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Manual for Monitoring & Evaluation of Public Administration Reform Policy



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***Manual for Monitoring & Evaluation of
Public Administration Reform Policy***

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List of Abbreviations

AP	Action Plan
BV	Baseline value (of indicator)
CEP	European Policy Centre
CSF	Civil Society Facility
CSFP	Civil Society Focal Points
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union
FREN	Foundation for Advancement of Economic Science
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MPALSG	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self Government
NAD	Needs Assessment Document, nowadays: Needs of the Republic of Serbia for International Assistance
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA	Public Administration
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PRAG	Practical Guide to Contractual Relations of the EU External Actions
RBM	Results-based Monitoring
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
RSPP	Republic Secretariat for Public Policies
SAO	State administration organisations
SEIO	Serbian European Integration Office
SEKO	Sectoral Civil Society Organisations

SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SLS	State Legislative Secretariat
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound
SO	Statistical Office (of the Republic of Serbia)
ToR	Terms of Reference
TV	Target value (of indicator)

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1. For whom is this Manual intended?

The Manual for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Public Administration Reform Policy (hereinafter: the Manual) is intended for civil servants from the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government (MPALSG), as well as for representatives of other ministries and structures in charge of monitoring and evaluation of the public administration reform (PAR), established in accordance with the Public Administration Reform Strategy (hereinafter: PAR Strategy): Council for PAR, College of State Secretaries and Inter-Sectoral Project Group, including contact persons in the state administration bodies.

Monitoring and evaluation structures of public policies in Serbia had not been structured in a systematic way by the time this Manual went into printing. Public administration reform policy is not an exception either. The PAR Strategy, which came into force in January 2014, foresees the adoption of Methodology for Integrated System of Policy Planning. This methodology regulates the strategic planning process from formulation of Government priorities and aims, to state administration bodies' strategic plans, to development of the Government Annual Work Programme, and ensures that this process is linked to the programme budgeting process. **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of policy effects/the PAR process** is an important measure for implementation of strategic documents, as well as for implementation of the PAR strategy. It represents an essential precondition for enhancing policy effectiveness and efficiency while carrying out the set objectives.

The implementation of the PAR Strategy is done on the basis of action plans (with duration of two or three years). The strategy envisages structures for coordination of reform implementation, which also entails M&E processes: PAR Council, College of State Secretaries, Inter-ministerial Project Group, as well as the organisational unit within the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government in charge of these tasks.¹ All these structures were neither created nor in the process of creation at the moment of the final preparation of this Manual.

The implemented activities represent only the beginning of public policies' planning, development, coordination and monitoring processes in Serbia, which will be based on a range of actions in the coming period. The success of these activities and the entire process will depend not

¹ Public Administration Reform Strategy, "Official Journal RS", no. 020-656/2014, p. 21. The Strategy is available on the Government website.

only on the Government programme and ministries' plans, but also on human resource capacities and available resources.

In light of the creation of structures for systemic monitoring of public policies, as well as for their evaluation, a large number of civil servants will obtain new tasks which they have not encountered before. The aim of this Manual is to help civil servants to properly perform M&E tasks by providing information about the elements and structure of these processes, and the role of different actors. More concretely, this manual gives answers to the following questions:

- Where is the place of monitoring and evaluation in the process of public policy management?
- What does the concept of PAR monitoring entail?
- What are the subject and aims of PAR monitoring?
- What is results-based monitoring (RBM)?
- What are the importance and the function of the PAR monitoring tool?
- Who is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the PAR? Monitoring structures.
- What is evaluation of the PAR policy?
- What are the subject and the aims of PAR policy evaluation?
- Who is in charge of PAR policy evaluation?
- What types of evaluation exist?
- How to involve civil society organisations in M&E of the PAR policy?
- How to integrate gender related questions into the PAR M&E process?

This manual is prepared within the framework of the project “Achieving Effective Policy Monitoring and Evaluation with the Evidence Supplied by Civil Society”, financed by the European Union under the Civil Society Facility Programme (CSF), co-financed by the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The overall aim of the project is to increase the effects and relevance of public policies through more evidence-based use of M&E as an intrinsic part of the PAR. The specific aims of the project are: a) to ensure the effective involvement of civil society in policy monitoring and evaluation and b) to improve the awareness and understanding of policy makers, civil servants, as well as CSOs of the benefits and specific ways/tools of involv-

ing the civil society in policy monitoring and evaluation. The project is implemented by the Foundation for Advancement of Economic Science (FREN) and the European Policy Centre (CEP).

Apart from this Manual, the “Manual for Involvement of Civil Society Organisations in M&E of Public Policies” and the study “How to Get Results in Public Policies? Monitoring and Evaluation with the Evidence Supplied by Civil Society”² were prepared within this project. Moreover, the project also incorporated awareness-raising activities related to public policy M&E and the importance of consultations with external stakeholders. They included holding a round table for representatives of civil society organisations; holding a high-level public debate with state representatives, renowned CSO representatives and foreign experts; and capacity-building activities both of civil servants and CSO representatives related to performing public policy M&E tasks.

² Sena Marić, Jelena Žarković Rakić, Ana Aleksić Mirić and Milena Lazarević, “How to Get Results in Public Policies? Monitoring and Evaluation with the Evidence Supplied by Civil Society” Fondacija za razvoj ekonomske nauke and Centar za evropske politike, Belgrade, September 2014. http://www.cep.org.rs/images/me_studija/study_final.pdf

2. Monitoring and Evaluation in the Policy Making Process

Monitoring and evaluation are very important steps in the policy cycle. They are part of the “policy learning” phase (see *Picture 1* below), in which it is necessary to monitor the implementation of a given public policy, as well as to evaluate its effects and impact.

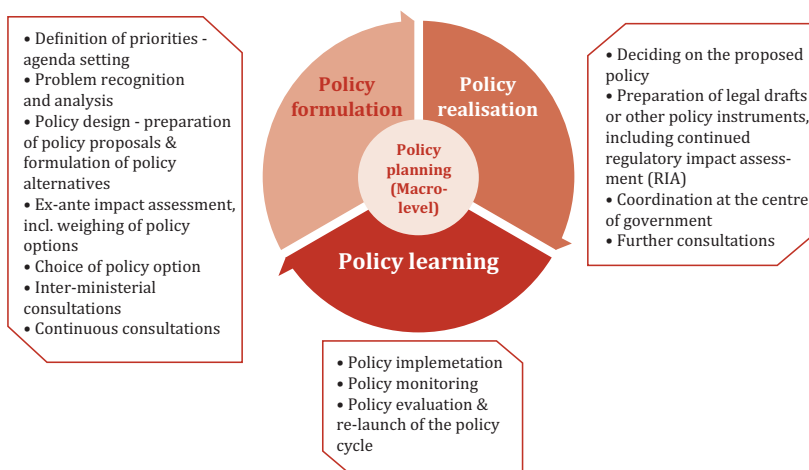
Public policy can most widely be defined as “[...] whatever governments choose to do or not to do”.³ Public policy is:

- **An activity based on the government’s mandate:** it is an action implemented by the government body that has the legislative, political and financial authority to do so;
- **A response to real needs or problems:** public policy should aim to react to practical needs and problems of the society or groups within the society, for example citizens, NGOs or government bodies.
- **Goal and result-oriented activity:** it seeks to achieve a range of **clearly defined goals**, by which it aims to respond to concrete needs of the society and the state;
- **A range of coherent activities:** it consists of a well-thought set of interlinked actions, due to which it can be thought of as “approach” and “strategy”;
- **A decision (of the government or government body) to do/not to do something:** public policy can be a decision to undertake actions with the aim to resolve a certain problem, or it can be based on the belief that the problem will be solved in the framework of an already existing policy, and therefore not necessitating additional action;
- **Carried out by one or more actors:** it can be implemented by a single government representative or a government body, or by several actors;
- **A justification for action:** a document that outlines a policy containing a statement on why it is necessary to conduct that policy;
- **An action based on a decision made:** it consists of decisions that have already been made, and not of intentions/promises.⁴

³ Dye 1992, cited in Anderson 1994. Retrieved from Eoin Young and Lisa Quinn, „Pisanje delotvornih predloga za javnu praktičnu politiku: vodič za savetnike za praktičnu politiku u zemljama Srednje i Istočne Evrope“, Institut za otvoreno društvo. Belgrade, 2003. p. 5.

⁴ Young and Quinn, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

Public policy cycle is a **model for managing public policies** that prescribes main features to be implemented by policy makers if they want to follow good practice examples, but not the concrete actions that policy maker should undertake in each particular situation.⁵ This definition suggests that policy makers should carefully and in line with the existing capacities (circumstances, resources, timeframe, etc.) formulate, plan and realise particular steps and elements of public policies. The policy cycle and the place of monitoring and evaluation within the cycle can be seen on Picture 1 below:



Picture 1: Phases of the policy cycle⁶

⁵Ibid. p. 13.

⁶ Milena Lazarević, Sena Marić, Amanda Orza, "Policy Making and EU Accession Negotiations: Getting Results for Serbia", Centar za evropske politike, Belgrade, 2013, p. 15. http://www.cep.org.rs/images/cepgizkonf/studija/policy_making_and_eu_accession_negotiations_study_cep_giz.pdf

3. Monitoring of Public Policies

What is monitoring of public policies? Definition and goal.

Monitoring represents systemic and continuous data collection for the sake of providing insights into the state of certain policy/programme/project in the given moment in relation to target objectives and results.⁷ **Monitoring of public policies** is information collection **during** the implementation of a given policy in order to process collected information, analyse and use it as data and facts to be considered when planning future actions in the policy realisation process, observing progress in its implementation and the use of available resources.⁸

Monitoring is supposed to demonstrate whether we are on the right path to the achievement of the goals of public policy, or whether we should adapt that policy so as to attain the desired results. The ultimate goal of monitoring is to bring timely decisions in order to improve the results of the policy/activity of state institutions and bodies, and potentially introduce amendments during the implementation.

All steps in the monitoring process (see below for more on the monitoring process) require management and coordination capacities, overview and data collection for monitoring, data analysis and preparation of reports, as well as presentation of monitoring results, both to policy makers (national/local parliament, government) and to other stakeholders (civil society, private sector, international community).

Therefore, the PAR Strategy determines new institutional and organisational structure for coordination, which among others includes M&E of the strategy implementation process, i.e. the sub-policy of public administration reform that is defined by this strategy.

