

Ten Principles of Effective Monitoring and Evaluation of the Implementation of National Anti-corruption Strategies and Action Plans

Principle 1 – Sound indicators

Well formulated indicators are the basis for clear and comprehensive monitoring. They need to call for specific, measurable, qualitative, and quantitative data. Reporting on progress towards indicators should go beyond limitations which indicators sometimes contain. It should provide the monitoring body and the public with all information they might look for in the context of each indicator.

Principle 2 – Reporting by state bodies

Each state entity responsible for the implementation of a certain action should be responsible for reporting on progress. State bodies should ideally report at least twice a year to ensure public scrutiny of progress. Any paper-based reporting requires templates. For ease of following the numerous activities, a system of enumeration of objectives and activities is recommended in action plans, and the same enumeration should be followed in the reports. Information from other sources should serve to complement and countercheck the data submitted by state bodies. Reports should contain quantitative data on the overall level of implementation, combined with a matrix on the quantitative and qualitative status of each action.

Principle 3 – Usage of IT-tools

IT-solutions facilitate structured input, render paper work obsolete, provide data in real time, and allow for easy public reporting. Ideally, the monitoring body is connected through a web application with all reporting entities. Whenever an online reporting system is not available, offline software can support the aggregation and analysis of all institutional reports. As an alternative, reports should still be in electronic format sent by email to be consolidated into one table, or such tables could be shared online.

Principle 4 – Incentives for reporting

Incentives should be available to facilitate reporting. This includes clear institutional and individual responsibility for reporting; clear instructions; high-level endorsement; public availability of progress reports; IT-support; and the possibility of on-site audits by the monitoring group.

Principle 5 – Monitoring bodies

Monitoring bodies – if a collegial body – should comprise of a diversity of stakeholders, including civil society, or – if an agency – ensure input from various stakeholders; should meet at least as often as is the frequency of reporting; should have political weight by its location or level of members; should employ staff with relevant expertise; and should promote its work to the public.

Principle 6 – Public access

Public access of progress reports can increase pressure and demand for change. It provides a strong incentive for public bodies to comply with benchmarks contained in indicators. It furthermore allows the public at large to scrutinise how the government lives up to its commitments. Public access means putting all progress reports online in machine-readable format to allow for key word search or for migrating part of the data for further analysis by civil society organisations. Similar is true for evaluation reports.

Principle 7 – Participation of civil society

Inclusion of civil society in monitoring and evaluating strategies ensures ownership of the process by a large societal basis. Civil society representatives should be included in any monitoring/coordination commission and its working groups (e.g. for on-site audits), should have access to progress reports, and the monitoring/coordination commission as well as implementing state bodies should take their comments on the implementation of anti-corruption strategies into consideration.

Principle 8 – Coordination

Monitoring is not just taking note of progress reports; monitoring bodies also have to steer activities into the right direction. To this end, the monitoring/coordination commission and implementing state bodies have to show leadership; communicate; review compliance with timelines; allocate resources; and update parts of an action plan in need of review or re-design. Coordination of activities has to reach out to the regional and local levels to ensure inclusion of all stakeholders and flow of information between all levels of government.

Principle 9 – Ensuring compliance

Accessibility of progress reports to the public creates a healthy competition between public entities. Implementation bodies should apply result-oriented management with their staff to facilitate achieving objectives. In addition, it is indispensable for monitoring bodies to not only react to the progress made, but explain from the beginning to each agency and staff their particular role and responsibility, and point out the benefit of doing so. The possibility of on-site audits by the monitoring body provides an additional incentive for implementing entities to comply with the action plan.

Principle 10 – Evaluations

It is necessary to review the overall success of an anti-corruption policy at least once during its time-span. The evaluation should be transparent and result in recommendations on updating the existing anti-corruption policy or on designing a follow-up one.