

Session 4.2. Monitoring and Evaluating Support to Decentralisation and Local Governance

INTRODUCTION

Building on Session 4.1, which deals more generally with challenges in implementing support to decentralisation, related to the choice of instruments and modalities of support, policy dialogue, capacity-building and financing instruments for local governments and governance, you will concentrate in this session on the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of support to decentralisation. You will get an update on current thinking on this topic, including on the specific guiding principles that have been developed by the DPWG-DLG and challenges you may encounter when developing or advising your partners on M&E systems. A particular focus will be put on participatory M&E tools and approaches, M&E capacity-building with stakeholders of decentralisation and local governance processes and issues of harmonisation and alignment.

The first part of the session will provide you with an overview of key trends and issues to consider. In the second part – that is, two parallel sessions of group work – you will study and exchange around a practice case presented by a fellow participant. The last part of the session will be a panel discussion. This discussion will focus on key challenges and burning issues that emerged in the group discussions or that you would like to exchange on with other participants. These could, for instance, refer to your experiences with joint evaluations or challenges you have encountered when trying to promote nation-wide M&E systems or a greater harmonisation and complementarity between M&E approaches approaches of different donors.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

In this session you will:

- get familiar with debates on challenges and tools for monitoring and evaluating support of decentralisation and local governance.
- get tips on how to use PM&E tools for strengthening the capacities of stakeholders of decentralisation at the national and local level and for strengthening accountability systems at the municipal level.
- exchange on their own experiences with supporting the design and implementation of M&E systems
- discuss challenges encountered when assisting partners with the design and implementation of M&E systems and M&E capacity building, including lessons learned.
- exchange on possibilities and obstacles to move towards joint/harmonised approaches.

PROCESS AND CONTENT

Introduction

M&E of support to decentralisation and local governance is a rather complex and technical topic, which could easily fill a whole day if dealt with in a comprehensive way (e.g. responding to the different needs of governance and sector experts, discussing the specificities of M&E systems for assistance provided through different aid modalities (project-based approaches, basket funding, sector budget support). Consequently, the approach we will take in this session is a selective one that will focus on some challenges, trends and examples of approaches that can be of interest for all of you. We will give particular attention to issues of M&E capacity-building with stakeholders, to the use of participatory M&E tools and to approaches that aimed to help local government and/or national authorities in partner countries to develop their own M&E systems and efforts that comply with some of the orientations put forward in the specific guiding principles of the DPWG-LGD.

Definitions and concepts

Attention to issues of M&E has increased in the context of the debate on MDGs and the commitments of the Paris Declaration and AAA to result-based management and (mutual) accountability. This is also reflected in the discussion on systems for monitoring support to decentralisation and local governance. Since the start of the millennium in particular, an increasing number of publications and seminars have been dedicated to the topic of M&E of support to decentralisation (Steinich 2000, van Osterhout 2004, Le Bay and Loquai 2008).

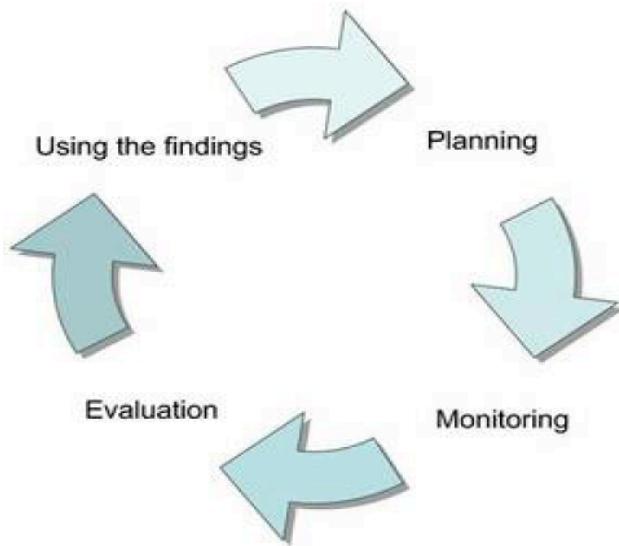
Since the beginning of this decade, efforts have been made to promote a consensus on M&E terminology and harmonise approaches to M&E. The work of the 'DAC Network on Development evaluation' can be quoted in this context. The specific guiding principles of the iDWG-DLG give orientations on M&E of support to decentralisation and local governance (see below).

