

ANNEX C: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN IN-DEPTH DIAGNOSIS OF COLOMBIA'S M&E SYSTEM

Introduction

The government of Colombia has been working since 1990 to create a robust and sustainable M&E system. The World Bank and other donors have provided a range of support for this purpose, including loans and technical assistance.

The objective of the current assignment is to prepare a diagnosis of the strengths and challenges facing the institutionalization of M&E in Colombia. Particular, but not exclusive, attention will be paid to the government's M&E system, SINERGIA. The World Bank has published a guide that provides an overview of concepts and issues and that will assist in this diagnosis.

Tasks

These terms of reference (ToRs) specify the tasks to be undertaken in the assignment.

1. Prepare a diagnosis, of about 60–80 pages in length, providing an overview of the Colombian government's approach to M&E, with a particular focus on SINERGIA. The types of issues the paper will be expected to address will include the following (an expanded listing of these issues is provided in the attachment to these ToRs):
 - The genesis of the government's approach
 - Legal and institutional framework
 - Use of M&E for political and social control
 - Role of M&E in the budget
 - Role of M&E in preparation of national development plan
 - Use of M&E by sector ministries/entities
 - M&E and results-based management
 - Types and quality of M&E conducted under SINERGIA
 - Other M&E work under the aegis of SINERGIA
 - Overall Colombian M&E strategy
 - Conclusions and summary of recommendations.
2. Preparation of the diagnostic paper is expected to involve a review of existing analyses and reports on SINERGIA and on related public sector reforms. It will also require close familiarity with the products of SINERGIA and the work of the unit in the DNP (the Directorate for the Evaluation of Public Policies) which manages the system. The current head of that unit, Sr./Sra. [insert name], will be the main government liaison point for the purposes of this diagnosis. Interviews of key informants in government, Congress, civil society, and the donor community would be expected to be involved.
3. You will complete the paper, which is to be written in English, by [insert date]. You will also be provided with tickets for business class air travel to Colombia, and will be reimbursed for hotel and incidental costs at the standard World Bank per diem rates. You will be paid \$[insert amount] upon satisfactory completion of this diagnostic paper.

Diagnosis of the Colombian M&E System—Detailed Issues

Genesis of Government's Approach

What are the origins of M&E in Colombia? Who prompted this initiative and why? How has SINERGIA developed over time, and what have been the main events and circumstances underlying this evolution? What are the stated purposes of SINERGIA (for example, national or sectoral planning; budget decision making; ongoing program management or results-based management; accountability relationships to DNP and the Hacienda, to the president's office, to Congress, to sector ministries, to civil society—"social control"), and have these stated purposes changed over time? How has the priority for M&E been stated, in terms of direct and indirect links, in the context of the main public sector reforms in Colombia? What types of M&E have been emphasized as SINERGIA has evolved over the three stages in this period (that is, since 1991)?

Legal and Institutional Framework

What laws, regulations, and so forth. govern the M&E system in Colombia (for example, the constitutional requirement, the CONPES policy document, and so forth)? Who has been responsible for monitoring their application, and how closely have they been applied? What gaps and overlaps exist in them? What is the institutional framework under which M&E takes place? What are the roles of DNP, the Intersectoral Committee for Evaluation and Management for Results, CONPES, sector ministries, and so on, in commissioning evaluations? What are the other roles/responsibilities of key stakeholders in SINERGIA?—DNP, Hacienda, the president's office, the sector ministries and entities, the Contraloria, lower levels of government, and the Congress? What incentives exist for these stakeholders to take M&E seriously? How strong is demand for M&E information?

Use of M&E for Political and Social Control

How important has the current president's support for SINERGIA been? In what ways has the president used information from SINERGIA? How

effective has M&E been in terms of improving the quality of public policy implementation? What have been its biggest successes/ failures so far? Does Congress demand information on public sector performance? Does it use the M&E information provided via SINERGIA? Does it have the proper incentive structure? What information is available to the public, and how is it used? How credible is SINERGIA M&E information to civil society? How can the use of M&E data be improved to promote greater accountability?

Role of M&E in the Budget

What is the actual use of M&E information from SINERGIA by DNP (DIFP) and Hacienda during the various stages of the (split) budget process—that is, to support policy advising and planning, budget decision making, performance review, and budget reporting? What are the implications of the split investment/recurrent budget and of the high degree of short-term budget rigidity? How useful has the DNP's initiative to present a supplementary document for the investment budget, reporting the government's budget outputs on a programmatic basis, been? What types of performance budgeting might be feasible in Colombia? Is there any disconnect between the M&E work of sector ministries and the use of such information in the budget process? What opportunities exist to strengthen the role of M&E in the budget?

