

Subject: MEAL Policy

1. Definition of MEAL

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) are part of everyday program management and are critical to the success of all programs. It enables organizations to track progress, make adjustments, discover planned or unplanned effects of programs on the lives, involve beneficiary and make accountable to the stakeholders through information sharing and developing a complaint or feedback mechanism which can help to guide better implementation.

2. Understanding Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

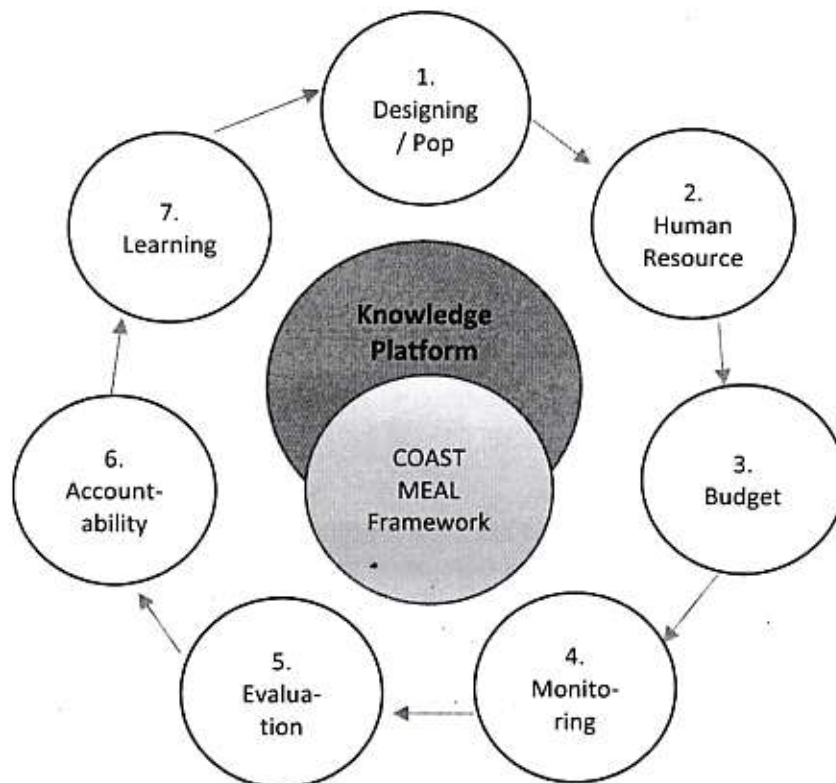
Monitoring: Regular collection of information to assess progress in the implementation of the work plan.

Evaluation: Periodic collection of information to assess progress in changing the behavior and well-being of target population.

Accountability: Involves giving beneficiaries and stakeholders the opportunity, voice and power to hold us to account in ways that influence project/organization's policies, priorities, and actions through information sharing, feedback, and complaint mechanism and participation.

Learning: It refers to the systematic incorporation of lessons, recommendations and observations into program design, including the findings that emerge from accountability and feedback mechanisms.

3. COAST MEAL Framework



Learning and knowledge management form MEAL system will help improve designing the further program, this time more wisely. And, will allocate necessary skilled human resources and budgets to get out the most from the reviewed project or program.


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4. Objectives

- 4.1 Track and reduce the information gap about program activities, ensure quality performance and put expected output in order through exercising of MEAL,
- 4.2 Develop manager or leaders' skill on off-site monitoring in order to improve their performance dealing with programs, policies and practices with a minimal cost.
- 4.3 Ensure beneficiary and stakeholder's participation in MEAL system, allow them to share their views and ideas, hold accountable to them and document learning and knowledge management for future initiatives.

5. Process of preparing MEAL Policy

COAST reviewed different organizations MEAL policy, practice and procedure; and drafted this policy. It received feedback from beneficiary and staff and included them later on into this draft final policy.

6. Exercise of MEAL

6.1 MEAL exercise by Project personnel at project level

Project Coordinator/Manager (PC/PM), M&E officer, Team Leader or Head along with Primary Stakeholders, throughout their direct participation, meeting, discussion and field visit, will ensuring regular monitoring by using some specific formats. Respective persons will compile the findings and share the findings and learning to their monthly PIU meeting and bimonthly Program Progress Monitoring Meeting (PPMM) for further decision.