Yet, there remain differences in the in M&E culture and practice between donors and aid agencies (e.g. with regard to the definition of terms, such as impact and outcome, the definition of terms (impact, outcome), the priority given to M&E in every day work, the preference for specific approaches and methods (e.g. PM&E tools, randomized trials) or the sharing and dissemination of evaluation results. Therefore, it is useful to clarify these concepts for the purpose of the course.

Some basic concepts

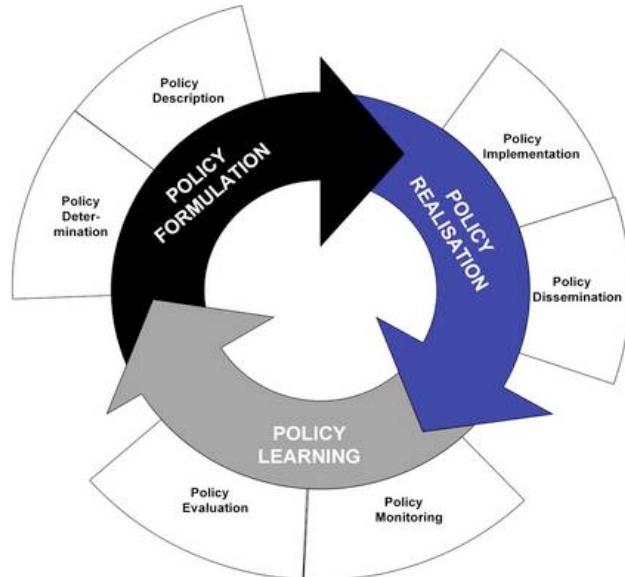
The terms "monitoring" and "evaluation" are often used together as "M&E", suggesting a symbiotic relation. This relationship exists, because evaluations require information generated in the course of monitoring. This relationship exists, because evaluations require information generated in the course of monitoring. However, as the below figures show, monitoring and evaluation are really two distinct phases in the project/ policy cycle (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 4.2. 1: Monitoring and evaluation in the project cycle



Source: <http://openeducation.zunia.org/typo3temp/pics/f2c3c1f989.jpg>

Figure 4.2.2: Monitoring and evaluation of policies



Source: <http://www.transport-era.net/about-ent/description-of-ent/procedures-for-cooperation.html>

Monitoring refers to a continuous and systematic process of data collection that takes place at regular intervals and provides insights into trends (a “sense of direction”). Monitoring focuses usually on quickly available data rather than in-depth analysis. The data generated can later be used to support evaluations. Monitoring can take place at different levels, e.g. at the activity, project/programme, policy level). It generally aims to help to inform management and decision makers by checking progress, effectiveness or efficiency of project or policies. For this monitoring needs to be institutionalized and linked to decision-making processes (Brüntrup et al. 2008).

The DAC defines **evaluation** as “an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention.” (OECD 2010). According to

this organization, the purpose of evaluations is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Evaluations should provide information that is credible and useful should enable the incorporation of *lessons learned* into the decision-making processes of *both “recipients” and donors*.

For the purpose of this discussion, two forms of M&E activities should be distinguished (USAID 2009):

- M&E that seeks to assess progress in implementing decentralisation reforms. This form of M&E draws mainly on what are sometimes called output indicators, e.g. the number of council meetings held, the number of deliberations of local councils sent to supervisory authorities, the number of municipal agents trained. Such indicators can help to document whether necessary steps have been taken towards effective support of implementation of decentralisation programmes and may be useful management tools for programme implementation.
- M&E that seeks to assess the impact of decentralisation on broader development goals such as democratization, political stability, inter-regional equity or poverty reduction. This kind of exercise is much more challenging. It raises the question of whether and how outcome can be attributed to specific measures of support. Aid agencies have tackled this challenge in different ways, e.g. USAID has advocated randomized evaluations, GTZ has constructed “result-chains”, AFD and SNV have noted that outcomes are best captured by “capitalizing” experiences).

