

TOWARDS RESULTS-BASED MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF GOVERNMENT BUDGETS AND PROGRAMMES

(Power point Version)

By

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1. INTRODUCTION

§ Monitoring and evaluation (M and E) are crucial aspects of budgets, project and policy planning and management.

- - Without M & E, it would be impossible to judge if implementation of budgets, programmes and projects was going in the right direction, whether progress and success could be claimed, and how future efforts might be improved.

⑩ § In Nigeria, ineffective implementation of otherwise good plans, policies and programmes remain an issue of crucial concern.

- - One notable problem in this regard has been ineffective M & E

⑩ § In recent years, emphasis has been placed on results-based M & E, in view of the need to achieve desired objectives and results

⑩ § This paper examines aspects of M & E as follows:

- - Concept and importance of M & E
- - Use of Results-Based Management Approach
- - Developing M & E Template
- - Developing Capacity for Scientific M & E

- **1. Concept, Importance and Types of M & E**
- **2.1 Monitoring**
- Different conceptions of monitoring as:
 - - a continuous or periodic review of budgets, project implementation by management/executive to assess progress, identify difficulties, ascertain problem areas and recommend remedial action(s);

- - a management process which enables ministries, agencies and organisations to keep track of performance, identify problems that may arise during the course of plan and project implementation and provide information that could serve as the basis for reformulating or fine-tuning programmes and projects.
- - a continuing function that aims primarily to provide management and stakeholders of an ongoing intervention (project, programme, etc) with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results.

- Monitoring may be of:
 - - physical activities and assets (physical monitoring);
 - - finances (financial monitoring)
 - - operations (operational monitoring), in terms of appropriate management structures/institutions being in place to ensure efficient and effective budget/ project implementation.

- Monitoring is thus important in:
 - - ensuring plan, budget and programme discipline
 - - facilitating on-the-spot assessment of progress made and problems encountered.
 - - generating data needed for progress reporting, meaningful annual budgeting, and evaluation. Data generated by the monitoring system helps to explain the trend in effects and impact of the project.

- **2.1 Evaluation**

- Conceived of as:

- - a selective exercise that attempts to systematically and objectively assess progress towards and the achievement of an outcome. An outcome refers to changes in development conditions that are sought to be achieved through programmes and projects. Outcomes incorporate the production of outputs. Outputs are the specific products and services that result from processing inputs through programme, project and other activities.

- - a post-event appraisal of performance. This is the case of ex post evaluation which takes a retrospective view of programmes, projects, plans and budgets, that is, it assesses the extent to which government programmes and projects have achieved their initial objectives and targeted results

- - an assessment to determine whether the project objectives set in terms of expected outputs, effects and impact are being, or will be met. This leads to the assessment of the results achieved, and the lessons to be drawn for future improvements in a later phase or in a similar project elsewhere.
- - not a one-time event, but an exercise involving assessments of differing scope and depth carried out at several points in time in response to evolving needs for evaluative knowledge and learning during the effort to achieve an outcome.

- ⑩ ✓ All evaluations need to be linked to outcomes as opposed to only implementation or immediate outputs.
- - Important for learning, decision-making and validation of results as well as for accountability.
- Evaluation is of different types:
- - **On-going evaluation.** Conducted while a project is being implemented, that is, during the operation, control and hand-over phase.

- - **Terminal evaluation.** Takes place at end of the project execution. The end of project report of the project manager serves as an evaluation tool which can be used to measure whether expected project outputs are actually attainable and whether problems were encountered.
- - **Ex-post evaluation.** Comes up some time after the end of the project, and it reviews all previous evaluations made. Ex post evaluation report will reflect analysis of the following, among others:

- ⑩ ✓ Project objectives
- ⑩ ✓ Resources available and utilized;
- ⑩ ✓ Overall project output and impact;
- ⑩ ✓ Alternatives, opportunities and constraints; and
- ⑩ ✓ Implications for project planning.

