Government of Sierra Leone

National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy

February 2021

Contents

FOREWORD

In Sierra Leone, the planning, monitoring and evaluation of results remain problematic and inadequate across the public sector and constitute a cause for concern. Since the conclusion of the war in 2002, efforts have been made to prepare national development plans in the form of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Unfortunately, little attention had been paid to the critical issue of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Evidence abound that, these national development blueprints were not designed with performance tracking in mind. Consequently, routine monitoring had been uneven in scope and quality, evaluation was sparse in coverage and use, and budgetary provisions for M&E in the national budget have been absent in most cases, and grossly inadequate, where they do exist. This has in the past limited the outcomes and impacts of our development efforts. Additionally, the Executive, Parliament and the general public have been left insufficiently informed on the value for money of public investments, the successes and failures of public programmes, and the lessons which provide the foundation for informed Policy decision-making, reform and development.

As a responsible Government, we are committed to understanding what we do well and where we should aspire to do better. This is a fundamental part of delivering effective and efficient services for the wellbeing of the citizenry and for all taxpayers. The 'New Direction' Government under my leadership therefore places significant thrust in ensuring the availability of accurate data and information at all times to help us plan, measure our development progress and interventions, as well as guide our planning and decision-making. Towards the fulfilment of this, for the first time, a section(Results Framework) detailing out the requirements for M&E as a strategic intervention for the effective realization of national development goals, objectives, and targets was introduced in The Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019-2023. Furthermore, my Government established the National Monitoring and Evaluation Department (NaMED) in 2018 within the newly re-created Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to provide technical leadership and coordination for the overall national M&E agenda of Sierra Leone. To show my commitment to delivering results, the department was moved to the office of the President as a directorate under my direct oversight.

A critical and urgent responsibility of NaMED was to develop the maiden National M&E Policy and related institutional development documents including M&E Standard Operating Procedures/Manual and M&E Operational Results Framework for the MTNDP a National M&E Strategy and a National M&E Communication Strategy. My Government is pleased to have accomplished this task in record time. It,

therefore, gives me a great pleasure to introduce this Policy as a major step towards the enhancement of our new approach to M&E.

This Policy applies to all public policies, strategies, programmes and projects managed by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) of government as well as Local Governments (LGs), Parastatals and Executing Agencies implementing public programmes. I am confident that, all the stakeholders mentioned above will strictly adhere to this Policy and demonstrate strong commitment in order to improve on the effectiveness and efficiency of the M&E of all our development programmes and projects. I, therefore, urge all MDAs of the Government of Sierra Leone and its partners to read, digest and implement this Policy for the good of our Nation.

His Excellency, Dr Julius Maada Bio

President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Government of Sierra Leone extends sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who contributed to the preparation of this Policy. Special note is made of the Ministries of Finance, and Planning and Economic Development, the Office of the Chief Minister, all MDAs, the Parliament of Sierra Leone, Local Councils (LCs), and non-state actors including the private sector, development partners, academia and civil society for their invaluable technical and institutional support throughout the process of developing this Policy. In addition, special mention and thanks to the leadership and Task Force members of the newly established National Monitoring and Evaluation Department (NaMED) for their conceptual and technical guidance in the development and production of this Policy as well as other organisational documents, frameworks and system for improving monitoring and evaluation at the national and sub-national levels.

Finally, special thanks to the Consultant, Mr. Peter M. Kaindaneh and team who led the technical development of this Policy.

WORKING DEFINITIONS

Accountability
A relationship based on the obligation to demonstrate and take responsibility for performance in light of agreed upon expectations.

Activities
The set of various actions executed by project/programme personnel to convert resources/inputs to the specific outputs.

Development Objective
Intended impact contributing to physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other benefits to a society, community, or group of people via one or more development interventions.

Effectiveness
The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention (policy, programme or project) were achieved, or are expected to be achieved.

Efficiency
The extent to which resources are used such that a greater level of output is produced with the same level of input or, a lower level of input is used to produce the same level of output in quantity and/or quality.

Evaluation
The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision– making process of both government and donors for present or future interventions. Evaluation can be carried out at different stages such as ex-ante (before), on-going, terminal (end) and ex-post (after end), performed from selection stage and after the operation stag

Goal
A broad and long-term objective that a policy, programme or project intends to accomplish.

Impact
The actual or intended changes brought about in the life and wellbeing of targeted beneficiaries by the policy, programme, or project. Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term changes produced by the intervention, directly or indirectly,

intended or unintended.

Impact Evaluation	A type of outcome evaluation carried out a few years after the completion of a programme or project to analyse and evaluate its impacts and sustainability.
Indicator	A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure change, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention., or to help assess the performance of a person/institution
Inputs	These are human, financial and material resources available (or used) to conduct a specific planned task or process.
Investment	The input of funds, materials, human resources, services, technologies, and other resources which are used to carry out programme and project activities.
Lessons Learned	Findings and experiences based on instruments such as monitoring, evaluation, focus group discussions, workshops etc. on implementation of projects, programmes, or policies that can be generalised to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.
Medium-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)	The schema for prioritizing development programmes with a view to improving the process of programme/project formulation and implementation and to improve the effectiveness of development programmes.
Monitoring	A continuous process of keeping track of progress of the implementation of plans, policies, programmes and projects. It serves as systematic data collection to inform managers and key stakeholders on progress in relation to planned inputs, activities and results, as well as the use of allocated resources
Monitoring system	The set of planning, information gathering and synthesis, analysis and reporting processes, along with the necessary supporting conditions and capacities required for the M&E outputs to make a valuable contribution to decision-making and learning.
Monitoring (or management)	The set of technological, organisational and human means implemented to enable to collect, process, store, and communicate M&E information within an organisation or

Information System	between different organisations.
Non-State Actors	These are organisations with sufficient power to influence and cause a change even though they do not belong to any established institution of the state.
Objective	A statement that describes the intended impact of a policy, programme or project. The Intended impact contributing to physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other benefits to a society, community, or group of people via one or more development interventions.
Outcome	The medium-term change or effect in development conditions produced by the intervention (policy or project) outputs.
Output	The products, goods, and services that result from the inputs invested in development programmes or projects. May also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Performance	The extent to which relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, economy, sustainability and impact (expected and unexpected) are achieved by an initiative, project, programme or policy.
Performance management	Reflects the extent to which the implementing institution has control, or manageable interest, over a particular initiative, project, programme or Policy.
Plan	An outline of programmes and activities designed on the basis of past learning as well as current needs and sustainability prospects, so as to bring about qualitative changes in the lives of people by means of socio-economic development.
Policy	An official statement, guidelines or operating principles that influence behaviour towards a stated outcome.
Programme	The collection of projects, operational systems and services which are geared towards achieving objectives of a plan/intervention and may cut across sectors, sub-sectors, or thematic areas.
Project	A collection of interdependent and coordinated activities geared towards achieving the

particular objective of a plan or policy within a predetermined budget and time schedule.

