Monitoring Overview and Guidance

For Humanitarian Organisations



The Evaluation Partnership

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2008

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
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The design of DG ECHO-funded interventions must be context-specific and any response should be informed by locally collected information on the needs, priorities and capacities of the affected population; wherever possible this information should be disaggregated by gender. DG ECHO is putting increased emphasis on a results based approach with measurable indicators. DG ECHO fully endorses the Sphere Standards in principal and considers them as a universally recognised set of benchmarks. Indicators should be based on Sphere standards, but adapted flexibly and must take full account of the local context, including national standards.

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Note

This is the primary version of the DG ECHO Monitoring Overview and Guidance. A Word version is also available to allow easy adaptation. These documents are available on CD-ROM and as a download from the internet.

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Abbreviations

ACH	Acción Contra El Hambre (Action against Hunger)
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
ARC	Action for the Rights of Children
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund (UN)
CISP	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DFID	Department for International Development
DG ECHO	Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GBV	Gender-based violence
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Project International
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPG	Humanitarian Policy Group (ODI)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced person
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHL	International humanitarian law
IHRL	International human rights law
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN)
OVI	Objectively verifiable indicators
PAT	Participatory Assessment Techniques
PCM	Programme Cycle Management
PHP	Public Health Practices
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RTE	Real Time Evaluation
TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
TEP	The Evaluation Partnership
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UN)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (UN)
WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
WHO	World Health Organisation (UN)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background
1.2 Aim

1.1 Background

This study on monitoring methodology for humanitarian aid has produced three documents:

- Guidance on Monitoring (this document).
- Monitoring Templates (a compilation of monitoring standards and indicators).
- Monitoring Tools.

The aim of these resources is to help humanitarian organisations to monitor the different aspects of their operations.

Discussion with a wide range of humanitarian agencies for this report show that there is considerable interest in improving the ways in which monitoring is carried out. These documents will be of interest to all those involved in the delivery of humanitarian aid, but are specifically focused on agency staff involved in the management and implementation of humanitarian aid programmes and the development and use of monitoring systems at country level and below.

After this introduction, this document comprises three main sections:

Section 2: **An Introduction to Monitoring** that provides an overview of issues, definitions and constraints.

Section 3: **Implementing Participatory Monitoring** that deals in some detail with the challenge of implementing beneficiary participation in monitoring, primarily based on the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action's (ALNAP) Practitioners' Handbook on Participation by crisis-affected populations in humanitarian action (ALNAP 2003a).

Section 4: **Monitoring through the Programme Cycle** that provides guidance on monitoring through the various phases of a project with the logframe analysis as a crucial element.

Section 5: **Practical Guidance with Worked Examples** aims to help practitioners with formats and examples.

Section 6: **Conclusions**.

1.2 Aim

The overall aim of this work, as stated in the Terms of Reference (Annex 3), is to strengthen the monitoring capacity of humanitarian organisations by establishing a standard methodology for the monitoring of humanitarian aid, developed in consultation with DG ECHO's international NGO partners.

Through this work DG ECHO hopes to achieve the following objectives:

- To increase the quality and timeliness of information available to humanitarian aid decision makers, by increasing monitoring capacity in the sector;

1 Introduction

1.2 Aim
1.3 Methodology

- To promote accountability and lessons learning by reviewing experiences and evidence of the use of indicators and benchmarks and their impact on activities, and both involve reflection and learning towards improving how things are done in the future;
- To promote the monitoring process for greater transparency and thus to give all humanitarian participants an overview of a linked set of processes of cause and effect; and
- To allow more intra-sector comparisons of operations by clarifying issues and promoting the use of a standardised methodology and thus to construct a body of knowledge.

This work is part of DG ECHO's broader strategy to build capacity in the humanitarian aid sector by equipping its NGO partners with tools for their use. This work on monitoring methodology has been undertaken in conjunction with parallel work on the development of a methodology for the evaluation of humanitarian aid.

The resources produced in this work are seen by DG ECHO as tools for its partner agencies to use and adapt as appropriate, recognising that some agencies already have well-developed monitoring systems. This guidance and the tools and templates are therefore available for agencies to use and adapt as required, but are not seen as obligatory.

1.3 Methodology

The consultancy team has focused on the following major activities:

- A widespread survey of documentation relating to monitoring in both humanitarian and development contexts. Key documents are referenced in the main text by author or agency name and year of publication and listed together with other resources in Annex 1.
- Extensive consultation with a range of agencies involved in humanitarian response, including UN agencies, INGOs, major organisations of the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement, donors and independent consultants (Annex 2).
- Workshops in Copenhagen and Nairobi to discuss and test the monitoring templates & tools.
- The emphasis of this work has been on drawing on proven and reliable sources of material, rather than producing new tools and methodologies.

The DG ECHO Monitoring Review, of which this is part, was undertaken by Graham White of The Evaluation Partnership (TEP) and Peter Wiles of Transtec/Prolog Consult. It was submitted to DG ECHO in June 2008.

1 Introduction

1.4 Guide to Using the DG ECHO Monitoring Documents

1.4 Guide to Using the DG ECHO Monitoring Documents

Table 1 below gives guidance to users as to ways in which the three documents comprising this study can be utilised by both international agencies and their partner agencies in-country.

Table 1: Using the DG ECHO Monitoring Documents

User	Guidelines	Templates	Tools
Field worker	Generally field workers are implementing monitoring systems drawn up by their managers. They should be consulted in the development of these systems, along with partner agencies and beneficiaries.		
	Section 2: Brief scan Section 3: Scan Section 4: Scan Section 5: Scan and refer to as needed.	Consult and draw on those templates that are relevant, adapting to local contexts.	Use those tools that are useful, adapting to local contexts.
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	M & E officers are often responsible for drawing up monitoring systems based on programme log frames and other planning documents and should do so in consultation with field staff, partner agencies and beneficiaries. Providing training and support to field staff.		
	Section 2: Scan Sections 3, 4 & 5: Draw on in detail to develop a monitoring system.	Consult and draw on those templates that are relevant, adapting to local contexts.	Recommend and use tools as relevant, adapting to local contexts.
Programme manager	Programme managers will be responsible for ensuring that the monitoring systems and activities are adequate, appropriate and of good quality to meet accountability and programme management needs and are implemented satisfactorily. They will also be responsible for ensuring that changes in programme implementation brought about by monitoring feed back are implemented. Ensuring that staff have adequate support and training in order to carry out their monitoring functions. Providing the leadership that ensures that monitoring activities give a real voice to beneficiaries.		
	Refer to all sections to inform management decisions and processes relating to monitoring.	Consult and draw on those templates that are relevant, adapting to local contexts, particularly the cross-cutting and sectoral templates.	Recommend and use of tools as relevant, adapting to local contexts, with particular reference to the analysis tools.
Country director	Country directors will want to ensure that monitoring meets their agency standards, provides good quality and timely information that informs the strategic decisions that need to be taken about programme development. Ensure that there are adequate resources for monitoring, including staffing, budgets and training. Providing the leadership that ensures that monitoring activities give a real voice to beneficiaries.		
	Primarily Sections 2 and 6 with an overview of Sections 3 and 4.	Working knowledge, paying particular attention to the organisational templates.	Working knowledge, paying particular attention to the organisational templates.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.1 The Humanitarian Context
2.2 Why is Monitoring Important?

2.1 The Humanitarian Context

The practice of monitoring humanitarian action takes place in the overall context of humanitarian response. Some of the main processes and changes are:

- The spotlight thrown on the humanitarian 'system' through the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster and the subsequent large number of evaluations including those by the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (Telford & Cosgrave 2006).
- Humanitarian reform processes including the development of the 'cluster' approach, gearing up the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) etc.
- Efforts at improving standards and accountability (The Sphere Project; Humanitarian Accountability Project - International (HAP); People in Aid; Mango's work; Good Humanitarian Donorship).
- Standards and accountability initiatives put increasing emphasis on downward accountability to those affected by humanitarian emergencies and disasters and the genuine involvement of populations in all stages of agency responses.
- Increasing focus on cross-cutting issues such as protection.
- The development by many agencies of a rights-based approach to their work.
- Pressure on agencies for upward accountability to donors also continues.
- In the development context and to some extent in the humanitarian context there are continuing efforts by donors and implementing agencies to demonstrate how their work contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

All these factors put increasing demands on humanitarian agencies to improve the quality of their work and to demonstrate that improvement. Hence, the quality of monitoring is a crucial element in that context.

2.2 Why is Monitoring Important?

The Sphere Project Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response state that monitoring is an essential part of the Project Cycle Management (PCM) process and a vital management tool. Monitoring systems therefore should be established early in the process to continuously measure progress against objectives and to check on the continuing relevance of the programme within an evolving context (Sphere Project 2004).

According to Sphere, monitoring is therefore:

- An information gathering exercise;
- A facilitator for good project management;
- A transparent exercise, whereby all parties are aware of project progress and difficulties (if any);
- A speedy and effective way of providing brief and informative reports;
- A service provided to all stakeholders to keep them informed regarding project progress; and
- An overview of project implementation at a given point in time, which is carried out against a clear set of objective criteria.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.2 Why is Monitoring Important?
2.3 What is monitoring? How is it defined?

The Sphere Project emphasises that monitoring is not:

- A substitute for weak project management;
- An evaluation, mid-term review or financial audit; and
- A process without guidelines or clear parameters, nor an inspection with a checklist in hand.

The importance of monitoring is not always well understood. It is sometimes considered as time consuming and less useful compared to other priorities. Monitoring is often perceived as a "necessary evil" rather than an opportunity to learn and improve the quality of present and future interventions (ACH 2006).

Participative monitoring is seen as a crucial part of developing agencies' accountability to the affected populations with which they work (See Section 3).

The Sphere guidelines point out the importance of sharing monitoring information in the inter-agency coordination context:

- Systematic sharing of knowledge and information among all those involved in the response is fundamental to achieving a common understanding of problems and effective coordination among agencies.
- Monitoring and evaluation activities require close consultation and cooperation across sectors. For example, during a cholera epidemic, information should be continually shared between water and sanitation agencies and health agencies. Coordination mechanisms such as regular meetings and the use of notice boards can facilitate this exchange of information (Sphere Project 2004).

2.3 What is monitoring? How is it defined?

A wide range of definitions of monitoring exist. In the ToR for this work, DG ECHO defines monitoring as:

> *An on-going process of observing, reflecting and responding to opportunities and challenges. It is a positive tool to promote management, control and accountability. It has to promote lessons learning and feedback into the processes throughout the entire project cycle, i.e., it has to be applied in an on-going iterative manner. It has to inform all participants and promote their understanding. (By participants, it is meant those parties external and internal to the implementing NGO, external participants can be donors and aid recipients, local NGOs and sub-contractors, internal can be all levels of management and responsible officials.).*

In the broader development context, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee, (OECD/DAC) defines monitoring more tightly as:

> *A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds (OECD/DAC 2002).*

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.3 What is monitoring? How is it defined?