- **2.1 Summary of Objectives and Significance of**
- **M & E** (Oladapo, 1999; UNDP, 2002; Obadan, 2003):

- **Objectives**

- ⑩ § Enhance effective project implementation
- ⑩ § Enhance organizational and development learning
- ⑩ § Ensure informed decision-making
- ⑩ § Support and reinforce transparency and accountability
- ⑩ § Provide timely information on the work planned and done
- ⑩ § Help determine viability or justification of projects in order to facilitate decisions on further resource commitments.

- ⑩ § Ensure inputs' deliveries, work schedules and standards, output targets are met according to plans to meet set objectives
- ⑩ § Assess the understanding and interests of stakeholders
- ⑩ § Ensure that the project is making progress
- ⑩ § Identify deviations from the original plan
- ⑩ § Realize on-line assessment of projects impact

- **Significance**

- ⑩ § M & E are thus significant in the light of the above objectives.
- - enhance the management of on-going projects
- - improve outputs, outcomes and impact

- **3. RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT APPROACH (RBM)**

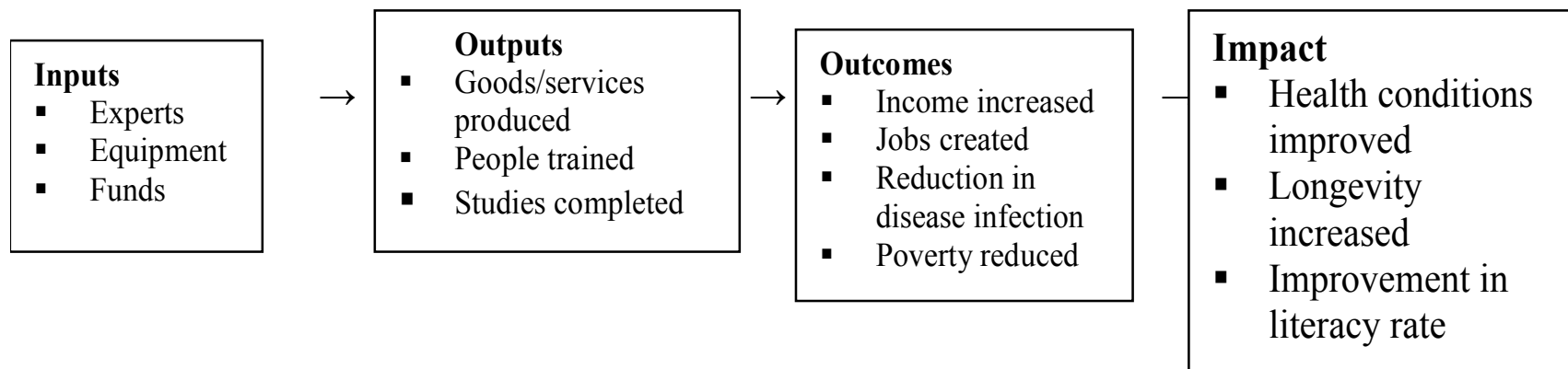
- ⑩ § Increasing emphasis on RBM in the management of projects
- ⑩ § RBM is a management strategy or approach by which an organization ensures that its process, products and services contribute to the achievement of clearly stated results (UNDP, 2002).
- ⑩ § It is also a broad management strategy aimed at achieving important changes in the way agencies operate, with improving performance and achieving results as the central orientation by defining realistic expected results, monitoring progress towards the achievement of expected results, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and reporting on performance.

⑩ § **Essential features of RBM.**

- (i) A logical process of relating inputs to outputs, outcomes and impact (strategic development goals), as shown in Figures 1 and 2

