Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluation

1st Edition
October 2002

Foreword

I am hoping that all stakeholders throughout the Federation will receive this first edition of the Monitoring and Evaluation handbook warmly. The ever-changing development landscape accompanied by the increased challenges of accountability, performance, quality standards and learning make this a timely publication for the Monitoring and Evaluation Division. It is a toolkit…a collection of tools each of which is designed to support the monitoring and evaluation function. As a management responsibility, monitoring activity provides the basic building blocks of decision-making, for strategic planning and resource mobilisation. It is a key measurement activity in our efforts at achieving organisational effectiveness. If we cannot measure…we cannot manage. Although it is primarily aimed at stakeholders in the field, it is nonetheless an interesting useful resource for all practitioners that share the common goal of effectively serving the most vulnerable in our world.

It is an evolving initiative and this first edition deserves critical appraisal. The variety of tools available for use in this handbook are offered and presented in an interesting, simple and readable format. Its harmonised terminology facilitates use alongside the Project Planning Process (PPP) and Better Programming Initiative (BPI). The 2nd edition of the handbook will be available in Spanish, French and Arabic. As a vehicle for organisational shared learning, we look forward to receiving your helpful input to make the 2nd edition an even more relevant and effective contribution to the achievement of the International Federation's goals and objectives.

Ibrahim Osman
Monitoring and Evaluation Division
October 2002

Contents

Module 3

Module 4

Module 5

Module 6

Module 7

Module 8

Introduction

The Monitoring and Evaluation Division is pleased to share this handbook as part of our efforts to enhance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) by all stakeholders. While this handbook has been drafted for use by all stakeholders it is particular mindful of the role of M&E from a National Society perspective. The handbook contains useful M&E tools and is supported by some theoretical background.

It is intended that this handbook will be complemented by a series of training and information sessions either as a stand-alone module, or incorporated into existing programmes like the leadership development programme or the Project Planning Process (PPP). It can be used alongside other relevant documents such as the Better Programming Initiatives (BPI), PPP manual and the Evaluation Operational Framework. It is a document that will develop and evolve as we use it in our joint efforts at achieving organisational shared learning.

Clarifying and demystifying the M&E function as a performance instrument to strengthen BPI and PPP has been demanded by all stakeholders. This M&E handbook codifies a more rigorous search for improved methods of assessing whether organisations are both "doing things right" and "doing the right things".

This handbook is designed in modules to facilitate easy reading and a logical pathway through M&E. It provides the reader with opportunity to reflect and refresh by addressing a number of key questions following each module.

The International Federation already has in place the BPI. In many post conflict countries, tensions continue long after the general restoration of peace and high levels of social violence continues to disrupt livelihoods. With explicit programming, National Societies can strengthen relationships within and between divided communities. The BPI emphasises the importance of analysing the context of situations, describing the programme actions, identifying the impacts and searching for alternative options in a strong analytical framework. Such initiatives have been tried in several countries including Colombia and Nigeria. The outcome in Colombia emphasised the need for increasing the coordination between different Colombian Red Cross departments, especially when planning programmes for internally displaced people. In Nigeria such BPI analysis help Nigerian Red Cross staff identify a number of ways of improving the implementation of water and sanitation programmes. This M&E handbook will help BPI initiatives by clearly raising questions that have to be asked about programme design.

In a similar way this handbook links to PPP. The PPP is a new practical management tool to help improve National Society and Federation planning and reporting to an internationally accepted standard. The PPP handbook, like this handbook, allows users to quickly and easily develop tools that are compatible with major donor requirements for project identification, appraisal, implementation and evaluation. The PPP handbook is tailored to the needs of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and applicable to both relief and development operations like this handbook.

As a result of this M&E initiative, it is expected that:

- ***programme/project managers will have the knowledge and tools to apply the M&E approach;***
- ***the quality of programme/project proposals and their implementation and reporting will improve;***
- ***planning standards and common terminology will be established;***
- ***planning training will be tailored to the Federation's National Societies' and donors' needs and requirements;***

- *the Federation's planning system will be harmonised with that of its different partners and donors; and*
- *in the long term, and after a certain period of training and implementing the M&E, National Societies will improve their income generation and fund-raising, the quality of their programmes/projects and their reporting.*

National Societies are increasingly putting emphasis on Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA). VCA is a new dynamic method of analysis promoted by the International Federation that complements the needs-based approach. VCA can be used as an institutional capacity assessment diagnostic tools and a programmatic tool to evaluation the effectiveness and impact of current programmes. The traditional needs-based assessment is important to verify that emergency preparedness, response and rehabilitation phases have fulfilled the basic requirements of people affected by a crisis episode. The Nepal Red Cross has conducted two pilot VCAs using participatory rural appraisal techniques, which showed vulnerability interrelated into seasonal migration, landlessness and literacy and allowed a ranking of areas most at risk. M&E can allow progress in response to VCA analysis to be overseen.

This M&E handbook together with other tools of the International Federation programming and planning framework - BPI, PPP and VCA - form an essential toolkit for National Societies that addresses their own management information needs as well as the needs of donors and stakeholders. All tools in the toolkit can be used for a range of tasks but all tools require creative use.

"A federation-wide evaluation system that includes self-evaluation and peer review will be established to measure progress in all core areas and incorporate learning into future programme development" ***Strategy 2010.***

1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Objective of the Guidelines

The objective of the Guidelines is ***to provide International Federation, staff of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and implementing partners with the necessary information to be able to design, manage and support a results-oriented monitoring and evaluation system for emergency and development operations***.

1.2 What is in the Guidelines?

The Guidelines provide a structured pathway through monitoring and evaluation design within International Federation and National Societies.

Modules	Module Contents
1. Overview This module provides the necessary grounding in results-based monitoring and evaluation concepts within International Federation and National Societies.	• Objective of the guidelines • What is in the Guidelines? • What principles and definitions should you be aware of? • What is the framework for monitoring and evaluation?
2. Monitoring and Evaluation This module provides generic guidance for designing a monitoring and evaluation system. Further detail specific to the different types of International Federation and National Societies operations is provided in subsequent modules.	• How to design a monitoring and evaluation system • Checking operation design • Assessing capacity for monitoring and evaluation • Planning for data collection and analysis • Preparing the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget • Planning for reporting and feedback
3. Monitoring and Reporting National Society Programmes Building on the generic guidance provided in Module 2, this module provides guidance on monitoring and reporting specific to country level programmes.	• How to design a monitoring and evaluation system for national society programmes • Checking the national society programme and activity design • Assessing capacity for monitoring and evaluation of national level programmes • Planning for data collection and analysis for national level programmes • Preparing the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget • Planning for reporting and feedback

4. Monitoring and Reporting

Building on the generic guidance provided in Module 2, this module provides guidance on monitoring.

- What is particular about monitoring and evaluating?
- How to design a monitoring and evaluation system
- Checking operation design
- Assessing capacity for monitoring and evaluation
- Planning for data collection and analysis
- Preparing the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget
- Planning for reporting and feedback

5. Evaluation

This module provides generic guidance on designing and conducting an evaluation. Specific guidance is also provided for self-evaluation and for evaluating Co-operation Agreement Strategies.

- Introduction
- A framework for evaluation
- Types of evaluation
- Evaluation standards and principles
- Is there an framework to capture criteria
- Asking questions about the context of the evaluation
- Asking questions about the planning of humanitarian assistance
- Planning a self-evaluation
- Part of the monitoring process is national society self-assessment

6. Steps in Planning and Managing an Evaluation

The module details on how to go about implementing an evaluation with confidence.

- Step 1 - Clarifying/agreeing on the need for an evaluation
- Step 2 - Planning an evaluation
- Step 3 - Preparing the evaluation terms of reference
- Step 4 - Selecting the evaluation team
- Step 5 - The desk review (pre-mission)
- Step 6 - Conduct of the evaluation mission
- Step 7 - Preparing the evaluation report
- Step 8 - Report dissemination
- Step 9 - Using the results and learning from the evaluation
- Enhancing the effectiveness of the evaluation process

7. Baseline Studies

Building on the generic guidance provided in Module 2, this module provides guidance on designing and conducting a baseline study for an operation or programme. Relevant links to Module 8 are provided where further detail is provided on specific data collection methods.

- What is a baseline study?
- Baseline studies for different types of situations
- Planning and managing a baseline study
- How to analyse and report the data
- Next steps - follow-up surveys for monitoring and evaluation

8. Tools for Data Collection

This module provides details of relevant data collection tools that can be used for monitoring and evaluation.

- Concepts and definitions
- Data collection tools
- Using secondary data
- Links to other technical guidance material

9. M&E Glossary

This glossary provides definitions and explanations for all terms currently used within the context of monitoring and evaluation in International Federation and National Societies.

1.3 What Principles and Definitions Should You Be Aware Of?

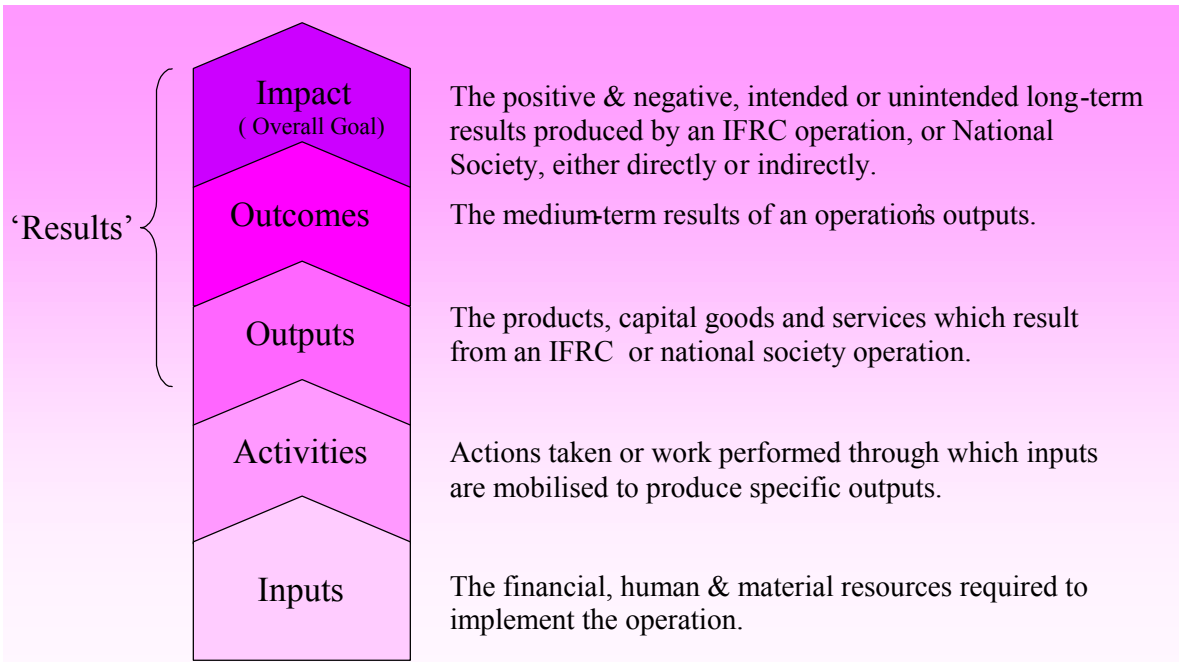
1.3.1 Results-Based Management

International Federation and National Societies are committed to pursue results-based management (RBM). RBM strives to improve management effectiveness and accountability by:

- Defining realistic expected results
- Monitoring progress towards achievement of expected results
- Using results for management decisions and
- Reporting on performance.

Central to RBM is the 'results chain' – the causal sequence for an operation that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives – beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes and impact (overall Goal). This provides the framework for the identification of indicators for monitoring and evaluation. The terminology and definitions used for the results chain are set out in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: The Results Chain



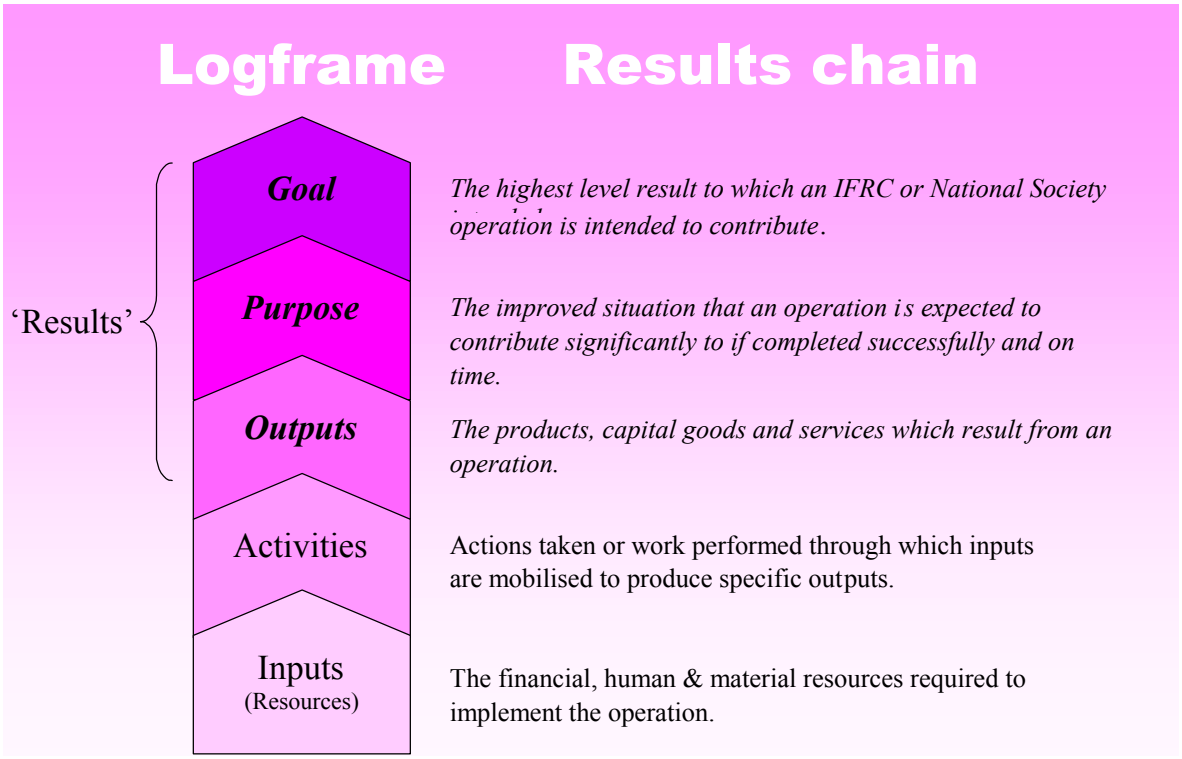
What does RBM mean for International Federation and National Societies?

- Expands the scope of monitoring and evaluation along the results chain;
- Ensures that outcomes and impact (overall Goal) are included in the plans to measure progress and performance;
- Implies a shift away from inputs and activities;
- Shifts emphasis towards the measurement of changes in the behavior and livelihoods of beneficiaries.

1.3.2 Linking monitoring and evaluation to a logical framework

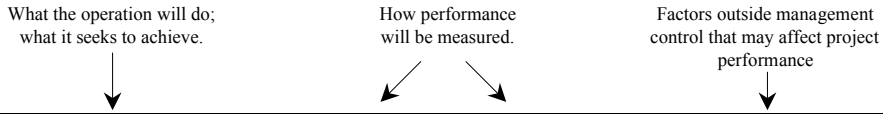
The main output of a logical approach to project design is a logframe matrix or logical framework (Figure 1.2). International Federation and National Societies share an approach to logical framework planning that is summarised in the Project Planning Process (PPP) Manual.

Figure 1.2: Relating the logframe to the results chain



The logframe is a summary table of no more than 2-3 pages, and usually accompanies the operation's design document (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: The logframe matrix



Logframe hierarchy	Performance indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions & risks
Goal Higher objective to which this operation, along with others, is intended to contribute.	**(Impact)** Indicators (increasingly standardised) to measure programme performance.	The programme evaluation system	**(Goal-to-Super-Goal)** Risks regarding strategic impact.
Purpose The outcome of an operation. The change in beneficiary behaviour, systems or institutional performance because of the combined output strategy and key assumptions.	**(Outcomes)** Measures that describe the accomplishment of the Purpose. The value, benefit and return on the investment.	People, events, processes, sources of data for organising the operation's evaluation system.	**(Purpose-to-Goal)** Risk regarding programme level impact
Outputs The actual deliverables. What the operation can be held accountable for producing.	Output indicators that measure the goods & services finally delivered by the operation.	People, events, processes, sources of data – supervision & monitoring system for validating the operation's design.	**(Output-to-Purpose)** Risks regarding design effectiveness.
Activities The main activity clusters that must be undertaken in order to accomplish the Outputs.	**Inputs/Resources** Budget by activity. Monetary, physical & human resources required to produce the outputs.	People, events, processes, sources of data –monitoring system for validating implementation progress.	**(Activity-to-Output)** Risks regarding implementation & efficiency.

1.3.3 What is monitoring?

Monitoring is the day-to-day management task of collecting and reviewing information that reveals how an operation is proceeding and what aspects of it, if any, need correcting.

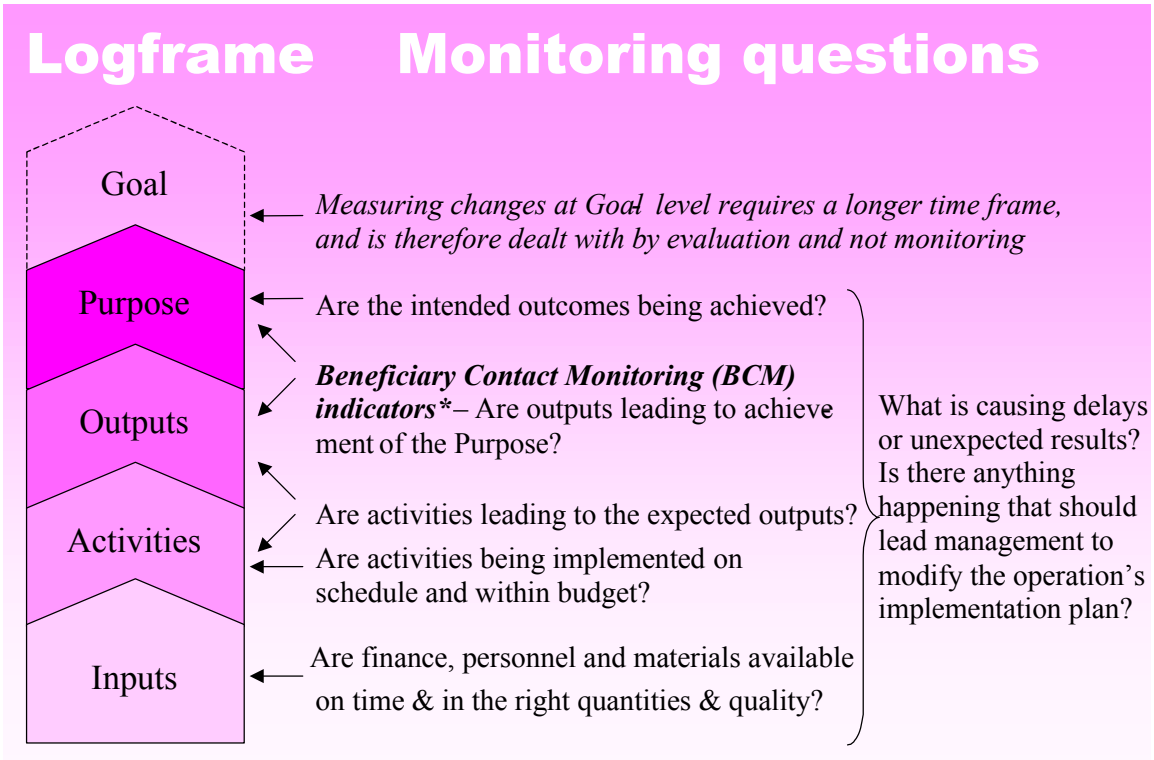
> Monitoring is ***a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to inform management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing International Federation or National Society operation of the extent of progress and achievement of results in the use of allocated funds.***

Reporting is an integral part of monitoring. Monitoring information is:

- Compiled in standard and *ad hoc* reports;
- Shared with implementing partners, donors and beneficiaries;
- Used to draw conclusions in evaluations.

Figure 1.4 sets out key questions at each stage of the logframe to which monitoring should pay particular attention. Managers will need to be updated regularly on the answers to the questions in order that they can respond in a timely and constructive manner to keep the operation on track towards achieving its objectives.

Figure 1.4: Monitoring questions and the logframe



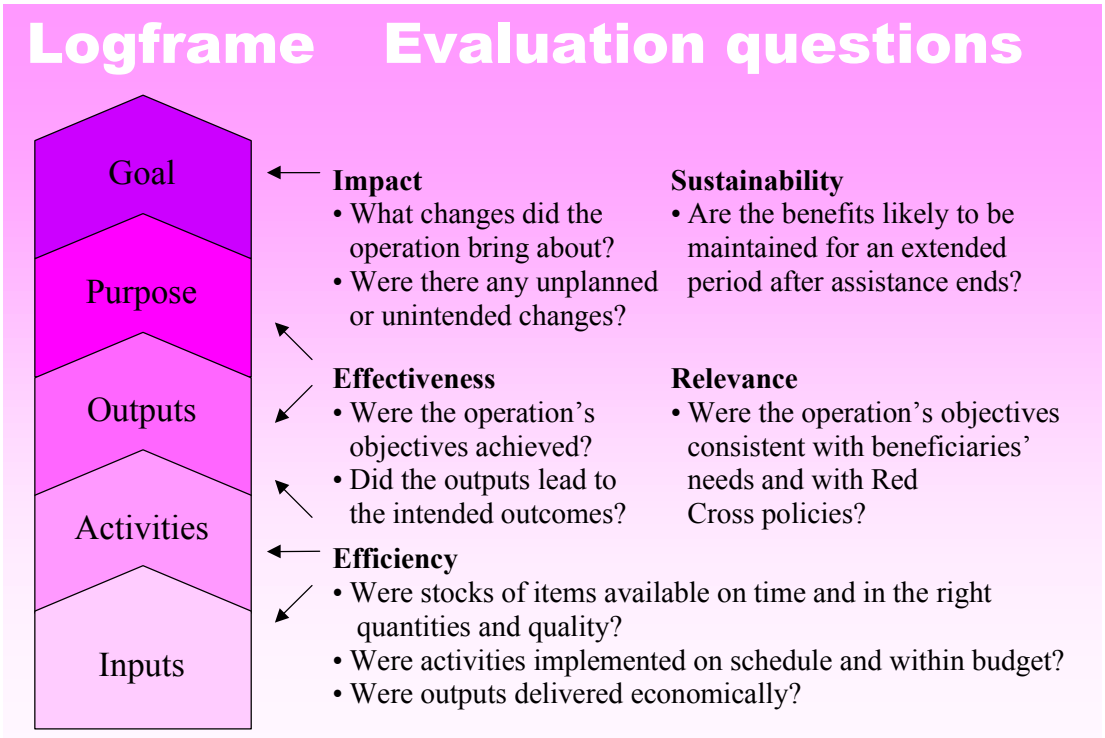
* BCM indicators measure changes in beneficiary behaviour resulting from delivery of the operation's outputs, and are an important means of tracking progress towards desired improvements in status or livelihoods.

1.3.4 What is evaluation?

> ***Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, Impact (overall Goal) and sustainability.*** An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons into management decision-making.

Figure 1.5 sets out the basic questions to be answered by evaluation.

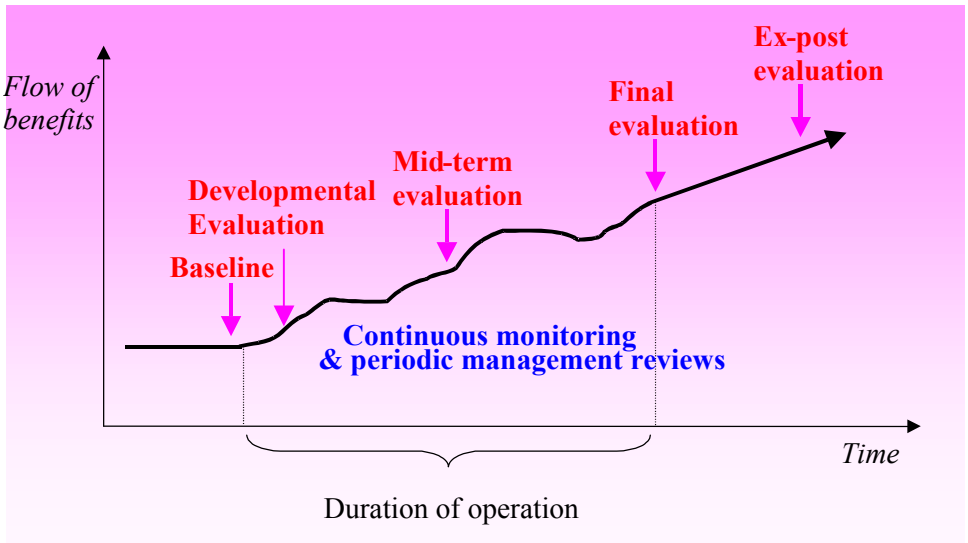
Figure 1.5: Evaluation questions and the logframe



1.3.5 Monitoring and evaluation throughout the lifespan of an operation

Monitoring occurs throughout the operation. A baseline study is usually conducted before the operations begin. Evaluations can occur - for different purposes - at different points on an evaluation.

Figure 1.6: Monitoring and Evaluation throughout the lifespan of an operation



1.4 What is the Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation?

Reflecting International Federation's results orientation, a new results-oriented monitoring and evaluation framework approved by senior management has been established. This framework outlines the purpose and standard definition of both terms, the principles and roles of results-oriented monitoring and evaluation, as well as International Federation's overall approach to monitoring and evaluation. Details of this approach are available in International Federation's Evaluation Operational Framework.

1.4.1 The purpose of a new framework on monitoring and evaluation

The main focus of the framework is to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation function in International Federation to ensure:

- Greater accountability in the use of resources
- Greater focus on the achievement of results
- A clearer basis for decision-making, and
- The promotion of institutional learning and knowledge sharing.

1.4.2 Principles of results-oriented monitoring and evaluation in International Federation

International Federation's framework on monitoring and evaluation is guided by four general guiding principles:

I. All International Federation and National Societies operations should be regularly and systematically monitored and evaluated (including processes, performance and context), unless security concerns are such that the safety of International Federation, national society workers and/or counterpart staff is compromised;

II. Monitoring and evaluation must be built into the design of every emergency and development operations;

III. Monitoring & evaluation systems need to be responsive and appropriate to the characteristics of the situation and the operation being monitored or evaluated. To the extent possible, monitoring & evaluation systems should be integrated with those of implementing partners;

IV. Monitoring & evaluation systems must reflect the information needs and approaches established by key corporate policies (Fundamental Principles of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement), and strategies (e.g. Strategy 2010) and reporting requirements. Such systems should also provide key data and results information for local as well as corporate results-oriented management information systems.

1.4.3 International Federation's approach to monitoring and evaluation

1.4.3.1 The approach to results-oriented monitoring

The basic tool for setting up a robust monitoring system is the logical framework approach. The key ingredients of such a system must include the following:

- Operation objectives that are clearly defined and stated in a logical framework that identify beneficiary population and delivery to a set of standards.
- A minimum set of results indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, for each objective and critical assumption that are feasible to collect and analyse;
- An assessment of the capacity for monitoring; and an assessment of training needs when capacity needs to be strengthened;
- A plan for data collection and analysis, including baseline and ongoing data; the plan is to include a combination of techniques such as report review, field visits and special studies and surveys;
- A monitoring and evaluation plan and budget summarising information needs, data collection and analysis, information use, reporting and presentation. It must identify who will be responsible and the time frame for key tasks is also noted and updated regularly. The budget must include funds for staff, consultants, travel, relevant meetings and workshops, baseline data collection, data management, special reports and studies, and where training is envisaged, funds for capacity-building;
- A reporting and feedback system that allows for timely decision-making by management on monitoring findings; identify who is responsible for ensuring actionable intervention; and
- An annual review meeting attended by key stakeholders that will allow a participatory annual assessment of performance and results obtained to date as well as planning next year's monitoring and evaluation activities.

1.4.3.2 The approach to results-oriented evaluations

A solid monitoring system is essential for evaluations to provide credible results information. The information provided by baseline studies, progress reports and review meetings enables International Federation and national country evaluations to focus on obtaining and confirming results achieved apart from providing accountability to the Governing Board, the Secretary General and donors.

Evaluations carried out by independent evaluators are undertaken only when there is a special management need or if the evaluation can inform the long-term strategy and policy needs of the organisation.

Evaluation also plays an important role in a learning organisation. In order to put more emphasis on broad reflection and learning from good as well as bad experience, self-evaluations undertaken jointly by National Societies and implementing partners are encouraged as a standard learning mechanism for all operations.

For example, at least one of the following three evaluation exercises should be undertaken during the lifetime (phase) of an operation:

- **self-evaluations** - undertaken by operation managers;
- **non-mandatory evaluations** - undertaken by independent consultants and managed by National Societies;
- **mandatory independent evaluations** undertaken by independent consultants and managed by M&E Division
  - Any operation once the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds SFr 5 million or more;

- Special operation, sectoral or thematic evaluations as requested by the Governing Board.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 1

OVERVIEW

- THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION ADVOCATES A RESULTS ORIENTED APPROACH
- AS SUCH, IT EMPHASISES RESULTS BASED PLANNING
- A SUITABLE APPROACH TO RESULTS BASED PLANNING IS THE LOG FRAME
- LOG FRAME ARE ASSOCIATED WITH LOG FRAME MATRICES WHICH DETAIL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, MEANS OF VERIFICATION AND ASSUMPTIONS
- MONITORING QUESTIONS ARE DERIVED FROM LOG FRAME. MONITORING IMPLIES THAT TARGETS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN LOG FRAMES. TARGETS IMPLY SPECIFIED BENEFICIARIES BY STANDARDS OF DELIVERY
- EVALUATION QUESTIONS ARE DERIVED FROM LOG FRAME. EVALUATION REQUIRES MONITORING EVIDENCE.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

2.1 How to Design a Monitoring and Evaluation System

For an introduction to monitoring and evaluation and their linkage to the logframe, see Module 1.3: What principles and definitions should you be aware of?

The steps in designing a monitoring and evaluation system are summarised in Table 2.1. These steps and the accompanying checklist are developed in more detail in the subsequent sections.

Table 2.1: Steps in the Design of a Monitoring and Evaluation System

Step	To-do-list
Check the operation's design	Review and revise (and if necessary prepare) a logical framework Ensure that objectives for Goal (impact), Purpose (outcome), Outputs and Assumptions are clearly stated and measurable. Ensure that indicators are adequately specified with quantity, quality and time.
Assess capacity for monitoring and evaluation	Identify what human and financial resources are available Assess training requirements for all monitoring staff, both from International Federation and National Societies and counterpart bodies. Specify training requirements
Plan for data collection and analysis	Check existing information sources for reliability and accuracy, to determine what data is already available. Decide what additional information should be collected, for baseline purposes, for monitoring and for evaluation Set a timeframe and schedule for data collection and processing, and agree on responsibilities.
Prepare the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget	Summarise agreed information needs, data collection, information use, reporting and presentation in a monitoring and evaluation plan. Summarise capacity building and support requirements. Cost all monitoring and evaluation activities, and identify funding sources.
Plan for reporting and feedback	Design the reporting system, specifying formats for reports. Devise a system of feedback and decision-taking for management.

