

Editorial

There is more than one good reason why monitoring and evaluation have gained status in development cooperation. Accountability towards tax payers regarding the effectiveness of development investments may be the best reason of all. But the creation of ownership among stakeholders and the agreement on expectations regarding development interventions are equally important.

The latter requires M&E to become an integral part of all steps of development program cycles and the application of M&E standards accepted by all parties involved. First, stakeholders have to reach an agreement on a particular intervention and their role in it. Next, they need to agree on indicators and targets, and on how the degree of achievement will be measured.

GFA has been one of the front runners in the development and dissemination of M&E methodologies that more and more determine everyday life of development planners and managers. The first article in this newsletter provides an overview of methodological achievements in monitoring and in evaluations, referring specifically to the European Commission and German development cooperation. The other article portrays the challenges of a complex EU country evaluation in Jordan currently conducted by GFA.

Such monitoring systems and evaluations entail high costs for commissioning organization. These costs have to be put in relation to M&E benefits. Improved accountability definitely is one such benefit. But it has to go together with other gains to justify the high costs.



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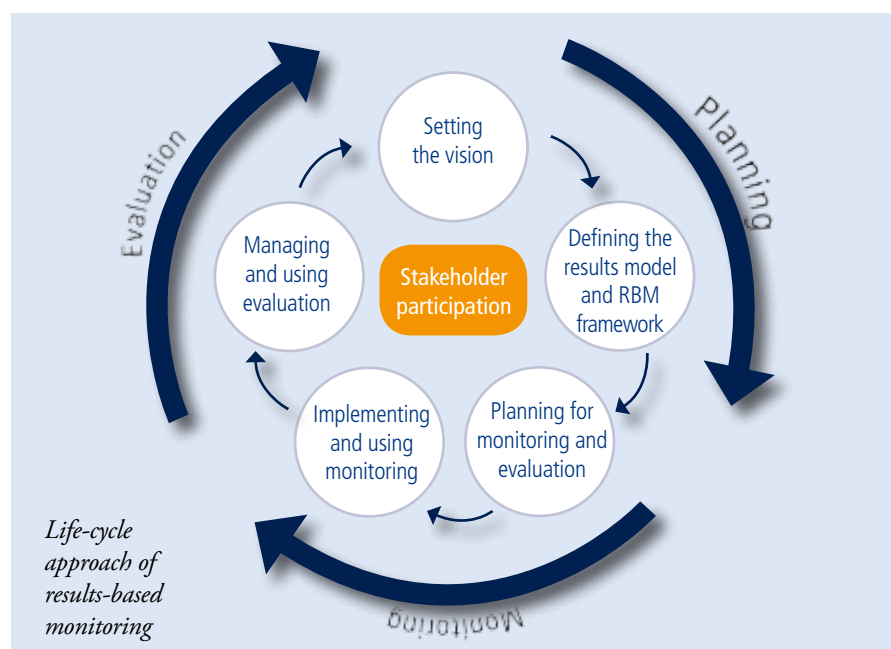
Monitoring and Evaluation in Development Cooperation

The importance of monitoring and evaluation in development cooperation has been steadily increasing. Tightened budgets and an increasingly critical public opinion in donor and recipient countries regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation require effective tools for project management and the verification of aid effectiveness. Therefore, donor organizations pay extra attention to monitoring and evaluation and new approaches have been developed in recent years.

