United States Department of State

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation

October 2016

Contents

How to Use this Guide

This guide was developed for applicants and implementing partners (grantees) of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL). It includes guidance and templates on project design, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and reporting. This guide is a supplement to DRL's **Proposal Submission Instructions**, which can be found on DRL's website (**Open Calls for Statements of Interest/Requests for Proposals**).

This should not be seen as a comprehensive source for all Department of State bureaus or offices. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures for program management and evaluation for each bureau or office, and other U.S. Government agencies. Applicants for Federal Assistance programs should also familiarize themselves with any program-specific requirements published in public Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs).

This guide has been formed to assist new applicants and current grantees in:
- Understanding DRL's current M&E requirements for applicants' project proposals, as well as how DRL Program Officers review a grantee's M&E components throughout the life of an awarded grant.
- Developing logic models when designing a project. Understanding how these models can be used to outline the relationship between activities and intended outcomes, as well as identifying the assumptions that need to occur for proposed changes to happen.
- Forming an M&E narrative and plan, which outlines how M&E activities will be carried out and the types of indicators that will be used to measure project performance.
- Understanding how evaluation can be used to demonstrate whether intended outcomes occurred, project activities were appropriate for the environment, and how findings can be used to design future projects.
- Collecting, analyzing and reporting on project data once implementation starts.

Please note that this publication has been designed for non-experts. It should not be seen as a comprehensive guide to project design, monitoring, evaluation or reporting. It includes guidance to assist applicants that are designing grants during prosposal development or grantees that are interested in re-designing active project. It also includes guidance for current grantees on quarterly and final reporting.

This guide includes the following sections:

Additional M&E-related documents, including performance indicator reference sheets (PIRS) and templates can be found on our **Resources** page.

Monitoring and Evaluation

What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

Several definitions exist for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and perspectives can differ on what is considered good practice depending on an individual's experience and the sector in which they work.

For the purpose of this guide, the following definitions are used:

- **Monitoring** generally refers to the collection of data to measure progress (based on performance indicators or other metrics). Progress is tracked based on expectations (targets) set before activities were implemented.
- **Evaluation** is defined as a process that determines the merit, worth or value of things (e.g. projects, processes, service delivery, advocacy interventions).[1]

Evaluation is often seen as a process conducted after activities end. However, evaluation methods for collecting and analyzing project data can and should be incorporated into several project areas, to understand:

- the needs of a target population (needs assessment);
- the theory or rationale behind a program (program design);
- how a program works, whether it was implemented as planned, and whether it was appropriate (process and program relevance);
- whether program activities were performed in the best possible way (efficiency);
- whether they were effective in producing short- or medium-term changes (outcomes); and,
- the long-term or sustained changes produced by a program, after activities have ended (impact).[2]

Monitoring and evaluation should be considered as systematic and integrated processes. The data produced from M&E should help grantees learn whether processes can be improved during implementation, and whether certain activities or approaches could be used for future projects.

It should also be understood that evaluation is not necessarily value-free. Since the evaluation process takes findings (i.e. survey data, observations from field research) to assess a project's significance, the conclusions from an evaluation are often value-based judgments. Since these judgments are used to evaluate the criteria or standards (e.g. targets, goals) set by an organization, the process of evaluation should be used to learn about a project and facilitate decision making. Using evaluation data for decision-making can take many forms, such as re-designing project logic or theories of change, modifying activities, or understanding how future projects can be improved to better serve target populations.

For the most part, this publication includes guidance on (1) incorporating evaluation principles in program design and (2) activity monitoring and reporting.

Monitoring and Evaluation at DRL

DRL believes that implementers know best—this is why we take a flexible approach to M&E. This does not mean that our office expects all grantees to become evaluation specialists. It simply means that we believe M&E should be useful, by fitting grantees' information needs and the complexities of the operating environment. While an organization's program officers are responsible for conducting activity monitoring, evaluation has often been defined as an independent, external activity.

---

[1] Scriven, Michael (1991). *Evaluation thesaurus* (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
[2] Rossi, Peter H., Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004). *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

However, if an implementing partner has an internal evaluation unit, project reviews and evaluations for DRL-funded projects can be conducted by an implementing partner's internal evaluation specialists and qualified staff. M&E should also be accessible to organizations with limited experience. DRL provides sample templates for organizations that would like to use them. To ensure that M&E is accessible, our templates include technical terminology, guiding questions, and plain English versions (free of technical terminology). **Please note that these templates are not required when submitting an application. If your organization uses a different format or has its own templates, you can continue to use these as long as they include the same level of detail as the DRL samples.**

Using 'Evaluative Thinking' for Project Design: DRL expects grantees to use evaluative thinking when designing projects. By using evaluative thinking during project design, grantees should value evidence (e.g. existing internal or external studies or evaluations, information from baseline studies, needs assessments) and identify the assumptions behind the way they think their projects work. During project implementation, grantees should reflect on the information they gather to make decisions on the way a project is designed, implemented and evaluated.[3]

Plans Change: It is often mentioned that M&E plans should be seen as 'living documents'. This is true for DRL grants. After being awarded a grant, if you need to add or change indicators or revise evaluation data collection methods, then please inform your DRL Grants Officer Representative (GOR)/Program Officer (PO). After informing the GOR/PO, grantees can upload revised M&E plans to **GrantSolutions**. **Please ensure that revised plans are uploaded, as GrantSolutions is the official record for project files.**

Honest Communication: Not everything can be a success. M&E should be used for more than just accountability or reporting on indicators and success stories. DRL encourages grantees to tell us about the challenges occurring in their operating environments, as well any project setbacks or failures. As many of our grants operate in complex environments and on sensitive topics, we believe that honestly reporting on both successes and challenges is a question of ethics. Honest communication provides those working in this sector with more information and the opportunity to learn. It also helps DRL Program Officers to plan for subsequent quarters, based on what has and has not worked. If implementing partners see major risks or challenges arising, please communicate these in a timely manner—i.e. partners should not wait for the quarterly reporting period to communicate risks and challenges.

Ethics: DRL strongly encourages applicants to consider whether their M&E systems are using human rights-based approaches,[4] applying a gender and equity lens,[5] or including marginalized populations. Applicants should consider whether evaluation design, data collection, analysis, reporting and learning are conducted in an ethical and responsible way with all project participants (e.g. direct beneficiaries, sub-grantees). While DRL and many grantee organizations do not have Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) like universities, organizations should still make adequate provisions to protect the privacy of human subjects when collecting data from individuals. For instance, when collecting data from project participants, consider whether your organization has the necessary informed consent forms, confidentiality agreements, and data security protocols.

DRL Evaluation Unit: The Strategic Planning and Evaluation Unit is responsible for promoting evaluation within DRL. In-house evaluation specialists routinely revise M&E guidance and templates for grantees, provide tailored training and one-on-one coaching for grantees and DRL staff, manage evaluation contracts conducted by external consultants, conduct internal reviews and evaluations, and ensure that the office maintains evaluation principles and standards that are in line with the **Department of State Evaluation Policy** and the **American Evaluation Association** (AEA).

---

[3] Buckley, J., T. Archibald, M. Hargraves, and W. M. Trochim (2015). *Defining and Teaching Evaluative Thinking: Insights from Research on Critical Thinking*. American Journal of Evaluation 36.3: 375-88.
[4] United Nations Practitioners' Portal on Human Rights Based Approaches to Programming
[5] For resources on applying a gender-responsive and equity lens to evaluation, visit EvalGender+

DRL Grant Applicants: Suggested Monitoring & Evaluation Proposal Components

Proposal Components

In addition to proposal narratives, applicants should submit the following documents related to project design and M&E (guidance on these components is included on the following pages):

A. **Logic Model** – A project planning tool that visually represents the logical relationships between the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of a project. A logic model should provide a snapshot of how an applicant thinks a project will work, and analyzes the "if-then" (causal) relationships between project elements (i.e. how do activities lead to outputs, how do outputs lead to outcomes).

B. **Monitoring & Evaluation Narrative** – A description of the applicant's monitoring and evaluation procedures, including how and when it will collect, analyze, store and report the data, who will be responsible, how it will evaluate the project (evaluation plan), and if and when data will be used to re-design a project or make decisions on project strategy.

C. **Monitoring & Evaluation Plan** – A tool that articulates the project's performance indicators. Indicators should be aligned with the objectives, outputs and outcomes in the logic model. For each performance indicator, the M&E Plan should include indicator definitions, baselines, quarterly and cumulative targets, data collection tools, data sources, types of data disaggregation, frequency of M&E activities, and roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting. There should also be metrics to capture whether the most at-risk and vulnerable populations are included within project activities, where applicable.

