Project Performance/Monitoring

Training on Project Cycle Management for Researchers
Ethiopian Academy of Sciences
25–27 May 2016, Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa
Session’s Objective

- To increase participants understanding of the concepts used in designing M&E Frameworks and Plans

- Build their competence to effectively track research process and outcomes and disseminate such information to relevant stakeholders and ensure accountability
At the end of this session participants will be able to:

- identify and define key indicators for M&E research work;
- systematically track the research process and outcomes and disseminate such findings in a manner appropriate to the various stakeholders;
- produce a program monitoring and evaluation framework.
Major Topics to be Covered

- Conceptual Framework on Research M&E
- Designing M&E System for Research
- Packaging and Dissemination of Research Results
- Necessary Conditions and Capacities for M&E
Conceptual Framework on Research M&E
What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

Monitoring:

✓ is the systematic collection and analyses of data/information about the progress of a piece of work (research) so as to provide feedback to relevant stakeholders to take timely and corrective measures to ensure that the research is on track towards achieving its objectives.
What is Monitoring and Evaluation? (Contd..)

- **Evaluation:**
  
  Evaluation is assessment conducted at a single point in time (before, during or after) focusing on determining whether what was planned actually happened, and why it did or did not happen.
Difference between Monitoring and Evaluation

- They are different, but interrelated functions,
- Monitoring is conducted continuously and regularly as an internal management activity during the implementation of interventions.
- Evaluation is often external, periodic/ snapshot, in greater depth and asking different questions.
- **Monitoring** asks the question “Are we doing things right”?
- **Evaluation** asks “Are we doing the right things?” and “Are there better ways of achieving the results?”
Why is M&E Important?

- Enables Managers to ensure compliance with the project strategy and approach.
- Improves responsiveness and effectiveness by providing constant feedback from the research project staff and other stakeholders.
- Helps project managers meet reporting requirements of different stakeholders.
Who Carries out M&E?

Monitoring
- Typically done by the subject, i.e. self-monitoring.
- External Monitoring – where there is a lack of trust – external parties may monitor the actions. E.G. elections

Evaluation
- Typically done by external party, to ensure the integrity of the findings (i.e. remove bias), and provide insight (expertise)
- Self-Evaluation – done by the subject, when the primary objective of the evaluation is to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of what is being evaluated.
Levels of Research Monitoring

- Institutional Research Project Monitoring
  - Compliance with the institute’s rules and regulations
  - Tracking Budget and Utilization of Research Funds
  - Tracking Research Process to ensure that the research is carried out as planned
  - Dissemination of Research Outputs or Results to various stakeholders
Monitoring at the Individual Researcher Level

- **Inputs**: such as staff, finance, materials, and ensure that these inputs are available at the right time in the right quantity and quality
- **Process of Implementation**: activities and how they are implemented and any barriers for implementation.
- **Outputs or Research Results**
- **Impact or Uptake of the Research Findings**
Types of Evaluation

- **Ex–Ante Evaluation**: before the implementation of the project; aimed at assessing the viability of the project.

- **Formative Evaluation**: during the implementation of the project, so as to identify any problems and take corrective measures.

- **Summative Evaluation**: conducted at the end of the project so as to ascertain achievements or failures of the project.

- **Ex–post Evaluation**: One that takes place a few years (3–5 years) after the expiration of the project to assess its impact or effects.
What Do We Look For During Evaluation?

- **Relevance** – whether the intervention was appropriate
- **Impact** – whether it made a difference in the lives of people
- **Effectiveness** – whether it has achieved what it set out to
- **Efficiency** – whether it did so at the lowest cost
- **Sustainability** – whether it will be leading to lasting change
Evaluation Methods

• **Desk review** of relevant documents (project documents, annual reviews, donor-specific, etc)

• **Key informant interviews**: with key partners and information stakeholders both at central and field levels. Drawing on specific check-listed questions

• **Focus group discussions**: internal and external parties both at central and field levels. Gaining consensus on key issues.

• **Sample surveys**: of effects and impacts of initiatives as and where necessary
Designing M&E System for Research
What is a Monitoring and Evaluation System?

- **M&E System** is a framework for collecting and using information about the progress or performance of a project such that lessons could be drawn to guide the effective implementation.
- It is both a means of collecting information and a communication system.
- The design of a M&E System should start at the same time as the overall project preparation and design,
- The overall M&E System should correspond with the key stages of a project’s lifecycle.
The Project Cycle

- Programming
- Identification
- Formulation
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Appraisal
At each stage of the project cycle there are tasks that will plan and implement the project and also monitor and evaluate it.

