

POLICY MONITORING

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The Capacity Development Resource Guides highlight the key technical areas of expertise needed to effectively influence health policy design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Each guide identifies the specific skills, knowledge, and capacities that individuals and organizations should possess in the area. The standardized indicators listed for each competency and capability map to the accompanying Capacity Indicators Catalog, which helps to generate a tailored tool for assessing and scoring an organization's capacity level. Each guide also includes a list of useful resources for designing and delivering capacity development assistance.

MONITORING POLICY TO ASSESS LINKS AND BARRIERS TO IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

DEFINITION

Policy monitoring is a process by which stakeholders follow and assess policies to ensure they are developed, endorsed, enacted, and implemented as intended. Policy monitoring involves (1) appraising the policy environment, (2) gauging the level and quality of stakeholder engagement, (3) documenting the progress of policy development and the legislative endorsement of policy, (4) putting policies into practice through financing and implementation planning, and (5) evaluating outcomes of implementation.

RELEVANCE TO POLICY

Monitoring policy development and implementation is an integral component of the **policy cycle** and complements researchers' ability to link policies with improved service delivery and health outcomes (policy and program evaluation). Tools—such as the USAID | Health Policy Initiative's Policy Implementation Assessment Tool (Bhuyan et al., 2010) and the Health Policy Project's Roadmap for Implementing and Monitoring Policy and Advocacy Interventions (Judice et al., 2013)—can help stakeholders monitor policy implementation and identify barriers to and facilitators for effective policy implementation. Other tools developed to gauge the extent of a supportive environment for health policy include the Family Planning Effort Index (Ross and Smith, 2010) and Policy Environment Score module for family planning (POLICY Project, 1998). The information generated can be used to inform policy dialogue and

recommendations for translating health policies into action. Policy monitoring can and should be conducted by all stakeholder groups and requires expertise in different areas, such as advocacy, accountability systems, monitoring and evaluation, and data analysis.

■ ■ KEY CAPABILITIES

Policy monitoring requires stakeholders to understand how policies move through the process from development to implementation and the potential barriers to progress. Specifically, effective policy monitoring requires an awareness and understanding of the policy environment; analytical skills, such as being able to identify, develop, and apply assessment tools and analyze findings; and the ability to mobilize communities to participate in the policy process, lead strong well-coordinated advocacy efforts, and engage with a range of government departments and units (ActionAid, 2006).

■ ■ PERFORMANCE IDEAL

High capacity for monitoring policy development, adoption, and implementation includes being able to

- Effectively and systematically collect, analyze, communicate, and use data related to the process and outcomes of policy development and implementation
- Use data (including financial data and data about service delivery and health outcomes) to improve policy development and implementation
- Build strong relationships among sectors and among individuals and organizations to adequately monitor the full policy process

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- Opportunities and mechanisms that engage multiple sectors and organizations in policy dialogue
- Systemic monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of policy formulation and implementation for positive or negative effects
- A robust legal and regulatory framework that allows for a strong M&E system but also protects individuals' rights (i.e., laws on the confidentiality of individuals' health records and health status; data sharing among institutions)
- National working groups/committees focused on policy monitoring, which meet regularly and have clear working objectives
- A national research agenda, which includes specific research priorities and stakeholders with interest in using the data collected

INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCIES

KNOWLEDGE OF

Local and national policy environments, laws, and institutions related to health sector issues	PM1
Political processes, power brokering, and key political actors/champions in the health sector	PM2
Processes for the uptake of policy by national/subnational institutions, including funding mechanisms and other systems	PM3
Benefits of and approaches to facilitating the use of evidence to inform different stages of the policy process	PM4
M&E fundamentals, including how to develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives, indicators, M&E systems, and evaluation designs	PM5

SKILLS TO BE ABLE TO

Listen, communicate, negotiate, and influence others to participate in monitoring the processes of policy development and implementation	PM6
Collect and analyze data from primary and secondary sources to monitor progress in the policy process	PM7
Identify, analyze, and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy monitoring, including national-level policymakers, advocates, technical specialists, and citizen groups	PM8
Identify where a policy issue or problem lies in the policy process and chart out a pathway for successfully developing and/or implementing the policy	PM9
Develop routine data collection systems, including a policy monitoring plan, indicators, and data storage mechanisms	PM10
Design and implement process and outcome evaluations and/or operations research studies to evaluate policy implementation	PM11
Facilitate the use of information at different points in the policy process	PM12

ATTITUDES/VALUES/ATTRIBUTES

Values working in collaboration	PM13
Is committed and can remain engaged and monitor issues over the long term	PM14

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES**TECHNICAL ABILITY TO**

Systematically use qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to receive input from constituencies on their needs, priorities, and interests and how policies affect them	PM15
Identify stakeholders and target audiences for monitoring information and analyze their position for potential support or opposition	PM16
Identify where issues or problems exist within the policy development or implementation process and chart an approach to successfully develop or implement the policy	PM17, P18
Analyze and document implications of existing policy and proposed policy alternatives, especially from the perspectives of gender, equity, and stigma and discrimination	PM19
Develop an M&E plan to track short- and intermediate-term changes in the policy process to accurately assess attribution or contribution to longer-term change through policy implementation	PM20
Systematically evaluate the effectiveness of different policy interventions (e.g., advocacy, policy dialogue, policy analysis, strategic planning) to determine contributions to policy outcomes and learn lessons to improve future activities	PM21
Communicate findings of policy monitoring through various communication channels to groups who could use the findings for decision making, advocacy, etc.	PM22

RELATIONAL ABILITY TO

Maintain constructive links with various policy stakeholders, including communities, policymakers, advocates, and civil society organizations	PM23
Earn credibility with the public, constituents, media, and donors to ensure that accurate information is collected and that these stakeholders trust the information produced through policy monitoring	PM24
Influence others to participate in monitoring the processes of policy development and implementation	PM25
Provide training/technical assistance to other organizations on policy monitoring	PM26

ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT TO SUPPORT

The allocation of dedicated resources (staff, time, money) to policy monitoring efforts	PM27
Systems to collect, analyze, and synthesize data related to the policy process	PM28
Innovation and adaptation of approaches in response to the changing environment, internally and externally	PM29

■ ILLUSTRATIVE CAPACITY- STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

- Conduct training on the policy process and monitoring and evaluation for government institutions, civil society, key populations, etc.
- Engage lawyers and others with expertise in the legal and regulatory framework and policy process to provide technical assistance to individuals and organizations responsible for policy monitoring
- Facilitate multisectoral workshops on the development and implementation of policy monitoring plans
- Provide experiential learning opportunities to design, conduct, and use information from an evaluation of policy implementation
- Support advocacy for country-owned systems for ongoing policy monitoring

■ RESOURCES

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