The M&E plan and narrative should provide detailed information explaining how and who will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on project objectives and activities. These components document an applicant's systematic approach to monitoring, reporting, and evaluating a project's progress toward its objectives over time, as well as how they plan to learn from the data that is collected and analyzed.

All project proposals being considered for DRL funding must include these components (for additional guidance, please refer to the **Proposal Submission Instructions**).

Logic Model

What: A Logic Model is a tool for demonstrating how a project intends to produce particular results. It can be used to help "map" a project by depicting the logical relationships between the need for the project, the resources (inputs) and activities that will be utilized to address those needs, what will be produced or delivered or who will be trained from these activities (outputs), the short- and medium-term changes deriving from these outputs (outcomes), and the long-term changes in the social, political or economic context (impacts). To demonstrate "if-then" relationships, the logic model demonstrates causal logic—i.e. if lower-level results are achieved, then the next higher-level result can be achieved. More specifically, these "if-then" relationships articulate the project's theory of change. Before constructing a logic model, applicants may choose to design a project theory of change,[6] which is a description of how and why a set of activities are expected to lead to early, intermediate, and long-term outcomes over a specified period.

Why: The Logic Model is an important resource because it depicts how project components are interrelated—i.e. how one change may build on the other and how the project will succeed. It also helps applicants to specify strategic objectives, identify what resources are needed, identify indicators to measure progress and proposed outcomes, and communicate the project's potential value. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to work with potential partners or sub-grantees to develop their logic models, as they can offer diverse viewpoints during the project design process and help identify issues in the initial project approach.

Design Strategies

Construct the logic model before the proposal narrative: Applicants designing projects are encouraged to start with a logic model, or alternative approach (e.g. logframe, theory of change, systems mapping[7], rich picture[8]) prior to writing their proposal project narrative. Note that within the updated Proposal Submission Instructions, applicants are encouraged to develop the logic model before writing their proposal narrative. Thinking through the logic model before writing a proposal narrative may help grantees think through how they assume their project will work, as well as any expected results.

Ask if the project will work, based on the way it is designed: Projects are often built on underlying assumptions of cause and effect—specifically, whether one aspect of the project will actually lead to another (i.e. does the project work in the way it has been designed). Focusing on the "if-then" relationships within the logic model, at the start of the project design process, helps project staff to question whether there are "black boxes" or "large leaps of faith" in these assumptions. Black boxes occur when it is not clear how expected outputs (e.g. people trained) lead to expected outcomes (e.g. trainees apply the skills from training). Applicants should think about assumptions for all activities.

Identify if there are factors outside of your control and how they will affect your project: This step will help in developing the external factors within the logic model. Because DRL projects operate in complicated and complex environments, there are factors that could affect the project that are out of a grantee's control (e.g. change in policy or government). Many of these factors cannot be anticipated, but it is helpful to plot out these factors to understand if and how they could have an adverse effect on a project.

Connect assumptions and external factors to the risk management plan: The assumptions and external factors you come up with from your logic model can be used within another proposal requirement: the risk management plan.[9] Applicants can plot out how these factors may affect programming, and illustrate how they plan to adjust if issues arise.

---

[6] For a helpful resource, see UNICEF's methodological brief on Theories of Change
[7] For an overview, see Innovation Network's guide on Systems Mapping
[8] For an overview, visit Better Evaluation's page on rich pictures
[9] For more information on the risk management plan, reference DRL's **Proposal Submission Instructions**.

Logic Model: Tips

- Applicants should be able to clearly show specific "if-then" causal relationships for inputs, outputs, outcomes.

- Each activity in the logic model generally has a corresponding output; however, several outputs can feed into a single outcome if it captures the cumulative effects of the outputs.

- The causal relationships reflected in the logic model must complement those in the project narrative. Components within the logic model and grant scope of work (e.g. objectives, activities, outputs) must be aligned.

- Assumptions must show what needs to occur for the project to work as planned. External factors must show how factors beyond the grantee's control can have a significantly influence activities, goals and objectives.

- Applicants' activities and expected outputs and outcomes within the logic model should be achievable within project's funding and time-frame.

Definitions and Examples

Component	Definition	Example
Needs	The gaps identified within a community – i.e. <u>what the community needs after you have identified the problem</u>	Lack of awareness of rights; inexperience with particular advocacy strategies.
Inputs	The primary resources required to carry out a project – i.e. <u>what the project needs to carry out its activities</u>	Funds; human resources; facilities; equipment; partners and community groups.
Activities	Sets of actions which use inputs to produce specific outputs – i.e. <u>things a project does</u>	Provide training; develop websites; send delegations; prepare materials; conduct advocacy.
Outputs	The immediate products of project activities – i.e. <u>what immediately results from activities / shows that your activity occurred</u>	People trained/mentored; website operational; website visitors; materials developed[10] and distributed; small grants awarded.
Outcomes	The things that happen, in the short- and medium-term, after an activity has been implemented – i.e. <u>what occurs after an output</u>	Increased awareness of human rights[11]; trainees apply skills; development of new networks or connections; local policies adopted.
Project Objective	A concrete target under the general goal. Objectives are achieved when all outcomes, within that objective, have been achieved	Civil society organizations have improved knowledge on the role of community dialogue forums and how to make them more effective.
Project Goal	The higher-level objective to which a project will contribute	To promote minority group X's acceptance in society through greater advocacy.
Assumption	Factors that must hold true for a project to progress or succeed	Civil society-government collaboration; participants' interests in training; effective and relevant training.
External Factor	Factors that are not under an organization's control, but that can affect goals and objectives from being achieved	Change in government; legal restrictions on civil society organizations; threats to civil society

---

[10] "Materials" can be considered an output if a project beneficiary produces something (e.g. media campaign documents, reports, or recommendations) based on support received through a DRL-supported project. However, materials can also be designated as an input if they need to be in place for an activity to take place (e.g. curricula developed before training).

[11] Depending on the theoretical framework used by the implementing partner, some organizations define 'increased understanding/knowledge' as a higher-level output, whereas others may define it as a lower-level outcome. Either is fine, as long as the project theory of change is clear.

Logic Model & Components

Problem Statement					
What problems or issues does the project attempt to solve or address? What does the target population need and what strategies will lead to positive change?					
Project Objective 1: State the project objective here and divide the logic model by each objective. Objectives are concrete and viewed as targets under the general goal.					
Needs	**Inputs**	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Impact**
What are the needs of the community, based on the social, political and economic condition of the country or region?	*What human and financial resources will be used for this project?* *[Staff, Time, Money, Materials, Equipment, Partners]*	*What activities will be conducted to meet the needs or address the issues of the community?* *[Conduct workshops, meetings; Deliver services; Provide training; Facilitate; Partner]*	*What will be produced or delivered or who will participate in activities?* *[Products created or resources developed; Serviced delivered; Participants (e.g. NGOs, local citizens, media, host country officials) reached]*	*What short- and medium-term changes will happen after an activity has been implemented?* *[Change in awareness, knowledge, or attitudes; Improved skills; Change in behavior, practice, or decision making; Policy change*	*What long-term changes will occur in the social, political or economic context?*
Assumptions			External Factors		
What factors need to occur, or which stakeholders or grantees need to be involved, for the project to be successful? How & why proposed activities will lead to proposed outputs. How will outputs lead to outcomes? *[Country's political & economic condition; Skills & knowledge level of beneficiary; Implementer's org. capacity; Level of engagement by stakeholders]*			*What factors that are not in the control of the project—e.g. changes in government policies or the political situation—could affect expected activities, outputs and outcomes?* *[Change in government policies, such as NGO restrictions; Change in political situation, such as a coup or civil unrest; Involvement from other donors and implementers]*		

The plain English version of this logic model – i.e. without the technical terms - can be accessed on the Resources page of our website (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/257893.docx)

Monitoring & Evaluation Narrative

What: The M&E narrative section is a two-page summary explaining how an applicant will monitor, evaluate, report on the progress of project objectives and activities. The narrative should also explain who is responsible for M&E, as well as how the applicant will learn from the data they collect. *Additional information (beyond the page limit) can be included as an annex within quarterly reports.*

Why: DRL must be able to understand and verify that an applicant is taking a comprehensive, realistic approach to M&E. The written summary should outline the planned methods, timeline and resources for M&E.

