

EVALUATION OF DFAT INVESTMENT LEVEL MONITORING SYSTEMS - CASE STUDIES

FEBRUARY 2019

CASE STUDY ONE

Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Rural Economic **Development (AIP-Rural)**

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) provides a results measurement standard and periodic results audits. AIP-Rural integrated the DCED standard, added elements and used it to improve the program.
- High value, long-term portfolio investment with discrete but interrelated interventions.



Investment value: AUD \$112 m



Investment goal: Increase net attributable incomes of 300,000 smallholder farm households by 30%



Time period: 2013-2018



Indonesia



Quality Characteristics: outcome focused; quality assurance; used monitoring information

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM

The design for the AIP-Rural was iterative, commencing in 2012. The expected outcomes and monitoring indicators were in place from the beginning of the program. The overarching AIP-Rural goal was simple and clear, with 8 KPIs flowing from it and monitoring at its core. The monitoring focus was on program outcomes, not just outputs but at a realistic level of expected accomplishment.

The funding committed to M&E was approximately 7.5 % of total value. This is relatively high when compared to most other Australian aid investments, especially for an investment of this value, but not out of proportion given the data and analytic intensity of the intervention model.

In part, due to the time taken by the design phase, the MC had to request an extension of 6 months and additional human resources to realistically plan for meeting targets. DFAT considered this worthwhile and agreed to the extension and reallocation of funds towards this purpose within the budget parameters. A significant build-up of M&E personnel subsequently took place. Originally, two results management specialists were planned for; however the team gradually grew to nearly 15 specialists, working with more than 70 implementation staff.

By the end of 2018, DFAT, MC and local partner organisations all recognized that relevant, robust data 'belonged to everyone' associated with the investment. DFAT Post was actively engaged in using the monitoring system and encouraging further improvements. DFAT staff who worked on the investment underwent one week of results management training.

DFAT and the AIP-Rural MC team jointly placed high value on M&E capacity building and mutual learning. Staff on both sides exhibited a willingness to accept mistakes to inform improvements. DFAT took a deliberatively adaptive approach to management, and DFAT staff remained intimately involved in understanding the M&E objectives of the investment. The investment design articulated that the program could tolerate a failure

rate of up to 30 percent, to ensure an appropriate balance between innovation, strategic risk taking and value for money.

AIP-Rural was supported by a two-person Strategic Review Panel, who provided technical commentary on major monitoring tools and products. They also served a help desk function to support the Results Manager and implementation teams on analytical matters when needed.

Initially gender relations were incorporated in the monitoring system only through sex disaggregation of data, but by 2017 the investment was more assertively integrating gender analysis into each intervention, gathering data on gendersignificant behaviour change and related matters.

In late 2015 the flagship program in AIP-Rural, PRISMA, developed a rigorous Quality Management Tool for assessing market system interventions. The tool, which was refined over time, allowed for consistent assessment of its interventions and was then used to develop management responses. Developments such as this were shared across the AIP-Rural portfolio and were used to inform the design of Phase II of the program.



LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

DFAT and an MC can work together closely and successfully to develop and run a high-quality monitoring system. Both parties need to be actively engaged, invest in building monitoring and evaluation capacity, and be in a continual learning mode.

A clear goal and theory of change is essential for a high-quality monitoring system. Outcome indicators (or KPIs) are developed from this.

Relatively data-intense monitoring may require higher levels of resourcing but the payoff in readily available, reliable data can be substantial.

A semi-independent review panel or advisory group can be a useful resource and sounding board to support development and quality assurance of a monitoring system.

CASE STUDY TWO

Tonga Skills for Inclusive Economic Growth Program (S4IEG)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- Perceived to be Tongan-driven, working within existing structures and has put in place a systematic process for the identification of demand and priorities.
- Results-based payments contract



monitoring information

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM

S4IEG has grappled with many practical challenges during its first eighteen months of implementation. Contract signature was delayed, as was the recruitment of key staff including the team leader. Severe weather including cyclones and a change of government and bureaucratic staff also presented challenges. Time was required to repair some negative legacy relationships, and to establish working relationships with the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board.