Also note that there is a difference between evaluating the impact of decentralisation reforms and the impact of a donors’ intervention in support of decentralisation and local governance.

Specific challenges encountered in monitoring and evaluating support to decentralisation and local governance

The discussion on M&E of support to decentralisation and local governance shows that M&E in this field of cooperation poses a number of specific challenges (Steinich 2000, van Osterhout 2004, Scherff 2004):

- **Methodological challenges.** Decentralisation and local governance reforms are multi-dimensional, involve a large number of stakeholders and take place at different levels of a political/administrative system. To monitor and evaluate progress is thus a rather complex task. Moreover, the progress and outcome of these processes is influenced by many external factors. It is thus difficult to establish to what extent the support of one donor, aid agency can influence these complex processes (which is an argument for coordination and harmonisation!). Interventions at the national level are far removed from those who should ultimately benefit – the citizens. It is thus often difficult if not impossible to establish sound relationships of causality between input, outcome and impact variables for projects and programmes that support these reform processes.

- **Decentralisation reforms are highly political and risky.** They are often stop-and-go processes and can be reversed (re-centralization). External aid can certainly influence and shape these processes, especially in highly aid dependent countries, but ultimately it is domestic politics that determine the pace and direction of reforms. M&E systems thus have to be geared to “moving targets”. They may need to foresee risk indicators and exit criteria. Moreover, assessments of outcomes of (support to) decentralisation processes are politically sensitive and may not always be desirable for „tactical reasons“ (e.g. if they draw attention to risks or politically unpopular measures required for the implementation of reforms, that the partner government does not want to flag for fear of opposition to reforms).
- **Weaknesses of decentralised statistical and analytical capacity.** In many developing countries, statistical and analytical capacities are weak and this applies in particular to those of newly established local government. National statistics offices may not be sufficiently present at decentralised levels, organizational structures and procedures for insufficiently geared to the new political realities (e.g. lack of cooperation between line ministries and local governments, off-loading of responsibilities for data collection to poorly equipped local entities). Thus, locally disaggregated data may not be available in the initial stage of a decentralisation process.
- **A lack of guidance?** Evaluators often criticize the lack of attention given to the formulation of clear objectives, the establishment of baseline data or identification of appropriate result and outcome indicators. Aid managers often retort that there is a lack of operational guidance. Research for this course, showed that there is indeed rather limited guidance on this subject in handbooks or training material of donor agencies.

Moreover, like in other areas of cooperation, the shift towards new aid modalities, such as budget support and other programme-based approaches, poses new challenges in terms of M&E. As discussed in previous chapters, these new aid modalities are often used for providing assistance to nation-wide grant or subsidy schemes for local government. Consequently, much more attention is currently given to developing **national systems** for monitoring the implementation and outcome of decentralisation processes or the performance of local government.

These challenges are not insurmountable and there are good arguments for investing in M&E systems and help partner countries to develop their own M&E capacities. Highlight the following points:

- **M&E is important for the justification and mobilisation of political support for decentralisation and related external assistance.** The discussions in donor agencies show that justification of support in this area is not always evident to political decision-makers in donor countries. The concept of decentralisation is rather abstract, and many outcomes of support are intangible. Moreover, many potential outcomes materialise only after a long time-lag and there is no immediate relationship with MDGs. With a view toward securing funding and political support, it can therefore

be important to have evidence of developmental outcomes of development cooperation in this area and to illustrate how support can impact political systems and the lives of people in developing countries.

- **Opportunities for strengthening domestic accountability (systems).** The literature on support to decentralisation and local governance pleads for approaches to M&E that **strengthen the capacities of national and local stakeholders to monitor and assess outcomes of reforms.**
- **Empowerment.** This is a central objective and aim of the participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches that will be discussed in the last section.