Design Strategies
The applicant should be able to summarize the following within the narrative section (a checklist with additional guidance on each of these five points is provided below):
- **How and when** it will collect, analyze and report the data (M&E activities)
- **Who** will be responsible for each one of these steps (M&E responsibilities)
- **How** the applicant will safely store the collected data (data security)
- **How** it will evaluate the project (evaluation plan)
- **How and when** the data could be used to improve or adapt strategies, or re-design activities (learning)

Provide Sufficient Details: Within the M&E narrative, applicants should outline who is responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data. While the narrative is only two pages and cannot capture all details about an applicant's M&E system, it should provide an idea about survey protocols, evaluation approaches and methodologies, and what the applicant plans to learn from evaluation findings.

Think beyond indicators: DRL welcomes alternative approaches to M&E. Your project M&E plan and narrative do not need to revolve around performance indicators, as there are a number of methods that are useful in capturing change. For example, if an applicant would like to take a more narrative or storytelling approach to M&E, utilizing "Most Significant Change" (MSC)[12], or a case study[13] approach may prove useful for your project. DRL welcomes alternative approaches as long as an applicant justifies how and why the approach will provide relevant data, and why the M&E plan may have a limited number of performance indicators (i.e. because alternative ME approaches are being utilized).

External vs. internal evaluation: Projects that are over 24 months are encouraged to include external evaluation, or specify how internal evaluation will meet the needs for accountability and learning. Because many DRL projects are shorter than two years, what would be considered traditional external evaluation design (i.e. design that include a baseline, mid-term, final evaluation) may not be feasible due to the project timeframe and budget. Additionally, many short-term DRL projects are cost amended. Therefore, it is important for grantees to consider, during cost amendment negotiations (for iterations of 12, 18, 24 months or longer), whether additional evaluation deliverables (e.g. mid-term/ interim, final evaluation) can be integrated into a project.

Additionally, applicants are welcome to propose internal evaluations, as we know that many organizations already have capable evaluation units with qualified staff. Within an M&E narrative, please highlight if you plan to conduct an internal evaluation or manage an external evaluation. This is an important factor for DRL when assessing an applicant's proposal, as we need to understand how an organization plans to learn from evaluation. Regardless of whether an external or

---

[12] For an overview and resources, visit Better Evaluation's page on Most Significant Change
[13] For an overview and resources on case study approaches, visit Better Evaluation's page on case study approaches in evaluation

internal evaluation is chosen, an applicant should be able to articulate the type of evaluation they will be conducting. Several key categories include:

- o **Formative Evaluations:** An evaluation conducted during project implementation, with the aim of improving performance and programming during implementation. These evaluations generally focus on project improvement, such as understanding whether implementation has been efficient or whether targets will be met. **Example**: mid-term evaluations with a focus on **project design, performance or process**.

- o **Summative Evaluations:** An evaluation near the end of a project or after it has been completed. Summative evaluations focus on (a) understanding whether expected and unexpected outcomes occurred, (b) identifying factors that affected activities, outcomes and impacts from occurring, (c) assessing the sustainability of results, and (d) drawing lessons that may inform future programming. **Example**: final evaluations or ex-post evaluations, focusing on **outcome and impact** (what the project achieved).[14]

- o **Developmental Evaluation:** An approach that is useful for evaluating change initiatives in complex or uncertain environments, where fixed targets and evaluation reporting may not be appropriate. Many DRL projects could benefit from this approach. **Example**: developmental evaluation facilitates real-time, or close to real-time, feedback for project staff; facilitating a continuous development loop for innovation and project re-design.[15]

Budgeting for M&E: As M&E is a grant requirement, DRL strongly encourages applicants to think through the M&E system described in their proposal, and budget accordingly (i.e. the cost of the M&E system, and associated M&E activities, should be included within project budgets). DRL does not mandate what percentage of project budgets should be dedicated to M&E; however, most applicants budget between 3-10%. While there have been DRL grantees that have built low-cost M&E systems (for less than 3%) that provide reliable data or rigorous evaluations, others have found that 10% may not suffice because restrictive or conflict-sensitive environments can create difficulties for data collection. When budgeting for M&E, applicants should determine their data needs, the time needed to analyze and use data for decision-making, and the physical and digital security environment. Additionally, applicants may choose to prioritize their M&E budgets for one or several purposes: (1) building complex databases or project monitoring systems (monitoring), (2) conducting internal evaluation or managing external evaluations (evaluation), and (3) prioritizing the publication or dissemination of research or evaluation findings to the wider community (learning).

The following page includes a checklist that applicants may use when developing their M&E narrative.[16] It includes areas that DRL Program Officers check for when assessing project proposals.

---

[14] For definitions and examples of formative and summative evaluation, visit Evaluation Toolbox's pages on Formative and Summative evaluation
[15] For an overview and resources, see Better Evaluation's page on Developmental Evaluation

Checklist: M&E Narrative

DRL applicants are strongly encouraged to address the following questions in their M&E narrative:

M&E Narrative Content	√
1. Overview and Methodology: How and when will data be collected, analyzed and reported	
COLLECTION: What evaluation approaches and data collection methods are proposed? Does the narrative explain how methods will be applied?	

• Categories: e.g. formative, summative, process, developmental, etc.
• Approaches: e.g. participatory, utilization-focused, empowerment, transformative
• Methods: e.g. key informant interviews, focus group interviews, surveys, pre- and post-tests, direct observation, document reviews (including secondary data), Most Significant Change, Outcome Mapping.[17]
• Data collection: while DRL does not ask implementing partners for participant lists, organizations should have internal processes for collecting data and ensuring quality.
• Do data collection methods reflect special consideration of marginalized populations?
   o Is data being disaggregated by relevant categories (gender, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic or religious minority status)?
   o Have collection procedures been put in place to ensure the safe collection and storage of data from marginalized populations? Can data be collected without undue security risks, invasions of privacy, or impeding beneficiaries from participating in the project?	

ANALYSIS: Does applicant indicate how it will analyze the data?	
• Examples: comparing actuals to targets in performance indicator tables; analyzing differences across disaggregates; analyzing survey data (e.g. quantitative analysis, qualitative coding).	
REPORTING: How will applicant report its data to DRL?	
• Within quarterly reporting documents, what data will be provided and in what format? Examples: updating indicators in tracking table; written summaries and analyses of project results; providing data visualization.	
TIMING: When will the applicant collect, analyze and report the data?	
• When will M&E activities—e.g. baseline studies, needs assessments, mid-term evaluations, project reviews, final evaluations—be delivered? • Does the overall project timeline include the M&E processes outlined in the narrative?	
2. Roles and Responsibilities: Who is responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data?	
• Does the M&E narrative outline who is responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting data? • Does the narrative mention whether responsible person(s) are based locally, regionally, and/or at headquarters?	
3. Data Security: How will data be safely stored, transmitted and handled?	
STORAGE: Does the M&E narrative include a section on data security? How does the section address the following:	

• Are there protocols for data storage, transmission and deletion?
   o Example: physical files (attendance sheets, pre- and post-tests, survey results). Are they secured (e.g. locked file cabinets)? Who is responsible for it?
   o Example: electronic (files, database). Who has access? Are they encrypted?
• Are there special protocols for handling participants' and partners' personally identifiable information (PII)—names, addresses—for sensitive projects?
• Are staff members and project partners trained on data security procedures or software, as needed?
• Are data security procedures—including storage, transmission and elimination of files—outlined for sub-	

---

[17] For an overview and resources, visit Better Evaluation's page on Outcome Mapping

M&E Narrative Content	√
contractors (e.g. external evaluators, consultants)?	
4. How will project evaluation be conducted?	
Does the M&E narrative include a section with the following information?	
• The number of evaluations—e.g. baseline, mid-term, final—and estimated timing of each evaluation—e.g., mid-point, four months before the grant end date, etc. • Estimated time and resources. Does the project budget sufficiently take into account the proposed evaluation activities, rigor of evaluation methods, level of effort and evaluation staff's expertise? • Will the evaluation statement of work, draft reports and/or finalized evaluation reports be shared with DRL? • Justification if an external evaluation is not proposed, given specific factors—e.g. short project time-frame, difficult operating environment, project sensitivity, project M&E system will provide sufficient data for evaluation and learning, alternative approaches will be used to document results.	
The following evaluation components may be included, but are not required during the proposal stage:	
• Potential evaluation questions—e.g. questions on the efficiency and effectiveness of the project's approach, on the appropriateness of the approach within the project's operating or policy environment. • Relevant quality assurance processes—e.g. recruitment process of evaluation team, internal reviews of evaluation SOW, DRL review and approval of evaluation SOW and evaluation team's qualifications, reporting or presentations to DRL. • Relevant quality assurance processes—e.g. recruitment process of evaluation team, internal reviews of evaluation SOW, DRL review and approval of evaluation SOW and evaluation team's qualifications, reporting or presentations to DRL.	
5. Does M&E contribute to project strategy and design?	
• Does the M&E narrative describe how and when data and findings will be used to adapt or improve project design and strategies? Does it include when M&E materials will be reviewed and updated if needed?	

