Seeing is Believing and Monitoring – How the SiB team monitor projects
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Many thanks to all of you for supporting all the Seeing is Believing team here in London with the project reporting. We have noticed a continued improvement in reporting in 2013. And I can report that we utilise all the data you send us!

SiB realises that in some projects we have had to support data collection within the project itself - support to HMIS, specific staff training…. But SIB appreciates that without the foundations being robust, it is very problematic to produce accurate and clear data for monitoring the project outputs and achievements.

SiB receives reports at 6 month intervals, but due to 2 reporting cycles to manage our workload here, we are engaged with project monitoring across the whole year.
The main ways we use the data is:

- **At the project level.**
As well as reading the narratives very closely to inform ourselves about your specific project, and its progress - both the planned as well as the unplanned / unexpected – we also compare the narrative with the data in the excel sheets to make sure that we have a clear picture of how the individual project is progressing, and the issues that you are experiencing locally. We also compare with your original plans. And we review spend (planned and actual) with the outputs reported.

We also undertake some additional reviews, primarily utilising the data in the excel sheets. We produce several key SiB documents / summaries from your data.

- **Project progression sheets**
These project progression sheets - outputs and spend - are produced for each individual project, mapped against your original plans. They are presented both as tables as well as graphs, and are cumulative over the life of the project. Clearly not every project progresses exactly as planned, but periods with high or low performance should be balanced with periods of "catch-up" or "smoothing" of project activity and spend. These sheets are sent back to each project, they are also shared with the Bank and sent out to the countries. These were discussed at the KL workshop in June. And we hope that you are all now receiving these at the project level.

- **Risk registers**
The risk register is an overview of each individual SiB project, organised by the Phases. In this we use 4 parameters: spend, outputs (both compared to +/-90% of expected), sustainability, and having a clear plan to return to the agreed targets (should the project be deviating).   This is used every 6 months to provide a clear overview of progress against plans for senior SiB managers and Committee members. We use a "traffic lights system".   Any projects in higher risk categories (red) will have been contacted directly.

- **Output sheets**
The output sheets are a summary of all your output data and can be summed, again at the Phase level. From your original proposals we had tabulated your expected outputs, and the actual output sheet are updated at each reporting cycle and sit alongside the expected outputs. These include clinical outputs, as well as capacity building and other infrastructure / capital improvements. This is a summary at the programme level (all the projects) and allows SiB to map all outputs across the globe.

- **Collect audit reports**

We also collect auditors' letters from the countries to confirm that SiB projects are meeting standards in their project and financial management at the country level.

- **Visits**

The Bank in-country is tasked with visiting the projects at least twice per year to inform themselves directly about the progress of the SiB project. This is also a great opportunity for project teams to educate the Bank staff about the project and the issues that are faced - both for eye care in general in the country, and also success and challenges for the project team.

Also the SiB team will visit every project during its lifetime (generally around its mid-life) to be able to capture key learning and help gain ideas for sharing the successes and learning of the SiB projects. It also enables the team to understand the local situation, and expected impact of the project in that country. This learning is primarily among SiB at the moment, but with Phase V we hope to encourage more sharing across the eye care sector.

Evaluation

As Phase IV projects have been coming to a close we have encouraged all projects to undertake a structured evaluation and to share the report with SIB. Most projects had already planned an evaluation, and some had specific budgets allocated. An evaluation is more than the sum of monitoring. It is an opportunity to reflect on achievement and also the processes involved.

The evaluation reports that we are accumulating as projects close-out we hope to utilise both to review the full impact of Seeing is Believing, and also to help review key issues at country and also thematic and global levels.

Sally Crook, Seeing is Believing