Monitoring Guidance

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Overview

The BEAM Monitoring Guidance aims to provide an introduction to current thinking and practice in monitoring for programmes using a market systems approach. It is primarily targeted at programme staff who implement these programmes, but it may also be of interest to donors, development finance institutions, and government agency staff.

The guidance has been developed as a collection of nine modules. The modules can be read and used on their own, but the aim is that they are used together.

Each module focuses on a significant issue relevant to monitoring:

> **Module 1: Outlining a systemic change monitoring framework**

> **Module 2: Developing a theory of systemic change**

> **Module 3: Intervention performance monitoring**

> **Module 4: Assessing wider system change**

> **Module 5: Reviewing and integrating results**

> **Module 6: Monitoring for adaptive management**

> **Module 7: Assessing value for money**

> **Module 8: Involving market actors**

> **Module 9: Methods and tools**

Market systems programmes are implemented in complex, dynamic environments, and therefore need to adapt as they progress. This means that programme
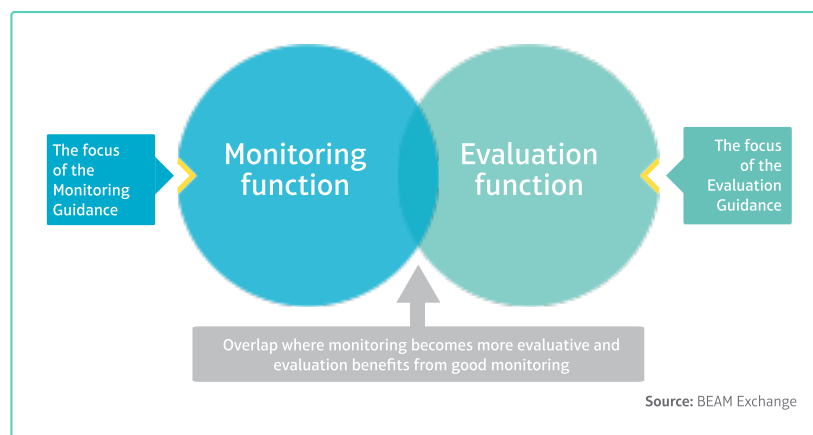
teams need to have timely information about what interventions are achieving, and what is happening in the wider market system, which in turn requires a monitoring system that can provide this information. At the same time, there are increasing demands for programmes to report on their effectiveness. The guidance will help practitioners to comply successfully with these two requirements.

Different programmes have different needs and ambitions for monitoring, and need to develop a monitoring framework that reflects their particular circumstances. As a result, this guidance is not intended to provide a step-by-step guide or blueprint for developing a monitoring framework.

Instead, the aim is to guide the thinking of the practitioners who work on monitoring by summarising and discussing key issues. To avoid 're-inventing the wheel', extensive links to other resources have been included in each module, with a brief explanation of the content of the resource, and why it may be of use.

This guidance has been prepared in conjunction with the separate and forthcoming, BEAM Evaluation Guide for market systems approaches, and reference has been made to that document where relevant.

It is expected that the modules will be revised in response to emerging practice in the field, and in response to suggestions from the BEAM community.

The focus of the Monitoring Guidance — Monitoring function — Evaluation function — The focus of the Evaluation Guidance

Overlap where monitoring becomes more evaluative and evaluation benefits from good monitoring

Source: BEAM Exchange

A few words on terminology

'Monitoring' and 'evaluation'

Traditionally, monitoring has been understood as a function that shows whether a programme is being implemented according to plan. As such, monitoring activities typically focused on measuring outputs and activities, for instance, how many training sessions were implemented, how many beneficiaries participated, or how much equipment was bought.

More recently, and particularly in discussions on the need to implement market systems programmes in an adaptive manner, the ambit of monitoring has extended to assess whether interventions are achieving their intended effects. This broader conception has been described as 'monitoring and results measurement', or 'impact monitoring'. In essence this implies that programme monitoring should now extend into areas previously thought of as being the preserve of evaluation.

In the rest of this guidance, the term 'monitoring' is used to signify monitoring and results measurement carried out by the programme, either by programme staff or externally sourced contractors. The term 'evaluation' is used to signify an external activity, usually mandated by the donor and implemented by a third party.

This guidance makes the case for an extended monitoring function that includes activities typically seen as evaluative. It explains why monitoring outcomes – and considering the contribution of a programme towards achieving these – is essential for programmes that intervene in complex and rapidly changing systems.

Programmes and interventions

This guidance addresses monitoring at both the level of the overall programme and its individual interventions. For the purposes of clarity a **programme** is meant here as a collection of coordinated interventions which are implemented during a given time period to achieve a specific set of goals. An **intervention** is understood as a project which forms one component of the wider programme.

Interventions have defined implementation periods and defined resources, and are designed to help achieve all or some of the programme goals.