The 2018 Mid Term Review found that satisfactory progress has been made in the delivery of outputs underpinning the program. However, there have been several shifts in the approach to identifying the outcomes for Tonga Skills since the original Design, leading to a lack of clarity in the monitoring and evaluation process. The Design presented a conceptual framework which was not amenable to planning and monitoring because it did not present a clear hierarchy of outputs and outcomes. This is not unusual at design stage; however, the theory of change and outcomes were not successfully clarified during early implementation.

Eighteen months into implementation the project team is still working to establish the management information systems (MIS) it needs to manage the Program, including the procedures, tools and software to collect, process, store, and disseminate information. Some systems are in place, but they are not well integrated, nor adequate for the value of the intervention. The 2018 MTR made recommendations to address this which are being actioned.

This Case Study is a valuable one, because many of the same challenges are commonly faced by MC teams and DFAT posts. Designs do not always have sufficient (or correct) details about outcomes or logic, and further work to clarify the results framework is often required. Competing demands mean that staff at Post

often cannot allocate enough time and resources to monitoring, even when they are aware that issues exist, and are motivated to address these. Similarly, MC teams can be overwhelmed by the (often considerable) practical difficulties of establishing an intervention and feel unable to prioritise establishment of the monitoring system while battling to implement core activities.

The Evaluation finds that there is an issue of relative priority, and a lack of process to escalate the priority of establishing a results and monitoring system amongst competing demands. Improvements can be made both within DFAT, and by MCs. In this case, the MC might have provided more corporate support in the form of technical staff, and access to and recommendations on appropriate systems and tools. DFAT might have provided more corporate support in the form of technical assistance to quality assure establishment of the monitoring and results system during inception, recognising that Post staff were not able to prioritise this.

In the early stages of implementation S4IEG lacked the focused effort required to develop a results and monitoring system. However, this can be corrected during implementation as the FCDP case study shows. The level of attention from DFAT to the preliminary MTR findings provides the necessary basis for this.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores) 2016 S4IEG Commences Missed opportunity to collect baseline data 2017 AQC M&E rating: 5 2018 Mid Term Review Multiple shifts in outcomes since program design New simple and clear ToC approved by DFAT MELC did not translate ToC into logical hierarchy of outcomes MIS not in place 3rd International M&E Advisor

recently mobilised

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

It takes time and effort to get the monitoring system right. It is best developed in conjunction with a broader performance/results management system.

Competing demands make it difficult for investment teams and posts to prioritise monitoring. To some extent this is an inherent constraint, but for some interventions the challenges are more acute than others.

Both DFAT and MCs need to recognise and respond when additional corporate support is required to develop / quality assure a monitoring system. This may come in the form of technical support, access to proven corporate tools and resources, and cross-organisational knowledge transfer / capacity building.

CASE STUDY THREE PNG Strongim Gavman Program (SGP)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- Implemented by Australian Government Departments.
- Ministerial initiative.
- MC provided deployee support only.
- No design undertaken.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM



Investment value: AUD 302.4 m



Investment goal: To assist the PNG Government to strengthen public sector performance in selected sectors and agencies.



Time period: 2009-2017



Papua New Guinea



Quality Characteristics: delays in clarifying outcomes and using monitoring information

The most significant factor behind SGP's low ratings for M&E is that of lack of leadership and weak strategic direction. Falling scores over the life of the initiative reflect higher scrutiny and standards of aid management progressively being imposed.

SGP's predecessor, the Enhanced Cooperation Program (ECP), was created as a Ministerial initiative. The ECP responded to a perceived need to help stabilise PNG economically, as well as to enhance Australia's understanding of and influence within PNG. This stronger focus on economic diplomacy also distinguished the initiative.

No formal design process was undertaken for either the ECP or SGP. A design has been completed for the successor program; the Institutional Partnerships Platform (IPP). Evaluation interviews indicated that the recommendations from a mid-term review of SGP were not implemented, although some of these have been considered in the IPP design.

SGP was most often described as a capacity building program. Australian Government Departments deployed staff to their counterpart Departments in PNG, in response to identified capacity gaps. The process was overseen and managed by AusAID (and later DFAT). The role of the MC was limited to deployee support. The investment was governed by a Joint Steering Committee comprising Department heads from both countries. It did not convene as often as originally intended, and members (reportedly) tended to focus more on deployments from their respective Departments than on the performance and oversight of the program as a whole.