Relevance	The extent to which a policy, programme or project addresses a demonstrable need, is appropriate to the GoSL, and is responsive to the needs of the population.
Result	The outcome or impact of a public policy or intervention, whether intended or unintended, positive or negative.
Results-based Management	A strategy that focuses on the processes, products and services contributing to the achievement of development results. It underscores the need to enhance the effectiveness of investments by linking inputs and activities with outputs, outcomes and impacts.
Social audit	A process in which all of the activities and performances of a service delivery agency are examined, assessed and analysed with direct involvement and participation of a wide range of stakeholders.
Stakeholders	Agencies, organisations, groups or individuals who have a direct or in direct interest in the development intervention or specific outcomes.
Targets	A realistic and measurable milestone set to be achieved within a specific time frame of implementing a Policy, programme or project.

ACRONYMS

ACC	-	Anti-Corruption Commission
AfP	-	Agenda for Prosperity
AFRC	-	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CBO	-	Community Based Organisations
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
DP	-	Development Partner
EVD	-	Ebola Virus Disease
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GoSL	-	Government of Sierra Leone
HDI	-	Human Development Index
IPRSP	-	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
LC	-	Local Council
LG	-	Local Government
LGA	-	Local Government Act
MDAs	-	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	-	Ministry of Finance
MoLG	-	Ministry of Local Government
MoPED	-	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MTEF	-	Medium-term Expenditure Framework
MTNDP	-	Medium-Term National Development Plan
NaMED	-	National Monitoring and Evaluation Department
NDP	-	National Development Plan
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMEF	-	National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
NPRC	-	National Provisional Ruling Council
NRS	-	National Revenue Service
OAG	-	Office of the Auditor-General
OCM	-	Office of the Chief Minster
OTC	-	Office of the President
PCC	-	Provincial Coordinating Council
PCME	-	Presidential Committee on Monitoring and Evaluation

PETS	-	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
PRSP	-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAIC		Right to access Information Commission
RBM	-	Results-Based Management
ROM	-	Results-Oriented Management
RUF	-	Revolutionary United Front
SBFP	-	Sector Budget Framework Paper
SLPP	-	Sierra Leone Peoples Party
SMART	-	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
SOP	-	Standard Operation Procedures
SSL	-	Statistics Sierra Leone
SWG	-	Sector Working Group
TSA	-	Treasury Single Account
VFM	-	Value For Money

1.   INTRODUCTION

The Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019–2023, for Sierra Leone, is grounded on renewed optimism for sustainable development as the country's democracy matures and public participation in development processes attains new heights. The plan represents the first five years of a 20-year long-term national commitment to a vision for attaining "a Middle-income country". The plan includes an appropriate governance framework that would be based on disciplined leadership, accountable governance, inclusivity, unity, and the rule of law. It envisages a diversified economy that is resilient, offering jobs to all, and taking account of the special needs of women, children, and vulnerable groups. In essence, the MTNDP seeks to build a united, peaceful, progressive, dynamic, confident, enterprising, and happy nation where the people have access to jobs, food, education, and health services, and where there is equal justice and equal opportunity for all.

An effective M&E system is critical in ensuring that the development aspirations and efforts of government yield the expected dividends. It can help obtain credible data and information required for the formulation and implementation of development plans that will enable Government and its development partners to track their implementation progress and ascertain the extent to which development goals and set targets have been met. However, the absence of clear national direction and framework to inform the proper harmonisation and coordination of the M&E function continue to limit the gains of M&E in Sierra Leone.

Like in most developing countries, M&E systems are often times costly and slow systems detached from the frontline, with policy makers looking for reporting and impact evaluations just to assess whether a policy/program worked or not. This policy should push for a 'proactive M&E', which will be close to the frontline. Here, local governments, MDAs will be facilitating relevant learning flows that are actionable to implementation problems

In line with the foregoing, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has developed this Policy to clearly set out the direction and strategic actions in terms of instituting a systematic, coordinated, simplified, results-oriented performance tracking system. This will be a reliable an effective mechanism of making the public sector more results-oriented. The Policy will do the following:

- addresses gaps in existing policies, legislation and administrative practices with respect to tracking the performance of public policies and investments and their evaluation;

- help to focus Government and development partners on improving the quality of planning and management of policies, programmes and projects and the attainment of organisational and sector objectives;

- ensure that roles and responsibilities of the various actors in the tracking of progress and performance including the assessment of the impact of policies, programmes and projects are properly clarified and coordination of institutions in the provision of quality service is strengthened; and

- promote lifelong organisational learning for improved performance which ensures equitable, effective and efficient resources allocation and utilization in a transparent and accountable manner. Such resource allocation should be tied to the results of performance evaluations carried out by NaMED on a yearly basis, before the national budget preparation.

This document is organised in eight (8) Sections. The first Section covers the Introduction. Section 2 presents the Situational Context, which details the current state of M&E in Sierra Leone and the recent efforts to improve National M&E at national level. Section 3 provides the Vision Statement. The fourth section details out the Rationale for an M&E Policy. Section 5 discusses the Guiding Principles and Key Assumptions taken into consideration during the design of this policy, while the sixth section presents the Overall and Specific Strategic Objectives of the Policy.   Section 7 details out the Actions to be taken for achieving the strategic Policy objectives. The final section outlines the Policy Implementation Framework including institutional framework, legislative requirements, resource mobilisation, financing of M&E and compliance requirements.

2.   SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 Current state of Monitoring and Evaluation in Sierra Leone

Conducting Monitoring and Evaluation across the public sector continues to be seriously constrained by an array of factors. Currently, there are M&E units in MDAs and in the various Local Councils (LCs). However, there is no properly established national M&E system that links MDAs and the LCs to conduct effective M&E of key policies undertaken at the central and local levels. M&E activities conducted by MDAs and LCs are ad hoc in nature and largely compliance-focused. Additionally, the status of M&E across government is at different levels of development and application. Some MDAs

such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation had developed M&E frameworks without recourse to national standards or guidelines. The absence of a coordination mechanism articulated in the implementation of these frameworks and to assess their effectiveness and adherence to expectations and requirements continues to cast doubts on their productivity and relevance. Consequently, the M&E capacity of Government has remained weak with its attendant ramifications. The different frameworks are not conversant to each other, and these frameworks and M&E tools/products/processes might be of low quality, thereby creating M&E inefficiencies. The vision/objectives of some of these M&E frameworks/policies might quite different from that of the Central Government. As such, it is very difficult to link M&E with other systems (e.g., planning, budgeting, procurement) when there is a proliferation of different approaches to M&E. These were key lessons learned in the implementation of earlier PRSPs.