However, in comparison with other aspects of support to decentralisation, there is relatively little guidance and documented experiences on support to national M&E systems or on harmonized approaches of donors in this field. From interviews and a literature search it seems that donors and their partners are only starting to reflect on how to develop and implement joint approaches to M&E, and that only a few of these efforts have been documented. Few references to joint M&E efforts were found in preparing this course; most of them are listed in the literature list. Any hints to interesting initiatives, you have come across, are therefore very much appreciated!

Support for national M&E systems and harmonised approaches

As the specific guiding principles of the DPWG-DLG show and the below case studies illustrate, there is currently a strong consensus on the need to support the **development of national M&E systems**, which in turn requires **M&E capacity building** with different stakeholders at the national and local level. The DPWG-DLG also calls on donors to conduct **joint evaluations**.

In Box 4.2.1 we have listed the guidance principles that refer to aspects of M&E. However, as reflections on this issue appear to be still in the initial phases, they may have to be complemented in the future.

Box 4.2.1: Orientations on M&E provided in the specific guidance principles of the iDWG-DLG

- Support the establishment and strengthening of domestic M&E systems, in particular the following “ingredients”:
 - Fiscal analysis units with staff to continuously monitor local government finance;
 - An extensive data system that will allow quantitative monitoring and evaluation.
- Strengthen statistical and analytical capacity at the national and sub-national level.
- Develop **an integrated assessment framework** for the political, administrative and service delivery elements.
- Develop appropriate result indicators for pro-poor DLG outcomes.
- Consider **extending PEFA** Performance Measurement Framework to decentralised level.
- Build linkages between domestic accountability, result-based monitoring and M&E.
- Conduct joint diagnostic reviews and assessments at the outset of programmes are the basis for harmonised M&E efforts [as the basis for joint M&E systems].

Source: DPWG-DLG (2008).

Focus on some recent trends and interesting practices

A review of literature and tool-kits for M&E points to the following trends:

A worldwide interest in performance assessment tools for local government. In the last ten years many such tools have been developed. References to some examples are provided in the literature list. Le Bay et al. 2007 and ANCB 2007 describe experiences with performance self-assessment tools for local government in West Africa. There is also a reference to the World Bank’s efforts to develop a local governance performance measurement framework in Indonesia (World Bank 2008). Tumushabe et al. (2010) describe how the score card approach was used to develop a system for assessing local governments in the Uganda. score card report (Tumushabe et al, 2010).

The use of PM&E approaches and efforts to build local M&E capacity

PM&E tools have become increasingly popular in the context of support to decentralisation, because if appropriately used and built into donors’ and partners’ M&E systems, they hold the promise to contribute to the following objectives

- empower stakeholders of decentralisation/local government
- strengthen national/local M&E capacity and culture
- enhance to developing domestic accountability systems
- generate data at the decentralised level that is relevant for donors and stakeholders of decentralisation
- bring together a variety of perspectives from the national and local level

But what is PM&E?

PM&E is a process through which stakeholders at various levels engage in monitoring or evaluating a particular project, program or policy, share control over the content, the process and the results of the M&E activity and engage in taking or identifying corrective actions (Guijt and Gaventa 1998). This means that PM&E goes beyond involving primary stakeholders in a process of conventional M&E, e.g. by consulting them on indicators or asking them to provide information. The emphasis rather lies on deepening participation and building capacities of local people to analyse, reflect and take action on the basis of evidence (Hilhorst and Guijt 2006).

This is a rather concise explanation of what PM&E encompasses. How PM&E differs from conventional methods of M&E is explained in the policy brief by Irene Guijt and John Gaventa (1998) listed under further readings.

The paper by Thea Hilhorst and Irene Guijt, listed under “key readings” gives a good overview of the different way of how PM&E tools are used to assess specific aspects of decentralisation and local governance processes and to strengthen domestic accountability systems around local government. Some of these tools have been discussed in session 3.1. and session 3.2.

A worldwide interest in performance assessment tools for local governments. In the last years, performance assessment tools for local governments have received much attention by scientists and practitioners around the world. A number of case studies that analyse experiences with the development and test of such tools in West Africa are listed in the below bibliography and summarized in the ECDPM Inbrief 19 (Loquai and Le Bay 2007).