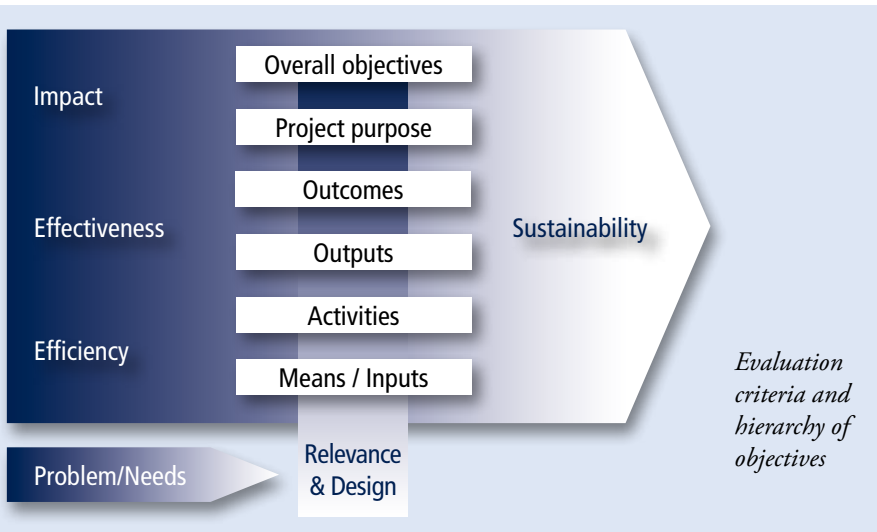
Monitoring and evaluation are linked but cover different requirements in projects or programs of development cooperation. Monitoring is necessary for process-related steering. It should continuously provide managers and stakeholders of a given program with information on the progress of implementation and the achievement of set objectives. Evaluation is necessary for a program's strategic supervision. It verifies the achievement of objectives with an analysis of related impacts and causes. The Development Co-operation Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) has developed five evaluation criteria that have become common place in evaluating programs or projects: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Monitoring

New monitoring approaches have recently been developed by the European Union and as part of German development cooperation. The monitoring system of GIZ is based on the result model, which provides a simplified representation of the real situation of a program, indicating causally interdependent positive changes. Cause-effect relationships in this model are not restricted to a linear relation as formerly displayed in hierarchical objective trees but allows for complex inter-linkages and interdependencies. The program and module objective, key outputs and activities are transferred to a results matrix which includes indicators, sources of verifications and key assumptions as well as risks. The matrix aims at making results measurable and contributes to efficient program and knowledge management. In this context, GFA has been commissioned to establish result-based monitoring systems in GIZ supported projects: Improvement of municipal services in Ukraine, energy efficiency advice in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Gender mainstreaming in transboundary water management in Botswana. Challenging new approaches related to result-oriented monitoring, budget support and internal monitoring have been



Monitoring and Evaluation (continued from page 1)



guided by the Quality and Results Unit at the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation (DEVCO) of the European Commission. The Unit trusts GFA Consulting Group, in a consortium with OPM, SEE Policies and GFA-B.I.S., with providing technical support related to quality monitoring systems and methodologies (SQ2M). Six key experts and a considerable number of short-term experts are engaged in this endeavor. In 2012, a revision of the methodology of results-oriented monitoring (ROM) was completed that led to a revised ROM handbook. The ROM reviews are conducted by external experts through regular onsite assessments of projects and programs in all European Union (EU) partner countries. A consistent, highly structured methodology ensures the quality and comparability of collected data. Projects and programs are given simple scores against the above mentioned DAC criteria,

substantiated by concise explanatory texts. Based on these observations, ROM experts give recommendations on how to improve the performance of specific development interventions. The ROM methodology has been developed further as to facilitate budget support monitoring and an assessment of results (Final ROM). ROM as an external monitoring tool will be complemented by a systematic internal monitoring system. This approach will provide task managers at EU delegations with a structured approach for continuous and on-the-spot monitoring of programs. It is currently being tested in various EU delegations so that internal monitoring is intended to become part of EU's project cycle management approach.

Evaluation

The emphasis on accountability and improved performance management for public service delivery can be seen as one of the

most important triggers for the growing demand in evaluation. The establishment of DEval, the German Institute for Development Evaluation, in 2012 is a striking case in point.

