

Section 5

The Project Cycle of M&E

5.1. Step 1: Agreeing the starting point

5.2. Step 2: Identifying the approach and securing a budget

5.3. Step 3: Implementing the M&E plan

5.4. Step 4: Analyzing the findings

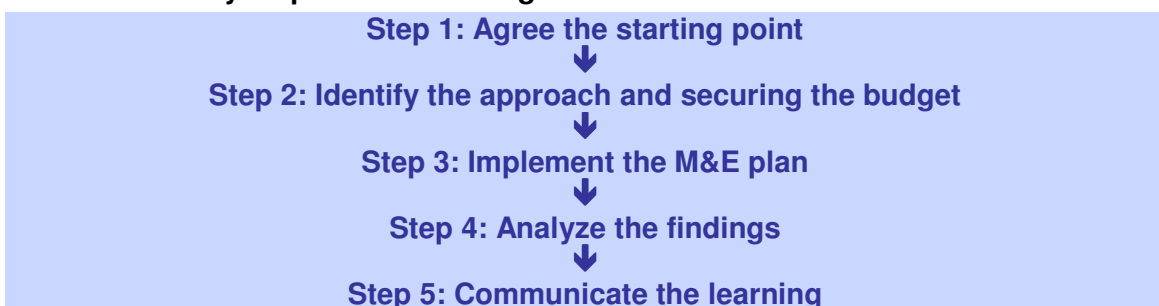
5.5. Step 5: Communicating the learning

Good practice suggests that to be effective, M&E should be addressed as part of project planning and integrated alongside project implementation and management systems⁵⁰. Attention should be given to both the processes and content of doing M&E and Impact Assessment.

The central challenge for the Project, Program or Task Manager⁵¹ (PM) is to balance the needs of the two key functions of M&E, i.e., the legitimizing and learning function (or proving and improving) with the overall demands of the project cycle.

This section will explore what steps the PM needs to take in order to integrate the M&E with the needs of program implementation. The two are not mutually exclusive processes. The following seeks to make explicit how the key steps in undertaking M&E (see Box 5.1) relate to the key steps in the project cycle.

Box 5.1: The key steps in undertaking M&E



⁵⁰ Different institutions use their own terms and labels to describe elements of their management systems. For example, IFC use the TASS System, DFID use PRISM and GTZ uses AURA.

⁵¹ We will use PM throughout this section. Different organizations use different terminology and the role of project management will vary from organization to organization.

5.1 Step 1: Agreeing the starting point

What is the context for developing the M&E and IA?

In an ideal world, decisions about M&E and Impact Assessment would be made at the earliest stage of the program. There may only be some basic characteristics about the proposed project and the context in which it will be take place. There are still some important decisions to be made as suggested in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Making early decisions

Define:
Is the reform
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A pilot or a roll-out• Operating at a national or sub-national level• A short, medium or long term intervention (the timescale)
Identify:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The key implementers (government officials, politicians, businesses, business associations, in-country staff, consultants: local and/or international)• The primary beneficiaries (business owners, government officials)• Who funds the reform and whether it is a multi donor intervention• Who provides resources for M&E• Whether there are additional partners• Who has the skills and is available to undertake M&E work in the team / organization

These are all vital to getting a ‘feel’ of what the nature and scope, the resources involved and a sense as to whether there is any interest and or commitment to M&E by the various stakeholders of the project. This information provides the context in which M&E will be designed.

Who should carry out the M&E and IA?

In many multi-lateral and bilateral organisations, responsibility for M&E is split between different sections within the organization. Responsibility for ongoing monitoring is usually undertaken by the local program team together with their counterparts in local partner organizations. Responsibility for evaluating immediate outputs and outcomes is also usually undertaken by the local team but with support from external consultants and

specialist M&E staff. These could be local and/or from the organization's central evaluation department (see section 4).

Impact assessment is not usually a program team's responsibility *per se* but one that is undertaken by external consultants and/or evaluation specialists within the organization. However the program team are responsible for ensuring that their monitoring systems and evaluation findings provide evidence for impact assessment, and therefore they need to be aware of what and how impact assessment is undertaken. (See section 4)

The PM must have oversight of what is needed for implementation, an ability to demonstrate what has been done, how it has been done, what has been measured and what results have been achieved. Furthermore, PMs need to be confident that evaluators and impact assessors will find the data they need on the project and on a comparator group or control group as discussed in Section 4.

The responsibility for the actual design may vary from project to program and from organization to agency. However, the PM must understand the requirements for M&E and be able to integrate and translate between M&E and program management needs.

5.2. Step 2: Identifying the approach and securing a budget

Designing an M&E approach is typically an iterative process involving several versions of an M&E plan. Here we are looking at the tasks of M&E design. The program manager will not be responsible for all the tasks but will need to understand and influence and perhaps have the final decision-making authority.

