SeeBeyondBorders

POLICY

DESIGN, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (DME) POLICY

Change begins with education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

As an international not-for-profit organisation, SeeBeyondBorders has key responsibilities to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of programs and processes. We are also responsible for taking appropriate steps to ensure that our processes bring no harm to or negatively affect the communities in which we work, either directly or indirectly.

SeeBeyondBorders recognises that:

- Well-designed, effective and well-managed projects are indispensable if SeeBeyondBorders is to achieve its objectives and realize its vision
- Well-designed, effective and well-managed projects are indicators of SeeBeyondBorders' own value , professionalism and commitment
- Monitoring and evaluation activities are essential performance management practices for assessing project effectiveness and continual improvement processes

We are committed to monitoring, evaluation and learning across the whole organisation and we have designed rigorous, transparent and ethical monitoring, evaluation and learning processes to allow us to regularly review the effectiveness of our programs and monitor progress towards our stated outcomes.

2. DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline SeeBeyondBorders' approach to the design, monitoring and evaluation of our programs and projects relating to education in Cambodia, from initial scoping stage to final evaluation stage, and to demonstrate how we apply learnings from this process.

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all SeeBeyondBorders personnel involved in the design, monitoring and evaluation processes. This includes staff, volunteers, interns, program participants, Board/Advisory Committee members, trustees and staff of partner organisations in so far as they are working with SeeBeyondBorders (collectively "SeeBeyondBorders Personnel").

This policy also applies to stakeholders and beneficiaries involved in the monitoring process. The policy follows standard procedures and is laid out to adhere with third party donor audits, evaluation processes and frameworks.

4. DEFINITIONS

Baseline:

A baseline is a measurement that is used to determine conditions (eg indicator in a logframe) before a project starts. Baseline data can therefore be used as a historical point of reference to support project planning (eg, set targets) or to assess project performance/progress and its overall impact.

Beneficiaries:

Education in Cambodia is administered at a national level by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), then at a provincial level by the Provincial Office of Education (POE) and finally at a

district level by the District Office of Education (DOE). Individual schools are arranged into geographic 'clusters' of schools, with one school designated as the 'Core' school. A district consists of a number of clusters of schools. Communities engaged in schools come from one or two local villages within a commune which is the local municipality.

Direct beneficiaries for SeeBeyondBorders are usually teachers and DOE representatives, whilst indirect beneficiaries are primary school students.

Child Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative in Cambodia:

UNICEF first launched an education model that is suitable for the differing realities of developing countries in 2001 called the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) model. In 2004, South East Asian Ministers of Education agreed to promote and develop all schools in their countries to become Child Friendly Schools.

Evaluation:

The rigorous, scientifically-based collection of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes that determine the merit or worth of the program, analysing whether the program goals have been achieved. Evaluation studies provide credible information for use in improving programs, identifying lessons learned, and informing decisions about future resource allocation.

Indicator:

A quantitative or qualitative variable that provides a valid and reliable way to measure achievement, assess performance, or reflect changes connected to an intervention.

Lessons Learned:

Lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact. They help to indicate where changes may be required to program design to maximise effectiveness and/or efficiency.

Logical Framework (Log Frame):

Management tool used to measure and improve the design of interventions. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, activities, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions of risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution, and monitoring and evaluation of an intervention.

Monitoring:

The routine collection of information that tracks and assesses project inputs, which lead to the delivery of activities and outputs.

Program Review Committee:

A small committee that takes overall responsibility for the implementation of programs and related projects. This committee is made up of the CEO, the Cambodian Country Manager, the Compliance Manager and the Quality Education Manager and it meets every 4-6 weeks.

Program:

A program is a suite of related projects that share a common methodology and overall objective. It includes all the accumulated learning around how to implement a particular initiative including template documentation, workshop materials, resources, and monitoring, evaluation and learning standards and approaches.

Project:

A project is a unique, specified endeavour established to deliver planned outputs as efficiently as possible in a designated place and over an identified timeframe. Documentation will be drawn from the relevant program log frames and templates and modified and adapted for the specific circumstances of the project.

