



Kementerian Keuangan
Republik Indonesia



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Australian Government



Designing Baseline Research for Impact: SKALA Experience

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Australian Evaluation Society Conference
Melbourne, September 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present of the Wurundjeri nation, who are the traditional custodians of this land. And I extend that respect to other Indigenous people who are present.

PROGRAM LOGIC

Goal: To help reduce poverty and inequality within Indonesia by improving basic service provision to poor and vulnerable communities in less-developed regions

End of Program Outcomes



1. Stronger Enabling Environment for Subnational Service Delivery

Central ministries develop and implement improved policies, plans, and budgets that can support better basic service provision in less developed regions



2. Better Subnational Service Delivery

Selected provincial and district governments more effectively plan, budget and manage for basic service provision



3. Greater Participation, Representation and Influence of Women, People with Disabilities and Vulnerable groups

Women, people with disabilities and vulnerable groups in targeted areas are represented and able to exercise influence in subnational service delivery-related planning and decision-making processes

SKALA MERL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Multiple objectives, for a complex program, within a complex environment...

- 1. Multiple objectives** : the SKALA MERL team is tasked with building a results framework - including establishing a program baseline, informing a strategy for effective and sustainable program activities, while contributing to partner government's desire for real impact.
- 2. Complex program** : working within multiple issues and actors, both government and CSOs on interlinked decentralization policies and implementation.
- 3. Complex environment** : Working with 3 main ministries (MoF, Bappenas, and MoHA) at central level and 12 provinces at the subnational level, each with unique characteristics, different socio-economic and political contexts during a sensitive political period.

How to design a baseline that well suited to answer these challenges?

TRADITIONAL VS SYSTEM THINKING BASELINING

1. **Linear Approach:** Focuses on collecting initial data points to measure progress against predefined outcomes in a straightforward cause-and-effect manner.
2. **Single-Actor Focus:** Centered on the program's direct interventions and outcomes without deeply considering broader influences or interactions.
3. **Static Snapshot:** Provides a one-time, static snapshot of the situation before interventions are implemented, with limited flexibility to adapt as the program evolves.

VS

1. **Interconnectedness:** Systems thinking highlights the relationships between components. In evaluation, it involves examining how stakeholders, processes, and policies interact to shape outcomes, focusing on the whole system.
2. **Collaboration:** Complex systems require diverse perspectives. Involving stakeholders ensures inclusive evaluations, leading to better ownership and more effective interventions.
3. **Adaptation:** Systems evolve over time. This principle encourages flexibility, allowing evaluators to recognize new elements as new behaviors or outcomes emerge.

EOP0 3

Greater **Participation, Representation and Influence** of Women, People with Disability and Vulnerable Groups

Women, PwD, and Vulnerable Groups in targeted areas are represented and able to exercise influence in subnational service delivery-related planning and decision-making processes.

Traditional Baseline

1. Participation

- Number of vulnerable groups representative attending planning forums

2. Representation

- Number of vulnerable group organizations that have formal collaboration with government offices.

3. Influence

- Number/proportion of vulnerable groups proposals accommodated by the subnational government



Problems :

1. This “narrow” indicators may not be relevant in the long run. I.e. participation, in itself may not mean much (interconnectedness and adaptation problem).
2. It have limited utility : clear on “what”, but not much information on “why” (adaptation and collaboration problem).
3. Does not contribute to the programmatic objectives and reduces the value for money of the study (collaboration problem).

