

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR'S RESPONSE TO AIDS

A TRAINING MANUAL FOR AGRICULTURE SECTOR WORKERS

11

MODULE

Programme Monitoring and Evaluation



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AIMS

The aims of this module are the following:

1. To introduce the role of monitoring and evaluation in the agriculture sector's response to AIDS.
2. To analyse UNAIDS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework and explore how it can be adapted to the agriculture sector.
3. To stimulate thinking and ideas on how to improve the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and impacts of agriculture sector AIDS programmes.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the module the learner should:

1. Have a basic understanding of the main purposes of monitoring and evaluation in the agriculture sector's response to AIDS.
2. Have knowledge on various types of monitoring and evaluation and be familiar with different tools and techniques to carry out monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes.
3. Have a general understanding of the UNAIDS M&E framework and how it can be adapted to the agriculture sector.
4. Be familiar with different vulnerability models used in the United Nations system, which could be useful to monitor and evaluate agriculture sector AIDS programmes.

QUESTIONS for REFLECTION

1. What is the main goal of M&E?
2. Why is it important to monitor and evaluate agriculture sector AIDS programmes?
3. How can M&E contribute to advocacy efforts with the health and other sectors for the role of agriculture in the AIDS response?
4. What indicators could be used for M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes?
5. What challenges might the agriculture sector face in engaging in M&E activities?
6. What can be done to improve M&E of outcomes and impacts of agriculture sector AIDS programmes? How can outcomes and impacts be assessed?

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are interconnected and complementary techniques. Their main purpose is to enhance accountability, strengthen programmes and improve advocacy. While monitoring is done routinely, evaluation involves periodically stepping back and gathering information. Evaluation involves reflecting on and analysing data and information in order to gain a broader perspective on the effect and potential impact of programmes.

Within the agriculture and other sectors, decision makers require evidence of the efficient and effective use of resources. Meanwhile, those working in the agriculture sector and on programmes need to provide evidence of the optimal use of resources – the sector needs to

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build its evidence base and document its successes and failures in responding to the AIDS epidemic. Monitoring and evaluation is an invaluable tool in this regard. It allows the sector to address challenges and shortcomings and to improve activities and programmes. M&E can also inform and provide direction for future work and the scaling up of activities. The information obtained from M&E activities is crucial for national decision makers in the agriculture sector, as well as for donors at national and international levels.

Continued advocacy in the agriculture and other sectors is important to ensure support for the sector's role in responding to AIDS. Positive outcomes from M&E can support such advocacy efforts. In this regard, it is also important to ensure that M&E activities used by the agriculture sector are in line with the national AIDS M&E system.

In this module the learner is presented with an overview of programme monitoring and evaluation for agriculture sector AIDS programmes. The first part of the module looks at the role and importance of monitoring and evaluation when developing programmes. It then goes on to describe what monitoring and evaluation is and looks at various M&E tools and techniques. The module then looks at existing M&E frameworks, which can be useful for the agriculture sector in developing M&E activities for its AIDS programmes.

READINGS: AN OVERVIEW OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR AGRICULTURE SECTOR AIDS PROGRAMMES

1. Monitoring and evaluation in programme planning

1.1. *Importance of M&E in programme planning*

Effective planning is important in order to ensure optimal use of programme and project resources and to reduce the chance of problems during implementation. Monitoring and evaluation should be part of the planning process from the very beginning as it is difficult to go back and set up an M&E system once the programme is already being implemented. Information relating to performance and targets should be gathered from the start of the programme planning process, typically when the needs assessment is carried out. This provides the information against which achievements and programmed results will likely be assessed over time.

Monitoring and evaluation help determine if a programme or project is working and when circumstances have changed. Carrying out M&E provides the necessary information to make decisions about programmes and about changes that need to be made. Programmes should be regularly monitored and adjusted before being evaluated and re-planned.

While there is not a single standard method for planning for monitoring and evaluation, the use of a logical framework¹ can be useful.

1.2. *Logical framework*

In the programme planning process, creating a log frame is a useful and important step as it provides a picture of how the programme will work to achieve its goal(s). It addresses the relationship between inputs and results in a focused and practical manner. Annual work plans are derived from the logical framework. A log frame is a useful tool during the programme planning stage as it helps those developing the programme to think about how activities create outputs, which meet objectives and ultimately the programme goals(s). It is important that it is developed at the inception of a programme for easier reporting on progress, for funding, and for adapting and adjusting the programme. A log frame is important for the planning, implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of a programme.

A log frame is a matrix (see table 1 for an example of a log frame template) in which information is completed row by row, in descending order from top to bottom. The logic is then verified row by row from bottom to top. Objectively verifiable indicators should be included for all rows. They provide a simple yet reliable means to measure achievements and results and they also reflect processes and changes in the context.

Table 1. Log frame matrix

Hierarchy of objectives	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal/Impact: What the programme intends to contribute in the long term	Measure impacts: Assesses actual change in conditions of the basic	Typically measured through baseline and end line (evaluation) surveys.	Acknowledgement of other things that might happen (beyond direct

¹ Also referred to as Log Frame.