6.2 Meal exercise by Principal Office staff (Focal persons, AD-MEL&H, Head-MEAL, etc.)

On behalf of ED, AD-MEL&HA and Head-MEAL along with other focal persons are responsible for monitoring. They will prepare monitoring formats along with monitoring plan. They will monitor and evaluate programs or projects mainly in two ways, i.e. (a) off-site monitoring through receiving M&E report, newsletter, meeting minutes and teleconference with staffs, and (b) on-site monitoring while they visit programs/projects. The core program (Micro Finance, Institution Building and Good Governance) will be monitoring under the core program.


7. Tools and Techniques

7.1. Tools for off-site Monitoring

Off-site monitoring can be defined as the viewing of closed-circuit television (CCTV). Monitoring formats, reports, pictures, skype meeting or teleconference with staffs, stakeholder feedback, etc. tools can be used for off-site monitoring. This type of monitoring controls programs from principal office to field offices and ensures quality implementation of programs.

COAST Off-site monitoring tools

| Sl | Monitoring Tools | Objective | Process | | | Frequency | Follow-up |
|----|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | Source | Compilation & Analysis | Preservation and Dissemination | | |
| 1. | Quarterly Project Planning report | - To know the project planning | Report receive | Focal persons, AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL | Focal persons, AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL & disseminate to the Director & ED | Monthly | DD-ME & IA AD-MEL&HA |
| 2. | Activity progress review report | - To know the last month achievement performance | Report receive | AD-MEL&HA Head-MEAL at PO | AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL & disseminate to the Director and ED | Monthly | DD-ME & IA AD-MEL&HA |
| 3. | Finance review report | - To know the activity progress and expenditure | Burn Rate Report receive | DD-FC&CA, focal persons | DD-FC&CA and disseminate to ED | Fortnightly | Director, DD-ME & IA, DD-FC&CA |


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| SI | Monitoring Tools | Objective | Process | | | Frequency | Follow-up |
|----|---|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | Source | Compilation & Analysis | Preservation and Dissemination | | |
| 4. | Statutory requirement format of project | - To ensure timely submission, quality control and follow-up | Printed Statutory requirement | Focal persons, PC | PC, Focal person | During the project | Focal person, AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL |
| 5. | Plan of Operation (PoP) review | - To keep PoP updated (need base) | Existing format of PoP | Focal persons & PC | PC & AD-MEL&HA | Quarterly/ Yearly | Focal person, AD-MEL&HA |
| 6. | Complaint Response Mechanism (CRM) | - To know the situation and progress of submitted complaints | Complaint register | AD-A&SR, AD-GT&CR | AD-A&SR, AD-GT&CR and disseminate to Director and ED | Monthly/ need base | Director |
| 7. | Focal persons review at PPMM | - To know the project updates and decisions that are made in last PPMM | PPM Meeting at Principal Office | AD-MEL&HA | AD-MEL&HA and disseminate to focal persons, Director and ED | Bimonthly | DD-ME&IA, AD-MEL&HA |
| 8. | Meeting minutes review | - To know the progress and decisions to be addressed | Meeting minutes receive | AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL | AD-MEL&HA & Head-MEAL & disseminate to the Director and ED | Monthly | AD-MEL&HA, Head-MEAL, Focal persons |
| 9. | Weekly review with PCs | - To know last week progress - To share the next weak plan | Telephone/ Teleconference/Weekly plan | AD-EFDC&P AD-MEL&HA | AD-EFDC&P, AD-MEL&HA and disseminate to the focal person, Director | weekly | AD-EFDC&P AD-MEL&HA |
| 10 | Desktop news-letter review | - To ensure project news are published & stakeholders receive it | Newsletter publication | AD-MEL&HA | AD-MEL&HA and disseminate to the Director and ED | Monthly | AD-MEL&HA, Head-MEAL |

7.2. Tools for on-site monitoring

On-site monitoring is carried out by an individual who visits the program site at a regular basis and ensure activities are on track, based on plan. The person uses tools like formats, discussion with program participants and check out documents and photos for data verification. DD-ME&IA, AD-MEL&HA, Head-MEAL, focal persons, PCs and monitoring officers will carry out the on-site monitoring.