Stakeholder:

A person, group, or entity who has a direct or indirect role and interest in the goals or objectives and implementation of a program/intervention and/or its evaluation.
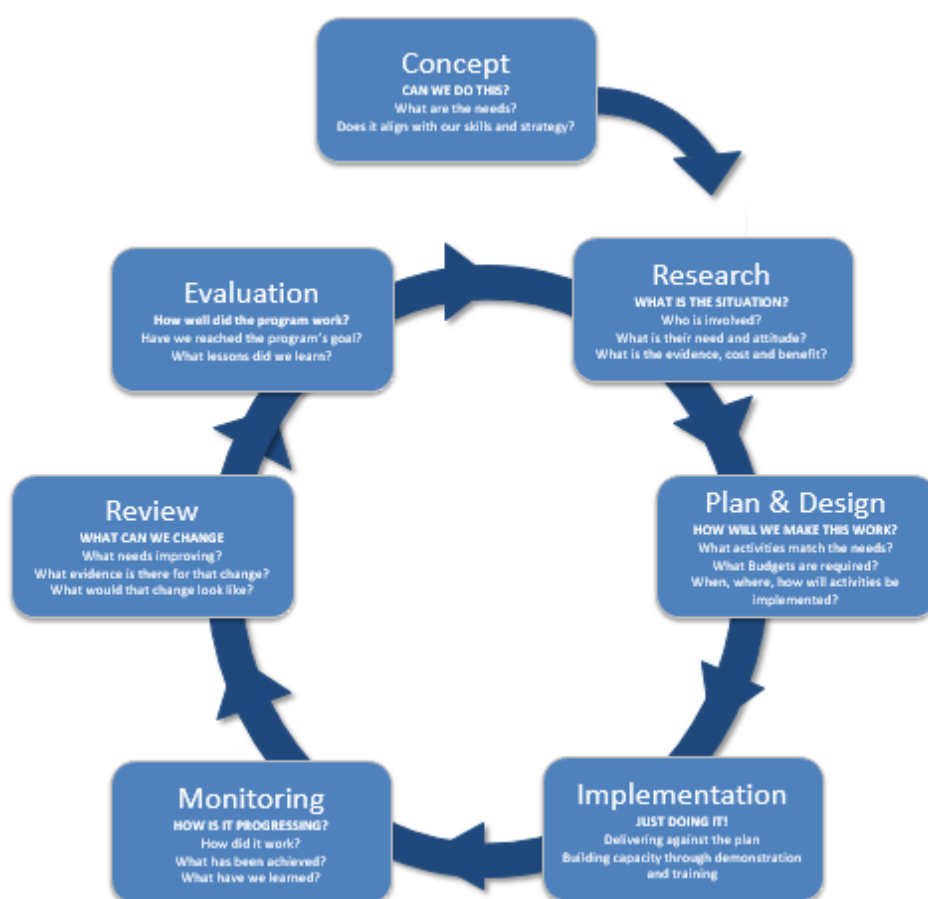
5. PROJECT LIFE CYCLE

The project life cycle spans across the entire life of each of the projects we implement in designated districts and schools, starting with identification of needs, going through the design and implementation phases, followed by monitoring, lessons learned as part of the continuous improvement cycle, and end with evaluation.

We divide our projects into distinct phases to help us define the responsibilities of SeeBeyondBorders Personnel and other stakeholders, such as beneficiaries and local authorities. These defined phases also help us to ensure that our decisions are based on relevant and appropriate information and to clarify the role played by meetings and documentation. Based on the information produced at each phase, we decide whether to continue activities as planned, amend them or retract them.

This process helps us to keep our programs on track to meet our stated outcomes and achieve our program goals as outlined in relevant Program Log Frames. It also helps to foster sustainability in all phases of the project cycle, which is vital in all that we do as an organisation.

At annual program reviews we analyse the program methodologies, as applied in each project, and draw conclusions of their sustainability and overall impact of our programs which can lead to the termination of a program at the end of the project's lifespan or adjusting aspects of the program's outline.

A diagram of our project life cycle is included below:

5.1 Concept

During the 'Concept' phase, SeeBeyondBorders' management and executive assesses whether implementing a new project or program aligns with both our strategy and our vision to empower a generation of Cambodian children through education.

We therefore consider if a) we have the skills and resources to meet the needs of the beneficiaries effectively and to drive sustainability through program implementation, b) we have the financial means to deliver tailored activities to communities committed to educational improvement and c) we can ensure lasting positive impact by monitoring and evaluating progress and performance at a local level.

A concept note will be written and presented to the Program Review Committee, who will assess it against our strategy, our cross cutting themes of gender, disability and safeguarding, and the organisational minimum standards that are outlined in section 9.1 of the Development Policy. If they approve the concept and agree that we have the skills, resources and financial means to succeed in driving sustainability in the districts and schools we have identified, we will enter the research phase.

