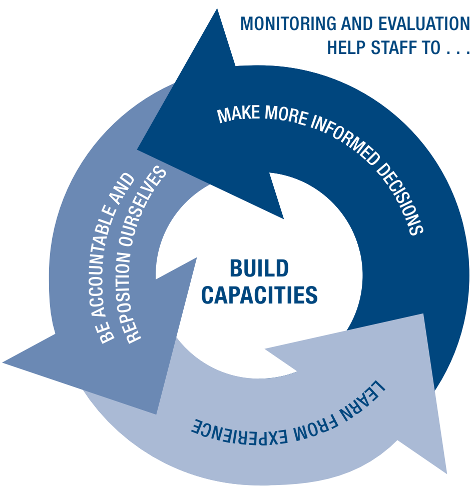
OG 3.50: Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes

Objectives

This module will:

- ✓ highlight the importance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in programme management;
- ✓ show how to develop a DDR-specific M&E strategy; and
- ✓ offer guidance on carrying out M&E.

Figure 3.50.1: Objectives of M&E



Source: UN Development Fund (UNDP), *Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results*, 2002

1. Introduction

DDR practitioners are under considerable pressure to plan, design and implement programmes quickly. These pressures, however, should not free them from the obligation of carrying out M&E of DDR programmes. The success of DDR programmes depends to a great extent on the quality of M&E.

M&E are essential to:

- make informed decisions;
- learn from experience;
- ensure accountability; and
- build capacities.

Without monitoring, management does not receive the feedback it needs for day-to-day decision-making, and cannot communicate effectively with stakeholders. Without evaluation, it is impossible to make the necessary adjustments to programmes, and to capture lessons learned that can be fed into future programmes.

2. M&E and results-based management

M&E make up an integral component of the results-based approach to implementing and managing programmes. The focus of M&E is therefore on assessing how

Box 3.50.1: Definitions of key terms used in this module

Monitoring is the frequent and systematic collection of data on specific indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing programme with indications of the extent of progress in the use of allocated funds.

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy. The aim is to determine the relevance of objectives, the effectiveness of design and implementation, the efficiency of resource use, the impact on beneficiaries and the sustainability of results.

Reporting is the systematic and timely provision of essential information at defined intervals. Reporting is an integral part of M&E.

A **lesson learned** is an instructive example based on experience that is applicable to a general situation rather than a specific circumstance. It is learning from experience.

An **indicator** is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention or to help assess the performance of an actor.

The **baseline** is the situation before a programme or activity begins against which progress can be assessed and comparisons made. **Baseline data** is data that reflects this situation.

A **results framework** is the programme logic that explains how the programme's objective is to be achieved, including causal relationships and underlying assumptions.

Source: Adapted from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), *Evaluation Feedback for Effective Learning and Accountability, Evaluation and Aid Effectiveness,* No. 5, Paris, 2001; *Glossary of Key Management Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management,* 2002; and UNDP, *Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results,* 2002.

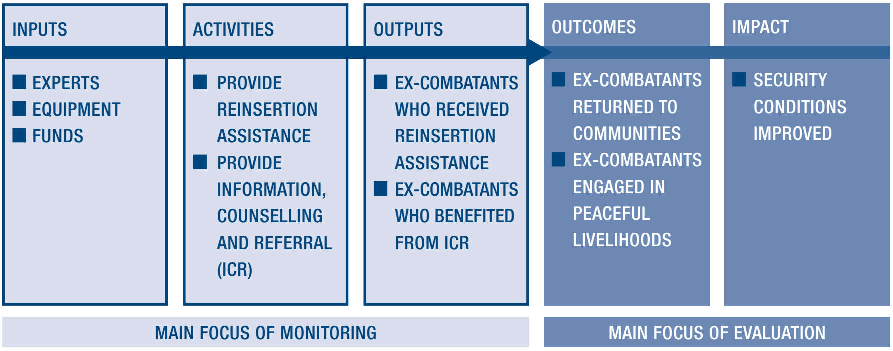
and if various factors contribute to the achievement of proposed outcomes or prevent them from being achieved.

M&E can take place at two different levels:

- *Level one* focuses on *outputs*, which are the *specific products and services* that emerge from processing inputs and activities through programme;
- *Level two* focuses on the *outcomes* of the programme or project efforts, which are the *changes in conditions* that the programme or project aims to achieve. Outcomes include the production of outputs and activities, and the contribution of partners.

Traditionally, DDR practitioners have been more familiar with level one: monitoring and evaluation that views performance in terms of outputs. Within the results-based approach, the challenge is to go beyond this level and to link performance with outcomes, with rigorous and credible assessments of progress towards and achievement of outcomes. Figure 3.50.2 shows the results chain of inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact:

Figure 3.50.2: The results chain



Source: Adapted from UNDP, *Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results*, 2002

See section 3.1 in OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design on how to develop a results-based framework.

