

Result-based Monitoring & Evaluation Systems (RME): Concepts, Principles and Approaches¹

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BACKGROUND: DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

We will find it useful to outline and define some of the concepts and issues which will hopefully give a fuller meaning to the assigned course topic.

These concepts include, but not limited to:

- Types of Agricultural and Rural Development Projects
- Project beneficiaries : Population specific / non-population specific
- Project monitoring
- Project evaluation
- Monitoring versus Evaluation of a project

Types of Agricultural and Rural Development Projects:

- Physical delivery projects: **achievements** are readily **compared** to set **targets** (e.g. buildings, rural infrastructure)
- People oriented projects: **goals** and means of achievement tends to be **less tangible** and somewhat **arbitrary**, e.g., raising quality of life, improvement in health delivery

Examples of Physical infrastructure:

Market infrastructure built

No of market stalls
No. VIP latrines built
No. cold rooms built (m³)

Fadama roads created

Km. of roads constructed by type
Km of roads rehabilitated by type
No. of culverts established,
No. of drifts established,
No. of stock routes established,
No. of grazing reserves established

Water resources infrastructure built

No. of: boreholes,
No. of small earth dams constructed (m³)
No. of rock-filled dams constructed,
No. of drainage systems constructed,
No. of irrigation systems created
No. of overhead tanks constructed (m³)
No. of cattle troughs established

Project Beneficiaries:

These are **segments** of the **population** targeted to **benefit** from a given project. Project beneficiaries or **target population** must be made **explicit** right from **project design**.

Here are a set of **criteria**/examples that are **specific to a population**:

- rural families
- owners/cultivators of < 2 hectares of land
- land suitable for agricultural production
- earners of < ₦50,000 income per annum

Some **projects** or programmes **are not so specific about the target population**:

- Fertilizer **importation** programmes
- Input and/or commodity **price support** programmes
- Agricultural **research** and technology **adoption** programmes

PROJECT MONITORING:

Definition: **Information gathering** on the **various aspects** of a project.

- a **continuous** project activity;
- an **internal (routine)** activity of a project; **aids management decision making**.

- a **good management practice**; part of day-to-day input into project management;
- ensures **adherence** to the **implementation** schedule;

Management Information System (MIS): **main source** of monitoring data.

Examples of monitoring data:

- Financial records
- Physical records
- **Inputs given** and **services rendered** to beneficiaries
- Survey data

TABLE 1: A GENERAL FORMAT FOR PROJECT MONITORING:

Activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark

Exercise: Target population vs monitoring target? Discuss

Exercise: discuss and explain each column heading

EXAMPLES OF AGRICULTURAL PROJECT MONITORING FORMATS UNDER FADAMA II:

Table 2: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF FADAMA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS (FCAs)

Sample of activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark
Meetings attended	No	4		Register / minutes	
Training attended	No	2		Register / minutes	
Visit to FUGs by FCAs	No	40		Register / minutes	
Meetings held	No	12		Register / minutes	
Visits to FCA's sub projects	No	8		Register / minutes	
Reported cases of conflict	No	NS		Report	
No of persons displaced by conflict	No	NS		Report	
Fund received from SFDO	₦	NS		Account books	
Fund disbursed	₦	NS		Account books	
Local Development plan prepared	No	1		Report	
Sub projects prepared	No	6		Proposal	
Sub projects implemented	No	6		% completion	

Source: Second National Fadama Development Project (Fadama II) Monitoring formats (2006)

Table 3: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION OFFICER

Sample of activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark
Baseline survey	No	1		Report	
Farm Enterprise Budgets	No	1		Report	
Monitoring of well	No	12		Report	
Supervision missions received:					
- NFDO	No	4		Report	
- World Bank /ADB	No	2		Report	
Periodic reports:					
- Quarterly	No	4		Report	
- Half year	No	2		Report	
- Annual	No	1		Report	
Market price survey:					
- Quarterly	No	NS		Report	
- Annual	No	NS		Report	
Enterprise production survey:					
- Crops	No	1		Report	
- Livestock	No	1		Report	
- Fishery	No	1		Report	
- Others	No	NS		Report	

Source: Second National Fadama Development Project (Fadama II) Monitoring formats (2006)

Table 3: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

Sample of activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark
Withdrawal applications prepared	No	3		Withdrawal applications	
Statement of Expenditure submitted:	₦	1		Account book	
Financial monitoring report	No	4		Report	
Audited reports	No	1		Report	
Loans drawn	₦	NS		Account book	
Disbursement to FCAs	₦	NS		Account book	
Expenditure on project components:	₦	NS		Account book	
- Capacity building	₦	NS		Account book	
- Advisory services	₦	NS		Account book	
- Pilot asset acquisition	₦	NS		Account book	
- Rural infrastructure	₦	NS		Account book	

