

PART II

How to Conduct Monitoring and Evaluation

Chapter 3. Planning for Monitoring and Evaluation	23
A. Key principles for planning	23
B. The planning process	25
Chapter 4. The Monitoring Process (“how to...”)	31
A. Key principles for monitoring	32
B. The building blocks: Monitoring tools and mechanisms	36
Chapter 5. The Evaluation Process (“how to...”)	45
A. Preparing for an evaluation	45
B. Managing an evaluation	56
C. Joint evaluations	57
Figures, Tables and Boxes for Part II	
Figure 1. Workplanning at the country office	24
Table 1. Selecting the right mix of monitoring mechanisms	36
Table 2. Questions to ask when planning an annual review	42
Table 3. Possible timing, purpose and duration of outcome evaluations	46
Table 4. Variations in timing, purpose and duration and scope of outcome evaluations	49
Table 5. Sample comparison of time and resource requirements for outcome evaluations	51
Table 6. Documentation sources and corresponding categories of analysis	53
Table 7. Examples of a mixture of approaches in an outcome evaluation	56
Box 1. Outcome evaluation planning using the Country Programme	29
Box 2. Evaluation compliance	29
Box 3. Is implementation also monitored?	34
Box 4. Key partners and stakeholders	47
Box 5. Measurement, attribution and credible linkages	48
Box 6. Forming the evaluation focal team	54

Planning for Monitoring and Evaluation

This chapter describes how to develop a comprehensive, logical planning framework for monitoring and evaluation related to Country Programmes, the strategic results framework, project-level and other activities. It provides guidance on how to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan, as well as criteria for selecting and planning evaluations. The objective of this chapter is to help users plan for monitoring and evaluation actions in a coherent manner, depending on the needs of the country and the intended results.

This chapter covers:

- A. Key principles for planning
 - Overall workplanning
 - Minimum requirements
 - Planning at the Country Programme level
- B. The planning process
 - Planning for monitoring
 - Planning for evaluation
 - Project workplanning

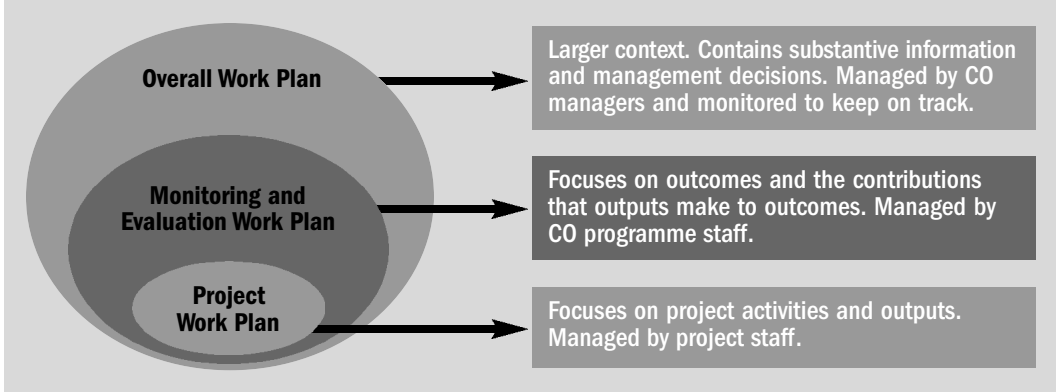
A. Key Principles for Planning

OVERALL WORKPLANNING

A **work plan** is an annual or multi-year summary of tasks, timeframes and responsibilities. It is used as a monitoring tool to ensure the production of outputs and progress towards outcomes. Work plans describe the activities to be conducted as well as the expected outputs and outcomes. The overall process of workplanning is a comprehensive tool that helps people translate information or ideas into operational terms on an annual basis. Monitoring and evaluation are integral parts of a country office's overall work plan, which encompasses many additional areas.

A country office work plan, as illustrated in Figure 1, contains three inter-related elements:

FIGURE 1. WORKPLANNING AT THE COUNTRY OFFICE



- The overall work plan, which contains substantive information and management actions and is overseen by country office management;
- The monitoring and evaluation work plan, which is focused on outputs and outcomes and overseen by programme staff; and
- The project work plan, which is focused on activities and outputs and overseen by project staff.

At the country office level, workplanning is reflecting the shift to results-based management by placing greater emphasis on the planning of monitoring and evaluation. For results-oriented monitoring and evaluation, UNDP offices must plan for the specific needs of the office, partners, project or outcome—and not mechanically follow prescriptive procedures.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Country offices may integrate their results-oriented monitoring and evaluation planning into existing systems and structures in any number of ways. Nevertheless, as a minimum for planning, offices should:

- 1. Plan monitoring and evaluation simultaneously:** Evaluation is an important monitoring tool and monitoring is an important input to evaluation. Because they are so inter-related, it is recommended that country offices plan monitoring and evaluation processes together at the same time.
- 2. Capture results (outcome and outputs):** Meaningful information about outcomes and outputs needs to be captured, regardless of the unit of analysis used by a monitoring and evaluation plan (e.g. outcomes, outputs, projects, activities, themes, areas).
- 3. Develop an evaluation plan:** An evaluation plan covers outcomes for the Country Programme period. All operating units and offices prepare a mandatory evaluation plan within the first quarter of each Country Programme cycle. This is a key element in performance assessment.
- 4. Base planning on a strategic choice:** Planning is not primarily about scheduling (the timing and selection of tools); it is about determining the best approach depending on the needs and the nature of what is being monitored or evaluated.

PLANNING AT THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME LEVEL

Planning of monitoring and evaluation begins as early as the formulation stage of the Country Programme. It is kept up-to-date continuously, which may be annually or periodically depending on local needs and as plans become more concrete and programmes evolve. Such planning leads to strategic and selective decisions about what to evaluate, when and why. In other words, it takes into account how the evaluation will be used to improve programming and policy. In addition, the findings may recommend actions that affect either the CO overall work plan, the project work plan or the work of the Programme Manager.

At the design and approval stage of the Country Programme Outline (CPO)—the document that encapsulates UNDP’s programme in a given country—the country office with partners will:

- Decide on the **strategies** for monitoring and evaluation and describe these arrangements in the CPO. Define a general approach for how monitoring and evaluation will be carried out. Indicate the outcomes to be evaluated (or the process that will be used to make this decision). Also indicate how outcomes, programmes and projects will be monitored in general terms. Note: This step often yields an opportunity to reach agreement on monitoring and evaluation with the government through the Country Programme formulation process.
- Plan **outcome evaluations**. Actually select specific outcomes (results or development changes) to evaluate and the timing of these evaluations. (See the following section on planning evaluations.)
- Plan **outcome monitoring** and set up systems for this. The assessment of progress towards outcomes is based on the continuous collection of data and information. This may involve using existing mechanisms or establishing consultation groups on outcomes, determining how indicator data will be collected, discussing the focus of such monitoring and so on. (See the section on planning monitoring below and Chapter 4.)
- Once the CPO is approved and implementation of the Country Programme starts, plan detailed programme/project monitoring for Year 1. This should go beyond the planned monitoring for the related outcome. In other words, programme/project monitoring should address implementation issues and production of outputs, as well as progress towards outcomes, whereas the outcome monitoring plan would focus at a higher level.

B. The Planning Process

PLANNING FOR MONITORING

Discussions about how and when to monitor the progress of UNDP activities take place early on and continue at regular intervals. Planning for monitoring generally takes place at the Country Programme design stage, the programme/project design

stage and yearly thereafter. A plan for monitoring may focus on projects and programmes as well as the resulting development changes (outcomes).

Projects, programmes and new activities are developed or initiated during every programming cycle. At this time, plans for their monitoring and evaluation are drawn up. These plans are designed to fit into the framework for monitoring and evaluation that already exists in the Country Programme. UNDP Programme Managers are responsible for designing monitoring arrangements that are appropriate for the nature of the outcome, programme and project. A few examples of different kinds of **monitoring arrangements** are provided below:

- If the outcome being monitored is the enhancement of livelihoods at the village level, a more participatory approach may be required;
- If the outcome involves a high degree of policy advice, the monitoring plan should include a means of following the policy formulation process in the country;
- If the outcome involves a high degree of advocacy, monitoring might need to capture changes in perceptions (as revealed through client surveys or focus groups) rather than physical changes (as revealed through field visits to project sites);
- If the outcome is at the regional or global level, monitoring may require more frequent reporting because the countries involved are spread out geographically.

When planning monitoring to assess progress towards outcomes (**outcome monitoring**), country offices are encouraged to take the following steps:

1. **Assess needs:** This is done by assessing the nature of the outcome and/or the programmes and projects that are expected to contribute to outcome. What information is needed to assess that outcome? What elements are most important to keep track of? What would indicate progress or success?
2. **Assess current monitoring:** To assess current monitoring (or proposed monitoring for new projects), look at the monitoring tools being used in all of the projects and programmes intended to contribute to a given outcome. Are these tools providing the necessary information? Do they involve the key partners? Is monitoring focusing on key issues for efficiency? Are there possibilities for greater efficiency and coordination? This will help to identify gaps in the analysis as compared with the needs for this information.
3. **Review monitoring scope or tools:** Is there a need for additional or specific monitoring scope or tools to suit the programme or project? For example, large or complex programmes may require more details about implementation, downstream projects may require additional participation by beneficiaries, and innovative pilot projects may generate specific lessons learned that should be captured through monitoring.
4. **Adapt and/or design monitoring mechanisms:** The mechanisms used should provide sufficient analysis on outcomes and close the gap, if any, between the available and the required information. For example, if steering mechanisms are being used to monitor, be sure to include partners working in the same outcome area. Or, if an outcome involves a large number of partners, add tools such as stakeholder meetings. (See Chapter 4 on selecting the right monitoring tools.)