3. Similarities and differences between monitoring and evaluation

Both monitoring and evaluation:

- are aimed at the systematic collection and analysis of information to track changes from the baseline conditions to the desired outcome;
- are closely linked to decision-making processes;
- provide consistent information for the improvement of programmes and projects; and
- can demonstrate accountability.

Monitoring and evaluation differ, however, in their specific objectives, focus, methodology, frequency and timing, and use of results. Table 3.50.1 gives the differences between the two:

Table 3.50.1: Differences between monitoring and evaluation

	Monitoring	Evaluation
Objective	■ Tracks changes from baseline conditions to desired outcomes	■ Aims to validate the outcomes that were achieved

Focus	■ Measures the outputs of projects, programmes, partnerships and assistance activities, and their contribution to outcomes and inputs (according to the budget)	■ Compares intended with actual outcomes (and unintended outcomes) ■ Focuses on how and why outputs contributed to the achievement of outcomes (both intended and unintended) ■ Focuses on questions of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact
Methodology	■ Tracks and assesses performance and process (progress towards outcomes) through analysis and comparison of indicators over time	■ Evaluates achievement of outcomes and impact by comparing indicators before and after the programme ■ Relies on monitoring data
Frequency and timing + who is responsible?	■ Continuous and systematic by programme managers, project managers and key partners	■ Time-bound, periodic, in-depth at key points of the implementation cycle ■ Carried out by internal evaluators, external evaluators and partners
Use	■ Alerts managers to problems in performance ■ Provides options for corrective actions	■ Provides managers with strategy and policy options ■ Provides the basis for learning

Source: UNDP, *Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results*, 2002

4. Developing an M&E strategy and framework for DDR

An M&E strategy and framework for DDR should be developed during Phase IV of planning (the development of a programme and operational framework), and integrated into the DDR programme design. In general, the design and implementation of the M&E strategy and framework is the basic responsibility of the programme manager, supported by the M&E officer.

Section 3.4 in OG 3.10 on Integrated DDR Planning and sections 3 and 4 in OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design

Box 3.50.2: Key questions for developing an M&E strategy and framework for DDR

- Is there a well-defined general results framework with a set of indicators from input to impact levels?
- What should be the objectives of the M&E strategy and framework?
- What key indicators coming from the results framework are important to M&E?
- What information management systems are necessary to ensure timely capture of appropriate data and information?
- How can the results of M&E be integrated into programme implementation, and used to control quality and adapt processes?

The following M&E issues should be considered *at the start* and *integrated into programme design* as follows:

- indicators relevant for M&E should be identified within the results-based framework, and a baseline study should be carried out immediately before programme implementation begins;
- specific M&E requirements, such as dedicated staff, material and financial resources, and information management systems, should be taken into consideration during the identification of programme requirements;
- key aspects of the M&E system and activities should be developed and harmonized with the overall programme implementation cycle, and reflected in the corresponding work plans; and
- programme implementation methods should be designed to permit analysis and incorporation of M&E results in order to provide programmes with the capacity to adjust the implementation approach based on M&E results and lessons learned.

4.1. The M&E strategy document

The M&E strategy document should contain at least the sections described in Table 3.50.2:

Table 3.50.2: The sections of the M&E strategy document

Work plan section	Description
Type of M&E	States the category of monitoring instrument used for daily, monthly or quarterly progress reports, annual reports, field visit reports, etc; and type of evaluations needed (periodic internal evaluations, mid-term evaluations, terminal evaluations and ex-post evaluations, among others)

Objectives	Describes the purpose of the monitoring or evaluation tool used, referring to how the results will be used, including reviewing and improving performance, ensuring conformity with procedures, generating lessons learned, investigating serious problems, etc.
Frequency	Explains how often, or at what point in the programme implementation cycle, a monitoring or evaluation tool is used
Outputs/outcomes covered	Gives a description of the project outputs measured by the M&E instrument. In general, monitoring measures outputs and outcomes of specific activities (e.g. number of weapons collected, number of ex-combatants discharged, etc.), while evaluations measure overall impact and effectiveness of the overall DDR programme or individual components, such as disarmament
Definition of terms and corresponding indicators	Describes the indicators used to measure performance for an M&E tool (see below for a description of indicators)
Information sources, and data collection and analysis methods	Describes the information collection mechanisms used to gather information on specific indicators, e.g. field surveys, registration data, field visits, review of documentation, etc.; and describes analysis methods
Responsibility	States person or unit responsible for managing and implementing M&E
Work plan	Defines who will do what, how, when and for how long

Section 2.4 of OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design gives data collection methods; section 5.3.7 of IDDRS 3.20 on DDR Programme Design gives methods used to analyse results.

