



Aftësi për Punë / Skills for Jobs

# Monitoring and Results Measurement Manual

'SKILLS FOR JOBS' (S4J)  
August 2018

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# Acknowledgement

The 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) MRM manual is primarily based on the Swisscontact Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM) guidelines. The text and the instruments have been adjusted to fit with the specificities of the S4J program. Some of the sections of the manual have been adapted from different Swisscontact projects to fit the needs of S4J. Special acknowledgement is for the Katalyst and PPSE<sup>1</sup> project "process flows" which helped in designing S4J tailored process flow.

Many thanks to Tanjima Ali for leading the process of adaptation of the MRM manual to the needs of S4J and Erka Çaro for her contribution with the development of the manual.

Thanks to the S4J team, who have contributed relentlessly in the workshops to define the MRM tools for efficient and effective monitoring and steering of activities. Special thanks go out to the component managers and the product managers.

S4J is grateful for the continuous sharing of knowledge within Swisscontact's Community of Practice (CoP) and between MRM specialists in the region which helped in defining the roles and responsibilities to implement the MRM system.

Last but not least, special acknowledgement goes out to Henry Leerentveld, Director Eastern Europe, for his guidance to the team and Michael Fink, Coordinator of Measurement and Monitoring, for reviewing the manual.

## **Fation Dragoshi**

Project Manager  
Skills for Jobs

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## How to read the document

Sections 1 and 2 sets the context of the project and the function of MRM within the project context. 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) project is funded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by Swisscontact. The project is currently at the end of Phase I and is designing Phase II with the goal of reaching scale and sustainability of the innovations piloted and tested during Phase I. With this in mind, S4J has developed processes and put in the resources to ensure MRM is integrated in teamwork from start of Phase II and whenever required, adapted to the needs of the team.

Section 3 explains each stage of MRM and how the process should go, who is in charge and what will be the outcome from each of the steps. The steps have been thought through as from the start of an intervention, however, for more mature interventions in its second and third year, the process might fold differently and some of the steps could be skipped.

Section 4, 5 and 6 explains and summaries the use of standard MRM tools: results chains, indicators and systemic change used in S4J. Details of these tools and templates are further available to Swisscontact MRM guideline and other DCED materials.

Section 7, 8 and 9 puts forward S4J experience with the implementation of impact assessment. These methodologies are continuously changing as the project matures

and faces new changes in the context. Overall, the use of technology in data collection and using tracer data from providers have improved over time and the team foresees that this section might need further finetuning in the early months of Phase II.

Section 10, 11, and 12 are critical for S4J to maintain the system, review it periodically and get the optimum use of the tools and templates. The team acknowledges the use of different tools, such as, results chains and MRM plans, helps their facilitative role and effectively monitors the activities. However, review on balancing between monitoring and implementing is also necessary to ensure the system remain light and financially affordable. Thus, team members have been capacitated to use the tools and one full time MRM person manages and ensures the quality of the MRM system, and supports the team in applying various tools and measurements. An experienced international MRM expert supports the MRM manager and the team. The management team oversees the balance and takes decision on ensuing optimum resource.

Lastly, the manual links different sections on internal templates, tools and the Swisscontact MRM guideline. However, most of these resources are internal documents and not to be shared with wider community without proper approval from SDC and Swisscontact Management.



## *Abbreviations*

<b>AAER</b>	Adoption Adaption Expansion Response
<b>ATTDID</b>	Average effects of Treatment among the Treated Diff in Diff
<b>BACO</b>	Before and After Comparison with Opinion
<b>CASI</b>	Computer Assisted Self Interviewing
<b>CG</b>	Comparison Group
<b>DCED</b>	Donors Committee for Enterprise Development
<b>DiD</b>	Difference in Difference
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>IA</b>	Impact Assessment
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>LMI</b>	Labour Market Insertion
<b>MRM</b>	Monitoring and Results Measurement
<b>RCH</b>	Result Chain
<b>S4J</b>	'Skills for Jobs' Project
<b>SC</b>	Swisscontact
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>VSD</b>	Vocational Skills Development
<b>VTC</b>	Vocational Training Centre



# 1. The Goal of 'Skills for Jobs' S4J project

'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) that is implemented by Swisscontact. **The project is part of the Economic Development Domain of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy** for Albania (2014-2017 and 2018-2021), with specific focus on promotion of employment opportunities and skills development.

The project facilitates the development of quality Vocational Education and Training (VET) offers by supporting VET providers in offering labour market integration facilities with string networks with employers and including dual approaches and 'New Ways of Learning'.

Both vocational skills development (VSD) delivery and labour market integration are based on a 'New Ways of Learning' approach, including the use of modern technologies like smartphones and social media and by applying a combination of blended (individualized) learning and work-based learning approaches.

The project focuses on 4 sectors with potential for growth and job creation: Tourism and Hospitality; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (also as a crosscutting theme); Textile; and Construction. Swisscontact applies a regional approach for the implementation of the project focusing in the regions of Shkodra, Lezha, Tirana, Vlora and Berat.

Seven providers in the five selected regions benefit from the project: 'Hamdi Bushati' vocational school in Shkodra, 'Kolin Gjoka' vocational school in Lezha, 'Gjergj Canco' vocational school in Tirana, 'Kristo Isak' vocational school in Berat and the industrial 'Pavarësia' school, the 'Commercial' school and the Vocational Training Centre in Vlora. The latest will serve for replicability assessment and will only benefit from selected activities.

The project main intends to contribute to the achievement of its objectives by focusing on three areas of intervention:

1. Quality of formal VET and 'New Ways of Inclusive Learning';
2. Innovative employers' relations and school management;
3. Labour market integration facilities and short-term VSD offers.



**The overall goal and the outcomes of the project are described below:**

**Overall goal:** Young people profit from strengthened labour market- oriented education and training in sectors with growth potential, allowing them to find an attractive and decent job.

**Outcome 1:** Young people access market oriented formal and non-formal education and training programs delivered based on new ways of inclusive learning in Tourism & Hospitality, Construction, Textile, and ICT sectors.

**Outcome 2:** The private sector plays a strengthened role for the gender sensitive provision of VSD in selected centres of excellence / providers of vocational skills development in the Shkodër, Lezhë, Tiranë, Vlorë, and Berat districts.

The **expected key result** of the project is to improve the VSD training offer for up to 9,500 young Albanian women and men, and to actively place 60% among them in attractive and decent jobs. Special consideration is given to the training and employment opportunities for young women and special-needs groups.

'Skills for Jobs' applies a holistic view and follows a **systemic approach** to VSD and labour market integration, considering VSD delivery and labour market insertion at the micro, meso as well as on macro level. All changes in VSD and LMI, especially in the formal part of the systems, are long-term processes, requiring close cooperation with national actors and advocates in this field. The project employs a facilitation approach i.e. (in principle) not implementing activities itself but capacitating the stakeholders within each economic sector and region to identify and address the key underlying constraints and achieve systemic change by their own actions.

