



**Government of the Islamic Republic of
Afghanistan**

Ministry of Finance

Directorate General Budget

&

Ministry of Economy

Directorate General Plan and Results Based Monitoring

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**Assessment of M&E Systems in Ministries
and Agencies**

Executive Summary

This monitoring and evaluation systems assessment has really only been able to look quite superficially at the systems and practices being used in the 10 ministries and agencies sampled for review. This is because each ministry/agency is home to a large variety of sub-systems and practices employed by individual projects and programs, and also because many of the people interviewed did not have a clear and full picture of planning, M&E across their institution. Another problem encountered was the very differing levels of understanding amongst the interviewees of what an M&E system actually is, and a severe lack of people qualified enough to know what a good M&E system actually looks like in practice.

Before mentioning the main findings of the study it is worth emphasizing the benefits which the review process itself have already generated. It was very clear to the reviewers that the meetings which were held in the ministries/agencies with representatives from different departments were often the first opportunities which the interviewees had had to discuss the existence and adequacy of basic performance monitoring and evaluation systems within their institution. The review seemed to be well-timed in discussing questions which were seen as particularly relevant and urgent at this time. The general impression was that there is a very strongly felt need across most of the institutions for planning and performance monitoring systems to be rationalized or developed and joined up into cross-institution systems, and for these to be integrated into planning and strategic and operational management processes. In short, there was very strong support for the current proposal of the Ministry of Finance to support the development of a basic cross-government performance monitoring and evaluation system.

The different institutions reviewed are at very different stages in their progress along the path of building their own fit-for-purpose performance planning and M&E systems. Whilst the current (baseline) situation is one in which the large majority of the ministries have effectively no functioning cross-institutional performance monitoring and evaluation system many of the institutions are hosts to projects or programs which are applying some quite strong M&E processes. However in most of these cases the prime user of the M&E system (apart from the program management team) is the donor funding the program. Hence the good practices being applied in these project/program 'islands' are not being extended to other programs within the institutions. There is therefore an urgent need for the ministries/agencies to build on the assets which they have and to work to collectively develop one integrated cross-institution system. This applies not only to M&E but to strategic and operational planning, an area which most interviewees acknowledged to be still very weak.

One interesting finding was that the Capacity Building for Results (CBR) program does not appear to have prioritized the strengthening of institution-wide planning and M&E systems as part of its support. In one or two cases the ministry planning and policy managers, following this M&E assessment, stated that they intended to go back and revise their CBR support requests to focus more on this area.

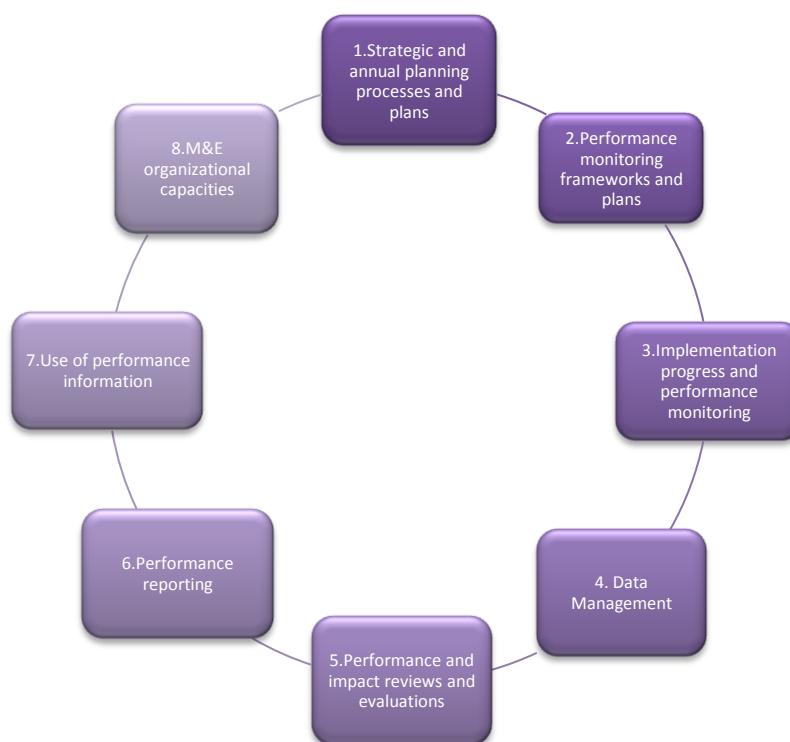
Functional performance monitoring systems require technical expertise, financing for data collection and data management processes and serious institutional senior management support in order to generate their potential benefits. There appeared to be an increasing level of awareness of and commitment to M&E in over half of the institutions reviewed. The question of senior management basic 'literacy' in M&E remains an issue however, and this should be addressed urgently by the central government agencies concerned with BU planning and performance monitoring. New M&E units are being created or expanded, and better qualified people are being hired, although the level of prior experience and training in M&E is still very low and needs to be addressed centrally on a large scale and as a priority. Whilst financing appears on the surface to be a major issue it is perfectly within a ministry's power to require that all projects and programs commit a certain percentage of their annual

budget to planning and M&E and for some percentage of this to be used to finance the institution-wide system above the level of the individual projects and programs.

The major challenge therefore remains the level of understanding and commitment of ministry/agency senior management to building and maintaining a performance monitoring and evaluation system and to using this in operational management and strategic planning processes, and their ability to establish a technical department with the technical skills and internal power to ensure that all departments and programs comply with the requirements of the institution-wide system. There is a long path to be followed in the coming years in these areas.

This report ends with a series of recommendations made to the GoIRA relating to a series of measures to be taken in order to begin to seriously address the current weaknesses identified in the study. The two main recommendations are to develop a policy discussion paper on the proposed new Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) and to get this fully discussed amongst key stakeholders and supported by the higher echelons of government, and secondly to develop a detailed and costed proposal document and to obtain funding support for the GPMES initiative from the international donor community.

Data areas covered by the systems assessment



Summary of Findings

Strategic and Operational Planning

Strategic plans often exist but are usually not used as the basis for annual planning and performance reviewing. Ministries and agencies require support from the MoEc in guiding their strategic planning processes and in ensuring integration of the National Priority Programs into their planning and monitoring work. Ministry/agency strategic plan results are sometimes not well reflected in the performance plans presented in the budget submissions (BC2s).

Ministries and agencies use different approaches and formats for the preparation and monitoring of execution of annual operational plans.

Performance Monitoring Frameworks

Not all the BU strategic plans had Performance Monitoring Frameworks, and where these existed they were generally weak in terms of results specification, indicator specification, clarity on data sources and base-line data.

BU Program and Sub-Program Structures

A large number of ministries/agencies need to conduct a comprehensive review and revision of their program and sub-program structures in order to adequately reflect their current strategies, but several do not want to do this as they are currently applying results-based management approaches to these. The MoF guidance on the number of programs is a constraint as it results in many different areas of work being aggregated in one program which does not really qualify as a program in terms of having clear and specific objectives.

Project Planning and Appraisal Systems

Project appraisal and selection within ministries and agencies is generally done without the use of an agreed and systematic process and is only very weakly related to program and sub-program strategies.

Performance Planning in the Annual Budget Submission

The current format and guidelines provided to budgetary units for the submission of annual budget requests does not allow for sufficient performance plan information to be provided against which BUs can subsequently report performance. Outcomes and multiple outputs should be permitted for each sub-program, and up to two indicators per result (whether outcome or output).

Performance Monitoring and Reporting Systems

Only a minority of programs had structured and operational performance monitoring and evaluation systems in place. Data collection and reporting processes were generally weak even for reporting on the outputs programmed in the BU BC2 submissions to the MoF, except for donor-supported projects, thus undermining the credibility of some of the information presented in BU budget performance reports.

Quarterly and annual BU performance reports often do not clearly show the level of implementation of the planned annual (operational) activity plan (including in terms of activity completion targets), but are usually only narrative descriptions of activities completed, and only rarely systematically report using program results and indicators. Moreover, ministry staff felt overwhelmed by having to produce multiple performance reports (of slightly different formats) to different external state bodies.

Representatives of several ministries believed that the information submitted to the MoEc and MoF in their budget performance reports was not sufficient to be able to obtain a reasonable idea of the performance of the programs and sub-programs in question.

Performance Monitoring Databases

None of the ministries/agencies assessed had institution-wide performance monitoring databases containing results-based (outcome and output) performance plan and baseline data and performance achievement data.

Internal Performance Review Events

A range of different practices is used by the ministries/agencies in the conduct of periodic internal performance reviews. Most of the ministries do not conduct periodic ministry or program-level review events where M&E data is assessed to arrive at judgments about program performance and the overall performance of the institution in implementing its strategic plan. This is done however, for some donor-supported programs (which are projects or sub-programs for the BUs). A number of institutions conduct activity-focused quarterly and annual operational plan implementation reviews however.

Independent Reviews and Evaluations

External reviews are frequently conducted for donor-funded projects and programs but only cover the work supported by these programs. There are very few cases where whole ministry/agency (BU) programs or even sub-programs have been periodically independently reviewed for the benefit of the BU management. For the donor-led reviews/evaluations conducted, the level of involvement and empowerment of the ministry staff in the management of the reviews and evaluations is often too superficial to ensure an adequate level of impact of the review. Widely differing approaches and protocols are used in the conduct of these external reviews and the level of transaction costs for ministry staff is high. There is a need for more standardized approaches to be used so as to facilitate greater BU involvement and empowerment in the processes.

M&E Structures and Capacities

There is a clear trend within the ministries/agencies reviewed to create or strengthen M&E units in response to growing pressure for them to better account for their use of resources and the results obtained although some ministries still don't have dedicated M&E units. M&E processes and systems are still highly fragmented across the ministries/agencies as they are usually developed for specific programs and projects. The capacity and power of central ministry planning or M&E departments to consolidate these into unified institution-wide systems is weak.

There appears to be a mixed, but generally low level of understanding of and commitment to institution-wide performance M&E systems amongst the institutions' senior officials and management. Ministries and agencies are still not funding M&E as a separate line item in their program/sub-program operating costs and M&E is mostly too under-resourced to enable appropriate data-collection and management processes to be implemented for key performance indicators data.

Where central M&E departments/units exist some of them are experiencing problems in having the freedom to openly report real levels of program and sub-program performance and to identify explanatory factors, due to internal pressures placed upon them to downplay performance issues in performance reports. In order to function effectively M&E units need mechanisms to protect their technical independence.

Levels of technical qualifications and experience in performance planning and M&E within the ministries/agencies is generally very low. This is a major constraint to M&E system development. Some programs and one or two institutions have M&E technical assistance support but these are a small minority.

Summary of Recommendations

The full set of recommendations is the following:

1. The National Development Planning Framework should be reviewed and strengthened.
2. The Strategic Plans of the ministries/agencies (BUs) should be reviewed and strengthened
3. Project planning and appraisal systems in ministries/agencies should be strengthened
4. MoF and MoEc should review and revise the guidance provided to BUs on the specification of their program and sub-program structures.
5. The structure of BU detailed budgetary submissions (BC2) should be comprehensively reviewed and revised.
6. The GoIRA (MoEc and MoF) should provide BUs with a set of minimum required standards for BU performance monitoring and evaluation systems and monitor their compliance with these, together with guidelines on how to meet these standards.
7. A set of standard performance reports should be developed which will enable budgetary units to provide the required performance information to all the major information demanding agencies.
8. All BUs (above a certain size) should develop and adopt a review and evaluation policy
9. The work of the Budget Committee and its Budget Hearings process should be comprehensively reviewed and re-designed in order to base medium-term and annual budget allocation decisions much more on program and sub-program performance information.
10. Ministries/agencies should establish a Performance Monitoring Unit which conforms to a standard set of requirements.
11. Ministries/agencies should allocate a separate annual budget amount to planning and M&E.
12. A major training and coaching program in program planning, monitoring and evaluation for selected ministry/agency staff should be developed and delivered.
13. The CBR program should be used to focus on the development of ministry/agency strategic and operational planning and performance monitoring and evaluation capacities.
14. This M&E systems assessment study together with an initial draft of a policy document on the establishment of a Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) should be the subject of a special seminar/workshop.
15. A new office should be established to develop and implement a cross-government standardized strategic planning and performance monitoring system and to help ensure that the results feed into policy-making and budgeting.
16. The donor community should be approached to provide financial support for the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System and the new results office using a basket-funding arrangement.

Next Steps

The MoF will use this current M&E systems review as the basis for developing a proposal for a policy document on the introduction of a government-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system. It is hoped that this study will sensitize senior government leaders to the need for such a system as well as the urgency of this need given the current phase of highly constrained budgets and aid support which the government is facing. The transition period demands that the government use fewer resources to achieve more results in terms of the delivery of basic services across the country, and at the same time, the government needs to communicate to the public the results, which are being achieved with the resources used. A functioning and integrated government performance monitoring and evaluation system is a key element in responding to this need.

Prior to this however this report will be shared with the 10 assessed ministries/agencies in order to obtain their feedback and corrections. It should be emphasized that the objective of this assessment was not to judge how well the individual institutions were doing or to compare them to each other (which explains why a system scoring mechanism was not used) but to get a picture of the current level of development of M&E systems and practices and the major issues, challenges and opportunities facing the government in this area.

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1. Introduction

This document presents the results of a rapid assessment of the planning, monitoring and evaluation systems of a selection of key national line ministries and agencies. The work was conducted by the Budget Performance Monitoring Unit of the Budget Department of the Ministry of Finance, together with the General-Directorate of Policy and Results-Based M&E in the Ministry of Economy. Technical support was provided by the Strengthening Afghanistan's Budget II project, which is based within the MoF and is financed by the Department for International Development of the UK.

The objective of the assessment was to obtain a rough baseline picture of the level of development of planning, monitoring and evaluation systems within the sampled ministries and agencies, to understand some of the key system strengths and weaknesses, and to begin to develop a shared cross-government understanding of the need to strengthen performance monitoring and evaluation within the government. In short, the exercise was intended to help launch a process of developing and institutionalizing strengthened approaches to performance monitoring and evaluation within the government, and to establish a government-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system, which is one of the key objectives of the SAB II project.

The development of the assessment tool and the conduct of the interviews by the joint MoF/MoEc team with the ministries and agencies was as valuable as much for the process as the final output because it enabled a dialogue to be opened concerning what an M&E system is and what good M&E practices look like. Whilst the exercise encountered some initial resistance from a small number of institutions the process was ultimately appreciated by most of the stakeholders involved.

The scope and depth of the assessment was necessarily limited given the number of ministries involved, the fragmented nature of M&E within them, and the limited resources available. The data collection and processing process is explained in the methodology section below. The field work was conducted in December 2013 but the work was only completed in June 2014 owing to a number of factors affecting the work of the Budget Department and the SAB II support project.

In summary, this Diagnostic exercise is the first stage in the process of developing and institutionalizing the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES), which the GoIRA is committed to developing and rolling out as an important component of the new Public Financial Management Reform Roadmap (PFMR II).

2. Methodology

The following process was used in conducting the assessment:

1. Selection of ministries/agencies

The MoF/MoEc team selected the 10 ministries or agencies listed in Table 1 using a purposive sampling approach with the aim of selecting institutions which satisfied the following criteria:

- a) High likelihood of having benefitted from the introduction of strengthened management systems through the hosting of donor-supported projects.
- b) Is delivering a key service, either externally to the population, or internally to the rest of government.
- c) Is the recipient of an important proportion of the government's annual expenditure (both on and off-budget) or is an important current or potential source of government revenue.

Whilst more detailed results could have been obtained had a smaller sample been selected it was decided to choose 10 institutions in order to obtain a reasonable picture of the level and nature of diversity in planning and monitoring and evaluation systems across the central government.

Table 1. Ministries and Agencies selected for assessment

No.	Ministry/Agency
1	Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)
2	Ministry of Education (MoE)
3	Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)
4	Ministry of Economy (MoEc)
5	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
6	Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD)
7	Independent Directorate for Local Government (IDLG)
8	Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW)
9	Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP)
10	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD)

2. Administration of Questionnaire Instrument

A questionnaire was developed, tested with one ministry and adjusted. This is presented in Annex 3 to this report. The tool covered the following 8 data areas:

Table 2. Data areas covered by the assessment

No.	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System area
1	Strategic Planning
2	Results Frameworks
3	Annual Operational Planning
4	Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting
5	Internal Performance Reviewing
6	External Reviews and Evaluations
7	Data Collection and Management
8	M&E Resourcing and capacities

Whilst the questionnaire served its purpose it was found to be a little long and repetitive. Given that there will be periodic repeats of the M&E systems assessment in the future (in order to monitor system evolution) a proposed revised version of the tool is included in Annex 4.

The questionnaire was administered in a meeting held with each agency in its premises. The meetings were conducted in Dari with occasional specific questions or issues discussed in English for any international SAB II TA present. The participants in these meetings included directors or unit managers representing Finance and Administration, Policy, Planning and M&E, and Programs. In some cases Deputy Ministers or Director-Generals of the interviewed agencies chaired the meetings. For a list of participants in the meetings see Annex 2.

3. Document Review

Relevant key documents such as strategic plans, operational plans, results/performance monitoring frameworks, annual and quarterly performance reports and specific evaluations were requested in the course of the first main interview and the follow-up interview (see below). In some cases it was difficult to obtain copies of the relevant documents. The MoF and MoEc teams have initiated a file storage system for all key documents relevant to the 10 ministries/agencies' Planning, M&E (PME) systems (in both hard and soft copy).

4. Compilation of data sheets

The information obtained from the initial round of interviews and the review of documents resulted in the compilation of the Data Sheets, which are essentially summaries of both reported information from the institutions as well as the analysis of the documents which were supplied to the review team.

The information entered into the data sheets is still descriptive as the team has not used a standardized M&E system assessment tool against which they could score particular elements of the system. However the need for such a tool has been identified and this will be an element of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) which the GoIRA is committed to developing and rolling out as part of the new Public Financial Management Reform Roadmap (PFMR II). However the data sheets constitute the heart of the Diagnostic Report because they represent a reasonably clear snapshot of where the ministry/agency currently is in terms of

planning and M&E system development and can be directly used to compare with the results of future repeated assessments.

5. Follow-up Interviews

Once the data sheets were completed it was clear that there were a number of data gaps or responses which were not sufficiently clear. Additionally in many cases insufficient documents had been received from the institutions. These issues were addressed in a follow-up technical meeting with each of the institutions individually, the results of which were used to revise and add to the data sheets.

6. Validation of findings with the institutions

Once the data sheets were completed they were translated into Dari and both the English and Dari versions were shared on an individual basis with each ministry/agency together with a request to supply written comments and proposed amendments. The results from this and the review of any additional documents received were used to improve the data sheets.

7. Preparation of draft report and conduct of results review workshop

The draft report was prepared based on the amended data sheets. This was then translated into Dari and both Dari and English versions were distributed to the management teams of all the 10 sampled institutions. A workshop was then held (involving only the assessment team and the assessed ministries/agencies) to discuss the report and its general findings. Whilst the discussion inevitably raised a number of additional proposed corrections or modifications to the individual institution sections of the report the workshop discussion was focused on the general findings and the proposed next steps in the process (related to addressing the issues and opportunities identified). It was therefore aimed at achieving a general consensus on the need to strengthen government planning and performance monitoring systems and raising awareness of the possible ways forward for doing this.

3. Findings

A summary of the main findings by individual ministry/agency is presented below. An overall summary of the diagnostic's findings is presented in the subsequent section. This is followed by the study's recommendations in Section 4.

3.1 Summary of Findings by Ministry/Agency

Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)

1) Strategic Planning

A Strategic Plan exists and it is quite a well-developed document in comparison to those of other ministries. However it is somewhat complex and ambitious (with 62 strategic objectives). Its results structure is on the weak side, making it difficult to monitor. It is also not strongly owned within the ministry due to relatively weak levels of participation in its development and it is not very much used as an annual review and planning tool. However, the SP appears to have a quite well-organized set of committees to monitor its execution.

The ministry's program and sub-program structure could be substantially improved in order to better reflect the real programs that the ministry is implementing and to make program monitoring and reporting more meaningful. The results chain upon which the strategic plan is based requires review and strengthening and could benefit from simplification.

2) Results Frameworks

Results frameworks exist for the strategic plan and this is used to inform the performance information in the BC2. There is substantial room for improving the specification and categorization of results by level of the results chain, and for indicator strengthening.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual planning is informed by the strategic plan but is conducted mostly on a program by program basis with the Health Financing Department trying to stitch the resultant plans together into an institution-wide plan. The plan is monitored on a monthly and quarterly basis. Staff recognize the need to substantially strengthen and better integrate the annual planning process across the ministry.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Whilst some programs and projects of the ministry have good quality performance monitoring and reporting the main problem is that M&E systems are fragmented. There is no standard system applied across the ministry. The ministry staff recognize the need to establish standardized planning and performance monitoring systems. Quarterly reporting is mostly activity-based.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

The ministry has quite a well-established structure of provincial, program and overall ministry performance reviews which focus on implementation performance and lessons learning for a wide range of stakeholders. It is not clear to what extent these are results-focused as opposed to annual and strategic plan activity-focused.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

Evaluations are usually conducted on a project or donor-funded program basis and tend to be donor-driven. No (or few) ministry program or sub-program level evaluations are conducted and no institution-wide policy or standards exist for identifying and conducting evaluations. Where evaluations have been conducted their results have been quite influential in ministry policy-making.

7) Data Collection and Management

Some rigorous data collection and verification systems are in place for selected donor-supported programs. The ministry operates a HMIS. No structured lessons learning system is in place.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

The ministry has the institutional structure for an institution-wide M&E system but it does not yet have the resources and capacity in place to operationalize this. The ministry recognizes the need for significant capacity-building in the area of M&E and for greater standardization of approaches across the public sector. The ministry is actively planning to strengthen its planning and M&E systems however.

Overall

Whilst good-practices in M&E are being implemented in different projects and programs the Ministry suffers from not having a robust institution-wide planning and performance monitoring and evaluation system in place.