5.2 Research

During the 'Research' phase we collect data and information that will provide us with an initial understanding of the situation in provinces and districts we are considering working in. Our research tools are tailored to identify beneficiary needs and stakeholder interests, priorities and resources. Data is gathered during initial visits to schools and meetings with local authorities and this is used in feasibility and scoping activities to support the district and school selection process. We summarize

the outcomes from the research phase in a Feasibility Study, which is also used as a comparison tool in future new district research. The Feasibility Study ensures that project selection maximises the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of interventions,

5.2.1 Feasibility Study

a) Needs Assessment
Key local baseline statistics, such as absenteeism, repetition and drop-out rates and a summary of student learning outcomes (test results) are used to determine which schools have the highest need for intervention. We also consider the experience of teachers in the district and how much training they have received to date, so as to assess their need for further training.

b) Accessibility
Schools in Cambodia, particularly those that SeeBeyondBorders supports, are usually in rural areas and can often only be reached on unpaved roads that flood during the rainy season. We therefore consider the distance from the project location to a SeeBeyondBorders office and the overall accessibility of schools to SeeBeyondBorders staff when selecting schools.

c) Commitment
The overall support and willingness of local authorities and key stakeholders, such as the Directors of the district offices of Education, school principals and Commune chiefs, to commit to the project is directly linked to its sustainability and long-term success. In this context, SeeBeyondBorders defines sustainability as the development impact that continues once the program itself has ended. SeeBeyondBorders measures the level of commitment through individual meetings and questionnaires.
d) Literature Review
SeeBeyondBorders undertakes a review of the literature published about the project area. We might examine the current policies that affect the project, list the leading research which can be used as evidence to show there is a problem, show other sides of the argument or provide details on what other NGOs are completing in this area.

e) Service Mapping
SeeBeyondBorders meets with relevant and interested Government and Non-government services who work in the districts under consideration to fully understand their focus and achievements to date and ensure there will be no duplication of services. Where possible, we will consider collaboration with other organisations for future projects.

5.2.2 Costs and Benefits

SeeBeyondBorders considers operational needs and costs, such as resource requirements, staffing needs and operational activities so as to scope out the potential costs of the project and measure them against the benefits that are anticipated. Estimated costs will be added to the initial budget and, in light of available funding, a consideration for the project scope will be drafted which will feed into the final decision making process during the design and planning phase.

5.2.3 Data Collection and Community Assessment

SeeBeyondBorders assesses school conditions through UNICEF's Child Friendly School (CFS) model as outlined in Program Frameworks and takes these conditions into consideration during the research phase. We also engage with communities to determine their willingness to participate with different programs, for example working as an assistant coach in the sport program or helping with school development activities.

After completing all elements of the 'Research' phase, a Feasibility Study is sent to the Program Review Committee to review and approve against the Feasibility Report Appraisal Form. The next phases in the project cycle will not begin until approval from this Committee has been received.

5.3 Planning and Design

In the 'Planning & Design' phase we consider project parameters, such as baselines and program activities and look at the outline of Program Frameworks, including logical frameworks and indicators.

5.3.1 Planning and Design – Program

5.3.1.1 Program Framework
SeeBeyondBorders has created a Program Framework for each of its programs. The Program Framework defines the program goal as well as its outcomes, and the activities that will take place to achieve these objectives. Information from the Program Framework is used to populate the Program Log Frame and this forms the foundation on which monitoring and evaluation activities are based in each project. Each Program Framework includes an overview of the program, sets out responsibilities and timeframes, outlines monitoring activities, defines evaluation processes and refers to related documentation. Frameworks are updated annually before the start of the new academic year to reflect changes and lessons learned that resulted from the annual program review. These standard frameworks are used and adopted appropriately in each relevant project

5.3.1.2 Logical Framework
In each Program Log Frame we define a set of indicators against which end-of-year results are measured to assess whether outcomes have been met and whether we are on track to achieve the overall goal of the program. The Management Team present Log Frame results as part of the annual program review and highlight key challenges and lessons learned so as to develop recommended program amendments to ensure continuous improvement. This process can include redefining indicators and activities, which will be updated in the Program Log Frame after approval from the CEO.

5.3.2 Planning and Design - Project

During the project Planning and Design phase, SeeBeyondBorders sets out project parameters, such as matching program activities with school and beneficiary needs, establishing relevant baselines for children and teachers, securing community involvement, completing a project risk assessment in line with the Risk Management Policy and finalizing the operational work plan, the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) plan, and the budget.