No format is required for a monitoring plan. In practical terms, such planning can be reflected in CO work plans, in project work plans, in the individual work plans of Programme Managers and in plans for coordination mechanisms. Nevertheless, for effective outcome monitoring, many COs will want to produce one document that describes the totality of monitoring efforts.

PLANNING FOR EVALUATION

Evaluation is important for learning, validation of results and decision-making. Country offices will be expected to conduct a limited number of outcome evaluations during the programming cycle, and to develop an evaluation plan for these and any other evaluations of projects, programmes or themes that the office wishes to conduct. (See Chapter 5 on evaluations.)

Evaluation planning is linked to the country programming cycle. Within the first quarter of each Country Programme, country offices prepare and submit the evaluation plan to the Evaluation Office.⁸ (See Annex A for format.) Subsequently, the plan is kept up to date continuously, annually or periodically depending on local needs, becoming in essence a “rolling” plan. For example, if a country office plans its first outcome evaluation three years into the Country Programme, the country office may not need to revisit the evaluation plan for two years—that is, until the year prior to the evaluation. Any revision of the plan over the course of the cycle should be presented first by the CO to the Evaluation Office. Sometimes revision is required when circumstances change, such as a loss or gain in financial resources or when there is change in the national context.

An evaluation plan is based on strategic and selective decisions by country offices (by senior CO management in particular) about what to evaluate and when. The plan is then used to ensure that evaluation activities are on track. When preparing for an evaluation, it can be helpful to think in terms of “backwards planning”. This means looking at the scheduled dates for an evaluation, estimating the time needed to prepare and conduct the evaluation, and then working backwards to anticipate by when the preparation process needs to begin.

When planning outcome evaluations in particular, country offices may pick and choose which outcomes to evaluate, covering at least the mandatory minimum number of outcomes that must be evaluated. Using the strategic results framework (SRF)⁹ for the country, country offices should select which outcomes to evaluate by considering the following criteria.

Criteria for outcome selection:

- 1. Purpose of the outcome evaluation:** Outcome evaluations may fill a number of different needs, such as providing early information about the appropriateness of UNDP’s partnership strategy, identifying impediments to the outcome, suggesting

⁸ A corporate system for Evaluation Planning and Tracking is being designed to: (a) plan for the conduct of evaluations; (b) record and analyze lessons learned and findings from evaluations; and (c) monitor the progress of evaluation recommendations. The system will link up with and integrate information from country office evaluation plans and evaluations for overall corporate learning and accountability. Country offices will be able to develop their evaluation plans and follow-up systems for electronic use at the country level.

⁹ The strategic results framework (SRF) defines an approach to development and how the desired results may be achieved. It includes strategies, objectives and problem analysis and provides a basis for organizing results-oriented monitoring and evaluation. In UNDP, it is presented in a document that defines outcomes, outputs, partnerships and indicators with specified goals, sub-goals and strategic areas of support.

mid-course adjustments and gathering lessons learned for the next programming cycle. Country offices should review the intended SRF outcomes and reflect on which outcome an evaluation would be most useful for, why and when the evaluation would yield the most relevant information. For example, an early evaluation might be called for if a governance outcome includes a great deal of policy advice and advocacy that the country office is relatively inexperienced in providing. Such an early evaluation (even within the first year) could look at design and implementation strategy issues. In a different situation, a mid-term outcome evaluation might be called for if a need arose for a mid-course adjustment and verification of early outputs. (See Chapter 5 for more on the purposes of and options for outcome evaluations.)

2. **The level of country office resources invested in the outcome:** When selecting an outcome for evaluation, look for one in which the country office has invested significant resources. Avoid selecting only those outcomes that have very modest resources behind them.
3. **The likelihood of future interventions in the same thematic area:** An outcome evaluation is an important means of generating recommendations to guide future work. It enables the CO to take stock of whether the outputs have contributed to the outcome and whether UNDP has crafted an effective partnership strategy. When selecting an outcome for evaluation, look for one in area that the country office will continue to support.
4. **Anticipated problems:** Evaluations can help prevent problems and provide an independent perspective on problems. When selecting an outcome for evaluation, look for those with problems or where complications are likely to arise because the outcome is within a sensitive area with a number of partners.
5. **Need for lessons learned:** What kinds of lessons are needed to help guide activities in this country or other countries in the region? An outcome evaluation in one thematic area is not only relevant to that area but also may reveal generic lessons for other thematic areas. COs should select outcomes for evaluation that yield lessons for use across the organization. For example, an outcome evaluation looking at the design and implementation of policy or regulatory frameworks—a relatively new area for UNDP—will provide much-needed insight into an area in which UNDP has had little experience.
6. **Timing:** The country office determines the timing of evaluations based on its expected workload in any given year. It also strives for an **equitable spread** of evaluations throughout the Country Programme, both in terms of timing and of scope for a mixture of early and late, light and heavy exercises depending upon need. An example of how a country might use the Country Programme for evaluation planning purposes is provided in Box 1.

Once the outcome is selected for evaluation, the CO identifies the projects and programmes that may contribute to the outcome. These projects and programmes are noted in the evaluation plan. This gives notice to the concerned programmes and projects and allows them to take account of the outcome evaluation in their monitoring and workplanning. It also helps the Programme Manager in outcome monitoring, and ensures that the project's contributions are included within the scope of the evaluation.

BOX 1. OUTCOME EVALUATION PLANNING USING THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The UNDP programme in Country X is expected to have “medium” resources available to it for the next Country Programme (CP) cycle. At the beginning of the CP period, country office X submits to the Evaluation Office an evaluation plan for three outcome evaluations that it plans to undertake over the next five years. The country office selects these three outcomes based on their prominence in terms of substance, the resources going towards them and the areas of likely future assistance. The country office also selects a mixture of types of outcome evaluations based upon what the CO and stakeholders want to get out of the exercises.

Based upon the expected timetables of the various projects, programmes and activities associated with the three outcomes, the evaluation plan submitted to the Evaluation Office in the first quarter of the CP envisages a relatively light outcome exercise centered around Outcome #1 at the end of Year 1, the more robust evaluation of Outcome #2 in the middle of Year 3 and the full evaluation of Outcome #3 at the end of Year 4.



Another aspect of planning for evaluation is that of **evaluation compliance**. Compliance is based on the outcome evaluations that the country office commits to undertaking during a given Country Programme cycle. UNDP Headquarters uses the evaluation plan submitted by the country office as the basis for assessing compliance. Beyond the outcome evaluations, other evaluations that the country office elects to undertake will not figure into compliance rates. The Evaluation Office (EO) is responsible for monitoring evaluation compliance and systematically analyzing information generated to promote learning, and reports to the UNDP Executive Board. Compliance is calculated according to a formula explained in Box 2.

BOX 2. EVALUATION COMPLIANCE

To determine evaluation compliance, countries are categorized into ranges and required to undertake a certain number of outcome evaluations during the Country Programme cycle based upon **total resources** (core and non-core) expected to be at the disposal of a country office, and taking account of the previous evaluation workload. The ranges for mandatory evaluation compliance are as follows:

Category	Resource range (in US \$ million)	Number of mandatory outcome evaluations per CP (depending upon resources and previous evaluations) Minimum of....
A	< 2	Optional or 1
B	2 < 5	1 or 2
C	5 < 10	2 or 3
D	10 < 20	3 or 4
E	20 < 70	4 or 5
F	70 <	6

Example: Country Z falls into the high end of Category E over the next programming cycle. It will therefore be required to undertake a minimum of 5 outcome evaluations over the course of the next Country Programme (CP). This workload is lighter than in the past, when Country Z was required to carry out project evaluations of 19 projects over US\$ 1 million.

PROJECT WORKPLANNING

The project work plan is a tool used to set targets for the delivery of outputs and to develop a strategy for maximizing the contribution of the project and associated activities to the attainment of the goals of the SRF. The workplanning process helps build consensus between project management and other stakeholders on the best strategy for generating results.

When taking a results-based approach to workplanning, it is important to review the work plan regularly. The focus should be on the broad goals of the SRF rather than a more limited focus on the project's objectives. This work plan serves as a mechanism to link inputs, budget, activities, outputs and outcomes. As lessons are learned, a more flexible approach to implementing the project may be needed to accommodate constant adjustments.

The Programme Manager uses project work plans as the basis for monitoring the progress of project implementation. Project work plans enable Programme Managers and other stakeholders to agree on results and to ensure that these results conform and contribute to the results and targets in the SRF. They also can be used as the basis for discussion about activities to produce outputs, inputs and budget lines. Critical milestones for activities and outputs in the work plan can serve as early warning indications that progress is off-target. The Project Manager should include the project's key monitoring and evaluation actions in the work plan, noting in particular how the production of outputs will be monitored. The plan may also include how to supervise contractors, how to collect data and information, and specific monitoring events such as stakeholder meetings.

The Monitoring Process (“how to...”)

CHAPTER 4

Why do we have to monitor and evaluate our work? The focus of monitoring and evaluation is to enhance the effectiveness of UNDP assistance by establishing a clear link between past, present and future interventions and results. Monitoring and evaluation can help an organization to extract, from past and ongoing activities, relevant information that can subsequently be used as the basis for programmatic fine-tuning, reorientation and planning. Without monitoring and evaluation, we would not be able to judge if we are getting where we want to go, whether we can credibly claim progress and success or how to improve on our efforts.

Monitoring is arguably the most important responsibility of any Programme Manager. She or he monitors the progress of project activities towards the intended outcomes, and selects different monitoring approaches to do so. This chapter provides guidance on the successful monitoring of results, which includes a mix of reporting and analysis, verification of progress towards results and participation.

Monitoring is based on adequate planning, discussed in Chapter 3. Monitoring also serves as the basis for evaluation, discussed in Chapter 5. Formats for select monitoring tools are presented in the Annexes, and templates are available on <http://www.undp.org/eo/>.