Subject of PAR Monitoring

As it is the case with every public policy, the subject of the PAR policy is the corresponding strategic document which sets the objectives and results that should be achieved by carrying out that policy.

⁷ "Basic Terminology and Frameworks for Monitoring and Evaluation", UNAIDS, 2009, pp. 18-20; European Commission, DG Secretariat General, "Evaluation Guidelines", November 2013, pp. 7-8.

⁸ Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić i Lazarević, op. cit., p. 8. http://cep.org.rs/images/me_studija/study_final.pdf

Every public policy and its implementation are based on a corresponding, precisely defined strategic document (or another policy document) which sets mid-term or long-term directions in realisation of the given policy. In addition, in accordance with these directions, the strategic document sets general and specific strategic objectives, which are implemented on the basis of a detailed action plan (see *Table 1* below with the structure of the Action Plan for the PAR Strategy implementation). The development of good-quality strategic documents (strategies and corresponding action plans) for policy implementation, based on precise background analysis and adequately defined policy priorities, represents the basic prerequisite for successful policy monitoring (and later on, evaluation).

Hence, the PAR policy, whose lead institution is the MPALSG, is based on the **Public Administration Reform Strategy in the Republic of Serbia**,⁹ adopted in January 2014, to be implemented on the basis of the **Action Plan for Implementation of the Public Administration Reform for the Period 2015-2016**,¹⁰ a document that is expected to be adopted by the Government at the beginning of 2015.¹¹

Even though the structure/organisation of action plans may vary from one case to another, the Action Plan for Implementation of the PAR Strategy contains the following elements:

- Overall objective – for which the impact indicator is defined, aligned with goals and indicators set for monitoring of IPA II for the PAR sector;
- Specific objectives that fulfil the overall objective – in accordance with the PAR Strategy, for which the outcome indicators are defined;¹²
- Measures within the specific objectives – based on the titles from the PAR Strategy, they represent “document subtitles by which coherent and interlinked results are grouped”¹³, and consequently, the indicators on the level of measure are not defined.

⁹ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit. p. 21.

¹⁰ Initially, Action Plan for Implementation of PAR Strategy of Republic of Serbia 2015-2016 was supposed to cover the three-year period (2014-2016), but it was practically designed for a two-year period, given that during 2014 this document was being prepared and revised. For this reason, a separate annex was made (Annex 1) of the AP, which enumerates realised activities in 2014 in a table format, in accordance with the structure of measures and objectives from the Strategy.

¹¹ By the time this manual went into printing, the Draft Action Plan for Implementation of the PAR Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2015-2016 was in the public consultation process. According to the Ministry's plan, the Government should adopt this document by the end of January 2015.

¹² The PAR Strategy does not define the goals at this level as specific; effort has been made so that such characteristics are provided through indicators.

¹³ The Action Plan for Implementation of the PAR Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2015-2016. Belgrade, December 2014, p. 7.

- **Results**, which are **basic units for measurement of the level of AP implementation**, and which are also defined on outcome level, given that they signal a change in the actual state of play and not in the concrete, direct result of a certain activity, which would be an output level;
- **Activities** – they do not represent an exhaustive list of activities for achievement of a result, but the main/basic ones that can be distinguished. Accordingly, the activities are grouped, in order to avoid unnecessary fragmentation;¹⁴
- **Deadlines for completion of activities** which contribute to implementation of results;
- **Baseline value and target value indicators** for overall and specific objectives, as well as on result level;
- **Financial resources** from the budget and/or donor resources;
- **Responsible institutions** for implementation of results;
- **Partner institutions** in achievement of results, which can bear primary responsibility for a certain activity or they can only be partners in its completion.

The described AP structure is illustrated in *Table 1* below:

Overall objective:				Indicator (impact level)			
Specific objective 1:				Indicator (outcome level)			
Measure 1.1:							
Result	Activity	Deadline for completion	Baseline value and target value indicators	Estimated extra financial resources		Responsible institution	Partners in completion
				Budget (national)	Donations		
Result 1.1.1.	1.						
	2.						
	3.						
Result 1.1.2.	1.						
	2.						
	3.						

Table 1: Elements of the Action Plan for Implementation of the PAR Strategy, based on which the progress in this process is monitored

¹⁴The group of activities that represent mandatory and usual elements are not listed as special activities; they are instead incorporated in the activity statement.

Results-based Monitoring of Public Policies

Results-based monitoring (RBM) is a continuous process of data collection and information analysis **during** policy implementation, **with focus on results/outcomes** of public policies, with the aim to compare the quality of policy implementation versus the set objectives.¹⁵

RBM is a powerful management tool, which helps state institutions to present the impact and the outcome to stakeholders and public groups and to gain public support. It is similar to an implementation/process monitoring system,¹⁶ but it goes beyond in its focus – the focus of results-based monitoring does not end with the implementation, i.e. the input values, activities and outputs, but it is mostly focused on **outcomes and impact**.¹⁷

In *Table 2* below, the elements of a process/implementation and results-based monitoring system can be discerned, as well as the example of a result from the AP for the PAR Strategy implementation, with elements of both process and results-based monitoring.

Implementation monitoring		Results-based monitoring		
→	→	→	→	→
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcome	Impact
Resources (financial, technical support and other) mobilised for implementation of activities.	Implemented activities or work that required mobilisation of inputs (finances, technical support and other types of resources)	Products and services that result in the implementation of activities defined in the framework of public policy	Desired or achieved short-term or long-term effects of public policy outcomes, which normally require the common engagement of all partners involved. The results at this level are implemented between the realisation of outputs and impact.	Positive or negative long-term effects on a particular target group which are achieved by a public policy, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally. They can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, ecological, technological, and other.

¹⁵ Based on: Jody Zall Kusek, Ray Rist. "A Handbook for Development Practitioners: Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System", World Bank, Washington, 2004, p. 16.

¹⁶ Process monitoring or implementation monitoring focuses on inputs, as well as carrying out activities and outputs. However, this type of monitoring does not provide information that would help policy makers and interested public in gaining insight in reasons behind success or failure of a programme, a project or a policy.

¹⁷ Kusek, Rist, op. cit., p. 26.

Example from the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation				
300.000 euros (EU IPA 2012 - project "Preparation of conditions for organisational and functional restructuring of the public administration system in RS")	1. Implementation of systemic analysis of PA with recommendations for improvement (...) 2. Preparation of the plan for improving overall organisation of the PA system (...) 3. Carrying out an analysis of the strategic purposefulness of selected organisations in the PA system	Improved organisational forms and their relations; number of organisations and employees in PA implementation (Result 1.1.1.)	Improvement of organisational and fictional PA sub-systems (Specific objective 1)	Further improvement of the work of PA in accordance with the European Administrative Space principles and providing high-quality services to citizens and business entities, as well as creation of public administration that would significantly contribute to economic stability and improvement of the living standard (Overall objective)
Approximately 50.000 EUR (World Bank)	4. Providing support to SAO in the preparation and implementation of rationalisation plans from the MMF programme with the aim to minimise the negative impact on PA capacity			
100.000 EUR (activity 5 and 6) - funding is not committed	5. Preparation and adoption/ amendment of acts necessary to implement the plan from Activity 2. 6. Elimination or merger of existing organisations in accordance with recommendations from the Activity 3 analyses, by adopting/ amending the related acts.			

Table 2: Elements of implementation monitoring and results-based monitoring and example from the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation

Results-based monitoring, therefore, is about continuous monitoring of delivery of objectives and results defined in the PAR Strategy and the Action Plan, **during** the implementation of the PAR policy, i.e. by monitoring the progress in achieving SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) objectives/results that are defined in advance. Some of the questions are listed here, which could help policy makers and responsible actors in the policy monitoring process to acquire information on the progress in achieving results:

- What are the objectives and the results of public policy?
- Are we delivering these objectives?
- Can we prove the progress in implementation of objectives and results? How do we measure progress?
- Are there any obstacles to achieving objectives/results and how can they be overcome in any given moment?¹⁸

Concretely, in the case of the PAR Strategy, the RBM is covering questions related to the Strategy effectiveness, as well as to its overall performance and progress in achieving impact indicators, measures and results

¹⁸ Kusek, Rist, op. cit., p. 11.

from the Action Plan for the PAR Strategy Implementation. For that reason, most of the elements of the AP matrix are result-oriented, especially the indicators and inputs. But, the elements of process/implementation monitoring approach have been kept, which are based on activities – for each result, the main activities necessary for its achievement are listed and the deadlines for realisation of those activities are given. However, the AP **introduces the basis for monitoring the achievement of higher objectives of the public administration reform policy**, given that it formulates objective and result indicators on SMART level (objectively measurable indicators).¹⁹

Power of Measuring Results.²⁰

- If results are not measured, you cannot distinguish success from failure.
- If you cannot see success, you cannot reward it.
- If you cannot reward success, probably thereby you stimulate/support failure.
- If you cannot see success, you cannot learn from it.
- If you cannot recognise failure, you cannot fix it.
- If you present results, you will gain public support.

¹⁹ Action Plan, op. cit., p.6.

²⁰ Kusek, Rist, op. cit., p.11.

Steps in Monitoring Implementation

Step 1: Define Results

In the preparation of the monitoring process, it is essential to make a thorough background/problem analysis, so as to determine long-term and mid-term objectives, as well as specific, measurable results (SMART). Based on precisely defined SMART objectives and results, indicators for monitoring are defined (more on indicators in **Step 2** in monitoring implementation). However, the indicators should be also considered **during** the process of defining results, at all levels. A well-thought definition of policy objectives and results sets a solid basis for later formulation of good-quality indicators, and thus for successful monitoring and evaluation of that policy.

Defining results is crucial for a results-based monitoring system. The establishment of this system is a deductive process in which inputs, activities and outputs stem from the results defined on the outcome level. Indicators, baseline values (BV) and target values (TV) (more on BV and TV in **Step 3** and **Step 4**), which represent the key elements within monitoring of performance in carrying out the given policy, stem from results and are based on them.²¹ For the purpose of determining SMART results, sometimes, if needed, studies and research are carried out and administrative data necessary for better understanding and needs assessment in the given policy field is collected, in this case of public administration reform in Serbia, and thereby of data necessary for formulation of objectives to be achieved, as clearly and precisely as possible.

When defining results/outcomes, it is recommendable to involve a large number of different state institutions representatives and bodies in charge of later implementation and results monitoring at that level, as well as civil society representatives (see part on involving civil society in the monitoring process) and other interested stakeholders, to ensure legitimacy and public support for the policy.