There is a misalignment between what SGP did well (relationship building, and in some cases strategic capacity substitution or upskilling), and what it was held to account for (building the capacity of PNG government institutions). It is unique amongst the case studies in that many key stakeholders consider it to have been quite valuable, and yet its overall performance ratings fell continually over the life of the investment.

SGP was, and remains, highly valued by Department heads in PNG, and is considered by Port Moresby post to have built valuable relationships and granted access within the bureaucracy. Yet in 2017, it was rated as an 'Investment Requiring Improvement' and given the lowest score for M&E in the entire sample of investments for this evaluation (2).

SGP had a monitoring system which, while underpowered for the investment value, could have produced better information if the structures and incentives to use it had been in place. Deployees were asked to report, including at the outcome level. However, a lack of baseline data on partner Government capacity and no theory of change mean that even when reports were submitted, outcomes were anecdotal and difficult to assess. The Joint Steering Committee did not use the existing reporting well, nor demand improvement. DFAT staff had difficulty convincing other Departments to comply with the minimal reporting arrangements that were in place.

In final reporting DFAT concluded that the mechanism and scale of investment did not match the stated goal, to strengthen public sector performance. It appears that this view was widely held within DFAT before final reporting, but staff did not feel able to address this mismatch directly.

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

A clear goal and theory of change is essential for a high-quality monitoring system. In their absence, investments may be judged against criteria that they were not designed to meet.

Transition between phases is a key point to address in monitoring and performance issues that have persisted through implementation.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores) 1 July 2009 Commenced 2009 AQC M&E rating: 4 2010 AQC M&E rating: 4 2011 AQC M&E rating: 4 2012 Mid Term Review Rated M&E 4 2012 AQC M&E rating: 3 2013 AQC M&E rating: 3 2014 AQC M&E rating: 3 2015 AQC M&E rating: 3 2016 AQC M&E rating: 2 (Investment Requiring Improvement) 2017 (final) FAQC M&E rating: 2

CASE STUDY FOUR Fiji Community Development Program (FCDP)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- FCDP drew on Australia's history of supporting civil society organisations in Fiji.
- FCDP was designed in response to a 2011 ODE evaluation that recommended Australia engage in a more strategic way with civil society, and support capacity strengthening of CSOs in their service delivery and advocacy roles.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM

Investment design included a draft M&E Framework, but the MEF was not finalised until December 2014, two years after implementation start up. DFAT was not satisfied with the submitted design and developed a revision through an internal review process.

The Mid Term Review (2014) had little to say about the investment monitoring system. While AQC scores for M&E were high, DFAT expressed dissatisfaction with the monitoring system by 2015. Reporting lacked sufficient rigour and evidence base, and M&E support to grantees was not adequate for tracking program outcomes or strengthening grantee capacity.

The MC replaced the M&E Specialist with a new Specialist in late 2014, and a part-time evaluation adviser was assigned from MC headquarters.

The new FCDP M&E leadership produced a comprehensive new MEF, working with DFAT and local partners, featuring a focused and complete approach to monitoring, supported by learning workshops and in-depth studies of issues and themes of key importance to program management and learning.

The revised monitoring system engaged both qualitative and quantitative data, emphasizing triangulation across methods and sources at multiple implementation levels. This added considerable power to performance analysis and reporting.

In this civil society capacity strengthening investment, the qualitatively oriented case studies were an extra effort, but considered worthwhile for stakeholders, since they provided valuable understanding of the processes behind the raw quantitative performance data.

While initial FCDP M&E personnel were not adequately prepared to deliver a monitoring system meeting DFAT standards. This is an impressive example of "turning around" a monitoring system, from unsatisfactory to exemplary.

DFAT technical capacity for monitoring was not especially high. However, the investment manager and other staff with responsibility to oversight the investment had an approach that facilitated effective cooperation with the MC to meet DFAT M&E standards.

The DFAT investment team collaborated well with the FCDP team. Some members of the DFAT team had participated in an earlier staff evaluation capacity building program, which they report served as a knowledge resource for assessing M&E products from the FCDP.

