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Mission Order: Performance Monitoring

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Mission Order is to provide Mission guidelines, procedures and recommendations related to strategy, project and activity/implementing mechanism (IM) monitoring.

II. AUTHORITY/POLICY

- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 and Government Performance and Results Modernization Act (GPRMA) 2010 regarding government-wide requirements related to performance management.
- ADS 203.3.2 to ADS 203.3.14 regarding all aspects of performance monitoring.

III. DEFINITIONS

Significant terms from the ADS for this Mission Order (MO) are:

- Performance Monitoring (ADS 203.3.2)
- Mission-wide Performance Management Plan (PMP) (ADS 203.3.3)
- Project M&E Plan (ADS 203.3.4)
- Activity/Implementing Mechanism (IM) M&E Plan (ADS 203.3.5)
- Development Objective (DO) (**ADS 201.3.3**)
- Project (**ADS 201.3.11**)
- Activity (**ADS 201.3.11**)
- Data Quality Assessment (ADS 203.3.11.2)
- Project Manager (**ADS 201.3.10**)

Other terms include:

- Program and Project Development Office (PPDO) Performance Monitoring Point of Contact (PMPOC): Per ADS 203.3.2.1, missions must designate a performance monitoring point of contact (PMPOC throughout this MO) within the Mission program office. This individual will ensure compliance with performance monitoring across the breadth of the Mission's portfolio, and will collaborate with the DO team staff in the Mission.
- Performance monitoring information system: A data system that serves as a repository for all performance indicators (at the strategy, project, and activity/IM levels), including baseline values and timeframes, targets and rationales for targets, and actual values. Currently, per ADS 203.3.3.1, the PMP is in two parts: a narrative portion (in Word) and a set of tabular data stored in a performance monitoring information system (which may include Excel spreadsheets). The data

in the system is dynamic and will be updated as baselines are measured, actuals are collected, and changes are made to performance indicators as laid out below. At this point in time, no one system is recommended other than using an application that allows for facile manipulation of data and reports, such as Excel or database applications. USAID/WBG has in place its own geographic information management system (known as Geo-MIS) for monitoring and reporting functions that is in line with ADS 203.3.2.1 requirements. Mission C/AORS are required to be able to use the system and certify performance data provided by implementing partners in addition to uploading site visit reports, photographs, and other relevant information related to program performance.

- Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR)/Activity Manager (AM)/Government - to - Government (G2G) Manager: For Mission awards, monitoring responsibilities fall to the COR/AOR; for awards made in Washington (field support, Food for Peace, etc.), monitoring responsibility falls to the AM.
- Technical Office Team (TOT): refers to the staff of a technical office within the Mission designated to plan and implement projects in a specific sector.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Mission Offices are responsible for the implementation of this policy and adherence to the Agency guidance and principles on performance monitoring. However, DO/TOTs and PPDO are central to successful Mission performance monitoring. Between these offices, there must be a clear delineation of roles, and strong sense of cooperation and transparency. See **Figure 1 in ADS 203.3.2.1** for respective roles of these offices across various monitoring tasks. The Program Office is responsible for overseeing the quality of the Performance Monitoring process as outlined in **ADS 203**, and for updating this Mission Order.

The Mission will take steps to create a Mission-wide Monitoring and Evaluation working group, chaired by the Program Office lead for M&E (either the Evaluation Point of Contact (EPOC) or the PMPOC). This group will be composed of technical and program office staff with primary responsibility for Evaluation and Performance Monitoring and will meet as needed.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Overview

Performance monitoring is a data-intensive, and detailed endeavor. Given the sheer volume of data and number of changes—from adding, refining, and dropping indicators to updating targets and actuals—maintaining a current and authoritative PMP can be challenging. Under the Program Cycle, performance monitoring systems are inter-connected, from the PMP to the Project M&E plan to the Activity/IM M&E plan—a change in one ripples across the others (see **Figure 2 in ADS 203.3.5** for an illustration). As such, it is important to ensure that Activity/IM M&E plans are consistent with the Project M&E Plan and the Mission PMPs.

Performance monitoring is critical to the Mission's ability to track progress toward DO results. The PMP serves as a tool to measure achievement of the project; the Project M&E plan measures achievement of the Project Logframe. The Activity/IM M&E plans contribute to the Project M&E Plan and, ultimately the PMP, and measure achievement of portions of the Project Logframe.