2.2 Checking Operation Design

The starting point in design of the monitoring and evaluation system is to refer to the logframe and its associated products – the implementation schedule and the budget (see Module 1.3.2: Linking monitoring and evaluation to the logframe) as well as the project document or operational plan indications on monitoring and evaluations.

It is vital that there is a clear link between the logframe and the monitoring and evaluation plan, and that information flows cater for the needs of management at different levels in the management hierarchy. Figure 2.1 summarises the linkages required:

Figure 2.1: Components of the M&E plan, and their linkage to the logframe

Guidance for the development and application of a Logical Framework Approach can be found in the International Federation PPP manual. If a logframe exists already, it is nonetheless important to verify its logic and feasibility, to ensure that it does in fact represent a feasible and measurable plan for achievement of the operation's Purpose and Goal.

2.2.1 How clearly are the objectives stated?

Objectives should be assessed for their compliance with International Federation and National Societies policy.

2.2.2 Have external factors been taken into account?

Successful implementation is dependent on other factors that lie outside management control – the assumptions and risks specified in the operation's logframe.

These factors must also be monitored in order that managers are in a position to respond to changes in the operation's operating environment. To make assumptions and risks 'monitorable' they need to be incorporated in the monitoring and evaluation plan and should be specified with indicators. It is important to revisit the risks and assumptions during the project operation to ensure that they still apply.

2.2.3 Will indicators effectively measure progress?

An indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement or to reflect the changes connected to a project/programme. Where possible and relevant, indicators should allow for the collection of disaggregated data (by sex, age and other relevant variables). For each selected indicator, a source of information should be specified that details when, how and by whom the necessary information will be collected.

Table 2.2: Best Practice 'Do's' for Indicators and Means of Verification

Indicators **Indicators should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic, Timely.** **Indicators should be objectively verifiable, meaning that different persons using the same indicator would obtain the same measurements** **Outcome indicators (purpose level) reflect the target population and type of benefits.** **Outcome indicators include coverage of target group access to, use of, and satisfaction with the delivered aid.**
Means of Verification **Indicators can be measurable at reasonable cost by existing means or by procedures to be developed by the project. Responsibility is clearly assigned.** **Output indicators are derived from management record-keeping and internal analysis.**

Common weaknesses in indicator selection are as follows:

Too many indicators are selected – **Managers have a tendency to ask for too much information, assuming that the more they know the better they will be prepared. However, the result is often information-overload. Instead, information needs must be related directly to decision-making roles and to levels of management – more detail is required by field level managers, while aggregated and summarised data is used at higher levels. Selection of indicators should reflect this through the specification of a <u>minimum</u> set of information. The trap of including too many indicators should be avoided, as this will add to the work and cost of collecting, recording and analysing the data.**

Don't select overly complex indicators – **Some indicators present major problems for data collection, either in terms of the skills or the resources required. For example, household income data can be complex and expensive to measure. Alternative indicators to consider are patterns of expenditure or household characteristics such as house construction materials used. Qualitative indicators (e.g. wealth ranking) can also convey complex information in summarised form.**

Don't over-concentrate on physical progress indicators – **Information about food stocks and distribution is vitally important within an International Federation and National Societies operation, but it does not provide sufficient information on the performance of the operation. Information about outcomes is also required. In addition, beneficiary contact monitoring provides a means of tracking the <u>likelihood</u> of achieving outcomes and impact.**

2.2.3.1 Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) Indicators:

Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) is defined as a systematic investigation to monitor the beneficiaries' perceptions of an International Federation or National Societies operation. BCM aims to obtain information about the beneficiary reaction to the outputs of an operation, and is intended to provide managers with an indication of progress towards achievement of the operation's Purpose. It must be noted that beneficiaries' reaction, however positive, is only a proxy indicator of the improved situation that an operation is intended to bring about.

Beneficiary Contact Monitoring Indicators:

Provide an effective means of validating whether the output strategy is working
Include information about beneficiary access to, use of, and satisfaction with operation outputs
Seek feedback directly from the women, men, and children
Are referred to in the Logframe Manual as leading indicators

Figure 2.2: Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) and the Logframe

BCM indicators should be included in the logframe at Purpose level. Examples for different types of operation are provided in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3: Examples of BCM indicators for different types of operation

Development	**Development Operation**	**Emergency Operation**
School feeding activity purpose: Increase access to basic education for children	*Supplementary feeding purpose:* Reduce mortality & morbidity risk in children under 5	*General food distribution purpose:* Save lives through provision of adequate food
Outcome indicators Increased rate of girls and boys from low-income households proceeding to higher educational levels	*Outcome indicators* Number of children under 5 suffering from malnutrition Under fives' mortality rate	*Outcome indicators* Crude mortality rate Under 5 mortality rate
BCM indicators *Access* – % of parents aware of value of sending girls for higher education *Use* – % of low-income households with girls & boys enrolled in participating schools *Satisfaction* – Mothers' and fathers' perception of benefits of school feeding for girls & boys	*BCM indicators* *Access* – % of target households aware of supplementary feeding programme *Use* – % of target households participating in supplementary feeding programme *Satisfaction* – Mothers' perception of quality & adequacy of food supplement	*BCM indicators* *Access* – % families registered for food distribution *Use* – Number of registered men, women, girls & boys consuming target ration *Satisfaction* – Men, women & children's opinions about composition & quality of ration

2.3 Assessing Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation

2.3.1 How to determine M&E capacity

The following questions should be asked:

1. Is there a unit or defined organisation with the responsibility to do monitoring and evaluation?

If yes, how many staff and what are their current responsibilities for data collection, processing, analysis and report preparation?

If no, who will be assigned responsibility for conducting and undertaking monitoring functions?

What skills and experience do the proposed or existing staff have?

2. What are the resources available to the M&E unit or responsible unit? Take into account items such as vehicles, computers (hardware and software) as well as recurrent funding for operations.

3. Are there any established procedures for doing monitoring and evaluation, including:
Specification of targets in plan documents,
Regular and ad hoc surveys, and reporting and dissemination of findings

2.3.2 Assessing training needs

How do you conduct a training needs analysis prior to or after the M&E plan has been prepared and budgeted?

The behaviour and performance of staff is determined by:

i) Their knowledge and skills
ii) Their motivation to fulfil their responsibilities
iii) The organisational environment within which they operate.

You need to assess training needs at three different levels:

Organisational: assessing the general weaknesses of the organisation in carrying out monitoring – *where is training most needed*?
Occupational**: assessing the skills required to undertake M&E activities – *what skills are needed to do the job*?**
Individual**: assessing the skills of individuals within identified sections and occupations against their job requirements – *who needs training in what*?**

2.3.2.1 Steps to conducting a training needs analysis and in designing and conducting training activities

1. Clarify monitoring tasks to be undertaken, and agreeing on how responsibilities should be assigned.
2. Discuss possible weaknesses or gaps in physical, financial and human resources available to undertake monitoring, and identify which organisational weaknesses might be addressed by training.
3. Prepare or analyse job descriptions for relevant occupations, specifying monitoring tasks to be undertaken by each, and knowledge and skills required.
4. Use questionnaires or interviews to identify staff's knowledge and skills about monitoring in relation to the requirements set out in their job descriptions, and to identify organisational constraints that may affect their ability to complete their tasks.
5. Together with managers and staff, discuss and agree on training priorities and ways to overcome organisational constraints.

Once training needs have been identified and agreed, the process of designing, delivering and following up the training can begin.

6. Set the training objectives and develop the syllabus:

Specify what trainees must be able to do, and to what standard, after they have completed training
Identify the content required to achieve these objectives

Decide on the training approach that will best achieve the objectives

7. Implement and evaluate the training:

Conduct the training event(s)
Assess whether the training achieved its objectives
Discuss whether the objectives the right ones
Decide whether the training justified its cost

8. Follow up the training:

Assess whether trained staff are putting into practice what they have learned
Assess whether this has generated the desired outcome (i.e. timely and good quality monitoring information)
Determine further training requirements

2.4 Planning for Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection task can be split into two sets of requirements:

baseline data **to gain information on beneficiaries and the local context prior to the start of the main operation activities**
ongoing data **for monitoring of progress during implementation**

Both sets of data are subsequently used for monitoring and evaluation. Special case studies and surveys can be undertaken to update baseline information and to understand the reasons for changes that have occurred.

2.4.1 Why do you need baseline data?

Monitoring and evaluation to a large extent use the same indicators and data sets, with evaluation being rendered difficult if the relevant baseline and monitoring data are not available.

More substantive information about how the operation has changed people's lives is required for evaluation, and so evaluation considerations must be explicitly addressed during system design. The main mechanisms for this are:

Arrangements for baseline data collection – what was the situation before the operation commenced; and in the case where comparison groups are included in a baseline study, how did the situation within the scope of the operation compare with that outside?
Arrangements for a follow-up study **– what difference has the operation made:**

i) since start-up; and
ii) in comparison with groups outside the scope of the operation?

The techniques used to collect baseline data are no different from those used in other exercises such as reviews, assessments and evaluations. The difference lies in the purpose of the exercise. Baseline studies provide the necessary information to complete the planning of the operation, through benchmarking of indicators and analysis of context. They are also the basis of sound monitoring and evaluation, providing a snapshot of the conditions prior to start-up. In particular, baseline data facilitates a later measurement of the outcomes and impact of an operation through a follow-up study.

Some key points to keep in mind when planning the collection of baseline information:

The collection of baseline data should be timed to be undertaken prior **to the start of an operation or next phase;**
Baseline and follow-up studies should be included in your M&E plan as key components, and therefore appropriately budgeted and resourced; and
The results of a baseline study should be analysed and presented in a format that is succinct and clear, and most importantly, that can be easily understood by programming staff, project managers or reporting delegates and evaluators.

For further information on planning and undertaking a baseline study, see Module 7: Baseline Studies.

2.4.2 What monitoring data are required and where will it come from?

2.4.2.1 What monitoring data are required?

Ongoing data requirements for monitoring can be summarised within the logframe structure as follows:

Table 2.4: Monitoring Questions and the Logframe

Logframe level	Monitoring questions	
Outcomes	What are the beneficiaries' (men, women and children) access to, use of, and satisfaction with the goods and services delivered?	**Assumptions** Are any external factors significantly affecting the operation's progress? Is the effect positive or negative?
	Are women and other vulnerable groups benefiting to the extent foreseen?	
	Is the operation on track towards achieving its Purpose?	
Outputs	What are the physical achievements of the operation?	
	Is the target group receiving items in the quantities and quality as planned?	
	Are assets being created/maintained as planned?	
	Are other services being made available as planned?	
Activities	Are items being distributed on schedule and in quantities planned?	
	Are other activities being undertaken as planned?	
	Who is participating in the operation?	
Inputs	What is the current position on stocks and pipeline? What are the current losses?	
	Are government, partner and beneficiary contributions being made as planned?	
	What management structures are in place, and how well are they operating?	

2.4.2.2 Input monitoring

Traditional information systems are often geared to satisfying the administrative requirement that funds and resources are adequately accounted for, and that work has been accomplished as planned. But perhaps the most common weakness in physical and financial monitoring is that deviations from the plan may not be traceable to responsibility centres, or that the reason for the deviation is not clear. If, for example, district data for medical activity indicates that there has been an interruption to the distribution of supplies, it is important that this information is accompanied by identification of ***where*** and ***why*** the problem has occurred.

2.4.2.3 Field visits – a valuable source of information

Field visits are an essential monitoring tool for International Federation and National Societies staff, providing the necessary close contact with beneficiaries.

Field visits can serve a number of interlinked purposes:

To gauge progress towards achieving the operation's objectives
To determine beneficiaries' perceptions and reactions to activities
To assess ownership and utilisation of assets created, and to identify any negative effects
To assess the quantity and quality of work undertaken, and the appropriateness of other activities
To make physical checks of commodity stocks, distribution and work
To help managers identify problems and make decisions to overcome them
To establish productive relationships with government, implementing partners
To ensure that men and women beneficiaries are fully involved in implementation and monitoring of the operation.

2.4.2.4 Monitoring participation

Monitoring participation is a critical monitoring task. This involves monitoring:

Who participates – in carrying out activities, in planning and organisation, and in the sharing of benefits?
How they work together:

- Do different interest groups (men, women, children, and socio-economic groups) participate in decision-making?
- Are the cost or burden of work equitably shared?
- Are organisational arrangements effective
- Are there established relationships between stakeholders and are they operating effectively?

What factors will aid or impede the process of participation – **sex, age, education, social status, mobility, authority, etc.**

At minimum International Federation and National Societies and its partners must monitor and evaluate the level and nature of participation of women, men and other stakeholder groups in their operations.

2.4.2.5 Monitoring and evaluating International Federation and national society's commitments to women

As part of its gender awareness policy, International Federation and National Societies must generate and disseminate gender disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

All International Federation and National Societies monitoring and reporting will specify:

Men/women percentage share of resources received from aid distribution
Men/women share of benefits by category of activities
Percentage of positions held by women in the planning and management of operations

2.4.3 Who undertakes data collection and analysis at the field level?

It is essential that duplication of monitoring be avoided, that information gaps are identified, and that resources for monitoring are used efficiently. The M&E Plan will help to clarify who

will collect what, and why. It will also provide a framework for agreeing on responsibilities for the scaling up of the monitoring effort.

Where International Federation and National Societies have direct responsibility for monitoring, the relevant tasks are usually undertaken by project managers. Project managers or reporting delegates are usually tasked to collect and analyse monitoring data and to prepare field reports. In the recruitment and deployment of managers and reporting delegates:

Constitute mixed teams – both internationals and nationals – to take advantage of the different perspectives of various individuals
Develop a team approach, with frequent team meetings to promote integration and shared perceptions
Aim for gender equity as women managers or reporting delegates monitors are usually essential to ensure access to women in the target communities, and to be able to determine what is happening to women within households.

Table 2.5: Qualities and skills required of those monitoring projects

They must:
Have an understanding of International Federation and national society's mandate and goals in operations
Have good analytical and reporting skills
Have skills in qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques
Have knowledge on input and output monitoring, inventory control and aid distribution methods, preferably gained from prior experience in similar operations
Be honest, observant, perceptive, inquisitive, persistent, and diplomatic
Be sensitive listeners who also have the ability to influence and convince people through discussion
Energetic, willing to travel and spend the majority of their time in the field
Capable of reviewing problems with officials onthespot
Be team players
Be able to determine and focus on what is important.

National staff:

Have advantages in terms of language, cultural understanding and, usually, freedom to travel, which are particularly important for monitoring distribution, enduse, and the evolution of the overall situation.
May be subject to a variety of pressures and, in general, should not be assigned to work in their own localities or immediate ethnic groups.

International staff including volunteers:

Can bring wider experience, relevant overseas experience particularly in relation to logistics and general management
May be able to address issues, which for cultural reasons, it is difficult for national staff to pursue
Have skills and can train others in the theories and practices of assessment and monitoring methodologies
Lack of local language and cultural understanding can be a handicap and may lead to undue reliance on reports and a failure to appreciate what is really happening within the communities concerned.
In some conflict or civil strife situations their freedom to travel may be restricted: they may require permits and/or escorts to travel to certain areas.

2.4.4 Computerised systems for monitoring

Computerised systems for monitoring offer opportunities for the following:

Efficient data storage
Flexibility and speed of analysis
Cross-comparisons
Trend analysis
Preparation of simple graphs.

Before deciding on what computer programme to use you should check the following:

Do existing manual systems work efficiently? If yes, then computerisation may not be an immediate concern.
Will data be collected extensively for a significant period of time, and be analysed quantitatively? If yes, then computerisation is likely to offer considerable efficiency gains.

What is the best programme or software to use? This will depend on the staff skills, equipment and funds available, the type of data required, and the type of analysis planned.

Relatively simple computerised systems using Microsoft Excel or Access exist and information on existence, strengths and weaknesses of such systems can be accessed.

MS Excel may offer the best solution if available skills are limited. Excel provides the facility to develop menu-driven data entry forms to build a database, and the *pivot-table* facility allows for simple cross-tabulations to be generated quickly.
MS Access **offers a more advanced tool for database development, but is more complex and may require investment in training for relevant staff to become fully familiarised with its functions.**

Whatever system is chosen, the following considerations should be taken into account:

Detailed plans for computerisation should be prepared as part of the monitoring and evaluation system design, to ensure that the necessary physical and financial resources are provided for.
There should be provision for back up to the system in case of computer breakdown.
Skilled staff will be required to operate and maintain the system, and to undertake the necessary analysis.

2.5 Preparing the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget

2.5.1 The monitoring and evaluation plan

Below is a matrix for developing the monitoring and evaluation plan.

Figure 2.4: A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The following information should be entered into the matrix:

Logframe element **– Goal, Purpose, Output, activity, inputs and assumptions**
Indicators **– for the Goal, Purpose and Outputs, the indicators contained in the operation logframe should be inserted and targets added. For inputs, the physical quantities and project financial costs should be inserted for the main cost categories – for example:**

- for items the projected quantities and cost of each commodity
- for human resources, the projected staff time and cost

etc.

Data source – **the primary or secondary data source that will provide information about each indicator – e.g. existing statistics or records; project accounts; nutrition survey; etc.**
Frequency of collection and cost– **how often primary data will be collected, or secondary data analysed (e.g. quarterly, annually, at end of phase, etc.), and the budget required.**
Responsibility for collection – **which organisation or unit will be responsible for collecting and/or analysing the data**
Collection Method – **how the data is being collected (e.g. focus group meetings)**
Reporting – **in which report(s) the information will be included**
Presentation – **at which fora or meetings the information or report will be presented and discussed**

2.5.2 The monitoring and evaluation budget

Data collection, processing, analysis and reporting, as well as capacity building and field support must be costed in terms of time and resources. These costs will be incurred either by International Federation and National Societies and must be included in the operation budget.

Monitoring is a basic management activity and as such should be considered a proportion of time of all staff involved in implementation as well as regular office equipment, facilities, vehicles, travel etc. These are standard budget items for International Federation and National Societies, government and implementing partners and are usually not budgeted separately.

2.6 Planning for Reporting and Feedback

2.6.1 Guidance for monitoring and evaluation report writing

1. Be as **short as possible**, consistent with the amount of information to be presented.
2. Focus on **results** being achieved as defined in the logframe or defined in the objectives, and link the use of resources allocated to their delivery and use.
3. Be clear on who your **audience** is and ensure that the information is meaningful and useful to the intended reader.
4. Write in **plain language** that can be understood by the target audience.
5. Ensure **timely submission** of progress reports. Even if incomplete in certain aspects or component coverage, it is better to circulate key results in other areas rather than wait for the complete picture.
6. Provide a **brief summary** (1 page) at the beginning.
7. Be consistent in your use of **terminology, definitions** and descriptions of partners, activities and places.
8. Present complex data with the help of **figures, summary tables, maps, photographs, and graphs**.
9. Only highlight the most significant **key points or words** (using bold, italics or other stresses).
10. Include **references** for sources and authorities.
11. Include a **table of contents** for reports over 5 pages in length.

2.6.2 How would project/programme managers use reports?

A baseline study report provides the necessary information to 'benchmark' indicators for the operation's Purpose and Goal, providing a snapshot of the situation before the operation commences or at least in its early stages. The follow-up study then provides a picture of how the situation has changed. The baseline study also provides useful information for planning purposes. If the study is conducted before implementation starts, baseline information can help to fine-tune the operation's design. If the study is conducted during the early stages of implementation, then it can provide useful information to validate the design, or to identify necessary modifications.

Timely progress reporting will inform whether or not the operation is on track regarding the delivery of outputs and outcomes, and thereby permit management to focus its energy on the most critical bottlenecks.

Progress reports at quarterly and six monthly intervals should:

Be results-oriented (provide updates on outputs achieved, and include BCM information)
Be action focused
Allow management to review what has been done in the last reporting period as compared to the plans
Permit management to decide on what needs to be done in the next period.

Self-evaluation reports should:

Be results-oriented (provide an assessment of actual output and outcomes achieved)

Permit the preparation of new or follow-up operations in a way that incorporates the experiences of the existing operation
Provide a close-out analytical report for those operations that are being terminated

More in-depth evaluations will support institutional learning and so guide policy formulation for management at the strategic level. Out of these policies and corporate lessons, practical guidance will subsequently emerge to help managers prepare better operations.

2.6.3 Monitoring the partner's reporting system

Operations reporting should be monitored for:

Timeliness – whether reports are submitted at the specified and agreed times. This can be monitored simply by recording on a flow chart when reports are received.
Completeness – **whether all of the information required by the report format is provided.**
Consistency – **whether the units used in consecutive reports facilitate comparisons in performance over time. This can be monitored by checking the report against the agreed milestones and indicators specified in the monitoring plan.**
Content – **the extent to which the report provides an analysis of what has taken place, or simply presents 'bare' figures.**
Reliability/accuracy – **the extent to which the report is a fair representation of the facts.**

2.6.4 Feedback

How can we ensure that relevant monitoring and evaluation information triggers dialogue and decision-making by the various concerned stakeholder groups?

First of all, acknowledge receipt of progress report and provide comments regarding report conclusions, recommendations and timeliness.

In addition, the M&E plan should programme more formal feedback opportunities such as:

Quarterly progress review meetings – **Reviews output progress (planned versus actual), reviews BCM findings and early evidence of outcome and acts on improvement proposals**
Evaluation debriefing workshop – **Conducted at the end of the field mission stage of the evaluation, where initial evaluation findings are presented and discussed in order that stakeholder feedback can be incorporated into the final report.**

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 2

DESIGNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- CHECK PROGRAMME DESIGN BY REVIEWING LOG FRAME
- ASSESS CAPACITY FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- PLAN DATA COLLECTION
- PREPARE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLANS AND BUDGETS
- OUTLINE REPORTING STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION•

3. Monitoring and Reporting National Society Programmes

3.1 How to Design a Monitoring and Evaluation System for National Society Programmes

The guidance provided in this module should be used following review of Module 1.3: What principles and definitions should you be aware of? and Module 2.1: How to design a monitoring and evaluation system .

The steps in designing a monitoring and evaluation system are summarised in Table 3.1. These steps and the accompanying checklist are developed in detail in Module 2. Additional details related to Co-operation Agreement Strategies and Development Activities are provided in Module 3.

Table 3.1: Steps in the Design of a Monitoring and Evaluation System

Step	To-do-list
Check the operation's design	Review and revise (and if necessary prepare) a logical framework Ensure that objectives for Goal (impact), Purpose (outcome), Outputs and Assumptions are clearly stated and measurable. Ensure that indicators are adequately specified with quantity, quality and time.
Assess capacity for monitoring and evaluation	Identify what human and financial resources are available Assess training requirements for all monitoring staff, both National Societies and counterpart bodies. Specify training requirements
Plan for data collection and analysis	Check existing information sources for reliability and accuracy, to determine what data is already available. Decide what additional information should be collected, for baseline purposes, for monitoring and for evaluation Set a timeframe and schedule for data collection and processing, and agree on responsibilities.
Prepare the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget	Summarise agreed information needs, data collection, information use, reporting and presentation in a monitoring and evaluation plan. Summarise capacity building and support requirements. Cost all monitoring and evaluation activities, and identify funding sources.
Plan for reporting and feedback	Design the reporting system, specifying formats for reports. Agree arrangements for national society supervision and oversight of the partner's reporting system Devise a system of feedback and decision-taking for management.

3.2 Check the National Society Programme and Activity Design

National society programmes and activity design should be presented in logframe. Guidance on developing a logframe is provided in the International Federation PPP Manual. For how to verify the logframe see Module 2.2: Checking operation design.

3.2.1 National society level

A National Society Co-operation Agreement Strategy (CAS) will normally have an overall logframe that brings coherence to the set of planned Activities and shows their coherence with a common set of Goals and Purposes. Below is an example of a CAS logframe, down to the Activity Purpose level:

Figure 3.1: Example Logical Framework Summary for Ghana CAS, 2001-2005

Results-Hierarchy		Performance Indicators	Assumptions and Risks
Goal at National level: The Central objective of Government's DSPR is the substantial reduction of the levels of absolute poverty in Ghana through measures, which increase the capacities and opportunities for all Ghanaians, in particular the poor.		A reduction of the incidence of absolute poverty from a level of 27% in 1999 to below 20% in 2004.	The general economic situation will allow Government increase investment in the northern savannah regions for poverty reduction.
Goal of Country Programme: Strengthened capability of food insecure households in the savannah region especially women to meet their own food and nutrition needs on a sustainable basis and withstand external economic shocks and natural disasters while addressing gender and regional imbalances as well as HIV/AIDS		**Impact indicators:** Contribute to reduce poverty levels in the northern regions from 70% in 1999 to the current national average of 40% by 2010. Reduced chronic food insecurity of vulnerable groups in the northern savannah zone, particularly during the lean season.	GOG will create and maintain an institutional framework for CP management and oversight that facilitates effective integration and linkages among CP activities as well with other related development activities. Provision of non-food items from different sources is a necessary condition for success. Lack of support from partners in that field may affect CP implementation.
Purpose of the Country Programme: (= activity level goals)		**CP Outcome indicators:**	**Assumptions and Risks**
1.	Progress towards the fulfilment of **the right to personal security** *inter alia* through improved health and nutrition practices and increased capacity of communities to rehabilitate/create and maintain assets that provide secure and sustainable livelihoods .	Increased percentage of normal weight children. Reduced percentage of children with low birth weight Increasing number of households successfully participating in soil and water conservation and forest management and conservation activities.	Adequate financial and technical capacity at district level. Risk: High turnover in government service may result in loss of capacities with departure of trained staff
2.	Progress towards the fulfillment of **the right to knowledge** through increased enrolment and attendance of girls and improved learning capacity.	Increased number of girls enrolled and successfully completing primary and JSS	Governments ability to comply with conditions such as providing complementary inputs (classrooms, teaching materials and teachers) to cope with expected increases in enrolment in targeted schools.
Purpose of each CP Activity:		**Activity outcome indicators***	**Assumptions and Risks**
1.1	Improve the household food security and therefore, the nutritional status of the vulnerable groups (under –5 children, pregnant and nursing mothers and mothers of malnourished children) through supplementary feeding .	Child underweight rate reduced below 40% by 2005 ; Low birth weight rate reduced to fall below 13% by 2005;	Efficient and effective monitoring and reporting system at health and nutrition centres. Availability of complementary resources for health and nutrition Compliance with lessons from health and nutrition education training at household level
1.2	Contribute to the rehabilitation of severely malnourished children by increasing their recovery rates	Reduction in numbers of mothers repeating the nutrition and health education classes	
1.3	Improve the skills of the health workers, volunteers and beneficiaries through health, nutrition and gender training.	Reduced prevalence of malnutrition in target communities.	
2.1	Increase enrolment of girls at primary school and JSS, increased school attendance and reduced drop out record of girls per year	Increase girls' enrolment by 15% yearly and reduce their dropout rate by 12% yearly at primary school and JSS levels.	Government and donors ability to provide complementary inputs (classrooms, teaching materials teachers etc) to the targeted schools

The International Federation and National Societies Country Delegation must monitor the performance of the Co-operation Agreement Strategy as a whole by:

- aggregating and summarising information about individual Activities
- re-allocating its human, physical and financial resources in support of these Activities in the most effective way.

3.2.2 At activity level

The International Federation and National Societies must monitor the performance of each Activity by:

- Conducting field visits (particularly to monitor changes to beneficiaries' livelihoods)

- Assisting in any special studies (as required and agreed during operation design)
- Monitoring food pipeline and other resources (inputs)
- In 'monitoring the monitors' – making sure that Government or NGO monitoring is being carried out effectively
- Assessing skill gaps and training needs related to Government or NGO monitoring capacity
- Undertaking training as required.

There are four types of development activities supported by International Federation and National Societies outlined in the International Federation Knowledge Sharing Division policy document.

This policy documents presents the most common objectives for each type of activity, and suggests indicators for the output and outcome (or Purpose) levels of the logframe, namely:

- Promotion of fundamental principles and humanitarian values
- Disaster preparedness
- Disaster response
- Health and care in the community offices.

The following resource materials available in International Federation and National Societies offer guidance on the particular information needs of different types of development activity:

- From Principles to Action
- Better programming initiatives
- Disaster preparedness training manual
- The Sphere Project
- Public Health Guide for Emergencies
- Guidelines on HIV/AIDS
- Water and Sanitation Guidelines

3.3 Assessing Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation for Co-operation Agreement Strategy and Activities

In order to assess capacity see Module 2.3: Assessing capacity for monitoring and evaluation. It gives guidance on Module 2.3.1: How to determine M&E capacity and on Module 2.3.2: Assessing training needs.

3.3.1 How to determine M&E capacity for co-operation agreement strategy and activities

For Co-operation Agreement Strategies and Activities, International Federation and National Societies assesses government and other partners monitoring capacity and ensures that the monitoring system is geared to the capabilities and resources available. This assessment and reassessment takes place:

- at design stages
- during the course of drawing up operational plans and other agreements
- at regular intervals (usually annually) during implementation.

International Federation and National Societies assesses and reviews its own staff skills, time and financial resources available for monitoring and evaluation functions regularly during the planning and implementation phases.

3.3.2 Assessing training needs for co-operation agreement strategy and activities

To enhance capacity of government and implementing partner staff to undertake the various monitoring and evaluation functions envisaged, on-the-job or formal training may be required. International Federation and National Societies staff may also require enhanced M&E skills.

For basic guidance on how to conduct a training needs analysis and the steps for implementing training see Module 2.3.2: Assessing training needs.

3.4 Planning for Data Collection and Analysis for Co-operation Agreement Strategy and Activities

In order to proceed to plan and develop data collection and analysis systems refer to Module 2.4: Planning for data collection and analysis that gives advice on:

- Module 2.4.1: Why do you need baseline data?
- Module 2.4.2: What monitoring data is required, and where will it come from?
- Module 2.4.2.3: Field visits – a valuable source of information
- Module 2.4.2.4: Monitoring participation

3.4.1 What baseline data are required?

For a general introduction to collecting baseline data, see Module 2.4.1: Why do you need baseline data. For more in-depth guidance refer to Module 7: Baseline Studies and Module 8: Tools for Data Collection.

Baseline data are always required for development activities. In some emergency situations, interventions will take place without baseline data. Without baseline data, it is impossible to judge whether the activity's objectives are being or have been achieved.

There are two levels at which baseline data are required.

- **At a country level** – data are required to identify *trends* over time in order to determine whether the programme as a whole has improved the situation of vulnerable men, women and children. These data will provide a baseline for the Co-operation Agreement Strategy objectives (and therefore the Goal level of each Activity), and should be available from the assessment and targeting process.

- **For the project** check:
  - the indicators specified in the Purpose level of the Activity logframe
  - monitoring data from the current phase
  - data available from Evaluations of previous phases
  - other secondary sources, including data available from the assessment and targeting process.

