

Project Monitoring PMG333

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Lecture 05: **Monitoring: Methods
& Results Part (2)**



Lecture

05

General Introduction

**« Being a Project Manager
is like being an artist, you
have the different colored
process streams combining
into a work of art. »**

Greg Cimamarrutsi

Session 3. Monitoring: Methods & Results (Part2)

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Types of monitoring



An overview of monitoring types
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Remote management, monitoring and third-party monitoring



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- Remote monitoring
- third-party monitoring

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Reporting and learning



- Collecting data to ensure results-oriented reporting versus activity-based reporting
- Reporting on results

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1. An overview of Monitoring types



Activities

Key monitoring tool: Detailed workplan

Results

Key design tools:
ToC, Results Matrix
Key monitoring tool: RMF

Budget and expenditures

Key monitoring tool:
Process and Resource Integrated Systems
Management (PRISM) financial reports and PRIMA for All

Risks

Key monitoring tool:
Risk Management Plan

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Types of monitoring (1/4)

- A variety of elements can be monitored in an intervention and what to monitor will depend on the specific information needs of an intervention.



<u>Monitoring type</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Tool/s to use</u>
<u>Activity monitoring</u>	- Activity monitoring tracks progress, gaps and delays in activities against a detailed workplan. - A manager should already have a basic workplan from the intervention proposal. At the start of implementation, this basic workplan should be further developed into a detailed workplan. The detailed workplan includes the activities and tasks identified within the Results Matrix, along with all other activities and tasks related to implementation. It includes, for example, a section for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities. Ideally, the development of the detailed workplan should be undertaken by the intervention team, under the overall leadership of the manager.	The workplan helps to plan and monitor the implementation of activities, clearly distribute tasks among the intervention team and helps to ensure that the outputs are delivered within the time frame and budget available.

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Types of monitoring (2/4)

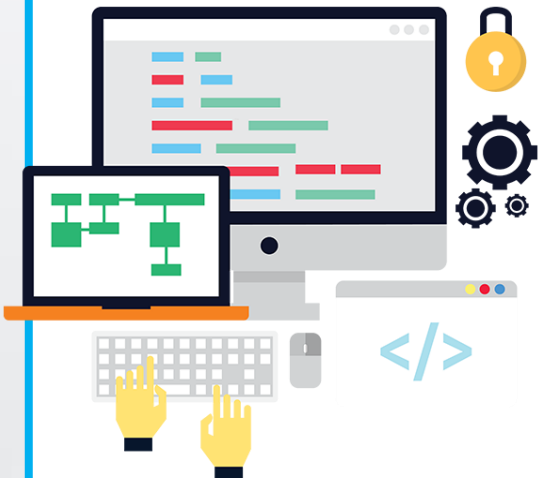
<u>Monitoring type</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Tool/s to use</u>
Results monitoring	- Results monitoring tracks results: This type of monitoring is used to determine whether an intervention is on or off track towards its intended results (outputs, outcomes, objective). - It is also recommended to reflect on and identify any unintended positive or negative effect. An example of this could be if training participants independently created a working group and continued to meet beyond the time frame of that training. - The previous sections have shown how to monitor for results in great detail using the IOM Results Monitoring Framework and/or the Results Matrix.	The RMF should always reflect the most recent agreed-upon version of the Results Matrix and should be reviewed regularly.



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Types of monitoring (3/4)

Monitoring type	Description	Tool/s to use
Financial (Budget and expenditure) monitoring	Financial monitoring tracks costs by input against the planned expenditures as per the approved budget. It is often done in conjunction with compliance and process monitoring (described below). When reporting, PRIMA is used to create interim and final financial reports and can, therefore, be a resource for financial monitoring.	PRIMA



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Types of monitoring (4/4)

<u>Monitoring type</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Tool/s to use</u>
Risk monitoring	• Risk monitoring tracks whether previously identified risks are still pertinent, if new risk has emerged and assesses whether the likelihood and timeline of previously identified risks remain accurate. • Risk monitoring also entails identifying and assigning risk treatment actions, which is part of setting up a risk management plan. Risk monitoring is often conducted in conjunction with context monitoring.	• Risk Management Plan • PRIMA includes a Risk Management module for managing risk.



