vision of success, as expressed in the results or outcome model at the planning stage. The intended use determines the timing of an evaluation, its methodological framework, and level and nature of stakeholder participation. The timing of an evaluation should be directly linked to its purpose and use. To ensure the relevance

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25 The Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC) is the UNDP information management system to support management accountability for evaluation. Available at: http://www.erc.undp.org.

of an evaluation and effective use of evaluation information, the evaluation should be made available in a timely manner so that decisions can be made informed by evaluative evidence.[26]

- ■ Resources invested—An area (thematic or programmatic area, outcome or project) in which UNDP has invested significant resources may be subject to an evaluation as there may be greater accountability requirements.

- ■ The likelihood of future initiatives in the same area—Evaluations are an important means of generating recommendations to guide future work. An evaluation enables the programme unit to take stock of whether the outputs have contributed to the outcome and whether UNDP has crafted an effective partnership strategy. When selecting an initiative to be evaluated, look for one in an area that UNDP will continue to support.

- ■ Anticipated problems—Evaluations can help prevent problems and provide an independent perspective on existing problems. When selecting an outcome for evaluation, look for those with problems or where complications are likely to arise because the outcome is within a sensitive area with a number of partners.

- ■ Need for lessons learned—What kinds of lessons are needed to help guide activities in this country or other countries or regions in the region?

- ■ Alignment and harmonization—Planned evaluations should be aligned with national, regional and global development priorities and UNDP corporate priorities (for example, the UNDP Strategic Plan), and should be harmonized with evaluations of UN system organizations and other international partners. This ensures that proposed evaluations will generate important information to help UNDP and its partners better manage for results in a changing context. Opportunities for joint evaluations with governments and partners should be actively pursued. Evaluations commissioned by UNDP should be useful for national partners. In determining the timing of an evaluation, UNDP should consider various decision-making points that exist in the partner government, such as budget decision making, development framework or strategy setting, and existing review processes for development programmes and projects. For instance, if the government is undertaking an evaluation of a national development strategy or framework to which UNDP projects are contributing, the UNDP-managed evaluations should enhance complementarities and minimize duplicated efforts.

Once the outcome evaluations are selected, the programme unit identifies the projects that are designed to contribute to the outcome and indicates them as relevant projects for the evaluation plan. This gives notice to the concerned projects and allows them to

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26 When determining the timing of outcome evaluations, it is important to keep in mind that the Evaluation Office is mandated to conduct evaluations of the global and regional programmes and selected country programmes (Assessments of Development Results) before the new programmes are submitted to the Executive Board for approval. The evaluation process normally starts in year four of the programme. Since outcome and project evaluations commissioned by the programme units provide the substantive basis for independent evaluations, they should be completed during the early to middle stages of the programme cycle, before the conduct of the Evaluation Office's independent evaluations.

take account of the outcome evaluation in their monitoring and work planning. It also helps the UNDP programme officers and relevant national partners in outcome monitoring prepare for the outcome evaluation.

The same criteria for selecting outcomes should be applied to selecting **project evaluations**. Some partnership protocols require their related projects to be evaluated. It is strongly recommended that evaluations should be completed for pilot projects before replication or upscaling, projects that are going into a next phase, and projects ongoing for more than five years for accountability and learning purposes. As part of the regular updating process of the evaluation plan, any newly identified project evaluations should be included in the plan.

In crisis settings, extra time should be allocated to evaluations, as there is a need for flexibility in order to respond to changing situations. This means being flexible when scheduling field visits and interviews and anticipating delays in data collection and last-minute changes in data collection methods if relationships between different groups change. Further, more preparation is required when working with vulnerable groups and those affected by conflict, as greater care and ethical considerations are required.

3.3   RESOURCES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Inadequate resources lead to poor quality monitoring and evaluation. To ensure effective and quality monitoring and evaluation, it is critical to set aside adequate financial and human resources at the planning stage. The required financial and human resources for monitoring and evaluation should be considered within the overall costs of delivering the agreed results and not as additional costs.