- **Fig. 1: RBM Chain.**

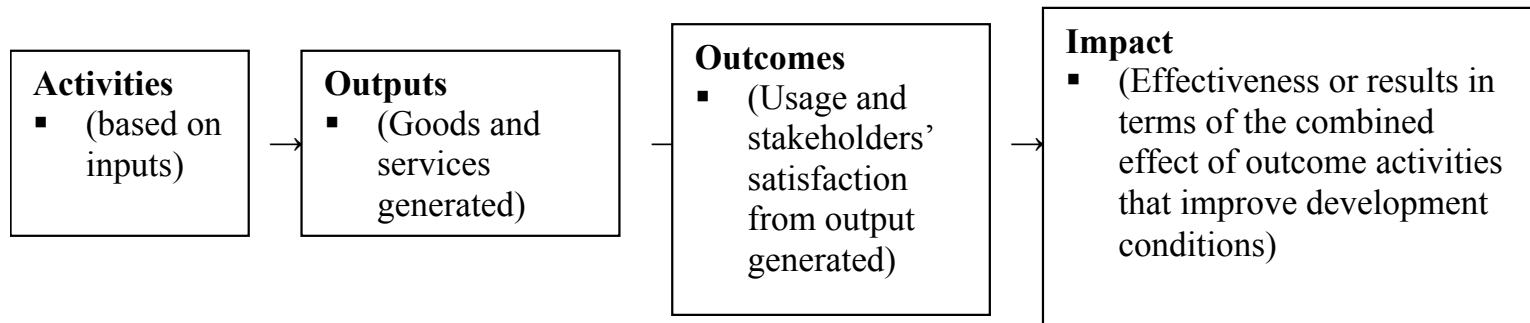
Fig. 1: RBM Chain.



- (ii) Identification of objectives, which should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).
- (iii) Development of a performance monitoring system to collect data on results regularly
- (iv) Outlining mechanisms for evaluation – analysis and reporting actual results in relation to targets.
- (v) A systematic analysis of performance against goals taking account of the reasons behind performance and influencing factors, and rating of progress based on indicators.

- - Indicators permit verification if progress towards results has taken place.
- ⑩ § Essentially, the monitoring of results (at the level of output, outcomes, and ultimately impact) is a process which commences with the implementation of activities based on inputs. This yields output.
- - Use of output by intended beneficiaries of programmes and policies and sustained production of benefits give rise to outcomes
- - Use of outcomes and sustained positive development change is reflected in impact or attainment of long-term goals
- - Fig. 2 shows the linkages between indicators and development performance results

Fig. 2: Monitoring of Results in the Context of Indicators



⑩ § Thus, RBM goes beyond output monitoring of the past to stress outcome monitoring.

- - Outcome monitoring tracks the outputs and measures their contributions to outcomes by assessing the change from base-line conditions.
- - Not same as implementation monitoring
- - Effective outcome monitoring will require the establishment of baseline data, selection of outcome indicators of performance, and designing mechanisms that include planned actions such as field visits, stakeholder meetings and systematic analysis or report.

- ⑩ § Also, RBM stresses outcome evaluation
- - An evaluation covers a set of related projects, programmes and strategies intended to bring about a certain outcome.
 - - It assesses the how and why outcomes are or are not being achieved in a given country.
 - - It may also help to clarify underlying factors affecting the situation, highlight unintended consequences, recommend actions to improve performance in future programming, and generate lessons learned.

- - An outcome evaluation extracts lessons learned, findings and recommendations by assessing:
 - ⑩ ✓ progress towards outcome
 - ⑩ ✓ factors contributing to outcome, etc.
 - ⑩ § Both outcome monitoring and outcome evaluation are closely linked to the decision making processes at programme and policy levels.
- - Both aim at the systematic collection and analysis of information to track changes from baseline conditions to the desired outcome and to understand why change is or is not taking place.
- - They, however, differ in their specific objectives, focus and methodology, and how they are conducted and used (UNDP, 2002: 12)

- **3. DEVELOPING AN M & E TEMPLATE**
- ⑩ § In order to carry out an effective M & E in the context of RBM, adequate planning is crucial.
- ⑩ § It requires the following:
 - - detailed work plan
 - - establish baseline data, benchmark and indicators of success at various levels
 - - identify data needs
 - - assess current monitoring system

- - decide on new system, adaptation or changes
- - assess human resource capacities (quantity and quality)
- - define capacity building needs in M & E
- - define technical cooperation needs in M & E
- - assess current hardware/software facilities – equipment/finance
- - specific terms of reference (TOR)
- - determine reporting format

- **3.1. Work Plan and Indicators**

- A work plan is a management tool that serves to organize the implementation of a project in an efficient and coordinated basis and enables the review of its progress and achievements to be carried out.
- - It is an annual or multi-year summary of tasks, time frames and responsibilities.
- - It describes the activities to be conducted as well as the expected outputs and outcomes.
- - It is used as a monitoring tool to ensure the production of outputs and progress towards outcomes.