EPO3

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System Thinking Baseline

1. Design based on the assessment of the government's emerging needs :
 - Aligning with govt. priorities : Quality and sustainability of engagement.
2. Opting for more substantive baseline indicators :
 - **Trust of GEDSI CSOs and Local Govt.** (measuring interrelation).
 - **Confidence of GEDSI CSOs and Local Govt.** (Assessing internal capacity)
3. Incorporate situational mapping to address the needs of diverse stakeholders
 - Technical capacity needs of CSOs
 - Subnational context analysis

EOP0 3

Greater **Participation, Representation and Influence** of Women, People with Disability and Vulnerable Groups

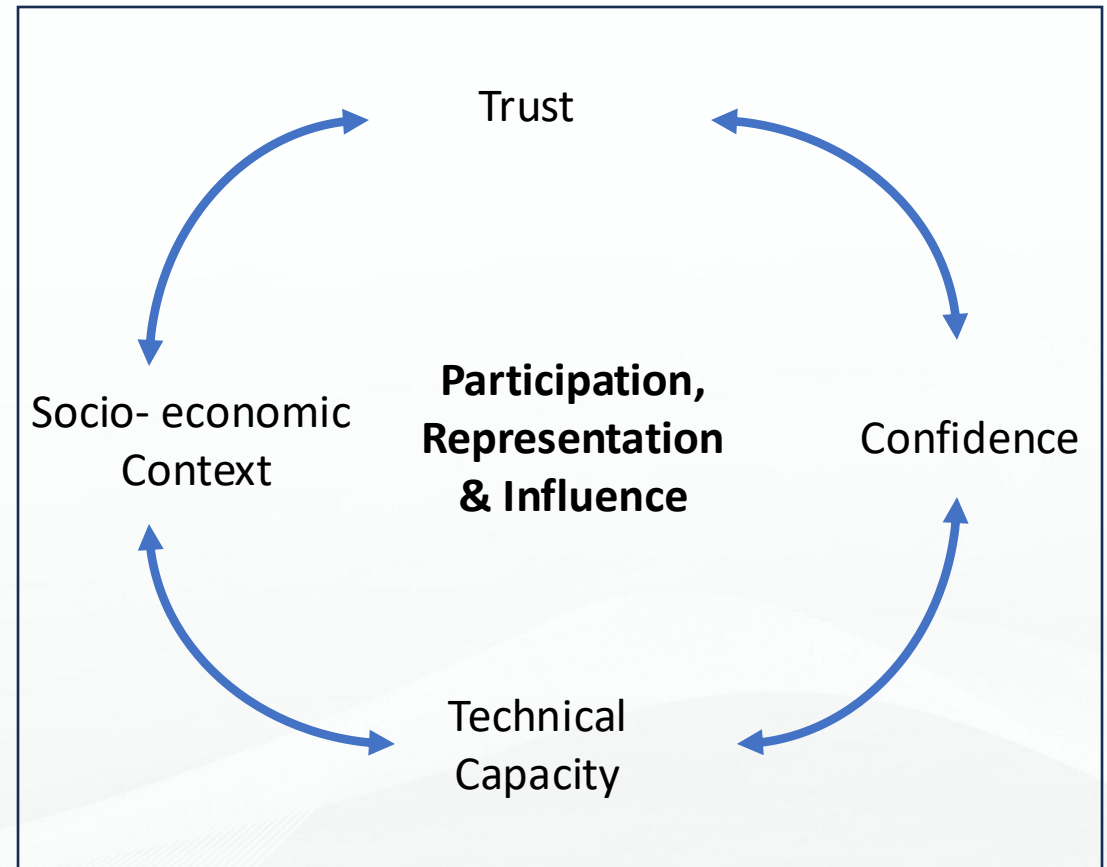
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System Thinking Baseline



KEY TAKEAWAY

1. Applying systems thinking in designing a baseline study supports comprehensive thinking about results, especially in complex nature and areas of work. By focusing on interrelations, it also provides insights for better programmatic planning by identifying the perspectives and incentives of all actors and stakeholders involved.
2. Rather than treating baselining as a siloed MERL activity, the approach also enables us to design it to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders. This approach increases the effectiveness of MEL system by closely aligning it with program implementation.
3. Externally, designing the baseline through a collaborative process strengthens government partner ownership, which in turn enhances the sustainability of SKALA's impact in the long term.



SKALA
Sinergi dan Kolaborasi untuk Akselerasi Layanan Dasar
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