Evaluation in the frame of the EU's development cooperation is managed by a specialized unit of EuropeAid. The evaluation program covers all geographical regions and the corresponding EU external cooperation programs, including their respective sectoral and thematic focus and aid delivery instruments. Evaluations are mainly carried out by external framework contractors which are organized in four lots. GFA Consulting Group, in collaboration with Eureval, SEE Policies and SIPU, is represented in three out of four lots. GFA is in the lead of the consortium for multi-country evaluations related to economic themes (Lot 1) and for country level evaluations in Asia, Latin America and Neighboring Countries (Lot 4). Currently, GFA is responsible for the EU country level evaluations for Bolivia and Jordan (see overleaf). At present, EU has a focus on budget support evaluations. The related 3-Step methodology has been developed by the Budget Support Evaluation Steering Group of the OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation under the guidance of the evaluation unit at DEVCO. Recently, this unit has organized training courses on the mentioned methodology. It facilitates the understanding of the autonomous and complex historical and political processes that lead to results, and consequently identifies specific budget support contributions. More than 15 GFA consultants from various departments have participated in these trainings. As a follow-up, GFA conducted an internal workshop on budget support evaluations at GFA headquarters in September 2013, which DEval staff and external consultants participated in. The development and approaches outlined above illustrate the growing relevance of high quality monitoring and evaluation as a crucial requirement for all stakeholders in development cooperation. At the same time, monitoring and evaluation constitute a growing market for consulting companies and independent experts.



GFA's SQ2M team at EC headquarters in Brussels

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EU Country Level Evaluation in Jordan

GFA Consulting Group has been commissioned to evaluate the complete cooperation framework of the European Union (EU) with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the 2007-2013 period of time. The framework is based on the EU-Jordan Country Strategy Paper (CSP). Two National Indicative Programmes define the priorities of EU-Jordan cooperation for the periods 2007-2010 and 2011-2013 respectively. In addition to this bilateral cooperation, the current evaluation also covers the components of EU special regional programs benefiting Jordan, general EU cross-cutting thematic programs and other EU instruments.

The main objectives of the evaluation are twofold. The EU's past and current cooperation and partnership relations with Jordan are to be independently assessed for the benefit of relevant external co-operation services of the EU and the wider public. In addition, the evaluation will identify key lessons and produce strategic, operational and forward looking recommendations in order to improve current and future European Union's strategies, programs and actions.

Currently, the evaluation is in a stage of desk research with field visits foreseen for June 2014. In accordance with the EU-approved evaluation methodology the GFA evaluation team is using four complementary sets of evaluation criteria. The OECD-DAC standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability are combined with the EU evaluation criteria of value added and the '3Cs' of coordination, complementarity and coherence. In addition, the EU thematic criteria of governance, institutional capacity, human rights, gender and environment, and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness criteria of alignment, harmonization, managing for results, mutual accountability and ownership are taken into consideration.

The evaluation pays particular attention to inclusive growth, education and employment, energy and water as well as governance, which incorporates democracy, public finance management, institutional reinforcement and support to civil society. Moreover, political and policy dialogue and to the regional context affecting the EU-Jordan cooperation strategy and cross-cutting issues as well as an aid



The evaluation covers topics such as local economic development and inclusive growth

modalities mix with a special emphasis on budget support are of special relevance.

The expected duration of the evaluation is 15 months with the final report anticipated by October 2015. The GFA team will apply a participatory process involving all major parties concerned: key Jordan stakeholders from the public, private, and civil society sector, and main EC players at headquarters and the EU Delegation in Amman. The evaluation team comprises three international and three national experts, with overall coordination and management safeguarded by GFA.

The methodological approach is based on the reconstruction of the intervention logic of the EU-Jordan cooperation over the 2007-2013 period of time. To this end, the GFA team creates faithful effects diagrams and their logically reconstructed versions, which helps develop evaluation questions. Judgment criteria for each question have been identified and key performance indicators were formulated per criteria. Evaluation questions, judgment criteria and key performance indicators constitute a matrix as a logically coherent tool developed by team leader Ruddy Vaes. The validation of judgment criteria and hypotheses will be based on aggregated achievements related to key performance indicators. This is complemented by a portfolio analysis indicating the financial allocation and final spending per sector, respectively aid modality and the current stage of implementation per program.