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as a result of achieving intermediate objective.	problem; shows changes that are fundamental and sustainable without continuing programme support.		control) that help achieve desired impact.
Objectives/Outcomes: What response the programme intends to achieve among the target population group.	Measure effects: Describe target population responses to programme outputs (e.g. systemic changes in institutions).	Also measured by the difference between baseline and end line measurements	Other conditions that might be brought out by other actors.
Outputs: What the programme intends to achieve in the short term as a result of programme activities.	Describe programme products: Describe the direct results of programme activities for which the programme is responsible.	Should be recorded in programme monitoring reports.	
Activities: What the programme implementers will do. Lists activities or interventions undertaken by the programme in order to produce the desired outputs. For each output there may be more than one activity.	Measure completion: Whether or not activities were completed and in comparison to any targets.	Monitoring and annual reports.	
Inputs: What resources are necessary to implement project activities.	Financial, human, logistic resources: Resource needed to carry out activities.		

(Source: FAO, 2010)

1.3. Indicators

Indicators are measurable or tangible signs that something has been done or that something has been achieved. They are an essential part of a monitoring and evaluation system because they are essentially what are measured and monitored. Using indicators, one can answer the following questions: Who? How many? How often? How much?

It is however important to decide early what indicators will be used so that information and data can be collected immediately. Two of the types of indicators that can be used for measuring the impact of AIDS programmes in the agriculture sector include impact indicators and effect indicators. Impact indicators measure lasting changes in the condition or aspects of the quality of life of a population. Effect indicators measure changes in the behaviour and practices of individuals and households, as well as changes in the coverage and quality of services of public and private institutions and other systemic changes.

The characteristics of good indicators are:

- SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound; and
- SPICED: subjective, participatory, interpreted, cross-checked, empowering and diverse.

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One challenge with measuring indicators is that other variables or factors may have an impact on them. Within a project or programme, however, it is possible to identify such variables and to take them into account.

Key steps to developing indicators:

- 1) Identify the problem/situation being addressed (e.g. social situation – health, education, etc.).
- 2) Develop a vision for how the problem areas will be – this will help determine impact indicators. Some questions to ask include:
 - What indicates that the vision has been achieved?
 - What indicators are available that can be measured to indicate that the vision has been achieved?
- 3) Develop a vision for how things should be achieved – this will help determine process indicators.
- 4) Develop indicators for effectiveness.
- 5) Develop indicators for efficiency targets (e.g. timeframes, costs, time allocations, etc.).

Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative indicators provide information on “how much” or “how many” (e.g. how much a workshop cost, how many people attended it, etc.). Qualitative indicators provide information on how people feel about a situation, how things are done, how people behave, etc. Monitoring and evaluation should include both quantitative and qualitative information in order to be comprehensive.

2. Monitoring

2.1. *Role of monitoring*

Monitoring essentially means keeping track of programme activities and outputs on a regular basis throughout implementation. Collecting data on a programme's process is essential in order to ensure that a programme is on track and consistent with established plans. Monitoring is most useful when undertaken within the context of an overall monitoring and evaluation plan and in line with the overall goals of the programme. When done properly, monitoring is an important tool for effective programme management and provides a good base for evaluation. It allows those involved in programmes to determine whether the resources available are sufficient and being used well, whether capacity is sufficient and appropriate, and whether the programme is achieving its desired outcomes.

Monitoring involves the following aspects:

- establishing indicators of efficiency, effectiveness and impact;
- setting up systems to collect information related to these indicators;
- collecting and recording this information;
- using the information to inform day-to-day management of the programme.

Two key types of monitoring include:

- 1) Results monitoring: the effects of a programme are monitored by assessing perceptions and responses of the target population against programme outputs. This helps those

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implementing programmes to understand the level of acceptance of programme outputs or interventions.

- 2) Objective monitoring: this involves checking whether programme objectives are being achieved or are likely to be achieved within the timeframe of the programme.

2.2. Monitoring methods and tools

Methods to collect information for monitoring and evaluation should be build into programme plans. They should facilitate a steady flow of meaningful and useful information, which should be stored in such a way that it is easily accessible. Some sources of information that can be used for M&E purposes include reports, financial statements, meeting minutes, etc. Other more specific tools that can be used to supplement information include: case studies, recorded observations, diaries, structured questionnaires, interview, focus groups, sample surveys, review of statistics, etc.

Table 2 looks at some of the various methods that can be used to collect information for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The appropriate method(s) need to be selected that fit the needs and resources of the programme.

Table 2. Information collection methods

Method	Description	Usefulness	Disadvantages
Interview	Can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Involve asking specific questions aimed at getting information that will enable indicators to be measured. Questions can be open-ended or closed (yes/no answers). Can provide qualitative and quantitative information.	Can be used with almost anyone who has some involvement with the programme/project. Can be done in person or on the telephone or even by e-mail. Very flexible.	Requires some skill on the part of the interviewer.
Key informant interview	Interviews that are carried out with specialists on a topic or with someone who may be knowledgeable on a particular issue.	As key informants often have little to do with the programme or project, they can be quite objective and offer useful insights. They can provide information on the "big picture", where people more involved may focus on more specific details.	Needs a skilled interviewer with a good understanding of the topic. Be careful not to take information as the absolute truth just because a key informant has said it.
Questionnaire	Written questions that are used to get written responses. When analyzed, information can enable indicators to be measured.	Can save a lot of time if it is self-completed. Allows for many respondents. Gives people a feeling of anonymity and therefore they may say things they would not say to an interview.	With people who do not read and write, someone has to go through the questionnaire with them. This can take time and the number of respondents will be reduced. It is not possible to explore what people are saying any further. Questionnaires tend to be over-used and people get

