Going to School Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Policy

Equity-Driven Evidence | Inclusive Learning | Accountable Impact

1. Introduction

At **Going to School (GTS)**, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is not just a compliance exercise—it is a cornerstone of how we learn, improve, and remain accountable to children, communities, and donors. We design our M&E systems to be **participatory, child-centered, inclusive, and equitable**, ensuring that data serves the people from whom it is collected.

This policy defines how M&E is integrated into all GTS programs, how it aligns with our **values of gender equity, DEI, safeguarding, and accessibility**, and how findings are used for **continuous improvement and advocacy**.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Guide the planning, implementation, analysis, and use of M&E across all GTS projects

- Ensure that data is collected ethically, disaggregated, and used to strengthen equity

- Build a culture of **reflection, learning, and adaptation**, grounded in evidence

- Align with national frameworks, donor expectations, and international child rights standards

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Gender-Responsive M&E

- Data is collected and analyzed by **sex, gender identity, and role** within families and communities

- Tools explore **how programs impact children of different genders differently**

- Evaluators are trained to **identify bias, power imbalance, and intersectional gender barriers**

3.2 DEI-Driven M&E

- Indicators are designed to **capture inclusion and marginalization patterns** (e.g., caste, class, language, disability)

- Youth, women, neurodivergent individuals, and those from underrepresented communities are involved in **design and feedback**

- Outcomes are not only about scale, but also about **equity of access and participation**

3.3 Accessibility and Inclusion

- M&E tools are **multi-format** (e.g., pictorial, verbal, tactile)

- Consent processes are **accessible, language-appropriate, and child-friendly**

- People with disabilities are engaged as both **participants and data collectors**, wherever possible

3.4 Ethics, Safety, and Consent

- All data collection is governed by GTS's **Child Protection and Data Protection Policies**

- No child is ever coerced to participate in an interview, survey, or filming

- Trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, and culturally safe practices are standard

4. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All GTS programs (school-based, community-based, media, research, digital)

- All evaluation types (baseline, endline, longitudinal, impact assessments)

- All GTS staff, consultants, M&E partners, enumerators, and vendors

- All stakeholders (children, parents, teachers, government partners)

5. M&E Design and Implementation

5.1 Inclusive Indicator Development

- Indicators are co-developed with program, safeguarding, DEI, and field teams

- All indicators are **disaggregated by gender, disability, caste, and geography**

- Inclusion-specific indicators track:

  ◦ Who is represented and who is not

- Barriers to participation
- How dignity, safety, and agency are experienced

5.2 Participatory Evaluation

- Children, families, teachers, and community members are invited to:
  - Validate tools
  - Share feedback in design workshops
  - Co-analyze findings (where appropriate)

5.3 Data Collection Methods

- Surveys, interviews, focus groups, creative storytelling, and digital platforms
- Researchers are trained in **neutral questioning, body language, gender safety**
- Enumerators are selected with attention to **language, local identity, and trust**

6. Data Management and Protection

- All data systems follow **GTS Data Protection Policy for Minors**
- Consent is obtained from **both guardians and children**, with assent processes for children over age 12
- Digital data is stored **securely**, and hard copy materials are kept in **locked cabinets**
- No identifiable child data is shared with third parties without express consent

7. Use of M&E Findings

- Findings are used for:
  - **Adaptive program design**
  - **Inclusive content creation**
  - **Safeguarding enhancements**
  - **Policy advocacy** on equity in education and skills
- Reports are shared in **child- and community-friendly formats**, such as comics, videos, or audio recordings in local languages

8. Oversight and Learning

- A **Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Committee** oversees compliance with this policy

- GTS reviews the policy every **12 months** based on:
    - Learning from the field
    - Feedback from youth and community partners
    - Changes in legal, donor, or ethical standards

9. Alignment with Other GTS Policies

This M&E Policy works in conjunction with:

- **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**

- **Data Protection Policy**

- **Gender and DEI Commitments**

- **Accessibility and Inclusion Policy**

- **Whistleblower and Ethics Policy**

At GTS, we believe that **data must reflect dignity**, **measurement must be equitable**, and **evaluation must be a tool for liberation, not judgment**. This policy ensures that our M&E practices embody these values and drive meaningful, inclusive impact for all the children we serve.