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| 1. INTRODUCTION |

Welcome to LWR’s Design, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (DMEL) Framework. The framework is more than a manual. It contains all the resources to meet LWR’s needs worldwide to design quality projects, track their progress, learn from regular analysis of verifiable data and information, and evaluate project impact and success. It will help to ensure that all new projects are impact oriented, are more effectively monitored and evaluated, that all learning opportunities are taken advantage of, and that lessons learned are documented and utilized.

The resources compiled in the framework were created by building upon LWR’s best practices and also by borrowing and adapting other peer agency and donor best practices and resources. The resources allow all LWR projects, utilizing both restricted and un-restricted funding, to meet the goal of being able to measure and evaluate project impact and success. Nevertheless, the use of each tool, depending on the funding source, may vary.

* It is important to review and understand the key differences in the use of the tool before using it. The instructions included for each tool of the Framework provide guidance on how to properly use each tool based upon the nature of the proposal, specific donor requirements, and/or provides links to other LWR manuals for further guidance.
  + The **LWR Grants Acquisition Manual** and the **Grants Management Manual** contain further detailed guidance on the processes for developing restricted proposals and managing restricted awards.

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| 2. M&E = DMEL |

Why is *DESIGN* and *LEARNING* included with *MONITORING* and *EVALUATION?*

* *DESIGN:* LWR has included design because it is the foundation of a quality monitoring and evaluation system.
  + A quality design allows the project to:
    - Clearly demonstrate logical links between the problem and its causes.
    - Develop project results (activities, outputs, outcomes and goals) linked to an analysis of the problem and its causes
    - Create indictors for each result that are used to measure project success and impact.
  + Project results and indicators form the foundation of the project M&E Plan.
    - If the project has a poor design, with unclear logic, then its M&E system will measure individual results that do not clearly link to the goal or expected impact.
* *LEARNING:* Although there are no specific processes or tools in the Framework that contain the word learning, learning is nevertheless the ultimate aim of every tool and process. Monitoring and evaluation is often viewed as a system of accountability; an M&E system must be in place because the donor or headquarters requires it. This view is common because of a lack of emphasis on learning from the results of M&E system. *The M&E system creates data and information that should be used by all stakeholders to analyze the progress and quality of LWR’s projects.*
  + Analysis highlights changes or adjustments that can increase the likelihood that the project will achieve its impact.
  + Learning from the data and information can help project staff make more informed decisions and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation.
  + Lessons learned can be documented and applied to new projects, which benefits LWR as an organization.

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| 3. PARTICIPATION |

LWR places significant emphasis on working through partners. The reasons for this are various ranging from the value LWR places in the dignity of all people, the value placed on partnerships because of the way they transform us and partners; the greater sustainability that comes from deep investment by participants; the innovation that comes from working with local partners who understand how to best influence the local context and the efficiency of working through others. In general, for LWR, partnership is a matter of best practice.

LWR encourages the most inclusive participation possible by all project stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle, from design to evaluation. This position should be taken as implicit throughout all the tools and resources included in the DMEL Framework. The tools and resources in Phase I of the DMEL Framework are oriented towards guiding project staff (both LWR country office staff and partner staff) and helping them organize, document and analyze the information and data that logically flows from an inclusive participatory process.

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| 4. DMEL FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE |

The goal of the structure of the DMEL Framework is to help all users easily access the information and resources most relevant to his/her needs. Experience has shown that presenting all the information in one large manual makes it difficult and time consuming to access an M&E resource on a specific subject. To make all the information and resources easily available the DMEL Framework is broken down into more accessible parts (Process Overview, Guide-Manual, Tools, Additional Resources). The combination of these four resources forms Processes, or major steps of the DMEL Framework. The Processes are linked to where they generally fall in the Project Management Cycle (Initiating, Planning, Implementing, Finalizing). The graphic below illustrates how the DMEL Framework is structured. The four boxes at the bottom of the graphic represent the actual documents (resources) of the Framework that are used together to complete a Process (Analyze problems and solutions or Develop conceptual framework), with the two particular processes falling under the INITIATING stage of the project management cycle.

* It is **important** to remember that this is a way to conceptualize and organize the Framework’s documents. Not all four types of resources are included in each Process, not all Processes lead linearly to the next, and not all Processes fall only within one stage of the project management cycle.