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			tired of completing them. Questionnaires must be piloted to ensure that questions can be understood. For complex questionnaires requiring computerised analysis, and expert may be needed.
Focus group	A group of about 6 to 12 people are interviewed together by a skilled interviewer/facilitator, with a carefully structured interview schedule. Questions are usually focused around a specific topic or issue.	Can be a useful way of getting opinions from a rather large sample of people.	Difficult to do random sampling for focus groups, meaning findings may not be able to be generalized. People may influence one another either to say or keep quiet about something. If possible, focus groups interviews should be recorded and then transcribed. This requires special equipment and can be time consuming.
Community meeting	Involves a gathering of a fairly large group of beneficiaries to whom questions, problems, situations are presented for input to help in measuring indicators.	Useful for getting a broad response from many people on specific issues. A way of involving beneficiaries directly in an evaluation process, giving them a sense of ownership of the process. Useful to have at critical points in community projects.	Difficult to facilitate – requires a very experienced facilitator. May require breaking into small groups followed by plenary sessions when everyone comes together again.
Fieldworker reports	Structured report forms ensure that indicator-related questions are asked and answers and observations recorded on every visit.	Flexible. An extension of normal work, so cheap and not time-consuming.	Relies on field workers being disciplined and insightful.
Ranking	Involves getting people to say what they think is most useful, most important, least useful, etc.	Can be used with individuals and groups, as part of an interview schedule or questionnaire, or as a separate session. Where people cannot read and write, pictures can be used.	Quite a difficult concept to get across and requires very careful explanation and testing to ensure that people understand what you are asking. If they misunderstand, data can be distorted.
Visual/audio stimuli	Include pictures, movies, tapes, stories, role plays, and photographs. Used to illustrate problems or issues, past events or future events.	Useful to use together with other tools, particularly with people who cannot read or write.	Necessary to have appropriate stimuli and the facilitator needs to be skilled in using such stimuli.
Rating scales	This technique makes use of a continuum, along which people are expected to place their own feelings, observations etc. People are usually asked to say whether they agree strongly, agree, don't know, disagree, and disagree strongly with a	It is useful to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions.	You need to test the statements very carefully to make sure that there is no possibility of misunderstanding. A common problem is when two concepts are included in the statement and you cannot be sure whether an

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	statement. You can use pictures and symbols in this technique if people cannot read and write.		opinion is being given on one or the other or both.
Critical event/incident analysis	Way of focusing interviews with individuals or groups on particular events or incidents. Aims at getting a full picture of what actually happened.	Useful when something problematic has occurred and people feel strongly about it. If all involved are included, it should help the evaluation team to get a picture that is reasonably close to what actually happened and to be able to diagnose what went wrong.	Evaluation team can end up submerged in a vast amount of contradictory detail and lots of "he said/she said". Can be difficult to remain objective.
Participant observation	Involves direct observation of events, processes, relationships and behaviours. Observer gets involved in activities rather than maintaining a distance.	Useful way of confirming (or otherwise) information provided in other ways.	Difficult to observe and participate. Process is time-consuming.
Self-drawings	Involves getting participants to draw pictures, usually of how they feel or think about something.	Can be useful, particularly with younger children.	Can be difficult to explain and interpret.

(Source: FAO, 2010)

2.3. Monitoring techniques

Some possible monitoring techniques include:

- Physical inspection: Gathering evidence by, for example, reviewing new equipment bought and observing inventory, invoices, or other supporting documents.
- Confirmation: Confirming whether target individuals or households have received goods for services from a project or programme. This can be done by asking beneficiaries directly
- Inquiry: Asking communities questions about the operations of a programme. This is used to get a better understanding of the programmes successes and failures in service delivery.
- Observation: Witnessing physical activities, such as the setting up of activities or programmes.
- Participatory programme reviews: Involving stakeholders in programme reviews in order to establish a shared vision and consensus on challenges in implementation and how to address them to achieve common programmed outcomes.
- Supervisory visits: Regular visits to observe the programme implementation process.

2.4. Documenting monitoring activities

In order to ensure effective monitoring, it is important to document monitoring activities. The following techniques can be used for this purpose:

- **Monitoring plan:** The monitoring plan should serve as the basis for all monitoring activities.
- **Monitoring tools/instruments:** These are various forms that are used to organize the review of activities (separate forms can be used for each activity). They can be designed and used for both desk reviews and on-site monitoring.
- **Working papers:** These are written records developed during monitoring to document all steps of the review process. They serve as a written record of the review from its onset, until the report is written. They include the monitoring instruments and detailed information collected during the review.
- **Summaries:** They provide an objective overview of the review and put findings into perspective.
- **Monitoring report:** This is a clear and accurate report on the results of the monitoring review. This is a formal report that is presented to the programme coordinator or other authorities.
- **Corrective action plan:** This plan outlines the steps taken to address gaps and challenges faced in implementing the programme.