## 2. 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) MRM System

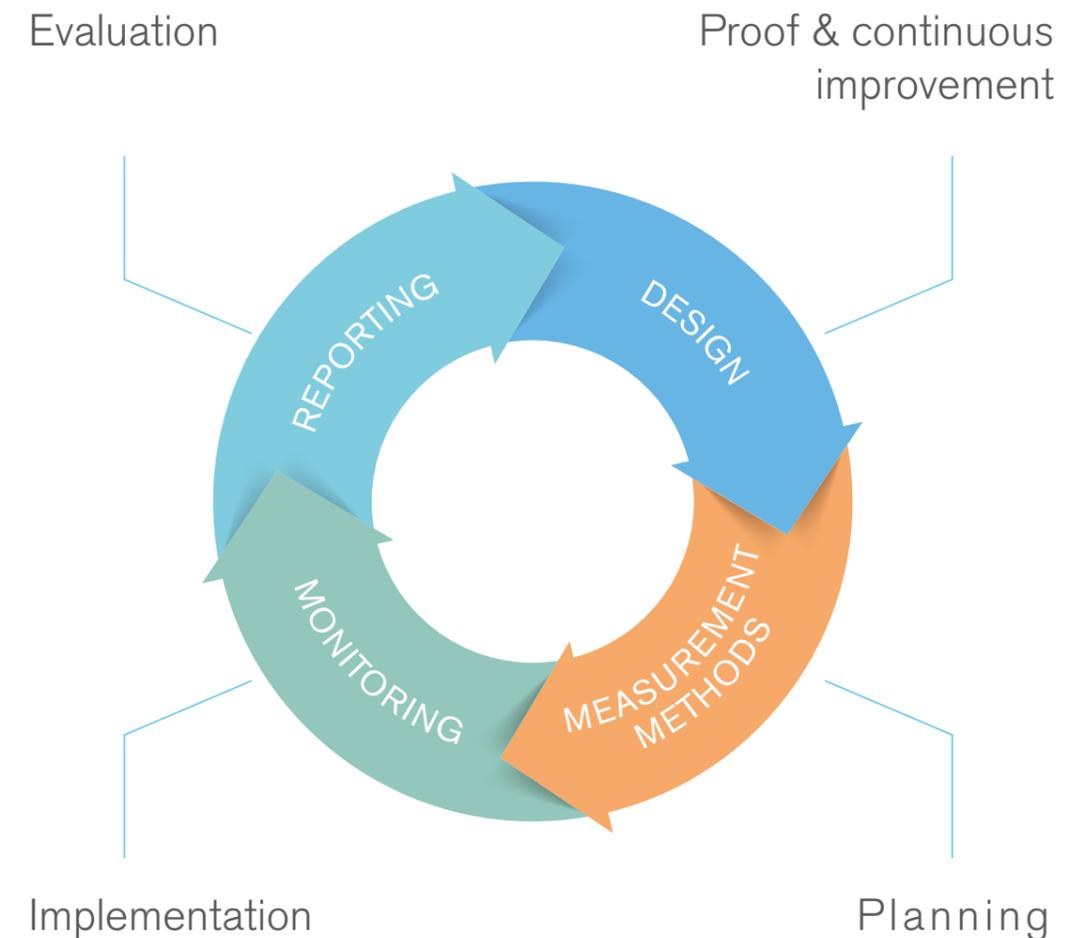


The MRM manual is intended to guide the 'Skills for Jobs' project team to apply an adaptive and result-oriented project management. S4J follows results-based project cycle management that ensures that projects fit and/or adjust according to the needs of the context. The MRM system ensures that the evidences are more systemically monitored, measured and reported. The S4J MRM manual is based on the Swisscontact MRM Guidelines 2018. The text and the tools have been adjusted to fit with the specificities of the S4J program.

The three main sections of MRM are:

- **Planning:** the process flow guides how new interventions are launched (including replications, scale up or pilot interventions);
- **Implementation:** the process will ensure steering of implementation with the aid of ongoing feedback, robust data and steering of activities based on evidence;
- **Evaluation:** the process outlines how ongoing data will be collected and aggregated for assessment, reporting and learning purpose.

Figure 1: MRM as integral part of project management





## 3. Process Flow

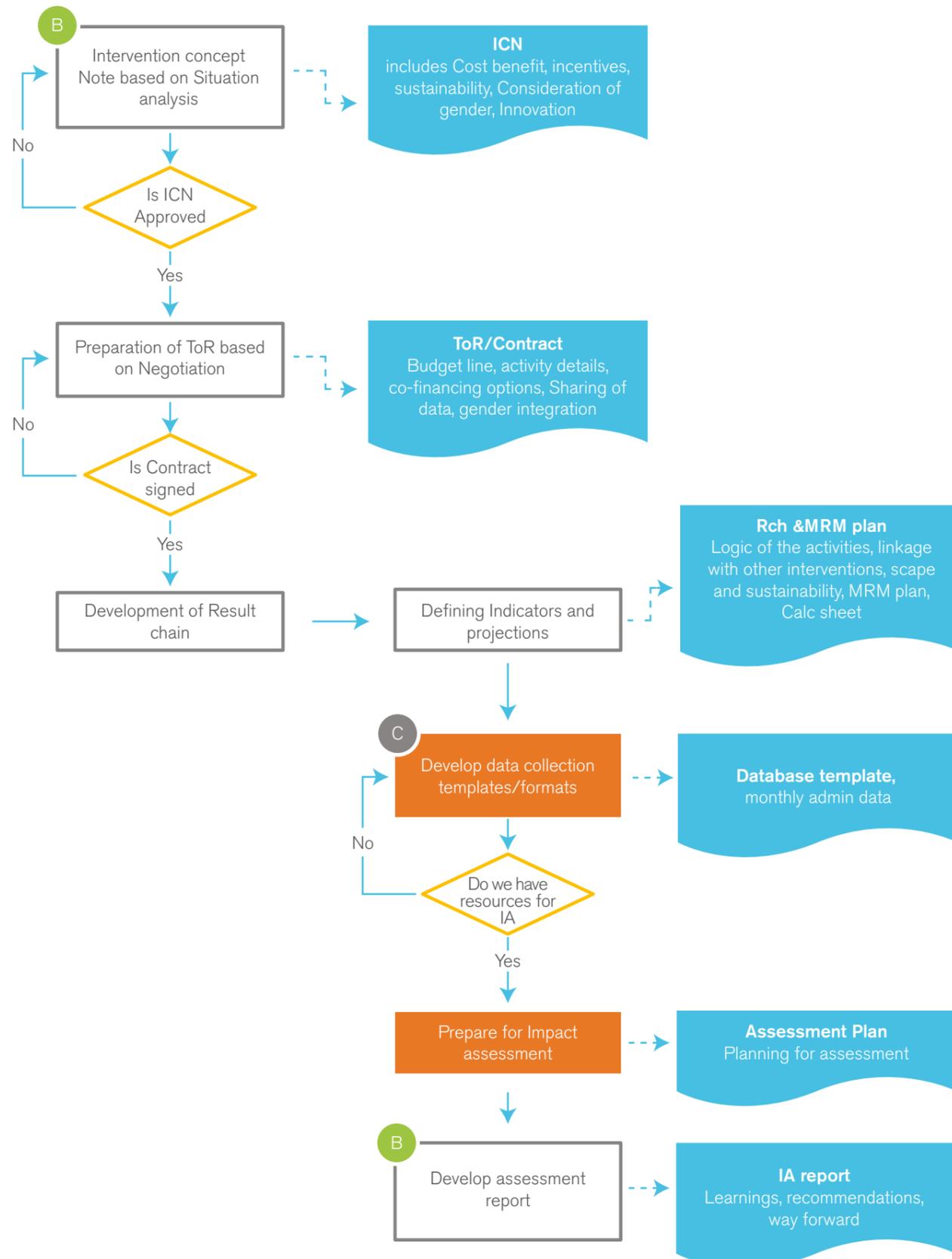
The process flow diagram below illustrates how the system is sequenced and where the critical decision points are within the system. The process is detailed in 3 main sections: Planning, implementation and Evaluation. As proof and continuous learnings are integral part of the system, implementation section details how to manage the system.

### Legends



- The **blue box** represents the documents that will be developed at different stages of the process;
- The **grey outlined box** represents the lead responsibility for the document lies with the component and/or intervention manager;
- The **orange box** represents the lead responsibility for the document lies with the MRM specialist;
- The **orange diamond** represents the critical decision points by the project management;
- The **circle** represents the feedback looks between the process.

## Planning/Design



## Planning:

The process flow of the Planning stage is the flow of information that follows from the conception of an intervention till the closing of it.

The process starts with the conception of intervention and the potential benefits it will follow. The concept note is elaborated by the respective intervention/component managers. The approval of the concept note lies with the management following the criteria and the cost benefit assessment.

If the concept note is approved, then the person in charge goes ahead to draft the contract with the partner based on incentives and mutual benefits. If the deal is signed, the negotiation process might continue. Management signs the contract for the agreed activities.

Following the signing of the contract, the Result Chain and MRM plan are developed. These documents are crucial to plan successful monitoring of the intervention, setting up indicators and defining the attribution strategy.

