
Module 5: Monitoring and evaluation for reintegration assistance

Key Messages:

- Start planning early in the programme design phase for monitoring and evaluation by developing a theory of change that describes how activities lead to desired results and helps in setting indicators to check progress and assumptions.
- Integrating monitoring into programme activities and mechanisms is a cornerstone of the collection of accurate and timely data of the programming.
- Findings from monitoring and evaluation processes must be institutionalized and made useable by those who need them to foster learning and improve the impact of future programming.

Introduction:

To understand and monitor the intended results of reintegration programmes, it is important to ask:

- What does success in the context of this reintegration programme look like? What are the results the implementing team should aim for in order to achieve such success?
- How will the programme be monitored and evaluated to better understand what results the team has achieved? How can this improve ongoing as well as future performance?
- What is the best approach to monitor and evaluate a programme's performance?
- What indicators will be used to measure progress towards achieving pre-determined results?
- How will risks be accounted for?
- How will the team's performance and the overall programme be evaluated?
- How will the lessons learned be generated and used in the future?

This module provides guidance on how to answer these questions, while recognizing that different types of monitoring and data collection methods might need to be used for reintegration interventions at the individual, community and structural levels.

This module provides:

- A basic understanding of the purposes, processes and guiding principles for planning monitoring and evaluation (M&E) within the reintegration context;
- Key points to consider when designing a reintegration programme to incorporate M&E at each stage and phase of the intervention;
- Recommendations for implementing M&E activities;
- An overview of evaluation in the context of reintegration programmes; and
- Information on how to learn from and communicate M&E findings for evidence-based programming.

There is an array of tools and resources available on M&E that reintegration programmes can use and adapt. This module will not go into detail on all aspects of M&E but will highlight areas of special relevance to reintegration programmes. Further suggested reading is proposed at the end of this Module.

Varying terminology for results can be used when discussing M&E. This Handbook uses the terms objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities.

Target Audience:

Programme managers/ developers, Case managers/other staff, Donors, M&E Officers

5.1 Understanding monitoring and evaluation

M&E, including data collection, analysis and learning, is key to helping implementers and other stakeholders understand the outcomes reintegration programmes have on returnees, communities and countries of origin. They can support the improvement of reintegration programmes and their outcomes.

M&E is part of a results-based management (RBM)⁴⁰ system. RBM is based on clearly defined and measurable results, and uses various processes, methodologies and tools to achieve those results. Results-based M&E moves from focusing on outputs to emphasizing outcomes and impact. In this way, M&E helps to:

- Demonstrate results as part of accountability to beneficiaries and donors;
- Put in place the right mechanisms for principled and evidence-based approaches;
- Identify possible gaps and improve reintegration programming through evidence-based learning;
- Provide evidence on the challenges and opportunities of reintegration for governments and non-governmental partners, migrants and non-migrants;
- Ensure availability of reliable data for analysis and research purposes.

M&E can be viewed as a tool to enable results-based management – a management tool to help decision makers track progress and show an intervention’s impact. M&E should therefore be incorporated throughout a programme’s life cycle.

Figure 5.1: Planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle⁴¹

What is monitoring? ⁴² Monitoring is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specific indicators to provide management and stakeholders of an ongoing development initiative with information on the extent to which progress towards programme objectives has been made.

Why monitor? Monitoring generates information for timely decision-making. In this way it helps decision makers be proactive, rather than reactive, in situations where it is too late to control damage. Monitoring helps determine whether:

- Planned activities are actually taking place;
- There are gaps in their implementation;
- Resources are being used efficiently;
- The programme's operating context has changed.

What is evaluation? Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy. It differs from monitoring in that it involves a judgement of the value of the activity and its results.⁴³

Why evaluate? Monitoring asks the questions “what has been done? How has it been done? When has it been done?”. Evaluation also answers these questions, and in addition helps answer the questions “why and how well it was done?”. Evaluation allows for critical examination of interventions. Some evaluations also help answer why one intervention worked better than another.

Evaluations are the main pathway towards discussing causality. Monitoring shows whether indicators have changed, but it is limited in explaining in detail why this change occurred. Evaluations **complement** monitoring by investigating why changes did or did not occur and drawing conclusions about why this did (or did not) happen. Evaluations contribute not only to accountability, but to creating space for reflection, learning and sharing findings. They are a source of reliable information to help improve assistance to direct beneficiaries, partners and donors.

? **Monitoring versus evaluation**

Although often grouped together, monitoring and evaluation are two distinct but related functions. The main differences between them are their focus on assessment and their timing in terms of the programme cycle.

Monitoring helps identify immediate patterns and trends that are useful for managing programme implementation. Monitoring focuses more on immediate and intermediate results. Measuring longer-term results such as progress towards long-term outcomes or objectives requires a longer time frame and more focused assessment. This is provided by evaluation.

Monitoring and evaluation are complementary – as well as mutually beneficial – functions.

5.1.1 Ethical considerations for M&E

When carrying out M&E activities, it is important to adhere to specific norms and standards. For evaluation, adhering to UNEG’s Norms and Standards for Evaluation is recommended.⁴⁴ IOM also developed a monitoring policy and an evaluation policy in 2018⁴⁵ and as part of this laid out monitoring principles: credibility, utility, ethics, impartiality, transparency, disclosure and participation. M&E practitioners should be careful to follow all ethical principles. Below is a list of ethical considerations that are based on the IOM monitoring policy.