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Additional types of monitoring to consider (1/4)

Process monitoring

- Tracks the use of inputs and other resources, the progress of an intervention's activities and the delivery of outputs. It assesses how activities are delivered.
- This type of monitoring is often conducted in combination with compliance monitoring (defined below).
 - **Process monitoring tools could be checklists to ensure that processes are undertaken; registration forms and tracking forms could also be tools used for process monitoring**



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Additional types of monitoring to consider (2/4)

Compliance monitoring.

- Ensures compliance with organizational and donor regulations Compliance and the expected results of the intervention, as well as with local governmental regulations monitoring and laws, contractual requirements and established ethical standards.
- One example of a compliance monitoring tool is a checklist



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Additional types of monitoring to consider (3/4)

Context monitoring

- Tracks the situation in which the intervention operates and focuses on identifying risks and assumptions, taking into account any unexpected considerations that may arise.
- In this way, context monitoring is closely linked to risk monitoring.
 - **Context monitoring covers the direct area of operation, as well as the larger institutional, political, funding and policy context that affect the implementation of an intervention.**



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Additional types of monitoring to consider (4/4)

Beneficiary monitoring

- Tracks beneficiary perceptions of an ongoing or completed intervention.
- This type of monitoring encourages beneficiary participation and assesses beneficiary satisfaction or complaints, the level of their participation/inclusion, their access to resources, how they were treated within the intervention and their overall experience of change.
- **Survey and questionnaire are examples of tools that can be used for beneficiary monitoring.**



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Strategy- and policy-level monitoring

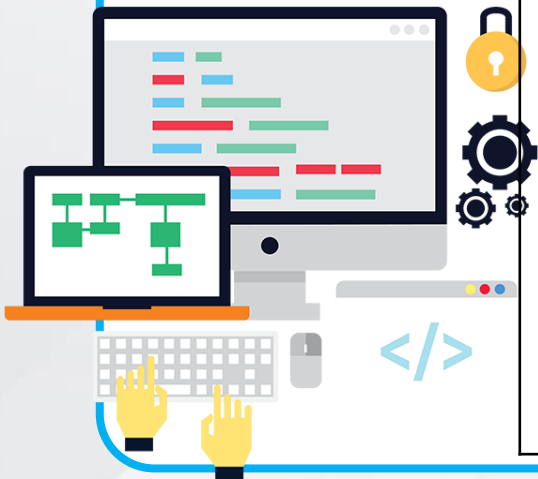
- Monitoring a policy or strategy differs from monitoring a project or program in that it looks at the bigger picture or macrolevel of what the organization is trying to achieve.
- Despite this difference, similar approaches can be used when monitoring a strategy. It is useful for monitoring purposes to differentiate between strategies developed at the country, regional and global levels.
- As strategies aim to attain results, usually through higher-level results than those found in projects and programs, it is also possible to apply a results matrix to a strategy



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Monitoring a strategy

Type of strategy	Considerations for strategy development that facilitate monitoring	How to monitor
Global strategy (such as a thematic or departmental strategy)	• Clear articulation of how interventions are responding to migration needs globally. • Clear articulation of what change or result is expected at global level.	• Strategies, as other interventions, should be monitored on an ongoing basis, regardless of the level at which they are implemented. When drafting or developing a strategy, a section on how to monitor it should be included. • Methods to monitor strategies include: ✓ Institutional questionnaires; ✓ Development of a results matrix for the objectives, outcomes and outputs of the strategy; ✓ Formal or informal midterm reviews of the strategy along the way.
Regional strategy	• Use global strategies or frameworks to establish indicators and targets, in order to ensure coherence between multiple countries • Explain how regional expectations and processes may feed into and interact with country-level strategies and interventions to enable the monitoring of these.	



