

EVIDENCE REPORT

No 6

Policy Anticipation, Response and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation Report: Year One

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June 2013

The IDS programme on Strengthening Evidence-based Policy works across seven key themes. Each theme works with partner institutions to co-construct policy-relevant knowledge and engage in policy-influencing processes. This material has been developed under the Policy Anticipation, Response and Evaluation theme.

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AG Level 2 Output ID: 347

MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT: YEAR ONE

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First published by the Institute of Development Studies in June 2013
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1 Introduction and Background

The IDS AG is a large and complex four-year grant, involving seven Outputs (also called Policy Themes or Themes); 20 Sub-themes; 68 Activity Domains; and over 300 Level 2 Outputs (or 'policy products'). Level 2 Outputs include papers, reviews, reports, briefs, events, guidelines and other tools. Sixty-eight Level 2 Outputs were completed in Year 1 (Table 1).

Table 1 Level 2 Outputs completed Year 1

	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Theme 7	Total
Level 2 Output Type								
Agenda					1			1
Brief	1	6	1	1	6		3	18
Bulletin								0
Database			1					1
Event					4			4
Fellowship					4			4
Grand Total								0
Guide								0
Guidelines	1							1
Paper	2						6	8
Recommendations								0
Report	2	4	1	1	3	6	7	24
Review			2	1	1	1		5
Strategy		1						1
Tool								0
Toolkit								0
Typology								0
Total	6	11	5	3	20	7	16	68

A diverse team of staff work across the institute to ensure the efficient production of these outputs. Working within the seven Policy Themes, these include theme convenors, sub-theme convenors, research fellows, knowledge services staff, communications staff and administrative support staff.

The scale and diversity of activity under the grant, the dynamic and unpredictable policy environment in which it operates, the number of people and partners involved, together with the imperative to deliver within tight deadlines, highlights the need for a simple yet robust system for tracking planned and completed outputs. This system must provide the framework for analysing the level of achievement against a logical framework that focuses upon availability (count available), accessibility (number of downloads) and perceived quality (opinion survey) of the Level 2 Outputs.

2 Progress to date

2.1 CRM

In recent years IDS has invested heavily in Microsoft Dynamics CRM software. This software integrates contracts, contacts and process management functions. It also enables links to the institute’s budgeting and financial management software. While CRM has all the functionality required for large-scale programme management, previous to the AG it had not been used in this way at IDS.

Therefore, after initially exploring other alternatives, a decision was taken to build the AG M&E system around CRM, and since early September 2012 we have worked closely with David Beaven (Head of IDS Computer and Technical Services) and Harvey Coates (Finance Department) to do this. The remainder of this report outlines progress to date and future developments. Others involved in this work include Tamlyn Munslow (Research Officer, 25 per cent of time spent on M&E), Barbara Befani (Impact Fellow), Fran Seballos (Partnerships Officer), Robin Coleman (Communications), Nason Bimbe (Library/OpenDocs) and James Sumberg (Grant Director).

To date, the basic structure of the CRM AG database has been created, populated with information about all Level 2 Outputs and cross checked to reflect completed Year 1 activity and planned Year 2 activities (Figure 1). Each Level 2 Output has a unique ID number (Figure 2). Opportunities for further development of the system exist and we are currently exploring these.

