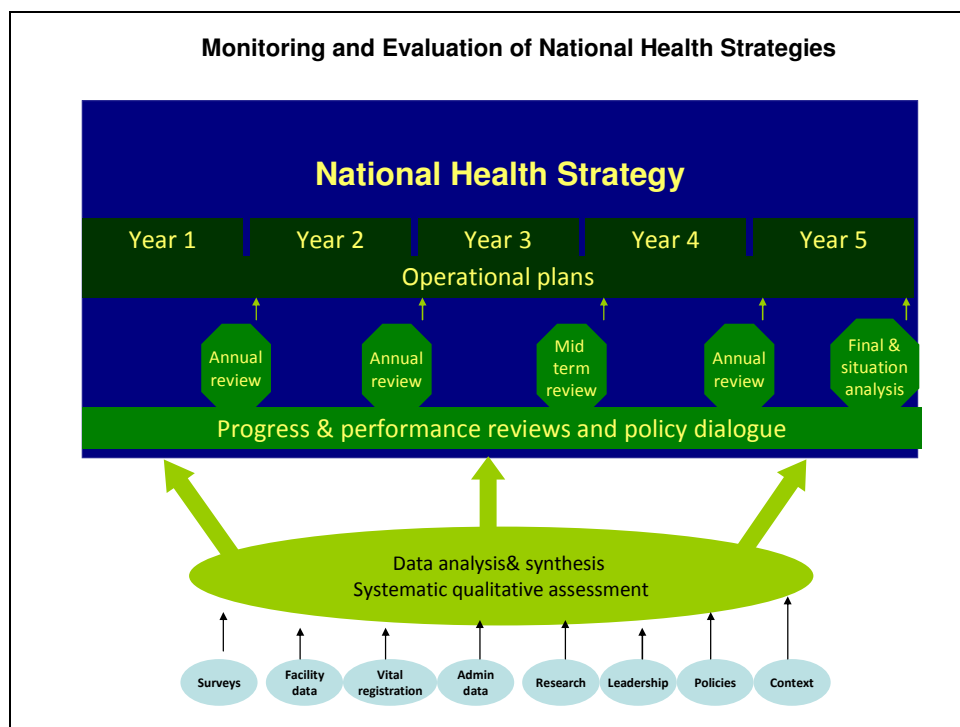# Moving towards one country-led Monitoring & Evaluation platform for national health strategies[1]

One strong country monitoring and evaluation (M&E) platform as part of the national health strategy, policies and plans is the foundation for accountability. M&E informs the progress and performance reviews, including annual health sector and programme reviews, mid term and final reviews. M&E also informs the policy dialogue and influences the development and implementation of short term operational plans as well as long term plans.

The M&E platform should meet a set of minimum criteria, related to the use global standards, transparency, data quality and country institutional roles and responsibilities. Global partners should align themselves with the one country-led M&E platform, including investing in it and minimizing parallel reporting systems. Disease-specific M&E systems should also be part and parcel of the national M&E platform. The importance of a strong monitoring and review platform is emphasized in the Joint Assessment of National Strategies (JANS) approach.

In the Brussels meeting, three sets of questions will be addressed:
1. What are the main challenges / obstacles to implementing this platform?
2. What can be done to overcome those challenges?
3. What are the main recommendations on next steps?

Monitoring and Evaluation of National Health Strategies

Based on a series of consultations involving many countries and international partners, the following elements and characteristics are considered desirable for a national M&E platform:

---

[1] This paper has been prepared for the IHP+ Country Health Sector Teams Meeting by T.Boerma, with inputs from a range of MoH and development agency staff. The objective has been to document some lessons learned on country monitoring and evaluation of national health strategies, policies and plans. It is hoped that it will help the participants have a fruitful discussion on this topic.

Key elements		Characteristics	
I. Policy and Institutional Environment			
1	The national health strategy (NHS) has the core attributes	1.1	NHS is based on a sound situation analysis
		1.2	Goals, objectives and interventions of the NHS are clearly defined
2	The M&E component is an integral part of the NHS and country-led	2.1	M&E is comprehensive and aligned with the main goals of the NHS
		2.2	M&E component is country-led and developed with systematic participation of all key stakeholders
		2.3	M&E is integrated with the country health information system that serves information needs at the different levels of the health system
		2.4	M&E is costed and funded, with partner alignment
3	Roles and responsibilities of country institutions are clearly defined and capacity assured	3.1	Key institutions and stakeholders have clear roles and responsibilities
		3.2	Adequate capacity for all areas of M&E
		3.3	Well-established coordination mechanisms for M&E of the NHS
4	There are periodic progress and performance reviews and processes for development of related corrective measures	4.1	Regular and transparent system of reviews
		4.2	Program-specific reviews are linked to the health sector review
		4.3	Global reporting and performance reviews are aligned with country review processes
		4.4	The M&E system performance is regularly assessed
II. Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Framework			
5	The M&E framework is comprehensive	5.1	Comprehensive framework guides the M&E work
6	M&E framework guides the selection of a core set of indicators	6.1	Balanced and parsimonious set of core indicators
		6.2	Programme and disease-specific indicators are aligned
		6.3	Well-defined baselines and targets
		6.4	Use of global standards for indicators and metadata
		6.5	Specified reporting frequencies
7	Data collection methods & sources are specified in an integrated manner and data gaps identified and addressed	7.1	Critical data gaps and weaknesses identified and an explicit plan developed to address these
		7.2	Data collection and management are specified for different levels.
		7.3	All relevant data and methods are publicly available
8	Data quality issues are anticipated and addressed	8.1	Specific processes for data quality assessment and adjustment in place and transparent
9	Data analysis work is specified	9.1	Data analysis and synthesis work specified and funded
		9.2	Prospective evaluation planned and linked to M&E of NHS
		9.3	Systematic analysis of contextual and qualitative information as basis for policy dialogue and performance review
10	Data dissemination and communication is effective and regular	10.1	Analytical reports for reviews available and accessible
		10.2	Routine feedback to sub-national and key stakeholders
		10.3	Appropriate decision support tools and approaches are used