RBMS Readiness Review

UNISDR

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

CONTENTS

The Readiness Assessment – Part 1
Step 1 of the 10-Step Model to Build a Results-Based M&E System

a. Why a Readiness Assessment?

This step is a unique addition to the many M&E models that currently exist because it provides an analytical framework to assess a given the organizational capacity and political willingness to monitor and evaluate its goals, and develop a performance-based framework. This is a key step—unfortunately often missed or omitted.

For all the good intentions to advance the design, creation, and use of results-based M&E systems, too little emphasis is placed on existing political, organizational, and cultural factors and contexts. Most experts look at the "what" questions—what are the goals? what are the indicators? — and not the "why" questions: Why do we want to measure something? Why is there a need to think about these issues? Why do we want to embark on building sustainable results-based M&E systems? To answer these "why" questions, there is a considerable amount of preparatory work to do before the actual construction of a results based M&E system. That preparatory work takes the form of the readiness assessment done below.

b. Three Main Parts of the Readiness Assessment

The readiness assessment is a diagnostic aid that will help determine where an organization stands in relation to the requirements for establishing a results-based M&E system. It is composed of three main parts.

Incentives and Demands for Designing and Building a Results-Based M&E System
It is important to determine whether incentives exist—political, institutional, or personal—before beginning to design and build a results-based M&E system. **This is undertaken through the questionnaire below.**

Roles and Responsibilities and Existing Structures for Assessing Performance
A readiness assessment will enable one to gauge the roles and responsibilities and existing structures available to monitor and evaluate development goals. **This will be undertaken later.**

Capacity Building Requirements for a Results-Based M&E System
The readiness assessment also includes a review of current capacity to monitor and evaluate along the following dimensions: technical skills; managerial skills; existence and quality of data systems; available technology; available fiscal resources; and institutional experience. **This will be undertaken later.**

c. UNISDR Readiness Review of Incentives and Demands for Designing and Building a Results-Based M&E System

Below are the results of a questionnaire review of UNISDR staff involved in regional programming, monitoring, donor relations, reporting systems, etc. About 14 respondents sent back answers to the questions, which are compiled and summarized below.

1) What Potential Pressures Are Encouraging the Need for the M&E System and Why?

UNISDR is currently feeling both external and internal pressures

External pressure
- Donors - A pre-requisite for resource mobilization, without which, no development partner would have the confidence in investing in the organization
- Mostly donors. It is believed, rightly, that UNISDR does not follow through on its initiatives. We also lack any kind of systematic monitoring and evaluation - at HQ level at least anyway.
- Donors have been asking UNISDR as well as other agencies to provide clearer, more impact focused, transparent reports and information, which only a comprehensive, systematic and strategic RBMS can provide.
- Donors - Pressure to do more with less funding and prove that we use funds efficiently.
- Partners - Reputation of the organization: without the ability to prove the positive changes/impacts that the organization brings about, it will be impossible for UNISDR as a coordination and advocacy body to engage with partners

Internal pressure
- Without an M&E system, responsible person(s) can neither work in coherence and synergy, nor see individual project/activity in contribution to the organization's objectives and impacts.
- The need to improve effectiveness and translating well-recognized challenges into actions. We need to be confident that we are effective in what we do. Another challenge has been to improve programme implementation and management. We as an organization have been talking about the various constraints but the same has not translated into actions to improve our planning or implementation.
- The need to stay focused and coordinated for planning and implementation to achieve the expected strategic outcome over a period of time
- Encourage individual and unit performance by avoid duplications and thus wasting financial and human resources
- As the HFA monitor and GAR gain in popularity, information of increasing richness trickling in from regional, national and local level, making our DRR database grow larger. UNISDR must be able to analyze this data not just for scientific and technical purposes, but also in the political sense. In this context, there is great pressures to remain organized, focused, and stay "on top of" trends or even anticipate them, if possible. A well-functioning M&E system makes this possible.

- Staff are constantly being asked to provide data, statistics or reports within very short periods of time. Based on such requests, UNISDR needs a results based management system that will allow for easier reporting to donors and other stakeholders.

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2) Who Is the Advocate for an M&E System? Who are the potential Champions?

Advocates
- Sweden, Australia, EC mostly advocate.
- Donors and ISDR senior management for a larger degree are the main advocates.
- M&E system is advocated for by SMT.
- Internally RMS and OSRSG
- Asia Pacific, as they run a successful RBMS already
- Each Programme Officer should advocate for, support the development and implement the system. All responsible managers should advocate for this. However, the threat of accountability and the change necessary to be an accountable manager does not always come quickly. There must be fairly applied rules and consistent application. If this happens, then all managers will become advocates. We all are, the senior managers in particular, as the system can be very useful tool in many aspects for an organization, including management guidance, staff performance, fund mobilization and partnership building

Champions
- SRSG, Director, Deputy Director, Head of ROs, Heads of RMS, donor relations, PAN, admin and ROSCU
- Potential Champions are different units within UNISDR.
- Everyone should also be a Champion as every single part of the system is important to make it work and become sensible, both internally and externally. For example, good design of the result chain, indicators and mean of verification will not make sense without regular monitoring/collection evidence and reporting. Also, M&E is meaningless if critical reflections are hidden and/or not used to improve our performance.
- There have to be advocates and champions at various levels of the system. It is not only the responsibility of one but all together. Within ISDR, ROSCU would be most appropriate to champion the implementation of the system knowing that their role is to coordinate the regional offices and serve as a link to various units at headquarters. Moreover all regional coordinators and regional leads should be strong advocates of the system. Having said that there is a big role of senior management in the process of development and implementation otherwise we could end up doing pilots.
- The potential champions should include UNISDR support group and donor group of UNISDR a way to build their confidence and support

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3) What Is Motivating the Champions to Support Such an Effort?

External - Donors

- Pressure to account for resources and activities that demonstrate outcomes. RBMS is essential for the future - without it we will struggle to convince donors to fund UNISDR.
- For their own reporting on the value of investment; and to guide their further investment decisions with ISDR and others
- To make sure that UNISDR will perform value-added services to the ISDR system, especially the member states of the UN. Donors want to make sure that UNISDR performance worth the dollars
- M&E system makes it easier for them to report back to capital and justify continued donations.