**PROJECT CYCLE**: INITIATING

Process Overview

**Process**: Analyze problems and solutions

**Process**: Develop conceptual framework

Tool

Additional Resources

Guide – Manual

Process Overview

Tool

Additional Resources

Guide – Manual

**THE PROJECT CYCLE**

The structure of the DMEL Framework is linked to the project management cycle and outlines all of key design, monitoring, and evaluation tasks that take place during that cycle by breaking them down into four stages:

1. **Initiating:** Includes all the actions that take place to complete the DME aspect of the project proposal. This stage is often referred to as the “project design” stage and includes everything from the initial assessment of the situation in the target area (needs assessment), analyzing the problem (problem analysis), determining solutions through the formulation of project objective statements (objectives analysis), ensuring the logic of the chosen solutions by placing them in a conceptual framework (results framework & logframe), and completing the initial planning for the remaining monitoring and evaluation requirements of a project proposal (initial M&E plan).
2. **Planning:** The planning stage begins once the project proposal has been approved (won). It includes all the actions needed to effectively plan for the collection and analysis of project data and information, monitoring of project progress, and evaluation of the project (detailed M&E plan).
3. **Implementing:** Includes the actions needed to monitor project progress, analyze project data and information, identify key lessons learned, adjust the project according to the lessons learned, and reporting on each of these aspects (progress reporting).
4. **Finalizing:** Includes the actions needed to successfully plan for and evaluate the project, learn from and document the key lessons, and distribute the findings to all stakeholders (evaluating the project).

**DMEL FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

1. **FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW**

This actual document, serves to orient the user of the Framework on its purpose, aim, and structure.

1. **DMEL FRAMEWORK SUMMARY TABLE**

Is a table whose purpose is to orient the user to all the content in the Framework by laying it out in a logical table. The table is a view of ALL the content contained in the DMEL Framework, and links to each of its documents. It contains:

1. The project management cycle stage listed in the left column
2. All Framework processes listed in the second column
3. A brief description of the process in the third column
4. A link to the Processes’ guide or manual in the fourth column
5. Links to the tools used in each process in the fifth column
6. Links to additional resources in the final column.

The table below is an example to illustrate how the structure of the DMEL Framework Summary Table.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Cycle Stage** | ***PROCESS*** | **DESCRIPTION** | **GUIDE - MANUAL** | **TOOLS** | **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** |
| **INITIATING** | ***Analyze problem(s) and solution(s)*** | **PROCESS AIM:** The aim of this process is to structure, summarize and organize the initial findings of an assessment in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of the situation under analysis.  **PROCESS DEFINED: *Analyze problems and solutions***  Problem analysis is defined as the thorough study of one or more problems (identified during the assessment stage), to identify their causes and decide whether and how to tackle them. | 1. IFRC Project Planning Guidance | 1. LWR Problem-Objectives Tree | 1. CRS Problem Tree Guidance |

1. **PROCESS OVERVIEW**

The purpose of the Process Overview is to introduce the user to the process, outline the resources and tools used in the process, and guide the user to the section of the resource or specific tool that will most closely meet his/her specific need.

* Throughout the Process Overview, and the rest of the documents of the Framework, *Processes are written in ITALICS* and Tools are underlined so that each can be easily identified.
* The Process Overview covers either one or two processes.
* Each Process Overview has only two main sections: 1. INTRODUCTION and 2. PROCESS: (name of process)
* The two main sections cover the following content:
  + INTRODUCTION
    - Summary Table: A table that is the same as the DMEL Framework Summary Table without the process definition.

