

Monitoring & Evaluation Guidelines



United Nations World Food Programme
Office of Evaluation

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What is RBM Oriented M&E

Overview

Introduction. The purpose of the module is to describe key principles relating to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as set out in WFP policies and to demonstrate the linkages between operation design and M&E concepts and tools. Definitions and characteristics of common M&E related terms are provided.

Why is this Module important?

WFP's main policies vis-à-vis monitoring and evaluation, captured in this module, underpin a wide range of guidelines on planning and implementing M&E activities within operations. This module outlines guiding principles, clarifies responsibilities within WFP for evaluation, and recommends an approach for the preparation of an M&E strategy, which, together, could be considered as an appropriate starting point for most readers. To plan or implement an M&E strategy for an operation a good understanding of key concepts and terms is required. This module briefly introduces key concepts, such as Results Based Management (RBM) and the Logical Framework Approach, and shows how they are linked together. Standard definitions, used by WFP for M&E terms such as monitoring, evaluation, results, results chain, baseline study, etc., are given and their characteristics are described.

What does this Module aim to achieve?

This module has the following objectives:

- To define RBM and its application in WFP.
- To describe the 4 guiding principles for results-oriented M&E.
- To define monitoring and evaluation in relation to each other.
- To describe timing, type and roles of Country Offices, Regional Bureaux and Office of Evaluation (OEDE) for evaluation.
- To describe how RBM, operation design and M&E relate to the logical framework approach and to specify the main contents in a logical framework matrix.
- To describe the components of an M&E strategy.
- To illustrate how M&E is used throughout the lifespan of an operation and to define the M&E terms used.

What should be reviewed before starting?

- The Logical Framework Guidelines (on the PDM)

How does this module apply to designing or implementing an M&E strategy for an operation?

The module gives staff with responsibilities in a range of M&E related planning or implementing tasks a quick review of key policies, concepts and terms that they will require to put their specific set of responsibilities into an overall context.

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What is Results-Based Management in WFP

Introduction. This section explains the basic concepts of Results Based Management (RBM) in WFP.

What is Results Based Management (RBM) in WFP

RBM is a participatory and team-based management approach that seeks to:

- Focus an organisation's efforts and resources on expected results.
- Improve effectiveness and sustainability of operations.
- Improve accountability for resources used.

In WFP RBM represents a shift away from focussing on inputs and activities towards the measurement of results. In operations this means focussing on changes in the behaviour and livelihoods of beneficiaries.

WFP's RBM approach comprises the following elements:

- A results-oriented culture instilled in all staff.
- Clearly defined results planned for in WFP's a) Organisational strategy, b) Cost centre workplans and c) Programmes and projects (operations).
- Resource requirements linked to expected results through planned activities.
- Programme, project and cost centre results monitored.
- Results information used for: a) Management decision-making, b) Learning from experience and c) Accountability reporting.

