Core Standards and Foundations for MEAL Management

Introduction

Introduction to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) core standards

MEAL core standards in programme management teams are necessary to ensure the following objectives:

1. Raise MEAL standards where the capacity is limited by boosting focus on the adequate language
2. Ensure key information is stored and readily available to all staff members
3. Track impact indicators (e.g. SDGs) and quality of interventions across organisations portfolios
4. Make everyone in programme management better equipped to manage programme quality and drive discussions with MEAL counterparts and programme managers based in-country.

This manual is a step-by-step guide on the proposed tool and it provides practical and theoretical guidance for Programme Management Teams to identify and appraise the quality of what are to be considered "core MEAL documents" for each project. The need for a specific document to refer to when appraising the MEAL cycle is particularly important at a time when donors requirements are becoming more stringent and evidence becomes the new currency to establish partnerships within an organisation and beyond.

Clarify language on indicators

Even before diving into the rationale of core standards, the language used in this guideline mainly refers to DFID logical framework for projects. The table below links DFID language with its equivalents:

USAID	DFID/UN	EC	Foundation (Gates)
Goal	Impact	Overall Objective	Strategic Area
Purposes	Outcomes	Specific Objectives	Project Goals
Outputs	Outputs	Results	Objectives
Activities	Inputs	Activities	Activities

Principles of Traceability, Quality and Accountability

The overall rationale underlying these proposed standards boils down to two simple concepts: tracing information and the ability to appraise it. The objective of embedding core standards in programme management teams stems out of the necessity to identify, store and integrate all key documents.

In addition to consistency in storing information, the intention for the following sections in the manual is to inform about what is an "acceptable level of quality" when appraising key documents or triggering a particular process linked with MEAL evidence. The ability of programme managers, funding coordinators/officers and contract finance officers to understand their role in programme quality is pivotal for the adoption of core standards.

Lastly, these standards would apply to both when an international development organisation is leading and subbing a specific contract. There are obvious limitations to what an organisation can influence in the latter case but, the capacity of programme team members to request and access relevant information remains vital to influence other stakeholders/donors, to ensure learning from projects and to track the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Definition of MEAL core standards and linkage with CI MEAL operational standards

The proposed set of standards need to be understood as interlinked, one cannot exists without the other as the kind of assumptions at design will evolve over the implementation period. Therefore tracking mechanisms on key issues will require a certain degree of consistency and iteration.

Core Standard 1	**The context, risks and MEAL capacities are appraised and marked at design**
This standard is particularly relevant at design as one of the key areas donors tend to focus on is previous experience of international development organisations in a given context and their capacity to express an	

in-depth appreciation and tracking strategies for all the key risks and assumptions for a proposed intervention.

Gender and governance considerations are useful to reflect on the context, power forces and barriers preventing the transformation of gender relations. In addition, there are specific documents/sections (e.g. stakeholder's mapping, theory of change, justification statement, context analysis) that are necessary to frame the relevant information and to identify conditions and entry points for a project to be relevant and impactful.

The ability to produce these relevant documents upon submission and to track them during implementation is at the core of this standard. This is only possible if appropriate financial resources for dedicated MEAL resources are negotiated with relevant donors. This guideline covers key criteria to estimate costs and appropriately budget for the MEAL function across a range of projects.

CARE International Standards Linkage

1. Design your MEAL system based on a clear theory of change and evidence needs

Core Standard 2	**Targeting and sampling methodologies are reliable & enable tracking of result chains**

The ability to target adequately implies a good understanding of "who" is the target group and "where" it is located. Therefore, the whole evaluation cycle needs to start under this premise, especially to meet the explicit requirements of tracking information that are pertinent to an internal change strategy.

Funding coordinators at design and programme leads over the implementation are supposed to double check and report on how the indicators targets were set and whether a reasonable process was in place to generate the relevant figures.

A clear justification on why a target group is selected needs to be provided as in: 1) what are its key characteristics, 2) its distribution across target areas, 3) its levels of disaggregation, and 4) its traceability- particularly for nomadic and mobile/internally displaced groups.

Another important consideration when targeting particular groups is if previous interventions have already affected them. In case international development organisations are building on previous projects, the identification and quantification of targets will need to include a specification on the results that have been already attained. Please consult this link on quick ways to reduce double counting through better tracking and identification systems.

CARE International Standards Linkage

1. Have a clear definition of participants: direct/indirect participants and target/impact groups
2. Define a meaningful and manageable set of quantitative and qualitative indicators and/or questions for impact, outcomes and outputs in each participant group and the methods to track them.

Core Standard 3	**A monitoring system is in place, functioning and generating digital outcome data**

A critical gap across projects is the limited access, diffusion and use of monitoring information; which tends to be collected to meet reporting requirements instead of informing management response.

To address this, one of the core standards require the programme lead[1] and her/his MEAL counterpart to demonstrate how key indicators, contextual forces and project's assumptions are tracked throughout the project cycle. At this end, a functioning monitoring system is necessary albeit adaptable to contextual forces, access to relevant information and risks to the enumerators when collecting evidence.

This area probes around digital systems in place to enable quick reviews and management response to output and outcome changes. The causal pathway can be demonstrated through triangulation of monitoring data that directly addresses SDGs indicators and targets. This guideline covers a specific overview of suggested digital principles to embed in large-scale interventions and MEAL advisors in programme are mandated to fully support their integration across flagship projects above a certain value threshold.

CARE International Standards Linkage

1. Define the monitoring and evaluation moments and methods that best ensure robust and comparable tracking of outputs, outcomes and impact
2. Make your evidence accessible, and ensure your MEL practices and participative and responsive to feedback

[1] As per contractual arrangement or organisational appointment

3. Use your MEAL system to continuously read the context and adapt to it	
Core Standard 4	**Endline data generates representative evidence of change to be used for learning**
The endpoint of an evaluation is the quintessential link between sums of actions and conclusive validation of an expected change. In most cases, it represents a synthesis point where expenditures are intersected with evidence tracing "how" and "why" a change (e.g. social norms) happened and the likelihood of our contribution. There are a wide range of methods to drive a final evaluation and International development organisations has the full interest to extract as much learning from any opportunity to measure depth and breadth of impact groups linked with SDGs Indicators. The word "representative" simply means how changes within the sample of a whole target population can be generalised for the largest number of recipients. It is a powerful concept that gains great traction with donors and private sector partners, therefore programme teams need to recognise themselves as gate keeper of valuable evidence that needs to be requested and shared across the confederation as much as possible. The requested core standard represents an acceptable simplification of steps to identify and quickly appraise the strength and validity of a certain evaluation approach, particularly in its consistency with baseline and previous evaluations.	
CARE International Standards Linkage 1. Ensure your evidence can be translated into learning and support on the identification of potential for scale	

Conceptual Foundations

Conceptual distinctions for MEAL

Impact groups vs. direct/target project participants

- ✓ The key difference between impact groups and project participants is in the scale and level of contribution that can be demonstrated when measuring change. An impact group represents a population or particular stakeholder category (institutions, government department) that experienced a vast and multi-dimensional change that can be labelled as transformational. Target project participants are the section of a population that International development organisations activities directly or indirectly reached and are usually quantified in outputs and sometimes in intermediary outcomes. For sake of simplicity, impact groups typically correspond to long-term outcomes targets and their combination. Double counting remains a risk and in the evaluation guideline some tips can reduce its incidence.
- ✓ Typically, the combination of direct and indirect recipients is the outreach boundary of claims as it is fairly quick to appraise based on what inputs have generated in the short-term. The approach to measure longer-term sort of transformation requires a more sophisticated approach that combines all pieces of evidence from inputs and outputs to hypothesize how they generated a deeper change, for example towards gender-equal access to resources. That is why clarity of key terms becomes necessary when quantifying target and when specifying the kind of/how much change we expect to see and its causes. The shorter the timeline (humanitarian response), the closer impact groups definition will be to input target recipients.
- ✓ In principle, all target values at the outcome and impact level of a result chain need to be specific since impact measurement does not correspond to a head count of people receiving project activities but it requires a specific sample strategy and clear assumptions on how all activities contributed to a larger transformation.

Evaluation vs. Monitoring

- ✓ Monitoring is on-going and tends to focus on what is happening. On the other hand, evaluations are conducted at specific points in time to assess how well it happened and what difference it made. Monitoring data is typically used by MEAL coordinators and managers for on-going project/programme implementation, tracking outputs, budgets, compliance with procedures, etc. Evaluations may also inform implementation (e.g. a midterm evaluation), but they are less frequent and examine larger changes (outcomes) that require more methodological rigour in analysis, such as the impact and relevance of an intervention.
- ✓ Given this difference, it is also important to remember that both monitoring and evaluation are integrally linked; monitoring typically provides data for evaluation, and elements of evaluation occur when monitoring (evaluative/outcome monitoring). For example, monitoring may tell us that a certain number of community facilitators were trained (what happened), but it may also include post-training tests (assessments) on how well they were trained. Evaluation may use this monitoring information to assess any difference the training made towards the overall objective or change the training was expected to produce, e.g. increase knowledge on climate information, and whether this was relevant in making optimal decision when planting seeds.

Conclusion validity vs. internal validity (quant. methods)

- ✓ When appraising the link between two variables, a statistically conclusive statement can be given upon statistical significance tests on a given set of hypotheses and adequate sample. Based on these tests, validity is the degree to which conclusions reached about relationships between variables within datasets are reasonable. For instance, for a study that looks at the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and attitudes about access to resources, we eventually want to reach some conclusion. Based on our data, an evaluator may conclude that there is a positive relationship like- people with higher SES tends to have a more positive view of access to resources while those

with lower SES tend to have opposite view. Conclusion validity is the degree for which statements about relationships between variables are credible or believable.

- ✓ Internal Validity is the inference regarding cause-effect or causal relationships. For studies that assess the effects of social programs or interventions, internal validity is perhaps the primary consideration. In those contexts, International development organisations would like to be able to conclude that its programs or made a difference – e.g. improved food security or change in social norms. But there may be lots of reasons, other than project's inputs, that can justify how food security improved or social barriers reduced. The key question in internal validity is whether the cause of observed changes can be credited to a program or intervention and not to other possible causes. It is important to note that International development organisations wishes to favour a contribution-based approach but when interfacing with donors, the language used for attribution needs to be understood to effectively negotiate requirements.

Theory of Change vs. Logical Framework

In practice, a Theory of Change typically:

a) Gives the big picture, including issues related to the environment or context that you can't control.
b) Shows all the different pathways that might lead to change, even if those pathways are not related to your program.
c) Describes how and why you think change happens.
d) Could be used to complete the sentence "if we do X then Y will change because…"
e) Is presented as a diagram with narrative text.
f) The diagram is flexible and doesn't have a particular format – it could include cyclical processes, feedback loops, one box could lead to multiple other boxes, different shapes could be used, etc.
g) Describes why you think one box will lead to another box (e.g. if you think increased knowledge will lead to behaviour change, is that an assumption or do you have evidence to show it is the case?).
h) Is mainly used as a tool for program design and evaluation.

In practice, a Logical Framework (Logframe):

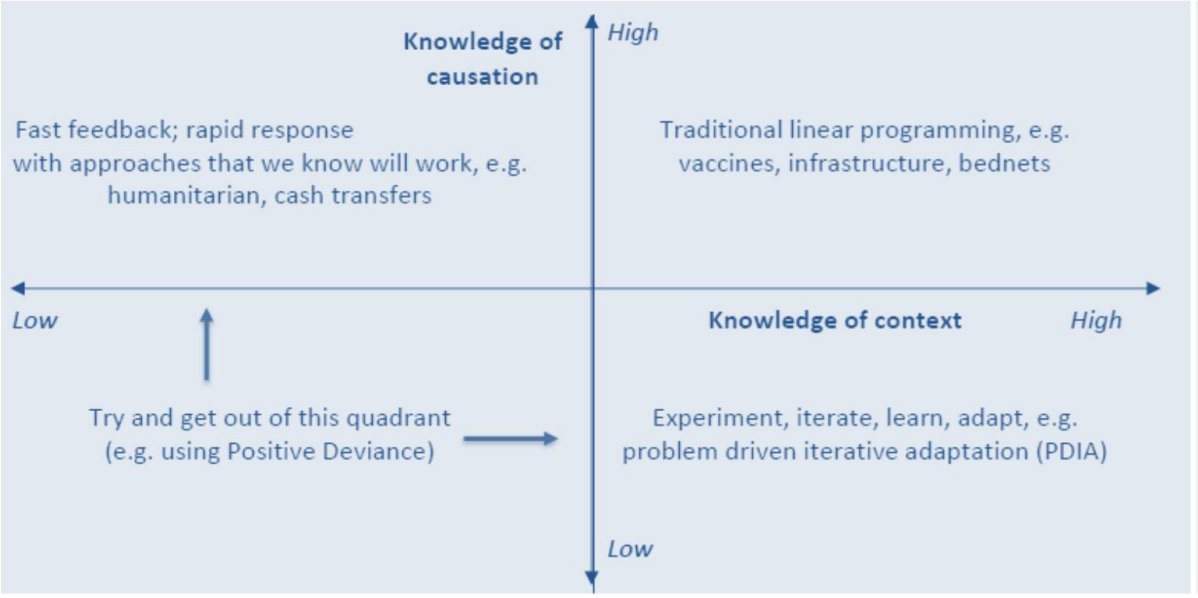
a) Gives a detailed description of the program showing how the program activities will lead to the immediate outputs, and how these will lead to the outcomes and goal (the terminology used varies by organisation).
b) Could be used to complete the sentence "we plan to do X which will give Y result".
c) Is normally shown as a matrix, called a Logframe. It can also be shown as a flow chart, which is sometimes called a logic model.
d) Is linear, which means that all activities lead to outputs which lead to outcomes and the goal – there are no cyclical processes or feedback loops.
e) Includes space for risks and assumptions, although these are usually only basic. Doesn't include evidence for why you think one thing will lead to another.
f) Is mainly used as a tool for monitoring.

Intro to Adaptive Management

Adaptive management means a constant review and monitoring of MEAL data to take management decisions of both operational and strategic nature. The kind of data that needs to be collected has to respond to agreed indicators and related targets, therefore boosting monitoring data collection and its interpretation is quite pivotal to achieve successful adaptive management. It is important to underline this approach cannot be prescriptive since the nature of each project determines the resource allocation for learning. In case of rapid responses, a light touch review can be proposed while for long-term projects it is encouraged that adaptive management becomes the norm.

The following steps are encouraged for Programme leads and Funding Coordinators to negotiate:

1. Cost effectively how much reviews a project entails in terms of logistic, human resources and time
2. Be open to negotiate with donors on the truthfulness of your figures and to defend the importance of resource learning as a core priority for programmatic success
3. Prioritise flexibility with both donors and all relevant stakeholders, costs need to be reviewed on a regular basis and integrated with programmatic priorities
4. Design a workplan that enable you to review Value for Money metrics on a quarterly basis (at least)
5. Ensure MEAL coordinators and Programme Managers are sufficiently cost-recovered to trigger evidence review and adopt an evidence-based inputs allocation in view of changing priorities
6. Choose and pursue strategy development of delivery models by taking into account how key assumptions and risks might evolved during the duration of a project
7. Assess where the project is placed in relation to knowledge of causation and of the context to drive the appropriate adaptive management approach (look at table below)



The consequences from embedding these steps in adaptive programmes are:

- ✓ A strong emphasis on rapid learning and feedback to inform changes;
- ✓ Flexibility in implementation to enable the above (including within budgets and results frameworks);
- ✓ Responsibility for decision-making is delegated to staff as close to implementation of work as possible, recognising that those close to the intervention (both affected populations and frontline staff) are thought to have the best knowledge of circumstances;
- ✓ The focus should be on problems that are identified and agreed by local people
- ✓ A politically-smart or power-sensitive approach is taken: this recognises that problems look different depending on whose perspective they are viewed from, allows space to explore the politics underpinning a problem and emerging contextual opportunities for action ;

- ✓ Accountability focuses on progress towards agreed high level results and on learning, rather than on pre-defined implementation plans and milestones (asking "did we do the right thing?" rather than "did we do what we said we would do?").

