



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN
The Administrative Office of the President

POLICY FRAMEWORK

For

**RESULTS-BASED MONITORING &
EVALUATION**

(RBME)

Draft
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PREAMBLE

The Administrative Office of the President (AOP) is committed to facilitate effective leadership of President's Office in fulfilling Afghanistan's National Unity Government's responsibilities of assuring citizens' rights, social order, hearing the public's complaints and problems, and safeguarding social, cultural and religion values.

Its mission is strengthening principles such as good governance, social justice, accountability, rule of law and fighting corruption. It will do so through follow-up and enforcement of Presidential orders, decrees and decisions based on the Afghan constitution, international treaties and commitments, institutionalization of the respect for human rights, reform in government policies and strategies, monitoring, evaluation and reporting to the nation, so that the Afghan people also become part of the country's efforts for development, economic growth, lasting peace and social harmony.

The AOP's mandate is to assure the Presidential Office and Cabinet's timely decisions and their effective implementation through providing essential services and an appropriate operating environment for its work.

Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation is the key to improved service delivery, accountability, transparency, good governance and effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in programming and policy implementation. Monitoring and Evaluation plays an important role in development: the transformation of evaluation in 2015 after the declaration of 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation made it even more important. Development agencies, donors and governments have worked throughout 2014 and 2015 to develop a comprehensive global evaluation agenda (EvalAgenda2020), the agenda was recently launched in Kathmandu in the Parliament of Nepal on the 25th of November 2015. This launch of the global evaluation agenda was subsequent to the endorsement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations on the 25th of September 2015 as the replacement for Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Government of Afghanistan is specially committed by the approval of the New Deal for Fragile States in 2011 where Afghanistan was selected as a pilot country for substantially strengthening its levels of transparency and accountability for the use of its public funds.

In addition the Government of Afghanistan is facing enormous challenges to increase basic service delivery to obtain verifiable changes in the economic and social development process and also increasing transparency and accountability to our population.

At present the Government is not in the position to verifiably inform the public about the effectiveness and efficiency of resource utilization because we are not systematically using results-based monitoring approaches as the basis for managing the execution of our duties.

It must become Government policy that Ministries and Government Agencies establish Results-Based Monitoring Directorates or Units which are equipped with sufficient means and budgets to enable them to contribute to results-based development planning processes, to be in the position to conduct appropriate baselines and other data collection, as well as supporting the management and steering the implementation of policies, programs and projects.

We need to significantly improve the quality of our plans by formulating realistic objectives and especially verifiable quantitative and qualitative indicators of results. In addition the

preconditions for realistic planning are that budgetary units, planning units and RBME units cooperate closely in their work.

Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation is also the basis for reporting and informing our population about our achievements, to show to the public the changes which have occurred and to motivate further efforts to improve the general situation in our country. However this also includes providing information about challenges and failures, which is important for legitimacy and transparency.

The Office of the President has developed the National Framework on RBME to provide a clear and consistent roadmap for the development of a government-wide Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation system.

The policy is based on assessments of the present M&E situation in the country and applies internationally-accepted best practices to implement a framework that is well-suited to the Afghan context. I look forward to the results of the implementation of this comprehensive monitoring and evaluation policy.

His Excellency the President
of the
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

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Policy Summary

This Policy Framework on Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) provides the basis for a comprehensive M&E system across the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Its main purpose is to promote quality monitoring and evaluation which can be used for learning to improve the effectiveness and impact of government, by reflecting on what is working and what is not working and revising interventions accordingly. It seeks to ensure that credible and objective evidence from monitoring and evaluation is used in planning, budgeting, organizational improvement, policy review, as well as on-going program and project management, and to improve performance. It provides a common language for monitoring and evaluation in the Afghan public service.

This framework defines Results-Based Monitoring as:

The continuous collection, analysis and reporting of performance related data in a way that supports effective management and provides managers with regular (and real-time) feedback on progress in implementation and results, and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected. It usually reports on actual performance against what was planned or expected. In addition, Results-Based Monitoring asks whether the activities, outputs and outcomes which have been planned are done in the right way and if anticipated development changes (impacts) have been achieved.

This framework defines Evaluation as:

The systematic and objective assessment of ongoing or completed policies, programs or projects, their design, implementation and results. Its aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact (change) and sustainability. It should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of recipients, national policy makers and, if applicable, donors. Finally, evaluations give recommendations for ways forward, as well as indicate what works well and what does not work well. In this context evaluation is a type of applied research that attempts to identify cause-effect relationships within a specific context.

The 6 key elements of the framework are:

1. The Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit in the Administrative Office of the President is the custodian for the government-wide monitoring and evaluation function, is responsible for the implementation of this framework in Government entities and needs to establish an “Outcomes Evaluation and Research Unit” to focus on evaluation.
2. Policies, development strategies and programs/projects need to be planned by Ministries and Government Agencies with a view towards impacts to be achieved in the future. These can be implemented by the elaboration of results or impact chains which also form the basis for results-based monitoring and evaluation.
3. Because of the close linkages between planning, results-based monitoring and evaluation, all Ministries and Government Agencies need to establish a Directorate or Unit for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. In order to do so a limited public sector reform process is required.
4. The establishment of the Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation approach will require an intensive capacity development process in Ministries and Government Agencies. The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission is responsible for developing RBME capacity building programs across the Government’s structure. Universities and the private sector should also contribute to building RBME capacity in the country.

5. The National Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group as an Inter-agency Working Group of existing experts and practitioners within the Government that supports and coordinates Monitoring and Evaluation efforts and related functions across government ministries and entities. The Working Group is responsible for providing technical support and advocacy as well as networking and partnership. In addition, the Afghan Evaluation Society (AfES) as a national association of people and organizations involved in M&E supports the development of systems and capacities, and is an important forum for learning and information sharing.
6. The Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit in the Administrative Office of the President will produce a series of guidelines and practice notes on the detailed implementation of the policy framework, to elaborate various aspects of the system to be established, and to set quality standards for results-based monitoring and evaluation across the government.

1. Introduction

1.1. RBME Policy Focus, Purpose and Coverage

The focus of this policy framework is on both Monitoring and Evaluation, equally. It states that sufficient *monitoring* should happen at the program level so that strong bases for data are created, and to use such data for evaluations; however, *evaluations* will normally look for more in-depth information which will require more thorough data collection processes than monitoring.

The Focus of Monitoring will be:

- To check and assess progress against pre-defined targets and milestones;
- To provide timely information for decision making at the entity level;
- To ensure interventions do not deviate from their primary purpose and direction;
- To ensure timely reporting of successes and failures for continuous improvements;
- To assist ministers, directors, senior managers and executives in timely decision-making related to program interventions.

The Focus of Evaluation will be:

- To judge the value of interventions (projects/programs) in relation to inputs, including level of effort and budgets;
- To validate interventions (projects/programs) to donors and funders and provide evidence that the results of interventions are of greater value than the inputs expended;
- To ensure that interventions are being implemented as intended, and that the expected results are achieved / being achieved / are likely to be achieved;
- To seek and suggest alternatives where interventions are not successful;
- To base decisions on results, including lessons learned and recommendations for improvements;
- To demonstrate results to the public, beneficiaries, stakeholders and investors/donors.

Purpose

The main purpose of a comprehensive RBME system is to promote quality monitoring and evaluations which assess performance and can be used for learning to improve the effectiveness and impact of government, by reflecting on what is working (and what is not working) and revising interventions accordingly. It seeks to ensure that credible and objective evidence from M&E is used in planning, budgeting, organizational improvement, policy review, as well as on-going program and project management, to improve performance. It provides a common language for monitoring and evaluation in the public service.