If there are major data gaps for key indicators that the Activity is intended to affect, then primary baseline data must be collected or another indicator selected.
The choice of baseline data collection techniques will depend on:

- how much time International Federation and National Societies, can allocate to data collection
- the available expertise on study design within International Federation and National Societies
- the availability and expertise of field staff or enumerators
- financial resources available for data collection.

For guidance on how to prepare a budget for a baseline and follow-up study see Module 7.3.12: Prepare the Workplan and Budget.

3.4.2 What monitoring data is required, and where will it come from?

The main mechanisms for monitoring operations within the Co-operation Agreement Strategy are as follows:

- **National Society Self Assessment**
- **Activity implementation schedules and monitoring plans** – these provide the national society with the framework and milestones against which progress is to be measured.
- **Regular reports** – prepared by the national society with the necessary quantitative and qualitative information about inputs, activities and outputs.
- **Field Visits** – conducted by CO staff in collaboration with government and implementing partners, these provide the national society with a systematic record of quantitative and qualitative information to complement and verify the information provided in regular reports.
- **The Project Report –** prepared for each operation, this provides a record of:
  - activity implementation with factual information on activities, outputs, and outcomes;
  - an analysis of issues and problems; and
  - recommended actions to address issues identified.
- **Review meetings/stakeholder meetings** – ad hoc or regular meetings in which stakeholders present and discuss issues identified through other monitoring mechanisms, these provide the national society with the opportunity to agree on actions to be undertaken to support Activity implementation.

For general monitoring questions related to each level in the logframe see Module 2.4.2: What monitoring data is required and where will it come from?

3.4.2.1 Field visits – a valuable source of complementary information

For information on how to undertake monitoring field visits see Module 8.2.6 Field Visits.

3.4.2.2 Beneficiary contact monitoring – determining beneficiary access to, use of, and satisfaction with the outputs of the activities

For an introduction to Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM), see Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) Indicators 7.2.6.

Seeking feedback directly from the men, women and children who are supposed to be benefiting from International Federation and National Societies Activities provides:

- an effective means of validating whether the output strategy is working
- information about the *likelihood* that the purpose will be achieved.

In addition, BCM can provide an early indication of problems in Activity design that could be addressed by re-allocating International Federation and national society's human physical or financial resources in support of one Activity to another, in order to enhance likelihood of overall achievement of Co-operation Agreement Strategy objectives.

3.4.2.3 Who undertakes data collection and analysis at the field level?

- See Module 2.4.3: Who undertakes data collection and analysis at the field level?

3.5 Preparing the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget

3.5.1 The M&E plan

An example of a monitoring and evaluation plan for a development activity is provided in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Examples of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for a Co-operation Agreement Strategy (Goal level)

Achievement of Activity Goal

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data source	Frequency of collection	Responsibility for collection	Collection method	Reporting	Presentation
Goal - Enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods	Reduced incidence & degree of food insecurity among households in districts with degraded natural resources	Baseline report	Before & after completion	Project Officer	Field Visit	Project	Evaluation Workshop

Achievement of Activity Purpose

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data source	Frequency of collection	Responsibility for collection	Collection method	Reporting	Presentation
Purpose - Increase incomes & food security of target population	Changes in income by households or household members Amount of forest products harvested per household	Baseline study & follow-up study in participating & control villages	Before & at completion	National society	Sample survey	Baseline Report Terminal	At inception workshop & terminal workshop
	Leading indicators: - Number households receiving income or food from protected land - Beneficiaries (men & women) perceptions of costs & benefits of scheme	Regular field visits Mini-survey at mid-term	Six-monthly At mid-term	National society	Field visits & sample survey	Mid-term management review report	At mid-term management review workshop
Assumptions - Encroachment by non-participating households can be controlled	Number of encroachments and extent of damage	Site survey of area protected	Annual	Implementing partner,	Visual observation during field visits	Annual report	At annual review meeting

Delivery of Activity Outputs

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data source	Frequency of collection	Responsibility for collection	Collection method	Reporting	Presentation
Output 1 - Increased area of protected & productive forested lands	Area of land developed or protected	Site survey of area protected & survival survey of seedlings planted	Annual	Implementing partner	Visual observation during field visits. Survival survey of seedlings planted	Annual Report Terminal	At annual review meeting & terminal workshop
Assumptions - Market prices for fruit tree crops remain stable	Local market prices for fruit tree crops	Market survey	Seasonal	Village Food Distribution committees	Recording of prices observed in sample of markets	Annual report	
Output 2 - Target population fed	Number of people who have received International Federation supplied food by gender and age group	Food distribution sheets	Monthly	Village Food Distribution committees, Implementing partner	Compilation from food distribution sheets	Monthly report	At quarterly progress review meeting
Assumptions - etc	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	
Output 3 - Community groups formed an active in managing forested lands	Number of community groups formed and active	Village committee records	Quarterly	Implementing partner Community Development Workers	Compilation from village committee records	Quarterly	At quarterly progress review meeting
	Representation and involvement in committees by gender	Village committee records	Quarterly	Implementing partner	Compilation from village committee records	Quarterly	
		Village committee survey	Six-monthly	Implementing partner	Focus group discussions	Quarterly	
	Number of plans prepared and adopted	Plans submitted Site verification	Quarterly	Implementing partner	Count of plans submitted & field visits to verify	Quarterly	
Assumptions - etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	

3.5.2 The monitoring and evaluation budget

For budgeting for monitoring and evaluation refer to Module 2.5.2: The monitoring and evaluation budget. For guidance on possible items to include in a budget for a baseline study see Module 7: Baseline Studies.

3.6 Planning for Reporting and Feedback

3.6.1 Written reports

The basic reporting system for national society programmes is as follows:

- **Regular Field Reports –** Most Activities are implemented at project level. For their own internal management purposes they produce regular monitoring reports (usually monthly and quarterly). The format and contents of these reports varies according to the type of Activity, the availability of data, and the capacity of the implementing agency to collect and process data. For guidance on how to design reporting formats, see Module 2.6.1: Guidance for monitoring and evaluation report writing.
- **The Quarterly Project Report** – The QPR is prepared every three months by the project and submitted to the country delegation, for which it is an essential management tool. These reports should include information on outputs as agreed in the M&E Plan.
- **The Annual Report –** The annual report is prepared every year for each Activity by the responsible International Federation and National Societies Officer. Individual activity will be summarised in a Co-operation Agreement Strategy that will be sent by the national society to the International Federation.

3.6.2 How would project/programme managers use reports?

For general guidance on how to use progress reports, self-evaluation and in-depth evaluation reports see Module 2.6.2: How would project/programme managers use reports?

Some examples of how to use typical reports for Co-operation Agreement Strategy and Activities are as follows:

- **The Quarterly Project Report**, **Project Implementation Report and Field Visit Reports** – are essential tools for the managers to measure progress against plans for the period. Timeliness is critical to permit management to focus on resolving the most critical problems and shortcomings. These reports are used by the National Societies to prepare the annual reports and make the necessary analysis of progress.

- **The Country Delegation Report on CAS Implementation** - This report permits judgement on the progress of each activity and the National Societies programme towards achievement of the planned targets. Country Delegation staff identify serious problems and indicate who should be responsible for producing corrective measures. Although this report is an internal International Federation and National Societies document, a draft of the report should normally be discussed at a review meeting with the implementing partners. In these meetings, agreement needs to be reached on what past actions have been completed and what future actions are needed.

3.6.3 Feed-back for co-operation agreement strategy and activities

See Module 2.6.4: Feedback.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 3

MONITORING NATIONAL SOCIETY PROGRAMMES

- PRESENT NATIONAL SOCIETY PROGRAMMES IN LOG FRAME
- OUTLINE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
- OUTLINE IMPACT INDICATORS
- OUTLINE ACTIVITY INDICATORS
- DETAIL ASSUMPTIONS

4. Monitoring and Reporting

General guidance on the design of a monitoring and evaluation system for all types of operation is provided in Module 2: Monitoring and Evaluation.

4.1 What is Particular about Monitoring and Evaluating?

In emergency operations and development operations, the external environment (context) is often unstable and can change rapidly.

Sudden-onset crises:

- have to be planned and initiated quickly on the basis of an incomplete understanding of the situation
- a minimum set of monitoring activities must be initiated rapidly and then be extended progressively as circumstances and resources allow
- a system for food distribution monitoring is essential, in order that reliable information is available as soon as possible on who is being fed, and how much they are receiving
- especially in conflict zones International Federation and National Societies relies heavily on local partners due to insufficient or absent governmental capacity.

In most slow-onset emergencies (e.g. drought) appropriate monitoring activities can be planned ahead.

In most development operations, monitoring activities build on activities during the emergency operation phase.

4.2 How to Design a Monitoring and Evaluation System (reminder)

The steps in designing a monitoring and evaluation system are summarised in Table 4.1. (See also 2.1). These steps and the accompanying checklist are developed in more detail in the subsequent sections.

Table 4.1: Steps in the Design of a Monitoring and Evaluation System

Step	To-do-list
Check the operation's design	Review and revise (and if necessary prepare) a logical framework Ensure that objectives for Goal (impact), Purpose (outcome), Outputs and Assumptions are clearly stated and measurable. Ensure that indicators are adequately specified with quantity, quality and time.
Assess capacity for monitoring and evaluation	Identify what human and financial resources are available Assess training requirements for all monitoring staff, both from International Federation and National Societies and counterpart bodies. Specify training requirements
Plan for data collection and analysis	Check existing information sources for reliability and accuracy, to determine what data is already available. Decide what additional information should be collected, for baseline purposes, for monitoring and for evaluation Set a timeframe and schedule for data collection and processing, and agree on responsibilities.
Prepare the monitoring and evaluation plan and budget	Summarise agreed information needs, data collection, information use, reporting and presentation in a monitoring and evaluation plan. Summarise capacity building and support requirements. Cost all monitoring and evaluation activities, and identify funding sources.
Plan for reporting and feedback	Design the reporting system, specifying formats for reports. Agree arrangements for Country Delegation supervision and oversight of the partner's reporting system Devise a system of feedback and decision-taking for management.

4.3 Checking Operation Design

For instructions on how monitoring and evaluation should be covered in design documents go to:

4.3.1 M&E considerations in project cycle stages

Table 4.2: M&E Considerations for the emergency operation and development operation project cycles

Project Cycle Stage	*M&E Considerations*
Initial assessment (Sudden-onset emergency) (emergency operations only)	What systems and capacity are available to maintain basic records? What resources (International Federation and National Societies and partners) are needed to assure minimum standards of record-keeping, reporting and monitoring from the outset?
Detailed assessment (Sudden- and slow-onset emergencies)•	What systems and capacity are available to: gather information on the overall situation (context) on an ongoing basis; monitor end-use (household level); analyse and decide on action? What is the intensity of monitoring required in relation to the expected duration and complexity of the operation? What resources (International Federation and National Societies and partners) are needed to assure monitoring and subsequent analysis and reporting take place?
Preparation of an Operational Plan (emergency operations only)	Defining an initial M&E plan: provisional indicators; responsibilities; procedures; schedule for progressive implementation of the plan; resource requirements and budget for M&E. Including M&E considerations in contingency plans to deal with potential changes in the situation.
Preparation of the operation document	Specifying M&E plan and the budget required from International Federation and National Societies
Implementation•	Scaling up of the monitoring and evaluation system: Compiling baseline data Designing data collection tools Training operational staff in reporting and use of monitoring information for decision-making Selecting and training project managers (recruited by International Federation and National Societies) Compiling, analysing and responding to reports on a continuous basis for inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes Planning and undertaking field visits; managing project mangers; enhancing teamwork Monitoring the performance of partners Organising periodic review meetings Feeding the findings of monitoring and ongoing self-evaluation into operations management decision-making
Review/re-assessment•	Assessing performance of the operation to date Assessing performance and adequacy of monitoring system to date Reviewing current situation and trends; requirements for ongoing assistance; exit strategy
Periodic evaluation•	Determining effectiveness and impact of the operation.

4.3.2 Reviewing or preparing a logframe

Guidance on developing a logframe is provided in the International Federation PPP manual. For how to verify the logframe see Module 2.2: Checking operation design.

For all development operations and for *slow-onset* emergencies:

- involve stakeholders in the development of a logframe following the guidance provided in the International Federation PPP manual or
- if a logframe has been prepared, check that the objectives and assumptions have been clearly and appropriately specified, and that a small number of relevant, feasible indicators have also been identified.

For a *sudden-onset* emergency:

- assistance to the population in need is likely to commence while assessment is ongoing
- operational objectives, implementation plans -- including for targeting and distribution – are set on a day-to-day basis
- at the earliest opportunity, the objectives and assumptions should be mapped into the format of a logframe, even if gaps remain and objectives and indicators are not stated precisely
- a group of 5-10 national society can construct a rough and ready logframe in half a day
- the logframe provides an agreed framework for going forward although it will require regular updating
- information about the assumptions, gathered as part of the initial assessment, will build a more detailed picture of the situation, and permit managers to revise and update their plans accordingly
- once a detailed assessment has been conducted, a more in-depth logframe analysis can be prepared and the monitoring and evaluation system designed accordingly.

4.4 Assessing Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to assess capacity see Module 2.3: Assessing capacity for monitoring and evaluation. It gives guidance on Module 2.3.1: How to determine M&E capacity and on Module 2.3.2: Assessing training needs.•

4.4.1 Defining roles and responsibilities for monitoring

Before you assess M&E capacity for an operation, it is important to first review the roles and responsibilities of International Federation and National Societies and implementing partners. Roles will vary depending on the context and the availability of partners.

Table 4.3: Monitoring Roles in Operations

Situation	Role of International Federation and National Societies	Roles of Government or NGO Partners	Roles of Main UN Partners
Slow and quick onset emergencies and development operations	Receives and analyses reports from partners and undertakes field visits on a regular and/or spot-check basis Helps identify and, where possible, resolves any problems.	Organise and report on distributions and other activities. Set up information systems to provide socio-economic and nutritional data.	UNICEF and International Federation and National Societies will collaborate in establishing routine monitoring mechanisms and in making periodic re-assessments.
In some conflict situations – complex emergencies•	Organises distributions, usually with and through local committees or community-based organisations. Field staff prepare distribution reports and 'monitoring team leaders' scrutinise reports and undertake supervisory field visits.	In some extreme cases government and NGO partners' roles are very minor.	Humanitarian coordination is usually undertaken by either UNDP or OCHA.
In refugee operations	Monitoring is planned and undertaken jointly by International Federation and National Societies and UNHCR.•	Organise and report on distributions and other activities.	UNHCR manages entire refugee operation and monitors a wide range of services from protection to health, education and sanitation.

International Federation and National Societies has concluded Global Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with major UN partners for emergency and development operations that provide guidance on monitoring and evaluation responsibilities for each party.

4.4.2 Assessing capacity for monitoring

For general guidance on assessing capacity, go to Module 2.3.1: How to determine M&E capacity.

In an emergency situation the following additional questions need to be addressed:

- How has previous M&E capacity been affected by the crisis itself?

- How might capacity and performance be impacted indirectly by the additional demands now placed on the organisation as a whole?
- What possibilities are there for certain M&E functions to be undertaken by locally-established NGOs, and what are the capacities of those available?
- What factors in the environment will make the collection and regular reporting of information difficult? What can be done (and by whom) to overcome those difficulties?
- What support would be needed to enable M&E activities to be undertaken? – What transport is available? What more will be needed? What training must be organised? What office supplies must be provided?

4.5 Planning for Data Collection and Analysis

In order to proceed to plan and develop data collection and analysis systems refer to Module 2.4: Planning for data collection and analysis that gives advice on:

- Module 2.4.1: Why do you need baseline data?
- Module 2.4.2: What monitoring data is required, and where will it come from?
- Module 2.4.2.3: Field visits – a valuable source of information
- Module 2.4.2.4: Monitoring participation

This Module provides additional guidance on these topics in relation to emergency operations and development operations.

4.5.1 Baseline data

For detailed guidance on planning and undertaking a baseline study, see Module 7: Baseline Studies.•
Baseline indicators that are often considered critical for measuring progress in multi-agency supported relief operations are:

- Rates of moderate and severe malnutrition (among children 6-59 months old)
- Mortality rates (for all age groups and particularly for children)

4.5.2 What monitoring data is required, and where will it come from?

General guidance for the collection of monitoring data is provided in Module 2.4.2: What monitoring data is required, and where will it come from?•

4.5.2.1 What is the minimum set of monitoring information that we must collect in a quick-onset emergency?

In an emergency situation decisions are made when information is unclear, contradictory or just absent. Prioritising the importance of key decisions can provide a rough basis for prioritising information needs.

Minimum monitoring information needs in a quick-onset emergency include:

- receipt and delivery of International Federation and National Societies-supplied commodities and non-food items
- number (gender and age disaggregated) of people receiving International Federation and National Societies assistance
- handling and distribution of International Federation and National Societies-supplied commodities
- food aid availability and unmet needs.

Post distribution monitoring will begin some days after the start-up of the operation.

4.5.2.2 Field visits – a valuable source of complementary information

For general guidance refer to Module 2.4.2.3: Field visits.

In conflict-affected areas assessment and monitoring are sometimes done simultaneously.

In acute crisis situations caused by armed conflict, it is sometimes necessary to plan food aid operations without a thorough understanding of the food deficits of particular groups in the society. The emergency response then targets a geographical area in which it is believed that a large number of people are at risk. Whenever staff from International Federation and National Societies or other agencies manage to make short visits to the area, they must seek to determine:

- how the food provided is being used (monitoring)
- the household food security situation and how it might be changing (assessment).

How is monitoring and assessment done simultaneously?

Two weeks after a food distribution or after a series of food distributions in a particular area gather information on:

- Food access and control at household level
- Changes in food intake and its consequences
- The specific effects of insecurity on people's food security.

4.5.2.3 Beneficiary Contact Monitoring – determining beneficiary access to, use of, and satisfaction with the outputs of the activities

For an introduction to Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM), see Module 2.2.3.1: Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) Indicators.•
Use rapid appraisal techniques, particularly focus group discussions with separate groups of men and women, and interviews with individual key informants to cross-check the plausibility of findings.

Field visits for the collection of BCM information also provide a useful opportunity to update assessment data. Table 4.4 provides a suggested checklist for such rapid monitoring of food needs, which should ideally be conducted two weeks after a food distribution (or after a series of food distributions in a particular area which targeted the same recipients).

Table 4.4: Suggested checklist for rapid appraisal (monitoring and assessment)

Food accessibility by men and women	What access do people have to their own gardens and to markets? Have crops and food stocks been destroyed, or looted? Who in the household is not receiving sufficient food? Are there opportunities for causal labour? What wages are paid?
Food control and surplus in the household	Has there been an increase of domestic violence due to food shortage and the coping strategies adopted? Who decides how much food/livestock will be sold and how much will be kept for household consumption? What are the constraints for women to decide on household food use?
Changes in food intake for household members	To what extent has access to safe drinking water and fuel wood changed? Which households face the greatest difficulty in accessing food? (Are female-headed households particularly vulnerable?) In which households are adults suffering from malnutrition? Has there been a change in the weight of newborn babies? Which households have the lowest weight babies?
Security situation	How has geographical mobility changed? What has been the effect on women in particular? How are people accessing basic food and non-food items, water and fuel wood? What type of activities cannot be carried out because of insecurity? What can the community do to increase the feeling of security?

4.5.3 Who undertakes data collection and analysis at the field level?

See Module 2.4: Planning for data collection and analysis

4.6 Preparing the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget

See Module 2.5: Preparing the monitoring and evaluation budget

4.6.1 The M&E plan

For the overall format and descriptions of what should be entered into the matrix refer to Module 2.5.1: The monitoring and evaluation plan. •

4.7 Planning for Reporting and Feedback

See Module 2.6: Planning for Reporting and feedback

4.7.1 Written reports

National offices are required to prepare four types of reports on operations:

1. Situation Reports (SITreps)
2. Pipeline Status Reports.
3. Project Reports.
4. Annual Reports.

4.7.1.1 SITreps and Pipeline status reports

SITreps are the principal means of sending information to Headquarters about the progress of field operations, describing any problems, constraints or unmet needs. They are numbered by year and sequence order (e.g. 2002/001, 2002/002, 2002/003). The frequency of SITreps depends on the size and gravity of the emergency. They should be sent every few days in an emergency's early stages, but are usually prepared monthly thereafter.

SITreps provide International Federation and the national society with up-to-date summarised information concerning:

- the progress of the operation;
- any changes in the situation during the reporting period;
- any particular problems, constraints or unmet needs.

Pipeline status reports are usually provided on a monthly basis.

4.7.2 How would operation managers use reports?

General guidance on linking reports to management decision-making is provided in Module 2.6.2: How would project/programme managers use reports?•
Frequent systematic reviews by all stakeholders are essential in fast-moving emergency (and some development operation situations. They should normally be at least every 3 months – perhaps every 6 months – depending on the rate and extent of changes occurring. Such reviews should be organised within each distinct operational area as well as at national level (following shortly after the decentralised meetings).

These reviews should focus on:

- what an operation is achieving
- the underlying reasons for any problems or under-performance
- how the overall situation is evolving.

4.7.3 Feed-back for operations

See Module 2.6.4: Feedback

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 4

PROJECT CYCLE

- LINK MONITORING AND EVALUATION TO PROJECT CYCLE
- REVISIT INITIAL ASSESSMENT
- REVIEW DETAILED ASSESSMENT
- EXAMINE OPERATIONAL PLAN
- DOCUMENT IMPLEMENTATION AGAINST
- ASSESSMENTS AND PLAN•

5. Evaluation

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 For what?

This module provides guidance on how to plan, organise, manage and use evaluations of International Federation and national society's emergency and development portfolio.

5.1.2 For whom?

Guidance is provided to evaluation managers in the national society and regional offices or in headquarters.

5.1.3 What is an evaluation manager?

Evaluation exercises are normally managed by the Evaluation Department of the International Federation Secretariat in Geneva. However, evaluations and other analytical functions may be implemented at Country Delegation and National Society level. Staff from the M&E Division in headquarters may integrate themselves into the evaluation team as a regular team member or the team leader or may provide advice and input into the design and implementation of the evaluation. The guidelines also provide more specific guidance on the role of the evaluation manager.

5.1.4 Why evaluate?

Evaluation is first and foremost an important management tool, enabling International Federation and National Societies to review its performance, take decisions, learn from experience and account for its actions, thereby improving International Federation and national society's ability to deliver results. Evaluation is also an accountability tool for providing management, the Governing Board and donors with the basis for reviewing performance and for making the necessary decisions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policies and operations. Evaluations also support accountability and learning at country level, by providing stakeholders with the information necessary to assess the performance of National Societies and to learn and agree on ways of improving the performance of International Federation and national society's programmes and operations.

For an introduction to evaluation including definitions and functions see Module 1.3.4: What is evaluation? and Module 1.4: What is International Federation and national society's policy for monitoring and evaluation?

5.2 A Framework for Evaluation

Evaluation for accountability purposes looks back at past performance to determine the *degree* of success or failure, while evaluation for learning seeks to improve future performance by determining the *reasons* for success or failure. International Federation and National Societies evaluations generally contain both elements, with more weight given to one or the other depending on the key purpose and timing of the evaluation. In both cases evaluation is concerned with comparing what has been achieved with what was planned, and therefore with measuring the extent to which the objectives or intended results of an operation have been achieved. The logical framework, together with a timeline, provide structures for evaluation reporting.

The logical framework has an important role in operation design, implementation and subsequently in evaluation. It provides an important framework for thinking through evaluation questions – so much so that if no logical framework exists, it is recommended that the evaluation team should retrospectively construct a logical framework as a means of analysing the logic and completeness of the operation design document. See Figure 1.6.

5.3 Types of Evaluation

Evaluations within International Federation and National Societies can be differentiated by the following terms:

- A **self-evaluation** (sometimes called a mid-term management review) is conducted entirely by staff involved in an operation (typically including national society staff), and normally without the assistance of external consultants.
- A **non-mandatory evaluation** uses independent external consultants and may be managed by the M&E Division or the national society/regional office.
- A **mandatory evaluation** is one required as outlined in the International Federation monitoring and evaluation policy. These are usually managed by the M&E Division.

The reports for all mandatory evaluations are presented to the Secretary General and Governing Board.

Non-mandatory and mandatory evaluations may take place at mid-point (also called **mid-term**), at the end (also referred to as final or **terminal**) or several years after the operation has been closed (**ex-post**) A term that is increasingly coming into usage instead of is '**real time** evaluation' used for developmental purposes. This refers to the fact that the policy, programme or operation are evaluated as the programme starts and therefore the results of the evaluation will be fed back into the remaining period of implementation.

5.4 Evaluation Standards and Principles

5.4.1 General standards

Evaluations must meet the following standards:

- **Evaluations must be useful and used** – the evaluation must serve the information needs of intended users, requiring that the needs of all stakeholders must be identified and addressed. Reports should clearly describe the operation being evaluated, including its context, and the purposes, procedures and findings of the evaluation. Findings and reports must be disseminated in a timely manner, and implementation of evaluation recommendations must be ensured by the national society, or the M&E Division in the case of thematic evaluations, through an evaluation recommendation-tracking plan.
- **Evaluations must be accurate** – The evaluation must reveal and convey technically adequate information about the operation, in order that its worth or merit can be determined. The evaluation report must be evidence-based, showing clearly how the methods were applied by the evaluation team and how the findings were arrived at.
- **Evaluations must seek to reflect the reaction of beneficiaries** – evaluation planning must provide for adequate consultations with representative beneficiary groups with attention given to including the perspectives of males, females, children, and other vulnerable groups as relevant for the operation. Evaluation teams must make use of rapid rural appraisal methods whenever possible.
- **Evaluations,** unless undertaken as a self-evaluation**, must be independent and impartial** – Evaluators should not have been involved at any prior stage in the operation being evaluated. The evaluation should be complete and fair in its examination and recording of the strengths and weaknesses of the operation. Different viewpoints, if they exist, should be presented in the report.

5.4.2 Key principles for evaluating operations

Evaluations of emergency operations and development operations in many respects follow the process of more conventional evaluations: preparing the terms of reference, selecting the evaluation team, selecting the methods, conducting the field study, developing conclusions and recommendations, and disseminating the evaluation findings. However, due to the characteristics of emergencies (multiplicity of actors, fluidity of the situation on the ground, problems of access, etc.), evaluation often has to be approached in a very different way.

Based on the OECD/DAC guidelines, the following key principles for emergency operations and development operations should be added to the ones listed in 4.1:

1. **Evaluations and their planning must take into account the special socio-cultural and environmental conditions created in emergency and post-emergency settings, e.g.**
    - Restricted access – evaluators may find their access to people and places severely constrained (by roadblocks, attacks on aid convoys, damaged infrastructure, etc.). The evaluation should take account of these constraints in their assessment.

- Human rights abuses – the population being assisted (particularly the women and children) may be subject to a range of abuses. The evaluation should take account of the security situation and the protection needs of the affected population – i.e. whether the operation has taken such issues sufficiently into account.
- Psycho-social trauma – the affected populations may have experienced severe trauma, much more than might be apparent to the outsider. Care must be taken to empathise with their experiences, whatever group (government; rebel; civilian; men, women etc.) they belong to, and the subject matter must be dealt with in a sensitive manner. In such cases the evaluation team must contain evaluators experienced with talking to such affected populations.
- Objectivity – conflict and tension may lead to such intensity of feeling and polarisation of views among different affected groups, that the search for 'truth' may never be successful. The veracity of information can never be taken for granted, and triangulation is a vital principle in data collection and analysis.

2. Evaluations must pay particular attention to reconstructing the sequence of events and processes

- Information on process – key information on a range of matters of vital significance to evaluators is often missing. Although this is a problem for all evaluations, it can be particularly acute for complex emergencies – monitoring and baseline data is often absent or patchy, either because of collection problems or difficulties in recording decisions and maintaining filing systems; and where data does exist, it may suffer from a lack of consistency or complementarity between the systems of different agencies.
- Information on context – lack of information on the sequence of events and the changing objectives of humanitarian assistance often requires evaluators to reconstruct 'histories' or 'pictures' of context and events from which to judge the appropriateness and effectiveness of aid.

3. Evaluations must place greater focus on policy evaluation techniques

- Cause and effect – the conventional evaluation approach of separating out cause and effect is often not possible in complex systems composed of numerous inter-dependent relationships. The focus is more on the use of qualitative and deductive methods to build narratives about specific events and processes, to understand what happened and why.
- The policy imperative – because the humanitarian response to emergencies often involves a multiplicity of actors and a high degree of interdependence, evaluating individual agency responses is often not appropriate – in logframe terms, too many factors and accompanying actions fall into the assumptions column. Experience shows therefore the need for a greater focus on collaborative and system-wide evaluations, enabling related operations to be evaluated together.

5.4.3 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria generally applied by International Federation and National Societies are:

- **Relevance** – The extent to which the objectives of an operation are consistent with beneficiaries' needs, country needs, organisational priorities, and partners' and donors' policies.
- **Preparation and design** – An assessment of the process by which the operation was identified and formulated, and the logic and completeness of the resultant operation design.
- **Adequacy** – an assessment of the adequacy and timeliness of inputs in relation to carrying out the activities.
- **Efficiency** – A measure of how economically inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to outputs.
- **Effectiveness** – The extent to which the operation's objectives were achieved, or expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
- **Outcome** – The medium-term results of an operation's outputs. Also interpreted as the purpose level effects attributable to an operation.
- **Impact** – Positive and negative, intended or unintended long-term results produced by an International Federation and National Societies operation, either directly or indirectly. Also interpreted as the goal level effects attributable to an operation.
- **Sustainability** – The continuation of benefits from an International Federation and National Societies operation after major assistance has been completed.
- **Connectedness** – in the case of emergency operations and development operations only – ensuring that activities of a short-term emergency nature have been carried out in a context which takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account.
- **Coverage and targeting –** Concerns the appropriateness of operation-level targeting objectives to the local situation, their compliance with International Federation and national society's targeting objectives at policy level, and the extent to which the planned coverage has been achieved.
- **Partnerships and coordination** – The appropriateness of the partnerships which have been established with governments, NGOs and agencies, the effectiveness with which these partnerships have been managed to support achievement of objectives.