In methodological terms, Strategy Testing is an example of proven approach for monitoring highly flexible programs that aim to address complex development problems. Its process contributes to broader efforts to reorient development assistance and operationalize more strategic, flexible, and adaptive approaches.

"[…]In principle, Strategy Testing challenges and review usual assumptions that core development hypothesis underlying the program design are correct. While traditional monitoring is tracking and logging the achievement of predetermined benchmarks and milestones, it is less effective at tracking how program activities relate to larger change processes and what this reveals about the efficacy of the program's logic, the likelihood that program strategies will achieve impact, or the extent to which assumptions underpinning the TOC are valid. These issues are often assessed in an end-of-project evaluation, but are generally not examined through on-going monitoring activities.

Timelines for monitoring activities are often determined by external pressures such as donor reporting requirements, rather than by program needs and the actual pace of change. Adaptive Management approaches deviate from conventional programs in a number of critical ways that counter the core assumptions and requirements of a standard monitoring approach. The development problems being addressed are only partially understood at the outset, and it is assumed that sustainable solutions would be identified through a non-linear "searching" process. A key premise underlying this approach is that the path to change will emerge over time through a repeating cycle of building relationships, experimentation, program adjustments, and continuous learning. Accordingly, it becomes imperative to envision a monitoring system based on continuous appraisal of assumptions behind outcomes, milestones, and indicators because these were expected to change over time, as the realities on the ground changed or teams discovered new information or opportunities.

Standard, Fixed Program Approach	Flexible Program Approach
Most suitable for problems with predictable, straightforward solutions	Most suitable for complex problems, where solutions are difficult to predict
From the start, program activities, outputs and outcomes can be clearly identified	Activities, outputs and outcomes emerge over time through experimentation and learning
Achievement of program outcomes follows a linear, cumulative path, based on causal relationships that link activities to outputs and outputs to outcomes	A non-linear, evolutionary path emerges through experimentation and responding to opportunities
Program design is largely based on research and analysis conducted during the design phase	Program design evolves throughout implementation, based on ongoing analysis and new learning
The program's theory of change is set at start up, and strategies and outcomes are expected to remain the same	The program's theory of change is adjusted throughout program implementation, as are program strategies and outcomes
While the program has some scope for adjustment, significant changes in direction are not easily accommodated	Significant adjustments in program direction are expected over the course of implementation

[…] Strategy Testing is designed to monitor programs that are deliberately taking a highly flexible, adaptive approach to find effective and lasting solutions to complex development problems. Central to this approach is the principle that program strategies can and should change over time as new information emerges about what works and the most plausible paths to achieving results. For this reason, this strategy is most appropriate for programs that require a flexible approach. However, for programs achieving changes that are non-transformational, standard techniques for robust monitoring remain suitable"

Overall, the clear implication is that becoming more adaptive will require shifts in the aid culture and increased capacity to design and manage monitoring systems that respond to this way of working. The intention is that both the government and development partners can reduce long-term uncertainty and improve the alignment with outcomes through deliberate processes of testing, experimenting, evidence gathering and learning and allocating the resources required to generate the learning.

This is contingent upon organisational and behavioural changes in the organisation. For instance, centralized command and control systems, 'risk averse' incentives linked with a culture of 'fear of making mistakes', delegations of authority, consultants management, grant and contract management approaches, and senior and mid-level leadership are key organizational "levers" that need to be adjusted to give donors and their implementing partners the capacity for adaptive management to maximise the value of what invested.

In operational terms, the key activities and focal points to be solicited when designing projects and during implementation of reviews processes are:

Key activities for adaptive management	Focal Points to lead the process	Source of information	% costs in MEAL budget
Sample a pool of respondents to collect monitoring evidence from beginning to end	Enumerators, MEAL Coordinator/Officers	Target groups, institutions, private stakeholders, secondary	Cost for primary data collection: 50%
Planning and executing quarterly review of monitoring evidence and key assumptions	Project MEAL Coordinator, Programme Manager in-country, Knowledge Manager	Implementing partners, staff of international development organisations	Cost for all quarters: 20%
Planning multi-stakeholders event for ToC annual reviews and for sharing evaluation findings	Programme Manager remotely[2] and in-country, MEAL Coordinator remotely and in-country	Community stakeholders, implementing partners and staff of international development organisations	Cost for all years: 15%
Produce communication material for wider disseminations relating to compelling evidence	Knowledge Manager, Project MEAL Coordinator, Communication Specialist, Consultants	Annual and quarterly reports, monitoring evidence, evaluation studies	Cost for all years: 10%
Organise at least for one event to share evidence linked with project results and the adopted adaptive management response	Programme Manager in-country and remotely, Knowledge Managers of all partners and external experts	Communication material and relevant publications using project evidence (evaluation, papers, blogs...)	Cost per event: 5%
NB: This is a suggested list**.** Key activities are subject to change depending on contextual/contractual circumstances and how much time is dedicated to respond to immediate humanitarian priorities.			

[2] Programme Managers are the ones working either in-country or remotely from the project site and holding the contractual responsibility with the relevant counterpart (Consortia lead or donor).

- **Donors like DFID are committed to maximising the impact of each pound spent to improve poor people's lives (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity). For taxpayers' money DFID needs to be able to explain and defend its decisions.**

- **Value for money means aiming for the best feasible programme, not just a good programme. This means carefully appraising possible objectives and delivery options, considering how to use the market and competition and thinking creatively about how to get the best development impact.**

- **That doesn't mean that we only do the cheapest things. We need to understand what drives costs and make sure that we are getting the desired quality at the lowest price. We need to influence partners to do the same.**

- **Nor do we just do the easiest things to measure. We need to explain what we value, be innovative in how we assess value for money and what results projects are trying to achieve with taxpayers' money.**

Value for Money

Value for Money Definition

An important requirement for multiple donors is Value for Money, a management approach that fits well monitoring systems to inform performance of programme/projects across the 4 "Es" (check the link):

In details, key definitions and issues to address when applying VfM to projects are:

✓ **Economy**: It is a function of quality of inputs in their selection, delivery and feedback upon receipt. The project team needs to be in a position to monitor the whole input cycle from procurement of goods/services to their quality, financial returns, accountability, timelines of delivery and accessibility. All teams involved in proposal development should be able to demonstrate and articulate optimal operating procedures for supply chain management, logistics and human resources utilisation while ensuring a linkage between input supply and project participant feedback. Economy should not be thought in isolation to other VfM components: if for example, the cheapest solution would involve reducing the effectiveness of a programme then this should be stated. The objective is not to minimize costs in absolute terms, but to minimize costs while keeping in mind quality and effectiveness consideration.

✓ **Efficiency**: The variation of inputs is determined by cost drivers that most likely affect the delivery of output-level targets. The depth and breadth of target outreach per output area requires extensive workplan/budget integration to track and benchmark cost per project participant. For examples, activities aimed at income generation and market linkages yield the most sustainable financial returns. This represents an estimate to quantify positive cost efficiency ratio. In short, questions to consider are:

- How many activities and/or outputs do you expect to deliver for a given level of resources?
- Do you manage to deliver in a timely way and in line with returns relative to original objectives?

✓ **Effectiveness**: Effectiveness can be defined as "the extent to which outputs are converted into outcomes and impacts (e.g. improved nutrition, increased social capital, improved health etc.)". For measuring Effectiveness, you will need to collect two pieces of information as per the example in

- How many project participants have reported an improvement across each target outcome for each year throughout implementation?

- How much change (i.e. the amount of change) they have experienced across each target outcome for each year throughout implementation?

When applicable, project-level MEAL coordinator should be able to take the following steps:

1. Based on your Logframe and MEAL plan, identify the outcomes against which you will be evaluating your project.
2. Based on your Logframe and MEAL plan, identify the outcome indicators against which you will be evaluating your project.
3. Based on MEAL data and / or impact assessments, determine the number of project participants and stakeholders experiencing each outcome sequentially in time
4. Based on MEAL data and / or impact assessments, determine the amount of changes these project participants and stakeholders have experienced with adequate tools
5. Present results on a yearly basis, alongside your costs.
6. Justify variations from original expectations on outcome achievement during project reviews

✓ **Equity**: Projects are supposed to reach the most vulnerable groups through robust targeting criteria, feedback mechanisms that generate evidence and the enforcement of CHS principles for humanitarian interventions. If samples that represent target groups become champion respondents during monitoring, the quality and relevancy of inputs can be verified with evidence. During analysis of data, disaggregation along targeting criteria for the most excluded population opens the opportunity to gauge on how the distribution of inputs addressed specific needs of priority groups.

Commercial Contracts: Adopt Value for Money indicators as part of monitoring cycles

Quality assurance is achieved through proven monitoring and evaluation systems and it remains a core component of VfM, key approach to determine at ITT stage for commercial contracts. A MEAL system will include: data on progress towards targets upon which payments are released (if PbR is applicable), the levels of provision across all the delivery areas, cost-effectiveness of IP projects, as well as best practices and policy recommendations. Commercial contracts request us to go further by approaching costs and targets in an integrated way, setup system at the CO level to gather evidence towards VfM indicators and, to assess their evolution along with strategies to optimise activities' contribution to long-term results.

Therefore, a well-done context analysis sets the major assumptions behind priority interventions addressing critical needs across different areas and key costs to consider while allocating resources strategically. The execution of commercial contracts entail costs are compared across operations and areas when measuring the value of technical assistance, project targets and MEAL-related strategies to promote data-driven management decisions. In short, commercial contracts require implementing partners at ease with numerical backups all the way from input management to impact measurement.

For Economy:

A financial methodology that explains the rationale of the commercial tender and how this offers best value is a core component of economy and it starts right at design. This should also set out the governance, risks management methodology and business processes that are sufficiently robust to ensure effective delivery on time and within budget. Hence, the tenderer should aim to provide convincing information in the following areas when outlining costs:

- **Benchmarking of fee rates:** Bidders are expected to clearly set out their own process of benchmarking fee rates to demonstrate competitiveness. This approach is increasingly important as DFID moves to a position where suppliers are expected to be transparent in their pricing structure in order to demonstrate that their commercial tender is competitive and represents Value for Money. Tenderers should therefore provide details of how their fee rates are constructed, detailing the overhead, salary and profit margin making up each fee rate. This is also true for all MEAL costs.
- **Financial risk/contingency costs:** It is a matter for tenderers to determine if they wish to include contingency elements in their tender. If for example, you have identified risks to successful delivery,

which would require additional resource or cost to mitigate, then key donors would expect these to be shown separately in the tender.

- **Economies of scale:** The tender should highlight any particular economies of scale that can be realised through sharing of resources with other operations the tenderer is currently involved in. For example if this area is adjacent to an existing operation or can leverage on existing equipment/infrastructure, there may be an opportunity to share certain resources. The tender should explain how these benefits can be realised and clearly demonstrate that they are realistic.
- **Life cycle of costs:** Tenderers need to demonstrate within the commercial tender that their overall proposal offers the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least amount over the period of using the goods or services required. The commercial tender should therefore be clear on whole life costs over the duration of the contract, including elements such as: capital, maintenance, management, operating and disposal costs. Where applicable, the tender should highlight where it continues to add value beyond the life of the contract (e.g. lower maintenance costs for the recipient government after the contract has ended).
- **A detailed financial plan:** Tenderers cross reference activities and outputs within the technical work plan. All costs associated with delivering the ToR must be detailed within the financial plan. Payment mechanisms within the financial plan are to be structured to support performance management and effective delivery of the activities and outputs identified. For this reason, commercial contracts require a much greater integration between the budget and the set of indicators in a Logframe.
- **Multiple phases:** In case the ToR highlights that the requirement will be taken forward in distinct phases (e.g. Inception & Implementation), the costs relating to each phase should be clearly shown. The Commercial forms provided in the ITT should be fully completed in the format requested. Typically, the forms should be completed separately for each phase and one must be completed to show a summary of total costs broken down into the proposed phases.

Given the importance of identifying key costs, their sequence and how they feed into output targets; the supplier agency is expected to be in a position to establish their composition in much detail. The two tables below describe how costs can be broken down at design and during implementation. The most important distinction to be made is between the unit cost intended as the net price of an input and the delivery cost as in the amount of resources required to deliver it. The definition of what is delivery and a net price is critical at design to establish the same understanding with the donor, and to demonstrate thorough understanding of the context, cost drivers, and what it takes to achieve a set of activities.

At design							
Relevant output indicator from Logframe	**Key costs: Main costs in budget lines**	**Number of units for each total cost**	**Unit Description (incl. contents)**	**Unit Cost (as per budget)**	**Estimated Delivery Cost**	**Unit Output Cost (Unit Cost+ Estimated Delivery Cost)**	**Summary of what is included in the delivery cost [3]**
1.1	=1500* 147	1500 Non-food items (NFIs)	Household items, hygiene items, winter clothing	£147	£118.24	£265.24	Personnel, transport and % of admin costs for each HH
1.2	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]

Clarity at design enables smooth tracking on a quarterly basis, which is encouraged in the context of commercial contracts since any major variance could change outreach targets and influence the release of payments or compel for a strong justification on why resources need to be shifted to other areas.

Tracking on a quarterly basis (Q1-Q4)			
Unit Cost (as per report)	Estimated Delivery Cost	Unit Output Cost (Unit Cost + Estimated Delivery	Notes on cost drivers (e.g. reasons behind substantial

[3] Making reference to information/lines in the budget - e.g. it includes insurance, delivery, distribution costs, staff costs, administrative costs

		Cost)	changes in the unit output cost)
£	£	£	Text

Importantly, donors might demand for stronger justification of costs in a commercial contract than other contractual arrangements. To make a business case on why a supplier agency is more competitive with respect to other suppliers, the table below provides for a strong logic that can be presented when calculating unit costs. The key word in this case is "benchmarking" or in other words, the comparison of unit cost across similar projects that had been implemented in the same area by either CARE or other development partners. Generating benchmarks might not be easy if what proposed is new in the intervention area but if any primary data in regards to unit cost has been collected by local counterparts in the past or can be retrieved, it would be best to use it. Otherwise it is encouraged for the organisation to setup system that allow for the storage of this information across thematic and geographical areas.

An example of Unit Cost calculation		
Key costs (derived from budget)	**Total value [GBP 2017]**	**% of total budget**
Total budget figure:	£1,000,000.00	
Of which:		
Purchase of drought resistant seeds	£300,000.00	30%
Wages of agronomists	£150,000.00	15%
Transportation costs	£250,000.00	25%
Example of Unit Cost calculation of drought resistant seeds		**Comments**
a. Total value of seeds [GBP 2016]	£300,000.00	
b. Total seeds purchased [Tons]	444	
c. Unit cost =a / b [GBP 2016]	£675.68	*Cost per ton of seeds bought (unit cost)*
Benchmark unit cost 1 ***[Source: Any previous projects in the exact same area implemented by CARE or other INGOs]***		**Comments**
a. Value of seeds [GBP 2005]	£37,870.87	
b. Total seeds purchased [Tons]	60	
c. Unit cost =a / b [GBP 2005]	£631.18	*Cost per ton of seeds bought in GBP 2005*
Benchmark unit cost 2 ***[Source: Wholesale market price in-country]***		**Comments**
Unit cost [GBP 2017]	£695	*Market price per ton of seeds in GBP 2017*
Conversion to 2017 prices (constant prices) –Indicate source of conversion-		
Costs for same inputs	**Original value (£)**	**Value in £ 2017**
Project unit cost	*£675 (£2016)*	*£681.60*
Benchmark 1 unit cost	£631 (£2005)	£849.80
Benchmark 2 unit cost	£695 (£2017)	£695.00

For Efficiency:

In an operational sense, the tables below offer the basis to shape adequate tools that can translate the questions mentioned above into tracking system able to demonstrate the linkage between activities, output targets and expenditures. The next table shows a disaggregation of activities by indicator, target, area and expenditures to highlight the operational implication of a commercial contract in terms of work-planning.