1.2. The need for a National Results-Based Monitoring & Evaluation System

This document is the result of extensive and comprehensive assessment of the current M&E systems and practices in the Government of Afghanistan, as well as assessment and best practices of major donor agencies, leading NGOs/INGOs in the country. An in-depth literature review was also conducted to see what other governments in the region have done to improve their M&E systems. The highly-regarded policy framework approach of South Africa influenced the preparation of this document.

The assessment of the current M&E systems in the Government of Afghanistan has shown that there are no standardized approaches in monitoring and regular evaluation. Because of this situation, most of the major strategic programs and interventions are not systematically evaluated to see whether these interventions have had positive impacts on the development of the country, and whether the expected changes did occur.

Monitoring and Evaluation in the Afghan government is seen as a donor requirement or donor-led effort to fulfill donor requirements. Also, there is lack of understanding within government entities regarding the importance of monitoring and how it can help them to improve steering of the implementation of policies, programs and projects as well as improving public services.

Even if there are no hard lines between performance auditing, monitoring and evaluation, it is important for every Government to establish a system with which the implementation of policies, development programs and projects can be managed and performance can be improved. Finally; the national RBME System enables reporting achievements and failures to fulfill transparency requirements. Table 1 below shows the range of results-based management activities with the core elements, activities and the reasons why those activities are undertaken.

Table 1: Range of Results-Based Management Activities¹

Core Element	Activity	Reasons
Inspection/ Investigation	Detects errors and verifies information.	Control and compliance
Monitoring	On-going tracking of progress against plans and corrective action, collection of data towards the indicators.	Management, steering, accountability, learning, corrective action, reporting
Evaluation	Systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence to assess issues such as relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, value for money, impact and sustainability, and to recommend ways forward.	Learning, accountability, improving performance, informs policy, planning and budgeting.
Performance Audit	Check the validity of performance information produced by departments.	Accountability, control, compliance
Research	Testing hypotheses/propositions through observation of reality.	Learning/knowledge creation only (no accountability focus), can inform policy

1.3. Establishing and operating a national RBME System

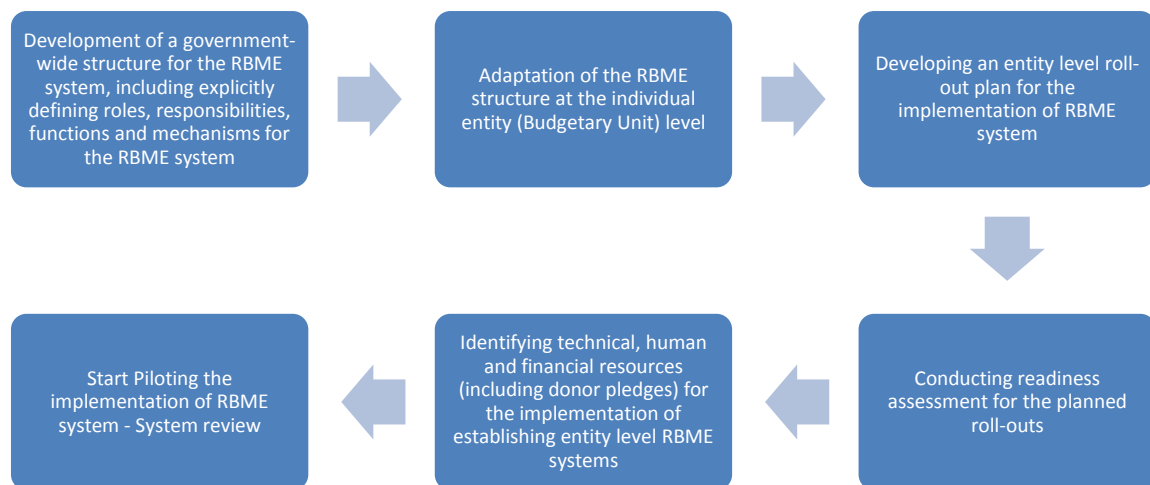
Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation cannot take place if there is no clearly-defined policy, strategy or plan to implement. Nor can RBME take place if plans do not clearly identify desired results or outcomes and impacts.

¹ Adapted from the “National Evaluation Policy Framework”, The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, Dept. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, November 23rd, 2011.

The implications for the Government of Afghanistan and all government ministries and agencies at central, provincial, district and municipal levels are that planning, monitoring and evaluation must be clearly linked to each other to develop policy, program and project strategies and plans that meet the requirements of the established national RBME System.

This policy framework paper is the main document for decision makers to review in considering whether to establish a nationwide RBME System. To implement the policy, the preparation of a **TECHNICAL MANUAL** and a **CURRICULUM** for nationwide implementation of the system will also be required.

RBME System Implementation Flow:



1.4. Terms and definitions

A clear understanding is required of main terms and definitions in this policy framework to ensure the successful implementation of the RBME system.

What are RESULTS?

Results are changes (outcomes and impacts) which occur due to interventions. They can be intended or unintended, expected or unexpected, positive or negative. Results occur during the entire term of the implementation of policies, development programs and projects and after they come to an end. They affect not just the defined target group of the policy, program or project, but the entire social, economic and administrative (governmental) environment as well.

What is MONITORING?

Monitoring involves the continuous collection, analysis and reporting of data to support effective management. It provides managers with regular (and real-time) feedback on progress in implementation and results, and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected. It usually reports on actual performance against what was planned or expected.

Monitoring assesses whether the activities, outputs and outcomes which have been planned are being done in the right way and if the anticipated changes have been achieved. However, while traditional monitoring usually is focused only on inputs, activities and outputs, in the Results-

based approach, monitoring assesses real or likely movement of outputs towards results (outcomes and impacts).

What is EVALUATION?

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of ongoing or completed policies, programs or projects, and their design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and achievement of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact (change) and sustainability. It should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of recipients, national policy makers and, if applicable, donors. Finally, evaluations give recommendations for ways forward, as well as indicate what works well and what does not work.

In this context, evaluation is a kind of applied research that attempts to identify cause-effect relationships within a specific context.

Is there a link between MONITORING and EVALUATION?

There is a strong link between Monitoring and Evaluation, especially in those cases when an evaluation is undertaken during the implementation of an intervention. During the implementation process it is necessary to check whether the activities and their outputs are leading to the desired outcomes. Such an evaluation or assessment will show management, if the policy, the program or project is on track and working towards its objectives, the desired changes (impacts) to be achieved.

2. Reasons for establishing a Government-wide RBME system

2.1. Summary of findings from assessments carried out by Ministries and AOP

In late 2015 the Administrative Office of the President (AOP) led an assessment of the National M&E system in Afghanistan, with the intention of assessing the current capacities, practices and systems in place for Monitoring and Evaluation in the Government of Afghanistan as well as key stakeholders, including donors and NGOs. The purpose of this assessment was to pave the way for the development of a National M&E Policy for the Government of Afghanistan. Key and summary findings of this assessment were as follows:

73% of government entities have a unit to undertake M&E related tasks, while 27% of government entities do not have a unit to carry out M&E related tasks. This was the highest performing domain (mean score = 2.59 out of 4.0) of the M&E system in government entities.

36% of government entities' M&E units have a written and approved mandate, 43% of government entities have written but NOT approved mandates while 21% do not have a written and approved mandate.

M&E functions at the entity level are not well coordinated because monitoring and evaluation is not considered the main purpose of a M&E unit. Lack of coordination mechanisms, presence of independent or parallel structures for M&E functions, fear of M&E and room for data manipulation are some of the key factors that were identified during the assessment of government entities.