External - Partners
- Primarily a strong demand from donors and our other client base like ISDR support group
- ISDR system members can see our added value role and services

Internal
- Professional pride. Knowing that an efficient and accountable organization will be respected. Each staff would perhaps like to be proud of the organization that he/she works for. An organization that can prove its results and possible impacts and has a system for it to be continued learning organization is always attractive.
- Improved results and recognition, both at organizational and individual levels are the major motivations for the champions.
- Another motivational factor for the champions would be less workload. Good M&E system means focused approach towards the achievements of organizations goals. Focused approach enables organizations and individuals to identify their priorities and assign right amount of human and financial resources (not less, not too much). Increased workload can be a major de-motivational factor for both champions and implementers.

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4) Who Will Own the System? Who Will Benefit from the System? How Much Information Do They Really Want?

Owners
- UNISDR should own. This includes the SMT, those who contribute data like responsible programme officers.
- All staff will own the system.

Beneficiaries
- Whole organization should benefit.
- In addition, the donors, ISDR support group and other partners will also benefit.
- Stakeholders and partners, as the system would enable all of us to develop, implement, adapt strategies and work plans with a long-term vision as well as mid and short-term implementation plans.

How much information?
- We need the right amount of information – not too much, not too little.
- The level of required information will be different.
  - Donors would want to know the results/impacts and how efficiently and effectively resources have been used
  - Internally we would want to know the full picture of goals, objectives, outcomes, expected outputs, activities and the link between them and associated resources, where we are at any time in terms of activity implementation, output achievement and resources used and periodically in terms of generated outcomes and impacts Within ISDR, SMT would need concise and summarized information after analysis. Individuals involved in direct implementation would need detailed information on the status and progress of the organizational activities, in order to determine the directions of their planned activities according to the goals set out in the work plan.
  - Partners would want to know our results and how these contribute to the regional or global DRR agenda as well as complement their efforts

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5) How Will the System Directly Support Better Resource Allocation and the Achievement of Program Goals?

Accountability and Efficiency
- Better M&E would mean higher accountability. This would enhance overall efficiency towards achievement of programme goals. This is what the donor partners are expecting from UNISDR or for that matter any fund recipient. Thus when the input-output relationships are clear, this would enable more strategic resource allocation
- Clearer view of needs and benefits; cost and expenditure. Better overview and management of UNISDR activities, and its alignment with activities and interests of partners and donors.
- Being part of a wider framework this process will clearly show the inputs, outputs, and outcomes and provide the organization with a business approach to managing resources.

Realistic goals
- Also it can help to have a better focus on identifying more realistic goals and activities and the partners to work with. Regular periodic feed back on the progress and direction of our activities will help us in achieving our intended goals and objectives set out in the work plan. It provide us the basis for well informed decisions and policy deliberation in the future, it will minimize the amount of un-directional work which does not contribute to our intended outcomes, thus also minimizing / rationalizing the amount of resources required to achieve intended outcomes. The information collected in the process can be analyzed to develop cost benefit analysis of our activities and will also provide basis / baseline for similar kind of activities in the future.

Budgetary decision-making

- Performance based information would help in improving budgetary decisions and allocation of resources. To require justification of resource allocation in terms of contributing to objectives. This would ensure that resources are allocated to those programs that achieve the best results at least cost, and away from poor performing activities.

Corrective management
- Reflection of corrective/improvement actions with clear accountabilities. Learn from the lessons

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6) How Will UNISDR, the Champions, and the Staff React to Negative Information Generated by the M&E System?

A system will always provide positive and negative feedback - the positive needs to be enhanced, and the negative used to improve and correct our direction and approach. Negative information may be addressed by agreeing beforehand on steps to be undertaken to internalize such learning as a lesson learnt for future improvement.

Promote positive corrective action internally
- Negative information should be seen as challenges and avenues for growth and improvement.
- SMT can use the information to revise and guide the planning and implementation processes.
- Similarly staff could use negative information to re-think the approaches and actions constructively
- We should take it as part of the learning process and learning organization. The staff performance management system should support this approach.
- In a small organization, negative information can reflect directly on individual staff. There is a need to engage staff in a positive corrective way.

Promote positive correction among partners
- The system can think of how to reflect on negative information in forums such as IAP to make constructive use of it.

Promote realistic targets
- There are risks for staff if goals are not achieved, as not all of our "goals" are directly under our control, and some results may mot be achievable in the proposed time frames, so success should be carefully assessed. This is thus an added imperative and in our own interest that the system generates less negative information by starting with realistic targets in the first place.

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7) Where Does Capacity Exist in UNISDR to Support a Results-Based M&E System?

ROSCU, Regional Offices

- Almost all professional staffs have varying levels of project management experience. Many of them, especially in the regional offices, are already exposed to GFDRR's RBMS, which dates back to 2007. Hence it could be assumed that UNISDR has a critical mass of latent capacity for results based management
- Principally, within regional offices (where the real work is being carried out). Support to this process would then be at HQ (advocacy and resources management level.)

<u>RMU, IMU, RMS</u>
- Moreover, some of the initiatives in aid of UNISDR's capacity to support such a result based system are as follows: the quarterly reporting mechanism, the e-management tool in Bangkok, reporting processes of donor relations, admin team and IMU, the PRC process, the PCM trainings from 2009 and so on
- RMS at HQ, but would need to have better links to SMT and implementing units. This might require a whole new team, which could be set up at HQ level, supported by 1 staff in each RO who is responsible for close linkage between HQ and RO.

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8) How Will the M&E System Link Various Work related Organizational Goals?

<u>Through Dedicated Staff</u>
- Needs to have some sort of expertise on these matters at least at first - not necessarily full time or in-house. Depends of resources and planning.