Box 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 give examples of how PM&E approaches have been used for building M&E capacities with stakeholders of decentralisation. Box 4.2.2 summarises the experience with participatory expenditure tracking and monitoring of the public service delivery in municipalities in Benin. Box 4.2.3 summarises experiences of CARE-Mali with the design and testing of a participatory M&E system for a programme in support of natural resource management and local governance in Mali.

Box 4.2.2: Strengthening citizens' control and local stakeholders' capacity for monitoring decentralised service delivery in Benin

Most social services in the areas of health, basic education and drinking water are offered at the district or municipal level. In the context of sector-wide approaches and poverty reduction credits, many African countries have conducted public expenditure tracking or household surveys to analyse the decentralisation of social sectors. These assessments often provide scant information on the reasons why infrastructure is not used or why resources channelled to decentralised levels do not translate into better service delivery.

The participatory local impact monitoring methodology (SILP) has been developed to provide supplementary information on the barriers blocking the proper operation of decentralised public services for qualitative evaluations. It is also intended to facilitate the identification and implementation of appropriate corrective measures by citizens themselves. The method has been developed in the context of a GTZ decentralisation project in Benin in collaboration with the local research organisation FIDESPRA - a Cotonou-based action research network.

The action research for SILP has involved 15 schools in three municipalities of the department of Atakora. School attendance in these in northern territories has lagged behind the national average. The trial forms part of Benin's poverty reduction strategy, which gives priority to education and decentralisation policy.

For this purpose, SILP follows an iterative process of consultation and exchange, involving sector actors on a number of levels (municipal, departmental, national) and various groups of actors (e.g. pupils, teachers, parents' associations, citizens, local government, women selling food to pupils, de-concentrated educational departments of the central state, central institutions and development partners). The stress lies on two aspects of the public spending cycle: tracing the resources allocated and evaluating the quality of service. Figure 3 gives an overview of important steps in this participatory monitoring process.

Both aspects are jointly reviewed by public and community service users and suppliers, applying national norms and standards and their own criteria. An external moderator facilitates discussion and evaluation according to these jointly defined criteria.

The evaluation is followed by a debate on corrective measures, which are then summarised in a collective action plan. Implementation of the plan is steered by parent associations and school administration, but jointly monitored and reviewed on regular basis with municipal councillors.

The initial results of the pilot phase of the SILP approach show that the methodology can improve knowledge regarding the strengths and weaknesses in using financial resources devolved from the central state to the decentralised level (to the departments, municipalities and schools). Even after only a few months of testing, the method appeared to have helped various local actors to better assume their respective roles in enhancing public scrutiny of the use of public funds. The act of mobilising their thoughts and energy for a common cause also improved the efficiency of public spending. Moreover, there is evidence that the SILP approach disseminates itself, as it is now being used in municipalities that were not included in the test sample.

However, the strategy also has pitfalls. In the absence of capable moderation, latent conflicts can surface that hamper constructive discussions. Also, if not properly prepared and supervised, SILP can lead to covert tactics and exclusion of actors, instead of self-corrective strategies. External support is thus essential in the test phase and probably well beyond.

Sources: Floquet, Mongbo, Woltermann (2007).

Box 4.2.3: Designing and testing a participatory M&E system for a programme in support of natural resource management and local governance

In 2004, CARE Mali started to develop a participatory M&E system for its *Support Programme for Municipalities and Grassroots Organisations*, co-financed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). The focus of the programme, which was based in the region of Mopti, was natural resource management and local governance.

Design and testing of the new participatory M&E system brought together a range of actors involved in resource management and new governance structures. Participants spanned the village, municipal, district (cercle) and regional levels and were drawn from both civil society and the de-concentrated technical departments of the central state. All had been intensely involved in designing the programme.

These actors were later to take on roles in the newly emerging M&E system, intended to meet both CARE's internal needs for monitoring data and Mali's need for better information and accountability systems for its new local governance structures.

