**T6– A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Joint Action Plans**

Contents

[Introduction 2](#_Toc74237848)

[Chapter I. Purpose of this Guide and target group 3](#_Toc74237849)

[I.1. Purpose of this Guide 3](#_Toc74237850)

[I.2. Target group 3](#_Toc74237851)

[Chapter II. Methodological framework for Monitoring and Evaluation activity 3](#_Toc74237852)

[II.1. What is monitoring and evaluation? 4](#_Toc74237853)

[II.2 Reporting 6](#_Toc74237854)

[II.3Indicators used in the M&E process 7](#_Toc74237855)

[II.4. Problems in the processes of monitoring and evaluation 8](#_Toc74237856)

[II.5. Why must JAPs be monitored and evaluated? 9](#_Toc74237857)

[Annex - Technical Report Template 10](#_Toc74237858)

**ACRONYMS**

**JAP –** Joint Action Plan

**LCD** – Local Council Decision

**M&E** – Monitoring and Evaluation

**LPA** – Local Public Authority

**AD** – Administrative Division

**TG** – Target group

### Introduction

The aim of this Practical Guide is to support the process of fostering a culture favourable to the development of Joint Action Plan (JAP) monitoring, evaluation and review processes within public authorities and institutions that are involved in the ROMACT Programme.

It is non-mandatory and does not include a list of predefined solutions. The Guide set out herein offers a guideline framework which is intended to support institutional initiatives for the development of monitoring, evaluation and review processes as management tools.

In this context, the Guide gives theory-based explanations of concepts and processes and methodological aspects, which are described in accessible and easy-to-understand language.

In general, evaluation and monitoring are connected processes.

**Evaluation** encompasses the processes of implementation and management, as well as identifying outcomes, benefits and progress achieved.

**The process of implementation and management** must go hand in hand with **monitoring and reporting**, and review involves co-ordination and corrective measures.

**The benefits of addressing all three processes are visible and quantifiable because they enable us to compare what we originally set out to do with what we have done and how we have done it, at the end of the proposed time frame.**

**We can analyse costs and allocated and used resources in the light of the benefits achieved.**

**We can identify difficulties or errors in the process of implementing a JAP, how to remedy them, and the co-ordination methods used.**

*This Guide is not intended to be a complete tool for monitoring and evaluation activities; rather, it is designed as a document that will increase the extent to which stakeholders are informed in the process of monitoring and evaluating JAPs.*

### Chapter I. Purpose of this Guide and target group

### I.1. Purpose of this Guide

The **purpose** of this Guide is mainly to make public authorities and institutions more aware of the role and importance of monitoring, evaluation and review – as activities and processes. With this goal in mind, the Guide addresses the following objectives:

* to offer *methodological support* for the description of monitoring, evaluation and review processes;
* to *identify the benefits* of these processes – as management tools;

### I.2. Target group

The Guide is aimed, *in general and to an equal extent*, at public authorities and institutions in central and local government.

This Guide is aimed *in particular* at:

* leaders of public authorities and institutions;
* persons with managerial roles within public authorities and institutions;
* persons who take decisions on monitoring, evaluation and review activity;
* persons who are directly involved in conducting monitoring, evaluation and review processes;
* people who are interested in achieving personal development by updating their knowledge of monitoring, evaluation and review processes

### Chapter II. Methodological framework for Monitoring and Evaluation activity

This chapter of the Guide aims to answer questions of a general nature about monitoring and evaluation, and of a specific nature about monitoring and evaluating JAP implementation.

* What is monitoring and evaluation?
* Why must JAPs be monitored and evaluated at central and local government level?
* What do we monitor and what do we evaluate?
* How do we monitor? Principles and process.
* How do we evaluate? Principles and process.

### II.1. What is monitoring and evaluation?

II.1.1 **Monitoring** is the process of periodically collecting and analysing information to underpin decision-making by those in positions of authority, making decision-making transparent and providing a basis for future evaluation actions.

In the evaluation process, relevant information gathered through monitoring activity must be used. For data gathered through the monitoring process to be accurate, it must be collected systematically and carefully.

Data collection methods and accuracy are important because **monitoring acts as an early warning system and often pinpoints problems or areas that require evaluation.**

**Activity implementation** is tracked through ***monitoring*** of JAP progress, and the focus is on analysing short-term performance as compared with what was planned.

**Monitoring** is a **continuous process**, whereas **evaluation** is a **process that takes place only at certain stages** in the life cycle of a JAP.