The M&E strategy and work plan may be integrated into the DDR programme document and implementation plan, or may be given in a separate document. However, the development of the M&E strategy and work plan should be an integral part of DDR programme planning and design.

5. How to carry out monitoring

DDR practitioners carry out monitoring by tracking inputs, activities and outputs, and measuring their contributions to outcomes. They should keep an eye on key inputs, activities and outputs, because these can indicate whether a strategy is relevant and efficient or not.

For effective monitoring, DDR practitioners need to ensure that baseline data has been collected and performance indicators have been identified. Baseline data is best collected immediately before the DDR programme enters the implementation phase. However, if the baseline data does not exist, it should be collected as soon as possible to determine the current situation in the affected country.

If indicators have not been developed within the general results-based framework during the programme design, it will be necessary to create them. Performance indicators are defined in relation to the activities, outputs and outcomes that are expected.

5.1. Monitoring mechanisms

There are three types of monitoring mechanisms:

1. *reporting/analysis*, which involves obtaining and analysing documentation from the project that provides information on progress;
2. *validation*, which involves checking or verifying whether or not the reported progress is accurate; and
3. *participation*, which involves obtaining feedback from partners and participants on progress and proposed actions.

DDR practitioners should determine the correct mix of monitoring mechanisms for each programme, project or outcome. Table 3.50.3 lists the different methods for each type of mechanism:

Table 3.50.3: Monitoring mechanisms and methods

Reporting and analysis	Validation	Participation
■ Annual project report (APR)	■ Field visits	■ Outcome groups
■ Progress and/or quarterly reports	■ Spot-check visits	■ Steering committee mechanisms
■ Work plans	■ External assessments/ monitoring	■ Stakeholder meetings
■ Project/programme delivery reports	■ Client surveys	■ Focus group meetings
■ Combined delivery reports	■ Evaluations	■ Annual review
■ Substantive project documentation		

Source: UNDP, Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results, 2002

See Annex C in IDDRS 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes for an example of reporting and analysis tools used for monitoring DDR in Afghanistan.

Reporting mechanism and report tracking system: DDR programme managers should establish a reporting mechanism and encourage staff compliance with it. Given the potentially large number of reports and documents generated by the DDR *programme, the development and maintenance of a report-tracking system is essential. This will be the basis for monitoring progress and for evaluation, in addition to being the institutional memory of the DDR programme.*

6. How to carry out evaluations

Before carrying out evaluations, DDR practitioners should define the type of assessment that is needed.

6.1. Types and timing of evaluations

The four types of evaluation and when they should occur are shown in Table 3.50.4:

Table 3.50.4: Type and timing of evaluations

Evaluation type	Timing during the programme implementation cycle
1. Formative internal evaluations	■ Primarily conducted in the early phase of programme implementation in order to assess early hypotheses and working assumptions, and analyse outcomes from pilot interventions and activities ■ Are valuable mechanisms to correct implementation strategies early on in the programme implementation process, and to identify and deal with potential problems ■ Generally carried out internally by the M&E officer or unit within a DDR section
2. Mid-term evaluations	■ Similar to formative internal evaluations, but are usually more comprehensive and strategic – as opposed to diagnostic – in function ■ Intended to provide an assessment of the performance and outcomes of a DDR process for stakeholders, partners and donors, enabling policy makers to assess the overall role of DDR in the broader post-conflict context
3. Terminal evaluations	■ Usually carried out at the end of the programme cycle ■ Designed to evaluate the overall outcomes and effectiveness of a DDR strategy and programme, the degree to which the programme's main aims were achieved and the overall effectiveness in contributing to broader impact ■ Generally address key questions regarding the overall strategic framework and focus of the programme, notably its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability

4. Ex-post evaluations	■ Usually conducted several years after the end of a DDR programme in order to evaluate long-term effectiveness of the results/outcomes produced by the programme, particularly sustainability of positive outcomes, direct and indirect impacts on security conditions, prospects for peace-building and consequences for economic productivity and development

6.2. Evaluation criteria

Evaluations should assess relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Table 3.50.5 explains each of these criteria:

Table 3.50.5: Evaluation criteria

Criteria	Definition	Relevant questions
Relevance	The degree to which the objectives of a programme or project remain valid and pertinent as originally planned, or as modified owing to changing circumstances, within the immediate context and external environment of that programme or project	■ To what extent are the goals and objectives of the programme still valid? ■ Are the activities, outputs and outcomes of the programme consistent with the overall goal and objectives? ■ Are the activities and outputs consistent with the intended outcomes?
Effectiveness	The extent to which a programme achieves its goals and objectives	■ To what extent were the objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved? ■ What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of objectives? ■ Were objectives achieved on time?
Efficiency	How well a given programme transformed inputs into outcomes and outputs. This is different from impact, because it places more emphasis on how financial, material and human resources were used to achieve specific outcomes	■ Were activities cost-efficient? ■ Were objectives achieved on time? ■ Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

Impact	Positive and negative changes produced by a programme, both intended and unintended	■ What has happened as a result of the programme or project? ■ What real difference has the programme made to the beneficiaries? ■ How many people have been affected?
Sustainability	Whether the benefits of a programme are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn	■ To what extent did the benefits of a programme or project continue after donor funding ceased? ■ What were the major factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?