<u>Through the Results Chain</u>
- The results chain has to be clear i.e. how each activity (responsible by a unit or sub-region/region) contributes to which output/outcome/objective. The linkage between them should also be reflected in the system. Judgment of an activity or an output should be from these perspectives i.e. whether it is completed and how it contributes to outcome/objective as well as how efficiently it is achieved, whether or not in synergy with other activities/outputs.
- The M&E system should have clear linkages between global, regional and project work plans. The linkages and flow of information between different levels should be dynamic and must complement the organizational objectives both horizontally and vertically at all levels. The system should address the need at every level, for senior management, officers, and finance & admin staff.
- Similarly the work programme of UNISDR should have clear linkages with the HFA goals and objectives. The primary objective of UNISDR secretariat is to advocate the implementation of HFA. HFA must be seen as a guiding instrument not only for the countries, but also for the organizations working on DRR. UNISDR as a lead organization in advocating HFA to the entire world, have greater responsibility to design their work programme aligned to it. We need to reflect back on the implementation against HFA goals and objectives at the UNISDR secretariat level.
- The baseline for this process is the UNISDR work-program.

<u>Through Focus on Strategic Objectives</u>

- Through consistent work planning in line with overall vision and long-term strategy, and regular monitoring and re-adjustment of work plans and budget according to the results.

Through Tools
- The e-management tool in Bangkok is a very good prototype of how an M&E system can be based on organizational goals. Just as it has linked the various components of the BWP 2010-11, a new M&E system could link the work related Organizational Goals as would be outlined in the BWP 2012-13. Details could be referred to from the guidelines of this e-management tool

The Readiness Assessment – Part 2
Step 1 of the 10-Step Model to Build a Results-Based M&E System

a. Why a Readiness Assessment?

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It is important to determine whether incentives exist—political, institutional, or personal—before beginning to design and build a results-based M&E system. **This is complete.**

Roles and Responsibilities and Existing Structures for Assessing Performance
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Capacity Building Requirements for a Results-Based M&E System
The readiness assessment also includes a review of current capacity to monitor and evaluate along the following dimensions: technical skills; managerial skills; existence and quality of data systems; available technology; available fiscal resources; and institutional experience. **This is undertaken through another questionnaire.**

c. Roles and Responsibilities and Existing Structures for Assessing Performance

Below are the results of a questionnaire review of UNISDR RBMS focal points in various units and regional offices. About 23 respondents[1] sent back answers to the questions, which are compiled and summarized below.

Policy related

> 1) Are the UNISDR HQ units or regional offices collecting information on their performance to support budget expenditure decisions or to enhance their program management? Which ones?

Yes to both, but not systematically or in a predictable manner. This appears to be rather based on the respective manager's initiative. Currently performance measurements are not necessarily required when budget expenditure is decided in line with cost plan and in an unverified manner. Justification process should be clearly defined with clear parameter.

For regional offices, information on results-based performance versus work plan outputs is systematically collected through quarterly reporting utilizing the E-Management tool although the financial overview modules need further improvement. The individual performance E-PAS is not much in use for budget expenditures decisions.

In some units or regional offices, there is no structured performance review or agreed key performance indicators for expenditure efficiency and HR (besides ePAS). Budget expenditures decisions are mainly driven by requests from external parties (mainly donors and beneficiaries) and availability of funds. Internal budget expenditure decisions (such as for office HR) are based on the workloads envisaged in the work plan. In addition, there are no identified benchmarks on "how much" staff is expected to deliver based on the unit and secretariat work plan.

However, in some units or regional offices information on the indicators at the output level are collected diligently. Similarly officers are managing budget allocations and the expenditure against their planned activities for better management and for future reference, of the resources.

Quarterly and annual reporting on outputs are collected and sent to RMS – however current indicators needs to be further refined since they do not necessarily capture the full reality.

There is also a quarterly review of work plan accomplishments against outputs and outcomes. Also within some regional offices, the process of preparation of allotment requests is based on a review of target achievements, constraints and needs.

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[1] Angelika-Pacific, Bina-GAR, Brigitte-Comms, Marco-OSRSG, Demetrio-Europe, Elina-NY, Justin-Policy, Majeed, Nong, Yuki, Hang-Asia, Rhea-Africa, Rahul-ROSCU, Sandra-Campaign, Sanjaya-IRP, Masahiro, Marc, Christine, Dionissia-RMS, Abdurahim-Central Asia, Craig-IMU, Luna, Amjad-ROAS, Raul-Americas

In some cases, a number of our largest expenditures were pre-allocated in the sense that these funds were programmed/earmarked back in 2009 and we are now disbursing the funds in concert with the deliverables.

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2) Are there any evident links between the fiscal year budget allocations to HQ unit or regional office performance?

No there are no direct links between the budget allocations to performance. Budget allocations are linked to what units plan to achieve rather than past performance. In addition, budget allocation based on cost plan is usually proportionate to the size of office and expected results and deliverables and in comparison to previous fiscal years.

One problem is that the work plan does not have identified key performance indicators or proxies that would allow us to have a result-based budgeting procedure.

On the other hand, unit or regional office performance level depends on sufficiency of resource allocated. In some regional offices, the quarterly allocations do take into account burn rate of previous quarter.

The link that exists is at the cost planning level in particular in the case of un-earmarked funds. However region or function specific funds that usually falls within the same fiscal requires the dedicated funds to be released. But since UNISDR is an extra-budgetary organization, in case of poor performance both budget allocations and future resource mobilization are affected.

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3) Are there any formal roles or responsibilities for donors and partners in UNISDR's planning processes?

Yes at global level, there is a structured role for donors through the UNISDR Support Group and the GFDRR Consultative Group. As per internal policy, the draft work plan is consulted with donors and partners prior to finalization, including by the HQ units and ROs. In addition, when building our work plan we do consult the most relevant partners and beneficiaries to assure that their inputs are included in our planning process.

Regionally, respondents noted that although there are spaces of participation of donors (i.e Advisory Committee for the preparation of Regional Platforms, editorial reviews for regional studies or join DRR Country Assessments), there are no formal roles for donors in other planning processes of the work plan.

There should be some mechanisms/modality for discussions, providing inputs, and information sharing in terms of UNISDR's planning process, so that donors will feel more comfortable and will be able to justify their contribution to UNISDR.

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4) Are there any formal roles or responsibilities for donors and partners in UNISDR's procedures for fiscal year budget allocation decisions?

Yes, in particular for earmarked funds such as in the case of GFDRR resources. Also AusAID and ECHO contributions are based on negotiated partnership agreements.