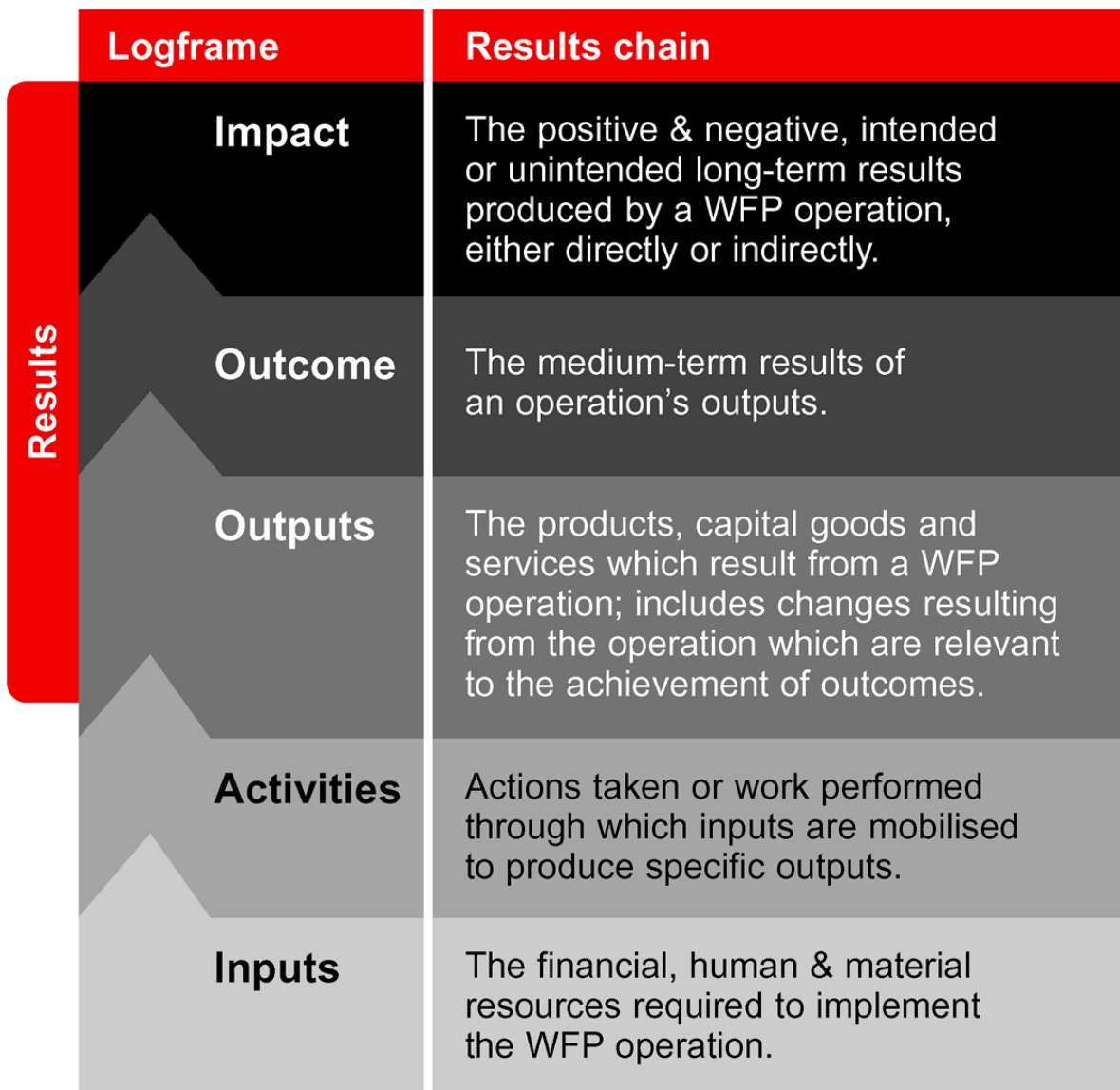
The Results Chain

What are Results?

A result is a describable or measurable change in state that is derived from a cause and effect relationship.

What is the Results-chain?

Central to RBM is the 'results chain' - the causal sequence for an operation that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives - beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes and impacts.



A Results Chain Example showing WFP's Results Chain for the Organisational Strategy

Within the specific context of WFP's overall organisational strategy, the results chain is interpreted within the following framework.

An Example of a Results Chain for a PRRO

The following is an example of a results chain based on a real WFP operation. The input column was not included by the originators so the chain remains incomplete. It does, however, demonstrate the results chain as it progresses from Activities through Impact.