Table 5.1: Ethical considerations for M&E

Ethical considerations

Personal and professional integrity

- Be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs of the social and cultural environments in which migrants work
- Address issues of discrimination and gender inequality.

No personal or sectoral interests

- Avoid twisting the truth and producing positive findings because of a conflict of interest or other payoffs or penalties.
- Do not allow unsubstantiated opinions to influence the monitoring and or evaluation activities because of sloppy, unreliable or unprofessional evaluation or monitoring practices.

Respect the right of institutions and beneficiaries

- It needs to be explained to respondents why and how information will be collected, stored, used and shared; assure them of the right to refuse or to withdraw at any time from participation without any consequence. Hence, withdrawing should not impact a service or delivery of goods due to be provided to the participants.
- Include informed consent forms in all data collection tools.
- Train data collectors on informed consent practice.
- Do not make promises to beneficiaries or

Ensure privacy, data protection and confidentiality

participants that cannot be kept in order to induce them to cooperate.

- Understand how benefits or the expectation of benefits, may incentivize or influence respondent answers and participation.
- Honour commitments made.
- Take care that those involved in M&E have a chance to examine statements made.
- Use data sharing agreements with all partners if data is to be shared, inform beneficiaries when asking for consent.
- Conduct a risk-benefit and a sensitivity assessment prior to collecting any personal data and prior to any other processing.
- Assure respondents that gathered data is used anonymously without bridging individual's privacy.
- Separate personal data (personally identifying information) from the response. To protect confidentiality, use an ID number for all beneficiaries and attach it to the database and files used to collect information, for data analysis and data sharing.
- Establish a secure filing system for hard-copy documents and encrypted (password-protected) electronic files with all personal data, especially highly sensitive ones.
- Personal data of returnees is only shared based on free and informed consent of the returnee.

⁴⁰ UNDG, [Results-based Management Handbook](#) (New York, 2011).

⁴¹ UNDP, *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results* (2009).

⁴² IOM, *Monitoring Policy* (Geneva, 2018).

⁴³ OECD/DAC, *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* (Paris, 2002).

⁴⁴ UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (New York, 2016).

⁴⁵ IOM Monitoring Policy (Geneva, 2018).

5.2 Planning for monitoring and evaluation

Strong project design is the foundation of successful M&E. Developing a programme theory, specifically a theory of change and results framework, can help reintegration programme managers best understand its objectives, intended outcomes, logical thinking and assumptions. This facilitates the monitoring and evaluating of the interventions. The programme theory should be developed as early as possible in the programme design phase so it can guide programme development and implementation.

The programme development stage lays the foundation for M&E by:

- Clearly articulating the desired results an intervention aims to achieve;
- Outlining how it aims to achieve them;
- Stipulating how progress towards these results will be measured.

When planning a new reintegration intervention, it is important to think through and explain how the intervention is expected to *contribute to a chain of results*. This is called a programme theory and is an important tool for designing an intervention. The programme theory represents all the building blocks that are required to bring about a higher-level change or result.

Programme theory can provide a conceptual framework for monitoring as well as evaluation. There are various different types of programme theory, including the logic model, intervention logic, the causal model, results chain and theory of change. This Handbook will describe two complementary approaches that can help to articulate how a reintegration intervention is expected to achieve results. The two approaches are the “theory of change” and the “logical framework”.

This chapter presents an overview of, and considerations to make, for effective international cooperation.

5.2.1 Theory of change

5.2.2 Results Framework

5.2.3 Types of monitoring

5.2.4 Results' Monitoring Framework

5.2.1 Theory of change

The theory of change is a type of logical thinking exercise that occurs primarily during the development of an intervention but is also helpful during its implementation.

A theory of change describes and explains how and why a result or desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It focuses on mapping out what a programme or change initiative does (its activities) and how these lead to results (outputs, outcomes, objectives). In this way the theory of change articulates a hypothesis about how change happens by explaining the connection between an intervention and its effect.

It does so by surfacing the logic and rationale for an intervention and articulating the assumptions inherent in the approach.⁴⁶

The theory of change is particularly suited for interventions seeking social or community-based change or those related to empowerment initiatives. It can also be used to measure the complexity of transformation and change, because it acknowledges that social change is not linear but dynamic and complex. Given the fact that reintegration interventions (at individual, community and structural levels) are complex and aim to cover multiple dimensions at economic, social and psychosocial levels, a theory of change can be a useful tool for defining the rationale behind the expected process of change brought about by reintegration interventions.

It is recommended to develop the theory of change using a participatory approach that includes all actors involved in reintegration. It is a collaborative process that can encourage discussion around questions such as:

1. Why do we think this change will happen?
2. What evidence is there to support this?
3. Is this logical?
4. What assumptions are we making?

This will also help all involved clearly understand the link between M&E activities and desired results.

The theory of change helps reveal assumptions to be 'tested' through an intervention's actions. Assumptions therefore play a central role in developing a theory of change. Generally, a theory of change can be articulated using the "If X, then Y, because of Z" formula. That is, "If X action occurs, then Y result will occur, because of Z assumption(s)." The process of surfacing underlying assumptions helps both identify where logical jumps are being made and identify missing key steps in the change process.

Understanding how a theory of change works helps better monitor and evaluate an intervention. A common challenge when designing an intervention are logical leaps and gaps. Often there is a disconnect between strong problem analysis and seemingly unrelated activities meant to address the problem. This is reflected in a causal pathway with weak links between objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities. Through surfacing underlying assumptions, the theory of change is a bridge between

analysis and programming.