It is important for UNISDR to provide enough information and briefings to donors and partners. Donors and partners can share their views with the UNISDR through these donor meetings and briefings as well as individual dialogues.

5) Is there any evident role for donor agencies in the UNISDR's process and setting of strategic goals? And in the BWP budget allocation decisions?

Yes, through Global Platform, and the UNISDR Support Group. It is however, a two-way process, as donors influence our work plan decisions, and donors themselves ask us advice when planning their investment decisions.

Respondents noted that the BWP development process and strategic objective identification is one of interactive consultation with donors and partners. As mentioned above, apart from several bilateral interactions, the ISDR support group and the recently formed ISDR donor group are two of the formal channels of donor participation

In addition, many of the ROs planned activities are based on consultation of possible donor agencies and countries.

Practice related

6) How would you describe the fiscal year budget monitoring that Resource Management Unit do of the HQ units and regional offices—none, light, medium, heavy? Can you give some examples to support your choice?

The monitoring is really light and should offer more guidance. Reports are requested but there is little follow-up even where limited information is given or budget and narrative show inconsistencies. In addition, it is not clear for some of the respondents what is done with the submitted reports on quarterly basis.

In a recent instance, units were advised to reduce the budget requirements, but there was little advice on how to best reduce the expenditures. It should be made clear though that often the units do not ask for help. Ideally there should be an assigned focal point that attends the revision and planning meetings per unit and SO.

There is also little advanced planning in the reporting. For example, when there is a need at HQ to report to GFDRR or to donors, there is a rush to produce reports. Regional offices systematically updates the budget status in the E-Management Tool, however there is very little reliance by HQ to utilize the tool online and extract needed information directly.

7) Is there any evidence that donor reporting requirements either conflict with one another or impose duplication for UNISDR in meeting these requirements?

There is some duplication as regards various formats for budget preparation and reporting for resources from GFDRR, AusAID, etc. there is room for ECHO, GFDDR and the UNISDR reporting to be coordinated and centralized to avoid spending time reporting.

Some respondents report that based on experience there is evidence that donor procedures clashes with some of our administrative standards (such as on overheads that can be charged on projects), or organizational standards (like the need to charge operational and staff costs to projects).

On reporting we simply make the same report twice or more to adapt the different standards, and there is room for improvements for our reporting procedures. It would be ideal if more and more donors could accept our BWP based annual reporting (RMS could advise better on this) or if we maintain consistency in language of reports used in the BWP and in projects, including GFDRR, Spain, ECHO, etc. to reduce reporting burden and avoid inconsistencies.

8) What kind of financial expenditure data are collected—and by whom—on the costs and outputs of the functions and activities of UNISDR?

The kind of financial expenditure data collected by UNISDR is as follows:
- Expenditures by inputs (according to IMIS budget categories)
- Expenditures by activity
- Expenditures by outputs/outcome areas
- Some units and regional offices also receive requests to report expenditures by country (e.g. as part of Cairns Compact reporting); as well as expenditures by UNDAF Outcomes, if relevant.

No outputs and activities level data of financial expenditure. IMIS data classified by class and sub-account are collected and utilized by RMS for analyzing them against estimated BWP budget of UNISDR secretariat as a whole in a financial overview.

Financial expenditures that are cross-cutting are not properly attributed to certain relevant outputs and outcomes yet, and should be looked at and improved in the future.

Because there are different service providers for UNISDR units and regional offices, including UNOPS, UNDP, etc. the timing and type of expenditure data that is collected varies as well.

9) Can you describe what financial expenditure data are collected—and by whom—on the costs and outputs of the functions and activities of HQ units and regional offices?

As stated above, for many units, it is difficult to track outputs and activities level data of financial expenditure. This results in an estimate at best of expenditure breakdown by Strategic Objectives in the Annual Report. A few regional offices do track expenditures down to the activity level linked to the work plan.

Ideally all expenditures made should be in line with work plan in activity level. All the cost, including staff cost and in kind contributions should be calculated.

10) How available are expenditure data to persons and organizations outside UNISDR? To UN, donors, partners, others?

Annual reports are made available but provide information at a very aggregate level. Usually there is no proactive dissemination policy for these reports. We do not have any issue to share financial information when requested by partners, though we do not have these information publically available (e.g. on the web).

Within the UN, financial reports are shared through the formal channels, i.e. UNOG, and partially OCHA and due to their function as delegated managers of the delegated financial authority, and the Controller Office.

Some details of financial reports are shared, depending on the requirements to those who ask. UNISDR as the whole secretariat provides the "statement on the utilization of funds-Trust Fund for DR" sheet shows "Income" and "Expenditure", as part of financial reporting. This is distributed occasionally to donor meetings and also upon requests from donors.

Also, UNISDR secretariat annual report includes some information about expenditures according to strategic objectives and regional offices etc. This is available on line and to anybody who is interested in.

Since UNDP and OCHA are involved in our financial transactions especially UNDP has all data, we follow UNDP rules and regulations for hiring of staff, procurement etc. Donors receive any financial information they require. As far as we know, this is shared on a case-by-case basis

Financial data at the secretariat level are public as Financial Statement in the Annual Report, while those at the lower levels are not public. On the other hand, at the project level, Statements on utilization of funds are issued about some earmarked projects to certain donors.

Performance related

11) Who in UNISDR is responsible for the collection of work plan accomplishment data for the organization? With whom are these data shared?

The Resource Management Section is mainly responsible for collection of work plan accomplishments from various units and regional offices. Each unit and RO also has focal points that are then responsible for collecting information and sending these off to RMS.

The collected information is then summarized and shared with all units; regularly reports are also compiled for donors. The Annual Report is shared with the public.

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12) What are the roles and responsibilities of the various HQ units and ROs in collecting statistics about work plan accomplishments and financial expenditure?

Various HQ units and ROs are required to produce summary periodic reports based on the templates produced by RMS. Financial expenditure reporting is less clear.

In what areas are statistics collected?
- We make ourselves basic statistics for financial reports in the area of expenditure tracking (e.g. expenditure rates, distribution of expenditures by SOs, frequency analysis of recurrent expenses etc.) Some units and ROs do not have specific output indicators which needs external statistics or secondary source of information from which we get data for our reporting.
- Based on output indicators, such as number of countries having incorporated DRR into UNDAF, number of hits on the Preventionweb, etc.
- For some units, respondents note that statistics are almost non-existent, only narrative reports against the outcomes are being submitted RMS.
- For some ROs, in financial reporting, output indicators achievement where relevant.

