



**ASIAN
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Independent
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 亚太财经与发展学院
Asia Pacific Finance and Development Institute



CLEAR

South Asia Center



**Global Evaluation
Initiative**

Strengthening M&E Frameworks in Bhutan through MESA

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Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results

Coordinated by World Bank Independent Evaluation Group

CLEAR South Asia Center hosted by J-PAL South Asia since 2011

Mission: Strengthen M&E systems and capacities and use of evidence

Partner of the Global Evaluation Initiative



A country in transition and the need to develop a robust M&E ecosystem



RGoB: **Civil services reforms.**
GNHC officially dissolved in October 2022 and its divisions merged with Cabinet and MoF.



Bhutan graduated from **Least Developed countries** on 13th December 2023. RGoB aims to transform Bhutan into a high income nation by 2034.



General elections in Bhutan held on November 2023. High expectations from the new government

- Current M&E systems are fragmented, with integrated 5YPs.
- Need for long-term strategic direction development objectives (beyond the FYPs) through an integrated PBME Framework.
- Need to understand **M&E landscape** in Bhutan to integrate agencies, institutions, and actors to avoid duplication of efforts to achieve national development goals.

Project output

Develop M&E framework for the country

Defining country PBME framework

It is a comprehensive guide that will provide the government with a strategic direction, and define key procedures that are essential to undertake planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of developmental programmes. It will provide a strategic roadmap with a long-term horizon, at the same time defining roles, responsibilities, resources and schedules for reporting.

– Our working definition

Key deliverables PBME framework project

High-level, strategic guidance document for a 'whole-of-government' approach

- Provide high level direction, separate from the actual department-level manuals
- Living document: relevant to changing times in Bhutan.
- Routine reviews (at least once in 3 years) of the framework under Cabinet

Defining the functional as well as institutional interlinkages for PBME

- Ensuring interfunctional linkages between planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluations, beyond ensuring cooperation
- Defining roles, responsibilities & future direction for key ministries/agencies to ensure accountability.
 - Example: Should Bhutan continue with 5YPs?

Actionable steps for strengthening the M&E systems

- Addressing systems level gaps (capacities, data issues, interoperability, administrative data governance, clarity of roles) and departmental level gaps
- Streamlining functions of M/D/As and reducing duplication of reporting

Partners

CLEAR SA's collaboration with GEI, UNDP, local consultant, govt in conducting MESA and PBME framework

Cabinet Secretariat

- Chief Program Officer, Strategic Evaluation Division, Office of Cabinet Affairs and Strategic Coordination
- Director, Office of Cabinet Affairs and Strategic Coordination and Principal Secretary to PM
 - Worked with CLEAR SA in the past

UNDP Bhutan

- Assisted the RGoB in developing the 13th FYP
- Local partners for the project

Local Consultant

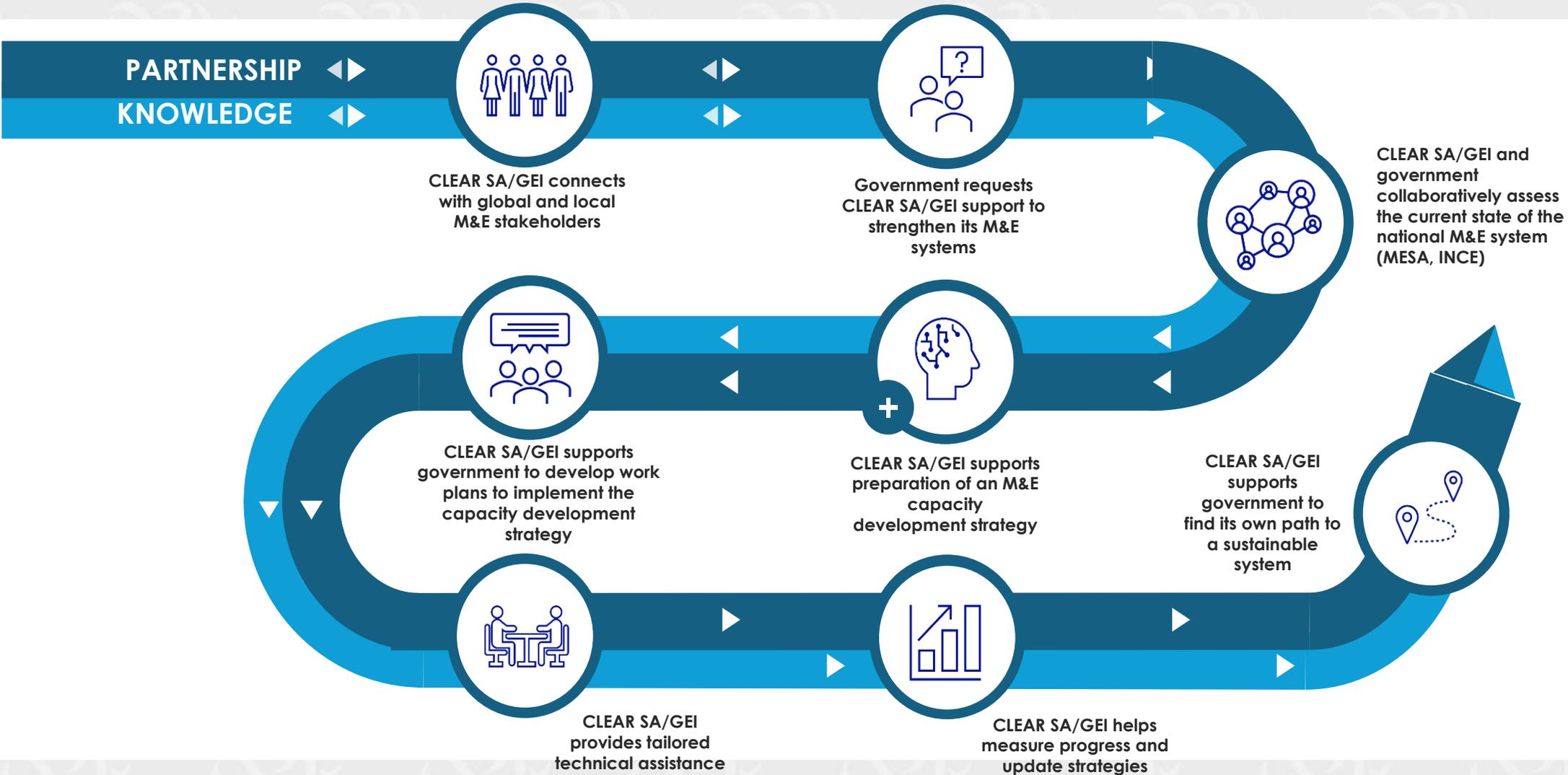
- Deputy Chief Planning Officer of GNHC in past, worked with Trongsa Dzongkhag i.e district and as planning officer as well)