However, defining results implies understanding of the **hierarchy of results** and the hierarchy of indicators, the latter being determined by the former. **Logical connection between impact, outcome and output results is indispensable.** *Picture 2* below demonstrates the hierarchy of results:

²¹ Ibid., p. 57.



Picture 2: Hierarchy of results

Step 2: Create Indicators – Main M&E Tool

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables which represent a simple and reliable tool for monitoring the level of progress in implementation of results (in results-based monitoring process), i.e. the overview of changes related to the public policy that is being monitored or the performance assessment of the institution in charge of the given policy implementation.

Indicators are developed at different levels, depending on the level of results being attributed. Indicators at all levels should be well linked to results at the corresponding levels and to the previously defined strategic/policy document. Moreover, the indicators at different levels should be well inter-linked – for example, impact indicators should be able to measure the most important factors that influence the achievement of outcome indicators. Defining impact indicators without the milestones in activity realisation, through which the achievement of results would be monitored, should be avoided.

Defining good-quality indicators takes time. In addition, the expenses for measuring indicators – the resources (human, financial, material, etc.) necessary for their measurement and making them available should be taken into account.

Proper formulation of indicators requires following SMART principles when defining objectives and results, as well as some additional principles presented in *Table 3*:

Specificity:	The indicator must ensure that the implementation of specific policy goals and objectives is properly assessed.
Causality:	The indicators on different levels (for more on different levels, see below) must be clearly and logically interrelated. In other words, the long-term results must be dependent on the delivery of outcomes, while their accomplishment should depend on the generation of outputs. Equally, the implementation of different-level indicators must differ, whereby the outputs should be generated most quickly, while the assessment of the long-term results is only possible after a longer period, normally no earlier than one year.
Usability and cost-effectiveness:	The indicators must ensure assessment of the progress in the implementation of corresponding results. The costs of data collection and processing should be considered when creating or improving the system of indicators, in the sense that the usability of information should be more valuable than obtaining the information per se. Thus, the use of indicators which do not provide useful information or do not constitute a basis for decision-making should be avoided.
Measurability:	The value of an indicator should be measurable, i.e. there should be a method that would unambiguously ensure the calculation of its value. The responsible institution should be able to foresee the optimal number of indicators: their number has to be limited, given that in the opposite case mistakes may appear in determining the most important results and/or activities necessary for further conduct of the programme.
Reliability:	The indicator has to be clearly formulated, so as to prevent divergent interpretations of its meaning. Its value should be based on a clear calculation method.
Achievability:	The indicator's pursued value should be realistic and justified.

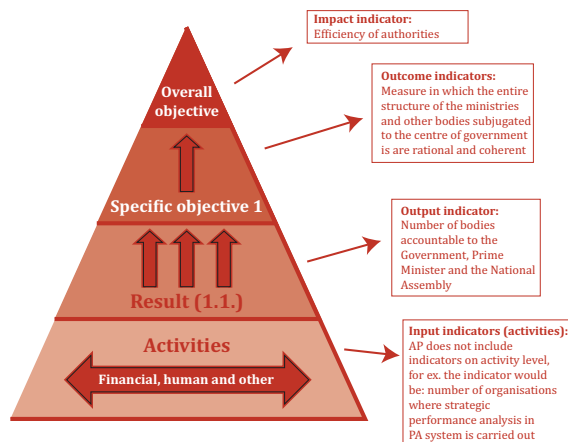
Periodicity:	Information on indicators' implementation should be regularly collected, processed and submitted to a relevant institution, in accordance with the prescribed rules.
Proper balance:	It is advisable to create an equal number of qualitative and quantitative indicators while monitoring a certain phenomenon. The percentage distribution may vary depending on the specific circumstances of the policy/institution. ²²
Involvement of political and managerial actors:	Leaders of institutions and civil servants on managerial positions should be involved in the process of development of indicators and their target values, so as to ensure ownership of indicators and their acceptance by the civil servants.
Competence:	The persons in charge of developing indicators and their values need to have required knowledge, experience and skills.
Cooperation:	Prior to the approval of strategic documents and corresponding action plans, it is recommended to hold consultations and discussions on the most important impact and outcome indicators with civil servants from other institutions, experts, end-users and other relevant actors. ²³

Table 3: Principles to be applied when defining indicators

There are different **levels of indicators for monitoring** i.e. evaluation of the conduct of a certain policy, depending on the level of results to which the indicators are linked, as it can be seen on *Picture 3*:

²² SIGMA and the EU recommend the lowest possible number of output indicators in the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation in Serbia.

²³ Adapted based on: „Improvement of Performance-Based Management (IPBM), Methodology for Formulating and Applying Performance Measures Used in Strategic Planning Documents”, Prime Minister's Office, Lithuania, 2011, pp. 7-10.



Picture 3: Example of vertical logical linkage of indicators at different result levels on the example of the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation

Input indicators. These indicators measure the type of resources (financial, human and others) used to develop a certain product or provide an envisaged service, i.e. for the conduct of an activity that leads to the achievement of concrete outputs. In the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation, these are for example estimated additional financial resources. They are important for measuring the ratio between the expenses and outputs. Input indicators are utilised for internal control within the institutions and for performance analysis. In the RBM system normally it is not necessary to define indicators at this level.

Process indicators. These indicators entail the actions necessary to conduct a given policy within the competent institution. The use of process indicators is very useful when it is difficult to articulate quantitative values of products or services. They are equally used for internal analysis of performance of an institution and make part of the annual reports.

Output indicators. These indicators measure the level of success of an activity being conducted to achieve direct output of the implemented policy, and are rather linked to the process monitoring than to the RBM approach. In the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation, the indicators that help us measure the success of activities implementation are not defined, given that its aim is to increase the extent of the RBM monitoring.

Outcome indicators. Indicators at this level are crucial for RBM, because they measure the success in achieving direct outcomes of the policy being monitored. In the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation, the indicators by which the success of achieving **specific objectives** and results is measured are mostly defined at outcome level, but, as it is stated in the main methodological remarks in the AP, the result level is not always equilibrated:

“In the RBM approach there are different levels of determining outcome and output results. In some approaches they are difficult to distinguish, but in substance, the definition of result level depends on the level of aggregation of the document for which the logical framework matrix is being developed. If the activities are very detailed and the input is planned (for example 20 days of training for civil servants on the topic of fight against corruption), the direct output of these activities will remain at a very low level (output – for example certain number of civil servants trained). If the level of document aggregation is higher and the activities are of a more general character (for example carrying out training programme), then the direct results will be at a higher level (outcome – for example civil servants understand their rights and obligations in the area of fight against corruption). The result in both cases can be defined at the middle level, i.e. **between the outcome and the output levels**. It is important that the results are defined at the level of what is aimed to be achieved, so that a change in the reality on which we want to act can be observed”.²⁴

By monitoring the progress in achieving identified target values of indicators at this level, the level of achievement of defined PAR Strategy objectives is being monitored. For a simpler and more precise formulation of outcome indicators, it is important to be guided by the following questions:

What? Which variables serve for measuring change during the achievement of an outcome, where a minimum or a certain quality standard that we aim to accomplish is taken into account? It is important to examine the reasoning, accuracy and cost-effectiveness of the implementation of a given policy/strategy, and decide which indicator contributes most to the provision of information to managers/decision-makers.

How much? We define the scope/domain of the change we want to achieve by a policy.

Who? The target group that we influence during the implementation of the strategic objectives and results of a policy.

²⁴ Action Plan, op. cit., p. 8.

Where? Additional data on the topic entailed by the public policy (if it is not clear after defining the target group – who?)

When? Timeframe for achieving objectives and results, which also sets the framework for defining deadlines for collection of data on the implementation of a given policy/strategy and for reporting on the level of progress in carrying out the results.

***Application in AP:** In the Action Plan for the PAR Strategy Implementation result indicators are principally identified in accordance with the above described methodology and the RBM principles.*

Maximum two indicators per result are identified (or 3 exceptionally).

Impact indicators. In the Action Plan for the PAR Strategy Implementation, the impact indicator is defined so as to measure the performance in implementing the **overall objective** of the AP. This indicator shows final users the benefits that stem from direct policy implementation. It is mainly utilised for **evaluation** of policy objectives, and therefore, it must present the content and long-term policy effects (see more about this type of indicator in part 4 of the Manual, which deals with policy evaluation).

In the absence of an integrated approach to monitoring and evaluation in the Republic of Serbia, it is advisable to apply a somewhat simplified approach when monitoring the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation based on the two most common types of indicators:

- **“Output indicators** of implemented actions, which suggest the completion of a certain activity or a group of activities. Output indicators can be process-based or aiming at final results (i.e. hint at something that is being realised by achieving one or more processes). The second group is more useful because it provides data on results instead of processes, and
- **Outcome indicators**, i.e. results of policy implementation that indicate mid-term changes in a certain policy field, and which are a result of several outputs during a certain time period. Outcome indicators provide to policy makers and the society as a whole an assessment of the extent to which the objectives have been achieved during the implementation phase.”²⁵

²⁵ Martins Krievins, “Comments on the result indicators framework and the success used in the draft Action Plan for Implementation of the PAR Strategy in the Republic of Serbia and recommendations for possible improvements”, SIGMA, April 2014, p. 5.

Depending on the method of collecting information, analytical methods used for data processing and types of final data to be gained with analysis, the indicators can be:

Qualitative indicators demonstrate qualitative (descriptive) characteristics of policy effects, both positive and negative, which stem from data collected through various qualitative methods that describe and interpret changes in indicator values. The most common qualitative methods are participative analysis, open-ended interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, secondary literature analysis, observation methods, et al.²⁶

Quantitative indicators weigh quantitative (numerical) values. They are formulated on the basis of precise, quantitative information gained through methods which seek to explain changes in indicator values by applying mathematical/numerical methods. The most commonly applied quantitative methods are surveys, close-ended questionnaires with predefined structure, econometric and numerical methods, et al. They are most commonly applied on a larger sample.²⁷

Indicator Passports

“Indicator passports” are, illustratively put, identification documents of indicators, which ensure gathering in one place of basic information of all defined performance indicators, including some of its key institutional aspects (for example which institution collects data for performance monitoring of the given indicator, how often and similar).²⁸

Indicator passports are developed based on methodology produced by SIGMA (*Support for Improvement in Governance and Management*) with the aim to provide useful information about each formulated indicator for the sake of effortless monitoring and understanding which institution collects data and data collection frequency, as well as to keep the number of indicators at a reasonable level.