Activities	Outputs (2002-2003)	Outcomes (by 2003)	Impact (by 2005)
1. Distribute relief food to institutions	1. Net food gap of 6,000 male and 8,000 female institutionalised orphans, disabled and elderly persons met	Maintain minimum acceptable nutritional standards of most vulnerable and unprotected groups with no other support system except the Government	Improved food security of the most vulnerable populations
2. Distribute relief food to refugees	2. Minimum kcal requirements of UNHCR-registered male (3,000) and female (4,000) refugees met		
3. Mobilise and sensitise community for FFW	3. Small-scale community initiated and designed projects approved for FFW support to 132,000 male and 232,000 female beneficiaries	New/rehabilitated productive assets and community infrastructure are being maintained to benefit vulnerable women and men	
4. Implement FFW micro-projects for productive assets	4. Rehabilitated productive assets for 50 communities		
5. Implement FFW micro-projects for community works	5. Community infrastructure improved through 30 completed micro-projects		
6. Implement FFT sessions	6. 900 male and 1300 female community members trained for new knowledge and skills in 5 regions of 3 districts		
7. Distribute food for recovery	7. Food received by 132,000 male and 232,000 female FFW participants and by 900 male and 1,300 female FFT participants		

WFP's Guiding Principles for Results-oriented M&E

Introduction. This section describes 4 guiding principles that direct M&E strategies in all WFP-assisted operations.

4 Guiding Principles for M&E strategies

Fitting into the overall conceptual framework of the UN system, WFP's policy on evaluation is guided by 4 general guiding principles:

- All WFP operations should be regularly and systematically monitored and evaluated, including processes, performance, intended and unintended consequences and context.
- M&E must be built into the design of every emergency operation (EMOP), protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO), development project and Country Programme.
- Both monitoring and evaluation need to be responsive and appropriate to the situation and the operation undertaken. M&E systems should be integrated with implementing partners' systems as far as possible.
- M&E strategies must reflect the information needs and approaches established by corporate policies such as WFP's Commitments to Women and the Enabling Development policy, strategies such as the Strategic Plan and Policy Framework and reports such as country office reports, annual performance reports and standard project reports. Such M&E strategies should provide data and results for local and corporate results oriented management information systems.

What is Monitoring and what is Evaluation and how are They linked

Introduction. This section defines the concepts and principle functions of monitoring and evaluation in comparison to one another and in relation to the logical framework.

What is Monitoring and what is Evaluation

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to inform management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing WFP operation of the extent of progress and achievement of results in the use of allocated funds and food aid.

(Glossary Definition)

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

(Glossary Definition)

How are Monitoring and Evaluation linked

The primary function of monitoring and evaluation is to test, empirically, whether or not the hypothesis articulated in the operation design (logical framework) holds true during the course of implementation and following completion of that operation. A good M&E strategy not only measures whether or not the hypothesis outlined in a logical framework held true, but uncovers why the hypothesis did not hold true allowing for adjustment and fine-tuning of the operation design.

Monitoring focuses more on the lower elements in a logical framework matrix and evaluation more on the longer term, upper elements. The 2 functions clearly overlap and complement one another. The difference between monitoring and evaluation lies in the perspective that each takes in assessing performance in relation to a logical framework for an operation, programme, or policy.

Monitoring is the day-to-day management task of collecting and reviewing information that reveals how an operation is proceeding and what aspects of it, if any, need adjustment. Results-oriented monitoring focuses on delivering outputs and tracks outcomes as far as possible – changes in beneficiary behaviour or status that emerge as a consequence of outputs.

Evaluation is characterised by events (e.g. surveys, studies, missions) rather than day-to-day data collection. Results-oriented evaluation focuses on outcomes and impacts and adds to and builds on monitoring information. It assesses overall performance, focusing on positive or negative changes in beneficiary behaviour or status occurring as a result of an operation. Evaluation provides information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons into management decision-making. A mid-term or final evaluation should be scheduled: a) to measure mid-course progress toward results achievement and to help guide planning for subsequent phases of an operations or b) to assess the operation's final impact and sustainability of results.

An Example of how Monitoring is linked to the Logical Framework

The following example shows how monitoring is linked to the logical framework by outlining a set of monitoring questions relevant to each level.