3. Evaluation

3.1. What is evaluation?

The evaluation of a programme looks at its actual impacts against defined strategic plans. It essentially compares what the programme intended to do with what was accomplished and how it was accomplished. The evaluation can take place during programme implementation (called 'formative' evaluation), with the aim of improving the strategy and functioning of the programme. Alternatively, the evaluation can take place after the programme has concluded (called 'summative' evaluation), which aims to draw lessons from a completed programme. It seeks to determine the relevance of the programme and how well it reached objectives and development efficiency (if the input to the work was appropriate in terms of the output) and effectiveness (the extent to which it achieved specific objectives).

Evaluation involves:

- Looking at what the programme intended to achieve – What difference did it want to make? What impact did it want to have?
- Assessing programme progress towards what it wanted to achieve and its impact targets.
- Looking at the strategy of the programme to see if the programme followed the strategy, if it worked or not and why, etc.

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- Looking at how the programme worked – Was there an efficient use of resources? What was the opportunity cost of the way it worked? How sustainable is the way in which the programme works? What are the implications for the various stakeholders?

Different ways of doing an evaluation:

- Self evaluation: Involves a programme holding up a mirror to itself and assessing how it is doing in order to learn and improve.
- Participatory evaluation: A form of internal evaluation, involving as many people with a direct stake in the programme as possible. The involvement of an outsider would be in the role of a facilitator, not as an evaluator.
- Rapid participatory appraisal: A qualitative way of doing evaluations and is carried out by an interdisciplinary team over a short period. It helps to understand the local situation and is quick, inexpensive, useful, flexible and interactive. It involves the use of secondary data review, direct observation, semi-structured interviews, key informants, group interviews, games, diagrams, maps and calendars.
- External evaluation: Carried out by a carefully chosen outsider.
- Interactive evaluation: Involves active interaction between an outside evaluator and the programme being evaluated. An insider may be included in the evaluation team.

3.2. Undertaking an evaluation

An evaluation should be based on a good understanding of why the evaluation is being commissioned, how the findings will be shared and used and the political context within which it will be conducted. Defining the scope of a programme is important in this regard as it helps to focus the evaluation.

A number of key questions should be asked when conducting an evaluation. An evaluation team would examine and assess a range of programme elements and aspects in order to be able to answer these questions.

- Who is currently benefiting from the programme and in what ways?
- Do programme inputs justify the outputs? What is the basis of the justification?
- What would improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the programme?
- What lessons can be learned from this programme, in terms of it being replicated?
- How can a project of this kind respond to the identified problem?

There are a range of approaches that can be used when conducting an evaluation and a good evaluation will often use a combination of approaches. Particular emphasis may be placed on one approach, however, findings from using other approaches should always be considered. Table 3 details some of the different approaches to evaluation.

Table 3. Approaches to evaluation

Approach	Major purpose	Typical focus questions	Likely methodology
Goal-based	Assessing achievement of	Were the goals achieved?	Comparing baseline and

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	goals and objectives.	Was it done efficiently? Were they the right goals?	progress data. Finding ways to measure indicators.
Decision-making	Providing information.	Is the project effective? Should it continue? How might it be modified?	Assessing range of options related to the project context, inputs, process and product. Establishing some kind of decision-making consensus.
Goal-free	Assessing the full range of project effects (intended and unintended).	What are all the outcomes? What value do they have?	Independent determination of needs and standards to judge project worth. Qualitative and quantitative techniques to uncover any possible results.
Expert judgement	Use of expertise.	How does an outside professional rate this project?	Critical review based on experience. Informal surveying and subjective insights.

(Source: FAO, 2010)

3.3. Next steps in the evaluation process

Once an evaluation has been conducted, subsequent steps in the process include analyzing the information collected, taking action on the results and reporting findings.

The evaluation team that conducted the evaluation should analyze the information collected. Those working on the programme may also carry out further analysis. Analysis essentially entails converting detailed information into a clearer understanding of patterns, trends, and interpretations. Once data has been collected, a structure for the analysis should be developed based on themes and concerns that emerge from the information. Data is then organized under the themes and patterns, trends and possible interpretations are identified. After evaluation data has been analyzed, the findings need to be reported to various programme stakeholders. Reporting can take on a variety of forms, including written form, verbal communication, or PowerPoint presentations, slides and videos.

It is important that programmes respond to the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation, based on information that emerges from the analysis of data. Programmes should learn from the findings, conclusions and recommendation of the monitoring and evaluation process. Subsequently, decisions need to be made about how to move forward with the programme and about what changes need to be made to the programme. This step may also involve dealing with possible resistance to changes within the programme, as well as among stakeholders.

4. Learning from existing M&E frameworks

Many organizations, such as UNAIDS and UNDP, have invested resources and effort, and have made considerable progress in developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This section seeks to learn from work that has been done in this area, which can help to guide the M&E activities in the agriculture sector.