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

What: A project's M&E plan should be aligned with its logic model and proposal narrative. It demonstrates, with indicators, how progress toward outputs, outcomes and ultimately objectives will be measured. The M&E plan contains details for each indicator, including: a definition; the indicator type (e.g. output, outcome; standard, custom); data source(s); how data will be disaggregated; the frequency of measurement; those responsible for data collection, analysis and reporting; and baselines (if available) and targets for indicators. *Additional information (beyond the page limit) can be included as an annex within quarterly reports.*

Why: The M&E plan is a key component because it provides DRL with an understanding of how the applicant intends to measure progress toward the project's stated objectives, as well as the details of each indicator.

Developing Indicators

Performance Indicators: Performance indicators measure degrees of progress, and show whether a project is on track. Each indicator measures a particular characteristic of a project. Indicators are included to measure actual results compared expected results (targets). Indicators should link back to the project theory, by measuring the outputs and outcomes mentioned within the logic model. **Output-level performance indicators** should measure a tangible, immediate and intended product or service from a proposed project activity (e.g. number of advocacy initiatives, number of reports disseminated, number of human rights defenders trained). **Outcome-level performance indicators** should measure the short-, medium-, or long-term results or benefits of one or a combination of outputs (e.g. number of new connections formed, percentage of human rights defenders applying social media skills in advocacy campaigns).

Applicants should also separately track (disaggregate) participant data by demographic categories that are relevant to the project—e.g. gender, age, location (rural, urban, region / province). When projects address issues affecting marginalized populations—such as persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and ethnic and religious minorities—the grantee should track and disaggregate participant data by categories that are relevant for the target populations (e.g. disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic or religious identity), where applicable and appropriate. Grantees are encouraged to find responsible and ethical ways to collect this type of data (e.g. voluntary self-identification forms), in ways that do not limit project participation or infringe upon privacy or security.

U.S. Government Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F-indicators): Standard foreign assistance indicators were developed to measure the achievement of foreign assistance projects. Performance targets and results are reported to the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources (F). When selecting F-indicators, DRL grants primarily fall within the Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DR) Category (formerly called Governing Justly and Democratically [GJD]). Applicants should choose from the DR Category indicators, the Peace and Security (PS) Category indicators (Section 6- Conflict Mitigation and Stabilization is most relevant), or the Cross-Cutting Category (e.g. gender, youth). For the Master Indicator List (MIL) and Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) (definitions) for the DR, PS and Cross-Cutting Category indicators, please refer to our **Resources page**. When including F-indicators within the M&E plan, please note the indicator number (e.g. DR.6.1-2) in the 'Indicator Type' column.

Most F-indicators are focused on outputs and broad topics (e.g. the number of human rights defenders trained and supported) to allow for aggregation across projects. Thus, applicants should supplement these with their own custom output and outcome indicators. If you have questions concerning how data should be collected or reported, please refer to the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS), or consult with your Program Officer or a DRL M&E Specialist. If none of the standard foreign assistance indicators are appropriate for a grant, please note within the M&E narrative, "Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators are not applicable to the grant". For instances where the security of the

implementing partner or project beneficiaries may be comprised due to data collection, the following notation can be added—"Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators are not applicable to grant, due to security concerns with data collection/reporting". If these notations are included within the grant agreement, the requirement to include an F-indicator can be waived.

When developing indicators, it is important to understand that the indicator will depend on the project scope, operating environment and budget. This will influence the type of indicators selected.

Performance Indicator Types

Indicator Type	Definition	Usually measures	Example
Quantitative	Measure numeric or statistical results; represented as #s, %s, or other amounts.	**Outputs**	# of human rights defenders trained on social media skills
Qualitative	Represent attitudes, perceptions or behaviors; can be articulated as #s or %s, but also as narrative.	**Outcomes**	% of human rights defenders applying social media skills to advocacy campaigns
Direct	Provides a direct measure of an intended result.	**Outputs/ Outcomes**	% of beneficiaries with increased awareness of how to obtain legal assistance [by surveying target communities]
Indirect / Proxy	Often used when the most direct indicator is not practical (e.g. data collection is too costly; project is being implemented in a closed society or conflict zone).	**Outputs/ Outcomes**	Number of new courts opened *[Assumption: physical access to courts is the root cause inhibiting access]*
Standard	Standard foreign assistance indicators (F-indicators). Primarily output-focused.	**Outputs**	Number of human rights defenders trained and supported.
Custom	Project-specific indicators that can be used to supplement standard indicators. Used to capture progress toward a project's specific objectives.	**Outputs/ Outcomes**	Number of local CSOs improving advocacy strategies; number of laws, policies or procedures stalled, revised or changed.

Design Strategies

Determine if indicator data would provide useful information: DRL would like applicants to focus on useful indicators (see below for our checklist on determining if indicators are beneficial). If the indicator does not provide useful information—i.e. if staff or DRL cannot use it for program management or it does not provide an indication of performance—then it the applicant should reconsider its inclusion in the M&E plan.

Emphasize quality over quantity: Including more indicators within an M&E plan does not necessarily make the plan better, especially if those indicators are not useful to project staff, your organization or DRL. It is fine to have just a few indicators under each objective, as long as those indicators are relevant and useful. *Cost vs. benefit:* Applicants should consider the amount of time it would take for project staff to collect, analyze and report on indicator data; determine whether the cost and time are worth the level of information generated by the proposed indicators.

M&E plans can change: M&E plans should be considered working documents. Grantees should aim to not change indicators frequently, in order to measure change throughout the life of their project. However, a grantee may find that, after project implementation has begun, a certain indicator is not providing useful data. If that is the case, it is fine to replace or delete the indicator.

- o **What might need to be changed within the M&E plan?** Grantees can modify an indicator, or the M&E plan as a whole, if they are not providing useful information. Generally, indicators will be deleted, or indicator components (e.g. definition, target, frequency of reporting, data collection methods) will be modified.

- o **How can grantees modify their M&E Plan?** This is a relatively easy process. Grantees should speak to their DRL Grants Officer Representative (GOR) or Program Officer (PO) first. After the grantee and the GOR/PO agree on changes to the M&E plan, the grantee must then upload the revised M&E plan to GrantSolutions.

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: Tips

- **Output Indicators**: Do not rely predominantly on F-indicators and output indicators.

- **Outcome Indicators**: Both output- and outcome-level indicators are necessary for reporting results. However, outcome indicators generally measure higher-level effects and can be paired with additional narrative to tell a project's story.

- **Setting Baselines**: Baselines are frequently zero (0) for new projects, but can also be "to be determined" (TBD). If participants have not yet attended training, the baseline would be TBD within the M&E plan until their pre-training knowledge was measured with a pre-test.

- **Setting Targets**: Targets should be ambitious yet achievable, considering available resources, the project time-frame, achievements from similar projects, and the operating environment.

- Are indicators "**SMART**"? Are they: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound? See the checklist below for developing indicators.

- **Marginalized Populations**: DRL projects should include indicators (or, indicator disaggregates) that measure whether activities support marginalized populations.

Checklist: Performance Indicators

Performance indicators should be identified and defined carefully, as it takes time and resources to collect, analyze and report on data. Applicants should review indicators carefully when establishing a project **M&E plan**; this can eliminate unnecessary reporting burdens and make the most of project resources.

While outputs can be measured with one indicator, outcomes may need to be measured with several in order to show that project activities are contributing to the achievement of project objectives. If a particular indicator does not provide the data an organization needs, there are several options, including:

1) developing a set of indicators to measure one condition;
2) revising the indicator to improve its quality;
3) deciding that this indicator represents the best option available, and noting its limitations;
4) identifying a new indicator; or
5) considering whether it is necessary to have an indicator and whether the activity or result could be evaluated using other methods (e.g. case studies, Most Significant Change).

Indicators are not perfect. If limitations exist within the performance indicators selected for a project, applicants should document these in the project M&E plan (in the 'Known Data Limitations' column).