Financial resources for monitoring and evaluation should be estimated realistically at the time of planning for monitoring and evaluation. While it is critical to plan for monitoring and evaluation together, resources for each function should be separate. In practice, each project should have two separate budget lines for its monitoring and evaluation agreed in advance with partners. This will help UNDP and its partners be more realistic in budgeting. It will also reduce the risk of running out of resources for evaluation, which often takes place towards the end of implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation costs associated with projects can be identified relatively easily and be charged directly to the respective project budgets with prior agreement among partners through inclusion in the project budget or Annual Work Plan (AWP) signed by partners.

Sourcing and securing financial resources for monitoring and evaluation of outcomes or programmes can pose additional challenges, as there is not one project where these costs can be directly charged. The most commonly observed financing mechanism is to draw resources together from relevant projects. Some additional possibilities include:

- Create a separate monitoring and evaluation fund, facility or project associated with an outcome or a programme to which all the constituent projects would

contribute through transfer of some project funds. This facility could be located in the same entity that manages the outcome or programme.

- Mobilize funds from partners directly for an outcome or programme monitoring and evaluation facility.

- Allocate required funds annually for each outcome on the basis of planned costs of monitoring and evaluation from overall programme budget to the facility or fund.

It is important that partners consider the resources needed for monitoring and evaluation and agree on a practical arrangement to finance the associated activities. Such arrangements should be documented at the beginning of the programme to enable partners to transfer necessary funds in accordance with their procedures, which could take considerable time and effort.

Human resources are critical for effective monitoring and evaluation, even after securing adequate financial resources. For high-quality monitoring and evaluation, there should be:

- Dedicated staff time—For effective monitoring and evaluation, staff should be dedicated for the function. The practices of deployment of personnel for monitoring vary among organizations. Some UNDP country offices have established monitoring and evaluation units with specific terms of references (ToRs), dedicated skilled staff, work plans and other resources.

- Skilled personnel—Staff entrusted with monitoring should have required technical expertise in the area. A number of UNDP country offices have a dedicated monitoring and evaluation specialist. Where necessary, skill levels should be augmented to meet the needs and with ongoing investments in developing such capacity within the office as necessary.

Each monitoring and evaluation entity that functions at different levels, for example at the project, programme or outcome level, should have a clear ToR outlining its role and responsibilities. In general, these responsibilities should include:

- Setting up systematic monitoring frameworks and developing an evaluation plan

- Meeting regularly with key partners and stakeholders to assess progress towards achieving the results

- Conducting joint field monitoring and evaluation missions to assess achievements and constraints

- Identifying any lessons or good practices

- Reflecting on how well the results being achieved are addressing gender, and the interests and rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups in the society

- Identifying additional capacity development needs among stakeholders and partners

- Reporting regularly to the lead individuals or agencies for the particular result areas and seeking opportunities to influence policy and decision-making processes

- Ensuring the quality of monitoring and evaluation work and providing guidance as needed

- Assessing the relevance of the M&E framework on a regular basis based on emerging development priorities and changing context

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUDGETING AND FINANCING FOR EVALUATION

Programme units should estimate and indicate financial requirements and financing means for each evaluation in the evaluation plan. When estimating the cost for an evaluation, the **duration and scope** of the evaluation should be considered. The duration of an evaluation will be determined by its purpose. An evaluation conducted

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Box 19. Key issues to be considered in costing an evaluation

- **Evaluators and external advisers, and expenses related to their duties**
  Evaluation consultants and expert advisory panel members (if any)
  - One evaluator or a team? How many in a team? What is the composition (national or international)?
  - How many days will be required for each consultant and adviser?
  - What would be the daily rate range for each one of them?
  - Any cost associated with hiring?
  - Are the advisory panel members paid (daily fees, honorarium)?

  Travel requirements
  - What types of travel expenses will be incurred? For example, how many times does the team need to travel to the country or field? What travel requirements exist for briefings in UNDP offices, interviews with stakeholders, data collection activities, stakeholder meetings, etc.?
  - What would be the primary mode of travel (air, project vehicle, etc.)? Is there a need for special modes of transportation due to accessibility and security considerations?
  - For how many days and what are the allowances?