Ministry of Education

1) Strategic Planning

The National Education Strategic Plan acts as the principal strategic plan for the ministry. This is well prepared at the strategic activity level (with clear targets and activities). However it does not clearly present the outcomes to be achieved by the plan together with specific targets, There is no clearly presented results chain.

The NESP is used to inform a 3-year plan, which in turn is used as the basis for the annual operational planning . Additionally some major projects (such as EQUIP) have their own performance monitoring frameworks.

The ministry recognizes the need to strengthen its capacity in the area of strategic planning.

2) Results Frameworks

The ministry has a solid basic performance monitoring system in place, which results from having quite a solid strategic program-based planning system. The strategic plan has a set of performance monitoring frameworks in place.

3) Annual Operational Planning

The ministry has a well-structured process of annual planning in place based on its strategic plan, including a quarterly (or monthly?) implementation schedule.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Ministry wide-monthly and quarterly reports are used to monitor the progress of the whole ministry in implementing the annual operational plan.

Annual (and Quarterly) Reports report on Outcome and Output achievement using the indicators from the Performance Monitoring Framework and are used for both internal and external stakeholders.

Reports are problem/issue and management action based.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

A system of ministry-wide quarterly and annual progress and performance reviews is in place. These occur at both central and provincial levels. These reviews have influenced ministry planning and policy-making processes.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

External reviews/evaluations have only been conducted for specific donor-supported projects. No ministry-level policy or guidelines currently exist for the conduct of project or program evaluations although the Ministry reports that it is developing a policy.

7) Data Collection and Management

A school facility survey is periodically implemented by the ministry. A robust Education Management Information System is in place and regularly updated by all provincial offices and programs, and data verification protocols are reportedly in place for key data sets. It is not clear if this includes the ministry's key performance targets and achievement information or if a separate database exists to manage this performance data. No structured lessons learned management system currently exists.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

M&E is quite well-resourced in the Ministry with each program having an M&E unit. Ministry M&E guidelines are being developed, and an M&E capacity-building program is ongoing. It is felt that the M&E Directorate needs to be made more independent in order to fully influence policy-making and planning.

Overall

The Ministry appears to have quite a robust set of strategic planning and performance monitoring and evaluation systems in place given the weak status of results M&E within the GIRoA. The Ministry is making concerted efforts to ensure that a coherent institution-wide system is in place.

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)

1) Strategic Planning

A ministry-specific strategic plan existed from 2005 to 2009 which remains on the website. It is quite a weak document due to its lack of an adequate results structure, insufficient results achievement indicators and lack of a strategic activity implementation schedule.

Ministry staff refer to a more recent strategic plan (2009-13) but MoF has not been able to obtain this document. It is possible that this is the E-Afghanistan NPP.

The E-Afghanistan NPP has no clear results structure or Performance Monitoring Framework.

The program and sub-program structure in the annual budget submission (BC2) is not very well aligned with the strategic plan. It is clear that the ministry's strategic plans are not used as the basis of regular performance M&E.

2) Results Frameworks

Whilst the ministry has developed some performance monitoring indicators for its CBR Matrix the results and indicators need reviewing and strengthening. Essentially the MCIT does not appear to have a performance monitoring framework (a results monitoring framework) to enable it to assess its performance in achieving its strategic objectives.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual operational plans are produced but they are not fully based upon the strategic plan.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Reporting is mostly activity-based and is still very weak in terms of results reporting.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

Structured results-based internal performance reviews are not part of the ministry's performance management system.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

There is no evaluation policy and no ministry-managed system for identifying and implementing program evaluations/reviews.

7) Data Collection and Management

Data collection, analysis and results information management systems are at a very basic level still. No institution-wide results monitoring data system exists.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

No dedicated M&E units exist and little institutional capacity appears to have been established in the ministry to ensure the functioning of a basic performance monitoring system.

Overall

Whilst MCIT appears to have some strong activity planning and implementation monitoring processes in place (largely based on E-Afghanistan) it is at a very early stage in the development of results-based M&E systems and capacities.

Ministry of Economy (MoEc)

1) Strategic Planning

No strategic plan exists for the ministry.

2) Results Frameworks

No institution-wide or program-level performance monitoring framework appears to exist for MoEc.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual plans are regularly produced, reportedly with an implementation schedule and activity completion milestones. It is not clear if they are used as the basis for activity implementation monitoring.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Activity monitoring is conducted by management but it does not appear to be done using the annual activity plan.

The ministry produces quarterly and annual reports for the implementation progress of BU projects under its supervision.

There does not appear to be any regular report which is produced and used internally by the ministry which reports on the level of achievement of the MoEc's outputs and outcomes as presented in the BC2. The only results report produced is the quarterly and annual performance report produced by the MoEc for submission to the PMU of the MoF.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

Annual activity and project implementation reviews are conducted at both the central and provincial levels. However no structured system of reviewing results (output and outcome achievement) based on indicator data exists.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

The Ministry does not have a policy for conducting independent reviews or evaluations of its programs and sub-programs. No cases were identified of major reviews or evaluations in recent years having influenced the ministry's strategies or policies.

7) Data Collection and Management

A systematic data-collection system only exists for the monitoring of implementation of BU projects (funded by the government's development budget).

Databases are managed for national budget financed BU projects, for NGO programs and projects, and for infrastructure projects.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

There is no dedicated unit within the ministry for the conduct of performance planning and M&E for the ministry itself (although units exist to conduct M&E of national development plans and priority programs and of BU budget-funded projects).

There is no M&E manual or guidelines produced by the ministry to guide ministry program performance monitoring and reporting.

The ministry has benefitted from a number of training programs in M&E and has received some limited TA support in M&E from GIZ.

Overall

The ministry could benefit from a significant strengthening of its performance planning and M&E systems. This is essential given the need for both MoEc and MoF to demonstrate good practice in planning and M&E (and program management in general) to the other ministries.

Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)

1) Strategic Planning

The ministry has no strategic plan for the ministry itself. Annual planning is guided by the National Agriculture Development Framework (NADF) (2009-14).

There is no cross-ministry results-based strategic planning system in place for the ministry although some of the indicators from the two NPPs are being systematically monitored.

Staff say that there are plans to introduce a results-based M&E system in 2014 starting with the new NADF which will function as a strategic plan for the ministry.

Most of the ministry's activities are implemented under donor-funded projects which are not clearly aligned with its programs and sub-programs which makes it very difficult to conduct effective strategic planning and performance reviewing.

The Ministry representatives feel that the current program and sub-program structure does not adequately reflect its work and should be reviewed and updated. However there are no current plans to do this.

2) Results Frameworks

Whilst there are cases of good results monitoring frameworks in the ministry and some good project-level M&E systems there is currently no program and sub-program results M&E system being implemented.

There is no ministry-wide performance monitoring framework. PMFs exist for the two NPPs which relate to the agriculture sector and these were reportedly recently used to develop a PMF for the NADF. The ministry is reportedly systematically monitoring a sub-set of the indicators in this.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Operational planning and budgeting and implementation monitoring is largely conducted on a project basis, with little emphasis on cross-ministry program and sub-program-based planning. There is no overall ministry operational plan.

Budgeting for the development budget capital expenditure is still conducted separately to budgeting for operational expenditure.

The ministry recognizes the need to strengthen planning processes.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Apart from the quarterly and annual performance reports submitted to the MoF, MoEc, OAA and Parliament there are no performance reports produced for use by the ministry's senior management.

Development outcome monitoring and reporting is only conducted at the level of some of the ministry's projects and not at the level of sub-programs and programs.

More support is required from MoF, MoEc and OAA to help ministries better link planning, budgeting and performance reporting, and more use should be made of the performance information.

Central bodies appear to be much more interested in budget expenditure information rather than results achievement information. They need to better support and incentivize ministries to produce more informative and useful performance reports.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

No internal program or sub-program performance reviews are currently conducted (although ministry staff say that these are planned).

There do not appear to be any semi-annual or annual overall institutional performance review events with key stakeholders.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

Reviews and evaluations are conducted only for selected major donor-funded projects, and the processes are usually donor-driven with the approaches differing according to the donor involved. There is no program of regular reviews or evaluations of the ministry's programs and sub-programs. The ministry has no evaluation policy.

7) Data Collection and Management

The ministry disposes of a web-based basic activity and project implementation monitoring system but has no system to manage results-based performance data.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

The Ministry has a basic institutional structure in place (unit and staff) to conduct performance monitoring and evaluation but this is not fully exploited.

The Ministry staff recognize the need to move to more results-based M&E at program and sub-program level and the need for significant capacity-building support in order to do this.

Overall	The ministry does not implement a results-based M&E system based on an overall performance monitoring framework for the ministry. Approaches to M&E vary by project and are quite heavily donor-driven. The ministry has an M&E unit and staff and is now in the process of trying to strengthen M&E systems and processes for which it recognizes the need for significant capacity-building.
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Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD)

1) Strategic Planning

A strategic plan exists for the ministry (2009-14) and is used as the basis of annual operational planning. The SP was developed to align with the 4 NPPs towards which the ministry contributes, but the SP has not been reviewed and revised in the light of implementation experience.

The ministry's program and sub-program structure is perceived by ministry staff to be well-aligned with the strategic plan.

2) Results Frameworks

The strategic plan has a results monitoring framework, which is aligned with the results monitoring frameworks of the sector NPPs. There are a number of program results frameworks (e.g. NSP; NRAP etc) and associated performance monitoring and reporting systems.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual plans are prepared on a program-basis based on the strategic plan.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Annual plan implementation is reviewed in monthly ministry management meetings. There is no standardized institution-wide performance monitoring system. The NSP is perceived by the ministry to be a very good example of a program with a robust M&E system.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

There is no system of ministry-wide performance reviewing using the strategic plan. Performance reviewing approaches vary by program and project.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

External reviews and evaluations are usually donor-driven and use different approaches. They are not built into an institution-wide performance monitoring system. Such processes appear to be insufficiently aimed at building ministry ownership of the process and results.

There is no evaluation policy for the ministry.

7) Data Collection and Management

Some programs, such as the NSP have well developed data-collection and verification systems designed to collect and manage performance indicator data. However such systems have not been extended across all of the programs of the ministry.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

M&E is relatively well-resourced in MRRD. The ministry has one overall M&E office reporting directly to the Minister (with International TA support) as well as an office for each of the 5 main ministry programs. Due to the differences in capacities and approaches of these offices there is a perception that the institution would benefit from merging them into one ministry-wide M&E department.

There is substantial scope for harmonizing approaches to M&E system development and implementation across the various programs of the ministry. CBR is not supporting M&E strengthening in the ministry.

Overall

Some very good examples of M&E practices for some programs but generally the ministry suffers from the fragmentation of approaches to performance planning and M&E – with a variety of program-level systems being implemented. But opportunities for other ministries to learn from this ministry in the area of M&E.

Independent Directorate for Local Government (IDLG)

1) Strategic Planning

IDLG uses the NPP for Local Governance (NPPLG) as its strategic plan. There is no specific SP for the IDLG although one is planned to be produced in early 2014.

The program and sub-program structure of the BC2 is not fully aligned with the NPPLG.

2) Results Frameworks

The NPPLG results chain needs to be strengthened at the outcome and impact levels (ensuring appropriate links from system and capacity improvements to improved institutional performance).

The NPPLG has a results monitoring framework which forms the basis of the IDLG's overall M&E system. By end 2013 only about 50% of the provinces were covered by this. The framework appears to be of good quality and includes baselines, sources of data and targets. The specification of some results needs to be strengthened and a number of indicators (especially at the outcome level) need to be reviewed and strengthened.

3) Annual Operational Planning

IDLG uses the NPPLG as the basis for annual operational planning even though this does not have annual activity completion milestones.

Each IDLG Directorate conducts its annual planning independently, using the NPPLG as the basis for this. This is likely to result in major efficiency losses as it will be difficult to ensure that the work of the different directorates is properly aligned to achieve the major high-level program and institution-level results.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Activity implementation monitoring and reporting is implemented separately by the different directorates and is not coordinated centrally. The M&E directorate then compiles this information to produce the overall IDLG quarterly and annual report. There is a need for one integrated operational planning and implementation monitoring system.

Whilst IDLG representatives claim that results-based performance reports are produced for the whole institution the review team has not seen any examples of such reports. The 2012 Annual report only presents information on activity implementation and not on the achievement of the NPPLG results using performance indicator data.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

There is no common approach to program/sub-program performance reviewing within the institution. One or two donor-funded programs (such as PBGF) conduct quarterly and annual performance reviews involving key stakeholders.

The M&E directorate conducts provincial level program assessments during provincial visits – which use a variety of data-collection techniques. These are ad-hoc however.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

There is no cross-institutional approach to conducting independent performance reviews – whether and how these occur varies by program and often depends upon the main donor(s) involved.

There is currently no cross-institutional policy on evaluations and reviews within IDLG although the M&E directorate is seeking to develop this.

7) Data Collection and Management

A range of data-collection tools are used to collect monitoring data (however no major regular qualitative or quantitative data survey was mentioned – get additional information).

Currently no institution-level performance monitoring database exists. Monitoring data is managed through (program-level) spreadsheets, but the M&E directorate reports that it is developing one. No lessons learned information system exists within the IDLG at the moment.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

A dedicated M&E directorate was established for the IDLG in 2012 and this has 14 staff (mix of *Tashkeel* and consultants). Some of the major donor-funded support programs to IDLG have their own separate M&E units and systems (sometimes with M&E advisers).

Overall	The IDLG's performance monitoring and reporting system is still fragmented as it consists of a number of different (usually donor-funded) programs and projects which have different M&E systems. However the M&E Directorate is currently working on integrating the different donor-funded program M&E systems into one institution-wide M&E system.
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Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW)

1) Strategic Planning

The ministry has a 5-year plan (2008-13) which is informed by longer-term sector master-plans. The SP is not reviewed or updated on an annual basis.

The strategic plan is informed by elements of the ministry's relevant NPPs, which are: the *National Energy Supply Program (NESP)* and the *National Water and Natural Resource Development Program*.

The recently developed 4 Year Action Plan has not significantly influenced the ministry's medium-term planning.

2) Results Frameworks

The Strategic Plan does not have a Performance Monitoring (Results Monitoring) Framework (PMF). There is no other PMF used by the Ministry to monitor its overall performance.

The ministry has developed some results and indicators which it includes in its BC2 but feels that it needs technical assistance in developing a ministry-wide Performance Monitoring Framework and system.

There is no institution-wide results-based performance monitoring system in place. M&E systems exist only at the level of large individual projects or programs (e.g. The 3 major energy projects implemented by GFA, and the 5 major water projects). The two M&E directorates (Water and Energy) receive the project reports and collate these and send them to the senior management.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual institution-wide operational plans are prepared (including schedules), reportedly based on the strategic plan – these are only finalized once the decisions on the approval of the funding of the proposed projects is known.

The ministry does not have a documented system in place for appraising and selecting projects.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Quarterly and annual activity implementation progress reports are produced – these are not broken down by province.

Annual and quarterly performance reports are produced which include information on output achievement (reportedly including both quantitative and qualitative data) but contain no information on outcome achievement. Annual Reports only sometimes refer to the annual targets presented in the strategic and annual plans.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

There is no standard ministry approach to conducting internal performance reviews.

There are no ministry-level performance reviews conducted, either on a quarterly or annual basis. However internal reviews are sometimes conducted for the large donor-funded programs and projects.

Ministry staff report that overall ministry-level performance assessment and lesson learning events are conducted each year. If this is true they must be based on project-level performance reports and not on assessing the performance in achieving institution-wide results as PMFs don't exist at this level.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

The ministry has no evaluation policy. No ministry-owned system of contracting independent reviews of the ministry's overall performance or of its major programs and sub-programs. However external reviews are sometimes conducted of donor-funded major programs and projects (e.g. NESP; IRDP).

7) Data Collection and Management

Surveys are conducted by specific projects as and when required but there is no regular survey conducted as part of the ministry-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system. There is no ministry-wide M&E data management system.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

The ministry is a Tier 3 CBR ministry but support has not started yet. There appears to be a strong need to support institutional capacity-building in the area of M&E but the CBR support program does not currently cover this.

Overall

- The ministry has not progressed very far in establishing institution-wide results-based performance monitoring and evaluation systems, although there are reportedly a number of good quality M&E systems operating at the level of individual large projects (e.g. hydroelectric energy projects) or groups of projects (e.g. IRDP) (though this review hasn't assessed these).
- The ministry representatives are very aware of the need to significantly improve its performance monitoring and evaluation particularly through integrating outcome monitoring and evaluation into its work.
- Ministry staff state that they would like M&E institutional capacity-building to be supported under CBR but currently it is not covered. It is not clear why this is the case.

Note: Ministry representatives state that their performance report clients/users in government and Parliament focus mostly on the budget execution rate of the ministry rather than on their performance in delivering results.

Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP)

1) Strategic Planning

A draft strategic plan (2010-15) was prepared but never officially adopted, although it is reported to be used as a key reference for annual planning. Whilst two levels of objectives are presented the document does not have clear measureable results. It is not costed.

Annual planning was also based on the NEIEP (NPP) up until it finished in 2013. There has been no guidance from MoEc on whether there should be a successor to the NEIEP, although a proposal to develop a new one is being considered by the ministry, in which case a revised 5 year business plan would have to be prepared, and this would in turn require the program and sub-program structure to be revised.

2) Results Frameworks

There was no Performance Monitoring (or Results Monitoring) Framework for the ministry at the time of data-collection in December 2013.

The CBR framework contains some ministry-level performance indicators but is mostly focused on internal capacity development indicators – there is substantial room for improvement of these.

There are some project-level results monitoring frameworks in use but there is little familiarity with these at the level of the finance and policy directorates.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual plans are prepared with reference to the (draft) strategic plan and includes a monthly (?) implementation schedule and (reportedly) annual activity completion milestones.

Project appraisal and selection prior to inclusion in budget proposals is (reportedly) guided by a ministry project appraisal and selection system.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Quarterly reports are produced for the ministry which report on annual plan activity execution (quantity and quality) and budget expenditure. This does not report on progress towards results achievement.

The ministry is not implementing a system of results monitoring and reporting. Annual performance reports focus on operational plan implementation progress (including implementation issues and recommendations) but do not report on results achievement. There is only one annual report, which is mainly intended for external audiences.

The quarterly and annual performance reports submitted to MoF and MoEc are managed by the Finance Dept and there seems to a lack of ownership and perceived utility in the information supplied, indicating a possible need to revised the design of the reports and also to substantially improve capacity-building and support in this area.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

The ministry does not have a system of conducting internal participatory performance reviews but does conduct quarterly review meetings with external stakeholders such as donors (not clear if with multiple stakeholders or individual ones – project steering committees?). These meetings with external stakeholders reportedly review progress in implementing activity plans (the annual plan) but do not review results achievement using any performance monitoring data.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

There is no ministry policy regarding independent program and sub-program reviews or evaluations. Some external program reviews have been conducted in recent years (these have been donor-driven) and these have had significant influence on the ministry's policies and strategies.

7) Data Collection and Management

The ministry has systems in place for collecting and managing (through a MIS) basic data in relation to work-plan activity implementation but not for data required to monitor results achievement indicators.

There is no process or system for managing lessons learned from project and program execution.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

There is no planning or M&E unit in the ministry. Planning and M&E functions are handled by staff of the Policy Directorate.

However there are plans to establish an M&E Directorate in the next couple of years.

No M&E manual or guidelines are used to support planning and M&E work. It is intended to use support from CBR to help introduce basic results-based planning and performance monitoring and reporting systems (but no details are provided). There is no mechanism established to link or share experiences and approaches between the various TA-support projects in the ministry.

Overall

The ministry appears to be at a very early stage in the development and use of results-based monitoring and evaluation and reporting systems.

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled

1) Strategic Planning

The ministry has a strategic plan which covers the period from 2013 to 2016, which is costed and reportedly reviewed regularly, and used as the basis for annual planning.

There is a need to review the ministry's program and sub-program structure in order to more closely align it with the strategic plan.

2) Results Frameworks

There is no ministry-level results monitoring (or performance monitoring) framework, although the ministry was reportedly currently working on one. The National Skills Development Program was reported to have a results monitoring framework.

3) Annual Operational Planning

Annual program-based (using BC2) operational plans are produced and include activity completion targets.

4) Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Monthly activity implementation reports are produced against this plan, and quarterly program-based progress reports are produced which include quantitative and qualitative data on activities.

Quarterly reports are activity-based. Annual performance reports are output-based but do not report on outcome achievement.

The ministry suffers from the problem of having to produce multiple annual reports (each requiring slightly different information) for different agencies and bodies.

5) Internal Performance Reviewing

The ministry has no system of requiring and supporting the conduct of regular internal program or sub-program level performance reviews aimed at the collective consideration by key implementors (or implementors and other key stakeholders) of performance information and the generation and dissemination of implementation lessons.

Some specific projects conduct performance reviews on an ad-hoc basis.

6) External Reviews and Evaluations

External reviews are only conducted for selected donor-funded projects and programs.

The ministry does not have an evaluation policy or guidelines document.

7) Data Collection and Management

There is no ministry-wide performance monitoring and reporting database system. Activity implementation monitoring systems exist for the NSDP and for the Pensions Project.

No lessons learned management system exists for the ministry.

8) M&E Resourcing and capacities

- The ministry has a M&E directorate with 22 staff. It has recently acquired TA support through the CTAP. No significant M&E training has been provided in recent years.
- It has a M&E policy document (to be reviewed) but no M&E manual for program staff.

There is a strong desire for a substantial program of capacity-building for the M&E Directorate.

Overall

Whilst there appears to be some areas of results-based planning and performance monitoring and evaluation within the ministry (notably in the NSDP) the ministry is relatively weak in terms of cross-institutional performance planning, monitoring and

3.2 Overall Summary of Findings

3.2.1 Strategic Plans

Most of the ministries/agencies have some kind of strategic plan. However, in most cases these appear to have been only vaguely referred to in the production of annual operational plans, and in no case did the review team find a strategic plan being reviewed and revised annually based on implementation experiences and changes in the external environment. In some cases some quite good strategic plans were produced (such as in the case of the MoPH) but, probably because they were produced by TA support projects or short-term consultants these appear to have not had a sufficient level of ownership of the management and staff.