This chapter covers:

- A. Key principles for planning
 - Conducting good monitoring
 - Scope of monitoring
 - Responsibility for monitoring
 - Selecting the right monitoring tools

- B. The building blocks: Monitoring tools and mechanisms
 - Field visits
 - Annual project report (APR)
 - Outcome groups
 - Annual review (AR)

A. Key Principles for Monitoring

Under RBM, “good monitoring” means that monitoring is continuous, involves partners, and is focused on progress towards outcomes. Such monitoring provides the basis for the results-oriented annual report (ROAR) and for evaluations. Good monitoring requires that a country office find the right mix of tools and is able to balance the analysis of reports, reviews and validation, and participation. Good monitoring is **not** demonstrated by merely producing reports in a prescribed format at set intervals.

UNDP offices will be expected to follow good practices when it comes to both the **scope** and **conduct** of monitoring and evaluation. Within a set of key principles, each office largely determines the tools, formats, timing and schedules that will produce the kind of input the management team needs in order to manage for results. To determine if UNDP offices are observing good monitoring and evaluation practices, they are assessed through reviews, management indicators and country office or project audits.

CONDUCTING GOOD MONITORING

The credibility of findings and assessments depends to a large extent on the manner in which monitoring and evaluation is conducted. Good principles (also called “minimum standards”) for monitoring are as follows:

- Good monitoring focuses on **results** and **follow-up**. It looks for “what is going well” and “what is not progressing” in terms of progress towards intended results. It then records this in reports, makes recommendations and follows-up with decisions and action.
- Good monitoring depends to a large measure on **good design**. If a project is poorly designed or based on faulty assumptions, even the best monitoring is unlikely to ensure its success. Particularly important is the design of a realistic results chain of outcome, outputs and activities. Offices should avoid using monitoring for correcting recurring problems that need permanent solutions.
- Good monitoring requires **regular visits** by CO staff who focus on results and follow-up to verify and validate progress. In addition, the Programme Manager must organize visits and/or bilateral meetings dedicated to assessing progress, looking at the big picture and analyzing problem areas. The Programme Manager ensures continuous documentation of the achievements and challenges **as they occur** and does not wait until the last moment to try to remember what happened.
- **Regular analysis of reports** such as the annual project report (APR) is another minimum standard for good monitoring. Such reports, prepared by Project Management or Directors for the audience of the country office and other partners, serve as a basis for analysis by the UNDP Programme Managers.
- Monitoring also benefits from the use of **participatory** monitoring mechanisms to ensure commitment, ownership, follow-up and feedback on performance. This is indispensable for outcome monitoring where progress cannot be assessed without some knowledge of what partners are doing. Participatory mechanisms include outcome groups, stakeholder meetings, steering committees and focus group interviews.

- Good monitoring finds ways to objectively assess progress and performance based on clear criteria and indicators. To better assess progress towards outcomes, country offices must make an effort to improve their **performance measurement system** by developing **indicators and baselines**.
- **Assessing the relevance, performance and success** of UNDP development interventions also enhances monitoring. The country office periodically asks critical questions about the continued relevance of the support to the activity, and strives to judge performance and success—or lack thereof—based on empirical evidence. The findings are used for decision-making on programming and support.
- Finally, as part of good monitoring, the country office is seen to actively generate **lessons learned**, ensure learning through all monitoring tools, adapt strategies accordingly and avoid repeating mistakes from the past. The use of electronic media for memory and sharing lessons is also considered a minimum standard.

SCOPE OF MONITORING

Monitoring aims to identify progress towards results. Using the information gained through monitoring, the Programme Manager must analyze and take action on the programme and project activities that are contributing to the intended results—results that are within the strategic areas of support in the strategic results framework (SRF) for the country.¹⁰ Programme Managers also monitor and document the contributions of soft interventions and strategic partnerships. These tasks all form part of **outcome monitoring**, as defined in Chapter 2.

All monitoring and evaluation efforts should address, as a minimum:

- **Progress towards outcomes:** This entails periodically analyzing the extent to which intended outcomes have actually been achieved or are being achieved;
- **Factors contributing to or impeding achievement of the outcome:** This necessitates monitoring the country context and the economic, sociological, political and other developments simultaneously taking place;
- **UNDP contributions to the outcomes through outputs:** These outputs may be generated by programmes, projects, policy advice, advocacy and other activities. Their monitoring and evaluation entails analyzing whether or not outputs are in the process of being produced as planned and whether or not the outputs are contributing to the outcome;
- **The partnership strategy:** This requires the design of partnership strategies to be analyzed as well as the formation and functioning of partnerships. This helps to ensure that partners who are concerned with an outcome have a common appreciation of problems and needs, and that they share a synchronized strategy.

Offices may add additional elements where needed for management or analysis, while keeping a realistic scope in view of available capacities, as discussed in Box 3 on implementation.

¹⁰ The simplified format of the project document aligned with RBM should facilitate monitoring and be supported by project output indicators where appropriate, and the project document should refer to the relevant SRF outcomes.

BOX 3. IS IMPLEMENTATION ALSO MONITORED?

The implementation of activities is no longer monitored as closely as it could be, largely because greater efforts are being directed towards the monitoring of outcomes and outputs. Today it is often a trade-off: less detail regarding implementation for more emphasis on results. Each country office is expected to strike the appropriate balance when monitoring implementation—accurate but not “bogged down” in details. For example, less emphasis would be placed on detailed implementation tasks such as “has the car been delivered” or “has the project assistant been paid”.

Regular interactions between the Programme Manager and project staff should provide sufficient detail regarding implementation problems, activities, inputs and resource expenditures. Such interactions are the responsibility of the institution designated to manage the project (the executing agent). In cases where close monitoring by the country office is required to ensure accountability, it is still possible to reduce the level of detail in the monitoring by introducing ex-post check-ups, tight workplanning with benchmarks and other measures.

It is worth noting that problems associated with implementation—such as weak management and lack of accountability—cannot be effectively solved by monitoring. These problems can best be avoided through capacity assessments, good project design and early agreement on standards for management.

Monitoring does more than look at what projects deliver. Its scope includes assessing the progress of projects, programmes, partnerships and soft assistance in relation to outcomes as well as providing managers with information that will be used as a basis for making decisions and taking action. Under RBM, monitoring becomes even more important as a tool for decision-making and learning and is indispensable in providing information and data for evaluations.

Adequate **budgetary** resources should be allocated for monitoring. The CO may charge the project budget directly for the cost of monitoring visits related to informing the designated institution. The project budget may also cover the participation of national partners in monitoring visits, when agreed by the Resident Representative.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING

The responsibilities for monitoring are different at each programming level, where the focus is on higher-level results at each higher level of programming. The senior office management focus on the Country Programme, UNDAF overall performance and Millennium Development Targets; Programme Managers focus on the SRF and outcomes and project staff focus on the project documents and outputs.

UNDP Country Office Management

UNDP senior office management are closely involved in the strategic choice of monitoring mechanisms. The role of senior management is to ensure that the programme developed contributes as best as possible to the attainment of the goals of the SRF and Country Programme (or CCF if one is still in place). This is accomplished in partnership with key national stakeholders and with particular attention to the coordinating ministry. Senior management actively leads the ROAR and the annual review process, develops advocacy and partnership strategies, promotes better monitoring for results and fosters a learning environment. In general, the management sets the framework for managing for results, prioritization in workplanning and partnerships. Together with partners, the management also ensures that periodic assessments review whether or not the approach followed is the best way to produce the intended outcomes.

At this level, the focus is on all of UNDP programming as well as UNDP's contribution to UN priorities as expressed in the CCA and the UNDAF. The annual review is the

main vehicle for such monitoring. It draws out general lessons learned and distills trends in assistance, overall performance and problem areas—whether they are related to specific outcomes or they cut across results. This level of monitoring may also involve participation by the UNDP Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator in a UN country team (UNCT) assessment of progress on UN-supported goals in the country, including the Millennium Development Goals.

UNDP Programme Management

UNDP Programme Managers are responsible for the overall monitoring of progress towards outcomes as well as the project’s contribution in terms of strategic outputs. At this level, monitoring is the main responsibility of the UNDP Programme Manager. He or she ensures that monitoring and reporting at different programming levels and from different sources are brought together to provide complete information on progress towards outcomes. An outcome monitoring plan may facilitate this work. (See Chapter 3 on planning monitoring.)

Programme Managers today take on a greater role in advocacy and partnership building than they did in the past. For the ROAR, Programme Managers bring together an analysis of several projects and activities along with data based on the annual review, and then help generate lessons learned around outcomes. Programme Managers may also add value to project work and provide soft assistance to exercise a positive influence on the outputs. They are expected to play a strong role in programme design in order to ensure alignment with strategic priorities. Programme Managers helps develop accountability mechanisms and, through them, monitors periodically to ensure that UNDP resources are being used appropriately.

Programme Managers monitor outcomes periodically, as the development situation changes. Since progress towards outcomes cannot be assessed by project reports and indicators alone, they continuously scan the environment, keep abreast of evolving perceptions of key stakeholders and the contributions of partners, analyze newspapers and reports received from other development partners, use evaluations to provide feedback on progress and, ideally, conduct client surveys to find out if perceptions of progress hold true.

Project Management

The project management, generally the government, is responsible for delivering the outputs of the project, its actual implementation, input management and sound administrative management. It also monitors implementation tasks carried out by other contractors. The project management develops the project work plan and the annual project report to the CO, which provide critical information and lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of the implementation strategy and the delivery of outputs. Project management may also contribute to the implementation of a partnership strategy developed by the CO. The institution managing the project ensures the interface between the desired results and the expectations of the target beneficiaries, thus promoting a sense of ownership.

