



Monitoring Data for ECA Framework Rollout

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Evaluation Division

New Monitoring Data for ECA Framework

Throughout 2019, the ECA Evaluation Division led an initiative to redesign the performance monitoring process across the Bureau. The Evaluation Division worked closely with ECA program teams, senior leadership, and award recipients to create the Monitoring Data for ECA (MODE) Framework that is responsive to the Bureau's data needs. The MODE Framework includes a results framework with indicators designed to track program performance, leading to strengthened feedback mechanisms resulting in more effective programs. Each performance indicator has corresponding data collection questions defined to facilitate uniform data collection.

Initiative Development

The motivation for the development of the MODE Framework emanated from two coinciding factors:

1. The revision of the Department of State Evaluation Policy (18 FAM 300). The new Policy incorporates new legislation that emphasizes the need to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impacts of programming rigorously, while at the same time utilizing and learning from the data collected through these enhanced M&E efforts.
2. The recognition that in the past the Evaluation Division only collected reliable performance monitoring for 10 ECA exchange programs, with those efforts often overlapping with those of award recipients. The Evaluation Division acknowledged that with new software and a better-staffed division, it could vastly improve the performance monitoring process.

Improved ECA Data Capacity

Implementation of the MODE Framework will enable the Bureau to standardize and utilize its data in the following ways:

- **Assess** data and performance metrics to enhance program performance
- **Inform** strategic planning activities at the Bureau, division, and individual exchange program levels
- **Supplement** the information ECA program officers receive from their award recipients and exchange participants to provide a comprehensive view of programmatic activities
- **Respond** quickly and reliably to ad-hoc requests from Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and internal Department of State stakeholders

Changes for ECA Staff and Award Recipients

ECA will operationalize the new framework through the solicitation process. Each solicitation will include relevant objectives, sub-objectives, and indicators so award recipients know their reporting requirements. The main modifications to the solicitation process include:

- Addition of a Results Framework section with relevant objectives and indicators award recipients will be required to report against
- A Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) template to include said indicators and their constituent parts, including detailed descriptions
- Modification to the associated Project Evaluation review criterion
- Using State Assistance Management System Domestic Results Performance Monitoring Module (SAMS-D RPM) to report related performance monitoring related data
- Addition of a requirement to estimate the amount of the award funding spent on M&E activities over the course of the reporting cycle

Expectations for Implementation

The Evaluation Division estimates this process will add approximately two hours of time for both the Program Officer (per solicitation) and award recipient (per program performance report). The Evaluation Division will lead the implementation of the MODE Framework, which includes the following:

- Guiding program officers in the selection of objectives, sub-objectives, and indicators
- Updating solicitation language and pre-filling the PMP to include the new requirements
- Utilizing new proposal review criteria for M&E-related narrative sections and PMP
- Training on the SAMS- D RPM module for both the Program Officers and award recipient
- Providing assistance on how to review the award recipient's reporting in the SAMS-D RPM
- Consultations with both program officers and award recipients throughout the first reporting period to obtain feedback on the MODE Framework.

Anticipated Timeline

The Evaluation Division plans to implement the MODE Framework in waves. The first wave will be a pilot that will begin in early 2020, and will only include ECA Program Officer-volunteered programs. This wave will be used to finalize the procedures for implementation and identify any barriers or challenges.

The number and timing of subsequent waves is dependent on the pilot phase, but the Evaluation Division intends to begin implementation of the MODE Framework within the entire Bureau in 2021. The Evaluation Division will consult EX/G and EX/PM to align with the timing of programs' solicitation development.

For more detail, you can review the [full MODE Implementation Guide](#)

You can watch a video on the rollout plan at <https://youtu.be/FnYSIlgPvM-0>

Have questions? Contact us at ECAevaluation@state.gov



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