Information pertinent for performance monitoring will be refined through the project design process. For instance, project designs will reveal new information that, in turn, will change indicators and targets in PMPs. Similarly, when Activities/IMs under the Project are designed, implementers will further refine and identify new information on realistic targets or better indicators, which in turn affects the Project's M&E plan and possibly the PMP. Beyond the set of issues in establishing PMPs and M&E plans, there is change introduced by portfolio reviews and learning, a key part of the Program Cycle, which may involve adding, subtracting, or revising indicators and targets mid-strategy. Finally, many projects will include activity/IMs that are pre-existing and must be incorporated through a portfolio alignment process (see **ADS 201.3.4.3**), adding more complexity to these tasks.

These procedures are designed around three major areas of navigating this complex system: good performance monitoring planning (see **ADS 203.3.2.2**); clear, efficient procedures during implementation when data is collected; and planning and integrating learning to improve development impact, while maintaining documentation.

B. Performance Monitoring Planning

Formulation of Mission-wide PMP

- The PMP POC and other staff from PPDO work with technical staff to ensure that indicators for Goal, DO, and IRs are defined using Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS). For the Goal and DO indicators, baseline data are collected and targets set prior to initial approval of the PMP. For IR indicators, baseline data need only be planned.
- The PMPOC will also ensure that any currently planned evaluations are incorporated into the Mission's annually updated Evaluation Plan.
- The PMP serves as a base to build project and activity/IM level M&E plans. Note that the PMP is not a static document, but will frequently be modified by project designs, partner feedback and portfolio reviews, etc. (see "Modifying/Updating Different Types of M&E Plans" below). The DO Office Director is ultimately responsible for achievement of the targets for the high-level indicators for his/her DO.

See **ADS 203.3.3** and **PMP How-To Note** for additional details.

Formulation/Approval of Project M&E Plans

- Project Design Teams ensure that Project M&E plans measure progress toward the results specified in the Project Logframe (full Project M&E Plan is an Annex in the Project Appraisal Document's (PAD)).
- During the PAD input and clearance process, PPDO confirms that Project M&E plans align with the Project Logframe.
- Upon PAD approval, PMPOC updates relevant performance indicators (including baselines and targets as only Project Purpose level indicator baselines and targets are required at time of PAD approval per ADS 203.3.4.3) and evaluation details from Project M&E Plans. If Changes are made from the original PMP based on the Project M&E plan (e.g., original IR or sub-IR indicators dropped, new indicators added), the relevant field of the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet for the changed indicator must also be modified.

See **ADS 203.3.4.3** regarding Project M&E Plans and the **Project Design MO** for more details.

Formulation/Approval of Activity/IM M&E Plans

All new activities must be designed using the Project Design guidance (see **ADS 201.3.11**). Existing activities/IMs must be aligned with the project Logframe (as included in the PAD)(see **ADS 201.3.13**). These steps ensure alignment in M&E planning among Activities/IMs, Projects, and PMPs.

- The COR/AOR/AM/G2G is responsible for the quality of Activity/IM M&E Plans submitted by implementing partners, and work with implementing partners to ensure that they are consistent with and meet the data collection needs of the Project M&E Plan and the PMP, as well as the PPR. (As per ADS 203.3.5, Activity M&E plans submitted to USAID should include only those indicators that the Mission needs for activity management, rather than the entire set of all indicators an implementer uses for its management purposes.) This includes working with OCM (or RLAs and others in the case of G2G) to ensure that relevant indicators are included in solicitation documents, negotiations with Palestinian Authority entities (when deemed relevant or appropriate), etc. before awards are made.
- Project Managers ensure that Activities/IMs include Project indicators and that use of the same indicator across different Activities/IMs is consistent in definition and collection methodology. They also ensure collection of appropriate Initiative indicators and coordinate, as needed, with other USG agencies on indicators related to initiative and/or PPR reporting. If Project Managers have not yet been designated, this should be the role of the direct supervisor of the C/AORs/AMs or a technical office M&E lead.
- PMPOC assists in this process by providing advice, official guidance and best practice, sharing information, and providing early review and advice. They use their "bird's eye view" of data collection and performance indicators across the Mission to ensure consistency and efficiency. They also ensure the collection of any indicators that cut across offices or DOs.
- The COR/AOR/AM/G2G approves Activity/IM M&E Plans submitted by the implementer. Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) and PMPOC clear Activity/IM M&E Plans.
- PPDO M&E staff are responsible for administering Geo-MIS, uploading Activity/IM M&E indicators into the system while the implementing partner is responsible for uploading and updating indicators data, reference sheets, and M&E planning documents. C/AORs/Activity Managers ensure and certify reported/updated data meets the data quality standards.