There are multiple pathways that can lead to a specific objective or the highest level of change. While there may be many other reasons for a specific change to occur, not all of these can be addressed through one single intervention. A theory of change identifies the multiple pathways to change and the most realistically achievable pathway.

A fully developed theory of change clearly spells out the sequence in which outcomes are likely to happen, and how early and intermediate outputs relate to outcomes. Sometimes outcomes are closely related, but they can also occur independently. These changes and connections are often represented visually, for example through a chart or a set of tables ([see Table 5.2](#)).

Once results are framed in a theory of change, indicators for each of these can be formulated. As explained, monitoring a theory of change focuses on assessing whether or not the assumptions hold true. Therefore, when developing indicators for monitoring, it is important to take the assumptions of the theory of change into account. ([See the “Results’ Monitoring Framework” section for more on indicators and how to formulate them.](#))

Theory of change diagrams are generally flexible in format and may be simple or complex. They can be vertical, horizontal or circular. The chart below is just one of many ways of illustrating a theory of change. It illustrates an example of what a theory of change for an integrated approach to reintegration could include. It articulates an overall holistic vision of the intended impact of each reintegration intervention, while also spelling out conditions that should be in place for this impact to occur.

Table 5.2: Illustration of theory of change: Integrated approach to reintegration

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
	What needs to be done to produce outputs?	What are components and services to be provided to returnee and community or at structural level?	What do we want to change through reintegration?	What are we trying to achieve with reintegration intervention?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available fund and resources for the provision of reintegration support, community based activities and structural interventions.	Assessment of the returnee’s situation upon return through reintegration.	Returnees are provided with tailored reintegration assistance.	Returnees have sufficient levels of economic selfsufficiency, social stability, and psychosocial well-being in their community of return.	Returnees are able to overcome individual challenges impacting their reintegration.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available human resources and adequate staffing structure to implement integrated reintegration programme. • Existing cohesion and collaboration at community level where migrants return. • Relevant available competencies for implementing organization and its partner to provide reintegration support, communitybased activities and structural interventions. • Existing synergies among relevant stakeholders at local, national and regional levels for a smooth implementation of an integrated approach to 	<p>Provide tailored training sessions to enhance returnees' skills.</p>	<p>Returnees have adequate skills and knowledge to increase employability and livelihood opportunities.</p>		

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
reintegration	Provide referrals to services (such as health, psychosocial support, business plan development, and others as needed).	Returnees access the services they need to facilitate their reintegration.		
	Conduct assessments of the main communities to which migrants return.	Community-based reintegration activities are designed to respond to communities' needs and priorities.	Communities are involved in the design and implementation of community-based reintegration.	Communities have the capacity to provide an enabling environment for reintegration.
	Establish community-level advisory groups to support socioeconomic needs and provide linkage with key financial stakeholders.	Returnees and their communities are able to access support to facilitate socioeconomic reintegration.		
	Hold community-based dialogues and events between returnees and their communities.	Communities are accepting of returnees.		
	Sensitize local and national stakeholders on the various aspects of reintegration.	Increased knowledge and skills among local and national stakeholders to address reintegration needs.	Local and national stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental) have enhanced capacities for the provision of essential and reintegration-related services.	Adequate policies and public services are in place to address the specific needs of returnees and communities alike.
	Establish consultative process to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).	Developed SOPs that are in line with migration, development and other relevant policies.		
	Conduct a stakeholder mapping at local and national level for reintegration programming	Well-established referral mechanism to support returnees and their communities with their reintegration		

Inputs	Activities	Outputs needs.	Outcomes	Impact
Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available funding • Comprehensive programme design • Commitment among stakeholders 		Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returnees are willing to partake in reintegration programme; • Local communities are willing to cooperate; • Local stakeholders are willing and open to collaborate; • National law and policy allow implementation of reintegration programme; • Available basic services for effective referral mechanism; • External factors (sociopolitical, security, economic, environment) not impeding reintegration process. 	Assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National authorities remain committed to strengthening a sustainable reintegration process; • External factors remain conducive to sustainable reintegration; • All stakeholders (including returnees and communities) are fully engaged throughout reintegration process; • Laws and policies are improved through capacity-building of relevant actors; • Allocated resources allow generating evidence-based data on impact of reintegration interventions. 	

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The programme development stage lays the foundation for M&E by:

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5.2.1 Theory of change

5.2.2 Results Framework

5.2.3 Types of monitoring

5.2.4 Results’ Monitoring Framework

5.2.2 Results framework

A results framework or logical framework (“logframe”) clearly formulates intended results, outlines targets and specifies how to plan for success and achieve results.

A logframe helps identify an intervention’s operational design and is therefore the foundation of M&E for that intervention. It is a summary of an intervention’s intended approach to attain results and is based on the situation and problem analysis undertaken during the conceptualization stage. It summarizes the logical sequence in which an intervention aims to achieve desired results and identifies the inputs and activities required to achieve these results. It also provides indicators and sources of verification to measure progress towards achieving results.

A logframe is mostly used in the form of a matrix, which encourages linear thinking about change. It is often viewed as a management instrument for planning, monitoring and evaluation.

The table below is a sample template results’ matrix. The columns are further described in [section 5.2.4](#).