There are typically six factors to consider in M&E design, prior to pulling together a budget and bringing this together into a formal plan. All these factors are covered in this Handbook (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: The six factors to consider and sources of information

1. Questions	Identify the key questions to be asked and answered by the M&E	See Section 2
2. Approach	Agree the overall M&E approach and methodology	See Section 1 & 4
3. Indicators	Choose the appropriate indicators	See Section 2
4. Data collection	Select tools and instruments for data collection and analysis	See Section 3 & 4
5. Timeframes	Plan clear time frames with milestones	See Section 5
6. Resources	Identify people and other resources for undertaking the M&E	See Section 5

Put together an M&E Budget

The following section walks through each of the six preparation aspects.

1. Questions: Identify the key questions to be asked and answered by the M&E

Usually the easiest way of establishing key questions is to look at the project Log Frame or the equivalent project planning document (see section 2). Typical questions for a Business regulatory simplification project would concern making to easier and ‘better’ to register a business. For example:

Monitoring questions:

- How many procedures does it take to register a business currently and then after reforms?
- How many and which government authorities need to be engaged in the reform efforts?
- How many and which government officials need to be trained to undertake the changes needed by the reform?

Evaluation questions:

- Have laws/regulations changed because of reform work?
- Has the cost of registration for each process changed under reform?
- Has there been changes in the time taken in registering?

Impact questions:

- Do more businesses register following reform?
- Are these new business start-ups or existing (informal) businesses registering for the first time?

Identifying the key questions to be answered in M&E is discussed in Section 2.

The PM quick checklist

1. Does this project have a log frame?
2. What is the learning from previous BEE reforms of this type?
3. What are the key questions I need to answer in my M&E?
4. What will I have to do to integrate the program management with the M&E cycle?

2. Approach: Agree the overall M&E approach and methodology

Monitoring and evaluation are different but contingent and complementary. For monitoring the key thing to consider is whether the project plan includes management systems and practices that will ensure the gathering, recording and reviewing of project inputs, activities and outputs on an ongoing basis.

The task of evaluating outcomes and assessing impact should be to 'prove' (as far as possible) or 'validate' and have the capacity to communicate learning. The particular evaluation approach and methodology selected will have to match the scale and nature of the project, fit within the resources and timeframe of the intervention.

Section 1 of the Handbook looks at issues to be considered: the 'why'. Section 4 deals with evaluation, at review and impact levels: the 'how'. Good practice suggests that it is vital to make sure that informed decisions about the methodology and approach are taken at the earliest stage of the project design.

The PM quick checklist

1. Can I confidently select the best M&E approach and methodology?
 - Quasi-experimental designs
 - Non-experimental designs

2. What has been learned from previous designs?

3. Can I create a robust baseline from existing sources or do I need primary data?

4. Do I know who and how to sample?

5. Do I know who to talk to for advice and guidance?

3. Indicators: Choose the appropriate indicators

Once key questions have been identified these need to be translated into indicators and then targets. These are the things that are going to be measured in order to demonstrate that the project is or is not doing what it set out to do.

Remember, indicators need to be identified for all aspects of the project's work from activities through to the overall objective or goal of the project.

The PM quick checklist

1. Does my organization use core indicators?

2. Do I have a mix of quantitative, core and customized, activity and process indicators?

3. Can the results be compared to other similar projects?

5. Can I disaggregate for diversity?

4. Data collection: Select tools and instruments for data collection and analysis

At this stage, a quick audit will show what information is available through existing documentation. Plans about what needs to be generated through project data collection and how best to do this can be agreed. Table 5.3 presents a simple audit sheet for doing this.

Table 5.3: Auditing data needs and sources for evaluation

Aspect of project /Evaluation Criteria	Is there sufficient information from the existing written documentation (Y / N)	If no what information is needed	What tools would be best to use for capturing this additional data?
Inputs /activities			
Outputs			
Outcomes			
Impact			
Relevance			
Efficiency			
Effectiveness			
Sustainability			
Other factors relevant to specific BEE reform			

Selecting tools for data collection and analysis should now become very straightforward as this is very closely linked to the methodology. Some questions will be suited to collecting quantitative data and others to process and more qualitative data.

In Section 4.2 there is a checklist rating the main data collection tools against various criteria.