5.3.2.1 Baselines
A baseline is a measurement that is used to determine conditions (eg indicator in a logframe) before a project starts. Baseline data can therefore be used as a historical point of reference to support project planning (eg, set targets) or to assess project performance/progress and its overall impact. Baseline data will be collected by the project manager in the planning and design phase of each project and evaluated by the program manager to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

5.3.2.2 Risk Assessment
A risk assessment is completed for each project. It aims to analyse and evaluate what risks are inherent in the project design, project activities, or project evaluation and sets out mitigating actions that will reduce or eliminate the identified risks. Risks will be considered across a range of different areas including financial, safeguarding, operational, cultural, and political aspects.

5.3.2.3 Work Plan

The work plan sets out all of the steps required to ensure the project goals are achieved. The purpose of the work plan document is to consider all of the aspects of the project and what needs to happen to make it successful, and it is usually presented as a Gantt chart.

5.3.2.4 MEAL Plan

SeeBeyondBorders will create a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Plan for each project which sets out all the tools required to collect and analyse project related data.

The elements of the Planning and Design phase combine to create a finalised project log frame, work plan and budget, which are referred to regularly by project teams in order to assess the progress that is being made towards the project and program goals on an ongoing basis.

5.4 Implementation

During the project 'Implementation' phase SeeBeyondBorders staff members carry out timely activities according to the operational plans and work plans that have been developed.

All operational activities and allocated staff responsibilities are specified in detailed weekly and monthly work plans. These include teacher observations, mentor meetings, community liaison activities, workshop facilitation, and meetings with key stakeholders, including the District Office of Education (DOE). Key administrative activities are also included in the 'implementation' phase, such as data collection, data analysis, report writing, and training activities, and these are incorporated into weekly and monthly plans fitting around the operational implementation.

Oversight of operational activities during implementation is conducted by project managers on a monthly basis, program review committee at six weekly meetings, and through quarterly CEO reports to the Board.

5.5 Monitoring

The monitoring process starts in the implementation phase and continues until the project is finished. SeeBeyondBorders personnel carry out monitoring activities on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, and beneficiaries contribute to monitoring activities regularly too.

SeeBeyondBorders has developed detailed monitoring and evaluation processes to effectively track the progress of the work that we do. In the Program Log Frames, each key activity has a series of performance measures that are used to monitor progress throughout the year and to measure success against specific program outcomes. The programs are monitored and outcomes are evaluated regularly with internal reports generated monthly and more detailed progress reports generated every six months, which are published on the website and circulated to SeeBeyondBorders staff and Board members in Australia, the UK and Ireland. Annual reports are also generated to provide an overview of achievements and challenges from the previous year and to publish progress towards our program goals.

Each project MEAL Plan outlines activities, data collection tools, timeframes and staff responsibilities for each project. Timely collection of data is vital to allow flexibility and adaptation, and the set timeframes ensure that data and information is collected and analysed regularly, so that programs

can evolve where necessary. Monitoring tools include reporting templates, data collection tables, observation forms, questionnaires and skills scales. The specific monitoring tools for each program are outlined in the Monitoring and Evaluation process table of the relevant Program Framework. Program Beneficiaries as well as SBB staff are trained and support in the collection of ongoing data to ensure the breadth and quality of monitoring activities….

5.5.1   Progress Reports

The monthly reports enable SeeBeyondBorders' Leadership Team to monitor progress of each project. The Project Managers have each been coached to identify problems as they arise on a day-to-day basis, and to speak to their peers or Line Manager to discuss how best to solve any problems quickly, rather than waiting until the next progress report is produced, when the problem may have escalated.

The information in progress reports is used in a variety of different ways:
- To build staff capacity to celebrate success and learn new and different ways of working
- To create news stories and social media content to disseminate to our supporters
- To inform Board/ senior members of staff about achievements and challenges on the ground and escalate issues for resolution that may impact the success of the project
- To monitor financial activity against budget at a project level
- To identify schools or teachers that have consistently underperformed, and to put in place a plan to support them to improve
- To communicate with District Offices of Education and keep them abreast of progress and activities in their district
- To monitor progress towards the outcomes stated in our Strategic Plan and Log Frames, and make changes where necessary
- To hold Project Managers accountable for the activities in their district
- To compare activities between districts
- To report to donors and other stakeholders

5.5.2   Beneficiary Feedback

We recognise that it is important to obtain feedback from beneficiaries on a regular basis as a key tool to monitor the success of our projects. We integrate beneficiary feedback mechanisms into design, monitoring and evaluation processes in many different ways including post-activity evaluations, questionnaires, focus groups, informal conversations, complaints and feedback forms, suggestion boxes and community workshops. We listen to our beneficiaries and adapt our programs appropriately to ensure they effectively meet their needs.