- **Requirements for consultations with stakeholders**
  - Are there regular meetings with the steering committee members to discuss the progress of the evaluation? Will there be a meeting with wider stakeholders to discuss the findings and recommendations of the evaluation? How many and who will be invited? What would be the cost associated with renting venues, and bringing in stakeholders (allowances and travel expenses) and refreshments?

- **Data collection and analysis tools and methods**
  - What are methods of data collection? If surveys and/or questionnaires will be used, what is the target population and area to be covered? What resources are required (fees for enumerators, including their travel expenses, etc.)? Is there a need for researchers to complete a detailed analysis of data collected?

- Any **supplies** needed? For example, office supplies, computer software for data analysis, etc.

- **Communication costs**
  - What are the phone, Internet and fax usage requirements?
  - If surveys or questionnaires are conducted, how will they be administered (mail, Internet, telephone, etc.)?

- **Publication and dissemination** of evaluation reports and other products, including translation costs, if needed.

- Are there any resources allocated for incidentals?

- Are there partners for the evaluation? Is this evaluation cost-shared? What would be the cost to UNDP?

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early in implementation, which tends to focus on programme or project design issues, is apt to be less complex and entail a smaller scope, hence requiring less data than would a 'heavier' exercise conducted at the end of the project or the programming cycle. The greater the complexity and scope of an evaluation, the longer time and more detailed work will be needed by the evaluation team to collect required data. This may increase evaluators' total fees. Programme units should be realistic in terms of the scope and complexity of the evaluation *vis-à-vis* available resources.

In addition, **the availability and accessibility of primary and secondary data** (monitoring, regular reporting and evaluation) and data collection methods influence the cost of the evaluation exercise. In the absence of reliable data, the evaluators need to spend more time and resources to locate or generate information. The appropriateness of allocated resources should be assessed together with the commissioned external evaluators based on the work programme submitted by them.

If an evaluation is carried out jointly with government or donors in the context of a larger outcome or government evaluation, the programme unit should agree on resourcing modalities with potential donors or government counterparts at the outset. Box 19 outlines the key items that are required for the evaluation. The programme unit responsible for the evaluation should ensure that every item is considered.

3.4   ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The engagement of stakeholders enlisted during planning and described in Section 2.2 continues to be relevant for monitoring and evaluation stages for the following reasons:

■   The stakeholders, who set the vision and the prioritized results to realize that vision during the planning stage, have the best ideas on how the results would continue to remain relevant to them. They must therefore be involved in identifying the **information or feedback that is needed during implementation**, which determines the parameters for monitoring and evaluation.

■   Having set the vision, priority results and initial parameters for monitoring and evaluation, the key stakeholders are best placed to ensure that the programmatic initiatives planned would deliver what was intended and the way it was intended.

Stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation can produce effective communication for various other objectives. These include: facilitate communication of 'early wins' to increase support and enlist engagement of those who are not yet engaged, ensure access of early products and services of initiatives for intended beneficiaries, mobilize additional resources to fill resource gaps, and ensure effective use of lessons learned in future decision making.

Stakeholder participation throughout the programming cycle ensures ownership, learning and sustainability of results. **Continued stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation cannot be assumed. It must be institutionalized.** Specific measures have to be built into programme and project management processes to ensure continued and effective involvement of stakeholders. The UNDP practice of institutionalizing stakeholder engagement is summarized in Box 20.

The programme management approach used by UNDP is designed to ensure that: A programme contributes to the achievement of the outcomes covered in the programme; a programme and its projects are coordinated within the national development framework; and agreed outputs are generated through projects and programme funds. This involves three levels: **the programme level,** which would cover one or more outcomes and provide linkage to overall national results; **the sectoral or outcome level;** and **the project level,** which relates to operational level of delivery of outputs by implementing activities using resources. The responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation are different at each programming level. (See Chapter 4 for further details.)

The participation of stakeholders is institutionalized in the management arrangements by boards or committees at the programme, sectoral/outcome and project levels. **These boards or committees should not duplicate existing mechanisms but instead use existing national structures and mechanisms. If no mechanisms exist, efforts should be made to constitute groups that fulfil such functions.** Each board or committee should have representatives of the owners, the beneficiaries and suppliers of technical services.