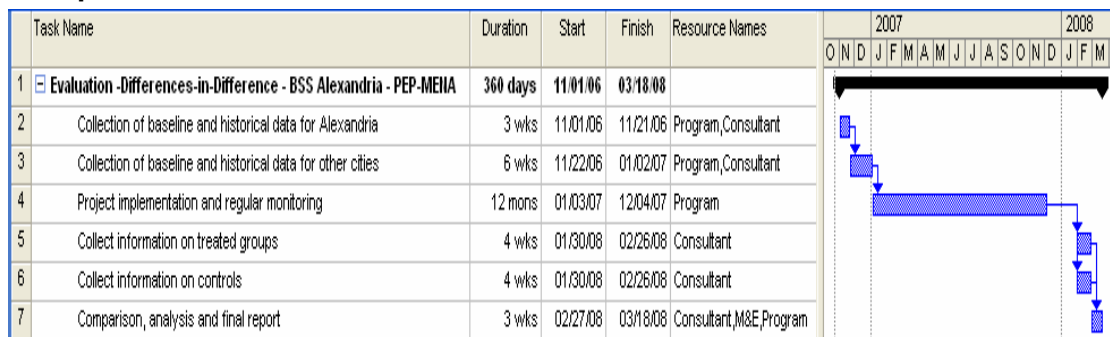
The PM/TM quick checklist

1. Is all the data I need available from secondary sources?
2. Can I get partners to collect data?
3. How often should the various data sets be collected?
4. Do I know who is responsible for analyzing the data?
5. Do I know the how and who of communicating the analysis?

5. Timeframes: Plan clear time frames with milestones

PM skills are vital in planning for M&E work. Data collection needs to be undertaken at different times: prior to, during project implementation, at fixed points including at and after the end of the project. It is useful to put this together as some form of timetable, such as a gant chart (using software such as Microsoft Project). An example is shown in Figure 5.1 which illustrates how a gant chart can help identify resource needs at given times, plan work and monitor progress.

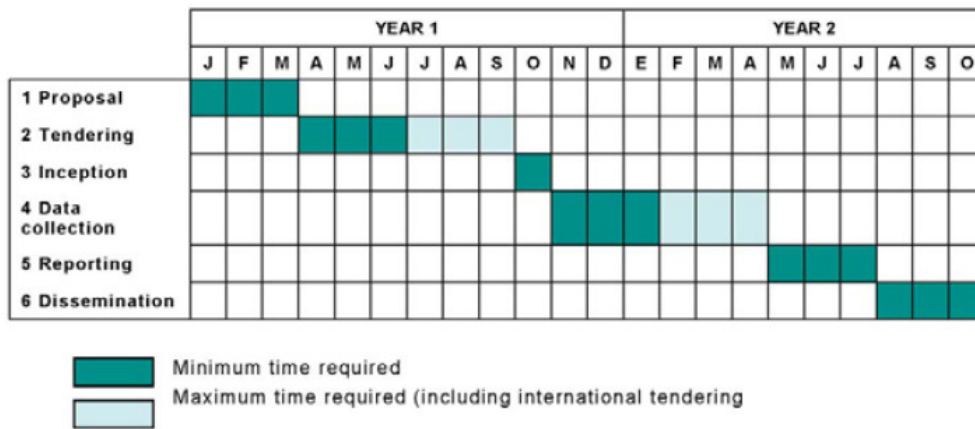
Fig 5.1: IFC Egypt Business Simplification Project – proposed evaluation study time plan.



A gant chart can be used as checklist both by the M&E and implementation teams and should work alongside the time frame for overall project implementation.

Where there are more complex needs, a review of the minimum and maximum timeframes is useful, taking into account the time required to tender, prepare documents for appointed consultants, allocate time for briefings and reporting.