Based on a comprehensive in-depth analysis of all relevant documents, the mentioned validation will be accomplished during the initial desk research phase. This will provide preliminary answers to the evaluation questions. The preliminary findings will then be verified during a field visit of two to three weeks in Jordan. A draft final report will be elaborated on the basis of the desk and field research findings. The GFA team will first discuss results internally with the EU evaluation unit. At a later stage, all relevant stakeholders will participate in a seminar in Jordan featuring presentations and discussions of the evaluation's findings. The final evaluation report will incorporate the seminar's presentations and discussion results.

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German-Zambian Agricultural Training Centre Launched

During the International Green Week 2014 in Berlin, Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) Dr. Hans-Peter Friedrich signed a declaration of intent for the establishment of the German-Zambian Agricultural Training and Knowledge Centre. In a meeting with the Zambian Minister for Agriculture and Livestock, Mr. Robert Sichinga on 19 Jan, 2014, Friedrich and his counterpart agreed on the realization of the three-year economic cooperation project. As BMEL's General Agent, GFA's Berlin office has assisted the ministry in preparing and conceptualizing the project and coordinated the negotiations of the implementation agreement between the partners (Zambia's National Farmers Union, the Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust (GART) and twelve business partners). Currently, GFA supervises the tender related to the economic cooperation project. During implementation, the project will be steered and evaluated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock on the Zambian side and BMEL, supported by GFA, on the German side. The project focuses on three areas: demonstrations and trials on GART land will be based on modern German agricultural equipment, as well as a diversity of improved seeds and plant protection products. Complementarily, practice-oriented training in technical, economic and ecological questions regarding grain and potato farming will be offered and field and equipment demonstration days will be held.

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GFA South East Europe Founded

In April 2013, GFA Consulting Group founded a new company in Belgrade, Serbia: GFA South East Europe d.o.o. The decision to set-up a subsidiary operating there is related to GFA's long-term strategy regarding business development and capacity building in the region. The core service of GFA South East Europe is project management encompassing project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Combining over 30 years of international experience and quality management of its German parent company with strong local capacities, GFA South East Europe is perfectly equipped for responding to the market challenges in the region. Contact details can be found at www.gfa-see.com

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GFA-led Consortium Listed as EU Framework Contractor

The European Commission has selected a GFA-led consortium as framework contractor for the BENEF 2013 Framework Contract Lot 9 (Culture, Education, Employment and Social). The objective of this framework is to provide short-term technical assistance through specific contracts worldwide. GFA gained solid competencies in this sector as a partner in various lots and through past and ongoing project activities. This expertise is complemented by the experience of our specialized partners – GVG, ÖSB, HDC, and CEI. Serving as framework contractor further expands GFA's worldwide activities related to labor market and human resources development, fields the com-

pany has dynamically increased in recent years. Further information, contacts, and job application forms can be found on the GFA website.

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Energy Performance Model Contract for Public Sector in Serbia

A team of experts led by GFA Consulting Group in close cooperation with the national inter-ministerial working group chaired by the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection and in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders elaborated a draft Energy Performance model contract for improving the efficient use of energy and reducing the operating costs in public buildings in Serbia. The draft was presented to the stakeholders from the region during the 4th Energy Efficiency Coordination Group Meeting at the Energy Community Secretariat (ECS) in Vienna on 27 Feb, 2014. The Energy Community was established by the European Union and nine contracting parties from the South East Europe and Black Sea region. The model contract was developed within the EBRD project Legal Assistance for an ESCO Project Enabling Legal Framework in the Republic of Serbia and in Montenegro. An ESCO, or Energy Service Company, is a business that develops, installs, and arranges financing for projects designed to improve energy efficiency. The project encompasses support to national legislators for improving the legislative framework for implementing ESCO projects in the public sector in Serbia and Montenegro.

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GFA vision – to be the partner of choice for clients in our core service areas.

GFA mission – to improve the livelihood of beneficiaries through our professional services.

GFA core values – to offer high performance in service delivery, technical excellence in our main sectors, innovative approaches and products, and credibility with our clients when putting projects into practice.