OECD/SIGMA suggests that the preparation of “indicator passports” begins even before the adoption of the the PAR Action Plan by the Government, because it will help to avoid accepting indicators where no data is available, or if too costly, to begin with data collection. Data collection for performance indicators is a rather resource-intensive business, therefore

²⁶ Fiona Divine, “Qualitative research” in “Theory and Methods in Political Science”, David Marsh and Geri Stoker (ed.), Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002. pp. 207-215.

²⁷ Peter John, “Quantitative research”, in “Theory and Methods in Political Science”, David Marsh and Geri Stoker (ed.), Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002. pp. 216-230.

²⁸ Krievins, op. cit., p. 7.

re it would be good to know which indicators are already available and which are not. In some cases, completely new performance indicators can be introduced, but then resources for their collection should be cost-appraised and included as a separate item in additional costs and sources of financing (it can also be formulated as a fiscal impact assessment) of the PAR Action Plan.

Table 4 shows detailed instructions for development of indicator passports:

Instructions for developing “indicator passports” ²⁹	
Title of indicator	Insert full title of indicator from the draft Action Plan.
Corresponding overall/specific objective or result	Insert the relation with the corresponding general/specific objective or the result to which the concrete indicator relates.
Data source for monitoring performance indicator	<p>Fill in information as to whether the data for monitoring of indicators is collected on domestic or international level.</p> <p>It is important to distinguish between these types of indicators so as to observe to what extent the data for monitoring the indicators may vary, because sometimes the method of measuring indicators on international level changes significantly, whereas sometimes their measurement is entirely missing.</p>
Name of institution in charge of collecting data	<p>Insert full name of the institution in charge of data collection in terms of a concrete performance indicator and publishing/enclosing that data.</p> <p>This information will be used in order to inform the relevant institutions about their duties, as well as to monitor the results of the institutions involved in the overall monitoring, reporting and evaluation system with regards to the Public Administration Reform Strategy and the Action Plan for its implementation.</p>
Data collection frequency	<p>Insert information on how often the responsible institutions collect data on a concrete performance indicator and publish it.</p> <p>This information is necessary in order to understand data about which indicators may be used for development of quarterly, semi-annual and annual monitoring reports prepared by the Ministry.</p>

²⁹ Krievins, op. cit., p. 7.

Short methodology description	<p>Insert a short description of a constructing and measuring performance indicator. If the explicit methodology for measuring that indicator is published on the Internet, it is advisable to insert a link to that methodological document here.</p> <p>Understanding the method used for measuring an/the indicator is necessary in order to observe a) the extent to which the presented data is relevant and reliable and b) how many resources should be attributed for measurement of that indicator if it is a new one for which no mechanisms of data collection exist.</p>
Data on the current state of play	<p>Insert data on the existing state of a concrete indicator, if such data exists. Insert data for maximum three previous years (i.e. 2014, 2013 and 2012).</p>

Table 4: Instructions for development of “indicator passports”, in accordance with the SIGMA methodology

In certain cases, and especially when it comes to new performance indicators, not all the information will always be available. In these cases, the descriptions inserted in the table will be significantly shortened. They could be much longer but, it is advisable not to be longer than two pages in total.³⁰

Step 3: Data Collection on Baseline Value

Baseline value of an indicator is data, qualitative or qualitative, on the baseline state of the indicator (**first important indicator measurement**) at the beginning of monitoring or before monitoring, which is contrasted with information obtained by monitoring the indicator, and in relation to which the progress in implementation of a given policy is measured.

The baseline indicator value is used as a first step or guideline in relation to which the future impact of public policy is monitored.³¹ With every change of indicator, the baseline is being altered based on which the policy progress is measured. Hence, every indicator must have its baseline at the moment of collection of first data for the given indicator.

When defining an indicator’s baseline value, it is desirable to involve as many individuals from the institutions in charge of progress monitoring of baseline indicator values; in this case, as many persons as possible

³⁰ Martins Krievins, op. cit, p.8.

³¹ Kusek, Rist, op. cit. p. 81.

in charge of monitoring the progress on indicators at the level of objectives and results of the Action plan on the PAR Strategy Implementation.

Step 4: Define Target Values and Deadlines for Implementation

Target value of an indicator is a qualitative or quantitative overview of an indicator, and actually represents the desired level of performance to be achieved in a certain period. It is defined upon a formulation of the BV of an indicator and the summing of that value with the desired improvement of effects.

The target value is normally shown as a periodic value (for example annual or bi-annual), i.e. it demonstrates the progress in achieving certain objective over a certain period of time. This means that, aside from formulating target indicator values, this step also implies defining deadlines/dates for their achievement, whereby it is necessary to take into account specific features of a policy and the Action Plan implementation timeframe, as well as factors that may influence its implementation (for example, political and social circumstances).

Step 5: Data Collection for Assessing the Level of Realisation of Results

Data collection for assessing the extent to which the results have been achieved represents the collection of information on changes in baseline (*Step 3*) and target (*Step 4*) indicator values, which relate to defined policy objectives and results.

During the data collection, we are looking for continual answers in time-bound intervals (monitoring deadlines) to the following questions:³²

- What are the means of verification?
- What methods will be used for data collection (for example, before-and-after comparison method)?
- Who will collect the data?
- How often will the data be collected – time intervals?
- What are the costs and/or potential difficulties in data collection?
- Who will analyse the data?

³² Kusek, Rist, op. cit. p. 82.

- Who will report on the data which relates to changes in the baseline and the target indicator values?
- Who will apply/use the data?

There are different methods for data collection on indicators. **Quantitative methods** for data collection necessary for monitoring the extent of achievement of objectives represent numerical display of the achieved change (for example surveys, public opinion surveys, application of statistical software, and others). **Qualitative methods** are for example techniques for so-called quick assessment, focus groups, data from panel discussions, semi-structured interviews, etc., which enable open and detailed analysis of primary and/or secondary data, while the change in the achievement of objectives is presented descriptively. There are also **participatory methods** (for example mapping, data arrangement etc.), **logical framework** (which is most commonly used in the RBM system), et al.

Monitoring the level of results achievement in the PAR Strategy is done by collecting data on target and actual values of indicators which are defined in the AP, as well as on other indicators formulated by the Government. Through data collection it is necessary to gain information about the:

- Policy implementation process;
- Output results delivery with the aim of achieving the pursued result;
- Use of resources and spent resources;
- Context in which the monitoring is performed.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SO) collects and publishes statistical information on achieving economic and social indicators defined by the Government. In accordance with some of the EU best practices, the SO should closely cooperate with the contact persons in the ministries and the monitoring and evaluation units in terms of consultations on data collection methods, so as to ensure data usability and reliability.³³ In the Republic of Serbia, these contact persons have still not been appointed in most of the ministries.

Apart from SO data, data collection is performed by applying different methods:

- Analysis of available documentation – such as semi-annual reports

³³ Taken from Lithuanian by-law which regulates monitoring: Unofficial version of Government's decision on Strategic Planning Methodology approval No 1220, 25.08.2010, Valstybės Žinios (Official Gazette), 2010, No 102-5279 (28-08-2010). The document is provided during the meetings with officials from the Prime Minister's Office in Vilnius on 15 March 2014.

on the AP implementation, financial reports on the use of resources, reports from the monitoring working groups meetings, reports on consultations with relevant stakeholders, reports from relevant events, for example, conferences, studies relevant for the given topic made by external actors, reports from international institutions and organisations, etc.;

- By sending out questionnaires or by holding interviews to gain necessary information;
- By organising focus groups and meetings with inter-sectoral working groups, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders.

Step 6: Reporting on the Achievement of Objectives and Results

Reporting is a very important step in the monitoring process, representing a preparation of concise and concrete reports based on previously collected data (see *Step 5* above) on the progress in the achievement of policy results. Reporting should be conducted by a unit/institution appointed for monitoring and reporting on policy/strategy implementation, in a defined timeframe and agreed structure and form.

The timeframe for performing monitoring depends primarily on the period covered by an action plan (one-year, two-year, multiannual), but also on the scope and nature of the policy being monitored. Reporting time intervals have to be in accordance with the deadlines for collecting data necessary for monitoring, in an agreed structure and form. Monitoring timeframe is also related to the frequency of reporting on progress in implementing output indicators, as an important step in the overall monitoring process.

In the case of the AP for the PAR, reporting is made by the MPALSG's organisational unit designated for monitoring and reporting on the PAR Strategy objectives achievement, but also by other organisational units from relevant ministries and state administration bodies, identified as responsible for implementing results from the PAR Action Plan.

Thus, the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation will cover a two-year period, with a planned 2015 revision, i.e. in the middle of its enforcement duration, when it would be supplemented by a 2017 Plan (which will in fact turn it into a three-year plan).

The PAR Strategy³⁴ indicates that the previous system of M&E of the

³⁴ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit. p. 33.

PAR implementation was not conducted in a systematic manner, but was rather based on an *ad hoc* and inconsistent reporting. Therefore, the PAR Strategy is particularly detailed on the introduction of a uniform monitoring and reporting system, through **mandatory semi-annual reports** made by all the involved actors. The reports are delivered to the competent ministry (the MPALSG, at the time of the preparation of this Manual), and will be subject to consideration at sessions/meetings of PAR coordination and monitoring structures defined by the PAR Strategy (see below *PAR monitoring Structures and Actors*).

Although the Manual promotes a results-based monitoring, some of the outcome indicators will be monitored on a two-year basis, therefore the reporting/**semi-annual reports** will be focused not only on the results but also on the activities, as well as on the key events related to the activities.

The model of a six-month report for PAR planning and monitoring, whose structure is based on SIGMA recommendations³⁵, on the first page of an *Excel* document contains information on the:

- Result/outcome of the AP, where the mentioned activity has contributed to the AP implementation;
- Result indicators;
- Timeframe for measuring indicators;
- Results-related actions, which are fully, partly or not completed within the six-month reporting period;
- Deadlines for action completion;
- Milestones leading to action completion, up to three by activity in order to avoid overly detailed AP implementation planning;
- Deadlines for milestones achievement;
- Institution in charge of milestones achievement;
- The way in which actions contribute to outcomes;
- Status of milestones achievement;
- Reasons for a possible deviation from the implementation plan;
- Measures taken to solve deviation-causing problems;
- Recommendations for the further course of implementation;

³⁵ Martins Krievins, "Ideas for operationalisation of Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation System (MRE) in the Public Administration Reform Strategy (PAR) and the Action Plan for its implementation in the Republic of Serbia", SIGMA, April 2014. p. 3.