Monitoring of project activities per se is done mainly by the executing agent. The annual project reporting is made by project staff with specific attention to outputs, and is analyzed by CO staff for the ROAR. The institution managing the project would ensure detailed monitoring of all “deliverables” as well as implementation tasks. Since project staff members are often experts in their fields, monitoring at project level may also entail some assessment of outcome status and thus provide input to the ROAR.

SELECTING THE RIGHT MONITORING TOOLS

The monitoring approaches and tools described here may be applied to projects, programmes, outcomes and any activity that can be monitored. Steering committees, for example, normally have been established for projects, yet they can also be established to monitor an outcome with which a number of projects are associated.

Programme Managers work within a framework focused on progress towards outcomes and UNDP's contribution to them. Within that framework, Programme Managers must determine the correct mix of monitoring tools and approaches for each project, programme or outcome, ensuring that the monitoring contains an appropriate balance between:

- Reporting/analysis, which entails obtaining and analyzing documentation from the project that provides information on progress;
- Validation, which entails checking or verifying whether or not the reported progress is accurate;
- Participation, which entails obtaining feedback from partners and beneficiaries on progress and proposed actions.


TABLE 1. SELECTING THE RIGHT MIX OF MONITORING MECHANISMS		
REPORTING AND ANALYSIS	VALIDATION	PARTICIPATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annual project report (APR) ■ Progress and/or quarterly reports ■ Work plans ■ Project/programme delivery reports and combined delivery reports ■ Substantive project documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Field visits ■ Spot-check visits ■ External assessments/monitoring ■ Client surveys ■ Evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Outcome groups ■ Steering committees/mechanisms ■ Stakeholder meetings ■ Focus group meetings ■ Annual review
		

Table 1 lists a variety of monitoring mechanisms, divided into three categories according to their predominant characteristic. The main purpose of field visits is validation by direct observation, for example, although they may also be considered participatory if they involve feedback from beneficiaries. Different groups of people will use different tools—or use them differently. It is not realistic to expect that any one monitoring tool or mechanism will satisfy all needs. Monitoring of outcomes may require a different mix of tools than the tools traditionally used at project level. Instruments such as project visits or tripartite/bi-lateral meetings may be insufficient because the scope of the project is too narrow or the range of partners involved is too limited. Instead, more useful tools may include reviews by outcome groups, analysis and surveys. (See Annex E for a depiction of how a flexible menu of monitoring tools may be used in a medium to large country office.)

B. The Building Blocks: Monitoring Tools and Mechanisms

A variety of formal and informal monitoring tools and mechanisms are available for use by country offices, including field visits, annual project reports, outcome groups

and annual reviews. Their formats and approaches are adaptable to local needs, provided the minimum content is reflected—namely progress towards outcome outputs and partnerships. Offices are expected to use tools and mechanisms such as the four key examples described below. (Additional choices are listed in Table 1 above and in Annex E.)

FIELD VISITS

Field visits are frequently used as a monitoring mechanism. It is common policy to conduct regular field visits. Consideration should be given to the timing of the visit, its purpose in terms of monitoring, and what to look for in order to measure progress.

UNDP Policy: A representative from the UNDP country office should visit each programme and project contributing to strategic results in the SRF at least once a year. Field visits may be undertaken by the Programme Manager, the Policy Advisor and/or a team from the CO (particularly when dealing with a complex outcome). The Resident Representative and CO management staff are also encouraged to undertake field visits.

Timing: A field visit may be planned for any time of the year. If undertaken in the first half of the year, just after the ROAR, it may be oriented towards the validation of results. If undertaken in the latter part of the year, the field visit should provide the latest information on progress towards ROAR preparation. The reports of field visits are action-oriented and brief, submitted within a week of return to the office.

Purpose: Field visits serve the purpose of validation. They validate the results reported by programmes and projects, in particular for larger, key programmes and projects that are essential for SRF outcomes. They involve an assessment of progress, results and problems and may also include visits to the project management or directorate.

Visits are increasingly joint efforts of several partners involving clusters of programmes and projects within an outcome. A team of Programme Managers, for example, may undertake a series of visits to projects that are contributing to one particular outcome. Several partners might also join together to visit all UNDP activities within a specific geographical area. Such joint efforts are often an efficient way to obtain a comprehensive overview of progress. Not all projects are worth the time and effort of annual field visits, as in the case of the following examples:

- Day-to-day monitoring may suffice for projects that deal with purely administrative matters such as Programme Logistical Support Projects, business centers or certain umbrella projects without predetermined development results;
- Monitoring through reporting and regular contact may be as effective as a yearly visit for projects that are small, not strategic in nature and/or last less than a year;
- When other monitoring and/or evaluation efforts have recently taken place, the Programme Manager may want to plan a visit at a later time. In other words, if a recent outcome evaluation has been discussed at a stakeholder meeting, and decisions taken by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), the Programme Manager may want to allow time for the actions on recommendations to take effect.

Focus: What should we look at during a field visit? The emphasis is on observing the progress being made towards the attainment of results (outcome and outputs) that are contributing to the goals of the SRF. The Programme Manager should also look at the contribution of soft interventions, the development of strategic partnerships and rates progress towards outputs and outcome. In a change from past practice, detailed implementation issues will no longer be the main focus of field visits. (See Annex D for a format for a field visit report.)

ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT

UNDP policy: The annual project report (APR) serves as the basis for assessing the performance of programmes and projects in terms of their contributions to intended outcomes through outputs and partnership work. As a self-assessment report by project management to the country office, the APR does not require a cumbersome preparatory process. It can be readily used to spur dialogue with partners. The report, which is prepared annually for larger projects that are essential to SRF outcomes, feeds into the annual review and the ROAR.

Timing: The reporting period of the APR is flexible because project performance assessment may take place at any time of the year. Ideally, however, the APR should be prepared every 12 months, with the review period coinciding with the fiscal year of UNDP (January-December), particularly for larger projects.

Purpose: The annual project report (APR) provides a self-assessment by the project management and is part of the Programme Manager's review of the project's performance. The APR should provide an accurate update on project results, identify major constraints and propose future directions. The APR provides input into the country office reporting process and the ROAR. It analyzes the underlying factors contributing to any lack of progress so that project management can learn from experience and improve performance.

Preparation: The APR is prepared by the project management—those responsible for the day-to-day management of the project (Chief Technical Advisor, Project Coordinator, National Director or equivalent). The UNDP Programme Manager often liaises with the project management to convey key concerns as input to the report. The APR is a report from the project to UNDP and other stakeholders and is not expected to be a participatory or consensus-building tool. Both the Project Manager and Programme Manager rate the progress of outputs in the APR. In addition, the Programme Manager also rates the progress of outcomes.

The APR may be prepared periodically or abolished for smaller projects or projects that do not have strategic outputs for the SRF/ROAR, such as:

- Performance monitoring through client satisfaction, services provided and other means may be sufficient for projects dealing with purely administrative matters, including programme logistical support projects, support projects, business centers and certain umbrella projects without specific development results;
- Day-to-day monitoring and a final report on results may be appropriate for smaller projects with a duration of one year or less;

- Performance monitoring mechanisms may suffice for smaller projects or projects that do not have key strategic outputs or outcomes that do not feed into the ROAR.

Use of the APR: The annual project report is part of UNDP country office central oversight and monitoring and project management, and the building block of the annual review and the ROAR. Once the report has been distributed, the next step is to hold consultations, which may take place at the steering committee or through written observations from partners, for example. Depending on its content and approach, the CO would use the APR for:

- **Performance Assessment:** The assessment of project performance is linked to the SRF and the ROAR. The UNDP Programme Manager reviews the APR for accuracy in reporting and to determine whether or not the highlighted problems seem complete, and may ask for additional information if the achievements reported do not seem clear. Once cleared, the APR feeds directly into the annual ROAR. When using mechanisms such as outcome groups or steering committees to review project performance, the APR may also provide a basis for consensus-building and joint decision making with key partners on recommendations for future courses of action. Key elements of the APR are used for the country annual review. The APR should be used as a basis for feedback on project performance.
- **Learning:** The APR provides information on what went right or what went wrong, and why. This should feed into the annual review, SURF learning and practitioners networks, repositories of knowledge and evaluations. It is recommended that the APR for the final year of the project add sections on lessons learned and planning for sustainability (exit strategy). APRs may address the main lessons learned in terms of best and worst practices, the likelihood of success and recommendations for follow-up actions where necessary. APRs may also be used to share results and problems with beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders and to solicit their feedback.
- **Decision-making:** The partners may use the APR for planning future actions and implementation strategies, tracking progress in achieving outputs, approaching “soft interventions”, and developing partnerships and alliances. The APR allows UNDP, steering committees and partners to seek solutions to the major constraints to achievement of results. The Programme Manager highlights issues and brings them to the attention of the CO management for action or input to the country annual review, contributing to discussion on results achieved, key problems and next steps.

Content and Format of the APR: The APR is very brief and contains the basic minimum elements required for the assessment of results, major problems and proposed actions. These elements include:

- An analysis of project performance over the reporting period, including outputs produced and, where possible, information on the status of the outcome;
- Constraints in progress towards results, and reasons behind the constraints;
- Three (at most) major constraints to achievement of results;
- Lessons learned;
- Clear recommendations for the future approach to addressing the main problems contributing to lack of progress.

Beyond the minimum content, additional elements may be added as required by UNDP, the project management or other partners. For example, some offices may want to include management issues such as output expenditure, implementation problems (i.e. how the management arrangements work), the adequacy of implementation approaches and strategies, external factors affecting relevance, staff issues and team work. The more that is added, however, the less easy it may be to focus on the key issues. Also, in the interest of harmonization, donor report formats may be used—as long as information on outcome, output and partnership strategies is included. (See Annex C for an APR format.)

OUTCOME GROUPS

Another important way of monitoring is the use of coordination mechanisms that bring together partners for discussion and analysis. This is generally known as the use of “outcome groups”.