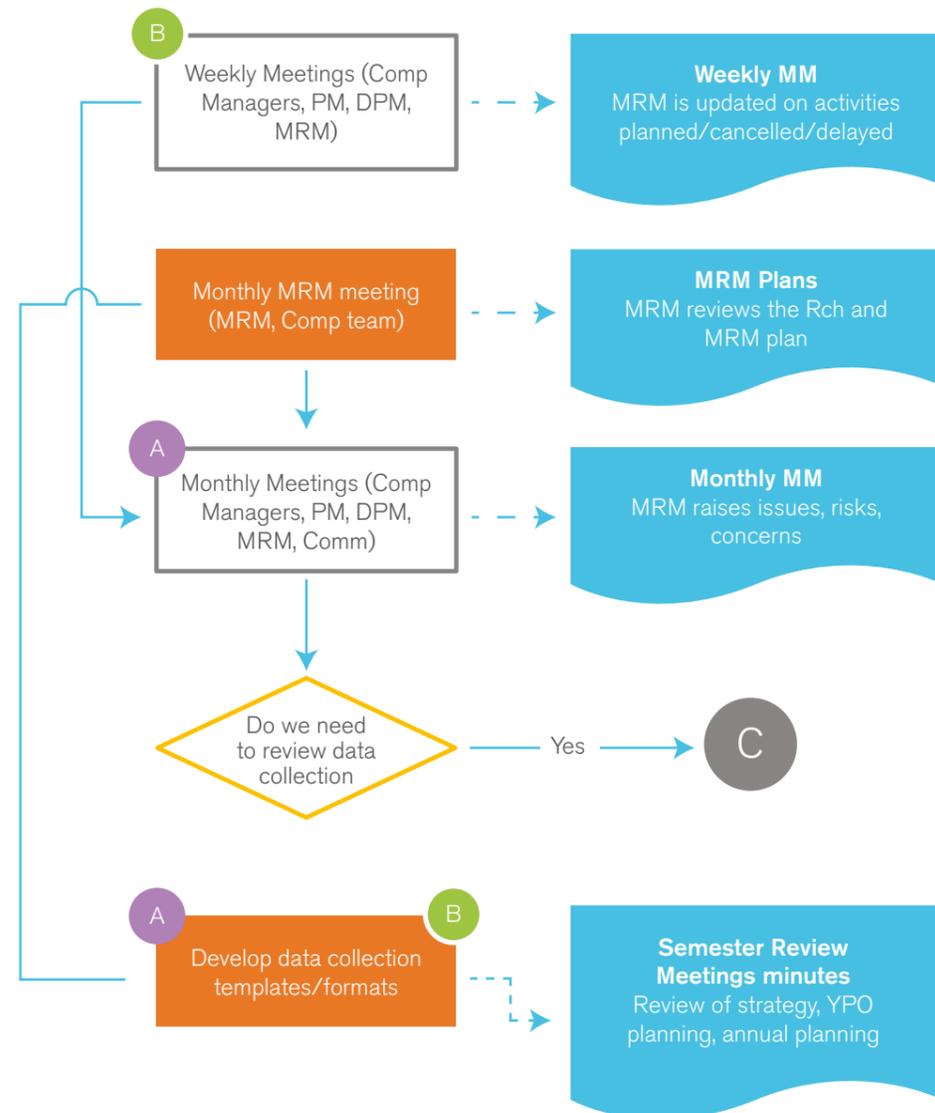


The detailing of the MRM plan might require new or improved monitoring data collection templates and formats. The management also decides if IA is foreseen following the MRM plan.

The assessment plan is developed aggregating MRM indicators and resources. More than one intervention might be assessed together to optimize resources and to assess the wider impact.

The final document is the development of assessment report which details the learnings of the intervention and way forward for replicating/scale up and/or sharing the lessons learnt from the intervention.

## Managing the System/Implementation



## Implementation:

Ongoing implementation of activities is also ensuring regular monitoring for timely and effective steering of interventions. Therefore, it is imperative that regular checks and balances are in place for managing the MRM system so that it can produce robust results.

The goal of weekly meetings is to update the components on major plans for the upcoming week and major deviations that might have happened in the previous week.

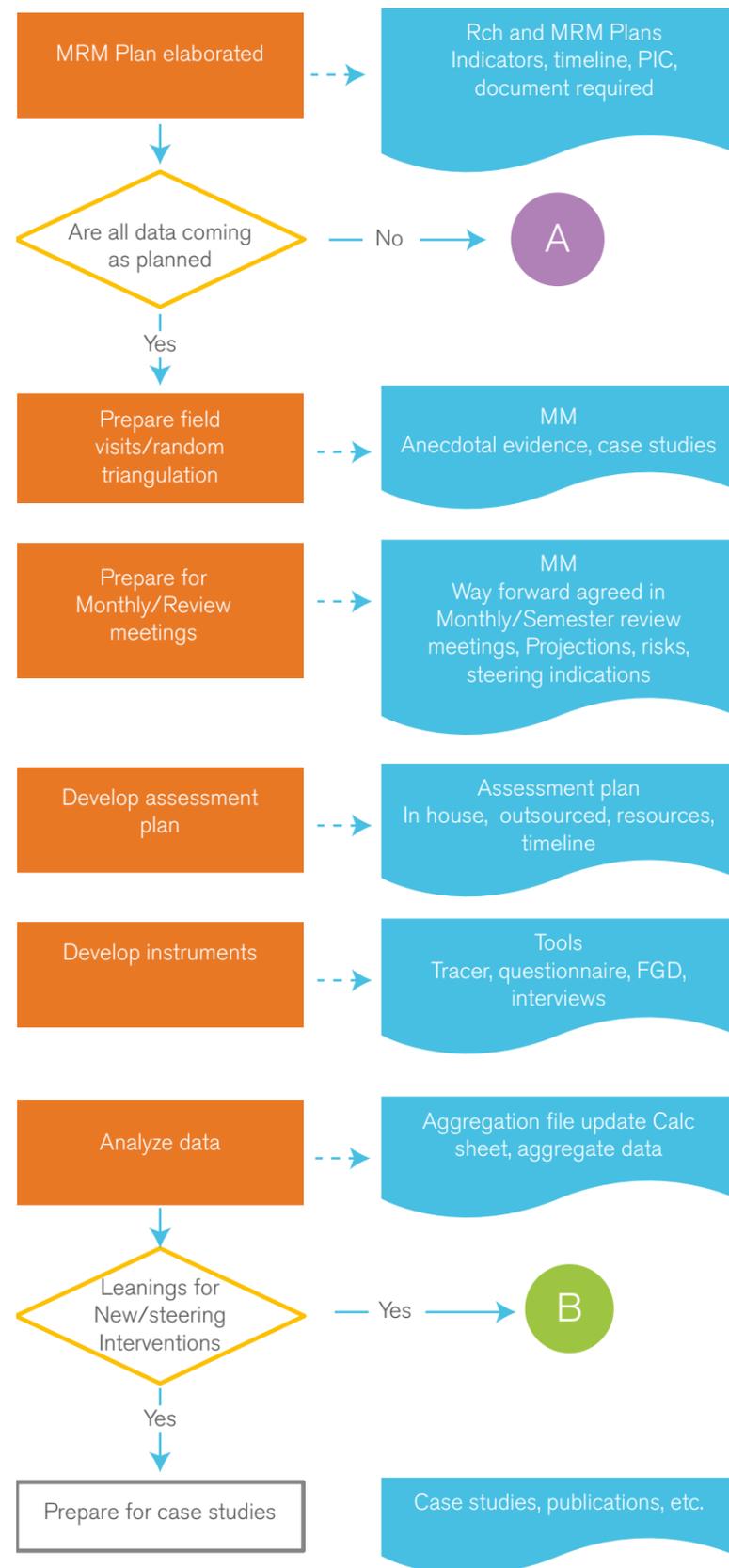
Monthly MRM meetings are done with component managers to ensure that the supporting documents are in place and the system has updated information regarding the ongoing activities.

Monthly meetings are strategic meeting for the management and components to review, steer or address issues for efficient implementation of the interventions. Monthly meetings are also opportunities to discuss need for changing formats, adapting tools and/or any other support necessary to ensure information feedback.

Semester review meetings are bi-annual strategic meetings where the team and management reflect on the overall direction of implementation and based on monitoring and IA data, internalize lessons learnt, formulate new strategies. The review meetings also help the team to develop the reports.

Type of meetings	Goal of meeting	Frequency	Who leads	Who participates	Documentation
Weekly	Update on activities	Weekly/bi weekly	Component managers (taking turns)	Component managers, MRM, Intervention Facilitators, Communication Management	Meeting minutes
Monthly MRM	Update MRM plan with documents	Monthly	MRM	Component manager & MRM	Updated MRM plan
Monthly Meetings	Update on Intervention lines	Monthly	Component managers (taking turns)	Component managers, MRM, Management, Communication	Meeting minutes
Semester Review Meetings	Update of Components	Bi-annually	MRM	Component managers, MRM, Management, Communication, Other relevant persons	Meeting minutes

## Evaluation/Monitoring



## Evaluation

Monitoring and result measurement are ongoing process which aids the evaluation of project impact and helps in learning and reporting.

Due to the dynamic context of the 'Skills for Jobs' project, it is important to do small assessments in different times of the implementation along with the annual tracer studies to deduce the ultimate impact of the project activities. The starting point of any assessment is the MRM plan. As per the MRM plan, the indicators and supporting data will help to determine who to interview, sample size and other different triangular points. The methodology for assessment is detailed in the Assessment Plan document including resource allocation and budget implication. Based on the assessment plan, instruments such as questionnaire, guiding questions are developed.

Following the development of instruments, tasks such as data collection, coding, cleaning and entry is done as per the plan. Analysis of data is fed into monthly, weekly or review meetings to ensure learnings are documented and helps in formulating new strategies.