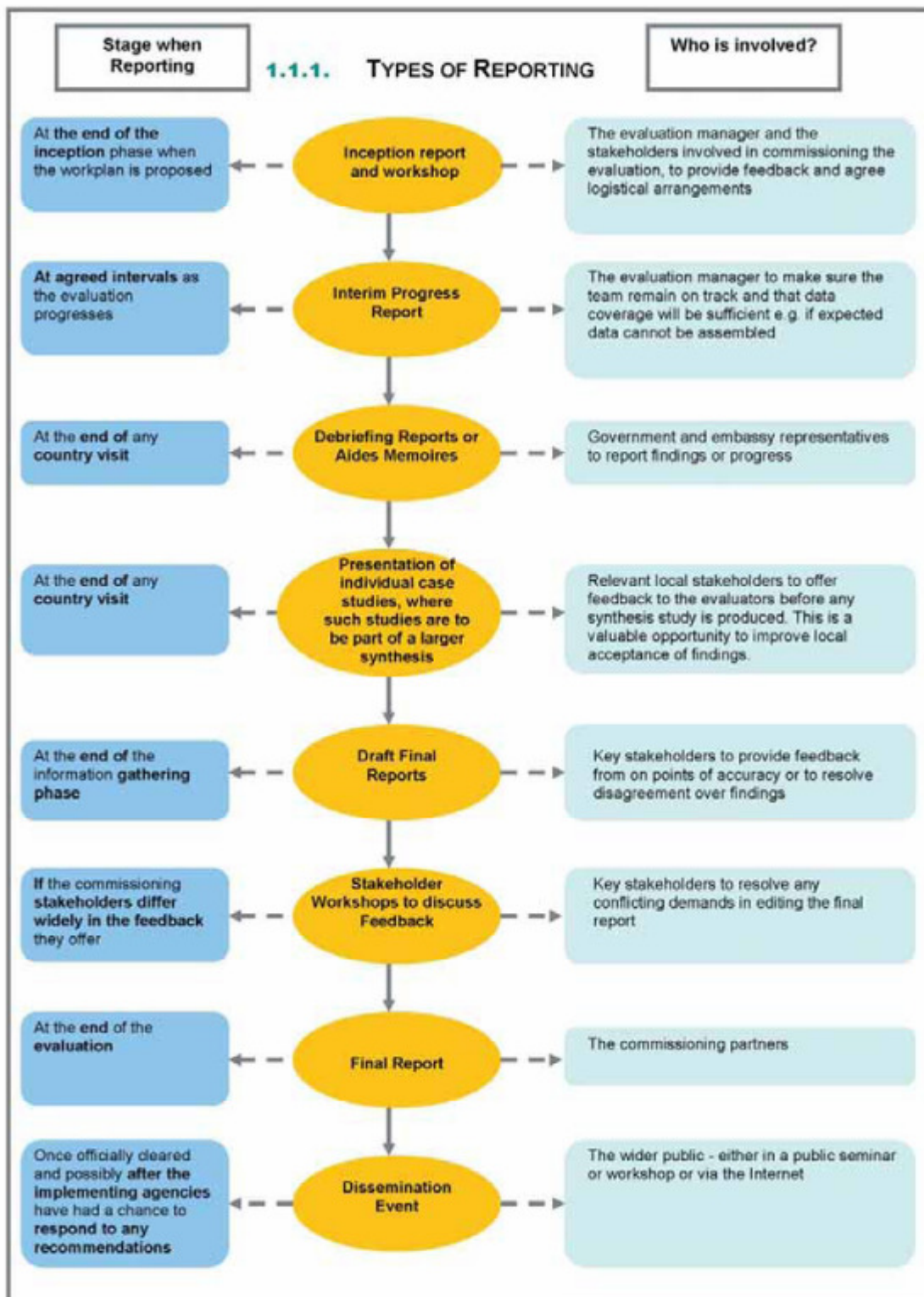
Fig 5.2: Planning example of time scale implementation of a large-scale evaluation



Reporting arrangements should also be made explicit. The work involved in ensuring all partners and stakeholders are adequately engaged can be easily underestimated.

Figure 5.3 is an example of all the steps that may be required.

Fig 5.3: Elements of reporting arrangements



Multi-component programs may operate an entirely different timescale, taking place over some years and involving several development partners. It is not unusual to find that an M&E project in its own right is warranted in order to prepare and plan for M&E. A major feature of this work is not just setting up a framework, but all the institutional factors surrounding it. This includes building a reporting structure, engaging agencies in data collection, building capacity, working with local survey firms, and especially engaging with the Private Sector by getting them involved and using M&E outputs as a way of building support for reform⁵².

The implications for the PM of not being involved in the planning of M&E is likely to have a negative impact on the proposed timeframes.

The PM quick checklist

1. Can I describe the milestones of the project in relation to the M&E needs?
2. Who needs to know the timeframe for evaluations?
3. Will there be multiple stakeholders/development partners involved?
4. What will be the time implications for commissioning external experts?
5. Who will sign off reports and documentation for communication?

6. Resources Identify people and other resources for undertaking the M&E

Worked through steps 1-5 will result in a clear perspective on what form and level of skills and experience will be needed for undertaking the proposed M&E work. Note that resources for dissemination of the findings and experiences are not always put in place and there is no point in having developed all of the above if there is no opportunity to show-case the success.

⁵² FIAS are developing experience of undertaking up-front M&E design projects for a number of substantive BE reform projects. Examples include Sierra Leone, Bangladesh, and this approach is also being rolled out to Madagascar, Liberia and other new programs. In some instances, there have been attempts to integrate the monitoring system into the government's own processes (see the case studies on Tanzania and Sierra Leone in Annex 1).

The PM quick checklist

1. Which of the internal M&E team will be involved with working on this project?
2. Does there need to be any capability building undertaken for this to take place?
3. How will findings and learning be disseminated?
4. What tasks need to be undertaken by an external consultant – local or international?
5. Where will the funds come from?

Once the above has been agreed then it needs to be captured in some form of project management framework for the M&E work showing tasks, responsibilities for partners, internal stakeholders and external consultants.