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Type of strategy	Considerations for strategy development that facilitate monitoring	How to monitor
Country strategy	• Provide a clear articulation of what the situation in the country is to inform the selection and development of any proposed results, indicators and targets to be monitored. • Use global and regional strategies or frameworks to ensure coherence. • During development, clearly link ongoing interventions to established results.	• Reporting (formal and informal, external and internal) on the strategy implementation on a regular basis; • Regular monitoring should ensure that ongoing and newly developed interventions are clearly linked to relevant strategy results.

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2. Remote management, monitoring and third-party monitoring

- **A management structure**, which may have been set up as a temporary mode of operation, can rapidly become a semi- and/or permanent approach to implementation in countries with deteriorating security. While the proliferation of remote management approaches may have offered a number of recommendations to practitioners to improve their results in hard-to-reach areas, it has also revealed its limitations, including those related to intervention monitoring.
 - This section will cover remote management, remote monitoring, as well as TPM of interventions.



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Remote management

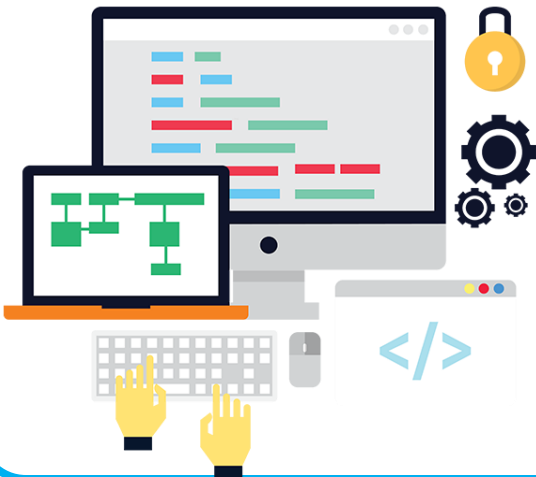
- **Remote management approaches** have substantial implications for *monitoring and accountability practices*, as well as the ability of the implementing organization to provide assurance of reaching project/ program results.
- Where situations may restrict staff members from meeting with beneficiaries or monitoring activities directly, they must rely on other staffing approaches or external partners.
- **Remote management approaches are required in circumstances where management may not have physical presence and hence limited technical oversight, monitoring and accountability, as well as in situations with an increased risk of fraud and corruption occurring.**



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Special circumstances...

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to further challenges in managing and implementing interventions, as well as, relatedly, all subsequent M&E efforts. It presented yet another remote management scenario, where most activities and movements were severely restricted for all actors. These conditions further reinforce the need for having strong and flexible monitoring systems in place to support the implementation of interventions.



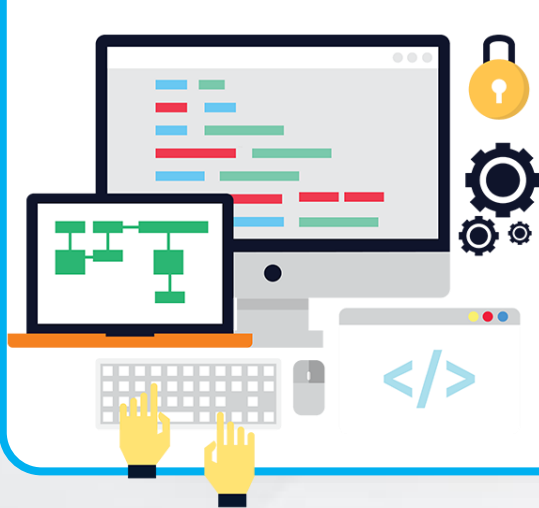
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- In general, **remote management**, including **remote monitoring** and some aspects of **TPM**, can be a temporary or a more permanent response to security and logistical challenges in the direct implementation of programmes.⁵¹ Depending on the degree of remoteness, different strategies may need to be applied.
- The office managing the intervention must identify a set of general parameters and **thresholds that define when direct implementation is no longer possible or advisable** (such as what are the risks the organization is willing to take).