In most of the government entities (64%) M&E operates under the policy and planning directorate or deputy ministry while in the remaining cases this unit either operates independently or under other deputy ministers.

73% of government entities have a clearly defined description of the tasks undertaken by different sections, while in 27% of the cases overlap exists or there is confusion about the tasks in different sections of the M&E unit.

Most of the government entities (71%) need external support to undertake their M&E functions, however the support is rarely provided in a timely manner.

At the National Level, on average 19 persons carry out M&E functions within every governmental entity, excluding MoI (Only 1 out of 149 approved personnel for M&E has been hired for MoI). High variability is present between the entities (Standard Deviation =12.2 persons).

47% of M&E posts in government entities were vacant at the time of data collection, which shows that about half of the human resources were not available to undertake M&E tasks within these entities.

Except for MoE and MoPH, none of the assessed-government entities have staff at the sub-national level to undertake M&E tasks.

Proper in-service capacity building systems for M&E are non-existent or only partly present within government entities.

Capacity development plans based on annual performance appraisals are not well connected with the technical capacity constraints of M&E staff.

72.7% of government entities reported the curricula used in pre-service education do not have topics related to M&E capacity building. In only 27.3% of the cases the pre-service curricula incorporated the M&E topic (in private institutions).

In terms of other performance domains assessed, including M&E plans, databases, advocacy and communication, routine program monitoring, surveys and surveillances, data auditing and supervision were also very weak in the governmental entities.

2.2. Recommendations resulting from the assessments

- One of the key recommendations that can improve government effectiveness in general, is introduction of a strong National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy that is evidence-based, practical and implementable in the short to long term.
- The government should take steps to establish M&E units within all governmental entities. The existence of M&E units is crucial for timely tracking of progress, improvement in service delivery, effectiveness and efficiency.
- Qualified personnel with M&E expertise should be recruited to fill the vacant M&E positions within governmental entities. However recruitment should take place only on the basis of the actual manpower requirements which are laid down or can be identified on the basis of the monitoring plans of the individual governmental entities.
- M&E should be planned and established at the sub-national level with structures, plans and functional data collection mechanisms. Once the M&E system is established on the sub national level it would be easier to feed data to a central Monitoring and Evaluation system.

- M&E should be integrated into national curricula for certain fields of study, such as economics, business administration, engineering, social sciences, management, and political science as well as in development studies. Also, specialized training should be offered through the Civil Service Institute to national M&E staff.
- The assessment made it evident that the Government had identified the challenge of harmonizing the varied modes and systems of Monitoring and Evaluation in the country.
- Firstly, a “National Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) Policy Framework” is required.
- Secondly, as soon as the RBME Policy is approved, its implementation should use a program approach on itself. Such a program plan would be the basis for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policy.
- In addition, it is recommended that for the development of the program the capacities of the national M&E Working Group should be utilized. Also, representatives from civil society (such as National Evaluation Societies and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluations (VOPEs)) should be part of the planning group as well.
- Responsibility for the implementation of the RBME Policy should be with the General Directorate of M&E and Audit of the Administrative Office of the President.
- The findings show that there is no entity/mechanism at the national level to coordinate, provide stewardship and align M&E functions.
- A national level entity/mechanism is required for coordination, steering and alignment of M&E functions. The general directorate of M&E and Audit at AOP may play an effective role in this regard, but also the national M&E Working Group may assume this function on behalf of AOP, with a responsibility to report to AOP.
- Entity level coordination mechanisms (taskforces, committees) should be established and strengthened so that M&E functions within entities can improve their performance.
- Monitoring and Evaluation consumes resources: however, the cost of M&E resources are significantly lower than the costs of inefficiencies, corruption, lack of good governance and poor public services – it more than pays for itself.
- To improve M&E systems nationwide, independent budget allocations need to be defined for their human resource development, technology, routine data collection, research, evaluation, advocacy and communication.
- Sufficient budgets for monitoring and evaluation directorates should be allocated at each entity.
- As highlighted by Evaluation Partners and International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), National Evaluation Societies and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluations (VOPEs), and M&E Working Groups play a vital role in advocating, promoting, standardizing and strengthening evaluation. They are in the position to disseminate international best practices and share regional knowledge among the practitioners of evaluation. Moreover, such VOPEs and Societies also work with governments, CSOs and the private sector to increase demand for the use of evaluation data.

- AOP should ensure adequate support is provided to the National M&E working group, the Afghan Evaluation Society (AfES) and other active VOPEs in Afghanistan, value their recommendations and take advantage of their expertise in the implementation of the proposed National M&E Policy.

2.3. Why Results-Based Monitoring & Evaluation?

Governments have long been engaged in traditional monitoring, i.e. monitoring levels of expenditures, revenues, staffing; amount of products and services produced/offered, while neglecting the real benefits (outcomes and impacts) that interventions may or may not have had on the lives of citizens. It is argued that NO efforts and resources should be utilized if interventions are not resulting in real changes in the lives of people. Therefore, NOW that there are significant internal and external pressures on governments worldwide; and Afghanistan is one of those countries that is suffering from a number of development challenges – donors and stakeholders are putting a lot of pressure on the government for improving security, governance, and tackling corruption, bring reforms and improve the government’s overall effectiveness and efficiency – in this context; through the introduction of this RBME policy framework, the government is intending to bring a major reform in the way it works and wants to work; this policy framework on RBME explicitly defines that the government should focus on improvements through introduction of a modern and comprehensive RBME system.

On the other hand, the newly endorsed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) launched on the 25th September 2015 by the United Nations call for all governments (Afghanistan is one of the signatories) to prioritize development, take a new approach to it, and learn from the successes and failures of implementing MDGs for the last fifteen years.

In its simplest form, the traditional approach to M&E answers the question of "did they do it" while the Results-based approach answers the question of "So what"? Therefore, it is important to distinguish between just doing something, and doing it properly, including the components of effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and value for money.

3. Government-wide RBME System

3.1. Scope of the RBME System

3.1.1. Linkages between Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

As stated earlier, monitoring and evaluation are not possible without strategies or plans for the implementation of policies, programs or projects.

A good quality plan should include a **diagnostic analysis** of the current situation and the forces at play, and which are likely to be the main strategic drivers of change. It should also explain the **logic model** or **theory of change** of the plan; in other words, the causal mechanisms between the activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. It should explain the underlying hypothesis that if we do what we suggest, we will achieve certain objectives and targets. It should also be explicit about the assumptions being made regarding the external environment.

3.1.2. Creation of the foundation for Monitoring and Evaluation – developing an impact or results chain.

Innovations do not emerge in a straight line starting with inventive scientists and then being passed on to advisors, acting as mediators, and ending up with members of society who are ready to try out innovations. They are rather the result of social interaction². Sweeping social and environmental changes that a government seeks to bring about are always based on a close-knit web of actors with specific interests and varying degrees of power. And the more actors involved in a change, the smaller – from the statistical point of view – the “relative factor weight” of the individual inputs are. The means that the greater the distance from the individual measure to the spheres where the changes take place is, the more difficult it becomes to attribute causal relationships to policy or development results.

Despite this methodological difficulty, it is essential to continuously observe these changes to steer policy and development measures through governmental entities. It is not enough to subsequently examine or evaluate whether the objectives have been achieved or might yet be achieved. It is also necessary to observe right from the start whether the changes to be brought about through the achievement of objectives actually occur. The question of whether government is acting at the right point in the system, i.e. not just whether the responsible government entity is doing things right (effectiveness and efficiency), but also doing the right things (relevance) needs to be repeatedly addressed during the implementation of a policy, a program or project.