In 2003 ALNAP, in the humanitarian context, adopted the definition of monitoring developed by Gosling & Edwards in Save the Children UK's Toolkits (Gosling & Edwards 2003):

> *The systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of a piece of work over time … It is a basic and universal management tool for identifying the strengths and weaknesses in a programme. Its purpose is to help all the people involved make appropriate and timely decisions that will improve the quality of the work.'*

The EuropeAid Handbook for Monitors notes the very practical importance of monitoring in the ongoing life of a project:

> *Monitoring systems should therefore provide information to the right people at the right time to help them make informed decisions. Monitoring must highlight the strengths and weaknesses in project implementation, enabling managers to deal with problems, find solutions and adapt to changing circumstances in order to improve project performance. Monitoring provides an 'early warning system', which allows for timely and appropriate intervention if a project is not adhering to the plan (EuropeAid 2005).*

Two succinct examples of definition come from Mango and Tearfund respectively, the former in the financial management context and the latter in the advocacy context:

> *Monitoring involves comparing actual performance with plans to evaluate the effectiveness of plans, identify weaknesses early on and take corrective action if required (Mango 2006).*

> *Monitoring is a way of checking that you are doing what you said you were doing, and identifying and addressing problems as they arise. It helps you to understand success or failure of your (advocacy) strategy (Gordon 2002).*

A number of key characteristics of monitoring emerge from the above definitions:

- It is a systematic process.
- It is continuous.
- It includes measuring changes through pre-determined indicators.
- It also looks for changes that have not been anticipated in the project plan, including changes in context.
- It analyses qualitative as well as quantitative information.
- It is an essential management tool.
- Monitoring is a key part of an agency's accountability and learning processes.
- It enables key stakeholders to know how the work is progressing, what is working and what isn't, and whether any changes are needed in implementation or plan.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.3 What is monitoring? How is it defined?
2.4 Monitoring & Accountability to Beneficiaries

There is no essential difference between monitoring in humanitarian and development environments, except for the conditions in which monitoring activities often take place. Typically, humanitarian contexts will include some or all of the following features:

- Rapidly changing, complex situations.
- Insecurity and uncertainty for both affected populations and field workers.
- Access to areas restricted by insecurity or damaged infrastructure.
- Absence of baseline information.
- Pressure on field workers, both in work situations and from headquarters for quick responses and an adequate flow of information. The affected population and field staff may be traumatised.
- High profile media coverage can add to pressure on staff.
- Rapid changes in personnel.
- Absence of basic infrastructure (electricity etc).

The purposes and uses of monitoring, evaluation and audit need to be distinguished as in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Key features of monitoring, evaluation and audit

	Monitoring & regular review	Evaluation	Audit
Who?	Internal management responsibility – all levels	Usually incorporates external inputs (objectivity)	Incorporates external inputs
When?	Ongoing	Periodic – mid-term, completion, ex-post ongoing and upon	Ex-ante (systems reviews), completion
Why?	Check progress, take remedial action, update	Learn broad lessons applicable plans to other programmes/projects and as an input to policy review. Provide accountability	Provide assurance and accountability to stakeholders. Provide recommendations for improvement of current and future projects
Link to Logframe objective hierarchy	Inputs, activities, results	Results, purpose, overall objective (& link back to relevance)	Inputs, activities and results

Source: European Commission 2004

2.4 Monitoring & Accountability to Beneficiaries

As noted in Section 2.2 above, increasing priority is being given to improving humanitarian agencies' 'downward' accountability to affected populations, spearheaded by HAP and also emphasised in the Sphere Project minimum standards.

HAP defines accountability as the means by which power is used responsibly. HAP's definition involves taking account of the needs, concerns, capacities, and disposition of affected parties, and explaining the meaning of, and reasons for, actions and decisions. Accountability is therefore also about the right to be heard, and the duty to respond (HAP 2007).

The HAP defines the principles for humanitarian action (Box 1), with, it should be noted, Principle 5 focussing on monitoring and reporting.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.4 Monitoring & Accountability to Beneficiaries

Box 1: The HAP Principles of Accountability

1. **Commitment to humanitarian standards and rights**
   - ▲ Members state their commitment to respect and foster humanitarian standards and the rights of beneficiaries
2. **Setting standards and building capacity**
   - ▲ Members set a framework of accountability to their stakeholders
   - ▲ Members set and periodically review their standards and performance indicators, and revise them if necessary
   - ▲ Members provide appropriate training in the use and implementation of standards
3. **Communication**
   - ▲ Members inform, and consult with, stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries and staff, about the standards adopted, programmes to be undertaken and mechanisms available for addressing concerns
4. **Participation in programmes**
   - ▲ Members involve beneficiaries in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and report to them on progress, subject only to serious operational constraints
5. **Monitoring and reporting on compliance**
   - ▲ Members involve beneficiaries and staff when they monitor and revise standards
   - ▲ Members regularly monitor and evaluate compliance with standards, using robust processes
   - ▲ Members report at least annually to stakeholders, including beneficiaries, on compliance with standards. Reporting may take a variety of forms
6. **Addressing complaints**
   - ▲ Members enable beneficiaries and staff to report complaints and seek redress safely
7. **Implementing Partners**
   - ▲ Members are committed to the implementation of these principles if and when working through implementation partners

Framework of accountability includes standards, quality standards, principles, policies, guidelines, training and other capacity-building work, etc. The framework must include measurable performance indicators. Standards may be internal to the organisation or they may be collective, e.g. Sphere or People in Aid (Source: HAP 2007).

The HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management established benchmarks to which HAP-certified agencies should sign up. Within HAP Benchmark Three (Box 2) there is reference to monitoring.

Box 2: Benchmark Three

Requirement
The agency shall enable beneficiaries and their representatives to participate in programme decisions and seek their informed consent

Means of verification
1. *Demonstrate how its analysis of capacity has influenced implementation*
2. *Review the appointment process of beneficiary representatives*
3. *Review actual beneficiary input and impact on project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation*
4. *Review the process used for establishing beneficiary criteria*
5. *Review records of meetings held with beneficiary representatives*

Source: HAP 2007

The Sphere Project Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response also emphasise the participation of disaster-affected people in all parts of the programme cycle to ensure the appropriateness and quality of any disaster response.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.4 Monitoring & Accountability to Beneficiaries
2.5 Constraints on Monitoring

Sphere common standard 1: Participation - The disaster-affected population actively participates in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance programme (Sphere Project 2004).

Acción Contra El Hambre (ACH) notes that *"organisations should always remember that monitoring is also a part of their duty of accountability and transparency towards headquarters and donors, but also towards the humanitarian community and above all, towards beneficiaries and locally affected populations"* (ACH 2006).

The Good Humanitarian Donorship principles request implementing humanitarian organisations to ensure, to the greatest possible extent, adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response (Donors 2003).

However, evidence from a number of major evaluations including those of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition is that when the pressure is on during a response and when time and human resources are limited, the requirements for donor accountability tend to dominate (Telford & Cosgrave 2006).

ALNAP points out that participation in monitoring has little meaning if the population or local actors have not been involved much earlier in the project cycle. However, monitoring processes and activities can offer very important opportunities for agencies to fulfil their responsibilities of accountability to affected populations (ALNAP 2003a).

2.5 Constraints on Monitoring

Through the document review and interviews for this work, a number of problem areas in relation to monitoring have been identified.

One humanitarian agency's internal document notes:

> *Monitoring is often forgotten in emergency programmes, and insufficient time and resources dedicated to it. It is imperative to include monitoring right at the beginning of the emergency programme cycle – as a planned activity. It should be highlighted as a separate activity in the programme proposal and logical framework, and appropriately resourced in terms of human and financial resources.*

The ALNAP Review of Humanitarian Action 2003 states:

> *The research project uncovered a monitoring world that is highly fluid, with multiple definitions, approaches and opinions. While there may be substantial sector wide agreement on the meaning of the evaluation of humanitarian action, monitoring currently has more chameleon-like features. The study found uncertainty about where monitoring fits in agencies' thinking and practice, and in some cases a lack of clarity about the meaning of the term.*
>
> *Of the multiple monitoring approaches, many are overlapping. Along with each approach and each agency come monitoring guidelines and manuals. This in itself is part of the problem – each*

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.5 Constraints on Monitoring

individual agency has developed its own system and approach, leading to a lack of harmonisation, over-complexity, and multiple monitoring requirements from different donors. Given the multiple approaches as well as the different responsibilities of agency staff, the picture is one of considerable complexity. As such there seems little purpose in introducing new monitoring toolboxes onto an already creaking ship (ALNAP 2003).

One paradox found in ALNAP's research was that monitoring appears in the job descriptions of many agency staff (e.g. as many as 80 per cent in the case of UNHCR), and yet the perception of many of those interviewed, including from larger operational agencies and donors, is that monitoring is a relatively low priority *(ibid)*.

Other issues that emerge:

- Monitoring has also tended to be neglected, sometimes over-shadowed by an emphasis on evaluation.
- Monitoring, for example, remains a poor cousin of evaluation and has yet to receive equal attention from decision-makers. ALNAP secretariat staff noted that there was little follow-up to ALNAP's Review of Humanitarian Action 2003 chapter on monitoring.
- Monitoring during humanitarian responses is often limited to looking at outputs in order to satisfy minimum reporting requirements for donors.
- Monitoring is typically focused on the input–output equation of project management, rather than on an assessment of the external environment and the changing nature of risks.
- This output bias is often linked with a bias towards quantitative data: the tendency to ignore the importance of qualitative data. A particular problem identified by this project is that while it is relatively easy to collect quantitative data and send it 'up the line', it is far more difficult both to define what qualitative data staff should collect on a regular basis, and to analyse such data when collected. Staff rarely have the appropriate training and skills to use qualitative data in an effective way (ALNAP 2003).
- An internal document from one agency notes: Past experience has shown that public health promoters spend valuable time re-inventing data collection forms, setting up databases and writing monitoring strategies.
- Too often monitoring systems do not provide the information required for routine management decisions to be made. There are a number of reasons for such weaknesses: a lack of time in the early stages of a response to either design an adequate monitoring system or to collect data; a lack of emphasis on the need to collect data; and, a lack of understanding by field staff on what data to collect (ALNAP 2003).
- Often, a main constraint for monitoring is a poor level of previous planning. Either because the LFA has not been well defined (indicators, confusion between activities and results…) or very often because monitoring has not been taken into account. It is important to include monitoring activities in the work plan, therefore to allocate budget, responsible staff and foresee the time needed (ACH 2006).
- Staff Overload – one of the most problematic issue is the increasing demands being made on those whose job it is to collect and analyse information. Demands for reports; increasing variety of issues to be monitored including protection.

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.6 Types and levels of monitoring

2.6 Types and levels of monitoring

Various types and levels of monitoring have been identified. Clarity in this area is not helped by the fact that different terminologies are used. The most comprehensive typology of monitoring in the humanitarian context comes from ALNAP 2003. Table 3 below is a simplified version of that typology.

Table 3: Types of Monitoring and their characteristics

Monitoring Level	Definition	Example	Methods	Frequency & Timing
Input monitoring	To check that resources (human, financial, material) are mobilised as planned	Bags of wheat are loaded, unloaded, and stored	Mainly quantitative	Regularly (weekly & monthly)
Output monitoring (also known as **activities monitoring)** (Often combined with inputs monitoring)	To check that services are being delivered as planned	Bags of wheat are delivered to primary stakeholders	Mainly quantitative	Regularly (monthly)
Process monitoring	Reviews processes by which change takes place as a result of an intervention			Regularly (3 – 6 monthly)
Performance monitoring (also called **results** or **outcomes** monitoring)	Measurement of progress in achieving specific objectives in relation to an implementation plan	Survey of primary stake holder perceptions of intervention performance Opinion survey as to agency performance	Combination of questionnaire, quantitative and qualitative including e.g. PRA	Regularly (3 – 6 monthly)
Impact monitoring (Normally seen as evaluation, rather than monitoring and takes place towards the end of a project)	To verify that the intervention is having the anticipated impact and to check for unintended impacts.	Distribution of wheat supports longer term goals such as promotion of gender equality	Quantitative and qualitative, e.g. anthropological surveys, large scale household surveys	Occasionally (usually near or at end of project)
Financial monitoring	Determines whether funds are being used efficiently and as planned	Audit of agency accounts	Financial	Frequently (monthly)
Institutional monitoring	Assessment of management, communications, and human resource functions	Communication between HQ and field leads to a coordinated response	Systems review	Occasionally (as required)
Context / situation monitoring	Reviewing the overall context to determine whether needs have changed	Monitoring visit by senior staff from HQ	Consultation with key stakeholders	Occasionally (as required)

Adapted from ALNAP 2003

2 Introduction to Monitoring

2.6 Types and levels of monitoring
2.7 Who Does Monitoring?

The monitoring templates which form part of this work mainly concentrate on results monitoring, but also, particularly in the log frame activities template, look at activities monitoring.

