

# Module 7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning For Increased Impact and Improvement of the IEA Process

## 1. Introduction and Learning Objectives

Monitoring and evaluation of an IEA process and its impacts focuses on how the assessment process has been organized to have a desired impact on policy making.

**Monitoring** is a planned, systematic process of observation that closely follows a course of activities, and compares what is happening with what is expected to happen. Monitoring the IEA process makes sure the environmental assessment meets its goals, while working within the scope of allocated resources (i.e., time, financial, human, informational and technical).

**Evaluation** is a process that assesses an achievement against preset criteria. Evaluations can have a variety of purposes, and follow distinct methodologies (process, outcome, performance, etc). Evaluation of the IEA process determines the extent to which achievements (outputs, outcomes and impacts) are comparable with the originally intended purpose, and what lessons can be learned for the next environmental assessment and management cycle. The evaluation of the process is, first and foremost, a capacity-development opportunity.

**Table 1: Comparison of Monitoring and Evaluation**

| Attribute                       | Monitoring  | Evaluation   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Main focus                      | Collecting data on progress                                       | Assessing data t critical stages of the process  |
| Sense of completion             | Sense of progress   | Sense of Achievement   |
| Time focus                      | Present   | Past – Future  |
| Main question                   | What needs to happen now to reach our goal?                       | Have we achieved our goal?   |
| How can we do better next time? |   |  |
| Attention level                 | Details   | Big picture  |
| Inspires                        | Motivation  | Creativity   |
| Periodicity                     | Continuous throughout the whole process                           | Intermittent; at the beginning or end of significant milestones                        |
| Supports                        | Implementation of a plan  | Designing the next planning cycle  |
| Skills required                 | Management  | Leadership   |
| Output processing               | Progress indicators needs to be closely monitored by a few people | Evaluation results need to be discussed, processed and interpreted by all stakeholders |

Successful completion of this module will allow trainees to do the followings:

- explain the importance of monitoring and evaluating;
- recognize monitoring and evaluation as learning opportunities for improving the IEA process; and
- develop a draft plan for monitoring and evaluating your national IEA process and its impact.

**Exercise 1:** In small groups, participants to point out areas of the IEA process where their organizations could have constraints that could limit M & E. (5 mins)

## 2. Foundation of effective monitoring and evaluation

### 2.1 Purpose

The purposes of conducting monitoring and evaluation are to render judgment by setting clear criteria and standards in order to increase the credibility of an IEA process, to encourage improvement involving changes in behavior and change in the state of environment, and to generate new knowledge needed for a pressing decision.

### 2.2 Users

The primary users of the evaluation may include IEA core team including policy-makers, and evaluation team. The qualification of individual users are who can revise the IEA process with mandate, knowledge and skills and who has both the willingness and a vested interest in influencing the design and implementation of the IEA process.

Identifying the users is perhaps the single most important step for getting the evaluation utilized. If you know who the users are, what decisions they have to make, and how the evaluation results can support their decisions, you can attract the users' attention and increase the uptake of evaluation outcomes/results.

*Exercise 2:* In small groups, participants to list names, positions and department of potential primary users of the results of M&E. Make a record for further discussion (5 mins)

### 2.3 Evaluators

Evaluators may include a small internal evaluation task force (including the IEA core team), and external evaluators (consultants and internal evaluators of another IEA). In reality, ministries are often chronically understaffed or challenged by the lack of capacity, and forced to use external evaluators. In this case, regular contacts between the external evaluator(s) and the IEA core team are essential throughout the IEA cycle. Evaluators are selected by the IEA core team. They should have a good understanding of the IEA process, its intended impact and societal contexts.

## 3. Framework, attributes and measures

### 3.1 Attributes of effective assessments

This framework takes a look at key attributes that enhance the IEA report's effectiveness in influencing policy-makers. The notions of **saliency, credibility and legitimacy**—as key attributes of effective assessments—arise from earlier academic research that focused on better understanding the factors that determine the effectiveness of assessments.

The saliency-credibility-legitimacy attribute triad acknowledges that the process is subject to political interests. Saliency is "What users consider useful relevant, hot, and significant: what make users use the assessment". Credibility is "Trustworthy, rigorous in scientific terms, believable and plausible". Legitimacy is "Lawful and justifiable". Need to attract political attention is emphasized when legitimacy and credibility are not convincing enough. It also implies that without credibility and legitimacy, political saliency is not enough to attract and maintain attention. Finally, it is recommended to involve key policy-makers and decision-makers who can develop a sense of saliency in addition to being assured of credibility and legitimacy.