- **The Program stage** is where the strategy framework in which projects can be initiated, funded and implemented is established. Lessons learnt from previous evaluations can be reviewed at this point to inform program strategy.
- **The Identification stage** is where the stakeholders are defined, the problem(s) is defined, and a number of possible solutions are identified.
- **The Appraisal Stage** is where we do technical appraisal, financial appraisal, weather some preconditions are met etc.
The Formulation/designing stage – is where Logical Framework is prepared in which the objectives, the assumptions, indicators and evidence are formulated. The activity schedule for the project and the budget for the project is prepared from the Logical Framework, and then the full project proposal is prepared. Successful Monitoring and Evaluation is dependent on the clarity of project design achieved at this stage.

The Implementation – Delivery stage; is where the project is implemented: and monitoring and evaluation supports the management to make decisions and steer the project to success. Activities, budget schedules, outputs and assumptions, stakeholder responses and the project's contribution towards the longer term outcomes will be monitored during this stage.

Evaluation – Measurement stage: is where evaluation of the project's outcomes, impact and contribution to the strategy is carried out. Conclusions, recommendations, impact and lessons learnt
Setting up an M & E System

Key components of an M&E system are:

- Stakeholders Mapping and Information Needs
- A causal analysis/Program framework
- A Results Framework/log frame or logical framework
- Designing indicators
- A data collection and analysis plan.
Stakeholders Mapping and Information Needs
Stakeholders Mapping and Information Needs

- Who are the key stakeholders: beneficiaries; donors; project/program management; project/program staff; government and local authorities etc.
- Categorize them according the project’s internal and external clients and prioritize them
- Identify their information needs & interests.
- Who might benefit from this research?
- How they might benefit from the research?
Potential M&E Clients

**Internal Clients**
- Project managers
- Project staff
- Implementing partners
- Sub-grantees
- Country office
- Program managers
- HQ

**External Clients**
- Donors
- Value chain actors
- Participants (Target groups, impact groups)
- Local communities and community leaders
- Business associations
- Community-based organizations
- Local and national government officials
# Information Needs of Internal and External M&E Clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Internal Clients</th>
<th>External Clients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purposes</strong></td>
<td>• Project management,</td>
<td>• Hold projects accountable for funds,</td>
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<td>• decision making and planning,</td>
<td>• gauge return on investment</td>
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<td>• integration with other project interventions,</td>
<td>• determine the effectiveness of development programming,</td>
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<td>• partner engagement,</td>
<td>• assess achievement of development objectives,</td>
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<td>• impact group participation,</td>
<td>• decide whether or not to initiate or scale a partnership with the project.</td>
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<td>• ensure accountability</td>
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<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing (Weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc)</td>
<td>Periodic (e.g., every 6–12 months)</td>
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<td><strong>Timeframe</strong></td>
<td>Short- and Medium-term</td>
<td>Medium- and long-term</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
<td>Quantitative, Qualitative</td>
<td>Quantitative (primarily), Qualitative</td>
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<td><strong>Formality</strong></td>
<td>Formal (Standardized measurement) Informal (Non-standardized measurement)</td>
<td>Formal (Standardized)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>Reasonable accuracy</td>
<td>Precise accuracy</td>
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<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Highly flexible in methods applied</td>
<td>Less flexible in methods applied</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attribution</strong></td>
<td>Expect information to establish plausible attribution</td>
<td>Expect information to establish more scientific attribution</td>
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- Frequency: Ongoing (Weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc) vs. Periodic (e.g., every 6–12 months)
- Timeframe: Short- and Medium-term vs. Medium- and long-term
- Type: Quantitative, Qualitative vs. Quantitative (primarily), Qualitative
- Formality: Formal (Standardized measurement) Informal (Non-standardized measurement) vs. Formal (Standardized)
- Accuracy: Reasonable accuracy vs. Precise accuracy
- Flexibility: Highly flexible in methods applied vs. Less flexible in methods applied
- Attribution: Expect information to establish plausible attribution vs. Expect information to establish more scientific attribution
A Causal Analysis/Program Framework
A Causal Analysis/Program Framework

- Specify the major problem and condition(s) that the project seeks to change and the factors that cause the condition(s):
  - needs assessments,
  - feasibility studies,
  - participatory rapid appraisals (PRAs),
  - community mapping, and
  - SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis

- Specify the interventions to influence the causal factors and the expected changes or desired outcomes
Causal Analysis/Program Framework

