

Approach to Lesson learning from the initial Joint Assessments

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Approach

The early Joint Assessments of national strategies (JA) are expected to yield useful lessons on the process, the tool and how to improve both. This note sets out proposals on the approach, what the lesson learning report should contain, and key questions for stakeholders.

Lesson learning will mainly take place at country level and could involve three main methods:

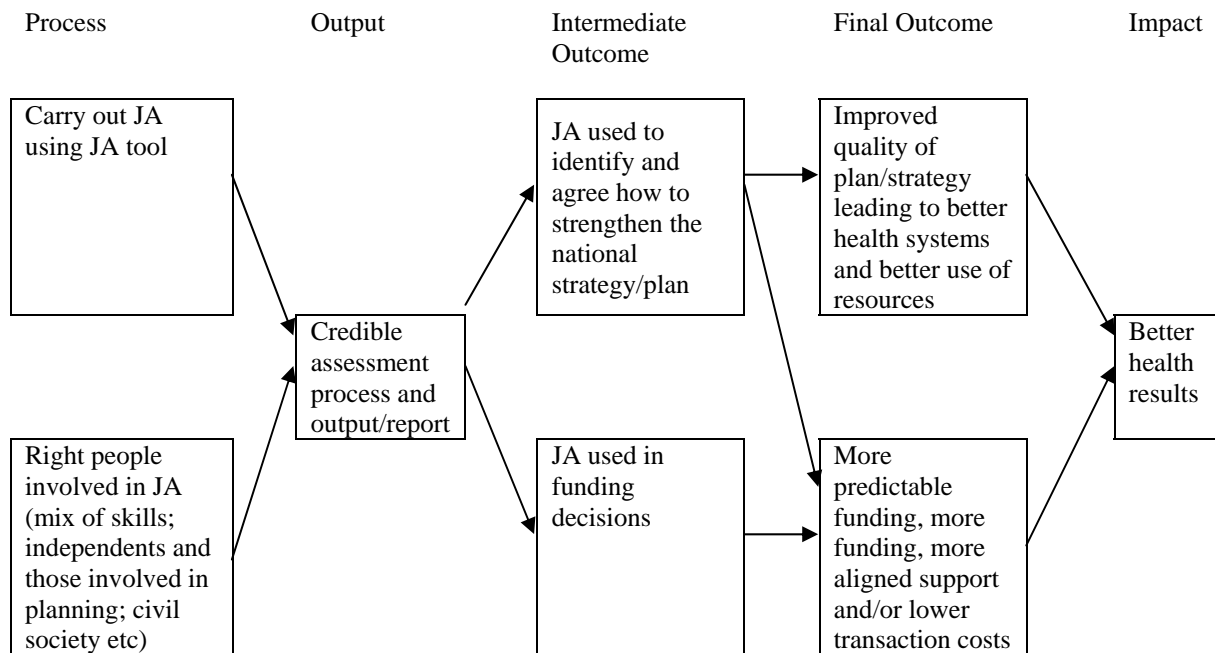
- direct observation of key meetings and processes
- group discussions or individual interviews with stakeholders
- detailed feedback from those involved in making the assessment on the tool, guidelines and process.

It is envisaged that for each of the first 2 to 3 Joint Assessments someone will be identified to lead the process of review, collect and analyse the views of stakeholders, and prepare a report. It is proposed that this role would be given to one of the external assessment team members as part of their terms of reference. This person could be supported by a locally based consultant who can help to observe and collect views on the process. This would bring an element of independence to the review.

At global / headquarters level the intended impact of the JA on decision making processes should be picked up by the IHP+ Results evaluation process. Feedback from agencies on the process of the JA and its outputs could be collected from a timetabled discussion at the executive SURG and a feedback session in the full SURG.

Framework for review of Joint Assessments

A logical framework for assessing the JA process is set out below



Suggested contents of the country Lesson Learning Report

The core issues to be covered in the country lesson learning reports are suggested as follows:

1. Description of the process

- Purpose of the JA and context - at what stage in planning process
- Planning of the JA - who was involved and how was the team selected, etc
- Composition of the JA team – skills, independent or not
- The JA process and activities - who did what, timing
- Steps since the JA and plans for follow up
- Costs of the JA (additional to what would have happened anyway/in the past)
- How the lesson learning was organised

2. Assessment and lessons from the JA

- Was the JA a good process? How could it be improved?
- Was it the right team? How could its selection or composition be improved?
- Feedback on the tool and guidelines, how can they be improved?
- How accurate and useful are the JA findings and recommendations?
- What are lessons for ensuring the assessment is fair, well informed and credible?
- What are the lessons for ensuring the JA is inclusive, transparent and developmental?
- What was the role of the sub-national level in the JA and how can it be made more relevant to sub-national level?
- What are the likely outcomes from the JA?
- How could the JA have more impact on the final outcomes?
- What is the added value of the JA (compared to what would have taken place anyway or in the past)?
- Has the JA added to transaction costs?
- How could it be better dovetailed with existing processes?
- Are there lessons on how to manage a JA efficiently or at lower cost?

Key questions for stakeholders

1. What has the JA contributed that was not there before - what was additional?
2. What would have happened without it - did it replace another process?
3. How well were different stakeholders engaged, including: civil society, USAID and other bilaterals, Non-state providers, Global Fund, GAVI, Ministry of Finance, Local Government, sub-national levels?
4. Any lessons or views on how to ensure effective engagement and inclusiveness?
5. The JA is meant to be developmental, not an exam to pass - how did it feel?
6. Views on the tool and guidelines, how can they be improved?
7. How valid and accurate were the JA findings?
8. What impact is expected on the quality and scope of the strategy/plan?
9. What worked best? What would you recommend changing?
10. What were the additional costs of having the JA? Were they reasonable?
11. Was the timing appropriate? At what stage of strategy development or implementation would you recommend others to carry out a JA?
12. Are the arrangements for follow up of the JA appropriate and working well? Do you expect the challenges and weaknesses identified to be addressed?
13. For government and civil society – what is the value added of the JA from the country perspective? How could its added value be increased?
14. For potential funders: how will the JA affect your plans for funding the strategy/plan? Has it/might it change the content of what you will fund, period of funding, amount or channel for funding?
15. For potential funders: how has/will the JA affect your process for planning and approving funding or technical support (e.g. need for separate missions)?