Table 5.3: A template results’ matrix

Results	Indicators	Verification source and data collection method	Baseline	Target	Assumptions
Objectives					
Outcomes					
Outputs					
Activities					

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Different M&E approaches can be considered for assessing results at each level of intervention (individual, community, structural). The appropriate monitoring approach depends on the overall programme theory of change, main stakeholders, the indicators developed in the results framework and the programme timeline (short or long term).

While there are many more types of monitoring, for the purpose of this Handbook, the following most relevant types are mentioned:

- **Programme monitoring** tracks progress and performance throughout the entire reintegration programme (covering project activities, results, budget and expenditure, and risk).
- **Beneficiary monitoring** tracks individuals’, communities’, governments’ and other relevant stakeholders’ perceptions of an ongoing or completed intervention. Beneficiary monitoring is a way to include beneficiaries in monitoring. It assesses beneficiary satisfaction or dissatisfaction, the level of participation and inclusion, access to resources, how they were treated and their overall experience of change. This type of monitoring is recommended (and particularly useful) for generating qualitative data (narratives of reintegration) from beneficiaries or even any stakeholder. This gives realistic feedback for reintegration interventions and can be used as a tool for programme visibility.
- **Reintegration governance assessment** assesses at national and regional levels the reintegration ecosystem. This includes the level of engagement of various stakeholders (including migrants, diaspora groups, local authorities and relevant organizations), potential livelihoods’ possibilities and mechanisms for durable solutions. At this level, collaboration of multiple stakeholders is required to assess whether implemented reintegration interventions have made any impact. This should happen over a longer term, at least 16–18 months after the reintegration intervention begins.

As with all programming, it is important to set up clear financial monitoring procedures, as well as risk monitoring.

When designing a reintegration initiative, resources should be allocated specifically for M&E. An overall range for M&E as recommended by the evaluation community is 5–10 per cent of the total budget, with 2–4 per cent for evaluation and 3–6 per cent for monitoring. However, this is purely indicative. Similarly, M&E activities should be reflected in the initiative’s workplans to support consistent and effective monitoring practices.

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5.2.4 Results-monitoring framework

The logical framework can be used as a basis for setting up a results-monitoring framework. This framework enables both all members of the implementing team and all stakeholders, to track progress being made towards achieving intended results.

As a monitoring tool, the results-monitoring framework can be used alongside a detailed work plan, financial reporting tools and a risk management plan to create a more holistic monitoring approach.

What follows is a sample results-monitoring framework based on the theory of change or result matrix outcomes. It outlines the questions that the framework's components aim to respond to. This should be developed for all outputs and outcomes and for the objective(s). Further explanation on indicators, baseline and target, means of verification, the data collection method and the timeline is provided in the following sections.

Table 5.4: Results-monitoring framework

Outcome	Indicator	Data source and collection method	Data analysis	Frequency	Responsible person	Baseline and target
First positive result or observed change immediately after the intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know if we are on track • How do we know if beneficiaries, community, stakeholders at the structural level are satisfied? • How do we know if given services meet b 	Where and how will information gathered to measure the indicator?	How will the data be analysed?	At what stage will the data be collected to measure the indicator?	Who is responsible for organizing data collection, verification and storage?	Baseline: What is the value of the indicator at the beginning of the intervention? Target: What is the expected value of the indicator upon completion of the intervention?

Outcome	Indicator	Data source and collection method	Data analysis	Frequency	Responsible person	Baseline and target
	beneficiaries' needs?					
Returnees have sufficient level of economic sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being in their community of return.	For example, the number of returnees who self-reach an overall reintegration score of 0.5 and above, disaggregated by sex, age and vulnerability.	For example, a survey among beneficiaries who have received reintegration assistance.	Quantitative and qualitative.	4–6 months after provision of reintegration assistance.	Name to be included. This could be an M&E officer.	Dependent on country's caseload.
Communities benefit from the design and implementation of community-based reintegration.	For example, the percentage of community members reporting satisfaction of community-based reintegration activities.	For example, participatory monitoring (focus group discussions, community interviews). Direct observation.	Quantitative and qualitative.	4–6 months after start of community-based activities.	Name to be included. This could be an M&E officer.	For example: Baseline: could be 0 if no previous activities have taken place. Target: 50%
Local and national stakeholders (governmental and nongovernmental) have enhanced capacities for the provision of essential and unrelated services.	For example, the percentage of stakeholders declaring that they are more engaged in the field of reintegration assistance (disaggregated by type of support).	For example, pre and post-training survey. Semi-structured interviews with local and national stakeholders.	Qualitative and quantitative.	3–6 months after capacity building activities and periodically during partners meetings.	Name to be included. This could be an M&E officer.	For example: Baseline: according to initial stakeholder mapping. Target: 70%

Indicators

Indicators are measurable pieces of information that help assess how work or activities lead to

results. They show progress towards targets and whether a result is achieved. During monitoring, indicators are meant to measure outputs and outcomes, and for evaluation they can be used at the impact level.

Created with Sketch. Tip

When selecting and defining indicators:

- Define key concepts, such as what does 'sustainability' mean for reintegration interventions. Agree on common definitions of key concepts.
- If a reintegration initiative has a regional nature, harmonize indicators across countries, so data can be compared and analysed.

Data source and collection method

Based on the indicators selected, data sources identify where and how information is gathered for the purpose of measuring the specific indicators. The data collection method identifies the method(s) to be used to collect the data. Commonly used methods include:

- Document or desk review
- Observation
- Surveys (mini and formal)
- Interviews (including key informant and exit interviews, [see section 2.7](#))
- Focus group discussions
- Testing or direct measures
- Mapping (for example, community maps)

See [Annex 4.A](#) for more detail on data collection methods.