Consider the following criteria when designing indicators:

Criteria	Rating (Yes/ Somewhat/ No)	Comments
Specific		
Is the indicator defined, so it is clear what is being measured? Have disaggregates been specified?		
Measurable		
Would two or more project staff members measure it in the same way? For percentages, are the numerator and denominator defined? Can data be collected in order to report on the indicator?		
Achievable		
Are indicator targets achievable, given the time and resources for the project?		
Relevant		
After collecting data, does it give an indication of whether progress has been made toward activities, outputs, outcomes and objectives? Will the data be used for decision-making?		
Time-bound		
Has the frequency for data collection, reporting and analysis been set? Are targets set on a quarterly basis or other time-frames (e.g. fiscal year, cumulative project)?		

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan – Components and Definitions

Indicator: A particular characteristic or dimension used to measure intended changes. Indicators are used to observe progress and measure actual results compared with expected results. Indicators answer "how" or "whether" a project is progressing toward objectives. Indicators can be expressed quantitatively and should be objective and measureable (e.g., numeric value, percentages, indices). Although indicators are mainly expressed in quantitative terms, the methods used to collect data can often be qualitative in nature (e.g. qualitative survey questions, observation).

Examples of indicators include: number of gender-based violence survivors provided social support services and percent change in knowledge about investigative journalism from workshop participants. The components and definitions below should be included within an applicant's M&E plan. **A sample M&E plan template (with guiding questions), and a completed example, follows this section (see pages 18 and 19).**

Indicator Definition and Unit of Measure: Define how the indicator will be measured to ensure it is reliably calculated throughout the life of the project. Terms within the definition should be defined. For example, if your project is providing training, the applicant should define what constitutes a full training cycle. Ambiguous terms often included in M&E plans, but that should be further defined, include: 'appropriate' 'sufficient', 'increased capacity', 'stakeholders'. The **unit of measure** defines what you are measuring (e.g. human rights defenders, civil society organizations, recommendations incorporated into law or policy). Within this section, you can also include **data collection methods.**

Indicator Type and Source: Define the level of expected change (e.g. input, output, outcome, impact). If using USG standard indicators or indicators from other donors, please refer to the source and include the indicator number. For indicators that an applicant develops, please write 'custom'.

- **Input / Process Indicators**: measures activities or the necessary components for an activity to occur. These are often represented as milestones, with measurement ending when the process is completed. Milestones are often used to progress toward enabling factors or significant tasks (i.e. would the project progress in the same way if these activities, events, or decisions did not take place). Often, rather than using a specific quantity as a target, milestones are reported as "yes or no', 'will be met/will not be met', "meets target / does not meet target". This is useful is the quantity is one (i.e. one product is developed; one set of curriculum is developed). Examples of project inputs or processes, as well as potential milestones, include: training curriculum developed, product developed, working group established, recommendations drafted by working group.

- **Output Indicators**: which are products and services delivered from the project activities, are often stated as an amount. Output indicators track the delivery of these products and services. Output data show the scope or size of project activities, but they cannot replace information about progress toward the project's outcomes or impact. Examples of project outputs include: 100 civil society organization members trained in organizational fundraising, and 60 radio programs produced.

- **Outcome Indicators**: in contrast, represent the specific, realistic results of a project and are often measured as a degree of change. Outcomes may include progress toward expected project objectives or other results of the project. Outcome indicators measure the degrees of change. For example, a project's objective could be to increase the participation of female candidates in elections. One outcome of the project would be that after

receiving training on effective engagement in the political process, 40% of the female participants ran for a seat in parliament.

Data Source: Indicates where data comes from. Data can be sourced from project materials (e.g. training attendance sheets) or external sources (e.g. government administrative records).

Disaggregation: Disaggregates are various levels of analysis. If the unit of analysis is training participants, project staff will generally disaggregate by gender or geography. Other units of analysis may include: tone of media piece (positive, negative), type of human rights work conducted. For project planning, it can be helpful to disaggregate targets, to ensure that vulnerable or marginalized populations, such as persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, and ethnic and religious minorities, are represented in the data collected on the appropriate activities.

Timing, Frequency or Schedule: This section details the frequency or timing of data collection, analysis and reporting. The frequency should meet the needs of project staff, to allow them to make program management decisions and report both internally and externally.

Responsibility: Outline those that are responsible for data collection, analysis and reporting. Data may be collected or analyzed by in-country staff, an organization's M&E specialist, or program staff and managers.

Known Data Limitations: Measures often include limitations, such as: self-reporting bias, obtaining follow-up surveys (low response rates), or determining demographic information from administrative files that are inconsistent in a country. Outlining limitations helps to understand the feasibility in collecting and measuring data and controlling for data quality.

Baseline: Outlines the starting point for your project. The baseline for projects that have been implemented for some time (e.g. cost amendments, subsequence phases of a project) would include previous project figures (the number of individuals previously trained or supported). If your data source includes government administrative records, you can include data from the previous year or period prior to project implementation. Baselines for training sessions or workshops are generally zero.

Target: Targets indicate what you would like to achieve (e.g. training 20 human rights defenders, forming three coalitions). When setting targets, please remember that it is fine if you do not always reach these figures or milestones during implementation. Targets are set to provide an indication of what you would like to achieve.

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan – Sample Template

Activity	Indicator	Indicator Definition, Unit of Measure	Indicator Type and Source	Data Source, Disaggregation	Timing, Frequency or Schedule	Responsibility	Known Data Limitations	Baseline	Target
Goal: *[State the project goal from the proposal narrative.]*									
Project Objective 1: *[State the project objective here and divide the M&E plan by each objective. The Objectives should match the objectives in the logic model and proposal. Objectives are concrete and viewed as targets under the general goal.]*									
List activities and match numbering from M&E plan (e.g. Activity 1.1, Activity 1b).	List all indicators for each activity.	**Definition**: Define how the indicator will be measured to ensure it is reliably measured throughout the life of the project. For Standard Indicators, where the definitions are broad (e.g. DR.6.1-2), the applicant should define how the indicator will be measured--i.e. what constitutes a full training cycle. **Unit**: What is the unit of analysis--individuals, specific groups, training days, policies?	**Type**: Output or outcome? **Source**: Standard Framework Indicator (e.g. DR.6.1-2) or Custom	**Source**: Where will the data come from? What tool(s) will be used to collect it? **Disaggregation**: Additional levels of analysis that can be used for comparative purposes (e.g. gender, location).	**Collection**: Timing, frequency or schedule for data collection. **Analysis**: Timing, frequency or schedule for data analysis. **Reporting**: Timing, frequency or schedule for reporting.	**Collection**: Who is responsible for data collection? **Analysis**: Who is responsible for data analysis? **Reporting**: Who is responsible for reporting?	**Limitation**: Measures often include limitations, such as self-reporting bias, obtaining follow-up surveys, or determining demographic information from administrative files that are inconsistent in a country. Outlining limitations helps to understand the feasibility in collecting and measuring data and controlling for data quality.	Usual baseline values: TBD (assessed at baseline); 0 (prior to training)	Define targets for each activity, to report against actual progress. If the indicator will be collected over multiple quarters or years, targets should be provided by quarter, by each fiscal year, and cumulatively.

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan – Sample DRL Project

Activity	Indicator	Indicator Definition	Indicator Type	Data Source	Disaggregation	Frequency	Responsibility	Baseline	Target
Activity 1.1: Provide training to human rights defenders on digital security	**1.1.1**: Number of human rights defenders trained	Number of USG-supported human rights defenders attending a three-day training on physical and digital security. To be counted, participants will need to attend all training modules.	Output **Source**: DR.6.1-2	Training attendance sheets	**Disaggregation**: 1. Gender 2. Geography (region) 3. Type of human rights work conducted (issue)	**Collection**: Data collected during training and input in database after training **Analysis**: Monthly (internal progress reports), Quarterly (Quarterly Reports) **Reporting**: Quarterly	**Collection**: Project Officer **Analysis**: M&E Specialist **Reporting**: Program Manager and M&E Specialist	0	Q1: 25 HRDs Q2: 30 HRDs Q3: 30 HRDs
	1.1.2: Percentage of human rights defenders improving digital security practices	**Definition**: Assessed before training, to establish a baseline for each individual's digital security behavior, and six months after training. The two measures will be compared to understand if behavior has improved over time. An internal scoring sheet will be developed to measure improvement levels for various behaviors (based on training modules, e.g. encryption). Data on each training module will be compared to understand if certain subjects were taught more effectively than others. Changes in behavior will be measured as a medium-term outcome. **Unit**: Individuals	Outcome **Source**: Custom	Pre-test and follow-up survey	**Disaggregation**: 1. Gender 2. Geography (region) 3. Type of human rights work conducted (issue)	**Collection**: Prior to training and three months after **Analysis**: After training and three months after **Reporting**: Quarterly	**Collection**: Trainers **Analysis**: Trainers and M&E Specialist **Reporting**: Program Manager and M&E Specialist	TBD (determined by baseline assessment)	50% of participants improve digital security practices