Sectoral or outcome level: There is a need to coordinate UNDP contributions to outcomes and provide feedback into the overall UNDP programme management. UNDP often participates in national sectoral coordination mechanisms to make explicit the link between UNDP contributions and national priorities. The sectoral or outcome level coordination mechanisms: promote partnerships bringing together all projects concerned within a single shared outcome; ensure synergy and reinforce a common strategy among partners towards results; and monitor the achievement of outcomes. Also, the UNDP programme manager should ensure that UNDP-supported outputs are coordinated at the outcome level.

Programme and Project Boards: Programme and Project Boards meet at a minimum annually to review annual progress of results, agree on any changes as required, and set new annual targets. These boards are management entities of the UNDP programme and focus on the UNDP contribution to national development results.

3.5 CAPACITY FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In UNDP assisted programmes, national programme partners are jointly responsible with UNDP for carrying out certain planned monitoring and evaluation activities. In line with the principles of MfDR, national ownership and use of country systems, monitoring and evaluation efforts in UNDP should capitalize, be aligned to, and build on existing national monitoring and evaluation systems and capacities whenever feasible (see Box 21). When appropriate, monitoring and evaluation efforts of UNDP

Box 21. Examples of alignment with national systems

- National budgeting process
- National medium-term or long-term development strategic plan or framework
- Sector strategy, policy, programme or projects and national coordination bodies tasked to coordinate such activities
- National M&E systems for national development strategy, plan or framework and a sector strategy, policy, programme or projects
- Existing review mechanisms (poverty reduction strategy reviews, New Partnership for Africa's Development [NEPAD], peer-review, etc.)

should indicate where the organization's programmatic support requires further strengthening, including that of national systems. The analytical process and data used for planning provides initial opportunities and insights to discern future monitoring and evaluation requirements in comparison to existing data sources and quality. This also identifies areas where capacity to monitor and evaluate can be further developed in national partners at their request and when relevant.

At the higher levels of results (national goals, sector goals and outcomes), key stakeholders should typically form sector-wide or inter-agency groups around each major outcome or sector. Whenever there are existing national structures such as sector-wide coordination mechanisms, the United Nations and UNDP should ideally engage them and participate in these rather than setting up parallel systems. Sectoral or outcome-level coordinating mechanisms should not be a United Nations or UNDP management arrangement, but an existing national structure that is already charged with the coordination of the sector from a development perspective within the national context. These groups should have adequate capacity to be responsible for the following:

- Agree on an M&E framework for the outcomes and oversee their implementation. They ensure continuous outcome assessment and can enhance progress towards results.

- Promote partnerships and coordination within a single shared outcome. All projects that are generating relevant outputs to the corresponding outcome should be included in the outcome group to ensure inclusive discussions. This gives partners a common vision of the outcome to which different projects or outputs are contributing.

- Ensure synergy and coordination by reinforcing a common strategy among partners working towards common results.

- Monitor and evaluate, where appropriate, the achievement of outcomes and their contribution to national development goals. Outcome-level mechanisms are expected to determine who is responsible for monitoring and data collection, how often it will be collected, who will receive it and in what form. The results frameworks and the M&E framework serve as the basis for joint monitoring and evaluation by these groups.

- Carry out, participate in, and assure the overall quality of project, outcome, thematic and other types of reviews and evaluations and ensure that the processes and products meet international standards.

- Ensure effective use and dissemination of monitoring and evaluation information in future planning and decision making for improvements.

Capacities for monitoring and evaluation, like for most technical areas, exist on three levels: the enabling environment, the organizational level, and the individual level. Capacities at these levels are interdependent and influence each other through complex codependent relationships. Change in capacity generally occurs across four domains: institutional arrangements, including adequate resources and incentives; leadership; knowledge; and accountability mechanisms. Addressing only one of these levels or domains in a programme or project is unlikely to result in developing sustainable monitoring and evaluation capacities. Therefore, an outcome group needs to take a more holistic view in identifying and addressing the capacities needed to monitor and evaluate the results being pursued.