The way to implement Results-Based planning is to develop a RESULTS CHAIN (or impact chain) which defines different phases of the implementation of a policy, program or project through to the desired future change (impact).

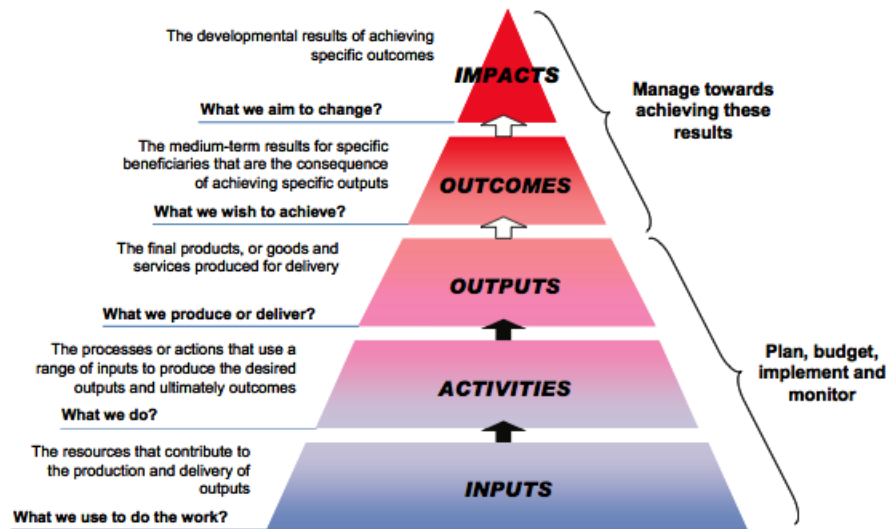
A first step is to define what a policy, a program or project should change in the country, which is usually called the **IMPACT** or **OBJECTIVE**. Then it needs to develop the **ACTIVITIES** (actions taken in hand) which have to be implemented as well as the **INPUTS** required to produce **OUTPUTS**. Outputs are products, capital goods and services that result from a policy or development intervention which are necessary to achieve **OUTCOMES**. Outcomes are the likely or actual short-term or medium-term effects or changes of the intervention’s outputs. In other words: the outputs are used by specific stakeholders and/or beneficiaries who initiate and set the desired change process in motion. Finally the change process leads to the desired **IMPACT**; the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a policy or a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Development of a results or impact chain is based on cause-and-effect hypotheses which refers to the presumed relationship between the individual links in a results chain. The implementation strategy of policies and/or development measures rests on these hypotheses, which are systematically examined in results-based monitoring.

The summary of the logic of the results chain and monitoring is shown in Figure 1.

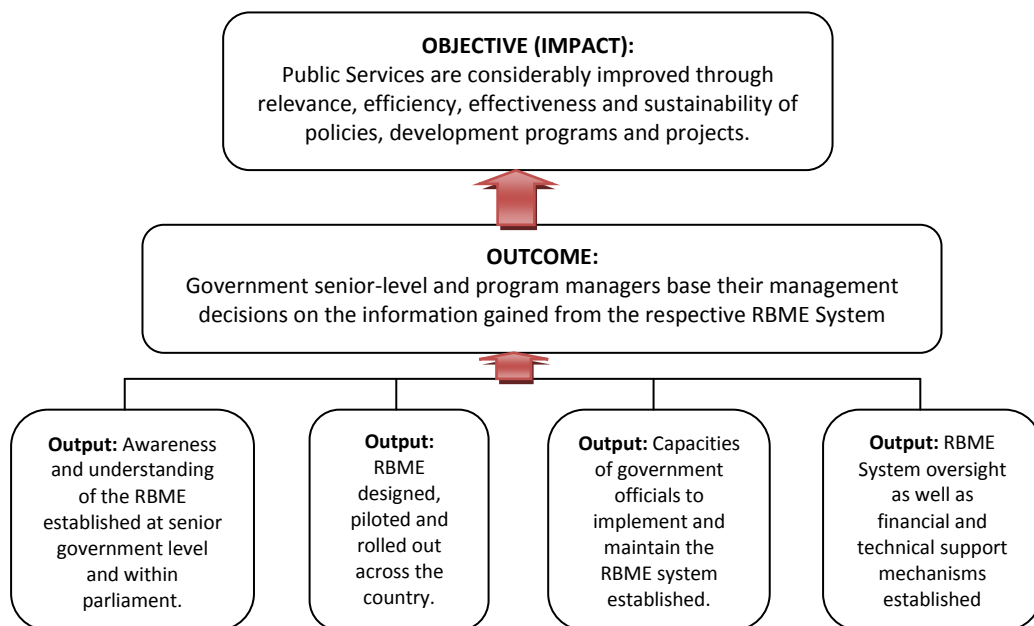
² The social organization of innovation. A focus on stakeholder interaction. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 1997.

Figure 1: Results-based Management Pyramid³



In reality, a results chain is more diverse than this results-based management pyramid indicates. Figure 2 is an example of what a results chain might look like for an evaluation of the implementation of the RBME Policy Framework itself.

Figure 2: Simplified Draft of the Results-Chain of RBME Implementation



3.1.3. Importance of indicators for verification of results

The results of policies and development program implementation need to be measured. Therefore, it is necessary to design INDICATORS. An indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure results, to reflect

³ Adapted from the "National Evaluation Policy Framework", The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, Dept. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, November 23rd, 2011.

the changes connected to a policy or development intervention, or to help assess the performance of a policy or development actor.

Indicators map a specific situation and complement (explain) the formulated Outcome or Objective (Result or Impact).

There are two types of indicators:

- Indicators for objective (impact) always refer to the end of the entire implementation phase of a policy or development program.
- Indicators for Outputs and Outcomes are **MONITORING INDICATORS**. They include interim information until the desired Output or Outcome is achieved.

Indicators on all levels have special **qualities**:

- An indicator has to be objectively verifiable, i.e. different analysts need to come to the same result independently.
- An indicator is precise. It should not create further questions.
- Indicators should not have an “objective character”, i.e. they are not supposed to describe the intended change, but they need to prove the change.
- Indicators should not contain vague “judgments”. Words such as “functional” require additional explanation and are to be avoided when formulating indicators.
- Indicators must also provide information on how the measurements are made and indicate the source of verification.

Verification of achievements requires data at the start of implementing a policy or a development intervention (Baselines) to define a base from which to measure the progress of implementation or to see at the end of an intervention whether the desired change (impact) has happened as expected.

If required data is not available from National Statistics or other evaluations, it is necessary to do **BASELINE ASSESSMENT**. They provide the baseline data for the defined outcomes and objective (impact) indicators at the start of the implementation of policy or development intervention and enable ‘before and after’ comparisons. They are a prerequisite for substantiating results and an essential requirement for quantifying and qualifying indicators.

Indicators also define the **TARGET VALUE** which has to be achieved by a certain time (valid for monitoring indicators) and what has to be achieved at the end of the implementation of a policy or development intervention. Target values are important yardsticks for reporting during implementation.

3.1.4. Documentation and Reporting

Documentation and reporting are required in preparing an Operational Plan for the entire implementation time span of a policy, development program or a project. The plan determines the timeframe for activities to achieve Outputs and estimates when Outcomes are expected to occur.

The results of the impact chain and the formulation of indicators as well as details of the Operational Plan and other detailed statements that are important for monitoring policies, development programs and projects are transferred to an RBME form. The RBME form is

used to structure the data collection processes and to systematically document the collected data. This helps when interpreting and using the data for steering purposes.