GEI

- Program Manager , TTL

Contextualizing the request

How we work at country level



What is MESA?

A diagnostic tool developed by GEI and its partners

- What does the country's M&E ecosystem already have in place?
- What are the opportunities to further strengthen the M&E ecosystem?

Objective: Enable countries to assess the current capacity of their national M&E systems, identify gaps, and inform potential capacity-development strategies to strengthen these systems.

Designed for a wide range of users- governments, M&E practitioners, and policy makers.

May be used in different ways: to guide initial desk review or conduct an initial assessment; or to undertake in-depth analysis

GEI suggests using MESA, along with INCE and CAT tools as needed

Components of the MESA Guidance Note

1. **Background to the country** and its current status in relation to M&E
2. **Overview of the country's overall public sector management capacity** (planning, budgeting, and M&E systems)
3. **Monitoring and reporting systems** : Line ministries/sub-national levels □ explores systems for generation of and incentives for acting on monitoring information
4. **Evaluation systems**: Government capacity to manage, commission, and undertake evaluations; use of evaluation findings
5. **Findings, conclusions and recommendations**

Application of MESA

Developing the PBME framework in Bhutan

Methodology Used: Combination of desk reviews, online surveys, stakeholder interviews, and data analysis.

- Pioneers of M&E in Bhutan
- Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies
- Royal University of Bhutan
- Royal Institute for Governance and Strategic Studies
- Cabinet Secretariat members
- Ministry of Finance
- UN PBME Group
- National Assembly Secretariat
- National Statistics Bureau
- Royal Civil Services Commission
- Royal Audit Authority
- Thimphu Thromde (Municipality)
- Planning and Policy Division (PPD) of Economic Cluster
- PPDs of Social Cluster

Application of MESA

Developing the PBME framework in Bhutan

Using MESA to understand roles, capacities, and needs of different stakeholders (government agencies, CSOs, international partners).

MESA findings directly influenced the creation of a PBME Framework for Bhutan.

Few action points derived from MESA:

- Establishing a whole-of-government approach,
- Integrating technology and data governance,
- Fostering inter-functional linkages,
- 10 year strategy for planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation

Case Studies facilitation

Diagnostics for co ownership

- Discussion groups with civil servants in Bhutan:
 - [Planning and budgeting systems](#)
 - [Monitoring systems](#)
 - [Evaluation systems](#)
 - [Overall M&E interlinkage](#)

Each group was presented with a global best practice along with an overview of the current system in Bhutan related to their respective themes

Example:

- Performance management challenge of Civil Servants in Bhutan- officers were selecting departmental targets to improve performance.
- Korea had a similar challenge-
- Potential implementation challenge in Bhutan?

Lessons on conducting future diagnostics

1. Building National Evaluation System requires long term investment

2. Country co-ownership, along with stakeholder support is crucial

3. Diagnostics need to be globally informed but locally grounded

4. Flexibility: Applying the MESA will depend on context, including resources and timing.

5. Diagnostics are a means to an end, not an end in themselves

MESA at the ministry and sub-national level

Diagnostics as the key to capacity building : CBC in India

6. Value of rapid diagnostics critical in working with the government

7. Diagnostics at the sub-national level : Customised MESAs

	Data Governance	Monitoring	Evaluation
Individual Functional, Behavioural & Domain Competencies	Transferable skills on data collection, storage, use, analytics, and technology; opportunities and interest for upskilling.	Aptitude for systematic monitoring of schemes and programmes; opportunities and interest in capacity building on M&E.	Capacity to carry out evaluations; aptitude to use evidence in practice; opportunities and interest in capacity building on M&E.
Organizational Systems, Processes & Resources	Strategies for data governance; use of information systems (MIS / Dashboard).	Monitoring strategies; indicator frameworks; review mechanisms; M&E staff capacity.	Strategies and guidelines for systematic evaluations; funding; evidence use.
Institutional Unified strategies & policies	Cross-department collaborations on data use for decision making; e-governance policies.	Uniform monitoring and review policies; state / district indicator frameworks; NIF / SDG alignment.	State-level evaluation policies; dedicated budget; enabling environment for evaluations.



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Thank you

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