See ADS 203.3.5 for more details.

Collecting Baselines

The collection of baseline data should begin as soon as possible after the approval of the Project or Activity/IM M&E plans. Baseline data should be used to establish performance targets (or revise initial targets) and used as a reference point to monitor progress toward the results outlined in the PMP and/or Project and Activity/IM M&E Plans.

- Given the need to rationalize data collection, COR/AOR/AM/G2G should coordinate with PMPOC and Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) to minimize baseline data collection time and cost. The Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Task Schedule in the PMP can assist in this coordination.
- The PMPOC must ensure cross-office coordination for the collection of data shared by different projects to minimize costs and rationalize efforts.
- PPDO initially creates performance-level indicators into Geo-MIS. At that point, COR/AOR/AM will enter and track performance baseline, actual and target data into Geo-MIS.

See ADS 203.3.9 for more details.

Modifying/Updating Different Types of M&E Plans

As outlined above in the Overview, as projects and activities/IMs are approved, learning occurs, and context changes, performance monitoring plans change as well (i.e., PMPs, Project M&E Plans, and Activity/IM M&E Plans). ADS 203.3.10 grants broad authority to Missions to make needed changes. However, for solid management reasons, these procedures will operationalize the following principles:

- Visibility and transparency in making changes, while delegating authority responsibly.
- Ability to trace back rationale for changes, particularly to indicators and targets, through thorough documentation to ensure that changes will be fully understood by incoming staff, auditors, other personnel and new partners.
- As a general principle, targets should not be updated more frequently than annually to incentivize good planning and analysis prior to target setting.

The following procedures will guide changes for each of the following plans. The appropriate staff member (as laid out below) should review the plan to ensure that appropriate updates have been made at least annually.

- For Mission-wide PMP (when applicable for the West Bank and Gaza Mission – see Strategy MO):
  - The PMPOC will make all modifications to the Mission-wide PMP, as a way to ensure consistency and quality. Decision-making for PMP modifications will be inclusive, transparent and coordinated, as outlined in the two bullets below.
  - Substantial modifications are those that occur because of a change to the results framework, or learning and adapting during program implementation. These changes will be decided through the process outlined for strategy modifications (see **Strategy MO**), or in a formal decision-making forum, such as a portfolio review and approved by the Mission Director.
  - Routine modifications (such as the updates needed after approval or modification of a Project M&E Plan) should be made by the PMPOC in collaboration with DO teams as updated information becomes available, documenting the rationale for the change in either the PIRS or performance monitoring information system.
- For Project M&E Plan:
  - The Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) will make changes to an existing Project M&E Plan. Such changes require clearance of the DO Office Director and the PPDO. Substantial changes should be decided in a formal decision-making forum, such as a portfolio review or project review.
  - Project Managers (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) will enter changes into the WBG Mission Geo-MIS as guided by the PMPOC. These changes may come from a substantial change decided per above or from changes at the Activity/IM level (see below).
- For Activity/IM M&E Plan:
  - The COR/AOR/AM/G2G will approve changes to the Activity/IM M&E Plan. Such changes require clearance of the Project Manager or designee and, depending on the nature of the change (i.e., whether it affects an indicator reported to Washington or one included in the mission-wide PMP), the PMPOC. Changes to the Activity/IM M&E Plan that are approved by the COR/AOR/AM/G2G must be within the scope and terms and conditions of the award, and must not serve to modify the award (consult OAA if in doubt).

- COR/AOR/AM/G2G will enter changes into the Geo-MIS system, noting rationale for changes identified by the PMPOC.