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

A quality monitoring system can be built during implementation, given sufficient attention and resources. FCDP offers an example of both DFAT and the MC responding actively and well (if somewhat late) to a weak start to an investment monitoring system.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores)

2012

Implementation commences

2014

Normalisation of GoA and GoF relations

Oct-Nov 2014

Mid Term Review

December 2014

MELF Finalised

May 2015

End of Phase I

2015

AQC rating, M&E: 5

2016

AQC rating, M&E: 5

2017

AQC rating, M&E: 5

Feb-May 2017

Final Evaluation

CASE STUDY FIVE Policing and Justice Support Program in Vanuatu (PJSPV)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- PJSPV was funded and managed by DFAT and had the Australian Federal Police (AFP) managing the policing element, and a managing contractor (MC) implementing the justice element and overall program administration.
- The AQC rating for M&E continued to improve over time.
- Design and implement model.



Investment value: AUD 22 m



Investment goal: All justice services promote justice, provide fair & equitable services to meet the needs of the community, rule of law & protection of human rights.



Time period: 2011 - 2017



Vanuatu



Quality Characteristics: outcome focused after delay; using monitoring information

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING **SYSTEM**

The M&E plan was developed at the start of PSJPV in July 2014 and was an improvement on the M&E plan for Stage One of the program (which covered only the Justice Sector). It was viewed as ambitious but fit for purpose, and integrated M&E for both the justice and policing elements.

Over time, scope to reduce the number of indicators was identified – given there were 76 indicators in the initial plan with 58 having baseline data.

The plan was deemed to meet DFAT M&E Standards.

There was sufficient performance information from the justice part of the program, covering the completion of Stage One and the start of PJSPV, with further strengthening occurring for the policing component. Progress reports were done separately. The managing contractor produced a six-monthly report, aligned with DFAT standards that covered justice, the civilian inputs to policing, and finance.

The AFP police advisers produced quarterly reports, which changed to six monthly from January 2015, that are submitted to AFP. DFAT would then request copies of the reports from AFP.

The M&E plan was resourced by two specialist staff and monitoring officers. The M&E Specialist provided leadership, the Adviser technical oversight, and the monitoring officers implemented the plan. This layered

model provided sufficient resources to implement the plan and significant support for skills and knowledge transfer to the Monitoring Officer of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MJCS).

The baseline report produced in early 2015 found that there was evidence of an increasing alignment of M&E with strategy and increasing integration of M&E into the operations of advisers, with advisers actively considering how to monitor outputs and outcomes and reflecting on and reporting results based on evidence.

Information collected informed management decisions e.g. changing mechanisms for working with strategy working groups.

The M&E plan was also aligned, as far as possible, with the Government of Vanuatu's (GoV) own M&E justice sector framework and ensured that GoV indicators relevant to the program are used where these already exist to collect data for inclusion in the GoV's Annual Development Reports and the MJCS business plans.

Where gaps existed in the collection of data for the GoV indicators, the program M&E team worked with the relevant agency staff to put relevant systems in place. The program also carried out three smaller evaluative pieces to look at how the program was tracking areas with recommendations for program improvement. The evaluative pieces generated recommendations that were subsequently used for management decisions.



LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

Complex monitoring systems with multiple stakeholders require points of intersection to work well and make it possible to tell a cohesive story.

Strong alignment with government partner systems ensured ongoing relevance and fit for purpose of the program and the monitoring system – to both strengthen the system and inform program performance.

CASE STUDY SIX

Cambodia Agricultural Value Chain Program (CAVAC)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- DFAT's first market systems development intervention.
- Monitoring system uses the DCED Standard for results measurement.



Investment value: AUD 130.2 m



Investment goal: Reducing the percentage of people living below the poverty line in three provinces



Time period: 2010-2021



Cambodia



Quality Characteristics: baseline for outcomes; quality assurance; using monitoring information

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING **SYSTEM**

The first Phase of CAVAC was a good early example of an adaptive, performance-based investment management system. ODE's 2017 evaluation found that it fell short of true adaptive management but featured many positive elements. Close attention was paid to monitoring, and the detailed logic for each element of the program enabled CAVAC to effectively track the progress of its activities, and adjust delivery. Monitoring was at the core of CAVAC's phase 1 business model, and in this respect the investment was exemplar.