At what levels (activity, output, outcomes, etc.)?
- For the quarterly reports, only input, activity and output levels are reported and no systematic outcome monitoring but anecdotal evidence collected of outcomes and impact.
- Mostly at outcome levels. Only few units and ROs report and compile quantitative information against output indicators.

To whom are the statistical data provided?
- All inputs are submitted to the heads of units and ROs, who then submit the compilation to RMS
- RMS then compiles and submits to SRSG
- In some cases, this information is also shared with donors, and partners.
- To UN secretariat and Programme and Budget Committee through IMDIS

What information is or is not made public?
- Usage of outputs is made public - expenditure data not (apart from that relating to donor funding).
- Mostly financial information is not made public. Row IMIS data is not public, only aggregated tables of expenditure breakdown of secretariat were public.
- Selected information goes into the annual report, which is then made public

- Outputs such as HFA progress reports, city sign ups, and data on national platforms are made public
- Regional Bulletin including activities and some output and outcomes are made available to partners.
- Regional annual reports including these info are available to the public (downloadable from the website)

What organizations assist in collecting statistical information?
- UNISDR does not use specific data from external partners, however we are use DevInfo or PreventionWeb and other sources if we need specific country level information for our reporting purposes.
- In some cases, our implementation partners provide us report on expenditure
- Based on specific MoU with CRID

What special surveys are conducted?
- Some ROs conduct office evaluations
- Based on output indicators to be measured (through web tools such as surveymnonkey and zoomerang), such as:
  o HFA Monitor review
  o GAR usage surveys
  o DesInventar training and usage feedback
  o Review of submissions of UNFCCC Parties pursuant to guidance provided by UNISDR to examine the effectiveness of our inputs.
  o Screening of project proposals submitted to the Adaptation Fund Board.
  o Status of DRR in Africa
  o Inventory of DRR centers in Africa
  o Inventory of national coordination mechanisms
  o HFA Mid-term Review follow-up in the Pacific
  o Inventory on urban risk reduction actors and activities in the Arab Region
  o Mapping of funding mechanisms and resources in the Arab Region
  o Specific studies regarding the national platforms
  o Mapping of policies, institutions and initiatives on DRR and CCA in Asia Pacific

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13) What are the roles and responsibilities of the Resource Management Unit?

Respondents noted that there is limited issues listed below work in practice, and even also in theory, and suggested that in order to respond positively to these questions properly, a major change is necessary in work processes in the secretariat.

What is its authority to audit HQ units and ROs?
- Many respondents feel that RMS should be able to do this, as they are the relevant authority. However, there is no systematic audit in place.
- RMS developed Management Responses to UNISDR Evaluation 2009 up to the third revised version.

To whom are findings reported?

- Internally to SRSG, Director and SMT
- Within the UN to GA/ECOSOC
- Externally to donors, partners.
- Information included in the Annual Report reach a much broader audience

Are these findings made public?
- Yes some of these information, in particular those included in the Annual Report are printed and posted in the UNISDR web site, but not proactively shared with the wider public.
- Management audit and responses are publically available.

Does the RMS have any oversight on the quality of information produced?
- Not at the moment, although RMS can ask for verification and evidence for any reported claims concerning achievements or expenditures. However, in practice this is not yet done.
- Donor relations unit in RMS advises on final submissions of financial and narrative reports to donors.

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14) Are there any HQ units or ROs that have evaluation expertise and undertake evaluations?

- RMS supports the main UNISDR evaluations. Some regional offices like Bangkok Office have conducted several evaluations as well.
- Various units and ROs have staff with experience in evaluation however we do not carry out evaluations
- Various units also formally evaluate the work done by consultants.

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15) What data systems do the RMS have available to them?

Some respondents noted that another issue to consider is how audit information is used. In addition, there could be better organization and communication of program and project completion reports.

Budget data
- Yes available are the cost plan, IMIS expenditure reports, IRFA report, monthly expenditure tracking in IMIS, ATLAS reports, E-tool reports

Output data
- Yes, based on quarterly output reports by units (Excel file) and ROs (E-Tool).

Outcome or impact data
- To some extent, depending on the submissions of ROs in the E-Tool. However for HQ units, there is no reporting requirement for outcomes.

Performance audits
- Respondents are not aware of any performance audits so far

Financial audits
- Respondents are not aware of any systematic performance audits so far
- Respondents note that in Bangkok, using the E-tool self auditing can be done on the financial data against the work plan
- There are some auditing done for donor funded project and program completion reports

Donor data systems
- There is access to some donor data like GFDRR's RBMS.
- Other than this, there is no systematic access to donor data systems

The Readiness Assessment – Part 3
Step 1 of the 10-Step Model to Build a Results-Based M&E System

a. Why a Readiness Assessment?

This step is a unique addition to the many M&E models that currently exist because it provides an analytical framework to assess a given the organizational capacity and political willingness to monitor and evaluate its goals, and develop a performance-based framework. This is a key step—unfortunately often missed or omitted.

For all the good intentions to advance the design, creation, and use of results-based M&E systems, too little emphasis is placed on existing political, organizational, and cultural factors and contexts. Most experts look at the "what" questions—what are the goals? What are the indicators? — and not the "why" questions: Why do we want to measure something? Why is there a need to think about these issues? Why do we want to embark on building sustainable results-based M&E systems? To answer these "why" questions, there is a considerable amount of preparatory work to do before the actual construction of a results based M&E system. That preparatory work takes the form of the readiness assessment done below.

b. Three Main Parts of the Readiness Assessment

The readiness assessment is a diagnostic aid that will help determine where an organization stands in relation to the requirements for establishing a results-based M&E system. It is composed of three main parts.