For clarification on how these criteria are linked to the logframe, see Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: The logical framework and evaluation criteria

Logframe level	Information Required	Evaluation Criteria
GOAL	**Contribution of the operation to wider and long-term objectives.** What have been the long-term changes to the lives of the beneficiaries; can these changes be attributed to the operation or programme? **Have impact indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?**	**IMPACT** – progress towards achievement of Goal *'Making a difference in the long-run.'*
PURPOSE	**Actual achievement of Purpose/outcome targets compared to the plan.** Were targets achieved – who benefited and how? If targets were not achieved, was this due to poor performance, poorly specified indicators, or problems with operation design; what are beneficiary perceptions of the operation – how do they perceive their lives to have changed? **Have outcome indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?** **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect achievement of the purpose; did operation design adequately take these into account? Have assumptions been monitored and if so, has this resulted in a change of strategy when indicated?	**RELEVANCE** – addressing the right problems with the right approach as well as International Federation and national society's core mandate responsibilities and national policies. *'Meeting the real needs of beneficiaries.'* **OUTCOMES** – Extent to which outputs have resulted in the achievement of the purpose or component purposes **EFFECTIVENESS** - extent to which an operation has attained its purpose **COVERAGE & TARGETING** - have targets been met, the right people benefited at the right time? *'Meeting the right needs.'* **SUSTAINABILITY** - prospects for self-reliance and continued utilisation of services after completion. *'Continuation without outside help.'* **CONNECTEDNESS** – whether the operation in responding to acute and immediate needs, is taking longer-term needs and problems into account.
OUTPUTS	**Actual achievement of output targets compared to the plan.** Who received food aid and other services; were targets met; could performance have been better achieved through a different approach? **Have output indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?** **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect achievement of outputs; did operation design adequately take these into account?	**EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY** -. Testing the quality, quantity and timeliness of outputs and the cost-efficiency with which they were delivered. *'Doing the right things and doing them well'* **SUSTAINABILITY** - prospects for continued delivery of services after completion. *'Continuation without outside help.'*
ACTIVITIES	**Actual start-up & completion dates compared with plan.** Beneficiary selection criteria and processes. Was food aid delivered effectively by International Federation and National Societies and its partners; did the organisational arrangements work; were there any delays or time-savings; what effect did any deviations have on the operation? **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect completion of activities; did operation design adequately take these into account?	**EFFICIENCY** – achievement of an optimum relationship between cost, quality & time. *'Doing things right and spending less.'* **COORDINATION & PARTNERSHIP** - taking a joint approach to problem solving and delivery. *'Working well together.* **SUSTAINABILITY** - prospects for continuation of activities after completion. *'Continuation without outside help.'*
INPUTS	**Actual input quantities and costs compared to budget.** Were resources provided and utilised according to plan; were inputs provided at least cost and to the desired standards of quality and quantity; if not, how did this affect the operation?	**ADEQUACY** – Having adequate and timely inputs to carry out activities *'Securing support and being prepared'*

5.5 Is there a Framework to Capture Criteria?

Accountability evaluation criteria of relevance, impact, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability all require measurement of different things. What is measured under relevance is the appropriateness of action in relation to policies, needs and priorities. By implication these questions are asked from society's perspective - not that of the implementation or target group. The major methodological challenge is how to address the lack of social consensus that exists about humanitarian crises. And the reference point is the mission of donor and implementing partner.

Table 5.2 outlines what to measure from which perspective, the methodological challenges and the points of reference as well as laying out key questions. It provides a map for addressing the evaluation criteria. Note, in particular, that the Key Questions required judgements and that judgements require data. Data requires measurement and measurement needs perspective. Measurement also raises methodological challenges. Most importantly, judgement requires a reference point shared by all parties.

Table 5.2: Evaluation Criteria

	What to Measure	Whose Perspective	Point of Reference	Methodological Challenge	Key Questions
Measuring Relevance (Coverage)	Appropriateness in relation to policies, needs and priorities	The society	Mission of donor and implementing partner	Lack of consensus regarding needs and priorities	Are objectives in keeping with needs and priorities? Should activities be continued or terminated?
Measuring Impact	Intended and unintended positive and negative effects	The society	Status of effected parties prior to intervention	Lack of information about effected parties Cause and effect linkages	What are the positive and negative effects? Do positive effects outweigh negative effects?
Measuring Efficiency (Timeliness)	The delivery of aid	The implementors	Similar interventions Best practice standards	What standards to use as reference	To what degree have aid components been delivered as agreed? Could it have been done cheaper, more quickly, and with better quality?
Measuring Effectiveness (Coherence) (Coordination)	Achievement of objectives	The target group	Agreed objectives	Unclear, multiple, confounding, or changing objectives	To what extent have agreed objectives been reached? Are activities sufficient to realise agreed objectives?
Measuring Sustainability (Connectedness)	Likelihood of benefits to continue	The society	Projected, future situation	Hypothetical answers	To which extent does the positive impact justify investments? Are the involved parties willing and able to keep design and exit strategy?

5.6 Asking Questions about the Context of the Evaluation

It is important to understand the situational context in which aid is delivered. This best done by asking a series of questions:

1. Are lives or livelihoods in danger?
2. How rapidly are circumstances changing?
3. Are governance structures in place?
4. What is the demographic make-up of the beneficiary population, including data on age, gender and ethnicity?
5. Are there significant gaps in statistical knowledge about the beneficiary population?
6. Have any efforts been made to identify and seek local solutions?
7. What is the security situation in the area?
8. How likely are people to be able to return to their traditional livelihood systems?
9. Which other agencies are operating in the area?
10. What are the beneficiaries' attitudes towards external assistance?
11. What standards will govern the delivery of assistance?
12. What would happen if aid were not provided?

5.7 Asking Questions about the Planning of Humanitarian Assistance

In reviewing the situational context, it is usually possible to provide an initial assessment. In humanitarian assistance however there is frequently a missing middle were the assessment is not turned into a planing framework. While there is a defence that immediate action can take place after the assessment without a planning framework, it is difficult to monitor and therefore difficult to evaluate humanitarian assistance without a planning framework. To this end it is useful to ask a series of questions that inform a planning approach to humanitarian assistance:

1. Is there an adequate analysis of the crisis situation and a clear identification of the beneficiary population?
2. Has data been systematically collected and analysed and, if not, how are data requirements to be tackled?
3. Has parallel experience from other humanitarian assistance interventions been taken into account?
4. Have roles been clearly defined including that of coordination?
5. What are the reasons for involvement of individual agencies and how will they be phased out?
6. How is the situation likely to change because of the intervention?
7. How has the prioritisation of need been determined?
8. Are assumptions realistic?
9. Are the objectives sufficiently explicit so that they can be monitored, against standards, for achievement?
10. What are the main inputs and activities to generate that achievement?
11. Does the humanitarian assistance discourage local initiative and increase dependence?
12. Is the planning comprehensive and coherent?
13. Is a timeframe provided with the plan?
14. Do agency staff have experience to implement and monitor activities?

Asking questions using the evaluation criteria in evaluating humanitarian programmes and projects a starting point is provided by the OECD/DAC Guidelines for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies, which provide questions around the key criteria of evaluation. These are: -

Relevance

Relevance is the extent to which the aid activity is consistent with the priorities and policies of the target group, implementing agency and donor.

In evaluating relevance of programme or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

1. To why extent are the objectives of the programme relevant?
2. Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of the objectives?
3. Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impact and effects?
4. Are the activities appropriate interventions?
5. Is there adequate coverage, by activity, of the affected population?

6. Should the programme have been discontinued earlier or should it have been extended?

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which an aid programme attains its objectives. Effectiveness measures the extent to which the activities achieves its purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of the outputs.

In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

1. To what extent were the objectives achieved?
2. What were the major issues influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
3. Was there shared goals between different implementing agencies (coherence?)
4. Was there evidence of coordination issues influencing achievement of objectives.

Efficiency

Efficiency is an economic term, capturing the costs (physical and human resources) to achieve the desired results. In other words, what was best value for money?. Efficiency measures the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been used.

In evaluating the efficiency of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

1. Were activities achieved at least cost?
2. Were objectives achieved in a timely manner?
3. Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative ways?
4. Did responding in an emergency situation raise unit costs?
5. Was input material purchased locally?
6. Where local tenders sought?
7. What was the cost split between expatriate and local salary costs?

Impact

Impact is a term indicating whether the project has had a positive or negative effect on its surroundings in terms of technical, economic and socio-cultural, institutional and environmental factors. Evaluation should consider:

1. Direct effects - the immediate costs and benefit of both the contribution to and the results of a project without taking into consideration their effect on the economic;

2. Indirect effects - the cost and benefit which are unleashed by the contributions to a project and its results;
3. Multiplier effects - a special indirect effect that deals with the increase in the use of the economy's capacity, by the aid programmes generating a rise in demand.

In evaluating the impact of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

1. What has happened as a result of the programme or project?
2. What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
3. How may have been affected?
4. What would have happened if the programme or project did not exist?

Sustainability

The extent to which the objectives of an aid activity will continue after the project assistance is over; the extent to which the groups affected by the aid want to an can take charge themselves to continue accomplishing its objectives. Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether an activity or an impact is likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. A programme/project needs to be environmentally as well as socially and financially sustainable. As half of humanitarian aid is judged to be rehabilitation activities, it is important to address sustainability.

In evaluating the sustainability of a programme or project, it is useful to consider the following questions:

1. To what extent did the programme or project continue after donor funding reached an end?
2. What were the major factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?
3. Was the sustainability issue broadly addressing issues of environmental, economic or social sustainability?

Where the humanitarian aid programme is focused on emergency relief the questions address connectedness. Here the questions are:

1. How did relief activities relate to rehabilitation and development activities?
2. How was the exit strategy planned?
3. If there was no exit strategy, how did termination occur?
4. Were there significant changes in activities as the level of disaster reduced?

Some questions that are difficult to answer. (Source: OECD, 1991 and OECD, 1986).

Measuring impact is very difficult to do particularly in humanitarian assistance where evaluations frequently take place after intervention has finished. As such it is difficult to judge whether overall objectives have been achieved especially in the absence of plans, monitoring result and specified standards. More specifically it is difficult frequently to attribute the contribution of specific activities to changes in the livelihood status of the target population.

It is also important to ask, especially in complex emergencies, if project activities helped stabilise the conflict or helped generate additional levels of conflict. For humanitarian aid agencies, operating in a human rights tradition, the impact of their advocacy strategy should also be evaluated.

Efficiency questions focus on the deployment of financial and human resources in relation to output. The questions must start with cost data and, if possible, a comparative cost data between different agencies in the same intervention or similar interventions in different contexts. Did management guidelines exist for implementing activities and how far did these guidelines facilitate objectives. Could the same results have been achieved at lower cost or accommodated more beneficiaries? How did logistics work, particularly in terms of timeliness? And, because it relates to efficiency as well as effectiveness, it is essential to ask if creating and monitoring space for humanitarian activity was an issue.

In dealing with relevance questions of coverage arise. What was the target population? How did project activities reach that population? Was anybody excluded from the services? With issues of effectiveness the major question is was the project purpose achieved and were the activities carried out as originally planned? Arising under effectiveness issues are the issues of coherence between funders and among agencies in the field - did they share frameworks of intervention or were interventions on a stand-alone basis.

In relief evaluations the sustainability issues focus more on connectedness. How was the relief strategy designed to phase out? Did the phase out seek to hand over resources to local capacity? How were local coping mechanisms strengthened as a consequence of the relief intervention? It is worth noting, however, that a large proportion of humanitarian assistance are actually rehabilitation rather than relief and as such the OECD sustainability evaluation criteria should be used. It is however very difficult to evaluate exit strategies if there is no plan and monitoring system which identifies the end of programme intervention. This stresses again the importance of building an adequate planning and monitoring framework for humanitarian assistance.

Addressing evaluation criteria will generate a series of questions about the design of the humanitarian intervention. Were the objectives clearly stated? Were external factors taken into account including a specification of risk and assumptions? Were indicators identified to measure progress, particularly indicators that were SMART (Specific, Measurable, Accurate and Timely)?

5.8 Planning a Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation is an evaluation undertaken by the project implementers themselves with or without external facilitation. Self-evaluation should become an integral part of the national society operations and be required **before the preparation** of a new phase or as a **close-out self-assessment** at the end of an operation.

5.9 Part of the Monitoring Process is National Society Self-Assessment

The following framework for the administration and follow-up of the National Society self-assessment is based on feedback received and lessons learnt from the Self-Assessment process in 2000 and 2001.

5.9.1 Objectives of Self-Assessment and Operational Framework

Context

Strategy 2010 called for mechanisms to be established to enable International Federation Governance to actively review the state of its members, while providing timely support to National Societies towards achieving the *Characteristics of a Well-functioning National Society*. To support this priority, in November 2000 the Governing Board adopted National Society Self-Assessment as an institutional tool and process for monitoring National Society performance and integrity. The Secretariat was directed to refine and administer the tool to all Federation members in a phased manner over a period of 3 years. In their meeting of November 2001, the Board further called upon National Societies to follow up their completed Self-Assessment with a plan of action, and directed the Secretary General of the Federation to provide consistent support to help National Societies implement these plans. It further directed the Secretary General to report back to the Governing Board on each National Society's progress in this area.

Objectives

The objectives of the Self-Assessment Programme are:

- To assist individual Societies in identifying their strengths/weaknesses, demonstrating their commitment for change and prioritising actions in line with Strategy 2010 in order to better fulfil their mission to improve the lives of the vulnerable people.
- To support the Federation Governing Board in policy and strategy making by providing the means to annually review the members performance against the Characteristics of a Well Functioning National Society.
- To contribute to organizational shared learning by sharing baseline data on National Societies and samples of good practices.
- To enable the member Societies to compare the status of their Society towards the Movements global trends, thematical or geographical.
- To mobilise Federation and external support to National Societies through sharing the Self-Assessment findings.

Instrument

The core instrument for National Society Self-Assessment is a questionnaire designed, and updated when needed,[1] by the Evaluation Department in consultation with Secretariat Departments and Regional Delegations. This core questionnaire ('Well-functioning National Society Self-Assessment') contains the key indicators to measure progress towards achieving the characteristics of a well-functioning National Society within the framework of *Strategy*

[1] The questionnaire was last revised in April 2002 based on lessons and feedback from the 2001 phase of self-assessments.

2010. It has undergone an extensive consultation process to ensure its relevance and utility across the spectrum of National Societies Federation-wide.

In addition to the above-mentioned core questionnaire, further questionnaire modules containing region/sector specific indicators may be proposed, developed and administered by a Regional Delegation or Secretariat department, in consultation with the Evaluation Department.

Operational Framework

The following operational framework for the administration and follow-up of the National Society Self-Assessment builds on experience and feedback from the Pilot and ongoing phase of Self-Assessments.[2] It incorporates operational changes to implement the Governing Board decisions.

I. Questionnaire Administration

A. Administration of the core questionnaire to the 178 National Societies is phased out over a period of three years (2001-2003). In addition to the 15 National Societies which volunteered for the Pilot Self-Assessment phase, 40 Societies (8 from each world region) were selected for the first phase of the Self-Assessment programme in 2001; a further 60 Societies were included in the process in 2002; and all remaining Societies will be invited to participate in the 2003 phase.

B. Upon completion of the three-year process, the Self-Assessment exercise will be repeated at appropriate intervals in order to capture time trends.

C. The list of National Societies to which the core questionnaire is to be administered each year is determined by the Regional Departments based on recommendations from the field. Comparisons with samples for 'new generation CAS' will be an important consideration in the selection process.

D. The core questionnaire is sent to each selected National Society in the first quarter of the year under a cover letter from the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, and is copied to the corresponding Regional Department, Regional Delegation, as well as Country Delegation/Office where applicable.

E. Consultations within the Society between the leadership and staff/volunteers on the various areas addressed in the questionnaire should take place to ensure the accuracy and relevance of responses, please see National Society Self-Asessment Operational Framework - Recap, National Society Activities.

F. The Regional Delegation (with the assistance of the Country Delegation/Office where applicable) is responsible for adequate follow-up with the National Society for completion and return of the questionnaire (along with any additional material submitted) to the Evaluation Department. The Regional

[2] An earlier draft of this framework was shared with all Secretariat Departments and Heads of Regional/Country Delegations for comments in September 2001. Comments have been reviewed and suggestions incorporated as far as possible in this revised version. The framework will be continually updated to reflect lessons/experience in the field, and further comments/suggestions are welcome.

Delegation should retain a copy of the completed questionnaire and additional material for reference and follow-up to each Self-Assessment undertaken in its region.

II. Data Analysis and Reporting of Trends

A. The Evaluation Department analyses the overall responses received within the given time frame and prepares a trend analysis on the National Societies for inclusion in its annual report to the Federation Board and biennial report to the General Assembly.[3] This report constructs a profile of National Societies in key areas including governance, legal and resource base, programming and mechanisms for self-monitoring.

B. Where sections of the questionnaire responses are incomplete/unclear, the Regional/Country Delegation will be requested to co-operate with the Evaluation Department to clarify these sections in a timely manner to enable the trend analysis.

C. The trend report will be based on available samples of Societies participating in the Self-Assessment, and will eventually cover all National Societies. Time trends will be recorded once the process has been repeated at suitable intervals with the Societies.

D. The Evaluation Department will further develop its computer database on questionnaire responses to provide for access by Secretariat Departments so as to facilitate knowledge-sharing of baseline data and qualitative information from the Self-Assessment.[4]

I. Regional Follow-up to Self-Assessment

A. Each Self-Assessment is followed up individually by the Regional/Country Delegation covering the National Society. If the follow-up is to be handled by a Country Delegation, this should be clearly agreed between the Country and Regional Delegation, and notified to the Evaluation Department. It remains the responsibility of the Regional Delegation to ensure prompt follow-up of the Self-Assessment by a Country Delegation.

B. In consultation with the Regional/Country Delegation, Regional Department, and other relevant Secretariat departments, e.g. Organisational Development, Legal, Co-operation Departments, the Evaluation Department prepares a Self-Assessment Preliminary Findings which will input into National Society and Federation planning, as well as into any co-operation strategies *vis-à-vis* the National Society. As the Society's ownership of this report is crucial, the document should be based on the Society's questionnaire responses, submitted materials, and their further clarifications/comments.

C. The Self-Assessment report should essentially contain:

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[3] The most recent report is the National Society Self-Assessment Report 2001 of which copies are available from the Evaluation Department. National Society Self-Assessment Report 2002 is available as of November 2002.

[4] A database with search and access functions was tested in April 2002, search only function is not available yet.

a) **a set of preliminary findings from the Self-Assessment prepared by the Evaluation Department** to be shared with the National Society via the Regional / Country Delegation or Regional Department for further comments. While the preliminary findings should be based on the Society's questionnaire responses, the Delegation and the Regional Department may use its contextual knowledge of the Society and region in deciding which issues raised in the Self-Assessment require particular emphasis or focus. Apart from highlighting key findings from the Self-Assessment, the document should identify what further verifications/clarifications with the Society are needed on specific issues, as well as suggest areas for potential/priority actions by the Society. The preliminary findings should be prepared in the official Federation language used by the National Society.

b) **a set of written comments/plan of action from the Society** containing clarifications/confirmations on the preliminary findings, and highlighting actions decided/taken by the Society in the meantime to address the key findings; the comments should also identify potential areas for Federation and external support. A plan of action as a follow-up to the Self-Assessment findings should include specified targets and time frames, as well as responsible persons/departments in the National Society. The Regional Delegation should identify a focal person for each follow-up.

D. It is emphasised that any reference to integrity issues in the preliminary findings and final report should be strictly limited to the Society's self-reporting in the questionnaire; delegations aware of significant integrity issues not presented in the National Society's Self-Assessment should inform the Secretariat of these issues through the Desk Officer or Head of Regional Department for appropriate follow-up actions to be identified.[5]

E. The finalised plan of action should be endorsed by the National Society, and sent to the Regional and Evaluation Departments. The National Society should report on the progress in implementing the plan of action within reasonable time frame. This report will be submitted by the Secretary General to the Governing Board in their following meeting, along with a report on Federation progress in supporting the Society's Self-Assessment and identified needs consistent with Strategy 2010.

I. Federation and External Support to National Societies

A. Consistent support by the Secretariat, peer Societies and external partners are necessary to assist individual Societies in addressing priority areas/actions in capacity-building where identified in their Self-Assessment reports. For the Secretariat, this constitutes part of the larger commitment to assist National Societies towards achieving the characteristics of well-functioning in the long term, while constantly seeking to refine minimum standards in consultation with Societies.

B. To this end, copies of the Self-Assessment reports on individual Societies will be circulated to Secretariat Departments as one of the inputs to ongoing processes supporting National Society capacity-building. This includes

[5] See the Federation document *Dealing with National Society Integrity Issues*, prepared by the Monitoring and Evaluation Division, 2001. For copies, contact Joyce Duffuor at duffuor@ifrc.org

analytical input into National Society organisational development and statutes revision processes, as well as input for co-operation and co-ordination processes. As stated in the *National Society Capacity Building Framework*[6]*,* the Self-Assessment process provides useful complementary information for National Society organisational development, and in some cases helps trigger a far-reaching organisational development process.

C. National Societies, on their side, should integrate the priority areas/actions identified in their plan of action following the Self-Assessment into their strategic planning. Where formulation/update of a Society's Development/Strategic Plan is ongoing or envisaged, the priority areas/actions identified by the Society in their Self-Assessment should be included in the new/revised plan with the assistance of the Regional/Country Delegations. An up-to-date and relevant National Society strategic/development plan is one of the prerequisites for starting the CAS (Co-operation Agreement Strategy) process with individual Societies in the current round of 'new generation CAS',[7] and the Self-Assessment process supports the CAS process in this way.

D. Regional Departments and Regional/Country Delegations, on their part, should address the priority areas identified in line with Strategy 2010 in the Self-Assessment reports in their planning of activities with the National Societies. Agreed priorities should be incorporated into the Annual Federation regional and country appeal process.

E. The ownership of the finalised Self-Assessment plan of actions lies ultimately with the National Society, with access retained by Secretariat departments and delegations. While the Societies should be encouraged to share their plans of actions with peer/participating Societies, the ICRC and partners external to the Red Cross in order to mobilise technical and financial support, the Society's explicit permission should be sought for circulation outside the Secretariat.[8]

[6]Copies available from Organisational Development Department.

[7]For fuller information on the CAS process, visit the CAS website: http://quickplace.ifrc.org/cas

[8]External partners interested in accessing the report should contact the Society directly.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF EVALUATION

- EVALUATIONS MUST BE USEFUL AND USED
- EVALUATION MUST BE FAIR, IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT
- EVALUATION MUST BE ACCURATE
- EVALUATIONS MUST INCLUDE BENEFICIARY PERSPECTIVE
- EVALUATION CRITERIA ARE CONSTANT ALTHOUGH THE FOCUS OF EVALUATION CAN CHANGE

6. Steps in Planning and Managing an Evaluation

Evaluations involving external consultants may be managed by National Societies or the M&E Division. The monitoring and evaluation framework policy provides more information on what types of evaluation are managed by whom. The evaluation life cycle for both is very similar and is presented below. Depending on who is in the "driver's seat" the responsibility for tasks may be different.

Table 6.1: The *Evaluation Life Cycle*: Nine steps in the planning and management of an evaluation

Evaluation stage and steps	Who is responsible	
	National society-managed evaluations	M&E Division managed evaluations
Clarifying/agreeing on the need for the evaluation Identify evaluation purpose – why is it needed? Consult with relevant International Federation and National Societies offices (e.g.M&E Division, Regional Bureau), and relevant stakeholders. Identify evaluation issues, and if required prepare concept paper (M&E Division only). Identify funding sources, and seek necessary approvals.	NS	Evaluation officer
Planning the evaluation Develop a timeline of the entire evaluation process	NS	Evaluation officer
Preparation of terms of reference Review information sources (e.g. Project files and documents, Evaluation Memory System). Conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders and determine scope, key issues and timing. Prepare terms of reference and forward to key stakeholders for comment. Set a timeline for the evaluation (if not done before)	NS	Evaluation officer
Selection of the evaluation team Research and list potential candidates. Select evaluation team members. Organise contract(s) for evaluation team.	NS	Evaluation officer
Desk Review (pre-mission) Send relevant background materials to the team. Team to review background documentation. Team leader to submit comments on terms of reference and to draft outline of evaluation method.	NS & evaluation team	Evaluation officer & evaluation team
Conduct of evaluation mission Prior to arrival of the team in-country: Arrange meetings and debriefing workshop. Tentatively arrange field visits and beneficiary consultations. Inform stakeholders of relevant details of the forthcoming evaluation. Prepare files and documentation for evaluation team. Ensure that updated self-evaluation report is available.	NS	NS
During evaluation mission: Commence with a half-day workshop with NS and possibly other stakeholders to clarify and if necessary amend ToR, discuss methodology and review and agree/modify itinerary. Allocate responsibilities among evaluation team. Collect and analyse information. Consult with stakeholders. Debriefing workshop(s). Prepare and present an aide memoir .	Evaluation teamleader & evaluation team	Evaluation teamleader & evaluation team
Preparation of evaluation report Develop findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons. Prepare evaluation report (including executive summary). Prepare summary evaluation report (maximum 5,000 words).	Evaluation teamleader & team	Evaluation teamleader & team
Review of evaluation report Review and comment to Team on draft evaluation report. Review and comment on draft summary report. Approval final drafts and pay team.	NS With inputs from Govt & Ips	Evaluation officer with inputs from NS, RO, relevant tech'l HQ units
Dissemination of evaluation Disseminate full or summary report to stakeholders. Implement and/or track evaluation recommendations. Disseminate important lessons (e.g. lessons web page or provide lessons to relevant in-house exercises and policy discussions).	NS	Evaluation officer

6.1 Step 1 – Clarifying/Agreeing on the Need for an Evaluation

6.1.1 Evaluation purpose

Evaluations should normally be programmed and budgeted during project design and be reflected in the M&E workplan. It is nevertheless important to revisit the rationale for the evaluation, to clarify why it is being undertaken, what issues it will address, and whether the cost will be justified. An evaluation may also be programmed on an *ad hoc* basis by management, or at the request of the Governing Board, if there is a reason to believe that an evaluation would be useful and would provide accountability.

6.1.2 Consultation

It is vital that stakeholders are consulted early on, and their role in the evaluation discussed. Their involvement can take many forms – commenting on the TOR, participating as members of a mission, joining in collecting data, in analysis, or reviewing and commenting on the evaluation report. International Federation and National Societies stakeholders can be grouped as follows:

- International Federation and National Societies full-time and contracted staff
- Development partners at the national level, such as ministries, UN agencies, multilateral and bilateral donors, and other NGOs with a national presence
- Institutional partners engaged in International Federation and National Societies activities
- Participants and beneficiaries in International Federation and National Societies activities.

For some evaluations, it might be useful to establish a small task force of key stakeholders drawn from the above groups. The task force's role would be to assist in preparing the TOR and in supporting the evaluation mission. Experience has shown that such an approach greatly strengthens stakeholder ownership of the evaluation findings, thereby increasing the chances that recommendations will be acted upon.

6.1.3 Evaluation issues

Available documentation (design documents, monitoring reports, correspondence files, etc.) should be reviewed, both as background research for preparation of the terms of reference, and to identify what documents should be provided to the evaluation team for the desk review. This is the point at which you will discover how effective your filing system is – it is vital that a clear paper trail is available to track back over events that have occurred during design and implementation of the operation.

It may be useful to prepare a concept paper as a basis for discussion both within International Federation and National Societies and with stakeholders, to help with the decision whether or not to go forward. Suggested elements for inclusion in the concept paper are:

- Why the evaluation is required (for example, is it mandatory?) and by whom (National Society or M&E Division).

- Who are the stakeholders (e.g. partner agency, government, donor)?
- The proposed timing of the evaluation.
- The scope of the evaluation and the key issues to be examined.
- The evaluation approach and methods to be used.
- Who will undertake the evaluation?

The preparation of a concept paper is standard practice for M&E Division evaluations. They differ from the eventual terms of reference, as their main purpose is to establish early on the rationale for planning and undertaking an evaluation. They can also serve as an early negotiation document between the M&E Division and the National Societies, setting out expectations and requirements.

6.1.4 Funding sources

It is also important to be clear on what funds are available for the evaluation, whether additional funds are required, and where they might come from. This emphasises the need ideally to programme the evaluation early on and earmark funds for the evaluation in the operation approval document.

6.2 Step 2 - Planning the Evaluation

6.2.1 Evaluation planning

Once the evaluation has been decided on it is important that the evaluation manager prepares a timeline for the implementation of the evaluation. The time it takes to prepare and implement an evaluation is often underestimated. Adequate time is needed to prepare for the evaluation and to ensure that appropriate consultants are available. At this point a rough evaluation timeline and planning checklist should be elaborated which is modified and updated over the lifetime of the evaluation exercise:

Table 6.2: Evaluation Timeline and Checklist

Evaluation Task	When? (insert actual dates)	How long?	Who?	Done?
ToR drafted	As early as possible but no later than 3 months before the mission	1 week	Evaluation manager	
ToR reviewed and stakeholder consulted	See above	2 weeks	Key stakeholders (e.g. NS management, Government, partners)	
Team selected	See above	Up to 4 weeks	Evaluation manager	
Team contracted	As early as possible if not up to 3 weeks before the mission	2-3 weeks	Human Resources Officer	
Background material collected and sent to M&E Division or team	If not done during ToR then done at this point	1 week	Evaluation manager and NS	
Desk Review done	About 1 month before the mission	3-5 days	Team	
Evaluation method outlined	At least 2 weeks before briefing	N/A	Team leader	
Draft Itinerary proposed and agreed	Upon agreement of method with teamleader	1 week (depends on logistics)	NS	
HQ/RO Briefing organised and taking place	Organise 10 days in advance. Ideally Thurs/Friday before start-up in country	1 – 2 days	M&E Division evaluation manager	
In-country mission	As per agreement	As per TOR	Evaluation team, NS	
Start-up workshop/meeting prepared and organised	Prepare 2 weeks ahead of time for 1st working day	½ day	Evaluation team, NS	
Debriefing workshop prepared and organised	Prepare 2-3 weeks ahead of time for: Late during last week	½ – 1 day	Evaluation team and others	
Aide Memoir presented	Last day	Depends if one or several meetings	Evaluation team, NS, Government	
Draft Report received (including summary)	3 weeks after departure of team	10 days for TL 5 days per team member	Team leader and team	
Review of and commenting draft report		2 weeks	Evaluation manager and relevant key stakeholders	
Comments incorporated and report finalised		depends	Teamleader	
Recommendation Matrix prepared and negotiated	Upon acceptance of draft report		Evaluation manager together with Action Units	

Evaluation Task	When? (insert actual dates)	How long?	Who?	Done?
Report disseminated			Evaluation manager	

6.3 Step 3 - Preparing the Evaluation Terms of Reference

The terms of reference (TOR) constitute the plan or scope of work for conducting an evaluation. Good TOR are an essential ingredient for a successful and outcome-oriented evaluation process. Ideally, they not only constitute clear guidance for the evaluation team but also highlight expectations of various stakeholders in terms of the expected results of the evaluation. Important principles to bear in mind are:

- **TOR are negotiable** – Once the team meets (usually during the initial briefing) the TOR must be discussed in detail to ensure that evaluation management and evaluation team share the same understanding regarding the purpose, implementation and expected outputs of the evaluation. At this point any evaluation issues the team feels it is unable to cover must be discussed and decided upon. Subsequent to this discussion the TOR may be modified and approved as the final TOR.

  The issue of TOR being negotiable is of particular importance for emergency and some development operations. Experience shows that some of the issues that emerge are not apparent at the start of the process. It might be sensible therefore to consider undertaking some form of pre-study – either for the implementing agency to undertake its own rapid self-evaluation, or for the evaluation manager and team leader to liaise with the national society in identifying key issues, or by building in time and resources to allow the evaluation team to make an exploratory visit to construct basic data and to identify key issues. Findings from the pre-study would then inform the desk study stage of the evaluation, and allow the TOR to be modified accordingly prior to commencement of the main field study phase.