Data collection sources can include questionnaires, checklists, topic guides,⁴⁷ or project administrative documents such as handover certificates, case file documents, and so on.

When creating a data collection tool, remember to:

- Include fields that record the name of the data collector and the date and location of data collection, biodata and contact information of the respondent.

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- Include free and informed-consent and confidentiality clause in the personal data collection instrument if the tool is not anonymous ([see section 5.1.1](#)).
 - Address data-management requirements for the specific data collection tool. This can include budgeting for resources or staff time to develop and use the tool, as well as databases or systems that may need to be set up and maintained.

Language in data collection tools should be neutral and objective. Consider the data collection skills and technology available in the country. Different tools require different skills and failure to match capacity with the tool creates data bias and error. It is recommended to pre-test the data collection tool.

When it comes to generating feedback through monitoring beneficiaries,⁴⁸ sampling as a method can be specified at the planning stage of monitoring or evaluation.⁴⁹ This method is particularly useful, as often it is unrealistic to meet every beneficiary or visit every project site. Instead, use of a smaller group of beneficiaries, their geographical coverage, allocated resources and security context are all key aspects to be considered. Hence sampling is useful to:

1. Minimize data bias and improving data quality;
2. Reduce the time and money spent on data collection.

Sampling involves a variety of techniques. The choice of technique depends on the context, type of population, information available, data collection method and type of data collected by the project. All techniques provide different answers on:

- Representation: the degree to which the sample “represents” the larger group;
- Sample selection: how the people or places are chosen;
- Sample size: how many people, services and so on to include in the sample.
- If sampling is planned, programme M&E officers with skills in this area should be recruited or trained.

Data analysis

How the data will be analysed will depend on the data collection method. Different tools are needed based on the type of analysis required. Some data collection methods can be analysed for both qualitative and quantitative information. For example, if the indicator is “presence of legislation that reflects international best practice”, the data source would be where the information (data) comes from (copy of the legislation), while the data collection method would be a document review (review of the legislation). Data analysis can be qualitative in nature, for example an expert undertaking an assessment of the degree to which the legislation is in line with international best practices.

Frequency

The timing and frequency of data collection should be clearly defined from the outset of planning. Reintegration programme implementation often takes place in varied geographical places and with various partners, something crucial to consider when deciding the frequency of data collection, because this has budget implications. For example, if the indicator being measured is “referral to psychosocial support”, then it would make sense to monitor the number of persons being referred on a regular basis, such as monthly or quarterly.

Normally the results-monitoring framework is transferred to a clear workplan, where monitoring steps

and their frequency are outlined.

Person responsible

There should be clear roles and responsibilities for data collection, verification and storage ([see sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3](#)), especially when multiple stakeholders are involved. There should also be a data controller for personal data who ensures that data protection principles are being followed.

Baseline and target

A baseline provides a foundation against which to measure change over time. The baseline is the first measurement of an indicator; it assesses conditions pre-implementation and sets the conditions against which future change will be measured. A baseline study can have budget implications but can also be based on a previous evaluation or a desk review. When budget is limited, or when security constraints or other factors do not allow for a baseline study, the monitoring visit in which a specific indicator is measured for the first time can be considered the baseline.

The target is what the intervention hopes to achieve and is usually defined in relation to the baseline.

IOM's Reintegration Sustainability Survey

IOM developed a standardized Reintegration Sustainability Survey to evaluate the sustainable reintegration of returnees in the economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. This survey helps answer the question: To what extent have migrants achieved a level of sustainable reintegration in communities to which they returned?

This survey, along with the scoring system, can be used as a case management tool, for beneficiary monitoring and for programme evaluation. It is primarily designed to be administered to returnees 12–18 months after their return. However, the survey can be completed multiple times throughout a returnee's reintegration process. For example, depending on available resources, a first (baseline) reintegration score could be generated during the first counselling session that is used to assess needs (month 0–1) and compared to intermediary score 6–9 months after return to assess progress. A final score (month 12–18) then measures reintegration sustainability.

Intermediary monitoring scores collected during the reintegration assistance period can serve to readjust assistance based on reintegration scores for the three different dimensions.

Scoring after the conclusion of reintegration assistance is perhaps the most valuable – because it reflects the sustainability of the returnee's situation. These scores can also feed into final programme evaluation. They can be analysed to indicate the effectiveness of different types of reintegration assistance for different categories of returnees, in different contexts. Data generated through the scoring system also provides necessary evidence of the influence of community and structural-level factors on the reintegration of individuals (for example, poor access to health care is systematically reported in a set area) and can therefore feed the development of targeted community and structural-level interventions.

Trends in reintegration scores can be easily analysed in relation to basic profile information. Reintegration scores can be compared across sex, gender and age. They can compare patterns for returnees assisted through voluntary return and those returning through other means. The

recommended variables for an analysis of reintegration sustainability are listed below:

- Sex and gender
- Date of return
- Age at time of return
- Host country prior to return
- Country of origin
- Length of absence from country of origin
- Mode of return
- Community of return same as community of origin?
- Possible situations of vulnerability (determinants/triggers)
- Type of occupation

See [Annex 4](#) for more information on the Reintegration Sustainability Survey.

⁴⁶ IOM definition of theory of change adapted from the [Center of Theory of Change. What is Theory of Change?](#) (2017).