Performance Indicator Tracking Table – Sample Template

All indicator data should be input within a performance indicator tracking table (PITT) (see example, below). A tracking table enables DRL and project staff to view the reported data for every indicator, from the first to last quarter. This allows for consistencies or inconsistencies in the data, as well as positive or negative trends, to be easily tracked. When submitting quarterly and final reports, tracking tables can be submitted as stand-alone spreadsheets or included as an annex to the report. Grantees can easily create the PITT from the original M&E plan, by adding columns for quarterly targets and actuals. During project implementation, data should not only be included for the purpose of submitting quarterly and final reports; data should be reviewed and analyzed on a quarterly basis to ensure that the project is progressing as planned. When reporting percentages, the numerator and denominator should be included. *All DRL projects should include a PITT when submitting quarterly and final reports.*

To see a sample for a completed PITT, see **Performance Indicator Tracking Table – Sample DRL Project**.

[Activity and indicator descriptions]			FY 2016								FY 2017		Cumulative	
[Activity and indicator descriptions]			Qtr 1		Qtr 2		Qtr 3		Qtr 4		Qtr 1		[Project Totals]	
Activity	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Project Objective 1														
Activity 1.1	*Indicator 1.1.1*													
Activity 1.2	*Indicator 1.2.1*													
Project Objective 2														
Activity 2.1	*Indicator 2.1.1*													
Activity 2.2	*Indicator 2.2.1*													

DRL Grantees: Project Reporting

Following the launch of their projects, grantees should use their scope of work (e.g. agreed-upon objectives, activities) and M&E plan (e.g. proposed indicators) as a guide for (1) the type of data they should be collecting during implementation, and (2) reporting. Data should contribute to the measurement of proposed indicators in the M&E plan (including the agreed-upon disaggregates), and quarterly narrative reporting should provide an analysis of project progress by objective. Within the quarterly report, each project objective can serve as a header.

The checklists provided, below, focus on the collection, analysis and reporting of this data for both quarterly and final reports.

Quarterly and final reports should be written in a clear and concise way. This information is used by DRL GORs/POs to understand whether projects are progressing as expected. In addition to understanding whether projects are progressing, DRL GORs/POs use grantee reporting for several purposes: (1) promoting certain project approaches when designing new projects, depending on the successes or failures of an approach and whether activities were appropriate for the context; (2) supporting a grantee's request for a cost amendment or no-cost extension, if delays have occurred or the operating environment is difficult; (3) reporting "up" (to the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, DRL Principals, Congress, etc.).

Project Quarterly Reports

What: A report documenting activities conducted, changes in the operating environment, and progress toward performance indicators. Quarterly reports should detail what is or is not working, progress toward project objectives, and any risks or challenges that may be affecting project implementation.

Why: Provides documentation to DRL that the project is conducting its activities, meeting agreed-upon output- or outcome-level targets and progressing toward objectives, or if there are factors impeding progress. It also allows for changes in project design while the project is still underway if such impediments exist.

Quarterly Report Checklist

Grantees can organize their quarterly reports as they wish, as long relevant information about key project activities are included, as well as analyses regarding progress toward project objectives. The checklist, below, provides suggestions on how grantees can organize the content of their quarterly reports.

Quarterly Report Section Headers and Content	√
Project Information: (*Please include the following information as a cover page, or on the introductory page of the quarterly report*)	
Grantee: Project Title: Grant Number: Funding Amount: Grant Dates: Quarter (Reporting Period): Primary Point of Contact/Title: Phone Number: Email:	
Executive Summary *(A brief write up of key achievements and/or activities during the quarter, as well as key contextual changes or challenges)*	
A brief (one paragraph) summary of the project and its objectives (a summary of the scope of work from the grants memo can be used for this).	
Quarterly highlights: a summary of key achievements or outcomes (or activities undertaken if there are no achievements/outcomes to report) for the quarter. Bullets are acceptable.	
A short summary of the **contextual changes** since the previous quarter.	
A short summary of the **challenges** affecting project implementation during the quarter.	
Section Break	
Background *(Briefly describes changes in the current operating environment)*	
A few paragraphs on any changes in the operating environment and how they are positively or negatively impacting the grantee's ability to carry out project activities or achieve objectives.	
Section Break	
Activities / Project Progress *(Main section of report describing quarter's significant activities)*	
Significant activities from the quarter are organized under each objective, as follows: • Objective 1: [Description of project activities and achievements related to Obj. 1] o Activity 1.1 [as sub-header] – description of activities undertaken and an analysis of progress toward associated outcomes and objectives o *[Repeat for all other activities under objective]* • Objective 2: [Description of project activities and achievements related to Obj. 2] o Activity 2.1 [as sub-header] – description of activities undertaken and an analysis of progress toward associated outcomes and objectives *[Repeat for all other activities under objective]*	
Activities conducted during the quarter are sufficiently described, including an analysis of how the activities are demonstrating progress toward project objectives—e.g. identifying trends from indicator data reported in the PITT; reporting findings from research or evaluation activities (baseline studies, pre-/post-tests; sub-grantee activity reporting); field observations.	
Clearly highlight accomplishments or outcome-level results that are related to project activities.	
Use tables, charts or data visualization to supplement descriptions (or replace text).	
Analyze progress toward the overall project objectives and goal, when applicable.	
Section Break	
Challenges *(Barriers to implementing project activities)*	
Report problems or challenges in conducting project activities during the quarter (previous quarterly challenges should not be included if they are no longer applicable). Challenges can be external (e.g.	

Quarterly Report Section Headers and Content	√
devolving political environment) or internal factors (e.g. delays finding in-country partners, difficulties in receiving activity reports).	
Explanations regarding contingency plans or plans to overcome challenges.	
If challenges will seriously impede the progress, provide a plan with an updated timeline of project activities (generally done after speaking to DRL GOR/PO).	
NOTE: DRL understands that many of its implementers work in difficult operating environments and does not fault them when unforeseen problems arise. However, it is important to document these difficulties in the quarterly (and final) reports, and to communicate with the GOR/PO as they occur.	
Proposed Activities for Next Quarter	
Proposed activities for the following quarter are listed.	
Section Break	
Evaluation *(Include or summarize findings from any evaluation activities that were conducted)*	
If internal or external evaluation activities (interim, mid-term) were conducted, highlight the key findings and recommendations from the evaluation and describe if/how recommendations were, or can be, applied to the project.	
Section Break	
Sustainability *(Evidence that project results will continue to provide benefits after DRL support ends)*	
If applicable, include information demonstrating effects that may continue after the project ends—e.g. relationships between CSO networks, improved CSO-government dialogue, strengthened organizational or individual capacity, improved project management skills for in-country partners, continued funding. *May not be applicable until the later stages of the project.*	
Section Break	
Performance Indicator Tracking Table *(Tracks performance indicators against expected outputs, outcome and objectives from the logic model)*	
PITT data is updated for the current quarter (see sample PITT, below). The PITT can be submitted as a stand-alone spreadsheet or as an annex.	
Indicators should be disaggregated (e.g. gender, age, region), as proposed within the M&E plan.	
Explanations are provided in the "Project Progress" or "Challenges" sections, if results are significantly below or above targets.	
Section Break	
Additional Information	
Attach relevant supporting documents or products related to project activities—e.g. articles, meeting agendas, surveys, reports, manuals—as separate attachments or addenda.	