Although the M&E system had been running for barely a year at the time of the stock-taking exercise, the authors of the case study could already point to several lessons learned:

- Participatory M&E is an effective way of transferring skills to local actors, but time and patience are required to put such an approach into practice. Especially in a poor region like Mopti, where educational standards tend to be low, participants need to be given plenty of time to absorb the information they receive.
- It is vital to choose able participants with a basic level of capacity from among the 'beneficiaries' if the process is to be successful. Illiteracy, for instance, has proven to be an obstacle to participants taking ownership of some of the M&E tools.
- The commitment of the steering team is a key success factor of participatory M&E. It is important that the team clearly distinguish this method from earlier, less participatory methods of managing projects.

Problems encountered during the test phase were, among others, related to the diversity of languages and dialects spoken in the region and differences in educational levels of the participants. As a solution, all important documents were translated into the three main languages (Dogon, Peulh and Bambara) spoken in the region. Moreover, at meetings the participants were divided into groups according to language spoken and educational background. This made the process time-intensive, but ensured that the people involved could communicate and make their points.

Source: Coulibaly et al. (2007); Loquai and Le Bay (2007).

Building necessary statistical and analytical capacities in partner countries. The specific guiding principles of the DPW-DLG emphasize the need to assist the development of statistical and analytical capacities of partners.

In many decentralising developing countries statistical capacities are insufficiently decentralised. Therefore, efforts to strengthen or build national systems for M&E of decentralisation or the performance of local governments often require parallel support measures for reorganising statistical services, building basic statistical capacities at the decentralised level and sensitising local policy makers (councillors, mayors) on how to use statistics for their work. The literature list provides references to some case studies that deal with efforts to strengthen statistical capacities of municipalities in parallel with M&E capacity building (Lodenstein et al. 2007, Tamini et al. 2007, Dumont and Samaké 2007, Dery and Dorway 2007, Toonen et al. 2007). Other examples will be provided in the working groups.

Note that apart from national government, local government associations are a “natural partner” for initiatives that aim to develop national M&E systems or local government assessment tools (slide 26). Refer, for instance to the initiative of the National Association of Municipalities to develop a local government performance assessment tool (see Box 4.2.4).

Box 4.2.4: The experience of the Association nationale des communes du Bénin (ANCB) with measuring local government performance

In 2005 UNDP published the report that assessed the performance of communes in Benin. The National Local Government Association of Benin (ANCB) contested the results of this report and asked GTZ, Helvetas, SNV and UNDP to help them develop a performance self-evaluation tool for municipalities. Having heard about the above-mentioned efforts to design and test such a tool in Mali, ANCB liaised with drivers of this process and developed its own tool, drawing on the Malian experience. This report describes the key features of the tool used in Benin and how it was used to guide a country-wide performance self-assessment of the country’s local governments. The report also summarizes the key findings, which have been disseminated at the departmental level and national level.

Source: ANCB 2007, Le Bay et al. 2008.

The importance of strategic alliances and harmonised approaches

A number of the experiences quoted above illustrate the importance of strategic alliances between donors, development agencies, local governance actors and central authorities in testing and replicating M&E tools for local governments. An approach that is jointly tested, used in a variety of local contexts and validated by the central government and a range of donor agencies will be better suited for broad, nationwide dissemination and institutionalisation than a small initiative tested in just a few localities by only one actor (see ANCB 2009, Le Bay, Maiga and Tiénou 2007). Strategic alliances can pay off in terms of time as well, as they allow for a tool to be tested simultaneously in different parts of a country and for the pooling of different agencies’ and institutions’ financial and human resources.

The guidelines of the iDWG-DLG emphasise the importance of **national platforms and steering committees that can coordinate joint M&E initiatives** at the local level. Whilst these institutions are key, getting and keeping them operational often is a challenge. In this

context it is interesting to note that many of the above-mentioned initiatives relied on the strategic alliances of a few committed individuals from like-minded development organisations and partner country authorities, rather than broader platforms for coordination.