Outputs, Outcomes and Objective: The Objective (Impact) as well as the Outputs and Outcomes established in the planning phase need to be transferred to RBM forms in accordance with the results/impact chain.

Activities: If necessary, activities can also be included in the RBM form. Here, though, it is advisable not to include too many details but to define activity clusters.

Hypotheses, assumptions and risks: The hypotheses, assumptions and risks at Output, Outcome and Objective levels that were formulated during the planning phase are also transferred to the RBME form, and need to be monitored. This makes it possible to determine whether the initial hypotheses are still correct. The development of assumptions and risks is also monitored, and any deviations and need for steering and action are documented in the RBME form.

Indicators: Indicators at Output, Outcome and Objective levels have to be transferred to the RBME form as well. Each indicator must state which value should be achieved by which point in time (milestones). This determines the measurement interval. Measurement intervals depend on implementation planning milestones, not vice versa. The RBME form also records whether an indicator relates to cross-cutting themes such as gender, conflict, environment, etc.

Time schedule for RBM/data collection: At the start of operational planning, it is established at which point in time indicators are relevant and when the targets they specify have to be achieved. A record is also made of when the indicators will be measured (measurement intervals and milestones).

Data collection methods: The source of information or data collection method must be stated for each indicator. If they are not collected by the implementing Ministry or Government Agency itself, the source of information must be stated. The choice of the appropriate data collection method depends on the indicator, the monitoring objective and stakeholder expectations. It also depends on availability of time and resources.

3.2. Facilitation, Management and Coordination of the RBME System

The responsibility to facilitate, manage and coordinate the RBME System is with the respective Ministry or Government Agency: within these entities a **Directorate for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation** should be created.

The Directorate is responsible to prepare a strategic plan for the Ministry / Government Agency if no strategic plan exists. In case of the existence of a National Development Plan (NDP) the Directorate has to extract from this plan the elements the Ministry / Government Agency is responsible for implementing. Those elements are the basis for the strategic plan of the entity.

The main elements to be elaborated in the **strategic and operational planning process** are⁴:

- The length of time to be covered by a strategic plan.

⁴ Drawn from: "Policy Proposal: Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES)", Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy, September 3rd, 2014

- The major sections to be included in a strategic plan document.
- Development of the types of results to be specified and the means of presenting the hierarchy of results (activities, outputs, outcomes) in the plan (the results chain).
- Formulation of appropriate indicators for different types of results.
- Formats for presenting the strategic plan of the Monitoring Framework (MF) (indicators, data sources and data-collection frequency).
- Budget requirements for implementing the strategic plan and indicative resourcing levels should be presented.
- A risk analysis should be in the plan, with the format for presenting this.
- The requirement to review and update the strategic plan at least every two years.

A strategic plan is the basis for Annual Operational Plans which are the basis for determining the milestones for activities and outputs, which also have to be noted on the Monitoring and Evaluation forms.

Finally, Heads of the respective Ministries have to decide on the rhythm of Monitoring Meetings and the frequency of reporting.

3.3. Inclusion of Equity Focus and Gender Responsiveness

Defining Equity

Equity is distinguished from equality. Equity means fairness and impartiality towards everyone, while prioritizing the most marginalized and disadvantaged.

The aim of equity-focused policies is not to eliminate all differences so that everyone has the same level of income, health, and education. Rather, the goal is to eliminate unfair and avoidable circumstances. For example, Equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favoritism.⁵

Defining inequity

Disparities between population groups that are not driven by biology; are avoidable, and unfair are termed inequities. Equity is therefore based on notions of fairness and social justice.

Inequities generally arise when certain population groups are unfairly deprived of basic resources that are available to other groups. A disparity is 'unfair' or 'unjust' when its cause is due to the social context, rather than biological factors.

This RBME Policy framework includes the following components of gender responsiveness and equity in interventions and evaluations:

Pre-intervention phase:

During the pre-intervention phase of every policy, project or program, that explicitly includes phases of; 1) situation analysis, 2) context analysis, 3) intervention design, 4) budget allocation, and 5) identification of beneficiaries and stakeholders, gender responsiveness and equity focus should be aligned. Women, children, minorities, disabled and other marginalized groups should be considered, with focus on those most disadvantaged. These groups should also be quantified in terms of reach, percentage,

⁵ UNICEF Evaluation Working Paper (EWP) on how to design and manage Equity-focused evaluations by Michael Bamberger and Marco Segone.

numbers and quantities in ratio to other groups who are not marginalized, as well as qualified in terms of what types of interventions are planned for marginalized groups in comparison to other groups.

Intervention Phase:

During the implementation of interventions, including; 1) geographical area selection, 2) beneficiary selection, and; 3) implementation, a gender perspective and equity focus should be defined and applied. For example, this could mean: if there are 500 people to benefit from an intervention, how many should be women, children and minorities - and how are those worst-off and most deprived ones included to receive benefit, and what priorities are considered for them.

Evaluation Phase:

If the interventions are designed based on approaches of an Equity Focus and Gender Responsiveness (EFGR), an Equity-focused evaluation determines if the EFGR aspects were sufficiently included and considered during implementation. The evaluation phase should critically look into the availability of EFGR. The evaluation should assess the extent to which equity was taken into account during beneficiary selection, and gender disaggregation was one of the criteria in delivery of interventions. For example, if a bursary was awarded to 100 students for a masters program, how many of them were women, compared to how many women were eligible to be awarded the bursary out of 100, etc.

What is an Equity-focused evaluation?

An Equity-focused evaluation is a judgment made of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability – and, in humanitarian settings, coverage, connectedness and coherence – of policies, programs and projects concerned with achieving equitable development results. It involves a rigorous, systematic and objective process in the design, analysis and interpretation of information to answer specific questions, including those of concern to worst-off groups. It provides assessments of what works and what does not work to reduce inequity, and it highlights intended and unintended results for worst-off groups as well as the gaps between best-off, average and worst-off groups. It provides strategic lessons to guide decision-makers and to inform stakeholders. Equity-focused evaluations provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making process (*UNICEF, Evaluation Working Paper, Michael Bamberger and Marco Segone, 2011, p9*).

3.4. Development of the RBME Policy Implementation Process

The **Administrative Office of the President** will be responsible for developing and starting the process. The Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit takes the lead and develops a strategic plan (results or impact chain) and the required RBME system for the program to develop and implement the RBME Policy.

To set up the results or impact chain the Directorate General will use the capacities of the M&E Working Group and planning and monitoring experts from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy. An expert well experienced in RBME as well as in the facilitation of workshops on planning RBME systems will support the process of designing the entire RBME Policy Implementation Program.

The Working Group can refer to the following documents during the design phase:

- Policy Proposal: Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES); Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy; September 2014
- Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES), Technical Manual; October 2014

However, the RBME Policy planning group will ensure they design an implementation plan that is adapted to the results of the assessments and recommendations prepared in January 2016.

The main orientation of the Program is to establish a nationwide RBME System that is feasible to implement and to start with a simple step by step approach.

3.5. Getting the process started

After approval of the plan to develop the RBME Policy, the following three actions need to be implemented simultaneously:

- Selected Ministries (maximum seven, including MoF and MoEc as pilots) and establish **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorates**. To establish the RBME Policy, it is essential to closely link planning and monitoring, and integrating other units or sections within Ministries and Government Agencies that are responsible for data collection.
- An expert well experienced in RBME as well as in the facilitation of workshops on planning RBME systems trains a **pool of RBME Moderators**. Those RBME Moderators will form, after having gained practical experience, a pool of **RBME Trainers** to train additional RBME Moderators to be in the position to cascade the establishment of RBME systems in the future.
- The RBME Policy planning group is responsible to design unique formats for all the steps needed to establish RBME Systems. This process starts by taking as an example the planning process for the implementation of the RBME Policy. This includes formats for the results/impact chains, monitoring formats for steering/managing the implementation of policies, programs and projects, and reporting formats. This includes establishing a digitized system so decision makers can be informed about the project's progress at any time.

