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| **TOOL SUMMARY: M&E PROPOSAL CHECKLIST** |
| Purpose | This checklist is the primary tool used to ensure that all elements of the initial M&E plan have been covered in the project proposal. |
| Information Sources | * Donor M&E Requirements
* Grants Acquisition Manual
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| Who | This tool should be used by the person who is coordinating the project design and its documentation in the problem analysis, objective analysis, results framework, and logframe. It may also serve as a reference tool for other members of the proposal development team.  |
| When | The Initial M&E Plan Checklist should be updated before a project/proposal kickoff meeting to reflect any additional donor requirements identified during the donor M&E research. * The checklist can be referenced throughout the entire project/proposal development process and should be checked for completion prior to submitting the final draft of the proposal.
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| Recommendations | * The project technical team should review the checklist and answer as many items as possible with the country team and partners. Request support from the M&E team for more specific guidance.
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| Tips | * Use the DMEL Framework for more tools on each phase of the project design and planning. For example, the M&E Plan Matrix is an ideal template to work from when a USAID PMP is required. Also, a link to the US-G (USAID and Dept. of State mainly) standard indicators is included.
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| **PLANNING FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION****PROJECT PROPOSAL STAGE CHECKLIST** | Check |
| **Understanding the Donor and their M&E priorities (if a restricted grant proposal)** |
| 1. Review donor’s Evaluation Policy and any other documentation available about donor’s approach to M&E; Ensure that the team is clear what the donor’s general standards and practices are in terms of M&E in a project.
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| 1. Review the solicitation clearly for any notes or requirements about M&E for this particular project. Ensure they are addressed in the proposal.
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| 1. If there is a Q&A period, prepare and submit any questions related to M&E.
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| 1. Review the solicitation’s evaluation criteria to examine what aspects of M&E will be evaluated, and how heavily it may be weighted, compared to other aspects. This can serve as guidance on how much space in the document to dedicate to M&E, and how detailed the M&E tools may need to be, thus allowing the proposal team to also plan their time accordingly.
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| 1. Gather intelligence, if available, about real-time experiences with the donor, related to their support and/or preferences about M&E. If a large donor, seek information about that particular department, country office, team, point of contact, etc., if available, as it can vary.
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| **Proposal Development Process** |
| 1. Discuss what type of M&E support may be needed, how much, and when (according to proposal timeline), and work with the M&E team to decide who will provide that support
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| 1. Come to an agreement among the proposal team for how design, monitoring and evaluation will be described in the proposal, based on the format and guidelines, space limitations, and option to use annexes.
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| 1. During initial “back of the envelope” budget discussions with International Finance, consider any significant M&E-related needs, including staffing, which should factor into the discussion early-on.
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| **Project Design Elements of the Proposal** |
| 1. Gather all relevant materials including needs assessments, publications and other secondary sources. Determine relevant evidence which can be used to support the project design.
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| 1. Review final project evaluations of previous relevant LWR projects (or mid-terms or other relevant reports of current projects). In addition to external materials and evidence collected, determine relevant evidence, lessons learned, and best practices which can be used to support the project design.
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| 1. Based on the concept paper or proposal format, clarify what level of detail needs to be included and what could be completed during project start-up. For instance, is the results framework sufficient, or is a logframe needed? Is a short list of illustrative indicators sufficient, or does every indicator needs to be included, including targets and indicator definitions?
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| 1. Complete the relevant processes with the team- problem analysis, objective tree, results framework, logical framework, and transfer the completed worksheets into the Project Design Book.
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| **M&E in the Technical Design** |
| 1. Based on the selected list of indicators, determine the project’s baseline/endline data collection needs, plus indicator data collection needs for regular monitoring.
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| 1. Determine whether a mid-term evaluation is needed. If so, determine if it will be external or internal, and if internal- conducted by whom, how, what method, etc.
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| 1. Agree on a plan for the final evaluation. Prepare text for the proposal.
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| 1. Decide whether there is any need to include special data collection, special studies or research, or any additional evaluative work during the life of the project.
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| 1. Determine dissemination and learning strategy for the final evaluation and any other studies or key tools. Prepare a plan and associated budget for any additional documents (i.e. evaluation executive summary, toolkits, etc.), translation, learning workshops or conferences.
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| **Staffing for M&E** |
| 1. Determine who on the project implementation team will have primarily responsibilities for M&E oversight for the project. Ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities for various aspects of M&E, including the partners’ roles, other staff or project managers’ roles, or other M&E technical support (LWR or external).
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| 1. Assess the project (LWR and partner) staff’s capacity for M&E functions. Determine and incorporate capacity development and/or additional staffing needs.
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| **Other M&E Needs to Consider** |
| 1. Consider whether the project will have any IT needs related to monitoring or evaluation, and if so, ensure they are included. For example, database for beneficiary management or indicator data tracking, GIS mapping of results, statistical analysis software.
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| **Budgeting for M&E[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| 1. Calculate the salaries and benefits for the staffing listed above (and cited in the proposal narrative).
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| 1. Calculate the costs of the M&E elements listed above are included in the budget, such as capacity development, baseline, mid-term, endline, final evaluation, special studies, dissemination and learning, IT, etc. Include consultant, LWR staff and partner expenses, travel, data collector costs, etc.
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| 1. Agree on translation needs for final documentation (evaluation, reports, or other) and calculate those costs.
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| 1. Ensure the budget sufficiently covers costs for meetings with the project team- staff and partners- for the project start-up meeting, to develop a detailed M&E plan, M&E training, regular reviews of monitoring and/or impact data, analysis, discussion and reflection, and create an action plan to adjust the project accordingly.
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1. Guidance on how to calculate what the budgets should be for these M&E items such as a final evaluation, is coming soon as Part 2 of the DMEL Framework. In the meantime, contact someone from the M&E team for direct support as needed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)