WOMEN RIGHT ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

MONITORING AND EVALUATION POLICY

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The overall aim of this policy is to establish common structures and standards across Women Right Advocacy Initiative that governs the application of effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems with a view to maximizing the benefits from interventions.

More specifically, this policy aims to:
➔ Demonstrate WRAI's commitment to monitoring and evaluating its work and using the results to drive performance and impact
➔ Set out minimum requirements, principles to be respected, as well as roles and responsibilities
➔ Provide an overview of and basic introduction to M&E with additional tools referenced to provide further guidance and information.

All **Women Right Advocacy Initiative (WRAI)** staff must comply with this policy and therefore they constitute its primary audience.
However, this policy is also aimed at external stakeholders such as donors and partners, to provide information on WRAI standards and procedures. Hence this policy plays an important role in delivering accountability and transparency on M&E.

Definition of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring
Monitoring is the continuous collection and analysis of information used by management and partners to determine progress on the implementation of activities, achievement of objectives and use of resources. Monitoring can happen at several levels, project and programme level.

Evaluation
Evaluations are form of activities that provide evidence of the achievement of results and Institutional performance. Evaluation is a periodic and systematic assessment, as impartial as Possible, of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of an activity in the projects, policies and organizational units. Evaluations should provide credible, reliable and useful information, enabling timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons learned into relevant decision-making processes.

The difference between monitoring and evaluation
The term 'monitoring' is often used in conjunction with the term 'evaluation'. In fact, information collected through monitoring is an important source of data used in evaluation. While monitoring tells us what is happening, evaluation provides more detailed information such as why and how things are happening. In other words, while monitoring tells us whether an activity is on track to achieve its intended objectives, evaluation tells us whether the activity as a whole is on the right track. Monitoring and evaluation, together with planning, are the foundation for Results Based Management (RBM), the broad management strategy adopted by WRAI.

4. The purpose of monitoring and evaluation at WRAI

The purpose of M&E is three-fold:

 Learning and Improvement

M&E activities help to understand why, and the extent to which, intended and unintended results are achieved, and their impact of the project. It is therefore an important agent of change through the provision of useful feedback and a commitment to act on that feedback, thereby driving organizational learning. Furthermore, as a learning tool, M&E adds to WRAI's body of knowledge with respect to best practices in monitoring, evaluation and conservation.

Results Based Management

RBM is a 'management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts', collectively known as 'results'. RBM uses a structured, logical approach that identifies expected results and the inputs and activities necessary to achieve these. This management strategy ensures that all project units work towards and report on a common set of goals. At WRAI, RBM is based on the following pillars:
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⇨ **The integration of planning and budget processes**, covering both programme (substantive conservation and human well-being results) and operations (results that support the functioning of the WRAI)

⇨ **Monitoring and reporting tools**, from those aimed at measuring delivery of results through to those for measuring finances and risk

⇨ **Utilisation-focused evaluation:** All evaluations must be designed with a focus on intended users and intended use.

⇨ Data and information collected either through planning; monitoring or evaluation processes are used by senior management to **manage for results** in all key decision-making fora.

⇨ **Accountability**
M&E plays a crucial role in accountability. WRAI is answerable to its Members, partners and donors on whether its policies, programmes and projects are having the intended results. WRAI also needs to demonstrate that resources are used efficiently and effectively. The M&E process, together with the required documentation that accompanies it, holds WRAI staff and contracted implementing partners responsible for their performance. High quality M&E builds Members', donors', and partners' confidence in WRAI.

Evidence-Based Management

The results of M&E activities are an important input to the decision-making process within Women Rights Advocacy Initiative (WRAI) and affect a range of management processes, including risk and performance management and decisions to change, expand or contract programmes.

5. The main types of monitoring and evaluation at WRAI

There are many different types of M&E, and some may be more appropriate and useful depending on the activity being evaluated. However, WRAI's M&E work generally falls in one of the categories below.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a management tool to improve organizational delivery and performance. At WRAI monitoring is almost always undertaken internally (including by project staff), WRAI's organization-wide monitoring and reporting efforts focus on the below.

 Programme Monitoring

Programme monitoring measures the contribution of a WRAI programme to the achievement of through a set of result and impact indicators. Every programme reports on an annual basis on implementation progress and delivery of results. This is aggregated into an annual *Programme Report*, shared with WRAI's main partners.

 Project Portfolio Monitoring

This measures the health, performance and risks associated with a programme portfolio, including growth/decline, reliance on unsecured income, cost recovery and risks associated with project implementation. WRAI programmes reports on a quarterly basis against agreed risk indicators.

 Project Monitoring

This type of monitoring measures and reports on the implementation progress of a project while it is being implemented. The format and deadlines for reporting are typically determined by the project donor and reporting is often against a logical framework and set of indicators agreed at the start of the project.

Evaluation

Evaluations can be commissioned internally or externally, and implemented by internal or external teams, or mixed teams. The main types of evaluation carried out at WRAI are:

 Project Evaluations

These cover projects, which are time-bound sets of activities aimed at delivering a set of a greed conservation and human wellbeing results. A project rests within a programme unit contributes to the intended results of that programme. A project evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the project. Project evaluations are undertaken as agreed with the project's donor(s), normally at the mid-term of the project schedule and at its termination.

 Programme Evaluations

Programme evaluation again assesses relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the programme. WRAI defines, internally, a series of programme level evaluations of strategic importance, normally reviewing organizational units or other topics of strategic importance.

☐ **Strategic Reviews**
These address the organizational performance as a whole, Strategic Review, intended to assess any unit in terms of its organizational performance, organizational capacity, organizational motivation and external environment. WRAI undertakes one or two Strategic Reviews per 2 year.