An essential prerequisite for operationalizing a nationwide RBME System is the establishment of the **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN** as a guideline for all Ministries and Agencies to elaborate their strategies and development programs as well as RBME Systems.

4. Undertaking Evaluation

4.1. The role and objectives of evaluations

Many people think of evaluations as a mechanism to reward or punish, while others think of it to prove to donors and stakeholders that an intervention has worked or failed, while some think of evaluations as donor requirement. Evaluation in fact is a combination of all these, plus some other key factors. The role and objectives of evaluations can be summarized as follows:

- To generate reliable and timely information on government performance to guide its operations, improve its effectiveness and efficiency, and support accountability to the public;
- To verify and improve the quality and management of an intervention (policy, project, program);
- To identify successful strategies for extension, expansion and replication;
- To modify unsuccessful strategies;
- To measure effects/benefits of an intervention (policy, project and program);
- To document what works and what does not work;
- To ensure relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of interventions;
- To assess and improve Value for Money (VfM);
- To ensure equitable development (Equity-Focus and Gender Responsiveness) interventions;
- To justify and validate interventions to donors and partners.

4.2. Different types of evaluation

Types of evaluations in this policy framework are categorized based; 1) by when they take place, 2) by the process used, and; 3) by where they focus.

Type of Evaluations by when they take place:

- a. Prospective Evaluation⁶
- b. Formative Evaluation⁷
- c. Summative Evaluation⁸

a. Prospective Evaluations

A prospective evaluation assesses the likely outcomes of proposed projects, programs or policies. Government-led projects are usually large scale interventions, mobilization of such projects consumes a lot of time and resources, therefore government-led projects should be carefully reviewed before they start mobilization, since pulling back from an active intervention can also incur huge costs for governments.

⁶ Prospective - other relevant terms used (ex-ante or before the fact evaluation)

⁷ Formative - other relevant terms used (mid-term evaluation, mid-term review, mid-term assessment)

⁸ Summative - other relevant terms used (Ex-post evaluation, Post Implementation Review, Impact Evaluation, Impact Assessment, terminal evaluation, and final evaluation)

b. Formative Evaluations

Formative evaluations are evaluations intended to improve performance, and are most often conducted during the implementation phases of projects or programs. Formative evaluations may also be conducted for other reasons, such as compliance and legal requirements. In other terms, any evaluation that is conducted before the end of an intervention is a formative evaluation. The purpose is usually to improve the design and performance of an on-going policy, program, project or other interventions.

Formative evaluation looks into the ways in which a program, policy, or project is implemented. It examines whether or not the assumed “Operational Logic” corresponds to actual operations. Formative evaluations are also called Mid-term Evaluations or Mid-term Reviews.

c. Summative Evaluations

Summative evaluations are studies conducted at the end of an intervention (or distinct phase of an intervention) to determine the extent to which anticipated outcomes were produced.

Summative evaluations are intended to provide information about the worth and impact of a program/intervention. In other words, any evaluation that is conducted towards the end of a project or program is a summative evaluation. It can also take other forms: not assessing the results, but looking into processes, what worked well or what did not work and documenting lessons for the future.

Summative evaluation is conducted at the end of an intervention to determine the extent to which it achieved desired results. A summative evaluation is often called outcome or impact evaluation.

Type of Evaluation by the process used:

- Self Evaluation
- Participation Evaluation
- Process Evaluation

Type of Evaluation by where they focus:

- Project Evaluation
- Program Evaluation
- Sector Evaluation / Thematic Evaluation
- Country Program Evaluation
- Policy Evaluation

4.3. Assuring credible and quality evaluations

Evaluations have little value if they are not of high quality, and the likelihood of using evaluation findings is very low if they are not credible. Basically, no one is going to use findings of an evaluation which is not a quality evaluation: therefore, quality assurance and producing credible information are pre-requisites for use. To conduct a quality evaluation, and assure the credibility of information produced, the following approach should be taken:

Planning Evaluations

The quality of evaluation planning is important – when and how well it is planned matters. Evaluations should ideally be planned at the intervention design phase, however, some evaluations can be planned on ad-hoc basis, for example in cases where there are questions about the quality of interventions, there are compliance issues, etc.

An evaluation plan that is prepared during the design phase of an initiative is termed "Plan for Evaluation" – when the actual time for the evaluation draws near, the details of the "Plan" itself should also be prepared, using the following criteria:

When the Plan for Evaluation should be prepared:

Intervention Budget which is being evaluated	Advance Time for Design of Evaluation
For interventions (projects/programs) worth under US\$ 1,000,000 (AFA 70 million)	Evaluation should be planned at least 2 months in advance of the evaluation expected start date
For interventions (projects/programs) worth US\$ 1,000,000 (AFA 70 million) up to US\$ 10,000,000 (AFA 700 million)	Evaluation should be planned at least 4 months in advance of the evaluation expected start date
For interventions (projects/programs) of more than US\$10,000,000 (AFA 700 million)	Evaluation should be planned at least 6 months in advance of the evaluation expected start date

Planning an Evaluation should include the following documents and steps:

- Identify the main evaluation client or user of its results
- Define the evaluation purpose
- Define the evaluation scope
- Define the evaluation management and approval process
- Define stakeholders of the evaluation (including their roles, interest and involvement in the evaluation process)
- Decide the evaluation type
- Develop evaluation questions / objectives (draft - to be refined after the evaluator is on board)
- Determine data collection methodology (draft - to be refined after the evaluator is on board)
- Budget the evaluation (draft internal estimate)

Managing an Evaluation

After planning, the second important aspect of an evaluation is its management, which should be based on the following four steps:

- Drafting Terms of References / scope of work for evaluation;
- Select evaluator / evaluation team (including advertising, short listing, negotiations, and selection);
- Organize relevant information before the evaluation starts;

- Delineate roles and responsibilities. three parties are usually involved in an evaluation; 1) the evaluation manager; 2) the evaluation team and; 3) the commissioning body⁹. It is important that the roles and responsibilities of all these three parties are clearly defined.

Conducting an Evaluation

Once the evaluation plan and management arrangements are in place, the evaluation should commence, and this part is more an "evaluation team" responsibility, with the instructions and inputs from the evaluation manager and commissioning body, as well as stakeholders. Conducting the evaluation should involve the following tasks and activities:

- Defining the logic model for the intervention being evaluated
- Refining the evaluation method
- Collecting data
- Analyzing data
- Formulating findings and preparing a draft evaluation report for review and revision if required
- Preparing the final report

Quality Assurance of Evaluations

The final step in pulling it all together is to critically assess the quality of the evaluation. It is also important to note that nobody will act on information that is not reliable, accurate and based on realities on the ground. Therefore, it is very important that the evaluation manager ensures the quality and reliability of the evaluation. A good evaluation has the following characteristics:

- Meets stakeholder needs and requirements
- Is relevant and realistic in scope
- Uses appropriate methods
- Produces reliable, accurate and valid data
- Includes appropriate and accurate analysis of results
- Presents impartial conclusions
- Conveys results clearly – in oral and/or written form

4.4. How to use the recommendations of evaluation

The time spent earlier, carefully planning the evaluation so that it meets the needs of decision-makers, pays off at this point. Evaluations have little value if they are not used. The utilization component of an evaluation should be planned from the beginning. To increase the likelihood of using the evaluation's findings, the following should be considered throughout the evaluation process:

- **Involving stakeholders from the beginning** – it is stakeholders who will use it, so they should be informed and their interests should be accommodated in the evaluation.