The relevant sector-wide or outcome-level coordinating mechanism may begin by undertaking a high-level or preliminary capacity assessment to understand the level of existing and required monitoring and evaluation capacities of a given entity.[27] Benchmarks for the three levels and four domains mentioned above are limited. However, the subsections below offer possible lines of questioning for the preliminary assessment. The insights generated by these questions and others may help a programme team formulate a capacity development response.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Is there a documented institutional or sector programme monitoring and evaluation policy that clarifies the mandates of monitoring and evaluation entities and programme or project teams, their responsibilities, and accountability measures for effective data collection and data management of public programmes or projects?

- Does the institutional and sector policy mandate require: establishing standard tools and templates, aligning organizational data with the national data collection and management, defining standards for monitoring and evaluating skills, and ensuring proper training?

- Are sufficient resources, including availability of skilled staff and financial resources, allocated for monitoring and evaluation activities in respective monitoring and evaluation entities? Do monitoring staff have proper statistical and analytical skills to compile and analyse sample and snapshot data?

- Is there an independent evaluation entity? Is the institution responsible for evaluation truly 'independent' from management and subject to evaluation? What is the reporting line of those responsible for carrying out evaluations? What mechanisms are there to safeguard the independence of the evaluation function?

LEADERSHIP

- Does high-level management support evidence-based decision making throughout the organization?

KNOWLEDGE

- Can high-quality information be disaggregated by relevant factors (such as gender, age and geography) to assess progress and analyse performance?

- Do the respective monitoring and evaluation entities have access to all relevant programme or project information to be gathered? Do the stakeholders have access to data collected and analysed (for example through the Internet)?

- Do the monitoring and evaluation entities have easy-to-understand formats for data collection and reporting? Is there a systematic and documented process of ensuring data quality control at all levels of collection, analysis and aggregation?

- Is there sufficient evaluation technical expertise in the national system? Are there national professional evaluation associations?

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27 See UNDP, 'Practice Note on Capacity Assessment', October 2008, for a full discussion of UNDP capacity assessment methodology.

ACCOUNTABILITY

■ Can the information from the monitoring and evaluation entities be provided to decision makers and other relevant stakeholders in a timely manner to enable evidence-based decision making?

Based on the above considerations and the insights generated from a high-level capacity assessment, one of four broad approaches would be selected to meet the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the results being pursued (see Figure 12). This high-level capacity assessment may also lead to more in-depth capacity assessments for particular areas.

It may be important for the sector-wide or outcome group to document the analysis from Figure 12 in a simple capacity development matrix (see Table 17). This matrix can help determine what monitoring and evaluation facilities exist in national partner institutions that can be used and identify gaps. The last column could be used to indicate how capacity development efforts—including detailed capacity assessments— may be addressed through other UNDP programmatic support, when relevant national demand and need arise.
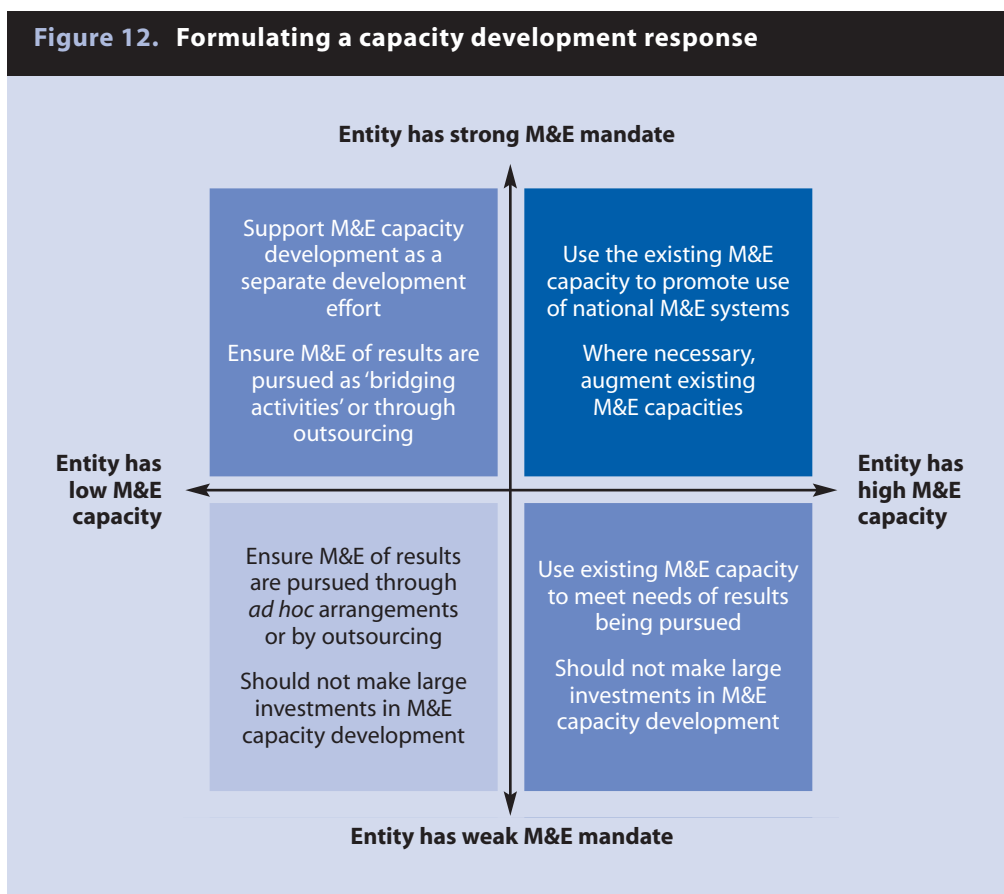

