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Workshop Report on Monitoring and Evaluation

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Introduction

City Investments To Innovate, Integrate and Sustain, commonly known as the CITIIS program, is intended to support Indian cities in becoming more integrated, innovative and sustainable. Twelve projects have been selected under CITIIS which are determined to receive financial assistance and technical support from Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Union (EU).

Where financial assistance is conceived in the form of loans and grants, technical support is envisioned to be provided through mentorship of domestic and global experts. The program is being managed by a Program Management Unit, based in National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi.

CITIIS Program is visualised under three components, first of which is ‘CITIIS’. Twelve selected projects form a part of this component and are classified under four major themes of:

- Sustainable Mobility;
- Public Open Spaces;
- Urban e-governance and ICT; and
- Social and Organizational Innovation in Low-Income Settlements.

Objectives

Following-up on the second function of RBM, the main question posed in front of the SPVs is, how to measure the change? The Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop was intended to help SPVs answer this question.

Format and Design

Format

Initially, the M&E workshop was planned to be conducted physically (in-person), in two sessions. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the physical workshops were cancelled. The CITIIS-PMU took it as an opportunity to engage with all the twelve SPVs individually. Twelve project-specific workshops were conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams software, each with a duration of three to four hours. (refer Table 1)

Aim of the workshop was to,

‘Introduce SPVs to the M&E methodology under CITIIS and further assist them in the selection of indicators for their respective project components.’

The first component deals with the overall preparation, selection, maturation and implementation of these projects. The second component involves building of capacities at the state-level by developing a ‘State Capacity Development Plan’ to share good practices and enhance the replicability of integrated urban projects. Under the third component, the Program aims to strengthen monitoring & evaluation (M&E) processes and promote knowledge capitalization.

Accordingly, efforts have been made to keep the concepts of ‘monitoring and evaluation’ integral to the program right from the inception. Unlike the traditional approach where M&E is considered as an interval-based activity, this program adopted a ‘Results-Based Management’ (RBM) approach, wherein, M&E activities are intertwined with the step-wise progress of the projects.

The approach taken can be defined under three main functions, viz., Design, Measurement, and Reporting. Under the first function of Design, the intention was to provide SPVs with the tools that would help them in providing a clearer understanding of Where they are? And Where do they want to go? Project Logical Framework (PLF) Workshop was conducted and PLF Workbook was prepared to assist in this design-thinking exercise. Subsequently, all the CITIIS-SPVs submitted their PLFs as maturation deliverable.
Design

Each workshop was primarily divided into three sessions:

The first session provided an insight on the theoretical aspects of M&E followed by its detailed interpretation according to the CITIIS program.

In the second session, facilitators presented a three-tier indicator selection methodology.

In the third session, a preliminary list of indicators was presented which provided SPV team-members with an opportunity to collectively brainstorm and derive an effective list of indicators.
**Sessions**

**Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation**

This session aimed at developing a shared understanding about two complementary concepts of monitoring and evaluation amongst the participants. During this session, participants were asked to present their views on how do they relate with ‘monitoring’ and ‘evaluation’ in their day to day lives; and what is the first thing that comes to their mind when anyone talks about ‘indicators’.

Interestingly, each participant had a different way of interpretation but collectively agreed upon certain basic grounds. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Helps us track what we are doing and what we are changing.
- Helps us to reflect back to our goals and objectives.
- Choice of indicator(s) is backed by the primary purpose of the project.

• Indicators help us ‘indicate’ the state or level of something.
• Indicators help us to measure change in the situation/condition.
• To make correct judgements, the chosen indicator needs to be:
  - Specific to the context/project;
  - Measurable and achievable in a sense that we are able to get data to validate our point;
  - Realistic and time-bound, to enable us to make past references.

Participants were also presented with the notion behind M&E and how it has been an integral part of the program since inception.

*Figure 1 Workshop Snapshots: Session 1 - Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation*
**Indicator Selection Methodology**

The objective of this session was to provide participants with a step-by-step methodology to select relevant indicators. During the session, participants were familiarised with three levels of indicators, the criteria that can be used to choose indicators and the acceptable total number of indicators.

The facilitators suggested that limited number of indicators must be chosen to highlight the benefits of the project and its components. Indicators should be such that find relevance to the project, provide clarity of focus and are technically feasible to be computed.