Activity	**Link with indicator**	**Monitoring tool and responsible partner**	**Expected targets per area and quarter for each activity* (Gantt)**				Actual Values Q1	Actual Values Q2	Actual Values Q3	Actual Values Q4	**Expenditure amounts per quarter for each activity**			
Activity 1	Output 1.1	Describe monitoring tool and specify lead organisation	**Area 1**											
			Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**	**Actuals 1**	**Actuals 2**	**Actuals 3**	**Actuals 4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**
			Area 2											
			Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**	**Actuals 1**	**Actuals 2**	**Actuals 3**	**Actuals 4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**
Activity 2	Output 1.3	Describe monitoring	**Area 1**											
			Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**	**Actuals 1**	**Actuals 2**	**Actuals 3**	**Actuals 4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4…**

		tool and specify lead organisation	Area 2											
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4…	Actuals 1	Actuals 2	Actuals 3	Actuals 4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4…
**The distribution of targets are typically linked to activities but they can also link to indicators depending on how the MEAL framework is developed*														

In addition to a detailed and integrated work-plan to track how activities are contributing towards output targets, what is shown below is an additional example of all areas to consider when developing management tools to keep track of how project activities are delivered. The following table represents an overview relevant to PbR modalities when risks ought to be regarded as drivers for targets and payment triggers, which are agreed upon systematic review of unit cost composition (see economy). An activity-based risk analysis is critical for these contracts since the more CARE demonstrates knowledge of the context and its volatility, the more credible its programme preposition will appear to the eyes of the donors.

INDICATORS	ACTIVITIES	TOTAL PAYMENT PLANNED	TOTAL TARGETS	EVIDENCE TO VERIFY ACHIEVED TARGETS	PAYMENT TRIGGER	RISK ANALYSIS (Low, Med, High)	RISK ANALYSIS (% of payment at risk)	Justification for Risk Assessment
OUTPUT 1								
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.1	Introductory stakeholder engagement workshops	£3,000	1 for each IP	List of participants, pictures	#of workshops completed	Low	0%	Good reputation with key stakeholders
	…				Submission of Report	Low	0%	Within control of programme
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.2	…							
OUTPUT 2								
OUTPUT INDICATOR 2.1	Learning events with local partners	£25,000	1 per region each quarter	Pictures, Video, Reports	Number of meetings per quarter	Medium	10%	New relationships need to be built with some communities
	…							
OUTPUT INDICATOR 2.2	…					Low	0%	

If the appreciation of the context and its risks goes hands to hands with a clear causal pathway (outcome-output-activity) then the table below can guide the IP to clearly outline how each activity links up to the longer-term change it is expected to contribute. In managing commercial contracts, outcomes, intermediate outcomes and outputs should always be mapped to activities and their targets as they are in any theory of change.

Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Output	Activity ID	Output indicator	Activity Description	Lead partner	Targets per quarter and per year	
Select from drop-down list the outcome to be most impacted by this activity	*Select the most relevant intermediate outcome*	*Select from drop-down list*	*To match column on budget.*	*To match Logframe (e.g. 1.2, 5.1 etc.)*	*To match column on budget. For additional activities which are not in budget (i.e. have no cost) add these below the budgeted activities*	*Partner responsible for the activity*	*Targets for each quarter*	*Totals for each year*

This wide range of tables presented in the efficiency section is because the requirements and prescribed templates for commercial contracts can vary significantly from programme to programme. As well, the attempt is to show how important it is to bring activity-based planning at the core of targets and expenditure distribution. Efficiency induces a supplier to bring them together and to track them simultaneously so to demonstrate the achievement of payment triggers in view of inputs allocation.

The implementation of the efficiency principle translates into some of the operational tools presented so far along with the measurement of cost-efficiency ratio across a set of outputs. Such calculation is strategic in the context of commercial contracts, particularly when executed on annual basis to describe trends of cost incidence on output targets. The following example presents the steps needed to produce a credible ratio that can be benchmarked with similar values from relatable projects.

1. Key outputs achieved	
Examples of outputs	**Number of project participants**
Farmers with access to improved seed varieties:	7,500
Farmers trained in using improved seed varieties:	6,500
2. Costs of delivering activities	
Direct plus delivery costs	
Purchase + Distribution of improved seeds [GBP 2016]:	£400,000
	£50,000
Costs of training in using improved seed varieties [GBP 2016]:	£240,000
Management/indirect costs (organisation support including wages and overheads of CARE staff)	
a. Total management costs for entire project [GBP 2016]:	£350,000
b. Assumption (% of management costs attributed to each activity)	33.30%
c. Management costs per output = a * b [GBP 2016]:	£116,550
Total costs = *direct/delivery costs + management costs*	
Purchase and distribution of improved seeds [GBP 2016]:	£566,550
Costs of training in using improved seed varieties [GBP 2016]:	£356,550

3. Cost Efficiency calculation			
Examples of outputs	**a. Costs [GBP 2016]**	**b. Number of participants**	**c. Cost Efficiency = a / b**
Purchase & distribution of improved seeds [GBP 2016]:	£566,550	7,500	£75.54
Training in using improved seed varieties [GBP 2016]:	£356,550	6,500	£54.85

4. Examples of benchmarking		
Benchmark cost per farmer with access to drought resistant seeds *(converted to 2016 GBP at constant prices)*	**Source from similar projects**	**Project cost per farmer with access to drought resistant seeds**
£83.00	*IFAD, 2013*	**£75.54**
Benchmark cost per farmer trained in using improved seeds (converted to 2016 GBP at constant prices)	**Source from similar projects**	**Project cost per farmer trained in improved seeds**
£90.24	*PAN UK, 2003*	**£54.85**

From the table above, we can notice the importance of integrating costs with output targets after inputs are analysed in their composition (direct, delivery and indirect costs). The integration of these values is the core logic behind cost-efficiency, which is a simple division of costs by number of participants benefiting from the output of activities delivered. The ratio gains credibility when there are benchmarks available from previous projects in similar geographical and thematic areas. From a commercial contract perspective, previous programme experiences should provide enough data to cement cost-efficiency trends in order to demonstrate suppliers' competitive value over-time and with respect to other interventions. Systems ought to be setup at COs to initiate this kind of analysis by retrofitting information from past experiences and facilitating regular review of cost-efficiency ratio of outputs across active initiatives.

For Effectiveness:
In order to address effectiveness, a clear targeting strategy and adequate forecast of outcome change is critical. Usually, the latter information can be retrieved from previous programmes if they had sufficient MEAL evidence to demonstrate change. The table below provides an example of outcome indicators and how they should embed risk-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies to inform target progression in

relation to total project participants. These values are hard to predict and might not be affected by risks that justify methodological changes but context appreciation informs the logic based on previous programming experiences that can strengthen the assumptions behind cumulative yearly changes. The lack of it can enhance the chance of delivery failure and endanger INGO credibility along with payments release.

Key indicators		Risk-based methodology of outcome monitoring	Total outcome area cost	Cumulative % of yearly change for total number of project participants				Sample strategy for evaluation of outcome changes
				Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	
Outcome Indicator 1	% households surveyed demonstrating improved food security	*High Risk*: Third party monitoring *Low Risk:* Semi-structured survey	£10,000,000	5%	13%	17%	20%	*High risk*: Purposive *Low risk*: Quasi-experimental
Outcome Indicator 2	% vendors in target value chains report improved quality and increased variety of goods by the end of the project	*High Risk*: Absent *Low Risk*: Structured interviews	£ 5,000,000	2%	5%	10%	25%	*High risk*: None *Low risk:* Purposive

Another core component of VfM is the measurement of cost-effectiveness. The way this ratio is generated relies on a clear idea of outcome-level targets, how they are sequenced and linked to costs. The example provided below is a step-by-step calculation exemplifying what improved health from safe drinking water yielded in terms of monetised benefits. When assumptions on how benefits translate into pound values are clear, a proper cost/benefit analysis can be conducted; otherwise a simple cost-effectiveness calculation (total cost of outcome/ total number of participants experiencing an outcome change) is sufficient.

Outcome 1: Improved health condition for 20% of the target population as a result of improved access to safe drinking water	**Assumptions**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**All Years**
Indicators for Outcome 1 :					
E.g. No. Of Individuals in the project catchment area reporting improved health condition as a result of safe drinking water	Target population 5,000 individuals	200	300	500	1,000 (20% of total)
E.g. Average savings on medicine and clinic visits reported by project participants in the project catchment area	Average annual household spend on health £500	Average savings 5%	Average savings 10%	Average savings 30%	30% (total average savings)
E.g. Average reduction in sick days reported amongst project participants in the project catchment area, as a result of improved health	Average number of sick days.	Less sick days by 10%	Less sick days by 20%	Less sick days by 60%	Sick days reduced 60%
Total Cost of Outcome 1		£20,000	£40,000	£40,000	£100,000
Other benefits could include, for example, time saved from not having to walk 4 hours a day to collect water - what could that the extra time be used for, reduced patient numbers at local clinics -would that result in clinic savings?					
Monetised Benefits of Outcome 1		**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**All Years**
E.g. Increased income available to target population due to less	Increased Income = Average spend * Average	£5,000	£15,000	£75,000	£95,000

expenditure on health	savings * no. of project participants				
E.g. Increased income amongst target population due to a greater number of working days.	Average daily income £50 Increased Income = Average daily income * (average decrease in sick days) * no. of project participants	£10,000	£30,000	£150,000	£190,000
Simple Cost Effectiveness Calculation = **Total Cost of Outcome 1/Total People Benefiting**	£100,000/1000= £100 per individual benefiting from improved health as a result of improved water supply				
Cost Benefit Analysis Calculation = **Total Cost of Outcome 1/Total Value of Outcome 1 Benefits**	(£95,000+£195,000)/£100,000= Within the lifetime of the project £2.85 of benefit for every £1 spent.				

As stated in principle #3, statistical rigor is in order to validate cost-effectiveness calculation since target group ought to experience a significant change in its condition versus another similar population that has not received any intervention. Beside the ethical implications, the evaluation of results in commercial contracts tends to favour an experimental design. To address this trend, the supplier agency needs to be aware of all concurrent projects in the same area of delivery at design in order to maximise the measurement of "structural change" that can be attributed to the project.

For Equity:

In a commercial framework, there could be project components embedding humanitarian response upon a specific shock or vulnerability condition. During data analysis, a disaggregation along equity indicators, similar to the ones proposed below, opens the opportunity to gauge on how activities addressed specific needs of priority groups while considering internal and external forces that can skew their inclusion in the targeting strategy.

Equity Indicators	Internal Influences	External Influences	% of totals
e.g. **Project participants gender ratio**	None to report	Self-selection of participants from community members might create a skew in the age group of women targeted in the project	50%
e.g. **Project participants percentage with food insecurity** (i.e. lack climate change resilience)	Baseline methodology to target food insecure households might conflict with external benchmarks	Extreme weather that limits the access of the targeted location.	75%
e.g. **Project participant percentage with economic vulnerability**	Knowledge of the income and assets of a household can be hard to determine.	Power dynamics within the community mean that the most economically vulnerable (for example, female headed households) are not made known by leaders.	80%

Yet, a simple disaggregation of targets might not be enough since a clear justification on how a supplier agency quantified the proportion of specific types of project participants is necessary when demonstrating longer-term changes (outcomes). See below a proposed set of steps to qualify and measure target distribution along one example of equity criteria (nutrition).

1. Equity incidence (project-driven)

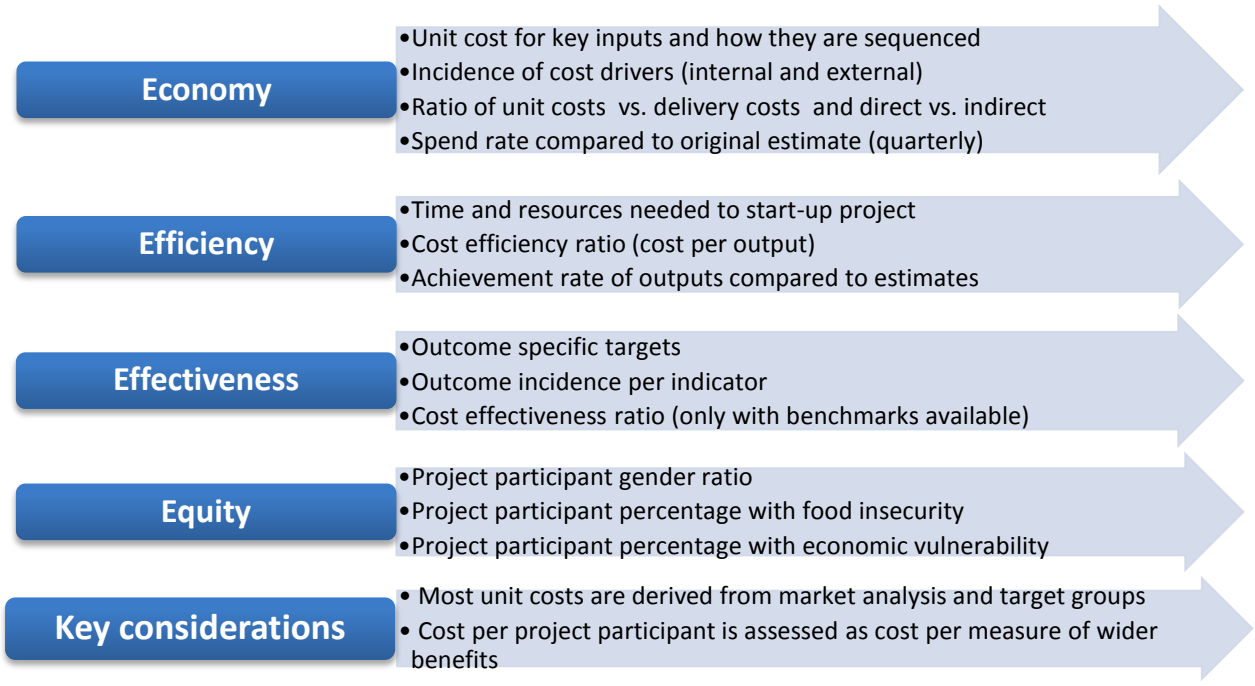
Outcome	a. No of project participants benefiting from outcome change	Equity component (criteria)	Equity indicator description	b. Indicator (%)
Improved nutrition	1,300	Proportion of project participants with food insecurity	Percentage of project participants in food insecure HH (%)	20%
2. Equity benchmarking/baselining				
Outcome	**Equity component (criteria)**	**Indicator description**	**Benchmark description and source of baseline**	**d. Benchmark (%)**
Improved nutrition	Proportion of project participants with food insecurity	Percentage of project participants in food insecure HH (%)	Proportion of food insecure households in national-level or primary surveys	28%
3. Results on equity				
Outcome	**Equity component (criteria)**	**Indicator description**	**Difference between baseline and following appraisal (%) = b - d**	
Improved nutrition	Proportion of project participants with food insecurity	Percentage of project participants in food insecure HH (%)	Decrease of 8% of project participants (104) with food insecurity in targeted households	

Looking at one specific area (nutrition), equity should be linked to an outcome change addressing a critical vulnerability that informed the targeting strategy (e.g. food insecure households) at design. Based on what outcome changes the project achieved and a clear baseline value outlining the degree of vulnerability, any supplier agency is in a position to generate a result that links to a specific dimension of equity. As per the example above, food insecure households were targeted by setting "nutrition improvements" as outcome change and during annual appraisals/evaluations; a supplier can progressively demonstrate how much of that change was delivered to the participant sub-group most in need.

Given that commercial contracts emphasize the importance of clarity and measurability of output and outcome targets, equity considerations can be easily addressed and related results derived by applying the simple steps in the tools illustrated above. However, the pre-requisite for all these tools to produce compelling results lay with the ability of implementing partners to outline target groups and their needs prior to project's kick-start so to demonstrate their competitive advantage in terms of: knowledge of the context, previous programme achievements, existing infrastructure/staff and availability of technical expertise in particular thematic areas.