2.7 Who Does Monitoring?

Monitoring takes place at many different levels in most agencies and therefore, typically, a wide range of staff have some kind of monitoring responsibilities within their job descriptions. At the programme implementation level, grass roots monitoring work is likely to be carried out by field workers with sectoral / specialist responsibilities for whom the wider aspects of monitoring discussed in this report may not be apparent. This highlights the need for simple and robust systems and tools.

Larger agencies may have specialist monitoring (and evaluation) officers to set up systems, advise staff and sometimes to carry out specific monitoring functions.

Some agencies consulted for this report noted issues about the use of monitoring officers that need to be borne in mind:

- There is a danger that a specialist develops a monitoring system that is too complicated and time consuming for field staff to use.
- Another danger is that field staff see monitoring as the responsibility of the monitoring officer and not theirs.

In these situations, the role of a monitoring officer should primarily be for system development and staff training.

In many situations, international agencies are working with and through national and local agencies. The ALNAP Annual Review 2003 notes:

> *Most UN agencies and NGOs work through a wide variety of implementing partners. In relation to monitoring they tend to be both donors and fund recipients, and both contractors and sub-contractees. Many agencies therefore have multiple roles in that they are likely to be simultaneously monitoring their own work and those of their implementing partners, at the same time as being monitored by their donors (ALNAP 2003).*

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.1 Introduction

3.1 Introduction

This section provides guidance to field staff about developing a participatory approach to humanitarian monitoring. It should be consulted in conjunction with Sections 4 and 5 on the practical elements of monitoring through the programme cycle.

The section starts with the Sphere Project standard for monitoring and then draws mainly on Chapter 6 of ALNAP's Participation by Crisis-Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action: A Handbook for Practitioners (ALNAP 2003a) which should be consulted by those wishing to look in more detail at participatory issues throughout the programme cycle.

The challenge of implementing effective participatory monitoring is dealt with at some length here because it represents a major challenge for agencies and is often outside their 'comfort zone'. At the same time, as Section 2 above has shown, participatory monitoring offers tremendous opportunities for agencies to increase their accountability to affected populations and to improve the quality of their humanitarian action. Participatory monitoring is not a simple process, but, if it is implemented well, it can contribute, to a large extent, to a programme's success.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.2 Sphere Standard for Monitoring
3.3 From Consultation to Facilitation

3.2 Sphere Standard for Monitoring

The Sphere Standard for monitoring given in Box 3 below should form the basis for good practice in humanitarian monitoring work.

Box 3: SPHERE Common standard 5: Monitoring

The effectiveness of the programme in responding to problems is identified and changes in the broader context are continually monitored, with a view to improving the programme, or to phasing it out as required.

Key indicators *(to be read in conjunction with the guidance notes below)*

The information collected for monitoring is timely and useful, it is recorded and analysed in an accurate, logical, consistent, regular and transparent manner and it informs the ongoing programme (see guidance notes 1-2).

Systems are in place to ensure regular collection of information in each of the technical sectors and to identify whether the indicators for each standard are being met.

Women, men and children from all affected groups are regularly consulted and are involved in monitoring activities (see guidance note 3).

Systems are in place that enable a flow of information between the programme, other sectors, the affected groups of the population, the relevant local authorities, donors and other actors as needed (see guidance note 4).

Guidance notes

1. **Use of monitoring information:** disaster situations are volatile and dynamic. Regularly updated information is therefore vital in ensuring that programmes remain relevant and effective. Regular monitoring allows managers to determine priorities, identify emerging problems, follow trends, determine the effect of their responses, and guide revisions to their programmes. Information derived from continual monitoring of programmes can be used for reviews, evaluations and other purposes. In some circumstances a shift in strategy may be required to respond to major changes in needs or in the context.
2. **Using and disseminating information:** information collected should be directly relevant to the programme – in other words, it should be useful and acted upon. It should also be documented and made available proactively as needed to other sectors and agencies, and to the affected population.

   The means of communication used (dissemination methods, language, etc.) must be appropriate and accessible for the intended audience.
3. **People involved in monitoring:** people who are able to collect information from all groups in the affected population in a culturally acceptable manner should be included, especially with regard to gender and language skills. Local cultural practices may require that women or minority groups be consulted separately by individuals who are culturally acceptable.

Source: Sphere Project 2004

3.3 From Consultation to Facilitation

The remainder of this section is taken from ALNAP's Participation by Crisis-Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action: A Handbook for Practitioners (ALNAP 2003a). Table 4 below describes three different approaches to participation in monitoring.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.3 From Consultation to Facilitation

Table 4: Instrumental, collaborative and supportive approaches to participatory monitoring

Description	Potential benefits	Risks	Reminder
Instrumental			
Consultation with various stakeholders	Taking into account the perceptions of the population. Increased capacity to react and to adjust to the programme according to the situation. You can consult with groups that would be excluded in the participatory process.	You can be exposed to many complaints and demands. Low trust; people do not provide constructive information.	Inform people of the objective of the exercise. Provide feedback on the results of monitoring. Explain how the information will be used. Be ready to deal with complaints.
Collaborative			
Monitoring carried out jointly by your organisation and an associated structure (such as a local NGO or CBO)	Taking into account the perception of the population. Reinforcing local capacities (good in regard to recurring crises). Trust building. In the long run, it can save time and money.	Loss of impartiality depending on the choice of partner. Can increase the cost and the time required at the start of the process. Transparency may be more difficult to achieve for a local institution. Local institutions may have difficulty explaining and implementing changes process.	If necessary, train local partners, focussing on the purpose and methods of monitoring, and the participatory tools that can be used. Decisions on adjustments and reorientation resulting from monitoring should be taken in negotiation with the partner. Difficulties should be managed jointly.
Supportive			
Monitoring carried out by the affected population or associated structure	Reinforcing the weight and recognition of local capacities. Increasing appropriateness and ownership of the programme. Trust building.	Respect for your organisation's principles? Are certain groups being excluded? Local structures and populations engaging in their own projects may not necessarily consider the need to set up a monitoring system. Local structure may be reluctant to share negative results with the population and donors.	Know the context and the people you are supporting well. If necessary, train people, focussing on the purpose and methods of monitoring, and the participatory tools that can be used. As an external agency, your role may be one of facilitator, providing guidance on establishing and implementing participatory monitoring.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.4 Participatory Monitoring: Key Principles

3.4 Participatory Monitoring: Key Principles

Inclusion of the affected population and local actors in the monitoring process is a rich, yet risky endeavour. The external aid actor has to be ready to be criticised!

It is important to accept that known 'good practices' in monitoring may be challenged by the population and their local representative(s). The debate on monitoring indicators, for instance, might be a complex one. What should be the set of monitoring indicators? Those required by donors? Those required by NGO management? Or those identified by the affected population?

Box 4: Whose indicators and criteria?

Quantitative	V	Qualitative
International standards	V	Locally identified references
Collected by in-house expertise or external consultants	V	Generated by local groups

A few key principles make the process meaningful:

Principle 1 Participation in monitoring has little meaning if the population or local actors have not been involved much earlier in the project cycle—that is, in the assessment, design and implementation phases.

Principle 2 One should be ready to accept that programmes will be monitored and measured against criteria put forward by the population and local actors.

Principle 3 Participatory monitoring implies that corrective measures recommended by participants are implemented and acted on. If this does not occur—and if the reasons for not doing so are not explained—the affected population might abandon the process, feeling that, again, it has been betrayed.

Principle 4 Monitoring processes are not 'one-shot operations', but activities that will take place throughout the life of the project. Make sure that local partners and affected populations understand this.

Principle 5 Transparency in the monitoring process has to be very high, from the design of the monitoring system to decisions taken when a problem has been detected.

Principle 6 It should be made clear from the beginning that the aim of monitoring is not to apply sanctions, but, rather, to facilitate readjustments, when necessary. However, if illicit activities are identified during implementation, sanctions may, nevertheless, be required.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.5 Key Cross-Cutting Issues in Participatory Monitoring

3.5.1 Security and protection

Monitoring processes can result in managerial matters and issues related to honesty being placed on the table in the course of the project. They can also highlight errors in the initial design, or difficulties that were not taken into account. Decisions have to be made, and action has to be taken, which might entail potential dangers for certain stakeholders, including those who have detected the problem or those who were responsible for it. People charged with monitoring social control mechanisms, for instance, are potentially at risk, especially in a context of social or political crisis. Therefore, they must be chosen carefully and supported in this task. During surveys of the population, anonymity can provide a certain amount of protection.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How can I make sure that the monitoring process does not create security problems for those involved?
- How can I make sure that the monitoring system takes programme-related security and protection issues into account?
- When necessary, how can I ensure that the anonymity of informants is maintained?

3.5.2 Discrimination and minorities

Throughout the monitoring stage, one should pay attention to whether the programme is leading to the inclusion or exclusion of particular groups. Although one should attempt to anticipate this in advance (in the design phase), the effects may not become evident until implementation. Consequently, it is particularly important to focus on this issue during the entire period of project implementation.

This entails listening to those who are 'voiceless', because they are marginalised, or because they cannot attend community assemblies, for instance. Creating the space for them to speak out is a delicate undertaking, which should take into account the ramifications that they may experience as a result, such as risks to their security or further stigmatisation.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How can I ensure that the monitoring process will record the views of marginalised groups?
- How can I ensure that poorly assisted groups will not be further marginalised or stigmatised due to the fact that they have complained openly during the monitoring process?

3.5.3 Impartiality and independence

Being impartial and independent at this stage essentially necessitates listening 'to all sides' and garnering the perspectives of different population groups, which may perceive an intervention in different ways. Conducting a variety of focus groups and interviews, in numerous areas that have been affected by the intervention, and being transparent in the process, is one possible way of reaching various parts of the population concerned.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How can I ensure that the views of all groups and stakeholders are taken into account?
- How can I ensure that, by acting on certain recommendations, I am not being manipulated by particular groups?

3.6 The Design of a Participatory Monitoring Process

Participatory monitoring is an exercise that occurs throughout the project's duration. It can be conducted through different mechanisms, with different partners, and it can have different objectives. Consequently, it is important to clarify the different parameters of a monitoring system, that ideally takes place at the design stage.

These parameters concern:

- Goals;
- Criteria and indicators;
- Stakeholders and their role;
- Methods to be employed; and
- The means (resources) required for monitoring.

The key questions that should be asked when defining these parameters are presented in Table 5 below.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.6 The Design of a Participatory Monitoring Process
3.7 Implementation of the Monitoring Process

Table 5: Parameters of participatory monitoring Questions	
Parameter 1 Definitions of the purpose of monitoring	▲ Is it to assess the programme's relevance from the affected population's standpoint? ▲ Is it to appraise whether needs have changed or not? ▲ Is it to identify the effects of the intervention on a specific set of problems? ▲ Is it to be informed of the quality of the programme? ▲ Is it to be aware of the developing impact of the programme (positive and negative)? ▲ Is to adapt the intervention to the actual situation? ▲ Is it to compare the evolution of activities with the initial action plan? ▲ Is it part of a learning process aimed at preventing the recurrence of error? ▲ Is it to keep an eye on the population's level of satisfaction?
Parameter 2 Definitions of the indicators to be used	▲ What monitoring criteria and indicators should be used? ▲ Those required by donors? ▲ Those required by NGO management? Or a set identified by the affected population? ▲ Is it possible to elaborate on these indicators and criteria collectively? How and with whom?
Parameter 3 Identification of the different stakeholders in a participatory monitoring process	▲ Are there local mechanisms or institutions, accepted and recognised by the population, which could play the role of 'intermediary'? ▲ Is it preferable to engage directly with the population? ▲ Will it be necessary, for practical reasons, to engineer the emergence of local intermediaries?
Parameter 4 Definitions of the methods to be used	▲ Is it possible partly to incorporate monitoring into traditional decision-making and problem-solving mechanisms? ▲ Are there any existing and known social-control systems? Is it possible to involve them in the monitoring process? ▲ Is it possible to identify collectively an analytical framework for monitoring, including identification of monitoring criteria, indicators and benchmarks? ▲ How will the results of monitoring be used?
Parameter 5 Identification of the means required	▲ Can we identify the physical means and human resources needed for the process, from among the stakeholders involved in monitoring and from among aid organisations? ▲ How can they be mobilised? How can responsibility for mobilising them be shared?