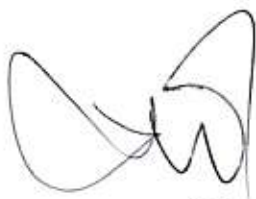
On-site monitoring and Evaluation tools

| SI | Monitoring Tools | Objective | Process | | | Frequency | Follow-up |
|----|---|---|--|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | Source | Compilation & Analysis | Preservation and Dissemination | | |
| 1. | Project Performance Review (PPR) report | - To assess the performance of project and its impact | Beneficiary, project documents and reports | AD-MEL&HA/ Head-MEAL | AD-MEL&HA, Head-MEAL, focal person, and disseminate to ED and respective project leader | Quarterly (need base) | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA |


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|----|--|--|---|---|--|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | Source | Compilation & Analysis | Preservation and Dissemination | | |
| 2. | Beneficiary feedback report | - To know the satisfaction level of beneficiary and unintended negative effect of project, if any | Interview/ Focus Group Discussion- FGD report, photograph | AM/RPC, PC/PM/M&E, Head-MEAL, AD-MEL&HA, AD-GT&CR | AD-MEL&HA and disseminate to respective project leader, Director, ED | Quarterly | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&IA & AD-GT&CR |
| 3. | Risk assessment report | - To know and address, if there is any ongoing risk, e.g. SEA, safety, security, financial, management, etc. | Monitoring, audit, review reports and interview | PC/PM, AM/RPC at PIU and audit, monitoring & finance dept. personnel from central | Monitoring, audit & finance personnel and disseminate to Focal person, the Director and ED | Quarterly/ regularly | Director, DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA |
| 4. | Leadership Performance Review(LPR) | - To assess the managerial skill, performance & knowledge on COAST policies | Staff and beneficiary interview | DDs, ADs, and Head-MEAL | DDs, ADs, Head-MEAL, and disseminate to the ED and respective project leader | Quarterly (need base) | DD- ME &AI |
| 5. | Financial (Burn Rate) Monitoring and Audit | - To assess the financial progress and performance of project | budget line, cash book, ledger & BR reports | Corporate Affairs and Audit team | Corporate Affairs and Audit section and submit to the Director and ED | Monthly/ Fortnightly | DD- FC& CA |
| 6. | Post-facto Movement Checkup (PMC) | - To assess staff movement, output and effectiveness | Movement register and field visit | DDs, ADs, Head-MEAL and Focal persons | DDs, ADs, Head-MEAL, and submit to the Director | Need base | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA |
| 7. | Midterm review | - To assess the midterm progress of project | Beneficiary, project documents, reports, staff interview | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA, HEAD-MEAL and Focal persons | DD- ME&AI, AD-MEL&HA, HEAD-MEAL and Focal persons, and disseminate to ED | Mid of the projects | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA |
| 8. | Project ending review | - To assess the impacts of the project | Beneficiary, project documents, reports, staff interview | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA, HEAD-MEAL and Focal persons | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA, and disseminate to Director and ED | Ending of project | DD- ME &AI, AD-MEL&HA |



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COAST Accountability Mechanism

7.1 Core program

COAST ensures accountability in its programs, especially in Microfinance, Institution Building and Good Governance. It ensures display "Your Right to Know" policy on boards of every offices. It also publishes Information Discloser Policy, Communications Policy, Complaint Response Mechanism policy, Humanitarian Accountability Framework, etc. available both in website and diary. It clearly declares mechanism for responding to complaint, if anyone sought. COAST Micro Finance Passbook contains emergency communications numbers including the Executive Director's and it encourages stakeholders for submitting complaints, if any. COAST ensures proper solution of complaints within the stipulated time, it declared.