Incentives and Demands for Designing and Building a Results-Based M&E System
It is important to determine whether incentives exist—political, institutional, or personal—before beginning to design and build a results-based M&E system. **This is complete.**

Roles and Responsibilities and Existing Structures for Assessing Performance
A readiness assessment will enable one to gauge the roles and responsibilities and existing structures available to monitor and evaluate development goals. **This is undertaken through another questionnaire.**

Capacity Building Requirements for a Results-Based M&E System
The readiness assessment also includes a review of current capacity to monitor and evaluate along the following dimensions: technical skills; managerial skills; existence and quality of data systems; available technology; available fiscal resources; and institutional experience. **This is undertaken through the questionnaire below.**

c. Capacity Building Requirements for a Results-Based M&E System

Below are the results of a questionnaire review of UNISDR staff and RBMS focal points in various units and regional offices. About 26 respondents[2] sent back answers to the questions, which are compiled and summarized below.

1) How would you assess the skills of UNISDR staff in your unit or RO in each of the following six areas?

Of the six areas below, project and programme management and policy analysis seems to be the strengths of the existing staff of the various units and regional offices, with project management being core strength.

Setting programme goals and budget management seems to be middle areas, where although there are a number of units, which are particularly strong, there are equally a number of units that needs improvement.

Finally, the areas that need attention include performance auditing and data analysis, key areas in results based management and in accountability frameworks.

1) Project and program management				
	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent
OSRSG			X	
NY Office			X	
Campaign			X	
Admin		X		
RMS			X	
IMU			X	
PAN		X		
CADRI				
Communications		X		
HLA				
GAR			X	
Policy			X	
ROSCU				X
Asia			X	
Kobe		X		
Pacific			X	
Africa		X		
IRP		X		

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			X	
Americas			X	
Europe				
Central Asia			X	
Arab States			X	

2) Data Analysis

	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent
OSRSG			X	
NY Office		X		
Campaign			X	
Admin			X	
RMS			X	
IMU			X	
PAN				X
CADRI				
Communications		X		
HLA				
GAR				X
Policy				X
ROSCU				X
Asia			X	
Kobe		X		
Pacific	X			
Africa	X			
IRP		X		
Americas			X	
Europe				
Central Asia	X			
Arab States		X		

3) Policy Analysis

	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent
OSRSG			X	
NY Office			X	
Campaign		X		
Admin	X			
RMS			X	
IMU	X			
PAN				X
CADRI				
Communications		X		

HLA				
GAR				X
Policy				X
ROSCU				X
Asia		X		
Kobe		X		
Pacific			X	
Africa		X		
IRP		X		
Americas		X		
Europe				
Central Asia			X	
Arab States				X

4) Setting project and program goals				
	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent
OSRSG			X	
NY Office			X	
Campaign		X		
Admin		X		
RMS			X	
IMU			X	
PAN		X		
CADRI				
Communications			X	
HLA				
GAR			X	
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Kobe		X		
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Africa	X			
IRP		X		
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Arab States			X	

5) Budget management				
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OSRSG			X	
NY Office	X			
Campaign		X		
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RMS			X	
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RMS	X			
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Policy			X	
ROSCU				X
Asia		X		
Kobe	X			
Pacific	X			
Africa	X			
IRP		X		

Americas	X			
Europe				
Central Asia		X		
Arab States	X			

2) Are you aware of any technical assistance, capacity building, or training in M&E now underway or done in the past two years for UNISDR staff at HQ and RO? Please describe who provided this help. Has it been related to:

- **Work Planning**

Feedback suggests that most senior staff derives work planning training during retreats, either that organized in Geneva or in the regions. In addition, in 2009, project cycle management training was offered to interested staff based in Geneva, starting with members of the SMT. It is unclear however how many staff availed of this training. Although it was planned to continue this training in 2010 and 2011, these were shelved due to budget constraints. There have been a few staff members who participated in organized training either at their own cost (in 2009, one staff), or at the cost of UNISDR (in 2011, one staff). There is a number of staff that have received training on project management before joining UNISDR. Most other staff members are not aware of any training provided to staff on work planning. respondents noted that work planning activities taking place in the context of retreats cannot be termed as systematic, but rather ad-hoc in nature, and suggested that work planning training is not institutionalized in the organization.

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- **PRINCE2**

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- **Change management**

Respondents note that this was originally supported by the UNISDR training schedule for 2010-2011 mainly in Geneva, which included Value Workshops, Communications Skills, Presentation Skills and Management & Leadership training. Some senior level staff (P4 and above) has undertaken Management and Leadership Courses in 2010. In addition, one staff member had undergone Management Development Programme training.

> 3) Are you aware of any individuals in UNISDR or immediate partner institutes, UN, research centers, private organizations, or universities that UNISDR work with in the past that have some capacity to provide technical assistance and training for UNISDR staff in performance-based M&E? Can you list a few examples?

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CADRI?		
OXFAM?		

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HLA				
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			X	
Americas			X	
Europe				
Central Asia			X	
Arab States			X	

2) Data Analysis				
	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent
OSRSG			X	
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The Readiness Assessment – Recommendations
Step 1 of the 10-Step Model to Build a Results-Based M&E System

Recommendations on the Three Main Parts of the Readiness Assessment

I. Incentives and Demands for Designing and Building a Results-Based M&E System

1. To improve staff buy-in and the understanding of the purpose of building a sustainable RBMS for UNISDR, it is proposed that an **in-depth all staff briefing** be conducted of the background, the demands, the pressures, the capacities and the gaps and opportunities for improving its system. Ideally this should be done by RMS before the completion of the next biennial work plan. This should be followed by similar briefings in the regional offices, preferably through video, or through the respective RBMS focal points.

2. Similarly, to create ownership of RMBS by staff, it is proposed that before the finalization of the RBMS components later in 2011, **that each HQ unit and RO should discuss the draft design of the RBMS and the implications of its implementation on each of the unit and RO's work processes and structure**. Outcomes of these discussions will feed into the final version of the design of the system.

II. Roles and Responsibilities and Existing Structures for Assessing Performance

Performance Management

3. There is a need **to improve unit and RO information collection on their performance to support budget expenditure decisions**. This can be done by agreeing on a structured performance review based on work plan indicators and linking this to accountability frameworks including PAS.

