TAMAM Project

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Developing the TAMAM's Monitoring Model: An Experience of Evolving Design Planning

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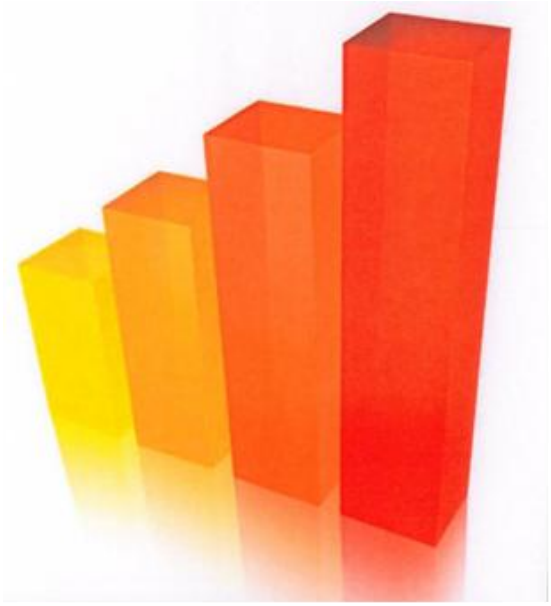

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Abstract

TAMAM is a research and development project that adopts an evolving design approach in designing processes for school-based improvement that are grounded in the organizational and social culture of the schools. TAMAM's monitoring model establishes a process that provides useful information on an ongoing basis to improve the project's activities and their implementation. As such, it puts into action the concept of the "Evolving Design Planning" adopted by TAMAM, where evidence is collected as a basis for reflective practice and improved decision-making.

The purpose of this report is to illustrate the journey of the TAMAM Project Steering Team (PST) in developing the project's monitoring model at the conclusion of the first phase of its implementation. It describes the various processes that led to the development of the current TAMAM monitoring approaches including how they evolved from being reactive and practicing intuitive heavy data collection to being proactive and following purposeful, efficient, and effective data collection procedures. The report will highlight how TAMAM's monitoring interventions were gradually conceptualized based on the lessons learned from phase I and how these procedures were accordingly modified and improved. The ongoing participation of the TAMAM school teams and the constant efforts of the (PST) to include all stakeholders in the decision-making needed for developing the suggested monitoring model kept TAMAM true to its claim of participatory evaluation and evolving design planning. Thus, this project pioneers future research and innovations based on its own implementation of the various methodologies and approaches both adopted and adapted.

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Background: Introducing TAMAM

In 2007, the Arab Thought Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding with the American University of Beirut and launched the TAMAM project. The project was conceived in response to a dire need in the Arab region for a paradigm shift in how educational reform is planned and implemented in that Region (Karami-Akkary & Rizk, 2011). A focus on teacher-education, and professional development supporting the educational reform movement in the Arab world, has been widely recognized as critical to the success of any attempt at reform in the region (World Bank, 2008; Arab Knowledge Report, 2009).

The word "TAMAM" in Arabic means "complete" but relative to the project it is actually an acronym that consists of the initials of "school-based reform" in Arabic [Al-Tatweer Al-Mustanidila Al-Madrasa]. In the context of Arab countries, TAMAM attempts to break the current trend of the prescriptive "top down" approach for school reform and develop a reform model that is school-based where professional development and continuous inquiry play a central role and are directly responsive to the emerging needs of the improvement initiative. The project also introduces a new approach for building capacity at the school level to initiate, lead, and sustain school-based improvement initiatives that take into consideration the unique needs of adult learners and the specific contextual characteristics of the school context of the members it is working with.

A group of university professors comprise the TAMAM project steering team (PST) and serve as both the trigger and the catalyst for the project's implementation. Educated in Western Universities, the PST team share the belief that while there are indeed very different cultural and political contexts, the changes educators in the Arab world aspire to make - as well as the

challenges they face - are fairly similar to those experienced by their Western counterparts. The PST also believe that although a lot can be learned from examining the best practices around the world, in developing countries, educational researchers and policy-makers need to exercise caution while adapting Western-born models and practices (Ryan, Carlton, & Ali, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2003; Hallinger, 1995; Karami-Akkary, 1998). Their main challenge is to develop a culturally grounded model of school-based reform in order to trigger teachers' learning, and build their capacity to lead and sustain school-based improvement. As such, the TAMAM project is designed with a thorough consideration of local context coupled with a deep understanding of the existing professional habits and beliefs. This understanding is used to determine the applicability and usefulness of internationally accepted conceptions, models and theories of school reform.

TAMAM's vision for school-based improvement focuses mainly on organizational development while considering that

> "change comes from the emergence and widespread embrace by the whole system of stakeholders of new ideas, models, metaphors, and theories; and that it is fueled by questioning and challenging the basic assumptions of the organizational culture that leads to fostering critical consideration of that which is taken for granted and culminates in new alternatives towards actions" (Bushe & Marshak, 2009, p. 355).