Value for Money Metrics

Along with these definitions and guides, there are a series of metrics to be considered across projects:



These metrics are example of what need to be calculated in view of benchmarks that can be extracted from previous and similar interventions or third-part projects/sources. It is important to keep tracking of key costs and how they evolve over the implementation cycle through regular reviews. To provide more details, the above metrics can be calculated in the following way:

Metrics	Simplified steps to calculate them
ECONOMY **1. Unit cost for key inputs and how they are sequenced** **2. Incidence of cost drivers (internal and external)** **3. Ratio of direct versus indirect costs** **4. Spend rate compared to original objectives (quarterly)**	1. Extract from cost categories the top five ones in % of total budget and break down the figures per year to see projections and to verify their credibility 2. Identify cost drivers and quantify in % terms their power to change key unit costs. Ex: Supplier costs might change by 10% because the second best alternative is located further or charges more money 3. At design, consider Direct costs: a. Those costs that can be directly attributed to the project. These include input costs, delivery costs of a certain input/activity, research personnel costs, travel and subsistence of implementing partner, data acquisition, meetings and publications, and audit costs. At design, consider Indirect costs (av.ge 8% funded by DFID): b. Management and administration (i.e., salary costs of project support staff, meetings staff and office administration staff) c. Costs of office space, including rent, depreciation of buildings, equipment, electricity, water, gas, maintenance, insurance d. Communication costs such as postage, and network connection charges 4. From inception, outline forecast expenditures per quarter in a budget template that allows a programme manager and a MEAL coordinator to keep track of expenditures for key activities
EFFICIENCY **5. Time and resources needed to start-up project** **6. Achievement rate of outputs compared to**	5. Procurement timelines and resources to be summed: office set-up/rental, IT equipment, permits from institutions, costs of inputs for immediate delivery, vehicles, and recruitment of Programme Management Unit (PMU) members 6. In case outputs have numerical targets, be specific on the logic behind these numbers and how they are sequenced. Each quarter, it is good practice to review

objective 7. Cost-efficiency benchmarking (when applicable). IRC developed a detailed approach, refer to this link.	the variance between targets reached and prior estimations to validate the initial logic. Recurrent variances ought for prompt input re-allocation. 7. Cost-efficiency ratio : {(direct costs + delivery costs + indirect costs)/output targets)} is the average cost to deliver a certain activity/input per project participant (cost per output/# of project participants). The delivery cost can be categorised as all inputs plus distribution activities and % of total management cost per output. This ratio can be compared across projects to establish benchmark.
EFFECTIVENESS 8. Outcome specific targets 9. Outcome incidence 10. Cost effectiveness ratio (when applicable)	8. Outcome specific targets: How many project participants have reported an improvement across each target outcome for each year throughout implementation 9. Outcome incidence: How much change (i.e. the amount of typologies of change) target groups have experienced across each outcome for each year throughout implementation. Each outcome indicator should have a clear methodology to quantify changes between each evaluation study. Each project is accountable to adopt trackable metrics. Some examples are: a. Increased income: Average household income annual increase b. School attendance: Average number of days attending school per month c. Improved nutrition: Additional number of meals per week d. Improved health: Improvement of health on standardised scales 10. Cost effectiveness ratio: it will require: a) to use outcome targets/incidence and combine changes in benefit indicators with costs associated in achieving each outcome; b) to place a monetary value to compare the total value of outcomes achieved against costs.
EQUITY 11. Project participant gender ratio 12. Project participant disability ratio 13. Project participant percentage with food insecurity 14. Project participant percentage with economic vulnerability *Other distribution criteria can be applicable	11. Project participant gender ratio: The number of total female target individuals compared to total target. This ratio can be further disaggregated by age. 12. Project participant disability ratio: The number of total disabled target individuals compared to total targets. a. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) does not try and define disability. Instead it states that disability is an 'evolving' concept, and that 'disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'. b. An impairment largely becomes disabling when the individual is prevented from participating fully in society because of environmental and social barriers, for example when they are unable to access to assistive or adaptive devices, when buildings are physically inaccessible, when communications are not presented in accessible formats and when they are excluded through stigma and discrimination, etc. Barriers are different in different contexts. 13. Project participant percentage with food insecurity: A Coping Strategy Index to identify the % could be used to probe the severity and frequency of a detrimental coping strategy as a reliable proxy for food insecurity. Check this link to adopt an adequate tool: Figure 4. Actual Example—Calculating a Household CSI Index Score 14. Project participant percentage with economic vulnerability: An example of "Economic Vulnerability Index" is the following arithmetic average of 2 sub-indexes: a. The exposure sub-index is a weighted average of 5 component indexes: population size (25%), remoteness from world markets (25%), exports concentration (12.5%), share of agriculture, forestry and fishery (12.5%) and the share of population living in low coastal zones (25%). b. The shocks sub-index, which is a weighted average of 3 component indexes: the victims of natural disasters (25%), the instability in the agricultural production (25%), and the instability in exports of goods and services (50%).

MEAL Core Standards Tool

Detailed instructions on how to use core standards modules

The proposed tool represents a guiding document where the programme lead/MEAL focal point indicates where all key documents are stored in an online platform or shared drive.
In addition, this tool is supposed to enable focal points in managing projects to rapidly appraise if these key documents are meeting the quality standards necessary for reporting back to donors and wider sharing.

An important consideration that applies when embedding similar standards in a programme portfolio is the diverse nature of projects across international development organisations. Therefore, the standards will apply to different degrees across a range of interventions as requirements tend to change along contractual typologies, projects duration and expected results. Usually, the main categories of active initiatives are:

- PBR/CC : Payment by Result/ Commercial Contract
- Dev.nt Grants: Development accountable grants
- Above a certain value[4]: Development/Humanitarian funding above a threshold value
- >6 months HUM: Humanitarian projects longer than 6 months
- Rapid Response: Humanitarian interventions shorter than 6 months

Given the project typology, the general principles to use the tool effectively are:

1) **How to fill information:** Information for each module should be filled in the "Fill Info" box, which is either a drop-down list with options or a request for a number value. The box below what requested always asks for a piece of document wherein the relevant evidence can be easily identified. The most recurrent documents to be considered for updating the tool are: proposal document with 1) Annexes; 2) updated workplan; 3) Logframe/agreed indicators; 4) Budget and expenditure tracking; 5) Theory of Change/Justification; 6) Markers; 7) evaluation studies. And, for all indicators values in % form it is necessary to derive the number of the total population it refers to.

2) **Applicability:** It is suggested to apply these standards to all projects above the median value and with duration longer than 6 months but this remains an organisational choice.

3) **Risk/context:** When filling each module, you should review the three colours next to the requested information as they define how important it is in view of project's contractual arrangement.

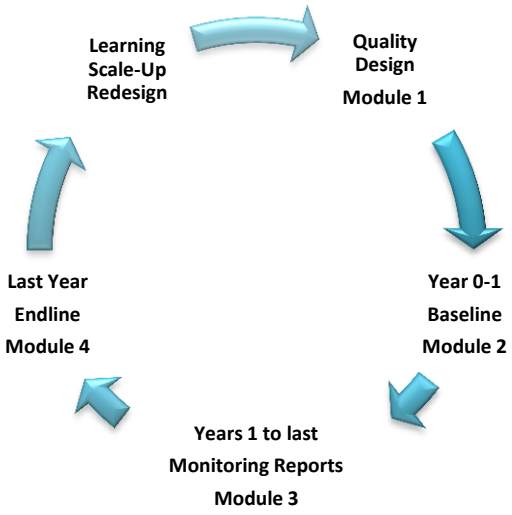
4) **Risk of bias in measuring results when lack of evidence:** The lack of certain information creates a risk for the project as gaps in evidence hinder the process of appraising results and derive learnings from the project. Therefore, for each requested information, three colours define its importance:
    - **Green (Low risk, N/A):** The information is not required and there is low risk from lack of reference documents. This level of risk usually applies to rapid responses with quick turns-around, which do not allow for a long design phase and a theory based approach.
    - **Amber (Medium Risk):** The information is not required but suggested as there is a medium risk from lack of evidence. A wide range of document falls within this category as it encompasses donor's requirements that might or might not apply to a specific intervention. If some information is not explicitly requested by a donor, this rating suggests that it would still be useful to document it because of what can be learned from it.
    - **Red (High Risk):** The information is required and it would typically represent a compliance requirement. For specific contract types, notably commercial contracts, there are very specific priorities to take into account (e.g. Value for Money frameworks) and lack of adequate documentation would represent a specific risk for the project.

5) **Proposed leads/focal points:**

[4] This value need to be established by the organisation depending on the size of the portfolio, it usually represent a large project.

- At design stage: Funding coordinators are responsible for filling all the relevant information in the first module.
- During implementation: Programme coordinators and MEAL dedicated resources will be considered as the reference points to retrieve the requested information for the baseline, monitoring and endline modules.
- Oversight: During the whole cycle, MEAL advisors in the Programme team are supposed to provide support, troubleshoot and synthetize all information from projects into risk scores.

6) **Timeline per module:** Filling information for each module should be an on-going exercise as focal point access relevant information. The specific timelines to complete each module are the following:
   - **Design Module:** To be completed upon submission of last version of the proposal
   - **Baseline Module:** To be completed upon submission of last baseline draft + datasets
   - **Monitoring Module:** To be completed at submission of the last midline/mid-term review report to donor (multiple modalities apply)
   - **Endline Module:** To be completed upon submission of last endline draft + datasets



7) **Validity:** The tool is an incentive to work collaboratively by overseeing and sharing relevant documents in any online platform as a first a step to validate whether an adequate MEAL framework and practice are in place. A limited set of questions also facilitate an initial assessment over the quality of shared documentation. Yet, any further appraisal is only possible by technical and MEAL experts if the required evidence is stored and accessible in the online platform.

8) **Storage in organisation:** All tools with updated information can be stored in a shared folder. For each project, there will be a folder name (Fund Code + project Name) where to store the updated tool to be updated over the life cycle of a project.

Step-by-step guide on the modules for design

The following tables contain a detailed explanation of how to fill each module. Consider the blue text box below each item, which presents a concise explanation and references to relevant documents to use.

Core Standard 1: The context, risks and MEAL capacities are appraised and marked at design

Risk/Context	Fill Info	PBR/CC	Dev.nt Grants	Large value projects	>6 months HUM	Rapid Response
Context analysis of the area of intervention	Y/N/N.A					
What is a context analysis and required documents A context analysis does not have a specific format and it would change from project to project. Typically, there should be some sections in the proposal document where economic, political, organisational/institutional, environmental and social/cultural factors are considered. Locate the section where this information is stored in the proposal document.						
Indicate document location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Risk analysis from Go-No-Go	Y/N/N.A					
What is a risk analysis and required documents The risk analysis contained in the Go-No-Go process set-up by the international development organisation.						
Indicate document location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Design workshop took place in-country	Y/N/N.A					
Workshop in-country If project conditions allow for a design in-country, then please refer to a workshop report document stored in the online platform. Usually, rapid responses with quick turns around do not allow for an extensive design so this information usually applies for more complex programmes with long-term components.						
Indicate document location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Theory of Change/ Justification/Outcome Mapping (1) (2)/ Result Chain	Y/N/N.A					
What is a Theory of Change and required documents A ToC is the basic logic of what the intervention is intended to achieve and what key strategies will be used to achieve the results (RealWorld Evaluation 2nd edition). There are multiple ways to shape a ToC in development. In a broader sense, it justifies the logic of a particular intervention and it can take many forms. In the humanitarian context, it can correspond to a need-based justification whereas for projects aiming at transformational change it embeds: context analysis, long-term change, sequence of intermediate changes, assumptions and a narrative summary (DFID Review).						
Indicate document location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Stakeholders mapping and power analysis	Y/N/N.A					
What is a Stakeholder Mapping and required documents The first step in a Stakeholder Analysis is to identify who the stakeholders are. The next step is to work out their power, influence and interest, so you know who you should focus on. The final step is to develop a good understanding of the most important stakeholders so that you know how they are likely to respond, and so that you can work out how to win their support – you can record this analysis on a stakeholder map. If a similar process is followed, either during a design workshop or proposal development phase, the reference to a document (section in the proposal or Annex) is requested.						
Indicate document location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Value for Money	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
Economy: VfM budget template is used and key costs are identified (tot cost per budget line)	Y/N/N.A					
Efficiency: Workplan is based on outputs	Y/N/N.A					
Effectiveness: Impact groups are clearly specified and quantified	Y/N/N.A					
Equity: The project embeds a feedback mechanism	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate proposal section location in online platform to validate evidence:						
Process review of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity Based on a range of contextual and contractual factors, each project is supposed to deliver some level of Value for Money. The latest internal guidelines and templates that can be used for reference is stored in the online platform. *Economy*: Any template or document where key unit costs are listed and tracked is to be considered and referred to. In case						

there is not any ad hoc document, the Value for Money section in the proposal should explain how these key costs are identified, their possible drivers and how they are going to be managed and optimised.

Efficiency: A project is encouraged to develop a workplan template that links every activity with its relevant output. Look at the provided template and adapt it according to projects' circumstances. The reference document for efficiency would be a workplan annex to the submitted proposal.

Effectiveness: Impact group are considered to be the target numbers for outcome indicators. Therefore, this number cannot correspond to input level outreach but it entails a specific logic on how multiple outputs lead to a higher level change (impact). The proposal should embed targets number and criteria (pg. 56) for each relevant indicator in sequential order (outcome and/or impact); such information should be stored in the online platform (ref. to specific section in the proposal).

Equity: A feedback is the moment when a project participant expresses a particular opinion about a good delivered by the project or a service by a provider (gov.nt, international development organisation, etc.). Feedback mechanisms have multiple forms; it can be a specific tool like a community score card or PDM. In the proposal document, a feedback system should be included and costed for.

Budgets/Capacity	**Fill Info**	**Comments:**
MEAL expenditure as % of total budget	%	*Comments:*
How to calculate this ratio All staff, consultants, equipment in collecting/processing data and cost-recovery of additional support should be summed into a single value, which will need to be expressed in % of project's total budget. If an international development organisation leads, then check total MEAL costs.		
Interest and skills availability from implementing partners	Responsive, Reactive, Unresponsive	*Comments:*
How to appraise IPs interest The implementing partners involved in a project should be appraised on whether they seem: 1) engaged and pro-active; 2) reactive under pressure or 3) unresponsive. This is a subjective call from the funding lead looking at IPs engagement during proposal development to help flagging relationships that will need more attention if the contract is secured		
No. of MEAL Coordinators/Managers budgeted full-time		*Comments:*
This is the number of MEAL resources that are 100% cost-recovered by the project and able to work with all counterparts		

Logframe/SDG linkage (list to be extended for all long-term change indicators)	
Impact/outcome indicator 1:	Target Number Fill
Link to SDG indicator:	*Indicator Name: […]*
Impact/outcome indicator 2, 3, 4[…]:	Target Number Fill
Link to SDG indicator:	*Indicator Name: […]*
Linking indicators The indicators at the top of a results chain/Logframe should be pasted and copied here along with their targets to track them better. The second step is to link indicators and their protocols, when applicable, with their closest SDG proxy.	

Core Standard 2: Targeting and sampling methodologies are reliable and enable tracking of result chain

Logframe tracking at baseline (list to be extended for all long-term change indicators)		
Impact/outcome indicator 1:	***Value baseline***	*Comments*
Impact/outcome indicator 2, 3, 4[…]:	***Value baseline***	*Each indicator has its own line*
Make sure all indicators are tracked from baseline Baseline values are usually sets to zero but there could be instances when a project is only scaling-up previous results. For these key indicators, it is important to express the baseline values up-front so they can be tracked systematically. For all indicators values in % form: derive the number of the total population it refers to.		