⁴⁷ A topic guide is an outline of key issues and areas of questioning used to guide a qualitative interview or group discussion.

⁴⁸ Beneficiaries include returnees, community members and local stakeholders.

⁴⁹ A sample is a part of the population, used to describe the whole group. Sampling is the process of selecting units from a population, to describe or make inferences about that population; that is, to estimate what the population is like based on the sample results.

5.3 Implementing a monitoring framework

Monitoring reintegration programming requires systems and practices to collect and analyse data based on established monitoring frameworks. Monitoring should be ongoing throughout programme implementation to identify common obstacles; findings should be reported back to programming staff and partners so the information can be used for programme improvements.

Once the results-monitoring framework is in place, it needs to be implemented according to plan. Within the context of reintegration programming, attention should focus on some common M&E considerations:

1. Conducting a regular review (for example during monthly meetings) of the results-monitoring framework against a detailed workplan and current expenditures. This will aid assessment of the budget, activities, results and potential risks that may affect operations.
2. Establishing good communication channels and means to communicate on progress or results. This is useful to:
 - Adapt or improve programming according to the results. For example, if beneficiaries consistently report that they are not able to access a specific service, this can be addressed.
 - Boost team morale as well as stakeholder buy-in and mobilization.
 - Clarify expectations, roles and responsibilities.
3. Stakeholder involvement is critical for a smooth reintegration process overall, including for M&E. Some stakeholders are directly involved in data collection while others are part of monitoring activities. Therefore, a participatory approach is required. It is important to be transparent and take feedback into consideration.
4. Finally, attention needs to be given to data validation methods. This often involves random spot checks, interviews during provision of assistance or cross-checking a small sample of forms (such as a handover certificate) against the beneficiary (such as contacting the person listed on the certificate) and applying quality control in the beneficiary database.

This chapter presents a detailed overview of the considerations and steps to take in order to implement a monitoring framework, supported by further guidance in the annexes:

5.3.1 Common challenges when monitoring reintegration initiatives

5.3.2 Data collection, entry and clean-up

5.3.3 Data analysis and reporting

5.3.1 Common challenges when monitoring reintegration initiatives

When conducting M&E in the field of reintegration, some common challenges can be encountered at all three levels of intervention (individual, community and structural). These challenges should be considered, along with the ethical considerations mentioned in [section 5.1.1](#). Common challenges include:

? **Resource constraints:** Often reintegration-programme implementation involves various country offices (for instance from host and origin countries). In this process, it is recommended to include appropriate resources needed both for implementation and M&E purposes. This is to avoid

constraints in gathering and analysing data.

- Recommendation: Realistically design and fund the programme to include the M&E component (human resources, coordination and transportation).

? **Contact with the returnees:** Successful monitoring depends on the willingness of returnees to participate in monitoring. This is not always a given, however, and returnees have the right to decline participation. Returnees might not want to be contacted, in particular if they feel that their reintegration process is difficult or not successful. Other programme beneficiaries (such as community members or relevant stakeholders) may not be fully aware of purpose and practice of M&E. Therefore, it is important to provide returnees and other beneficiaries with regular information about the value of receiving their feedback.

- Recommendation: Explain the purpose of obtaining feedback in counselling sessions and create a well-established relationship between case manager and returnee.

? **Ensuring beneficiary participation:** Beneficiaries (returnees, community members and relevant stakeholders) should not be financially rewarded for their participation in M&E. However returnees and community members could receive a small stipend to cover transportation costs associated with their participation in meetings or focus group discussions, and a beverage or snack during the interview to show appreciation for their cooperation and time. This can help mitigate any financial burden associated with this participation.

- Recommendation: Explain the purpose of obtaining feedback in counselling sessions. Use a survey to ascertain to whom beneficiaries prefer providing feedback.

? **Transparency of the monitoring process:** Staff involved in monitoring exercises should make sure that participants understand how the monitoring data will be used and that it will not have a positive or negative impact on the remaining support they are entitled to, if any, or on future migration possibilities. This should be made clear from the beginning and each time the participants are interviewed. This increases the likelihood of programme beneficiaries giving informed consent – and genuine answers, which will be useful for future programme design and implementation.

- Recommendation: Share M&E findings with beneficiaries and reiterate to them that they are a crucial stakeholder. Emphasize that through their feedback, future programmes will be adjusted and their valuable feedback will be incorporated. Documentation resulting from monitoring should be in an easily consultable and readable form to foster transparency and legitimacy.

? **Security:** For locations that are inaccessible due to security concerns or in which returnees have demonstrated aggression towards reintegration staff during the reintegration counselling process (for instance, due to reasons that go beyond project influence), the preferred method for monitoring is over the phone. Another example of a security concern is when in certain regions of return, security and safety deteriorate throughout the implementation phase. In such cases, monitoring over the phone or videoconferencing can be considered when technology allows. Or, based on thorough assessment, monitoring could be done by implementing partners who have access to locations of concern.

- Recommendation: If needed, use other methods of monitoring such as distance monitoring via videoconference, phone or via trusted implementing partners. Communicate changes to

relevant stakeholders.

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5.3.1 Common challenges when monitoring reintegration initiatives

5.3.2 Data collection, entry and clean-up

5.3.3 Data analysis and reporting

5.3.2 Data collection, entry and clean up

In order to assess progress, good-quality, reliable data needs to be available. Data collection guidance is crucial for this. This can include training for data collectors, so that they clearly understand why the data is being collected and ensure that they follow privacy and data protection principles. It is also important to have the tools and software necessary for data entry, clean up and analysis.