List of relevant documents	Frequency (when to produce)	Relevance of the document
<b>Planning/design</b>		
<b>Intervention Brief</b>	Before contract signing for the intervention	To do cost benefit analysis of the intervention and to develop the risks associated undertaking the intervention
<b>ToR/Contract</b>	For contract signing	Detailing the activity list, co-financing options and roles of all stakeholders
<b>RCH and MRM plan</b>	Within 1 month of intervention start date (reviewed every 6 months)	To develop detailed monitoring plan and decide on any gap with baseline data
<b>Database template</b>	As needed	For data collection from partners
<b>Assessment plan</b>	Before planning impact assessments	Detailing the assessment modality, sample size, attribution strategy, resource allocation
<b>Impact assessment report</b>	For every intervention	Detailing the findings, recommendations, way forward and lessons learnt
<b>Managing the system/implementation</b>		
<b>Weekly Meeting Minutes</b>	Weekly/biweekly	To update on the activities planned/postponed/cancelled
<b>Monthly MRM meeting minutes</b>	Monthly before the monthly meetings	To update the data collection schedules in the MRM plans
<b>Monthly Meetings</b>	Monthly	To Update on monthly activities, finances and communications
<b>Semester review Meetings</b>	Bi-Annually (reviewing YPO and strategy)	To reflect on the semester and plan for the upcoming semester
<b>Evaluation/Monitoring</b>		
<b>RCH and MRM Plans</b>	Within 1 month of intervention start date (reviewed every 6 months)	To develop detailed monitoring plan and decide on any gap with baseline data
<b>Meeting minutes</b>	As needed	Transparency of field information, anecdotal evidence and qualitative triangulation
<b>Assessment Plan</b>	Before planning impact assessments	Detailing the assessment modality, sample size, attribution strategy, resource allocation
<b>Assessment Tools</b>	As needed	For detailed accounts of the results from the assessment, methodology used, transparency of analysis
<b>Aggregation file</b>	Annual	Annual progress reporting and projecting the project deliverables for the next season
<b>Case Studies</b>	As appropriate	Anecdotal evidence of the impact



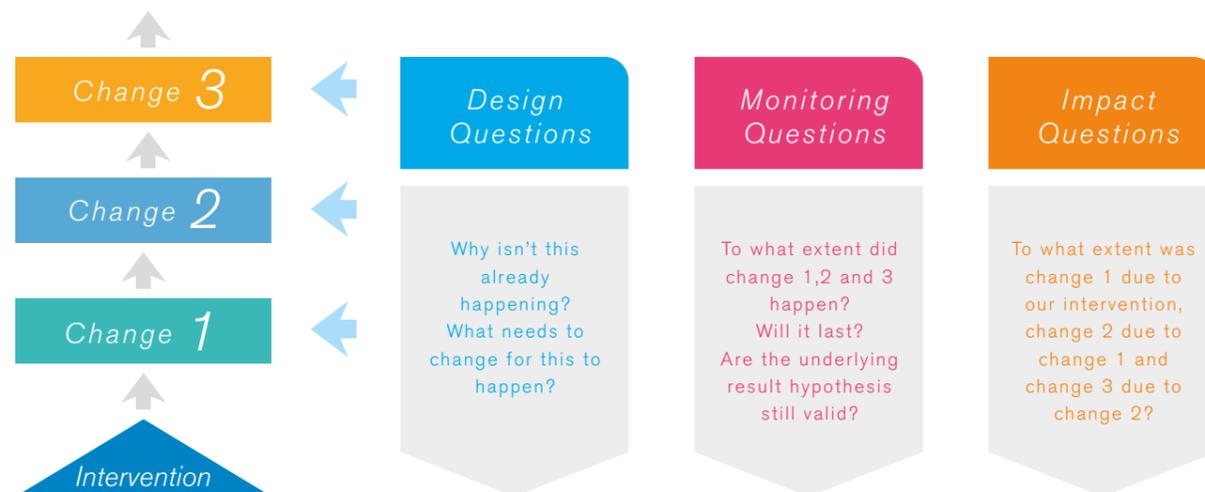
# 4. Developing Result Chains<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Intervention briefs

Intervention Briefs (also known as concept note) are a good way to formulate an intervention in a narrative text. In this text, the intervention facilitators formulate which change is achieved (main outcome), then how (resource allocation) and what is achieved (activities, outputs and linkage to other interventions). The text is put in a simple way so that it can be explained to a friend. Refer to Annex 1.

## 2. Causal link

Results chains are an effective tool to think through, communicate and optimize the strategy of a project or sector and its interventions by inserting them into a causal logic framework with regards to expected changes at output, outcome and impact level. It is important that for each box, concrete and measurable indicators of change are defined.

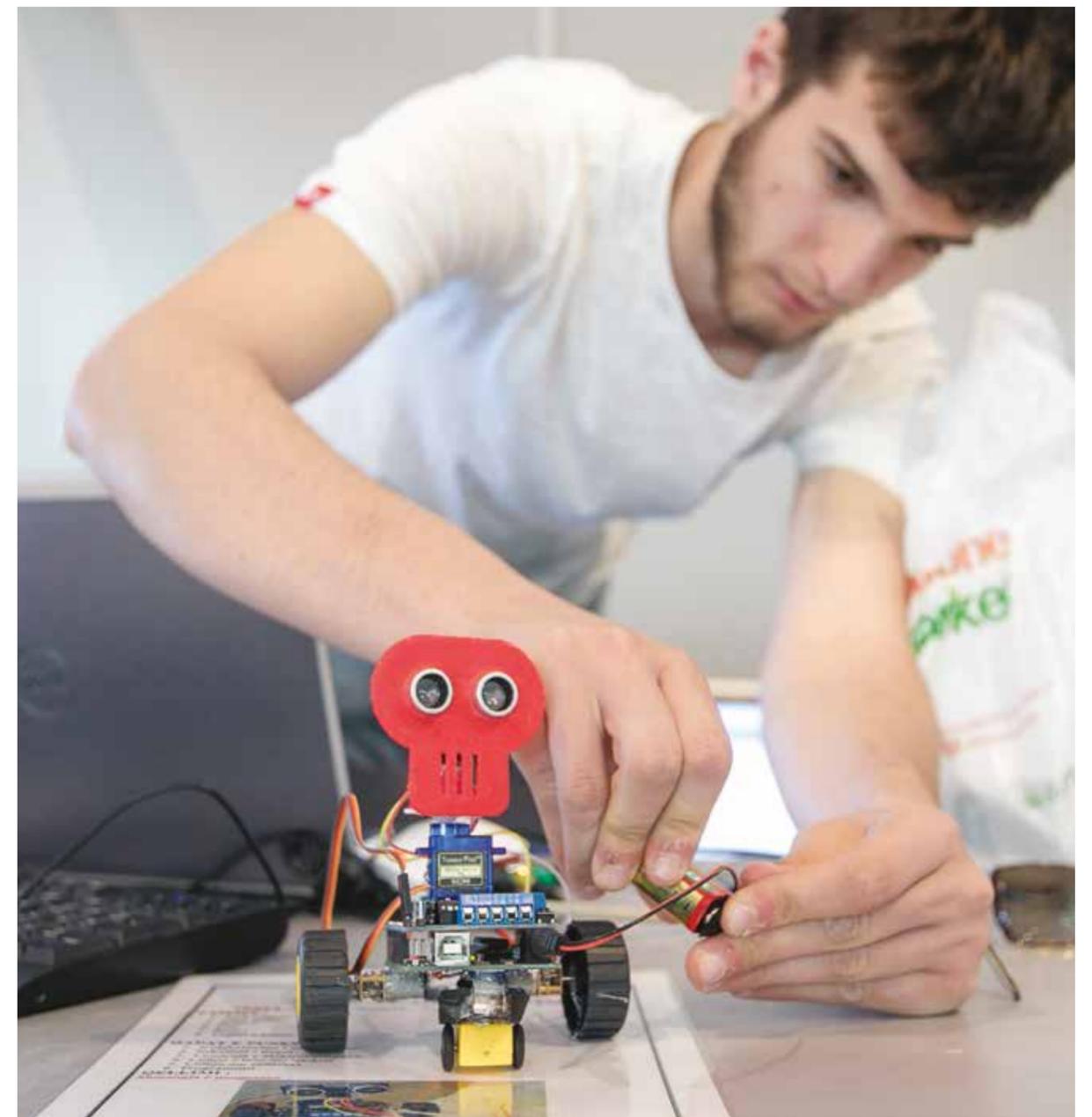


S4J uses Results Chains on various levels with increasing details:

- On a project level showing the overall logic of the project. We call this usually “Theory of Change”;
- On a component level to reflect the strategy (selection of interventions) as a dynamic tool to steer the activities to reach the desired results.