This section is divided into two parts. Section 4.1 adapts the UNAIDS M&E framework to the agriculture sector by highlighting key points relevant to monitoring and evaluation of

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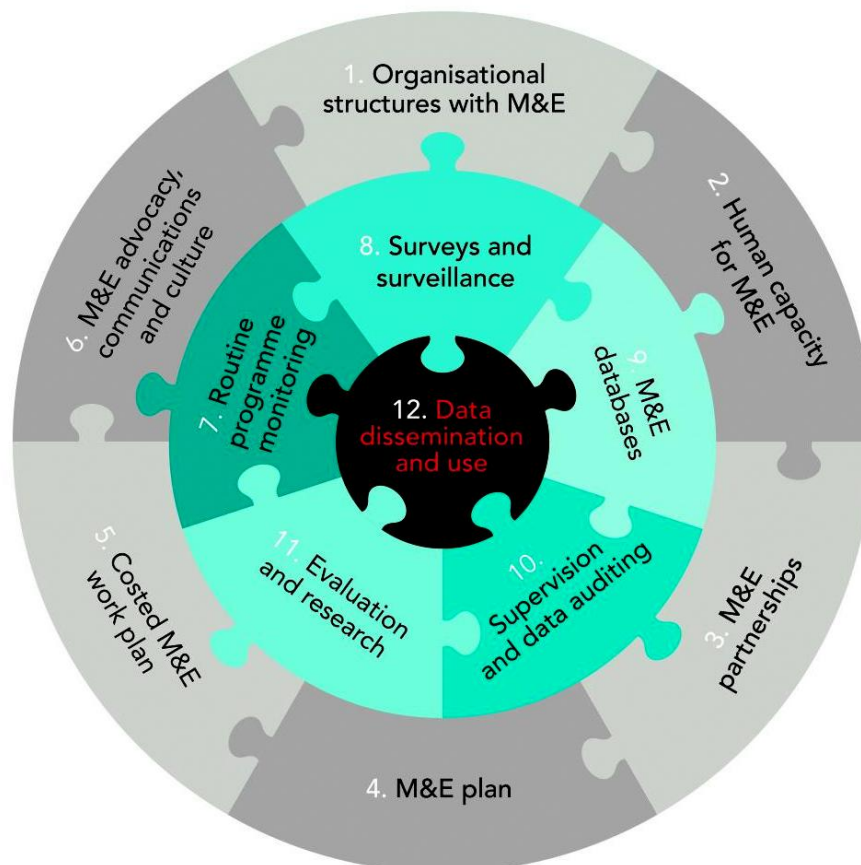
agriculture sector AIDS responses. The complete UNAIDS framework² should be used as a reference to supplement this section, as it covers the elements of the framework in greater detail. By describing the framework's components from an agriculture perspective, it can better help agriculture sector workers tailor M&E to meet the specific needs of the sector.

Section 4.2 looks at UNDP's M&E framework for adaptation to climate change. While this framework does not look specifically at AIDS M&E, it can be useful to the agriculture sector in developing M&E tools, in particular to address outcomes and impacts of responses.

4.1. Adapting the UNAIDS M&E Framework to the agriculture sector

UNAIDS has identified 12 components for an M&E system (see figure 1). Not all of the components are highly relevant for monitoring and evaluation of agriculture sector AIDS programmes, but they are briefly presented because they should be included as part of a checklist. Each component should be considered and prioritized based on the degree of importance for the national situation. Although numbered, the components are not sequential.

Figure 1. Organizing framework for a national AIDS M&E system



(Source: UNAIDS, 2008)

The figure should be read as interconnected components of building blocks. As for the three concentric circles, the outer circle represents the human resources, partnerships and planning

² See: UNAIDS. 2008. Organizing framework for a functional national HIV monitoring and evaluation system. Geneva.

(http://data.unaids.org/pub/BaseDocument/2008/20090305_organizingframeworkforhivmesystem_en.pdf)

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to support data collection and use. The middle circle focuses on the mechanisms through which data are collected, verified and transformed into useful information – this is where indicators are relevant. The central piece represents the main purpose of the M&E system – using data for decision-making. The following section looks at the 12 components of the UNAIDS M&E system, while highlighting how they relate to M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes.

1) Organizational structures with AIDS M&E functions

Since Ministries of Agriculture (MoA) already have their own M&E units, the issue is to integrate M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes into the existing unit. Doing so requires discussions with the M&E unit and relevant decision-makers. In addition to internal discussions within the Ministry of Agriculture, it would be useful at an early stage for a focal point of the MoA's M&E unit to engage in discussions with the M&E unit of the National AIDS Authority or Ministry of Health. Resource requirements for M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes also need to be evaluated and secured.

2) Human capacity

Staff in the Ministry of Agriculture's M&E unit already have expertise in monitoring and evaluation. However, they would need, along with the Ministry's focal point on AIDS, training in the specific aspects of M&E of AIDS programmes. Staff should become familiar with the system established (or being developed) in the country for AIDS M&E and should be able to develop relevant indicators on AIDS for the agriculture sector.

This is important because M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes should be developed to serve the needs of decision-making in both agriculture and AIDS. Therefore, compatibility and coherence is crucial right from the beginning.