CAVAC's monitoring system is founded on the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) Standard for Result Management. Several of DFAT's market development investments now use this standard and tend to stand out for their monitoring practice. During Phase 1 there were some weaknesses in application of the standard. Clear baselines were not established, and changes in farmer's incomes were not calculated. Post and the MC team argued that there are sound reasons for these decisions. ODE's evaluation found that these data gaps, as well as changes to performance targets during implementation, have made it difficult to assess progress and impact. DFAT has also noted some challenges in applying the DCED standard and adaptive management system to the more traditional elements of the investment; irrigation & water management and milling & export.

The evaluation found that the CAVAC 1 monitoring system did not adequately meet stakeholder needs. The investment was governed by a National Steering Committee, which did not meet as regularly as intended, and appears to have failed in providing Cambodian government counterparts with the expected information and influence. DFAT, too, noted difficulty in working with projected results alongside actual results. The overlapping timeframes between submission of the CAVAC1 completion report and development of the CAVAC Phase two design did little to facilitate the systematic consideration of lessons between phases.

ODE's evaluation found that CAVAC 1 did not have an established system for strategically sharing lessons beyond the program. The role of independent review and external technical input was also limited, suggesting that during Phase I, CAVAC was more insular than ideal. Fortunately, key staff on both the CAVAC and DFAT sides who had been involved throughout much of the implementation of Phase one were instrumental to the development of the design for Phase two. The MC and the local team were retrained between phases, supporting the transfer of lessons to some extent.

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

Investments should develop a fit-for-purpose M&E system, especially for a complex program like CAVAC.

Investments should actively seek engagement with stakeholders to shape the monitoring system and share information and learning.

Interventions based on tested approaches come with certain strengths; but require attention to design to work well.

Transition between phases is a key point to address monitoring and performance issues that have persisted through implementation.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores)

2010

CAVAC Phase 1 commenced

2011

AQC M&E Rating 5

2012

AQC M&E Rating 6

2012

Mid-term review noted that reported results at that point were projections and recommended more attention paid to meeting stakeholder information needs.

2013

AQC M&E Rating 6

2013

DCED audit found the monitoring and results system and culture to be strong but noted weakness in ability to determine impacts.

2014

AQC M&E Rating 6

2015

AQC M&E Rating 6

2015

CAVAC Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 design completed.

2017

AOC M&E Score 4

December 2017

ODE Evaluation completed at request of Post.

CASE STUDY SEVEN PNG Transport Sector Support Program (TSSP)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- Amongst the highest rated investments for M&E in PNG.
- Reliant on both partner government and managing contractor systems for monitoring.
- Large infrastructure investment.
- Country context remote geography, poor infrastructure, known issues with data quality.



Investment value: AUD 400 m



Investment goal: a safe, reliable transport system in place enabling economic and social development in Papua New Guinea.



Time period: 2014-2019 (Phase 2)



Papua New Guinea



Quality Characteristics: quality assurance; using monitoring information

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM

TSSP was founded on the principle of partnership. Performance targets were set jointly with the Government of PNG, with the overall target that 75 per cent of national priority roads to be in good condition by 2015. Implementation was, therefore, a joint exercise, with the funds and technical support provided by Australia supplementing those of PNG.

A partnership approach is better practice in terms of development effectiveness. This case is a good illustration of some of the challenges this can present to monitoring implementation and performance.

AusAID (and later DFAT) established mechanisms to monitor PNG budget allocations to roads and road maintenance. This data was used to inform advocacy and representations by Australian staff to their PNG counterparts, with the aim to incentivise greater investment in road maintenance (which has a higher social and economic return on investment than construction).

ODE's evaluation in 2017 noted that monitoring and advocacy around government budget allocations became less robust from 2014. The authors argued that DFAT should advocate for adequate funds to road maintenance.

It is good practice to verify monitoring data for any investment. With an infrastructure investment of this value, in a country where national data is known to be poor, verification was critical.

TSSP monitoring of its projects was systematic and effective. It had multiple layers of oversight and supervision which incorporated several verification mechanisms.

These included:

Oversight of all procurement by engineers engaged by a managing contractor.

Independent visual verification of all works completed by private contractors, sourced from a panel of supervision providers.

However, information about the condition of the broader national priority road network was less robust. Despite significant investment in the PNG Road Asset Management System (RAMS) by Australia and other donors, some of the data was known to be incomplete and inaccurate.

As a result, TSSP commissioned a Visual Road Condition Survey as an additional verification mechanism. Completed in late 2014, the survey reported that 13% of National Priority Roads were in good condition – a stark contrast to the 46% recorded in RAMS in 2011.