Adequate resourcing (personnel, finance and materials), of M&E at all levels is yet to receive the attention it deserves. Very limited technically capable personnel in the subject matter are available and no designed capacity training program defined. Allocations for the conduct of M&E by MDAs and LCs in national budgets have been grossly inadequate. Most programmes and budgets are designed without due cognizance to the importance of M&E, leading to limited allocation of funds for M&E, especially the Government of Sierra Leone funding component. On the other hand, most donor funded projects or programmes however, have provided funding for M&E activities. The inadequacy of funding coupled with the limitation of logistical support is a core challenge in the execution of M&E functions across the public sector.

The collection of credible and accurate data by both the MDAs and the LCs nationwide to inform planning and policy decisions remains an outstanding issue. A system for proper data collection and analysis systems is yet to be developed and effectively operationalised. Currently, data collection is mostly done irregularly and manually, which does not guarantee accuracy, in-depth analysis and reliability. The absence of a central coordination mechanism for data collection, analysis and sharing has led to data fragmentation and proliferation of separate activities by MDAs and LCs which are normally not quality-assured. The challenges posed by the low quality of data and information are compounded by the untimely preparation and dissemination of quality M&E data.

In the last three years, there have been attempts at embarking on national joint monitoring missions involving stakeholders of relevant sectors, civil society and development partners. This practice is, however, yet to be institutionalised. They have been aimed at reinforcing mutual accountability

among partners. National joint monitoring missions have been organised mostly for donor funded programmes and projects.

The identified challenges provide the justification for developing a culture of high performance, accountability and results-focused orientation at the national level. This will bring about the intended development results, which has guided the formulation and development of this Policy.

2.2 Legal and Policy Environment of Monitoring and Evaluation

The Sierra Leone 1999 Constitution, other legislations and policies affirm government institutions' obligations to execute development and service delivery duties with considerations for maximizing outcomes, and accounting for results. For example the Constitution provides that the State shall take all steps to eradicate all corrupt practices and the abuse of power. Economic objectives, and within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made ….. harness all the natural resources of the nation to promote national prosperity and an efficient, dynamic and self-reliant economy; and manage and control the national economy in such a manner as to secure the maximum welfare and freedom of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of opportunity.[1] Monitoring and evaluation of government policies, projects and programmes enhances this fundamental constitutional objective.

In addition, the Government Budget and Accountability Act, 2005 provides for the function to control and management, preparation, monitoring and implementation of the budget, including any adjustments to the budget, and to ensure that all interested parties are able to participate fully in the decisions taken on the budget within the medium term expenditure framework developed by the Minister. [2] Furthermore, the Public Financial Management Act, 2016 being an act that makes provision for the prudent, efficient effective, and transparent management and use of public financial resources and under the institutional responsibilities in budget system and other related matters gives power to the Cabinet to monitor and review the execution of the State budget and the financial management of the general government through review of the quarterly statement of the central government, the annual financial statements of the Consolidated Fund, the annual financial statements of the central government, and the audit reports of the Auditor-General.[3] The

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[1] The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, Chapter II Section 5 to 7
[2] The Government Budget and Accountability, 2005, Part II, Section 3(2) (b)
[3] The Public Finance Management Act, 2016, Part III Section 4 (b)

Audit Service Act of 2014 being an with the authority to ensure greater accountability in the receipt, disbursement and control of public funds, to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funds and to provide for other related matters[4] also lends credence to the need for control and monitoring of the use of public resource and funds.

Most recently, the Finance Act 2019 specifically made provision for the establishment of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Department with the key reasonability for creating an effective national institutional framework to monitor and evaluate government and donor funded public sector projects as well as the National Development Plan.[5]

At the policy level, there has been a number of relevant policy and strategy documents that have been adopted or being developed that underscore the need for a national monitoring and evaluation system for Sierra Leone. Among these are the MTNDP -2019-2023, the Public Finance Management Reform Strategy 2018- 2012 and the draft national Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. In the MTNDP, a sub cluster of the implementation plan for than strategy of the focuses on the scope and institutional framework for monitoring and evaluation in the national development plan.[6] On the other hand, the Public Finance Management Strategy specifically identifies the challenges facing monitoring and evaluation and lays out key strategic objectives to be achieved over a four year period.[7]

Finally, with the establishment of NaMED, efforts are underway, alongside the development of this SOP and other institutional documents, to develop a comprehensive National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. It is presently in its draft form and will be validated, approved and rolled out in conjunction with the SOP.

2.3   Efforts to improve Monitoring and Evaluation

The emphasis on strengthening the existing public sector monitoring and evaluation systems continues to be reinforced by successive governments of the last two decades. For the first time, a forensic audit on certain transactions of selected public offices was commissioned by the Office of the Auditor-General in 2018/19. A renewed impetus has been given to M&E demonstrated by:

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[4] The Audit Service Act, 2014, Short Title
[5] The Finance Act 2019, Part III Section 30(a)
[6] Sierra Leone 's Medium Term National Development Plan 2019-2023. Pg. 183 - 185
[7] The Public Finance Management Reform Strategy 2018 – 2021 Pg. 22 – 23.

(i)   a section (Results Framework) of the MTNDP, which has been dedicated to M&E as a strategic intervention for the effective achievement of the goals, strategic objectives and stated targets of the Plan.