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Remote monitoring



- Remote management may have significant implications for the organizational set-up, accountability, monitoring and assurance of the quality of interventions.
- When a **situation calls for remote management**, the set-up and use of monitoring approaches require more attention.
- Due to logistical difficulties in conducting the monitoring in complex and remote environments, the need for additional training and contractual arrangements with additional reporting lines may arise. Strong remote monitoring approaches become **key to supporting and contributing to remote management**.

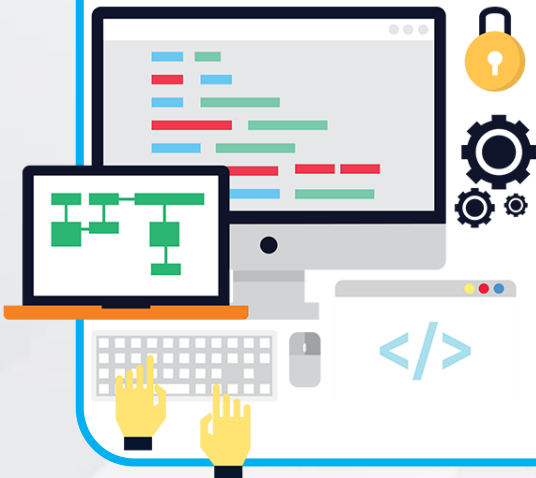
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Remote monitoring: Key challenges and possible solutions

Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Potential deterioration in program quality	Ensuring high quality in programming may be especially challenging when projects are technically complex.	Where/if possible: - Preventive measures should include a clear and strong performance framework, including a solid communication plan and quality assurance mechanisms. - Break down complexity into simple, digestible components, including easy-to-follow standard operating procedures for technically complex projects. - Schedule regular and reoccurring meetings with the project/program team; train staff, including implementing partners, and refresh their understanding of the subject matter, as well as conduct cross-checks and provide ongoing supervision and technical guidance on the subject matter. - Increase monitoring visits, where possible, as this can contribute to remote supervision, technical guidance and the cross-checking of data.

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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Weak monitoring and control mechanisms	Rigorous monitoring may be neglected when a project is already facing competing priorities and deadlines or budgetary constraints. The lack of staff capacity, standardized approaches and monitoring tools, infrequent monitoring visits, low quality of collected data and the lack of information triangulation are factors that can weaken monitoring and result in poor decision-making, potential deterioration in programme quality and corruption	Where/if possible: • Ensure dedicated monitoring capacity both at the program/project development and implementation levels. • Develop an M&E plan, outlining the overall strategy for monitoring, its standardized approaches, sources, timing and management processes and procedures. • Provide standardized monitoring tools that are regularly reviewed and updated. • Regularly conduct capacity-building of monitoring staff. • Introduce controls in the monitoring process, where required. • Enable real-time communication and information- sharing mechanisms. • Implement strict financial tracking systems to mitigate corruption.



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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Insufficient and/ or inaccurate data and reporting	Low quality of data can affect the quality of reporting. It can be related to limited staff capacity and/ or time spent in the field due to security concerns while collecting data.	• Where/if possible: • Set up easy-to-use data collection tools. • Set up an effective data quality control mechanism at the end of every day of data collection, as well as during data entry and submission. • Plan enough time for training and piloting of tools. • Avoid complex or lengthy tools and focus on collecting only the most critical information • Throughout the data collection process, call the field focal person daily to receive updates or troubleshoot challenges. This will ensure everything is on track and can be particularly useful when working with partners. • Introduce data reporting systems that are accessible online or through cell phones and in which it is possible to provide real-time feedback to bridge the physical distance.