UNDP policy: Country offices need to employ mechanisms that involve partners and allow for periodic discussion and analysis around outcomes. For ease of reference, coordination mechanisms that monitor outcomes are referred to as “outcome groups”. Such groups focus on the monitoring of outcomes and the contribution of outputs to outcomes; they do not address general information exchange or project details. Ideally, outcome groups should use existing mechanisms such as established programme steering committees, thematic groups or sectoral coordination groups. If regular mechanisms do not exist, the CO may bring key partners together at periodic meetings. Projects should be included in outcome group discussions because they need to have a vision of the outcome to which their outputs are ultimately contributing.

Purpose: Outcome groups ensure continuous outcome assessment, which serves as a basis for the SRF and ROAR and enhances progress towards results. They also promote partnerships. Bringing together different projects concerned with a single shared outcome may help ensure synergy and reinforce a common strategy among UNDP projects and partners towards results.

Participation: Participants in outcome groups include UNDP Programme Managers and Project Directors. Outcome groups also involve the Assistant Resident Representative or Deputy Resident Representative and government counterparts at the technical level. External partners should also participate at least once a year, but may not wish to attend all meetings.

Focus: What do outcome groups look at? The outcome group assesses the status of strategic outputs and related initiatives by partners—all of which contribute to an intended outcome. It does so by examining information from projects, national reports, donor reports and other sources. By bringing partners together, it helps define the strategic approach towards the outcome and assists in its formulation. A central task is to agree on a monitoring plan for the outcome and oversee its implementation. It also serves as the focal team for outcome evaluations. An outcome group should be a vehicle for documenting and disseminating lessons learned. When partners are involved, the outcome group may be part of the annual review, where the main consultations on the given outcome take place. This may help alert the CO

Management to problems or issues that might be common across results or areas. Outcome groups should not increase transaction costs by looking at all project details.

Organization: The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring that there is consultation and analysis to support the monitoring of outcomes. For practical reasons, COs generally use existing fora, if available. If there are many SRF outcomes, some COs may want to cluster them, perhaps under the Strategic Areas of Support (SAS) or thematic areas.

ANNUAL REVIEW

UNDP policy: The annual review (AR) connects reporting, feedback, evaluation and learning to assess performance as a basis for the annual ROAR. It is essential that the ROAR is prepared from analysis based on consultations with partners. The AR is held towards the end of the year (October to December) in order to feed into the ROAR preparation. The review is fully managed at the country level, as decided by the UNDP country office.

Purpose: The AR is a management dialogue at country level to assess progress towards results (outputs and outcomes) that can be used for building a consensus and a mutual understanding between UNDP and its partners around common outcomes (results). It involves an assessment by CO managers with partners of SRF outcomes and their contribution to goals at the Country Programme (or CCF) level, as a basis for the ROAR. The discussions are meant to guide the planning of UNDP assistance over the next 12 months. The AR is the key vehicle for learning by determining overall and general lessons learned and reviewing recommendations of outcome evaluations.

Participation: The entire country office is involved in the review to varying degrees, and in particular the country office management. Also involved are key partners including the UN Country Team, the government coordinating authority, project management and counterparts. The Regional Bureau may also decide on the extent of its involvement, perhaps taking part directly or electronically, or simply being informed of major findings.

Organization: The scope of the review must be balanced between its complexity and added value. It would depend on how well the CO has involved partners in the issues during the year; for example, many of the AR issues would already have been covered if outcome monitoring with partners has been regular, leading to a simpler AR. A focused approach is recommended so that the key issues and/or outcomes are addressed. The CO may wish to adapt the approach as the Country Programme evolves. To determine the most effective approach, the CO reflects on the three questions in Table 2: What do we want to get out of the annual review? Who needs to be involved? What should we or shouldn't we focus on?

Documentation: There is no formal documentation required for the AR, as it may take different approaches. The preparatory work is based on internal CO discussions to review performance based on the APRs, Country Programme (or CCF), SRF, management issues, evaluations and other relevant information on project performance and progress towards outcomes. In some countries, it may be useful to share the SRF

TABLE 2. QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN PLANNING AN ANNUAL REVIEW

KEY QUESTIONS	IF THE SITUATION IS...	...THEN,THE CO MIGHT WANT TO:
What do we want to get out of the annual review?	Partners are not very involved or informed about results and UNDP's approach.	Focus more on information-sharing, less on planning and problem-solving. Involve key allies or government to generate interest. Seize the opportunity to engage partners.
	There is a controversial area or outcome. There are different views on progress.	Aim for consensus-building. Identify areas of conflict. Use facilitators? Meet and consult individually and then bring "adversaries" together. Use the review to improve progress.
	There are delays in progress and achievements in all or key areas.	Make strategy-setting and planning the main purpose. Get key decision makers to take part. Put more emphasis on planning than on reporting.
Who needs to be involved?	A large number of partners are involved, or a very large UNDP programme.	Avoid one large meeting that might be too unwieldy. Instead, use existing mechanisms such as thematic groups or hold outcome/sector/project meetings. Concentrate on the most key outcomes within the SRF.
	Some partners are involved in many (two or more) of the outcomes.	Avoid overloading partners with many separate meetings. Several outcome or theme consultations may be more effective, as would a focus on "exceptional" outcomes/projects. A more limited policy level meeting with all parties at the end allows for the "big picture" negotiations.
	There are few key partners in the country.	One meeting bringing them all together may be most effective. This is good for a full overview with key partners but requires effort and does not allow in-depth discussion of all issues.
	The government is strongly engaged in coordinating UNDP assistance.	Consult the government on the organization of the review, or organize it together.
What to focus on – or not focus on?	There are one or several outcomes that are more difficult or controversial than others.	Focus discussions on the difficult and controversial outcomes. For easier ones, it may be possible to simply produce the ROAR and share information on it.
	There are outcomes/projects with already excellent "sectoral" coordination. There are national programmes with coordination mechanisms that work.	Because there is probably enough consultation around these outcomes already, produce the ROAR and share information on it. Focus on other outcomes or issues.
	An outcome evaluation or a stakeholder meeting for a project has just taken place.	Use information from the consultations as input to the ROAR. The annual review need only discuss these evaluations or meetings if there are policy issues that require solving by all parties.
	There are outcomes and projects for which progress is straightforward or is being achieved.	It is probably possible to produce the ROAR and simply share information on it.

and/or the draft of the current ROAR compiled from the APRs as a basis for discussion. This would allow the partners to agree on the achievements reported. In other circumstances, information is provided on the key results in a different format. The APRs could be distributed at separate meetings taking place on specific outcomes. At a larger meeting, however, it would be more efficient to distribute a consolidated list

of issues arising from the APRs, noting problems and recommendations, evaluations and steering committee deliberations.

The progress towards outcomes reported in the annual review feeds into the ROAR. To ensure follow-up on other aspects discussed in the review, the CO should prepare brief records of decisions, conclusions and lessons learned during the AR and share them with local partners and other relevant parties or networks. This promotes learning and helps Programme Managers to monitor the future implementation of agreements resulting from the AR process.

Review of the CCA and UNDAF: The UNDP contribution within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is covered by the regular monitoring of outputs and outcomes. The annual review may be used to provide information to periodic reviews of the common country assessment (CCA) and UNDAF, where they exist. (See <http://www.dgo.org> for guidelines on the CCA and UNDAF.)

The Evaluation Process (“how to...”)

How do country offices prepare for and manage an evaluation? And how does an evaluation team go about conducting an evaluation? This chapter introduces outcome evaluation methodology and provides suggestions on improving project evaluations. It also helps users to manage an evaluation process and set standards for quality results-oriented evaluations. (Full “*Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*” are one of the companion series to this *Handbook*.)

This chapter covers:

A. Preparing for an evaluation

- Purpose and timing
- Involving partners and stakeholders
- Revisiting the outcome
- Defining the scope
- Drafting the terms of reference
- Budgeting
- Organizing the relevant documentation
- Forming the evaluation focal team within the UNDP country office
- Selecting the evaluation team

B. Managing an evaluation

- Collecting and analyzing data
- Backstopping and feedback
- Reporting
- Following up

C. Joint evaluations

A. Preparing for an evaluation

Preparing for any evaluation requires an investment of time and thought. More preparation time and reflection in advance is generally required for an outcome evaluation than for a project evaluation.

PURPOSE AND TIMING

Deciding precisely why and when to conduct an outcome evaluation is a process that begins early in the programming cycle. As discussed in Chapter 3, evaluation plans are made on the basis of a certain (and varying) number of outcomes that each country office is required to evaluate in a given Country Programme (CP) cycle. A variety of outcome evaluations—each with different purposes, scopes and timing—will take place during the CP cycle. Country offices should strive to identify, at least generally, the purpose and timing of their evaluations in a comprehensive and coherent manner—and do so as early as possible.

The timing of an outcome evaluation should be directly linked to its purpose (as noted in Chapter 3). If, for example, the outcome evaluation is expected to contribute to learning and a change in the type of outputs or the partnership strategy, it should be conducted early enough to allow this change in programming. This means that if UNDP began working towards an outcome in year one of the CP cycle, an evaluation of that outcome might be most strategically placed at the end of year three because enough time has elapsed to have something to evaluate, yet enough time remains to apply lessons learned from the evaluation. On the other hand, an evaluation of might be most strategically placed at the beginning of year five if the country office wants to extract lessons learned regarding the quality of outputs and partnership strategy employed towards an outcome and how each did or did not contribute to its achievement. The same principle holds true for project evaluations (if country offices elect to conduct them): the purpose of an evaluation should dictate its timing and scope.

More information on the timing, purpose and duration of outcome evaluations is provided in Table 3. (See also Annex B.)