Logframe	Monitoring questions	
Impact	<i>Measuring changes at impact-level requires a longer time frame, and is therefore dealt with by evaluation and not monitoring</i>	
Outcome	Are the intended outcomes being achieved?	<p>What is causing delays or unexpected results? Is there anything happening that should lead management to modify the operation's implementation plan?</p>
Outputs	Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) indicators* Are outputs leading to achievement of the Outcome?	
	Are activities leading to the expected outputs?	
Activities	Are activities being implemented on schedule and within budget?	
	Are stocks of food & non-food items available on time & in the right quantities & quality?	
Inputs		

* BCM indicators measure changes in beneficiary behaviour resulting from delivery of the operation's outputs, and are an important means of tracking progress towards desired outcomes at the purpose level.

An Example of how Evaluation is linked to the Logical Framework

The following example shows how evaluation is linked to the logical framework by outlining a set of evaluation questions relevant to each level.

Logframe	Evaluation questions	
Impact	Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What changes did the operation bring about? ● Were there any unplanned or unintended changes? 	Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are the benefits likely to be maintained for an extended period after assistance ends?
Outcome	Effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were the operation's objectives achieved? ● Did the outputs lead to the intended outcomes? 	Relevance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were the operation's objectives consistent with beneficiaries' needs and with WFP & government's policies?
Outputs		
Activities	Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were stocks of food and non-food items available on time and in the right quantities and quality? ● Were activities implemented on schedule and within budget? 	
Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Were outputs delivered economically? 	

Timing, Type and Allocation of Responsibilities within WFP for Evaluation

Introduction. This section describes when and which type of evaluations are required and which office within WFP is responsible to undertake them.

Timing, Type and Allocation of Responsibilities within WFP for Evaluation

For evaluation, at least 1 of the following 3 exercises must be undertaken during or after the life-time of any operation lasting longer than 12 months.

1. **Country Office led self-evaluations** include all operations lasting longer than 12 months and take place prior to the planning of a new phase or at the operations' close.
2. **Country Office or the Regional Bureau led evaluations** include:
 - any operation at any time if a management need arises and if issues cannot be dealt with through self-evaluation; and
 - any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US\$50 million and if the last evaluation took place more than 3 years previously.
3. **OEDE managed evaluations** include:
 - all first-generation Country Programmes;
 - any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US\$50 million and if the previous evaluation took place more than 3 years previously (if such an evaluation is not undertaken by the Country Office or Regional Bureau);
 - any operation, thematic or policy evaluation requested by the Executive Board or by senior management.

How to link RBM, Operation Design and M&E using the Logical Framework Approach

Introduction. This section explains the relationship between operation design and monitoring and evaluation and illustrates it using the logical framework approach. It describes the main content in the logical framework matrix distinguishing between operation design and monitoring and evaluation. It describes how the content in the RBM results chain is identical to the first column of the logical framework matrix. Hypothetical examples of logical framework matrices are included.

The Standard Logical Framework Matrix including Description of Content

In the standard logical framework matrix, the objectives hierarchy (column 1) and the assumptions and risks (column 4) articulate the operation's design. The performance indicators (column 2) and means of verification (column 3) describe M&E functions that serve to test whether or not the hypothesis articulated in the operation design holds true.

What the operation will do; what it seeks to achieve	How performance will be measured		Factors outside management control that may affect project performance
Logframe hierarchy	Performance indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions and risks
Impact	(Impact)		
Higher objective to which this operation, along with others, is intended to contribute	Indicators (increasingly standardised) to measure programme performance	The programme evaluation system	Risks regarding strategic impact
Outcome	(Outcomes)		
The outcome of an operation. The change in beneficiary behaviour, systems or institutional performance because of the combined output strategy and key assumptions	Measures that describe the accomplishment of the Outcome. The value, benefit and return on the investment	People, events, processes, sources of data for organising the operation's evaluation system	Risk regarding programme level impact
Outputs			
The actual deliverables. What the operation can be held accountable for producing	Output indicators that measure the goods & services finally delivered by the operation	People, events, processes, sources of data – supervision & monitoring system for validating the operation's design	Risks regarding design effectiveness
Activities	Inputs/Resources		
The main activity clusters that must be undertaken in order to accomplish the Outputs	Budget by activity. Monetary, physical & human resources required to produce the outputs	People, events, processes, sources of data – monitoring system for validating implementation progress	Risks regarding implementation & efficiency

The First Column of the Logical Framework is identical to the RBM Results-chain

The logical framework approach employs a causal sequence for an operation, described in the first column that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve the desired objectives. This causal sequence is identical to the RBM results chain.