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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Reduced number of visits and access to implementation sites	Monitoring visits to implementation sites or field offices can, at times, be challenging. This can result in poor communication, lack of information-sharing and lack of control of information, which can ultimately negatively affect the quality of implementation.	• Where/if possible: • Identify a monitoring team not affected by security limitations to conduct field visits on behalf of the implementing team (ensure prior training if it is an external team). • Ensure consistent information flow by establishing mechanisms that provide real-time collaboration spaces, enable greater data security, seamless coordination, and improved management and control mechanisms. • Favour online monitoring mechanisms as mentioned above including also receiving photographs and GPS tracking devices for distribution of goods



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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Limited staff/ partner capacity	The most common limitations are related to management, data analysis and reporting skills, as well as having a good understanding of concepts such as M&E, humanitarian action and beneficiary accountability. Providing adequate technical support through remote management can prove to be more challenging.	. Where/if possible: - Introduce these concepts at the start of an intervention, during staff capacity-building to ensure common understanding of requirements and expectations. - Consider developing a regular internal training schedule, invest in collaborative training events with local or international actors, promote good practice presentations and use systematized tools and templates.

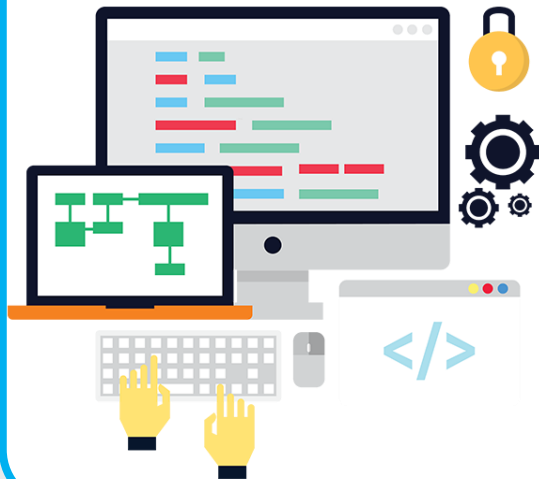


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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Weak technical oversight of implementation	Providing adequate technical support through remote management can prove to be more challenging.	Where/if possible: - Consider identifying a technical M&E expert within the team (field or country office). - If not available, consider reaching out to relevant regional offices or colleagues at Headquarters to request for assistance.



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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Potential weak communication between the main country office or delocalized main office and sub- offices in the field	Communication may suffer in remote management contexts.	Where/if possible: • Bring staff from head and field offices or partners together for regular meetings, either in person or for time-effective virtual communication to address the weak connections. • Use reporting templates and real-time document- sharing through online platforms, as it can support improving communication, increase accountability, follow-up and information-sharing. • Introduce communication protocols

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Challenge	Explanation	Suggested solutions
Increased risk of fraud and corruption	The risks of fraud and corruption are present throughout the implementation of an intervention and may arise in remote management settings, where monitoring is more difficult. Fraud or corruption can occur at various levels: at the organizational level with own staff, at the beneficiary level or at an implementing partner level. Certain socioeconomic and political factors can lead to increased likelihood of fraud and corruption.	Where/if possible: - Take relevant contextual factors into consideration when setting up rigorous control, monitoring and supervisory systems. - Incorporate sufficient checks and control mechanisms tailored to the intervention's individual procedures and processes.



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Remote monitoring systems

- Insofar as it is possible, remote monitoring systems should allow **for real-time feedback**.
- Such systems have multiple benefits: they can enable a real-time and/or close to real-time two-way communication in remote environments; thereby serving not only as a management tool, but also as a check and quality assurance mechanism.
- By receiving near to real-time information/data, staff is able to **identify and respond to challenges through corrective efforts much faster.**