Targeting and sampling	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
The impact group is specified or mentioned in the baseline report (or its equivalent)	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate impact group:						
Who is the impact group The baseline report needs to be clear about what is the number of units that is expected to experience some level of long-						

term or transformational change. Usually this corresponds to outcome target numbers. The kind of "impact" will depend on the nature of the intervention. In humanitarian rapid response, we would rather refer to target groups and they would typically represent input or output recipients. In longer responses, we need to produce evidence for outcome changes.						
Impact group is defined by criteria (gender, vulnerability, geography)	List of Criteria					
Indicate document in online platform to validate impact group:						
What kind of impact group disaggregation A baseline document will typically provide a clear description of the impact group and how it informs sample structure. The impact group is a combination of outcome targets or a single impact number, if such indicator exists. Along with the division of this number along outcome metrics, the impact groups can be further disaggregated by three key criteria: gender, vulnerability and geographical distribution. The vulnerability criterion is going to be project specific whereas gender and geographical distribution are necessary to embed in the breakdown of every outcome target. There could be a lot of variation to what "impact groups" means, but in short it represents the number of people we assume are going to experience the most transformational change from this project. The transformative value can span from survival to a disaster all the way to bank linkages as long as the project is impacting a priority need.						
The baseline sample is identified for tracking pre and post-delivery	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate sampling strategy:						
Are we tracking the same sample A very important clause to agree with consultants and in-country counterparts is to guarantee some level of traceability of respondents between baseline and endline. Even though the evaluation does not need to be quantitatively rigorous at all levels, it is good practice to ensure additional respondents in the event of drop-outs. In the baseline ToR and report, the sample strategy needs to be clear on how respondents can be consistently tracked and risks mitigated if population is mobile.						
The sample data is collected in the same geography of delivery	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate section in baseline report in online platform to validate sampling strategy:						
Sample and its geography The sample for the baseline study needs to be collected in a proportional way to the area of direct delivery. Therefore, at baseline strategy, outputs and outcome targets disaggregation per area is necessary. The sample structure needs to take into account in its formula the likelihood of respondents' selection to be recipients based on where the delivery is planned to happen. In other words, the sample needs to represent total recipients based on where they'll be located.						
The sample splits into control/intervention to assess output change	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate evidence:						
Experimental design This particular requirement usually applies to particular commercial contracts. In short, it means the existence of a control (without inputs) and an intervention group (with inputs). Both groups need to be tracked from beginning to end.						
Representativeness	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
Datasets and tools of baseline/needs assessment study are available	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate dataset location in online platform to validate baseline ***(mandatory):***						
Traceability of information Every initial appraisal needs to come with datasets and transcripts of qualitative evidence. This information will be required and constantly monitored, as these documents represent the most elevated value that MEAL can generate.						
There is a sample formula that considers a change effect	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate sample calculation in baseline in online platform to validate methodology:						
What is a change effect Look at the annex section.						
The sample size considers a % of respondents drop outs (attrition rate)	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate sample calculation in baseline in online platform to validate methodology:						
Attrition Rate Number of respondents at baseline who could drop out from project interventions (specify assumptions as in what could drive the %) by the end of the period divided by the total number of respondents at baseline. Consider to over-sample.						

The sample structure reflects the composition of impact groups	Y/N/N.A	
Indicate document in online platform to validate methodology:		
What is a sample structure The sample structure needs to take into account in its formula all characteristics of impact groups. In the sample structure, all key traits of an impact group need to be expressed in percentage terms, for instance 50% men and 50% women. In proportion to these values, the adequate sample is then constructed.		
Baseline Report/Initial Assessment Findings	**Fill Info**	**Comments:**
The baseline values are calculated with qualitative and quantitative methods	Y/N	*Comments:*
Indicate section in baseline report in online platform to validate:		
Methodological triangulation The baseline report should set the methodological frame for all other evaluation studies and outcome monitoring. Thus, a mixed methods approach based on qualitative + quantitative evidence is a reliable proxy for quality reporting.		
The report reviews assumptions, risks, indicators and the ToC	Y/N	*Comments:*
Indicate ToC review document/section in online platform to validate:		
Review of project's assumptions The baseline report needs to have a section or a process in place to review all key assumptions, risks and relevant indicators in the Logframe. This is a critical step as baseline evidence needs to validate the relevancy of project's rationale and the feasibility of targets in view of access to information, external forces and target group's conditions.		
The baseline findings have led to a management response	Y/N	*Comments:*
Indicate management response message/doc in online platform to validate:		
Adaptive Management The management response from baseline data can take multiple forms but it typically entails a reflection process in view of baseline's findings among all implementing partners. This discussion should also involve the donor in case there are some structural changes needed across selected indicators or assumptions. Any form of documentation describing the management response is requested here: emails, reports, action points etc.		
The report provides recommendations for implementation	Y/N	*Comments:*
Indicate report's recommendations in online platform to validate evidence:		
Key recommendations to consider The baseline report should end with a list of key recommendations to improve the way impact and outcome indicators should be tracked over the lifetime of the project. In addition, recommendations should also inform any programmatic concerns or structural risk to be taken into account (e.g. a volatile institutional landscape) and that can affect delivery.		
Consultants Recruitment	**Fill Info**	**Comments:**
The consultants are hired for the whole evaluation cycle	Y/N	
Indicate ToR in online platform to validate evidence:		
What is the optimal contractual arrangement for consultancies If possible, evaluation consultants should be hired for the whole project cycle to avoid inconsistency in the methodology and sampling strategy. In case it is not possible, contacts of performing evaluators' should be retained.		
A context analysis is shared with the consultant prior to tools design	Y/N	
Indicate ToR in online platform to validate evidence:		
How are we engaging with an evaluation consultant The evaluation consultant should receive all key documents that are necessary to frame the context analysis, whether from primary or secondary sources. Ideally, a context analysis would have been produced at design stage.		
A document is produced for wider dissemination to key stakeholders	Y/N	
Indicate dissemination document in online platform to validate evidence:		
How are we communicating results Every baseline report should be accompanied by a shorter publication for wider dissemination- either produced by the consultant or another member of the project team. The write-up should only highlight the key learning and findings from the baseline study in a way that is accessible and understandable by a broader audience than project staff.		

Core Standard 3: A MEAL system is in place, functioning and generating digital outcome data

Risk/Context tracking	Fill Info	PBR/CC	Dev.nt Grants	Large value projects	>6 months HUM	Rapid Response
Digital data collection and/or MIS in place	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate monitoring datasets in online platform/external sites to validate:						
What is the system in place for monitoring Monitoring data needs to be stored in a central unit and the programme manager should have access to such system or a sample of monitoring evidence (synthesis report) on a quarterly/annual basis. The monitoring system is heavily dependent on the bandwidth of in-country counterparts so any kind of accessible monitoring evidence should be included in this module.						
Review meetings of monitoring evidence are in workplan	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate workplan in online platform to validate:						
What is the core of adaptive management A series of quarterly review meetings specific to monitoring evidence needs to be budgeted and planned for.						
Core humanitarian standards are considered and tracked	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate CHS checklist from Guidance Annex in online platform to validate:						
What are Core Humanitarian Standards The list of indicators in the Annex is intended to promote monitoring systems/tools in humanitarian that are meeting the standards and are driving learning and improvement in the quality and accountability of humanitarian responses. The proposed checklist is to enable a basic comparison of CHS across different projects, contexts and timeframes.						
Updated documentation and tracking of key risks	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate risk tracking document in online platform to validate:						
How are risks tracked Risks can be of multiple types: programmatic, financial, external/internal etc. Most projects should have risks trackers to ensure close monitoring of how they evolved during implementation. Where the risk register is saved to be shared here.						
Review of assumptions, indicators and ToC happen	Freq.					
Indicate assumptions review document in online platform to validate:						
How are assumptions reviewed Over the monitoring cycle, there is going to be some form of evidence generated- at least to report back to donors. The evidence collected during the implementation should inform the assumptions of the project, the way indicators are articulated and the underlying rationale of a project (ToC) that justify International development organisations' intervention. All the monitoring data can result in a review process of evidence which, if documented, becomes key information to appraise and share in this tool.						
Value for Money tracking	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
Key costs are tracked/ in VfM budget template	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate key costs monitoring document in online platform to validate:						
Efficiency: Outputs can be broken down by inputs in workplan	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate workplan linked with outputs in online platform to validate:						
Effectiveness: Outcome changes are tracked consistently	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate:						
Equity: Evidence of feedback mechanisms/post-monitoring exists	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate feedback evidence in online platform to validate:						
VfM is a management approach that needs monitoring Each project is supposed to embed some basic Value for Money principles and as a minimum: *Economy*: There should be a template tracking unit costs quarterly/yearly and a budget linking expenditures to output indicators and possibly to cost drivers and risks. The integration of this information is usually a simple addition of few extra columns in a spreadsheet but it makes a lot of difference as it allows for better integration of the result chain. *Efficiency:* The workplan also needs to map every activity with its contribution to a relevant output indicator. Again, the mapping exercise is a matter of adding 1-2 extra columns to the spreadsheet that is being used with this specification. *Effectiveness:* If they exist, outcome indicators usually contain milestones. If so, there should be a clear source of information on how these milestones are updated and reported back to donors. If a tracking system for outcome indicators is in place, the						

programme manager should easily access such information in terms of the methodology and evidence collected. If outcome indicators are not tracked systematically, refer to any report with updated milestones.

Equity: A feedback is the moment when a project participant expresses a particular opinion about a good delivered by the project or a service by a provider (institutions, community organisations, international development organisations etc.). Refer to any tool or spreadsheet that contains evidence about the process and, if accessible, what collected from recipients in regards to their opinion on the quality of direct inputs delivery or services affected by international development organisations intervention.

Expenditures of total budget managed by an international development organisation	**Fill Info**	**Comments**
Spend rate of MEAL expenditures against budget forecast *All staff, consultants, equipment and cost-recovery*	%	
Indicate key budget document in online platform to validate:		

How to calculate this ratio

Sum all the expenditures from MEAL budget lines on a quarterly/annual basis to check whether they are in line with the forecast projections. As well, provide an explanation on the reasons behind significant variances.

Trip reports from organisation support visits are filed	Y/N	
Indicate trip reports in online platform to validate:		

Reporting habits

Reports from monitoring visits can be considered additional sources of information on the performance and key issues affecting a project. Therefore, the path of the shared folder where all trip reports are stored is requested in this module.

Logframe tracking at midline (in case of midline study, provide progress towards target values)		
Impact/outcome indicator 1:	***Midline Values***	*Justify review target or midline target number*
Impact/outcome indicator 2, 3, 4[…]:	***Midline Values***	**Each indicator has its own line**

Tracking relevant indicators

In case of a mid-term review of project impact/outcome indicators, typically through a midline study, the updated values need to be tracked and captured in this tool. This is to respond to the compelling need of tracking towards SDGs targets.

Midline Evaluation		
Midline/mid-term review exists	Y/N	*Indicate document in online platform to validate:*
Midline evidence is representative of impact change	Y/N	*Indicate midline report in online platform to validate:*

Midline informs evaluation

The midline produces evidence to represent changes across the whole target population. If so, the sample strategy needs to be linked to the baseline formula and the methodology also needs to be consistent across all evaluation studies.

Midline Datasets are accessible	Y/N	*Indicate document in online platform to validate:*

Sharing information

In case of a midline study, all relevant datasets where key evidence is stored need to be shared with the relevant stakeholders and organisation. In case the datasets are not for sharing, there needs to be a strong justification on the reason why.

Management response from midline/reviews exist	Y/N	*Indicate evidence of response in online platform:*

Adaptive Management

All evidence collected during the midterm review process would have generated some form of conversations and reactions in the programme management unit. At the midline, documenting the management response is critical as the delivery model could change its course of action based on relevant findings.

Learning brief/document from midline exist	Y/N	*Indicate document in online platform to validate:*

How are we communicating results

As for all evaluation reports, it is good practice to produce a short learning brief to share results, challenges and management response triggered by the study. For large projects, communicating and sharing results should be a priority.

Core Standard 4: Endline data generates representative evidence of change to be used for learning

Logframe tracking at endline (list to be extended for all long-term change indicators)		
Impact/outcome indicator 1:	***Value endline***	*Comments*
Impact/outcome indicator 2, 3, 4[…]:	***Value baseline***	*Each indicator has its own line*

Tracking relevant indicators

At endline, final outreach values across all impact/outcome indicators are expected to be measured. Final values are critical

to report in this tool to enable systematic tracking of all high-level changes in organisation portfolio. This is a requirement for implementing organisations and requires focused discussion with MEAL counterparts, evaluation consultants and in-country counterparts.						
Targeting and Sampling	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
Impact group definition and its quantification exist in the report	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate impact group:						
Who is the impact group The endline report needs to present upfront the definition and number of units who reported some level of long-term or transformational change. Usually this corresponds to outcome outreach. The kind of "impact" will depend on the nature of the intervention. In humanitarian rapid responses, we would rather refer to target groups and they would typically represent input or output recipients. In longer responses, we need to produce evidence for outcome-level changes.						
Impact group is defined by criteria (gender, vulnerability, geography)	List of Criteria					
Indicate document in online platform to validate impact group:						
What kind of impact group disaggregation The number of units/individuals experiencing some form of deeper change requires to be defined in detail. This value is usually a combination of outcome targets or a single impact number, if such indicator exists. The endline should provide an explicit break-down numbers of impact targets by three key criteria: gender, vulnerability and geographical distribution. The vulnerability criterion can be project specific whereas gender and geographical distribution are necessary to embed in the breakdown of every outcome target. Any additional level of disaggregation affects the sample structure.						
The sample remains the same along the whole evaluation cycle	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate evidence:						
Sampling consistency The sample structure should remain the same along the whole evaluation cycle and in case there are significant inconsistencies, the study will not be representative of change for the whole target population. Programme managers and MEAL counterparts need to ensure that the sample structure and formula are as close as possible to baseline and midline.						
The sample group is in the same geographical areas as baseline	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate document in online platform to validate sample distribution:						
Geographical consistency As mentioned above, consistency is a core requirement for an endline. In addition to sample structure, its distribution should also follow the one from previous evaluation studies. In case the sample of respondents cannot be in the same locations as for baseline, there should be a clear explanation on why the geography of the study had to be different.						
The sampling methodology is the same from baseline	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate methodology section in online platform to validate sampling strategy:						
Methodological consistency Along with sample structure and its geographical distribution, the methodology also plays a key role in each evaluation. Ideally, the way information is collected from a similar pool of respondents during an evaluation study through similar tools used at baseline and midline. Structural changes to the methodology need to be justified.						
Representiveness	**Fill Info**	**PBR/CC**	**Dev.nt Grants**	**Large value projects**	**>6 months HUM**	**Rapid Response**
Datasets and tools of endline study are available	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate dataset location in online platform to validate endline (mandatory):						
Traceability of information The endline report needs to be shared with all relevant datasets and transcripts of interviews/focus group discussions. This information is mandatory and its absence needs to be justified.						
There is a sample formula that considers the same change effect as baseline	Y/N/N.A					
Indicate sample calculation in baseline in online platform to validate methodology:						
What is a change effect						

Look at the annex section.							
Sample structure reflects composition of impact group	Y/N/N.A						
Indicate document in online platform to validate methodology:							
What is a sample structure The sample structure needs to take into account in its formula all characteristics of impact groups. In the sample structure, all key traits of an impact group need to be expressed in percentage terms, for instance 50% men and 50% women. In proportion to these values, the adequate sample is then constructed.							
Endline Report Findings	**Fill Info**	**Comments:**					
The executive summary shows final findings on impact groups	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate report in online platform to validate:							
Keep key information up-front It is good practice for a final evaluation report to present all key findings linked to outcome and impact changes in the executive summary. A list of high level indicators with achieved outreach figures is important to have in the initial section.							
The endline provides triangulated evidence (quantitative/qualitative methods)	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate report in online platform to validate triangulation:							
Triangulation Most evaluation requires a mixed methodology in gaging changes. The methodology section should outline this approach							
The report generates communication materials for dissemination	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate communication materials in online platform to validate communication:							
How are we communicating results The endline report should be accompanied by a shorter publication for wider dissemination- either produced by the consultant or another member of staff. The write-up should highlight key learning and findings in an accessible way							
Relationship with consultants (only when external)	**Fill Info**	**Comments:**					
All monitoring evidence on key costs, outcome changes, contribution claims, risks and assumptions is shared	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate relevant folder in online platform to validate:							
How are we engaging with an evaluation consultant The evaluation consultant should receive all key documents that are necessary to deepen the study. Ideally, a context analysis, assumptions reviews and monitoring evidence would be available for sharing by the end of the project.							
A summary is produced for wider dissemination to policy stakeholders	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate document in online platform to validate:							
How are we communicating results externally The communication material generated by the evaluation could inform policy stakeholders (policy brief).							
The relevant datasets and report are shared with global teams/policy makers along with an after-action-review	Y/N	*Comments:*					
Indicate document/s in online platform to validate:							
How are we sharing results internally Key evidence generated by the evaluation needs to be accessible and inform global teams about results and learnings.							