Result Chains of components therefore consist of the following elements:

- Activities grouped into an intervention line with the project's strategy;
- Sufficient steps to illustrate the causal logic (no shortcuts): Is Box 1 a logical consequence of Box 2?
- Clearly formulated results hypothesis: Assumptions under which Box 2 follows from Box 1.





## 5. Monitoring Plans and Indicators: <sup>3</sup>

While result chains are logical sequence of changes that are expected through the intervention, the MRM plan details the indicators of change derived from these results chains. Once the team has clarified what it expects to happen, it is necessary to be clear about what is expected to change – and how it needs to be measured. The indicators of change provide this information and form a major part of the monitoring and results measurement (MRM) system.

Indicators are primarily used for steering. So, they must provide relevant information on the progress, efficiency and effectiveness of interventions. A selection of indicators (so-called common indicators) is then also used for accountability, i.e. in the reports.

The MRM plan consists of:

- Indicators of each RCH box;
- Projection of the expected changes in each box up to impact and its outreach;
- Means of verification for the indicators;
- Timeline for the expected changes;
- Person in charge for monitoring and verifying the change.

Due to the interlink between the components, 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) maintains its attribution strategy of the impact consistent for all components and is highly related to the annual tracer study.



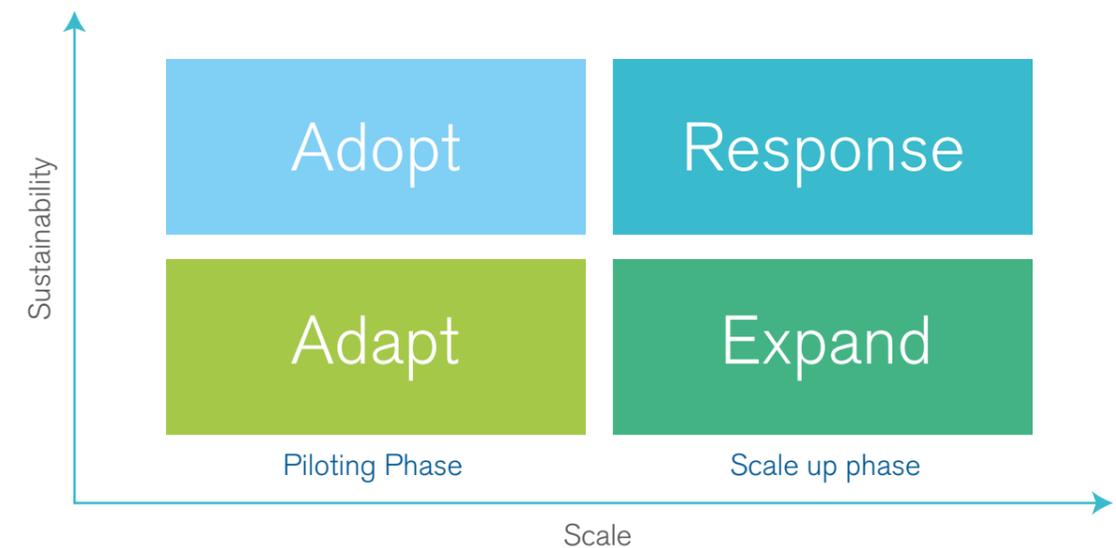
## 6. Systemic change <sup>4</sup>

Systemic changes are transformations in the structure or dynamics of a system that lead to sustainable improvements in the livelihood or resilience of large numbers of people beyond the reach of a project.

Hence, a change can be termed as systemic, if it has the following features:

**Sustainability:** the intended change continues after the end of the project, without further external assistance;

- **Scale:** Systemic change influences and benefits a large number of people who were not directly involved in the original providers;
- **Relevance:** Change that has happened has to be inclusive, i.e., relevant for the young, women stakeholders involved in the market system;
- **Resilience:** market players can adapt models and institutions to continue to deliver inclusive offers as the market and external environment changes.



'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) uses the AAER framework to define four processes of systemic change that allows the project to identify early signs of systemic change during project implementation:

It is important to note that adaptation, expansion and response are not sequential phases after adoption but may occur at different times or even simultaneously. Moreover, it is not a prerequisite that all processes must occur to lead to a system change.

**Adoption** is, in positive cases, a direct result of interventions and reflected in results chains.

**Adaptation** may be supported by the project, but the initiative lies with the partner. The support is much lighter than in the pilot phase.

**Expansion** can also be supported by the project with specific interventions such as dissemination of positive results, reduced support to additional multipliers etc. A pure replication of the pilot intervention is not vindication of its sustainability.

**Response** can also be induced and supported by the project through specific interventions. It is only regarded as a response with a high chance for sustainability if the main driver is with the respective actor.

Following the annual IA and information from the tracer system, 'Skills for Jobs' analyses the information and captures the interventions into different AAER stage depending on the evidence. It is recorded at a separate document and reviewed annually.



## 7. Measurement method and attribution

The measurement method is the way data and qualitative information is collected. The attribution strategy defines how strongly observed changes can be attributed to the project's interventions. It answers the question: what difference the project makes or what would have happened without the project (counterfactual).

For each indicator, 'Skills for Jobs' defines how the data will be collected with a mix of qualitative and quantitative collection methods. S4J also uses triangulation, i.e. to mix quantitative and qualitative methods and use multiple sources to increase the reliability of the results.

'Skills for Jobs' uses the following measurement methods:

- In-house surveys - Statistically representative surveys of beneficiaries undertaken by the project:
  - o Tracer (tracing graduates and trainees);
  - o Yearly surveys (census) with students and teachers to measure the changes;
- In-depth interviews of selected beneficiaries;
- Group interviews of beneficiaries (Focus Group Discussions);

- Expert opinions: interviews of subject experts or persons linked to beneficiaries;
- Analysis of secondary data:
  - o Interpretation of statistics;
  - o Interpretation of research results;
- Interpretation of data from other projects;
- Interpretation of administrative data/company records from providers which relate to the beneficiaries;
- Observations and field notes by the team which complement other instruments, if they are systematically collected and evaluated.

'Skills for Jobs' follows a combination of the following 3 attribution strategies, depending on the project phase. In the first and second year of the project, due to the innovative processes introduced within the partner providers, S4J can attribute the changes using Before After Comparison and Opinion (BACO). 'Skills for Jobs' has also used the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) method, using the baseline and inception study and control groups, to measure the early impact of the project. However, for the following years, it would be interesting to look at trends and comparison groups to understand the contribution effect of 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) within the VET system.

▪ **Comparison groups defined after the intervention (CG):** In many cases, it is difficult to predict the economic development in a region and how it will impact the VET graduates, or for ethical reasons, an isolation of a control/comparison group is not feasible. In this case, a comparison group which has not participated, can be identified after an intervention (e.g. VTCs supporting tourism related businesses). In this case, the baseline (i.e. the situation of comparison and treatment groups before the intervention) must be re-constructed. The bias inherent in this method (e.g. selection of dynamic schools versus conservative schools) will be documented. 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) uses logical link of the result chains and documentation of the changes to assess the contribution of the project.

▪ **Investigation of Opinions (BACO):** Interviewing experts is one of the most feasible methods, especially for 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J), due to its linkages with stakeholders. Experts can be researchers in universities or think tanks but also business owners who provide mentorship to apprentices. They could help to interpret data capturing the situation before and after interventions. The selection of experts should be from a range of backgrounds and must consider their focus and vested interests.

▪ **Comparing trends (CT):** Through either trend analysis or through calculations, external factors can be eliminated. For example, inflation can be eliminated by calculating with constant prices, or the long-term increase of productivity can be extrapolated into the future. 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) can analyse geographical data of economic factors such as trend of girls, enrolment in partner schools, drop-out rates, etc. to assess the macro changes that the system triggers.



## 8. Data collection, recording and processing

'Skills for Jobs' collects primary, secondary data and company records through quantitative and qualitative methods to triangulate the results.

### Quantitative Methods:

A quantitative approach using standardized questionnaire surveys has been adopted by 'Skills for Jobs'. The target population is the total population of students and graduates in the 6 VET providers from the cohorts 2016-2019.

#### a) In-house Tracer Surveys

To trace the graduates and certified trainees into the labour market, 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) conducts a census rather than a sample survey. (However, due to our monitoring experience and regular administration data from schools, future tracer studies might have samples from cohort rather than full census). For each cohort, an updated survey frame enables every graduate the same probability of participation in the study. To facilitate this process, graduates' tracing is implemented in two phases: the pre-tracer phase and the tracer phase.