4. Related to the PAS, there needs to be an agreed set of benchmarks on "what" and "how much" staff is expected to deliver related to the work plan of each unit and the whole secretariat. Comparable benchmarks across the organization will allow for improved acceptance of the system. **As a starting point, a review of the status of PAS compliance across the secretariat should be done with statistics on rating and compliance.**

5. In addition, the **finalization of the HR exercise on skills and functions profiling** will be useful to align functions required for WP delivery with the skills and profiles of staff with a view to maximize efficiency and effectiveness as well as improve staff job satisfaction.

Biennial Work Planning

6. For the next biennium work plan, there is an urgent need for **output and outcome indicators to fully reflect reality of units and RO responsibilities and resources**.

7. Because of the reality of late budget release and the related delays in the implementation of work plan activities, **more realistic planning of activities should be made** to incorporate previous biennium work plans that will likely get carried over in the new biennium.

8. There is an urgent need to **create a link between budget allocations with performance** and rates of accomplishments based on the work plan. A method for doing this need to be developed.

Donor Engagement

9. There is a need to **improve discussions and information sharing in terms of UNISDR's planning process with donors** so that they will feel more comfortable and will be able to justify their contribution to UNISDR. The Global Platform, the UNISDR Support Group and the new UNISDR donor group are good avenues to have two-way discussions of work plans, priorities, and resource allocations.

10. There is a need to explore opportunities to **harmonize different donor reporting with BWP reporting**

11. There is a need to **include at least one staff from each RO into the donor relations unit plans** to strengthen and harmonize resources mobilization actions both at the HQ and in the regions. A key principle should be to have a larger, informed and more engaged resource mobilization team, but with one message and approach.

Strengthening RMS and HQ unit and RO functions and work processes

12. **RMS monitoring and auditing of units and ROs should be strengthened**. This should include improved guidance, authority for accounting-both substantive and financial, and quality control of submissions by units and ROs. This will ensure the quality and timeliness of narrative reports and avoid inconsistencies. There should also be a clear communications and dissemination plan on the submitted reports.

13. **There is a need to improve and harmonize reporting across the secretariat**, especially aligning reporting between the work plan, and project funded work plans and between output and outcome reporting. A clear reporting plan, harmonized set of indicators, alignment of project work plans with the overall BWP would be necessary. As a key principle, there should only be one reporting process for units and ROs.

14. **There is a need to improve and standardize procedures** with those of donor procedures especially if there is potential for clashes with UN administrative standards (such as on overheads that can be charged on projects).

15. **There is a need to improve financial expenditure data collection** by HQ units, ROs and RMS. For example expenditure requests should be standardized across the secretariat, with clear links to work plan deliverables (outputs, outcomes, etc.). Clarity would also be needed on what type of financial data would be needed across units and ROs, including by UNDAF Outcomes and other metrics for ROs, as relevant.

16. **There is a need to clarify what the responsibilities are for collecting financial data** of the various units and ROs at activity and output levels. This is particularly important as there are various service providers among regions and HQ units and their financial reporting schedule and formats varies.

17. As a matter of principle, **UNISDR should be able to track expenditures starting at output level** (including staff costs) without making too many estimations and assumptions; recognizing that real costs for outputs will only be reflected if real costs at the activity level are estimated. A simple and acceptable process needs to be developed to make this a reality.

18. **There is a need to better track cross-cutting expenditures in the secretariat**. In particular costs incurred to service more than one output or outcome, including personnel costs and operating expenses. A simple and acceptable approach needs to be developed and adopted.

19. **There is a need to develop a clear communications plan for the work plan**, and the accomplishment reports including financial information, for various stakeholders with a clear schedule of deadlines, if possible aligned with the regular reporting schedule of the work plan. An agreement on levels of detail of information that will be shared, need to also be developed.

20. **There is a need to improve outcome reporting**. A key step is the **assignment of focal persons per outcome indicator**, who would then be responsible to collate accomplishments among units and ROs undertaking activities under such outcome indicator. To reduce the number of focal points, more than one related outcome indicator can be assigned to one person, as appropriate. This person would also be responsible for reporting against the outcome indicators and in engaging in discussion the various units and ROs in the delivery of the outcome.

21. **There is a need to clarify which organizations UNISDR needs to collect statistics** on work plan accomplishments and with this clear, standardize engagement with these organizations.

22. **There should be an agreement on what methods for information on work plan accomplishments will be undertaken** in order not to create undue burden internally and with stakeholders. For example, clarity on what questionnaires will be done, when and for who should be agreed upon.

23. **There is an urgent need to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework**, in particular regularizing evaluations of the secretariat, its units and regional offices. In addition to improving monitoring and reporting, evaluation should become a regular part of the work of the secretariat and a means for improving its work. As a first step, a review of past evaluations, recommendations and responses to these should be undertaken, based on which a plan for future evaluation work should be made.

24. **RMS should have access to the information** required to monitor the various units and ROs both substantively (through ROSCU) and financially. Based on this review, **RMS should also recommend ways of improving data access** from units and ROs.

III.   Capacity Building Requirements for a Results-Based M&E System

25. It is recommended that **as a matter of priority, capacity building on performance auditing and management is undertaken**, including on PAS management. Performance auditing and management are key components of any accountability framework, and an understanding and proper implementation of this area would be a key step to improve UNISDR's RBMS.

    Some areas proposed that can be undertaken include:

    For Performance Auditing
    -   Performance standard-setting, including standard performance comparators
    -   Performance appraisal
    -   Accountability frameworks

    For Performance Management
    -   Unit work planning and goal setting
    -   PAS development and management
    -   Level of responsibility delegation
    -   Roles, responsibilities and reporting lines
    -   Matching skills to responsibilities given
    -   Monitoring progress
    -   Feedback and coaching
    -   Supporting creativity
    -   Supporting career aspirations

26. In addition, **in the short term, another area where training should be done is on work plan data analysis and results based budgeting,** in particular related to

performance measurement of work plan indicators, an area identified to be weak among staff. At present, there is only two staff in the whole UNISDR that has been trained on RBB, so a more targeted training for key staff should be done before the costed work plans gets finalized. The present training schedule which focuses on issues such as Value Workshops, Communications Skills, Presentation Skills and Management & Leadership training should be re-focused and incorporate performance auditing and management, RBB and work plan data analysis and reporting urgently.