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5.3.2 Data collection, entry and clean-up

5.3.3 Data analysis and reporting

5.3.3 Data analysis and reporting

Turning data into evidence involves the following steps:

1. Data management: This includes how data is organized, cleaned, verified and stored.
2. Categorizing or calculating data (qualitative versus quantitative analysis).
3. Validating data: This entails checking or verifying whether or not the reported progress is accurate. This can be done through triangulation, which is the process of comparing several different data sources and methods to corroborate findings and compensate for any weaknesses in the data by the strengths of other data. Triangulation can and should therefore play a major role in M&E efforts, as it can enhance the validity and reliability of existing observations about a given issue, and to identify areas for further investigation. When findings converge, this can lead to new, credible findings about an issue and can create new ways of looking at it.
4. Developing a report based on the findings: This should include a summary of key achievements, progress made towards realizing outcomes and outputs, progress achieved with the established indicators, challenges encountered and actions taken, and finally a summary.
5. Sharing findings: To cultivate evidence-based approach in programming, it is necessary to

establish a clear plan of how to communicate M&E findings to project teams, beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders. Feedback from partners and beneficiaries on progress and proposed actions, should be sought and addressed when possible. The report's information may be communicated in different ways according to the target audience.

5.4 Managing an evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic, objective assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy. It differs from monitoring in that it involves a judgement of the value of the activity and its results. Evaluations should be done for most reintegration programmes, with the type, scope, timing and approach dependent on its intended use.

The core functions of evaluations are to:

- Enable accountability and learning;
- Inform stakeholders;
- Provide empirical knowledge about what worked, what did not and why;
- Enable informed decision-making.

Evaluation criteria are standards by which an intervention can be assessed:

Relevance The extent to which the objectives and goals of an intervention remain valid and pertinent either as originally planned or as subsequently modified.

Efficiency Helps analyse how well human, physical and financial resources are used to undertake activities and how well these resources are converted into outputs

Effectiveness The extent to which a project or programme achieves its intended results.

Impact The criteria that helps assess the positive or negative, and primary or secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, and intentionally or unintentionally.

Sustainability Refers to the durability of project results or the continuation of the project's benefits once external support ceases.

Not every evaluation needs to focus on all these criteria. Depending on the scope of the evaluation, it might assess only some of them.

Evaluation mechanisms need to be integrated at the beginning of an intervention and be part of the initiative's workplan and budget.

? **Assessing the use of an evaluation**

To understand how an evaluation should be set up it is necessary to assess how the evaluation findings will be ultimately used. To do this, ask three questions:

1. What information is needed? Examples:

- Information on the relevance of intended outputs or outcomes and validity of the results framework and results map;
- Information about the status of an outcome and factors affecting it;
- Information about the effectiveness of the reintegration partnership strategy;
- Information about the status of project implementation;
- Information on the cost of an initiative relative to the observed benefits;
- Information about lessons learned.

2. Who will use the information? Users of evaluation are varied but generally fall within the following categories: senior management, programme or project officers and managers. Others involved in design and implementation:

- National government counterparts, policymakers, strategic planners
- Donors and other funders
- Public and beneficiaries
- Academia

3. How will the information be used? Examples:

- To design or validate a reintegration strategy
- To make mid-course corrections
- To improve the intervention's design and implementation
- To promote accountability
- To make funding decisions
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the benefits and challenges of the intervention

? **Evaluation types** are defined according to the timing of the evaluation and its purpose, who conducts the evaluation, and the methodology applied. According to the timing and depending on its intended use, an evaluation can be implemented before the start of a project (ex-ante), at the early stages of an intervention (real-time), during the intervention's implementation (midterm), at the end of the intervention (final) and after the completion of the activities of the intervention (ex-post).

Evaluations can be conducted internally or externally, individually or jointly. Whether an evaluation is

conducted individually or jointly also depends on available resources and how participatory the evaluation needs to be. It is highly recommended that the organization implementing the reintegration interventions takes part in evaluation.

- An **internal evaluation** is conducted by project management. It is an independent internal evaluation if conducted by somebody who did not directly participate in the conceptualization or implementation of the intervention. It is a self-evaluation if done by those who are entrusted with the delivery of the project or programme.
- An **external evaluation** is conducted by someone recruited externally, usually by the donor or the implementing organization. External evaluations require the recruiting of consultants and can therefore be more expensive than internal evaluations. These are considered independent evaluations.

Some general considerations when planning and conducting an evaluation are included below. These questions are examples so they are not extensive. Each intervention needs to define specific questions.

Table 5.5: Considerations for planning and conducting an evaluation

Question	Guidance
How to conduct evaluations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources required for evaluations are included in programme and M&E plan.• Evaluation steering committee is recommended to be established.• Depending on type and scope of intervention, to develop internal, external or mixed-team evaluations.
What questions should evaluations ask?	<p>Depending on the purpose of the evaluation, questions should address, for instance, a few questions per criteria:</p> <p>Relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are reintegration support measures responding to the needs and preferences of returnees?• Were the initiative's reintegration-related activities designed in coordination with the communities in countries of origin, in order to respond to their needs and priorities?• Did the initiative's reintegration-related activities align with the needs and priorities identified by governments in countries of origin? <p>Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did the initiative have the necessary

Question

Guidance

coordination to avoid duplication of efforts between stakeholders, and to foster complementarity and coherence across reintegration-related activities?

