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Definitions and Planning Terms

These definitions are for guidance only, as terms are often defined differently by individual government departments.

Acceptable performance	Extent to which a measurable objective must be achieved to be considered complete. (<i>National Treasury, ENE annexure, 2002.</i>)
Activity	An intervention used in a strategy. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Aim	Overall desire - e.g. to reduce morbidity and mortality. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Average	The arithmetic mean obtained by adding up the values of a set of numbers and dividing the total by the quantity of numbers in the set. (<i>Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2000.</i>)
Best practice	The performance or practice of the best performing member(s) in a group. (<i>Collins, D.</i>)
Evaluation	Measures what has been achieved or what impact has been made. Non-routine assessment in particular to determine effects or impact. (<i>Health Goals, Objectives and Indicators 2001-05.</i>)
Goal	A summarised element required to achieve the aim. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Impact	The effect of activities on the main “aim”, e.g. reducing morbidity. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Indicator	Variable used to measure progress toward attaining strategic goals and objectives. (<i>Health Goals, Objectives and Indicators, 2001-05.</i>)
Input	A resource required to implement an activity. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Measurable objective	Specific, quantifiable outcomes that can be achieved within a foreseeable time period. (<i>National Treasury, ENE annexure, 2002.</i>)

Monitoring	Monitoring and evaluation are complementary, but separate functions which often serve distinct purposes. Monitoring looks at what is being done whereas evaluation measures what has been achieved or what impact has been made. Monitoring is the routine ongoing collection of data in order to assess activities and progress. Monitoring is usually applied to assess programme inputs, processes and outputs. (<i>Health Goals, Objectives and Indicators 2001-05.</i>)
Norm	A statistical normative rate of provision or measurable target outcome over a specified period of time. (<i>National Health Bill, 2002.</i>)
Objective	A detailed element required to achieve each goal. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Normative value	An “average level of achievement or performance” or a “standard of achievement or behaviour that is required, desired or designated as normal”. (<i>Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus, Harper Collins Publishers. 2000.</i>)
Operational plan	An activity plan detailing precise timing and mode of implementation. Operational plans at national, provincial and district level have been in place since about 1996/7. (<i>Green A. An introduction to health planning in developing countries, 1992.</i>)
Outcome	(a) End social and economic result of public policies or programmes, mainly referring to changes in the general state of well being of the community. (<i>National Treasury, ENE annexure, 2002.</i>) (b) Intermediate results short of impact, and resulting from the combinations of outputs. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Output	Final good or service produced or delivered to clients. (<i>National Treasury, ENE annexure, 2002.</i>)
Planning	A method of trying to ensure that the resources available now and in the future are used in the most efficient way to obtain explicit objectives. (<i>Green A. An introduction to health planning in developing countries 1992.</i>)
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time related. (<i>National Treasury, ENE annexure, 2002.</i>)
Standard	(a) A desired and acceptable level of health care. (<i>Primary Health Care Package for South Africa, 2001.</i>)

Strategic plan	A document outlining the direction an organisation is intending to follow, with broad guidance as to the implications for services or action. (<i>Green A. An introduction to health planning in developing countries, 1992.</i>)
Strategy	A combination of interventions used to achieve an objective. (<i>National District Health Planning Guidelines, Tanzania, 1995.</i>)
Target	Desired value of an indicator related to the achievement of an objective.