**Listing of Indicators**

With an intention to integrate data and present different levels of impact that the CITIIS program and its 12 projects would have, indicators are classified into three levels. In this session, participants were presented with a final list of Level-1 and Level-2 indicators and a suggestive list of Level-3 indicators.
**Level – 1: Program level indicators**

The objective behind this category is to be able to measure the impact that the program would make, as a whole, in the social, physical and institutional environment. Centred around the CITIIS’ core values of innovation, integration and sustainability, nine indicators are chosen that are mandatory for all the twelve SPVs to record.

To evaluate innovation, an ‘Innovation Evaluation Framework’ was presented by facilitators to distance everyone from the conventional thinking that innovation entitles only the use of new technology. The framework, in a form of matrix, expects the SPVs to study their project components across six types of innovation and three levels of innovation.

It tries to secure answers to three main questions:
- Is their project/project component innovative?
- What type of innovation does it represent?
- At what level of innovation would they want to pitch their project/project component?

**Figure 4 Workshop Snapshots: Session 2 – Indicator Selection Methodology: Innovation Evaluation Framework**

Developing further on the value of ‘integration’, evaluation was presented to be done under three main ideas. First, stakeholder integration in the form of stakeholder engagements; second, user integration through user-feedbacks and gender-equity; and third, integration of observations and learnings by analysing project’s replicability.

**Level – 2: Sectoral Indicators**

Being sensitive to the multi-dimensional nature of the projects and the kind of interventions proposed under each, Level-2 indicators are intended to measure the program’s impact across various sectors. Accordingly, seven sectors have been considered, viz., education, health, housing, transportation, public open spaces, green spaces, and water and sanitation. Data from different projects intervening under a particular sector are expected to be aggregated to understand the sectoral impact of the program. For example, if four out of twelve CITIIS projects are making interventions in education sector, such an indicator is devised, pertaining to which, data collected from these four SPVs could be aggregated and demonstratively projected as the program’s impact in education sector.

Fourteen indicators have been selected and classified under seven categories of sectoral indicators. (refer Table 3)
Program-level indicators

- Integration of end-user’s feedback in the project designs
- Stakeholders’ participation in design, planning, and execution of the project (number of stakeholders)
- At least one woman director has been appointed in the Board of Directors
- Does the project target a female audience as beneficiaries or contribute to the inclusion of women?
- Total number of women being engaged in the project concept, design, and implementation [Sub-category indicator]
- Global level of innovation (according to the innovation evaluation framework)
- Number of SPV and NIUA staff trained in sustainability issues and M&E processes (including gender action plan)
- Probability of a CItiis project to be replicated
- Total number of beneficiaries
## Table 3 Level 2: Sectoral Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Concerned CITIIS SPV</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New and/or refurbished educational facility (including digital infrastructures)</td>
<td>(Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Amaravati)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of students per year benefiting from new and/or refurbished educational facility (including digital infrastructures)</td>
<td>(Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Amaravati)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Green Spaces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Green Spaces created or/refurbished by the project</td>
<td>(Surat, Hubballi, Bhubaneswar, Visakhapatnam)</td>
<td>Hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased access to green space and/or improved and well-maintained public spaces</td>
<td>(Agartala, Ujjain, Bhubaneswar, Surat, Hubballi)</td>
<td>Number of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New and/or refurbished health facilities (including the implementation of e-health solutions)</td>
<td>(Kochi, Amaravati)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The number of patients benefitting from new and/or refurbished health facilities (including the implementation of e-health solutions)</td>
<td>(Kochi, Amaravati)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of new housing units build for people from low-income communities</td>
<td>(Puducherry)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population benefitting from improved housing conditions</td>
<td>(Puducherry)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Public Open Spaces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Spaces created or/refurbished by the project</td>
<td>(Agartala, Ujjain, Bhubaneswar, Dehradun, Puducherry, Surat, Visakhapatnam)</td>
<td>Hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Water and Sanitation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population benefitting from safe drinking water thanks to the CITIIS Projects</td>
<td>(Puducherry, Visakhapatnam)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved access to sanitation (number of sanitation infrastructure)</td>
<td>(Puducherry, Agartala, Visakhapatnam)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Transport</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to affordable transport services (public transport - buses and ITPs)</td>
<td>(Amritsar, Ujjain)</td>
<td>Number of buses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of km of created or refurbished NMT infrastructures (Walkways, Bicycle lanes, etc...)</td>
<td>(Agartala, Surat, Ujjain, Bhubaneswar, Hubballi, Dehradun)</td>
<td>Kilometres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public transport users</td>
<td>(Amritsar, Dehradun)</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level – 3: Project-Specific Indicators
Facilitators presented a preliminary list of indicators in this session. The list was generated based on the project specific documents shared with the CITIIS-PMU by all the SPVs, particularly the recent draft of Project Logical Framework, Project Preparedness Framework and Project Maturation Roadmap. Indicators classified under this level are considered to be stand-alone indicators. Data reported pertaining to these indicators are not envisaged to be aggregated with any other CITIIS project.