The ministries and agencies are mostly at a very incipient stage in terms of the use of planning and plan implementation monitoring systems. There appears to be a lack of understanding amongst ministry senior management regarding how strategic plans should be used to produce annual operational plans, how they should be reviewed and revised on an annual basis, and how they could be used to negotiate support programs with development partners. Many of the technical staff interviewed for this study were of the opinion that their ministry was currently very weak in the area of planning processes and would appreciate technical capacity-development support in this area. There is therefore a need to provide a strong program of support to ministries and agencies in this area.

There would be a lot of benefit derived by ministries from the Government having a standard format for strategic and annual operational plans as this would support capacity-development processes and would enable a clear set of standards to be applied to all agencies. It would also support the use of IT systems in planning and plan implementation monitoring processes. Such standardized formats and processes (together with accompanying guidelines) could be developed as a component of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) (see below).

The urgent need to strengthen strategic planning within ministries has been recognized by a number of donors who have been providing capacity-building support in the area of planning and M&E including AusAid (now DFAT) and GIZ. However an important component of good strategic planning is the adjustment of the strategic plan to the most likely level of medium-term resource availability, and therefore requires improvements in the government's medium-term budgeting capabilities.

3.2.2 Performance Monitoring Frameworks

The situation regarding Performance Monitoring Frameworks (PFM) is quite varied across the institutions reviewed¹. In some cases the ministries/agencies did not have an overall PMF for the institution but most institutions have several projects or sub-programs with PMFs². Where they did exist they often required some significant review and strengthening. Common problems encountered were the confusion of outputs with outcomes and of activities with outputs, the weakness of indicator specification and the lack of clarity on sources of data. The absence of baseline data is also a major problem and this affects the quality of performance target setting.

¹ PMFs are tables presenting key performance indicators and sources of data for the institution's strategic plan results - outputs, outcomes and overall goals.

² Although some institutions have PMFs produced in order to obtain support from the CBR program these are frameworks which focus on some internal institutional strengthening areas and are not full service-delivery focused performance frameworks.

As in the case of strategic plans there is a need for the central government to develop a standard basic format for Performance Monitoring Frameworks together with a very clear set of guidelines on how to develop them (including examples of good practice). There is also an urgent need for the Government to establish a technical assistance facility staffed with qualified people which could both conduct ministry/agency-specific capacity-building, act as a centralizing and dissemination point for good knowledge products in the area of Performance M&E, and quality assure key plans and M&E documents produced by the institutions.

3.2.3 National Priority Programs

Almost all of the ministries/agencies reviewed were contributing towards the achievement of one or two NPPs. In a few cases more than one institution was working towards one common NPP but in most cases these were being entirely delivered by only one ministry. In the case of E-Afghanistan the NPP constituted one of the programs being implemented (MoCIT). In this sense the basic objective of the NPPs – to act as a set of nationally prioritized and aligned strategies which would substantially influence the strategies of individual BUs – appeared to be working. The NPPs were also beneficial in that they generally have quite good performance monitoring frameworks, and in some cases these appear to have influenced ministry/agency frameworks.

However in several cases the NPPs have come to the end of their 3-year lives and the relevant ministries were waiting to see whether they would be followed by new updated programs. The lack of clarity about this question was also contributing to some institutions not wanting to renew expired strategic plans as they did not want to go through a strategic planning process only to then find that a new NPP is developed which would require them to re-do the plan.

Whilst all of the ministries interviewed had been consulted on the content of the new 4-Year Action Plan, which is intended to provide the overarching framework for ministry and agency policy-making and strategic planning in the coming years, there was still a lot of uncertainty about what will happen in relation to the NPPs and the new national development plan (the '4 Year Action Plan')³. There is therefore an urgent need for the MoEc to provide clarity to the BUs regarding how they should align their strategic plans to the higher-level national development plans.

3.2.4 BU Program and Sub-Program Structures

For approximately half of the ministries interviewed the current structure of programs and sub-programs does not appear to be too meaningful to ministries in terms of the definition of a program, which is a coherent set of activities/projects designed to achieve a specific service-delivery objective. In several cases interviewed ministry staff indicated that they did not feel that their current ministry structure of programs and sub-programs adequately reflected what they were doing and the strategy through which they were doing it. Whilst they thought that their program/sub-program structure should be revised they did not want to engage in a revision process because they anticipated having to go through a difficult negotiation process with the MoF. Ministries/agencies which require a review of their program and sub-program structures include MoPH, MAIL and IDLG.

In reality, the MoF-imposed requirement that there be no more than 5 programs has resulted in ministries simply categorizing all the areas supervised by each Deputy Minister as a program, thus defeating the purpose of programs to some extent. In fact it is the currently-specified sub-programs which are far more coherent programs in the proper sense of the term. A visit to a selection of the major ministries will quickly reveal that it is only really the sub-programs that constitute the focus of a ministry's planning and management of service delivery. An

³ This was submitted to Cabinet in May and is presumably intended to be the follow-on overall plan from the ANDS.

example of this is the Health Services Provision Program of the MoPH which incorporates a number of 'real' programs for the ministry.

It is unfortunate that the current guidelines from the MoF to the Budgetary Units recommend that a sub-program have only one output and no outcomes because it is actually important for an adequate results structure to be developed for each sub-program, and this requires at least one outcome and often several outputs. It will be necessary to revise these requirements/recommendations as the Program Budgeting reform is taken forward in order to establish adequate performance monitoring and reporting systems for sub-programs.

3.2.5 Project Planning and Appraisal systems

The general finding from the institutions interviewed was that the different ministries/agencies were using their own very different approaches to planning and appraising projects. Whilst the review did not look at specific internal guidelines and formats it appeared to be the case that approaches even varied across programs and projects within one agency. Only in a couple of cases did there appear to be a common approach adopted for the whole ministry.

The M&E systems assessment heard many ministry technical staff complain that capital projects were not being identified and selected based on their contribution to the achievement of program and sub-program results, and that the future operational costs of additional capital projects were not being considered in the project selection process.

The reviewers were often informed that even where a basic process was in place (with guidelines) for planning, appraising and selecting projects this was often either ignored or manipulated in order to ensure that particular projects (usually infrastructure projects) were approved for financing. This highlights the need for both the strengthening and better use of strategic planning processes (see above) and for the second phase of the Program Budgeting reform to be pursued, in order to fully integrate the planning of projects and activities into fully costed program and sub-program plans.

There was no evidence of recent standard government guidelines having been provided to the BUs by the central government (either the MoEc or any other agency). This is an area that should be addressed urgently⁴.

3.2.6 Annual Operational Plans

The preparation of annual operational plans is a normal part of most ministry/agencies' business processes. However the formats used tend to differ from institution to institution and the way in which the plan execution is monitored and reported also differ. For example, the practice of clearly linking the AOP activities to Strategic Plan activities and results is not uniformly applied across the institutions. Similarly not all AOPs set clear annual activity completion targets which facilitate overall plan execution monitoring and some BUs appear to plan activity implementation by quarter whilst others do so by month.

As in the case of strategic planning there would be substantial benefits to be obtained from the Government adopting a standard format for AOPs and to the provision of guidelines for BU managers on both the preparation of AOPs and monthly, quarterly and annual monitoring and reporting of AOP implementation, including the provision of a standard quarterly and annual report format. This would help establish clear quality standards and would minimize the effort required to establish a core body of government staff qualified in the standards and guidelines. Such standardized formats and processes (together with accompanying guidelines) could be combined with similar ones for strategic planning (see above) and included as a component of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) (see below).

⁴ This is an area which is currently being supported by the DAFA III program in MoPH, MoEd, MAIL and MoEW.

3.2.7 Performance Planning in the Annual Budget Submission

Following the guidelines provided by the MoF the ministries/agencies (i.e. the Budgetary Units) specify the results which they expect to achieve at the end of the forthcoming year and the two subsequent years. They are required to specify one outcome for each program (but no outcome for the sub-programs) and one output per sub-program. For each result (outcome or output) they are required to specify one performance indicator together with yearly performance targets for this.

Representatives of a number of the ministries/agencies reviewed were of the opinion that the type of performance information contained in the BC2 was not very meaningful for them, and that the performance reports they submitted on a quarterly and annual basis were not very informative in terms of how well their programs (and particularly their sub-programs) were progressing. Although the institutions generally did not elaborate in detail their problems with the performance information in the Budget Circular 2 (BC2) form it is clear from a review of the MoF requirements that the current design of the BC2 and the quarterly and annual performance reports does not permit the BUs to adequately communicate the performance of their programs and sub-programs.

Given that in reality it is the sub-programs in the BC2 which are the entities which most correspond to the definition of a coherent program of activities intended to deliver a particular service it is here that the performance information should focus. Hence the ministry/agency should be able to include the minimum information necessary to communicate its intended performance. This would require it to specify at least one sub-program outcome result, and at least two output results, given that a service delivery system usually delivers more than one type of service. Additionally, for each of these results (outcome and outputs) two performance indicators should be permitted. In order to determine whether a service is being delivered for example (the output) it is necessary to know the scale (quantity) of the service delivery (such as number of primary schools operational) as well as the quality of the service delivery (such as the % of the schools which are staffed with the minimum required level of qualified teachers). If the quantitative indicator is used without a quality one then the budgeting and ministry management systems will prioritize service delivery units over ensuring the respecting of basic service delivery quality standards.

It is strongly recommended therefore that as part of the development of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) there be a review of the performance information requirements required by the MoF, both in terms of the BC2s and the quarterly and annual performance monitoring reports.

3.2.8 Performance Monitoring and Reporting Systems

In only a small minority of ministries were there programs or sub-programs where a performance monitoring system existed (as summarized in a PMF – see above) and was being implemented. This was most obviously the case with the primary and secondary schools programs of the MoEd and also the basic and secondary health services delivery programs of the MoPH. Particular programs such as the National Solidarity Program of MRRD and the skills development program of MoLSAMD also had well-developed monitoring systems.

Whilst the review was not able to go down to the level of reviewing specific data collection and management processes for individual programs and sub-programs in a clear majority of cases there did not appear to be structured and reliable data-collection systems in place even for those outputs presented by the BUs in the budget submission forms to the MoF. Activity completion and output delivery information is presented in regular management reports but in many cases the reliability of this information is in doubt due to the absence of the use of adequate data collection and checking protocols.

It was much more difficult to find cases where BUs were systematically collecting monitoring data for outcome indicators than cases of outputs, which is to be expected given the level of development of M&E capacities in the government, but this major weakness (the main weakness identified in this study) is the principal stumbling block to the move to a more service-delivery and results-based program budgeting system. This will require the clear allocation of funding to M&E in BU budgeting processes, very substantial capacity-building and the establishment of institutional mechanisms at the centre of government that can both establish standards and monitor ministry and agencies' level of compliance with these.

There were very few reported cases of ministries preparing overall ministry-level quarterly and annual performance reports for the exclusive use of the ministry's senior management in quarterly and annual management meetings or planning sessions. Most institutions prepared quarterly and annual performance reports for external Government agencies such as the MoEc, the MoF, the OAA etc. It is generally a good practice to clearly separate the production of internal performance reports (which would be expected to be produced by the M&E department) from those intended for audiences external to the ministry (which could be produced by a different unit or the communications department/unit) so as to enable senior management to have access to reports which fully identify performance weaknesses and clearly state the assessed reasons for these, so that they can take appropriate management decisions based on these.

Ministry/agency annual performance reports currently tend to focus on reporting activities completed (sometimes with some output delivery information) together with challenges encountered. Reports rarely systematically report on the progress made during the year in implementing the Annual Operational Plan in terms of activity completion targets. A small number of annual reports, such as those of MoLSAMD and MoE systematically report performance in delivering outputs.

As stated elsewhere in this report several ministries/agencies were of the opinion that the performance reports which they are required to submit to MoF and MoEc do not enable a sufficiently rich performance picture to be communicated and that the format of these reports should be revised. As these reports are designed to report on the performance targets presented in the BC2s this revision should be part of a review and re-design of the narrative sections of the BC2 forms.

Multiple performance reporting requirements by different bodies

A major problem which is shared by all the ministries and agencies and which is well known is that of multiple reporting to multiple report audiences. The institutions interviewed complain that they have to write many different types of quarterly and annual performance reports for different requesting bodies. Whilst the main audience for such reports is the MoEc and MoF (notably the budget performance reports collected and analysed by the BPMU of the MoF) other institutions also request reports from the BUs either on a regular or ad-hoc basis. For example, the OAA requires its own report format to be completed and submitted so as to enable it to monitor policy and executive decision implementation. Additionally the Lower House of the National Assembly requires reports according to its own format, as does the Upper House. There are other reporting obligations in addition to these. In early 2014 the BPMU of the MoF began work on developing one standard quarterly report format which would provide all of the information required by these bodies in one coherent format. Such common reporting formats (together with accompanying guidelines) would be a component of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) which the government is planning to develop and roll out in the coming years.

3.2.9 Data Management Systems

Of the institutions covered in this review it was only the MoEd and the MoPH that appeared to have well-developed databases which enabled the management of performance monitoring data and the production of

standard and customized reports. However, whilst these databases were not reviewed for this study it appears that even these are designed to manage a specific sub-set of data relating to the delivery of certain services such as those of primary or secondary education, rather than databases which systematically cover all of the results and performance indicators contained in an institution-wide Performance Monitoring Framework. None of the institutions reviewed had an operational institution-wide performance monitoring and reporting database.

The development of a standard database to manage planning and performance data is planned as a component of the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System. This should greatly facilitate the planning and M&E work of the BUs.

3.2.10 BU Internal Performance Reviewing and Management

One or two of the institutions surveyed conduct quarterly collective workshop-style events to assess progress made in implementing the annual operational plan and to review information on output delivery. Good practice is to hold such events quarterly or semi-annually/semestraly (6-monthly). In the cases where such events occur (and sometimes they are preceded by similar events at the provincial level amongst the provincial teams) it appears that they are mostly implementation-progress review events rather than results achievement review events. That is, they look at the rate of activity completion from the annual operational plan, the reasons for this progress and remedial measures to be taken to get the plan back on track.

In some cases this is also done on an annual basis, where the focus is the implementation of the strategic plan – which is very good practice. The annual reviews which the review team encountered appear to have been implementation-progress based and not events which are focused on achieving a collective understanding of what the data is saying about overall program and sub-program success – i.e. outcome and impact achievement.

On at least an annual basis (and ideally on a six-monthly basis) the information collected for the institution's programs' key performance indicators should be presented to program technical staff and management together with an analysis of the overall progress being made in delivering the outputs and achieving the outcome targets, and the data interpreted to achieve a shared understanding of performance and appropriate measures to address performance issues. Some of the donor-funded programs within some ministries conduct this type of internal stakeholder performance review workshops, sometimes in preparation for annual external reviews, and sometimes as part of the external reviews themselves.

3.2.11 Independent Reviews and Evaluations

Independent reviews of programs occurred frequently for most programs which are funded by international development partners of the 10 ministry/agencies reviewed. These were mostly either annual program reviews, or mid or end of-term program reviews. Only in the case of the National Solidarity Program was a full impact evaluation seen although one is also being planned for the MoLSAMD pensions program.

The representatives of the ministries who were interviewed were generally of the opinion that whilst the development partners will sometimes go through the motions of involvement of the ministry management and staff in the review – in terms of consultation on ToRs, selection of consultants and consultations on final products, there is actually very little sense of ownership of the ministries over these reviews, and as a consequence they often have very little impact in terms of influencing the institutions' strategies or in learning real lessons for application in other programs or subsequent phases of the reviewed program. In other words, the level of involvement and empowerment of the ministry staff in the management of the reviews and evaluations is often too superficial to ensure an adequate level of impact.

This problem is compounded by the fact that the reviews are often conducted only at the level of one project or sub-program, covering only the activities which were financed by the donor leading the review.

Additionally, each donor tends to have its own approach to designing and implementing such reviews and will often insist on this approach being used. The net result of this is that the ministry incurs a great deal of 'transaction costs' for each review and must repeat the investment for each different project or program.

The solution to the above problem is for the ministry to develop its own Evaluation/Review Policy in which guidance is provided on when reviews should be conducted, the type of approaches to be used, and the protocols to be followed in terms of the management and oversight of the review/evaluation, including the dissemination of the results and obtaining management feedback. Such a policy could also oblige projects and smaller programs to be reviewed/evaluated as part of one larger review/evaluation conducted at the ministry sub-program or even program level.

Such reviews/evaluations would potentially have much greater impact on the institution and on its learning, as they would involve more active engagement from the ministry's management and senior technical staff. However they would also require a higher degree of flexibility from the donors in terms of control over the process and the results. In the M&E Diagnostic study no ministry/agency was found to have an Evaluation/Review Policy in place.

3.2.12 M&E Structures and Capacities

The review has noted a very clear 'waking up' to M&E within the ministries and agencies assessed. Whilst certain ministries have been hosting some donor-supported programs for several years which appear to have had reasonably satisfactory M&E systems in place (as 'islands of good practice') there is now a growing realization that there is a need to institutionalize this capability within the core architecture of the ministries/agencies. This was clearly noticed in MoLSAMD for example.

Where ministry-wide integrated M&E departments have been created they still suffer from being seriously under-resourced. No ministry is financing M&E as a separate activity in its annual budget submission to MoF so this makes it hard for M&E departments/units to plan and conduct the requisite amount and type of data collection to ensure effective M&E systems. Of the ministries and agencies reviewed only MoCIT, MoEW and MoMP still have no institution-wide M&E unit or department in place.

Fragmented M&E systems within ministries

It has been difficult for M&E (and Planning) directorates or departments to get all ministry/agency programs and sub-programs (including donor-supported projects) to conform to certain common approaches and standards in terms of M&E system design, reviews and evaluations, and reporting. This was cited as a major problem at MoLSAMD for example. MRRD has invested a lot in developing M&E institutional structures at the level of each of its 5 programs as well as for the ministry as a whole, but even here it now recognizes the need to move towards one integrated cross-ministry approach to performance planning, monitoring and evaluation.

MAIL appears to suffer to a large extent from having a lot of different donor-supported project-level M&E systems with very little alignment and coordination of M&E at the overall ministry level. In the case of the MoPH planning and M&E is conducted separately by different programs and it has been difficult to subsequently combine these into coherent plans or performance reports. The MoPH has just recently tried to deal with this serious problem by developing a very large program which will be 'basket-funded' by a large pool of donors. This approach offers substantial opportunities to improve the quality of program management as it will allow the integration of a lot of projects and programs into one integrated program with its own program-wide planning and performance M&E systems. It is recommended that other ministries follow this experience closely to see how they could apply a similar approach in their institutions.

It takes time for standard systems and practices to spread across the major and separate 'silos' of a large institution, but a key requirement for such improvements to occur is the understanding of their importance by the top management.

Senior Management Support to M&E

The level of understanding of ministry/agency senior management of performance monitoring systems appears to be a major weakness in Afghanistan at present. It would appear that most of the ministers, deputy ministers and director-generals do not really understand what institution-wide M&E systems are, what is required in order to establish and maintain them, and what benefits they can deliver for the investment made.

However as a functional M&E system is a core component of an institution's capacity to be transparent and accountable to the leadership of the Government and to the general public it is there will always (in all countries) be some leaders who will not allow an M&E system to function. This in turn is a strong argument for the Government to create and actively support an empowered and resourced central office which is tasked with establishing M&E standards, developing standard tools and practices and overseeing the quality of M&E system development and implementation in ministries and agencies. Such an office will in turn only be really effective as long as the Government in office is prepared to finance it, politically protect it, and give it the power to have real leverage over individual ministries and agencies.

Hence the introduction of a standard approach to developing and operating a ministry/agency M&E system and the oversight of such a system by a strong central office is a major way of addressing the risk of the undermining of effective performance monitoring systems within individual institutions. This therefore constitutes another strong justification for the introduction of a Government-wide Performance M&E System.

As stated earlier an additional constraint to the development and adoption of one integrated institution-wide M&E system is the tendency of some donors to insist that the projects or programs that they fund should have a particular M&E and reporting system in place which is compatible with their own institutional systems. Whilst this may appear to be a major problem at first, once a ministry/agency can show that its own M&E systems and reports conform to good international practices and standards donors are much more likely to relax their requirements and to use the information and data from the government systems, provided that they are able to periodically validate this through independent reviews.

Independence of M&E Units

In one or two cases the lack of adequate independence of the M&E unit or department was raised as an issue. This is a major problem experienced in public sector institutions in many countries. If the M&E system is to be credible and therefore to retain support it has to generate information and recommendations for management which can be used to deal with under-performing programs and to maximize learning from both successful and unsuccessful programs. However if significant pressure is brought to bear on the M&E unit by senior management to under-emphasize poor performance and to not clearly identify the reasons for this then it will be increasingly seen as just another bureaucratic unit which does not make much difference, and will eventually have its resourcing and internal political support reduced, thus ensuring the failure of the system. For this reason it is very important to have senior management formally agree procedures for ensuring a sufficient degree of independence of the unit, such as having it report directly to the minister (or at least a Deputy Minister), and procedures for distribution and provision of management responses to its reports.

Staff capacities in M&E

The final institutional issue facing the ministries and agencies surveyed was that of individual staffing and staff technical knowledge, skills and experience in M&E. This is a well-recognized problem and the government is using

programs such as the CTAP and the CBR to try to help address it. However it was surprising for the review team to note that at the time of the review in almost no ministry/agency reviewed was the Capacity-Building for Results (CBR) program being used to support the area of planning, monitoring and evaluation. It was not clear why this was but does reinforce the point made above regarding the lack of understanding of the ministries' senior management of the critical importance of having strong planning and M&E systems. In one or two cases when the review team raised this issue the ministry staff responded that following the awareness-raising caused by the M&E systems review they would seek to modify their CBR support request to specifically include M&E capacity development.