(ii)   improving on the institutional strengthening of M&E through the creation of the National M&E Department (NaMED) within the MoPED;

(iii)   initiating and vigorously pursuing concrete steps focusing on creating the required Policy and legal environment in support of M&E including the preparation of this M&E Policy, a National M&E Framework and Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for M&E;

(iv)   a Performance Management and service delivery coordinated by the then Office of the Chief of Staff was introduced in 2015. A Performance Tracking Tool was developed requiring MDAs to indicate results to be achieved on an annual basis (spread over quarters) which formed the basis of developing Performance contracts signed by the Office of the President (OTP) and the Political heads of the respective MDAs and later extended to other public servants;

(v)   the Parliamentary Oversight Committees of Parliament have become more active in holding public sector institutions to account for their stewardships by conducting nationwide oversight activities including holding public hearings;

(vi)   accountability institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) and the National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA) were established and supported to effectively perform their statutory functions. The ACC was strengthened through the revision of the Act, that established it, to give it prosecutorial powers, and lately to make assets declaration by public officials and verification more effective and results-oriented;

(vii)   the Freedom of Information Bill was enacted and the Access to Information Secretariat established to ease the process of the public accessing information from public sector institutions;

(viii) envisaging a new M&E system which will build on rectifying the weaknesses of past systems including putting in place a regular, effective, and efficient M&E mechanism from central to project levels and by streamlining implementation from the outset of project activities, and strengthening existing M&E, transparency and accountability mechanisms;

(ix)   Though still considered little, a 71 percent increase was made to the budget allocated to NaMED between 2016 and 2019.

3.   VISION

This national M&E Policy envisions;

"A Sierra Leone where all public sector policies, programmes and projects at national and sub-national levels produce value for money and are subject to an independent, integrated, institutionalised and well-coordinated M&E system that ensures improved development results, accountability, transparency and learning."

On "learning"' the Theory of Change model used in Results Based Management for learning is that M&E (which is key in transparency and accountability), together with learning give evidence-based informed decision-making. This process will improve development results.

The Policy has been developed on the basis of weaknesses identified in standalone M&E systems within MDAs and LCs. These include:

a) unclear roles, responsibilities and functional relationships,

b) weak coordination of M&E of public sector projects and programmes across the board,

c) lack of credible, harmonised information management system, manifested in fragmented systems of data collection, analysis and dissemination,

d) allocation of meagre or no funds for M&E in the national and sector budgets, and

e) underutilisation of M&E data and information.

The Policy shall provide for the establishment and strengthening of institutional M&E structures and capacity development. It will serve as a tool for facilitating and strengthening accountability among all development stakeholders, good accountable corporate governance based on transparency and information sharing in development processes and the attainment of value for money for all development policies, programmes and projects.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND KEY ASSUMPTIONS

4.1 Guiding Principles

The following shall form the guiding principles upon which the Policy objectives are based:

1. Inclusion and Participation

Monitoring and Evaluation activities shall be gender inclusive and conducted in a consultative and participatory manner among development stakeholders and beneficiaries at national and sub-national levels. PolicyM&E shall ensure that, the public identifies with government programmes and

projects that will benefit all Sierra Leoneans. Third party and Joint monitoring shall be embarked on to promote transparency, ownership, objectivity, timely implementation of M&E recommendations, minimising unnecessary duplications and facilitating economies of scale and synergies.

2.   Evidence-based Decision-making

M&E shall be simple so that it is understood by everybody, while being effective and implemented in a consistent way to allow for aggregation and benchmarking and used for decision-making and accountability. There shall be a national M&E results framework for enhancing the generation of good quality M&E evidence. This will be delivered within a robust and proportionate governance framework to provide greater accountability and a stronger evidence base for future decision-making. Policy makers and development partners shall be made to utilise the M&E findings to review policies, programmes and projects for better results.

M&E shall ensure that all reviews and evaluations shall contain specific, targeted and actionable recommendations. All institutions shall respond to the M&E recommendation(s) within a stipulated timeframe. An automated M&E management information system shall be set up that requires all MDAs and LCs to maintain and keep track of review and evaluation recommendations, agreed follow-up actions, and status of these actions. Lessons learned shall be used to improve future performance.

3.   Managing for Results

The implementation of this M&E Policy shall be guided by national priorities and properly aligned to the National Development Plan (NDP). It shall be focused on measuring the epected results outlined in public policies, projects and programmes. M&E shall ride on Results-based Management (RBM) principles that focus on results of implemented policies, programmes and projects (activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts).

5.   Ethics, Integrity and Professionalism

The professionalism and independence of monitors and evaluators shall demonstrate impartiality, objectivity, compliance with international standards in data collection, analysis and reporting in order to conduct a successful M&E. The confidentiality, where required, of institutions and

individuals who provide information to monitors and evaluators should be guaranteed at all times. M&E shall give due regard to the welfare, beliefs and customs of those involved or affected, upholding a strict moral code.

6.   Transparency, Accountability and Inclusion

In order to ensure transparency, the beneficiaries of public sector projects shall be engaged directly in all stages of project management, from proposal development to completion of project. Policies, programmes and projects of Government shall be monitored on regular basis and evaluated at different stages to help ensure transparency of the results. M&E reports shall be timely prepared and widely disseminated to all stakeholders and the general public, pursuant to the laws of Sierra Leone.

Institutions and individuals who receive public funds shall account for them based on agreed targets set linked to the NDP and other standards. Performance information that pertains to misuse of funds or malpractice shall be forwarded to the relevant institutions. NaMED and the relevant Parliamentary Committees shall conduct M&E of the government functions/activities to make MDAs accountable to the people of Sierra Leone.

7.   Value for Money (VfM)

Effective M&E shall ensure efficient and effective use of public funds to achieve results thus contributing to the improvement of the lives of the people. As such, M&E shall ensure the maximisation of the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them, and the maximisation of the relationship between the intended and actual results of public spending (outcomes) i.e. spending well and wisely.

4.2   Enablers

1.   Strong and Sustained Political Will

The success of policies, anywhere in the world, is a function of strong and sustained political will. '**Political will**' is commonly used as a catch-all concept, the meaning of which is so vague that it does little to enrich our understanding of the political and policy processes. In this document, it is defined

as **'the determination of an individual political actor to do and say things that will produce a desired outcome, irrespective of perceived push back by some within his group'.** The political will must be sustained for it to be meaningful. In this regard, it is expected that it will be continued even when there is a change of Government. This is hardly the case in most developing countries, thus leading to repetitive reproductions of policies addressing same issues over and over.

2. Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Requirements

Information and communication technologies shall be employed progressively to develop devices and networks so as to make M&E function more systematic, smart and swift, and to enable it to effectively communicate basic information as well as progress reports through its application. An efficient system to facilitate the capture, processing, analysis and use of monitoring data within each sector, including its relevant MDAs and LGs, shall be established. The system will be integrated with other systems in key MDAs for complete data analysis and reporting. Print and electronic media as well as evolving social media outlets will enhance national coverage.