	Logframe	Results chain
Results	Impact	The highest level to which a WFP operation is intended to contribute.
	Outcome	The improved situation that a WFP operation is expected to contribute significantly to if completed successfully and on time.
	Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a WFP operation; includes changes resulting from the operation which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
	Activities	Actions taken or work performed through which inputs are mobilised to produce specific outputs.
	Inputs	The financial, human & material resources required to implement the WFP operation.

Description of the Main Content in each Column of the Logical Framework Matrix

Each of the 4 columns in the Logical Framework is described below. The first and fourth columns articulate operations design and assumptions, while the second and third columns outline the M&E performance measurement indicators and means, to test whether or not the hypothesis articulated in the operation design holds true.

Column 1: This column encapsulates the design or internal logic of the operation. It incorporates a hierarchy of what the operation will do (inputs, activities, and outputs) and seeks to achieve (outcome and impact).

Column 2: This column sets out how the design will be monitored and evaluated by providing indicators used to measure whether or not various elements of the design have occurred as planned.

Column 3: This column specifies the source of information or means of verification for answering the indicators.

Column 4: This column outlines the external assumptions and risks related to each level of the internal design logic that are necessary for the next higher level of the internal logic to occur.

A Logical Framework Example for an EMOP or PRRO

A hypothetical example logical framework for an EMOP or PRRO is shown in the matrix below.

Logframe Hierarchy	Performance Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
Impact	(Impact)		
Increased consumption, especially among women, children and other vulnerable individuals	Average number of meals consumed per day (recall over X month period following distribution) by gender and age	Household interviews - random sample of 10% of target households	
Outcome	(Outcomes)		
Increased Household Food Supply (quantity and quality/diversity) and intra-household food distribution is favorable to children and women	% of target household with adequate food supply for the remainder of the month, measured 3 weeks after WFP distribution	Household interviews - random sample of 10% of target households	Food commodities are acceptable to household members
Outputs			
Targeted women receive full family ration	# of family ration recipients - disaggregated by gender	WFP food distribution reports	Distribution to women results in female control of relief food resources. Relief food is brought home, rather than sold
Activity	Inputs		
Distribution of family ration to women through 'sit-on-bag' distribution	X kg maize, X kg oil, X kg pulses	WFP food distribution reports, WFP food stock reports	Food pipeline provides resources in a timely manner allowing for planned distribution dates, commodities and quantities

A Modified Version of the Logical Framework Matrix for a PRRO

A modified version of the logical framework matrix can be used to link a number of individual sub-project logical frameworks to a combined, overarching logical framework. What were impacts for the individual sub-project logical frameworks become the outcomes in the overarching logical framework. These outcomes then combine with external logic (risks and assumption at the purpose level) to achieve the highest level of the overarching logical framework, the operation impact. A hypothetical logical framework reflecting the combined higher result of multiple sub-projects for a PRRO is shown below. Note that individual logical frameworks would also exist for each separate sub-project and feed into this overarching framework.

