



Monitoring and Evaluation Module

Introduction

This monitoring and evaluation module is designed to be used by an individual or a group to help them assess, improve and report on their work. This module will explain the basic tools and systems needed to undertake these tasks effectively, even with limited staff resources. Templates are included with this module, which can be used for organizational use, planning or training purposes. These templates are designed to give the opportunity for both organizational and personal development. They are suggestions only, and should be adapted and modified to be as useful as possible to the needs and capacity of the organization. If you are working alone on this module, you may find it helpful to talk over some of the points with someone else.

What is monitoring and evaluation?

- Monitoring and evaluation — or M&E as it is commonly referred to — is a dual-purpose framework that covers both tracking (monitoring) and assessing (evaluating) what your group is doing, measured against what you planned to do.
- M&E is a program management tool that allows you to learn from your past work to plan and/or improve future work.
- M&E is an information management tool that allows you to gather and maintain both quantitative and qualitative data, which can be used in proposal and report writing, for a formal evaluation, for strategic planning, and for education, outreach, communications and advocacy materials.
- M&E is an organizational management system that can provide anything from a quick snapshot to a more in-depth analysis of the financial and organizational health of a group.

YOUR TURN

- *Have you ever been involved in an M&E exercise – either in a formal or informal way?
- *What was your role?
- *What did you learn?
- *How did you use what you learned?

Why is M&E needed and useful?

The information helps you . . .

- record the history of the organization, campaign and/or movement
- analyze trends

- identify emerging issues and problems
- learn from current and past activities
- prepare funding proposals
- report in a consistent way to funders
- prepare for strategic planning exercises/discussions or organizational reviews of any type
- prepare for more formal evaluation processes, either internal or those involving external evaluators

The exercise provides . . .

- a way of critically assessing work in a constructive way
- an opportunity to think about your role and responsibilities in the organization
- an opportunity to think organizationally rather than just individually
- a forum for trying out new ideas or different ways of working
- a reality check on the organization's capacity to undertake specific activities and programs
- team-building potential
- professional development opportunities

The tools you will need for M&E

Tool #1: A Work Plan

Why?

This is the basic document(s) against which you measure how much you have done and explain what adjustments were made to your planned activities and why. It can be an organization-wide work plan and/or an individual work plan.

Components

Goal:	The 'big picture' statement or strategy of what you are aiming to accomplish for the organization
Objective:	The specific purpose behind the work proposed
Activities:	Proposed activities that will support the realization of your objective
Outputs:	Direct products or services arising from the activities
Outcomes:	Change(s) that can be attributed to the outputs — the effect achieved
Indicators:	Quantitative and qualitative measurement tools to support or denote progress and change
Person(s):	Person(s) responsible (position and/or name) by activity
Timeline:	By activity — it can be ongoing or event specific, like a workshop
Variance:	Changes between what was planned, what happened and why

NOTE:

1. 'Outputs' and 'Outcomes' are in common usage, since many funders now require presenting results (what has been achieved) in these terms. You may come across a funder who uses more generic terms like 'results' or 'impact'. Whatever the term used, it generally means something beyond just implementing activities. Regardless, these are useful measurements to include in your work plan.

2. An organization's strategic plan can also be used to measure plans against accomplishments. However, these plans are generally less specific in terms of activities. Most groups use their strategic plan as the basis for developing work plans.

Sample Work Plan Template:

Goal: A mine-free world!						
Objective: To influence governments' policies and practices...						
Outcome	Output	Activity	Timeline	Person	Indicators	Variance
Advocating effectively with those States Parties that have missed or will miss a treaty deadline	Movement by non-complaint states to meet deadline	Meetings with those countries that have missed stockpile destruction deadline	2011		Statements at Interessionals & MSP on progress	<i>To be filled in as needed</i>
	<i>[Next output for the activity]</i>	<i>[Next activity for this objective]</i>				
Objective:						
<i>etc.</i>						

YOUR TURN

- *Map out an organizational work plan, either as a team or individually.
- *Using this plan, prepare your individual work plan.
- *Seek feedback from your colleagues. Adjust as necessary.

Tool #2: A Reporting and Monitoring System

Why?

M&E requires fact-based data to be valid and useful. Information should be collected in a standardized way to build and record a clear picture of what the organization has been doing in a given period. Using such a system is particularly challenging in campaigning and advocacy organizations since they often rely heavily on volunteers, who can change frequently.