Standards explained: Checklist to evaluate an effective consultancy- from ToR to final report

CRITICAL TASKS/SKILLS The consultant/s is/are able to		TIMELINE
☒	Share all datasets, transcripts and evidence collected during the evaluation study	At design: contract clause
☐	Design a sample strategy that reflects the composition criteria and their break-down for outcome/impact groups	At design: sample strategy
☐	Calculate a change effect for each outcome target and to specify how it affects the sample calculation	At design: sample strategy
☐	Tailor and pilot tools already developed by International development organisations (if available) by mapping them with each output/outcome area + hypothesis	At design: data collection tools pilot
☐	Demonstrate skills in technical, qualitative and quantitative terms	At selection and during analysis of data
☐	Train staff/enumerators on ethical standards, tools use and communication skills in sharing findings with respondents & staff	At design and after submission

ENCOURAGED TASKS/SKILLS The consultant/s is/are able to		TIMELINE
☐	Express willingness or pre-agree to collaborate along the whole evaluation cycle to ensure sampling and methodological consistency	Upon final proposal selection
☐	Train on the use of technological equipment to collect and analyse data	At design: data collection tools pilot
☐	Articulate a clear strategy of how to index and track sample respondents at each evaluation step	At design: sample strategy
☐	Map each outcome metric change with expenditures to appraise VfM (for midline and final evaluation)	During analysis of collected evidence
☐	Communicate proposed approach and results findings in a clear manner that can be understood by non-technical staff	After submission of last draft report

OPTIONAL TASKS/SKILLS The consultant/s is/are able to		TIMELINE
☐	Draw general conclusion for a larger population than project's outreach by setting specific parameters with staff from international development organisations involved in delivery	During analysis of collected evidence
☐	Develop a clear linkage between evaluation and monitoring tools/ methodologies for outcomes measurement given contextual constraints and evidence from the field	After analysis of collected evidence
☐	Link the findings with learnings that can inform theory-based assumptions and future programming	After submission of last draft report

ADDITIONAL TASKS The consultant/s is/are able to		TIMELINE
☐	Access secondary sources from other studies or previous internal studies to benchmark costs and results metrics	At design: context analysis
☐	Propose ideas on how to select contribution claims and assumptions that are worth reviewing on a quarterly basis	After analysis of collected evidence
☐	Advise on dissemination strategies when findings are statistically conclusive or particularly compelling for policy makers and institutional stakeholders	After submission of last draft report

Standards explained: Measuring the Change Effect Size[5]

Critical at baseline, the effect size refers to a change that a program produces or is expected to produce at the outcome level. It could require a specific level of rigor in statistical proof. There are different types of effect sizes, including correlation coefficients and difference between means (called "d"). Technically, "d" is the difference between the outcome metric on programme targets receiving the intervention and an estimate of what the outcome for those targets would have been had they not received the intervention.

The larger the difference between the means of the two groups being compared (pre-test/post-tests), the greater the effect size. However, it is sometimes necessary to use less rigorous measures, such as the perception-based scales or tailored aptitude test where the meaning of the change is still in exploration and without reliable secondary source and/or theory-based assumptions. For binary variables, an odds ratio [6]is often used. To obtain a standardised measure, that can be used to compare the findings of different studies the difference of means is divided by the standards deviation to the population.

Thus: standardised effect size equals to the following: MeanProjectGroup-MeanPop/StdDeviationPop*X

> "If a microcredit programme had been operating for two years, the average income of all target women in the community was 300 pesos, while the average for women who had received loans was 350 pesos, and that the standard deviation of income for the total population was 100 pesos. Then the effective size would be equal to (350-300)/100=**0.5**. If the standard deviation was lower, then the effect size would have been greater."

With this in mind, MEAL resources need to establish a Minimum Acceptable Effect Size (MAES) for each outcome target: the smaller the effect size that must be detected (or more nuanced), the larger the required sample. In some cases the MAES is defined in comparison to an accepted norm or target (for example, average test scores for a particular school grade or health metric), in others it is based on a comparison with similar programmes and in other cases policymakers determine what is perceived by politicians and other stakeholders to be the minimum acceptable increase (gov.nt benchmark). The MAES could also be based on cost-effectiveness calculations. It is normally population specific so that the acceptable effect size for a group of may be quite different from the acceptable effect size for another group (gender, age, location).

The choice of effect size is a key determinant of the required sample size and should drive the discussion of what inputs can deliver the best results that can be measured in unit. The underlying assumptions behind the effect size require following specific criteria listed in the table below:

Difference in the original measurement scale	The outcome measure has a clearly understood meaning and MAES may be stated directly in terms of this unit. For example, the monetary value of health service after the introduction a new program or reduced dropout rate of adolescent girls
Comparison with tests norms or performance of a normative population	For a literacy program the MEAS may be defined as reducing the gap blow the average grade score in the targets scores
Difference between criterion groups	Comparison of school with national grade scores
Proportion over a diagnosis or other success threshold	Mental health program might use a well-known test of clinical depression which defines a score as borderline clinical condition. The MAES could be defined as the proportion with scores below a certain value
Proportion over an arbitrary success threshold	Proportion of families in an unemployment program with incomes above the national poverty line
Comparison with the effect of similar programs	One of the goals of local irrigation programs is the proportion of farmers paying into a water service charges required to maintain the system MAES could be defined as the average repayment rate fond in similar projects
Conventional guidelines	Conventional guidelines based on meta-evaluations conducted in different sectors of small effects, medium effects or larger effects

[5] Based on extracts of chapter 15 from: https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/realworld-evaluation/book234002

[6] An **odds ratio** (OR) is a measure of association between an exposure and an outcome. The OR represents the **odds** that an outcome will occur given a particular exposure, compared to the **odds** of the outcome occurring in the absence of that exposure.

Illustrative menu of costs [7]

*** Values are based on averages from the analysis of active projects. They need to be adapted in light of national rates and length of response**

MEAL Costs Category	Cost name	Cost items	10 Mill £+ FLAGSHIP	5-10 Mill £ LARGE	1-5 Mill £ MEDIUM	Up to 1 Mill £ SMALL	Unit Cost	Time	Cost Assumptions * Consulted a sample of organisation projects budgets, currency and unit values may vary
Evaluation Study/Needs Assessment	Evaluation Fee	*International Consultants*	63,000	45,000	27,000	18,000[8]	£	Once per evaluation	Daily rate for an international consultants ranges from 500 to 1000. Average = 750/day
	Evaluation Fee	*National Consultants (lead or support)*	21,000	15,000	9,000	6,000	£	Once per evaluation	Daily rate of a national consultant ranges between 100 and 400. Average = 250/day
	Enumerators	*Based on sample size and number of geographies*	7,500	3,750	2,250	2,250	£	Once per evaluation	Average salary enumerator: 750/month 20 days*8 hours surveys=160 replies each
	Logistics for Consultants	*Accommodation, VISA, flights*	5,250	3,250	2,750	2,250	£	Once per evaluation	Cost of 1 international flight: 1000 Average cost of VISA: 250 Daily rate for accommodation: 100
	Publication and translation	*Fees graphic design for publication and translator*	4,900	3,500	2,500	1,000	£	Once per evaluation	Average cost of translation per word is 0.2 Average daily fee for graphic designer: 500
On-going monitoring and feedback mechanisms	Dedicated staff to collect monitoring evidence (e.g. PDM)	*Monitoring staff salary*	45,000	36,000	27,000	18,000	£	Yearly	Average monthly salary of monitoring staff: 35-40 per day or 750 month
	MEAL HQ support to review and synthetize data	*Cost-recovery days (if applicable)*	4,125	2,750	2,750	-	£	Yearly	Daily rate of MEAL support: 275 *Specified scope of support with learning objectives
	Bulk SMS to project participants	*Text credits charges*	3,000	1,500	750	300	£	Quarterly/Yearly	Average cost per SMS: 0.03
	Logistics	*Transportation costs, accommodation and incentives*	6,000	4,800	3,600	2,400	£	Yearly	1 month fuel per vehicle: 100 Number of days: 10 per month Number of monitoring staff: 1-5

[7] This is list is not prescriptive and it solely offers a menu of options and assumptions to consider
[8] Not applicable in most instances

Staffing capacity	MEAL Coordinator	*Salary*	36,000	36,000	18,000	9,000	£	Yearly	Average monthly salary: 3000 *Specified scope of support with strategic objectives
	MEAL Officers	*Salary*	72,000	48,000	48,000	24,000	£	Yearly	Average monthly salary: 2000 *Specified scope of support with operational objectives
	CMP MEAL Support	*Cost-recovery days, travels*	19,750	12,250	7,500	2,750	£	Yearly	Average daily fee: 275 Average travel cost for 2 weeks: 2000 *Specified scope of support with skills growth objectives
	Data analyst	*Cost-recovery days*	24,000	12,000	6,000	2,000	£	Yearly	Average daily fee for a data analyst with expected support of 1 week per month: 250
Equipment	Tablets	*Procurement cost*	1,000	800	600	500	£	Once	Average cost tablet for all MEAL staff: 100 *Cost savings if tablets already available
	Tablets internet	*Monthly internet*	1,470	1,182	894	750	£	Yearly	Average monthly cost of internet for one tablet: 30 setup + 12 monthly fee
	Software	*License for collecting, storing and analysing digital data*	2,200	2,200	1,200	1,000	£	Yearly or Lump Sum	Fee for data analytics software and/or storage space: membership 100/month and/or 1000 lump sum
	Database for monitoring information	*Development of a database interoperable with SQL, Oracle, Access*	6,000	4,000	-	-	£	Lump Sum	Fixed sum to purchase or develop a basic database
Adaptive management and evaluation reviews	Review meetings with all IPs	*Logistics and per diems*	3,500	2,900	2,000	1,900	£	Yearly	Venue is 1000 (250 per quarter) and 50 per diems for 2 days each quarter. 10 is the max number of people per diem
	Consortia entry and exit meetings	*Logistics/venue, accommodation, transport*	14,000	8,100	5,650	-	£	Twice (beg and end)	International and national (5:15 or 3:7) participants for 3 days each time: 500 for venue, 1250 international travel + VISA, 50 for national travel, 100 accommodation per day
	Pamphlet and posters with results	*Print charges*	375	313	250	125	£	Yearly	Average cost of printing material: 0.25/page
Yearly sub-total			**340,070**	**243,295**	**167,694**	**92,225**	£	Per year (average)	All these costs can vary depending on project length, negotiation ability and available capacity.

Calculations from above to transpose in Excel for further value change				
Evaluation Fee	=750*70*1.2	=750*50*1.2	=750*30*1.2	=750*20*1.2
Evaluation Fee	=250*70*1.2	=250*50*1.2	=250*30*1.2	=250*20*1.2
Enumerators	=1*750*10	=1*750*5	=1*750*3	=1*750*3
Logistics for Consultants	=2*1000+250+30*100	=1*1000+250+20*100	=1*1000+250+15*100	=1*1000+250+10*100
Publication and translation	=(0.2*12000)+(500*5)	=(0.2*10000)+(500*3)	=(0.2*10000)+(500*1)	=(0.2*5000)
Monitoring Staff	=5*(750*12)	=4*(750*12)	=3*(750*12)	=2*(750*12)
MEAL support from headquarters	=275*15	=275*10	=275*10	-
Bulk SMS	=100000*0.03	=50000*0.03	=25000*0.03	=10000*0.03
Logistics	=10*10*12*5	=10*10*12*4	=10*10*12*3	=10*10*12*2
MEAL Coordinator	=3000*12	=3000*12	=3000*6	=3000*3
MEAL Officers	=2000*3*12	=2000*2*12	=2000*2*12	=2000*1*12
CMP MEAL Support	=50*275+2000*3	=30*275+2000*2	=20*275+2000*1	=10*275
Data analyst	=2000*12	=2000*6	=2000*3	=2000*1
Tablets	=100*10	=100*8	=100*6	=100*5
Tablets internet	=30+12*12*10	=30+12*12*8	=30+12*12*6	=30+12*12*5
Software	=100*12+1000	=100*12+1000	=100*12	1000
Database	6000	4000	0	0
Review meetings with IPs	=500+(10*50*6)	=500+(8*50*6)	=500+(5*50*6)	=1000+(3*50*6)
Consortia meetings	=500+(1000*5)+(250*5)+ (50*15)+(100*20*3)	=(500)+(1000*3)+(250*3)+ (50*7)+(100*10*3)	=(250)+(1000*2)+(250*2)+ (50*3)+(100*10*2)	0
Pamphlet and posters	=1500*0.25	=1250*0.25	=1000*0.25	=500*0.25

Standards explained: Monitoring quality checks

Check	Monitoring checks	Source of verification	Timeline/ Frequency
Monitoring resources and feedback mechanisms			
☐	**The monitoring system is led by a team of fully cost-recovered monitoring staff who are collecting data on a constant basis**	Budget figures	At design
☐	**Monitoring staff and MEAL resources have competencies to combine complex monitoring information and show data trends in visual form for analytical purpose**	Resumes of MEAL Resources	At design
☐	**Selected monitoring questions measure respondents opinions about the quality of project inputs delivery**	Monitoring data collection tools	At inception
☐	**Selected monitoring questions measure respondents opinions about the service provided by a supplier (institutions) funded or supported by the project**	Monitoring data collection tools	At inception
Monitoring approach in data collection and storage			
☐	**Tools for monitoring are in place and used consistently**	MEAL Plan	During Implementation
☐	**Monitoring data is collected with digital equipment (tablets, smartphones)**	Budget figures	During Implementation
☐	**Monitoring data is collected to review project's assumptions and risks (financial and programmatic)**	Hypothesis Tracker	During Implementation
☐	**Monitoring tools are designed to respond to output indicators**	Monitoring data collection tools	At inception
☐	**Monitoring data is available on a quarterly basis in relation to project assumptions (e.g. the evolution of a regulatory framework as pre-condition for a specific result)**	Monitoring data storage platform	During Implementation
☐	**Monitoring tools are designed to measure outcome changes** *(ref. to evaluation tools)*	Monitoring data collection tools	At inception
☐	**Monitoring data is stored in an accessible way for CMPs and MEAL resources (through database or shared platforms)**	Monitoring data storage platform	During Implementation
Monitoring data review			
☐	**Reports from quarterly/annual review meetings document the use of monitoring evidence to take management decision**	Review meetings reports/emails	During reporting timelines
☐	**Monitoring evidence links to workplan and financial data to identify gaps, delays and target needs for revision**	Quarterly and annual reports	During Implementation
☐	**A system is in place to generate synthesis of outcome and output monitoring evidence on a quarterly basis**	Monitoring dashboards, results tracker...	During Implementation
☐	**Monitoring data is shared with evaluation consultants to ensure adequate links between evidence collected during implementation and evaluation phases**	Evaluation reports	During evaluation
☐	**Monitoring data informs outcome indicators and VfM metrics on a quarterly basis to reduce variances between actuals and forecast values across programmatic and financial targets.**	Workplan, budget and Logframe	During Implementation

Standards explained: Evaluation Policy (adapted from UNEG)