Figure 1 Level 2 Outputs in CRM Year 1

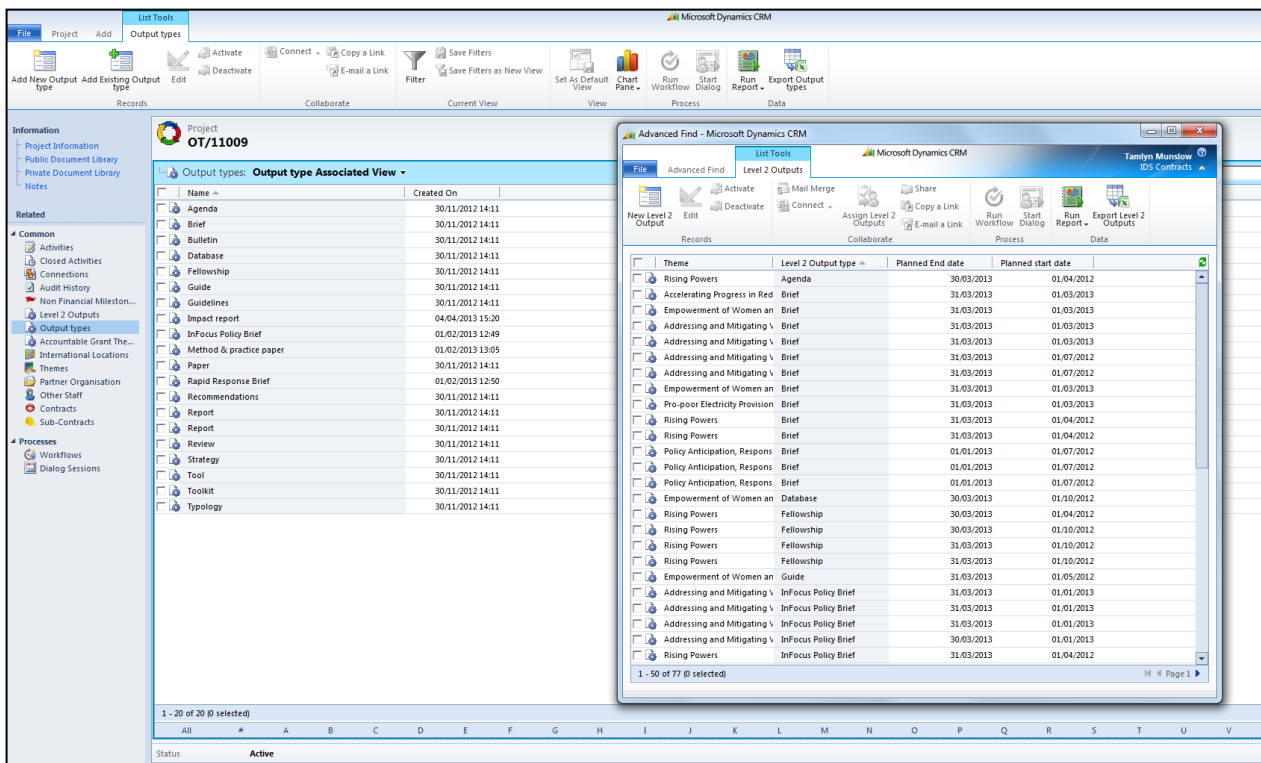
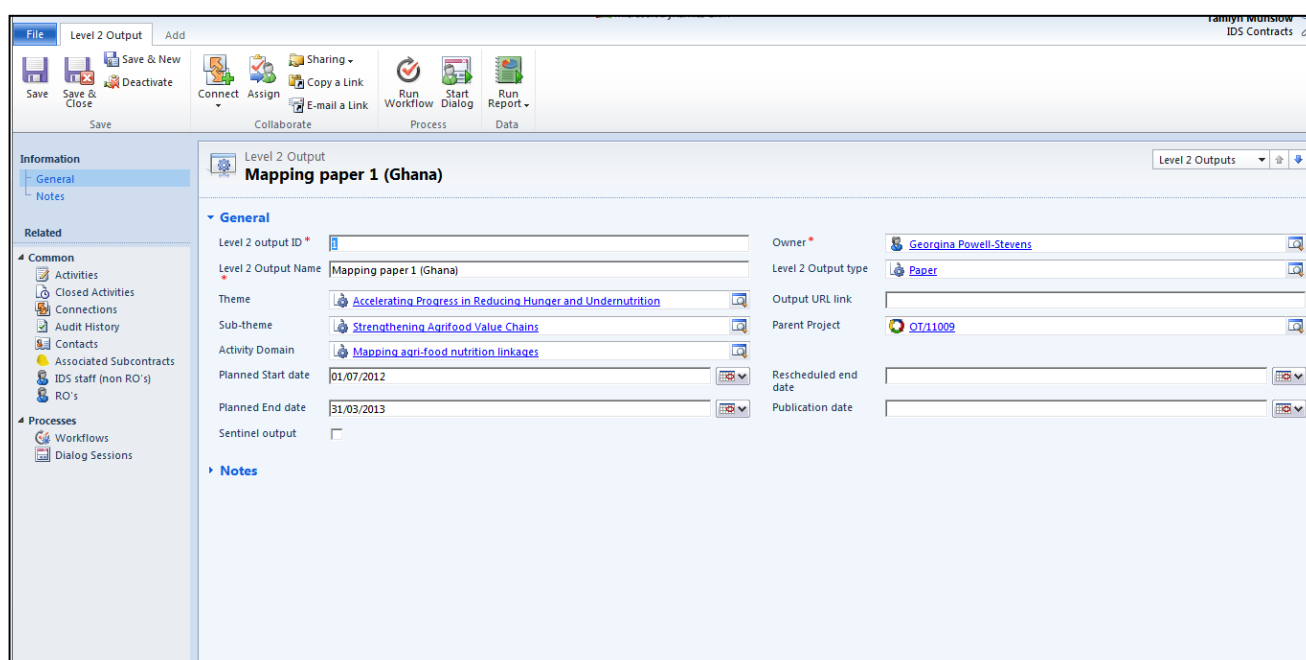


Figure 2 Information held on Level 2 Output



CRM can be used to generate queries as well as access and export information for further analysis (e.g. Table 2).