3.7 Implementation of the Monitoring Process

3.7.1 The Process

During implementation, the monitoring system is engaged in an ongoing process, comprising three steps, as outlined in Table 6 below.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.7 Implementation of the Monitoring Process

Table 6: The three steps in a monitoring cycle	
Step 1 **Actual observation and information recording process**	▲ Will the process be implemented directly or in partnership with a local actor? ▲ In the latter case, what will the terms of the contract be? ▲ Which participatory tools will be used? ▲ How can we ensure that certain 'voiceless' groups are not excluded from the process? ▲ Will the process be credible and safe enough for the 'discontented' to express themselves without fear? ▲ Will the process be perceived as rigorous enough for its conclusions to be credible?
Step 2 **Feedback and decision-making**	▲ How will feedback and decision-making on changes and reorientation be given? ▲ Will a specific session(s) be organised for this purpose? ▲ Will there be enough time for people to digest the findings and to react?
Step 3 **Use of the results**	▲ How will participants be informed of how their views have been taken into account? ▲ Is it possible to establish a participatory system to follow up on implementation of the recommendations generated by the monitoring? ▲ How can the safety of groups involved in the monitoring process be guaranteed? ▲ And how can the risks of stigmatisation or social tension be minimised?

3.7.2 Partners in the Monitoring Process

Choosing a partner

In regard to monitoring, it is very important to choose the most appropriate partner. Regardless of the kind of actor (international or national NGO or CBO, for instance), its staff will be involved, sometimes deeply, in the monitoring process. Control of, or involvement in, a monitoring process can be a source of power. Certain choices can have detrimental consequences. Structures that are perceived as non-representative, or are known to have inappropriate past records, have to be avoided at all costs. Structures that cannot access key segments of the population (such as women and other ethnic groups) should be utilised in conjunction with other bodies, which do not suffer from the same limitations.

In addition, care should be taken to ensure that structures involved in participatory monitoring do not abuse the opportunity in order to gain power over the population or other institutions; structures that might have vested interests or hidden agendas should thus be avoided. This is an especially sensitive matter in a context of armed conflict.

Where acceptable intermediaries do not emerge or cannot be identified, it is necessary to identify what culturally and socially acceptable collective problem-solving mechanisms exist, and to negotiate how to work with them.

Establishing a steering committee

Where there already is a certain amount of social organisation and a practice of electing or designating committees, setting up a steering committee for the monitoring process can be a very effective way of ensuring the existence of an independent, but well-accepted and well respected, monitoring mechanism. But beware of the tendency for 'committology'! Aid agencies can create committees that have no roots in the social setting, and, therefore, have a low level of legitimacy.

3 Implementing Participatory Monitoring

3.7 Implementation of the Monitoring Process

Working through traditional assemblies
This is extremely useful in ensuring that the population can be informed through existing communication channels. Hence, information should be available in local languages and via culturally acceptable media.

In such cases, the role of your cultural bridge—for expatriates, this can be a translator—is essential. His/her personality, the way he/she is perceived, and his/her capacity to create empathy will significantly affect the quality of the dialogue and the reality regarding local stakeholder involvement in the monitoring process. It is vital that these fora are also used for feedback exercises throughout the monitoring process.

Last, but not least, working through these traditional mechanisms implies a commitment that conclusions and recommendations will have a visible impact on the project. Otherwise, people can feel betrayed.

Working with social-control mechanisms
Make sure that everyone is aware of the programme design and their entitlement, such that people who feel unhappy or betrayed can always complain. This is monitoring through social control.

While very effective in certain societies, this can lead to more problems than it solves in other settings, creating tension amongst the population. For instance, social-control mechanisms are important in validating choices, ensuring opportunities to control corruption and inequity, and limiting the risk of nepotism and patronage. Full transparency, from the design stage to the monitoring phase, is critical for social-control mechanisms to function.

Security and protection issues that might affect those in charge of the promotion of social-control mechanisms are the main potential counter-indicator to social control.

3.7.3 Listening To The Voiceless, The Discontented, The 'Competitors'

Listening to various perspectives …
In the midst of participation, certain groups tend to be overshadowed. These usually comprise the poor, the landless, the discontented and people of the 'wrong' age, gender, cast and ethnic group. It is important to ensure that the entire participatory process takes into account their existence, their needs and their views, notably in relation to monitoring activities.

The voiceless These people are not represented in the leadership; they are often not, or only loosely, organised; they are simply too afraid to speak. Make sure that the process does not leave them behind! But think of their security and protection before encouraging them too strongly to go public. If this precaution is not straightforward and clear, people are likely not to get involved, or they may be taking risks if they do so.

The voice of the 'discontented' This group usually has two types of reaction: either they are forcefully vocal; or they discretely leave the programme. Even if a group of unsatisfied stakeholders tries to monopolise the discussion, do not forget to include the silent group.

The voice of the 'competitors' Knowing what other agencies and actors in the same field think of the programme is another very useful component of participatory monitoring. It is crucial to incorporate

these views into the debate with the main stakeholders – that is, those assisted by the programme. Sometimes, the fact that one point has been raised by another agency can open up new avenues of debate and prevent what could have been a dangerous 'face-to-face' confrontation between the aid provider and the recipient.

Managing claims and complaints through participation
Participatory management of claims and complaints is one possible process to be included in programme monitoring. In relation to distribution processes, for instance, there are always discontented people, even if they have had the opportunity to request to be on the target list. Accusations of unjust inclusion of certain families, or unfair treatment of others, will always be levelled. An ad hoc participatory mechanism might have to be thought through well in advance, and established on time to deal with this.

One way to proceed with the design of a claims/complaints mechanism is through a series of focus groups, composed of a representative sample of the population, in terms of gender and age. This exercise should be followed by a large-scale public campaign to make people aware of the decisions that have been made. An alternative is to identify and work through local 'problem-solving' mechanisms and authorities.

3.8 The Keys to Successful Participatory Monitoring

3.8.1 Information Sharing and Transparency
Given the fact that participatory monitoring is a time-consuming undertaking, the population will be willing to commit itself on a continued basis only if the flow of information is fluid, and the data are relevant and consistent.

This can take various forms: notice boards; public meetings; distribution of leaflets; and public announcements through the media.

Maintaining a transparent and continuous flow of information on monitoring is not without certain dangers. Indeed, it publicises errors and failures and constraints and difficulties, as much as it does successes! It might also underline certain responsibilities and specific attitudes of key stakeholders. Putting this in the public arena can be risky. So be careful and do not be 'over-communicative'!

3.8.2 Monitoring Should Lead To Action
A basic piece of advice is: do not get involved in participatory monitoring if your organisation is not ready to take it seriously, to listen to the results, and to act on them.

3.8.3 Time Management
Monitoring can be extremely time-consuming for aid actors, for local leaders and for the population. Furthermore, although the population's enthusiasm for the project and its willingness to be involved is strong in the early stages, the momentum is gradually lost, especially when difficulties and delays occur in the implementation phase, making it more difficult to encourage people to participate. Be careful not to overdo it!

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.1 Introduction

4.1 Introduction

This section looks at how monitoring relates to different parts of the programme cycle and to the use of the logframe. It should also be read in conjunction with section 5 which provides practical guidance and some worked examples.

Monitoring is an integral part of an agency's management system and therefore monitoring activities have to fit within those systems. So it is important for users of this guidance to adapt and adopt the elements that are useful so that they fit with their agencies' systems and needs.

This section is not intended as a guide to PCM. There are a number of resources that can be referred to for guidance on PCM (e.g. Bainbridge & Tuck 2006; European Commission 2004; DG ECHO 2003).

The various elements of the programme cycle and their inter-relationships can be described in various ways. The representation in Figure 1 below draws on a number of sources (ALNAP 2003a; Blackman 2003; CISP 2005; DG ECHO 2003; Gosling & Edwards 2003).

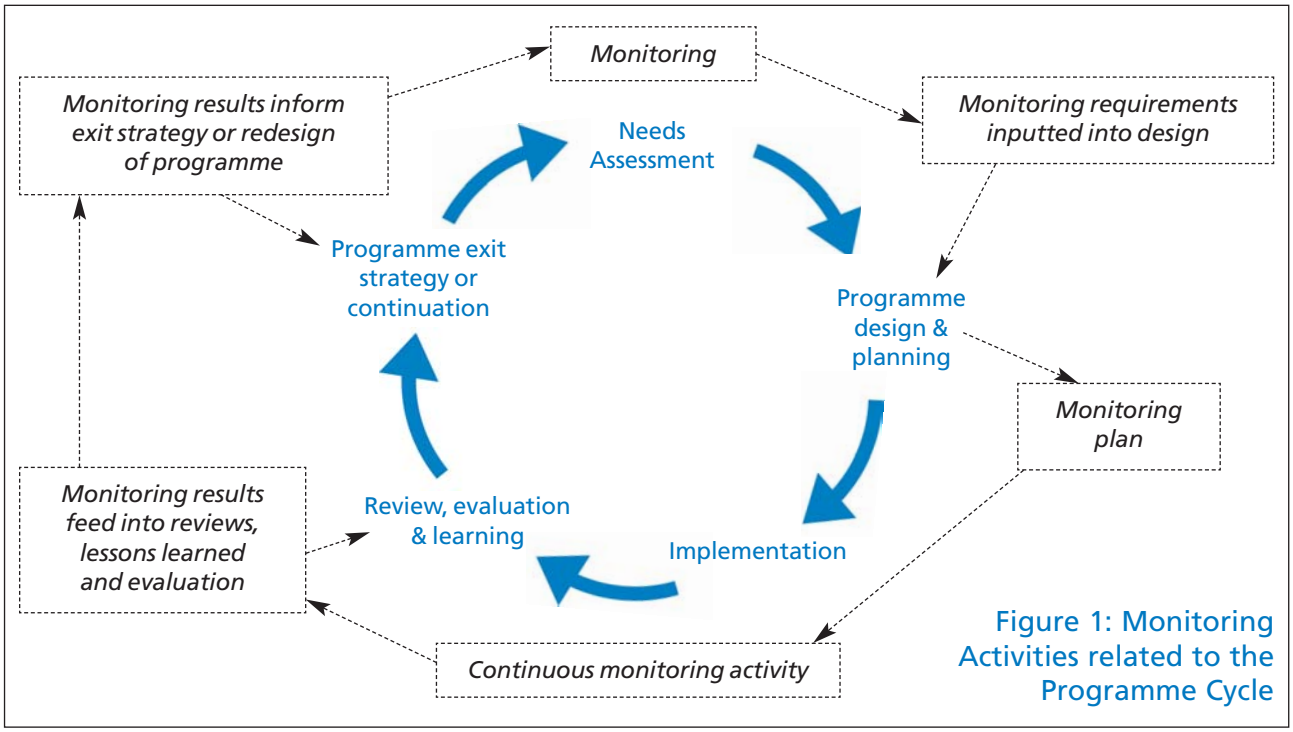


Figure 1: Monitoring Activities related to the Programme Cycle

Monitoring is sometimes put between Implementation and Evaluation as a discrete activity within the programme cycle. This is misleading as effective programme monitoring involves continuous action throughout the programme cycle, feeding information in at all stages, as Figure 1 illustrates.