Source: Second National Fadama Development Project (Fadama II) Monitoring formats (2006)

Table 4: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Sample of activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark
Procurement plan:					
- Prepared	No	1		Plan	
- Assets acquired by SFDO	No	NS		Register	
Procurement monitoring report	No	1		Report	
Price survey conducted	No	1		Report	
Technical assistance to:					
- FCA	No	NS		Record	
- FUG	No	NS		Record	
International competitive procurement	No	NS		Record	
National competitive bidding	No	NS		Record	
Procurement by category:					
- Goods	No	NS		Record	
- Civil work	No	NS		Record	
- Consultancy services	No	NS		Record	
- Training	No	NS		Record	

Source: Second National Fadama Development Project (Fadama II) Monitoring formats (2006)

Table 5: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF ADVISORY SERVICES OFFICER

Sample of activities	Unit of measurement	Target (annual or quarterly)	Achievement (annual or quarterly)	Means of verification	Remark
Orientation workshop for service providers	No	1			Report
Database for improved technology	No	1			Report
Learning events conducted	No	2			Report
Evaluation of advisory proposal	No	1			Report
Cross FCA activities:					
- Facilitated	No	1			Report
- Appraised	No	1			Report
Linking FUGs to input/output markets :					
- Pastoralist	No	NS			Report
- Fisher folk	No	NS			Report
- Agro forestry	No	NS			Report
- Hunters	No	NS			Report
- Crop farmers	No	NS			Report
- Youths	No	NS			Report
- Elderly	No	NS			Report
- Widows	No	NS			Report

Source: Second National Fadama Development Project (Fadama II) Monitoring formats (2006)

PROJECT EVALUATION:

A possible definition: **Assessment** of the **relevance, performance, efficiency and impact** of a project in **relation** to the stated **objectives**.

- Can be **informal or formal**. In the **latter** case, it may extend beyond the **life span** of the project;
- Relies mainly on **comparative analytical** tools.

Purposes of project evaluation:

An exercise for **gathering lessons/ experiences** to:

- **improve** on the implementation of **existing** project
- **alter** aspects of the **design** of **similar ongoing** projects
- **improve** the **design** of **future** projects

Caution: **Project evaluation** should therefore **not** necessarily be an exercise that ends in **harsh judgment** on seemingly **or presently** ‘**unsatisfactory**’ project outcomes.

Sources of Evaluation data:

- **Existing** project’s **MIS** (collected over time)
- MIS from **outside** the project (**control**)
- **Results/Reports** of **impact studies** on **similar projects outside the present** project area

Project monitoring versus project evaluation:

Line of distinction between monitoring and evaluation is narrow:

- **Monitoring** focus more on **implementation issues**.
- **Evaluation** focuses more on the **likely outcomes** of project intervention.

Types of project Evaluation:

- **informal periodic reviews**; an internal activity of project management
- **formal**, at **fixed points in time**: mid-term, terminal, ex post

Informal project evaluation:

- Essentially, an **activity** of the **project staff**, for **internal use** only;
- **Continuous**, not adhoc;
- Necessitated **if monitoring reveals significant departures** from **design**
- Draws **information** mainly from the **MIS**; requires **minimal data**.

Focus of Informal evaluation:

- Extent of **beneficiary acceptance** of project **inputs, services** and other forms of assistance; (**examples; discuss**)
- **Preliminary effects** of project on agricultural **production/income**
- **Unintended consequences** of the project. (**examples; discuss**)

Formal project evaluation:

Timing: best at **full** project development, i.e., some **years after** project completion.

Broad focus of formal project evaluation:

- **changes** that have occurred as a result of the project
- **proportion** of the changes attributable to the project

Specific focus of formal project evaluation:

- performance
- output, effects, impact
- economic and financial efficiency

Issues in performance evaluation:

- (a) project **identification, preparation and appraisal**; **must ensure**
 - quality of feasibility studies
 - adequacy of preparation and appraisal reports
- (b) project specification, in terms of
 - objectives
 - components
 - activities
 - targets, etc.
- (c) **timing** of project **start-up** and **implementation**
- (d) **Services** and **inputs** provided (supply adequacy?)
 - physical infrastructure
 - agricultural inputs
 - services
- (e) beneficiary **coverage** and **response**
 - coverage of the target area/population
- (f) managerial performance
 - effective supervision ?
- (g) financial performance
 - satisfactory financial control?