Monitoring is continuous and systematic, and addresses questions such as:

* How much has been spent?
* What has been achieved in return?
* Are we on track to achieve the targets set through the performance indicators?

*“Monitoring means investigating what is happening as it happens”.*

Monitoring will **identify deviations between the original plan and updates** so that the JAP can be adjusted by taking corrective actions, including by repeating planning processes, where necessary.

**The JAP review process involves three sets of decisions:**

1. how to monitor the JAP, in order to check its progress;
2. how to evaluate JAP performance, by comparing the monitored observations with the JAP;
3. how to intervene in the JAP through a feedback loop, in order to make changes that will bring it back into line with the original plan.

The person designated to co-ordinate JAP implementation can monitor the implementation of the plan on the basis of performance reports **stating what has been achieved as compared with what was planned.**

Monitoring helps to save resources and simultaneously ensures that the JAP is executed properly, enabling constructive suggestions to be made.

**What do we monitor?**

* **resources** invested in JAP implementation: human, material, financial, information, time;
* **activities**: adherence to planning and quantity and quality standards for each one;
* **the decision-making process:** what decisions are taken, who is involved in decision-making;
* who is not involved in decision-making.
* **Stages in the monitoring process:**
* Continuously collecting information;
* Collating information and data in order to see what has been achieved along the way;
* Assessing the extent to which goals have been achieved or problems have been solved;
* Drawing conclusions and using experience for the future.

***Monitoring must be viewed as a management tool and not a review mechanism, because its role is to act as an “early warning system”.***

* ***Relevance of monitoring***
* **Monitoring acts as an *early warning system*:**
* It identifies deviations and difficulties
* It enables problems that occur at an initial stage to be addressed
* **Monitoring can reduce implementation costs**
* **A monitoring plan MUST take into account:**
* *What we are doing*
* *When we do it*
* *What the resources are*
* *What the responsibilities are*
* ***Monitoring highlights:***
* Changes within the community resulting from the implementation of the JAP;
* Changes in the situation of the target groups;
* The implementation situation at a particular time;
* Adherence to deadlines and the content of the activities set out in the JAP;
* Delays/difficulties in carrying out activities and the reasons for them.

II.1.2 ***Evaluation*** – assessing an ongoing or completed JAP as systematically and objectively as possible during the design and implementation stages, and its outcomes.

**Evaluation answers the question: *What have we achieved and what is the impact?***

Evaluation will be based on input, output, outcome and impact **indicators** with respect to baseline indicators etc. and will include those *value indicators* that can be evaluated objectively and that show whether the proposed/adopted goals can be achieved.

Evaluation consists of assessing the **impact** that the JAP has on beneficiaries/the community or the environment.

***Evaluation is a process through which the outcomes achieved over a certain period of time are assessed in relation to the planned activities and overall objectives; it involves a value judgement.***

* ***Relevance of evaluation***
* It makes efforts more efficient;
* It helps us to see where we are going and whether we need changes;
* It identifies strong and weak points;
* It makes it possible to check that costs are proportionate to achieved outcomes;
* It helps to share experience;
* For comparison;
* It is a basis on which to make better plans in future.
* ***Evaluation highlights:***
* The extent to which implementation outcomes match the outcomes that were originally planned;
* The relationship between costs and outcomes;
* Adherence to deadlines and content of activities;
* The impact on the target groups.
* ***Evaluation does not overlap with monitoring in terms of either time or the scope of the activity.***
* ***Monitoring and evaluation are connected processes.***

### II.2 Reporting

*The outcomes of monitoring and evaluation are set out in* ***reports.***

The main **purpose** of a monitoring report is to highlight the stage of implementation of the plan and to put forward recommendations and actions to achieve the final goals of the action plan.

**It is important for a monitoring report to be as straightforward and easy to read as possible.**

Reports on performance must give details of changes in the purpose, schedule, costs and quality.

Several **types of reports** are used to monitor a JAP:

* lists of activities, with percentages of completion;
* analyses over time of JAP implementation;
* Gantt charts showing the staggered timetable for the activities (*see Appendix 1 in the specimen Technical Report appended to this Guide);*
* monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annual execution reports, if the JAP extends into the long term (*see Appendix B to this Guide*).

A **monitoring report** will have an *introductory section* giving details of the period that the monitoring report covers.