A continuous monitoring process is particularly important in the humanitarian context when time for a thorough initial assessment may be short and when the context can change rapidly and drastically. An initial response may start before the full assessment and planning work has been completed. Early monitoring work is important to inform the refinement of programme planning.

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.2 Establishing a Monitoring System
4.3 Assessment & Analysis Phase

4.2 Establishing a Monitoring System

During the first phases of emergencies the rotation of the staff in the field can be high. Monitoring may be done by many different people throughout the life of the project. This fact highlights the importance of having a good selection of indicators on the planning stage. The implementation of a monitoring plan needs to be established in the planning phase and should provide a detailed definition of the monitoring indicators to be tracked, specifying the source, method of data collection and schedule of collection for all required data, defining how the analysis will be presented and assigning responsibility for collection to a specific office, team, or individual (ACH 2006).

The key elements of a monitoring system are:

- A Logical Framework matrix that identifies indicators and means of verification;
- A timetable for data collection, analysis, feedback and review;
- Allocation of monitoring responsibilities;
- Reporting flows and formats; and
- Budget for monitoring activities including any additional staff costs (Punto-sud 2007; WFP 2003).

Different types of monitoring will fall under the responsibility of different actors involved in project management, both in the field and at the headquarters (for more see Forum Solint 2003).

4.3 Assessment & Analysis Phase

The Assessment and analysis of phase of any response will often include the following activities:

- Stakeholder analysis (see Monitoring Tool 11);
- Problem and needs analysis (including use of a problem tree);
- Analysis of objectives (what can we realistically achieve/what do we want to achieve?); and
- Analysis of strategies (comparison of different options to help in a given situation) (Forum Solint 2003; DG ECHO 2003).

Sphere points out the umbilical link between assessment and monitoring:

> *An initial assessment is not an end in itself, but should be seen as a first step in a continuous process of reviewing and updating as part of the monitoring process, particularly when the situation is evolving rapidly, or when there are critical developments such as large population movements or an outbreak of disease* (Sphere Project 2004).

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.4 Design / Planning – the Logframe

4.4 Design / Planning - the Logframe

The information gained during the assessment and analysis phase (see 4.3 above) provides the raw material for the programme design and planning phase. Most agencies use a logical framework analysis as the tool for their programme planning and many donors, including DG ECHO, require the production of a logical framework (Sources: ACH 2006; Bainbridge & Tuck 2006; DFID 2002; DG ECHO 2003; Punto-sud 2007). The specific logframe model provided by DG ECHO can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/fpa_ngos_en.htm.

It is useful to distinguish between the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and the Logical Framework Matrix. The LFA involves problem analysis, stakeholder analysis, developing a hierarchy of objectives and selecting a preferred implementation strategy. The product of this analytical approach is the matrix (the Logframe), which summarises what the project intends to do and how, what the key assumptions are, and how outputs and outcomes will be monitored and evaluated.

The quality of the LFA and the logframe and the indicators selected are crucial for successful monitoring.

The establishment of a logframe should not be a formal 'blueprint' exercise done for compliance to donor rules. It should be seen as a key tool to aid programme strategy development and planning. The quality of the logframe and hence the programme strategy and intervention depends upon a number of factors, including:

- The level and quality of information available;
- The ability and experience of the planning team (training in LFA may be needed);
- Consultation of stakeholders, ensuring balanced representation of different interests, including the most vulnerable groups; and
- Thorough consideration of lessons learnt.

In particular in humanitarian responses, where often immediate action is necessary, the logframe must be seen as a dynamic tool, which can be completed, more detailed, re-assessed and revised as the intervention goes on and circumstances change during implementation (DG ECHO 2003).

Table 7 below outlines a typical logframe as used by ECHO. Terminology in the left hand column can vary from agency to agency, hence, for example, the inclusion of Outcomes alongside Results.

Table 7: Typical logframe format

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs)	Sources of Verification	Assumptions / Risks
Overall Objective				
Purpose / Specific Objective				
Results / Outcomes				
Activities		**Means / inputs**	**Costs**	

Source: DG ECHO 2003

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.4 Design / Planning – the Logframe
4.5 Implementation

The logframe enables monitoring against activities, results and purpose or objectives. Monitoring against objectives will normally take place at the end of a project in an evaluation. The monitoring data gathered during the implementation of the project will provide important evidence for the evaluation.

4.4.1 Indicators

Selecting appropriate and usable indicators often presents the biggest challenge to effective monitoring. Tool 16 in the Monitoring Tools document offers guidance on selecting and using indicators. The Monitoring Templates provide practical suggestions for project, situation and institutional monitoring based on international standards and good practice. Table 8 below gives an example of how indicators relate to the hierarchy of results moving from outputs through outcomes to impact.

Table 8: An example of indicators relating to a hierarchy of results

Results Hierarchy	Performance Indicators
Impact Decrease in acute malnutrition	% of children under 5 that are acutely malnourished (< -2 standard deviation weight-for-height)
Outcome Increased food consumption	% of households indicating eating 2 or more meals per day by gender of household members
Output Dry take-home rations distributed to targeted mothers	Number of rations distributed to targeted mothers

It is important that indicators can show trends over time and are not just used to present a static picture.

Section 3 above on participatory monitoring stresses the importance of selecting results / outcome indicators that reflect the changes the affected population would like to see coming out of the project. Indicators of change developed by a community:

- may or may not be compatible with other indicators;
- may seem illogical to outsiders;
- may not be applicable in other emergencies or other communities
- may not be time-bound; and
- may not enable comparison between projects.

However community-led indicators are a way of making sure project staff look through the eyes of beneficiaries, enable people to express their views, and take into account their experience and wishes (Emergency Capacity Building Project 2007).

4.5 Implementation

Section 5 offers practical guidance with worked examples on monitoring. This section looks at the background to some of the issues associated with monitoring during programme implementation.

4.5.1 Assumptions and Risk Monitoring

The achievement of project objectives is always subject to influences beyond project manager's direct control (assumptions and risks). It is therefore important to monitor this 'external' environment to identify whether or not the assumptions that have already been made are likely to hold true, what new risks may be emerging, and to take action to manage or mitigate these risks where possible (see also Monitoring Tool 13).

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.5.2 Situation Monitoring

Apart from monitoring using the logframe analysis of activities, results and assumptions, the agency will also need to monitor the overall context in which its response is taking place. ALNAP suggests that situation monitoring covers the following:

- Focus on context (political, economic, social, institutional, etc) and any rapid changes in this.
- Emphasis on overall assessments and baseline studies in relation to individual sectors.
- Emphasis on early warning systems and preparedness.
- Emphasis on collective monitoring since all humanitarian actors will have similar minimum information requirements (ALNAP 2003).

4.6 Evaluation

The distinction between monitoring and evaluation is generally clear cut. The former is an ongoing, internal function aimed at providing concurrent knowledge, while the latter is usually a one-shot external function that reports after the event.

Comprehensive guidance and methodologies on humanitarian evaluation can be found in Prolog Consult 2008.

The outputs from good quality monitoring systems are important for subsequent evaluations. Many evaluation reports note that the lack of good monitoring information weakened the evaluators' efforts to assess outcomes, and, in some cases, even outputs. This means that monitoring data and analysis should be of the best possible quality and should be easily accessible to future evaluators. Monitoring files and reports should be carefully kept.

Real time evaluations (RTEs) which include some aspects of both monitoring and evaluation have increased in popularity. RTE's are one-off events, rather than continuous activities, often involving external consultants, and so are not strictly speaking monitoring activities. However, like monitoring, they take place while the response is underway and are designed to feed back to staff issues and problems that need attention.

One NGO describes the objectives of an RTE as to:

> *review progress to date, and capture emerging lessons in order to inform the next phase of the programme. It is also intended to identify lessons of possible relevance to other operations, and where possible draw on learning from previous RTEs.*

RTEs are explained in an inter-agency context as follows:

> *the primary purpose of an inter-agency RTE is to support management decision-making in the field to improve the performance of a specific emergency response. Inter-agency RTEs are relatively short and quick turn-around exercises with immediate benefits for humanitarian actors. There is hence a strong emphasis on organizational and corporate learning, which does not exclude benefits in terms of accountability. A secondary purpose should be to allow senior managers in the agencies to better understand and support the programmes they are in charge of directing (UNICEF & OCHA 2006).*

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.7 Lessons Learnt
4.8 Quality of Information

4.7 Lessons Learnt

Apart from making a key contribution to ongoing programme management, monitoring information feeds into agencies' lessons learnt mechanisms. How this is done will vary from agency to agency but can most commonly be done by some kind of Lesson Learning Review that brings staff at all levels together and can include external stakeholders and facilitators.

The timing of such a review will depend on a number of factors and will probably take place between 6 and 12 months after the start of a project. Sufficient time should be allowed for project implementation to allow for some assessment of outcomes to be made. However, it is also important to carry out the review while most of the key staff involved are still in post.

4.8 Quality of Information

4.8.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Data

While quantitative data have long been cited as being more objective, and qualitative data as more subjective, more recent debates have concluded that both types of data have subjective and objective characteristics. Qualitative and quantitative data complement each other and both should be used.

Characteristics of Quantitative Data:

- Seek to quantify the experiences or conditions among beneficiaries in numeric terms.
- Use closed-ended questions with limited potential responses.
- Normally ask women, men, boys and girls to respond to questions on the basis of their individual experiences, or the experiences of their households.
- Often, but not exclusively, employ probability sampling techniques that allow for statistical inference (or estimation) to a larger population with defined levels of probability (or confidence) and tolerable error (or confidence interval).

Characteristics of Qualitative Data

- Qualitative data seek to uncover the context, perceptions and quality of, as well as opinions about, a particular experience or condition as its beneficiaries view it.
- Data collection methods are more likely to employ a more participatory approach through the use of open-ended questions that allow respondents to expand on their initial answers and lead the discussion towards issues that they find important.
- Sampling techniques for these methods are often purposive. Even when samples are selected randomly, these methods rarely require the rigorous determination of sample size, and respondents are often asked to generalise about the condition or experience in the larger population, rather than talk about themselves. (WFP 2003)

4 Monitoring Through The Programme Cycle

4.8 Quality of Information

One of key issues relating to monitoring is ensuring the quality of information gained. Some key criteria are given in Box 5 below:

Box 5: Factors affecting the quality of monitoring information

Accuracy, validity: does the information show the true situation?

Relevance: is the information relevant to user interests?

Timeliness: is the information available in time to make necessary decisions?

Credibility: is the information believable?

Attribution: are results due to the project or to something else?

Significance: is the information important?

Representativeness: does the information represent only the target group, or also the wider population?

Spatial: Issues of comfort and ease determine monitoring sites.

Project: The assessor is drawn toward sites where contacts and information is readily available and may have been assessed before by many others.

Person: Key informants tend to be those who are in a high position and have the ability to communicate.

Season: Assessments are conducted during periods of pleasant weather, or areas cut off by bad weather go unassessed, thus many typical problems go unnoticed.

Diplomatic: Selectivity in projects shown to the assessor for diplomatic reasons.

Professional: Assessors are too specialised and miss linkages between processes.

Conflict: Assessors go only to areas of cease-fire and relative safety.

Political: Informants present information that is skewed toward their political agenda; assessors look for information that fits their political agenda.

Cultural: Incorrect assumptions are based on one's own cultural norms; assessors do not understand the cultural practices of the affected populations.

Class/ethnic: Needs and resources of different groups are not included in the assessment.

Interviewer or Investigator: Tendency to concentrate on information that confirms preconceived notions and hypotheses, causing one to seek consistency too early and overlook evidence inconsistent with earlier findings; partiality to the opinions of elite key informants.

Key informant: Biases of key informants carried into assessment results.

Gender: Male monitors may only speak to men; young men may be omitted.