- Relevant documents, such as data sources or information important for carrying out key actions.

In addition to information on actions completed in the reporting period, six-month reports also contain (on the second side of the *Excel* document) information necessary for planning actions and monitoring result indicators in the next reporting period, and this is information on:

- result/outcome of the AP whose implementation is assisted by the stated action;
- result indicators;
- timeframe for measuring indicators;
- planned actions for the next six-month reporting period;
- deadlines for action completion;
- milestones leading to implementation of planned actions, up to three per activity;
- deadlines for achieving milestones;
- institution responsible for achieving milestones.

A monitoring officer from the MPALSG will prepare parts of six-month reports containing the results and activities that should have been carried out during the given reporting period (page 1 of *Excel* document Model Report, see [Table 5](#)), as well as the activities planned for the next six-month period (page 2 of *Excel* document Model Report, see [Table 6](#)), making sure that the report includes results whose implementation is assigned to the institution/SAO to which the report for filling in is sent, according to the AP.

All the elements of semi-annual reports can be seen in [Table 5](#) and [Table 6](#) below.

Result	Result Indicators	Timeframe for Monitoring Indicators	Action	Deadline	Milestones	Milestone Realisation Deadline	Institution/body responsible for milestones	Status (implemented/ not implemented/ ongoing)	Justification for plan deviations	Problem-solving measures	Recommendations for further course of implementation	Relevant documents (data information source)
1.1.1. Advanced organisational forms, their mutual relations and number of public administration organisations and employees rationalised	Number of organisations reporting in the Government, Prime Minister or the National Assembly (BV: 0 TV: to be determined in 2015. TV: to be determined in 2015.	Once per year	1. Systematic analysis of public administration with recommendations for administrative system improvement (ongoing)	4 quarter 2015	M1 First draft report on systematic analysis presented M2 Recommendations from analysis adopted	Saturday February 20, 2015. Tuesday March 3, 2015.	MOALSG PAM Council					
			2. Preparation of a plan for improving general administrative system, including defining typology of bodies and organisations of public administration, basic notions (including the notion of public administration) and criteria for selecting the organisational form.	1 quarter 2015								
			3. Conducting analyses on strategic purposes of the public administration system (ongoing) and preparing recommendations for improvement.	1 quarter 2015								
			4. Supporting SMOs in implementation of the rationalisation plans with IMF, with the aim of minimising negative impact on PA capacity.	1 quarter 2015								

Table 5: First page of the Model Report for reporting on the progress in the Action Plan implementation

Result	Result Indicators	Timeframe for Measuring Indicators	Planned Action	Deadline	Milestones	Milestone Realisation Deadline	Institution /body responsible for milestones
1.1.1. Advanced organisational forms, their mutual relations and number of public administration organisations and employees rationalised	Number of bodies reporting to the Government, Prime Minister or the National Assembly (PPA)	Annually	5. Preparation and adoption/amendment of regulations necessary for implementing the act. 2 plan	3 quarter 2015	M1 Regulations necessary for implementing the act. 2 plan are prepared.	31-jul-2015	MPALSG
	BV: to be determined in 2015. TV: to be determined in 2015.				M2 Regulations adopted	15-sep-2015	MPALSG
	Number of dismissed or affiliated organisations, or those with modified organisational form	Annually	6. Dismissal or affiliation of existing organisations in accordance with the recommendations from act. 3, analysis and from act. 3, by adopting/amending corresponding regulations.	4 quarter 2015			
	BV: 0						
	TV: to be determined by the plans and recommendations from act. 2, 3 and 4						

Table 6: Second page of the Model Report for reporting on the progress in the Action Plan implementation

Regarding the frequency of reporting by institutions on the progress in the implementation of the Action Plan results, the PAR Strategy envisages quarterly and semi-annual reports. However, results-based monitoring experts from the OECD/SIGMA stated in the AP report from 3 April 2014 that the quarterly reporting in the context of the PAR Strategy and the respective AP for its implementation would be difficult to implement, because there would be no significant progress for each quarter in each of the PAR Strategy fields and resources (including time) spent on reporting in the case of such frequent reporting, especially considering the number of institutions involved. In cases where more frequent progress reporting is required, the MPALSG can use less formal ways to exchange information, including meetings of the Inter-ministerial Project Group. Therefore, the recommendation to do reporting twice a year has been accepted/adopted.

In addition to the organisational units and/or individuals responsible for regular monitoring and reporting in all the relevant SAOs, it is necessary to appoint a monitoring officer in the competent ministry (at the time of preparing the Manual it was the MPALSG), which would be in charge of consolidating reports, entering monitoring tools, preparing semi-annual and annual reports, etc.

Annual reports prepared by the monitoring officer from the MPALSG are descriptive, narrative documents, which should contain descriptive information on the progress in achieving target values for higher-level indicators (outcome indicators) and summarise the results of all completed activities to show what has been achieved on a large scale. Annual reports would include the following parts:

- summary information on the Strategy and Action Plan implementation, including the most significant performance achieved during that particular year, in order to facilitate communication with the general public and the interested parties (a short summary of the main achievements);
- assessment of the key actions that were not carried out by the Plan and information on how it could impact the overall PAR progress, the way it was initially planned;
- proposals for the necessary capacity building actions and other measures that would facilitate overcoming the existing shortcomings;
- priority actions for the next year and determination of any amendments or modifications to planning documents (primarily to the PAR Action Plan, but also, where appropriate, to other action plans for the implementation of related strategic documents, in accordance with the PAR AP methodology) based on an analysis of current developments;

- detailed information on funds spent for each result, based on which the cost-benefit analysis will be carried out as well.

PAR Monitoring Structures and Actors

The PAR Strategy defines structures and bodies/persons responsible for the PAR monitoring and coordination, and for this purpose establishes four coordination levels covering monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

The PAR strategy envisages the adoption of a methodology for producing monitoring reports, which will include structured data, comments, recommendations and an annex providing details on the implementation of the applicable Action Plan, its outcomes and monitoring results. In addition to the methodology, development of other instruments is also envisioned, such as standardised reporting procedures and an info-system software, for the PAR M&E purposes.³⁶ The Strategy also indicates its aim to use obtained information for the planning of corrective activities when its implementation lags behind the planned schedule and expected results.³⁷

In terms of structures for PAR management and coordination, which includes monitoring, evaluation and reporting on its implementation, the Strategy envisages four levels of PAR coordination, where the first two levels include the levels of professional coordination of the PAR process, while the third and fourth level are the levels of political PAR coordination:

1) The first PAR policy coordination level is the **Section for PAR Implementation and Professional Development** within the Department of Public Administration, Labour Relations and Salaries at the MPALSG, as an organisational unit in charge of these tasks at the Ministry.³⁸ With the formation of this Department, the internal capacity for conducting these activities has been established for the first time at the Ministry responsible for the coordination and implementation of the public/state administration reform.

The manager of the Sector will, among other things, be responsible for the PAR monitoring. According to the good practice examples,³⁹ this Sector should perform the following tasks:

³⁶This Manual represents a proposal for the methodology and instruments for monitoring and reporting on the Action Plan to the MPALSG, according to the PAR Strategy.

³⁷Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit., p. 51.

³⁸Rulebook on Internal Organization and Job Systematisation in the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government, August 2014.

³⁹From Finland (<http://www.stm.fi/en/ministry/structure/hso>) and Lithuania (<http://www.finmin.lt/web/finmin/home>)

- operational management and coordination of strategies and action plans in the field of the PAR;
- collecting data from relevant institutions involved in the PAR policy implementation;
- preparing reports on the PAR policy implementation;
- preparing evaluation plans for the upcoming year;
- preparing terms of reference and participation in evaluation;
- drafting proposed measures to improve the PAR policy, based on prepared M&E reports.

2) The second level of operational coordination of the PAR process/policy is the **Inter-ministerial Project Group**, composed of 66 representatives (33 members and 33 deputies): secretaries of ministries and assistant directors for general affairs and human resources in Government services and special organisations. The contact points from competent state bodies are deputy members of the Inter-ministerial Project Group, mostly middle-level managers or advisors for human resources and/or planning affairs, according to the proposals from individual state administration bodies. The contact points will represent an operational aspect, responsible for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the PAR Strategy and the AP implementation in their respective bodies. The PAR Strategy⁴⁰ assigns them the following tasks:

- professional role in coordination and monitoring of the PAR Strategy implementation process;
- reporting on the PAR Strategy implementation – preparing six-month reports (whose structure is displayed above);
- adoption of reports on implementation and evaluation of results achieved by the PAR Strategy/Action Plan;
- participation in evaluation of the PAR Strategy results implementation (each member within the scope of their jurisdiction).

The description of the Inter-ministerial Project Group's tasks **does not elaborate on monitoring tasks** (e.g. fulfilment of Action Plan indicators is not mentioned, etc.). Nevertheless, it is recommended that it perform the following tasks:

- Based on the AP implementation report, discusses the PAR policy implementation progress and approves the report, and sends it to

⁴⁰ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit., section III.A.3: Improving the strategic planning system and policy coordination.

the Collegium of State Secretaries (the next coordination level) for approval;

- prepares analysis of the implementation of the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation;
- proposes new measures and activities on the basis of data obtained during the AP implementation, in order to achieve the expected results;
- provides guidance for the preparation of terms of reference for the AP for the PAR Strategy Implementation and participates in the evaluation;
- approves the evaluation report and sends it to the Collegium for approval;
- drafts a proposal for a three-year AP for the PAR Strategy implementation for the next period (2017-2019).

Although the PAR Strategy did not envisage the involvement of external representatives in the work of the Inter-ministerial Project Group, with the emphasis on civil society, the MPALSG has eventually involved CSOs in the Inter-ministerial Project Group's composition. (see more in *Section 5* on the CSO involvement in PAR policy M&E).