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3. Third-party monitoring

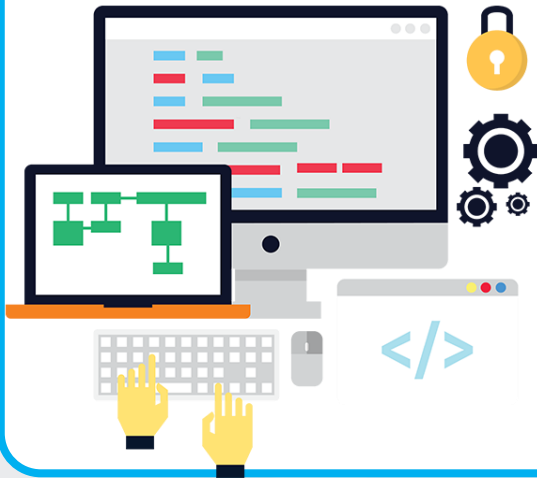
- TPM is the system of contracting third parties **to conduct the monitoring, and/or cover monitoring functions, such as collecting (and at times verifying) data, on behalf of the implementing instance or donor.**
- It is important when engaging in a TPM scenario to ensure that the parties involved have **clear and realistic expectations.**
- Contractual agreements define the parameters and conditions for any TPM scenario, including the obligations and requirements of the different entities involved.
- **When entering into an agreement with a third party for the purpose of monitoring, in any of the three TPM scenarios outlined above, several key considerations should be kept in mind:**



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The Key considerations for third-party monitoring agreements

- **Roles and responsibilities:** Ensure that the roles and responsibilities within the scenario are clearly outlined for each party, including frequency of monitoring and reporting, lines of reporting, lines and means of communication between parties, staffing required for implementation, deliverables and division of work between the parties. Other important obligations may be identified and included depending on the context.
- **Data protection:** Identify potential data protection issues and address them directly within the agreement and at the outset of monitoring implementation.



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Challenges and risks of Third-Party Monitoring (TPM)



- While TPM **allows for the indirect tracking, verification, validation, real-time collection of data and course correction of project's interventions**, it also has some limitations.
- Such limitations can **include poor-quality reporting of monitoring visits conducted, unexpected** costs (inter alia, related to improving the quality), lack of transparency and difficulty using TPM to collect outcome-level data.
- **Many of the risks** inherent in remote management are also true for TPM.

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Additional potential risks associated with third-party monitoring

Programmatic	• Inadequate design: Budget does not include air travel, proper M&E system or trainings, for example. • Implementation/technical oversight: Supervision only from a distance. • Poor feedback and participation: If no direct and regular feedback is available for monitoring (for instance due to reduced regularity of visits to projects or inadequate M&E frameworks), the performance of the program may be at risk, such as risk of corruption and recruitment of inadequate skills or mismanagement. • Communication: Inaccurate/inconsistent/untimely data collection and reporting; triangulation of data is very difficult; weak communication with staff in the field and head offices. • Limited relationship with the community/acceptance and participation.
Institutional	• Financial: If a TPM system is weak due to limited funding, monitoring and reporting may be affected and weaken the value of the use of TPM. • Reputational: Third-party monitors need to be selected with due consideration to ethical behaviours, professionalism, cultural sensitivities and reputation. A bad selection can affect the reputation of the organization using TPM.
Other	• Conflict of interest at the TPM level with biased monitoring for its benefits and other contractual opportunities.

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4. Pulling it all together: Monitoring and evaluation plan

- This chapter has so far introduced various types of monitoring, including the four essential areas to monitor: results, activities, budget and expenditure and risk.
- While various definitions exist, the terms “M&E plan” and “M&E framework” are often used interchangeably.
- However, while both seem identical, they refer to two different concepts.



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Monitoring and evaluation <u>plan</u>	Monitoring and evaluation <u>framework</u>
- In some cases, a detailed description of project logic, envisioned evaluations and monitoring activities, as well as M&E tools, may be requires a more detailed plan on how M&E will be enabled at the start of the intervention. - This more detailed version would be called an M&E plan and would cover all planned M&E activities. It can also cover additional areas, such as learning and reporting.	- The most common definition of an M&E framework is a table that lists all indicators (and their brief definition), along with data source, baseline, target, how often it will be measured, data collection methods and tools, as well as who is responsible for measuring results. The closest concept to an M&E framework is RMF. - In many cases, RMF may be sufficient for monitoring the results of an intervention, along with the plans described in the M&E sections of the project document.
M&E plan should ideally be done at the initial (inception) phase of a project, before starting implementation and should be reviewed periodically to reflect changes in the implementation context, or after major project design changes are made.	- The M&E framework is also developed at the start of the project. - It may also need to be reviewed periodically to reflect the changes in implementation.
The M&E framework can be a component of, and included in, the M&E plan.	