Basic principles

- Keep the recording system(s) as simple and easy to complete as possible
- Only collect information that is useful for and needed by the organization
- Make sure everyone who will be responsible for collecting data understands and is briefed on using the system (including why it is important)
- Supplement this training/briefing with a summary reference sheet that can be posted online and in the organization's office
- Set a reasonable timeline for people to prepare and submit their reports on activities (e.g., one week after completion of a trip or event; the first day of each month)
- Assign one person in the organization to ensure the data is submitted and stored in a known and accessible place (likely a mix of paper files and information entered in computer)

- Maintain more than one copy of this information

Collection methods

- Questionnaires
- Participant feedback forms
- Minutes/reports of meetings
- Workshop reports
- Trip reports
- Document review
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Focus groups

Your starting point is recording the activities your organization is doing. You build your reports and analysis from this information.

Sample Recording Templates: Activities

Sample 1:

Activity Record

Name: _____

Position: _____

Type/ Location/Date	# of participants	Nature of participants	Collection Method	Note any changes
MRE workshop, Siam Reap, 20 May 11	35	15 secondary school students, 4 CSO volunteers, 3 staff, etc.	Registration information	Originally planned for 2 days for 25 people; reworking the agenda to one day reduced costs and allowed us to include more participants for the same amount of money

Sample 2:

Activity Record

Type of activity (plus where & when)	# of participants	Nature of participants	Collection method/ Collected by	Funding source	Supports which objective/ output/outcome	Note any changes
MRE workshop, Siam Reap, 20 May 11	35	15 secondary school students, 4 CSO volunteers, 3 staff, etc.	Registration information/SK	Part of our capacity-building program funded by Government of Norway	Org work plan, Obj.3, Output 3.2, Outcome 3.1	Originally planned for 2 days for 25 people; reworking the agenda to one day reduced costs and

						allowed us to include more participants for the same amount of money
Meeting with Minister of Defence	etc					

NOTE:

1. The columns in blue are optional, but would be useful for larger organizations that are receiving funding from multiple sources with fairly formal reporting requirements.
2. Take note of the text in green. This explanation provides potentially useful background information for when the financial reports are prepared.

YOUR TURN

- * Using past activities, recreate an activity record.
- * Identify what information is missing or difficult to find. Discussion solutions.
- * Discuss the most useful way to record and store this information.
- * Seek feedback from your colleagues. Adjust as necessary.

The next step looks at how you are doing in terms of meeting your planned results (outputs and outcomes). This involves analyzing and consolidating activity information collected. Remember to refer back to your work plan.

Sample Monitoring Template: By Outcomes and/or Outputs

Results Record

Outcome	Output	Qualitative Indicators	Quantitative Indicators	Action needed / things to note
3. Advocating effectively with those States Parties that have missed or will miss a treaty deadline	3.1 Contractor to undertake stockpile destruction in Belarus chosen 3.2 Clearance extension request approvals took into account detailed ICBL critiques and intervention ...	ICBL critiques and interventions regarding clearance challenges, expediting clearance and revised timelines included in extension request approvals	-3 interventions made at Intersessional meetings in June on stockpile destruction in country x,y,z -2 interventions made on clearance deadlines at MSP in November on x,y,z -20 meetings with officials from x,y,z organized during 2011	

NOTE:

The action needed column is where you would note, for example, the suggestion that the program plan required an adjustment of some sort.

YOUR TURN

- * Using your sample activity record, create a results record.
- * Be creative in the absence of a program framed around outputs and outcome. Use what you know about the mine-ban movement and the work of the ICBL-CMC.
- * Seek feedback from your colleagues. Adjust as necessary.

A few words about formal evaluation

Structurally there are two basic types of evaluation exercises — internal and external:

- Internal evaluations can be informal or formal processes. They are learning exercises, sometimes undertaken to address a specific problem in an organization or to re-imagine what an organization can be doing in a new political or economic context. They are generally participatory (i.e., involving staff, board members, volunteers and other stakeholders). They require a facilitator to make the most effective use of people's time and to direct the discussion in an efficient and useful way. The facilitator can come from within the organization or be an external resource person.
- External evaluations are generally undertaken to comply with the requirements of a donor. They can be general organizational evaluations, financial or management evaluations, or project-specific evaluations. The organization usually has input into the evaluator or evaluation firm selected. Staff, etc., of the organization are sources of information for the evaluators, but they are not 'participatory' in the sense of working to a common goal. An organization in the end may disagree with some of the findings of an external evaluation.

Resources

- * CIVICUS (World Alliance for Citizen Participation), *Monitoring and Evaluation* by Janet Shapiro.
- * International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions
- * International Freedom of Expression Exchange