27. **In the medium term, additional training can be provided on setting programme goals** where a number of units identified as areas that need improvement.

28. **In the longer term, supplementary training can be provided on project and programme management and policy analysis** where staff already noted key strengths and capacities do exist, and may just need some capacity updating. UNISDR may wish to follow previous practice of doing project and programme management training back to back with UNSIDR retreats. Following up on the training plan started in 2009, additional programme management training can be offered to all staff (through UNOG for staff based in GVA, UNON for Nairobi staff, ADPC and ESCAP for Asia Pacific staff) and properly budgeted in the respective unit and RO office work plans for 2012-2013. In addition, UNISDR may wish to negotiate to have PRINCE2 online training offered to all staff before the end of the 2012-2013 biennium.

29. Finally, **UNISDR should encourage the development of a cadre of in-house trainers**, in particular those who undertake the trainings themselves. For example, those who finish training should be encouraged to brief other colleagues in their units and ROs, and share training material and information on courses they attend where possible for the benefit of other colleagues.

Action Matrix

Options for Actions for the Development of an RBMS in UNISDR

There are 4 tasks at hand:

1) Inform the donors on 9 May 2011 of the efforts by UNISDR to build an RBMS. The level of detail needs to be agreed to.
2) Start modifying the 2010-2011 work plan to make it more results oriented. This is linked to task 1, and due to the timing, it is imperative to be clear on what we will do and by when and inform the donors accordingly.
3) Start a process to track value for money. Expenditures versus outcomes.
4) Build a sustainable RBMS for the UNISDR secretariat

The proposed interim actions with due dates are as follows:

	Action	Due by	Comments
1	Appoint a small group of relevant people from UNISDR HQ and the regional offices to review the draft analysis done so far and provide comments.	Appoint by 20 April. Comments due by 22 April	
2	Convene the same group after the Global Platform for 1.5 days (2 days if possible) to agree on proposals for changes to the 2010-2011 work plan based on the analysis above	Due by May 18	
3	Appoint a small group of people from HQ and the regional offices (if possible different people) to look at financial tracking. Tasks would include reviewing and making inputs to an analysis paper and convening and making recommendations for actions	Appoint by 22 April. Convene sometime after GP.	
4	Agree on what will be communicated to donors (options below) on 9 May, and prepare accordingly	By 22 April	
	- Develop short paper for donors - Propose creation of a donor sub-group to assist us build the RBMS	By 2 May	

a. The 10-Step Approach to build an RBMS for UNISDR

I have proposed to adopt a standard approach to build a sustainable RBMS with the following 10-steps[4].
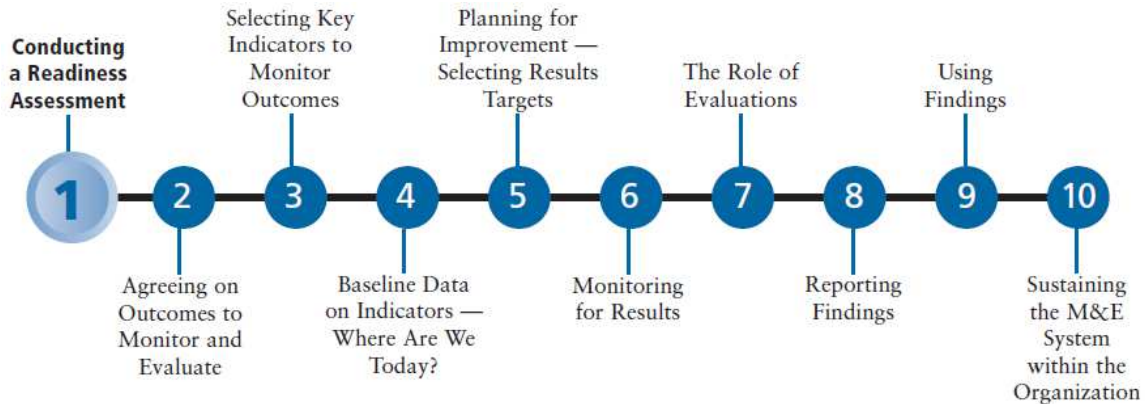
To complete task 2 (modification of the work plan) above, we need to complete up to Step 5. The first part of Step 1 is done (2 other parts of Step 1 are pending and can be done at a later date). Draft analyses for Steps 2 and 3 are also complete, which leaves us with Steps 4 and 5 as below.

- Step 2 - Agreeing on Outcomes and Outputs to Monitor and Evaluate
- Step 3 - Selecting Key Performance Indicators to Monitor Outcomes
- Step 4 - Setting Baselines and Gathering Data on Indicators
- Step 5 - Planning for Improvement---Selecting Results Targets

Because of the looming end of the 2010-2011 biennium, the above tasks cannot wait too long. Draft reviews that I have prepared for Steps 2 and 3 (and later this week, Step 4) will need to be verified and completed. After which proposed changes to the 2010-2011 work plan need to be proposed, reviewed, and adopted, before we can proceed to Step 6, which is actual monitoring.

b. Tracking Value for Money

This task has just started, and a paper is pending with some analysis on where we stand, due this week.

c. Communicating to donors our RBMS efforts

<u>What do we want to achieve when we communicate to donors on 9 May on our RBMS efforts?</u>

I believe we would like to achieve the following:

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[4] Jody Zall Kusek Ray C. Rist, Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System. World Bank, 2004.

1) Build confidence that a participative and acceptable process has started to build an RBMS
2) Be part of the process
3) Be informed of our plans, with clear proposed tasks, dates and deliverables

For this purpose, we might wish to do the following:

1) Present a short paper outlining our plans for building an RBMS, actions taken so far, due dates, deliverables, and seek comments
2) Propose the creation of a support sub-group on RBMS, TOR to be agreed at later date. Primary tasks to help us build the RBMS.

There will be 2 parallel tasks that need to proceed that will eventually merge. The first task is the modification of the work plan 2010-2011 up to step 5 of our process. This is separate as we are starting from an existing work plan, which just needs to be modified. The second parallel task is the building of the next work plan along the lines of the new RBMS. This will start from the beginning building on whatever we have and the outcomes of the Global Platform. These two processes will merge with Step 6, monitoring, at which point there will only be one process.