Performance Indicator Tracking Table – Sample DRL Project

All indicator data should be input within a performance indicator tracking table (PITT) (see example, below). A tracking table enables DRL and project staff to view the reported data for every indicator, from the first to last quarter. This allows for consistencies or inconsistencies in the data, as well as positive or negative trends, to be easily tracked. When submitting quarterly and final reports, tracking tables can be submitted as stand-alone spreadsheets or included as an annex to the report. Grantees can easily create the PITT from the original M&E plan, by adding columns for quarterly targets and actuals. During project implementation, data should not only be included for the purpose of submitting quarterly and final reports; data should be reviewed and analyzed on a quarterly basis to ensure that the project is progressing as planned. When reporting percentages, the numerator and denominator should be included. *All DRL projects should include a PITT within quarterly and final reports.*

Sample PITT for an 18-month DRL Project (with three quarters completed thus far)

[Activity and indicator descriptions]			FY 2016						Cumulative	
[Activity and indicator descriptions]			Qtr 1		Qtr 2		Qtr 3		[Project Total]	
Activity	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Activity 1.1: Provide training to human rights defenders on digital security	**Indicator 1.1.1:** Number of human rights defenders trained on digital security practices	0 (beneficiaries have not received any training prior to the project)	25	23	30	20	30	30	175	
	Disaggregation:									
	Location A		10	9	15	15	15	15	85	
	Female		5	4	7	7	7	4	40	
	Male		5	5	8	8	8	11	45	
	Location B		15	14	15	5	15	15	90	
	Female		8	7	7	3	7	7	43	
	Male		7	7	8	2	8	8	47	
	Indicator 1.1.2: Percentage of human rights defenders improving digital security practices (reported six months after training)	5% (5% of trainees were already employing adequate digital security practices—determined by pre-training test)	75%	Reported in Q3 (17 improve after six months)	75%	Reported in Q4 (15 improve after six months)	75% (17/17)	75% (17/17)	75% (131/175 trainees improve after six months)	

Project Final Reports

What: A final (end-of-project) report details the cumulative results of a project, and analyzes whether project activities contributed to the achievement of outcomes and objectives. It should also identify major challenges, lessons learned and best practices.

Why: The final report provides DRL with information about project outcomes. By identifying ways in which the project did or did not succeed, as well as any lessons learned and best practices, the final report helps DRL to improve how future projects are designed.

Final Report Checklist

Grantees can organize their reports as they wish, as long relevant information about key project activities are included, as well as analyses regarding progress toward project objectives. The checklist, below, provides suggestions on how grantees can organize the content of their reports. In addition to reporting on final project results, grantees should reflect on the project activities that were conducted and identify what worked well and what did not. *The final report should be more analytical than the quarterly report. Grantees are required to submit final reports 90 days after the project end date.*

Final Report Section Headers and Content	√
Executive Summary *(An overview of the project highlighting its key results, lessons learned and best practices)*	
Project highlights: a summary of key achievements or outcomes (rather than activities). Bullets are acceptable.	
A summary of the challenges encountered during the project (i.e. summarize why challenges may have affected outcomes and objectives from being achieved).	
A summary of what did or did not work (best practices, lessons learned).	
Project highlights: a summary of key achievements or outcomes (rather than activities). Bullets are acceptable.	
Section Break	
Background *(Briefly describes the changes that took place in the operating environment over the life of the project)*	
Provide an explanation of the operating environment, how this changed over the life of the project, and how it positively or negatively affected the grantee's ability to carry out project activities.	
Section Break	
Project Progress and Challenges *(Main section of report describing activities and how they did or did not contribute to results)*	
Significant results and activities from the project are organized under each objective.	
Clearly highlight accomplishments or outcome-level results that are related to project activities.	
Project activities are summarized; including what did or did not work.	
Analyze how project activities contributed to overall progress toward project objectives and goal. This analysis describes the positive internal (e.g. collaboration between project partners) or external (e.g. constructive CSO-government dialogue) factors that contributed to project success (if achievements met or exceeded expectations / targets).	
If the project did not meet expectations under certain objectives, describe the external (e.g. devolving political environment) or internal factors (e.g. delays finding in-country partners, difficulties in receiving activity reports) that impeded performance. If applicable, describe how project staff members and/or project participants overcame challenges.	
Use tables, charts or data visualization to strengthen descriptions (or replace text).	
Section Break	

Final Report Section Headers and Content	√
Evaluation *(Include or summarize findings from any evaluation activities that were conducted)*	
If internal or external evaluation activities (interim, mid-term) were conducted, highlight the key findings and recommendations from the evaluation and describe if/how recommendations (if provided) were applied to the project (i.e. if recommendations led to adjustments in activities; changes in partners, target populations or scope of project).	
If an end-term (final) evaluation was conducted, explain key findings and recommendations. Provide thoughts and analysis on the findings. If the grantee plans to continue similar projects, discuss if/how findings and recommendations (if provided) will be used to design and implement future projects.	
If a final evaluation was conducted, include the report as an annex.	
Section Break	
Sustainability *(Evidence that project results will continue to provide benefits after USG support ends)*	
Grantee includes information demonstrating the potential continuation of the beneficiary organizations' work or the effects of that work – e.g., deepening relationships between their organizations and NGO/CSO networks, government organizations, and/or non-USG donor groups; strengthened organizational or individuals' capacity, enabling the maintenance or expansion of its programming after USG funding ends. Only applicable after project midpoint.	
Performance Indicator Tracking Table *(Tracks performance indicators against expected outputs, outcome and objectives from the logic model)*	
A final updated PITT representing all quarters of the project is included, either embedded in the report or attached as an annex.	
Indicators should be disaggregated (e.g. gender, age, region), as proposed within the M&E plan.	
Explanations are provided in the "Project Progress and Challenges" section, if results are significantly below or above targets.	
Additional Information	
Attach relevant supporting documents or products related to project activities—e.g. articles, meeting agendas, surveys, reports, manuals—as separate attachments or addenda.	

Key Monitoring & Evaluation Terms – Glossary

Activity: An action or process undertaken over a specific period of time by an organization. Activities convert inputs (resources) to products or services, in order to achieve outputs and outcomes.

Assumptions: Hypotheses about factors or risks, such as underlying beliefs about the program, and the stakeholders or beneficiaries that should be involved. If these underlying beliefs do not occur, they can affect the progress or success of a program.

Baseline: Information collected before or at the start of a project or program. Baselines provide a basis for planning and/or assessing progress.

Benchmark: A standard against which results are measured. Related terms: Milestone, Target.

Beneficiaries: The individuals, groups, or organizations that benefit from an activity or project, or program.

Data: Information collected by a researcher or program implementer. Data gathered during an evaluation are analyzed to yield findings that serve as the basis for conclusions and recommendations.

Data Collection Methods: Techniques used to identify information sources, collect information, and minimize bias during an evaluation. Examples include surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

Evaluation: A systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project or program. Evaluations are undertaken to (a) improve the performance of existing programs, (b) assess their effects and impacts, and (c) inform decisions about future programming. Evaluations involve the systematic collection and analysis of project data.

Evaluation Design: The approach and methodology selected for collecting and analyzing data in order to reach conclusions about program efficiency and effectiveness.

External Evaluation: The evaluation of a project or program conducted by entities and individuals not directly related to the implementing organization. Related term: Independent Evaluation.

External Factors: Factors which are not explicitly in the control of program staff or an implementing partner, but which can have a significant effect on intended outcomes and impact. Common external factors include changes in government policies or the political situation in a country (e.g. law restricting NGO activities).

Goal: The higher-order objective to which a project or program is intended to contribute. A goal should be lofty in nature and not resource-dependent. Many projects can contribute to the same goal.

Impact: A result or effect that is caused by or attributable to a project or program. It can also be a significant and measurable change affecting project beneficiaries. Impact is often used to refer to the higher-level effects of a program that occur in the medium or long term, and can be intended or unintended, positive or negative. For example, if a program trains human rights defenders (HRDs) on improving tactics and strategies to more effectively advocate for the rights of a vulnerable group, the number of HRDs trained is the output; skills acquired by HRDs, a demonstrated

improvement of advocacy campaigns, and effectively reaching target audiences (general public, government) are the outcomes; and an improvement in the social, economic or political rights of the vulnerable group is the impact. Related terms: Result, Outcome.

Independent Evaluation: An evaluation carried out by entities and persons not directly involved in the implementation of a project or program. It is characterized by full access to information and by full autonomy to carry out research and report findings, without undue influence from program managers and staff. Related term: External Evaluation.

Indicator (or Performance Indicator): A particular characteristic or dimension used to measure intended changes. Indicators are used to observe progress and measure actual results compared to expected results (targets). Indicators answer "how" or "whether" a project is progressing toward associated objectives. Indicators can be expressed quantitatively and should be objective and measureable (e.g. numeric value, percentages, indices). Indicators that are qualitative are less common, though acceptable. Examples of indicators include: number of gender-based violence survivors provided social support services; percent change in knowledge about investigative journalism.

Input: Resources used to produce an output. Inputs generally include technical assistance, supplies, funds, or training. Resources provided for program implementation. Examples: money, staff, time, facilities, equipment, curriculum.