⁹ Evaluation Manager: The person within the commissioning body who is responsible for the overall management of evaluation (not doing it). For example, an M&E director in the ministry which is commissioning the evaluation to a third party. - Evaluation team: The team that is selected (normally outsourced) to do the evaluation. Commissioning body: The entity that is requesting (and usually paying for) the evaluation of its intervention.

- **Plan dissemination from the beginning** - the evaluation manager and commissioning body should ensure that a dissemination plan is in place and prepared by the evaluation team, and that the evaluation team will present the evaluation findings in an appropriate manner.
- **Plan for recommendations** - The evaluation manager should validate recommendations, and once they are accepted by the commissioning body; a comprehensive plan for reflection should be developed and shared with all stakeholders who were identified in the planning phase of the evaluation.
- **Follow-up for reflection** - once the plan for implementing recommendations is in place, approved by commissioning body of the evaluation, and shared with stakeholders, the evaluation manager should follow up with all relevant stakeholders to ensure recommendations are taken into account and are used. Reporting of the results of this reflection should be provided to all stakeholders by the evaluation manager.

4.5. Institutionalizing Evaluation in Government¹⁰

4.5.1. Evaluation Plan

As soon as this Policy on RBME is approved, annual national evaluation plans will be developed by the Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit, Administrative Office of the President (AOP). The plans will be concentrated on the evaluation of large, strategic and innovative policies and programs suggested by Ministries and Government Agencies. However, Ministries and Government Agencies should draw up similar evaluation plans of their own, especially for evaluations in the Provinces.

4.5.2. Roles and Responsibilities

Ministries and Government Agencies have the responsibility to incorporate evaluation into their management functions to continuously improve their performance and learning processes. They need to:

- Ensure that there is an evaluation budget in all programs and a plan ideally for 3 years or more, identifying which evaluations will be undertaken, and the forms of these evaluations;
- Ensure that there are specific designated individuals within the organization who are entrusted with the evaluation role and that they have the required skills, authorities and resources.
- Ensure that the results of evaluations are used to inform planning and budget decisions, as well as general decision-making processes. The results of evaluations must be discussed in management forums and used to guide decision-making.

The **Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit of AOP** is the custodian of the government-wide monitoring and evaluation function in Government, and needs to establish an Outcomes Evaluation and Research Unit to focus on evaluation. This role includes:

¹⁰ This chapter is adapted from Part C of the “National Evaluation Policy Framework”; Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Republic of South Africa, because of its high quality.

- Leadership and promotion of evaluation in government, including development of policy, vision and championing the discipline;
- Standard setting, with the development and publication of suitable standards and guidelines in collaboration with M&E Group and National Evaluation Societies;
- Pooling of knowledge emerging from evaluations and publishing evaluations;
- Quality assurance of evaluation processes and products;
- Co-funding some evaluations in the national evaluation plan;
- Capacity building and technical assistance, ensuring suitable courses are established and providing technical assistance to Ministries and Government Agencies;
- Monitoring of progress against the national evaluation plan;
- Evaluating the evaluation process itself to ensure it is adding value and that the benefits outweigh the costs;
- Reporting to Cabinet on progress with evaluations.

The Ministry of Finance must ensure value for money when it allocates budgets. To this end it needs to see that:

- Plans and budgets are informed by evidence, including from evaluations;
- Cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses are undertaken and that interventions are providing value for money.

Ministry of Economy has to see that the results of evaluations that raise questions around the performance or structure of the public service are addressed. The Ministry is also a source of expertise in helping to build the quality of evaluation and improving the performance of government.

The **Central Statistic Organization of Afghanistan (CSO)** provides the required data, based on the data collection efforts of the organization.

Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission is responsible for developing M&E capacity-building programs across government.

IDLG is responsible for the RBME System of the sub national governance network.

The **Parliament**, or interested members of the parliament, may support and/or monitor the process of the implementation of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework in order to utilize the information derived from the System for their decision making processes in future.

National Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group is an Inter-agency Working Group from existing experts and practitioners within the Government who support and coordinate Monitoring and Evaluation efforts and related functions across government ministries and entities. The Working Group has the responsibility to provide technical support and advocacy as well as networking and partnership.

In addition this group of experienced monitoring and evaluation professionals will meet on a regular basis to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this framework, and to discuss issues such as the national monitoring and evaluation plan, policy documents, technical guidelines and capacity building.

Universities are also an important factor in that they can provide the skills development to support this framework. This should not only be specialized M&E courses, but also courses in public administration, development studies etc. They and other research service

providers will also supply many of the evaluators, particularly where sophisticated research methodologies are needed, e.g. for impact evaluations, and undertake research which is closely allied to evaluation, and can help to inform research processes.

The Afghan Evaluation Society (**AfES**) is a national association of people and organizations involved in M&E. They (or similar organizations) need to support the development of systems and capacities, and are an important forum for learning and information sharing.

4.5.3. Planning and budgeting for evaluation

Evaluations will not be realized unless they are budgeted for. Evaluation costs are typically 1%-5% of an intervention's budget; depending on size (large programs need proportionally less). This needs to be factored into annual budgets of the Ministries and Government Agencies. This is particularly important where large budgets are needed, e.g. for impact evaluations.

The cost of an evaluation will depend on its complexity. Frequent small evaluations which provide feedback immediately into implementation may be more useful than large ones, particularly for complex interventions where the future is unclear.

4.5.4. Standardized systems for the evaluation process

One of the ways to ensure quality, particularly when there is limited capacity, is to avoid reinventing tools. The **Directorate General of Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit** will issue specific guidance notes and standard setting guidelines for evaluation to complement this Framework. These will include such elements as:

- Standardized terms of reference for different types of evaluation;
- Standard contract formats for evaluation by external service providers;
- Models for program design (logic models) which facilitate evaluation;
- Formats for program rules of operation to provide some standardization of how programs operate;
- Standardization of evaluation processes to improve quality, such as use of inception reports and evaluation report guidelines; including a sample table of contents.
- Guidelines for improvement plans;
- A national panel of evaluators, possibly with standardized fee rates;

4.5.5. Donor funded evaluations

Donors are funding many evaluations. While doing so they have supported Government efforts, however they have also created numerous parallel systems which put major strains on government capacity. Therefore, this Evaluation Framework should also be applied to donors in the future.

4.5.6. Implementation of the policy framework

This policy framework requires a major increase in the use and quality of monitoring and evaluation, which will have to be addressed in phases. The implementation timeframe will be developed in the course of the preparation of the results (impact) chain for this policy initiative. The results chain needs to be developed, together with the RBME System as soon as possible after this framework has been approved by the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and communicated to key stakeholders.

5. Next steps – Policy development and implementation sequence

5.1. Introduction

This section builds on the previous sections of this framework by summarizing the key steps in developing and implementing a policy in government. It is a check list for policy planners and others who support, approve, or may be impacted by a policy initiative. It begins with a definition of what a policy is and where it fits in the various parts of a country’s governance framework, and then continues to describe the main steps in designing and implementing a policy. It can be applied to the next steps in designing and implementing the RBME policy.