Putting together an M&E budget

The cost of M&E is increasingly an issue. As development agencies explore more robust ways of measuring development results, questions about the costs and efficiency of doing M&E arise. Resistance to undertaking substantive evaluation activities, beyond the simple end of project round up, is often put down to cost. The argument being that resource used on M&E is better invested in the aid intervention itself to maximize benefits to those targeted.

The issue of cost is a valid and important concern for M&E and the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance require the efficient undertaking of M&E as well as efficient project delivery (see Section 4.1).

The overall budget for and scope of M&E activities for any given project must bear some relationship to the scale and scope of the aid intervention being assessed. Larger more complex projects addressing large populations of businesses and/or people will usually have more extensive and hence expensive M&E systems. Similarly an innovatory project may warrant more effort and resource for M&E because of having to develop new approaches. Likewise a pilot type of activity may involve more intensive M&E work over a shorter period of time in order to assess whether or not it should be 'rolled out' more widely.

How much should be allocated?

Once the contents of the M&E design have been established then everything needs to be costed and brought together into a budget for M&E. Again this may involve an iterative process.

The budget has to balance the available resources for M&E against the needs of the M&E framework and plan that have been put together (box 5.2).

Box 5.2: What does an M&E budget typically include?

- Human resource – internal staff, including any training needed
- External consultants
- Materials, equipment
- Travel
- Data collection (baseline and follow-up)
- Data analysis
- Seeking and managing stakeholder involvement
- Reporting and communicating findings, internally and externally
- Printing

If the methods, tools, and staff options chosen exceed the available budget then this will need to be reviewed. Different more restrictive choices have to be made on the methods and tools to be used or more resource needs to be negotiated.

The budget should be benchmarked in three ways against:

- the costs of other similar M&E activities;
- the M&E of similar projects; and
- the 'rules of thumb' i.e., an upper limit of 5% of the overall project budget, except for experimental or more substantive projects where a guide of nearer 10% is usually given.

Who manages the budget?

The budget may not all be managed in one place or by one individual. As discussed, some of these activities for M&E (particularly monitoring) form part of the routine collection of data on the activities and outputs of the reform and may be undertaken by partners or the project team. However, computer programs or training may need to be

developed to ensure accurate and timely data gathering and recording. This may be allocated to other budgets. An impact assessment may be required and paid for by a specific donor rather than from the program. All of these factors need to be taken into consideration when developing a budget and in reporting 'rules of thumb'.

M&E budgets have been what might be termed 'outline budgets' primarily concerned with evaluation activities and focusing on covering the costs of end of project evaluation and inputs from external consultants. The increasing focus on 'proving' development results and the development of more detailed and sophisticated M&E practices means there is an imperative to put together more detailed M&E budgets and plans. Reflecting this, IFC are establishing more detailed M&E design and budget elements of their project approvals forms

The PM quick checklist

1. Does my organization have a rule of thumb for M&E budget?
2. Will some of the M&E activities be undertaken by other stakeholders?
3. Have I included a budget allocation for dissemination?
4. Who holds what aspects of the budget?

5.3. Step 3: Implementing the M&E Plan

Once a program has been approved for implementation, the next stage is to set about operationalizing the M&E activities. The first task will be to update the M&E framework and plan and completing a more detailed program management framework seeking to:

- Reflect any changes in the original time table;
- Detail M&E tasks and responsibilities identified and allocate to internal PM/M&E officers;
- Prepare final TORs for any external consultant to co-conduct the M&E and agree recruitment procedure and timetable; and
- Ensure M&E systems and reporting procedures and documentation are linked to project reporting systems.

What are the key tasks for implementing the M&E plan?

The project manager has specific responsibilities for implementation. These are likely to include:

- Briefing of internal PM/M&E officers on overall plan and their key role in monitoring and evaluation work
- Selection and briefing of external consultants for periodic evaluation work.
- Ensuring any baseline survey work is initiated
- If adopting a quasi-experimental M&E approach, preparation needs to be made for the identification and establishment of control groups alongside confirmation of the main target group audience for the reform work
- Ensuring monitoring systems for the capturing and recording of inputs activities processes and outputs are put in place
- Periodic data collection for the evaluation of outputs and outcomes are put in place
- Periodic data collection for the impact assessment
- Review and updating of the log frame (see Section 2)
- Establishing forums for stakeholders
- Identifying other interested parties
- Developing a communications plan

How should the data be recorded?

Recording monitoring data on inputs, activities and outputs is usually straight forward and is guided by the project management and reporting systems for the project. This usually entails collating numbers and reporting performance against targets set in the project document. This does not require any special tools outside of the usual management reporting system or expertise outside of the project team.

How often the indicators and monitoring data is updated, will depend on the nature of the reform, what is being measured and at what point in the project this is happening. Some monitoring indicators (see Section 3) may be measured monthly, quarterly and/or annually.