TIMING	EXAMPLES OF PURPOSES	DURATION
Early in the CP cycle: Years 1–2	To check early strategy for a particularly ambitious outcome	Shorter-term
Middle of the CP cycle: Years 2–3	To prompt mid-course adjustments in output production	Medium-term
End of the CP cycle: Years 4–5	To learn lessons for the next Country Programme formulation	Longer-term

INVOLVING PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

An emphasis on results places an even greater emphasis on the involvement of partners (those with whom UNDP is actively engaged in pursuing results) and stakeholders (those with a role and/or interest in the results) in evaluation exercises of all kinds. In particular, **key partners**, such as those listed in Box 4, should be involved in every step of an outcome evaluation. Likewise, stakeholders affected by an evaluation should also be involved, even if they are not directly involved in the programme or outcome. Stakeholders might be involved, for example, through a stakeholder meeting to discuss

the initial findings of the evaluation team. Often, but not always, partners and stakeholders will include the same actors and agencies. Indeed, partners, stakeholders and “beneficiaries” often are coterminous, having the same interests. This is not always the case, however, so it is important to distinguish between the three terms since, in a given context, one actor might be a partner, another a “beneficiary” and yet another a stakeholder. In a project to strengthen civil society’s advocacy power with Parliament, for example, the Parliament may be a stakeholder; a donor government agency may be both partner and stakeholder; and civil society organizations may be partners, stakeholders and “beneficiaries.”

BOX 4. KEY PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

National authorities
Civil society organizations
National and international NGOs
UN agencies
Private sector
Other donors
Academic institutions

The level to which different partners and stakeholders are involved at different steps in the process will vary. Some need only be informed of the process, while it would be important for others to be involved in a decision-making capacity. Because evaluation has important capacity development and learning dimensions, decisions about who is involved and to

what degree will impact upon the results. In general the greater the level of involvement the more likely it is that evaluative knowledge will be used. It is important to note that greater participation of partners or stakeholders or both often implies greater costs and sometimes can lead to a reduction in efficiency. Nevertheless, by strategically involving stakeholders and partners, participatory evaluation can positively influence the degree of ownership of the evaluation results and sustainability.

Tips for involving partners and stakeholders in the entire evaluation process include the following:

- Make a preliminary selection of partners and stakeholders to contact in the early stages of evaluation planning (i.e., when selecting the outcome, defining the scope, deciding on timing and so on);
- Share the TORs and CVs of suitable candidates for the evaluation team and obtain feedback from stakeholders and partners, who can play a valuable role in defining the scope of the outcome evaluation;
- Introduce team members to partners and stakeholders;
- Invite partners and stakeholders to workshops with the evaluation team (i.e., when they form the evaluation questions, present the evaluation report, etc.);
- Organize a joint analysis with partners of relevant documentation for the evaluation and make the analysis available for future examination by the evaluation team;
- Organize joint field missions with partners when relevant;
- Organize a meeting with partners and stakeholders after the first draft of the evaluation report is produced to discuss the findings with them;
- Follow-up with partners and stakeholders to help ensure that the lessons learned and recommendations of the evaluation are internalized.

REVISITING THE OUTCOME

One of the first steps in planning is to revisit the outcome selected for evaluation. This is done as a check to verify that the outcome is still relevant and to reidentify explicitly the key outputs, projects, programmes, activities and partners' interventions that may have contributed to the outcome. This information should be readily available to the country office staff from regular monitoring reports, from the SRF/ROAR and from the evaluation plan prepared by each country office, which details the projects and programmes that are directed towards a given outcome. Ideally, revisiting the outcome should occur at least six months in advance of evaluation itself.

DEFINING THE SCOPE

Typically, the scope of a project evaluation is self-defined within the project document. The scope of an outcome evaluation will be larger than that of a project evaluation in most cases.¹¹ Senior country office management, the programme staff, the National Human Development Report staff (who can provide important contextual analysis on the outcome), key partners and, if possible, the evaluation team leader, should all participate in defining the scope of the outcome evaluation.

At a minimum, the scope of an outcome evaluation should incorporate the following four categories of analysis, either fully or in part.

Categories of analysis:

- 1. Outcome status:** Whether or not the outcome has been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards its achievement;
- 2. Underlying factors:** An analysis of the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influence the outcome;
- 3. UNDP contribution:** Whether or not UNDP's outputs and other interventions can be credibly linked to achievement of the outcome, including the outputs, programmes, projects and soft and hard assistance that contributed to the outcome (see Box 5);
- 4. Partnership strategy:** Whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective.

BOX 5. MEASUREMENT, ATTRIBUTION AND CREDIBLE LINKAGES

Outcome evaluations demonstrate a credible linkage between the whole spectrum of work undertaken by UNDP in partnership with others and the achievement of or progress towards outcomes.

Example: A country office defines an outcome in terms of the "more effective regulations for municipal decentralization". The country office reflects in the SRF/ ROAR that it is assisting the country in (1) facilitating the discussion process on the legal regulations for decentralization, (2) pilot testing in municipalities to extract experiences on decentralized budget execution, and (3) promoting community empowerment for planning local development. The outputs have made a clear contribution to a more effective decentralization process, and can be claimed to be conducive to the achievement of the outcome. In contrast, credit could not be claimed by UNDP for the approval of the law (which is Parliament's mandate) nor its effective implementation (which is the municipalities' mandate).

Source: Adapted in part from the Multi-Year Funding Framework Report by the Administrator, 1998.

¹¹ Exceptions to this generality could occur. For example, an evaluation of an extremely large, complex and long-term project could conceivably be of a larger scope than an early, light outcome evaluation conducted one or two years into the Country Programme.

Country offices may wish to emphasize one category of analysis over the others, influencing the scope of the evaluation. In Table 4, the dimension of “scope” is added to the list presented in Table 3 to illustrate ways in which the timing, purpose, duration and scope of an outcome evaluation interact.

In addition to the four categories of analysis that should be within the scope of an evaluation, an outcome evaluation might also address:

- Identification of innovative methodologies to approach key development issues of Sustainable Human Development;
- National capacities developed through UNDP assistance (capacity building is a component of most of UNDP support);
- Level of participation of stakeholders in the achievement of the outcome, i.e. to ascertain whether the assistance provided by UNDP was of a participatory nature (Were the civil society and representatives of grassroots groups consulted in the design of a policy on social investment, for example?);
- Identification of direct and indirect beneficiaries and their perceptions of how they have benefited from the UNDP assistance;
- Implementation and/or management issues if they are suspected of being problematic, including the timeliness of outputs, the degree of stakeholder and partner involvement in the completion of the outputs, and how processes were managed/carried out (Were the processes transparent and participatory, for example?).

TABLE 4. VARIATIONS IN TIMING, PURPOSE AND DURATION AND SCOPE OF OUTCOME EVALUATIONS		
TIMING	EXAMPLES OF PURPOSES	DURATION
Early in the CP cycle: Years 1-2	PURPOSE: To check early strategy for a particularly ambitious outcome Scope (i.e., which reflects, to varying degrees of emphasis, the 4 categories of analysis): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Status of outcome and its relevance ■ Factors affecting outcome ■ Strategic positioning of UNDP ■ Partnership strategy and formulation 	Shorter-Term
Middle of the CP cycle: Years 2-3	Purpose: To prompt mid-course adjustments in output production Scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevance of outcome (and possibly status/factors affecting) ■ Strategic positioning of UNDP ■ Partnership strategy and formulation ■ Production of outputs (possibly with partners) 	Medium-Term
End of the CP cycle: Years 4-5	Purpose: To learn lessons for next CP formulation Scope: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Status of outcome and factors affecting it ■ Relevance of outcome/outputs ■ Strategic positioning of UNDP ■ Production of outputs ■ Partnership strategy, formulation and performance 	Longer-Term

Together, the outcome selected along with the timing, purpose, duration and scope of the evaluation will dictate much of the substance of the outcome evaluation's terms of reference.

DRAFTING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

At a minimum, it is expected that terms of reference for all evaluations will contain the following information:

- **Introduction:** A brief description of what is to be evaluated (outcome, programme, project, series of interventions by several partners, etc.);
- **Objectives:** Why the evaluation is being undertaken and a list of the main stakeholders and partners;
- **Scope:** What issues, subjects, areas and timeframe the evaluation will cover;
- **Products expected from the evaluation:** What products the evaluation is expected to generate (e.g. findings, recommendations, lessons learned, rating on performance, an “action item” list);
- **Methodology or evaluation approach:** The methodology suggested to the evaluation team;
- **Evaluation team:** Composition and areas of expertise;
- **Implementation arrangements:** Who will manage the evaluation and how it is organized.

The terms of reference should retain enough **flexibility** for the evaluation team to determine the best approach to collecting and analyzing data. The TOR, for example, might suggest a combined approach of questionnaires, field visits and interviews—but the evaluation team should be able to revise this approach as it sees fit.

The terms of reference involves strategic choices about what to focus on, and therefore should be reviewed by key stakeholders in an evaluation and, in the case of outcome evaluation, should involve partners in the drafting process. (See Annex B for specific information on the terms of reference for evaluations, including detailed guidance on outcome evaluations.)

BUDGETING

Budgeting for an evaluation depends upon the complexity of the project or outcome to be evaluated and the purpose of the exercise. These factors dictate the timeframe and the number of evaluators needed. For projects, evaluation resources are allocated from the monitoring and evaluation lines of the project budget. Similarly, outcome evaluations draw on the respective monitoring and evaluation allocations of the projects and programmes that contribute to that outcome.