- A work plan may be presented in terms of summary information sheet, time table or any other suitable form.
- Specifically an M & E work plan is also focused on outputs and outcomes while a project work plan is focused on activities and outputs.
- Thus, activities, outputs and outcomes are among the key elements in a monitoring and evaluation template.
- And for outcomes, in the least, all monitoring and evaluation efforts need to address:
 - - progress towards outcomes
 - - outcomes status
 - - underlying factors that influence the outcome, i.e, contributing to or impeding achievement of the outcome.

⑩ § Indicators are indispensable in tracking progress towards outputs, outcomes and, ultimately, impact. And so, appropriate indicators must be developed.

- - Indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables that provide a simple and reliable basis for assessing progress and achievement, keeping projects and programmes on track and providing early warning signals of problems in progress.
- - As outcomes are less tangible than outputs, indicators are indispensable for an informed analysis of progress in that direction.

- - Examples of indicators with respect to output, outcomes and impact.
- ⑩ ✓ Output (goods and services generated by projects and programmes) – implementation of activities.
- ⑩ ✓ Outcome (effectiveness, or results in terms of access, usage and stakeholder satisfaction from goods and services generated by projects and programmes. It reflects actual or intended change in development conditions as a result of the project or programme. This change is measured as between the completion of outputs and achievement of impact. - The indicators relate to the use of outputs and sustained production of benefits, e.g., increased cassava yield, increased income for the farmer, reduction in poverty incidence.

⑩ ✓ Impact (overall and long-term effect of programme/project. It portrays results in terms of a combination of outcome activities that improve development conditions) – The indicators relate to use of outcomes and sustained positive development change. Examples are higher standard of living, increased food security, increased earnings from non-oil exports.

- - Some key steps in selecting indicators are:

⑩ ✓ select baseline data and targets expected at the end of a programme or activity.

⑩ ✓ use proxy indicators when necessary, i.e, where results cannot be measured directly

⑩ ✓ distinguish between quantitative and qualitative indicators

- ⑩ ✓ use disaggregated data
- ⑩ ✓ avoid too many indicators
- ⑩ ✓ ensure timeliness
- - Of important note though is that indicators do not explain things. This implies that qualitative analysis is needed to interpret what the indicators say about progress towards results.
- - Finally, a correct mix of appropriate M & E tools and mechanisms need to be determined. These tools and mechanisms, such as field visit, annual project report, are the building blocks of M & E.

- - And, of course, in undertaking an evaluation an appropriate terms of reference (TOR) needs to be developed with the following as some of the elements.
 - ⑩ ✓ Introduction – programme/project context
 - ⑩ ✓ Objectives of the evaluation
 - ⑩ ✓ Scope of evaluation
 - ⑩ ✓ Products expected from the evaluation
 - ⑩ ✓ Methodology of the evaluation
 - ⑩ ✓ Implementation arrangements.

• 3.2. The M and E Template

⑩ § In the context of RBM, the template for M and E should have the following (could be more) as the essential elements. Usually they are presented in the form of a table or spreadsheet.