- **TOR must be discussed with all stakeholders** – During the drafting of the TOR and elaboration of the key issues, the views and expectations of key stakeholders must be reflected. The draft TOR should be shared and discussed with implementing partners and donors. Ideally, beneficiary representatives should also be consulted regarding key issues for the evaluation. This could be arranged by International Federation and National Societies.

As with all evaluations, key informants should be informed in advance of the impending arrival of an evaluation team, of the objectives and scope of the evaluation, and of the likely information requirements. The advance warning should be sufficient to allow the implementing agencies to compile relevant files and documentation prior to the team's arrival.

Evaluation TOR must include the elements shown in Table 6.3.

An example of Terms of Reference is contained in Annex 1.

Additional sample TOR are available upon request from the M&E Division.

Table 6.3: General Framework for Evaluation Terms of Reference

Structure	Contents
Project Background	The background to the evaluation explaining its origins and broad purpose. A solid background description of the project, operation or theme to be evaluated.
Project Status	An update on the current state of implementation.
Purpose and scope of the evaluation	Clear statement of evaluation objectives and the scope of the work.
Key Issues	Key evaluation issues to be covered.
Method	Evaluation method(s) to be used. Identification of existing reports and performance information
Team composition	Profile and mix of expertise required
Schedule and Logistics.	Draft itinerary and logistical requirements
Evaluation Report	Guidance on expected reporting.

Review all available information sources

Prior to drafting the TOR it is good practice to review all available documentation: project documents, progress reports, evaluation reports. ALNAP provides a source for meta-evaluation and most donors post their evaluations on the web. This will allow you to check for previous evaluation reports undertaken in the country as well as a search for relevant evaluation experience and key issues elsewhere for similar-type of evaluations.

Consulting with stakeholders

Planning an evaluation requires negotiating skills as much as a good understanding on how to design an evaluation. Early on in the planning of an evaluation, the evaluation manager must identify the key stakeholders for the evaluation and which ones should be consulted for determining evaluation objectives. For instance, key stakeholder consultation could include Government policy makers, counterpart staff, major implementing partners, district-level officials, donors, UN agencies, beneficiary representatives etc. Stakeholders must be convinced of the usefulness of and the rationale of the evaluation. By consulting them on the objectives and key issues of the evaluation, ownership in the process may be obtained, an important prerequisite for later acceptance of the evaluation findings and recommendations.

Determining the objectives and scope of the evaluation

Given the complexity and interrelationships inherent in a humanitarian response, there is a danger that in setting objectives for an evaluation (especially a collaborative one) an unprioritised 'shopping list' of objectives may emerge. It is important to allow adequate time for discussion and negotiation of evaluation objectives amongst the various actors involved. Allowing the TOR to be negotiable during the early stages of the evaluation should allow for any further refinement of objectives.

Guidance should be given to focus the evaluation and prioritise areas and/or periods of inquiry. For example, in the evaluation of a development operation it may be appropriate to specify that the evaluation should focus initially on the recovery strategy, assessing how it

was formulated and how it has evolved over the life of the operation and its relevance to the current situation.

In deciding the scope of the evaluation of an emergency operation, the evaluation manager may face a number of options:

- Should the evaluation look only at the emergency response, or should it also look at actions that were or should have been taken prior to the onset of the emergency (e.g. pre-disaster planning)?
- In a prolonged emergency, should the evaluation consider the whole period of the emergency, or just the most recent or critical periods?

Developing the key issues

The most important element of the TOR, and perhaps the most challenging to develop, is the section on key issues to be examined. Essentially this is an exercise in framing evaluation questions against the evaluation criteria being applied.

Table 6.4: Sample evaluation issues and questions

Strategy
• Was the strategy adopted the most relevant and appropriate to meet the identified needs?
• Were gender issues appropriately reflected in the strategy?
• Were alternative approaches to achieving objectives considered?
• Was the strategy consistent with International Federation and national society's core mandate responsibilities and with International Federation and national society's policies?
• What was the link between emergency aid and other assistance provided?
• Was the strategy well prepared and did it provide adequate guidance for implementers? (For development operations) Did the strategy accurately gauge the opportunities to introduce recovery activities?
• Was an exit strategy developed?
• Were other agencies included in the analysis of the problem and the drawing up of response plans?
• Did the preparation process adequately involve beneficiaries (both men and women)?
• Were constraints to implementation adequately assessed from the onset?
• Has the strategy been periodically reviewed or modified over the life of the operation in order to maintain its relevance with changing circumstances?
Design
• Was the design of the operation logical and coherent? Did it provide a good 'road map' for implementation and a sound basis for review and evaluation?
• Were objectives set at the right levels (i.e. in compliance with logframe definitions) and were sound means-to-ends linkages made between inputs, activities, outputs, purpose(s) and the goal?
• Was the operation design technically feasible?
• Were gender concerns appropriately reflected?
• Were assumptions reasonable when they were specified, and were contingency plans made for known risks?
• Which external factors were not taken into account during design?
• Has the operational context of the operation changed since its design, and if so has the operation adapted effectively?
Achievement of objectives
• Are the objectives appropriate and realistic?
• To what extent have planned outputs been achieved in terms of quantity, quality, equity and timeliness?

- For emergency operations and development operations – have targeted beneficiaries received planned rations? Have the right beneficiaries been targeted? Did beneficiaries use aid as intended?
- For recovery operations and development activities – have beneficiaries maintained or improved their livelihoods and what assets have been created/ maintained and who have they benefited and how?
- What were the most successful recovery activities? And the least successful? How effectively was a transition made from relief to recovery activities? To what degree has aid contributed to promoting resettlement and food self-sufficiency (where applicable)?
- Have outputs reached the poorest? Women? Vulnerable groups? To what extent?
- What has been the share of women and vulnerable groups in benefiting directly from outputs?
- Were resources effectively and efficiently used? Do the results justify the costs?
- What evidence is there that the operations stated purpose(s) and goal were achieved?
- To what extent were International Federation and national society's core mandate responsibilities met?
- If at mid-term – what additional measures may be needed to improve the chances of achieving the Purpose?

Factors in the effectiveness and efficiency of operations emergency operations and development operations

- Registration/verification
- Was reliable and disaggregated data collected for target populations/groups and how well was it maintained?
- Assessments
- How was the initial situation assessed? How has food insecurity, vulnerability and nutrition status been assessed? Were the roles of men and women adequately analysed? Have regular reassessments been conducted? Have host communities' needs been assessed?
- Final distribution
- Was the delivery system efficient and equitable? Was it transparent? Was a complaints procedure in place? How well were any failures in the delivery system addressed?
- Did women play lead roles within local decision-making committees on food management? If so, to what extent and has this resulted in a change in acceptability of women in lead decision-making roles?

Targeting

- How have beneficiary groups/areas been identified?
- Were the special needs of certain groups/areas considered?
- Have the needs of any host community been addressed?
- Were targeting objectives appropriate?
- Were arrangements made to review and update the targeting strategy?
- Were male and female beneficiaries involved in the negotiation of beneficiary status?
- What was the proportion of male and female beneficiaries participating in FFW?

Appropriateness of rations

- Was the food ration and basket adequate and acceptable (quantitatively and qualitatively) and did it relate to livelihood and coping strategies of both men and women?
- Were the nutritional objectives realistic and to what extent were they achieved?
- What has been the nutritional effect/outcome of International Federation and National Societies assistance on beneficiaries?
- Have there been ration reductions or phasing out of food assistance and, if so, on what basis?
- Was food aid culturally acceptable and appropriate?

Factors in the effectiveness and efficiency of ALL operations

Implementation

- Were there any significant delays in approval; what were the causes?
- Were the implementation schedule and management arrangements realistic (this should include financial management and budgeting systems)?
- Were plans followed? If not, why not?
- Did objectives change during implementation? Why? On the basis of what analysis or what events?
- Have there been delays in implementation? How were these dealt with? What was the impact of such

delays?

- How well were risks and problems managed?

Monitoring and reporting

- Was baseline data collected and were appropriate indicators identified at the outset for measuring progress and results?
- Did the monitoring systems work – including the extent to which gender considerations were built into monitoring arrangements? Was gender disaggregated data collected in accordance with International Federation and National Societies policy?
- What is the type and frequency of reporting for the operation, including periodic participatory appraisals? Were reports submitted on time; were they complete; what problems were experienced? Is the information analysed and used to make decisions regarding the management of the operation?
- (For development operations) Have criteria been established to signal when to shift activities from relief to recovery and likewise from recovery to development? If so, are these being applied effectively?

Coordination, partnerships and beneficiary participation

- Were objectives and activities compatible with the policies/programmes of the relevant government(s)? How supportive are International Federation and national society's counterparts?
- What mechanisms were put in place for coordination with government, donors, UN agencies, NGOs, etc. and how effective were they? Were sectoral responsibilities successfully divided between partners?
- Did implementing partners fulfil their contractual obligations? How was their capacity assessed? What training of partners has taken place? Has there been a trend towards or away from using local implementing partners? What capacity has been left behind?
- In what way have the beneficiaries participated in the design, implementation and monitoring of the operation? Were the arrangements adequate? What was the impact of their (non-) participation?
- Was beneficiary involvement empowering in any sense men and women?

Programmatic linkages

- Are the objectives and activities of the operation/programme compatible with and complementary to those of the other operations currently being implemented by the CO?

Management, human resources and training

- Did the National Societies and specialised units fulfil their roles effectively and efficiently?
- Did staff have the experience and expertise to carry out the activities envisaged?
- Are there staff or skill shortages? What has been done about these?
- Have correct financial and administrative procedures been followed?
- Is there appropriate gender balance in the operation staff (both International Federation and National Societies)? Has staff been trained on gender issues and are they applying this training to their work?

Pipeline, commodity control, and logistics

- Has there been efficient pipeline management?
- Commodity sourcing and delivery – what difficulties and losses were experienced; how were they resolved?
- Was planning for logistics, transport, storage, staffing, and auditing adequate and what have been the major challenges to the smooth functioning of the operation/programme?
- For operations: What has been the overall scale of the war economy and the relative scale of contribution to it by diverted or taxed humanitarian assistance; what have been the steps taken by International Federation and National Societies and partners to avoid or minimise the level of diversion or taxation through the selection of particular delivery channels, supervised distributions and end-use monitoring?

Security

- Have adequate and appropriate measures been introduced and adhered to, in order to minimise the risk to International Federation and National Societies staff and implementing partners involved in the implementation of the operation/programme?
- Have measures been taken, if necessary, to provide protection to the affected men, women and children who participate in the operation?
- Are there significant security challenges to the smooth functioning of the operation/programme? Was the safety of the beneficiaries a high priority?

Budget and resources

- Operation costs – what was the planned vs. actual expenditure for the operation as a whole, and within

main cost headings?

- Was the budget appropriate in relation to its objectives/activities, and what factors affected individual budget items?
- ITSH – how were they financed; were the calculated rates adequate; what revisions were required?
- To what extent have the resourcing requirements for the operation been met and how has the national society managed shortfalls? How predictably and regularly have resources been supplied to the operation/programme?
- Monetisation – was it justified, were the prices fair?
- (For development operations) Has transformation resulted in longer-term (more than 1 year) financial commitments to the operation?
- How successfully has the operation/programme resourced its non-food inputs (NFIs) and what, if any, have been the constraints?

Standards and quality

- What systems were put in place for assuring programme quality including setting appropriate technical standards?
- Have relevant international standards and code of conduct been addressed?

Outcome/Impact and sustainability/connectedness

- What difference did the operation make to the lives of the beneficiaries (livelihood improvements, etc.)? Who benefited exactly? What would have happened if no assistance had been given?
- How do beneficiaries and other stakeholders value the operation?
- What impact did the operation have on household food security and self-reliance?
- (emergency and relief operations) What was the impact on host populations?
- What unexpected outcomes (positive or negative) have occurred?
- Have environmental concerns been adequately addressed within the operation/programme?
- What intended or unintended impacts have occurred on the environment as a result of the operation?
- What impact have camp sites (where relevant) had on the environment? What effect have rations and cooking requirements had?
- What was done to ameliorate environmental impact and restore natural habitat?
- How long are these benefits likely to last? What are the prospects for the sustainability of activities and outputs? What factors are likely to undermine sustainability of benefits? Are the sustainable benefits likely to exceed the costs?
- What costs will have to be borne by government, implementing partners, beneficiaries or other stakeholders in order for the benefits to continue?
- Has food aid been used as a leverage to obtain complementary national and international resources and recognition to improve the condition of women?

Commitments to Women

- To what extent were International Federation and national society's gender policy met in terms of i) aid access by women; ii) access to power structures and decision-making; and iii) access to resources, employment, markets and trade?
- What changes are required in a future phase to ensure better compatibility with these Commitments?
- What gender training has been carried out and for whom and what difference, if at all, has it made?
- Was adequate effort been made to mainstream as well as advocate gender considerations?

What are the standard evaluation methods to be used by the evaluation?

TOR should contain a brief outline on the proposed method for the evaluation. This proposed method will need to be refined and developed by the Teamleader and the team, and discussed prior to the start-up of the mission.

There are essentially five ways of obtaining evaluation information:

1. Collecting, tabulating, reviewing already available data;

2. Questioning people through interviews, focus groups;
3. Facilitating critical performance and results reflection by implementers and beneficiaries.
4. Conducting surveys; and
5. Observing people and things though field visits.

These can be elaborated into a more detailed list as shown in Table 6.5, which includes comments on the applicability of each method.

These techniques can be used in a purely extractive (i.e. non-participatory) or participatory way, or a mixture of the two. The methods selected should always match the evaluation objectives and focus, and should flow from the questions asked and correspond with the purposes and uses of the data.

The conventional approach to evaluation within International Federation and National Societies has under-emphasised the need to incorporate stakeholder feedback into evaluation findings, and in particular the perceptions of beneficiaries. Interviews with a sample of beneficiaries or with the affected population can be one of the richest sources of information for the evaluation and are an absolute must. In addition, useful information and views can also be obtained from so-called comparison groups, i.e. men and women who have not been able to participate in the International Federation and National Societies operation but who cope with similar problems in a similar environment.

Although the evaluation process will remain extractive in nature, especially if accountability considerations are to be served, beneficiaries and stakeholders must be provided with greater opportunity to contribute and to receive feedback. It is particularly important to engage in a discussion with beneficiaries on how they perceive the operation and the way in which it has affected their lives, and to involve them in the discussion and validation of findings. This provides a 'reality check', grounds the evaluation in the real changes (planned or unplanned) that the operation has brought about, and enables beneficiaries and other stakeholders to understand better the role and purpose of evaluation.

In cases of a recent or ongoing conflict the team must be careful to ensure confidentiality of people interviewed.

Table 6.5: Data collection methods for evaluation

1. Document review	**File reviews** Essential starting point for all evaluations. Involves examination of available reports, files and other project documents. Good for familiarisation, for developing a historical perspective, and for identifying the initial list of evaluation questions.
	Literature search Economic and efficient way of obtaining information. Difficult to assess validity and reliability on secondary data.
	Tabulating data Registration of quantifiable or classifiable data by means of analytical instrument. Analysis of performance indicators tracked by operation management. Precise, reliable and often requiring few resources. Registers only facts, not explanations.
2. Consultation	**Key informant interviews** Flexible, in-depth approach. Easy to implement. Risk of biased presentation/interpretation from informants/interviewer.
	Timeline Useful tool for initial meetings with key informants and focus groups. A timeline of important events is developed, to help reconstruct actual events and to explore the perceptions of different stakeholders regarding the sequence and importance of events.
	Focus group interviews For analysis of specific, complex problems, to identify attitudes and priorities in smaller groups. Reasonable in terms of cost, and efficient. Stimulates the generation of new ideas. Risk of domination by individuals and bias of moderator.

	Group interviews Low-cost, efficient. Direct contact with those affected. Susceptible to manipulation and less suitable for sensitive issues.
	Other RRA/PRA techniques Visual techniques such as mapping, ranking and scoring, and other verbal techniques such as transect walks provide a means of generating a local analysis, and involving beneficiaries and stakeholders directly in the evaluation process.
3. Facilitation	**Self-evaluation on performance and results obtained** The evaluator becomes a facilitator, facilitating a critical self-assessment of implementers and beneficiaries. Less extractive with stakeholder potentially becoming owners of the evaluation process.
4. Survey-based techniques	**Formal survey** Oral interviews or written questionnaires in a representative sample of respondents. Data collection is demanding but often produces reliable information.
	Informal survey Involves quantitative surveys of small samples. Reasonable and rapid. Risk of sampling errors/biases. Less suited for generalisation.
	Case studies In-depth review of one or a small number of selected cases. Well-suited for understanding processes and for formulating hypotheses to be tested later.
5. Observation	**Direct observation** Involves inspection, field visits, observation to understand processes, infrastructure/services and their utilisation. Dependent on observer's understanding and interpretation.
	Observation In-depth observations over an extended period of time, participatory or non-participatory. Well-suited for understanding processes but with limited potential for generalisation.

The immediate implication for International Federation and National Societies of a shift towards a more inclusive approach is the need to plan for beneficiary and stakeholder involvement. This requires at minimum:

- Scheduling sufficient time and resources within the evaluation process
- Ensuring that the requisite skills and experience within the evaluation team

Facilitating the meaningful involvement of stakeholders and beneficiaries through individual and group interviews, and through the use of RRA and PRA techniques.

- Facilitating critical performance and results reflection by implementers and beneficiaries (the evaluator turns into a facilitator)

For more on data collection methods, see Module 8: Tools for data collection.

Disseminating and discussing the draft TOR

At this stage all of the elements of the TOR should have been developed and the draft TOR can be put together (see Table 6.3). The draft TOR should be sent to the list of key stakeholders that have been approached earlier in order to ensure that there is a common understanding and agreement.

Setting a timeline for the evaluation

Normally this is done before the preparation of the terms of reference and needs to be refined once the terms of reference have been agreed to.

6.4 Step 4 - Selecting the Evaluation Team

The team must be identified, contracted, and provided with terms of reference. When using external consultants, it is advisable to start the recruitment process well in advance of the evaluation mission, in order to ensure the availability of team members and to take account of the time required for contracting. If the dates for the evaluation are already set, the search for consultants can be done even while negotiating and preparing the terms of reference to ensure availability of the desired consultants.

Team members should usually fulfil the following requirements.

Table 6.6: Criteria for selecting the evaluation team

For Team members:	Professional competence and solid technical experience in areas such as food security, nutrition, gender, school feeding, emergency operations, food-for-work, etc. The expertise depends on the key issues to be looked at by the evaluation. Knowledge of International Federation and National Societies and its operations (at least one team member, preferably the mission leader, should have International Federation and National Societies experience). Prior evaluation experience; familiarity with standard evaluation methods. Impartiality (e.g. not belonging to one of the implementing agencies, not having participated as a consultant in any stages of the project, not being involved in the country in any other or related official capacity). Preferably prior experience working in the country. Language skills (English, French, Spanish).
For the Teamleader (in addition to the above)	Has s/he proven team-leading skills? Can you confirm s/he has excellent writing skills in English, French, or Spanish? Proven track record as an evaluator and team leader? Does the TL present himself/herself well and is credible?
Other criteria	Mix international professional expertise with national professional expertise. Consider gender (appropriate consideration of qualified female consultants). Getting the right balance (gender, nationality, skills).

Donor participation

At times, a donor or partner agency may request that one of their own staff join the evaluation mission. This is welcomed so long as the person proposed fits the criteria set out in Table 6.6, and functions as a full team member under the guidance of the teamleader. International Federation and National Societies should reserve the right to reject candidates if they do not meet the selection criteria. Where larger teams are required (for example, to conduct collaborative or system-wide evaluations), the teamleader must possess strong team management skills.

Special considerations for humanitarian assistance evaluations

Evaluations of emergency and development operations will require considerable time to be spent interviewing beneficiaries, and women and children in particular. Beneficiaries may well have experienced serious psycho-social trauma. The evaluation team should therefore include adequate gender balance and sufficient expertise to undertake these interviews.

6.5 Step 5 - The Desk Review (pre-mission)

Evaluation teams are usually allocated 3-5 days for desk review depending on the nature, size and scope of the operation to be evaluated. Ideally, this should be done prior to the briefing and be based on the materials available on International Federation and National Societies or sent to the team. Given the fact that most evaluation teams do not meet prior to arriving in the country, it is up to the team leader to develop further the method outlined in the ToR and present a short method and issues paper to the evaluation manager prior to the start of the mission. This evaluation methods outline should contain the following:

- proposed method(s) for the evaluation
- proposed distribution of responsibilities (by team member to be finalised during briefing)
- proposed key informants (key agencies and partners to be visited (here the country delegation should also contribute)
- indicative time schedule - of course to be refined upon arrival.
- criteria for a representative selection of areas to visit (based on this the national society would propose project areas and types to visit).

ToR may be modified at that time or at the latest during the initial briefing days of the entire team. It is important that both team and evaluation manager come to an agreement as to the scope, objectives and key outputs of the evaluation. Once the evaluation manager has agreed to the proposed method the evaluation itinerary will need to be reviewed and adapted. For instance, if the method foresees one team member to spend his/her entire time undertaking RRA exercises in a number of sample communities, separate from the rest of the team, this will need to be reflected and arranged for (or alternatively ensure there is flexibility to adapt the itinerary upon arrival of the team).

If the project design is not based on a logical framework approach it may be advisable to ask the team leader to prepare a retrofitted logical framework prior to the mission. This presents a starting point for the discussion and helps the team establish underlying hypothesis.

6.6 Step 6 - Conduct of the Evaluation Mission

6.6.1 Prior to the arrival of the team in-country

Good preparation is key for a successful and useful evaluation. Key tasks for the national society and/or the M&E Division prior to the start of the evaluation mission include:

- Collecting relevant background documents to be made available to the team (operation progress reports, relevant Government policies, evaluation reports, reports by other donors, food security briefs, CAP etc.) – alternatively some of this material may be provided to the team for the desk review prior to the mission.
- Tentatively organising the itinerary – ensuring that sufficient time is available for the team to talk to beneficiaries; ensuring that the team will visit a representative sample of operation sites and will meet a good range of key informants. Arrangements should fit with stakeholders' availability, and in the case of the beneficiaries may need to be scheduled for the evenings or to coincide with a village or group event so as to minimise disruption. Last but not least, enough time must be provided for the team for internal discussion and work (e.g. joint review of ToR and work distribution, discussion of key findings, conclusions and recommendations, preparation for debriefing workshop etc.).
- Advising key local stakeholders of the mission. When organising the itinerary, the key stakeholders to be interviewed should be well briefed on the purposes and work programme of the evaluation and receive a copy or summary of the terms of reference.
- Making sure that the logistics (transport, meeting arrangements, etc.) are set up in advance of the arrival of the team.
- Ensuring that there is broad national society staff availability for the half-day briefing session (workshop format) and that staff is can provide quality time to the team.
- Organising the evaluation wrap-up well in advance, ensuring where possible that a debriefing workshop is arranged and that a good range of stakeholders will attend, and ensuring that the official debriefing with the Government is set up.

6.6.2 During the evaluation mission

For the evaluation team, there are typically three main evaluation stages:

- The **desk study** stage, during which the key issues to be examined are elaborated further in discussion with the evaluation manager. It is at this point that the TOR are 'negotiated' and modified to a final version. In case of M&E Division-managed missions, this stage may also involve the **initial briefing** in headquarters and/or the regional office.
- The **field mission**, during which operation sites are visited, interviews are conducted, and data is collected and analysed. Typically prior to leaving the country, the team prepares and presents an aide memoir to the national society.
- **Synthesis and report-writing**, during which evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations are written up. For all evaluations led by the M&E Division, it is usual for the evaluation team to produce an evaluation summary report for presentation of the evaluation findings to the Governing Board.

The role of the evaluation manager

An evaluation manager normally does not participate as a team member of the mission but manages the entire evaluation process from drafting the TOR to disseminating the final report.

Evaluations require a high degree of flexibility, good lines of communication between the evaluation manager and the team, and sufficient time for the process.

Apart from preparing the TOR the evaluation manager's main role during the evaluation mission is as follows:

- facilitate the work of the team,
- ensure that appropriate time is spent with key staff,
- act as link between the team and the various agencies involved
- arrange and facilitate the necessary permissions and logistics for fieldwork
- provide advice to the Team on International Federation and National Societies current policy issues
- provide additional information and clarifications but not seek to manipulate the opinion of the team
- identify additional key informants when necessary
- negotiate and agree to modifications of the TOR and itinerary if necessary
- meet regularly with the team to ensure the work is on track
- assess the team and teamleader performance and, if necessary, take action
- facilitate the discussion of findings amongst a potentially large group of stakeholders

Evaluations are an excellent learning opportunity throughout and evaluation managers and national society staff should be in regular touch with the team.

Stage I: Desk Study and Briefing

The desk study/review has already been described under Step 5 - The Desk Review (pre-mission).

Since the briefing in the country is typically the first time evaluation team members meet each other, enough time should be provided to the team to meet, review the ToR and to agree on tasks for each team member. This is the role of the teamleader who must ensure that all aspects of the ToR are covered according to each team member's experience and knowledge. The evaluation manager (the M&E Division or the national society should ascertain that this has been done, and that team members understand precisely what is required of them.

It is recommended to start off the mission with a half-day briefing workshop for national society staff and the evaluation team. During this session the team can clarify the purpose, scope and key issues of the evaluation, who are the key informants for the issues and check the retrofitted logical framework. The purpose and planning of the debriefing workshop should also be addressed here (see Stage II).

Stage II: Beyond the briefing – the field mission

This stage includes the time after the initial national society briefing up to the departure of the team. Typically, the mission spends the first few days in the capital, interviewing key stakeholders. If necessary, some of these meetings can also be scheduled for the last week of the mission.

During the field mission, the teamleader is responsible for the day-to-day management of the evaluation, while the national society provides the necessary support to ensure that the team is able to complete its itinerary.

Data collection considerations

- ### Administrative records

Administrative records are likely to be the first source of data consulted by an evaluation team, and should be compiled by the implementing agency in advance of the arrival of the team. SitReps and other relevant progress reports enable the team to build up a picture of events as they evolved. Design documents, Memoranda/Letters of Understanding, plan of operations and other such documents provide the framework for analysing objectives, mandates and fulfilment of responsibilities. Minutes of meetings provide data on what decisions were made, when, and on what basis.

- ### Interviews

Interviews are generally the most important source of information on what happened and why. Evaluators should talk to as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, to build up a complete and balanced picture of an operation.

When interviewing agency staff, it is worth remembering that personnel, in particular those working in emergency operations, often have a high degree of personal involvement and engagement in their work, and that they have probably tried their best in difficult circumstances. Interviews should therefore be conducted in the spirit of shared learning, and the need to understand why mistakes may have occurred rather than taking a judgmental approach.

When evaluating in conflict or post-conflict situations, evaluators should be as sensitive as possible to the experiences that the interviewees may have been through.

Beneficiary interviews are a vital element of any evaluation. As well as providing a rich source of information, these interviews can give a voice to those who may have lost their normal communication channels.

- ### Rapid and participatory techniques

While there may not be time to carry out a comprehensive PRA exercise, there should always be some attempt to use participatory and rapid techniques. Triangulation is particularly important, to cross-check findings. The deliberate inclusion of those who have not benefited from the assistance available can be a useful means of evaluating targeting and beneficiary selection processes.

However, the difficulties of using participatory techniques in conflict or post-conflict situations should not be under-estimated:

- By talking to evaluators, beneficiaries may be exposing themselves to risk, and agencies may be perceived as having ‘taken sides’.
- Communities and groups are likely to have fragmented, making it difficult to find ‘representative’ participants or entry points to a participatory process.

- The trauma that beneficiaries may have suffered might be such that it is unacceptable to ask them to recount their experiences.
- Communities and groups are unlikely to understand the evaluation process. There is a danger that participatory evaluation can raise expectations that cannot be met.

Field travel during the evaluation mission

Depending on the size of the team, the time available and the spread of the project the team may travel jointly or separately to the field. National society and Government participation as observers is encouraged as this provides ample opportunity for learning. However, care should be taken to avoid arriving in the field and in particular in communities with a team that is too big. Teams and Observers that are larger than five should consider splitting up during community visits. Alternatively, the team leader may suggest dividing the entire group into several teams with each team applying the same method in different communities and meeting in the evening to compare findings.

The team should meet an adequate and representative sample of beneficiaries and stakeholders. Avoid the mistake of trying to visit too many sites at the cost of not allowing the team enough time in each site to interview and apply the various evaluation methods.

Back from the field travel – the last week

Upon return from the field the team should have at least one additional week in the country. During this week the team may need to interview additional key informants, undertake additional data review and analysis, and meet as a team to discuss the findings and implications of the field visit and start or continue writing these up.

The feed-back workshop

The debriefing or feed-back workshop is a key event during the evaluation. The national society is responsible for logistical arrangements, while the teamleader is responsible for workshop design and the preparation of necessary presentation materials. If funding is available, the workshop may be held off site and may use the services of a skilled external facilitator.

The aide memoir

Prior to leaving the country, an aide memoir should be prepared by the team. The aide memoir must contain the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mission and may be structured according to the outline of the summary report.

The aide memoir is usually drafted by the team leader with inputs from team members and provided to the Country Delegation for comments. Depending on the programme and advice from the national society, the aide memoir may also be discussed with UN partners, the donor community, NGOs, and other stakeholders to benefit from comments they may have. The Aide Memoir is provided in advance and discussed in a meeting with the Government. In case senior decision-makers attend the debriefing workshop this stage may be dropped in agreement with all parties. Time providing, the team may wish to present the main results on flip charts or power point.

Normally the Aide Memoir is not revised once presented to the Government unless there are factual mistakes.

Table 6.7: Conducting the debriefing workshop

Purpose and advantages of a debriefing workshop

- Communicates initial evaluation findings to stakeholders, and seeks to gain their feedback on the evaluation process and findings so far.
- A reflective forum that can bring about learning and a critical review of key components of the operation or programme being evaluated.
- Should be viewed not as a formality to be got through as quickly as possible, but as a vital opportunity to gain additional insights. Stakeholders should be encouraged to attend and to participate actively in the knowledge that they can still influence the evaluation's findings.
- May allow team to jointly with stakeholders, work out recommendations and identify lessons.

Who should attend?

- Concerned working-level and beneficiaries. As appropriate, select donors and UN agency representatives may be invited. Ideally, the decision-makers for the project should be present but this may not always be feasible if these are senior officials. In such a case these would be debriefed during the Aide-Memoir presentation and by their technical staff who attended the debriefing workshop.