Example: The assessment of Stratospheric Ozone depletion.

The assessment of stratospheric ozone depletion is a good example, because it was perceived by policy-makers as salient, credible and legitimate:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Salient</b>    | Because it addressed a global threat to survival that called for immediate attention and action from decision-makers.          |
| <b>Credible</b>   | Because it involved high-profile research institutions from different countries, triangulating their observations and results. |
| <b>Legitimate</b> | Because of the transparent process, engaging all relevant stakeholders and acknowledging their investment.                     |

## 3.2 Framework

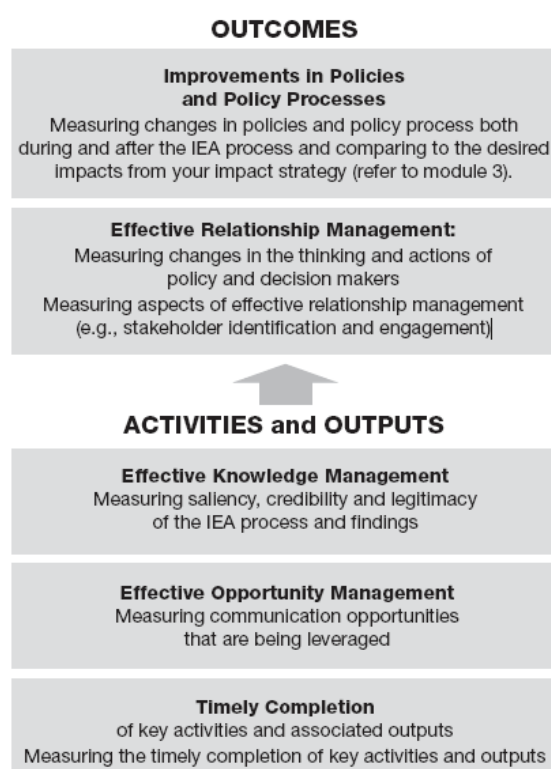
The ultimate goal is to maintain and enhance the health of ecosystems and the well-being of people. A basic conceptual understanding of how the activities and outputs are linked with intended outcomes and impacts needs to be developed. The intended outcomes of an IEA process are the changes in the thinking and actions of policy-makers that can bring about improvements in policies and policy making processes, which, in turn, can result in environmental improvements.

## 3.3 Measures

There are five categories of measures, supporting the development of self-assessment matrix.

- 1) Outcome-based Measures for Improvements in Policies and Policy Processes
- 2) Outcome-based Measures for Effective Relationship Management
- 3) Activity- and Output-based Measures for Effective Knowledge Management
- 4) Activity- and Output-based Measures for Effective Opportunity Management
- 5) Measures for timely Completion of Activities and Outputs

**Figure 1: Framework for M&E the National IEA Process**



### 3.3.1 Outcome-based Measures for Improvements in Policies and Policy Processes

Attributing improvements in policies and policy processes to your IEA process will, in most cases, be a difficult or impossible task. It is not critical for these measures that you be able to attribute sole credit for the change to your IEA; what is most important is that the change occurred. Your measures for effective relationship management might still help you better understand the role of your IEA in higher-level policy improvements.

### 3.3.2 Outcome-based Measures for Effective Relationship Management

Relationships among people jointly processing and communicating ideas are what initiate change. Module 3 called decision-makers, whom should be made relationship with other target audience such as civil society, academic community, research institutes, and media for supporting, reinforcing, influencing and

strengthening recommendations and outputs from IEA process. Possible measures to monitor and evaluate for effective relationship management include:

- Number of key persons identified for each relationship group. Including specific names from each of the potential audience categories identified.
- Behavior observed (important changes in thinking and actions of key actors)

### **3.3.3 Activity- and Output-based Measures for Effective Knowledge Management**

Knowledge needed by policy-makers and decision-makers was generated from Modules 3, 5 and 6 in order to improve the policies and policy making processes. Measures of effective knowledge management could include:

- Views of decision-makers on their thought on the key issues
- Availability of required types or forms of information
- Identified list of reviewers
- Reviewed data and analysis
- Participation of Multi-stakeholders in identifying key issues and review the analysis

### **3.3.4 Activity- and Output-based Measures for Effective Opportunity Management**

Module 3 brings out challenges to leverage opportunities for getting information and knowledge generated into hands of decision-makers and policy-makers. Possible measures for effective opportunity management include:

- Number and type of unique communication outputs for each stakeholder and audience,
- Development of interim products,
- Scenario exercise and its feedback,
- Numbers of stakeholders represented.