3. Social responsibility

Social Audit shall be carried out to develop ownership of stakeholders on the activities of public agencies; make maximum use of available resources; improve transparency, promote the culture of accountability and address the problems and issues surrounding service delivery including people grievances. Social audits shall examine the entire activities and performance of a service delivery agency and assessed with the direct involvement and participation of stakeholders.

4. Institutional Development and Capacity Building for M&E

Institutional development and capacity building shall be core in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of M&E. It shall be ensured that staffing for monitoring is commensurate to the requirements of the stakeholders in the public sector especially the MDAs and LCs. Knowledge, skill, and competence of human resources involved in M&E shall be developed by making provision for an adequate budget in annual budgets.

4.3   Key Assumptions

In order for the National M&E Policy to be successful, the following conditions should hold:

(i)   there shall be continued demonstration of strong political leadership and support for M&E;

(ii)   a supportive legal and regulatory environment shall be created and maintained;

(iii)   buy-in of key stakeholder and senior management of the public sector shall be sustained;

(iv)   functional M&E cadre established within the public sector to lead and coordinate M&E structures and activities. Consequently, MDAs and LCs shall be able to attract and retain sufficient, competent and motivated staff for the execution of the M&E function;

(v)   clarity of, appreciation of, and adherence to the assignment of roles, responsibilities, functional relationships and resources among all statutory bodies and stakeholders involved in the M&E process shall be ensured;

(vi)   user friendly Management Information Systems (MIS) shall be developed and available at all levels;

(vii)   adequate resourcing (demonstrated by national budgetary allocations) for M&E activities at all levels shall be ensured; and

5.   OVERALL POLICY AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

5.1   Overall Policy Objective

The overall strategic Policy objective of the National M&E Policy is to create an efficient, effective and coordinated system to track the progress of implementation of Government projects, policies and programmes. It will objectively assess public sector performance, hold MDAs and LCs to account for achieving results based on reliable information and data, and promote evidence-based decision-making at all levels, while ensuring learning and capacity building.

5.2   Strategic Policy Objectives

To achieve the overall policy objective, the following specific objectives shall be pursued:

(i) Establish a National M&E framework for the implementation and coordination of M&E at all levels with clarified structures, roles, responsibilities and functional relationships.

(ii) Establish and operationalise a national M&E management information system for planning, programming, reporting and evidence-based decision making.

(iii) Enhance coordination, transparency and accountability in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects in conformity with the tenets of good governance.

(iv) Strengthen capacities of MDAs, the LCs and key stakeholders involved in the M&E of policies, programmes and projects.

(v) Develop and implement a communication strategy for development results

6.   POLICY ACTIONS

For each specific objective, the stipulated policy measures shall be implemented in order to achieve the overall objective of this Policy.

Strategic Objective 1: Establish a National M&E framework for the implementation and coordination of M&E at all levels with clarified structures, roles, responsibilities and functional relationships**.**

Policy Actions

(i)   NaMED to develop and operationalize an M&E Framework for measuring the progress of programme and projects implemented by the public sector with clarified roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships.

(ii) Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs), reporting guidelines, manuals and tools to guide all MDAs and LCs in programme/project planning and implementation.

(iii) Align all projects and budgets to the national development plan and indicative framework.

(iv) NaMED to ensure that each MDA develops a Sector Results Framework (SRF) linked to the defined National Results Framework (NRF) and appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) to promote integrated results-based M&E in project planning and implementation.

(v) NaMED, through a system of performance assessment benchmarks, ensures the performances of MDAs and LCs and their senior managers against set targets. Introduces reward system for high performing MDAs and LGs and subject low performing MDAs and LGs to measures that will encouragement improvement in delivery.

Strategic Objective 2: Planning, programming, reporting and evidence-based decision making Establish is derived from a national M&E management information system.

Policy Actions

(i) Establish a well-functioning public sector-wide automated M&E System with clarified roles and responsibilities that provides effective mechanisms for reporting progress towards the achievement of targeted results.

(ii) Integrate the NaMED MIS with other systems at the Ministry of Finance, Directorate of Science Technology and Innovation (DSTI), Statistics Sierra Leone and other key institutions in order to harmonise systems for data collection, processing and analysis to ensure completeness and easy accessibility of M&E data to inform decision-making.

(iii) Progressively employ information and communication technologies to develop networks to make M&E function more systematic, and access to information as well as progress reports easier, secure and transparent.

(iv) Encourage the development and institutionalisation of MIS across MDAs as part of efforts to strengthen and promote standard results-based M&E/MIS training and capacity development efforts across MDAs.

(v) Promote a culture of information and knowledge sharing by utilising IT based systems at all levels to increase access to real-time data for decision-making and project implementation.

(vi) Ensure that the data collection cycle is synchronized with the budget cycle and, hence, inform the planning and budget cycle.

(vii) Use the MIS for timely availability and dissemination of M&E reports to stakeholders in order to trigger demand for M&E results, research findings and recommendations to inform the design, implementation and review of policies, programmes and projects.

(viii) Promote coordination of M&E systems to harmonise data on pricing of goods and services across MDAs and non-state actors to eliminate variabilities on related items.

Strategic Objective 3: Enhance coordination, transparency and accountability in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects in conformity with the tenets of good governance;

Policy Actions

(i) The Office of the President (OTP) shall serve as the highest body for the provision of the required leadership and guidance in the formulation and implementation of M&E policies, programmes and projects.

(ii)   The Parliament of Sierra Leone shall provide legislative support to ensure that the required legal environment is created and shall through its oversight Committees hold public institutions accountable for their stewardship.

(iii) The Ministry of Finance (MoF) shall allocate funds for the smooth functioning and operations of NaMED, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) ensure disbursement of funds to the MDAs and LCs for the purposes of M&E.

(iv)   MoPED shall be responsible for providing political oversight for the coordination of the implementation of this Policy and ensure the proper linkage between development planning and M&E.

(v)   NaMED as an interim arrangement shall be a Department of the MoPED. It shall be fully responsible for providing the technical leadership, implementation, and management of this Policy.

(vi)   Sector M&E Working Groups (SWGs) shall be established and supported by NaMED to serve as the platforms for joint planning, implementation, coordination and review of M&E at the sector level.

(vii) All MDAs and other spending agencies through their M&E Divisions/Departments/ Units shall be responsible for the design, implementation and coordination of M&E activities in their respective sectors, including providing reports of such activities to NaMED.

(viii) All LCs shall be responsible for the planning, implementation and coordinating M&E activities of their respective districts or localities including, providing reports of such activities to NaMED.