5.5.3   Data Collation

All personal data that is collected is treated sensitively and in line with our Privacy Policy. Data is collated on spreadsheets that are stored on SeeBeyondBorders' secure, password protected google drive or in our Management Information and Reporting System called Civica Involve. This new database (April 2021) will improve the security of the data and it will also allow SeeBeyondBorders to more easily analyse results, identify challenges, and integrate cross-cutting themes into all data reporting. In 2021, data will continue to be stored on spreadsheets and will gradually move across to Civica Involve as the system is implemented with each project.

5.6 Program Review

A program review takes place at the end of each academic year and before the new school year begins. This usually falls in September. Projects undergo several review stages before final changes and adjustments are being made.

At the end of the academic year our staff facilitate annual student tests and evaluate teacher and mentor skills. The student test and teacher/mentor skill set results, together with data and statistics collected throughout the year (such as mentor visits and workshop statistics), are reviewed by Project Managers before the Program Managers help them to populate results in Program Log Frames, aligned with program indicators.

During the annual program reviews, attended by all staff, the results are summarised before challenges are discussed and lessons learned are agreed. Staff members collectively suggest amendments to program activities that aim to make them more efficient and/or effective. These suggestions are firstly reviewed by the Program Review Committee, who make necessary amendments to ensure the solutions are practical and achievable, and they then prepare a summary of the recommendations to be presented to the CEO and the Board for approval.

If approval is given, program managers will update Frameworks, Log Frames and associated documentation and tools. A six-month review takes place, which provides an opportunity for senior managers to review and, where necessary, update SeeBeyondBorders documents as well as the operational plan and budget.

5.7 Evaluation and Learning

We apply learnings at all stages of our project life cycle and regularly discuss, analyse and review our project activities and related documentation.

At the end of a project's lifespan, SeeBeyondBorders' project managers carry out an internal project evaluation, which typically spans two - three academic school years. The aim of this evaluation is to assess the overall efficacy of the project and the impact it has had on beneficiaries.

The evaluation analyses whether outcomes were met and whether the program goals have been achieved. Project Managers evaluate how effectively time and resources were used, by measuring end of project results against initial operational plans, budgets and donor agreements. Results and lessons learned from the annual program reviews are used as parameters to demonstrate the project's year-on-year progression and to assess the project's impact on different beneficiaries in the district.

Student learning outcomes, teaching quality and community engagement are all measured against baseline at the end of the project life span in order to assess overall progress and improvement. Project Managers carry out questionnaires with stakeholders, local authorities and community members to assess the impact of different programs and to gain some valuable qualitative data for certain projects, questionnaires are circulated at mentor, teacher and parent meetings at the end of the academic year and the results are compared with those from initial questionnaires. Project Managers base their assessments and analysis on information gathered from monitoring and evaluation tools including monthly reports and the Log Frame as well as qualitative and quantitative data that has been collected since the beginning of the project. The results and lessons learned from

the evaluation is summarized in a report and disseminated to all relevant SeeBeyondBorders staff, local stakeholders, Board/Advisory Committee members and relevant donors.

5.8 Procedures

All processes related to the project life cycle, from project design through to project evaluation, are described in detail in SeeBeyondBorders' Program and Project Manual and also the Monitoring and Evaluation Manual. These manuals provide links to template documents and further information for staff to use when planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating their projects.

6. POLICY MANAGEMENT

This Policy has been approved by the Australian Board and the Trustees of SeeBeyondBorders' other entities as noted below.

Amendments and or developments will be recommended to the Board from time to time as deemed appropriate by senior management. Formal reviews are recommended within three years from the anniversary date of approval by the Board. Recommendations for minor changes can be approved by the CEO before the Board review every three years, and recommendations for changes to the background or policy in practice can be approved by the relevant Sub-Committee.

Doc ref	Doc type	Approved by Australian Board Date	Minute ref.	Approved by UK Trustees Date	Minute ref	Approved by Irish Board Date	Minute ref
	Policy Original	2018		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
DME/04/2021/2.0	Policy Review	Board 28 June 2021	Item 3	Trustees 11 Aug 2021	Item 5		