The extreme scarcity of ministry/agency staff who are experienced and skilled in the development and management of large program M&E systems is a major constraint, which requires remedial measures in addition to initiatives such as technical assistance programs and the use of salary top-ups for *Tashkeel* positions⁵. Even where ministries have built some capacity within planning and M&E departments through the use of training courses and through involvement with donor-supported projects or programs the younger trained staff are easily lost to local donor offices or NGOs.

Hence, if the development and institutionalization of a government-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system is to be successful, there will be a need for one or more quite large-scale, highly structured and long-term capacity-building programs in M&E. Such programs would be likely to involve the combination of training and coaching (possibly using the services of regional bodies such as CLEAR South Asia), institutional twinning between ministries/agencies in Afghanistan and similar ones in more advanced countries in the region (e.g. Sri Lanka, Malaysia or Turkey) and facilitated on-line courses and communities of practice. It would probably be necessary for such a major capacity-building program to be supported by a long-term TA project.

⁵ There is probably a need for the IARCSC to review the structure of the *Tashkeel* to see whether greater clarity and professional recognition can be given to M&E specialists. This was not a matter which was looked at by this review.

Summary of Assessment Findings

a) Strategic Plans

1. Strategic plans frequently (but not always) exist but are not used as the basis for performance monitoring and annual planning
2. Strategic planning processes are often donor-driven and are not integrated into normal BU business processes
3. There is no standard GoIRA approach or guidelines to BU strategic planning and no significant central agency support to BUs in this area.
4. Ministries and agencies urgently require guidance from the central government on strategic and annual operational planning processes and on the management of the NPPs.
5. It is difficult to link the program/sub-program results presented in BU budget submission documents to ministry/agency strategic plans.
6. Although it is clear that the NPPs have been integrated into BU strategic plans it is difficult to clearly see the read across from ministry/agency strategic plan results to NPP results.

b) Performance Monitoring Frameworks

7. Not all the BU strategic plans had Performance Monitoring Frameworks, and where these existed they were generally weak in terms of results specification, indicator specification, clarity on data sources and base-line data.

c) BU Program and Sub-Program Structures

8. A large number of ministries/agencies need to conduct a comprehensive review and restructuring of their program and sub-program structures in order to reflect their current strategies.
9. Ministries and agencies have little incentive to conduct a review of their program and sub-program structures because they are not currently applying results-based management approaches to these.
10. The high-level ministry/agency programs are usually not real programs aimed at achieving a specific service delivery objective but are aggregations of distinct areas of work which are usually under the oversight of one deputy minister. The BU sub-programs (in terms of budget submissions to MoF) are usually real programs in this sense.

d) Project Planning and Appraisal systems

11. Project appraisal and selection within ministries and agencies is generally done without the use of an agreed and systematic process and is only very weakly related to program and sub-program strategies.
12. The future operating and maintenance costs of capital projects are usually not systematically considered as part of the appraisal and selection process, thus risking the possibility of the projects not being sustainable.

e) Annual Operational Plans

13. Ministries and agencies use different approaches and formats for the preparation and monitoring of execution of annual operational plans.

f) Performance Planning in the Annual Budget Submission

14. The current format and guidelines provided to budgetary units for the submission of annual budget requests does not allow for sufficient performance plan information to be provided against which BUs can subsequently report performance. Outcomes and multiple outputs should be permitted for each sub-program, and up to two indicators per result (whether outcome or output).

g) Performance Monitoring and Reporting Systems

15. Only a minority of programs had structured and operational performance monitoring and evaluation systems in place.
16. Data collection and reporting processes were very weak even for reporting on the outputs programmed in the BU BC2 submissions to the MoF, thus undermining the credibility of some of the information presented in BU budget performance reports.
17. There were very few cases of ministries/agencies having structured and functioning data collection processes in place for collecting data on indicators of program outcome achievement. These only existed for a small minority of programs and sub-programs which are receiving substantial donor financial and technical support.
18. The practice of M&E units preparing program and sub-program performance reports for internal management consumption only (containing clear and frank assessments of performance and problems) to be used as a basis for BU performance management and learning activities, is very rare. Quarterly and annual performance reports are prepared largely for external accountability purposes (to MoEc, MoF, OAA etc.).
19. Quarterly and annual BU performance reports generally do not clearly show the level of implementation of the planned annual (operational) activity plan (including in terms of activity completion targets), but are usually only narrative descriptions of activities completed.
20. Representatives of several ministries believed that the information submitted to the MoEc and MoF in their budget performance reports was not sufficient to be able to obtain a reasonable idea of the performance of the programs and sub-programs in question.
21. Ministry staff felt overwhelmed by having to produce multiple performance reports (of slightly different formats) to different external state bodies.

h) Performance databases

22. None of the ministries/agencies assessed had institution-wide performance monitoring databases containing results-based (outcome and output) performance plan and baseline data and performance achievement data.

i) Internal Performance Review events

23. A range of different practices is used by the ministries/agencies in the conduct of periodic internal performance reviews. Most of the ministries do not conduct periodic ministry or program-level review events where M&E data is assessed to arrive at judgments about program performance and the overall performance of the institution in implementing its strategic plan. This is done however, for some donor-supported programs (which are projects or sub-programs for the BUs). A number of institutions conduct quarterly and annual operational plan implementation reviews however.

j) Independent Reviews and Evaluations

24. External reviews are frequently conducted for donor-funded projects and programs but only cover the work supported by these programs. There are very few cases of whole BU programs or even sub-programs being periodically independently reviewed for the benefit of the BU management.
25. The level of involvement and empowerment of the ministry staff in the management of the reviews and evaluations is often too superficial to ensure an adequate level of impact.
26. Widely differing approaches and protocols are used in the conduct of these external reviews and the level of transaction costs for ministry staff is high. There is a need for more standardized approaches to be used so as to facilitate greater BU involvement and empowerment in the processes.

k) M&E Structures and Capacities

27. There is a clear trend within the ministries/agencies reviewed to create or strengthen M&E units in response to growing pressure for them to better account for their use of resources and the results obtained.
28. There appears to be a very mixed level of understanding of and commitment to institution-wide performance M&E systems amongst the institutions' senior officials and management.
29. Ministries and agencies are still not funding M&E as a separate line item in their program/sub-program operating costs and M&E is mostly too under-resourced to enable appropriate data-collection and management processes to be implemented for key performance indicators data.
30. M&E processes and systems are highly fragmented across the ministries/agencies as they are usually developed for specific programs and projects. The capacity and power of central ministry planning or M&E departments to consolidate these into unified institution-wide systems is weak.
31. Where central M&E departments/units exist some of them are experiencing problems in having the freedom to openly report real levels of program and sub-program performance and to identify explanatory factors, due to internal pressures placed upon them to downplay serious performance issues in performance reports. In order to function effectively M&E units need mechanisms to protect their technical independence.
32. Levels of technical qualifications and experience in performance planning and M&E within the ministries/agencies is generally very low. This is a major constraint to M&E system development. Some programs and one or two institutions have M&E technical assistance support but these are a small minority.

4. Recommendations

Based on the findings presented above the following recommendations are made:

Recommendation 1. The National Development Planning Framework should be reviewed and strengthened.

The national development planning system should be reviewed and revised or clarified where necessary and the system presented in one guideline document. This would be likely to cover four main components:

- 1) The over-arching national development plan (previously ANDS; currently 4-Year Action Plan);
- 2) Sectoral and thematic development plans (currently the NPPs);
- 3) Ministry/Agency (Budgetary Unit) strategic plans;
- 4) Provincial and District Development Plans.

The document would be produced by MoEc and would present a standard format and requirements for each type of plan (in terms of duration of plan; consultation and approval procedures; periodic plan review and reporting requirements; resourcing information etc.). It would also provide some guidance on how local government plans should link with ministry/agency plans, and how ministry/agency strategic plans should link to sectoral/thematic strategies. It should also include a clear glossary of terminology so that all levels of government use and understand different terms in the same way.

Detailed guidance on the performance monitoring and evaluation of sectoral/thematic and ministry/agency strategic plans would be developed as part of the proposed Government-wide Performance M&E System (GPMES), so would not need to be included here.

As is evident from the findings in this M&E Systems assessment many ministries and agencies are looking to MoEc to provide them with greater guidance in the area of planning. In order to be able to adequately respond to this the MoEc requires some additional institutional capacity strengthening⁶.

Recommendation 2. The Strategic Plans of the ministries/agencies (BUs) should be reviewed and strengthened

Using the proposed national development planning requirements and guidelines document (discussed above) the MoEc and MoF should review the strategic plans of all ministries/agencies and assess the extent to which they comply with the standards. Where BUs have no current strategic plan, or where such plans fall clearly short of the minimum requirements specific recommendations should be made to the institution and an agreement reached on its plan to respond to these.

The main objective of this work would be to ensure that each institution has a current strategic plan which is clearly linked to approved sectoral/thematic development plans (e.g. NPPs) and which includes a clear chain of expected results and well specified strategic activities and annual milestones and an adequate performance monitoring framework. Secondly it should ensure that these plans are adequately reviewed at least once a year and by using a sufficiently participatory approach involving key stakeholders, and that the results are incorporated into annual operational plans.

It is critically important that this ministry/agency strategic planning strengthening work occurs urgently as the current level of strategic planning in GoIRA agencies appears to be very weak and the success of the government's plans to introduce a government-wide M&E system and to strengthen medium-term program budgeting depend

⁶ During the conduct of the M&E systems assessment exercise MoEc and MoF staff discussed the possibility of developing a specific Strategic Planning systems strengthening project for possible external financing and technical support.

upon this. Additionally the required process of reviewing and revising program and sub-program structures in the budgetary units requires an up-to-date and 'fit-for-purpose' strategic plan to be in place.

Recommendation 3. Project planning and appraisal systems in ministries/agencies should be strengthened

It is recommended that an updated set of project planning and appraisal guidelines be developed by MoEc and MoF, consulted upon with ministry representatives, and provided to all budgetary units together with appropriate training. This is an area of work which has been identified in MoF strategic planning processes as being very important for a number of MoF reforms including those of Program Budgeting, O&M and performance monitoring and evaluation. As MoEc is the lead central agency for guiding and supporting capital project development and selection it would be expected to lead this work⁷.

Recommendation 4. MoF and MoEc should review and revise the guidance provided to BUs on the specification of their program and sub-program structures.

The MoF and MoEc should review the current 'guidelines' provided to BUs on the maximum number of programs and sub-programs and should consider giving greater flexibility to them to identify programs and sub-programs which more clearly align with their strategic plans. In the ministries/agencies reviewed in this study the programs were frequently unrecognizable as programs in terms of the actual strategies of the BUs but appeared to be simply large baskets of programs (the sub-programs) used to aggregate budgetary information for the convenience of the MoF.

Recommendation 5. The structure of BU detailed budgetary submissions (BC2) should be comprehensively reviewed and revised.

The BC2 form should be revised in order to enable a clear performance plan to be presented for each sub-program. The current restriction on each sub-program having only one output and no outcome should be lifted and sub-programs should be presented with one major outcome and two key outputs. This would enable the sub-programs (which are still generally large and complex programs for the BUs) to cover two different services for example. Additionally, the BC2 should enable two key performance indicators to be specified for each output, thus enabling a physical scale indicator to be combined with a service delivery quality indicator. By introducing these changes the BC2 would be able to more clearly reflect the results delivery planning information contained in the BU's own plans, and the budget performance reports submitted to the MoF would be more easily produced based on the BU's own internal program performance monitoring reports.

Recommendation 6. The GoIRA (MoEc and MoF) should provide BUs with a set of minimum required standards for BU performance monitoring and evaluation systems and monitor their compliance with these, together with guidelines on how to meet these standards.

The key central government agencies involved in coordinating policy implementation, BU financing and performance management (MoF; MoEc; OAA) should agree what all ministries and agencies (BUs), above a certain minimum size, should have in terms of an institution-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system. This should relate to performance planning (the performance monitoring framework), plan implementation monitoring, results achievement monitoring, evaluation, lesson learning and progress and results reporting. These requirements should be accompanied by clear guidelines on how the institutions can comply with them, including the provision of formats and tools which could be used. A well-resourced and supported institutional mechanism should be established involving MoEc, MoF and possibly OAA, to develop the M&E system standards and guidelines and to build the capacity of the BUs to use these. The institution (a joint technical office) should also

⁷ The Australian aid-supported DAFA program is supporting this area of work in 4 ministries and is currently looking at the possibility of supporting MoEc in this area.

closely monitor the performance of the BUs (starting with the most important ones) in complying with these M&E system standards.

Recommendation 7. A set of standard performance reports should be developed which will enable budgetary units to provide the required performance information to all the major information demanding agencies.

The MoF and MoEc should develop one common set of quarterly, mid-year and annual performance reports which provide all the information required on a regular basis by the MoF, MoEc, OAA and the upper and lower houses of parliament. Such reports would need to be consulted with these institutions prior to their introduction, but once the unified set of performance reports are introduced no external agency should be permitted to require BUs to provide them with additional reports on their activities, spending and results. This is in order to reduce the multiple reports reporting burden on the budgetary units so that they can produce more data-rich, analytical and informative performance reports.

Recommendation 8. All BUs (above a certain size) should develop and adopt a review and evaluation policy.

Ministries and agencies should adopt policies which lay out how scarce review and evaluation resources should be used to provide performance and impact information on those programs and sub-programs of most strategic importance to them, including the mechanisms and processes to be used in planning, contracting (if relevant), governing and using the results of such studies. These documents should be used as the basis for agreements with donors to collaborate in resourcing and planning external/independent reviews so that they cover whole ministry programs or sub-programs and not just projects funded by particular donors. Such documents would also aim to ensure that a minimum set of quality standards are applied in the conduct of the reviews or evaluations. They would also be expected to result in a higher level of involvement and ownership of ministry management in the review cycle thus ensuring better use of the review/evaluation's results in ministry and program planning and management processes.

Recommendation 9. The work of the Budget Committee and its Budget Hearings process should be comprehensively reviewed and re-designed in order to base medium-term and annual budget allocation decisions much more on program and sub-program performance information.

The M&E systems assessment clearly identified a major problem in the current functioning of the Budget Committee and budget hearing system managed by the MoF (but including MoEc and a number of other institutions) (see findings section). If budgetary units are to be incentivized to develop and use fit-for-purpose planning and M&E systems they need to see that the central government values and uses the performance information which they provide, and that their program funding is in some way linked to this (although not in a direct formulaic manner).

Recommendation 10. Ministries/agencies should establish a Performance Monitoring Unit which conforms to a standard set of requirements.

Ministries and agencies with an annual budget above a certain minimum size should be required to establish an institution-wide performance monitoring and evaluation unit which is equipped with a minimum complement of qualified staff, located appropriately within the organizational structure and given clear and standardized terms of reference. This unit would become the focal point for the development of the unified cross-government performance monitoring and evaluation system. It is very important that such units be given the mandate and freedom to assess all aspects of program performance and to report upon this candidly and directly to an institution-wide performance monitoring committee. The collaboration of the IARCSC would be needed in this work.

Recommendation 11. Ministries/agencies should allocate a separate annual budget amount to planning and M&E.

All ministry/agency operational (non-administrative) programs should be required to allocate at least 3% of their annual budget to a separate Planning, M&E activity line to finance planning and data collection, management and performance review activities. This is essential to ensure that all programs and sub-programs are able to generate basic performance information based on reliable data systems, and to prevent the use of severe under-financing as a weapon to undermine the functioning of the institution's performance monitoring and evaluation system.

Recommendation 12. A major training and coaching program in program planning, monitoring and evaluation for selected ministry/agency staff should be developed and delivered.

It is recommended that a major skills development program be developed and delivered over a 5 year period aimed at creating a cadre of staff in the budgetary units who are able to lead the strengthening of program planning and performance monitoring and evaluation within their institutions. In order to have impact such a program would need to be established in collaboration with one or more specialist institutions in the South/Central Asian region⁸. This would involve the development of a suite of courses (probably covering three different target competency levels) which would probably be delivered in a regional centre, with a practical coaching support program focused on practical cases undertaken by the trainees.

This would also be supported by a simple on-line structured knowledge-base and an on-line 'walk-in clinic' where a couple of well-qualified international technical specialists would be able to help BU Planning, M&E trainees solve problems and review draft technical products. Considering that each main ministry/agency would need to have about 10 staff complete such a program (in order to have sustainable institutional impact) the program would need to train between 300 and 400 people.

Recommendation 13. The CBR program should be used to focus on the development of ministry/agency strategic and operational planning and performance monitoring and evaluation capacities.

The CBR program is an important source of resources and technical assistance to help ministries and agencies improve their efficiency and effectiveness in delivering services. It is recommended that CBR support programs be reviewed to see whether support to planning and M&E could be given a much greater focus, as this is an area which is very important for helping ensure improved institutional effectiveness, but which is currently very weak indeed.

Recommendation 14. This M&E systems assessment study together with an initial draft of a policy document on the establishment of a Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (GPMES) should be the subject of a special seminar/workshop.

A synthesis of this M&E systems assessment should be produced, together with a policy discussion paper on the GPMES (which MoF and MoEc have been recently discussing), and both should form the basis of a seminar involving government, M&E community representatives from civil society and interested donor representatives. The aim of such an event would be to disseminate the findings from the study and to obtain initial reactions to the proposed introduction of the GPMES, and to elicit ideas regarding how such a system could best be developed. The event should also motivate interest by the donor community in supporting the development of the GPMES.

⁸ One potential major partner institution would be the CLEAR program for South Asia. The CLEAR South Asia Regional Centre is hosted by J-PAL South Asia at the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR), Chennai, India

Recommendation 15. A new office should be established to develop and implement a cross-government standardized strategic planning and performance monitoring system and to help ensure that the results feed into policy-making and budgeting.

The current institutional resources of the government are inadequate to ensure any major improvement in the short to medium term in the government's results planning and performance monitoring and evaluation processes. The MoEc does not have the capacity to deliver a coherent and functional sectoral and thematic national planning system and to support BU strategic planning, and both the MoEc and the MoF are not able to provide adequate direction and support to a significant improvement in budgetary unit performance monitoring and evaluation systems. This situation is not helped by the fact that there is confusion in the responsibilities of the MoEc and MoF in relation to guiding BUs in performance monitoring and evaluation and reporting⁹.

It is recommended that the GoIRA establish a new office which will support both improved results planning and results monitoring and evaluation and reporting both at the level of the budgetary units and at the level of the Government's national development plan. This 'Results Unit' would need to be very carefully established if it is to be able to function effectively in the current institutional environment. Key suggestions include the following:

- It should incorporate (on a seconded basis) some carefully selected technical staff from both the MoEc and the MoF, and probably also from the Office of Administrative Affairs (OAA) and the IDLG.
- It should have a formally established coordination mechanism with the MoEc, the MoF and the OAA (with coordination meetings occurring on at least a quarterly basis).
- It should be strongly supported by the top level of government – with its governance body regularly chaired by a Vice-President.
- It should probably be physically located outside of, but close to the MoEc and MoF in order to guarantee its neutrality between these two major ministries.

Recommendation 16. The donor community should be approached to provide financial support for the Government-wide Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System and the new results office using a basket-funding arrangement.

The Results Unit would need to be provided with substantial financial support from the donor community (a group of donors – not one – in order to ensure maximum involvement of the local donor community in this initiative) and it would need to be supported with a technical assistance contract awarded to a prestigious international company or consortium whose members have a well-established reputation in this particular field of M&E. The structured M&E training work (mentioned under Recommendation 11 above) could be a separate contract to the TA contract but the training curriculum and course structure and content would need to be agreed with the Results Unit.

As stated in the key suggestions list above it is recommended that the Results Unit be provided with a substantial financing facility (a grant-making facility) which could be accessed by supported budgetary units to help finance the implementation of new or improved results planning, monitoring (especially data-collection) and management systems whilst they are in their development and testing phase. Such funding would obviously need to be carefully controlled but would enable BU planning/M&E units to push ahead with the strengthening of selected areas of monitoring systems without being excessively affected by extreme lack of resources.

⁹ The MoF appears to be focused on having the BUs report on program and sub-program output delivery whilst the MoEc is apparently focused on the reporting of program outcome achievement. Given the absence of any effective technical coordination mechanism to support this it is clear that such an arrangement cannot work as there should be one coherent body responsible for ensuring integrated program results planning, M&E and reporting.