How to plan and prepare for the workshop

- The date and venue for the workshop should be arranged well in advance to enable the maximum number of stakeholders to attend. Beneficiary representatives should be invited and encouraged to consult with the people they represent both before and after the workshop. As soon as they are available, an agenda, list of participants, the ToR, and other relevant details should be communicated to all of those invited to attend.
- It is advisable to use visualisation techniques, such as VIPP* cards, and moderation techniques such as group exercises and buzz groups. This will require that the venue be of sufficient size and with sufficient wall space to allow for 'break-out' groups to undertake exercises, and for group presentations to be pasted in the wall for all participants to see. (As a general guide, 15 participants will require a room of at least 80m^2.)
- Seating arrangements will have a big influence on the workshop. Formal seating with tables, name cards, microphones, etc., is to be avoided as it is likely to constrain interaction, and may even intimidate some participants unused to such meetings.
- Visual aids, such as overheads slides, pre-formatted flipcharts, and handouts, will provide a focus both for the teams' presentation and for discussions with participants. Care should be taken to ensure that all such materials are clearly written, and will be readable by all participants in the room.
- If a large number of participants are expected, it may be sensible to employ an experienced facilitator to chair discussions and maximise participation. If the workshop is expected to last more than half a day, then refreshments and a meal will be required.

*VIPP: Visualisation in Project Planning

Stage III: Synthesis and report writing

To a certain extent there is overlap between stage two and three, as many teams start synthesis and report writing while still in the country. As a matter of principle, major key findings, conclusions and recommendations should be contained in the Aide Memoir. If there is funding available it is recommendable to extend the presence of the team leader so as to allow the team leader to finalise the bulk of the report while still in the country. This allows for additional feed-back and consultation and ensures that the evaluation report is submitted on time. For more on report preparation, see Module 6.7 Step 7 - Preparing the evaluation report.

6.7 Step 7 - Preparing the Evaluation Report

6.7.1 Procedures

The teamleader is usually responsible for collating the inputs of the team member into the production of the final report. Normally the final report should be submitted within three weeks of the end of the mission. The draft report is reviewed and commented on by concerned units and offices within International Federation and National Societies, and the teamleader makes the necessary modifications in response to these comments. In the interests of independence, it is the teamleader's final decision as to what the final conclusions and recommendations are. However, if there is strong disagreement voiced by any of the key stakeholders this should be noted in the report.

Given the complexity of humanitarian assistance operations, and the frequent inadequacy of documentation and data, it is vital for reasons of credibility and competence that the draft report is shared widely, and that adequate time is allowed for preparation, receipt and consideration of comments.

Evaluation summary reports are a requirement for all evaluations. The procedure is as follows:

- **For evaluations managed by the M&E Division** – All M&E Division evaluation results are presented to International Federation Secretary General. They are presented in a summary report not exceeding 5,000 words, which highlights the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation team. Evaluation summaries are the responsibility of the Team Leader who uses the standard outline.
- **For evaluations managed by Country Delegations** – As a matter of principle, reports for all evaluations should be preceded by an evaluation summary. This summary should contain the main findings, recommendations and lessons of the mission, and may follow the format used by the M&E Division. Summaries of national society managed evaluations should be submitted to the M&E Division for possible inclusion in the annual reports.

The internal review and approval of evaluation summaries follows a standard process:

Table 6.8: Steps in the review and approval of Board-submitted evaluation reports

1. Reflecting the Aide Memoir comments as appropriate, the Mission drafts the Full and Summary Reports and circulates them via the M&E Division evaluation manager for comment to action officers.
2. At the discretion of the national society, the draft full and summary reports are also forwarded to the Government for comment.
3. The Mission leader (or the Evaluation Manager) incorporates the various comments into the full as well as the summary report as appropriate.
4. The Director of the M&E Division clears the draft of the Summary Report for circulation to Executive Staff for their comment.
5. The Evaluation Manager incorporates Executive Staff comments as appropriate and ensures that amendments are not in contradiction to the Full Report
6. The Director of the M&E Division clears the final Summary Report for submission to the Governing Board processing.
7. The edited and translated Summary Report is forwarded to the national society which in turn passes it on to

the Government, in both cases for information, follow-up action, and reporting by means of the Management Response (recommendation tracking) Matrix as appropriate.

6.7.2 Guidance for the evaluation manager

This stage of the evaluation is crucial as this is when the final product of the evaluation will be presented. The evaluation manager here has a quality control function. As soon as the report is submitted by the Teamleader the evaluation manager should critically review its contents, TOR compliance, relevance and accuracy.

The evaluation manager at this point may also act to "negotiate" or "mediate" between the evaluation team and the key stakeholders, especially in the case of an evaluation report that provokes emotional or negative reactions.

Based on the review of the evaluation manager as well as the comments received the teamleader is then asked to reconsider, revise, restructure key points or elements of the report. As a matter of principle, factual errors should be corrected. Substantive issues are at the discretion of the Teamleader but should not contradict current International Federation and National Societies policy. If this is the case this must be clearly stated with the Team's reason for not reflecting policy.

What to do if the report is not satisfactory

Should the second draft not reflect the comments provided, the evaluation manager needs to decide whether the report can be accepted as it is or if it needs further review before it can be accepted. The independent view of the evaluation team must be safeguarded – if there is disagreement this should be added to the evaluation report and possibly included in the management response of the Country Delegation.

If the report remains unsatisfactory then the evaluation manager may withhold a portion of the payment. (Payment modalities should be clearly spelled out in the TOR and/or the contract).

Report editing

It is advisable to have a professional editor edit the summary report before the report is disseminated. This requirement may also be built into the contract and payment of the teamleader, and the teamleader should be held responsible for providing a full and summary report that meets professional standards.

6.8 Step 8 - Report Dissemination

As soon as the full report and the evaluation summary have been finalised, they should be distributed to all interested stakeholders. At country-level, the national society will decide who should receive the full report, or who needs the summary. At HQ level, the M&E Division presents all M&E Division-produced summaries to the Secretary General.

Summary reports may be added to the International Federation webpage upon request of the National Societies.

National societies may also consider disseminating evaluation findings as an advocacy tool. This can be done through press releases, press interviews, radio/television coverage.

6.8.1 What happens to the recommendations?

If evaluations are to serve their purpose, then decisions must be made on which recommendations will be acted on, who will implement them, and when action will be taken.

In the past evaluations have been criticised for not turning into action and for simply being "shelved". To enhance the usefulness of evaluations, a Recommendation Tracking System (RTS) has been developed by the M&E Division.

The RTS is a mechanism that allows evaluation stakeholders to track the implementation of evaluation recommendations in addition to providing management with an opportunity to reflect critically upon the recommendations made. Although this is a tool that has been developed for the Secretary General and National Societies are encouraged to use this matrix when engaging in their own evaluations.

All M&E Division evaluation reports contain in the annex a standard matrix requiring the following information:

- concisely-worded, action-oriented **recommendations**, grouped by area of concern
- identification of who is **responsible** for taking action
- the immediate **management response** to the recommendation
- eventual **action taken** by management (for presentation to the Governing Board).

RTS requires a formal two-phased management response to evaluation recommendations.

1. During the preparation of the Evaluation Summary Report, the team leader will insert the recommendations and the table will be sent to the national offices and other relevant action units to complete the columns "Immediate Management Response" and "Action by". At this point, the only blank column will be "Review of Action Taken".
2. Six weeks before the Governing Board presentation, the Evaluation Officer will contact the national society to complete the final column. The completed matrix will then be provided to Governing Board members as an "Information Paper", separate from the Summary Evaluation Report.

6.9 Step 9 - Using the Results and Learning from the Evaluation

The greatest value of evaluations lies in their immediate use, application, and where appropriate their influence over future programmes and policies locally as well as corporately. How can evaluation results be used?

- Improving management
- Changing/modifying current operation strategy, including outputs to be produced
- Improving monitoring
- Improving/modifying/adding partnerships, partner inputs
- Assisting in decision-making - whether or not to proceed
- Providing inputs for policy-making
- Providing guidance/advice/lessons for redesign or design of next phase
- Providing information for advocacy and fund-raising
- Updating information on the situation on the livelihoods of International Federation and National Societies beneficiaries
- Providing independent assessment of results being achieved

It is important that evaluation results are disseminated widely to all concerned stakeholders. Beyond circulating the report or a summary of the report it is very effective to hold discussion-groups, workshops or even retreats to discuss the findings and implications of an evaluation and can be the opportunity to discuss the design of the next phase.

Learning from the evaluation will be enhanced if the national society staff are fully prepared for and involved in the evaluation. Evaluation management must play an active role in the negotiation of the objectives, key issues and method used of the mission if the results are to be useful. While the independent view of the evaluator needs to be preserved, the best learning will occur by the national society providing as much space and time to the team as needed. Frequent short feed-back sessions throughout the mission may prevent later surprises. A feed-back or debriefing workshop at the end of the mission provides a forum for frank and critical discussion of the issues identified and for joint reflection on recommendations and future action.

While learning can usually be generated from the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, it may help to go one step beyond and identify lessons that can be learned. In their simplest form, lessons enable us to avoid re-inventing the wheel, or constantly falling into the same traps. A lesson differs from a finding or a recommendation in that it is applicable to a generic situation rather than to a specific circumstance.

It is important to note in the above example, that at project level the most useful outcome of the evaluation will be the recommendations made. The learning or “lesson” that can be drawn out of finding and recommendation is most useful if applied in future situations and shared with others (i.e. inform policy makers, project design elsewhere etc.). Evaluators and evaluation stakeholders are therefore encouraged to identify lessons as well as recommendations that may have a wider application in the organisation and to identify the appropriate “end users” of such learning (e.g. relevant technical or logistical units in headquarters). End users may also be found at national level – in particular if the lesson

identified may have a bearing on national policy-making or the work of other donors, agencies.

Table 6.9: What is a lesson?

Learning output	Definition	Application	Example
Finding	A factual statement	Situation-specific	No training was provided on gender issues. Only 10% of has gone to female beneficiaries.
Conclusion	A synthesis of findings	Derived from a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Gender concerns have not been taken into account throughout the execution of the operation
Recommendation	A prescriptive statement	Prescribed for a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Training on gender issues should be provided to all International Federation and National Societies and partner staff.
LESSON	An instructive generalisation based on a learning experience	Generic – not situation-specific	Unless staff are sensitised and trained on gender concerns, an operation will not appropriately address gender concerns and equal and fair access to International Federation and National Societies resources.

6.10 Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Evaluation Process

A common theme of evaluations is that the effectiveness of the evaluation process is severely limited by three constraints:

1. The absence of clearly stated objectives *and/or a strategy* for the overall *operation* and its various sectoral and project components.
2. Poor availability and comparability of the monitoring data necessary to assess the performance and results of projects, and therefore the programme as a whole.
3. Evaluations are not regarded as a useful exercise by key stakeholders and are therefore not taken as a serious opportunity for learning and change.

Addressing these issues during the design and implementation stage can significantly improve the likelihood of effective evaluations.

6.10.1 Clarifying objectives

When the *purpose and/or goal* of the operation are not clearly stated, the evaluation will be made more difficult – what should results be measured against? This problem may exist for individual operations within the humanitarian response system, or may apply to the whole system. Difficulties are further exacerbated by the fact that in an emergency, objectives even if stated are likely to be modified as the situation evolves.

The Good Practice Review suggests the following tools to assist in improving the clarify of objectives:

- **Strategic frameworks** – which set overall objectives for the international community's response, to be adhered to for all emergencies (e.g. UN Agency Country Strategic Framework; OCHA Appeal).
- **Country or response strategies** – which establish objectives in the build up to, or at the onset of, a particular emergency.
- **Logical framework analysis** – which establish a hierarchy of objectives for a particular operation.

6.10.2 Improving the availability and accuracy of monitoring information

Much of the lack of vital information is due to the nature of the context of the emergency. However, there are measures that can be taken to increase the usefulness of monitoring for evaluation purposes. A particular feature of emergencies is the increased need for managers to constantly re-assess the situation (e.g. by updating assessment data) to determine the overall appropriateness of the operation, in addition to the more conventional monitoring function of providing information for routine management decisions (e.g. pipeline monitoring).

Particular issues that should be addressed to improve the availability of monitoring information are:

- Reaching early agreement on the key indicators to be monitored by all agencies
- Gathering baseline information prior as early as possible

- Establishing monitoring and data collection systems that facilitate cross-agency and cross-programme comparisons
- Establishing effective management of filing and information systems so that key reports and records of decisions are readily available.

6.10.3 Making evaluations useful

Making evaluations useful, relevant and timely requires a number of ingredients:

- Good evaluation planning and timing
- Making the evaluation relevant to management and user needs
- Ensuring participation and a degree of ownership of key stakeholders
- Established follow-up procedures for the use of the evaluation
- Promoting the learning aspect of the evaluation
- Presenting evaluation results in succinct formats: e.g. news briefs, 1 page abstract, powerpoint presentation, news letters etc.
- Sharing the evaluation with all relevant partners and the public.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 6

MANAGING EVALUATION

- AGREE PURPOSE OF EVALUATION
- PLAN TIME FRAME FOR EVALUATION
- PREPARE TERMS OF REFERENCE
- SELECT TEAM
- PRE-MISSION DESK REVIEW
- CONDUCT OF EVALUATION MISSION
- DEVELOPING DRAFT FINDINGS
- PREPARATION OF EVALUATION REPORT
- REVIEW OF EVALUATION REPORT
- DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS•

7. Baseline Studies

7.1 What is a Baseline Study?

A baseline study is the analysis and description of a situation prior to an operation/programme, against which change can be assessed or comparisons made. The baseline study provides a benchmark (a snapshot of the current situation) for operation objectives, focusing mainly on the variables that the operation is intended to affect – food security, nutritional status, asset ownership, access to schooling, etc. – which are summarised by the indicators contained in the logframe. The baseline provides the basis for monitoring and evaluation, with a follow-up study at a later point (typically at mid-term or completion of the operation) to facilitate measurement of the outcomes and impact of an operation. The baseline study is therefore a vital tool for Results-Based Management – without baseline data, it is difficult if not impossible to determine what difference the operation has made.

Figure 7.1: Baseline and follow-up studies in the project cycle

There are a number of principles to be applied in relation to baseline studies:

- Baseline data is always required for every type of operation. Without baseline data and some form of follow-up study, results cannot be determined with any confidence.
- Secondary sources should always be the first point of reference when assembling baseline data. If possible, baseline data should be collected from existing sources – baseline studies can be expensive and time consuming, and there are many examples of studies that provided late, incomplete or unreliable data.
- Plans for baseline data collection should include provision for a follow-up study, which would use the same methods and study the same sample or sites in order to generate comparative data.

The baseline data should ideally be collected before the start of project implementation. If this is the case, then baseline data can assist in the planning process, enabling planners to fine-tune the operation design. If baseline data are collected after the start of implementation (as is often the case with emergency operations), this may not be a problem provided that the data reflect the situation prior to the commencement of the operation's main activities.

There are three common problems with baseline studies:

- They attempt to collect too much data, giving rise to difficulties in analysing all of the data, (with implications for cost-effectiveness and for the timeliness of reporting) and in making full use of the analysis that results. It is therefore essential to be rigorous in determining what baseline data are required.

- Baselines are often executed after the operation has started. While this may not necessarily be of concern if no activities have yet got underway, it is preferable to ensure that the baseline has been organised in advance and possibly even included as a step in the approval process.
- Baselines are conducted without a plan or budget for the necessary follow-up study. While baseline data are useful for planning purposes, they also play a major role in evaluation for which some form of follow-up study is required to compare the before and after situations. For comparability of data, there must be consistency in the methods and tools used. It is important, therefore, that the baseline study clearly records how the data were collected and analysed. It is quite likely that staff will have changed in the two to three years since the baseline was conducted, and they need good reference material in order to be able to reconstruct a comparable data set.

7.2 Baseline Studies for Different Types of Situations

A fundamental aspect that concerns International Federation and National Societies when designing baseline studies is the nature of the operation for which a baseline is required. Table 7.1 contrasts the context and implications for baseline data collection for development activities and for emergency operations and development operations.

Table 7.1: Characteristics and implications for baseline data collection for different types of operation

Type of operation:	**Development**	**Emergency & Development Operation**
Characteristics:	• Development operations have a planning horizon and the project cycle process creates potential space for baseline and follow-up studies. • Working with development partners can mean a wider span of interest in baseline data and support with resources for data collection.	• The pace of work means that assessment, baseline analysis, and operation start-up are all going on at the same time. • The use of assessment data is likely to be an important component of the baseline.
Implications for baseline studies:	o More time is available to collect good quality data and develop staff capacity.	o Data collection is likely to favour rapid methods that can produce quick results, even if they are less precise.

If the operation is an expansion or extension of a previous one, there is likely to be a significant amount of data already available – from monitoring and assessment; from a terminal evaluation; or from a follow-up study to a previous baseline. Under such circumstances, the available data should be carefully scrutinised to determine what could be used to construct the new baseline. The normal principles apply for verification of the accuracy and reliability of secondary data (see Module 8.3: Using Secondary Data).

With the advent of national programmes for poverty reduction, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs), many countries have embarked on processes to analysis and quantify the extent of poverty against criteria drawn from the international development goals and targets (see OECD Development Goals for 2015). In many countries, UNDP has a leading role in the process of poverty monitoring and there are structured programmes of national surveys designed to monitor poverty and welfare. In such a country, poverty indicators, combined with food security indicators, might be able to substitute for all or part of the baseline information required. The main concern would be to find out if data are available for the specific area of the project or for the defined target group.

These factors discussed above are summarised in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Factors and implications for baseline studies

Factor	Implication for baseline
Development operation	Schedule in the project cycle process
Emergency, Relief & Recovery Operations	Draw on assessment data, use rapid techniques, upgrade through monitoring
Expansion/ extension	Use evaluation or monitoring results to help construct the baseline
Community development	Plan for rolling baselines through community plans
PRSP countries	Make use of secondary data on poverty and welfare

7.3 Planning and Managing a Baseline Study

The basic steps in planning and managing a baseline study are set out below, and are elaborated in the following sections:

1. Decide if a baseline *survey* is required
2. Decide who will undertake the baseline study
3. Decide on the objectives for the study
4. Decide on timing
5. Identify questions and topics to be covered by the study
6. Select units of study (e.g. households; schools; communities; etc.)
7. Decide on using a comparison group
8. Control for the 'year effect'
9. Identify the secondary data to be used
10. Choose primary data collection techniques
11. Select the sample, or sites to be visited
12. Prepare the workplan and budget

7.3.1 Is a baseline *survey* required?

Baseline *data* are always required, but it will not always be necessary to conduct a baseline survey. It is possible that the necessary benchmark data will have been collected by VAM, as part of the appraisal mission, during the assessment for an emergency operation, or during an evaluation of a previous phase.

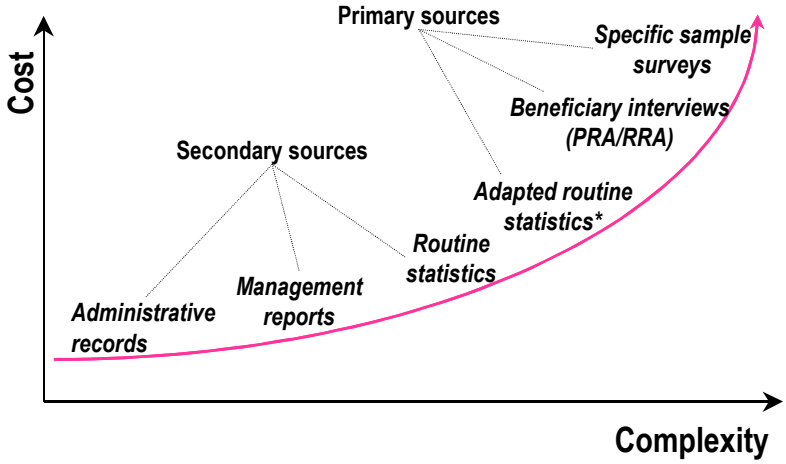
The basic question to be answered is therefore *do sufficient secondary data exist to describe the situation before or at the start of implementation, based on the indicators established for the operation's goal and objectives?*

If the answer to this question is *Yes*, then it is better to make use of existing data rather than to commission a baseline survey. This is because primary data collection is a complex activity requiring a high level of skill and is very demanding on management resources. Wherever possible, it is preferable to use secondary data collected by the government, an implementing partner or another agency, as long as the topic is relevant to the proposed operation, and the coverage identifies the specific beneficiary group.

Particularly in the case of extensions to an existing operation, a considerable amount of data may already exist about the target groups. Using a range of beneficiary records, past reports and general statistics from government and non-government sources, an accurate and up-to-date picture of the population at risk may be assembled at minimal cost. During the closing months of a past phase, evaluations or routine monitoring may define in detail the latest circumstances of the population, and in so doing lay the groundwork for the new phase of the operation.

If the answer is *No*, you will need to consider undertaking a baseline survey. See Module 8.2.4. What is a sample survey?

Figure 7.2: The relationship between cost and complexity of data collection and analysis



*Adapted routine statistics refer to statistics accessed from routine data collection activities, but then subsequently re-analysed for the purposes of the operation baseline.

7.3.2 Who will undertake the baseline study?

Undertaking a baseline study requires considerable skills in data collection techniques (for example, in sampling and surveys, or in rapid and participatory techniques), field management, and analysis and report writing.

An important step early on in the design is to consider what resources and skills are available, either within the organisation (International Federation and National Societies, government or the implementing partners) or from elsewhere (for example, through consultancy firms, university departments, or other independent organisations). The availability of the necessary expertise, its cost, and the resources available, will be major considerations in decisions on the duration and complexity of the study. Take the time to identify what options exist:

- What capacity exists among International Federation and National Societies staff to design and manage the study?
- Where will the necessary expertise come from – government, implementing partners or external consultants? Will additional training be required?
- Does the country delegation have funds available? Are there other funding sources?
- Does the National Statistical Bureau or any university conduct commissioned studies?
- What private companies or NGOs exist that provide relevant expertise, and could design and manage the study?

7.3.3 Deciding on the objectives of the study

Write down a clear statement about the objective of the study. Agree on this statement with partners and with those who are implementing the study.

Examples

- To collect information about the extent and distribution of food insecure households in the target area.
- To identify the current enrolment, attendance and learning achievements of primary school-age children in the target area.

7.3.4 Decide on timing

Do the data have to apply to a specific period of time before the operation, or does the timing not matter very much?

Example

- The operation supports diversification of livelihoods in the programme area. Data from a household survey collected within 5 years before the operation starts are available. These are considered adequate because there have been few other development activities in the area in recent years.

7.3.5 Identify the questions and topics to be covered in the study

Make a list of the topics and specific questions for which data are needed. It is vital that the scope of the study is directly linked to baseline data requirements – the main sources for this are the approval document and the logframe. All too often, additional data requirements are added as the study design evolves – **all data requirements must be justified in relation to the operation's objectives and indicators, and key aspects of the operational context.**

Identify who the beneficiaries are: are they children at school, nursing mothers, farm families or specific groups such as female members of a producer cooperative?

Examples

- In a school feeding operation, the information that is required concerns the proportion of children by sex who are registered at school, who attend for more than X% of days, and who pass their grade examination. Other information consists of the numbers of basic facilities at each school: desks, chairs, textbooks, writing books, and teachers. The operation aims to increase the proportion of girl students, so a further item of information is the percentages of adult females and of adult males who support education for girls.
- In a food for asset operation, the information that is required concerns the area of rainfed land that is in need of rehabilitation, the area of irrigated land affected by salinisation and the number of households whose cultivation is mostly or totally in degraded areas.
- In a sustainable livelihoods operation, the information that is required is the number of months for which households by socio-economic characteristic (ethnic group, female headed, family member with a disability) can feed themselves from their own resources. Information is also required about access to and participation in other off-farm sources of employment and income-earning activity.

7.3.6 Select the units of study

It is necessary to identify the people or organisations for which information is required. These are known as 'units of study' for any primary or secondary data collection.

Examples

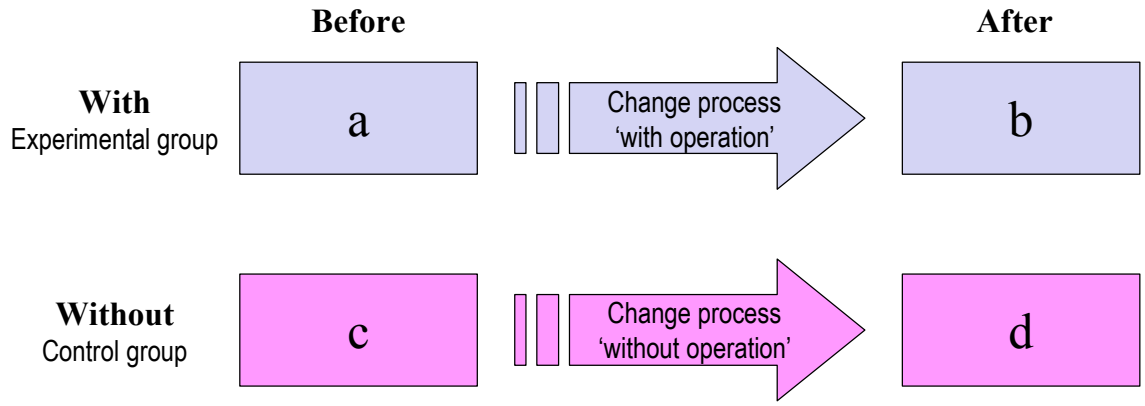
- The units of study for the education operation are girls and boys, and their mothers and fathers; and for the school assets, the school or possibly the classroom.
- For the asset creation operation the units of study are rainfed land, irrigated land and farm families.
- For the sustainable livelihoods operation the units of study are households and individual household members (probably adult members).

7.3.7 Decide on using a comparison group

A baseline study provides an analysis and description of a situation prior to an operation, with a view to conducting a follow-up study enabling comparisons to be made *before* and *after* the operation has been implemented. However, there may well be difficulties in attributing any changes that have occurred due to the effects of the operation. Maybe the changes would have occurred anyway – due to government policy, the diffusion of technology in the area, or other reasons.

The use of comparison groups – units of study that lie outside the scope of the operation – provides a basis for making a *with and without* comparison, as well as *before and after*. As Figure 7.3 illustrates, the changes that occur in a→b are compared to those that occur in c→d, with the difference being attributed to the operation.

Figure 7.3: Using comparison groups



There are two key issues to address in deciding whether to include a comparison group in the sample:

- Can units of study be found that sufficiently match the characteristics of the target population (experimental group)?
- Are there sufficient resources available to expand the sample size to include a comparison group?

For a valid comparison to be made between the target population and the comparison group, they must exhibit sufficient similarity on key 'influencing' characteristics (a process known as 'matching'). Otherwise, any changes observed between the two groups in the "after" situation may simply be the result of their pre-existing differences. In practice, a perfect match is impossible and a judgement must be made about what characteristics constitute an adequate

match. A simple example of such a compromise for a school feeding baseline study would be to select schools in similar agro-economic zones.

The use of a comparison group requires the allocation of a proportion of the available survey resources to this group. For statistically significant results, the comparison group should be of comparable size to the target population. This is likely to mean that the survey will be considerably more expensive. The use of a comparison group (if carried out as part of a well-designed survey) will always provide a better basis for attribution of change, so the additional costs need to be weighed up against the benefits gained from the improved ability to attribute change to the operation.

7.3.8 Control for the 'year effect'

To what extent might the baseline data be susceptible to the conditions of a specific year or season? For example, data about coping under vulnerable conditions might need to take into account whether the years before the operation were 'crisis' years or normal years.

Examples

- For a school-feeding project in rural areas, enrolment is likely to be influenced by cycles of agricultural activity, which are in turn influenced by climatic conditions. Enrolment should therefore be estimated against both recent years and conditions under a crisis year.
- For an asset creation project, data from any of recent years will be suitable, as the desired change to be generated is a simple increase in asset ownership.
- In food assessment, seasonality can distort.

7.3.9 Identify the secondary data to be used

Having identified the timing, topics, units of study and year effect, you can now ask if existing secondary data provide an adequate baseline.

Examples

- Data on school attendance and performance are available from records kept by the Ministry of Education. There are no existing data about the opinions of parents about education of females.
- A survey five years ago by the Ministry of Soil Conservation mapped and classified land that was degraded in various ways. Although the data are old they are available for the target area and there has not been any land development in the area in recent years.
- Information about food security was collected by a national household survey three years ago, but the estimates are only available at the regional level. There are no data about income-earning opportunities.

For more guidance on using secondary data, go to Module 8.3: Using Secondary Data.

7.3.10 Choose primary data collection techniques

Once it is determined that primary data are required, a choice needs to be made about the technique for data collection.

There is a trade-off between the costs, speed of collection and speed of analysis according to the technique selected, but all are skill-intensive. There are no short cuts or easy options to good quality data. As is shown in Figure 7.2, it has been noted that a sample survey is the most expensive technique. Particular issues to consider before selecting this method are:

- the existence of a sampling frame (the listing of all units of study from which the sample will be drawn such as households, schools, villages). If no sampling frame exists, or if it is questionable (for example, the household listing from a census may be significantly out of date), then it will require significant investment to construct a new one; and
- the time, resources and skills required for data entry and processing, and statistical analysis.

Guidance for data collection techniques

Few studies make use of a single technique: participatory surveys often include questionnaires for individual respondents; group meetings are frequently followed by individual interviews; land can be accurately measured for area whilst production is estimated from farmers' memories. The maxim is to choose the right tool for the job. For example:

- If the need is for data that are very precise about measurements, such as energy intake for food deficit, individual interviews and exact questions or a specific measurement technique must be used.
- If the need is for estimates about people's opinions or perceptions, and broad figures such as 25% of households feed themselves for 3 months or less will suffice, data from focus group meetings and open discussions will be acceptable.
- As a general guide for most baseline studies, participatory techniques that are well structured and for which the data collection is thoroughly documented will suffice for most International Federation and National Societies operations. This is especially the case in situations where secondary data about poverty and welfare are also available.

More details on primary data collection methods are provided in Module 8.2: Data Collection Tools.

7.3.11 Select the sample or sites to be visited

If primary baseline data are to be collected, consider how large the sample needs to be.

Guidance

- Estimation of sample size is a skilled task and for any formal questionnaire-based sample survey or large-scale study professional advice should be sought.
- A number of rules of thumb can be employed. In order to have enough data about units of study so that results can be reported for a specific location or facility, a

minimum of 30 units should be interviewed. For example, 30 children at a school, 30 mothers attending a post-natal clinic.

- To make comparisons between locations or facilities such as rural/urban; or one school and another, a larger sample, between 60 and 100 will be better.
- For units of study such as communities, where comparisons need to be made between districts and types of operation such as irrigation development or access roads, no fewer than 5 communities should be selected in each category (5 in district 1, irrigation; 5 in district 1, access road; 5 in district 2, irrigation; 5 in district 2, access road, etc.)
- Informal sampling is often used to overcome possible selection bias. For example, on a visit to a village, enquire at the 5th, 10th, 15th etc. houses moving north from the village centre, or from where the vehicle is parked. In meetings, ask questions in quadrants around the group. In a market, sample traders by walking a transect across the market and stopping at every n th trader.
- Typically, a confidence interval of 95% is used to ensure that sampling error is acceptable. But non-sampling error (eg. measurement error) can often be a more significant factor in determining the overall accuracy and precision of data. A high confidence interval implies a relatively large sample size, with all the costs that this entails. It may therefore be a sensible trade-off to reduce the required confidence interval (to say, 80%), leading to a smaller sample size, and then to invest some of the savings in more rigorous training of field staff in order to reduce the risk of non-sampling error.
- Including comparison groups in the sample is a means of inferring causality. Comparison groups are units of study that are not involved in or affected by the operation, and which may provide a *with and without* comparison with beneficiaries. The challenge is to identify units of study which exhibit the same characteristics as those involved in the operation, in order that the comparison is relevant.
- Site selection is critical for PRA/RRA, because it is very likely that only a small number can be visited given the time and labour intensity of each visit. The number of sites that can be studied will depend on the availability of skilled team members, and the amount of time that they can spend in the field. In any case, the principle of optimal ignorance means that it is not the number of sites that are visited that is important, but how representative the sites are. For detailed guidance on site selection for RRA/PRA, see the Catholic Relief Services PRA Manual.