(ix)   Third party monitoring shall be done by District M&E Committees comprising officials of the LCs, Traditional Authorities, CBOs, NGOs, Private Sector shall serve as the District M&E Committee and Ward and Chiefdom M&E Committee. Periodic reports of these shall be submitted to NaMED.

(x)   External Support Agencies (ESAs) comprising Civil Society, Private Sector, Academia and Development Partners/Donors shall provide collaborative support to the NaMED in the implementation of this policy. They will also provide an outside perspective of the functioning of the M&E system.

(xi)   NaMED shall promote linkages and synergies between functions of M&E and those for statistical departments/units at national, provincial and district levels.

(xii) Parliamentary Committees to hold public hearings based on NaMED findings and reports to ensure that the public is informed about the activities and results of various programmes/projects in which MDAs and LCs are engaged.

(xiii) NaMED to collaborate with institutions responsible for transparency and accountability such as the Office of the Auditor-General (AOG), Accountant-General, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA) and Office of the Ombudsman to effectively and efficiently execute its roles and responsibilities.

(xiv) NaMED to collaborate with Civil Society and the Media to be able to effectively engage public sector institutions to demand accountability from them.

(xv) NaMED to promote the effective operationalization of the Right to Access to Information Act, 2013 to ensure that the public can easily access information from public sector institutions.

Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen capacities of MDAs, the LCs and key stakeholders involved in the M&E of policies, programmes and projects.

Policy Actions

(i) Build capacities at all levels of the public sector for the preparation and dissemination of information and reports including prompt response to stakeholders and public information needs across government and non-state actors.

(ii) MoF to Provide adequate budgetary allocation and other resources to enhance capacities for M&E across public sector to institutionalize the conduct of M&E.

(iii) NaMED shall be responsible for the strengthening of the M&E capacities of MDAs and LCs, and shall provide oversight to their M&E functions.

(iv) NaMED to develop, promote and implement a comprehensive capacity development strategy to guide the capacity development efforts of MDAs involved in M&E across the public sector.

(v) Use of evidence for decision-making. Note that the emphasis on number 2 is in the MIS and not on outcome (behavioral change – using data for policy implementation).

(vi) Harmonize M&E processes with other key national public management systems (e.g., budgeting, planning).

(vii) MDAs and LCs establish the required structures and staffing levels for M&E functions across the public sector where they are non-existent.

(viii) Support higher institutions of learning to introduce courses that will address the needs of M&E and related areas.

(ix) MDAs and LCs make budgetary provision for financing their M&E activities and to provide required office space and logistics for M&E staff to be able to function effectively and efficiently at all levels.

Establish effective coordination mechanisms to promote synergy for capacity building and to avoid unnecessary duplication and wastage of limited resources.

(x)   Learning from the process, Communicating M & E and Reporting mechanisms should be considered in the policy.

7.   IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The implementation framework shall ensure the realisation of the vision, goal, strategic objectives and policy actions of this Policy.

7.1   Institutional Arrangement

7.1.1 National Level

The key institutions in monitoring and evaluating government projects, programmes and policies shall include State and Non-state actors. The state actors shall include the Executive represented by the Presidency, MDAs, Local Councils, Legislature represented by Parliament, and Judiciary. The non-state actors shall include the Civil Society Organisations(CSOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Private Sector and the Academia.

The Parliament of Sierra Leone shall:

(i)   Review existing legislations, if necessary, and/or enact appropriate enabling laws and legislations to create the required legislative environment for the effective implementation of this Policy. This may include an Act establishing National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency/Commission.

(ii)   Provide oversight over the executive branch in the implementation of this Policy.

(iii)   Guarantee transparency and accountability in the utilization of public funds.

(iv)   Encourage its Oversight Committees to use data from M&E for informed decision-making and to monitor and evaluate national policies, plans, programmes and projects.

(v)   Receive, review and approve M&E budgets for public sector institutions as contained in the national budget and ensure that there is a separate M&E budget for Sector plans, programmes and projects.

(vi)   Assist in educating and sensitizing their constituents on the importance of M&E and their responsibilities.

1.   The Office of the President (OTP)

The OTP shall be the highest Policy body that shall provide the required leadership and guidance in the formulation, implementation, M&E of public sector policies, programmes and projects. The OTP shall:

(i)   Provide Policy oversight to the implementation of this Policy. Consequently, keep under review the operations of the Government with respect to its purposes, scope, and objectives to ensure that Government policies, programmes and projects are monitored and evaluated as provided for in this Policy.

(ii)   Provide Policy direction arising from recommendations of M&E reports and ensure transparent and accountable governance at all levels., and the effective and efficient performance of Government and the delivery of results.

(iii)   With support from NaMED, design and roll out a performance management system to track public sector institutions in achieving national targets derived from the NDP.

(iv)   Support the establishment of required M&E structures particularly at the MDA and LC levels to ensure the effective implementation of monitoring and evaluations functions at all levels and to resolve complex inter-ministerial coordination problems and difficulties encountered in the implementation of this Policy.

(v)   Periodically receive feedback from Cabinet on Government performance and results, and Utilise information from the integrated management information system for evidence-based decision making.

2.   The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED)

(i)   Providing strategic leadership for coordinating the implementation of this national M&E Policy at both the national and decentralised levels and ensure the effective linkage between development planning and results-based M&E.

(ii)   Advocate for support for the development of M&E capacity at all levels to ensure the preparation and effective and efficient implementation and coordination of national and local level M&E frameworks and plans.

(iii)   Support establishment of functional M&E Departments/Units in all MDAs and LCs and Ensure adequate human, financial and physical resources are allocated for M&E activities

(iv)   In collaboration with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Human Resource Management Office (HRMO) ensure creation of national M&E cadre and with relevant M&E skills and competences.

(v)   Ensure adequate human, financial and physical resources are allocated for M&E activities and that data from the M&E are utilised for informed decision making.

(vi)   Utilise information from the M&E for informed decision-making.

3.   The National Monitoring and Evaluation Department (NaMED)

(i)   Provide technical leadership in the development, operationalisation and periodic review of this Policy.

(ii)   Design and implement a National Monitoring System (NMS) that links the monitoring units at all levels.

(iii)   Provide technical leadership for the introduction of simplified procedures and practical guidance for the development of selected instruments in line with Government's results-oriented M&E framework, and strengthen the overall system of M&E of public sector development programmes and projects.

(iv)   Contribute to the preparation of public investment projects and national development plans to inform M&E needs and track progress of implementation of all projects as well as the National Development Plan using modern and appropriate technology.