Public health Problem

Population, system level factors that cause the public health problem

Action/interventions that can change the factors and ultimately alleviate/eliminate the problem
A Results Framework/Log Frame
Or Logical Framework
Results Framework

- The first step in monitoring and evaluation processes is to define the results that need to be measured and the metrics for measuring them.
- A results framework is a tool in project development that enables project developers to discuss and establish strategic project development objectives and then link interventions to intermediate outcomes and results that directly relate to those objectives.
- It is a graphic display, matrix, or summary of the different levels, or chains, of results expected from a particular intervention—project, program, or development strategy.
- Results Framework is based on the concept of Results Based Management which has become a key tool for development programs and projects.
- Results Based Management is a shift from focusing on the inputs and activities to focusing on the outputs, outcomes, impact.
- Results Based Management applies a Results Chain to plan a clear logical process and manage the implementation.
The planning starts with a clear view of the project purpose and outcomes, planning backwards to the inputs and then implementing the project from the inputs to the outcomes.

When monitoring and evaluating the whole plan is kept in focus, the details of implementation existing within the context of the chain.
Actions for developing a results framework start with understanding both the problem to be addressed and the desired outcomes,

There will be a need to visualize the logic of an intervention and identify the proposed causal links among inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.
Sample Program Logic to Reduce Childhood Morbidity through the Use of Oral Rehydration Therapy

**Inputs**
- Trainers
- ORT supplies
- Funds
- Participants

**Activities**
- Launch media campaign to educate mothers
- Train health professionals in ORT

**Outputs**
- 15 media campaigns completed
- 100 health professionals trained
- Increased maternal knowledge of ORT services
- Increased access to ORT

**Outcomes**
- Improved ORT for managing childhood diarrhea

**Goal (Impacts)**
- Reduce mortality rates for children under 5 years old
Example. Agriculture Results Chain

What are the long-term benefits for beneficiaries?
Example: Decreased poverty among farmers

What are the benefits for beneficiaries?
Example: Increased yield

How do the beneficiaries make use of the goods and services provided?
Example: use of new technologies

Long-Term Impact

Outcomes
Intermediate Outcomes
Outputs

goods and services provided through the intervention?
Example: Extension services provided
The word 'result', in this context, means that monitoring is focused on the higher level objectives/outcomes and not the lower level activities.

The achievement of project purpose is measured in terms of results, which are the extent to which the observable outcomes are as planned.

The extent to which the project contributes to its development goal(s) is the impact of the project.

Monitoring at these two levels is usefully referred to as ‘results monitoring’.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the processes through which inputs are utilized to produce the planned outputs. referred to as ‘implementation monitoring’.
Results-based M&E systems are designed to address the "so what" question.

A results-based M&E provides feedback on the actual outcomes and goals of the intervention.

Results-based system helps to answer questions:
- What are the goals of the organization?
- Are they being achieved?
- How can achievement be proven?
Essential Actions to Build Results-based M&E System

- Formulate outcomes and goals
- Select outcome indicators to monitor
- Gather baseline information on the current condition
- Set specific targets to reach and dates for reaching them
- Regularly collect data to assess whether the targets are being met
- Analyze and report the results
The Logical Framework

- The Logical Framework is the main tool used for designing, implementing and evaluating projects.
- It facilitates the monitoring of projects by establishing linkages between the immediate objectives, outputs, activities and inputs of the project more clearly in a logical manner.
- It establishes a clear hierarchy of objectives, from input resources at the bottom to overall outcome at the top.
- The clearer the hierarchy of objectives, the easier it is to monitor and measure their progress, to make changes to the project and track the consequence the change made.
## The Logframe Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative Summary</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Means of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
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<td>Purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outputs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Inputs</td>
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</table>
Goal: To what extent has the project contributed towards its longer term goals? Why or why not? What unanticipated positive or negative consequences did the project have? Why did they arise?

Outcomes: What changes have occurred as a result of the outputs and to what extent are these likely to contribute towards the project purpose and desired impact? Has the project achieved the changes for which it can realistically be held accountable?
M&E Questions Using the Logframe (Contd...)

- **Inputs:** Are the resources being used efficiently?

- **Outputs:** What direct tangible products or services has the project delivered as a result of activities?

- **Activities:** Have planned activities been completed on time and within the budget? What unplanned activities have been completed?
Before Researchers or M&E Officers embark on M&E data collection, there is need to plan ahead by asking critical questions like:

- What information is needed and where can it be obtained?
- How will the data or information be collected?
- What sampling method will be used and why?