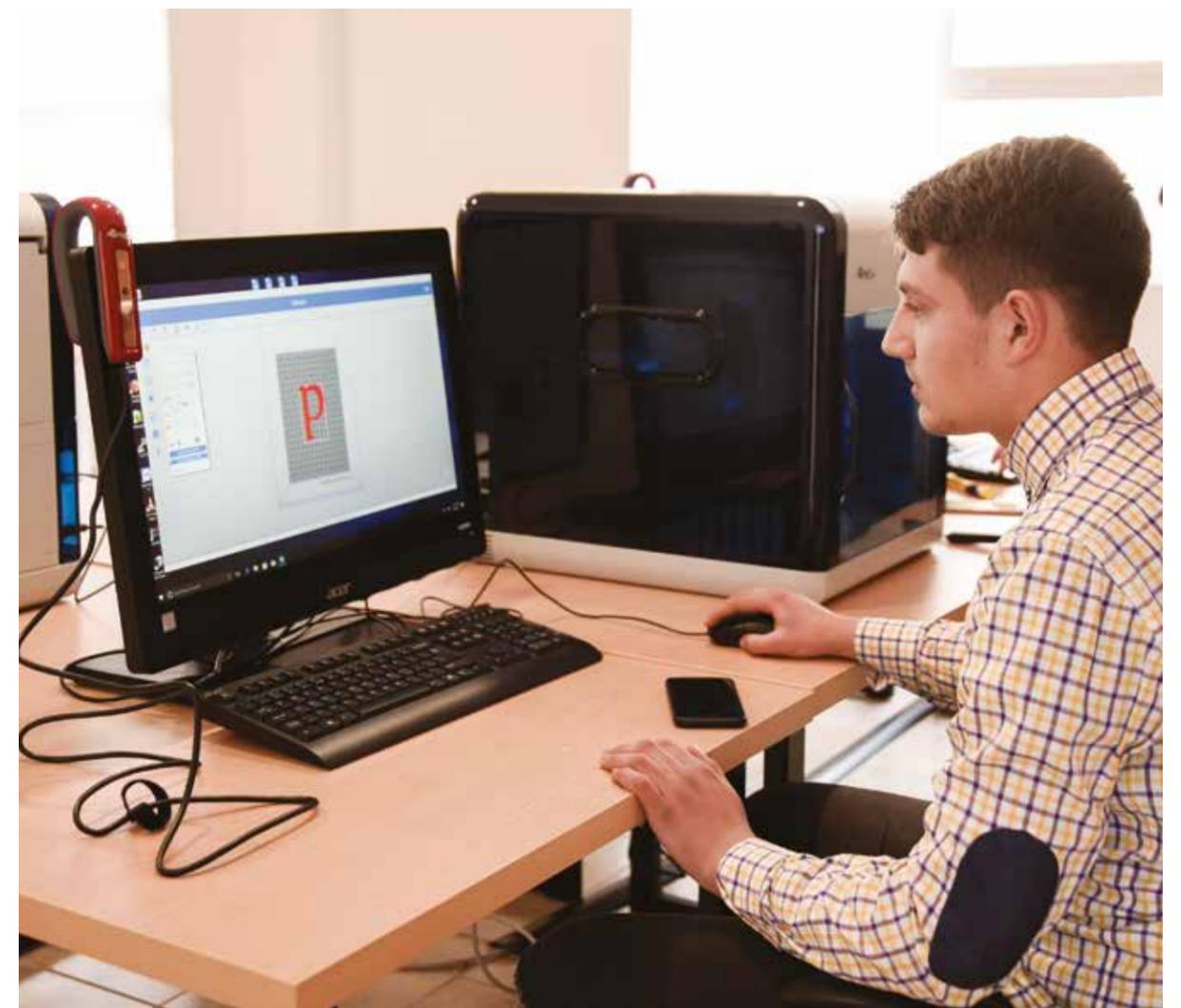
The key objective of the pre-tracer phase is to collect baseline data of targeted students/future graduates regarding their subjective career plans and expectations, socio-demographic characteristics and contact information. The pre-tracer phase comprising of a standardized questionnaire covering the afore-mentioned information

along with other supplemental subjective indicators will be conducted approximately 3-4 weeks before the graduates leave their respective institutions. Next, the tracer phase will follow approximately 9-12 months after graduation in the case of VE schools and 3-6 months in the case of Vocational Training Centre.

The data collection method has been through standardized questionnaire using Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI), KoBo Toolbox. In the case of Vocational Training Centre, the interviews have been facilitated by a phone operator using the standardized questionnaire in KoBo toolbox.

#### b) In-house Annual Surveys

A census survey is conducted yearly in all partner schools ("Pavarësia" and "Tregtare" in Vlora, "Kristo Isak" in Berat, "Kolin Gjoka" in Lezha, "Gjergj Canco" in Tirana, and "Hamdi Bushati" in Shkodër) with students and teachers. In 2016, the census survey was conducted only in the first four abovementioned schools. The census survey in 2017 was administered to gauge the school environment, quality of learning process in school, active participation in school, employability and further education, ICT usage, and student's awareness on S4J project. Comparisons are done for selected questions with the previous census survey. The census survey is paper based conducted through enumerators. Following the data are manually entered in excel and processed using SPSS and STATA software.



## Qualitative Methods

The aim of using qualitative methods is to explore and understand in depth the opinions, feelings and behaviour of the beneficiaries of the 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) project and to have a clear view on the outcomes of the interventions of 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) towards 6 VET schools in Albania. The scope is the exploration of the current situation referring to all the actors involved, through identification, analysis and comparison of opinions, perceptions, satisfaction or disappointment degree, expectations and doubts, problems, challenges and suggestions regarding different components, trying to detect the possible differences of among actors or within each group. The sample participants are students, teachers, parents and mentors in the businesses.

The applied methodology is based on carrying out of a qualitative analysis, supported by a several indicators integrated in three instruments: focus-group discussions, in-depth interview and observations. The participants taking part in focus-group discussions and in-depth interviews are to be selected purposely or randomly depending on the aim, assuring a gender-balanced ratio as well. The questions are based on pre-elaborated questions and topics and were also enriched with other questions and interventions, depending on the subjects brought into attention by the individuals.

Data was also gathered through observation of the participants in their natural environment and documented through field notes.

### a) Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Depending on the research objective, the FGD is used alone or in conjunction with other methods. The results obtained from the FGD application are particularly effective in supplying information about how people think, feel, or act regarding a specific topic.

### b) In-depth Interviews and key expert interviews

Some interesting cases resulted from the FGD are followed up with in-depth interviews to elicit people's view and perspectives in a detailed and comprehensive manner. Moreover, expert interviews are used to quickly obtain good results and information and shorten time-consuming data gathering processes, particularly when the experts are seen as "crystallization points" with insider knowledge and are interviewed as surrogates for a wider circle of players<sup>5</sup>.

### c) Observations or collecting data by observing the participants in their natural environment (field reports)

Observation is defined as the method of viewing and recording the actions and behaviors of participants. Based on the observations field notes are gathered which are then used to steer decisions and triangulate quantitative data.

All the qualitative data derived from the FGD and in-depth interviews are tape recorded and verbatim transcribed. Further the transcriptions are analysed thematically, and study reports are produced per each beneficiary and or intervention.



## 9. Analysing the data

In the case of tracer survey, the data is recorded automatically through the software in excel datasheets and is processed and analysed including descriptive and comparative analysis along with relational statistics produced and facilitated by SPSS software. Regarding the analysis of the findings, 'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) considers the relevant context for the interpretation of the labour market experiences and professional situation of students and graduates.

In case of annual census surveys, each of the reported quantitative measures is computationally unique and defined by the following:

**Average score:** the average score is computed as the sum of the rating scores divided by the total number of responses for each survey question.

**Median score:** the median score is the middle value after scores are ordered from smallest to largest.

**Mode:** the mode is the value or category repeated most often in the survey data.

**Response percent:** the response percent is the percentage found by dividing the total number of survey responses by the sum of both survey responses and non-responses.

**Standard deviation:** the standard deviation is a measure of dispersion of the data away from the average score. Standard deviations with a lower numerical value tend to indicate data nearest the average score, while higher values indicate data with a greater distance away from the average score.

Survey results are based on Yes/No items, Likert satisfaction-level scores (i.e. Very unsatisfied = 1, Unsatisfied = 2, Neutral = 3, Satisfied = 4, Very satisfied = 5), multiple choice queries related to materials used for learning, sources of information for school and profile choice, reasons-related questions, etc.