7.2 Social Development program

Likewise, core programs, COAST ensures accountability mechanism in social development programs, i.e. ensures complaint receiving and solution mechanism, set-up suggestion box, discloses email and postal address and emergency contact number, as well as ensures mutual accountability to all its beneficiary, stakeholder, staff and donor. COAST has a statutory requirement format in use which contains project basic information and must-be-done activities that makes the organization accountable to the donor in other way.

8. Beneficiary feedback

8.1 COAST ensures beneficiary feedback mechanism both in its core and social development programs. It regularly organizes Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and/or direct interview with beneficiaries and collects feedback to know their level of satisfaction over services, they receive. It considers beneficiary feedback as a learning tool and improves services, when requires.

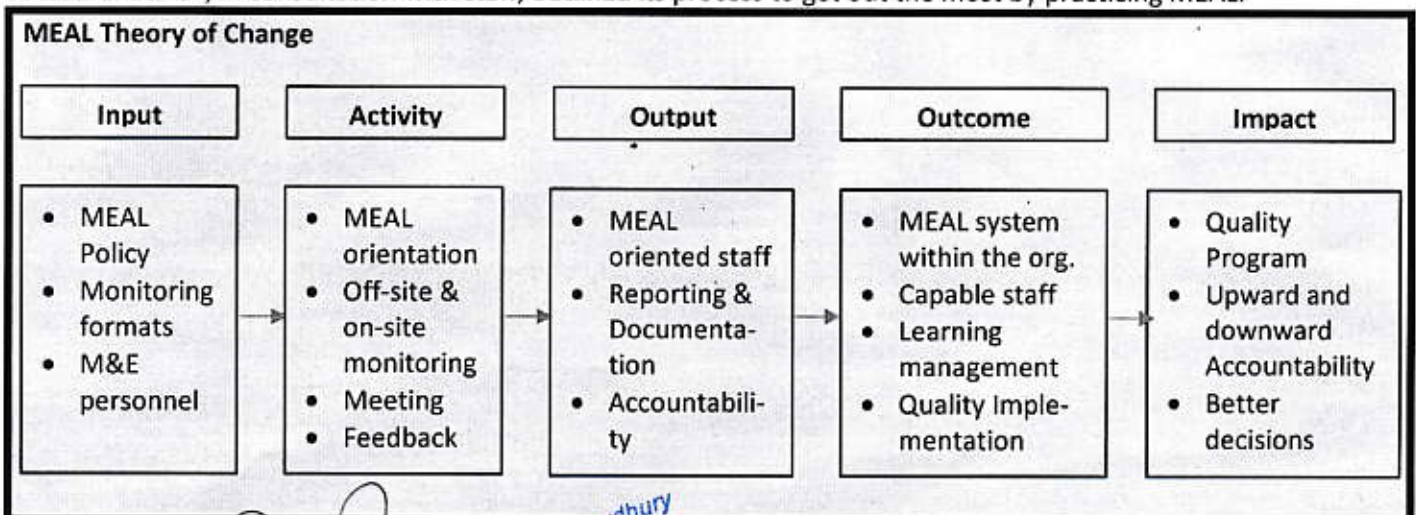
8.2 COAST also organizes FGD and/or direct interview with beneficiaries and collects feedback on actual or potential unintended negative effects, if there is any, e.g. gender discrimination, sexual exploitation and abuse, livelihood, safety-security, environment, etc. which is affected negatively by the implementation of COAST projects/programs. It also seeks beneficiary opinion to prevent that unintended negative effects and takes necessary action in consultation with the management.

9. Learning:

As learning refers to the systematic incorporation of lessons, recommendations and observations, including the findings that emerge from accountability and feedback mechanisms, COAST will document that, share and publish to get meaningful, evidence based learning from them to practice.

10. Theory of Change (ToC)

Theory of Change defines long-term goals and then maps backward to identify necessary preconditions to reach its outcome. COAST, in consultation with staff, outlined its process to get out the most by practicing MEAL.




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11. Approved by The Trustee Board: This policy has been approved unanimously in the 99th BoT meeting held on 22 March, 2019.

12. Review of this policy:

This policy can be reviewed with the changes of relevant policies/guidelines of COAST Trust and in line with the response in Humanitarian Accountability.



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