Figure 12. Formulating a capacity development response

Entity has strong M&E mandate

Support M&E capacity development as a separate development effort

Ensure M&E of results are pursued as 'bridging activities' or through outsourcing

Use the existing M&E capacity to promote use of national M&E systems

Where necessary, augment existing M&E capacities

Entity has low M&E capacity

Entity has high M&E capacity

Ensure M&E of results are pursued through *ad hoc* arrangements or by outsourcing

Should not make large investments in M&E capacity development

Use existing M&E capacity to meet needs of results being pursued

Should not make large investments in M&E capacity development

Entity has weak M&E mandate

Table 17. Monitoring and evaluation capacity matrix				
Key Partner or Stakeholder of the Outcome Group Contributing to Result	Specific Component of Result or Outcome for Which the Partner is Directly Associated	Existing M&E Mechanisms and Capacities of Partner (institutional arrangements, leadership, knowledge, accountability)	Potential Areas for Developing M&E Capacities of Partner in Line with Its Mandate	Recommended Action for Developing M&E Capacities
Elections Authority	■ Organizing progress reviews, field visits ■ Collection and analysis data ■ Reporting	Limited to Headquarters level only.	Field monitoring, especially skills at the regional level to assess inclusion of disadvantaged and those in remote locations.	Initial capacity development support should be focused on developing monitoring skills pertaining to achieving the outcome. Funds available within the outcome may also be used to carry out a capacity assessment for the Elections Authority.
National Office of Statistics	All surveys will be completed by National Office of Statistics.	National Office of Statistics is a key national institute that is expected to provide high quality national surveys, analyses and reporting of findings.	Capacity development of National Office of Statistics is a national priority.	The Outcome Group should promote a national effort to develop capacity of National Office of Statistics for conducting, analysing and reporting on surveys.
Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Planning	Government unit responsible for monitoring and evaluating major development projects and coordination of sector-level monitoring and evaluation (including the election project) at the national outcome level, and to build the national capacity in monitoring and evaluation.*	Monitoring and Evaluation Division is politically independent and is staffed with civil servants competent in monitoring and evaluation.	Monitoring and Evaluation Division has never worked directly with staff members of the Election Authority or National Office of Statistics regarding monitoring and evaluation in this particular area. This is at high risk to be politicized.	Support the efforts of the Monitoring and Evaluation Division to train the Election Authority Electoral Commission staff and National Office of Statistics staff on the development of specific indicators, baselines and targets and data collection methods for the work of the Elections Authority. Support the efforts of the Monitoring and Evaluation Division to promote the culture of evaluation within the Elections Authority.

* Units responsible for monitoring and evaluation of independent institutional bodies, such as a Monitoring and Evaluation Division, vary from country to country.