Logframe Hierarchy	Performance Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
PRRO Impact	(Impact)		
Increased Food security among vulnerable households	A. % of food access (a % of requirement) from baseline among 'poor' and 'very poor' households B. Change in food sources (% change in food from relief) among 'poor' and 'very poor' households	FSAU baseline and subsequent Food Economies data among targeted groups	
PRRO Outcomes	(Outcome)		
Increased consumption, especially among women, children and other vulnerable individuals	A. Average number of meals consumed per day by people in 'poor' and 'very poor' households during the last 3 months by age group, gender (% by <2, 2, 3+) B. Dietary diversity (by age group and gender) for 'poor' and 'very poor' households (number of days/times per day, cereals, tubers, vegetables/fruits, meat, milk, fat, breastmilk for U6 months and U2s consumed) based on 7 day dietary recall (compared to baseline by season)	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with women/mothers in each targeted group	A. Other causes of food insecurity are addressed (nutrition/health, income, production and resources) B. Security and drought conditions remain stable such that recovery and rehabilitation activities can take place
Improved health and nutritional status, especially among women, children and other vulnerable individuals	A. % of children under 5 years (disaggregated by gender) 'wasted' and 'severely wasted' (% < -2sd and -3 sd weight-for-height respectively)** B. Perceived change (by women/mothers) in nutritional and health status of children and women	UNICEF/MCH sentinel site data, UNICEF/NGO nutritional survey data, FGDs with women/mothers in each targeted group	A. Other causes of food insecurity are addressed (consumption, income, production and resources) B. Security and drought conditions remain stable such that recovery and rehabilitation activities can take place

Logframe Hierarchy	Performance Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
	<p>A. Mean % increase in production (by unit of livestock, crops, fish and other) disaggregated by 'gender'</p>	<p>FGDs with women and men in each targeted livelihood group</p>	<p>A. Other causes of food insecurity are addressed (consumption, malnutrition/health) B. Security and drought conditions remain stable such that recovery and rehabilitation activities can take place</p>

What is an M&E Strategy

Introduction. This section explains the major components and functions of an M&E strategy, simply a detailed description of the measurements, analysis, and reporting needed to monitor and evaluate an operation's implementation and achievement of results described in the logical framework.

What are the Main Components of an M&E Strategy

The main Components of an M&E Strategy are:

- A logical framework.
- An M&E plan for data collection and analysis, covering baseline, ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
- Reporting flows and formats.
- A feedback and review plan.
- A capacity building design.
- An implementation schedule.
- A budget.

The logical framework matrix is the foundation document for both operation design and M&E. Additional elements of the M&E strategy are extensions of the logical framework that describe how indicators will be used in practice to measure implementation performance and results achievement.

The Logical Framework outlines:

- Clearly defined and realistic objectives, assumptions and risks that describe how the operation is designed to work.
- A minimum set of results indicators for each objective and assumption that are feasible to collect and analyse. Indicators measure performance on implementation and achievement of results. The means of verification provided in the logical framework for each indicator outlines the source of data needed to answer each indicator.

An M&E Plan for Data Collection and Analysis, covering Baseline, and ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Sets out arrangements for routine collection of monitoring data, based on indicators identified in the logical framework including how, when, and by whom data will be collected, analysed and reported. This includes descriptions of Beneficiary Contact Monitoring to gauge progress toward achieving results and monitoring achievement of output targets, milestones to measure completion of activities and compliance with contract agreements, resource expenditures versus budget, and risks and assumptions. This also includes arrangements for verifying the quality and accuracy of M&E data and analysis.
- Describes the use of baseline and subsequent evaluation events to gauge change over time in indicators identified in the logical framework. Usually WFP operations employ a simple before and after operation evaluation design. While a baseline and final evaluation are recommended, a mid-term evaluation is also employed to measure mid-course progress toward results achievement and to help guide planning for subsequent phases of an operation.
- Sets out arrangements for collection of periodic evaluation data, based on indicators identified in the logical framework and including how, when, and by whom data will be collected,

analysed and reported.

Reporting Flows and Formats:

- The reporting flow and formats for both monitoring and evaluation are linked to each level of management, as well as to the agreed system for feedback and management review.

A Feedback and Review Plan:

- Sets out the measures to be taken to ensure timely decision-making by management and other stakeholders based on monitoring and evaluation findings. In WFP usually an annual review meeting attended by key stakeholders is held to allow for a participatory annual assessment of performance and results obtained to-date as well as for planning the following year's M&E activities.