5.1.1. Definition of “Policy” and Where it Fits in Governance Documentation

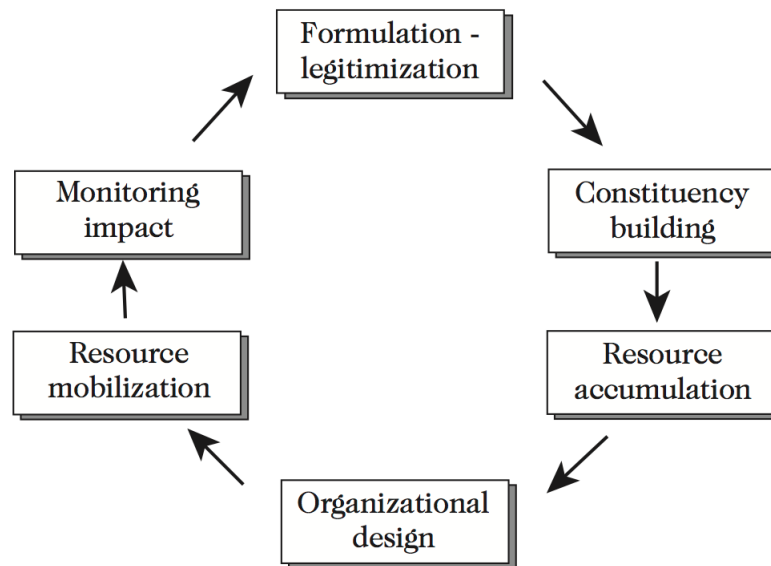
A policy is one of many components of a government’s multi-level administrative framework. In general, a country’s constitution, its national development strategy, and its laws are at the highest level, providing a context for policies addressing particular problems. In some circumstances where there is an absence of legislation, this order is reversed: an officially approved policy can provide a framework for drafting of laws. Regulations define how laws and policies are to be implemented, with strategies and procedures providing greater detail. Guidelines define even further levels of detail on actions required to carry out the intent of a policy, all of which should ultimately result in strategic plans, budgets, staffing charts, performance management procedures and, ideally, in monitoring and evaluation systems to feed performance data back to senior leadership so they can manage the organization appropriately.

5.1.2. Steps in Policy Design and Implementation Process

Once an issue has been identified by leaders as a problem that needs to be addressed, the rest of the policy development and implementation initiative is underway. This multi-stage process has been described by Brinkerhoff and Crosby¹¹ as a sequence or cycle, with major steps shown in the following figure. They stress that in reality the process is unpredictable and not as neat and tidy as it appears in the figure: it is rarely as linear and clearly defined, and there can be blockages or reversals and multiple iterations of the cycle as the policy initiative proceeds. Policy documents prepared at the beginning may undergo significant change as a result.

¹¹ Brinkerhoff, D., & Crosby, B. (2002). *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner - Kumarian Press. Pp. 32, 57-59.

Policy Implementation Sequencing and Tasks



The authors describe a participatory approach to defining these six steps of the policy implementation process:

- **Formulation – legitimization:** preliminary analytical or diagnostic work to lay out the rationale for the reform. This work is used by interest groups both inside and outside of government to legitimize the policy initiative.
- **Constituency building:** identifying and reaching out to stakeholders to bring them into the policy process.
- **Resource accumulation:** identifying and acquiring access to the resources required for the policy initiative.
- **Organizational design:** defining and putting in place new implementation arrangements and structures.
- **Resource mobilization:** providing resources to the implementation actors and ensuring the new processes run smoothly and effectively.
- **Monitoring impact:** generating and analyzing feedback to support adjustments, adapt to changing conditions and contribute to future policy initiatives.

Some major policy development and implementation projects can take a long time: they can extend over a decade or more during which there may be several changes in governments. Stakeholder engagement needs to be strong enough to withstand unanticipated changes in the political context as proposed policy changes move toward becoming embedded in government operations.

The next section describes the steps in a policy development and implementation process in greater detail.

5.2. Define the Problem to be Addressed

The first step in a policy development process is to describe the problem the policy is to address. The basic problem should be clearly summarized in one or two sentences.

Examples could be:

- The government can not reliably and systematically assess its own performance.
- Subnational governance is not properly organized.
- Women and minorities do not have equity of access to justice and to opportunities.

In complex situations where there are influential stakeholders who may need to be convinced, it might be necessary to prepare supplementary material describing the problem in some detail, and its significance in the operations of the state.

5.3. High-Level Agreement in Principle that the Problem Must be Addressed

The next step is to get confirmation from senior governing authorities that the problem is serious enough that it requires the government's attention, and to receive approval in principle to proceed with developing a policy to address the issue. Cabinet level endorsement should be obtained for policies that are likely to have broad impacts so there is a government-wide mandate to deal with the issue. This may need a concept paper for senior officials' review, adjustment (if required) and approval.

5.4. Identify Political Level Sponsor(s) and Technical Team

Identify appropriate political level sponsor(s) for guiding development of the policy, and form a technical team to work on the policy project. Define a project management structure and process, and ensure both groups have sufficient time and resources to work on the policy. The technical team should regularly inform political level sponsors of the progress of the policy development project so they can provide guidance and approve major steps as it proceeds.

5.5. Prepare Preliminary Project Workplan

Draft a preliminary step-by-step workplan for the next phase(s) of the policy development project. This workplan should include the following:

- Define the policy approval procedure – key actors and steps in the process.
- Define the regulatory context for the policy – list applicable laws, regulations and other formal and informal protocols related to the problem the policy is addressing.
- Analyze possible impacts (legal, financial, social, environmental, etc.).
- Identify major stakeholders – list agencies and groups that have an interest in the problem the policy is addressing, and who might be impacted by the policy.
- Define likely sources of support and opposition to the new policy.
- Plan stakeholder consultation process.
- Provide technical team with needed support – facilities, equipment, project management software, etc.

- Draft a preliminary project management workplan, get approval from key senior level sponsor(s).

5.6. Implement Project Workplan

Start work on the main steps described in the previous section:

- Analyze the regulatory context, define areas that may need to change, plan and implement regulatory changes.
- Analyze possible sources of support and opposition, plan and implement a strategy to increase support and reduce opposition.
- Carry out a stakeholder consultation process, focusing on defining the policy content and implementation process.
- Identify policy implementation resource requirements (personnel, organizational structure, budget, etc.).
- Monitor policy development project progress, revise or update the workplan as required.

5.7. Write Draft Policy and Revise as Required

Write a draft policy document based on findings from the workplan implementation process.

- A policy should be as concise and clear as possible, and usually has the following sections:
 - **Purpose Statement:** Why the policy exists
 - **Policy mandate or authority:** Legal foundation of the policy
 - **Context and Scope:** Where the policy fits and who it applies to
 - **Policy Statement:** Details of the actual policy
 - **Supporting Regulations:** List of issues to be dealt with in other more detailed supporting regulations and procedures
 - **Responsibility:** Who is responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy
 - **Definition of terms**
- Submit the policy draft(s) to senior officials and key stakeholders for consultation: review and revise as required.
- Repeat previous steps as often as required to obtain formal stakeholder and senior level approval of the policy.
- Obtain access to resources needed for policy implementation.

5.8. Implement and Monitor Approved Policy

Work with stakeholders to start policy implementation:

- Develop roll out strategy and deploy required resources.
- Make necessary organizational changes – structure, budget, personnel, operations, etc.

- In some cases it may later be recognized that new legislation is needed to address the problem, and senior institutions such as Parliament should be engaged in the assessment, approval and monitoring process.
- Monitor policy implementation process.
- Adjust policy as required – repeat steps above at regular intervals if needed.