### **3.3.5 Measures for timely Completion of Key Activities and Outputs**

Another important aspect is time provided and the desired quality. Time delivery implies efficient and effective use of resources and opportunities. The module has proposed a potential format for monitoring the timely completion of activities and their outputs throughout the IEA process.

| IEA Process/Stages                           | Time proposed | Outputs proposed  |
|--|---------------|---|
| Stage 1: Start-up                            | 4-6 weeks     | MoUs reviewed   |
| Stage 2: Institutional Set-up                | 1-3 months    | MoUs signed and Established Institutional Framework and stakeholders map                      |
| Stage 3: Scoping and design                  | 2-4 weeks     | Designed document (structure and outline of the report) and impact strategy                   |
| Stage 4: Planning                            | 4-6 weeks     | Agreed implementation plan and adjusted impact strategy and communication & outreach strategy |
| Stage 5: Implementation                      | 10-12 months  | Draft report and its results  |
| Stage 6: Communication of results & outreach | 1-2 months    | Report and complementary products in public   |
| Stage 7: M & E and learning                  | 1-2 months    | IEA impacts and recommendations for future  |

## 4. Self-Assessment Matrix

Self-Assessment matrix is the key tool for monitoring and evaluating the IEA process. Below are three recommended steps for self-assessment that could be followed.

**Step 1:** Identify major issues and monitoring questions, and develop specific measures.

| MAJOR ISSUES IDENTIFIED                       |  | MONITORING QUESTIONS  |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| - change statement                            |  | - have the desired improvements in policies and processes identified been realized?   |  |
|   |  | - what are other improvements observed during and following the IEA process?  |  |
| - relationship management                     |  | - have perceived changes in thinking and actions of policy-makers observed?   |  |
| OTHER FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED                |  | MONITORING QUESTIONS  |  |
| - knowledge management                        |  | - Is the right knowledge being generated and is that knowledge salient, credible and legitimate?  |  |
| - opportunity management                      |  | - are opportunities being leveraged for effectively communicating that knowledge to those persons in a position to influence change?    |  |
| - timely completion and outputs in each stage |  | - are the key activities and outputs necessary to complete the IEA process being completed on time and at the desired level of quality? |  |

**Step 2:** Identify sources of data and data collection methods

Measures developed from Step 1 will make possible to identify sources of data and data collection methods for each measure. The data will come from a variety of sources with a variety of data collection methods. In order to select the most appropriate data collection method, it depends on where the data are most likely to be found. The following table provides some guidance.

**Step 3:** Set priorities and frequency of monitoring and evaluation

There are several kinds of indicators required for this step.

1. Indicators for monitoring progress of the impact strategy that will required less regular and frequent monitoring
2. Indicators for monitoring the process for effective management

Both indicators are required for monitoring for several years after the national IEA report and other outputs have been disseminated.

### **Exercise 3: Participants to work a group of 4-5 and discuss**

Based on the identified issue and proposed indicators in each group, the same group will be gathered. The group will design the monitoring plan to follow the output of the specific issue.

#### **Step 1: major issues and specific measures**

##### **1. Change statement**

- government - changes in their political wills to address priority hotspots identified in the report
- public - public awareness raising of the public's impacts on environment
- Business – improvement of dialogue between lawmakers and industry that make great compliance with existing laws.

##### **2. Effective relationship management – what changes in the actions of policy & decision makers have you observed ?**

#### **Step 2: sources of data and data collection**

##### **1. what are sources of data?**

##### **2. what are techniques used in collecting data?**

#### **Step 3: Set priorities and frequency of monitoring**

Based on the first exercise on identifying limitation to M&E and the second on identifying the potential actors, set up process and progress indicators.

## **5. Improvement opportunities**

IEA is a capacity building process. M&E should be considered as a learning opportunity for an organization and increases impacts from the assessment process to improve policy making and human well-being.

Learning is more than knowledge creation and demonstrated by behavior changes. Exchange of information and discussions (processing) are prerequisites for learning opportunities.