A Capacity Building Design:

- Sets out capacity building needed for WFP and implementing partners including specification of training if required.

An Annual Implementation Plan and a Budget:

- Links planned M&E activities to an implementation schedule and budget.

Examples of the Types of M&E Strategy Documents

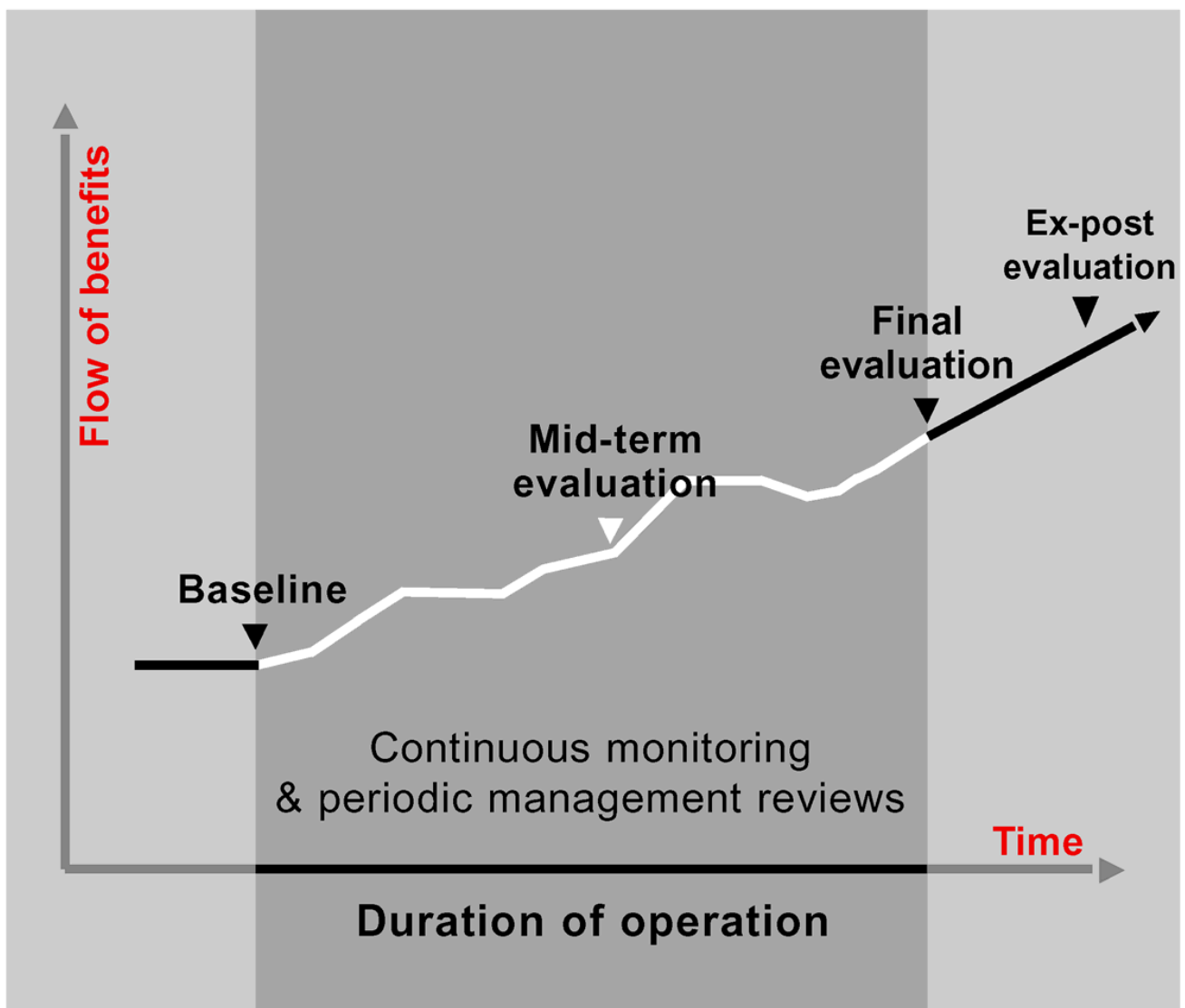
- Logical Framework Matrix - specifying the operations internal design logic (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact), indicators at each level, the means of verification for each indicator, and the risks and assumptions (external design logic) associated with each level of the internal design logic.
- M&E Plan Matrix - specifying the indicators for each logical framework design element, the data source or means of verification for each indicator, the frequency and cost of data collection for each indicator, the responsibility for data collection, the method to be used in data collection (if collecting primary data), and in which reports and how the information will be used. The same information is also to be specified for the most critical assumptions.
- Evaluation Plan - identifying the before-and-after comparison of baseline, mid-term, and final evaluation results.
- Annual M&E Implementation Plan and Budget – detailed calendar of M&E activities and associated costs.
- If required, a M&E Capacity Building Plan describing equipment, training and other requirements needed for WFP and implementing partners to undertake the plans outlined above.