Answers to these questions may be summarized in an M&E design worksheet as indicated below
# M&E Design Work Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues or Indicators to Monitor or Evaluate</th>
<th>Information Needed and Source</th>
<th>Methods and Techniques to use in collecting information</th>
<th>Sampling</th>
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After thinking through your M&E requirements and activities, the information may be summarized in an M&E Plan Matrix.

The M&E Plan Matrix, specifies the activities, timeframe/schedule, resources, responsibilities, for your M&E activities (data collection, data quality control, reporting, dissemination and use of data).

The plan should specify the time points when evaluations will be carried out, for example: Midterm, and End term.

Outcome/Impact evaluation is reserved for large longer term programs that can make impact at the bigger picture level.
# Research M&E Plan Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M&amp;E Activities</th>
<th>Time Frame (Months or Quarters of Year)</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Collaborators</th>
<th>Resources Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring of project inputs and Activities</td>
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<td>Monitoring of project outputs</td>
<td>X X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of Progress report and dissemination</td>
<td>X X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring of project outcomes and impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others (Specify)</td>
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</table>
The following elements need to be considered in planning the M&E plan:
- Performance indicators
- Baseline performance levels and targets
- Data sources and methods of data collection
- Data storage and management
- Data quality assessment
- Monitoring and reporting schedule
- Information products and reporting formats
Performance Indicators
Markers that help to measure change by showing progress towards meeting objectives

Are the quantitative or qualitative variables that enable us to measure achievement in the sector against targets, or to measure for example performance in an organisation

Enables us to use the indicator information to improve management of the programme

Can be used to feed back into the planning process to improve follow-on programmes
The preparation of clear and measurable indicators is the most important part of establishing a monitoring system.

Indicators must be designed to provide information to check progress towards achieving stated objectives and to take remedial action if there is a problem.

Indicators are only relevant when they measure the objective of a programme, plan or project (e.g. GTP, Agricultural Sector Plans, Regional Plans).

Select the plan or plans to be monitored and identify and define appropriate indicators.
Selecting Indicators

- Go to the outcome level objectives first and identify the indicators relevant to measuring the achievement of that outcome/s
- Then go to output level objectives and follow the process (as above)
- Prioritise the indicators – only include those that are ‘key indicators’
- Plan for Information Gathering Data Collection and Management using the selected indicators
- Involve all stakeholders and reach consensus
Criteria for Indicator Selection

- Indicators must be ‘SMART’
  
  **Specific:** to the objective it is supposed to measure, with clear targets

  **Measurable:** in terms of quality and/or quantity

  **Available:** at an acceptable cost

  **Relevant:** to the information needs of their users

  **Timely:** available in time in order to be useful for the programme, and time-bound so we know when to can expect the objective/target to be achieved
Data Sources and Methods of Data Collection
Planning for Information Gathering
Data Collection and Management

- For each indicator, find out:-
  - Who are the stake holders?
  - What information is needed and where can it be obtained?
  - How will the data or information be collected?
    - simple record-keeping forms; agronomic assessments of yield changes; household surveys, observation and participatory workshops etc
  - Who should collect, record compiling and analyzing the data?
  - What sampling method will be used and why
Identify data source from which the project will draw information

- Technical field reports
- Institutional reports (weekly, monthly, quarterly etc.)
- Project participants Feedback Forms
- Non-routine data sources (baseline assessment, mid-term review, final evaluation and impact assessment, diagnostic studies etc.)
Sources of information for measuring Indicators

For example:

- Kabele and Woreda records
- Special surveys by M&E team
- Field visits / Rapid Appraisals
- Technical or specialised reports
- CSA statistics
- Management reports
Data Collection and Management

- Good data capture processes are essential in order to manage project monitoring and provide management with up to date information.
- Monitoring and Evaluation Data may come from two main sources, namely,
  - Primary data: compiled by the researcher through interviews, observation and surveys etc.
  - Secondary data: extracted from records or information compiled by another person or department. These may include financial records kept by the finance unit, administrative records etc.
The type of data collection method depends on:
- the kind of information needed
- how the information would be used
- the availability of resources and time for the data collection.