Role of M&E in Preparing the National Development Plan

To what extent does DNP actually use M&E information from SINERGIA in the development of the 2006–2010 National Development Plan? To what extent does the plan highlight monitoring information and evaluation findings?

Use of M&E by Sector Ministries/Entities

Do sector ministries use the M&E information produced by SINERGIA? If so, how (for example, for policy development and planning, budget allocations, program management, accountability re-

quirements within the sector or externally)? If there is little or no utilization of M&E information, why? Do there exist “islands of good practice M&E” in sector ministries/entities? Document in detail at least two successful ministry/ agency M&E systems (for example, ICBF or MEN). How persuasive are these islands for other ministries? To what extent has SINERGIA contributed to their development?

M&E and Results-Based Management

Can Colombia reasonably expect its public sector to move towards results-based management? What changes to public administration (budgeting, human resource management, auditing and control, etc.) need to take place for this to happen? Is there genuine interest in and demand from key stakeholders for results-based management?

Types and Quality of M&E Conducted under SINERGIA

Types of M&E

Which types of M&E tool are emphasized in SINERGIA—performance indicators, rapid reviews or evaluations, rigorous, in-depth impact evaluations? How much does each of these types of M&E cost? Report the total cost of each impact evaluation and of all other types of evaluation conducted so far, and provide a cost disaggregation into data collection, data analysis, management, and dissemination. What has the annual cost of SINERGIA been in recent years? What are the implications of the heavy reliance on donor funding of SINERGIA?

Performance Indicators and Data Systems

Is there a disconnect between the SIGOB focus on presidential goals and the focus of sector ministries/ agencies—are entities much more focused on micro, project-level issues? Are there multiple systems of performance indicators at the sector or agency level? To what extent are SINERGIA and ministry/entity data systems harmonized? Can they be harmonized (in terms of data definitions, periodicity, geographical coverage, and so forth), and what are the implications for M&E coordination and burden at the facility level? How are data requirements defined? What do SIGOB performance indicators focus on spending, ad-

ministrative processes, outputs and service delivery, outcomes, and national impacts? How are data collected at the entity level? Are they adequately controlled for quality and content? Have any data audits been conducted by sector ministries/entities, or by the DNP, or by others? What options exist to reduce the cost of evaluations through greater reliance on national statistical collections and less on ad hoc data surveys? Are data processed adequately by SINERGIA and presented in a useful way? How are data passed on to DNP? Is data utilization too much, too little, or just enough? What about timeliness? How can information management be improved? How are final reports prepared and presented to the president, Congress, and society?

Impact Evaluations

Who commissions and manages impact evaluations? Which stakeholders are involved in determining which programs should be evaluated and which issues investigated—are they focused on “problem programs,” pilot programs, or high-expenditure or high-visibility programs, or are they based on a systematic research agenda to answer questions about program effectiveness? Who conducts the impact evaluations, and what quality assurance processes are followed? Which government programs have been subject to impact evaluation? Have any shortcomings been identified in the impact evaluations conducted so far under SINERGIA? Have these impact evaluations had any observable impact on policy decisions or program management? What sectors are good candidates for such evaluations in the future? What are the strengths and weaknesses of local supply of M&E? What are the key capacity constraints and what are the capacity-building priorities?

Other Types of Evaluation

Assess the usefulness of the pilot rapid evaluations (based on the evaluation approach of Chile’s evaluations of government programs) being conducted by the Hacienda and DNP. What types of government processes—national planning, budget decision making, ministry/entity management, social control—could be supported by a broader range of evaluation types being conducted under the aegis of SINERGIA? What issues and challenges

would the government face if it decided to broaden the range of types of evaluation it commissions?

Other M&E Work under the Aegis of SINERGIA

Make a rapid assessment of all other M&E capacity-building activities undertaken by DNP/DEPP, including SIGOB pilots in municipalities, performance-budgeting pilots in municipalities, “institutional incentives,” and so on.

The Overall Colombian M&E Strategy

How comprehensive and appropriate is the strategy proposed by the CONPES policy document on M&E (CONPES 3294)? What are its strengths and shortcomings? How far along is its implementation? What issues need to be resolved to make it more effective? Is there adequate stake-

holder buy-in? What opportunities exist for additional, lower-cost types of evaluation and review? What is the appropriate balance between independent evaluation and self-evaluation, or can the benefits of both be obtained without incurring the disadvantages of either? What are the threats to sustainability of SINERGIA?

Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations

What are the main strengths of SINERGIA and the remaining challenges it faces? What are the critical success factors and key options facing the institutionalization of SINERGIA and of M&E more broadly, in the government? How can the sustainability of SINERGIA be assured following the eventual change in administration? Briefly, what are the key lessons for other countries?