- How many events have been held this month, how many officials trained this quarter?

Evaluation indicators (see Section 4) are usually measured against milestones over longer periods.

- What has been the reduction in the time and cost of business registration since the reduction in procedures last year?

Recording data for quasi-experimental methodologies and large-scale surveys can require specialist tools and expertise. Typically a statistical package is required to store and handle data.

The PM quick checklist

1. How does the data relate to the outcomes of the program?
2. What aspect of the project does this data represent?
3. What biases should be noted?
4. How can the data be best presented to be understood and useful to all?
5. What are the shortcomings of the data and the data collection method?

How should findings be reported?

Mechanisms for reporting monitoring findings should be identified and agreed up front. Most reporting will be undertaken through the organization's project management systems. Usually this will involve contributing to regular (monthly /quarterly) monitoring reports together with periodic annual and milestone reporting.

Figure 5.4 shows an overview of such a system for a GTZ BEE reform program in the Philippines.⁵³

⁵³ Participatory Management Of Development Results – GTZ BEE Program In The Philippines Martina Vahlhaus GTZ May 2007 IFC Smart Lessons

Fig 5.4: Internal management of the monitoring system in Philippines

Chart 1: Overview on Internal Management of the Monitoring System

	Basic Elements (= what is being monitored)	Frequency and Format	Participants
Strategic Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System boundaries • Result chains • Indicators • Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-day workshop once a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program management • Component managers • GTZ advisers
Operational Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestones (output monitoring, use of service) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program management • Component managers • GTZ advisers • Partners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational plans (= activity monitoring) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings, within the responsibility of each component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component manager • Component staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs and costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and monitoring meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual (end of the year) workshop (1-2 days) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GTZ Team • Partners (decision-makers and implementers)

The PM quick checklist

1. Will the proposed reporting system fulfill the information needs of the internal and external users?
2. Is it adapted to the resources and the capacities of the program and its environment?
3. Will it fulfill both the 'proving' role of results against goals and the 'improving' role of sharing learning and analysis?
4. Am I reporting the right things at the right time?

5.4. Step 4: Analyze M&E Findings

Data is collected from M&E activities throughout the project and hence analysis of the findings should be undertaken alongside this work. Undertaking analysis on an ongoing basis and discussing findings as they are reported is important if the informing and learning roles of M&E are to be achieved.

The tools needed to undertake the analysis of the data collected through M&E activities will depend upon and reflect the methodology adopted, the range of data collection instruments used and the volume and nature of the data collected.

Data needs to be analysed for different groups, compared between groups and over time periods. External expertise may be required for the analysis of data, both in terms of

guidance as to what tools should be used and related to this, how data should be recorded and stored as well as undertaking the actual analysis once the data has been collected.

It is typical to have four or five points in a project when there will be a need to analyze and report results, in addition to the regular M&E reporting undertaken as part of project management. Key points of analysis and reporting take place as follows:

- **First stage baseline and mapping work.** If a project involves undertaking a baseline or mapping exercise then the findings from this work need to be analyzed and reported quickly because they form an integral base from which the project proceeds and will often determine what tasks will be progressed and which will not.
- **Pilot phases or pilot work.** A project may involve undertaking a pilot phase, where something will be tested out with a group or a particular locality before the project is 'rolled out' further. Again it is important that the analysis of M&E data from this pilot is undertaken thoroughly and quickly, as the findings from this are needed to inform the progression of the project. For example the Alexandria Business simplification project described in Annex 1 is a case where a project had to be implemented and evaluated within a 2 year period to determine whether the approach worked and should be considered for roll out to other governorates.
- **Mid-term or periodic evaluative reviews** - key findings from periodic evaluation work usually from the mid term timeframe of the project onwards need to be analyzed and reported in a timely manner as they illustrate whether the outputs of the project are being achieved or not and whether process issues are progressing. The findings from these mid-term evaluations inform the ongoing validity of the M&E plan for assessing outcomes and impact for the project. If initial findings show that the project is not achieving and or is achieving in an unexpected way then the M&E plan may need to be reviewed and updated for the end of project evaluation activities.

Mid-term is a significant review point for DFID projects, whereby external consultants or DFID staff external to the project are brought in to assess the progress of the project to the outcome level. Likewise, GTZ have a substantive review with their mandatory 'project progress review' noted above. This analysis of project/program results is based on objectives and indicators, results hypotheses and results chains, data and information obtained from the results oriented monitoring.