Mandate or speciality: Agencies assess areas of their competency without an inter-disciplinary or inter-agency approach.

Time of day or schedule bias: The assessment is conducted at a time of day when certain segments of the population may be over- or under-represented.

Sampling: Respondents are not representative of the population.

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.1 Preparation for Monitoring

Look back to Section 1.4 for guidance on using this document and the associated Monitoring Templates and Tools.

First scan this section to see which parts are relevant to your particular monitoring needs. If you want to use a table, template or tool, get the Word version of these documents from the DG ECHO website (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/) and copy the items into your own documents.

Remember to apply common sense and a "good enough" approach. The key questions to be asked and for which answers are needed are:

- What information do we need to know?
- How do we find that information and who will gather it?
- How will the information be analysed?
- How will the information be used?

In sudden onset emergencies and in fluid situations there may be a continual process of re-assessment, re-design and implementation in which monitoring activities play an essential role.

A simple monitoring plan, which can be upgraded as the response settles down, should cover:

- A list of priority information needs for situation monitoring. What data collection is needed to cover key information gaps in terms of the affected population, numbers and needs, vulnerable groups? What are the likely sources or methods for covering these?
- A list of priority information needs for programme monitoring, taken from the key programme documents, particularly the indicators contained in the logframe.
- What baseline information needs to be collected? (see Box 6 below)
- The monitoring plan needs to include sources of information, tools to be used and who is responsible for the data collection.
- Estimate what resources in terms of staff and money will be needed for monitoring purposes.

Data collection in the first weeks will be primarily through rapid assessments, which typically focus on gathering data on the situation of the affected population.

Box 6: Top tips for baseline data

- Ensure you include any assumptions that have been made when providing baseline data. E.g. the population size assumes an average household size of 6 people.
- Ensure that all sources of data used are referenced.
- Ensure the baseline data gathered fits clearly with the chosen indicators for the logframe or vice versa. The point of the baseline is to be able to measure how the project is doing against the objectives. Therefore the measurement indicators in the logframe need to tie up with these.

Source: Bainbridge & Tuck 2006

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.1 Preparation for Monitoring
5.2 Implementation

Box 7 below provides a check list to help ensure that your monitoring work is as participatory as possible (see also Section 3).

Box 7: Participatory monitoring strategy – checklist	
Did you involve the various stakeholders in the design of the monitoring process, in order to define: ▲ Objectives? ▲ Indicators? ▲ The stakeholders involved? ▲ The methods to be used? ▲ The means required?	▲ Focus group on the design of the monitoring methodology
Implementation of the monitoring	
Three steps: ▲ Information collection; ▲ Feedback and decision-making; ▲ Use of results	▲ Working with a partner ▲ Establishment of a steering committee ▲ Working through traditional structures ▲ Social-control mechanisms
Information collection	
▲ Did you manage to involve all stakeholders? ▲ Did you manage to hear all of their voices? ▲ Were the participatory tools appropriate? ▲ Are the quantity and quality of the information collected adequate for the monitoring exercise?	▲ Focus group on the evolution of the situation and needs ▲ Structured and semi-structured interviews ▲ Surveys ▲ Storytelling ▲ Box for the collection of complaints ▲ Social audit ▲ Monitoring days
Feedback	
▲ How will the evaluation results be fed back to the population?	▲ Focus groups on programme adaptation ▲ Communication and information tools
Use of results	
▲ How will the results be used? ▲ Will recommendations and decisions made be acted on?	

Source: ALNAP 2003a

5.2 Implementation

The tables below contain examples of monitoring matrices taken from WFP and provide an example of the way in which a monitoring system can be developed.

The blank version of the form (Table 9) is followed by a worked example (Tables 10, 11, 12).

Table 9: Achievement of impact – blank template							
Information Requirements	**Indicators**	**Means of Verification**				**Use of Information**	
		Data Source	**Frequency & Cost of Collection**	**Responsibility for Collection**	**Collection Method**	**Reporting**	**Presentation**

Table 10: Achievement of impact							
Information Requirements	**Indicators**	**Means of Verification**				**Use of Information**	
		Data Source	**Frequency & Cost of Collection**	**Responsibility for Collection**	**Collection Method**	**Reporting**	**Presentation**
Impact - Enable house-holds which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods	Incidence & degree of food insecurity among households in districts with degraded natural resources	Vulnerability & Analysis Mapping (VAM) reports	Before and after completion	VAM Officer, WFP Country Office	VAM tools	VAM Reports	At evaluation work-shop

Table 11: Achievement of outcome

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data Source	Frequency & Cost of Collection	Responsibility for Collection	Collection Method	Reporting	Presentation
Outcome - Increase incomes and food security of target population at risk	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, and at completion	WFP Country Office	Sample survey	Baseline re-Port Terminal Country Office Report (COR)	At inception workshop & terminal COR workshop
	Leading Indicators: Number of 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 . Site survey of area protected.	Six-monthly At mid-term	WFP Country Office, in collaboration with implementing partner	Field visit and sample survey	Mid-term management review report	At mid-term management review work-shop
Assumptions							
Encroachment by non-participating households can be controlled	Number of encroachments, and extent of damage		Annual	Implementing partner. Community Forestry Officer (CFO)	Visual observation during field visits	Annual Report	At annual review meeting

Table 12: Delivery of outputs

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data Source	Frequency & Cost of Collection	Responsibility for Collection	Collection Method	Reporting	Presentation
Output 1 - Increase incomes and food security of target population at risk	Area of land developed or protected	Site survey of area protected & survival survey of seedlings planted	Annual	Implementing partner, Community Forestry Officer (CFO)	Visual observation during field visits	Annual Report Terminal COR	At annual review meeting & Terminal COR 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	No. of people who have received WFP supplied food by gender and age group	Food distribution sheets	Monthly	Village food distribution committees, implementing partner, CDO	Compilation from food distribution sheets	Monthly Report, Quarterly Progress Report (QPR), Progress Implementation Report (PIR)	At quarterly progress review meeting
Assumptions							

Table 12: Delivery of outputs *(cont. from page 34)*

Information Requirements	Indicators	Means of Verification				Use of Information	
		Data Source	Frequency & Cost of Collection	Responsibility for Collection	Collection Method	Reporting	Presentation
Output 3 - Community groups formed and active in managing forested lands	No. of community groups formed and active	Village committee records	Quarterly	Implementing partner Community Development Workers (CDWs)	Compilation from village committee records	QPR, PIR	At quarterly progress review meeting
	Representation and involvement in Committees by gender	Village committee records	Quarterly	Implementing partner CDWs	Compilation from village committee records	QPR, PIR	
		Village committee survey	Six-monthly	Implementing partner CDO	Focus group discussions	PIR	
	No. of plans prepared and adopted	Plans submitted. Site verification	Quarterly	Implementing partner CFO	Count of plans submitted & field visits to verify	QPR	
Assumptions							

Source: WFP 2003

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.3 Activity Monitoring

5.3 Activity Monitoring

The template below provides a simple form which can be developed into an activity monitoring template. As designed, the template accommodates one activity (indicated in the header table), together with a number of objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) indicated in the first column from the logframe. Progress to date, rating, expected completion, and comments are added in the adjoining columns.

Where there are several activities, multiple templates can be used. Alternatively if there are only a few OVIs for each activity, it would be possible to combine the activities on one template.

Organisation	Organisation
Project Title	Project Title
Monitoring Template	Logframe – Activity
Monitoring Date	Date
Name	Name
Project Activity	Activity

OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS TO DATE	SCORE	EXPECTED FINISH	COMMENT
Indicator 1	Summary	?	XX/XX/XX	Comment here
Indicator 2	Summary	?	XX/XX/XX	Comment here
Indicator 3	Summary	?	XX/XX/XX	Comment here

Overall assessment and notes on action to be taken and by whom:

Suggested scoring	**4=Fully achieved (100%)**	**3=Largely achieved (75%)**	**2=Partially achieved (50%)**	**1=Achieved to a very limited extent (25%)**	**0=No progress (0%)**	**X=Too early/unable to judge**

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.3 Activity Monitoring

Worked example of Activity Template

Organisation	
Project Title	Humanitarian assistance to conflict and natural disaster affected communities
Monitoring Template	Logframe – Activity
Monitoring Date	31-07-2007
Name	John Smith
Activity	Water and Sanitation: Targeted households adopt improved public health practices when using water and sanitation facilities

OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS TO DATE	SCORE	EXPECTED FINISH	COMMENT
1 Provision of 2 mobilisation trainings	Training 1 completed Training 2 completed	4	20-07-07	Training 1 held in Makada on 27-06-07 Training 2 held in Gitena on 18-07-07
2 Provision of 4 PHP (Public Health Practices) trainings	Training 1 completed Training 2 completed Training 3 scheduled Training 4 planning	3	30-09-07	Training 1 held in Buhonda on 05-07-07 Training 2 held in Ngodi on 12-07-07 Training 3 due in Rumongo on 15-08-07 Training 4 to be decided
3 Development and distribution of IEC materials	Development completed Distribution in planning	3	30-09-07	Materials have been prepared and are presently being printed. Distribution is due to commence on 01-08-07
4 Community session for increasing awareness regarding risky behaviour	Not yet started	0	30-11-07	New staff member starting 01-09-07 will be responsible for this.
5 Development of guidelines & designs for the distribution among other agencies	Not yet started	0	30-11-07	New staff member starting 01-09-07 will be responsible for this.
6 Formation of village level committees for awareness creation/take action	In progress	2	30-09-07	Contact has been made with beneficiaries and a village committee should be established shortly.
7 Construction of 25 common wells	Completed: 4 Under construction: 8 Planning: 7 Not started: 6	2	30-11-07	Project is on target for completion as planned.
8 Renovation of 25 wells	Completed: 7 Under construction: 6 Planning: 7 Not started: 5	2	30-11-07	Project is on target for completion as planned.

Overall assessment and notes on action to be taken:
Overall the project is progressing to schedule. We need to follow the new staff member for items 4 and 5 to ensure that she is able to deliver on time.

Suggested scoring	4=Fully achieved (100%)	3=Largely achieved (75%)	2=Partially achieved (50%)	1=Achieved to a very limited extent (25%)	0=No progress (0%)	X=Too early/unable to judge

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.3 Activity Monitoring

Organisation	
Project Title	Humanitarian assistance to conflict and natural disaster affected communities in Indonesia
Monitoring Template	Logframe – Activity
Monitoring Date	31-07-2007
Name	John Smith
Activity	Community Infrastructure: Targeted communities have improved access to basic infrastructure facilities

OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS TO DATE	SCORE	EXPECTED FINISH	COMMENT
1 Rehabilitation of 7 internal minor roads	R1-completed R2-completed R3-completed R4-in progress R5-in progress R6-planning R7-planning	3	31-10-07	3 roads have been completed without problem. Two roads are being rehabilitated at the present time. Two roads are at the planning stage, but it may be that another NGO takes over this responsibility.
2 Consultation with community for construction plan and implementation	Completed	4	15-05-07	Consultation was held with the local authorities on 30-04-07. Meetings were also held with the whole community on 05-04-07 to discuss implementation.
3 Organise individual and group based training specific to appropriate construction process	Completed	4	15-06-07	
4 Construction of 640 temporary houses	Completed: 240 Under Construction: 240 Planning: 80 Not needed: 80	3	31-10-07	After discussions with beneficiary leaders, the number of temporary houses to be built has been downgraded to 560. Donor has been notified. Remainder of houses are due for completion on schedule.

Overall assessment and notes on action to be taken:
We need to agree with donor how to use the resources which have become available because the number of houses was downgraded from 640 to 560. Project manager to action this.