Table 2 Countries in which the Level 2 Outputs are active

Country	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Total	Region
Egypt		1	1	tbc		1	3	N Africa
Ethiopia	1						1	Horn of Africa
Kenya	1		1		1		3	E Africa
Uganda			1			1	2	E Africa
Tanzania	1						1	E Africa
Malawi	1						1	S Africa
Zambia	1						1	S Africa
Mozambique	1						1	S Africa
South Africa			1		1	1	3	S Africa
Ghana	1						1	W Africa
Nigeria		1					1	W Africa
Sierra Leone		1					1	W Africa
India	1	1	1		1	1	5	Asia
Bangladesh	1		1				2	Asia
Nepal	1					1	2	Asia
Indonesia			1				1	Asia
Cambodia						1	1	Asia
Philippines						1	1	Asia
China					1		1	Asia
Russia					1		1	CIS
Brazil					1		1	S America
Yemen						1	1	Middle East
	10	4	7	0	7	7	35	

CRM has been used to produce Gantt charts for each theme showing the delivery of Level 2 Outputs over the grant period (Table 4). 'Planned start date' reflects the date in which Level 2 Outputs become 'live', and 'Planned end date' reflects the submission of the final output for publication. The Year 2 planned end dates have been staggered so as to facilitate dissemination and maximise the potential impact of the Level 2 Outputs.

Table 3 Example Gantt chart Theme 1, Year 2

Level 2 output ID	Output Name	Level 2 Output type	Planned start date	Planned End date	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13
1	Mapping paper 1 (Ghana)	Paper	01/07/2012	31/03/2013												
2	Policy guidelines 1 (Ghana)	Guidelines	01/07/2012	30/06/2013												
3	Mapping paper 2 (Nigeria)	Paper	01/07/2012	30/09/2013												
4	Policy guidelines 2 (Nigeria)	Guidelines	01/07/2012	31/12/2013												
5	Mapping paper 3	Paper	01/04/2013	31/03/2014												
6	Policy guidelines 3	Guidelines	01/04/2014	30/06/2014												
7	Business case study 1	Report	01/04/2013	30/12/2013												
8	Business case brief 1	InFocus Policy Brief	01/12/2013	30/12/2013												
9	Business case study 2	Report	01/04/2013	30/12/2013												
10	Business case brief 2	InFocus Policy Brief	01/12/2013	30/12/2013												
11	Business case study 3	Report	01/04/2014	30/09/2014												
12	Business case brief 3	InFocus Policy Brief	01/09/2014	30/09/2014												
13	Business case study 4	Report	01/04/2014	30/12/2014												
14	Business case brief 4	InFocus Policy Brief	01/12/2014	30/12/2014												
15	Tool for value chain ranking	Tool	01/04/2014	30/09/2014												
16	In-depth case assessment	Report	01/04/2014	31/12/2015												
17	Synthesis report of policy guidelines	Report	01/04/2015	31/12/2015												
18	Learning event	Report	01/04/2015	30/09/2015												

3 Future developments

3.1 Sentinel outputs

An important part of the M&E function is to generate information and understanding concerning the quality and impact of the 300+ Level 2 Outputs. To help in this regard we have developed the notion of **Sentinel Outputs**, which refers to the relatively limited selection of what are the key or critical outputs per theme and per year. The logic is that by monitoring and understanding how these sentinel outputs impact on policy processes and outcomes, we will have a better picture of grant impact overall than if we were to try to monitor all outputs.

Theme Convenors will work with Knowledge Services (KS) and Communications staff to identify Sentinel Outputs. For Year 2 we are re-organising how Knowledge Services and Communications inputs are made and managed. For KS, the idea is to concentrate efforts on the Sentinel Outputs. In addition to both greater clarity about roles and tighter coordination with Communications, it is important that KS are involved in thinking about potential uptake pathways from the very beginning.

Each output should have a 'dissemination plan'. This will be particularly important for Sentinel Outputs, and we anticipate that the new arrangements with KS and Communications will allow significant progress along these lines. One idea is that we developed is a kind of generic dissemination plan for each type of Level 2 Output (e.g. Evidence Report, IDS Policy Briefing, Rapid Response Briefing, etc). Such discussions will need to anticipate a protocol for gathering, storing, updating and analysing download data on AG sentinel outputs as well as to consider how these will be stored in the CRM database (Figure 3 and Table 4).

From an M&E perspective, the focus is upon generating, capturing and analysing feedback from external users with regards to these Sentinel Outputs. The M&E system, together with the notion of Sentinel Outputs, can be used to generate concrete, substantiated findings on the Level 2 Outputs as well as offer narrative explanations as to the role they have played in policy processes.

3.2 Accountability and learning

CRM assists efficient reporting, production of timeframes and monitoring of Level 2 Outputs. In this sense it enhances accountability to the donor. Additionally, CRM has the potential to increase accountability to Level 2 Output users, since indicators are geared towards generating feedback from the end user. As we progress, lessons will be shared as much about this two-directional approach as reporting on Level 2 Outputs.



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