3) Partnerships to plan, coordinate and manage the M&E system

Without impinging on the M&E unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, other partnerships should be identified within the Ministry, the agriculture sector at large, national AIDS authorities and donors, and other interested stakeholders who can assist with the development of M&E for agriculture sector AIDS programmes in the sector. A working group or a task force could be set up to assist in this process.

4) National M&E plan for the agriculture sector's AIDS response

This plan should be of a strategic nature, including identifying data needs, indicators, data collection and assigning roles within the M&E unit, as well as with AIDS focal points and the Ministry of Agriculture. The plan should cover a 4 to 5 year period and should be regularly revised as developments take place. The plan can cover the national, as well as sub-national levels if necessary. This plan, along with the annual work plan (component 5), needs to conform to the format and standards used by the M&E unit of the Ministry of Agriculture.

5) Annual costed national AIDS M&E work plan

The annual work plan is the operationalization of the national plan. The annual work plan needs to assign priorities and to cost the activities to be carried out under it.

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6) Advocacy, communication and culture for M&E for agriculture sector AIDS programmes

M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes needs the support of decision-makers within the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as within the agriculture sector itself. Stakeholders and staff working in agriculture outside of the AIDS field might be resistant or skeptical about the value of agriculture sector AIDS responses. There is a need for further dialogue in this regard in order to show transparency and accountability so as to change attitudes.

Advocacy and communication are also necessary outside of the agriculture sector and particularly towards the health sector, national AIDS authorities, as well as donors. They need to understand and recognize the importance of M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes and to be informed of developments and activities of the Ministry of Agriculture and the results of activities in this field.

7) Routine AIDS programme monitoring

This component is closely linked to components 4 and 5, with priority generally given to monitoring routine programme performance. Decision-makers need frequent and standardized data. Routine data monitoring corresponds to inputs (e.g. staff, funds, materials), activities (e.g., training of staff, preparation of communication materials) and outputs that focus on immediate results (e.g. the number of home gardens established or orphans trained).

Information can also be incorporated from other available sources – for example, from national AIDS programmes on coverage of rural populations by services or access to ARTs. In a similar manner, existing data and indicators on the agriculture sector can also be brought to the attention of decision-makers in the context of agriculture and AIDS, such as data on food security or vulnerabilities of farming systems, which can serve as early warning signals for HIV or trends in population mobility.

8) Surveys and surveillance

This component refers to high quality studies on various aspects of the epidemic, which can strengthen the agriculture sector in responding to AIDS. From a practical point of view, it would be better to piggyback on, or collaborate with, other relevant surveys that are carried out. This means keeping abreast of plans to conduct surveys by other organizations – such as Demographic and Health Surveys and the AIDS Indicator Survey – and intervening at the early stages in order to have a possible influence. Adding key questions of relevance to the agriculture sector and especially discussing data analysis plans (e.g. levels of disaggregation by geographic area, types of rural population – farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk) can greatly enhance the value of the data for the Ministry of Agriculture's M&E unit.

9) National and sub-national databases

Under this component one has to ensure that information relevant to agriculture and AIDS is integrated into the national database of the Agriculture sector. This ensures its legitimacy in the sector and in the eyes of decision-makers, while also enhancing the potential of its usefulness to various users.

Depending on available resources, sub-national databases should be considered in order to monitor rural areas that play an important role in the epidemic, such as near market or border

towns and among specific high-risk rural populations such as fisherfolk. Such databases can assist in tailoring agriculture sector AIDS programmes to meet the needs of these populations, as well as play an important role for advocacy.

National AIDS programmes develop databases for what they consider most at risk groups (MARGs), such as sex workers or injecting drug users. Such efforts, however, generally do not include important MARGs, such as fisherfolk or commercial farm workers. By addressing these important groups, the agriculture sector would be making an important contribution to the overall response to the epidemic.

10) Supportive supervision and data auditing

It is often stressed that quality data is in part a question of time and patience, associated with continuing efforts. A well designed indicator based on poor data can be misleading and negatively affect the credibility of not just the M&E system, but also the issue of agriculture and AIDS. Quality data is difficult to obtain and is often the result of continuing improvements. This should be recognized and it highlights the importance of auditing data quality. It is possible that the M&E unit of the Ministry of Agriculture already has an auditing system in place. In such a case it can be extended to the agriculture sector response to AIDS.

Auditing is also important at the field level because this is where issues with data often start. This, however, requires the provision of support and training in order to improve performance. Collection procedures may also need to be improved and this can be discovered and addressed following an audit.

11) HIV evaluation and research

The M&E findings must aim to answer the needs of the agriculture sector as well as respond to those of AIDS programmes since the agriculture sector's response to AIDS is at the intersection of the two. In view of the fact that M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes is still in its infancy, research is needed to improve the system. Since complexity increases with the evaluation of outcomes and especially impacts, research would be particularly useful in these two areas. Moreover, once an indicator is adopted, research is necessary to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses – e.g. Does it really reflect the situation? What are its limitations? How can it assist in decision-making?

12) Data dissemination and use

This component is at the heart of the M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes as it represents the ultimate goal of the efforts invested in the previous components. Preparing a dissemination plan for M&E results is an excellent tool for supporting advocacy efforts. However, the understanding and use of results needs to be adapted for different types of stakeholders through appropriate presentations. All identified stakeholders need to receive and have access to results in order to promote their use in agriculture as well as health and AIDS programmes. Such an approach can greatly promote interest in, understanding of and support for agriculture sector AIDS programmes.

