Monitoring data needs to be compiled and reviewed on a regular basis in order to draw conclusions about how individual interventions or the programme are working, and whether remedial action is needed. Given the characteristics of market systems programmes, the process of review needs to go beyond checking if interventions are being delivered effectively ('are we doing things right?'), and also to consider if the intervention seems likely to achieve the desired outcome ('are we doing the right things?').

It is important to consider different perspectives, and therefore to involve a range of programme team members in these reviews. It is particularly important to include front-line staff who are closest to market actors. In some circumstances it may also be sensible to review monitoring data more regularly and in smaller team settings, where questions about specific market events can be answered.

While indicators for the programme as a whole and for interventions are critical sources of information in this process, the programme team should also step back from the indicators during review meetings and look at the monitoring questions as well.

While undertaking this analysis, it is worth considering if the available data is sufficient to answer the questions, and if the indicators used to measure change are still appropriate. The monitoring framework should be revised accordingly where this is not the case.

The focus of the review process is likely to evolve over the lifetime of a programme. In earlier stages the focus is more typically on assessing what has and hasn’t worked, with the emphasis on learning and then adapting where necessary. In contrast, finding proof for the effectiveness of interventions may be more important.
The use of monitoring data for adaptive management is discussed in more detail in Module 6.