3) At the third level – representing at the same time the first political coordination level – the **Collegium of State Secretaries**, formed by the PAR Council (fourth coordination level,⁴¹ see below) as its working group, will manage the reform. The Collegium includes state secretaries of each ministry, representative of the Office of the Minister without Portfolio in Charge of European Integration, as well as representatives of institutions at the centre of government at deputy minister level (e.g. State Secretariat for Legislation [SSL], the Office for European Integration [SEIO], the National Public Policy Secretariat [NPPS]).⁴² According to the PAR Strategy, the Collegium has the task to:⁴³

- discuss different issues relevant for the public administration reform (especially issues on which consensus has not been reached at professional level, i.e. at the first or second coordination level);
- monitor reports on the PAR Strategy/Action Plan implementation;

⁴¹ Based on interview with a representative of the Office of the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-government, 29 August 2014.

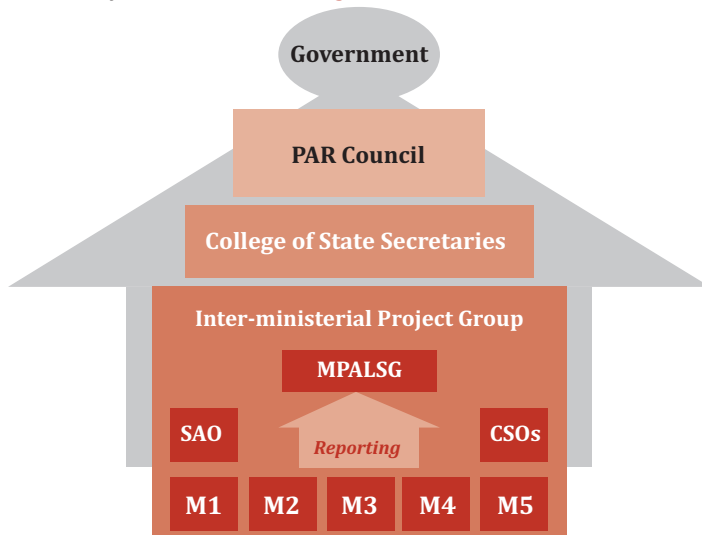
⁴² Decision on Establishing the Collegium of State Secretaries, the Council for Public Administration Reform 28 August 2014.

⁴³ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit., p. 50.

- propose content for discussion during the the PAR Council sessions;
- adopt reports on the AP implementation, previously approved and forwarded to the Collegium by the Inter-ministerial Project Group;
- adopt evaluation reports previously approved and forwarded to the Collegium by the Inter-ministerial Project Group.

4) The fourth PAR policy coordination level, and at the same time the highest political coordination level, is the **PAR Council**, a temporary Government working body headed by the Prime Minister. His deputy is the Minister of Public Administration, while the members are relevant line ministers, the Minister of Finance, a member of Government in charge of European integration (the Minister without portfolio in the current Government), the Secretary General of the Government, the Director of the National Public Policy Secretariat and the Director of the State Secretariat for Legislation.

The relation between these structures or PAR policy coordination levels is clearly shown below in *Figure 4*:



Picture 4: Relation between structures/coordination levels in PAR policy implementation⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Action Plan, op. cit., p. 73.

PAR policy monitoring tool

Monitoring tool is a table in Microsoft Excel program intended for monitoring officers from the competent ministry (the MPALSG, at the time of the preparation of the Manual) to enter data relevant for the PAR policy monitoring. This data was previously delivered by the individuals/bodies in the SAOs responsible for collecting relevant data and reporting on the PAR implementation progress.

The tool has three basic functions:

- **Monitoring** – all data relevant for successful monitoring is collected and integrated into a single document. Once all the relevant data has been entered, the progress in achieving objectives and results is significantly easier to monitor. All the data is entered in the Monitoring tool during the enforcement of the AP for the PAR Strategy (2 years), and it should be followed by appropriate documentation for verification purposes.
- **Steering** – provides an overview of the current situation in the PAR policy implementation for every previous six-month period, which is a defined time for PAR policy monitoring, and therefore ensures that the need for timely action taken by the competent individuals/institutions is recognised.
- **Results-based tool** – allows process/implementation-oriented AP monitoring, but does not ignore the importance of results, and hence shows how implemented actions support the implementation of results.

The MPALSG monitoring officer will enter data relevant for the monitoring progress on implementation of individual actions which contribute to the implementation of the AP results. Activities will be divided into previously determined **milestones**. In addition to the individual data collection on the results implementation progress, the competent monitoring officer will collect data from MPALSG employees responsible for achieving a particular result, and also from the SAO (those who according to the AP are in charge of results implementation) employees responsible for PAR policy monitoring and coordination. They will all send the necessary data to the MPALSG monitoring officer, in the six-month reports' form (see above *Step 6* in the PAR monitoring process, and the overview of the Model Report in *Table 5* and *Table 6*).

The Monitoring Tool Model will be developed by the MPALSG, with the assistance of national and foreign experts, during 2015.

Policy Evaluation

Policy evaluation entails the use of collected and analysed data and knowledge obtained through monitoring in order to assess the performance, effectiveness, progress and/or final **impact** of the policy that **is being or was implemented**.⁴⁵ Evaluation represents a logical continuation of the monitoring process.

An evaluation should provide credible and useful information, which will ensure that the lessons learned are incorporated into the decision-making and policy-making processes.⁴⁶ In the best case scenario, an evaluation will provide a comparative insight into the *ex ante* and *ex post* situation (the situation before and after the policy has been implemented) and the analysis of a positive and/or negative course of events in a series of interventions that comprise the given policy.⁴⁷

Policy impacts and outcomes can be evaluated only long-term, for the changes or trends will not occur quarterly, but annually or even less frequently. Therefore, the evaluation is typically performed once in two or three years. With the fact that changes can be seen only in the long run, evaluation usually requires more resources than in the case of regular monitoring reports.⁴⁸

Institutional Framework for PAR Policy Evaluation in Serbia

The PAR Strategy currently does not specify the exact number of evaluations of the AP for its implementation, but states that “following the collection and processing of data from the regular reports on conducted activities, and/or within the continuing monitoring process, it is necessary to prepare occasional (but regular and systemic, established) evaluation of such a complex and intricate process.”⁴⁹

The internal evaluation function should, as stipulated in the PAR Strategy, belong to the **Inter-ministerial Project Group** (see above, level 2 within the AP monitoring structures); nevertheless, the Strategy does not offer a more detailed description of how the role would be managed. It is envisaged that the Group’s meetings be held once a month or even more often if necessary, at the MPALSG’s proposal.

⁴⁵ Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić, Lazarević, op. cit., p. 8. http://europeanpolicy.org/images/me_studija/studija_final.pdf

⁴⁶ “Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Result Based Management”, OECD-DAC, 2002. p. 21

⁴⁷ Lazarević, Marić, Orza, op. cit., p. 17.

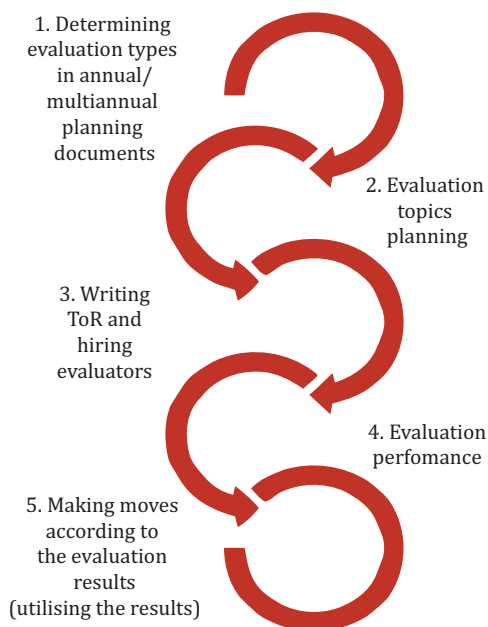
⁴⁸ Krievins, „Ideas for operationalisation...“, op. cit., p. 6.

⁴⁹ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit., p. 57

The PAR Strategy also indicates that in addition to the internal evaluations it is necessary to enable independent external evaluations, through involving renowned educational and other expert institutions, civil society, relevant international organisations and independent control bodies.⁵⁰

Steps in Conducting Evaluations

Figure 5 below shows the main evaluation processes:



Picture 5: Steps in the evaluation process

Step 1: Planning of Means/Resources for Conducting Evaluations

The first step in conducting an evaluation has to begin with a question: “What do we want to achieve by evaluations?”, “What are the evalu-

⁵⁰ Ibid., see p. 57 – “Aside from internal evaluation and reporting, it is necessary to ensure the system of independent external evaluation through the involvement of renowned educational and other expert institutions from the relevant fields, civil society and reports by independent control bodies and relevant international organisations”.

ation objectives?”, as well as “Which dilemmas are to be resolved?” Determining the exact type of evaluation that fits the policy needs and objectives at the early stages of its implementation is of crucial importance for the proper development of further stages of a given policy.⁵¹

Questions		Appropriate evaluation type
What changes did the implementation of the given policy cause? Policy impact?	➔	Results-based evaluation
In what way has the given policy been implemented?	➔	Process/implementation-oriented evaluation
What changes did the policy cause and how was it implemented?	➔	Combination of process-oriented and impact evaluation

Process/implementation evaluation answers the questions of compatibility of defined policy results and realised activities, i.e. if and to what extent a policy has been implemented (whether the needed resources have been mobilised, whether the agreed activities have been conducted, whether the planned outcomes [e.g. certain services] have been achieved). This approach is focused on providing information on the very policy implementation process. However, it is insufficient for understanding the reasons for policy success or failure and exactly this is the main advantage of the results-oriented approach (see more below).⁵²

Similarly to the results-based monitoring (RBM approach, for more on the Policy Monitoring see *Section 3* above), which is used to measure the policy implementation progress by observing the broader picture of its implementation,⁵³ **results-based evaluation** aims at assessing achieved results focusing on its importance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.⁵⁴ Based on the collected data and knowledge obtained through the monitoring process, this type of evaluation helps analysing and measuring the **overall impact of the implemented policy**. Since the primary monitoring unit in the AP for the PAR implementation is the result (the *outcome* level), it is recommended to conduct results-based AP evaluation. Results-based evaluation does not preclude process evaluation, but uses its findings with a step further – assessing whether and to what extent the given policy implementation has enabled the achievement of the desired results/outcomes. Results-based evaluation is performed on the basis of **impact indicators** and **outcome indi-**

⁵¹ Adapted from: UK Government, DECC Evaluation Guide, p. 13.

⁵² Government of the United Kingdom, HM Treasury, “The Magenta Book: guidance notes for policy evaluation and analysis”, HM Treasury, 2011, p. 11.

⁵³ Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić, Lazarević, op. cit., p. 29.