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Monitoring and reporting on results



- Reporting on intervention results **is an essential component of ensuring compliance with a results- based approach.**
- It is undertaken at **different intervals throughout the life cycle of an intervention.**
- Based on operational knowledge, best practices and reporting, it is a means of communicating information on intervention progress, achieved results, lessons learned, constraints encountered.
- The steps taken to overcome and address challenges and good practices identified during implementation.

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Implementing a reporting plan

- Developing a reporting plan to anticipate reporting needs and ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the collection of data and the preparation of reports. This could be included as part of an M&E plan (see the previous section, [Pulling it all together: Monitoring and evaluation plan](#)) or it could be developed as a stand-alone plan.
- A reporting plan can cover reporting roles (who is responsible for reporting), the types of reports required, how frequently a report is to be produced, procedures for report review and who is to receive the report.



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Reporting on results

- Reporting is a critical component of M&E, as **it enables the presentation of collected data and findings generated for key stakeholder use and overall performance.**
- Reporting on results **provides evidence and feedback to decision makers to inform their decision-making processes.**
- **Internal monitoring reports and external donor reports can serve several purposes, depending on an intervention's information needs, as well as the information derived from M&E, which can be put to different uses. M&E information can serve to:**



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	Demonstrate accountability
	Delivering according to engagements taken with different stakeholders.
	Convince
	Using evidence from findings.
	Educate
	Reporting findings to help organizational learning.
	Learn
	Seeing what works, what does not and why.
	Document
	Recording and creating institutional memory.
	Involve
	Engaging stakeholders through a participatory process.
	Gain support
	Demonstrating results to help gain support among stakeholders.
	Decision-making
	Providing feedback to decision makers.

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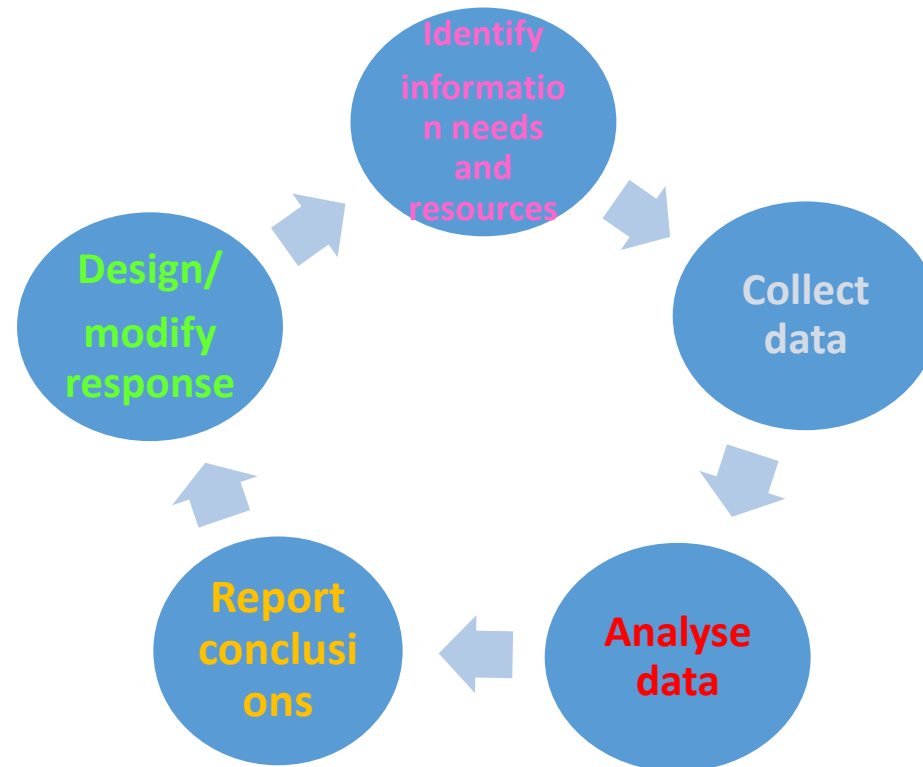
Collecting data to ensure results-oriented reporting versus activity-based reporting