(v)   Facilitate the formation of Sector Working Groups (SWGs) and Third Party Monitoring groups (at district, ward and chiefdom levels) and support them to monitor sector investment plans, public investment projects containing an annual sector budget framework.

(vi)   Receive and review M&E plans from MDAs and the LCs and ensure their conformity to the national guidelines provided in the SOP, and on the basis of such plans undertake periodic development expenditure tracking and reviews to assess correlation of public capital spending with planned outputs/outcomes.

(vii)   Lead the conduct of independent baseline studies, mid-term and final evaluation of prioritized policies, programmes and/or projects assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability and establish and maintain a database and repository on all completed and on-going projects.

(viii) Through a GIS-enabled web-based system, ensure the preparation and dissemination of relevant M&E information of programme/project activities, including their impact.

(ix) Provide the required institutional and capacity development support for the effective discharge of roles and responsibilities by stakeholders at all levels.

(x) Promote a culture for the demand of M&E information and data and ensure its utilization by public sector officials and other relevant stakeholders for informed decision-making,

(xi) Ensure that all public sectors institutions comply, develop and implement functional M&E systems, and periodically produce and disseminate reports approved by NaMED.

4.   The Ministry of Finance (MoF)

The MoF shall:

(i) Ensure that adequate resources are allocated annually through the national budget to NaMED and the M&E functions of MDAs in line with this Policy.

(ii) Promote the culture of results-based budgetary allocation in line with this Policy and monitor the utilisation of the budget in collaboration with NaMED.

(iii) Strengthen the capacities of MDAs to effectively and efficiently utilise and account for funds disbursed to them.

(iv) Utilise information from the Government–wide M&E MIS for evidence-based decision making and periodic reporting to Cabinet and Parliament on budget execution and performance especially as it relates to M&E.

5.   Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)

The Ministry responsible for Local Government (LG) shall:

a) In collaboration with the Local Government Service Commission (LGSC) ensure that the required expertise are assigned to each of the M&E Units of the LCs.

b) Facilitate all LCs to prepare results-oriented plans and budgets and ensure proper coordination of monitoring activities at the LC level.

c) Ensure that LCs effectively comply with statutory requirements and adherence to this Policy and related frameworks and standards.

d) Promote the institutionalisation of social accountability initiatives, systems, and practices by the LCs to improve transparency, accountability and upward reporting in local governance and devolved service delivery.

e) Participate in national third party and joint monitoring sessions to review and assess performances of LCs and utilise M&E data and information to determine the relative performances of LGs across the country and make informed decisions.

6. Line Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

The MDAs shall:

(i) Take full responsibility for the operationalisation of this Policy at the Local government levels and raise awareness and relevance of M&E.

(ii) Establish functioning Planning and M&E Departments/Units in their respective MDAs to coordinate the implementation of this Policy and create effective linkages between the MDAs and local level public sector institutions with respect to the conduct of M&E and sharing of M&E information

(iii) Facilitate capacity building of all staff in results-based M&E approaches and in adequately planning annual budget for M&E activities.

(iv) Ensure that a Management Information System (MIS) is in place and functioning effectively to provide data on progress against performance indicators to NaMED and to generate and disseminate M&E reports.

(v) Hold semiannual performance review meetings to determine progress towards output targets and to utilise M&E findings to inform programme, policy, and resource allocation decisions.

(vi) Maintain a Recommendation Implementation Tracking Plan (RITP) which will keep track of review and evaluation recommendations, agreed follow-up actions, and status of these actions.

7. Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL)

The SSL shall:

(i) Strengthen statistical capacity, including ensuring that that Planning and M&E Units in MDAs and LCs have adequate staff and sufficient budget for statistical activities;

(ii)   Provide MDAs and LCs with technical support and training in M&E data collection, analysis and dissemination in line with this Policy.

(iii)   Ensure best practice and adherence to standards, classifications, and procedures for statistical collection, analysis and dissemination in MDAs and LGs.

8.   Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC)

(i)   The RAIC shall make information available to the masses by increasing the supply of open data to the extent possible;

(ii)   It shall improve on data accessibility by the masses;

(iii)   It shall make the public aware of what rights they have in gaining such access;

(iv)   NaMED shall ensure that RAIC has access to the policy document and everything else that emanated from it.

9.   Directorate of Science Technology and Innovation (DSTI

Other Government Spending Agencies (GSAs)

(i)   Ensure the establishment of functional M&E Departments/Units with adequate staff and budget for M&E activities including ensuring the implementation of this Policy as it applies to their respective agencies.

(ii)   Provide relevant information and knowledge products and periodically produce and disseminate M&E reports.

(iii)   Utilise M&E information and data for evidence-based decision making.

10.   Sector Working Groups (SWGs)

There shall be four SWGs, each comprising of MDAs that work in each of the following areas; Human Capital Development (education, health, skills development, youths, women, vulnerable groups and labour and employment); the Economy Sector (agriculture, fisheries, trade, commerce, tourism, etc.) Infrastructure and Economic Competitiveness Sector (roads, transportation, energy, water, environment, lands etc.) and Governance and Accountability Sector (judiciary and justice sector, security sector, local governance etc.)

The SWGs shall:

a) With support from NaMED and Public Investment Management Directorate in MoPED, develop and implement sector investment plans based on the MTNDP containing an annual sector budget framework, and a results-oriented monitoring matrix and evaluation plan.

b) Establish and maintain a M&E function within the SWG to ensure proper coordination and oversight of M&E activities in the sectors.

c) Hold performance reviews on a quarterly basis to assess progress against targets, and to prepare and disseminate reports after approval of NAMED sector-based M&E reports on a half-yearly basis.

7.1.2 Local Council (LCs) Level

The LCs shall:

(i) Oversee the implementation of this Policy at the district level and ensure that the LC and other decentralized structures fully adhere to this Policy and ensure proper coordination of monitoring activities at Council and lower decentralized levels.

(ii) Ensure the establishment of Local Council Development Planning Unit and M&E Units staffed with qualified development planners, M&E specialists and Statisticians, and the functions of the two Units are well coordinated and linked to effectively.

(iii) Facilitate the capacity building and training of all staff in results-based M&E approaches and establish effective M&E mechanisms with baselines, on the basis of the M&E guidelines.

(iv) Develop results-oriented Local Council Development Plans with annual M&E plans and budgets, coordinate the implementation and ensure that activities are conducted as stipulated in the plan.

(v) Create effective linkages between the district M&E structures and processes with those at sub-district level .to organize and direct the collection, processing, analysis and publication of relevant M&E information for planning purposes and to establish best practices and lessons learned.