**Strength and weaknesses of the survey questionnaire:**

As a rule, questionnaires are strong in terms of statistical reliability, but weak in terms of statistical validity. Statistical reliability is a reference to the degree a survey question reflects the perceptions and attitude under the study. In the context of this survey study, reliability would be the extent to which each survey query has meaningfully captured student perceptions and attitudes – in other words, each question should mean the same thing to each student taking the survey. Validity is a reference to the extent a given survey question correctly measures the concept under study.

**Impact Evaluation:**

‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J) used the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) method to explore the time dimension of the data to define the counterfactual. The DiD method requires having data for both treated and control groups, before and after the treatment takes place. The ATTDID is estimated by comparing the difference in outcomes between treated and control groups in some period after the participants have completed the programme with the difference that existed before the programme.



# 10. Managing the system

Differences-in-Differences Method

Our sample is broken into four groups:

- Control group which is not affected by the intervention before the intervention (Inception 2015 + Baseline 2016)
- Control group after the project intervention ('Hamdi Bushati' and 'Gjergj Canco' school in 2017)
- Treatment group, which is thought to be affected by the project intervention before the intervention (4 partner schools from the inception 2015 and baseline 2016)
- Treatment group, after the intervention (4 partner school from the survey 2017)

Impact Evaluation of S4J Project

It is measured as a systematic difference between the control and treatment groups

	Before	After	After - Before
Control	$\beta_0$	$\beta_0 + \delta_0$	$\delta_0$
Treatment	$\beta_0 + \beta_1$	$\beta_0 + \delta_0 + \beta_1 + \delta_1$	$\delta_0 + \delta_1$
Treatment - Control	$\beta_1$	$\beta_1 + \delta_1$	$\delta_1$

$\delta_1$  measures the effect of the project intervention

**Setting up the system:** The first phase for ‘Skills for Jobs’ has been a pilot phase for setting up the MRM system. Also, the dynamic nature of development within the providers shaped the direction of MRM which is adequate for learning and credible reporting for stakeholders. The team has been periodically trained on the guiding principles of MRM standard within Swisscontact, following the DCED standard. The ongoing capacity building will be continued and will be part of annual plans and budgets of the projects.

**Anchoring MRM in ‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J):** To anchor the MRM system within the project, ‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J) defined clear roles and responsibilities of MRM functions to all staff. One full time MRM person ensures the quality assurance of the MRM system and supporting the team in applying various tools and measurements. ‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J) is committed to spending 5-10% of the annual budget on MRM (including the MRM staff) depending on the project activities.

**‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J) MRM manual** is based on the **Swisscontact MRM Guidelines 2018**, but with details on instruments, their use and when and how they are applied in the ‘Skills for Jobs’ (S4J) context.

Use in decision making:

**Monthly Meetings:** As already described in the MRM process, monthly review meetings

will review the intervention lines synced with the results measurement. The purpose of the meeting is to assess the progress versus the planning of the intervention, to validate the assumptions and adjust as necessary, and to define the implications for the component strategy.

**Component Review Meetings:** At least twice per year, component review meetings should take place one before steering committee meeting and one before semester reporting. The main purpose of the meetings is to assess the progress versus the planning, to validate the strategy and where necessary adjust it and to define the major inputs for reports and/or planning.

**Reviewing the system:**

'Skills for Jobs' wants to ensure the quality of the MRM system and therefore will employ two ways of reviewing the system.

- The project manager and/or the regional manager will use MRM checklist on the completeness of the information annually;
- 'Skills for Jobs' will also use peer review of the MRM System. Such a review would incorporate the same check-points as in the checklist or in the DCED Standard but can enrich the project with practical experiences in similar Swisscontact projects.



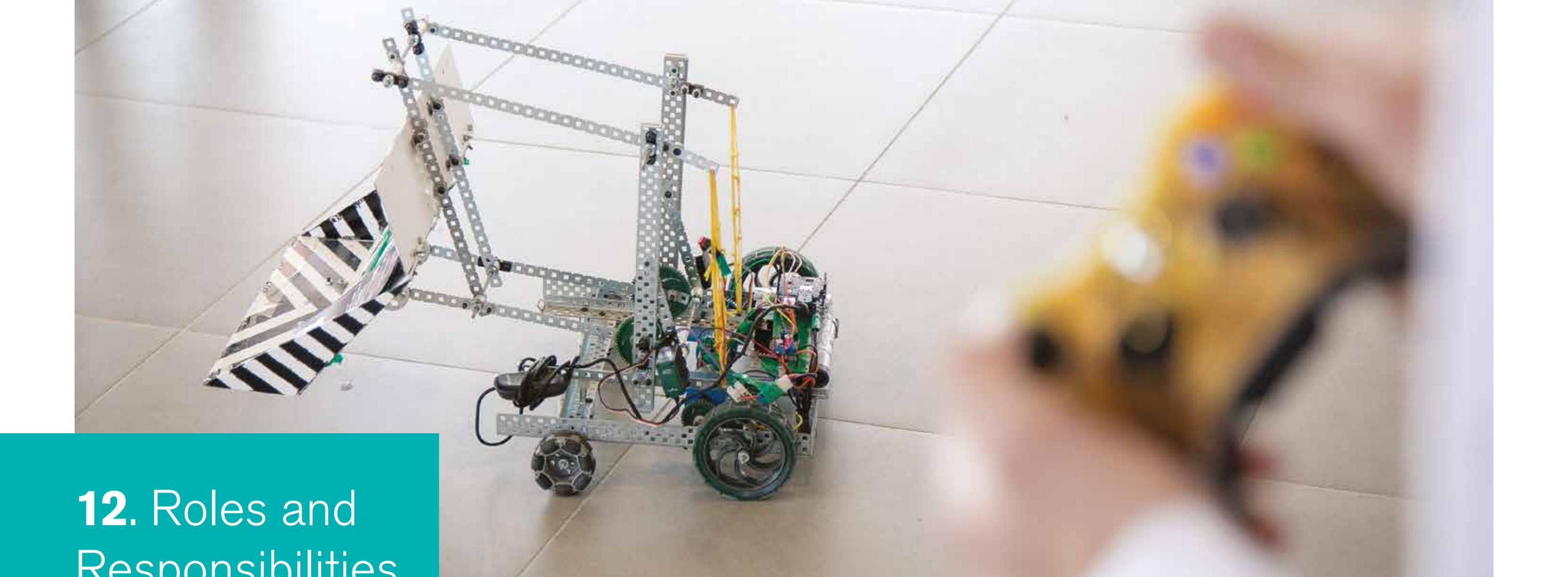
# 11. Reporting the results

There are various types of reports for 'Skills for Jobs', including:

- Annual and Semester Reports: The format and deadlines of the annual and semester reports are agreed upon with the donor in advance;
- Case Studies: A good instrument to highlight results and impact in a qualitative way;
- Individual stories or videos on interventions: to illustrate results visually;
- Impact assessment reports: illustrate the work and the results in specific areas;
- Qualitative reports: On each partner and for specific interventions;
- Factsheets: Semester and annually updated;
- Video Documentary: Reporting project results annually.

To maximum 'Skills for Jobs' learnings to its stakeholders, the wider public and other projects, other communication channels such as social media and e-newsletters are also used.

For any report, the first questions to be answered are: Who are the addressees? What might their interests be? What is their previous knowledge on the subject? What are the development challenges, and the approaches required to overcome them? Each report is made self-explanatory, i.e. readable as a stand-alone document and not refer to previous reports or studies.



## 12. Roles and Responsibilities

### MRM Regional Advisor

As MRM Regional Advisor for 'Skills for Jobs', the main tasks include:

- Elaborate together with project staff results chains, indicators and measurement plans in workshops according to the MRM-guidelines of Swisscontact and of the project;
- Review together with the project staff monitoring plans and assessment methods (enquiries, data collection, etc.);
- Interpret results and review reporting on results;
- Support the project management to use the MRM-system in project management;
- Assess training needs and train project staff in establishing and managing an MRM-system;
- Backstop the MRM-specialist of the project in the regular review of log frames and results chains and advise project staff on improvements of the MRM-system and tools;
- Support projects in the preparation for phase end and preparation of Phase II;

- Participate actively in knowledge exchange on MRM (Community of Practice, workshops etc.).

### MRM Specialist

As MRM Specialist for 'Skills for Jobs', the main tasks include:

- Lead the process of defining the MRM methodology and instruments to be applied and consistent with Swisscontact general guidelines;
- Lead the process of analysing, aggregating and reporting results;
- Ensure the quality of intervention documents such as monthly reports, support documents etc.;
- Conduct regular field visits to assess the quality of activities and participate in field research to guarantee the quality of data collection;
- Support the team in developing the result chains and measurement plan;

- Discuss early monitoring signs with teams and provide recommendation on strategies based on monitoring data;
- Support the teams in coaching partners in MRM for data collection and reporting;
- Provide necessary assistance in formulation and development of case studies, semester reports, annual reports, special studies and other similar documents on a regular basis;
- Ensure mainstreaming and data disaggregation of gender in the overall MRM system.