The shift towards programme-based approaches, in particular **sector budget support and basket funding, requires reflection on appropriate indicators, frameworks and procedures for joint reviews**. At present, there is still little operational guidance or case material available that could inform interested aid practitioners or those looking into experiences with such approaches. Point out that it would be useful if donors and their partners would document and share their experiences. At the time that this course was being designed, the EC was preparing the joint evaluation of budget support in Mali, which will also look into the experiences with sector budget support to decentralisation and administrative reform. It is expected that this evaluation will provide useful insights on this matter.

Preliminary conclusions and points for the discussion

The last slide draws some preliminary conclusions, drawing on research analysing the experience with some of the above-mentioned practice examples. The trainer can supplement the points on the slide with the following information given in the note pages to the slide.

- **Joint design and testing of tools needs time.** Designing and testing M&E tools that involve different actors in decentralisation at the national, regional and local levels takes time. When working with councilors and local civil society actors who have little or no experience with M&E tools, they need to be allowed time to learn how to identify, discuss and interpret indicators and statistics. This is a key aspect of capacity-building for the M&E of decentralisation and local governance. Furthermore, many cases show that trust among actors and working procedures is not built overnight. In multi-ethnic and multi-lingual contexts, time for translations is also required. Otherwise the various stakeholders involved in designing and testing a tool could feel uncomfortable interacting and articulating their viewpoints.
- **Identification and fine-tuning of indicators is a process.** This holds true to some extent for most M&E exercises, but it is particularly relevant for the experiences described in this brief. Decentralisation and local governance have a process dimension. It is therefore unrealistic to try to define too many indicators at the start of a test-run of a specific M&E tool. Even when formalized, it is important that a tool retain some flexibility for fine-tuning, if necessary even changing indicators to reflect the dynamic nature of reform processes.
- **There are challenges involved in managing the dynamics of multi-stakeholder processes.** As the case study on the performance self-evaluation tool in Mali illustrates, those engaging in multi-stakeholder exercises and strategic alliances should be cautioned when designing and testing M&E tools: the path from design to widespread use may be long and fraught with problems. If an approach is to be participatory and draw on the support of a wide range of representative actors, with different views and opinions, contributions have to be carefully managed. The

assistance of an external consultant or resource person experienced in applying such an approach is a valuable, if not necessary, asset.

- **M&E results need to be followed up.** Most of the approaches and tools described provide participants of the M&E exercises with new insights on the performance and effects of local governance. These include not only information on positive changes and good performance, but also on things that went wrong, were only moderately productive or which need to be changed. Care has to be taken that corrective measures are firmly agreed on and followed up. Otherwise, local actors' interest and incentive to engage in M&E will fade. Besides, all of the stakeholder groups will be challenged to adapt their attitudes and ways of working so as to dissolve any sources of misunderstandings or distrust identified during M&E exercises.

KEY READINGS AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Commission/EuropeAid. 2007. Supporting decentralisation and local governance in third countries. (Tools and Methods Series, Reference Document No. 2). Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, chapter 5 and 6.

This reference document is addressed to staff of the European Commission, which supports decentralisation directly or indirectly, e.g. in the context of sector programmes. Chapter 5 focuses on the implementation of aid and provides guidance on monitoring progress achieved in the implementation of development interventions in support of decentralisation. It emphasizes the important role of a continuous policy dialogue and communication and the need to invest in national M&E systems. Chapter 6, on 'Assessing outcomes and impacts' of support', gives advice on how to plan and implement evaluations of interventions in support of decentralisation, including some practical hints. Drawing on examples from practice and from evaluation literature. the authors point the reader to some lessons learned in assessing projects and programmes in this rather new area of cooperation. The authors highlight that reflections and documentation of relevant practices are still in their initial stages, refer the reader to some innovative practices and conclude that this aspect of support deserves to be explored further. Annex 10 and 11 of the document give examples of indicators used in different interventions in support of decentralization,, including sector budget support.