4.2. UNDP's M&E framework for adaptation to climate change³

UNDP has developed an M&E framework for adaptation to climate change. While this framework was developed to look at adaptation to climate change, it uses several well-accepted indicators, which could be applicable for conducting monitoring and evaluation of agriculture sector AIDS programmes. The framework focuses on four key types of indicators:

- 1) Coverage (quantitative)
- 2) Impact (quantitative, qualitative, survey-based, narrative)
- 3) Sustainability (quantitative, qualitative, survey-based, narrative)
- 4) Replicability (quantitative)

The following section looks at these indicators in greater detail, while adapting them to the agriculture sector's AIDS response. Table 4 provides an example of this framework as it is applied to an agriculture and food security project.

1) Coverage

- Number of policies, plans or programmes introduced or adjusted to incorporate HIV vulnerabilities and impacts.
- Number of stakeholders (e.g. households, communities, organizations, decision-makers) engaged in capacity development activities for vulnerability reduction or impact mitigation.
- Number of stakeholders served by new or expanded AIDS-related services or programmes (e.g. HIV prevention, testing or treatment; nutrition programmes, etc.)
- Number of investment or funding decisions revised or made to incorporate the AIDS epidemic.
- Number of vulnerability or impact-reducing practices/measures implemented to support adaptation of livelihoods and/or resource management.

2) Impact

- Percent change in stakeholders' behaviours as a result of programme interventions.
- Percent change in stakeholders' capacities to manage AIDS-related impacts.
- Percent change in use of HIV-related services and programmes, for example, testing, treatment, training, etc.
- Percent change in stakeholder perceptions of vulnerability to (or capacity to adapt to) HIV and related impacts.
- Improvement in the relevant quantitative development outcome (food security, nutrition status, health outcomes, etc.) in relation to past data.

3) Sustainability

- Number of project beneficiaries involved in capacity development for implementation of specific adaptation or mitigation measures.
- Availability of skills and resources necessary to continue adaptation and mitigation after conclusion of project/programme (at relevant scale).
- Stakeholder perceptions of sustainability.

³ This section is adapted from: UNDP. 2007. Monitoring and evaluation framework for climate change adaptation (draft). (http://www.undp.org/climatechange/adapt/downloads/Adaptation_ME_DRAFT_July.pdf)

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4) Replicability

- Number of 'lessons learned' documented.
- Number of relevant networks or communities with which lessons learned are disseminated.

Table 4. Application of UNDP's M&E framework for adaptation to climate change

TA 1. Agriculture/Food Security		
Project Objective: Vulnerability of farmers and pastoralists to increased drought and rainfall variability reduced.		
Outcomes	Indicators	Indicator Type
1. Rainfall capture and storage systems introduced or improved where rainfall is declining or becoming more variable.	1.1 Number of farms and pastoralist households participating in rainfall capture and storage schemes.	Coverage
	1.2 Water used for food production collected using capture and storage systems among farmers/pastoralists, measured as % change from baseline and % of total annual water requirements.	Impact
	1.3 Perceived impact of project-driven use of rainfall capture and storage on food security (QBS of affected stakeholders)	Impact

(Source: UNDP, 2007)

LEARNING REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Selection of indicators for M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes

1. Based on your experience and on what you learned in the module, make a list of key indicators that you would use for M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes in the country where you work.
2. In pairs or small groups compare your lists and explain your choices to your partner(s). Discuss the following:
 - a) How did you go about selecting the indicators?
 - b) To what extent are these indicators country-specific?
 - c) In your opinion, could the indicators selected by your partner(s) be useful for M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes in your country? Why or why not?

Activity 2: Developing a log frame

Working in small groups, think about a proposal for a possible project that you would like to implement. Using the following format, develop a log frame that can be used in the project proposal.

Hierarchy of objectives	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
<u>Goal/Impact:</u> What the programme intends to contribute in the long term as a result of achieving intermediate objective.	Measure impacts: Assesses actual change in conditions of the basic problem; shows changes that are fundamental and sustainable without continuing programme support.	Typically measured through baseline and end line (evaluation) surveys.	Acknowledgement of other things that might happen (beyond direct control) that help achieve desired impact.
<u>Objectives/Outcomes:</u> What response the programme intends to achieve among the target population group.	Measure effects: Describe target population responses to programme outputs (e.g. systemic changes in institutions).	Also measured by the difference between baseline and end line measurements	Other conditions that might be brought out by other actors.
<u>Outputs:</u> What the programme intends to achieve in the short term as a result of programme activities.	Describe programme products: Describe the direct results of programme activities for which the programme is responsible.	Should be recorded in programme monitoring reports.	
<u>Activities:</u> What the programme implementers will do. Lists activities or interventions undertaken by the programme in order to produce the desired outputs. For each output there may be more than	Measure completion: Whether or not activities were completed and in comparison to any targets.	Monitoring and annual reports.	

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one activity.			
Inputs: What resources are necessary to implement project activities.	Financial, human, logistic resources: Resource needed to carry out activities.		