### **Component Managers and Intervention Facilitators**

As component manager, the embedded MRM tasks include:

- Develop result chains, define indicators and measurement plans for the components and interventions;
- Ensure continuous monitoring, measurement and reporting of results as per the MRM plan;
- Ensure quality of supporting documents;
- Provide feedback to the MRM tools and instruments to make them user friendly for data collection;
- Engage in assessments and analysing data to ensure the proper consideration of context.

### **Project Management Team:**

The Project Management Team has the overall responsibility for the design and implementation of the MRM system. The specific responsibilities include:

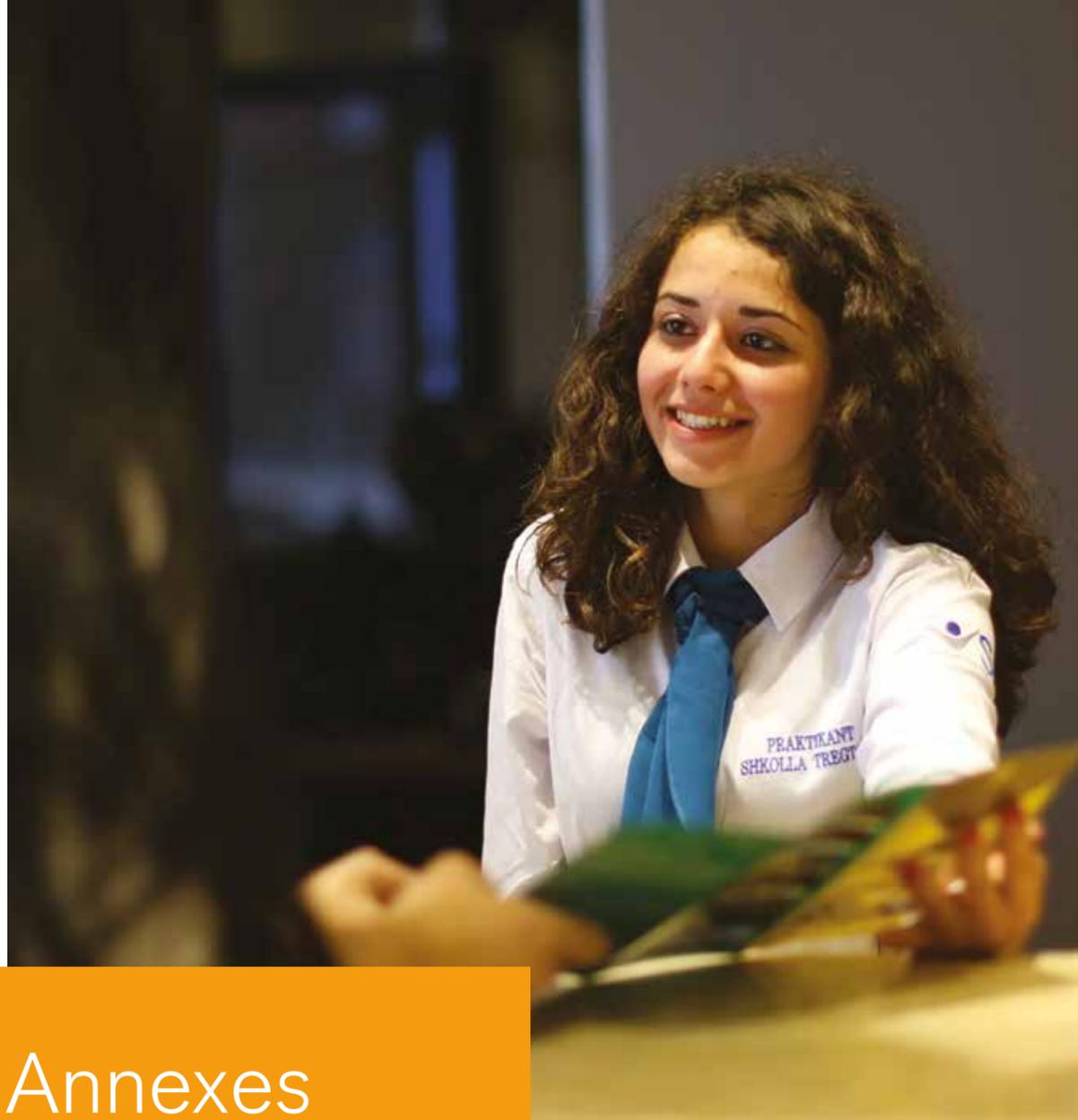
- Contribute and approve the MRM process flow;
- Ensure that MRM information is integrated into program planning, decision making, intervention design and day to day operation;
- Ensure timely and effective usage of resources to ensure robust information;
- Promote appropriate culture for honest enquiry and acknowledge learning;
- Review the MRM system periodically to ensure it is effective and efficient for steering and reporting purposes.



# Terminology Definition<sup>6</sup>

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Aggregate</b>	To combine the results a programme has plausibly caused from various interventions; overlap must be considered when aggregating results.
<b>Attribution</b>	The ascription of a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention.
<b>Baseline</b>	An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed, or comparisons made. The status of indicators before an intervention starts or before the indicators have been influenced by intervention activities, against which change can be measured to help assess intervention impact.
<b>Contribution</b>	When a change is caused partly by a programme and partly by other factors (but the amount caused by the programme is not separated from the amount caused by other factors).
<b>Counterfactual</b>	The hypothetical situation or status of indicators that would have happened without a programme intervention. The difference between what actually happened, and the “counterfactual” is the result of the programme or “impact.”
<b>Difference in Difference (DiD)</b>	When comparing two groups (“treatment” and “control”) there could be a difference between them before the intervention starts (B) and (another) difference after the intervention ends (A). The Difference in Difference equals A minus B. With all other factors equal, that represents the attributable impact.
<b>Evaluation</b>	The assessment of a programme’s performance and results along multiple dimensions. “Evaluation” is usually undertaken by a person, team or organization external to the programme.
<b>Impact</b>	The results of a programme among the target beneficiaries or at the “goal” or highest level. (Technically impact can be at any level but most people commonly “impact” at the beneficiary or goal level.)
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	The process of estimating a programme’s impact among its target group and/or at the “goal” or highest level.
<b>Intervention</b>	A coherent set of activities that are designed to achieve a specific change,

	reflected in one results chain. An intervention is generally a subset of a sector or component.
<b>Monitoring</b>	A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.
<b>Monitoring and Results Measurement</b>	Internal and regular tracking of programme activities and results (both quantitative and qualitative, at all levels) to report results credibly and to improve programme management to maximize impacts with the given time and money.
<b>Result</b>	A change plausibly caused by a programme
<b>Results Chain</b>	The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes, impacts and feedback. A diagram of the expected causal links from a programme’s activities through intermediate changes to the programme’s goals(s).
<b>Secondary Data</b>	Information gathering that relies on existing data, studies or reports.
<b>Survey</b>	Gathering information from a specific number of respondents in a specific population generally using a set of questions for which answers can be quantified.
<b>Sustainability</b>	The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. (For measurement purposes, sustainability will be indicated by continuation of benefits at least two years after the end of a programme).
<b>Systemic Change</b>	Change in systems that are caused by introducing alternative innovative sustainable models for the delivery of products, services and an enabling environment that benefit the target group (such as in private sector, government, civil society, public policy level). Changes in scale, norms and resilience are important dimensions of systemic change. Crowding in and copying are typical elements of systemic change.



# Annexes

- Annex 1. [Result Chain and MRM Plan \(Sample Comp 1\)](#)
- Annex 2. [Aggregation file template](#)
- Annex 3. [Swisscontact MRM Guidelines 2018](#)
- Annex 4. [S4J log frame](#)
- Annex 5. [Intervention Concept Note Template](#)

# We create opportunities.

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**Swiss NPO Code:** The structure and management of Swisscontact conforms to the Corporate Governance Regulations for Non-Profit Organisations in Switzerland (Swiss NPO Code), issued by the presidents of large relief organisations. An audit conducted on behalf of this organisation showed that Swisscontact adheres to principles of the Swiss NPO Code.

**ZEWO Seal of approval:** Swisscontact was awarded the Seal of Approval from ZEWO. It is awarded to non-profit organisations for the conscientious handling of money entrusted to them, proves appropriate, economical and effective allocation of donations and stands for transparent and trustworthy organisations with functioning control structures that uphold ethics in the procurement of funds and communication. Swisscontact is regularly audited on the adherence to these criteria. (Source: ZEWO)



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