Annex 1

Diagnostic Findings by Ministry

Ministry/Agency		1. Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOPH Strategic Plan. MoPH has a Strategic Plan covering 2011-15. It is costed. It is only updated every 5 years and is not reviewed annually. • Whilst there is a project review and selection committee which refers to the SP in its work Ministry staff admit that <u>the SP is not sufficiently used as the basis for prioritizing and selecting construction projects</u>, as this is the result of political processes involving MPs. This is an issue as the construction projects should come directly from program planning processes. • Review of SP: The SP has no clear top level limited number of objectives (final outcomes and impacts) which would be achieved by the successful implementation of the plan. Instead, apart from the mission and vision, the first objectives mentioned are the 10 strategic directions, which appear to be work streams or areas of work of the ministry. However these actually describe results at different levels of the (implicit) MoPH results chain. • For example, the objective 'Improve the nutritional status of the Afghan population' is a high level expected outcome of the successful implementation of the strategy, whereas the objective 'Increase equitable access to quality health services' is an intermediate outcome which, if achieved, would lead to improvements in the health levels of the population. Most of the other objectives in the list of 10 are lower level output type results, such as 'Strengthen human resource management and development', and 'Advocate for and promote healthy environments'. By structuring the strategic plan using these 10 'strategic directions' of different result levels the plan creates some confusion. • Each of the 10 strategic directions has between 3 and 9 'Strategic Objectives' which results in a total of 62 'Strategic Objectives' for the whole strategic plan. These 'strategic objectives' (SOs) are a mixture of program outputs and intermediate outcomes. For example, the SO 'To reduce the prevalence of major micronutrient deficiency disorders.....' is an outcome because it is an expected effect of the MoPH's work on the health of the population. On the other hand, the SO 'To monitor the nutritional situation in Afghanistan and strengthen the M&E of nutrition strategies and programs' is an output because it is within the management control of the ministry. • Hence, whilst the strategic plan effectively groups strategic activities into discrete result areas, it could be strengthened by better categorizing the results into their appropriate level in the results chain showing the strategic outputs, how the achievement of these outputs would result in a set of intermediate outcomes, and then how these in turn would achieve the expected final outcomes in terms of the health practices and outcomes in the population. • The ministry staff recognize that there are a lot of problems with the strategic plan and that whilst it is a visionary document it does not respond practically to their needs (it was the first SP for the MoPH). It is felt that it was not developed in a sufficiently participatory manner. But a lot has been learned on strategic planning from the experience. • The MoPH representatives claim that the strategic plan is 90% aligned with the health-related NPPs. However the recent assessment done by MoEc on the degree of alignment of core-budget funded projects with NPPs found that the level of alignment for the Ministry was a lot lower than this. • The ministry is developing one large program called Sehat which will act like a sector-wide program to be financed by multiple donors – this will help align donor funding with the ministry's core programs and plans. This will have a budget of about \$420m and will be aligned with the Strategic Plan.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MoPH BC2 is structured according to 3 programs and 14 sub-programs (each headed by a DG). (1. Infrastructure Development and Evaluation; 2. Health Services Provision; 3. Administrative Affairs. Program 1 has 5 sub-programs, Program 2 has 4 and Program 3 has 4. The program structure appears a little strange given that Program 1 includes public health training and health promotion, and also that Program 3 includes Pharmaceutical Affairs. The logic and

		<p>coherence of the programs could be improved by increasing the number of programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoPH representatives stated that the limited number of programs imposed by the BC2 approach results in programs which are of limited meaning for them. For example, the Health Services Provision Program is really many different programs, most of which are funded off-budget by donors. The 3 programs were simply created to cover all of the DGs and Directorates under each of the 3 Deputy Ministers. The sub-programs are more meaningful with DGs or Directors managing these. Ministry staff also felt that more flexibility was needed in the BC2 structure to allow them to capture their main results more effectively. This might mean the space to include more results per program or sub-program or more indicators to indicate result achievement. The BC2 should be able to clearly reflect the main results and indicators coming from the strategic plan. There is an Internal Budget Committee chaired by the DM Finance and Admin in which all 14 DGs are represented. The ministry staff feel that they have a lack of adequate capacity in conducting program-based planning, budgeting and monitoring despite having received training from the MoF.
	Use and updating of plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic plan is the basis for the preparation of annual operational plans. The strategic plan does not appear to be used as the basis for the identification of specific projects. This is reported to be more of a political process.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Plan PMF : The ministry's strategic plan has a Results Monitoring Framework (PMF) presented in Appendix A of the Strategic Plan. This presents a number of indicators for each of the 10 strategic directions. The MoPH representatives stated that there was one PMF for each of the strategic directions. Whilst it is laudable that a framework is presented with a limited number of results achievement indicators the framework contains a mixture of appropriate and weak indicators. The problem of mixing different result levels in the 10 strategic directions (discussed above) also undermines the effectiveness of the framework. An example of the weakness of some of the indicators is the following: The strategic direction 'Strengthen MoPH's stewardship role and governance in the health sector' has the following indicators: 1) % of MoPH departments that submit annual work-plans following the established process; 2) Fully functional policy analysis unit in place ; 3) Extent to which Procurement Dept meets certification requirements. These are all fairly low level organizational performance indicators and do not indicate the quality of MoPH's governance and stewardship of the whole health sector. BC2 Results and indicators: The results specified in the BC2 could be significantly improved upon. For example, the outputs for the sub-programs should be clearly specified results, whereas in fact many are specified more at the activity level rather than the level of a major sub-program result. For example, 'Planning and budgeting process implemented in the provinces', and 'Staff from MoPH were provided training'. Some of the output statements are also formulated as targets (e.g. '80% of the provinces have been visited.....'). Additionally the indicators could be strengthened in a number of cases. For example: 'No. of health workers who benefited from MCH training program' – this could be 'No of health workers who achieve at least a pass grade in the MCH capacity assessment'.
	Use and updating of frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry representatives claimed that all of the results were being monitored on a quarterly basis.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each directorate does its annual planning based on the strategic plan, but without using a budget ceiling. This causes a great deal of problems for the Health Financing Department which has to integrate the plans into one consolidated annual budget. As the ministry's funding consists mostly of off-budget donor funding the annual plan is mostly prepared without yet knowing what the approved core budget financing will be. The donors confirm their financing in an annual Donor Coordination Meeting. The Ministry finds that the most difficult aspect of their planning is the discretionary projects which are funded from the core budget.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual plan is finalized once the annual budget values are known. The operational plan is monitored on a quarterly and annual basis. The primary purpose of the monitoring is to ensure that the budget is expended as planned. The ministry is aware of the need to make its annual operational planning and implementation monitoring more systematic and professional. Monthly coordination meetings are held to monitor the implementation of the operational plan's activities.
4. Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quarterly monitoring reports state the planned activities, achievements against them, problems encountered, any changes in the plan which occurred during the quarter, and recommended actions. Operational plan activity implementation monitoring and reporting systems are planned and managed separately by different directorates within the ministry. There is no one standardized and coherent system used for the whole ministry. Progress and performance reports are produced individually for each of the 10 Strategic Directions (or for the directorates? .This is a major issue for the ministry. The quarterly and annual directorate reports cover completion of activities, budget execution, and program based outputs achievement. However it appears to be largely activity implementation-based reporting. The quarterly reports are presented and discussed in monthly meetings of the Internal Budget Committee (IBC) (chaired by DMs) which review activity implementation and budget expenditure. The ministry representatives state that because there is no standard approach to implementing M&E across all Ministry projects there are projects which have little or no M&E and this results in poor quality projects. A Strategic Reporting template was designed for annual reporting against the strategic plan's indicators but this has never been used. There is a Strategic Plan Steering Committee but it is not using the SP's indicators (or any indicator system) for its work. The ministry recently changed its Annual Report format in order to align with the report format issued by the OAA (President's Office). As this has outputs and outcomes it was found to be useful so it is now used internally. The HMIS also produces reports on a quarterly and as-needed basis. There is a plan to link the HMIS with the Expenditure Management Information System.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry representatives believe that the Ministry's current reporting system not sufficiently structured and systematic and is not very evidence-based. The ministry believes that its reporting system could be strengthened in order to enable its performance to be more clearly seen and communicated to stakeholders. The M&E department sends individual directorate performance reports to the Senior Management Committee, and does not produce a consolidated synthesized report. The outcome indicators presented in the overall results monitoring framework are reported against in the Ministry Annual Report on an annual basis. The Sehat program has now introduced performance-based contracts with the NGOs which implement their service delivery work. This uses a 3rd party monitoring system. The contracts are awarded by province (and program?) and include performance in achieving health outcomes (and not just outputs!).
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three committees exist (each covering one program and chaired by a DM) to review the implementation of the strategic plan on a quarterly basis. Sub-program committees were also established one year ago. Reviews are conducted (overall or at program/sub-program level first) on a quarterly basis. However this is largely focused on activity implementation. An annual results conference is held for internal ministry stakeholders. However this appears to be focused on the level of achievement of the annual operational plan and budget expenditure. Some departments make presentations on their achievements but the conference does not

		<p>appear to be focused on assessing overall results achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are annual provincial level review and learning workshops for all 34 provincial directorates (each one with about 300 participants) and an annual conference at which all the provincial health directorates are represented. There is also an annual retreat which is attended by senior management and the ministry's donors which uses a work-group approach to discussing performance in the preceding year and the draft plan for the forthcoming year. It is not clear how results-focused (as opposed to activity focused) this is. These retreats are reported to be influential in developing policy and strategy (e.g. the basket-funded 'sector-wide approach' initiative). There is also an annual external stakeholders conference.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	Reviews/Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of evaluations have been conducted in recent years including: GAVI evaluation of Health Sector Services (HSS); HMIS evaluation by World Bank, and the PKF review of financial systems (although this was multi-ministry). These evaluations have resulted in some major changes to policy, strategy and systems (e.g. the unification of financial management systems following the PKF study). All the reviews and evaluations conducted to-date have been donor-funded project or program-based. There have been no reviews or evaluations conducted at the level of the 3 main programs or the 14 sub-programs because different activities/projects within these are financed by different donors (<i>this is an example of how the donors 'projectize' the ministry's work at the expense of a programmatic approach</i>). The new basket-funded program is intended to address this.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently there is no ministry-level policy regarding the identification, resourcing, conduct and use of evaluations. Reviews and evaluations are identified, designed and implemented on a fragmented basis across the different departments, and are usually project or donor driven. The ministry staff interviewed recognize this problem and believe that there should be one review and evaluation system applied across the ministry. It was stated by ministry managers that whilst some of the ministries are advancing with their monitoring there is very little done in the area of program evaluation – and this should be a major focus of the proposed government-wide system.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Health Facility Monitoring Survey conducted quarterly. This covers a number of indicators for a sample of health facilities. A Balanced Scorecard is produced from this. Household surveys are sometimes conducted in order to collect data on key outcome indicators. Apparently the last such household survey was conducted in 2010.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMIS database – managed by the General Directorate of Policy and Planning. The database is still not web-based but there are plans to make it so. The ministry feels that it requires further capacity-development support in order to be able to manage its HMIS more effectively. There are currently a number of separate databases being managed in the ministry but there are plans to combine them into one Health Information System in 2014.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A data-verification system was previously implemented by Johns Hopkins University. This has now been contracted to a local NGO.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal lessons learned management system is in place. Only occasional events/activities.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry has an M&E directorate (part of Tashkeel). This has a staff complement of approx. 20. There is no separate budget line for M&E (except for BPHS). This appears to focus on project execution monitoring. The EU-funded institutional strengthening project for the ministry (TA provided by EPOS of Germany) includes supporting the M&E function (Caroline –TL). There is a Planning Department in the ministry but a lot of planning is done in different ways by other departments.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an urgent need to strengthen the planning and M&E areas in the ministry. The new basket-funded <i>Sehat</i> program (which will run to 2018) will include capacity-strengthening in this area and this is expected to begin in the second half of 2014. This will develop one integrated Health Information System (which will have international TA support). The ministry's quarterly and annual reporting to MoF of the performance indicators specified in the BC2 is done by the Health Economics and Finance Department which has a Program Budgeting unit.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E Directorate (together with the M&E Task Force) produced a M&E Framework document in 2012. This is apparently focused on service delivery facility monitoring. There are reportedly some MoPH program planning and management guidelines. The ministry has received no guidance materials from the MoEc on planning and performance monitoring and evaluation.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff capacity in planning, M&E is recognized as weak, particularly in the case of Tashkeel staff. The ministry relies a good deal on national TA. The directors and department heads do not have a well-developed culture of planning and performance monitoring. Johns Hopkins provides M&E support to BPHS (WB funded) but there is no general support to M&E across the ministry. This should be put in place with the new SEHAT donor pool funded approach. No major M&E capacity-building courses have been conducted in last 3 years.
	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A senior ministry manager stated that there is a very urgent need for a government-wide monitoring and evaluation system but that it is essential that this includes management practices which mean that institutional performance results obtain meaningful responses – so that the monitoring and reporting processes are taken seriously by the BUs. If poor performance is responded to in the same way as good performance, then what is the incentive to perform well and what is the incentive to report accurately?

Ministry/Agency		2. Ministry of Education
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main NPP relating to education is the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) (2010-14). There is also the Higher Education Strategic Plan. The Ministry claims that the NESP is 60-70% funded. It is broken down into provincial strategic plans (and there are plans to do the same at the district level). The NESP has 5 programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and Islamic Education (Sub-Programs: General Education; Islamic Education). Curriculum development, Teacher and Science and Technology Education (Sub-Programs: Curriculum development; Teacher Education; Science and Technology Education). Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Literacy. Education Sector Governance (Sub-Programs: Education Administrative Development; Strategic Management Development). Each program and each sub-program has an overall goal and a strategy, followed by a number of 'objectives' (which are mostly formulated as activities). The NESP then presents a number of components through which the program/sub-program strategy will be delivered. Each component presents a clear list of strategic activities to be implemented with completion dates. Components also have targets, which are a mixture of activity completion and output delivery targets. Hence the implementation of the plan and the delivery of low-level outputs can be easily monitored and reported upon. The document does not present clear program/sub-program outcome and output results statements however. The ministry is implementing what it calls a three year interim plan (current one covers 2011-13) which is actually the low-scenario scenario of the NESP. It is also developing a new strategic plan covering 2015-20, which is currently in the draft stage (looking for donor funding). The 3 year plan does not clearly present planned outputs and outcomes. The SP is reviewed and updated annually. It is used as the basis for the preparation of the annual operational plans and the BC2s (including for the prioritization of projects). In addition to the Strategic and Interim Plans there are some major projects such as EQUIP which have their own plans and performance monitoring systems. The ministry is gradually moving from a project-based system of planning, management and monitoring to a program-based one. For example, the literacy program used to be simply a collection of a large number of donor-funded projects but they have recently been developing a standardized implementation approach or program which different donors can support. A major reported issue affecting the ability to plan strategically and the utility of this is the unpredictability of donor financing. The ministry produces plans but they are very unsure about the extent to which they will be donor-financed beyond the current year. The ministry would very much like to institute a sector-wide planning approach so as to reduce the burden of managing multiple donor-financed projects (with different management systems, audits, reviews etc) and to increase the ability to have funded multi-year plans (a critical element of program and results-based management). Ministry staff state that scarce ministry capacity is focused on managing different donor-funded projects in different ways, at the expense of the development and operation of core ministry management systems. This is also wasteful of scarce donor technical capacity, which should be focused at the strategic program level rather than on smaller projects. The ministry wants the support of the MoF to help move to an Education Sector-wide Approach.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry is in the process of discussing its BC2 performance indicators with the MoF, but

		<p>there are no agreements yet from the discussions. They say that they cannot control the number of students (as they must accept all candidates) and need to relate their budget to the achievement of minimum education quality standards – hence need to include quality indicators. Apparently the MoF is not in agreement with this proposal.</p>
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 5 programs of the strategic plan (NESP) have results frameworks and there is also one overall results framework. The interim plan has 300-400 indicators (output/activity level) which are being regularly monitored. Ministry staff state that the results frameworks ('log-frames') are updated periodically. In addition to strategic plan results monitoring frameworks major projects such as EQUIP have their own monitoring frameworks. A brief review of the EQUIP shows that whilst some of the indicators need revision there is a basic structure in place for monitoring the main outputs and outcomes with baselines and targets established. This is a clear example of very good practice within the Afghan government and should be used as a case-study for the development and roll-out of the national Performance Monitoring System (GPMS). The EQUIP project presents a simple results monitoring framework in its 2013 reports. This presents weaknesses in terms of some of the outcome (thematic objective) indicators (e.g. for the objectives: 'improving the quality of education' and 'strengthening project management, delivery of education services and M&E'. Whilst most of the output level (component level) indicators are appropriate some are weak (e.g. for teacher and Principal education).
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual plan is based on the funded elements of the Strategic Plan and provincial annual plans are prepared based on the central ministry plan. The activities are planned by quarter. The plan is broken down by province and district.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity implementation reports are produced on a monthly and quarterly basis. Whilst these are obviously produced at the project level (for the funding donors) the last 2 to 3 years have seen the ministry's quarterly and annual reports report upon strategic and operational plan implementation. Quarterly and annual implementation progress report data is verified through the conduct of provincial visits by central monitoring teams. Annual progress and performance reports are produced for external stakeholders. No separate internal performance report is produced. Additionally regular performance reports are produced for major projects. The EQUIP project is a good example of this. It produces semi-annual performance reports which include performance, progress, issues and recommendations. The ministry has a highly developed field monitoring system in place which monitors the building and maintenance of schools as well as the functioning, staffing and materials supply to schools. The data is entered into the EMIS. Some projects are using smartphones and tablets to do this. The Infrastructure Services Department has a well developed system of monitoring infrastructure development, including the use of 3rd party monitoring (data input to EMIS).
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear and regular reporting system in place for a limited number of outcomes and outputs of the EQUIP project (school level outcomes and outputs) (see the semi-annual reports). Currently there is no national monitoring system for monitoring learning achievement/outcomes (a major ministry outcome area). This is currently being developed under the EQUIP program, with external technical support. A dedicated unit has been established for this work. It is not clear to what extent the results framework for the NESP is reported against in annual MoE reports.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly and annual reviews are reported to be conducted at the provincial level and annual reviews at the level of each of the 5 ministry programs. These review annual plan activity implementation progress as well as performance in delivering the Interim Plan outputs. It is not clear to what extent the reviews systematically use monitoring data for output and

		<p>outcome indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently the ministry has set up program-level teams (made up of representatives from different directorates/units) to conduct review visits to the provinces to verify the progress and performance reporting information from the provincial directorates. These focus on issues and make proposals regarding solutions. The reports are then presented to all the the program directors. Each of the 5 major programs is internally reviewed in this way once each year. The ministry conducts a Joint Sector Review on an annual basis, which is conducted with external stakeholders including donors and the MoF. The ministry level annual review conducted for 1390 influenced the MoE to change their approaches on female education in order to increase number of girls in secondary schools. They came to an agreement to adopt a policy regarding relocating female teachers along with their Mahram with better benefits in those provinces where female teachers are unavailable in secondary schools.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some external reviews/evaluations have been conducted in recent years but these have usually been driven by specific donor-financed projects rather than being part of the core M&E system of the ministry. An example is the current review of EQUIP II. Previously the WB planned and managed the evaluation but now it has been done by the MoE itself. Hence the ministry has developed its own evaluation/review management capacity.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No ministry-level policy or guidelines currently exist for the conduct of project or program evaluations, but the ministry reports that it is currently developing such a policy.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A major schools survey (Schools Census) was conducted in 2008. It has been conducted annually since 2011. Data from this is verified. The EQUIP project has begun conducting a national sample-based assessment of learning achievement. This covered Grade 6 in 2013 and Grade 3 in 2014 (supported by Australian Council for Education Research).
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education Management Information System (EMIS) is a well-developed system. The EMIS Directorate has 22 staff. A central part of the dataset is on school facilities and staffing. The data used to be collected and input by the EMIS but this was decentralized to the provincial directorates last year. Now data is input at both provincial and central levels. The central EMIS team takes a sample of the information and directly checks its validity. The directorate conducts a range of different types of analysis of the data collected. It is not clear to what extent the EMIS manages data on strategic plan indicators, targets and actual performance or if a separate database exists to manage this performance data.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data verification protocols are in place and implemented for the EMIS data. Field verification of a sample of schools is regularly conducted.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst lessons learned are generated from internal and external reviews there is currently no structured lessons learned (knowledge) management system in place in the ministry to ensure the systematic application of these lessons in planning and project/program development processes.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E system is implemented by the program managers. The Directorate-General of Planning and Evaluation supports them. Each of the 5 major programs has a technical M&E unit. The M&E staff and units are not part of the Tashkeel however. Under the DG Planning there is a Directorate of Policy and Planning and a Directorate of EMIS. There is also a unit for Research and Evaluation (under the Dir. Policy & Planning). MoE representatives stated that it would help the ministry if the M&E directorate could be made more independent. The ministry has staff dedicated to monitoring its achievement of results in terms of access to education, application of norms for operation of schools, and levels of learning achieved. However there are major problems with the availability of the operating budget to finance field monitoring visits by the results monitoring staff. Hence they say that improvements in

		M&E require proper budgeting.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has an M&E system development action plan. M&E guidelines are being developed. An assessment of the ministry's M&E systems was conducted by the DAFA project in 2007/8. A more recent assessment was conducted in 2013: 'Planning, M&E and MIS Assessment'. Volume 1 assesses the systems and Volume 2 makes recommendations for system strengthening [<i>Deputy Minister for Administration promised to share this with us</i>].
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DANIDA; USAID and WB are providing capacity-building support in M&E. WB supports with national TA and equipment and operating costs. An M&E capacity-building program is in place which includes basic training for national staff and overseas study visits and trainings.