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| **Project Cycle Stage** | **Process** | **Guide – Manual** | **Tools** | **Additional Resources** |
| **INITIATING** | *Analyze problems and solutions* | 1. IFRC Project Planning Guidance Manual | 1. LWR Problem-Objectives Tree | 1. CRS Problem Tree Guidance |

* + - Process and Project Cycle: Orients the user about how the processes included in the Process Overview are linked to the project cycle and to both previous and subsequent DMEL processes.
    - How does it help?: Contains key ways in which use of the resources and tools of the DMEL Framework will help make LWR projects and LWR as an organization more efficient and effective.
    - Process Guide - Manual: Describes the main resource for the process(es). The resource is a detailed manual borrowed from a peer agency.
  + PROCESS: (NAME OF PROCESS)
    - Table: Tools Description: Is a table that list and gives a short description of all the tools used in the process
    - Process Aim: Briefly describes the ultimate aim of the process.
    - Process Defined: Provides a brief description of the process.
    - Good Practice for Great Results: Is designed to be a compilation of best practices, particularly from LWR and its partners, but also from peer agencies and donors.
    - Table: Process Resource and Tools: The first column provides a general steps in completing the process. The second column (if process contains a resource) lists the exact page number in the resource that is linked to that step. The third column lists the tools linked to that specific step.

1. **GUIDE-MANUAL**

The LWR DMEL Framework uses peer agency manuals or guidebooks as comprehensive guides for the processes. It is recommended that all LWR staff read them once to orient themselves. They are particularly useful for staff that do not have an extensive background in design, monitoring and evaluation.

* Each resource was chosen based on its quality, completeness, and simplicity.
* The resource provides a complete description of the process from beginning to end.
* They often contain tools within the document, some not included as core LWR tools. These tools can be used if it is relevant and useful to LWR staff.

1. **TOOLS**

Framework tools are at the core of the Framework. They include methods, templates, checklists, cheat sheets, and meeting agendas that are used to assist LWR staff in completing each process. The use of each tool will help to ensure that all key aspects of the project monitoring and evaluation system have been properly designed and planned for.

Each tool contains the following table to orient and guide the user. The content contained in each row is described in the table.

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| **TOOL SUMMARY:** | |
| Purpose | A short description of the purpose of the tool. This is usually the same purpose as outlined in the Process Overview. |
| Information Sources | Lists the sources of information that contain key information needed to use or complete the tool. This includes Framework resources, previous tools, key staff knowledge, etc. |
| Who | Outlines who is involved in the completing the tool and suggests who should be responsible for ensuring the tool is completed and meet LWR standards.   * Lists both those responsible for completing the tools for both restricted and un-restricted grants. |
| When | Describes when the tool is normally completed, compared to both the tools and processes coming before and after. |
| Recommendations | Outlines key recommendations for the completion and use of the tools.   * Includes the requirements for restricted grants as outlined by the NBD Unit in the Grants Acquisition Manual. |
| Tips | Contains general tips for using the tool and will also continually add tips the come specifically from LWR and its Partners. |

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| 5. DMEL FRAMEWORK KEY CRITERIA |

LWR understands that the quality of the tool available is not the only challenge in ensuring that a quality DMEL system is in place. It also understands that the success of the DMEL Framework relies on it being *logical, comprehensive, accessible, and sustainable*.

**Logical:**

LWR’s work is based around projects. Projects follow a logic of producing predefined results that have clearly defined timeframes and resources. If the foundation of the organization is built on discrete projects, then the most important foundational resources are the project managers and the tools they need to ensure the highest possible impact and beneficiary satisfaction.

Given the importance of projects and project managers, the DMEL Framework logic is linked to the project management cycle, which is divided into four stages: initiating, planning, implementing, and finalizing. Within each stage of the project management cycle the Framework outlines a list of processes that must take place in order to meet the standards needed to efficiently and objectively verify the outcomes and impact of the project. See Section 4 for further details about how the Framework is structured and how that structure facilitates the use of the Framework.

**Comprehensive:**

The Framework will include explanation of all the processes that cover the design, monitoring, evaluation, and learning of a project and the tools and templates to complete each process.

Furthermore, LWR recognizes that there will constantly be different DMEL needs according to the knowledge and skills of the staff on each individual project. In order to meet those diverse needs the content of the framework is presented in many different ways, from short bullet pointed cheat sheets to detailed resource guidebooks or manuals.

Each process will contain LWR standard tools as well as a library of other quality resources from peer agencies and donors that can be referenced by LWR staff to broaden their knowledge and contribute to innovation within the organization. The DMEL Framework is a descriptive guide, but it should not be utilized so rigidly that staff do not explore new and more effective tools and methodologies.

* The LWR M&E Unit encourages project staff to present and discuss new tools and methodologies so that they can be considered for inclusion as primary resources in the DMEL Framework.