Effectiveness:

- Have returnees been assisted by entities they have been referred to? Are returnees satisfied by the referral process and assistance received through referrals?
- Does the reintegration counselling offered to migrants upon their arrival to the country of origin allow them to make an informed decision with regards to the reintegration path they would like to engage in?

Impact:

- Did reintegration activities link returnees and communities (social cohesion)?
- Did reintegration activities impact on the socioeconomic conditions of communities to which migrants return (employment, well-being)?

Sustainability:

- Are structures, resources and processes in place so that benefits generated by the project continue once external support ceases?
- Did the project contribute to the sustainable reintegration of returnees?
- Did the project strengthen national and local capacities (governmental and nongovernmental) to provide reintegration services to returning migrants?

How to define good practice?

Evaluations promote good practice and learning through the completion of case studies highlighting good practices, validation and ideally learning workshops with involved parties. In the field of reintegration, it is recommended to involve returnees and communities in both the data collection phase and workshop stage to share good practices.

How to respond to and use evaluation findings?

Evaluation findings should be discussed and responded to through:

- A participatory reflection and planning
-

Question	Guidance
How do we share findings from evaluations?	<p data-bbox="901 123 1029 156">meeting;</p> <ul data-bbox="869 156 1530 831" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="869 156 1348 235">• A management response to all evaluations;<li data-bbox="869 235 1530 347">• Implementing the management response and monitoring the planned actions with concerned relevant stakeholder.<li data-bbox="869 347 1530 548">• Each evaluation should have a clear strategy for communication, developed with the Terms of Reference. This includes internal staff, relevant external partners and other stakeholders.<li data-bbox="869 548 1530 627">• Evaluations should be sent to the relevant donors and other stakeholders.<li data-bbox="869 627 1530 784">• Recommended to have a webinar or presentation on main findings and lessons learned to project team, relevant stakeholders.<li data-bbox="869 784 1530 831">• If possible, publish findings externally.

A sample template terms of reference for an evaluation are included in [Annex 4.C](#).

Spotlight

One evaluation approach with good potential for better understanding the intended and unintended effects of reintegration programming is the most significant change (MSC) approach. MSC involves generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why.

There are three basic steps in using MSC:

1. Deciding the types of stories to collect (or stories about “what”: for example, about practice change, health outcomes or empowerment);
2. Collecting the stories and determining which stories are the most significant;
3. Sharing the stories and discussion of values with stakeholders and contributors so that learning takes place about what is valued.

MSC is not just about collecting and reporting stories but about having processes to learn from these stories – in particular, to learn about the similarities and differences in what various groups and individuals value.

5.5 Learning and generating knowledge from monitoring and evaluation

One of the most direct ways of using knowledge gained from M&E is using it to inform ongoing and future planning and programming. Lessons from evaluations of programmes, projects and initiatives – and management responses – should be available when new outcomes are being formulated or projects or programmes are identified, designed and appraised.

Institutionalization of the learning process can be achieved in part by better incorporating learning into existing tools and processes. As addressed in the first section, results-based management is an effective approach to cultivating organizational learning throughout programming. Knowledge products can take many different forms depending on the audience and its information needs. For meaningful learning and knowledge sharing, knowledge products should be high quality and have a clearly identified audience and purpose. A good knowledge product, including a good publication, is:

- Based on demand for the product among targeted users (this means that the product will be relevant, effective and useful);
- Designed for a specific audience;
- Relevant to decision-making needs;
- Written in clear and easily accessible language, with data presented clearly;
- Based on an unbiased evaluation of the available information.

As stated above, a good practical way to use collected data and findings in evidence-based programming is to have a strategy for communicating findings and good practices. This could be through webinars, workshops, production of flyers and infosheets on findings.

In conclusion, to sum up this module, M&E process throughout an intervention follows these key stages:

Reintegration programming stages

M&E process

Reintegration programming stages

Planning

M&E process

1. Review learnings from previous initiatives, including information from already conducted M&E activities if available.

2. Clearly define the overall objective and the results the reintegration intervention hopes to achieve. This is achieved, for instance, by creating a theory of change or a logical framework.

3. Develop and define relevant indicators. Start creating the data collection and analysis plan at this time.

4. Identify if an evaluation or review will be used for this intervention.

5. Assess budget required and who will need to be involved in the M&E activities.

Startup

6. Finalize monitoring data collection and analysis plan. Start thinking about this during indicator selection and project design.

7. Establish a baseline within two months of starting implementation. Exact timing for baseline data collection can vary, depending on the intervention.

Implementation

8. Collect data from different sources, using different methods. It is recommended to use a “mixed method” approach for data collection and monitoring. This combines quantitative and qualitative methods.

9. Analyse, interpret and share findings. Data collected should be used to inform good practices and evidence-based programming.

Closure and review

10. Review and evaluate. Reflect on the intervention’s achievements and lessons learned and use this information to shape future interventions.

Impact evaluation

“Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer a specific cause-and-effect question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a program on an outcome of interest? This basic question incorporates an important causal dimension. The focus is only on the impact: that is, the changes directly attributable to a program, program modality, or design innovation.”⁵⁰

For more information: www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJIT8t5ezU

⁵⁰ Gertler, P., S. Martinez, P. Premand, L. Christel and M. Vermeersch, [Impact Evaluation in Practice](#). World Bank Group (New York, 2011).
