Roadmap for monitoring and evaluation

## INTRODUCTION

This roadmap will provide you with brief guidance on how to go through the monitoring and evaluation module. Monitoring and evaluation actually start at the set-up phase, with the development of the logical framework with response-specific indicators.

Monitoring involves collecting and analyzing programme information on a routine basis in order to track progress against plans and check compliance with established standards. It helps identify trends and patterns, adapt strategies and inform decisions on project management. Monitoring is done through the use of indicators, which measure the extent to which an objective has been accomplished.

Programme evaluation involves assessing, in a systematic and objective manner, an ongoing or completed intervention, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors[[1]](#footnote-1).

For the purposes of the CiE Toolkit, the monitoring and evaluation process has been divided into steps and sub-steps. Each sub-step has been associated with tools selected for their potential to be adapted and used in different programmatic contexts, by different organizations. When adapting tools to your context and needs, you can get detailed guidance on monitoring and evaluation from the reference documents suggested both at module and step levels.

Steps and sub-steps are indicative and not necessarily sequential. M&E should be adapted to the size and the scale of the program. Sometimes, you may need to skip some of the steps or sub-steps proposed, due to time and resource constraints that are common in emergency contexts. In any case, you should at least comply with the minimum standards set for the monitoring and evaluation module. For each step, you will also find minimum standards that may help you decide what to focus on.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS

* Planning for monitoring and evaluation must start at the setup phase.
* Monitoring and evaluation must be based on the indicators established in the logical framework.
* Indicators should be limited in number and look at processes, outputs, outcomes and markets.
* In the case of multipurpose cash grants (MPG), indicators should be broad enough to allow for capturing secondary impacts.
* Make sure that the monitoring team is trained and tools are tested.
* Gather baseline data before or at least at the time of the first round of encashment.
* Ensure some level of direct monitoring by RCRC Movement team, even when encashment is done through a third party.
* Combine both quantitative and qualitative data from different sources, so as to allow for triangulation.
* Market monitoring must be conducted for all types of relief interventions, whether in-kind, cash or vouchers
* Monitor prices, involving Finance and Logistics, throughout the programme cycle.
* Make sure contingency plans are in place, so the programme can be adjusted in case prices reach cut-off levels, beyond which entitlements are jeopardized.
* Make sure the programme includes an evaluation component.
* Engage communities and local government in the CFW supervision and monitoring.

## STEPS AND SUB-STEPS

The CiE Toolkit suggests four steps for monitoring and evaluating a programme. The CiE Toolkit makes available resources that can help you:

**Plan for monitoring and evaluating the programme.** This process involves developing a comprehensive M&E strategy (including a detailed activity work plan and an M&E matrix with indicators and means of verification) and building the capacity of volunteers and staff. A sound monitoring system should include a limited number of indicators and look at processes, outputs (if and how cash was distributed/encashed), outcomes (if and how beneficiaries have been affected by an increased purchasing power) and markets.

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| In the case of multipurpose cash grants (MPG), which increase flexibility on the use of cash by beneficiaries, it is important to set a broad monitoring system that can also capture secondary impacts (e.g. changes in access to education, health, etc.). |

**Monitor the programme.** This process starts with the collection of baseline data, which should be consistent with the indicators set in the logical framework and M&E matrix. Baseline data can be collected right before or at the time of the first round of distributions (cash, voucher or in-kind). Encashment or distribution monitoring informs how the process has been conducted and whether or not beneficiaries have timely received the correct amount of cash/vouchers, or the right quantity and quality of commodities. One of the main purposes of post-distribution monitoring (PDM) is to check whether and how beneficiaries have used their entitlements. Therefore, it should be schedule so as to allow beneficiaries enough time to spend the cash or used the supplies received. PDM may also help detect early signals of negative programme impacts, and address arising complaints.

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| Programme monitoring can be instrumental in detecting protection and security risks to beneficiaries as a result from the participation in the programme. |

**Monitor the market.** Market monitoring must be conducted for all types of relief interventions. It is important to monitor if the purchasing power has changed and if the market is able to provide the relief items the beneficiaries need. It is also important to foresee changes in market behavior, so as to adapt the programme accordingly before the beneficiary population is affected.

In the case of cash transfer programming, market monitoring, particularly price and traders monitoring, should happen more regularly, because cash transfers can affect and be affected by markets, or have multiplier effects on the local economy. Monitoring prices can help understand whether the project is reaching the expected objectives without causing harm. Monitoring traders can help detect supply-side problems, as well as potential effects of the programme on the market. When entitlements are impacted by price changes, a decision must be taken on whether and how to respond. The capacity of the organization to respond to price changes will depend on the existence of contingency plans and budget.

**Evaluate the programme.** Evaluation can take place at different stages of the programme, and can help understand whether the expected outputs, outcomes and objectives have been reached, so as to capitalize on learning. The evaluation process starts with setting criteria and questions that help develop a manageable evaluation framework. The evaluation of cash transfer programmes may also include the analysis of multiplier effects on the local economy. Ideally, evaluations will be conducted by independent parties, therefore ToR should clearly define the purpose and scope of the evaluation, provide detailed guidance on how it should be conducted, explain which results are expected from it and to whom the findings are addressed. Evaluation reports are the instruments to communicate findings and capitalise on learning.

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| REFERENCE DOCUMENT  Monitoring and Evaluation. Series on learning from cash responses to the tsunami. Issue paper 6. HPG, ODI  <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/4893.pdf>  UNHCR (2015) *Operational Guidance and Toolkit for Multipurpose Cash Grants*. <http://www.cashlearning.org/mpg-toolkit/>  ECHO (2015) *Common Principles for Multi-Purpose Cash-Based Assistance*.  <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/concept_paper_common_top_line_principles_en.pdf>  ICRC (2016) *ECOSEC Executive Brief on Multi-Purpose Cash Grants*.  IFRC (2011) Project/programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) guide. |

1. IFRC (2011) Project/programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) guide [↑](#footnote-ref-1)