- In the case of a **capacity-building-related result**, if **the focus is on the knowledge attained**, with an indicator *that measures the percentage of participants who increased knowledge or the percentage who reported being able to apply knowledge gained*, then once this data is collected, reporting will also be able to focus on this information and demonstrate a change in capacity through increased knowledge.
- On the other hand, if the indicator is not used **and the data is not collected**, then the report would only be able to state how many people were trained or how many trainings were implemented, which would be insufficient information to demonstrate a change, that is, the training provided achieved a change and the intended result of the capacity-building activity was reached.



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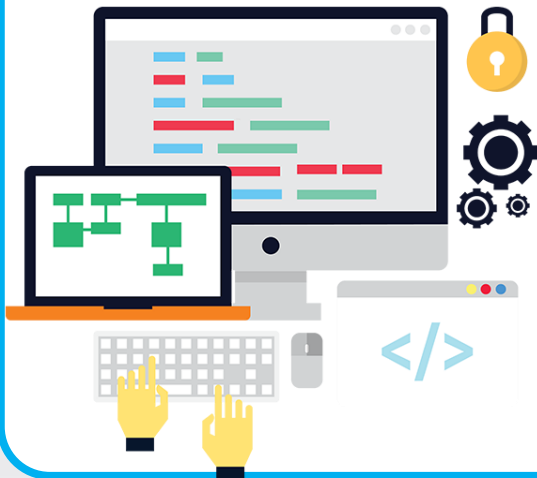
Cycle of data collection, analysis, reporting and use



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Writing a results-based report

- When looking at reporting from **an M&E perspective**, some **additional practices** can be used to ensure results-based reporting.
- It is important **to emphasize active language that captures the process of change**, by explaining measurable, visible and concrete change in a given context.
- Language used in the report should focus on **what is different as a result of the intervention**, rather than what is implemented to create that change.



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Reporting in a narrative donor report

- **The project manager** is responsible for drafting, preparing and coordinating the donor reports in a timely manner.
- There are **two main types of donor reports according to frequency**, namely interim and final reports. In detail, **the steps required to draft and prepare a narrative donor report**. In summary, these steps are as follows:
- **Review project documents** (originals and any subsequent revisions) to ensure that the most up-to-date information is presented in the report; specifically, the most recent agreed-upon version of the Results Matrix, reporting requirements and deadlines.
- **Review previous interim** reports to ensure consistency of information and provide updates on any previous challenges raised in prior reports.



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Reporting and learning

- As stated above, **reporting based on M&E findings and data** can contribute to organizational learning and help improve the quality of interventions overall.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines** provides more detail **on learning through evaluation, this section highlights the link between reporting and learning** with a focus on reporting based on findings and data from M&E activities.
- **Results-based reporting** is crucial **for decision-making and planning during the implementation of an intervention**, as it can provide **the information necessary for evidence-based decision-making.**



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- **The findings and data generated** through M&E activities provide crucial input for project management and informs decision-making. Furthermore, reflecting on findings from M&E allows for learning from day-to-day activities. In turn, the lessons learned from daily activities help to improve the quality of both ongoing and future activities, as well as for future programs
- **Reporting, reflecting and learning** should occur throughout the intervention life cycle. While at the conceptualization stage, findings and lessons learned can be incorporated from previous evaluations; at the implementation stage, monitoring and/or a midterm evaluation can provide information to help decision-making to improve performance and impact and contribute to learning.
- **Finally, at the completion stage, project/program staff can reflect on the intervention to prepare for donor reporting and an evaluation facilitates the collection of higher-level lessons learned.**



Lecture

05





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Thank You