When budgeting for an outcome evaluation, the UNDP country office should consider the following factors:

- The **scope, complexity** and **time commitments** of the evaluation: An outcome evaluation conducted early in the Country Programme is apt to be less complex and entail a smaller scope and time commitment than would a “heavier” exercise conducted at the end of the Country Programme. The greater the complexity and scope of an evaluation, the longer time and more detailed work will be required of the evaluation team, thus increasing evaluators’ fees. The duration of an outcome evaluation will be determined by its purpose, with earlier, shorter-term exercises costing less than later, longer-term exercises. Table 5 presents the types of costs associated with outcome evaluations and how they may differ depending upon the scope and timing of the exercise.
- **The need to minimize time and expense:** It is recommended that country offices provide the evaluation TORs to all short-listed candidates for the evaluation team leader position, so that the team leader may provide feedback on the methodology and timing of the mission. This can help minimize the time spent on preparation. Another way to minimize time is to hire firms rather than individuals, in cases where firms charge a flat rate for the entire evaluation rather than daily rates for additional, unexpected time. Country offices also are encouraged to take advantage of national evaluative expertise and use national experts on outcome evaluation missions, to the extent possible, which should help reduce the cost of the evaluation.
- **The use of field visits and interviews:** Outcome evaluations may require evaluators to speak with a range of partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries about perceptions of progress towards results or the production of UNDP outputs. Field visits and interviews may be quite brief for outcome evaluations conducted earlier in the Country Programme. Later exercises require evaluators speak with a wider variety of stakeholders and partners, thereby influencing travel, DSA and consultancy costs.

TABLE 5. SAMPLE COMPARISON OF TIME AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTCOME EVALUATIONS

TIME REQUIRED FOR:	EARLY IN CP YEARS 1-2	MIDDLE OF CP YEARS 2-3	END OF CP YEARS 4-5
Initial visit of team leader	1 day	3 days	1 week
Desk reviews	4 days	1 1/2 weeks	2 to 3 weeks
Evaluation mission ■ Drafting evaluation report ■ Debriefing	1 1/2 to 2 weeks, including: ■ 1/2 to 1 week ■ 2 days	3 weeks, including: ■ 1 week ■ 3 days	4 weeks, including: ■ 2 weeks ■ 1 week
Preparation of final report	1/2 to 1 week	1 1/2 to 2 weeks	2 weeks
TOTAL	3 TO 4 WEEKS	6 TO 7 WEEKS	9 TO 10 WEEKS
BREAKDOWN OF THE RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR:			
National consultants—research	1 for 1 week	2 for 2 weeks	9 to 10 weeks
International experts—mission	1 for 1 to 2 weeks	1 for 2 to 3 weeks	2 for 3 weeks
National experts—mission	1 for 3 to 4 weeks	1 for 4 weeks	1 for 6 weeks
Travel costs	Travel and DSA for national and international experts	Travel and DSA for national and international experts	Travel and DSA for national and inter- national experts

- **The use of national consultants:** National consultants may be employed to complement the work of the evaluators. Outcome evaluations may require analysis of documentation prior to the arrival of the evaluation team in country. This can be efficiently accomplished by hiring national consultants to review the data. Beforehand, staff of the UNDP country office should spend some time acquiring the materials, reviewing them and making a “first cut” to select the most relevant documentation.
- **The areas of expertise needed among the evaluators:** Because a multi-disciplinary approach is needed for outcome evaluations, the evaluation team will need to include at least one evaluator (national or international) with RBM knowledge. In addition, one evaluator (national or international) should also have in-depth knowledge of the outcome to be evaluated. These criteria could increase the consultancy costs for the mission.

ORGANIZING THE RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

Once the scope of an evaluation has been defined, the CO gathers the basic documentation and provides it to the evaluation team. Preliminary deskwork may be carried out to gather information on activities and outputs of partners, previous UNDP-related assistance and the current situation of the project, programme or outcome itself. Such work may be agreed in the TOR or suggested by the evaluation team.

The following sources of information would be most useful for an outcome evaluation team:

- **Country Programme (or CCF):** This addresses the key outcomes that UNDP had planned to achieve in a three- to five-year time period. It also provides background information and UNDP’s perspective on development in a given country.
- **Country Office SRF and ROAR:** The SRF and ROAR present some of the projects and programmes clustered under the outcome in question and should, ideally, identify all of the projects, programmes, sub-programmes and soft assistance that contribute to the outcome. Also included is information on key outputs, the strategic partners, partnership strategy, how much progress has been reported in previous years, the quality of outcome indicators, the need for further work and baseline information.
- **CCA Report and UNDAF:** These documents include baseline information on the country development situation, partnerships and joint activities of UNDP and other UN agencies.
- **Monitoring and evaluation reports:** These include evaluation reports on related subjects, APRs, field visit reports and other outcome and key programme or project documentation.
- **Reports of Related Regional and Sub-Regional Projects and Programmes:** These reports indicate the extent to which these projects and programmes have complemented contributions by UNDP and its partners to progress towards the outcome.
- **Reports on Progress of Partners’ Interventions:** Progress made by partners in the same outcome and information about how they have strategized their partnership with UNDP may be found in these reports.

- **Data from Official Sources:** Information on progress towards outcomes may be obtained from sources in the government, private sector organizations, academia and national research institutes.
- **Research Papers:** Topics related to the outcome being evaluated may have been addressed in research papers from the government, NGOs, international financial institutions, academia, the National Human Development Report and other sources.

The above sources are expected to yield information about the four categories of analysis (outcome status, underlying factors, UNDP contribution, partnership strategy) in an outcome evaluation. Table 6 indicates how relevant documentation can support the analysis of these four factors.

TABLE 6. DOCUMENTATION SOURCES AND CORRESPONDING CATEGORIES OF ANALYSIS				
SOURCE OF INFORMATION	WHAT IT MAY TELL YOU ABOUT			
	Outcome status	Underlying Factors	UNDP contribution	Partnership strategy
CCF/Country Programme	X	X	X	X
SRF/ROAR	X		X	X
CCA/UNDAF	X	X	X	X
Monitoring and evaluation reports	X	X	X	X
Regional/Sub-regional reports			X	X
Partners' reports	X	X		X
Official source data	X	X		
Research papers	X	X		

FORMING THE EVALUATION FOCAL TEAM WITHIN THE UNDP COUNTRY OFFICE

For outcome evaluations, it is recommended that the senior management of the country office form a small evaluation focal team (EFT) within the programme unit, as described in Box 6. This team of two to four members assumes primary responsibility for the organization of an outcome evaluation, and works actively to support the work of the independent outcome evaluation team.

Working as an evaluation focal team is more efficient than one person working alone because outcome evaluations touch upon a broad range of issues. With the UNDP emphasis on results, a small team needs to be involved in the process. This is in contrast to project evaluations, where the Project Manager took charge of planning and ensuring that the exercise was undertaken within the framework of the TOR.

Ideally, preparations for an outcome evaluation are linked to the process of outcome monitoring, and not separate from it. The same programme staff should be involved

BOX 6. FORMING THE EVALUATION FOCAL TEAM

Country offices are advised to set up an evaluation focal team (EFT) within the office as soon as a given outcome is selected for evaluation during the planning stage. Establishing an EFT from the start offers several benefits. First, it introduces a team approach within the CO to handle the work entailed in tracking developments connected with the evaluation. At the same time, it widens learning and cross fertilization of knowledge within the CO. Second, it provides a team to monitor the outcome automatically during the period leading up to the beginning of the evaluation, thereby increasing the connection between outcome monitoring and outcome evaluation.

When preparing for an evaluation, a country office revisits the outcome to be evaluated as one of the first steps. At this time, it is the EFT that can best ascertain the continued relevance of the outcome as already stated/identified for evaluation. For example, it is possible that changes in the circumstances could make it necessary to change the envisaged timing, scope and nature (that is, from light/forward looking to mid-term/course adjusting or late/backwards looking, or vice versa) of the evaluation in order to enhance the value of evaluative exercise. A well-considered team approach is more effective in making decisions on such issues than is an individual approach.

in monitoring progress towards a given outcome and also in preparing for the evaluation. These staff members, along with partners in an outcome group (where one exists), are responsible for the preparation.

The EFT serves a useful function in connecting the evaluation team with the programme unit, the senior management and the partners. In addition, the EFT is responsible for substantive and logistical arrangements, such as drafting terms of reference for the evaluation team, identifying suitable candidates (individuals or firms) for the evaluation team, hiring the evaluation team, ensuring a participatory evaluation process, contacting partners, backstopping the evaluation team and commenting on the evaluation draft report.

The EFT ensures a high level of participation within the country office and among partners at all stages of the evaluation process. Participation helps keep all interested parties informed of the evaluation progress and helps ensure the credibility and quality of the exercise. Some of the most relevant input to the evaluation process may come from the following parties:

- **Senior management:** Senior management gives direction and vision to the evaluation; provides information on the strategic positioning of the office, soft assistance and the SRF; and contributes first-hand information on planned or potential assistance (e.g. preliminary discussions with high-level authorities on specific assistance or services and soft pipeline).
- **Programme staff:** Programme staff enriches discussions through the exchange of information on related or complementary initiatives in other thematic areas, key outputs from projects and programmes, key ongoing soft assistance and linkages with cross-cutting issues (e.g. governance, environment, gender, risk management).
- **Human Development Report staff:** If available, this staff provides the team with recent information on human development variables, statistics and other relevant information.

- **“Think tank” staff:** If available, this staff provides context, suggestions on how to approach outcome-related matters, hints on sources of information and contacts with key partners.
- **Partners:** Various kinds of partners can enhance understanding of simultaneous assistance towards the same outcome and help to assess UNDP’s partnership strategy.

SELECTING THE EVALUATION TEAM

Beyond the country office’s EFT is the official team of experts who will conduct the evaluation. The choice of the evaluators is an important factor in the effectiveness of evaluations. Evaluators can be internal, from within UNDP, or external. External evaluation firms or individual evaluators may be national or international, or a combination of both. (See Annex B for a comparison of advantages and disadvantages of hiring firms or individuals as evaluators.) All members of a team must be independent—with absolutely no connections to the design, formulation or implementation of the UNDP or partner outcomes, programmes, projects or activities in question. The team must not include government civil servants who are directly or indirectly related to the activities and their results. Failure to observe this requirement could compromise the credibility and independence of the exercise.