To ensure visibility and transparency throughout these processes:

- PMPOC will establish a common location for all Project M&E Plans and Activity/IM M&E Plans to be electronically stored in their latest version. The PMPOC will establish naming conventions and practices to make it easy to find the latest version of each plan.
- PMPOC will ensure PMPs are stored in a common location; Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) will ensure that latest Project M&E Plan is stored there; COR/AOR/AM/G2G will ensure that latest Activity/IM M&E Plan is stored there.

Develop Data Quality Assurance Plan

Once the Mission has selected its indicators for monitoring various levels of program performance, the next step is to verify the quality of the indicator data collected. The procedures below are based on the principles that analysis of data quality should be performed by the individual closest to management while following common procedures to ensure consistency and efficiency.

- COR/AOR/AM/G2G is responsible for conducting data quality assessments (DQAs) for indicators in the Activity/IM M&E Plan that will be reported to Washington. If the COR/AOR/AM/G2G do not conduct the DQA, they are responsible for certifying the DQA and for addressing findings with the implementer and ensuring that corrective actions are taken. They are assisted by the PMPOC who provides guidance on formats, best practice, and Agency and Mission requirements, as well as the Project Manager.
- Project Managers (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) are responsible for ensuring the comparability of data for the same indicator collected by different mechanisms and performing DQAs for indicators in the Project M&E plan that will be reported to Washington that are not collected by activities (e.g. data from third-party sources, host country government, etc.) They should ensure that COR/AOR/AM/G2G is on track for conducting DQAs and following up on corrective actions.
- PMPOC is responsible for conducting the DQA of indicators that will be reported to Washington in the Mission-wide PMP that are not contained in Project and Activity/IM M&E Plans (relevant if the West Bank and Gaza Mission is granted approval to initiate a CDCS – see Strategy MO). The PMPOC is responsible for ensuring that the mission-wide PMP section on data quality assessment procedures includes the following information: 1) common Mission formats for DQAs (see recommended DQA checklist), 2) a common location for approved DQAs, and 3) Mission-specific procedures and best practices for conducting DQAs. The PMPOC has the responsibility to ensure that the Mission tracks important findings and follow-up actions from DQAs.

See ADS 203.3.11 for more details regarding when DQAs are required and filing requirements.

C. Data Collection, Oversight, and Quality Assurance

Conduct Activity/IM Oversight

COR/AOR/AM/G2G, in coordination with Office Directors should plan for ongoing and routine monitoring and oversight of activities. Routine Activity/IM oversight includes:

- Site Visits.
    - COR/AOR/AM/G2G should perform site visits as part of their contract and grant oversight, but also to learn, verify data, and other purposes.

- The COR/AOR/AM/G2G should complete site visit reports (standard templates are located in the Geo-MIS monitoring visits section) following every site visit and then upload the report into the Geo-MIS. COR/AOR/AM/G2G should keep a copy in their official activity/IM management files with an explanation of both positive and negative findings and required follow-up actions.
- During site visits, COR/AOR/AM/G2G should conduct data verification. They should select one indicator (or more) on which the partner has reported, and check the partner's understanding of the indicator, data collection methodology, reporting chain, and supporting documentation. The COR/AOR/AM/G2G should also take this opportunity to ask the partner whether there are any observations, findings or concerns beyond what the data capture that should be discussed at this time. For activity/IMs that have environmental mitigation measures, COR/AOR/AM/G2G should verify that these are being carried out correctly.
- The COR/AOR/AM/G2G should note any performance problem pertaining to schedule, cost, quality and/or non-compliance, as well as any other significant issues. The COR/AOR/AMs should bring any significant performance problem to the immediate attention of OAA to discuss resolution, and should also inform the Project Manager to discuss potential impact to the project. G2G Managers would bring performance issues to the PPDO/RLA/Controller. Any legal compliance, ethical or other similar problems noticed or discussed during the site visit should be brought to the attention of the RLA.
- The COR/AOR/AM/G2G should also note any new information or learning that could usefully be shared within the Mission and/or with other partners within the project. Where monitoring and oversight suggest that implementation is yielding different results than anticipated, the COR/AOR/AM/G2G should initiate discussions with implementing partners (in the case of A&A awards such discussions must include the CO/AO) and USAID staff to analyze this divergence for what can be learned and for indications that course correction in implementation may be necessary to yield better results. For A&A Actions only the CO/AO is authorized to approve any course correction in implementation that goes beyond the scope, and other terms and conditions of the award.