7.3.12 Prepare the workplan and budget

Once the details of the baseline study have been decided, they should be summarised in a study plan and costed in a budget.

Table 7.3: Example of contents for a baseline study workplan

Summary (to include a timetable/Gantt chart for the study)
Background and purpose of study
Summary of operation objectives, indicators and target beneficiaries
Objectives of study
Questions and topics to be studied
Review of existing data sources
Data collection

Units of study Use of secondary data Data collection techniques Sample/site selection **Design** Questionnaire or checklist design Arrangements for testing **Fieldwork** The fieldwork team Training required Timetable for fieldwork Arrangements for supervision Arrangements for data checking and filing **Data processing and analysis** Arrangements for data processing and analysis Proposed data tables Training required **Reporting and feedback** Proposed format of study report Arrangements for presentation of findings **Annexes**: Budget Operation design document

Although it is not possible to provide clear guidance on how much to spend on collecting primary baseline data, the following list of items may need to be incorporated into the budget for baseline data collection:

Table 7.4: Possible items for inclusion in the budget for a baseline study

Budget heading	List of possible budget items
Personnel	Staff salaries and allowances For contracted consultants For field staff involved in data collection For field supervisors For data entry and processing staff For drivers
Training	Hire of training venue and accommodation Transport to field sites for practical training exercises Hire of training equipment Food and beverages Training materials and stationery
Transport	Vehicle operating expenses Any allowances for maintenance of motorbikes or bicycles purchased specifically for the study
Equipment	Measuring equipment (eg. weighing scales, measuring tapes, etc.) Field staff equipment (eg. clipboards, calculators, etc.) Computer equipment (eg. hardware, software, consumables) Transport (eg. bicycles or motorcycles)
Stationery	Paper for questionnaires or checklists (including spares) Manuals (eg. for data collection, data entry, etc.) Reporting proformas for monitoring of data collection Pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, rulers, etc. Report production

Budget heading	List of possible budget items
Publicity	Posters Leaflets Hire of rooms for meetings Radio announcements Dissemination of study results (eg. through a workshop)
Contingency	To allow for unexpected problems and delays during fieldwork

7.4 How to Analyse and Report the Data

Whatever approach is taken, the results of the baseline data collection and analysis must be presented in a readable and well-structured report. Excessive detail can confuse and detract from the main findings. Material that is badly written or organised means the value of the data is likely to be lost to the operation's management and to those carrying out M&E work later on.

7.4.1 Presentation is vital

The baseline report should first provide a short summary of findings for wide distribution to all parties concerned. This should consist of one or two pages of highlighted points illustrated with key statistics describing the state of the main indicators. A more detailed main report should be prepared that has a well structured table of contents to guide the reader, and uses graphs and tables sparingly to improve understanding. Key data should be presented in summary tables in the body of the report. More detailed data should be annexed or made available upon request to those who need it, provided that confidentiality is respected. Care should be taken to note the likely errors and omissions in the baseline results, and to note the level of significance of any formal survey findings. The contributions of all those involved in the baseline work should be properly acknowledged.

7.4.2 Plan for links with monitoring

Recommendations should be made for the monitoring plan during the operation's life span, and what arrangements would be advisable for data collection following the approaches used in the baseline exercise. Based on the baseline experience, what can and cannot be measured at the least cost? What are the recommendations regarding the most sensitive indicators of change related to the type of operation chosen?

7.4.3 Using the results

Even if the survey work was not done in a very participatory way, the discussion and use of the findings can be. Thus the use of workshops, field meetings and local media can serve to validate and qualify the baseline results and ensure greater relevance. In short, the baseline should be used as a planning tool, and the results fed into a revision of the logframe and used to formulate revised work plans for the first year of operations.

7.4.4 Preparing the report

The primary function of a baseline study report is to present data that will be used for comparison in the future. The report can be less analytical than for a planning or diagnostic survey, though some analysis will be required. In many situations the baseline study will be contracted to a third party. The arrangements for reporting should be specified along the following lines:

- The results for all variables specified under the study should be presented for each administrative or other area of operation and according to the defined units of study.
- All data should be presented in basic tables that contain a suitable estimate of central tendency (mean or median for cardinal data, mode for ordinal or nominal data)

together with an appropriate presentation of distribution (a frequency distribution for ordinal or nominal data, standard deviation for the arithmetic mean, inter-quartile range for the medians).

- The organisation implementing the study and collecting the data should be asked to specify data tables prior to starting the work. The more detail given about these, the more likely the study will meet its objectives.

The report will need to be structured to suit the specific circumstances of the operation, but some general guidance is given in Table 7.5:

Table 7.5: Example table of contents for a baseline study report

Summary (to include a table of baseline values of key indicators)
Study design
Background and purpose of the study
Objectives
Scope of questions and topics
Units of study
Use of secondary data
Choice of technique
Findings
Population (estimates of population of interest in the target areas)
Target beneficiaries (estimates of relevant target groups)
Key indicators of performance relevant to the operation (structured according to the logframe structure: involvement of target groups in activities; data related to outputs; data related to outcomes)
Comparisons with data from other sources or in previous years
Comparisons with data from control group (if included in sample)
Implications for monitoring and evaluation
Issues related to data collection methodology
Data Annexes
Tables of summarised data according to geographical or other relevant units of study

7.5 Next Steps – Follow-up Surveys for Monitoring and Evaluation

The purpose of collecting baseline information is to prepare the ground for subsequent monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, the baseline report should identify appropriate methods and approaches for monitoring and evaluation. A simple example to illustrate this linkage is that of nutritional status. An Emergency Food Needs Assessment might include a nutritional survey to provide a baseline on the nutritional status of the population. It is important during the design of the baseline nutritional survey to consider what anthropometrical techniques could be used that would also be practical techniques for incorporation into the operation's monitoring system. By using the same technique (for example, measuring the upper arm circumference of under-fives) in both the baseline nutrition survey and the monitoring system, the operation is therefore able to more effectively track progress towards the achievement of objectives.

Thought should also be given to whether a follow-up study is necessary and when the appropriate timing may be. If a further phase of the operation is envisaged, it may be necessary to conduct a follow-up study while the operation is still ongoing – in preparation for the planning or appraisal mission for the next phase, for example. For operations that are terminating, the follow-up study should be conducted immediately before or after termination, in order that its full impact can be assessed. The data generated by the follow-up study is then compared directly with baseline data to identify differences – what was the situation like then; what is it like now.

The data required for the "before" and "after" comparison (or "with" and "without" if a comparison group is used) may be generated by the monitoring system, in which case the cost of the follow-up study will be considerably less than for the initial baseline study. However, if this is not the case, then the follow-up study is likely to have a similar cost to the baseline study in real terms.

For emergency operations and development operations, because the baseline data will generally be derived from assessments, so the follow-up data can be derived from re-assessments. At the end of the operation, there may still be a need to conduct a final assessment as part of the evaluation to determine whether objectives have been achieved.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 7

STUDY DESIGN

- BACKGROUND TO STUDY
- DATA COLLECTION
- RESEARCH DESIGN
- FIELD WORK
- DATA PROCESSING
- REPORTING AND FEEDBACK

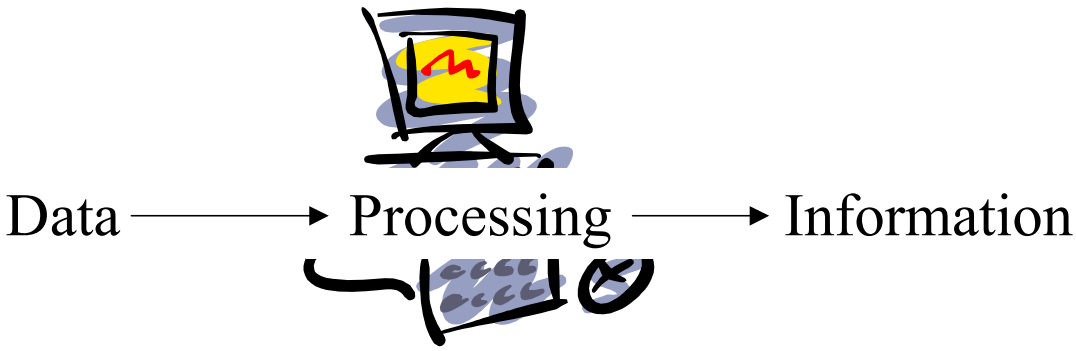
8. Tools for Data Collection

This module introduces some basic concepts and definitions relating to data collection and analysis, and provides an overview of the tools and methods available. Links are provided to key reference materials available both within International Federation and National Societies and elsewhere, where the detailed 'how to…' for each tool can be found.

8.1 Concepts and Definitions

8.1.1 Data, information and quality

Data is a term given to raw facts or figures, which alone are of little value. These can be anything from a date or number, to a name or event. We are so used to associating facts that it is often difficult to comprehend data at its lowest level. It may become clearer if you consider the following example. We might have two pieces of data, Nairobi (a name) and 652467 (a number). Each item on its own is purely data and means little to us. However, together, Nairobi 652467 is more useful as it associates the two items and with a little deduction we can assume that it is a telephone number in Kenya. This would be of more use to us if we also had data concerning the address and who lived there. Without these data this information has very little value – information is data that is useful because it has relevance and meaning, which results from processing.



Information aims to increase the user's knowledge and reduce the user's uncertainty and can only achieve this if it is of quality. The word 'quality' refers here to the characteristics that information should exhibit if it is to be useful for rational and effective decision-making:

- **Conciseness** – Information should be refined and summarised in a manner that gives the user precisely what is required, no more and no less. Every superfluous character means extra storage, more processing, extra assimilation and hence poorer decisions.
- **Completeness** – All information should be presented in one document where possible to prevent time loss and the misinterpretation of interrelated facts.
- **Accuracy/Reliability** – Supplied information should be sufficiently accurate for the purpose for which it is intended. Raising the level of accuracy raises costs whilst not always raising the value of the information. For example, knowing that average family size is 4.7 is no more useful than knowing that average family size is between 4 and 5.
- **Timeliness** – No matter how accurate, information which is too late to be used is of no value. A compromise between speed and accuracy must be established if the desired accuracy cannot be achieved in the time available.

- **Good presentation** – Information should be open to speedy assimilation by the user. Poor presentation can often obscure the message that the information is intended to convey. The use of graphs, charts and other diagrams helps make information more digestible, but care must be taken to ensure that each one conveys its intended message.
- **Relevance** – Only information that is of importance to the decisions being taken is of value. Failure to relate the information provided to decision-making requirements (e.g. by providing the wrong information, too great a volume, or an inappropriate level of detail) will undermine its value.
- **Cost effectiveness** – As a resource in a decision-making process, information has both a cost and a value. Costs in terms of the resources expended to collect and process the data, and value in terms of the greater returns associated with a correct decision made on the basis of findings.

8.1.2 Accuracy, precision and bias

Consider a food aid monitor who wishes to determine the price of maize in local markets. He records the price for a weighed quantity of maize from a sample of sellers in a sample of local markets. If the range of prices recorded is wide, then the estimated average price is not likely to be *precise*. If the weighing scales used are wrongly calibrated, then the estimate will not be *accurate*. Inaccurate data would lead to *bias* in the results; a situation that could be further exacerbated if an unrepresentative sample of market sites was selected – e.g. larger villages only, where the price might be higher than in more remote areas.

- **Precision** refers to the degree of confidence with which the study estimate represents the actual population value. It is used within statistics to refer to the closeness of a sample estimate to the mean of the sampling distribution.
- **Accuracy** refers to how closely the study estimate matches the actual situation among the population as a whole. It is used within statistics to refer to how closely the sample estimate matches the true population value.
- **Bias** means that a situation is represented from a particular angle. It is used within statistics to refer to the difference between the mean of the sample distribution of an estimator, and the true population value.

No research can be completely without bias, however scientific the methods used. The process of designing, conducting a data collection exercise, and of analysing data will be influenced by the experience, perceptions and assumptions of the researcher, and by the tools and approaches used for sampling and data collection.

Bias may arise at any or all of the three stages of design, data collection and analysis

- **Design bias** – regardless of the data collection tools used (formal survey, rapid or participatory enquiry), the sample selected may not represent the population it claims to represent. For example, men may have a different view to women; roadside communities may have different problems to remote communities; etc.
- **Measurement bias** – questions may be asked in a leading way, direct measurement may be done incorrectly; the attitudes of the interviewer may influence how questions are asked and responses are recorded.

- **Analytical bias** – data may not be disaggregated appropriately; different ways of analysing the data might generate different results.

In choosing which data collection methods to use, there is often a trade-off to be made between accuracy and precision. But at all times and for all methods, avoiding or dealing with bias is a requirement. For a more detailed explanation of bias in the context of rapid and participatory appraisal, see Methodological Principles in Volume I, Part II of the CRS PRA Manual.

8.1.3 Quantitative and qualitative methods

Quantitative data exist as numbers – *259 girls graduated from grade 8* – and quantitative methods help to answer questions such as *who*, *how much*, *how many*. Statistical analysis can be used to provide precise estimates for study variables, such as frequencies, averages, ranges, etc. **Qualitative** data exist as words – *the girl/respondent stated that the ration she received was monotonous, but that it was more than she would have received had she stayed at home* – and qualitative methods help to answer questions such as *how* and *why*. The focus is more on explaining meanings, processes, reasons and explanations.

Perhaps confusingly, qualitative methods may generate quantitative data. For example, during a group interview to assess women's role in food distribution committees for a school feeding programme, the majority of women expressed the view that decisions were in line with their own perception of food distribution priorities (qualitative information). When asked to rate the extent of their influence against a predefined scale, 67% of women rated their influence as 'effective' (quantitative information).

Quantitative techniques are useful in the following situations:

- When 'accurate' and 'precise' data are required
- When estimates will be used to generalise the behaviour of the whole population (e.g. through the use of confidence intervals)
- To test whether there is a statistical relationship between variables
- To produce evidence to prove that a particular problem exists, or to justify a particular strategy
- To identify the characteristics of a population (for example, during a baseline survey).

For useful material explaining quantitative techniques, see references for formal survey methods.

Qualitative techniques are useful when:

- A thorough understanding is required on a particular topic
- Information is needed on what people think about a particular situation, and what are their priorities
- Seeking to understand why people behave in a certain way
- There is a need to confirm or explain quantitative findings from a previous survey, or from secondary data

- Resources and time are in short supply.

For useful material explaining quantitative techniques, see references for rapid and participatory methods.

While quantitative and qualitative methods might appear to be at different ends of the data collection spectrum, they can in fact be complementary. For example, qualitative methods might be used to explore issues during the early stages of a longer study, enabling the researchers to understand better what questions need to be asked as part of a quantitative study. Conversely, quantitative methods might highlight particular issues, which could then be studied in more depth through the use of qualitative methods. For examples of how quantitative and qualitative indicators can be combined, see section III *Data Issues* in the International Federation and National Societies Indicator Menu.

8.1.4 Optimal ignorance

The phrase 'optimal ignorance' has come out of the development of rapid and participatory techniques, and refers to the trade-offs made between the desire for accurate and precise information, and the timeliness and cost of collection. It is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Talking to the right people** – Good information is not determined by the number of people talked to, but by the diversity of informants and their ability to represent a situation.
- **Consistency and understanding** – Confidence in the data does not come from the *amount* of data collected, but from the *consistency* of information provided by informants, and the understanding that this provides the researcher.
- **Accuracy or precision?** – We do not need to be 100% precise. Knowing that the average family size is 5.4 is probably no more helpful than knowing that it is between 5 and 6, and yet it probably required considerably more time and resources to arrive at the more precise figure.
- **Avoiding information overload** – We do not need to know everything even if it is interesting; in any case, it is impossible to know everything about people and their communities. We need to be able to understand this complexity rather than to document its characteristics.

8.2 Data Collection Tools

For specific guidance on tools suitable for emergency situations, refer to the International Federation and National Societies Emergency Field Operations Pocketbook, Chapter 2 (forthcoming)

8.2.1 What is rapid appraisal?

Rapid appraisal methods are quick, low-cost ways to gather data systematically in support of managers' information needs. They strike a balance between very informal methods, such as site visits, and highly formal methods such as sample surveys, and generate qualitative data.

Rapid appraisal shares many of the characteristics of participatory appraisal (triangulation, multi-disciplinary teams, etc.) and builds on the recognition that indigenous knowledge is a vital input to the management decision-making process. For both approaches, the role of the appraisal team as facilitator is important. The team must listen rather than tell, create learning situations rather than dictate terms and conditions, and facilitate rather than control.

Table 8.1: Strengths and limitations of rapid appraisal compared to formal methods

Strengths	Limitations
Low-cost – Typically using a smaller sample and narrower focus than a sample survey, a rapid appraisal can be conducted at a fraction of the cost of formal methods. **Quick turnaround** – Rapid appraisal methods can gather, analyse, and report relevant information to decision-makers within days or weeks. This is not possible with sample surveys. Rapid appraisal methods are advantageous to decision-makers who seldom have the option of holding up important decisions to wait for information. **In-depth analysis** – They are good at providing in-depth understanding of complex socio-economic systems or processes. Formal methods, which focus on quantifiable information, lose much in placing social and economic phenomena in context. **Flexibility** – Rapid appraisal methods allow evaluators to explore relevant new ideas and issues that may not have been anticipated in planning the study. Such changes are not possible in sample surveys once the questionnaire is designed and the survey is under way. **Accuracy** – Mini surveys, as a rapid appraisal tool, can provide accurate information from small samples, but may be subject to bias hence the need for triangulation (see 'Precision' opposite).	**Reliability and validity** – Information generated may lack reliability and validity because of informal sampling techniques, individual biases of the evaluators or interviewers, and difficulties in recording, coding, and analysing qualitative data. Techniques such as triangulation can be used to reduce bias during data collection. **Precision** – Most rapid appraisal methods generate qualitative information. Even when quantitative data is generated (e.g. by a mini-survey), it cannot be generalised with precision, because it is usually based on non-representative samples. Thus rapid appraisal may show that many women are not using a clinic, but it will not provide an estimate for the percentage of women. **Credibility** - Most decision-makers are more impressed with precise figures than qualitative descriptive statements. For example, a sample survey finding that *83 percent of local women* were satisfied with the services provided by a clinic is likely to carry more weight than the conclusion, based on key informant interviews, that *most women* interviewed seemed satisfied.

The most commonly used methods include:

- **Key informant interviews**. Involves interviews with 15 to 35 individuals selected for their knowledge and to reflect diverse views. Interviews are qualitative, in-depth and

semi-structured. Interview guides listing topics are used, but questions are framed during the interviews, using subtle probing techniques.

- **Focus groups**. Several homogeneous groups of 8 to 12 participants each discuss issues and experiences among themselves. A moderator introduces the topic, stimulates and focuses the discussion, and prevents domination of discussion by a few.
- **Community interviews**. These take place at public meetings open to all community members. Interaction is between the participants and the interviewer, who presides over the meeting and asks questions following a carefully prepared interview guide.
- **Direct observation**. Teams of observers record what they see and hear at an operation site, using a detailed observation form. Observation may be of physical surroundings or of ongoing activities, processes or discussions.
- **Mini-surveys**. Involves interviews with 25 to 50 individuals, usually selected using non-probability sampling techniques. Structured questionnaires are used that focus on a limited number of closed-ended questions. Generates quantitative data that can often be collected and analysed quickly.
- **Visualisation tools**. Involves the development of maps, diagrams, calendars, timelines and other non-verbal data recording techniques. Participants are prompted to construct visual responses to questions posed by the interviewers, for example by constructing a map of their local area. Particularly useful for obtaining local insights into issues, and for eliciting a response from individuals or groups who would normally avoid participating in a more formal discussion.

8.2.2 What is participatory appraisal?

Within International Federation and National Societies, participation is defined as ***a people-centred approach which has the highest probability of success because it offers the potential to strengthen the voice of the most vulnerable***. Participation involves women and men, allowing them to influence their food security through processes of empowerment. These processes increase knowledge and skills, and thus self-reliance. ***At a minimum, this implies consultation, knowledge exchange and equitable arrangements for sharing of benefits***.

Participation implies a change in the stance adopted by International Federation and National Societies and its implementing partners, towards the sharing of control with beneficiaries ('handing over the stick' as Robert Chambers put it), and an explicit recognition of the importance attached to the description of the *processes* used to plan and implement operations. Participatory tools are the means by which this approach can be put into practice.

Participatory appraisal is the term used to describe a process and a set of techniques for the collection and analysis of qualitative data. If a rapid appraisal is a discrete study, participatory appraisal is an extended process that can last for months or years as communities develop their own skills needed to address issues, analyse options, and carry out activities. The emphasis is often not so much on the information as it is on the process, and on seeking ways to involve the community in planning and decision-making.

The key feature of participatory tools is their emphasis on participatory decision-making – enabling beneficiaries and stakeholders to analyse their own situation, rather than have it analysed by outsiders. This does not imply the exclusion or sidelining of outsiders, rather it recognises that outsiders need to learn about situations from the 'insiders', and that insiders can analyse their own problems. The tools and approach draw on techniques developed within

fields such as applied anthropology, and provide a means of looking at the complex and inter-linked relationships and activities that exist within communities and groups.

The following bullet points summarise some key features of participatory tools, many of which are common to rapid techniques:

- **Triangulation** – This refers to the process of cross-checking information. Triangulation uses multi-disciplinary teams that include different skills, experience and viewpoints; a range of tools and techniques for data collection and analysis; and different sources of information about the same problem. In this way, the reliability and bias of findings can be assessed, and if necessary addressed.
- **Multi-disciplinary approach** – People with different skills, experience and viewpoints will look for and find different things, and the team as a whole will obtain new and deeper insights. Women should always be included on the team, as should members of the community or group in question.
- **Mixing techniques** – Using different techniques gives greater depth to the information collected. Typically the team would aim to use a mixture of interview and discussion techniques, diagrams and mapping, and direct observation.
- **Community** – Most activities are performed jointly with community or group members, or by the community or group on its own.
- **Optimal ignorance** – Adopts a 'quick and dirty' approach, balancing the degree of precision to be achieved, with the time and resources available. Unnecessary detail or accuracy should be avoided, as this increases the burden of data collection and analysis, and risks compromising the timeliness and appropriateness of findings. For more on this, see Accuracy, precision and bias.
- **Flexibility and on-the-spot analysis** – Plans and methods are semi-structured, and discussed and modified as fieldwork proceeds. The team constantly reviews and analyses its findings to decide how to continue. As understanding increases, so emerging issues and unexpected findings come more clearly into focus, and plans and methods can be revised.
- **Offsetting bias** – The team should constantly seek to identify possible sources of error and bias, and see how they influence findings. Views should be obtained from a cross-section of the community or group, including women and children and other vulnerable groups. This may require advance training in skills such as gender awareness, communicating with children, etc.

Facilitation is key to the success of participatory appraisal, and the roles played by team members are crucial. On the one hand they are central to mobilising the community's interest at the start, and to maintaining their enthusiasm throughout the exercise. But the team also represents the greatest danger to success, through the possible intrusion of outsider or disciplinary bias, or through their over-exuberance stifling community members' own initiative.

8.2.3. The Community Inventory – a practical and cost-effective data collection tool

Where resources and time for data collection are scarce, and the focus of the operation is on communities, a useful tool is the ‘community inventory’. This is a practical, cost effective approach that can be undertaken by many government staff and partner agencies such as NGOs. It records the following type of data:

- Location, population, natural and man-made assets, and access to facilities and services;
- Identification of the existence of specific groups within the community, such as the elderly, families with AIDS orphans, people of specific ethnic groups or castes, or people with low levels of well-being, and the size and characteristics of those groups;
- Opinions of groups within the community about problems and possible solutions.

A community inventory can be carried out using a participatory enquiry and in many countries there are staff of government departments, NGOs, academics or consultants, who are experienced in this

sort of work. An inventory should be undertaken by a team of two or three interviewers, who would take about two to three days per community. The specific techniques for each class of data are summarised in Table 8.3.

The results from such an inventory can be used in several ways:

- As a specific baseline for communities or villages that participate in the operation;
- As a source of information to plan the International Federation and National Societies operation and identify households or groups for targeting;
- As part of a process to build a community organisation and development plan;
- For comparison during field visits and other forms of contact with beneficiaries.

Table 8.3: Data and data sources (recommended approaches are shaded)

Data	Data sources categorised by degrees of accuracy		Comment
	Low - *Estimated* by	High - *Measured* by	
Population	Records kept by village committee or local council, updated from most recent count	Census enumeration of the community	*For most purposes, the population in broad age bands (e.g. 20-45 yrs) is adequate for operation planning & monitoring; it is desirable to have a split by sex*
Natural assets (forest land, irrigated land, fodder trees, common grazing, fuel wood, landslides, soil erosion, water sources etc.)	Size estimates & mapped location given in local units of measurement from a group meeting, checked by a transect walk through the community & against council or government records	Tape & compass survey of land area & count of trees etc.	*Local units can be quite reliable, but need to be checked for conversion to metric values*
Man-made assets (clinic, school, community centre, grain mill, bridges, market facilities etc.)	List in discussion with village committee or leaders & crosscheck visually	Not usually available	*Easy data to gain an understanding of the overall setting & well-being of the community*
Access to basic services (availability of sanitation, electricity, piped water, etc.)	List in discussion with village committee or leaders & crosscheck visually	Not usually available	*Easy data to gain an understanding of the overall setting & well-being of the community*
Access to basic services (dispensary, police, council, extension & veterinary workers, blacksmith, postal agency, savings/credit agency)	List in discussion with village committee or leaders & crosscheck visually	Not usually available	*Easy data to gain an understanding of the overall setting & well-being of the community*
Current or recent involvement with development agencies	Question recent activities from a meeting with village committee or leaders. Cross check visually with diverse social groups.	Contact local offices of agencies working in the area to enquire about activities	*It is good practice to make contact with other agencies to ensure there is no incompatibility with the work International Federation and National Societies is supporting*
Beneficiary opinions on problems & solutions	Response from group meeting of the community cross checked by follow-up meetings with members of diverse social groups	Sample survey of households	*There is always a danger that opinions reported from groups are led by an influential minority. This can be guarded against by triangulation & cross-checking*
Identification of social groups in the community	Social mapping of the village with community members	Full census enumeration of the community	*Both techniques are time-consuming; the social mapping fits well into a village transect & follows naturally from the group meetings*
Income of households	Single visit household survey with enquires about broad levels of expenditure & income	Formal, repeated visit household survey of income & expenditure	*Reliable data on incomes is very difficult to obtain. It is usually better to stick to broad estimates of improvements or deterioration rather than quantified values.*

8.2.4 What is a sample survey?

A sample survey is a study on part of a population rather than the whole of a population. It is a quantitative method for providing precise, statistical answers to carefully defined questions on topics that are well understood beforehand. The most reliable samples are drawn at random, using scientific techniques, because statistical theory enables predictions to be made about the precision of the results, and the findings can be generalised for the population from which the sample was selected.

The requirements for a formal survey include:

- Knowledge and experience in survey design, sampling and statistics
- People to collect data (field workers or enumerators) who are literate, numerate and accurate, and able to establish a rapport with respondents during interviews
- Experience of field conditions to ensure that sampling methods are practical
- Proper preparation, planning and execution which includes a pilot survey to test the questionnaire
- Proper training and supervision of field workers.

Surveys will generally use measurement techniques (e.g. measuring children's weight-for-height to determine nutritional status) or interview techniques (e.g. asking the respondent how many meals they have eaten in the last week, and what foods they ate), or a combination of the two. Findings will be based on the quantitative results, but may include the use of qualitative methods to deepen understanding of particular issues.

Surveys can be one-off events (e.g. to diagnose the causes of a particular problem), part of a programme or repeat surveys or for comparison with other surveys (e.g. before and after analysis for evaluation against a baseline). Table 8.4 sets out the strengths and weaknesses of formal sample surveys:

Table 8.4: Strengths and weaknesses of sample surveys

Strengths	Weaknesses
Surveys provide precise, statistical answers to carefully defined questions. The accuracy of results can be verified by checking the methods and statistics that were used. The use of a random sample means that people or households will be contacted from several different locations. Methods of analysis are clear and can be relatively quick, especially when carried out in the field using portable computers. The findings can give support to an argument or hypothesis by demonstrating the size and severity of a problem. Surveys allow comparisons to be made between different groups within the survey, or with other surveys which used similar methods (e.g. a baseline and follow-up study).	Considerable resources are needed – personnel, vehicles, fuel, computers, etc., making surveys expensive to carry out Surveys may take several weeks or even months to carry out Data collection can be intrusive and inconvenient to the people interviewed. Non-cooperation can be a problem and could lead to unreliable results. Surveys are often planned, and data analysed, far from the survey sites, with little or no involvement of people from the community Working with structured questionnaires hinders relaxed discussion Surveys look at pre-defined variables and often allow a limited range of responses. If poorly designed, the survey may ignore important avenues of inquiry or unexpected answers that could be crucial to the findings of the study The analysis of large amounts of numerical data is time-consuming and requires expertise. There is a danger that much of the data gathered might not be analysed or used effectively. When data collection and analysis tools are used incorrectly, the results may be invalid Surveys are designed to prove or disprove what the designers believe, so it is important to look at methods and conclusions critically.

Source: Toolkits: A Practical Guide to Assessment, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation', Save the Children Fund, 1995

Key issues in survey design are the sampling frame and sample size. The sampling frame refers to the population or universe of sampling units (households, schools, farms, children under five in a refugee camp, etc.) from which the sample will be selected. Sampling frames can be developed from existing sources (e.g. an aerial survey map) or constructed for the survey (e.g. by listing all households in the survey area). However, constructing a sampling

frame can be an expensive and time-consuming business, requiring for example a visit to every household within a district. Techniques such as multi-stage and cluster sampling can reduce this burden, and are also applicable when a complete list of sampling units is unavailable. General guidance on sample size can be found in Module 7.3: Planning and managing a baseline study. It is important to remember that it is sample size in *absolute* terms that determines the precision of the estimates gained in a sample survey, not the *sampling proportion* (e.g. 10% of all households).

8.2.5 Beneficiary Contact Monitoring (BCM) – monitoring the likelihood that objectives will be achieved

BCM is about *beneficiary access to, use of, and satisfaction with the goods and services delivered by the operation*. Implicit in the logframe is the hypothesis that ***if*** *Outputs are delivered* ***and*** *assumptions hold true,* ***then*** *the Purpose will be achieved*. BCM indicators provide information about the *likelihood* that delivery of the Outputs will lead to achievement of the Purpose, based on the following logic:

- If the target group does not have access to operation outputs, then they will not experience any benefit.
- If the target group has access, but they have chosen not to use the outputs, then they will not experience any benefit.
- If the target group is using operation outputs, but is not satisfied with the services or facilities they are receiving, then they are unlikely to use them in the longer term and therefore their experience of benefits will be limited.