Finally, the DMEL Framework will have specific group within an enterprise social network (ESN) called Yammer. The ESN is a forum for project staff worldwide to discuss related topics, share best practices and lessons learned, and gain more understanding through interaction with other IPD colleagues worldwide and with LWR M&E Unit staff.

**Accessible:**

Accessibility is an obstacle to effective use of the DMEL Framework in two ways.

1. The actual documents may not be accessible because of the format in which they are saved. For example a country office may have a printed manual in the office, but it is needed in the field, or a version is available on the internet, but the internet is unreliable and too slow in at the country office to download it.
2. Project staff may want clarification on a specific aspect of the DMEL, but the answer is buried in narrative or deep within a document that is hundreds of pages long.

The DMEL Framework will be made accessible in as many ways as needed to ensure that all project staff have easy access to the entire framework and to each of its component parts.

* The Framework is broken down into individual documents so that LWR staff can access the exact resource or tool to meet their specific need.
* The entire framework and each of its individual tools and resources are available online at <http://dmel.lwr.org/> . The website is set up to reflect the logical design of the framework as outlined above.
* All the soft files will available on a thumb drive at each country office and will be available as a zip file on LWR’s DMEL Framework website.
* Each country office will have at least one printed copy of all the documents contained in the Framework.

**Sustainable:**

Ensuring the logic, comprehensiveness, and accessibility of the Framework are the first steps in increasing the sustainability of the framework by making it relevant to the primary users and easy to access. Sustainability means that the framework is actively used and continues to be relevant, updated, and clearly understood.

To achieve this, the Framework will be updated at least once a year to reflect new trends, best practices, and lessons learned from its implementation within LWR as well as from new developments in the wider international development monitoring and evaluation community. Regular trainings on the entire Framework, as well as individual stages of the Framework, will be offered and individual support will be provided by LWR M&E Unit staff.

* Finally, the M&E Unit plans to provide every LWR staff member the opportunity to access and share experiences using LWR’s DMEL Framework using its Yammer site.

**DMEL FRAMEWORK GRAPHIC SUMMARY**

This summary is included at the beginning of each Process Overview to orient and remind the user of the *Processes* and Tools that preceded those outlined in the current Process Overview (s)he is viewing.

* It is included here to summarize all of the *Processes* and Tools develop for Phase I of the DMEL Framework.

***Evaluate the Project***

1. **ARC-CRS M&E Module: Preparing for an Evaluation**
2. **ARC-CRS M&E Module: Managing and Implementing an Evaluation**
3. Project Evaluation Criteria Recommendations
4. Evaluation Question Guidance
5. Evaluation Use Plan
6. Evaluation ToR Guidance
7. Evaluation ToR Blank Template
8. Evaluation Report Guidance
9. Evaluation Management Response Plan

***Develop Conceptual Framework***

1. **IFRC Project Planning Guidance Manual**
2. Results Framework
3. Logframe Cheat Sheet
4. LWR Logframe
   1. Template
   2. Definitions
   3. Example
5. Logframe Master Translator
6. Project Design Workbook Blank Template
7. Problem Tree Documentation
8. Problem to Objectives
9. Results Framework
10. Logframe
11. Work Plan

***Develop Initial M&E Plan***

1. M&E Planning Checklist

***Develop Detailed M&E Plan***

1. Detailed M&E Plan- Instructions
   1. M&E Plan Matrix Cheat Sheet
   2. Indicator Tracking Table (ITT)
   3. Activity Tracking Table (ATT)
2. Detailed M&E Plan-Blank
   1. M&E Plan Matrix-Blank
   2. ITT-Blank
   3. ATT-Blank

***Report to Stakeholders***

1. Reflection Meeting Guidance
2. Project Progress Report Instructions
3. Project Progress Report Blank Template
4. Detailed M&E Plan
   1. M&E Plan Matrix
   2. Indicator Tracking Table
   3. Activity Tracking Table

**LINKING DMEL FRAMEWORK: PHASE I**

***Analyze Problems and Solutions***

1. **IFRC Project Planning Guidance Manual**
2. Problem-Objectives Tree Template
3. Project Design Workbook Instructions
   1. Problem Tree Documentation
   2. Problem to Objectives