

Module 4: Assessing wider system change

01

Beyond performance monitoring

To implement a successful programme it is important to understand how the context in which it is implemented is changing, because of the effects of both programme interventions and wider influences. It is therefore important that programme monitoring goes beyond individual interventions, and actively considers what is happening in the wider market system. There are two key reasons for this.

Firstly, interventions are likely to have effects, both positive and negative, beyond those anticipated in advance and specified in a results chain. If monitoring activities focus exclusively on what is expected, it is possible to miss other effects and results. This means that additional monitoring activities are needed, which take a step back from the intervention logic for any activity. Although a results chain may have defined a pathway to systemic change, in reality change might take a different trajectory or turn out to look quite different from what is expected

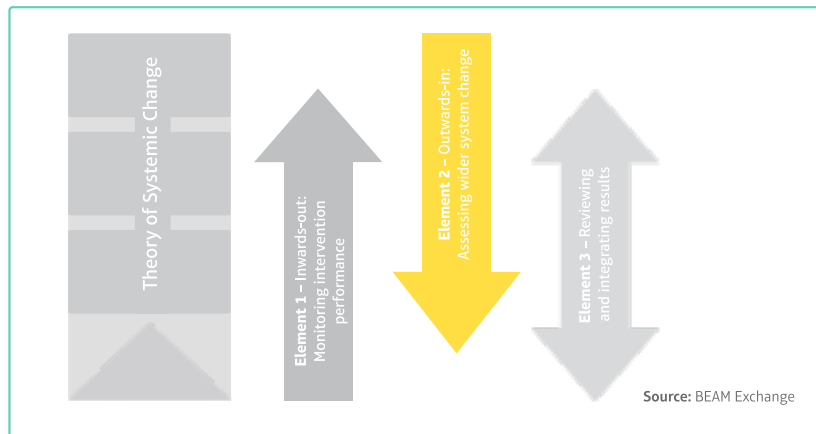
Secondly, there are a wide range of external factors that will influence the effectiveness of a programme. Continuous surveillance of what is happening in the market system will provide broader and richer information, allowing programme activities as a whole to be adapted to changing circumstances where necessary

02
Principles to consider in assessing wider system change

03
Ways of capturing wider system change

It is important to differentiate this type of monitoring from performance monitoring activities. To get an understanding of changes in the wider market system, it is important to look for trends beyond what the programme theory of change suggests might happen. This means scanning for changes in an open manner and being able to 'tune in' to wider market trends.

Similarly, it is easy when working closely with a programme to exaggerate the importance of that programme's effects, leading to so-called 'self-importance' bias. Monitoring activities therefore also need to capture the views of people who have not directly or indirectly participated in programme interventions. It is also important to consider who has a vested interest in the success of the programme, and to seek out other points of view.



Element 2 - Outwards-in: Assessing wider systemic change