	Key Standards	Applicable to
1	**Institutional framework for evaluation:** Each international development organisation should have an adequate and well-resources institutional framework for the effective management of its evaluation function.	Organisational Structure
2	**Evaluation policy:** International development organisations should articulate a comprehensive evaluation policy that is periodically reviewed and updated in order to support the evaluation function's increased adherence to MEAL Core Standards and SDGs targets.	Management And Organisational Structures
3	**Evaluation plan and reporting:** Evaluations should have a mechanism to inform the governing body and/or management on the evaluation plan and on the progress made in plan implementation.	Project/Programme evaluation cycle
4	**Management response and follow up:** Each international development organisation should implement appropriate mechanisms to ensure that programme management responds to evaluation recommendations. The mechanisms should outline concrete actions to be undertaken in the management response and in the follow-up to recommendation implementation.	Management And Organisational Structures
5	**Disclosure policy**: Each evaluation contract should have an explicit disclosure policy for evaluations. To bolster project's accountability, key evaluation products (including annual reports, evaluation plans, terms of reference, evaluation reports and management responses) should also be publicly accessible in the online platform	Project/Programme evaluation cycle
6	**Head of evaluation**: The head of evaluation has the primary responsibility for ensuring that international development organisations MEAL Core Standards are upheld, that the evaluation function is fully operational and duly independent, and that evaluation work is conducted to fulfil the requirements specified in the ToR.	Evaluation lead consultants
7	**Evaluation guidelines**: The head of evaluation is responsible for ensuring the provision of appropriate evaluation guidelines.	Evaluation lead consultants
8	**Responsiveness of the evaluation function:** The head of evaluation should provide global leadership, standard setting and oversight of the evaluation function in order to ensure that it dynamically adapts to new contextual developments and changing internal and external needs.	Evaluation lead consultants and local associates
9	**Competencies**: Individuals engaged in designing, conducting and managing evaluation activities should possess the core competencies required for their role in the evaluation process.	Evaluation lead consultants and local associates
10	**Ethics**: All those engaged in designing, conducting and managing evaluations should conform to agreed ethical standards in order to ensure question gender sensitivity, credibility of evidence and up/down-ward accountability	Evaluation lead consultants and enumerators
11	**Timeliness and intentionality**: Evaluations should be designed to ensure that they provide timely, valid and reliable information that will be relevant to the subject being assessed (post-feedback) and should clearly identify the underlying intentionality.	Evaluation lead consultants
12	**Evaluability assessment**: An assessment of evaluability should be undertaken as an initial step to increase the likelihood that an evaluation will provide timely and credible information for decision-making.	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
13	**Terms of reference**: The terms of reference should provide the evaluation purpose, scope, design and plan:	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
a	✓ The evaluation context and purpose is framed;	
b	✓ A description and a clear definition of the subject to be evaluated;	

c	✓ The scope of evaluation is clearly defined in light of impacts/outcomes;	
d	✓ The objectives link to key evaluation questions exploring causality	
e	✓ Proposed methodology is a combination of qualitative and quantitative	
f	✓ Management arrangements are included for prompt response	
g	✓ Expected deliverables are clearly sequenced in a timeline	
j	✓ The requirements for a budget, workplan and a dissemination strategy are expressed for selecting the proposal	
15	**Evaluation scope and objectives**: They should follow from the evaluation purpose and should be realistic and achievable in light of resources available and the information that can be collected.	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
16.a	**Methodology**: Evaluation methodologies must be sufficiently rigorous such that the evaluation responds to the scope and objectives, is designed to answer evaluation questions by appraising a change effect and leads to a complete, fair and unbiased assessment.	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
16.b	**Organisational approach:** The evaluation methodology refers to any approach an international development organisation uses to demonstrate "how changes have been achieved" for example, outcome mapping, contribution tracing and most significant change	Evaluation lead consultants and MEAL resources
17	**Stakeholder engagement and reference groups**: Inclusive and diverse stakeholder engagement in the planning, design, conduct and follow-up of evaluations is critical to ensure ownership, relevance, credibility and the use of evaluation. Reference groups and other stakeholder engagement mechanisms should be designed for this purpose in each large evaluation.	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
18	**Governance and gender considerations:** The evaluation design should include considerations of the extent to which the organisational approach was included in the design of the evaluation subject and key metrics.	Evaluation lead consultants and MEAL resources
19	**Selection and composition of evaluation teams**: The evaluation team should be selected through an open and transparent process, taking into account the required competencies, diversity in perspectives and accessibility to the local population. The core members of the team should be experienced evaluators who can enrich the knowledge of local and international partners	Programme Managers and MEAL resources
20	**Evaluation report and products**: The final evaluation report should be logically structured and contain evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations. The products emanating from evaluations should be designed to the needs of its intended users.	Evaluation lead consultants and local associates
21	**Recommendations**: Recommendations should be firmly based on evidence and analysis, clear, results-oriented and realistic in terms of implementation.	Evaluation lead consultants and local associates
22	**Communication and dissemination**: are integral and essential parts of evaluations. Evaluation functions should have an effective strategy for communication and dissemination that is focused on enhancing evaluation use and sharing learnings.	Evaluation lead consultants and local associates
23	**Quality assurance system:** The head of evaluation should ensure that there is an appropriate quality assurance system.	Evaluation lead consultants
24	**Quality control of the evaluation design:** Quality should be controlled during the design stage of evaluation.	Evaluation lead consultants and MEAL resources
25	**Quality control at the final stage of evaluation:** Quality should be controlled during the final stage of evaluation.	Evaluation lead consultants and MEAL resources
At least 75% of these standards need to be fulfilled to generate a quality evaluation		

Standards explained: Digital Principles (adapted from digitalprinciples.org)

ONE: DESIGN WITH THE USER

Develop context-appropriate solutions informed by user needs. Include all user groups in planning, development, implementation, and assessment. Develop projects in an incremental and iterative manner. Design solutions that learn from and enhance existing workflows, and plan for organizational adaptation. Ensure solutions are sensitive to, and useful for, the most marginalized populations: women, children, those with disabilities, and those affected by conflict and disaster.

TWO: UNDERSTAND THE ECOSYSTEM

Participate in networks and communities of like-minded practitioners. Align to existing technological, legal, and regulatory policies.

THREE: DESIGN FOR SCALE

Design for scale from the start, and assess and mitigate dependencies that might limit ability to scale. Employ a "systems" approach to design, considering implications of design beyond an immediate project. Be replicable and customizable in other countries and contexts. Demonstrate impact before scaling a solution. Analyse all technology choices through the lens of national and regional scale. Factor in partnerships from the beginning, and start early negotiations.

FOUR: BUILD FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Plan for sustainability from the start, including planning for long-term financial health, e.g., assessing total cost of ownership. Utilize and invest in local communities and developers by default, and help catalyse their growth. Engage with local governments to ensure integration into national strategy, and identify high-level government advocates.

FIVE: BE DATA DRIVEN

Design projects so that impact can be measured at discrete milestones with a focus on outcomes rather than outputs. Evaluate innovative solutions and areas where there are gaps in data and evidence. Use real-time information to monitor and inform management decisions at all levels. Leverage data as a by-product of user actions and transactions for assessments.

SIX: USE OPEN DATA, OPEN STANDARDS, OPEN SOURCE, OPEN INNOVATION - adapted

Adopt and apply open standards depending on the market availability of IT skills. Move towards open data and functionalities, and expose them in documented APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) where use by a larger community is possible. Give financial incentives and encourage developers in the target communities while making open source products or their replications developed by IT resources that are easier to procure in more affluent contexts[9]. Ensure the source code made available in public repositories and supported through developer communities.

SEVEN: REUSE AND IMPROVE

Use, modify, and extend existing tools, platforms, and frameworks when possible. Develop in modular ways favouring approaches that are interoperable over those that are monolithic by design.

EIGHT: ADDRESS PRIVACY & SECURITY

Assess and mitigate risks to the security of users and their data. Consider the context and needs for privacy of personally identifiable information when designing solutions and mitigate accordingly. Ensure equity and fairness in co-creation, and protect the best interests of the end-users.

NINE: BE COLLABORATIVE

Engage diverse expertise across disciplines and industries at all stages. Work across sector silos to create coordinated and more holistic approaches. Document work, results, processes, and best practices, and share them widely. Publish materials under a Creative Commons license by default, with strong rationale if another licensing approach is take

[9] *Open sources require to be sensitive about financial incentives and needs/gaps in terms of IT services development in targeted contexts*

Relevant Annexes, Tools and Templates

Steps of Outcome Mapping[10]

Outcome mapping (OM) is a methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating development initiatives in order to bring about sustainable social change. As the name suggests, its niche is understanding outcomes; the so-called 'missing-middle' or 'black box' of results that emerge downstream from the initiative's activities but upstream from longer-term economic, environmental, political or demographic changes.
At the planning stage, the process of outcome mapping helps a project team or program to be specific about the actors it intends to target, the changes it hopes to see and the strategies appropriate to achieve these.
As an evaluation approach, OM unpacks an initiative's theory of change, provides a framework to collect data on immediate, basic changes that lead to longer, more transformative change, and allows for the plausible assessment of the initiative's contribution to results.

OM involves 12 steps in three stages: intentional design, Outcome and performance monitoring and evaluation planning. The Intentional Design stage is based on seven steps in a sequential order:

1. The vision describes the large-scale development changes that an organisation hopes to encourage;
2. The mission spells out how the organisation will contribute to the vision and is that 'bite' of the vision on which organisation's programme is going to focus.
3. The boundary partners are those individuals, groups, or organisations with whom the programme interacts directly and with whom it anticipates opportunities for influence.
4. An outcome challenge statement describes the desired changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities, actions (professional practices) of the boundary partner. It is the ideal behavioural change of each type of boundary partner for it to contribute to the ultimate goals (vision) of the programme;
5. Progress Markers are a set of statements describing a gradual progression of changed behaviour in the boundary partner leading to the ideal outcome challenge. They are a core element in OM and the strength rests in their utility as a set of desired changes which indicate progression towards the ideal outcome challenge and articulate the complexity of the change process. They represent the information which can be gathered in order to monitor partner achievements. Therefore, progress markers are central in the monitoring process. Progress markers can be seen as indicators in the sense that they are observable and measurable but differ from the conventional indicators used in Logical Framework Approach (LFA). Progress markers can be adjusted during the implementation process, can include unintended results, do not describe a change in state and do not contain percentages or deadlines;
6. Strategy maps are a mix of different types of strategies used by the implementing team to contribute to and support the achievement of the desired changes at the level of the boundary partners. OM encourages the programme identify strategies which are aimed directly at the boundary partner and those aimed at the environment in which the boundary partner operates.
7. Organisational Practices explain how the implementing team is going to operate and organise itself to fulfil its mission. It is based on the idea that supporting change in boundary partners requires that the programme team itself is able to change and adapt as well, i.e., not only by being efficient and effective (operational capacities) but also by being relevant (adaptive capacities).

The monitoring stage involves four steps:

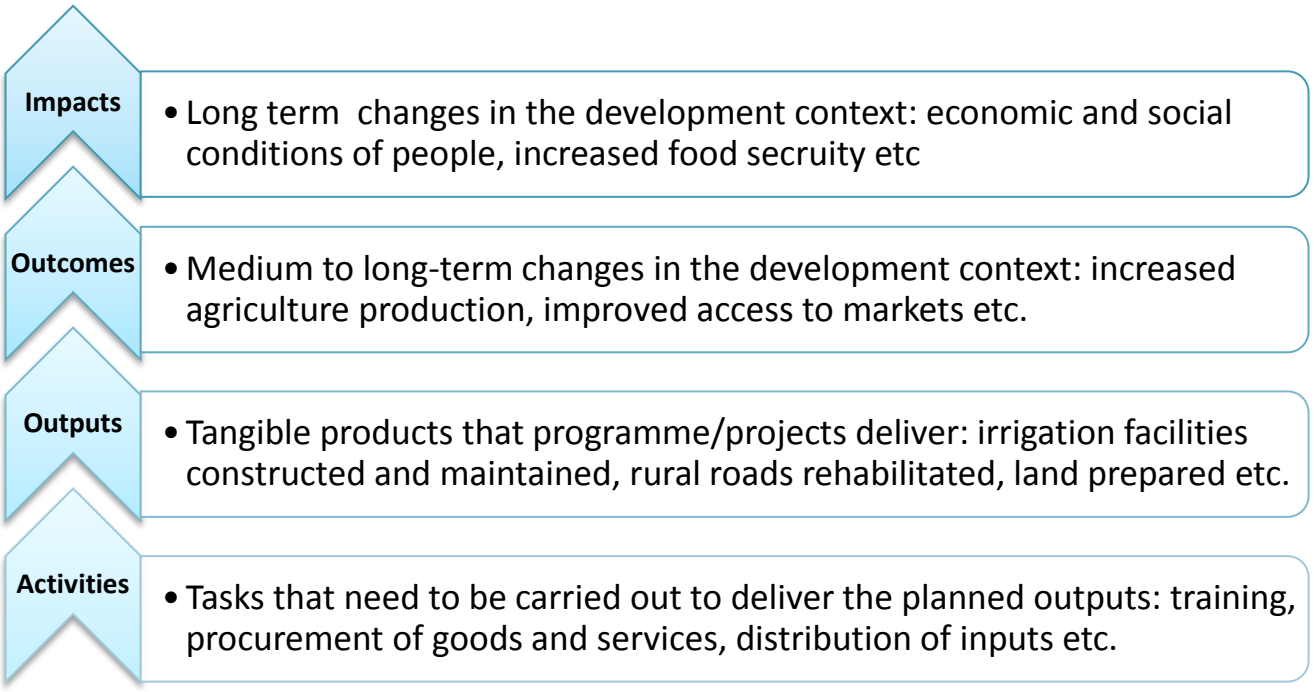
1. Monitoring priorities provides a process for establishing the areas of the project to be monitored.
2. Outcome journals are a tool for collecting data about the progress markers over time.
3. Strategy journals are a tool for collecting data about the activities of a project.
4. Performance journals are for collecting data about organisational practices.

The evaluation stage involves one step:

1. Evaluation plan provides a process and a tool for designing an evaluation using OM.

[10] Extracted from betterevaluation.org

Example Format: Results Chain



Example Format: Logframe

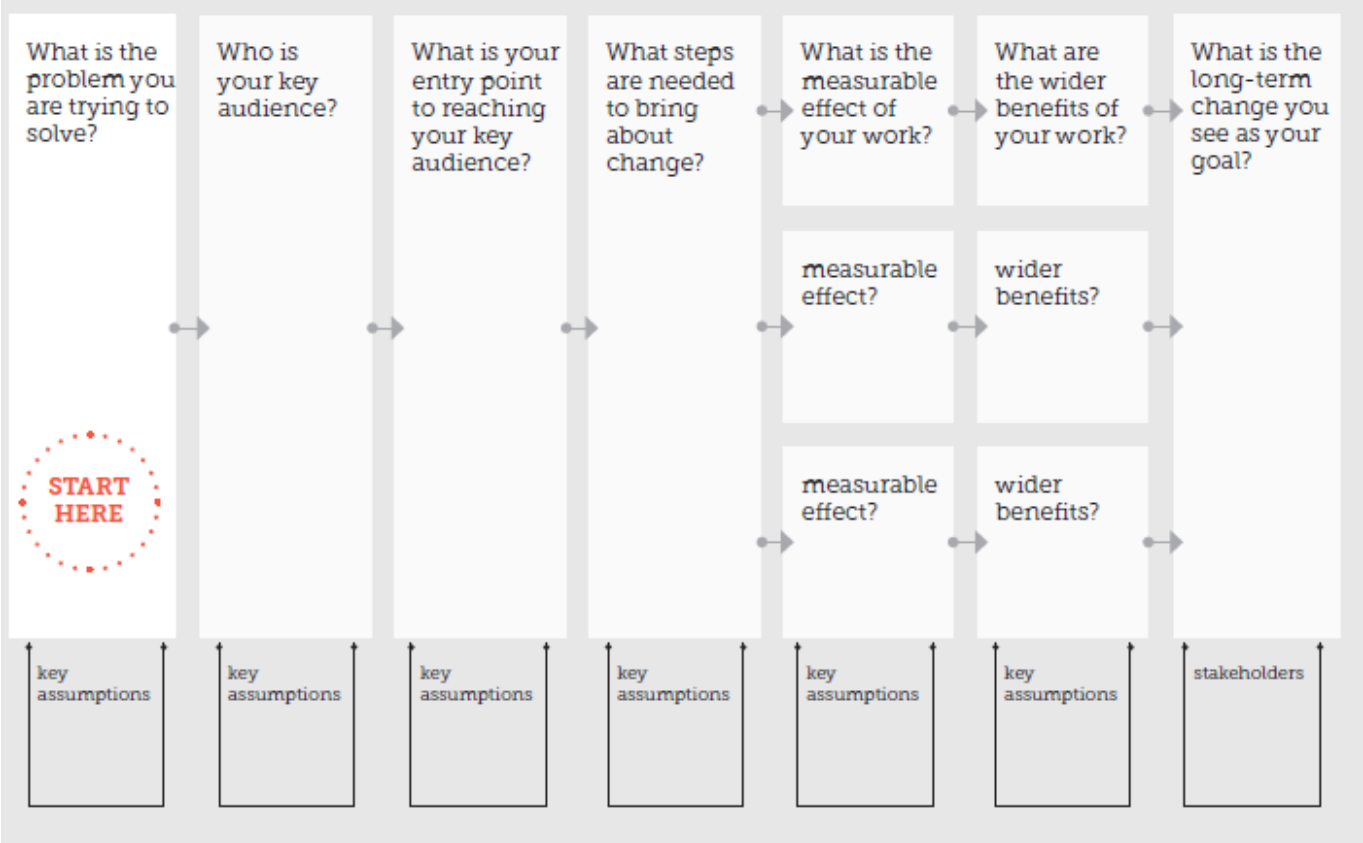
PROJECT NAME							
IMPACT	Impact Indicator 1		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	
		Planned					
		Achieved					
			Source				
	Impact Indicator 2		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	
		Planned					
		Achieved					
			Source				

