**Indicator Guidelines for reviewing of indicators for the National Indicator Data Sets (v0.1)**

**1. Introduction**

The District Health Management Information System (DHMIS) Policy requires a revision of the National and Provincial Indicator Data Sets after every two years of implementation. It is important to provide guidance that can be used by both managers and Indicators Technical Working Group.

The Indicator Guidelines, adapted from international and local resources, are designed to guide managers in selecting or formulating indicators for National and Provincial Indicators Data Sets.

The same guidelines will be used by the Technical Working Group that will be charged with assessing all submissions on indicators. It is important that all final submissions should be signed off by Cluster Managers and their Branch Managers.

Any disagreements on the proposed list after repeated failure to resolve them will be referred to a higher NIDS committee chaired by the Chief Operating Officer.

**2. NIDS Indicator Review**

There are various activities that are done when selecting indicators for the revised NIDS. These activities include:-

1. Formulating/Developing a new indicator;
2. Selecting indicator/s from research and/or existing lists indicators including national/regional/international lists;
3. Revising and improving existing indicators in the NIDS;
4. Removing indicators from NIDS; and
5. Consulting a wide range of stakeholders.

The above activities are presented in the flow diagram below.

National managers will be advised that all indicators they propose must have been consulted with their counterparts in the provinces.

A Technical NIDS Working Group has been appointed, consisting of both national managers and experts to review the various indicators which national managers will submit.

**Diagram: NIDS flowchart**

DG issues a memo to Branches, Clusters and Directorates to submit the proposed list of indicators in accordance with Indicator Guidelines

Clusters and directorates consult counterparts on their proposed list of indicators using the Guidelines. Indicators meeting the five criteria must be signed off by Cluster Managers and their Branch Managers

**EXISTING INDICATORS**: Is the indicator still relevant?

No

Consider removing the indicator from the NIDS

**NEW INDICATORS**: Is the indicator new?

Yes

Consider using an existing indicator

No

Yes

Is the indicator needed and useful? (Standard 1)

Does the indicator have technical merit? (Standard 2)

Is the indicator fully-defined? (Standard 3)

Is it feasible to collect and analyze data for this indicator? (Standard 4)

Do not develop this indicator any further. Consider alternatives

Yes

No

No

Yes

Can the indicator be used in practice? (Standard 5)

Yes

No

Does the indicator satisfy all five standards?

Yes

No

Return to Cluster to reconsider the indicator OR Recommend against the use of indicator

Submit to Technical Work Group for consideration

Recommend final NIDS for DG’s consideration

Submit TWG recommendations on draft final NIDS to a NIDS committee of Branch Managers & Cluster managers chaired by COO

Draft revised NIDS circulated to provinces for consultation

Circulate the approved final NIDS to all Heads of Provincial Department of Health

**3. Indicator Standards**

**3.1 Standard 1: The indicator is needed and useful**

*Is there evidence that this indicator is needed at national level?*

Primarily, the Department of Health needs indicators to measure the key performance results in its strategic plan and national programmes. National-level indicators need to specifically measure performance in those areas essential to an effective national response. In addition, a country needs indicators to measure its performance in implementing international commitments that it has made.

**How would information from this indicator be used?**

Indicators need to be relevant to all users and stakeholders at national, provincial and district levels.

*Which stakeholders need and would use the information collected by this indicator?*

If an indicator is to be of value, it is important that the information it generates is needed by and is useful to a range of people. Other stakeholders that might use information from an indicator will vary according to context but might include development partners, technical experts and programme managers.

**3.2 Standard 2: The indicator has technical merit**

*Does the indicator have the ability to pick up changes in programme performance?*

**Peer review:** In particular, national indicators should be reviewed by key programme managers at various levels. The modality and composition of peer review needs to be clearly defined.

**3.3 Standard 3: The indicator is fully-defined**

*Is the indicator fully-defined?*

The method of measurement for the indicator is clearly defined, including the description of the numerator, denominator and calculation, where applicable. The data collection method for the indicator is clearly stated and the reporting frequency for the indicator is clearly defined. There are clear guidelines to interpret and use data from this indicator.

**3.4 Standard 4: It is feasible to collect and analyse data for this indicator**

*How well are the tools and mechanisms, which are required to collect, interpret and use data for this indicator, functioning?*

**3.5 Standard 5: The indicator can be used in practice**

*Is this indicator part of a system to review programme performance?*

This indicator will form part of a system of periodic review for a particular health programme.

Targets should be set for indicators but this is not an absolute requirement

**4. National Indicators Data Set: Reference Sheet**

The Indicator reference sheet below should be completed for each indicator. Failure to complete one or more rows in this template may result to unfavourable outcome of the assessment by the Technical NIDS Working Group**.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Indicator Name  |  |
| Target |  |
| Indicator definition  |  |
| Indicator formula |  |
| Indicator Type( e.g. input, output, process, etc)  |  |
| Indicator Group: (e.g. Mental Health, Human resources, etc) |  |
| Baseline and Year |  |
| Targets and Years |  |
| Numerator  |  |
| Denominator  |  |
| Numerator Source |  |
| Denominator Source |  |
| Routine data elements |  |
| Data elements definition |  |
| Guide for use and Context  |  |
| How will data for this indicator be collected?  |  |
| How will data for this indicator be collected?  |  |
| Will this indicator be sensitive to pick up changes in performance? |  |
| Has the indicator been reviewed by relevant programme managers?  |  |
| Which stakeholders need and would use the information collected by this indicator? |  |
| How will this indicator be used to review programme performance? |  |
| What is the relevance of the indicator to five year Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan, National Health Insurance, National Development Plan, Programme Strategic Plans, etc? |  |
| Is the indicator use for measuring and reporting progress on international or continental or regional commitments and if yes specify? |  |

1. **Useful Resource Materials**

Managers are advised to consult published literature on their proposed indicators. The following resource materials may also be useful to managers as they construct their indicators.

* Department of Health ( 2007) Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook for Health Managers: A practical Handbook for Designing Monitoring and Evaluation Systems
* Department of Health (2010) District Health Management Information Systems Policy
* Department of Performance Information and Evaluation (2011) Evaluation Approach
* Health Systems Trust: District Health Barometer
* National Treasury (2007) Framework for Performance Information
* UNAIDS (2010) Indicator Standards: Operational Guidelines for Selecting Indicators for the HIV Response.