- - Project Name and Sponsor(s)
- - Project location
- - Long-term goal
- - Short-term/supporting objectives
- - Specific activities
- - Outputs
- - Outcome
- - Indicators

- - Means of verification (of indicators)
- - Responsible stakeholders
- - Time frame (i.e., specific time lines required to implement activities)
- - Key assumptions

⑩ § Table 1 shows a Monitoring and Evaluation Template for Nicaragua(just for illustration). It is, however, much less informative than the template we have suggested

**TABLE 1: NICARAGUA
MONITORING AND EVALUATION TEMPLATE**

Specific Activities	Indicators	Means of Verification	Responsible Partner	Assumptions
1. Produce/ Develop a National Profile on Children's Environmental Health in Nicaragua.	A national profile published and disseminated at the end of 4 th month of the project.	Document published. Distribution list.	MOH (Lead) . Min of Educ., Min of Environment	Starting from secondary sources. Information available.
2. Conduct a national awareness and training workshop for key partners to improve children's environmental health in Nicaragua.	50 key partners sensitized by the end of 5 th month of the project	Workshop minutes Partners sign workshop recommendation paper	MOH (Lead) Min OF Educ Min of Envir Min of Family	Key partners interested.
3. Establish and develop a national multi-sectoral network that promotes healthy environments for children.	A Network established with at least 10 multi-sectoral institutions by the end of 7 th month of the project	Minutes of the Network establishment.	Red de ecoclubes (lead) 20 other members (ALMA, CARE, CJA, Cruz Roja, FISE, INAA, MECD, MIF, MINSA, PNUD, ETC)	Organizations and institutions interested.
4. Develop a sectoral guideline policy proposal that promotes healthy environments for children.	A proposal produced jointly by the Network by the end of 9 th month and widely disseminated among decision-makers by the end of the project.	Proposal paper Distribution list Minutes of advocacy meetings	MOH (lead) Min of Educ Min of Family Min of Envir	MOH leadership in line with its health policy approach.
5. Conduct a home-based children poisoning prevention campaign.	A 3-month campaign implemented and evaluated by the end of the project.	Campaign evaluation paper. Materials produced	MOH (lead) National toxicology center Min of Educ Municipality of Managua	Organizations and institutions interested.

Source: [http:// www.undp.org/ec/](http://www.undp.org/ec/)

• 4. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RESULTS-BASED M & E

- ⑩ § From the above it is clear that a lot of expertise is required to implement the RBM approach in government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs).
- ⑩ § Capacity building through training is required just as in the case of introduction and implementation of MTEF.
- - In developing the M & E work plan, the use of logical framework for the programmes and projects will facilitate the preparation of such plan
- ⑩ § But as at now, the kind of high caliber professionals with expertise in M & E tools and techniques are hardly available in the existing monitoring and evaluation institutions and the Departments of Planning, Research and Statistics (DPRS)

⑩ § Essentially, therefore, relevant officers, particularly those in the Departments of Planning, Research and Statistics need to have their capacities adequately developed for M and E activities.

⑩ § They require training on:

- - the concept of RBM approach to M & E
- - development of M & E work plans
- - preparation of logical frameworks

- - identification of outputs, outcomes and impact in programmes and projects
- - evaluation methodology
- - project planning and management
- - computer-based M & E

⑩ § Where the staffs of the DPRS are trained as trainers, they would, in turn train officers in the MDAs who are involved in project planning and management.

- Members of relevant Committees in the legislature would also require sensitisation workshops on the same issues.

- **4. CONCLUSION**

- ⑩ § Success or otherwise of any M & E system would depend largely, on the existence of an adequate and properly functioning institutional framework

- ⑩ § Such a framework should have features, such as:

- - Clear definition of institutional roles
- - Clear articulation of standards, priorities, objectives and processes. Standards to be used in checking and evaluating performance of plans, budgets, programmes and projects should be clear.
- - Adequate institutional capacity
- - Effective legal framework (as backing to the institutions and their roles)

- Unhindered information flow among the institutions plan, budget and programme management
- Clear and comprehensive TOR
- The National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly are key M & E institutions in the context of their oversight functions.
- These, along with other institutional frameworks, should be able to ensure a credible M & E system that contributes to the achievement of plan, programme and project results.

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- ⑩ ✓ Allows corrective measures to be installed while the project is active. Project manager needs to stay informed on the progress of the project as measured against performance, cost, and scheduled standards.
- ⑩ ✓ At this stage, the evaluation relies on many documents: progress and status reports, contractor's reports, work's engineer's reports, budget reports, year-end reports of all projects in process, status reports of funding agencies