When creating a team for an outcome evaluation, country offices are encouraged to include UNDP staff members from other countries or regions, when possible. This helps to maximize knowledge sharing and staff learning and capacity development across regions and countries. These UNDP staff members—who should be at the level of country office programme management or senior management—must not have had any connection with the design, formulation or pursuit of the outcome in question or with any of its associated projects, programmes or activities.

Areas of expertise to be considered in the team composition include the following:

- Technical knowledge and experience in UNDP’s thematic areas, with specifics depending on the specific focus of the evaluation;
- Knowledge of the national situation and context;
- Results-based management expertise;
- Capacity building expertise;
- Familiarity with policymaking processes (design, adoption, implementation) if the evaluation is to touch upon policy advice and policy dialogue issues.

Expertise in RBM is increasingly important as evaluations begin to mainstream RBM principles and methodology. Evaluators need to know how to establish a link between the progress of UNDP’s assistance and the role it plays in bringing about development change.

B. Managing and Evaluation

This brief overview of the tasks involved in managing an evaluation touches on data collection and analysis, backstopping and feedback, reporting and follow-up. Such responsibilities belong to the UNDP country office staff—usually the Programme Manager, outcome group or evaluation focal team. Detailed guidance for outcome evaluators is provided in a companion publication to this *Handbook*, entitled *Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*.

COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA

Most of the primary data collection and analysis for an outcome evaluation is the responsibility of the country office, more specifically, the EFT (if there is one). The EFT decides which method(s) to use in the collection and analysis of information. Both **qualitative** and **quantitative** methods are used. The methods respond to different objectives and use different instruments and methodologies yet are highly complementary. Preparing for an evaluation normally requires a combination of both types of methods.

Qualitative methods can be used to inform the questions posed by the evaluators through interviews and surveys, as well as to analyze the social, economic and political context within which development changes take place.

Quantitative methods can be used to inform the qualitative data collection strategies by, for example, applying statistical analysis to control for socio-economic conditions of different study areas. See examples of both approaches in Table 7.

OUTCOME	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS
Improvement of legislative capacity	Data on the number of laws passed by the parliament—when, on what subjects and whether they were sponsored by the government or were private member bills.	Analysis of how many of those laws were technically complex and/or addressed significant national priorities; how many were technically proficient (were well written and constitutional); and how participatory and transparent the process was.
Increased transparency in the public sector	Data on the number of corruption cases presented for adjudication and the number to reach a final decision.	Analysis of how the process was carried out and how citizens perceived it.

BACKSTOPPING AND FEEDBACK

The UNDP country office staff or the EFT is responsible for liaising with partners, backstopping and providing technical feedback to the evaluation team. The EFT or other staff should be in constant liaison with the evaluation team. These well-informed staff members push the evaluation team to justify its conclusions and back them up with evidence, and help deepen and clarify the evaluation team's discussions.

The EFT is the main group with which the evaluation team interacts. It answers questions, facilitates interactions and provides information. The EFT also provides

feedback on the draft report and organizes a stakeholder and partner meeting to discuss the evaluation team’s findings.

REPORTING

The seeds for the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation report are found in the evaluation’s terms of reference (TOR). The TOR for an outcome evaluation, for example, will include the outcome to be studied and why it was selected, the scope of the mission, and the strategy for collecting and analyzing data. The outcome evaluation report also would be expected to include these elements. The evaluation team is bound by the TOR to ensure that the selected issues are adequately addressed in the report, although some flexibility will allow the team to add issues that it feels are particularly pertinent. Generally, the team leader drafts a table of contents at the earliest stage of the evaluation, based on UNDP’s requirements, the TOR and discussions with interested parties and partners.

The draft table of contents serves as a convenient framework around which to organize information as the work proceeds. The table of contents helps focus the fieldwork that is required to collect missing information, verify information and draw and discuss conclusions and recommendations. (See Annex D for a field visit report.)

Once the first draft of the evaluation report is submitted, the EFT or relevant UNDP country office staff (e.g. focal point for the evaluation, project staff and/or senior management), should analyze and provide comments. After comments are incorporated, the final draft version should be circulated among partners to obtain their valuable feedback. The evaluation team leader is responsible for incorporating comments into the final version of the report, and then for submitting it to the senior management of the country office. Depending upon the complexity of the evaluation findings, the country office should consider organizing a half-day stakeholders meeting at which to make a presentation to the partners and stakeholders. This helps ensure that there is a common understanding of the evaluation findings and facilitates feedback on the report draft.

FOLLOWING UP

The evaluation process does not end with the submission and acceptance of the evaluation report. Rather, the findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned need to be internalized and acted upon. Therefore, the final step in managing and conducting any evaluation is to follow up on the evaluation report and implementation of change. This step is closely linked to the knowledge and learning processes, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

C. Joint Evaluations¹²

Joint evaluations may be conducted within the context of any kind of evaluation and in partnership between UNDP and donors, governments or other partners. Joint

¹² Joint evaluations will be covered in more depth in the companion series to this *Handbook*.

evaluations will be covered in more depth in the companion series to this *Handbook*. In general, however, the suggested steps in planning and conducting a joint evaluation (whether an outcome evaluation or a project evaluation) are as follows:

- 1. Agree on the scope:** The scope should be defined jointly by the organizers of the evaluation. Priority areas of concern as well as mutual interests—which are not necessarily the same—should be clearly identified. Practical issues that should be clarified include the focus of the evaluation (a project or an outcome), the issues to be covered and the time frame of the exercise.
- 2. Divide the labor:** The senior management of the UNDP country office should agree on a decision-making arrangement among the actors and determine how the labor will be divided among them. This involves determining who will take the lead role in each of the subsequent steps in the evaluation; in other words, appointing Task Managers. One partner, for example, might be tasked with taking the lead in drafting the TOR, another in recruiting the team and another in making the logistical arrangements for the mission. Field visits may entail various parties gathering data in different locales simultaneously.

Different institutions take different approaches to evaluation, requiring the ability to adapt and to allow for some additional time to accommodate delays due to such differences. Even within the same country, different donors may have different administrative, political, financial and methodological practices, which may delay the process. Be clear on respective responsibilities during the field visit(s), and be attentive to detail. Specify, for example, who is responsible for funding the transportation of the experts from one site to another? Who will keep track of the “individuals met” list so that there is a well-documented account at the conclusion of the exercise? Who will collect the documents during the field visit and how will those documents be distributed to the other experts during subsequent analysis in respective home countries?

- 3. Select the funding modality:** A number of funding modalities are available for joint evaluations. UNDP prefers that the partner(s) contribute financial support for the evaluation into a pool of funds (akin to a trust fund) that is administered by UNDP and that covers all costs related to the exercise. A second option is for the partner(s) to finance certain components of the evaluation while UNDP covers others (akin to parallel financing). While this is sometimes necessary due to the financial rules of partners, it does require additional time and administrative processing.
- 4. Draft the terms of reference:** In general, it is more efficient and effective for all of the partners in a joint evaluation to discuss and agree upon the scope of the evaluation—and then for one party take the lead in drafting the terms of reference. After a draft is produced, it should be discussed and agreed upon by the partner institutions. The optimal type of TOR is one that satisfies the interests of all parties concerned. This is not always possible, however, given the range of motivations for undertaking an evaluation, such as identifying lessons learned, establishing an empirical basis for substantive reorientation or funding revision, satisfying political constituencies in donor countries or fulfilling institutional requirements that are particular to large projects. Consideration should be given

to creating a common agenda reflecting priorities that balance ownership with what is feasible.

5. **Select the experts:** There are several ways to approach the selection of experts for a joint evaluation. One option is to task one of the partners with recruiting the evaluation team, in consultation with the other partners. Another option is for each of the partners to contribute its own experts. In some cases, the approach taken to the selection of experts may need to correspond to the funding modality used. For example, if parallel financing is used, each partner might need to bring its own expert to the team. In cases where each party brings its own evaluators to the team, evaluators may have difficulty in reporting to one actor while serving as a member of a joint team. To resolve this issue, the evaluation managers from all of the institutions involved should make clear to evaluators that the independence of the team will be respected and expected.

At least one face-to-face planning session with all of the experts involved should be held prior to the field visit(s). In other words, do not combine initial introductions among the experts with a data gathering exercise. In some cases, the experts should meet with respective stakeholders in order to gain an overview of the project or outcome context before conducting field visits. This is true especially in situations in which experts are selected by both UNDP and the counterpart(s).

6. **Conduct the evaluation:** Experts recruited separately by UNDP and the counterpart(s) should undertake field missions together, to the extent possible. For example, a group of four evaluators—two selected by UNDP and two by a donor country—may pair off to optimize their time in a given country or region, but it is best if each pair includes one expert from each “side”. Also, the participation on the evaluation team of a representative of UNDP and/or the counterpart(s) may enhance the opportunity for capacity development among UNDP staff. This may be useful particularly during the fact-finding phase, on a purely observer basis, but it is likely to be a sensitive arrangement that requires careful communication with all parties to the evaluation.
7. **Prepare the report:** Only the evaluation team should be involved in analyzing the findings and drafting the joint evaluation report. This does not necessarily mean that everyone on the team will agree on how the findings and recommendations should be portrayed, especially when the evaluation team is composed of representatives from different institutions. Drafting the report may therefore entail some process of negotiation among the team members. After a draft is produced, the report should be shared with UNDP and the partner institution(s) for comments. The report can then follow normal vetting and finalization procedures.
8. **Follow-up and implement recommendations:** The findings and recommendations of all evaluations must be followed up. In joint evaluations, however, this can be particularly challenging, given that the internalization of the findings and implementation of the recommendations need to be done at the level of individual institutions and at the level of the partnership between them. Partners therefore need to agree on what to do individually and collectively, and decide upon a follow-up mechanism that monitors the status of the changes being implemented.