It is a good idea to draw up interim reports stating which activities have been carried out, or which services have been provided, within a particular time period, highlighting delays and deviations in plan implementation and their causes, and proposing corrective measures, as well as indicating who has used them.

On the basis of these reports, it will not be difficult at all to conduct a final evaluation of the plan or a period in its implementation.

The following **types of narrative reports** can be written:

* Quarterly activity report (*see annex to this Guide*);
* Annual activity report;
* Final activity report.

The **purpose of reports** is to provide recent data concerning achievements in JAP implementation in the light of the indicators and planned deadlines.

**It is advisable to make monitoring visits** to collect data needed to take stock of progress made in implementing the JAP over the reporting period.

### II.3Indicators used in the M&E process

To monitor the implementation of a JAP and analyse performance in the light of the established goals, a **set of indicators must be developed**.

The indicators must be chosen before or during the initial stage of implementing the JAP in such a way that the relevant data needed for the monitoring process can be collected.

*A monitoring system does not necessarily entail developing a set of indicators that differs from the one that has already been established; it may entail merely identifying the existing indicators and using them to obtain a maximally consistent picture of JAP implementation outcomes.*

Indicators should be regarded as levels achieved during implementation which correspond to the initial objectives and expected outcomes of the JAP.

In the monitoring and evaluation process, the relevant indicators are used as means of measuring success in JAP implementation.

Using indicators, we can measure interim and final outcomes against the initial targets. Indicators identified during the monitoring process can yield information that is useful for improving the quality and effectiveness of the JAP.

Setting clear objectives and outcomes helps us to choose performance indicators that are easy to measure.

* **Types of indicators used in the process of:**
* *Monitoring:*
* ***of resources*** *(Example:* no*.* of people involved in implementing the JAP; allocated funds; logistics);
* ***of outcomes*** *(Example:* no. of newly created jobs; no. of homes renovated; no. of local police patrols created for school surveillance, etc.)
* *Evaluation:*
* ***of impact*** *(Example*: low morbidity rate; no. of graduates employed in the field that they studied; percentage fall in the school drop-out rate, etc.)

### II.4. Problems in the processes of monitoring and evaluation

The observations and conclusions set out in this chapter are based on and geared towards identifying major problems in the processes of monitoring and evaluation, such as:

* overuse of planned resources in JAP implementation,
* failure to achieve objectives,
* lack of administrative review of the plan,
* lack of a monitoring and evaluation culture based on performance, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness.

***Types of problems*** that arise from ineffective monitoring and evaluation:

* *1. Institutional failings;*
* *2. Lack of resources;*
* *3. Structural problems in the processes of monitoring and evaluation.*

#### 1. Institutional failings

Problems in relation to institutional failings:

* Information about actions taken and outcomes achieved is difficult to obtain and use;
* Monitoring and evaluation activities are not perceived as routine and systematic activities;

**From the stage when the problem is identified and formulated onwards, the fields targeted by the proposed plan and the objectives, activities and outcomes need to be defined as precisely as possible.**

#### 2. Lack of resources

In most cases, no financial or human resources are allocated to monitoring and evaluation activities, and the lack of financial resources makes it very difficult to outsource evaluation and monitoring services.

#### 3. Structural problems in the processes of monitoring and evaluation

* No distinction is made between monitoring activities and evaluation activities;
* Lack of an integrated flow and clear management of JAP implementation documents.

At present, a major category of problems encountered in the evaluation and monitoring process has to do with differences over the understanding of terms relating to monitoring and evaluation and the conduct of activities to be undertaken as part of these processes.

**Monitoring is a continuous process of collecting relevant information about the way in which a JAP is implemented, whereas evaluation is a process that uses the information obtained during monitoring to analyse how the plan has achieved its goal and had the desired effect.**

Monitoring activities and evaluation activities are perceived more as simple calendar-based, periodic activities that track implementation. Poor quality of monitoring and evaluation reports is due to problems to do with the difficulty of collecting information and its accuracy.

In addition, in monitoring and evaluation processes, there are gaps in the identification of indicators attesting to JAP performance outcomes, and a lack of detail concerning implementation measures, which highlights the lack of planning and consistency of actions.

**In conclusion**, the biggest problems that could arise in the process of monitoring and evaluating a JAP are:

* a low level of awareness of the functions and role of monitoring and evaluation activities,
* confusion between them and the functions of review, audit and planning.