The Department of Works has since utilised the data from the Visual Road Condition Survey to prepare a National Road Network Strategy, with a focus on routine maintenance of the national priority road network.

TSSP is currently working with the Department of Works to commission another Visual Road Condition Survey. This will ensure the continued accuracy of data used to inform network modelling and project prioritisation.

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

Monitoring data should be verified. The extent of verification should be proportionate to known data quality issues, and any perverse incentives.

When objectives are genuinely shared, the efforts of other partners should be monitored as well.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores)

1990's

Road Asset Management System (RAMS) established.

2005

Poor reporting identified as a challenge in the Phase 1 design.

2005

27% of national roads reported to be in good condition.

2008

Expectations of domestic funds for road maintenance formalised in Partnership for Development.

2009

Completion reporting for Phase 1 finds data in RAMS is inadequate

2011

46% of priority roads reported to be in good condition.

2013

Visual road condition survey commences to address discrepancies in data.

2014

Visual Road Condition Survey corrects data: 15% of priority roads are in good condition.

2015

AQC M&E Score 4

CASE STUDY EIGHT

Indonesia Governance for Growth (KOMPAK)

WHAT IS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT THIS CASE?

- Design and implement model.
- Facility (development focused).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM

KOMPAK is a good example of the work required to build a sound monitoring system for a complex investment, and to ensure that it serves the broader performance system around it.



Investment value: AUD 81 m



Investment goal: Poor and vulnerable Indonesians benefit from improved delivery of basic services and greater economic opportunities.



Time period: 2015-2018



Indonesia



Quality Characteristics: outcome focused after delay; using monitoring information

At the three-year mark, it has the components of a monitoring system in place, and the system is being finetuned. Around 3% of the program budget has been committed to monitoring, with one fulltime M&E adviser and 8 staff working at the provincial level, primarily with government.

KOMPAK is a design and implement facility. This means that design work has been done iteratively during inception and implementation. This first three years has seen KOMPAK operationalised, and 10 pilot interventions designed and commenced collaboratively with the Government of Indonesia and other partners. KOMPAK has wrestled with establishing a monitoring system for what is a diverse portfolio of interventions.

The basis of the monitoring system was formed in 2015 with the development of a theory of change. A program logic model and performance framework that cascaded from the goal to interventions were developed in 2016. KOMPAK defined three levels of indicators:

- 1. Level 1 indicators align with the development outcomes to which KOMPAK can reasonably be held accountable for achieving;
- 2. Level 2 indicators at the Intermediate Outcome levels measure progress towards the changes KOMPAK expects to achieve throughout its life; and
- 3. Level 3 indicators at the Project/Activity levels measure progress towards the Project level outputs contributing to the Intermediate Outcomes.

KOMPAK's monitoring system has been influenced by several review processes during its inception phase. Two AQC rounds, a review by an independent group of consultants, a field-based M&E assessment, and a mid-term review have all been undertaken. This represents more independent scrutiny than is ordinarily the case for DFAT investments during inception, and it has led to monitoring issues being identified.

The Mid Term Review recommended that KOMPAK revise its program theory and consolidate it into a single, simplified framework, and invest in a more sophisticated Management Information System (MIS). It also proposed improvements to specific monitoring tools. An MTR may identify similar issues for typical investments; the difference is that KOMPAK is still only beginning implementation and is flexible enough to respond.

LESSONS FROM THIS CASE

It takes time and effort to get the monitoring system right. It is best developed in conjunction with a broader performance/results management system.

Points for review and independent advice during development of the monitoring system can be helpful.

Complex monitoring systems require points of simplicity to hang together and tell a cohesive story.

Development points for the monitoring system (including AQC scores)

2015

Foundational activities (objectives, governance, systems, baseline data collection, tools). Theory of Change developed.

2016

AQC M&E rating: 4

2016

Transition into implementation, 10 pilot interventions underway. Cascading performance framework developed.

November 2016

Independent review of poverty and social development programs

2017

AQC M&E rating: 4

2017

DFAT conducted M&E assessments in KOMPAK targeted areas, including discussion with local stakeholders

December 2017

Mid Term Review completed. Recommends theory of change and performance framework consolidated, and monitoring tools reviewed.