Internal Evaluation: Evaluation conducted by the organization implementing and/or managing the intervention or program. Evaluation specialists, within the evaluation unit of a grantee organization, generally conduct internal evaluation.

Logic Model: A visual representation that provides a "road map" showing the sequence of related events. The logic model should connect beneficiaries' needs (the need for a planned program) with the programs' desired outcomes. It should identify project elements (e.g., inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their relationships to one another (i.e. how outputs lead to outcomes), as well as the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure.

Mid-term Evaluation: Evaluation performed towards the midpoint of program implementation.

Milestone: Specific interim events, products, or steps in a process that convey progress or completion of a deliverable or result. Milestones tend to be output-oriented. Examples include: product developed, working group established, recommendations drafted by working group. Indicators can also be measured by milestone, rather than a specific quantity. Related terms: Benchmark, Target.

Monitoring: The systematic collection of data to measure progress (based on performance indicators or other metrics). Progress is tracked based on expectations (targets) set before activities are implemented. Monitoring should be used to inform managers about the progress of an ongoing intervention or program, and to detect problems that can be addressed through corrective action.

Objective: A statement of the condition or state one expects to achieve. Objectives should be concrete, time-bound, and measureable and viewed as targets within the general goal.

Outcome: Specific changes in events, occurrences, or conditions, such as attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, skills, or status. Outcomes are caused by a project (i.e. attributable to outputs or program activities), and are often expressed at an individual level among program participants. For example, if a program trains human rights defenders (HRDs) on improving tactics and strategies to more effectively advocate for the rights of a vulnerable group, the number of HRDs trained is the output; skills acquired by HRDs, a demonstrated improvement of advocacy campaigns, and effectively reaching target audiences (general public, government) are outcomes. Outcome is often used to refer to more immediate and intended effects. Related term: Result.

Output: A tangible, immediate, and intended product or result of an activity that is within an organization's control. Program deliverables are generally considered outputs. Examples include: number of journalist trained, number of media articles written, number of manuals distributed.

Program: A set of activities implemented by a defined set of implementers and designed to achieve specific objectives over a specified period of time. A program may cut across sectors, themes or geographic areas. Related terms: Portfolio, Project.

Program Evaluation: Evaluation of a set of activities designed to understand whether specific (global, regional, country, sector) development objectives were achieved. A program is a time-bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas.

Project: An individually planned undertaking designed to achieve specific objectives within a given budget and time frame. Several projects may make up a program. Related terms: Activity, Program.

Result: A significant, intended or unintended, and measureable change in the condition of a beneficiary. Results can also refer to a change at the host country or institution level that affects beneficiaries directly or indirectly. Related term: Outcome.

Scope of Work: A written description of the objectives, tasks, approaches or methods, deliverables and schedule for a project or evaluation.

Target: An expected value or level for an indicator, at a specified point in time in the future. The target shows the level of achievement that is expected in order for results to occur. Targets are compared against actual results. A target is defined for each indicator as part of the M&E plan. Related terms: Benchmark, Milestone.

Recommended Monitoring & Evaluation Resources

DRL M&E Resources

- **Sample Logic Model Template (MS Word)**
  http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/257893.docx

- **Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MS Excel)**
  http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/257894.xlsx

- **DRL-Related USG Standard "F" Indicators – Performance Indicator Reference Sheets**
  http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c72333.htm

Democracy, Human Rights and Governance M&E Resources

- **Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Peace**
  DME for Peace is an online platform enabling peacebuilding professionals to find and share resources in order to better identify what works in peacebuilding interventions. Users can access toolkits providing practical guidance on M&E, reports, and a series of webinars highlighting the work of practitioners (M&E Thursday Talks).
  http://dmeforpeace.org/

- **Monitoring and Evaluation: Showing How Democracy and Governance Programs Make a Difference (2013)**
  Handbook developed by the staff of the Office of Monitoring and Evaluation at the International Republican Institute (IRI). This comprehensive resource focuses on applying M&E to democracy assistance and governance programs.
  http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/fields/field_files_attached/resource/external_me_handbookfinal-01-27-16.pdf

- **Training Modules for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Peacebuilding, Search for Common Ground (2013)**
  Synthesizes key concepts, tools and methods for design, monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding programs.
  http://dmeforpeace.org/learn/training-modules-design-monitoring-and-evaluation-peacebuilding

- **Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities: A Handbook for Human Rights Educators – Equitas and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2010)**
  This practical guide builds on existing research and practice in educational evaluation. It provides information on the fundamentals behind program evaluation and step-by-step guidance, including adaptable tools and techniques for the evaluation of human rights training.
  http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/EvaluationHandbookPT18.pdf

- ***Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities: Towards DAC Guidance* – CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2008)**
  This report outlines an approach for evaluating conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.
  http://cdacollaborative.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Encouraging-Effective-Evaluation-of-Conflict-Prevention-and-Peacebuilding-Activities-Towards-DAC-Guidance.pdf

- **Evaluating Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences (2006)**
  Developed by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). It explores methods and techniques of evaluating democracy support. It also notes the challenges present when attempting to establish causality and attribution.
  http://www.idea.int/publications/evaluating_democracy_support/upload/evaluating_democracy_support_cropped.pdf

Policy Advocacy M&E Resources

- **The Advocacy Strategy Framework A tool for articulating an advocacy theory of change – Center for Evaluation Innovation (2015)**
  Provides a simple framework to articulate the theory of change behind policy advocacy strategies.
  http://www.evaluationinnovation.org/sites/default/files/Adocacy%20Strategy%20Framework.pdf

- **Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts – Center for Evaluation Innovation (2013)**
  Brief on theories most directly applicable to either understanding how policy change happens or how specific advocacy tactics play out. This update includes an expanded section on how evaluators, advocates, and funders can apply these theories to advocacy and policy work.
  http://orsimpact.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Center_Pathways_FINAL.pdf

- **Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy: Companion to the Advocacy Toolkit (2010)**
  Documents basic steps in planning M&E for advocacy, including data collection tools and case studies.
  http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Advocacy_Toolkit_Companion.pdf

Indicator Development Resources

- **Human Rights Indicators at Programme and Project Level Guidelines for Defining Indicators, Monitoring and Evaluation -- The Danish Institute for Human Rights Copenhagen (2006)**
  Provides a set of tools by which to plan, monitor and evaluate human rights projects.
  http://www.humanrights.dk/files/media/billeder/udgivelser/indikatormanualwebpdf.pdf

- **Handbook of Democracy and Governance Program Indicators**
  Based on USAID programming for democracy and governance, this gives examples of indicators that other organizations have used to manage programming. This handbook is divided by thematic area: rule of law, elections and political processes, civil society and governance.
  http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnacc390.pdf

- **Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation**
  This step-by-step guide helps readers think through the types of indicators they can collect under the realm of human rights programming. This handbook includes guidance on ethical data collection and interpreting statistical information from a human rights perspective.
  http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Human_rights_indicators_en.pdf

- **World Bank Collected Indicators**

The World Bank has collected relevant indicators on labor, political participation and effective governance.
http://data.worldbank.org/indicator

- **Human Rights Indicators in Development**
  Focuses on the intersection between human rights and international development indicators. This helps in the realm of proxy indicators so that we can identify strong sources of secondary data that are relevant to DRL work.
  http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTLAWJUSTICE/Resources/HumanRightsWP10_Final.pdf

- **USAID Office of Transition Initiatives Lessons Learned—Monitoring & Evaluation in Complex, High-threat Environments**
  Guide on conducting M&E in high-threat environments, emphasis is based on using data for decision-making.
  http://usaidprojectstarter.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/PNADY374.pdf

General M&E Resources

- **U.S. Department of State Evaluation Policy**
  The Department's Evaluation Policy works in concert with evaluation guidance, and draws on the evaluation principles and guidance developed by the American Evaluation Association, the Government Accountability Office and other U.S. government agencies, including USAID.
  http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/evaluation/2015/236970.htm

- **Better Evaluation**
  Better Evaluation is an international collaboration that seeks to improve evaluation practice and theory by sharing information about approaches and methods.
  http://betterevaluation.org/

- **American Evaluation Association (AEA)**
  The AEA provides links to professional evaluation resources, including online courses, workshops, and conferences.
  http://www.eval.org/

- **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)**
  Guidance for donor evaluation efforts.
  www.oecd.org/dac/

- **World Bank Evaluation Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) Resources for Evaluators**
  IEG is independent of the Management of the World Bank Group and reports directly to the Executive Board. This page provides resources for those interested in conducting or commissioning evaluations.
  http://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/evaluators-networks