BCM requires a systematic investigation of the responses of beneficiaries to operation outputs and activities. Taking account of the different groups participating (men, women, children and other vulnerable groups), the following questions should be explored:

- Is the operation reaching the targeted beneficiary groups – who has access, who does not; who is participating, who is not?
- Are the operation's outputs useful to them – food, assets, skills available through training, etc?
- Is food aid playing its intended role – how is food aid influencing the behaviour of participating beneficiaries?
- Are any beneficiary groups encountering specific problems?
- In what way do they see their lives improving as a result of the operation?

Follow-up action then takes place according to the response by beneficiaries - if the operation is going according to plan, management can continue with implementation; if problems are identified a more detailed investigation may be necessary to determine what action management needs to take.

BCM can be used in International Federation and National Societies-assisted operations at two levels:

- **Level 1** – During any regular field visits staff must meet with beneficiaries and explore their response to the operation. These interviews will become part of regular

on-site field monitoring and reporting. Level 1 monitoring should be undertaken on virtually all operations.

- **Level 2** – On operations where the need for a more detailed investigation is identified and where the resources and management capacity exist in-country, the Operational Contract or Memorandum of Understanding for the operation could include provision for specific studies. Level 2 monitoring would normally be undertaken with assistance from locally contracted experts having appropriate skills, and in close collaboration with government and with International Federation and National Societies. Unlike Level 1, its use will be restricted to selected operations.

8.2.5.1 Level 1 techniques for monitoring BCM indicators

Interviewing individuals: Qualitative interviews differ from the traditional structured interviews in which formal questionnaires are used by not being limited to a set of predetermined questions to be asked in sequence. Instead the interviewer uses a checklist of topics to guide the interview, pursuing avenues that open along the way. Initial questions usually involve informal discussions about the operation. Once the staff member has identified issues that need thorough coverage, the informal interview would be superseded by a topic-focused interview, or by a semi-structured interview with questions prepared before the interview and set out in a checklist. The checklist should probably contain no more than twenty questions, with the interview lasting no more than half an hour.

- **Informal interviews** – These aim to elicit information via conversations between interviewers and respondents. They explore, broadly, the views, experiences and values of the respondent by giving the interviewer freedom to pursue issues as they arise. In view of the interview's informal nature few notes are taken during the interview.
- **Topic-focused interviews** – These make use of an interview guide to direct the interviewer through the main topics to be covered. From this the interviewer develops his/her questions and format to fit the individual respondent. There is no time limit on the response to each topic or sub-topic and pursuit on topics of particular interest is permitted.
- **Semi-structured, open-ended interviews** – Open-ended questionnaires with lists of questions to be asked. However they differ from traditional structured interviews by having open-ended questions, which allow for expansion on the points raised; a flexible sequence of questions which allow for interviewer discretion; and leave room for additional questions to be asked.
- **Group interviews:** Interviews with individuals are not always the best approach on International Federation and National Societies operations. They are time consuming, need a large number to gain a representative picture for the operation as a whole, and for some topics interviewees may be reluctant to speak truthfully if they fear their views might be unwelcome. A group interview can overcome some of these problems. They can be used for a whole community, or for a specific set of people such as a work gang or a group of teachers or health-care professionals. The open forum will encourage some people to be more frank and honest than they would be in private, especially if supported by their colleagues.
- **Community interviews** – May involve all members of a community or village. When carefully planned, community interviews have great potential for providing insights into how members of the community view operation activities and how they see the

operation as affecting their lives. The following points should be borne in mind when planning and conducting community interviews:

- the use of structured interview guides should be standard practice.
- a few carefully selected and representative communities should be interviewed.
- interviews should be scheduled at times when the majority of people within the --community can attend; the evening is often the most convenient.
- a team of interviewers is preferable to an individual as conducting a meeting with many people and taking extensive notes is beyond most people. Planning is required, particularly in letting respondents have a fair say and not allowing the interviewers to take over.
- participation by a balanced representation of those attending is essential. Prominent individuals should not dominate.
- aggregate and community data can be gained through these interviews. Extreme caution should be taken, however, in attempting to quantify the data.
- meetings after the interview may be a forum for those who felt inhibited amongst a large group of people to discuss their thoughts.

- **Focus group interviews** – A more rigorous technique than community interviewing and as such requires both more extensive planning (e.g. careful selection of the participants according to determined criteria, even greater attention to development of topic guides, more systematic analysis of results) and specialised skills. The basic principle of the technique is using the skill of a 'neutral' moderator to stimulate exchange of ideas among a small (ideally 6-10 persons) group of selected participants. Information is thus obtained through carefully listening to the interaction among participants. The role of the moderator is to guide the discussion to cover the intended topics; he/she should not participate in the discussion as such, should not 'correct' erroneous ideas expressed, and should essentially be a neutral observer. Clearly, the success of the technique depends largely on the skill of the moderator. Members of the group should be from similar social and economic strata to ease discussion and eliminate status barriers. It may be difficult to satisfy these criteria. Selection of participants can be done via a list drawn up by several key informants. Efforts should be made to include diverse participants.

8.2.5.2 Level 2 techniques for monitoring BCM indicators

Mini-surveys: The objective is to select beneficiaries at random and use a short, simple questionnaire to record their views about operation activities. If the information is to be gathered from one, or a few, locations, it may be possible to draw a simple random sample. This technique is covered in most basic statistical texts and is capable of being used by staff on most operations.
Choice of sample size is not always straightforward and unless the staff member has had statistical training, professional help should be sought. As a working guide a sample of sixty should be selected from every location or group for which a separate response is to be calculated.

The sampled participants are then asked a few simple questions. For example:

- Is there a clinic in the village? [awareness of service]
- Do you have any children? [eligibility of user]
- Have you used the clinic? [use of service]
- If not, why not? [comment on non-use]

- Is the clinic what you want for your children? [relevance, comments]

These questions can be set out on a table so that ten or twenty people's answers can be recorded on one sheet. The survey can be administered very quickly, either by a single enumerator, or by two people working in pairs. The results are simple: percentage of people answering Yes or No, and some short comments. The results tell the operation how well people know about the day-nursery service, and what proportion of those with children have used it. Other questions could be used to ask if they have used it once, or are regular users.

If the results show a high level of awareness, and a high level of use, the operation can take this as evidence that the service is successful. If the results show the opposite, further study may be necessary to explore reasons why the nursery is not a success. This type of survey is very simple and the analysis should not attempt to go beyond simple percentage response.

8.2.6 Field visits

This sub-section explains the key issues to take into account when planning a field visit. For an introduction to field visits, see Module 2.4.2.4 Field visits – a valuable source of information.

8.2.6.1 Who should be on the field visit team?

Ensure that relevant government and implementing partner staff as well as International Federation and National Societies staff are able to participate. Good gender balance is important.

8.2.6.2 Site selection – where to go?

As resources for field visits are often limited, International Federation and National Societies and its partners should establish a two-tier strategy for field visits. Site selection will depend on number of staff, travel resources and time available.

1. **Purposive sampling:** A small number of sites for each operation should be selected for systematic, regular and repeated visits. The aim is to become sufficiently familiar with the localities and the people to be able to see and recognise progress and the changes brought about by the operation. Account should also be taken of the need to visit stores and distribution sites. Select information-rich cases purposively; specific type and number of cases selected depends on purpose and resources.
2. **Random sampling:** To validate regular field visit findings, and to provide a basis for confirming trends observed and to allow a broader picture of operation progress, additional sites should be visited in a random way. This adds credibility and reduces bias but does not allow full generalisation.

8.2.6.3 Who to meet?

- Men and women beneficiaries individually and in groups
- Community representatives, local leaders, traditional leaders
- Local government officials, district government officials
- Technical staff, site superintendents
- Donor, NGO representatives active in the operation area
- Private sector representatives (e.g. market vendors, truckers)
- International Federation and National Societies front-line staff

8.2.6.4 How to conduct the fieldwork?

- Be clear about the role of the observer.
- Be descriptive when taking notes.
- Stay open – gather different perspectives. Be opportunistic in following new leads and sampling purposefully.
- Cross-validate and triangulate by gathering different kinds of data: observation, interviews, documents, artefacts, recordings, and photographs. Use multiple and mixed methods.
- Use quotations: represent people in their own terms.
- Select key informants wisely and use them carefully.
- Build trust and rapport at the entry stage.
- Focus on pulling together a useful synthesis as fieldwork draws to a close.
- Be disciplined and conscientious in taking detailed field notes at all stages of fieldwork.
- Provide feedback as part of the verification process of the fieldwork. Observe its impact.
- Separate description from interpretation and judgement.

8.2.6.5 Why interview checklists are good practice?

- They help to ensure that key issues are covered during field monitoring visits.
- They help to ensure consistency and comparability of reporting.
- The discipline of checklists helps to institutionalise a system of monitoring that assists incoming staff to familiarise themselves with operations and thus become effective more rapidly.
- A formalised data collection and reporting system is an important ingredient of an institutional memory. Ad hoc systems tend to become very personalised and break down when the officers leave.
- The completed checklists provide raw data for subsequent analysis.

8.2.6.6 Analysing data collected using checklists

Checklist data needs to be analysed:

- For an ***individual site*** (e.g. one school in a school feeding activity)
  - to monitor changing performances over several visits
  - for discussion with local and senior staff about action that needs to be taken.

- For ***all sites*** taken together (e.g. all schools in a school feeding activity)
  - to show a comparative analysis of performance of sites under the operation

- to guide government and implementing partners in setting priorities to improve implementation
- through a summary of findings to compare results and to judge whether improvements are being made
- to assess the overall success of the operation.

Checklist analysis is likely to raise several issues that will need further investigation. When the investigation is complete, you might find that adding another question or two to the first checklist would improve the efficiency of your regular monitoring of the operation. As an operation progresses you should be able to build up a series of checklists to help your monitoring. Inevitably they will be modified as your experience of the operation grows. Do not imagine that your first attempt at producing a checklist will result in a perfect product. Be prepared to use your experience in the field to modify your checklists over time.

8.2.6.7 Reporting – how to document and use the results

After field visits, International Federation and National Societies staff should report their findings in Field Trip Reports (FTRs). Although designed for individual operations there are some features of an FTR layout that should be standard throughout International Federation and National Societies. Each field visit should result in a short to-the-point report, and should include at least the following information:

Table 8.5: Format for a Field Trip Report

Objectives of the field trip (linked to the indicators noted in M&E plan)
People and groups met and sites visited during the visit
Methods used to collect and analyse the data
Findings
Conclusions (includes analysis)
Recommendations for action by International Federation and National Societies staff, IPs and government; and names of the people responsible and the time frame for implementing these

The report should make comparisons between the most recent findings and those of earlier visits, requiring a certain degree of consistency between the different reports.

8.3 Using Secondary Data

Before using secondary data, it must be assessed for its reliability. This can be done in several ways. If it has been collected by a professional agency such as a National Statistics Office (or equivalent) or in cooperation with a donor or other international agency, it is reasonable to assume that the data are of acceptable quality.

If the source is not evidently reputable, look for the following information in the survey report:

- A discussion of how data quality was ensured during collection, including procedures for fieldwork supervision, data validation and error checking.
- A review of the collection methods used and implications for bias and non-sampling errors, with a discussion of the implications for the results.
- A description of field-validation tools such as triangulation.

Try to get hold of a copy of the questionnaire. Is it well laid-out, easy to read and a document that would inspire good performance? Was there a survey handbook or field manual? Are there clear definitions for key variables, such as the units of study or the meaning of a 'household'?

Look at the survey report. To what extent are comparisons made with other surveys? Are the findings in broad agreement? If there are divergences, are these adequately discussed and explained?

8.4 Links to Other Technical Guidance Material

Category	Links to technical guidance material	Comment
Formal surveys	**Social Survey Methods: A field guide for development workers**, Oxfam, Development Guidelines No.6 Can be ordered from: www.Oxfam.org.uk Code: 151262 Price: £9.95	Provides comprehensive guidance on study design, assembling a fieldwork team, questionnaire design, sampling, data analysis, and presentation of findings.
	Sampling Guide, produced by Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA) (1999) Available online at www.fantaproject.org/downloads/pdfs/sampling.pdf	This guide shows how to choose samples of communities, households, and/or individuals for surveys in a manner that will permit valid conclusions to be drawn as to the effectiveness of programmes. The guide emphasises the use of probability sampling methods, which are deemed essential to ensure objectivity in programme evaluations.
Rapid appraisal	Catholic Relief Services PRA Manual	Provides detailed guidance on all stages in design and conduct of rapid and participatory studies; descriptions of tools and explanations of how ton use them; case studies; and references to other useful source material.
	Rapid Appraisal Methods, edited by Krishna Kumar, 1993 (World Bank Regional and Sectoral Studies) Rapid Appraisal Methods Price: $ 22.00 ISBN: 0-8213-2523-X SKU: 12523	This book provides an overview of the origins, theory and practice of Rapid Rural Appraisal; an explanation of the main tools used; and a series of case studies illustrating how RRA has been applied in different settings.
General references	**Toolkits: A Practical Guide to Assessment, Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**, Save the Children Fund, 1995	This book provides core guidance for field workers on the principles and practice of assessment, monitoring, review and evaluation. It includes overview information on a range of tools, including PRA, surveys, and the logframe.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM MODULE 8

DATA COLLECTION

- CONCISE
- COMPLETE
- RELIABLE
- TIMELY
- RELEVANT
- COST EFFECTIVE
- WELL PRESENTED

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Monitoring and Evaluation Division

Glossary of Evaluation and Monitoring Terms

October 2002

Terms, alphabetical

Accountability
Analysis
Analytical tools
Appraisal
Assumptions
Attribution
Audit

Base-line study
Benchmark
Beneficiaries
Beneficiary contact monitoring

Comparison group
Conclusion
Connectedness

Disaggregated data

Effect
Effectiveness
Efficiency
Evaluation
Evaluation, ex-post
Evaluation, external
Evaluation, formative
Evaluation, independent
Evaluation, internal
Evaluation, joint
Evaluation, meta-
Evaluation, mid-term
Evaluation, participatory
Evaluation, portfolio
Evaluation, process
Evaluation, sector
Evaluation, self-
Evaluation, summative
Evaluation, thematic

Feedback
Finding
Focus group
Food basket monitoring
Food insecurity
Food security

Goal

Impact
Indicator
Indicator, performance
Indicator, proxy
Input

Lessons
Logframe (Logical Framework)

Monitoring

Objective
Objective, medium-term
Objective, long-term
Outcome
Outputs

Partners
Performance
Post-distribution monitoring
Purpose

Qualitative data
Quality assurance
Quantitative data

Recommendation
Relevance
Reliability
Results

Results chain

Results-based management
Review

Stakeholders
Survey
Sustainability

Target group
Terms of reference
Triangulation

Validity
Vulnerability

Monitoring and Evaluation Glossary

Accountability: Obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis a vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms.

Note: Accountability in development may refer to the obligations of partners to act according to clearly defined responsibilities, roles and performance expectations, often with respect to the prudent use of resources. For evaluators, it connotes the responsibility to provide accurate, fair and credible monitoring reports and performance assessments.

Analysis: An examination of a situation, its elements and their relations.

Analytical tools: Methods used to process and analyse information.

Appraisal: An overall assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of an International Federation and National Societies operation prior to approval for implementation.

Assumptions: Hypotheses about factors or risks which are largely outside the control of those responsible for the International Federation and National Societies operation, and which could affect its progress or success.

Attribution: The ascription of a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific operation.

Note: Attribution refers to that which should be credited for the observed changes or results achieved. It represents the extent to which observed effects can be attributed to a specific operation or to the performance of one or more partners, taking account of other interventions, (anticipated or unanticipated) confounding factors, or external shocks.

Audit: An objective and systematic review of the activities, systems, procedures, transactions and controls of an organisation, which is carried out in accordance with generally accepted common auditing standards.

Note: An audit provides feedback and recommendations to the management of

an organisation in respect of: the effective management of the organisation and the economic use (cost effectiveness) of resources; the soundness, adequacy and application of the financial and operational systems, procedures and internal controls; the compliance of financial transactions and other procedures with established rules, regulations and instructions; the regularity of the receipts, custody, expenditure, accounting and reporting of the resources of the organisation; and the conformity of expenditure with the purpose for which the funds were authorised.

Base-line study: The analysis and description of the situation prior to the start of an International Federation and National Societies operation, against which change can be assessed or comparisons made.

Note: The data collected should be disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant variables. See "disagregated data".

Benchmark: Reference point or standard against which performance or achievements can be assessed.

Beneficiaries: AN International Federation and National Societies beneficiary is a targeted person who is provided with International Federation and National Societies food.

Beneficiary contact monitoring: A systematic investigation to monitor the beneficiaries' perceptions of an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Note: A representative range of beneficiaries should be contacted (identified by sex, age or other relevant characteristics).

Comparison group: A group of individuals who are not exposed to an International Federation and National Societies operation, but who share characteristics similar to those of the target group.

Conclusion: A conclusion draws on data collected and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments. Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of an operation, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results, and more generally with regard to any other strength or weakness.

Connectedness: ensuring that activities of a short-term emergency nature are carried out in a context which takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account.

Disaggregated data: Information broken down by sex, age or other relevant variables to reveal the different needs, priorities, activities and interests of distinct groups, and their access to and control over resources, services and activities. Disaggregated data are essential for monitoring interventions and outputs in order to establish who is participating in International Federation and National Societies operations and who is benefiting from them.

Effect: Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an International Federation and National Societies operation. These changes (results) can be at the output, outcome and/or impact levels.

Effectiveness: The extent to which the operation's objectives were achieved, or expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Efficiency: A measure of how economical inputs are converted to outputs.

Evaluation: The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Note: An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons into management decision-making.

Evaluation, ex-post: The evaluation of an operation after it has been completed.

Note: It may be undertaken directly after or long after completion. The intention is to understand the factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform other International Federation and National Societies operations.

Evaluation, external: The evaluation of an operation conducted by entities and/or individuals outside of International Federation and National Societies

and its implementing partners.

Evaluation, formative: The evaluation intended to improve performance, most often conducted during the implementation of an operation.

Evaluation, independent: An evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of control by those responsible for the design and implementation of the International Federation and National Societies operation.

Evaluation, internal: The evaluation of an operation conducted by a unit and/or individuals reporting to International Federation and National Societies management.

Evaluation, joint: An evaluation in which different partners and/or donor agencies participate.

Note: There are various degrees of "jointness" depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources and combine their evaluation reporting. Joint evaluations can help overcome attribution problems in assessing the effectiveness of programs and strategies, the complementarity of efforts supported by different partners, the quality of aid co-ordination, etc.

Evaluation, meta-: An evaluation designed to aggregate findings from a series of evaluations. The term can also be used to denote the evaluation of an evaluation to judge its quality and/or assess the performance of the evaluators.

Evaluation, mid-term: An evaluation performed towards the middle of the period of implementation of an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Evaluation, participatory: An evaluation in which key stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together in designing, carrying out and interpreting an evaluation.

Evaluation, portfolio: An evaluation of a set of related International Federation and National Societies operations.

Note: In International Federation and National Societies, a portfolio includes all operations in a given country or region.

Evaluation, process: An evaluation of the internal dynamics of the implementing organisations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these.

Evaluation, sector: The evaluation of a set of projects within one country or across countries, all of which belong to a specific sector such as health, education, agriculture, transport etc.

Evaluation, self-: An evaluation planned and managed by those who are entrusted with the design and delivery of an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Note: In International Federation and National Societies, this is an internal, reflective learning exercise undertaken by country delegation staff and stakeholders, and possibly facilitated by a consultant.

Evaluation, summative: An evaluation conducted at the end of an International Federation and National Societies operation (or a phase thereof) to determine the extent to which the planned results were produced. A summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the value of the operation.

Evaluation, thematic: The evaluation of a selection of operations, all of which address a specific International Federation and National Societies priority that cuts across countries, regions, and sectors.

Feedback: The transmission of findings generated through the monitoring and evaluation process to parties for whom it is relevant and useful so as to facilitate learning. This may involve the collection and dissemination of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons from experience.

Finding: A finding is an accumulation of evidence from an assessment, review or evaluation that allows for a factual statement.

Focus group: A small, homogeneous group formed to discuss open-ended questions about a certain topic. Focus group respondents are encouraged to talk among themselves so that a discussion unfolds among the participants rather than between the evaluator/researchers and the respondents.

Food basket monitoring: The selection of a random number of families at a distribution site; their rations are weighed and the results are compared with the planned ration and the family size on the beneficiary document (e.g. ration card).

Food insecurity: When people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development, and an active and healthy life. Food insecurity may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level.

Food security: When all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.
Note: This definition includes the following three key dimensions of food security: sufficient availability of food; adequate access to food; and appropriate utilisation of food.

Goal: The highest-level result to which an International Federation and National Societies operation is intended to contribute. It is measured by impact indicators.

Impact: Positive and negative, intended or unintended long-term results produced by an International Federation and National Societies operation, either directly or indirectly. Relates to the goal level of the logframe hierarchy.

Note: See definitions for goal, results and results-chain.

Indicator: Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement or to reflect the changes connected to an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Note: Where possible and relevant, indicators should allow for the collection of disaggregated data (by sex, age and other relevant variables).

Indicator, performance: See "indicator".

Indicator, proxy: An indicator which is substituted for one that is hard to measure directly.

Input: The financial, human, and material resources required to implement the International Federation and National Societies operation.

Lessons: Generally applicable conclusions based on evaluation or review experiences with International Federation and National Societies operations or policies that extrapolate from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.

Logframe (Logical Framework): A management tool used to design projects and programmes. It involves identifying inputs, outputs, purpose (outcomes), and goal (impact), and their causal relationships, related performance indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Monitoring: A continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to inform management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing International Federation and National Societies operation of the extent of progress and achievement of results in the use of allocated funds and food aid.

Objective: The purposes and goal of an International Federation and National Societies operation, representing the desired state which the operation is intended to achieve.

Objective, medium-term: See "purpose".

Objective, long-term: See "goal".

Outcome: The medium-term results of an operation's outputs. Relates to the purpose level of the logframe hierarchy.

Outputs: The products, capital goods and services which result from an International Federation and National Societies operation; includes changes resulting from the operation which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. Relates to the output level of the logframe hierarchy.

Partners: The individuals and organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives.

Note: The concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations. Partners may include governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, universities, professional and business associations, multi-lateral organizations, private companies, etc.

Performance: The degree to which an operation or organization (International Federation and National Societies or partner) operates according to specific criteria/standards/guidelines or achieves results in accordance with stated goals or plans.

Post distribution monitoring: Information collected at the household level on the quantity of food received, the use of food aid, and its acceptability and quality.

Purpose: The improved situation that an International Federation and National Societies operation is expected to contribute significantly to if completed successfully and on time. It is measured by outcome indicators.

Qualitative data: Observations that are categorical rather than numerical, and often involve attitudes, perceptions and intentions.

Note: Where relevant and possible, data should be disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant variables.

Quality assurance: **Quality** assurance encompasses any activity that is concerned with assessing and improving the value of an operation or its compliance with given standards.

Note: Examples of quality assurance activities include appraisal, RBM, reviews during implementation, evaluations, etc. Quality assurance may also refer to the assessment of the quality of a portfolio and its effectiveness.

Quantitative data: Observations that are numerical.

Note: Where relevant and possible, data should be disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant variables.

Recommendation: Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, relevance or efficiency of an International Federation and National Societies operation; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of an International Federation and National Societies operation are consistent with beneficiaries' needs, country needs, organizational priorities, and partners' and donors' policies.

Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an operation or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.

Reliability: Consistency or dependability of data, with reference to the quality of the instruments, procedures and analyses used to collect and interpret data.

Results: The outputs, outcomes and/or impacts (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of an International Federation and National Societies operation.

Results chain: The causal sequence for an operation that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives - beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes and impacts.

Results-based management: A management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Review: An assessment of the performance of an operation, periodically or on an ad hoc basis. In International Federation and National Societies, a review is initiated and managed by the Operations Department.

Note: A review is more extensive than monitoring, but less than evaluation. An evaluation is more comprehensive, and places greater emphasis on results, relevance and sustainability.

Stakeholders: Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the operation, or its evaluation.

Survey: A data collection method that involves a planned effort to collect required data from a sample of the relevant population. The relevant population consists of people affected by the International Federation and National Societies operation (or, in the case of a control or comparison group, of people with similar characteristics).

Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from an International Federation and National Societies operation after major assistance has been completed.

Target group: The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the International Federation and National Societies operation is undertaken.

Note: Targeted individuals should be identified by sex, age and other relevant characteristics.

Terms of reference: The purpose and scope of the assessment, review or evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements, generally conveyed in a written document.

Triangulation: The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to explore, verify and substantiate an assessment.

Note: By combining multiple data-sources, methods, analyses or theories, evaluators hope to overcome the bias that comes from single informants, single-methods, single observer or single theory studies.

Validity: The extent to which the data collection strategies and instruments measure what they purport to measure.

Vulnerability: The presence of factors that place people at risk of becoming food insecure or malnourished, including those factors that affect their ability

to cope.

Note: This is the definition used by International Federation and National Societies in relation to food security. Vulnerability is a result of exposure to risk factors, and of underlying socio-economic processes, which serve to reduce the capacity of populations to cope with those risks.

Annex 1

International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Monitoring and Evaluation Division

Evaluation of support by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to the Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme (CHARP).

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

Draft 02-02-2002

1. Background

In 1990 the International Federation responded to a request from the three affected National Societies for assistance. The Federation Chernobyl Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation Programme was launched. Since 1990 the intervention has continued to be implemented through the operating National Societies of Belarus, Russian Federation and Ukraine, focussing activity at community level throughout the region affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The response by the International Community to the challenge of Chernobyl has been unique and groundbreaking. The programme is the first of its kind and has generated significant amounts of information in the course of its implementation. The intervention has been implemented over a long period of time, and in the course of the 11 years this evaluation is the fourth of its type.

More than 15 years following the disaster the consequences continue to unfold. The socio-economic context has changed in the interim with the breaking up of the "old" Soviet system. The break-up has had a dramatic effect on the access, quality and delivery of health care in the region compounded by the additional challenges resulting from the disaster. Although the radioactive fallout continues to decrease since the onset of the disaster the potential impact of exposure to radiation continues to develop and exposure to certain nucleotides continues. International institutions have set acceptable exposure criteria for people living in the affected areas. These criteria have a significant effect on local demographics and subsequently on the implementation of CHARP. Coherence and complementarity is embodied through the UN interagency task-force of which CHARP is an active member and participant.

2: Reasons for the Evaluation

The programme has been the subject of three previous interim evaluations from which recommendations emerged. The long duration of implementation has generated some interest in executing a major evaluation to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability
and impact of the intervention to date while also assessing appropriateness of designing an exit strategy.

3: Scope and Focus of the evaluation

3:1 Relevance:

- *Assess the degree of continued relevance of the initiative for the International Federation including the National Societies;*
- *Assess the role of the Federation in the process;*
- *Review the continued relevance of the intervention in so far as its current design reflects problems identified by all the stakeholders e.g. Mobile Diagnostic Laboratories, drug and vitamin provision, Psycho-Social support, training etc.;*
- *Assess whether the intervention is compatible with and reflective of IFRC policies, guidelines and standards (Gender, HIV/AIDS, Organisational Development and Capacity Building);*
- *Identify any unexpected outputs from the intervention;*
- *Suggest alternatives, adjustment or appropriate action where necessary to improve its relevance.*

3:2 Effectiveness:

- *Assess the degree to which the objectives of the intervention have been achieved;*
- *Determine the level of impact of the intervention on the demand, delivery and quality of health care to beneficiaries,*
- *Assess the impact on National Societies in terms of Training and Capacity Building;*
- *Assess the connectedness the intervention has to the host health systems, the degree of ownership and integration;*
- *Identify any constraints to the achievement of intermediate and long term objectives specifically in relation to the availability of accurate baseline information and indicators;*
- *Assess the level of coherence, complimentarity and co-operation among all stakeholders (including PNS, UN System, Governments Systems, and others) involved in the intervention;*
- *Examine the effectiveness of the working arrangements and linkages with the National Society and PNS ;*
- *Where appropriate, make recommendations on increasing the effectiveness of the intervention.*

3:3 Efficiency:

- *Examine the execution and management of the intervention and assess levels of efficiency;*
- *Examine the cost-effectiveness of the approach;*
- *Assess whether the inputs, budgets and costs for the intervention were adequate and reasonable in relation to the achievements of the intervention;*
- *Assess whether systems of financial reporting and reconciliation are appropriate;*
- *Assess the technical quality of the intervention including staffing arrangements and other support mechanisms.*

3:4 Sustainability:

- *Determine whether the intervention demonstrates financial, institutional and social sustainability particularly in terms of ongoing costs and any required capacity;*
- *Identify the factors that may influence sustainability in the short, medium and long-term;*
- *Determine the appropriateness, at this stage, of an exit strategy, reorientation or planning for future interventions.*

4 Methodology, Evaluation Team and Time Schedule

4:1 Methodology

- A critical review of IFRC/National Society documented materials including previous evaluation reports;
- An assessment of the degree to which recommendations from previous exercises have been agreed and implemented and identify unanticipated constraints to their implementation;
- Interviews and/or other approaches to a sample group of past and present programme beneficiaries selected on the basis of agreed criteria;
- Interviews and or workshops with National Society HQ and regional staff, as well as with the Federation Delegation programme team;
- Field visits to programme oblasts;

- Interviews with other key stakeholders - WHO, Ministry of Health, NGOs, UN Representatives, PNS;

4:2 Evaluation Team

The team will consist of a maximum of X participants. This will include;

- One participant nominated by each National Society as their representative;
- One representative from the Federation Secretariat Health Department;
- The team leader who will manage the process and write the report;

Potential consultants will be sought for the role(s) of the team leader and specialist in X. The team leader will write the report and have significant expertise in development initiatives preferably within the health sector(s) and specifically within an Eastern European context. Detailed knowledge of the treatment regimes for post radiation exposure will be desirable. Identification and selection of the consultant(s) will be undertaken jointly by the Evaluation Department and the Health Department in consultation with the National Society. Selection will be based on the quality of response to the TORs, availability and cost.

4:3 Time Schedule

The exercise will be implemented in April 2002. Consultant identification and selection will take place in late February. While will the schedule will seek as far as possible to facilitate the logistics, administrative needs and participation of National Societies, IFRC Secretariat PNS and other stakeholders it will be guided by the decision making process in respect of future programme activity.

5: Reporting and Feedback

The Consultant(s) will be required to produce a draft report within two weeks return from the country visit. The team will produce an *aid-memiore* for discussion at a debriefing in each region prior to departure. The final report will be presented in electronic format and will include a stand-alone executive summary. The report will be brief and concise and meet the needs of all stakeholders. Final reporting to the IFRC secretariat may also include a presentation of findings and conclusions in Geneva.

Brian Wall
Evaluation Department
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