OUTCOME	Outcome Indicator 1		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	Assumptions
		Planned					
		Achieved					
			Source				
	Outcome Indicator 2		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	
		Planned					
		Achieved					
			Source				
INPUTS (£)	DFID (£)		Govt (£)	Other (£)	Total (£)	DFID SHARE (%)	
INPUTS (HR)	DFID (FTEs)						

OUTPUT 1	Output Indicator 1.1		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	Assumption
		Planned					
		Achieved					
		Source					
	Output Indicator 1.2		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	
		Planned					

		Achieved					
		Source					
IMPACT WEIGHTING (%)	Output Indicator 1.3		Baseline	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Target (date)	
		Planned					
		Achieved					
		Source					RISK RATING
INPUTS (£)	DFID (£)		Govt (£)	Other (£)	Total (£)	DFID SHARE (%)	
INPUTS (HR)	DFID (FTEs)						

Example Format: Theory of Change



Example Format: Risks Tracker

RISK MANAGEMENT LOG	
Column	**Instructions For Completing This Document**
	Complete the Project Name, NC, Project Manager Name, and Project Description fields
	For each risk identified, complete the following:
A	**ID:** A unique ID number used to identify the risk in the risk tracking log.
B	**Current Status**: This column should be populated with the risk's current status. ✓ **Open**: The risk is currently open but is not yet an issue. ✓ **Closed**: The risk is no longer considered an active project threat and can be closed with or without resolution.
C	**Risk Impact**: This column should be populated with the potential impact of the risk if it did become a project issue. Valid options include the following: High, Medium, and Low. These are defined as: ✓ **High**: Risk that has the potential to greatly impact project cost, project schedule or performance. ✓ **Medium**: Risk that has the potential to slightly impact project cost, project schedule or performance ✓ **Low**: Risk that has relatively little impact on cost, schedule or performance.
D	**Probability of Occurrence**: This column should be populated with the estimated probability that the risk will at some point become a project issue.
E	**Risk Map**: This is a calculated field based on the values selected for both Risk Impact and Probability of Occurrence. ✓ **Green**: LL (Low Probability, Low Impact), LM (Low Probability, Medium Impact), ML (Medium Probability, Low Impact) ✓ **Yellow**: LH (Low Probability, High Impact), MM (Medium Probability, Medium Impact), HL (High Probability, Low Impact) ✓ **Red**: MH (Medium Probability, High Impact), HM (High Probability Medium Impact), HH (High Probability, High Impact)
F	**Risk Description**: This column should be populated with a description of the risk.
G	**Project Impact**: This column should be populated with a description of the potential project impact as a result of the risk.
H	**Risk Area**: This column should be populated with the appropriate risk area.
I	**Symptoms**: This column should be populated with the symptoms of risk that may eventually lead to the execution of a risk contingency plan.
J	**Trigger**: This column should be populated with the triggers that would indicate the requirement to execute contingency plans.
K	**Risk Response Strategy**: This column should be populated with the preferred risk response strategy.
L	**Response Strategy**: This column should be populated an appropriate response strategy to prevent the risk from becoming an issue.
M	**Contingency Plan**: This column should be populated with a description of the risk contingency plan.

Example of VfM Budget Template (Payment by Result Modality)

INDICATORS	ACTIVITIES	TOTAL PAYMENT PLANNED	TARGETS	EVIDENCE/SOURCE OF VERIFICATION	PAYMENT TRIGGER	RISK ANALYSIS (Low, Med, High)	RISK ANALYSIS (% of payment at risk)	Justification for Risk Assessment
OUTPUT 1								
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.1	Introductory stakeholder engagement workshops		1 per all implementing partners	List of participants, pictures	#of workshops completed	Low	0%	Good reputation with key stakeholders
	…				Submission of Report	Low	0%	Within control of programme
OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.2	…							
OUTPUT 2								
OUTPUT INDICATOR 2.1	Learning dissemination events with local partners		1 per region each quarter	Pictures, Video, Reports	Number of meetings per quarter	Medium	10%	New relationships need to be built with some communities
	…							
OUTPUT INDICATOR 2.2	…					Low	0%	

Example Format: Key costs tracker

At design								Tracking on a quarterly basis (Q1-Q4)			
Relevant Logframe indicator number	**Key costs: Highest total costs per budget line**	**Number of units for each total cost**	**Unit Description (incl. contents)**	**Unit Cost (as per budget)**	**Estimated Delivery Cost**	**Unit Output Cost (Unit Cost+ Estimated Delivery Cost)**	**Summary of what is included in the delivery cost [11]**	Unit Cost (as per report)	Estimated Delivery Cost	Unit Output Cost (Unit Cost + Estimated Delivery Cost)	Notes (e.g. reasons behind substantial changes in the unit output cost)
1.1	=1500* 147	1500 Non-food items (NFIs)	Household items, hygiene items, winter clothing	£147	£118.24	£265.24	Personnel, transport and % of admin costs for each	£	£	£	Text

[11] Making reference to information/lines in the budget - e.g. it includes insurance, delivery, distribution costs, staff costs, administrative costs

							HH				
1.2	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	[…]	£	£	£	Text

Example of Workplan[12]

Activity	Total Target (Describe and quantify)	Timeline targets (or Gantt chart)				Quarter 1 Values	Quarter 2 Values	Quarter3 Values	Quarter 4 Values	Output Indicator Linkage	Specify monitoring tool to measure output indicator	Responsible Party/Entity	Budget Amounts			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Actuals 1	Actuals 2	Actuals 3	Actuals 4				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4

[12] Quarterly can be replaced by monthly targets

Examples of Benefit Indicators[13]

Type of Benefit	Outcome / Benefit	Outcome/Benefit Indicator
ECONOMIC OUTCOMES	Agricultural revenue	Changes in revenue for subsistence and trade
	Livestock revenue	Changes in revenue for subsistence and trade
	Stock of livestock	Changes in stocks for subsistence and trade
	Evolution of other income sources	Evolution of revenue and market linkages
SOCIAL OUTCOMES	Health	Quality-Adjusted Life Years (QALYs) gained
	Education	School-years equivalent gained and performance metrics
	Social capital	Reliance on community members and wider network
	Institutional capital	Combination of average across items in a multi-composite indicator (CSCs)
	Gender empowerment	Decision-making capacity within household
ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES	Land degradation	Avoided hectares of arable land lost
	Deforestation / Reforestation	Number of trees planted or maintained

[13] List to be refined based on SDGs indicators

Strategy Testing Tool

STRATEGY TESTING: GUIDING REVIEW QUESTIONS

Problem Statement: The major problem the initiative is addressing.

Possible Review Questions:
- Since last working with our Theory of Change, what more have we learned about the nature or extent of the problem we are addressing?
- Have there been significant changes in context that require adjusting how we now frame or define the problem?

. . . because of

Analysis of Key Dynamics: The political, economic, social, institutional, and historical factors that result in the current scenario, including both formal and informal rules (e.g. key actors, relationships, interests, and incentives).

Possible Review Questions:
- How have the political, economic, social, and institutional factors changed?
- Who are the key actors now, and how have their relationships, interests, and/or incentives changed?
- How have changes in the environment or new information we have learned impacted our analysis of the most critical dynamics underlying the problem?

However, if we do . . .

Interventions/Strategies: Description of the strategies the initiative will undertake in order to bring about the Intermediate Outcomes along with a brief rationale.

Possible Review Questions:
- Given the changes in the context or our understanding of the problem, do we need to change or drop any of our current strategies or add any new ones?
- Is there new information or recent changes in key dynamics that impact the sequencing of our strategies?

Then we expect that . . .

Intermediate Outcomes: The major changes or preconditions that need to occur in order to bring about the Ultimate Outcome. These desired changes should be both "technically sound and politically possible."

Possible Review Questions:
- Given the current Ultimate Outcome and the dynamics surrounding the issues, do the intermediate outcomes or the required preconditions for the Ultimate Outcome need to change? Remember, these intermediate outcomes need to be "technically sound and politically possible".

As a result . . .

Ultimate Outcome: The major change or impact the Initiative seeks to achieve or influence. The Ultimate Outcome should be concrete and specific enough so that it can be measured, either through the use of secondary data or, in some cases, through the collection of primary data.

Strategy Review Questions:
- Have there been changes in the political economy context or new information that require adjusting our Ultimate Outcome?

After an initiative clearly identifies its Ultimate Outcome, it often does not change significantly. However, as the initiative "drills down" more and more, the Ultimate Outcome may become more narrowly defined.

Core Humanitarian Standards Checklist

Core Humanitarian Standards	Source and (Timeline)	Check
Please consider these standards when building monitoring tools specifically tailored for humanitarian response. Make sure to mention a source of evidence for each indicator.		
Commitment 1: Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate to their needs.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis consider that the response takes account of their specific needs and culture.	Context Analysis in Proposal (Design)	☐
2) The assistance and protection provided correspond with assessed risks, vulnerabilities and needs.	Risk assessment and Context Analysis (Design)	☐
3) The response takes account of the capacities (e.g. the skills and knowledge) of people requiring assistance and/or protection.	Target group definition in proposal (Design)	☐
Commitment 2: Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian response is effective and timely.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis, including the most vulnerable groups, consider that the timing of the assistance and protection they receive is adequate.	Monitoring tools[14]: PDM and feedback mechanisms. (Monitoring)	☐
2) Communities and people affected by crisis consider that their needs are met by the response.	Feedback mechanisms in PDM or similar tools (monitoring)	☐
3) Monitoring and evaluation reports show that the humanitarian response meets its objectives in terms of timing, quality and quantity.	Indicators trackers/ narrative reports	☐
Commitment 3: Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis consider themselves better able to withstand future shocks and stresses as a result of humanitarian action.	Feedback mechanisms in PDM or similar tools (monitoring)	☐
2) Local authorities, leaders and organisations with responsibilities for responding to crises consider that their capacities have been increased.	Monitoring tools specific to institutions and local leaders (monitoring)	☐
3) Communities and people affected by crisis (including the most vulnerable) do not identify any negative effects resulting from humanitarian action.	Feedback mechanisms in PDM or similar tools (monitoring)	☐
Commitment 4: Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis (including the most vulnerable) are aware of their rights and entitlements.	Monitoring tools specific to rights awareness (monitoring)	☐
2) Communities and people affected by crisis consider that they have timely access to relevant and clear information.	Approach to share feedback information with communities (monitoring)	☐
3) Communities and people affected by crisis are satisfied with the opportunities they have to influence the response.	Monitoring tools specific to response influence (monitoring)	☐
Commitment 5: Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints		
Quality criterion: Complaints are welcomed and addressed.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, are aware of complaints mechanisms established for their use.	Monitoring tools or questions specific to complaints mechanisms (monitoring)	☐
2) Communities and people affected by crisis, consider the	Monitoring tools or questions	☐

[14] Monitoring tools are meant for recipients

complaints mechanisms accessible, effective, confidential and safe.	specific to complaints mechanisms (monitoring)	
3) Complaints are investigated, resolved and results fed back to the complainant within the stated timeframe.	Complaints storage folder or database AND approach to share feedbacks (monitoring)	☐
Commitment 6: Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis do not identify gaps and overlaps in the response.	Feedback mechanisms in PDM or similar tools (monitoring)	☐
2) Responding organisations share relevant information through formal and informal coordination mechanisms.	Approach to share feedback information with stakeholders (monitoring)	☐
3) Organisations coordinate needs assessments, delivery of humanitarian aid and monitoring of its implementation.	Workplan outlining reviews of monitoring data (monitoring)	☐
Commitment 7: Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection.		
Quality criterion: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve.		
1) Communities and people affected by crisis identify improvements to the assistance and protection they receive over time.	Monitoring tools or questions specific to post-distribution improvements (monitoring)	☐
2) Improvements are made to assistance and protection interventions as a result of the learning generated in the current response.	Management responses from review meetings and their follow-ups (monitoring)	☐
3) The assistance and protection provided reflects learning from other responses.	References to previous interventions (design)	☐
Commitment 8: Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well managed staff and volunteers.		
Quality criterion: Staff members are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably.		
1) Male and female staff members feel supported by their organisation to do their work.	Gender ratio in the team and staff member surveys	☐
2) Staff members satisfactorily meet their performance objectives.	Staff members appraisals	☐
3) Communities and people affected by crisis assess staff to be effective (i.e. in terms of their knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes).	Monitoring tools or questions specific to staff behaviour (monitoring)	☐
Commitment 9: Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically.		
Quality criterion: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose.		
1) Communities and people affected by the crisis are aware about community-level budgets, expenditure and results achieved.	Approach to discuss cost structure and feedbacks with recipients (monitoring)	☐
2) Communities and people affected by crisis consider that the available resources are being used: a. for what they were intended; and b. without diversion or wastage.	Evaluation tools at the end of the project (evaluation)	☐
3) The resources obtained for the response are used and monitored according to agreed plans, targets, budgets and timeframes.	Updated workplan and written evidence of review meetings (monitoring)	☐
4) Humanitarian response is delivered in a way that is cost effective.	Evaluation tools intersecting costs and effectiveness metrics (evaluation)	☐

Indicators Protocol: an example

Indicator	Reading proficiency among children in Grade 6
Definition	Sum of all reading proficiency test scores for all students in Grade 6 divided by the total number of students in Grade 6.
Link with SDG or any international development organisations' strategy	<Insert>
Purpose	To assess whether reading proficiency at the schools participating in the program is improving over time. This would provide evidence on whether the reading component of the program is effective.
Baseline	Average score: 47
Target	Average score: 57
Data Collection	The class teacher will conduct a reading proficiency test for all students in the class. Each student will be assessed individually in a separate room. The teacher will ask them to read a list of words, sentences and paragraphs out loud and will mark each one that they have difficulty with. Any students not present on the day of the assessment will be excluded.
Tool/Methodology	National Reading Proficiency Assessment questionnaire (See Annex A)
Frequency	Every 6 months
Responsible	Teachers
Reporting	The individual score for each student will be reported in the six monthly progress reports submitted by each teacher to the Program Manager. The Program Manager will then combine the data from each class to create full list of students and their scores. This will be used to calculate the average score for all students in Grade 6 using the definition above. The average score will be included in the report for the donor submitted every six months.
Quality Control	All teachers will attend a one day training course on how to complete the assessment. To verify the accuracy of the test scores submitted by the teachers the Program Manager will randomly select one class every six months to audit. This audit will involve re-testing all the students in the class and comparing the results to the results submitted by the teacher.