**Guidelines for Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan)**

## Introduction

While the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) developed by the CSF-III grant beneficiaries and approved as part of the grants contract by the Contracting Authority represents a general overview of what the project intends to implement and achieve, a comprehensive M&E Plan provides the monitoring framework to **collect**, **analyse and** **aggregate** information to monitor implementation against the indicators identified in the Action’s Logframe, and **to report** on progress. Grant beneficiaries led by the Coordinator (the Lead Applicant) are expected to develop and submit their M&E Plans within three months of the signing of the contract. Below is a description of the steps involved and the contents of the M&E Plan. (A guiding non-mandatory template for the M&E Plan is attached).

## Steps in Developing the M&E Plan

1. **Draft LFM:** The grant beneficiaries through their Coordinator have already developed a Logframe as part of the Grant Contract. However, there are many indicators, mainly impact and outcome indicators, with baseline and target values yet to be determined. It is indicated in the LogFrames that these values will be determined from planned baseline surveys.
2. **Conduct Baseline Survey:** The grant beneficiaries are expected to conduct baseline surveys either through their own staff or by recruiting an individual consultant. You should follow what was planned in your Description of Action (attached as Annex I to your contract), especially the M&E arrangements to be put in place detailed under section 2.2.1. (Please also refer to the relevant budget provisions set out in Annex II of your contract). The report of this survey should determine the baseline values, mainly for impact and outcome indicators described in the current LFM as “to be determined during the baseline survey”.
3. **Determine the Target Values:** In principle, if the baseline values are not available at the contract signing, there should be no target values mentioned. Once the baseline values are determined from the baseline survey, the grant beneficiaries should determine the target values on the basis of the baseline situation.
4. **Finalize the LFM:** Once both the baseline and target values are determined for the high-level indicators, sources of verification (and assumptions if necessary) should be completed. The LFM may now be considered as complete. However, it is a live document and should be kept under review and amended accordingly. Any changes should be communicated to the EUD and TAU.
5. **Prepare the M&E Plan:** Most of the information to be included in the M&E Plan comes from the LFM. Additional parameters in the M&E Plan are (a) data description, and (b) frequency of data collection (as discussed below).

## Elements of the M&E Plan

* **Data Description**: While ‘what’ indicators will be used to monitor each level of the hierarchy in the LFM, further description on what the indicators entail should be provided so that different staff members coming in at any time will have the same understanding on what data needs to be collected, with no room for individual interpretations. What we mean by each indicator and exactly what data needs to be collected should be clearly described in this column.
* **Source of Verification**: As a rule, only one source of verification should be given for each indicator – otherwise multiple sources may result in different values. Therefore, in an effort to ensure uniformity and consistency of the data to be collected at different stages by different staff, a single, consistent, reliable and accessible source should be selected.
* **Frequency of Data Collection:** One of the principles applied in monitoring is the cost and time-efficiency of data collection. Data should be collected only when it is needed and feasible. For example, collecting data for the overall objective indicators more frequently than annually will not be feasible or cost-effective, as significant changes may not materialize over such a relatively short period. Collecting data at the lower levels of the hierarchy on results/outputs will be easier and more feasible to collect more frequently, such as quarterly or six-monthly. The M&E Plan should indicate the frequency of collection for each indicator to ensure cost and time efficiency.
* **Baseline:** Monitoring the progress of an indicator through time can only be done if there is a baseline to compare with in order to determine the level of progress. Normally the baseline figures are collected before or at the start of a programme. Depending on the availability of baseline data aligned to a specific indicator, the year of reference can be different.
* **Targets:** Targets are the desired cumulative level of achievement the programme is expected to reach by the end of the implementation period in return for the investment made. They should not be so low that they represent an injustice to the investment, nor too high to be overly ambitious and unrealistic, thereby undermining any achievements made by the intervention. While reserving the possibility to revise the targets during the mid-term review of the programme, the targets indicated in the M&E Plan are shown annually along with the final cumulative figures.
* **Assumptions**: Assumptions are necessary external conditions beyond the full control of a project’s management that must prevail in order for the project to achieve its objectives at each level of the hierarchy. They are derived from the programme’s revised LFM.

## Other points to Note re M&E

**General Conditions: Article 8 – Monitoring & Evaluation of the Action**

* Grantee must provide documents and information necessary for EU (or its agents) to undertake any evaluation or monitoring exercise
* Representatives of EU (including TAU) should be invited to participate in main M&E exercises performed by the grantee; to comment on ToR prepared for any planned evaluation before launching & to comment on draft reports before they are finalised.
* All M&E reports, including final values for each indicator in the LFM must be submitted to EUD (& TAU) with the final narrative report

**Annex I of Contract: Description of Action**

* The Grantee should follow the M&E arrangements described in detail under section 2.1.2.

**Annex VI: Narrative Reports**

* The template for Interim & Final Narrative Reports (Annex VI of the grant contract) requires grantees to report on the latest available values of LFM indicators at the time of reporting.

## M&E PLAN Template for EU-CSF III Grant Beneficiaries (with Example)[[1]](#footnote-1)

| **Hierarchy in LFM** | **Objective/ Results Statement (as in the LFM)** | **Indicators**  **(As in the LFM)** | **Data Description** | **Source of verification**  **(As in the LFM)** | **Frequency of Data Collection** | **Baseline (Year)[[2]](#footnote-2)** | **Target (Year)** | **Assumptions** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Impact**  **(Overall Objective)** | ***Example:***  *Increased Contribution of CSOs in Monitoring of National Policies* | ***Example:***  *Perception of CSOs regarding opportunities for their role in policy monitoring* | ***Example:***  *Percentage of sample CSOs that rated the availability of opportunities for policy monitoring as “satisfactory” and above* | *TAU survey report* | *Annual* | *30% (Mar. 2020)* | *45% (End 2020)*  *57% (End 2021)*  *65% (End 2022)* |  |
| ***<Insert the Impact statement>*** | *<1. Impact Indicator 1>* | *<Describe here clearly what you intend to collect>* | *<What is your source (only one) of verification, taken from the LFM>* | *Choose one <End line, Annual, Six-monthly>* | *What is the baseline value? (Indicate the year)* | *What is the target value? (Indicate the year)* | Not Applicable |
| **Outcome 1** | ***<Insert the Outcome statement>*** | *<1.1. Impact Indicator 1>* | *<Describe here clearly what you intend to collect>* | *<What is your source (only one) of verification, taken from the LFM>* | *Choose one <End line, Annual, Six-monthly>* | *What is the baseline value? (Indicate the year)* | *What is the baseline value? (Indicate the year)* | *List relevant assumptions (Ref. LFM)* |
| **Outcome 2, etc.** | *<1.2. Impact Indicator 1>* | *<Describe here clearly what you intend to collect>* | *<What is your source (only one) of verification, taken from the LFM>* | *Choose one <End line, Annual, Six-monthly>* | *What is the baseline value? (Indicate the year)* | *What is the baseline value? (Indicate the year)* |
| **Output 1.1, 1.2…2.1, etc.** | ***<Insert the Outputs>*** | *<1.1.1 Output Indicator>* | <as above> | <as above> | <as above> | <as above> | <as above> | <as above> |

1. This is not a mandatory template; it is for guidance purpose. You are encouraged to use it, but you may also modify having the overall purpose in mind. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Baseline figures for each indicator, depending on the source, might have different base years. However, they all indicate the initial status of these indicators before (or near to) the programme’s commencement to show changes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)