(vi) Guide the process for identifying the key performance indicators and parameters for monitoring the programmes and projects and comparing them to targets and design the format for such performance reports.

(vii)   Monitor on a periodic basis, activities of investment and recurrent funded projects and develop early response mechanisms in the implementation of the development programmes and projects at the LC level.

(viii)   Ensure that the local people effectively participate in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects implemented in their localities.

(ix)   Facilitate the creation and effective functioning of the M&E Ward Committees and ensure the preparation of quarterly and annual M&E reports and submit to NaMED and the relevant MDAs. Inviting sectoral authorities to these spaces will be one way of ensuring success.

(x)   Utilize M&E findings to inform Policy and resource allocation decisions and regularly produce M&E reports as well as disseminate knowledge products accessible to all levels of government and other stakeholders.

7.1.3 Non-State Actors

Civil Society Organisations and Private Sector

(i)   Private sector, NGOs and CSOs receiving public funds to execute assignments on behalf of public sector institutions shall be subject to this Policy.

(ii)   Align their operations to public sector programmes and projects, facilitate independent performance assessments and evaluation of government development policies, plans, programmes and projects to provide external perspective and feedback and to report.

(iii)   Comply with the Government mandate on reporting.

(iv)   Complement Government through financial, technical, advocacy and other forms of assistance to strengthen its performance and entrench a results-based culture.

(v)   Training institutions and higher institutions of learning organize training courses in M&E and related disciplines/areas that are accessible to public sector staff.

(vi)   Support transparency and accountability in public sector management, and participate in public events, support public education and outreach on M&E and role of the public, and promote transparency and accountability such as public hearing and media engagements.

(vii)   Participate in joint monitoring events to track programme and project implementation by the public sector and participate in M&E Committees to support the strengthening of M&E at District and Ward levels.

(viii) Provide timely and quality data on the financial and physical implementation of projects for which they are the executing agency to the relevant MDA or LG and utilise data for evidence-based decision making.

Development Partners

(i)   Provide funding and technical support towards the effective implementation of this Policy vis-a-vis enhancing M&E capacities and systems strengthening at all levels of the public sector and strengthening performance management.

(ii)   Promote the effective coordination of support to avoid unnecessary duplication of resources while promoting synergy and participate effectively in M&E Committees as required

(iii)   Design programmes in line with the NDP and the national M&E Framework, Standards and Guidelines and utilize M&E data for evidence-based decision making.

(iv)   Undertake independent performance assessments and evaluation of government development policies, plans, programmes and projects to provide external perspective and feedback.

7.2   Legal and Regulatory Requirements

M&E shall be given the desired effect through provision of a comprehensive legal framework which promotes and harmonizes the M&E structures towards effective and efficient service delivery at all levels in the country. To this end, the following shall be undertaken:

(i)   An appropriate legislation shall be enacted by Parliament to give full legal backing to this Policy.

(ii)   All existing policies related to M&E shall be made to conform to this Policy.

(iii)   From time to time, relevant legislation shall be reviewed and amended to reflect any changes that this Policy shall be subjected to.

7.3   Resource mobilisation and Financing of Monitoring and Evaluation

(i)   Government shall mobilize financial and technical resources through the annual budgets and co-operating partners to support the nationwide roll-out and institutionalisation of the Policy.

(ii)   The Ministry of Finance in consultation with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and NaMED shall allocate adequate budget or each MDA and LC to conduct M&E in line with the requirements of this Policy.

(iii)   A percentage of recurrent non-wage budgets at Vote level (Ministries and LCs) agreed by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and NaMED shall be allocated and ring-fenced for monitoring at MDA and LG levels, as determined annually during the national budget.

(iv)   A minimum of 2.5 percent of the budgets (in Leones) of sector Ministries agreed by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and NaMED shall be allocated and ring-fenced for the activities of the SWGs such as monitoring at sector level and production of bi-annual performance reports.

(v)   All projects shall allocate a minimum of 2.5 percent of their budgets agreed by MoF, MoPED and NaMED to evaluation. This percentage shall cover the cost of conducting a baseline study during the project preparation, a mid-term review at the half-way stage in the project, and a final evaluation.

(vi)   MoF, MoPED and NaMED shall track the use of funds provided to MDAs, LCs and other stakeholders for M&E to ensure that, allocated funds are used for costs associated with generating and updating data collection protocols for non-project activities, data collection operations, running the management information system (MIS), and validating and reporting monitoring data.

7.4   *Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning*

(i)   NaMED shall ensure effective monitoring of implementation of the Policy across all MDAs and LGs and report to the OTP in line with the implementation plan for the Policy.

(ii)   NaMED shall put in place mechanisms which shall be institutionalized at all levels for the monitoring of the implementation of this Policy.

(iii)   The monitoring shall ensure that all implementing institutions affected by this Policy effectively comply with it.

(iv)   NaMED shall play a lead role in undertaking periodic reviews of the implementation of the Policy and based on the outcomes of the reviews, make appropriate recommendations for improvements.

(v)   The Policy shall undergo a mid-term review after two and half years focusing on progress made in the implementation of the Policy and assess the appropriateness of the overall strategic direction, and a final term review after another two and half years focusing on impact of implementation of the Policy. The learning outcome will inform and guide on the way forward

7.5   Compliance Requirements and Obligations

(i)   Compliance with this Policy shall mean not only adhering to the provisions contained herein but also adhering to documents emanating from it including the national M&E framework and guidelines, standard operating procedures for M&Es, and regulations that shall in due course be prepared.

(ii)   All stakeholders affected by this Policy shall fully comply with it to ensure effective implementation of Government policies, programmes and projects.

(iii)   All MDAs, LCs, CSOs/NGOs and Private Sector Organisations that are registered with the GoSL and handle public funds shall be required to comply with the provisions of this National M&E Policy.

(iv)   Non-Compliance to this Policy shall attract consequences. For violations which are deemed not serious, warning letters such as suspension without pay will be triggered.

7.6   Communication and Information

NaMED shall undertake the following for an effective communication and information strategy:

(i)   Determination of the goal of the communication will be paramount.

(ii)   Identification and profile of the audience will make the difference as to whether or not the massage is communicated well.

(iii)   Develop Messages.

(iv)   Select Communication Channels.

(v)   Choose Activities and Materials.

(vi)   Establish Partnerships with MDAs and LGIs.

(vii)   Implement the Plan.

(viii) Evaluate and Make Mid-Course Corrections.