Suggested scoring	4=Fully achieved (100%)	3=Largely achieved (75%)	2=Partially achieved (50%)	1=Achieved to a very limited extent (25%)	0=No progress (0%)	X=Too early/unable to judge

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.4 ResultsMonitoring

5.4 Results Monitoring

The template below follows the same format for monitoring at the results or outcomes levels from the logframe. Where there are several activities, multiple templates can be used. Alternatively if there are only a few OVIs for each activity, it would be possible to combine the activities on one template.

Organisation	
Project Title	Project Title
Monitoring Template	Logframe – Results
Monitoring Date	Date
Name	Name
Project Results	Result

OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS TO DATE	SCORE	COMMENT
Indicator 1	Summary	?	Comment here
Indicator 2	Summary	?	Comment here
Indicator 3	Summary	?	Comment here

Overall assessment and notes on action to be taken:

Suggested scoring	4=Fully achieved (100%)	3=Largely achieved (75%)	2=Partially achieved (50%)	1=Achieved to a very limited extent (25%)	0=No progress (0%)	X=Too early/unable to judge

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.4 ResultsMonitoring

Worked example of Results Template

Organisation	
Project Title	Humanitarian assistance to conflict and natural disaster affected communities
Monitoring Template	Logframe – Results
Monitoring Date	31-07-2007
Name	John Smith
Project Results	Result 1: Targeted households adopt improved public health practices when using water and sanitation facilities

OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS TO DATE		SCORE	COMMENT
1. 40% of the targeted communities have access to and consume safe drinking water.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	26% 34% 36%	3	Progress on this indicator has been good.
2. 30% of the targeted community have access to and use improved sanitation facilities.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	15% 24% 28%	3	Target should be met by mid-August 2007.
3. 70% of the targeted community have adopted Public Health and Hygiene promotion (PHP) practices.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	30% 61% 80%	4	Results have exceeded expectations.
4. Water fetching distance and time decreased especially for women and other vulnerable groups.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	800m 800m 800m	0	A well was dug providing easier access. After two months it went dry and people returned to the former source.
5. Quantity of water used per household increased up to Sphere standards. (Assume 10 litres per person per day)	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	5 litres 6 litres 5 litres	2	The new well meant the water available increased dramatically. But with the failure of the well, the volume of water available fell back. People seem content to work with 5 litres per person per day.
6. Number of wells maintained and protected by the community.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	2 wells 4 litres 5 litres	X	No target set.
7. Increased hand washing practice.	31-01-07 31-05-07 31-07-07	40% 50% 55%	3	Good progress through a sustained teaching programme. No clear target has been set.

Overall assessment and notes on action to be taken:
Biggest challenge has been OVI 4. Consideration is being given to providing a gravity-feed supply to the community – but this is a long-term project. Other indicators are generally positive.

Suggested scoring	4=Fully achieved (100%)	3=Largely achieved (75%)	2=Partially achieved (50%)	1=Achieved to a very limited extent (25%)	0=No progress (0%)	X=Too early/unable to judge

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.5 Situation & Risk Monitoring
5.6 Financial Monitoring
5.7 Monitoring Supplies

5.5 Situation & Risk Monitoring

Apart from monitoring using the logframe analysis of activities, results and assumptions, the agency will also need to monitor the overall context in which its response is taking place. ALNAP suggests that situation monitoring covers the following:

- Focus on context (political, economic, social, institutional, etc) and any rapid changes in this.
- Emphasis on overall assessments and baseline studies in relation to individual sectors.
- Emphasis on early warning systems and preparedness.
- Emphasis on collective monitoring since all humanitarian actors will have similar minimum information requirements (ALNAP 2003).

A tool for risk analysis can be found in the Monitoring Tools document (section 13). As with all monitoring activities, risk assessments need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis (i.e. as part of the planning process).

5.6 Financial Monitoring

Financial monitoring will normally be done by comparing budgets with actual expenditure. A Budget Monitoring Report should cover the following questions:

- Is expenditure broadly in line with the budget?
- Is income broadly in line with the budget?
- Are there any significant variances? If so, have they been satisfactorily explained?
- What action is being taken to correct significant variances – e.g. under-spending as a result of delayed activity plans?
- Are there any large bills outstanding which could substantially affect the figures shown?
- Is the organisation owed any large sums of money? What is being done to retrieve them?
- Are there any un-budgeted expenses which may occur in the rest of the year?
- What is the projected end-year outcome? Is this outcome satisfactory? If not, what steps can be taken to change the result? (Mango 2006)

See also Financial Management Monitoring Template.

5.7 Monitoring Supplies

Monitoring is important through the whole supply process. The primary tools for monitoring supplies are delivery notes and waybills with warehouse checks.

Monitoring the use of supplies is also a critical part of programme monitoring involving:

- Warehousing systems: Do they meet agency standards in security, goods management and adequate reporting systems?
- Dispatches: Are they authorised appropriately and then recorded accurately?
- Inventory management: Is the stock moving? Are any goods such as medicines close to their expiry dates? Is the principle of 'first in, first out' being used?
- Accountability: Are goods being signed for by the end-user? Is it possible to track where everything went? (Bainbridge & Tuck 2006)

See also Logistics in the Monitoring Templates.

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.8 Using Monitoring Information

5.8 Using Monitoring Information

It is no use if monitoring information that has been painstakingly collected is not analysed and used. It is important that regular review meetings are held with field staff to consider the findings from monitoring work and to agree changes to project implementation, if needed. Feedback to beneficiaries is also extremely important.

A good monitoring report can include the following information:

- New information on activities' progress and explains advances in the results achievements.
- Concrete data and information about targeted populations when the proposal did not define them well.
- Openly describes the problems, constraints and difficulties that may slow down the implementation.
- Explains and is transparent on the reasons why to make changes as compared to previous plans.
- Gives options in the decision-making process to minimise delays or to avoid potential mistakes.
- Annexes the documentation that is being used during project implementation, such as surveys, maps, diagnosis (ACH 2006).

The example of a monitoring report in Table 13 below shows the reality of monitoring with the difficulty of getting accurate and adequate information recorded in the notes at the end of the form.

Table 13: Example of completed monitoring report form

OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS
PURPOSE		
To decrease malnutrition rates and strengthen the capacity of the resident and returnee population in the project area to address the root causes of food insecurity through selective feeding, agricultural support and community health and health education.	▲ Number of returnees who have settled and cultivated in the project area between February and October 2005 is greater than the same period in 2004. ▲ Malnutrition rate for children under 5 years of age reduced to less than 15% global acute malnutrition by end of October 2005.	▲ According to government registration statistics, which may not be fully reliable, 7,726 people resettled in the period January to June 2005, compared to 5,782 over the same period in 2004. This is measuring different dates than the indicator requires (February to October) and we can only comment on whether people have settled, not whether they have cultivated. ▲ A nutrition survey carried out in Sept' 2005 measured a global acute malnutrition rate of 17%, so while it is fairly close, the target was not fully met and there are no plans to carry out a further survey at the end of October that would fit with the indicator.

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.8 Using Monitoring Information

Table 13: Example of completed monitoring report form *(cont. from page 39)*

OBJECTIVES	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	PROGRESS
OUTPUTS		
Nutrition: **Decentralised dry supplementary feeding provided to moderately malnourished children under five years of age by October 2005.**	▲ At least 5,000 moderately malnourished children registered in the programme by October 2005. ▲ 60% of total number of malnourished children in the target population reached over project timeframe.	▲ A total of 5,696 moderately malnourished children were registered by Oct' 2005 so the indicator was met. In fact the number would be higher but data is missing for the first month. ▲ Assuming there is a total of 8,000 malnourished children in the target population (20% of 40,000 children), then 71% have been reached (5,696 children) and the indicator has been exceeded.
Health Education: **Improved health knowledge and practice amongst project households by October 2005.**	▲ 4,000 community participants with a 50% increase in knowledge compared to baseline survey with regard to key health messages by October 2005 (e.g. malaria, food preparation, weaning practice).	▲ Unable to measure. No comparison with baseline is possible as only one survey was carried out, towards the end of the project period (while the survey measured the correct health issues, it was not a baseline survey). 5,342 participants received health education, although it is unclear if this figure includes repeat attendants at classes.
Food Security: **Increased food availability at the household level for 10,000 households by October 2005**	▲ Successful seed fair resulting in 4,000 farmers with appropriate local varieties of seed to plant by June 2005 producing a yield of over 500MT in total harvest. ▲ Over 2,000 fruit trees seedlings sold and over 1,000 fruit trees planted by beneficiaries and still living by October 2005.	▲ Indicator was met, in that 4,237 farmers received an 8kg seed package by the end of May 2005. However, we cannot comment on the harvest as it can only be measured after the project period has ended. ▲ 33,253 seedlings were sold. However next to no information is available on the numbers planted and surviving. In a small sample group of 255 families 145 seedlings were found to be still alive.

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.8 Using Monitoring Information

Write down any problems you encountered and suggest why these problems occurred:

a. Inappropriate indicators:

- Some data could not be measured e.g. the harvest takes place after the project period is over so it was inappropriate to include an indicator assessing harvest yield.
- Some indicators were unmanageable e.g. the project area was too big for the team to find a system to record the number of surviving seedlings.
- No stats were available to measure number of resettlers who were cultivating. This should have been thought through at the start when designing the logframe – for each indicator we need to know exactly where we'll get the data from, or change the indicator if the data can't be found or measured.

b. Inadequate record keeping:

- Records weren't kept in the first month of the supplementary feeding programme.
- Unclear whether health attendant records include repeat attendants, so it's difficult to use the information for progress against the indicator.

c. Poor planning:

- No baseline was carried out on health knowledge.
- Timings of nutrition surveys were inappropriate, with no funds left to do a survey that actually fits with the indicator.

d. Unreliable statistics:
had to rely on government statistics which may not have been reliable.

e. Unnecessary assessment:
there was no need to do an extensive survey of the schools as this was not part of the project and represented unnecessary additional work for the team.

Source: Bainbridge & Tuck 2006

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.9 Summary of Good Practice

5.9 Summary of Good Practice

Box 8 provides some top tips on monitoring and is followed by further guidance on good practice in monitoring.

Box 8: Top tips for monitoring

- Plan carefully for surveys and ensure they are carried out as scheduled and not forgotten (nutrition survey, KAP etc.) This does sometimes happen!
- Record data throughout the period of the project to ensure that it is not a time consuming difficult activity at the end of the project, or when donor reports are required. Be careful to collect only that information which is useful and necessary.
- Keep accurate records as you go.
- Monitor on a monthly basis, not only as prompted by donor reporting deadlines, and keep accurate records from one month to the next.
- Refer back to original risks and assumptions, it is appropriate to explain problems and delays experienced in relation to these (as we had identified them as potential concerns) and conversely not to have anticipated a problem could reflect poorly on your project planning. Also, ensure that you explain how you anticipated solving or working around problems to ensure that as far as possible the project remains on track.
- Good practice in monitoring and evaluation involves beneficiary participation, as detailed in the HAP principles. Beneficiaries should be allowed to input their perspective on how the project is progressing and teams should feedback openly and honestly on project progress.

Source: Bainbridge & Tuck 2006

- Monitoring requirements need to be included in project assessment and planning from the start.
- There needs to be caution in standardising monitoring information. There is a danger that standardised monitoring and reporting forms tend to focus on more quantitative indicators (rather than less easily defined qualitative ones) and direct programme activities (rather than including the wider environmental context which may affect those activities).
- Sufficient time and resources need to be planned for monitoring activities.
- There will probably be a need for staff development in monitoring skills.
- Indicators are often best established using a LFA approach, involving stakeholders and, where possible, conducting a base line study.
- Monitoring systems should be kept as simple as possible, collecting only enough information which is **useful** both for decision making and action.
- The information gathered should be tailored to need at different levels within the organisation. It is vitally important to carefully consider ***who*** needs ***what*** information.
- The local partner and beneficiaries should be involved in all types of monitoring.