Ministry/Agency	3. Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)
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Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan (2005-09) : currently available on the website (English version). MCIT staff said this was followed by another strategic plan (2009-13) –we requested the document. However it is likely that they were in fact referring to the E-Afghanistan NPP (see below). • The 2005-09 plan (13 Aug 2005) is a 11 page document which has no clearly stated objectives or results, and only 7 indicators with targets and milestones. The rest of the document contains a list of priority activities by each of the 5 core activity areas (Regulation; Afghan Telecom; ICT; Capacity Development; Afghan Post). There appear to be no annexed results frameworks, strategic activity plan (by quarter/year) or budget. • NPP ‘E-Afghanistan’ : This was finalized in 2011. The program is costed (\$216m). It includes an ‘Implementation Action Plan’ covering 2011-13 (3 yrs). It has 7 main components (Legal, regulatory, policy and institutional framework; Telecommunications networks; E-Government; M-Government; Postal sector modernization; Strengthening the ICT sector; Strengthening MCIT). One can see from these that it is almost an NPP for the whole span of work of the MCIT rather than an NPP which is focused on ICT for development. Indeed Section 4a (p.34) states ‘the strategic plan for MCIT (E-Afghanistan) is already approved and is part of the National Priority Program’. <u>The NPP has no results framework with results, indicators and targets.</u> Furthermore, the quarterly reports (quantitative and qualitative) are not indicator-based. • There appears to be some confusion here between the concepts of a ministry strategic plan and an NPP (which only covers some of the thematic areas covered by the ministry). • In summary, given that the E-Afghanistan period has now expired and that there is no replacement NPP it can be concluded that the MCIT currently has no strategic plan. It is not clear what is planned in terms of reviewing and updating/renewing E-Afghanistan.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC2: The structure of programs and sub-programs submitted to the MoF in the BC2 does not seem to align very closely with the structure of programs in the ministry’s strategic planning documents. The old strategic plan had 5 programs (see above) whilst the NPP uses a structure of 7 major programs. The BC2 however, uses 3 programs (E-Afghanistan; ICT; Finance and Admin). E-Afghanistan has 3 sub-programs, one of which is different to the sub-programs in the other plans and frameworks (Infrastructure). These are Infrastructure, Postal Modernization and E-Governance. The E-Afghanistan program of the BC2 includes postal modernization, but the progress reports for the NPP do not mention this (even though postal modernization is part of the original NPP design).
2.Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the MCIT staff claimed that their strategic plan had a clear results framework this has not yet been seen by the Diagnostic Team and no overall current strategic results framework (relating to a strategic plan) has been identified to-date. E-Afghanistan has no results framework (only a budget and an activity plan). • Available monitoring frameworks are the CBR Results framework (developed in mid 2013- see below) and the results, indicators and targets included in the ministry’s BC2 submission. Quarterly reports are produced for the E-Afghanistan NPP but these only show activity completion rates and do not refer to results and result indicators. • CBR Results Framework: A results framework has been developed as part of MCIT’s proposal to CBR, although the document still has significant room for improvement. A number of the results are not sufficiently clearly stated, or set at the correct level of the results chain and a good number of the indicators need strengthening. Finally the framework lacks an adequate set of overall ministry service delivery improvement indicators. As it stands it will not be able to provide sufficient performance information to clearly establish whether the ministry is

		becoming more efficient and effective as a result of the CBR support program.
2. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry produces annual operational plans which it claims are based on the strategic plan (the NPP?). The annual plan is prepared following the approval of the BC2 submission. The annual plan is used in order to prepare quarterly and annual reports.
3. Progress and Performance Monitoring and Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quarterly and annual reports present the implementation status of the annual operational plan activities. MCIT produces quarterly and annual performance reports which go to the MoF and MoEc. These cover activity/project implementation progress and include information on the program output performance indicators included in the BC2 submission (correct?). They also produce reports for the Cabinet and Parliament. It also produces reports for the OAA. <i>Do the reports include budget execution? Any discussion of quality issues and other issues/constraints by activity?</i> The ministry is conscious of the fact that the quarterly and annual reporting process could be strengthened and made more systematic.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quarterly and annual performance reports do not systematically report on output and outcome achievement.
4. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No structured periodic performance review process exists whereby monitoring information for performance indicators is presented, reviewed by stakeholders and judgments made about performance in delivering planned results.
5. External Reviews and Evaluations	External reviews and evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst some donor-financed projects undergo external donor-led reviews/evaluations no recent external overall ministry or program-level reviews or evaluations appear to have been conducted.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry does not appear to have an evaluation policy in place (which guides units and staff on how evaluations are to be planned and used to support the functioning of the ministry).
6. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant surveys were identified by the diagnostic exercise
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry does not have a database to manage its results monitoring information.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No system is in place for verifying data supplied to the Planning Directorate by program units.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no organized system in place for identifying, organizing and sharing lessons and good practices from its projects and programs.
7. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no M&E department or unit in the ministry.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No M&E manual or guidelines appear to exist for the ministry or major programs.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There appeared to be a lack of understanding amongst the senior management about what an M&E system consists of and about what the good practices are in planning, monitoring and evaluation of the work of ministries.

Ministry/Agency		4. Ministry of Economy (MoEc)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no current strategic plan for MoEc. The ministry reported that it developed one a few years ago which was based on the ANDS. However it was not completed. It didn't have a Performance Monitoring Framework. The ministry representatives were questioning the need for MoEc to have a strategic plan given that the ministry is not a direct service delivery ministry. MoF officials clarified that this was necessary for all BUs.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outcomes and outputs presented in the BC2 are individually identified and are not drawn from any strategic planning process or intervention logic. MoEc senior staff felt that the information presented in the BC2 is insufficient and that the approach needs to be revised. For example, the outcomes are not adequately linked to higher-level results such as those of the NPPs. Additionally the sub-programs do not have their own outcomes. "There is a need to support line ministries to develop clear results chains and for senior staff to understand the need to focus on outcomes and not simply low-level outputs and activities and inputs". This is a major change process for the Afghan government. The ministry staff emphasized the importance of focusing on program-based budgeting with a results focus.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no results monitoring framework with which it can monitor its performance in delivering its services (to the rest of government). This is a major issue which needs to be urgently addressed.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual plans are produced each year at both the overall ministry and provincial levels. Draft plans are used to produce the BC2 and the plan is finalized once the approved budget for the year is known. Plan includes an implementation schedule and is used as the basis for activity implementation monitoring. The centre does not conduct regular activity implementation monitoring visits to the provinces due to security concerns. Ministry representatives state that the annual plan contains activity completion milestones and that these are used for monitoring during the year.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A quarterly report is produced which summarizes the implementation progress of all of the (on-budget) projects of all of the BUs which are under the ministry's supervision (done by the Design and? Directorate-General). In addition to the routine progress reporting the Directorate-General conducts physical in-depth verification visits (approx one visit to each province each year). Approximately 50% of projects are directly monitored by the central ministry and the rest by the provincial offices. Pre-designed project monitoring tools (checklists) are used. Reports are sent to the relevant line ministries and to MoF as well as summary reports to Cabinet. Where issues are addressed the MoEc follows up to monitor BU responses. The MoEc produces an annual report which reports on the level of implementation of the BU projects which it screened for inclusion in the budget, together with any issues related to the quality of these projects, and is presented in tabular and narrative form. This is a synthesis of the quarterly project progress reports submitted by the MoEc's provincial offices. The ministry compares reported progress to the plans in order to identify problem projects where issues need to be addressed. There does not appear to be a separate report produced by MoEc which reports on its own progress in implementing the activities in its annual plan. This is an issue. Activity monitoring is conducted by management but it does not appear to be done using the annual activity plan.
	Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Policy and Results Based Monitoring Directorate-General produces semi-

	achievement reporting	<p>annual/semestral and annual reports. The annual ones cover macroeconomic indicator data and the semestral ones used to report on the ANDS using its results framework indicators (the last report was in 2012). They are now finalizing the ANDS Completion Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Directorate-General is currently working on a report which focuses on the outcome performance reported by BUs to MoF via the quarterly and annual budget performance reports. • The reports (on BU project progress) are submitted to the Cabinet (quarterly and annually) and to the Parliament (annually). • The MoEc has recently introduced a standard tool to obtain information on the level of implementation of NPPs. • There does not appear to be any regular report which is produced and used internally by the ministry which reports on the level of achievement of the MoEc's outputs and outcomes as presented in the BC2. The only results report produced is the quarterly and annual performance report produced by the MoEc for submission to the PMU of the MoF. • The Policy and Results Based Monitoring Directorate-General also produces thematic reports covering policy issues such as Poverty and Food Security, MDGs, Provincial poverty etc.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry does not have a structured system of conducting internal participatory performance reviews for the ministry itself where stakeholders review performance monitoring information and assess overall performance. • However annual reviews are conducted at both the central and provincial levels – but with a focus on activity reviewing rather than results achievement. Results cannot be reviewed in this way as performance indicator data do not exist. • The MoEc does however conduct periodic workshops on its project appraisal and screening processes involving representatives from the BUs.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No external reviews or evaluations have been conducted of the ministry in recent years.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ministry has no evaluation policy which is used to guide the use of evaluations in the ministry's work.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MoEc has data-collection tools (standard forms and associated protocols) for monitoring the level of implementation of the BU projects funded from the national budget. • Specific data-collection activities are conducted on an ad-hoc basis, such as the recent assessment of the implementation status of a selection of NPPs (conducted with the MoF). • There are no other data-collection tools used to collect information on the services provided by the MoEc in terms of planning, project appraisal, NPP monitoring etc.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above. The MoEc is developing a web-based database to enable its provincial offices to upload project monitoring data – this should result in improved project monitoring. • There is also an NGO projects database and an infrastructure projects database.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only for the BU project implementation report data – done by central ministry staff for about 50% of projects, and provincial office staff for the rest.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No lessons learned system exists.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst there is a department in the ministry responsible for the M&E of the national development plan (ANDS), and another one to do M&E of projects funded from the development budget there is no unit established to ensure appropriate performance monitoring and evaluation of the ministry itself (major issue). General internal planning

		<p>and reporting is under the Directorate-General for Design and Coordination, which also handles the project monitoring work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No separate budget line exists for internal performance M&E within the ministry. • Because development program and project M&E is one of the main areas of work of the MoEc a lot of its staff (approx 300) are required to conduct M&E as a basic part of their work.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An M&E Guideline reportedly exists but this is only for the monitoring and reporting of BU project implementation. • The ministry issues no guidelines to BUs on the implementation of strategic and annual planning and performance monitoring and evaluation. There is only the Budget Manuals which are produced by the MoF in collaboration with the MoEc.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An institutional assessment was conducted by a British company (funded by USAID) but the results were not implemented. A UNDP institutional support project to MoEc ended in 2013. A follow-on project was expected but they do not know if this will happen. • The EGGI project supported the ministry and one of the outputs of this was a highly-appreciated institutional analysis conducted in 2010 (by Dr. Kuan?). • There is acknowledgement that the ministry needs some restructuring but there is internal resistance to this as long as the process is not a coherent and technical process with a long-term vision. The representatives are not sure if the CBR will support a restructuring process. • MoF benefitted from some TA in the area of M&E (including GIZ). Also MoF provided national TAs to the ANDS M&E department. • The MoEc has submitted its proposal to CBR so this will be reviewed soon, although the indicators are such that the review is not expected to reveal much to them. • Some staff have benefitted from study visits to other countries on M&E and ministry staff have received basic M&E training from MoF. • The ministry recognizes the need for further capacity-building in the area of performance monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Ministry/Agency		5. Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry does not have a strategic plan as such. It has the National Agriculture Development Framework (NADF), which is a strategic guidance document, but is not translated into an activity plan and is not costed. It covers the period 2009-14. However this has recently begun to be used to develop the Ministry's annual operational plans. A new NADF is due to be prepared over the Summer of 2014 covering another 5 years which is planned to function fully as a strategic plan. The Ministry is implementing work for two NPPs : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>National Comprehensive Agricultural Production and Market Development Program (undated)</u>¹⁰ (NCAPMDP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of the results and indicators for this program appears to be relatively high. The program is broken into two sub-programs, each of which has a 'logframe'. These present information for indicators at the impact (goal) level and the expected outcome level which combine indicators of service delivery and service outcomes. For example, 'improved and adapted inputs and services available to farmers' and 'strengthened capacity of MAIL in agricultural statistics and MIS' are two output-type objectives presented as expected outcomes, whilst 'increased gross margins' and 'increased number of households with food and nutrition security' are higher-level outcome/impact type results. Finally, the quality of the indicators is variable, ranging from good to weak (e.g. the two indicators of the expected outcome 'improved evidence-based planning and decision-making in MAIL..' are: '% of farmers that have access to some market information through a sustainable mechanism', and 'number of times that MAIL GIS system is accessed in one year'). This NPP is shared with the MRRD and Ministry of Counter-Narcotics. <u>National Water and Natural Resources Development Program</u> (Not reviewed) This NPP is shared with the Ministry of Energy and Water. The ministry has recently developed a guideline/manual for preparing concept notes for new projects (with support from DAFA III). DAFA III reports that the ministry is currently in the process of producing a strategic planning manual.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program and sub-program structure presented in the Ministry's BC2 uses four of the five programs of the NADF. But because the NADF is not really a strategic plan the ministry feels that the BC2 program and sub-program structure does not properly reflect its actual strategies. They have not tried to change their program and sub-program structure as they feel that this would involve extensive negotiations with the MoF, and they are not sure how beneficial it would be in terms of obtaining more or better funding from the MoF. One sub-program was reallocated to a different program this year. The Internal Budget Committee briefly discussed the need to introduce more major changes in the program structure this year. MAIL would like clearer guidance from the MoF on formulating appropriate structures of programs and sub-programs. The main work of the Ministry seems to be structured around major projects (donor-funded) and these have not evolved based on any overall Ministry strategic plan (or on

¹⁰ Program 2 of Cluster IV – Agriculture and Rural Development

		<p>the programs and sub-programs of the BC2). So these (off-budget) projects do not clearly fall under the Ministry's programs and sub-programs and contribute to their results. This is a major issue. They have now contracted TA to try to align the existing projects with their program and sub-program structure.</p>
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NADF has 5 pillars: NRM; Agricultural production; Economic Regeneration; Food Security; Institutional Development. • A Results Monitoring Framework was recently developed for this based on the frameworks for the two agriculture NPPs. However this is not being fully used as the basis for the Ministry's M&E. Only about 50% of the indicators are monitored and reported upon – almost exclusively at the output level. • The ministry planning and monitoring staff distinguish between their high-level output indicators and their lower-level indicators. There are only about 15 high-level ones (which are likely to be those presented in the BC2s and reported upon in the performance reports to MoF-MoEc). • Good practices in M&E are displayed at the level of some of the ministry's major projects. Examples cited by the planning and M&E representatives were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP) (which has its own outcome monitoring and evaluation system). ○ On-farm Water Management Project (which contracted out its baseline survey). ○ Comprehensive Agriculture and Livestock Project (CLAP). ○ Comprehensive Agriculture and Rural Development Facility (CARD-F) – this is a multi-ministry project with its own M&E system.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry develops an annual operational plan which is finalized once the level of funding from the national budget is known. However this only covers the development budget and is not integrated with the operational budget. • The overall operational (annual) plan and budget is constructed by the MIS department by aggregating the projected development budget requirement for all projects. The operating expenditure budgets of the departments are calculated separately based on the overall ministry budget and these are then distributed across the department's programs in some way, but are not constructed on a program basis. Hence the operating budget is not integrated with the development budget. This means that the Ministry does not properly conduct program-based budgeting. • The annual development expenditure plan and budget has a clear implementation schedule and quarterly deliverables. • Each project prepares its own annual operational plan based on its budget and these are used as the basis for monthly activity implementation monitoring. There is no one overall annual operational plan for the ministry which is the focus for top management implementation management and monitoring. • The Ministry is not implementing a system for appraising and selecting projects based on their contribution to strategic plan objectives but a system has been developed as part of the planning and budgeting manual for use in the provinces. • The Ministry staff are aware of the current weaknesses in their operational planning processes.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry management conducts regular activity implementation progress review meetings and separate budget expenditure review meetings. • Quarterly progress reports are prepared and formally submitted to MoF, MoEc, OAA and Parliament. They are also shared with other stakeholders such as donors. There are no separate internal performance reports prepared for senior management. • The quarterly reports report on performance indicators at the output level and are broken down by province (breakdowns can also be presented by district). • Performance indicators are quantitative rather than qualitative.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The progress reports identify implementation problems and reportedly propose actions to address these.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apart from output achievement monitoring mentioned above there is no system for monitoring and reporting on outcomes. The quarterly performance reports submitted to MoF, MoEc, OAA and Parliament are presented by program and not by sub-program. This is a major issue as it is at the sub-program level that the performance of the ministry will be most effectively demonstrated. Some projects (donor-funded) have an M&E system which includes assessing and reporting on outcome achievement but there is no higher-level Ministry program-level outcome monitoring and reporting. If outcome-type information is requested the Ministry staff attempt to construct this from the different project performance reports. Ministry staff were of the view that the level of performance reporting required by the central government bodies (MoF, MoEc and OAA) is not sufficient. More support is required from MoF, MoEc and OAA to help ministries better link planning, budgeting and performance reporting, and more use should be made of the performance information. There is a perception that when reviewing its Annual Report the MoF, Cabinet and Parliament focus almost exclusively on the level of the ministry's budget expenditure rather than the results obtained for the resources utilized. There is a need for these central bodies to focus more on linking spending to results achievement. Ministry staff emphasized that there should be clear incentives in place for data and information providers to provide regular and reliable information.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No internal program or sub-program performance reviews are currently conducted on a systematic basis. The planning directorate is currently planning a system for the conduct of annual internal performance reviews – occurring first at the sub-sector level (horticulture, livestock etc) with a mechanism to bring the analyses together for the institution as a whole. There do not appear to be any semi-annual or annual overall institutional performance review events with key stakeholders.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been no external reviews or evaluations of the Ministry's programs or sub-programs in recent years. Evaluations are only conducted of specific projects – driven and funded by donors. Examples include the NRM project (FAO), the Capacity Building project implemented by GRM, and the Livestock project (FAO).
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no evaluation policy document or evaluation guidelines.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry staff state that they are only monitoring a small number of indicators related to their outcomes. These are essentially national agricultural production and productivity statistics and are being monitored by the Statistics Department and reported in their Statistics Bulletin. This does not cover farm incomes or food security – though some data on these aspects are collected by some of their projects – but not at national level. The MAIL wants to include some indicators of interest to them (and related to their outcomes) in the next National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry has a web-based Management Information System (MIS) but this does not incorporate a results-based performance monitoring and evaluation system. The Ministry is currently in the process of linking its project implementation information to the requirements for program and sub-program reporting of the performance reporting for the MoF (against the BC2 targets) (not completed yet).
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system MIS is used to produce regular progress reports and these are shared with provincial and other staff for verification.

	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No lessons learned management system exists within the ministry.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an M&E Directorate which reports directly to the Minister's office with a total of 39 staff. There is no practice within the Ministry of assigning dedicated program managers to manage ministry programs and sub-programs. There are no separate M&E budget lines within the Ministry's programs or sub-programs. The Ministry is undertaking an organizational restructuring process with support from the CBR program. The Ministry's CBR proposal has been approved and it is now recruiting based on this. The CBR is being used to recruit qualified staff for the Planning and M&E areas. TA is also envisaged but this has not been set up yet.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry has recently produced a development budget planning manual and also has one to guide provincial budget planning, but these don't include performance monitoring. An M&E Guideline document (general – not adapted to the ministry) was produced in 2012 based on the WB 10 Steps process (Rist and Kusek) but it has still not been implemented in the ministry. A general M&E guidelines document was issued in 2007.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are M&E officers in some provinces but not all – due to a lack of Tashkeel positions. Some limited previous support in M&E was provided by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). The AusAid supported DAFA is providing support in the areas of planning and budgeting but not in M&E. There is a need for capacity-building of the M&E unit of the Ministry. Ministry Planning and M&E staff particularly requested support in improving their knowledge on data-collection and management tools and approaches. No recent specific assessment of Planning, M&E systems has been done recently (last one was for the Capacity Building project done 5-6 years ago). However a whole ministry institutional assessment was conducted in 2011 (financed by the Asia Foundation and implemented by Ernst and Young).

Ministry/Agency	6. Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD)
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Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRRD has a Strategic Plan covering the period from 2009 to 2014. MRRD is implementing four major programs. These are : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Solidarity Program (NSP) National Rural Access Program (NRAP) National Rural Enterprises Development Program (NREDP) WARSAP - Water supply. Of these only the NRAP appears to be a National Priority Program. All of these programs are ongoing large multi-phase programs (NSP is by far the biggest with an annual budget last year of \$400m) so the ministry is not concerned about any current lack of higher-level government strategic guidance documents. The ministry made its proposals for inclusion in the new 4-Year Action Plan developed by the MoEc. They say they will adjust their plans to the final Action Plan when it is approved. The SP has not been periodically reviewed and updated in the light of implementation performance reviews. The Ministry was in the process of preparing its new strategic plan in May 2014. This is due to be completed soon.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure of programs and sub-programs which is the basis of the BC2 is perceived by the ministry representatives to be well-aligned with the results structure of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is used to develop the BC2 at the results level but not for the identification of core budget-funded projects, which is not a strategic program planning process but a political process. There is no standard project appraisal and selection system across the ministry – this varies by program.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each of the major programs has a Results Monitoring Framework and their results and indicators are integrated into the MRRD Strategic Plan Performance (Results) Monitoring Framework.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry conducts annual work-planning with reference to the strategic plan and the strategic plan's results monitoring framework is used to supply the indicators for the BC2 submissions.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry conducts a monthly budget execution monitoring and coordination meeting which is based upon the annual work-plan. Plan implementation monitoring and reporting is conducted by the Planning Directorate. It complains that it has to produce different reports in different formats for a variety of central government bodies. Both NRAP and NSP have systems in place for the conduct of project monitoring by contracted third parties.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E conducted to-date has been up to the output level only, with the exception of NSP (and NRAP?) which collects and reports data for outcome indicators. There is no ministry-wide regular performance monitoring review process. Each major program has its own M&E system. The Ministry believes that the NSP system is their best

		<p><i>(although a brief review of the NSP Quarterly Report indicates that it has substantial room for improvement- as it is limited to tabular presentations of a limited number of activity and low-level output indicators without supporting assessments of quality of progress).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annual and quarterly performance reports produced for the MoF and MoEc use the results and indicators from the Strategic Plan. There does not appear to be any ministry-wide integrated quarterly performance report produced for senior management. Program-specific reports are produced separately and submitted to management.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no ministry-wide regular performance monitoring review process. There are only program/project specific internal review processes. For example, the WB conducts project implementation support missions every 6 months.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External reviews/evaluations are conducted for some of the major programs but these have been donor organized and led up to recently. Recently however the M&E directorate has had a greater role in these. The project and program reviews/evaluations are donor-motivated and organized. There appears to be insufficient involvement of the full ministry in these processes and consequently insufficient ownership of and learning from the results. Ministry representatives stated that in some cases they are not even given the full results of the reviews/evaluations. <i>The existence of a Ministry-owned cross-institution M&E system would oblige donors to adapt to these systems when planning and conducting reviews and evaluations, and should lead to improved donor-donor coordination and much greater capacity-building of the ministry from the M&E processes.</i> The ministry respondents cited the NSP as having the strongest M&E system amongst their programs. Mid-term and completion reviews of each phase are led by the WB (the main funder of NSP). These are reported to include participatory evaluation processes with beneficiaries. The NSP also has a system of community-based project and process monitoring. Apart from the external reviews there does not appear to be any periodic internal program participatory review system in place. NSP has conducted a major impact evaluation over the last several years with international TA support (a US university).
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no ministry-level evaluation policy.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of major surveys are implemented as part of the M&E system for specific programs. For example, NRAP had an externally conducted baseline survey and a follow-up survey after some time. Some programs, such as the NSP have well developed data-collection and verification systems designed to collect and manage performance indicator data. However such systems have not been extended across all of the programs of the ministry.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is one integrated MIS for the ministry which is linked on a live basis to the MISs of the major programs (bringing together selected higher-level data). This only covers physical output data and has no data for outcomes at present. The Change Management Unit has produced a concept note for the integration of a number of information systems in the ministry including the M&E systems – this has not been approved yet. There are plans to develop an Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) system.
	Data verification	
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No ministry-level lessons-learned management system exists.