SUMMARY REMARKS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a complex yet essential part of programming, serving three key purposes: accountability, strengthening of a programme and advocacy. It is thus important for the agriculture sector to develop and carry out M&E activities for its AIDS programmes. Existing M&E systems also need to take into account specificities of the agriculture sector's response to AIDS. This entails, for example, taking into account specific indicators on the vulnerability of farming systems or households, rural-urban migration, etc.

There are many available tools and techniques that can be used for monitoring and evaluation activities. M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes can also benefit from the expertise and experience gained from M&E of AIDS programmes. The UNAIDS framework presented in the module is a flexible system that allows for considerable adaptation and thus can be utilized for the needs of the agriculture sector.

M&E of agriculture sector AIDS programmes is not just a technical question of constructing indicators; it involves making policy and programme decisions that influence the selection and use of indicators. Moreover, as the ultimate goal of M&E is to demonstrate impact of programmes, the impact component of the evaluation of agriculture sector AIDS programmes requires particular attention. The evaluation of outcomes and impacts can be complex but it is important due to its potential to strengthen the agriculture sector's AIDS response and its credibility among other sectors.

Lessons learned

1. Monitoring and evaluation should be taken into consideration from the onset of the programming planning process, as information gathered at the beginning of programme planning will help provide the basis upon which outputs and impacts can be measured and assessed.
2. Indicators are a necessary component of M&E as they serve as the measure of programme performance and help to answer key questions regarding the performance of programmes.
3. Monitoring is a routine practice to assess a programme's progress. This is an integral component of evaluation, which is a more comprehensive exercise of analysing data and information and assessing programme impacts.
4. An evaluation exercise should be based on a clear understanding of its purpose and how findings will be utilized and disseminated. Programmes should learn from and be adapted and shaped based on outcomes of M&E.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
CBA	Community based adaptation (UNDP)
CRIS	Country response information system
GEF	Global environment facility
GRD	Global response database
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
KRA	Key result area
MARGs	Most at risk groups
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
PLHIV	People living with HIV
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound
SPICED	Subjective, participatory, interpreted, cross-checked, empowering and diverse
TA	Thematic area
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session (on HIV/AIDS)
VRA	Vulnerability reduction assessment (UNDP)

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Annex 1 – M&E implementation plan for HIV and AIDS in the Ministry of Agriculture of Zimbabwe, 2006-2010⁴

Main Programme Objectives	Key Indicators	Frequency of Reporting
1. Demonstrated leadership & commitment in the fight against HIV & AIDS	1. No. of managers & supervisors with HIV/AIDS programme in their key result areas (KRAs) 2. One clear annual plan & budget for HIV/AIDS	1. Quarterly
2. Effective coordination of HIV & AIDS programmes in the Agricultural sector	1. No. of HIV/AIDS coordinating focal persons at headquarters & departments 2. No. of staff supported by programme funds 3. An agricultural sector HIV/AIDS website set-up.	1. Monthly 2. Quarterly 3. Not stated
3. Senior managers, focal persons, frontline staff & community-based institutions are capacitated to mainstream HIV & AIDS into agricultural programmes & projects	1. No. of senior managers, focal persons, frontline staff & community-based institutions personnel trained in HIV/AIDS programming 2. No. trainings done per year 3. No. of agricultural colleges incorporating HIV/AIDS & gender issues into curricula	1. Monthly 2. Quarterly
4. Set-up an agricultural management system (AMIS)	1. No. of functional AMIS databases at departmental level	1. Monthly
5. Research with evidence-based decision making & programming	1. Number of evidence-based research projects conducted 2. No. of Project proposals approved & funded by research priority area	1. Monthly 2. Annually
6. Prevention of new HIV infections	1. No. of agricultural institutes/centres facilitating VCT on site 2. No. of departments facilitating the distribution of male & female condoms.	1. Monthly 2. Quarterly
7. Improve access to care & treatment services for vulnerable groups.	1. No. of households accessing food aid while on ART 2. No. of livelihoods programmes that offering care and treatment for vulnerable groups	Monthly for all
8. Improve food & security for vulnerable groups	1. No. of agricultural institutes offering nutritional gardens for PLHIV 2. No. of facilities with balanced meals 3. No. of affected or infected households accessing agricultural inputs	1. Monthly 2. Quarterly 3. Quarterly
9. Gender sensitive mitigation programmes & economic empowerment of vulnerable groups	1. No. of facilities practising multi-skilling to cover-up for increased absenteeism & loss of staff through death	1. Monthly
10. Effectively monitor, evaluate & assess the impact of sector programmes on HIV & AIDS & regularly review the strategy	1. No. of Provincial training for data collection system 2. No. of monthly meetings feedback distributed to each province by head office 3. No. of coordination meetings held with other stakeholders 4. No. of monthly returns submitted to head office on core indicators by provinces 5. No. of reviews conducted during the lifespan of the strategy 6. No. of provincial visits done by the coordinating unit	1. Monthly 2. Monthly 3. Monthly 4. Monthly 5. Annually 6. Monthly

⁴ The table is extracted from FAO, 2010. It highlights the main programme objectives, key indicators, and frequency of reporting of the M&E implementation plan.