⁵⁴ Kusek, Rist, op. cit.

cators, whose formulation requires a clear understanding of an overall policy objective, while its value has to show whether the problem is being successfully solved and the envisioned services successfully delivered.

In practice, process evaluation and results-based evaluation are often combined. The combination of the two is necessary for understanding all the changes brought about by a given policy, for what reason and in what way, as well as to examine the additional, secondary policy effects. However, this is preceded by a detailed listing of the questions which we want to tackle in the evaluation, considering the fact that available resources often do not allow for the complete application of both evaluation types.⁵⁵

Judging by the comparative practice findings, **internal evaluations**, which entail evaluations by the employees of the institution responsible for the given policy, are suitable in different stages of the M&E system: when the civil servants in charge of these tasks need to know all the steps in conducting evaluations, understand limitations of the given policy implementation (within their scope of work) and learn from mistakes – which will help them plan the next steps/activities. Additionally, every ministry should conduct its internal evaluations so that, when hiring external evaluators for the next evaluation, they are able to prepare terms of reference better, (see more about ToR in *Step 3* in the PAR evaluation process) on the basis of direct personal experience in conducting evaluations. A shortcoming of an internal evaluation is a possible bias/lack of objectivity when analysing the failure of policies, and therefore it is desirable to engage independent, external evaluators.

External evaluation can be conducted by specialised private companies, consultancies, audit firms and CSOs. The advantages of external evaluations are independence and neutrality of actions, which thus increase chances of producing more constructive and richer in content conclusions and recommendations useful for further steps in the policy implementation. A possible limitation for external evaluators is a lacking responsiveness of the state authorities to provide official data, which means for instance irregular and outdated data delivery or refusal to cooperate. As a consequence, this can result in lacking quality evaluation reports or can postpone their planning, which can eventually lead to the untimely publication of evaluation reports when the further course of action has already been determined for a particular policy.⁵⁶ The very quality of external evaluations can also be influenced by the “market of

⁵⁵ DECC Evaluation Guide, op. cit., p.15.

⁵⁶ For information on experiences in external evaluation, see Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić, Lazarević, op. cit., Chapter III.

evaluators”: more diverse profiles of external evaluators and their number higher imply that the chances to receive high quality and neutral evaluation reports will be better, thanks to the necessity to compete.

External evaluators are chosen through an open tendering process. Conditions for applying, evaluation topic and expected results are all announced in previously prepared **terms of reference**. The selection process is carried out according to public procurement rules, namely the Law on Public Procurement of the Republic of Serbia,⁵⁷ if the evaluation is funded from the budget, or the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions (PRAG)⁵⁸, if it is funded by the EU-funded projects.

In the comparative practice, the use of the so-called **“mixed” (internal-external) evaluations** has also been identified. The evaluation mix is reflected in the consortia of evaluators, which is made up of civil servants whose competence covers the evaluation topic, and independent, external evaluators. Judging by the statements of members of the two mixed evaluation groups in Lithuania, the very quality of evaluation reports was not at a high level, mainly due to coordination problems and attempts to shift responsibility. On the other hand, this type of evaluation proved to be successful and useful in that the concerned Ministry had significantly improved its internal capacity for conducting these tasks.⁵⁹

After defining the evaluation type, it is necessary to determine whether there are adequate human and organisational resources for its performance. In some EU countries (e.g. Lithuania), individuals/organisational units responsible for monitoring, are also responsible for coordinating and monitoring of evaluation activities, from planning the evaluation topics, through preparing terms of reference, selecting evaluators (internal or external), taking care of the evaluation conduct, to dissemination of information to the public.

In this step, it is important to specify the timeframe for conducting evaluations. They can be conducted **in the middle of the policy implementation (mid-term evaluation)**, in other words during the policy implementation in order to show us whether we are on track, or after the policy implementation - the so called **ex post evaluation**.

⁵⁷ Official Gazette RS No. 116/2008

⁵⁸ PRAG: Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Action 2014 <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do>

⁵⁹ For information on experiences in external evaluation, see Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić, Lazarević, op. cit., Chapter III.

Step 2: Adequately Planning Evaluation Subjects (Topics) and Timeframes

Evaluation planning has to follow and be in accordance with the dynamics of the implementation of the given policy, as well as with the needs of the ministry in terms of strategic plan implementation. Since it is impossible to assess each individual policy topic/area (especially when it is very comprehensive as it is the case with the PAR policy), there have to be some mechanisms which will determine the given policy's priority areas. The timing of evaluations must be carefully planned: their results must facilitate the incorporation in the upcoming Government/SAO decision on further intervention steps - continuation, suspension, modification or repetition of the intervention.

The MPALSG and other relevant SAOs for monitoring and coordination should clearly define which body/decision-making level proposes the topics that will be subject to evaluation. Comparative practice in Finland, for example, indicates that there is a department for planning and analysis in all ministries, which selects the subjects that will be incorporated in the evaluation based on the proposals of other organisational units of the respective ministry. Those departments are also responsible for the allocation of financial means.

Step 3: ToR Preparation and Engaging an Evaluator

Terms of Reference⁶⁰ (ToR) represent a document outlining the key aspects of evaluation conduct. Developing clear and specific ToR that unambiguously and precisely outline the expected results of an evaluation can crucially determine the quality of the final evaluation report. Therefore, it is necessary that ToR is well-written. ToR is made in the evaluation planning phase, prior to the process of hiring evaluators, whether internally or through an open call.

ToR **has to be** prepared for each external evaluation if it simultaneously represents a contracting basis between the evaluation contracting authority and the evaluator;⁶¹ while for the internal evaluations a **mandate** from the competent state authority is necessary (aims, key issues, evaluation scope, expected outcomes, deadlines and quality criteria).

⁶⁰ The expression "terms of reference" is often substituted by the expression evaluation specification, particularly in Great Britain, but the elements of the document are the same.

⁶¹ Independent Evaluation Group, "Writing Terms of Reference for an Evaluation: a How-To Guide", World Bank, 2011, p. 2.

ToR for consultants/evaluators⁶² should be as concise as possible (maximum 5-10 pages long) and should inform on: the reasons for the evaluation conduct, to whom it is directed, what it attends to achieve, the methods to be used, who will be involved in its production, what results it needs to deliver, when it will be conducted and what resources it will use. ToR components should consist:

a. Context and background – information on the policy, i.e. the evaluation program. It should provide insight into the state of the policy implementation at the moment of evaluation planning, with particular focus on:

- The intended objectives of the intervention (policy) to be evaluated, together with its rationale and scope (detailed information, such as a logic frame, indicators and alike can be included in the document annex);
- The timeframe and the progress achieved at the moment of evaluation;
- Key stakeholders involved in the given policy;
- Organisational, social, political and economic factors, at national or international level, which have an influence on the policy implementation;
- Disclaimer if any previous study or evaluation has been conducted for the same policy.

b. Evaluation purpose and target audience – why the external evaluation is to be conducted and who the key users of its findings are. Its main elements are the following:

- The reasons for conducting evaluation;
- What the evaluation seeks to accomplish;
- Who will use the evaluation results;
- How the evaluation results will be used.

c. Evaluation objective and scope – The objective of the evaluation should clearly reflect what the evaluation aims to explore and to what extent - **it is not recommended to have more than two or three evaluation objectives**. It is advisable to analyse few issues thoroughly, rather than to examine a broader set of issues superficially. While defining the

⁶² Adapted from the internal document of the Directorate-General for Regional Policy of the European Commission, regarding the external evaluations performance. The document was delivered after the interview with the EC official on 3 April 2014 in Brussels.

evaluation scope, one should consider the time requirements for exploring the subject, the geographical and thematic limitations, the target groups and available resources. The scope must be realistic, in accordance to the mentioned details.

d. Evaluation tasks and questions – a detailed and unambiguous overview of the tasks an external evaluator should undertake. The tasks and questions should be structured logically, so that each evaluation task builds on the next for the purpose of achieving evaluation objective. Under each evaluation task **there should be a specific evaluation question**, derived from the evaluation objectives and tasks, corresponding to a real need for knowledge, understanding and identification of a new solution in implementing the given policy. Evaluation conclusions must clearly answer these predefined questions, based on the presented and analysed evidence, including the evaluator’s judgment.

Sample of questions used in preparation of external evaluation ToR:

Are there any changes in results implementation or resources allocation?

Is there any progress in managing and implementing the results?

What are the needs of the relevant stakeholders?

Is there a common ground of the relevant actors in terms of what necessities a policy should fulfil with its final outcomes?

What changes could be spotted in relation to the policy objectives (its results)?

Have any of the implemented results provoked the spotted changes and to what extent?

Are there any unexpected results?

What are the mechanisms leading to an impact? What are the key contextual factors in this process?

e. Approach and methodology – It is possible that the contracting authority indicates preferable methods to be used, or it can leave it open and ask the applicants (tenderer) to propose the precise combination of methods in carrying out the evaluation. In both cases, a contractor has to possess the necessary knowledge and understanding of the evaluation methods in order to adequately assess the feasibility of the methods developed/proposed by the potential future evaluator. Terms of reference should leave enough space for the applicant to prove its methodological expertise and knowledge, both in the case of already proposed methodology and in the case of deliberate selection of the evaluation method. This is important in order to avoid the risk of copying the methodology

from ToR in the application documentation, which can make it difficult to assess the difference in evaluation proposals by the applicants.

f. Timeframes and expected results – ToR has to clearly set the **deadlines** for deliverables, as well as their **length, structure and target groups**. One of the main tasks is certainly writing the **inception report**, which is prepared **before** the start of the evaluation process (something like a detailed evaluation plan), containing a detailed description of the methodology, the data collection procedure, possible data sources and an indicative activity plan. In addition, the evaluator also prepares a **final evaluation report** after the completion of evaluation, containing an evaluation summary, a policy (intervention) description, an evaluation objective, a description of applied methodology, findings, conclusions, recommendations for the improvement of the given policy and, if necessary, annexes (e.g. list of conducted interviews, used documentation, detailed description of data collection techniques and/or questionnaires, potential discrepancies in evaluation methodology application, etc.). ToR should highlight the obligation of the evaluator to, before delivering the final report, first deliver a draft report to the contractor for obtaining comments. Depending of the complexity of the evaluation subject and scope, it is possible to prepare an **interim report, during** the evaluation process.