8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has a separate M&E unit which reports directly to the Minister's Office. Additionally each of the 5 programs of the Ministry has its own M&E unit. The Ministry representatives expressed a desire to combine all of the units into one consolidated M&E unit. The M&E directorate does not yet have the capacity to implement its own outcome monitoring data collection so this work is contracted out to third parties (e.g. the NRAP Baseline and Completion surveys).
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry representatives state that they are trying to standardize the approaches to M&E across the programs through regular meetings of the M&E units. A ministry M&E Manual was produced and introduced in 2013 after having been agreed with the major programs. The M&E directorate coordinates a group of M&E focal points from each of the major programs with a view to the gradual development of common approaches to M&E across all of the ministry's programs. The ministry representatives look forward to the harmonization and standardization of GoIRA M&E systems as this should facilitate their work and reduce the burden of multiple reporting to different agencies.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CBR program supports a Change Management Unit and process in the Ministry. The CBR proposal apparently does not explicitly support M&E strengthening although some ministry representatives said that in the future the CBR support will cover planning and M&E. The Ministry has an International Technical Adviser supporting the Ministry M&E unit (funded under the CTAP).

Ministry/Agency		7. Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IDLG gives its main strategic plan document as the National Priority Program for Local Governance (NPPLG) covering 2012-15. It also mentions the Sub-National Governance Policy document (SNGP) but the NPPLG is the main strategic guidance document. The NPPLG is costed and is executed through the implementation of the different major programs supporting IDLG (SPAD; ASGP; RAMP-UP; PBGF; ASOP; ALGFDP). Their previous Strategic Plan has expired. They are currently in the process of preparing a new one and this is expected to be completed in the coming months. The new strategic plan will cover all of the work of the institution and not only the work streams covered under the NPPLG. A results framework will also be produced with the new strategic plan. IDLG is planning to prepare a longer-term overall local government development plan, using NPPLG and SNGP amongst other sources. NPPs: The IDLG Strategic Plan is based on the National Priority Program for Local Governance (NPPLG) of May 2012. This NPP is a comprehensive reform program for local government covering policy and institutional development, organizational capacity development, representative bodies etc. However the document is quite weak in terms of its results chain. Four major objectives of the NPP are presented but these do not describe improvements in the functioning of local government. They describe the strengthening of systems, laws and capacities and the promotion of participation, which are outputs and activities. Similarly at the component level the component 'outcomes (intended results)' are mostly outputs (establishment of systems, capacities, structures) rather than outcomes (in terms of local government processes functioning more effectively). Currently (May 2014) IDLG has the following major projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPAD (on-budget – through the MoF). ALGFDP (on-budget – managing the development budget of IDLG) PBGF has finished, as has RAMP-UP (though this will be replaced by a new program called SHAHAR). A UNDP local government support program (off-budget) is also being prepared. IDLG is now seeking to ensure that the M&E systems of these projects are fully aligned with the IDLG M&E framework.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst IDLG representatives state that their program and sub-program structure is based on the NPPLG a review of them shows that the structure is not actually aligned with the components of the NPPLG.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDLG developed an overall institutional M&E framework in 2013 which it uses as the foundation of its M&E system. This is based on the NPPLG results framework but also includes additional objectives coming from the plans of the institution's directorates. The results framework for the NPPLG is well structured in terms of the presentation of indicators, sources of data and baselines. Many of the results need to be specified more concretely and clearly as results. The 'Deliverables' are usually quite well specified as outputs. Overall the results framework is quite well done but could benefit from a review and tightening up of results specification and indicators, particularly at the outcome level. IDLG states that it collects the data for the NPPLG results monitoring framework by conducting M&E visits to a sample of provinces and districts. As this was still being rolled out it only covered 18 of the 34 provinces in 2013. In 2014 it is covering the

		remaining provinces and some districts, but only some of the 2013 provinces, hence this process is currently covering one province every two years.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no unified overall institution operational plan. Each IDLG Directorate conducts its annual planning independently, using the NPPLG as the strategic reference document (which has a clear structure of strategic activities designed to achieve lower and higher-level outputs) but including activity areas not covered by the strategic plan. The annual operation plan contains clear year-end activity completion milestones and these are monitored in the quarterly report (including in % achievement terms – which is good practice). However, the NPPLG does not specify strategic activity completion targets or year-end milestones.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual directorates monitor and report on the level of implementation of their annual operational plans (need to see an example of the report format). The M&E Directorate uses these to monitor and report upon the implementation of the strategic activities (deliverables) and outputs and outcomes in the NPPLG Results Monitoring Framework. It does this on a quarterly and annual basis. However there is not a standard overall organization-wide annual work-plan monitoring system in place. The monitoring reports of the NPPLG represent only a subset of all of the activities planned, budgeted and implemented across the organization. There is no one integrated monitoring system for these.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPPLG results achievement (based on the NPPLG performance monitoring framework but including additional non-targeted achievements) is reported on quarterly and annually. IDLG staff state that the IDLG annual report provides a summary of implementation of annual planned activities/projects, a summary of budget execution and progress in delivering outputs against targets. However the 2012 Annual Report shows that the report only contains lists of activities completed in the year by the different departments and programs. There are no tables comparing activity completion planning and realization, and no presentation of output and outcome achievement information. Additionally there are separate quarterly and annual performance reports produced for some of the donor-funded programs. The M&E Directorate claims that it prepares program-specific performance reports ('M&E Reports') for internal use following visits to the provinces, with only some of the data/information being presented in external performance reports. These reports appear to be ad-hoc (not regularly planned) and look at issues and their causes and recommended solutions. IDLG states that these reports report on indicators of institutional performance for the various sub-national governance bodies as well as some indicators of service delivery. However IDLG has not yet begun conducting service delivery perceptions and satisfaction surveys, although this is being planned for later in 2014 (see surveys below).
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apart from regular management meetings (weekly senior management meetings and 6-weekly meetings of the Sub-National Governance Forum) senior management reviews the quarterly performance reports produced by the M&E Directorate. However there is no system of quarterly or annual multi-stakeholder reviews of the overall performance of the institution. Additionally there are program-specific performance reviews. E.g. the annual SPAD performance review with its major stakeholders including provincial bodies, and donors (as observers). Also the PBGF conducted regular quarterly performance reviews together with the M&E Directorate. The M&E Directorate is implementing a plan to ensure better alignment of the M&E systems of the national donor-funded programs with the cross-institutional M&E system being developed. IDLG states that it is taking a much more proactive role now in leading and managing

		reviews and evaluations of its individual programs. Examples cited of this included the quarterly reviews of Provincial Offices under the PBGF and the DFID reviews of SPAD. Similarly the M&E Directorate was substantially involved in the 2013 Beneficiary Study conducted by a 3 rd Party for SPAD. The donors are now gradually realizing this and are becoming more consultative in their reviews and evaluations, although it requires a certain level of technical capacity on the government's side to facilitate this.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External reviews and evaluations are conducted on a program-specific basis, and these are usually driven by the program donors – e.g. SPAD undergoes a regular annual external review by DFID. The approaches used and the degree of rigor of these reviews/evaluations differs markedly depending on the program and the donor. There is no cross-institutional approach to conducting independent performance reviews.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is currently no cross-institutional policy on evaluations within IDLG. However the M&E Directorate is seeking to better align donor-funded reviews and evaluations with a common IDLG approach based on the IDLG performance monitoring framework.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of data-collection tools are used by the M&E Directorate during their provincial data-collection visits – aimed at collecting data on the indicators in the M&E framework including focus groups, interviews, client perceptions assessments. A Local Governance Perceptions Survey is planned to be conducted in late 2014. This will be managed by IDLG M&E directorate but the implementation will be outsourced to a third party.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E Directorate is developing a database to manage its performance monitoring and evaluation data. They plan to enable province-based on-line data entry to the database. Currently monitoring data is entered into spreadsheets by the M&E Directorate.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no current system in place to ensure the verification of the monitoring data supplied in the monitoring reports for the donor-funded programs (off-budget funded).
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no lessons-learned management system being operated in the institution.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An M&E Directorate was established in IDLG in 2012. This now has 14 staff working in two departments consisting of Tashkeel and advisors. It is funded under the general operating expenditure for the IDLG but there is no dedicated budget line for M&E in the institution. The donor-funded programs have their own budget lines for M&E.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IDLG is transitioning from having a collection of differing project/program M&E systems to developing one overall institutional system. It really only started in 2012 so has not completed the process yet but has made good progress in this direction. There is a need to develop M&E capacities further and to further develop one integrated performance monitoring and evaluation system. IDLG doesn't have an M&E system design document, guidelines or manual(s). There are currently no program and project planning and management manuals being used to guide the institution's work. IDLG's M&E Directorate is planning to have periodic M&E coordination meetings to review the performance of the different program/project M&E systems. Institutional assessments which included planning and M&E were: 1) A USAID study in late 2013 on the institutional capacity of IDLG (process was much more consultative than previously though results reported to not have been fully shared with IDLG). 2) the UNDP-funded SNGP assessment of IDLG capacity (in preparation for the new UNDP program).
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E Directorate has had two international TAs supporting it in recent years. There is an expressed need for further technical assistance.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a strong desire for additional capacity-building support and for technical assistance to further professionalize the M&E systems within the IDLG.• The M&E Director stated that there is a strong need for greater clarity on the roles of the MoF, MoEc and OAA in terms of performance monitoring and evaluation of ministries and agencies. He also stated that the success of a national M&E system would depend on the quality of the collaboration between the MoEc and the MoF.• IDLG M&E Directorate works provides reports directly to OAA and works closely with the OAA's M&E Department. He said that a national M&E system would need to closely involve the OAA on provincial M&E.• The M&E Directorate recently conducted a rapid assessment of the level of alignment of its programs with the NPPLG and in doing this it found that there was a good deal of variety in the quality of its (donor-supported) program M&E systems. It shared these findings with the Sub-National Governance Forum.• The directorate also developed a plan ('Roadmap') for the gradual alignment of IDLG's individual donor-funded projects/programs with the IDLG M&E Framework. It is currently using this to encourage greater alignment of systems so as to enable the development and use of one cross-institutional system. One factor reported by IDLG which acts in opposition to this process is the rapid turnover of staff at the donor agencies Kabul offices.
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Ministry/Agency		8. Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry works with 5 year strategic plans. It has been implementing the plan covering 2008-13. These plans are guided by longer term (20 year) national infrastructure development plans : The Energy Sector Master Plan (2013-33) and the Water Sector Master Plan (2013-33). These sector master plans have no results monitoring frameworks. The 5 year Strategic Plan is reported as being costed. There have been no reviews and updates of the SP since it was produced. The NPPs which are relevant for the energy and water sectors are the <i>National Energy Supply Program (NESP)</i> and the <i>National Water and Natural Resource Development Program (NWNDRP)</i>. Of these two it is the NESP which the ministry staff are most familiar with and with which their work is most aligned. The ministry staff expressed their frustration with the NPPs due to the problem with their funding. As the ministry was consulted on material for the 4-Year Action Plan they feel that their plans are aligned with this. However the process has not influenced their own medium-term planning. Apart from using elements from the NESP and the NWNDRP the ministry does not appear to use any strategic planning process to identify and prioritize projects.
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry reports that its BC2 program and sub-program structure is fully aligned with its Strategic Plan.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst work has been done on developing performance monitoring indicators (e.g. for the BC2) the Ministry states that it needs technical assistance to help it organize these into a standard ministry performance monitoring framework. The SP does not have a Performance Monitoring (Results Monitoring) Framework. There is no other PMF used by the Ministry to monitor its overall performance.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual operational plans are prepared once the approval for the funding of projects is known for the year. The annual operational plan is used as the basis for regular and routine activity implementation monitoring. The Ministry states that it has a basic system for prioritizing and selecting projects (based on a checklist). However this is not a project appraisal system.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has a number of very large projects (e.g. approx 5 in the water sector and 3 in the energy sector) and these have their own separate M&E and reporting systems (as well as its own management and TA). These projects send summaries of their progress and performance reports to the M&E Directorate which compiles them and sends them to the senior management. The company GFA provides the TA for most of the large energy projects. It reportedly implements one common M&E system approach for all of these projects. The Irrigation and Rural Development Program (IRDP) also has its own M&E system even though it covers 5 separate projects implemented by 5 different contractors. Ministry staff state that they have a standard monitoring report format for small projects. As with all ministries the MoEW produces annual and quarterly performance reports for the MoF, MoEc, Parliament, Cabinet and the Office of Administrative Affairs. The reports include implementation issues/problems and recommended actions to address these. They do not include activity implementation and output achievement breakdowns by province. One annual report is produced which integrates the monitoring results from both the

		<p>water and energy sector work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry representatives admitted that their Annual Reports only sometimes referred to the annual targets presented in the sector and strategic plans.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual and quarterly performance reports include some information on output achievement but contain no information on outcome achievement. It is only really at the individual project level (or specific programs covering a number of large projects) that results-based monitoring and evaluation systems exist. The ministry staff believe that the best project M&E system they have is that of the Kabul dam project, and that of a hydro-electric dam project in the North.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no ministry-level performance reviews conducted, either on a quarterly or annual basis. Some of the main donor-funded projects (e.g. the IRDP) have internal performance reviews. There is no standard ministry approach to conducting internal performance reviews.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the main donor-funded projects contract independent external reviews and evaluations. There have been external reviews conducted of NESP and of the IRDP. A number of different donors have conducted institutional and performance reviews of the ministry (including DFID and WB), but with no effective donor coordination. There is a feeling within the ministry that these do not generate much learning for the Ministry and take up a good deal of time and resources. <p><i>This indicates the opportunity to achieve significant institutional efficiencies and organizational learning by building credible program reviews/evaluations into the normal work of the ministry.</i></p>
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no evaluation policy.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys are conducted by specific projects as and when required but there is no regular survey conducted as part of the ministry-wide performance monitoring and evaluation system.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of project-specific databases are maintained in the ministry with dedicated data entry and management staff. However there is no ministry-wide data management system.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some individual projects have systems in place for verifying reported monitoring data, but there are no policies or systems in place to apply this to all ministry monitoring data.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry staff report that lessons learning events are held by the ministry three times a year (<i>Note: How are these conducted given the absence of systematic M&E results to feed into them ?</i>).
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoEW used to have one ministry-level M&E unit some years ago but it was not effective so was closed down. It currently has no overall M&E unit. However two M&E directorates were created a couple of years ago – one covering energy programs and the other covering water programs, each with approx. 36 permanent Tashkeel staff in addition to the TA supplied by the project/program contractors. The former Planning Directorate was broken up into these two M&E directorates as well as one Directorate for Energy Programs and one for Water Programs. These conduct planning activities – there is no separate planning unit.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no M&E manual or guidelines.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major ministry-level institutional review is reported to have been carried out in recent years, although the ministry was restructured about 2 years ago. The ministry has been certified by the MoF to conduct its own procurement processes. MoEW has submitted its proposal to CBR – it has been categorized as Tier 3. Strengthening

		<p>M&E capacities and systems was apparently not part of the CBR proposal. The ministry staff said that they would now like to revise their proposal to include this (especially following the MoF's Diagnostic exercise).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The CBR support program has not started yet – IARCSC assessed the ministry's application last year.
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Ministry/Agency		9. Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP)
Area	Sub-Area	Findings
1. Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry developed a 5 year business plan in 2010 covering the period from mid-2010 to mid 2015. This only remained draft but it is reported to have been used as the basis for annual operational planning. The draft plan had 3 strategic objectives, each of which had between 2 and 6 specific objectives (total of 12 specific objectives). The plan included a rapid assessment of the organization and its performance. The plan did not include any specific activities related to M&E system and capacity development. The draft Business Plan is quite a professional document. It includes a work plan (Annex 3) which presents strategic activities by each of the 3 strategic objectives (there are 15 activities under Strategic Objective 1) but not by specific objective. There are no results presented in relation to the strategic activities or objectives. The plan is not costed. The ministry was implementing a NPP (the National Extractive Industries Excellence Program – NEIEP) up until mid 2013. They claim to have implemented over 80% of the activities in the NPP (with other activities going to other ministries). They are waiting for guidance from the MoEc and MoF on whether they should start preparing a new NPP to follow on from this. The World Bank recently recommended the development of a new NPP for the sector. No decision has been taken yet on this. If a new NPP is developed then they will re-do their Business Plan for another 5 years to adapt to this (this appears to be quite likely).
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not clear to what extent the structure of the MoMP's programs and sub-programs presented in the BC2 align with the objectives structure of the draft strategic plan. Ministry representatives stated that if, as seems likely, they will develop a new strategic plan in the near future, then their program and sub-program structures will need to be adjusted to adapt to the new strategy.
2. Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No results monitoring framework is presented in the draft strategic plan and there is no other high-level performance monitoring framework available for the ministry. There may well be reasonable M&E systems in place at the level of specific projects (e.g. those supported by MIDAS (USAID); GIZ; DFID) but there is no real familiarity with these among the staff at the level of the policy and finance directorates. The CBR results framework (Draft-Aug 2013) is focused on internal organizational development results so does not constitute a performance monitoring framework for the work of the Ministry. The reviewed draft CBR results framework could be strengthened considerably by reviewing and refining a number of results statements and their associated indicators.
3. Annual Operational Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry reportedly prepares annual plans based on its strategic plan, and these include schedules and year-end activity completion milestones. One annual operational plan is produced for the whole ministry. The annual plan is used to prepare the BC2 submissions, and are adjusted once the confirmed annual budget is known. The ministry staff state that investment projects are identified by following a ministry-level project appraisal and selection system.
4. Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior management conducts weekly management meetings in which they discuss progress in implementing activity plans. There are no dedicated plan performance monitoring meetings by senior management on a quarterly basis. The ministry produces quarterly progress reports which report on the level of execution

		<p>of annual work-plan activities and budget execution. It is not clear to what extent it reports on output delivery as there is no strategic output delivery plan. These are reported to include information on the quality level of outputs produced as well as the quantity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quarterly report also identifies implementation problems and recommends actions to address these. The Annual Performance Report reportedly includes a summary of the level of execution of the annual work plan and budget as well as major issues and plans for the following year. The annual performance report does not provide structured information on the ministry's performance in achieving the strategic and specific objectives of the strategic plan. Only one quarterly and annual report is produced – hence the same document is used for both internal (to the ministry) and external audiences. Both the quarterly and annual performance reports are used internally by individual units and senior management in order to manage program implementation.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry's CBR proposal contains a plan to move to results-based quarterly reporting but does not specify specific activities (to be supported under CBR) to achieve this. The quarterly and annual performance reports submitted by the ministry to the MoF BPMU are produced by the Finance Department. Ministry representatives admit that they don't really fully understand the performance reporting material, and due to communication problems between the finance department and the Policy (and planning) department there is no effective collaboration in this area.
5. Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meetings are held with stakeholders including donors, to discuss progress in implementing work plans and projects but these are not based on an indicator-based performance monitoring framework.
6. External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External reviews have been conducted by the WB and by DFID. These have reportedly had a good deal of influence on policy-making within the ministry relating to contracting, transparency, public information provision etc. There does not appear to be a ministry-wide system in place where all major programs are systematically reviewed by program teams for their performance in achieving their expected results, for identifying necessary changes in implementation strategy and for learning lessons on how to make programs more effective.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry does not appear to have a policy regarding the conduct of independent reviews and evaluations.
7. Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific surveys were mentioned by the interviewed staff.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has a MIS. However this does not appear to be results-based. Whilst it permits the production of activity and project implementation reports it appears that it does not enable automatic performance report production. It is not web-enabled.
	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry representatives claim that there is a system in place to verify the activity and project completion information supplied by the different reporting units.
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evidence of any lessons-learned management system in place.
8. M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no planning or M&E unit in the ministry. Planning and M&E functions are handled by staff of the Policy Directorate.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has no guidance materials to support the implementation of planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. No networking or knowledge-sharing mechanism exists to link representatives from the

		various projects and programs together to share ideas or approaches on M&E.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviewed staff (from the Finance and Policy Directorates) were not aware of any ministry-wide institutional assessments conducted in the last few years. However they mentioned a recent assessment conducted by the ASI project which resulted in the plan to create a Planning, M&E Directorate (possibly in 2016).• The ministry's institutional strengthening plans presented in its CBR proposal (Aug 2013) make no mention of the strengthening of M&E systems (only the target to make quarterly reporting results-based).