Loquai, C. and Le Bay, S. 2007. Building capacities for monitoring and evaluating decentralisation and local governance. Experiences, challenges, perspectives. (ECDPM InBrief 19). Maastricht : ECDPM

http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Navigation.nsf/index2?readform&http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Content.nsf/0/D8734DFE2BA78532C12573F30031C8AA?OpenDocument

This InBrief has been prepared with a view toward stimulating debate on developing local capacities to monitor and evaluate decentralisation and local governance processes. It summarises the findings of an action research that was conducted jointly by the Malian Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Government (MATCL), a group of donor agencies, ECDPM and local stakeholders of decentralisation in West Africa. The brief

analyses and compares lessons learned from eleven case studies that take stock of innovative tools and approaches for strengthening the M&E capacities of stakeholders of decentralisation in five countries: Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali and Niger. The approaches reviewed in this brief are diverse. They include experiences with local government performance self-evaluation tools, approaches for strengthening citizens' control in monitoring decentralised service delivery in the field of health and education, the design of a participatory M&E system for projects and programmes in support to decentralisation and efforts to enhance the analytical and statistical capacity of local governments with a view toward strengthening the M&E of the implementation of municipal development plans.

Hilhorst, T. and Guijt, I., 2006, "Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation - A Process to Support Governance: A Guidance Paper", report to the World Bank, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT): Amsterdam.

[http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/001D5B5136008DE4C125755100550811/\\$FILE/SNV%20Mali%20Assessment.pdf](http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Download.nsf/0/001D5B5136008DE4C125755100550811/$FILE/SNV%20Mali%20Assessment.pdf)

Current literature support of decentralisation and local governance emphasizes the need to build investments in M&E systems that not only serve the information needs of donors and central governments, but also help strengthen citizens' control and the accountability of local government. This can be achieved by using a participatory approach to M&E. This Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) guidance paper explores how a Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) process can enhance the participation and empowerment of citizens and improve the quality of governance at the local level. It draws on experiences gained in the context of projects co-financed by the World Bank. The paper explains the methodological underpinnings of PM&E and refers to a number of tools that practitioners can draw on when designing M&E systems with the stakeholders of decentralisation.

This paper discusses some of the tools that have been developed to measure the performance of local governments in Indonesia. This country used to be one of the most centralised countries in the world. However, over the past eight years the country has engaged in an ambitious democratic decentralisation process and since 2001, a wide range of competencies and responsibilities have been devolved to local governments. As the success of decentralisation will ultimately depend on the performance of these new bodies, the development partner community and various branches of the Government of Indonesia (GoI) have developed tools to monitor their performance. This paper explains why decentralising governments, LGs and citizens have an interest in the development of local government performance tools and describes some of the methodological choices and challenges faced in developing such tools, including lessons learned from the exercise in Indonesia.

Le Bay, S. in collaboration with M. Y. Maïga and O. Tiénou. 2007. Mali: Assessment of local government performance, experiences with a self-evaluation tool. Bamako: MATCL, REDL, SNV,

ECDPM

http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Navigation.nsf/index2?readform&http://www.ecdpm.org/Web_ECDPM/Web/Content/Content.nsf/vwDocID/C47067A3CD17610EC125710900432C53?OpenDocument

This case study describes experiences with designing and testing a performance self-assessment tool for local governments in Mali. The case study outlines the key features of the tool and comments on the challenges encountered in developing the tool. The authors, who were involved in the process, highlight that a key factor in the success of the exercise were strategic alliances between the National Directorate for Local Government, a number of development agencies and local governments. The latter were systematically involved in designing and testing the instrument. The study also illustrates, how elements of the tool have been replicated in neighbouring countries. A reference to the results of the exercise and an example of replication is made below (see MATCL/DNCT, SNV, Helvetas, PACT/GTZ-DED 2004 and Association nationale des communes du Bénin (ANCB 2007).

This booklet outlines the features of the above-mentioned performance self-assessment tool that has been developed and explains how to use it. The tool has been validated by the General Directorate for Local Government of Mali (DNCT) and forms part of the basic set of documents that have been distributed to all local governments in Mali.

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To be supplemented by examples provided by donors/participants.

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