- **End of project evaluation.** This is usually the most substantive analysis as it is bringing all of the above together, as well as undertaking end of project evaluation data collection analysis and reporting. This is the key time of activity for M&E work if findings are to be processed and reported in a timely manner after the end of the project. Therefore resources need to have been in place and tasks managed well during this period. This evaluation will always involve external people – colleagues from the central evaluation department and/or external consultants. Do not underestimate the time needed to bring together the summative M&E data and findings.
- **Post-project evaluation.** Sometimes there is provision in the project for there to be an evaluation after it has ended – a year or more afterwards - where the focus is on impact assessment. Usually this is undertaken by a specialist within the organization and/or external consultants who are contracted to undertake this work, develop the analysis and presentation of the results.

Box 5.3: How to write up an evaluation

- Keep it simple
- Make sure that the right information reaches the right people
- Use a form of communication that catches the attention of the intended audience
- Communicate in a way that makes the information as understandable as possible to each particular audience
- Present the information on time
- Involve the target group in deciding what and how to communicate
- Use a standardized format to allow comparison
- Indicate the reliability of the data

The PM quick checklist

1. How many times will an analysis need to be prepared?
2. Who will prepare it?
3. How many versions will we need?

4. Should I use a standardized format?

5. How can the finding contribute to the learning?

5.5 Step 5: Communicating M&E findings

While M&E findings are regularly reported through project management systems as noted above, it is not unusual to find that they are not communicated beyond this, either internally and externally. It is so often the case that those involved in M&E, especially impact assessment activities, devote a lot of time to the design and implementation of M&E systems and not enough time to considering how their findings will be used.

If M&E practice is to fulfill both its learning and proving roles and its findings are going to influence development thinking, policy and practice, then it is important to have a sound dissemination strategy in place. The importance of good communication to the effective practice of BEE reform is increasingly recognized. IFC has recently developed a specific toolkit on communication within its suite of BEE toolkits⁵⁴. This provides extensive guidance, includes practical examples and case studies on implementation, and recommendations for good practice.



The PM quick checklist

1. When is the best time to communicate M&E findings?
2. What is the message?
3. Who is the audience?
4. What is the best way to communicate?

When is the best time?

For the timing of findings there is a very simple rule: The longer the length of time between data collection and presentation of findings, the lower the impact for 'improving'

⁵⁴ Strategic Communications for BEE Reform: A guide to stakeholder engagement and reform promotion IFC BAH 2007. See: <http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/sme.nsf/Content/BEE+Toolkits>

practice. This is especially the case for external impact studies. Another key aspect of timing beyond the imperative 'don't delay' is to think: *who* is sharing the results and when is a good time for them to hear and learn about things. Some issues to think about:

- Institutions such as government tend to have a regular pattern of meetings and events. Many of these fit into an annual cycle – use existing publications, committee meetings and planned events to disseminate findings;
- Time is money for many businesses and so when trying to disseminate and engage with the private sector try to use a mechanism of delivery that they already use as part and parcel of their business life - Business Association meetings and newsletters, information sheets at registration offices or in banks
- Try to avoid busy times of year for the target groups - the end of March is the end of the financial or tax year in many parts of the world. In rural areas harvest time might not be a good time to engage agricultural enterprises.

What is the message?

The effective communication of M&E findings is critical for both the proving and improving roles of M&E work.

- **Proving:** Stakeholders want to know if the project has succeeded. Has it delivered what it set out to achieve? If so in what way and if not why not? Sharing findings, especially success with external stakeholders, not only validates the project but also helps to build consensus and support for the reform process and private sector advocacy
- **Improving:** What did the experience of running the project show about that particular form of intervention? What lessons can be taken for implanting this type of activity elsewhere or with different target groups?

The IFC Alexandria Business Simplification project in Egypt is a pilot project that has adopted an explicit communication strategy to both prove success by sharing interim results and improving know-how about the reform in an effort to build stakeholder engagement and trust. They have also produced an award winning IFC SMART Lessons sheet *Communication As A Tool In Policy Reform: Getting The Message Through In Egypt* in order to share their experience with a wider audience.



Simple, well-written short notes can tell a powerful story as Box 5.4 shows.

Box 5.4: Example of a short impact note

Uganda: a successful pilot program in Entebbe focused on streamlining business licensing. As a result, the time that Ugandan entrepreneurs needed to register a business fell from 2 days to just 30 minutes. An estimated four times as many businesses registered in Entebbe the year after the pilot and, despite the lower annual registration fee, the higher number of registrations meant that the total revenue collected by the municipality increased by 40%. There were significant savings in administrative staff time too.

Who is the audience?

There are a wide range of stakeholders who will be interested in the M&E findings: both internally, externally with immediate stakeholders, and with a broader audience. Box X below outlines four groupings of typical stakeholders who are all important to the effective performance of a BEE intervention but relate to it from different perspectives. Their role and position in relation to the project will determine the type of messages they are interested in hearing.

Box 5.5: Typical Audience Groups

- **The Accountable** – those to whom the reform measure is accountable in operational and cost terms. Who has instigated or paid for the reform measure? They will want to know that their money has been well spent and the effort has been worthwhile. Those accountable

could be development partners, government ministers, government officers, and /or key business organizations.