Source: OECD/DAC, *DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance*, http://www.oecd/dac.org

6.3. Drafting the terms of reference for an evaluation

At minimum, terms of reference (TOR) should contain the following information:

- *Introduction/background:* A brief description of the reasons for and focus of the evaluation (outcome, programme, project, series of interventions by several partners, etc.);
- *Objectives:* The purpose of the evaluation (e.g. 'to analyse strategic programmatic and policy dimensions');
- *Scope:* Which issues, subjects and areas the evaluation will cover;
- *Expected results:* What results the evaluation is expected to generate (e.g. findings, recommendations, lessons learned, rating on performance, an 'action item' list) and how they should be used;
- *Methodology or approach:* The methodology suggested to collect and analyse data;
- *Evaluation team:* The composition of the team and members' areas of expertise;
- *Management arrangements:* How the evaluation will be managed and organized.

The TOR involve strategic choices about what to focus on, and therefore should be reviewed by key stakeholders in an evaluation, and partners should be involved in the drafting process.

7. The development of indicators

Indicators are variables that should be measured from inputs to impact. They should provide information on what has been achieved in either quantitative or qualitative terms, or changes over time. In order for indicators to be meaningful, measurement should be made against baseline data collected immediately before programme implementation starts.

Indicators should be developed within the results-based framework during DDR programme design.

Box 3.50.3: How to develop indicators

Key steps are:

- select the input, activity, output, outcome or impact that needs indicators;
- define the terms contained in the input, activity, output, outcome or impact; and
- create indicators for the input, activity, output, outcome or impact.

Example: If the **output** is "Ex-combatants who received reinsertion assistance", the **indicators** may be:

- the number of ex-combatants living in a specific location who received reinsertion assistance within a specific time-frame;
- the percentage of ex-combatants living in a specific location who received reinsertion assistance within a specific time-frame; and
- the level of satisfaction of ex-combatants living in a specific location who received reinsertion assistance within a specific time-frame.

7.1. Types of indicators

There are three basic types of indicators:

1. *Activities and inputs indicators:* These are used to observe progress and to verify actual inputs and activities in comparison with those expected. They are used to validate outputs and are expressed in quantitative terms;
2. *Performance indicators:* Variables that allow the verification of changes in the intervention or shows actual outputs and outcomes compared to those that were expected. Performance indicators are used to measure 'how,' 'whether,' or 'to what extent' objectives are being achieved, rather than 'why' or 'why not' such progress is being made. Performance indicators are usually expressed in quantifiable terms;
3. *Impact indicators:* Variables that allow the assessment of positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term results produced by an intervention. These results can be produced directly or indirectly, and can be intended or unintended. Impact indicators often use several different indicators, each of which provides information on the extent, sustainability and consequences of a change brought about by a DDR intervention. Such indicators can include both quantitative and qualitative variables. Impact indicators depend on

comprehensive and reliable baseline data and causal links established in a results framework.

Proxy indicators should be used when there is no clear direct quantitative indicator. They are useful to reveal performance trends and make managers aware of potential problems or areas of success. This is often the case for outcomes in behavioural change, social cohesion and other results that are difficult to measure.

For examples of DDR-specific indicators, see section 6.2 and Annex B of IDDRS 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes, and Annex D, section 4 of IDDRS 5.10 on Women, Gender and DDR.

8. Summary of key guidance on the monitoring and evaluation of DDR programmes

- ✓ The development of a strategy and work plan to monitor and evaluate a DDR programme is essential in order to collect, process and use data and results, and ensure quality control. This should be an integral part of the DDR programme planning and design process.
- ✓ M&E should use information and data from the regular information collection mechanisms and reporting system, as well as periodic measurement of key indicators.
- ✓ Monitoring and data collection should be an integral component of the information management system that is developed for a DDR programme.
- ✓ DDR manager and evaluators should make the extra effort to evaluate programme outcomes and impact in addition to inputs, activities and outputs.
- ✓ DDR planners and managers should make provision for the necessary staff, equipment and financial resources to ensure that M&E can be adequately planned, designed and carried out, independently of other DDR activities.