Methods for data collection for M&E include:
- Critical review of secondary data
- Observation.
- In-depth interviews or Focus Group Discussions
- Surveys,
- Case Studies
- Participatory Methods.
Data Analysis

- Develop a data analysis plan identifying the purpose, frequency, responsibility, process for data analysis.
- Key data analysis stages:
  - data preparation,
  - data analysis (findings and conclusions),
  - data validation,
  - data presentation,
  - recommendations and action planning
The physical registration, or the actual monitoring system, can take place in a variety of ways, ranging from advanced computer-based spreadsheets designed for monitoring, to handwritten records in a logbook.
Data Quality Assessment

- Quality of data collected will be a major challenge to the project M&E system
- Some good practices that exist in a M&E:
  - clear indicator definitions
  - standardized data collection and reporting formats,
  - data reporting and compilation instructions,
  - on-site data verification practices guided by a terms of references or a checklist,
  - review of compiled data by supervisors before release to other stakeholders,
  - regular review meetings and feedback mechanisms are some of the
## Monitoring And Reporting Schedule

We can prepare a simple monitoring and reporting format

### Data Compilation and Reporting Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Office</th>
<th>Report to</th>
<th>Frequency of Reporting</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Contents of the Report</th>
<th>Means of Reporting</th>
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Packaging and Dissemination of Research Results
Planning for Communicating and Reporting M&E Findings

- Identify the stakeholders and audiences or potential beneficiaries of the research project,
  - Industry: Farmers, processors, manufacturers
  - Policy Makers: Govt., Development partners
  - Internal Stakeholders: Researchers, students, administration
  - Others
- Determine what information they need and in which format
- Identify the channel of communication
- The M & E Results will have to be communicated with a view of stimulating appropriate action
Formats and Channels for Communicating Research Information

- Develop a communication strategy detailing how the various research information would be packaged and disseminated to different stakeholders
  - Scientific presentations and publication of articles
  - Policy briefs
  - Media Publication.
  - Technology fair or exhibition
  - Website
  - Etc.

- Reporting needs to be regular, formatted, clear and focused and should refer to the results of actions rather than a description of actions.
Guidelines to Effective Report Writing

- Define Your Purpose: Know exactly what you are trying to accomplish with the report.
- Define Your Audience: Know your audience and target the report to meet their needs.
- Brief and analytical: The report should be concise, but analytical and covering all the vital parts. Do not just state the facts but analyze why and how things happened the way they are.
- Structure the report for logical flow of ideas: Use appropriate headings and subheadings to guide the reader.
- Use visual aids and examples where appropriate.
Necessary Conditions and Capacities for M&E
Planning for Human Resources and Capacity Building

- Assess the projects/program’s human resources capacity for M&E
- Create the right human & material as well as appropriate technology to store and retrieve information easily
- Determine the extent of local participation
- Determine the extent of outside expertise
- Identify M&E capacity-building requirements and opportunities
- Organizational structures/Management information systems (MIS)
Prepare the M&E Budget

- Itemize M&E budget needs
- Incorporate M&E costs into the project/program budget
- Review any donor budget requirements and contributions
- Plan for cost contingency
Review and Improvement of the Monitoring and Evaluation System

- Regularly review and improve the Monitoring and Evaluation system as the program project evolves and experience develops.

Criteria for assessing:

- **Utility** – the extent to which the Monitoring Evaluation System serves the practical information needs of intended users.
- **Feasibility** – the extent to which the methods, sequences, timing and processing procedures are realistic, prudent and cost effective.
- **Propriety** – the extent to which Monitoring and Evaluation activities are conducted legally, ethically and with due regard for the welfare of those affected by its results.
- **Accuracy** – the extent to which the Monitoring and Evaluation outputs reveal and convey technically adequate information.
Thank You
# Project Logical Framework

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<th>Narrative Summary</th>
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<td>Project Development Objective</td>
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<td>Intermediate Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Component 1: Access to Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate Result 1.1</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 1.2</td>
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<td>Component 2: Entrepreneurial Skills, Technology And Cluster Development</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 2.1</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 2.2</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 2.3</td>
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<td>Component 3: Project Management, Advocacy And Outreach, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation And Impact Evaluation</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 3.1</td>
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<td><strong>Project Development Objective</strong></td>
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<td>To increase the earnings and employment of MSEs owned or partly owned by the participating female entrepreneurs in the targeted cities.</td>
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<td><strong>Intermediate Results</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Component 1: Access to Finance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Objective:</strong> To establish and operate access to financial services through a dedicated line of credit for working capital and investment for growth oriented micro and small enterprises owned or partly owned by female entrepreneurs and to build the institutional and human resource capacity of PFIs to effectively service the female MSE client market</td>
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<td>Intermediate Result 1.1: Access to financial services through a dedicated line of credit established for working capital and investment for growth oriented micro and small enterprises owned or partly owned by female entrepreneurs</td>
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