- **The Beneficiaries** - those whose lives were to be made better by the reforms. Is the market now a better place for doing business? They could be the private sector and the enterprises themselves, or through the associations, chambers, and trade associations.
- **The Implementers** – those who are involved in managing and implementing the day-to-day activities that have been under reform. Can targets now be met more effectively and efficiently? They would be primarily government officers, compliance agency staff and business support agencies to a lesser extent.
- **Other Interested parties** – what do the findings tell other groups about the BE? Is this a good place to invest in? Is setting up a business straightforward? How long does it take to register a business now? The findings may be of interest to researchers, business development practitioners, consultants, potential business owners or investors – both in the country and in other countries.

How best to communicate?

How are the findings going to be presented how will people find out about them? Different stakeholders, by the very fact of what they do and where they are, will use different means of communication to find out about things. Whilst government ministers and officials and development partners will tend to be comfortable with detailed written reports, other stakeholders, such as business owners especially those in small businesses, are unlikely to have the time, the literacy skills, or indeed the interest to wade through what they would regard as boring paperwork even if they were able to have access to full technical reports.

The lesson is to use a variety of different forms of communication for disseminating evaluation findings from formal written reports through electronic newsletters to conferences and competitions – there are a wide range of media through which to communicate M&E findings and good practice.

Table 5.4 below gives some thoughts on what and how to disseminate M&E findings to the four stakeholder groups discussed above.

Table 5.4: Disseminating Findings to different Audience Groups

Target Audiences/key message	How to disseminate
<p>Accountable – development partners, government ministers, government officers, key business organizations.</p> <p>Key messages – easily digestible facts and figures about what has been achieved, proving change and relating it to intervention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written reports ▪ Executive summary briefing notes ▪ Presentations ▪ Discussions over ‘strategic cups of coffee’ ▪ Official visits to the ‘one stop shop’ out of town ▪ Leaflets and promotional material ▪ An annual ‘State of the BE’ report ▪ Web sites and electronic reports ▪ Media reports/showing changes heralding success - newspaper, radio, TV
<p>Beneficiaries - the private sector either directly or through their associations, chambers, and trade associations</p> <p>Key message - How doing business is now easier, quicker and cheaper – so do it!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Briefing notes ▪ Presentations to associations ▪ Official visits to the ‘one stop shop’ out of town ▪ Briefing note of SME feedback ▪ Leaflets and promotional material ▪ Media reports/programs showing changes heralding success - newspapers, radio, TV ▪ Newsletters- hard copy & electronic ▪ Web sites & electronic reports
<p>The implementers – primarily government officers, compliance agency staff and business support agencies</p> <p>Key message – Key milestones achieved - where efforts have made a difference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written reports ▪ Committee papers ▪ Briefing notes for staff meetings ▪ Presentations to staff ▪ Feedback at staff appraisals ▪ Organization Intranet /website ▪ Leaflets and promotional material ▪ Media reports newspaper, radio TV ▪ Internal staff newsletters
<p>Interested parties – researchers, business development practitioners, consultants, potential business owners or investors in the country, the media, development partners and governments elsewhere</p> <p>Key message - A successful reform has been achieved, and the BE here is better for business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Written reports ▪ Executive summary briefing notes ▪ Presentations – conferences /business seminars ▪ Discussions over ‘strategic cups of coffee’ ▪ Official visits to the ‘one stop shop’ out of town ▪ Leaflets and promotional material ▪ Media reports/showing changes heralding success- newspaper, radio TV ▪ Research journal papers ▪ Case studies ▪ An annual ‘State of the BE’ report ▪ Newsletters- hard copy & electronic ▪ Web sites & electronic reports

How to ensure inclusion

Throughout the whole process of designing, implementing and managing the practice of project M&E there should be an ongoing diversity/inclusion prompt that operates at each stage to ensure that issues and concerns of diversity and inclusion are considered and addressed where ever possible.

Most of the BEE reforms are what might be termed mainstream interventions. They are aimed at private sector development in general. However there are a multitude of different stakeholders who make up or who are involved in the private sector. Not all of these different stakeholders experience the BE in the same way, with some finding it more 'disabling' or 'enabling' than others. Similarly, not all groups stand equally in having their voices and needs heard.

5.6 Key Messages

- M&E should be fully integrated into project cycle and project management systems from the start.
- PMs must have an integral role in designing and planning M&E. PMs may not be responsible for all M&E tasks
- Identify the key questions to be asked and answered by the M&E early in the process.
- Milestones and operational plans should be developed in a participatory way with representatives of the partner organizations
- Effective communication can build support for the process of change, accelerate acceptance and contribute to the sustainability of a reform