6. Criteria and guiding principles

The Cost of Impact Evaluation
WRAI acknowledges the high cost of impact evaluations as well as the important role they play in evaluating interventions. WRAI endeavors to conduct impact evaluations where this provides the best value for money,

All WRAI M&E activities must respect the criteria and guiding principles below to ensure that M&E activities contribute to the WRAI Programme and the goals of the organization. Other concerns such as financial viability, equity, gender and poverty are equally important and should be explored as necessary.

6.1 Monitoring criteria

In line with RBM, information collected through monitoring needs to comply with the following so-called
SMART criteria and be:
(S)pecific - The information captured measures what it is supposed to measure. In other words, the data collected clearly and directly relates to the achievement of an objective and not to any other objective. If the information collected is specific, it can tell us whether the change we seek to create is happening or not.
(M)easurable – Before starting monitoring, staff must make sure that the information required can be practically collected using measurable indicators.
(**A)chievable** – Any changes measured must be feasible in the given time-frame.

(R)elevant – Monitoring results must make a contribution to selected priorities, i.e. they must fit with the WRAI Programme and where possible indicators must be included in monitoring.

(T)ime-bound – Monitoring is not open-ended but allows change to be tracked at the desired frequency for a set period.

6.2 Evaluation criteria
In general, WRAI evaluations explore the five major criteria outlined below. Not all of the criteria need to be systematically reviewed in all cases as WRAI may make modifications to ensure the criteria fit the specific nature of the evaluation. In all cases, WWFP evaluation must first consider all five criteria and decide which ones are the most important given the context. WRAI evaluation reports must explicitly state the criteria used in the evaluation.

Relevance – To what extent is the policy, programme, project or organizational unit contributing to the strategic of its Members and partners? Is it appropriate in the context of its environment?

Effectiveness – To what extent is the policy, programme, project, or organizational unit meeting its objectives and performing well?

Efficiency – To what extent is the policy, programme, project using its resources cost-effectively? Does the quality and quantity of results achieved justify the resources invested? Are there more cost-effective methods of achieving the same result?

Impact – What are the positive, negative, primary, secondary and long-term effects of an intervention directly, indirectly, intended or unintended? In other words, what difference has the activity made?

Sustainability – Is the enabling environment within which the, project operates supportive to its continuity? To what extent will the activities and outputs be maintained after development support is withdrawn?

6.3 Monitoring and evaluation principles

All Women Rights Advocacy Initiative M&E work must adhere to the principles set out below.

Results-Oriented Accountability
M&E must focus on the extent to which the work of WRAI contributes to policy, programme, and overall objectives of the Union. A results-oriented accountability regime recognizes that there are a number of approaches to obtain results. It provides the flexibility for managers to use their insights and creativity to obtain the results desired. Similarly, a results-oriented system supports a management and governance system that provides guidance to managers, and requires information from managers about performance and learning. System controls for accountability for inputs are primarily left to internal audit.

Improving Planning and Delivery
M&E activities must provide useful findings and recommendations. Those under consideration should see M&E as an asset aimed at improving results and thereby strengthening the organization. Sustained involvement in, and ownership of, M&E processes contributes to better planning, decision-making and strategy formulation at all levels.

Quality Control
M&E involves the systematic integration of a wide assortment of knowledge and information related to a set of questions posed. As a result of gathering, analyzing and making judgements, WRAI staff and their stakeholders make important decisions related to the quality of their work at the policy, programme, project and organizational level.

Supporting an Evaluation Culture
M&E is most effective when it forms part of an organization's culture – a way of thinking and a way of acting. Concretely, M&E is seen as an important part of all WRAI staff responsibilities. As such, WRAI's incentive systems need to support learning about and appropriately using

M&E. All staff should see the M&E process as a tool that can help them improve their work and their results.

Working in Partnership

M&E often involves multiple stakeholders. Those affected by the outcome of M&E work have a right to be involved in the process. Stakeholders should be actively involved in all aspects of the evaluation process. Such involvement will make evaluations better understood, promote contributions and acceptance, and will increase the likelihood of use.

Transparency

The transparency of the M&E process is an important aspect of ensuring that M&E information is extensively used by managers, the Director General and Council. Clear communication with stakeholders concerning the purpose of the monitoring and/or evaluation work, the key questions and intended uses of the results of the M&E process, along with standards for the design, data collection and analysis will maximize the transparency of the M&E process.

Access

Women Rights Advocacy Initiative makes M&E results publicly accessible. All final reports, as well as management responses where available,. Findings and lessons learned will be disseminated as appropriate

Ethics

M&E shall provide due regard for the welfare, beliefs, and customs of those involved or affected, avoiding conflict of interest. Stakeholder rights and interests shall be respected, particularly with regard to respecting culture and customs, fundamental values, the right to or not to participate, and ensuring confidentiality of individual stakeholders.

M&E processes should be complete and fair in their examination and record the strengths and weaknesses of the policy,

As much as possible, M&E procedures should guard against distortion caused by personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation.

Independence

M&E processes are expected to truthfully and honestly describe successes and shortcomings. The M&E function should therefore be independent to ensure credibility and maximize benefits. Independence contributes to impartial M&E and ensures that the ability of those carrying out M&E to provide credible reports and advice is not compromised.

Credibility

WRAI is committed to ensuring that M&E is carried out according to a high quality of accepted standards in the professional field and based on reliable data and observations.

The use of these standards by WRAI manager is reviewed on a regular basis, and progress towards improving the quality of evaluations is reported on an annual basis.

Improving the quality of evaluations in a critical aspect of the credibility of its evaluation work.

Utility

M&E must serve the information needs of intended users. There is no point in engaging in M&E unless it is seen as useful and used in decision-making and programme improvement.