5 Practical Guidance With Worked Examples

5.9 Summary of Good Practice

- Designing an 'extractive' monitoring system should be avoided (i.e. a system which is designed to meet only the needs of donors or senior planners/policy makers, but has no or little relevance to project implementers or other stakeholders 'on the ground'). Such systems often produce poor quality information, do little to build local capacity and are not sustainable.
- Monitoring should include all forms of communication: verbal and written, formal and informal, creating the potential for cross-checking information.
- Information collection and analysis should be linked coherently to decision making events – management meetings, periodic reviews, programme and funding cycles, national events outside the context of the programme.
- Monitoring activities should be scheduled and planned ahead, not just done when a donor's report is pending.
- Monitoring information and records should be collected throughout the life time of the project, logically and carefully filed and be available for use e.g. later, by external reviewers, e.g. evaluators, auditors. When staff leave the monitoring information and data should stay behind!
- Information gathered through monitoring needs to be collated, analysed and compared to expected results or baseline data.
- The conclusions drawn from the monitoring data needs to be fed back into programme design, planning and activity. The results of monitoring must be acted on.

(The guidance above has been collated from a number of sources including: ACH 2006; Bainbridge & Tuck 2006; Forum Solint 2003; MSF Holland 1999; European Commission 2004).

6 Conclusions

A number of contributors to this report noted that, at the end of the day, 'good' monitoring, including a fundamental element of consultation with and involvement of affected persons, will be dependent on a range of organisational and management issues, including:

- The values of the agency, which incorporate a commitment to programme quality and to accountability;
- Management decisions that allocate sufficient time and human resources to monitoring functions, including time for reflection and the more time-consuming qualitative areas of beneficiary consultation;
- Funding frameworks that allow resources for effective monitoring to be carried out; and
- Organisational cultures that allow for 'mistakes' in programme planning and delivery to be recognised in a mature way, with the emphasis on learning and programme improvement.

Contributors to this study noted that time and effort will need to be given to dissemination and associated training if this monitoring resource is to be fully effective. It was noted that this area of follow-up is one that DG ECHO and other donors should consider supporting.

It was also noted that standardising log frame terminology amongst agencies would be helpful.

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Annex 2 – Organisations Contacted

Belgium
World Vision

Denmark
ADRA Denmark
DanChurchAid
Danish People's Aid
Danish Red Cross
Danish Refugee Council

Italy
CISP
WFP
COOPI
Punto Sud

Kenya
ACF South Sudan
ADRA
CARE
COOPI
DRC
ICRC
IFRC regional office
Kenya Red Cross
MERLIN KENYA AND SOMALIA
OCHA
OXFAM GB
SC UK (Somalia)
VSF (Belgium) REGIONAL
WFP
WORLD VISION

Sweden
Church of Sweden Aid

Switzerland
HAPI
ICRC
ICVA
IFRC
Medair (Lausanne)
Sphere Project
UNHCR
WHO

UK
Action Aid
Disasters Emergency Committee
Mango
Oxfam GB
Tearfund

Independent Consultants
Margie Buchanan-Smith
Peta Sandison

Annex 3 – Terms Of Reference

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Humanitarian Aid

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID – ECHO

ECHO 0/1 – Evaluation Sector

Terms of Reference for: A methodology for the Monitoring of Humanitarian Aid

Contract n°: ECHO/ADM/BUD/2007/012XX

Introduction

1. Under this ToR DG ECHO intends to construct a methodology for the monitoring of humanitarian aid. This work is to complement the methodology for the evaluation of humanitarian aid that is currently being developed by DG ECHO. Both exercises are intended to build capacity in the humanitarian aid sector by equiping DG ECHO's NGO partners with tools for their use.

2. Monitoring may be considered as an on-going process of observing, reflecting and responding to opportunities and challenges. It is a positive tool to promote management, control and accountability. It has to promote lessons learning and feedback into the processes throughout the entire project cycle, i.e., it has to be applied in an on-going iterative manner. It has to inform all participants and promote their understanding. (By participants, it is meant those parties external and internal to the implementing NGO, external participants can be donors and aid recipients, local NGOs and sub-contractors, internal can be all levels of management and responsible officials.)

3. DG ECHO wishes to develop this methodology in consultation with its INGO partners. Humanitarian NGO's responsible for the implementation of projects/programmes are the primary clients for this review. It has to be stated that this review is also to equip INGOs with the tools to monitor the work of local NGOs and/or subcontractors responsible for the implementation of humanitarian aid projects.

4. Among the primary objectives DG ECHO wishes to realise are:
   - an increase in the quality and timeliness of information available to humanitarian aid decision makers, by increasing monitoring capacity in the sector;
   - to promote accountability and lessons learning by reviewing experiences and evidence of the use of indicators and benchmarks and their impact on activities, and both involve reflection and learning towards improving how things are done in the future
   - to promote the monitoring process for greater transparency and thus to give all humanitarian participants an overview of a linked set of processes of cause and effect;
   - to allow more intra-sector comparisons of operations by clarifying issues and promoting the use of a standardised methodology and thus to construct a body of knowledge.

Annex 3 – Terms Of Reference

5. DG ECHO considers that when comparing monitoring to evaluation, evaluation is a more infrequent exercise often performed by officials or consultants not involved in the hands on management of the implementation of aid projects/programmes. The monitoring methodology to be developed has to be a tool for on-going use by the officials responsible for the implementation of aid projects.

6. As a part of this review the application of key objectives e.g. LRRD, and cross-cutting issues e.g. protection, gender, children, elderly and disabled people, environment, consultation of beneficiaries; civil-military interface, access, advocacy and visibility have to be systematically examined for inclusion in the tool.

7. The methodology is to develop questionnaires and checklists directed to the key processes and the principal sectors within humanitarian aid, i.e., medical, watsan, nutrition and shelter interventions. The questionnaires will contain objectives, judgemental criteria and examples of indicators and benchmarks. The methodology is to consider the application of monitoring over the whole of the project cycle, from needs-assessment through to exiting. The methodology must cover the characteristics and components of monitoring mechanisms, including self-assessment tools.

8. The consultants are to support the methodology by documenting and attaching other tools already in the public domain and tose that are shared by major humanitarian NGOs. The consultants will have the opportunity to conduct workshops within the EU and a major workshop at field level on monitoring.

Objectives of the Review and Tasks to be Accomplished

9. Under Article 4 of the Humanitarian Regulation DG ECHO may also finance: general studies including the exchange of technical know-how and experience by European humanitarian organisations and agencies, or between such bodies and those of third countries.

Objective of the review

10. The overall objective of this review is to strengthen the monitoring capacity of humanitarian organisations by establishing a standard methodology for the monitoring of humanitarian aid.

Tasks to be accomplished

11. **The basis for the consultants' opinions shall be:**
    - their own professional qualifications and experience;
    - interviews with key DG ECHO officials, both personnel at DG ECHO headquarters and technical assistants (TAs) based in the field;
    - interviews with officials in other EC External Services, DG DEV, DG RELEX and DG AIDCO;
    - interviews with officials of UN organisations based in Geneva and elsewhere, and EU NGOs;
    - workshops in France, the United Kingdom and at one location in the field, possibly Kenya; and
    - reviews of relevant methodologies and tools created by Member States or their agencies, the UN, Red Cross bodies, international and regional entities and NGOs. Consultants will carry out a comparative analysis of the conclusions and recommendations drawn in other publications.

Annex 3 – Terms Of Reference

12. **Drafting of a Methodology for submission to DG ECHO and its partners.** The consultants will need to consider the various monitoring tools used at present and consider whether they should be added to or adapted. Based on this they need to set questions as to objectives, judgement criteria and identify benchmarks and indicators. The consultants must also provide a bibliography of supporting documents and websites that are pertinent for DG ECHO and its partners use. The emphasis is on clarity and conciseness in presentation.

13. In the conduct of their work, the consultants may also be able to draw upon the support of ALNAP, the secretariat for the 'Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action. www.alnap.org

Work Plan

14. **Briefing** in Brussels *(maximum 2 days including all travel)*: A briefing at DG ECHO with the responsible staff, during which all the documents available for the mission and necessary clarifications will be provided by the requesting service and other services of the Commission.

15. **Missions** to France, United Kingdom, Switzerland, *(maximum 8 days including all travel)*: The senior experts shall undertake these visits in order to have contact with relevant UN and Red Cross officials and workshops with major NGOs. One **mission** to a Member State capital *(maximum 2 days including travel)* to review relevant methodologies and tools created by Member States or their agencies.

16. **Field work** *(maximum 7 days including all travel)*: The senior experts shall undertake a field visit to one DG ECHO office in order to organise a workshop at field level with key international partners and NGOs. They will also have contact with certain of DG ECHO's technical assistants and officials.

17. **Drafting** of documents required by the review - the consulting companies bidding will have to propose a number of days for each of the two senior experts. The work has to be accomplished in the budget allowed. The other days are set out to assist with planning and per diems.

18. **Debriefing/presentation** of the documents required by the review at DG ECHO *(maximum of 2 days for each of the two senior experts including all travel)*: The two senior experts will make a presentation to DG ECHO management and key staff in 'PowerPoint' of the methodology and supporting documents.

19. **Submission** of the final version of documents requested: the experts are to submit their work at least two months before the December 2007 Partners' Conference to allow for review and editing and production of final CD/DVD versions.

20. **Attendance** at the 2007 DG ECHO Partners' Conference to host a workshop on monitoring methodologies *(maximum 2 days including all travel)*. This may be in October or November 2007, dates are not yet determined.

Annex 3 – Terms Of Reference

A Methodology for the Monitoring of Humanitarian Aid

21. The review will result in the drawing up of a methodology written in a straightforward manner, in English. The consultants will map relevant supporting documentation in a bibliography and include them on the CD/DVD whenever appropriate.

22. The document format appearing below must be adhered to.
    - *Cover page*
        - Title: "A Methodology for the Monitoring of Humanitarian Aid";
        - Date of the final version
        - Name of the consultants
        - Cost of the report in euros
        - Indication that "the methodology has been financed by and produced at the request of the European Commission."
    - Table of contents
    - Methodology
    - Annexes, including bibliography and supporting documents

23. DG ECHO requires that 2000 CD/DVDs incorporating the methodology and supporting documentation be supplied. The design quality must be of a professional level (inter alia using a desk top publishing tool to incorporate visual images and clickable links in the final pdf version). The recent DG ECHO Watsan Review may be used as an example of what DG ECHO expects to receive, http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/thematic_en.htm The consultants will have to include this cost in the budget to be submitted.

24. Once established, DG ECHO will have the methodology translated into French and Spanish.

Required Skills for the Consultants

25. DG ECHO envisages that two senior experts shall carry out the work. DG ECHO considers that the consultants proposed should preferably have work experience in implementing humanitarian aid emergency or relief operations at field level, experience of drafting research, policy or strategy papers and/or substantial experience of monitoring and/or evaluation in humanitarian aid.

26. All experts should be able to draft in English, but knowledge of French by at least one member of the team is essential.

27. DG ECHO will make available office space at its HQ and one field office to facilitate the consultants' work. Telephone conferencing to other entities and organisations may also be used where necessary.

Annex 3 – Terms Of Reference

Assignment of Tasks

28. Each team member is jointly responsible for the final accomplishment of the tasks; however, the separate elements of work necessary for the accomplishment of the tasks may be allocated between the consultants. The members of the team must work in close co-ordination.

29. A team leader shall be named who shall have the added responsibility of the overall co-ordination of the tasks to be completed and of the final coherence of the report and other works, both in terms of content and presentation.

Timetable

30. The tasks under this monitoring will be undertaken by two senior experts and will be completed between April 1st 2007 and December 31st 2007. The consultants will use a workshop at the DG ECHO Partners' Conference 2007 (date to be determined in either October or November) to present their work. After this presentation the work should be complete and the contract shall be presented for liquidation



The Evaluation Partnership

TRANSTEC

PROLOG CONSULT

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Humanitarian Aid

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