Ministry/Agency

10. Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD)

Area	Sub-Area	Findings
Strategic Planning	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013 the Ministry completed its strategic plan (process started in 2011 with CTAP TA support) covering the period from 2013 to 2016. This is costed and is reported to be approximately 50% funded. The strategic plan was only in English and had still not been translated into Dari by May of 2014. Ministry staff report that the strategic plan is reviewed on a frequent basis ("almost annually") and provides the basis for the formulation of the annual operational plan. The NSDP NPP is likely to be fully aligned with the ministry strategic plan given that it is only being implemented by the MoLSAMD (even though only part of it is being implemented due to funding shortages). The ministry produces quarterly progress reports on the NSDP for the MoEc and the MoF <p><i>Note: The credibility and utility of strategic planning appears to be undermined by the failure of the ministry (and others) to revise their initial draft strategic plans based on most likely levels of funding (i.e. to produce mostly funded strategic plans).</i></p>
	BC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has a structure of 4 programs (Labour Affairs; Social Affairs; Martyrs and People with Disabilities Affairs; Admin and Finance). One of the sub-programs under Labour Affairs is the National Skill Development Program (NSDP). Hence one sub-program is actually a NPP. Although the ministry staff claim that their program structure is fully aligned with their Strategic Plan the BC2 contains some incorrectly specified sub-programs (e.g construction of vocational training centres). There is a need to review and strengthen the program and sub-program structure to align it better to the ministry's strategic plan. Ministry staff complained that the rules imposed by the MoF in relation to completion of the BC2 were too restrictive. The ministry would like to have more indicators to measure performance in the BC2. They also stated that having only one output per Sub-Program was not sufficient. Ministry staff also have significant problems in correctly distinguishing between outputs and outcomes when completing the BC2s.
Results Frameworks	Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic plan (English version) has a Performance Monitoring (Results monitoring) Framework. This was originally developed in 2011 (at time of first draft of the Strategic Plan) and has not been updated since then (indicating lack of ministry ownership and capacity to update it – interesting finding) Performance Monitoring Frameworks are also reported to exist for the following projects/programs implemented by the ministry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Skill Development Program (NSDP) – operating since 2004) The Safety Net and Pensions Support Project ('The Pensions Project') The Afghan Peace and Reintegration Project (APRP) (project has recently terminated) <p>Each of these projects has an annual budget of between \$3m and \$7m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pensions Project (2012-16) has only had up to now the higher-level results indicators presented in the WB's Project Document, but now that it has M&E staff it is developing a set of lower-level indicators and processes to monitor implementation and performance.
Annual	Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft annual Operational Plans are reportedly produced based on the BC2. Once the actual

Operational Planning		<p>level of appropriated budget is known these are revised in order to produce a fully funded Operational Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the ministry claims to have a project appraisal, prioritization and selection system which feeds into the planning process it is not clear how effective this is as project selection is sometimes reported to be politically influenced. The ministry believes it needs capacity-building support in annual planning and it also needs to make its quarterly and annual performance reports more accessible to the intended users.
Progress and Performance Reporting	Activity implementation reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry produces monthly project progress reports as well as quarterly progress reports. Provincial and directorate-level (monthly?) reports are produced. The reports cover both qualitative and quantitative progress aspects. The Project Development Unit collects all the reports from the units and collates them and sends a report to the MoF and MoEc.
	Results achievement reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each directorate produces a performance report on a semi-annual and annual basis and presents this to the Senior Management group of the ministry. This covers performance in year to-date, challenges, future activity plans etc. The quarterly reports cover activity and project progress; Budget expenditure; Challenges; Recommendations; Lessons learned. The annual report covers the above plus results achievement in terms of progress against output indicator targets and explanatory factors. Outcomes are not covered however. The ministry complains that it has to provide too many different reports to different external state agencies (Parliament, MoF, MoEc, OAA, CSO, CAO, National Security Department, donors (APRP, WB)
Internal Performance Reviewing	Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no system in the ministry of conducting internal program-level or overall ministry-level participatory performance reviews on a quarterly, six-monthly or annual basis. However, internal reviews are conducted for some specific projects either on a quarterly or on an as-needed basis. For example, the NSDP conducts quarterly technical implementation reviews which are separate to the management reviews, although these are not performance-indicator based. It appears that there is no discussion of outcome achievement at the senior management level, indicating that the senior-management does not have the level of understanding of or commitment to, Results-Based Management in order to support quality M&E system development and operation.
External Reviews and Evaluations	External Reviews and Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External reviews are only conducted for selected donor-funded projects and programs (e.g. WB-funded Safety Net project and the Afghan Skills Development Project). The Pensions Project is due to undergo an impact evaluation. ToRs were recently prepared for this.
	Evaluation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry does not have an evaluation policy or guidelines document.
Data Collection and Management	Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry occasionally conducts baseline and follow-up surveys for specific projects. There is no general regular survey which it implements. It also employs a range of qualitative data-collection instruments for different projects. A Baseline Survey was conducted for the Conditional Cash Transfer program. This will be used in the forthcoming impact evaluation of the first phase of the program (2008-16). A graduate tracer survey is carried out for the NSDP in order to collect information on the employment and income status of program graduates.
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no ministry-wide performance monitoring and reporting database system. Some simple project-based MISs exist (e.g. for NSDP and the pensions reform project). Of these, it is reported that only the pensions project provincial data can be entered on-line.

	Data verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pensions project and the NSDP reported data is verified through provincial visits of central staff (M&E officer for NSDP). The M&E Directorate conducts some limited field verification of performance information reported by the various projects, but has insufficient budget to do this systematically – which is problematic because there is a clearly identified need to independently verify the performance data reported by the projects (see below).
	Lessons learned system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No ministry or program level knowledge management strategy exists and there is no lessons learned management system in place.
M&E Resourcing and capacities	Unit, staffing and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has a M&E directorate (established in 2011) which is under the planning and policy directorate-general. This has a <i>Tashkeel</i> staff complement of 22 staff which provides M&E services to both donor-funded and ministry-funded projects. The ministry has just recently begun to receive technical assistance in M&E provided under the CTAP. The ministry has specialist M&E staff for two major World Bank-supported projects – the Pensions Project, and the National Skills Development Program (a NPP). The NSDP has 5 M&E staff in the ministry central office and 5 M&E officers in regional offices. The Pensions Project recently hired an M&E officer and will shortly recruit another one.
	M&E System documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An M&E policy document was produced 2 years ago and has been implemented since then. There are apparently no M&E manuals in use in the ministry although the Pensions Project is developing one which will be completed shortly. The new ministry M&E international adviser is developing an M&E manual for the ministry.
	Capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IARCSC did an organizational assessment of the ministry as part of the CBR process, and this included looking at Planning, M&E. The ministry has had an International Technical Adviser in M&E (supplied by CTAP) for the last 5 months. He is training the staff in the M&E Directorate (works half-time with Policy Directorate-General and half-time with M&E Directorate). Ministry staff have not received any formal M&E training, only some peer-to-peer knowledge sharing from the NSP (MRRD). The ministry felt that they needed a lot of capacity-building support, including training and the sharing of experiences and good practices from other countries.
Additional Note		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The M&E directorate of the ministry has experienced frustration in trying to ensure coordination and collaboration between the different project-level M&E units/people (<i>a common finding</i>). The ministry's M&E directorate is reported to be often "sidelined" by donors engaging directly with the various project-specific M&E units. At times the project M&E reports contain information on project performance (gained from periodic direct field-based assessments) which contradicts the information contained in the M&E Directorate's report. Hence there is a tendency towards excessively favourable assessments of performance in the project-specific M&E unit reports. The MoLSWMD has a number of young professionals who are well-informed about modern M&E practices and appear to be involved in building improved systems in the ministry. They are also committed to participating in cross-ministry improvement processes and the development of a Government-wide Performance M&E System. It appears that the Budget Execution Directorate of the MoF (DGB) only accepts performance reports from the individual project M&E units, and not from the Ministry-level M&E Directorate (this aspect generated a long and heated discussion).

Annex 2

People Interviewed

Ministry/Agency	People Interviewed	Position
Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)	Abd. Aziz "Sharifi"	General Manager of Finance
	Haji. M Fahim "Ahmadi"	Employee of Budget
	Dr. Khosraw "Ahmad Zai"	Responsible for Monitoring Department
	Dr. Yousof Zai	Policy and Planning Consultant
	Babrak "Baryali"	Finance Department staff
	M. Agha "Amery"	Chief Operating Budget
	Jamshid "Saber"	HMIS Specialist
	Dr. Husnia "Sadat"	Health Finance Chief
	Meer M. Usman	M&E Advisor
	Dr. Rasooli	TL Sehat Project
	Dr. Khesraw	Monitoring Manager
Ministry of Education	M. Qasim "Mohseni"	Head of Strategic Planning
	Abd. Wasea "Arian"	Director General of Planning and Evaluation
	M. Ismaail "Khatab"	Head of EMIS
	Raz. M "Payenda"	Head of Finance and Accounting
	Haidar "Miakhil"	Director of Finance
	Sharafuddin "Sharaf"	Specialist in Monitoring and Reporting
	Abd. Wahab Sahak	Admin Manager
	Baluch Noori	Planning Officer
	Ata M. Mohammadi	Literacy Department Officer
	Jalaluddin Atahi	M&E Manager
	M. Ghani Ameen	DG Education Monitoring
	Ab. Subhan Raoof	M&E Controlling Manager
	Baheen	DG Education
	Ab. Sami Sulaimanzada	Evaluation Advisor
Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)	Eng. Nabi Shah "Habibi"	Audit Manager Development Projects
	Eng. Ghulam Rsul "Daudzai"	Responsible for PMO
	Eng. Hussain Bakhsh "Mirzad"	Plans and Policy Directorate of Technical Consultant
	Abd. Ghafar "Ghafoori"	Head of Analysis and statistics
	Shir. M "Ebadi"	Director of Development Budget
	Ahmad "Wahid"	Postmaster
	Azizurrahman "Safi"	President Plans
	M. Yasin "Hamraz"	Chief Financial
	Janat "Fahim"	Head Office
	Mutea Ullah "Rahimi"	General Director of Budget Analysis and statistics

	Abdullah "Ghalib"	General Manager of Finance
	Abd. Qahar "Pardis"	Calculation of the Financial Department
	Abd. Khaliq "Ahmad Zai"	General Manager Calculates
	Bashir Ahmad Ahmadi	Planning Manager
	Dawood Zai	PMO Manager
Ministry of Economy (MoEc)	Nabi "Sroosh"	Head of the Monitoring of the Implementation ANDS
	Sayeed Arif "Nazif"	Chief of the General Plan and Unity
	Abd. Latif "Yousofzai"	Head of Trade and PSD
	Khalilullah "Stanikzi"	Financial and Accounting Officer
	Nisar Ahmad	General Manager of Finance
	Abdullah "Sarwary"	M&E Expert
	M. Ismayel Rahimi	DG Policy , Monitoring & Evaluation
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)	M. Waheed "Etabar"	Chief Financial
	M. Shakir "Majeedi"	Planning Consultant
	Abd. Munir	Responsible for MIS
	M. Zarif "Babak"	Responsible for Budget
	M. Rafiq	Head of Monitoring and Information Regulation
	M. Daud "Popalzai"	General Manager of Monitoring and Evaluation
	Nasrullah Bakhtani	Evaluation Director
Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD)	H. Qudratullah "Mosazada"	Head of Reporting
	Eng. Sayeed Kazim "Toraby"	Head of Monitoring and Quality Assurance
	Naqibullah "Hakimi"	Financial Coordinator
	Shahrukh "Mirza"	M&E
	Eng. Yama "Shirzay"	Supervisor of Monitoring
	Eng. M. Naim	Director of Planning
	Hayatullah Fazi	NSP/MRRD Executive Director
	Rahmatullah	Deputy Head ED
	M. Arif Dawoodzai	Finance Manager
	Ehsanuddin Rahimi	Officer
	Ajmal Ahmadzai	Officer
	Malik M Elham	Program Officer
	Wali Mohammad	Head of C.M
	Akber Sadat	Sr. Contract Officer
	Nabiullah	Program Associate
	Shafiullah Rasulli	M&E Specialist
	Qanbar Ali Zareh	Project Specialist
	Niaz Zaki	MIS Manager
	Ab . Waheed Hamidi	Planning Sr. Advisor

	Mohammad Fedayee	Coordinator Head PD
	Mohammad Younis Alam	Head of Planning
Independent Directorate for Local Government (IDLG)	Dp. Eng. Khaja Faizuddin "Sediqi"	Expert Supervision of Budget Execution
	Eng. Najia	Member of Monitoring Department
	Abd. Kebar "Baryali"	Head of Policy
	Rafi Ullah "Hotak"	Monitoring and Evaluation Expert
	M. Hamid "Sarwary"	Head of Monitoring and Evaluation
	Shamsuddin "Babakarkhil"	Employee of Budget
	Ab. Muqtadir Nasser	Director Planning & Policy
	M. Naser Figaar	Director Programs
	M. Sahel Zhakfar Rahimi	GIS Manager
Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW)	Eng. Tamim	Director of Survey and Project
	Wali. M "Faiz"	HR Director
	Waliullah	Procurement Director
	Rameen	Finance D.G
	Eng. Akhtar "Hafiz"	Director of Policy
	Eng. Ziagul "Safi"	Director
	Dr. Arif "Wardak"	Adviser
	Eng. A "Sami"	DM Admin
	M. Sameem Rahimi	Finance & Budget Manager
	Naser Ahmad	Finance & Budget Officer
	Amadullah Siddiqi	Policy Directorate Officer
	Eng Murad	Water Programming Manager
Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP)	Meer Abdul Jamil	Acting Finance Director
	M. Kabir Ahmadi	Development Budget Member
	Farid Ahmad Kazimi	Policy Member
	M. Sardar Mahdi	PSU Project Member
	M. Haris Bromand	Economic Advisor
	Abdul Shokoor	Economic Advisor
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD)	M. Farid "Ahmadi"	Professional Member of M&E
	Ahmad Sohail "Yusufzai"	Professional Member of M&E (Developing Project)
	M. Najim "Jahed"	General Manager of Monotheism, Analysis and check Reports
	Abd. Latif "Ghiasee"	Head of Planning
	Matiullah "Shinwari"	M&E Report Liabe NSDP
	Fariduddin "Noori"	Head of M&E
	Jamal "Aryouby"	Budget Specialist

	Ahmad Farid "Nang"	Head of Budget
	Sayeed Musa "Mohseni"	Head of Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
	Zabiullah Salek	M&E Specialist
	Ali Shir Atif	Planning Director
	Sakhi Ahmad Khairi	Monitoring Director
	Ahmad Suhail	Monitoring Member
	Janagul Hanifi	Program Specialist
	Anwar Mirzay	M&E Manager

Annex 3

Questionnaire used for ministry/agency interviews



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Ministry of Finance

General Directorate Budget

Diagnostic of Ministry/Agency M&E Systems

Ministry Interviews Data Collection Tool

Conducted by Performance Monitoring Unit, BPRD, MoF
in collaboration with
The Directorate General Policy, ANDS M&E, MoEc

Ministry/Agency Name	
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		Date	Type of Interview (or purpose)
Date of Interviews	1st		
	2nd		

Interview Team Members	Name	Agency

Documents Obtained

Document	

1. Strategic Planning

Question	Response
1. Is there a current strategic plan? (What period covered?)	
2. What period does it cover (or period covered by completed plan)?	
3. Is it costed?	
4. What % (approx) of strategic plan is currently funded?	
5. Is there a Results Framework (or Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF)) for the strategic plan? <i>(If there are different results frameworks for programs, sub-programs and major projects – indicate this).</i>	
6. If so, to what extent is this used (i.e. approximately what percentage of the output and outcome indicators are being monitored on a regular basis)?	
7. Is the strategic plan used to develop annual operational plans?	
8. How well aligned is the structure of programs and sub-programs (presented in the BC2) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the strategic plan? the NPPs which the ministry contributes to? <i>Is alignment at the activity/project level; sub-program output level; or program outcome level?</i>	
9. Does the ministry periodically conduct reviews and updates of the strategic plan? <i>If so, how often; how does it do this?</i>	
10. Do you refer to the strategic plan when you are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Preparing the annual budget submission to MoF? b) Selecting and prioritizing projects for implementation the following year? 	

11. How do you think strategic planning could be strengthened in your ministry/agency?	
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General Interview Notes

2. Annual Operational Planning

Question	Response
1. Is an overall ministry-level annual operational plan produced each year to guide activity/project implementation?	
2. If so, what is the process followed to produce the plan (e.g. is it based on the BC2 and elaborated once the allocation from the MoF is known)?	
3. Does the annual operational plan include an implementation schedule and end of year activity/project completion milestones?	
4. Is the annual plan used as the basis for monitoring activity/project implementation? (How frequently?)	

5. Does the ministry use a project appraisal system (a set of criteria for screening and prioritizing projects and for preparing Project Concept Notes and full Proposals)?	
6. How do you think annual operational planning could be strengthened in your ministry/agency?	

General Interview Notes

3. Program Performance Reviewing and Evaluation

Question	Response
Internal Implementation Progress and Performance Reviews	
1. How does the ministry monitor and review <u>progress in implementing its annual operational plan</u> ? E.g. Is there a system of monthly or quarterly team review meetings? (Note the different systems if practices vary according to program/sub-program).	
2. How does the ministry monitor, review and report on its <u>performance in achieving the end of year results</u> targets in its results framework(s) (outputs and outcomes)?	

<p>3. Where any review processes (e.g. task groups or workshops) are used :</p> <p>a. are any external stakeholders involved (such as beneficiary representatives; service providers; donors; MoF or MoEc etc)?</p> <p>b. How influential were these in changing ministry policies or program or project strategy? <i>(Ask for examples)</i></p>	<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>
<p>External Reviews/Evaluations</p>	
<p>4. Have any of the ministry's programmes, sub-programs or projects been externally reviewed/evaluated by independent experts in the last 3 years? <i>If so, which ones? Which year? Evaluated by who?</i></p>	
<p>5. How influential were these <u>external reviews/evaluations</u> in changing ministry policies or program or project strategy? <i>(Ask for examples)</i></p>	
<p>6. How do you think the system of :</p> <p>a) implementation progress and</p> <p>b) results achievement reviews/evaluations</p> <p>could be strengthened in your ministry/agency?</p>	<p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>

General Interview Notes

4. Implementation Progress and Performance Reporting¹¹

Question	Response
1. What are the regular progress and performance reports that are produced by the ministry/agency? <i>(List the type of report and their frequency. Indicate whether the reporting system varies by program or sub-program).</i>	
2. Which reports are for internal use only and which are shared outside of the ministry?	
3. What key information is the <u>Quarterly (or Monthly) Report</u> designed to provide? <i>(This might be: a) Progress in completion of activities/projects; b) Annual budget execution; c) Program and sub-program output achievement; d) Other)</i>	
4. What key information is the <u>annual report</u> designed to provide? <i>(This might be: a) A summary of level of implementation of annual plan activities/projects; b) A summary of annual budget execution; c) Progress in delivering outputs against targets/milestones; d) Progress in achieving (or likelihood of achieving) outcomes, using the indicators from the results framework).</i>	
5. Is the information in the <u>Monthly or Quarterly Reports</u> presented as normal text saying what was done, or as tables showing progress next to each annual plan activity (and the % completion level)? <i>(How clearly do the reports show the level of progress in implementing the annual operational plan?)</i>	
6. Do the Monthly or Quarterly Reports provide a breakdown of activity implementation progress by province?	
7. Do the reports contain a summary of the <u>quality</u> of activity completion (rather than simply quantity) – e.g. of infrastructure construction, services provided, or capacity built? <i>(If not, how do the program managers monitor and manage the quality of activity</i>	

¹¹ Note: Performance Monitoring Framework, Results Framework and Logframe are used to mean the same thing for this exercise.

<i>implementation?)</i>	
8. Do the progress reports provide explanations for implementation problems and recommend actions to management to address these?	
9. How does the ministry assess and report on its progress in achieving its target program or sub-program outcomes? <i>(If this is not part of its annual reviewing and reporting process – then how is this performance assessed and reported?)</i>	
10. Who uses the <u>quarterly progress reports</u> (ministry level and program and sub-program levels) in your ministry? How are the reports used (to do what)?	
11. Who uses the <u>annual performance reports</u> (ministry level and program and sub-program levels) in your ministry? How are the reports used (to do what)?	
12. How do you think implementation progress and results achievement reporting could be strengthened in your ministry/agency?	

General Interview Notes

5. Data Collection and Management

Question	Response
<p>1. What types of data collection methods does the ministry use in monitoring and evaluating its performance? <i>(e.g. Regular service-level administrative data; Beneficiary perceptions surveys; Household surveys; Focus group surveys; Independent expert assessments; Beneficiary-based assessments (e.g. community/citizen score-cards); Self-assessments by service-delivery staff; etc.)</i> [Note the program/sub-program/project]?</p>	
<p>2. Does the ministry have any electronic data-management systems to manage activity implementation monitoring and results (output and outcome) achievement monitoring and evaluation data?</p>	
<p>3. If a system exists, is data entered by program staff or only by planning/M&E/MIS staff?</p>	
<p>4. Can data be entered and accessed on-line by program managers (e.g. provincial staff)?</p>	
<p>5. Does the system produce progress and performance reports? What kinds of reports?</p>	
<p>6. Does the ministry have any system for checking the accuracy of activity completion and results achievement data supplied by program and project managers? If so, describe it.</p>	
<p>7. Does the ministry have any system for managing lessons learned from the M&E system (such as Learning Events, Case Studies; Lessons Database; Lessons Briefs/Notes etc)?</p>	
<p>8. Does the ministry use any statistical techniques to analyse its monitoring data (such as Analysis of Variance or regression analysis)? Does it use any statistical software packages?</p>	

9. How do you think data collection, analysis and management could be strengthened in your ministry/agency?	
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General Interview Notes

6. M&E Resources and Capacities

Question	Response
1. Does the ministry have an M&E system? <i>(i.e. a systematic approach to specifying the results it is aiming to achieve and a system for measuring, assessing and communicating whether it is achieving these and processes for learning from experience)</i>	
2. Is there an M&E unit within the ministry (or is the M&E function combined with the planning function)?	
3. Does the ministry have any staff whose job it is to develop and operate the ministry's M&E system? If so, how many and at what grades?	
4. If so, is this M&E system described in one document (an M&E manual or strategy document, including a basic policy on evaluations)?	
5. Does the ministry have any Project or Program management guidelines/manuals which it requires staff to use when preparing project or program proposals?	

6. Does the ministry currently have, or has it had, any significant Technical Assistance support in the area of M&E in the last 3 years?	
7. Have any ministry staff received any M&E training in the last 3 years? If so, how many people, what kind of course; when?	
8. Do any of the ministry's programs, sub-programs or main projects have separate budget lines for M&E?	
9. How do you think the ministry's M&E capacities could be strengthened?	

General Interview Notes