g. Desired evaluator/group of evaluators qualifications – Information on the evaluator/group of evaluators selection process and required knowledge, skills and experience (e.g. in the context of public administration reform: previous experience in preparing and conducting policy evaluations; data analysis skills; knowledge of the institutional context of the Republic of Serbia; etc.). To prove the necessary qualifications, the evaluators are, in addition to the mandatory résumé, sometimes required to submit their references, for example some of their previous works. In case the evaluation process is more complex and requires a group of evaluators, it is recommended to appoint one expert as a team leader, while the other group members would be experts in special areas, paying attention that each member's roles and responsibilities are precisely defined and divided.

h. Roles and responsibilities of participating actors – Information on the requirements related to each evaluator's specific role and responsibilities. The tenderers should include a breakdown of activities per day and per team member. Additionally, this also includes the role and responsibilities of the contracting authority, such as providing comments on all the deliverables (inception report, draft of the final report), assessment of the evaluation team in all the steps of the evaluation, providing

contact and information, etc. Participation of other relevant stakeholders and their roles in the evaluation process, if any, is also worth mentioning. This part should also contain explanations of the process of choosing deliverables, as well as logistical questions such as office space, equipment, materials, etc. ToR should contain **requirements related to external evaluation independence**. Apart from establishing good managerial structure, it is important that tenderers describe their quality check mechanisms and provide adequate means for achieving them.

i. Budget – Information on financial resources available for the evaluation and the mode of payments (costs of hiring evaluators, per diems, travel expenses, etc.). It is recommended to leave space for the tenderers to make a breakdown of costs by tasks and activities (e.g. data collection, report preparation, fieldwork, etc.) in order to facilitate the proposal comparison. It is recommended that the payment be made after the submission of the requested deliverables/fulfilled ToR.

j. Proposal submission – Information concerning the format and content of the application, deadlines for submission, criteria and timeline for the choice of evaluator and contact information for questions and clarifications.

Procurement selection committee, composed of members from the competent ministry and relevant SAOs, assesses the best application and the most competent tenderer, and then hires them for conducting evaluations. Considering that the scope of evaluation tasks can be very complex, in practice it is often the case that several independent external evaluators form a consortium, in order to divide the duties in accordance with their expertise.

Step 4: Conducting Evaluation

After the committee chooses an evaluator/evaluation team, the evaluation process begins. Some of the most frequently used evaluation methods⁶³ are:

- **Study groups** – analysis of data collected in groups affected by the policy;
- **Matched control groups;**
- **Participatory methods;**
- **Triangulation** – comparison of the group information with the opinions of key informants and information available from secondary sources;

⁶³ "Monitoring & Evaluation: Some Tools, Methods and Approaches", World Bank 2004, p. 25.

- **Case studies;**
- **Analysis of primary and secondary documents.**

Step 5: Dissemination and Use of the Evaluation Results

Dissemination of the evaluation findings is a very significant step for it provides insight for a policy target group into the level of success of policy implementation, and for a broader public understanding of what we do. Therefore, no evaluation is considered complete without the communication and implementation of its results.

A special focus should be placed on the manner in which the PAR evaluation findings are communicated to each stakeholder. There is a whole range of communication tools (e.g. press statements, conferences, official reports of the competent ministry, presentations, video-materials, etc.). A group targeted by the evaluation results can often influence or significantly determine the means, approach, and the aim of communicating the evaluation findings. For instance, the approach (terminology, level of technical language, detailed/brief presentation of findings etc.) to presenting findings of the PAR progress evaluation will significantly differ if it is presented to the professionals and competent state bodies directly involved in monitoring and coordination of the PAR results implementation on the one hand, and a broader (non-professional) public that still directly benefits from the successful implementation of the given policy, on the other hand.

4. Civil Society Organisations' Involvement in Public Administration Reform Monitoring and Evaluation

CSO involvement in policymaking, and hence in policy M&E, is not systematically regulated in Serbia. Although cooperation between the state and the civil sectors has significantly improved in the recent years, it is still managed in an *ad hoc* manner. To date, CSO involvement in policymaking has been noted in one of two aspects:

- Formally, engaging in the public consultation process during the legal drafting phase;⁶⁴
- Informally, participating in legal drafting working groups.⁶⁵

At the initiative of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, the Government launched Guidelines for Involvement of CSOs in the Legislative Adoption.⁶⁶ The launch of these guidelines is an initial step for a systematic planning of CSO involvement, not only in M&E but generally in a complete policymaking process.

One of examples of how the public sector can engage CSOs in policymaking is SEKO (Sectoral Civil Society Organisations) mechanism formed by the SEIO with the aim of achieving successful cooperation between the civil society and the public sector in planning and using international development funds. In accordance with the National priorities for International Assistance (NAD) 2014-2017/2020, 10 SEKOs were formed.⁶⁷ The capacities of this, as well as other already formed networks in one of various policy areas (e.g. CSFP)⁶⁸ can be used for providing CSO representation in policymaking.

Encouraged by this example, the MPALSG has involved CSOs in the work of the Inter-ministerial Project Group for monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan for Public Administration Reform Implementation. CSOs are involved in this group as members, empowered to

⁶⁴ Government Rules of Procedure, "Official Gazette RS", No. 61/2006 – consolidated version, 69/2008, 88/2009, 33/2010, 69/2010, 20/2011 i 37/2011) article 41.

⁶⁵ Amanda Orza, "Civil Society and the Government: Participatory Policy Formulation in Serbia", European Policy Centre, December 2014.

⁶⁶ Government Conclusion 05 No. 011-8872/2014, adopted 26 August 2014.

⁶⁷ NAD defines nine sectors and three thematic areas (culture, media, civil society) which compose one separate sector.

⁶⁸ "Civil Society Focal Points (CSFP) for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation in the Republic of Serbia is a program launched by Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Republic of Serbia for the purposes of Poverty Reduction Strategy implementation. See: Marić, Žarković Rakić, Aleksić Mirić and Lazarević, op. cit.

give comments and express views. The SEKO mechanism has been used in fact for CSO involvement, i.e. the organisations that are part of the public administration reform SEKO. This has contributed to achieving representation of organisations involved in the Inter-ministerial Project Group's work, as well as dissemination of information towards other CSOs active in the PAR domain.

What can CSOs do to contribute to policy M&E?

First of all, considering the field of expertise, CSOs can provide comments and suggestions, as well as express an opinion on the prepared policy implementation reports. The state would commit to take into account and consider their comments, but not necessarily to adopt them. That way the awareness of the CSOs would be enhanced and the grounds for deeper forms of cooperation with the state/public administration would be laid. Bearing in mind the current CSO capacities, it is not normally expected to see them directly involved in measuring results and delivering data, although this is also possible in some areas where CSOs that had specialised for providing support to various social groups (such as e.g. social policy, youth-related issues etc.) can be involved as official data producers.

Once state-level M&E mechanisms have been developed and CSO capacities for conducting these activities have been improved, independent CSO studies and reports that monitor and evaluate certain policy can be used as a Government's supplementary source of data. In the evaluation procedure, CSOs fulfilling prescribed conditions can apply to external evaluators at the public tendering process organised by ministries/government bodies.

5. Integrating Gender and Gender Issues in the PAR policy M&E process

Gender-sensitive policy M&E should be used as a principal tool for achieving desired organisational change. It should not be isolated from the M&E process/system; just the opposite – these processes should be continuously revised to secure a gender-aware performance evaluation system which enhances gender equity and equality.⁶⁹

In Serbia, attention is paid to gender-sensitive M&E mostly because of the requirements of the donor projects. Comparative practise in the EU Member States differs – thus e.g. during Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), Finland and Lithuania⁷⁰ apply Gender Impact Assessment (GIA), which entails comparison and assessment, according to gender relevant criteria, of the current situation and the trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy.⁷¹

The PAR Strategy highlights the role of Serbia's Commissioner for Protection of Equality in external public administration control,⁷² stating that, under the Law of Prohibition of Discrimination, they control public administration (but also other entities) to prevent discrimination and unjustified creation of differences or unequal treatment of persons or groups of persons, based on some of their personal characteristics,⁷³ including gender-based discrimination.

For successful integration of gender-related issues into the system of policy monitoring and analysis, it is necessary to combine/integrate the following methods:

- **Gender analysis** – a part of comprehensive *ex ante* impact assessment, significant for M&E of policy impact on women, men, gender relations and gender equity, for the purpose of defining a **baseline**. The analysis includes the content and normative framework of the policy, as well as relations of power and causes of potential gender discrimination and inequity.

⁶⁹ Public Administration Reform Strategy, op. cit., p. 17

⁷⁰ European Commission, DG Justice, "Exchange of good practices on gender equality: Gender Impact Assessment", 3-4. June 2014. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-quality/files/exchange_of_good_practices_at/lt_comments_paper_at_2014_en.pdf

⁷¹ European Commission „A Guide to Gender Impact Assessment”, 1997/98.<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=4376&langId=en>

⁷² Public Administration Reform Strategy op. cit., p. 46.

⁷³ Ibid., op. cit., p. 48.

- **Classification of data by different stakeholders** – collecting data and sorting it by different groups (e.g. by gender, ethnicity, age, etc.)
- **Mixed method approach** – a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis in relation to gender-relevant criteria (e.g. research, focus groups, surveys, etc.)

In the case of PAR policy, creation of a gender-sensitive M&E system should rely on the following criteria:

- Does the PAR analysis include gender-related issues as well?
- Are identified indicators of the PAR results gender-inclusive and does their measuring allow the assessment of the potential effects on gender relations? (e.g. it should be considered that quota mechanisms or female/male ratio are not sufficiently adequate indicators of gender equality)⁷⁴
- Does the M&E system include gender-based data classification?
- What methods and tools are necessary for gender-sensitive data collection?
- Is there a planned regular analysis/assessment of the potential PAR effects on gender relations?
- Is the capacity of the PA system sufficient for gender-sensitive data collection and gender analysis performance, or it needs to be additionally strengthened (e.g. is there a person in charge of this task, are additional financial means needed for performing gender-sensitive data analysis, etc.)?
- Is the PAR policy M&E plan going to be forwarded to the responsible internal/external expert for gender issues, for gaining comments and suggestions?

After the properly collected policy implementation and data analysis, with a special view of gender-sensitive matters, it is necessary to communicate the results of this process (e.g. include them in a progress report on results implementation/achievement of identified indicators) and share knowledge/information on gender equity.

⁷⁴ More information on gender sensitive indicators available at: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/re63.pdf>

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