### II.5. Why must JAPs be monitored and evaluated?

The purpose of any institution/organisation is to offer a service or product to society. Any organisation needs, at least at certain times, to evaluate the outcomes it has achieved and how it has achieved them so that it can understand how it could improve its activity so that the services or products offered will be better. **This is the rationale behind evaluation.**

To be able to evaluate, it is necessary to collect data which will be analysed and interpreted as part of the evaluation process. **This data collection activity is monitoring***.*

**Monitoring and evaluation are inseparable activities.**

If monitoring does not happen, evaluation becomes a difficult exercise lacking in objective data which is mainly based on unrepresentative impressions or data. If evaluation does not happen, monitoring becomes pointless. Why collect data if it is not interpreted, if no conclusions are drawn and if nothing is done on the basis of these conclusions?

## Annex - Technical Report Template

This report should be filled in on a quarterly basis by the person designated as a JAP coordinator.

**TECHNICAL PROGRESS REPORT no.: ....**

**Reference Period: ......................**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title:** | Joint action plan....... |
| **Beneficiary:** | ATU... |
| **Value:** |  |
| **CAP start date:** |  |
| **CAP end date:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Contact person:** |  |
| **Phone:** |  |
| **E-mail:** |  |
|  |  |
| **Report written by:** |  |
| **Signature /**  **Date:** | ……………..  ………………… |

#### 1. SUMMARY OF THE JOINT ACTION PLAN (JAP)

**Objective(s) of the JAP:**



#### 2. PROGRESS OF THE JAP IN THE REPORTED PERIOD

**Implemented activities and results obtained during the reported period**

Present the activities implemented during the reported period. The activities included in this section must be correlated to those included in the JAP. The code of the activity / sub-activity must be included, as well as the actual actions carried out during the reported period (e.g. A1; A1.1; A2; A2.1 etc.).

Include the achieved results and the relating KPIs during the reported period, linked to the CPA. Even if the final results are not met during the implementation period reported, please include the status of the results in line with the implemented activities.

**REPORTED PERIOD: ………………….**

* **Activity 1 / Sub-activity ………………**

Period: …………………. ((dd/mm/yyyy - dd/mm/yyyy)

Human resources: ………………….

Financial resources: …………………

Implementation location: …………………….

**Description** (human and financial resources involved in the activity, the location of the activity implementation, other relevant information):

…………………….

**Human resources**

…………………….

**Implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation**

……………………….

**Results / Achievements**

**……………………….**

**Meetings** ………….

* **Activity 2 / Sub-activity …………….**

Period: …………………. ((dd/mm/yyyy - dd/mm/yyyy)

Human resources: ………………….

Financial resources: …………………

Implementation location: …………………….

**Description** (human and financial resources involved in the activity, the location of the activity implementation, other relevant information):

…………………….

**Human resources**

…………………….

**Implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation**

……………………….

* **Activity n / Sub-activity …………….**

#### 3. DELAYS / CHANGES IN ACHIEVING THE EXPECTED RESULTS /OBJECTIVES

* If there are changes in the Implementation Plan of the activities, they should be listed and explained.
* If there are planned but not implemented activities, they should be mentioned, together with the reasons for the delays and the period when they are rescheduled.
* if there are activities planned and carried out in advance, they should be mentioned and the reasons for this change in timing explained.

…………………........................

#### 4. SUMMARY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES (if required):

…………………

#### Annex 1: CHART FOR IMPLEMENTING THE JAP

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Month 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | .. | .. | .. | .. | n | Name of designated member responsible for implementation |
| Activity 1 [name] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sub-activity 1.1 [name] |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sub-activity 1.2 [name] |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sub-activity 1.3 [name] |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| etc. |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Activity 2 [name] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sub-activity 2.1 [name] |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sub-activity 2.2 [name] |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| etc. |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### Annex 2: REPORT FOR RESULTS ACHIEVED / KPIs MET

This table should be filled in with cumulative information from the beginning of the JAP’s implementation period until the end of the reporting period.

| Period: [implementation start date - reporting period end date] | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activities | Planned results / KPIs | Achieved results / KPIs | Percentage met | Status (started, ongoing, finished) and, as required, commentary regarding any changes, constraints and/or risks |
| ***Activity 1 [name]*** | | | | |
| **Sub-activity 1.1 [name]** |  |  |  |  |
| …….. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Legal Representative, By,**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[S*ignature*]**  **[*First and Last Name*]**  **[*Job* *Title*]** | **[S*ignature*]**  **[*First and Last Name*]**  **[*Job Title]*** |