Issues in the Evaluation of Project output, Effects and Impacts:

(Exercise: discuss differences among outputs, effects and impacts of a project)

- **intended** effects/results
- **unintended** effects/results

Mid-term project evaluation:

Not aimed to measure project impact, being a mid-term exercise

Results used to **correct aspects of the ongoing project implementation**

Main focus of mid-term project evaluation:

Concerned mainly with **project performance** in terms of:

- **organizational** structure and **management** capabilities
- **procurement** of goods and services
- **delivery system** for inputs and services to the target population
- **progress** in building **physical infrastructure**
- **volume, quality** of inputs and services
- **prelim beneficiary response** to inputs and services
- **prelim output response** (to be confirmed by more data in later years)
- **environmental changes** that may result from project implementation

Terminal evaluation (a.k.a. project completion evaluation/report):

- conducted when **funding** for a project **terminates**;
- **inputs** and **services** are expected to **continue beyond** project's **external funding**, if sustainability was built into the project design;
- **rates** of financial and **economic returns** can be more realistically computed under PCE; more **data is available**;
- **beneficiary perception** of project benefits/impacts on their lives is a welcome component of the project completion report (PCR);
- **Recommendations** in the PCE are **good inputs** for future project design, especially **phased** projects. (**Phased? Examples?**)

Ex post or Impact Evaluation:

- Ideally undertaken 5-10 years after project funding terminates.

Justifications:

- lasting **impact not visible** at project completion;
- recorded **impact** at project **completion** may be **transitory/unsustainable**;
- a project classified as '**unsatisfactory**' at **terminal evaluation** may show **improved impact** years later.

EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES TO FADAMA II M AND E : **MTR REPORT 2007**

MONITORING AND EVALUATION [M&E]

Objectives

- rendition of **timely** reports,
- **physical monitoring** of the implementation activities and the establishment of **functional** management information system [**MIS**],
- **periodic** report rendition,
- **data collection, analysis and availability**,
- website management,
- **studies and findings** emanating from the studies and **economic analysis** of sub-projects.

Implementation of physical monitoring

- **periodic visits** to sub-project sites; **poorly implemented**
- concept of **participatory M&E** was adopted as against the traditional M&E system; **still new**

Data collection, Analysis and Availability

The relevant data collected include:

- (a) **Market prices** of agricultural commodities were collected in quarterly, monthly, bi-annual and annual retails and at Farmgate Market Price of Fadama enterprises input and outputs [2004-2006].
- (b) Annual **production data** on Fadama investments which include: Crop output, yields and area cultivated [2004-2006]

Supplementary information:

- **Enterprise Budget** for Fadama Enterprises which is used to guide fadama users. Other agricultural practitioners use in decision making with respect to choice of enterprise.
- Project implementation progress report
- Work plans and budget [2004-2007]
- Summary of approved LDPs
- Financial monitoring reports [FMR]
- Procurement contracts register and fixed asset register.

Field surveys:

- **data collection** in most of the fadama states remains **unsatisfactory**;
- data collection is **not consistent**.
- accurate and consistent data collection is a paramount indicator of appropriate monitoring and evaluation.

Periodic Report Rendition

Project Implementation Monitoring, PIM: **formal reports** that should be made and are **time-bound** include

- monthly,
- quarterly
- bi-annual and
- annual progress report.
- Others are mid-term and
- implementation completion reports.

Management Information System

Primary objective of the MIS:

- to assist in the **tracking of investment** to sub projects,
- capacity building,
- studies and
- institutional support, etc.

Field visits: **MIS not satisfactory** in terms of

- the **quality of data** to be analyzed,
- the lack of adequate **logistics for data analysis** and
- the **local fadama desk officers, not computer literate** and could not efficiently make use of complicated software.

Economic Analysis

- **most** of the fadama **states did not conduct economic analysis** of their respective projects
- may be due to the **poor level of training of fadama M&E officers** as far as **project economic analysis** is concerned.

Website management

The national fadama development office website [www.fadama-org] is **operational** and also **functional** in most of the states.

Challenges:

- establishment – take off
- continued functionality
- maintenance / sustenance

Studies and Findings Emanating

Studies conducted:

- environmental baseline survey,
- fadama community listing survey,
- beneficiary assessment survey,
- Agronomic survey,
- monthly market survey and
- comprehensive agricultural input and output surveys.

- Impact on PDO tracking? **no systematic analysis of data by SFDOs**

Challenges (let us discuss these):

Some of the challenges of the M&E include:

1. FCAs' lack of capacity to undertake participatory M&E and sub-project evaluation.
2. M&E officers lacked capacity to design and implement monitoring and evaluation studies and carry out impact evaluation.
3. The **absence of a standardized LDP format at the initial stage** created much problems for the implementing officers vis a vis the CDD strategy for the project implementation.
4. The CDD approach in which **target cannot be set to measure performance** of the FCA/FUG until later in the project implementation period created a bottleneck for comparison across implementation states.
5. The **slow take-off of a functional MIS** actually hamstrung data collection at the initial stage of implementation and presently **computerized data base management is still not fully operational**.
6. Low supply of electricity as only 32.8% of the rural communities were connected to the National Grid [Power Holding Company of Nigeria] and only a very few (less than 5% can afford to purchase a power generating plant.

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