During this session, participants were asked to freely associate among each other as well as with the facilitators, provide suggestions and express opinions so as to arrive at an effective list of indicators that could later with further team-level deliberations be finalised for the project’s monitoring and evaluation.

Figure 5 Workshop Snapshots: Session 3 – Participants brainstorming together to select relevant indicators
Feedback

Schedule and Structure

More than 90 participants across the twelve CITIIS projects participated in the online M&E Workshop. One of the participants wrote in his feedback form, “It completely changes the way such workshops are arranged conventionally and irradiates to a great extent need to travel and be at one place. Online workshops not only save time but reduces the stress on resources by reducing travel needs.”

More than 90 percent participants felt that the workshop was rightly scheduled. As all the CITIIS projects are in their maturation phase and initial thoughts have already been given to planning and designing of varied project components, conducting M&E workshop at this time provided a platform for brainstorming further on how the planned interventions once implemented, can be monitored and evaluated.

Figure 6 Participants’ feedback on schedule and structure of the M&E Workshop

Relevance

The pre-assessment form, circulated before the workshop, not only helped in setting the context for the workshop but also made participants collaborate among themselves to define priority areas as a team. The workshop brought clarity to the participants on how to choose relevant indicators for their project’s defined outcomes, outputs and activities. Since the workshop was designed to be an interactive, participatory session, it also provided space for disagreements, thereby enabling the development of an effective list of indicators.

Overall, participants expressed that the workshop covered all the aspects of developing an M&E methodology as well as selection of relevant indicators. They found the discussion on three-tier indicator selection methodology very helpful, since the discussion delved deeper into the SPVs’ suggestive list of indicators.

“The workshop covered all the aspects for developing M&E indicators, especially the approach to be followed for selecting indicators was helpful.”

“The methodology shared was very useful & the framework explained was relatable to the project.”
Execution

More than ninety percent of the participants felt that overall, the quality of the workshop was good. Participants found the workshop specific, comprehensive, participatory and relevant. Since the workshop was being conducted online, it provided an opportunity to reach out to larger number of participants. The sessions were intentionally kept project-specific thereby encouraging multiple discussions and brain-storming sessions on narrowing down and selecting the most suitable indicators.

“A very well-structured approach, from the conceptual framework to the details. Adequately illustrated for the city to grasp the details. This is the first one I have participated in; I find it extremely useful.”

“The discussion was two way, so can actively participate and easy to clear all the doubts.”

“The team of facilitators were fully prepared with specific inputs for our city and that was very impressive.”
Gaps

- Conducting workshops online has both positives and negatives. Where it provided an opportunity to organise project-specific discussions, the prospect of learning from fellow CITIIS projects was lost.

- Even though efforts were made by the facilitators to cover all project components, workshop could not be effectively extended beyond four hours and comparatively less time was contributed to ‘defining means of verification’.

Way Forward

SPVs, under CITIIS Program, are expected to submit certain deliverables in order to come out of the CITIIS maturation-phase. The ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Plan’ is one such deliverable. The intent of this workshop was to guide SPVs in selecting relevant indicators that would later become a part of their ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Plan’ and reported on in due course of time. The next steps required in this regard are:

For CITIIS-SPVs

- Prioritization of outcomes and outputs that would highlight the main impact area of the CITIIS project.

- To collectively brainstorm in order to finalize the indicators, keeping in mind indicators pertaining to
  - CITIIS values (innovation, participation, sustainability and gender);
  - Number of beneficiaries; and
  - Each project component (minimum 2 and not more than 4-5 indicators per component)

- Developing a ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Plan’ in consultation with respective Domestic Expert and Global Mentor.

For the NIUA

- Developing an indicators’ repository based on the indicators ‘validated’ by the SPVs during the workshop.

- Integrating M&E activities on the CITIIS Management Platform for easy, periodic and reliable reporting.


- And finally, developing ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Plan’ template.