- Meeting with Stakeholders:
  - COR/AOR/AM/G2G and TOT Project Managers (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) should also meet with partner(s), sector experts, donors, Palestinian Authority (see ADS 202.3.6.2) to triangulate and share information as well as review activity level progress.

Collect and Record Data

Indicator data, which may come from implementing partners as well as through primary data collection or secondary sources, must be updated in the performance monitoring information system.

- COR/AOR/AM/G2G is responsible for ensuring timely data collection of performance data along the schedule outlined in the award agreement and Activity/IM's M&E plan (quarterly, semi-annual or annual), as well as for verifying implementing partner performance reports and working with implementing partners, and others in the Mission as needed, to resolve data collection or quality issues.
- DO/COR/AOR/AM/G2G, upon reviewing the data in implementing partner reports or third-party sources and deeming it to be of acceptable quality, should/verify performance indicator actual values into the Mission Geo-MIS system
- Office Directors/Project Managers (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) should periodically review Project performance data, checking for consistency and quality across activities.

- PPDO is responsible for ensuring that TOT Project Managers (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) and COR/AOR/AM/G2G collect and review indicator data consistently, and that these data are meeting the DQA standards and are entered in the Geo-MIS system on a timely basis. PPDO will periodically review COR/AOR/AM/G2G and DO/Project Manager (or designee) indicator data to ensure data quality and consistency. PPDO may engage in data collection as needed and appropriate (e.g., indicators collected directly by Mission staff or third-party data in PMPs).
- USAID/West Bank and Gaza will track the geographic location of each activity/IM and will be stored in the Geo-MIS at the Administrative 1 level (state/province/department).

D. Performance Data Analysis, Utilization, and Learning

Monitoring is an ongoing process of using data to track progress at all levels of a Mission's program. Much time and effort is expended establishing a performance monitoring infrastructure, but often much less time is spent utilizing those data to understand performance, test development hypotheses, question assumptions and cause and effect relationships and, ultimately, manage for results and learning. To ensure that data analysis and learning occur, it is important to plan for it effectively. Per **ADS 203.3.2.2**, data analysis and learning should be planned, participatory, and transparent. These procedures operationalize these principles.

Activity/IM, Project/DO, and Portfolio Reviews

Periodic reviews of the Mission portfolio are necessary for the Mission to understand its progress toward the desired results and Project Logframes. Such reviews are where all of the effort to collect and maintain performance data pay off, as these reviews should be intensively informed by such data. These reviews include:

- Activity/IM Reviews: COR/AOR/AM/G2G, once they have verified implementing partner periodic reports (quarterly/semi-annual/annual), should analyze the information, and determine if any changes are necessary to work plans, budgets, and/or schedules. These analyses can be done informally, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders such as the implementer, Palestinian Authority staff, other COR/AOR/AM/G2G, PMPOC or other M&E specialists, as desired. Any changes to work plans, budget and/or schedules for A&A awards must be within the terms and conditions of the award. Only the CO/AO is authorized to make changes that result in modifications of the award.
- Project Reviews: The DO Office Director/Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) should conduct Project Reviews with COR/AOR/AM/G2G, in collaboration with the partners, M&E POC(s), Initiative managers, and PPDO. Such reviews should be held at least semi-annually. Missions should consider timing to inform the DO-level Portfolio Review, Quarterly Financial Reviews, or PPR. The DO Office Director/Project Manager (or supervisor of COR/AOR if project manager not yet designated) should document performance relative to successes/failures/lessons learned, and next steps.
- Portfolio Reviews: PPDO, at least annually, must coordinate a Mission-wide review of the DOs (see **PR MO**, **ADS 203.3.12**, and **ADS 202.3.6.3** for more details).

If any of the reviews triggers a change in the performance monitoring information system, see section above regarding modifying performance monitoring plans.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND CANCELLATION

This Mission Order is effective on the date of the signature of the Mission Director and will remain in force until cancelled or amended.

Jonathan T. Kamin
Mission Director, Acting
USAID/West Bank and Gaza

Date: 6/17/14