How M&E is used through the Lifespan of an Operation

Introduction. This section explains how monitoring and evaluation are used throughout the lifetime of the operation to assess implementation, gauge progress toward and achievement of results, and measure change over time from pre-operation conditions to post-operation conditions for key outcome and impact indicators. Key terms are defined.

Sequencing of M&E Events over Time

The following graphic shows when the key M&E events occur in the life of an operation and which are ongoing simultaneously.



Sequencing

Monitoring:

Monitoring of implementation and progress toward results achievement is conducted throughout the lifetime of the project, between and during evaluation events.

Evaluation:

Evaluation events for any WFP operation include baseline, mid-term evaluation, and final evaluation. For some operations an ex-post evaluation may be added to assess the lasting or sustained benefits of the operation beyond the operation's lifetime.

Definitions and Explanations of Terms

Definitions and explanations of the new terms are as follows:

Monitoring:

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to inform management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing WFP operation of the extent of progress and achievement of results in the use of allocated funds and food aid.

Evaluation:

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Baseline study:

The analysis and description of the situation prior to the start of a WFP operation, against which change can be assessed or comparisons made.

Mid-term Evaluation:

An evaluation performed towards the middle of the period of implementation of a WFP operation. This is often done just prior to planning activities related to the next phase of an operation or when an Emergency Operation is being converted to a PRRO.

Ex-post Evaluation:

The evaluation of an operation after it has been completed. It may be undertaken directly after or long after completion. The intention is to understand the factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform other WFP operations.

Review:

An assessment of the performance of an operation, periodically or on an ad hoc basis. In WFP, a review is initiated and managed by the Operations Department. A review is more extensive than monitoring, but less than evaluation. An evaluation is more comprehensive, and places greater emphasis on results, relevance and sustainability.

Module Summary

What has been covered in this module?

Key principles relating to M&E as set out in WFP policies and the linkages between operation design, and M&E concepts and tools were outlined in this module. The module provided clarification of responsibilities within WFP for evaluation, and an approach for the preparation of an M&E strategy. The module briefly introduced key concepts, such as Results Based Management (RBM) and the Logical Framework Approach, and demonstrated how they are linked together. Standard definitions of M&E terms were given and their characteristics described.

What additional resources are available?

For further information the following modules and resources might be useful:

- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for EMOPs and PRROs
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for Development Programmes
- How to plan a Baseline Study
- How to Plan an Evaluation
- How to plan and undertake a Self-evaluation
- Choosing Methods and Tools for Data Collection
- What is Beneficiary Contact Monitoring and how is It conducted
- Identifying M&E Indicators
- Going to the Field to collect Monitoring and Evaluation Data
- How to consolidate, process and analyse Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for EMOPs and PRROs
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for Development Programmes
- How to manage an Evaluation and disseminate its Results

What is RBM Oriented M&E



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