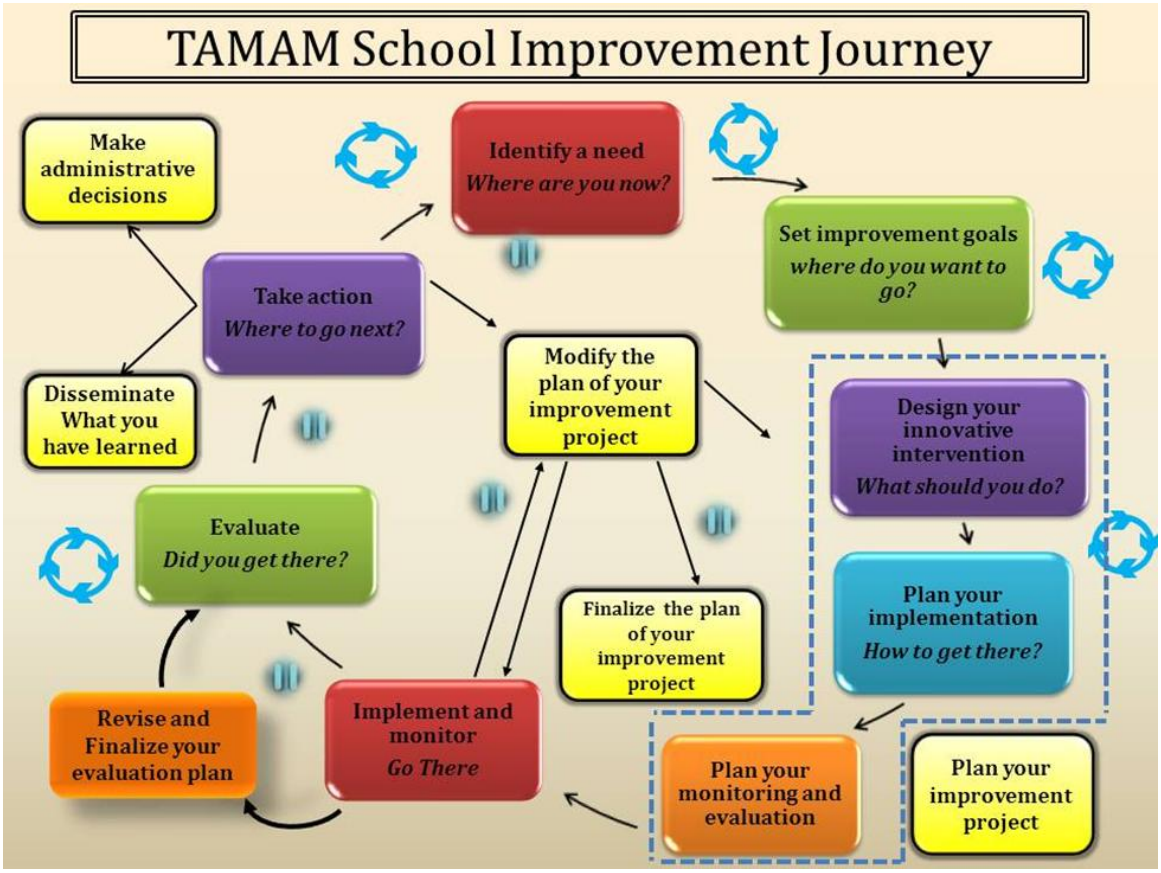
Moreover, it assumes that changes in behavior are mostly "self-generated", shifting the emphasis towards changing the framework that shapes what people think and say and guides how they behave. Consequently, as coaches and initiators of change, the (PST) members use inquiry and reflective practice (Argyris & Schon, 1978) to help school teams discover and exhibit their underlying beliefs and frames of minds, thus raising their awareness of current realities and experiences at the school level. Their roles involve confronting school teams and inviting their members to challenge those beliefs in order to explore and seek alternative

perspectives and outcomes, as agents of change in their own schools. In the first phase of TAMAM, 12 schools with a total of 70 members participated in the activities of the project.

In 2010, TAMAM officially launched its second phase. The main purpose of this phase was to expand TAMAM: (1) *in the participating schools* by enlarging the scope of its improvement activities and going beyond building the capacity of a school improvement team towards including more members within the school communities in the project's related activities; (2) *to other schools within the participating countries*, especially by reaching out to schools in the public sector; and (3) *to new schools in new countries.* The foundation of this expansion was based on the project's assumptions, original goals, as well as on the new insights and lessons learned during the first phase.

One of the main milestones that the project reached at the conclusion of its first phase was the development of a set of 11 [Pillars] that were adopted as foundational principles, that capture the beliefs, attitudes, and practices that the project's professional development activities aimed at helping the schools teams acquire (See TAMAM Project Technical Report 4) for more details). TAMAM's 11 pillars are: (1) Leadership for Change, (2) Professional Collaboration, (3) Inquiry, (4) Evidence Based Decisions, (5) Reflective Dialogue and Practice, (6) De-Privatization of Practice, (7) Decisions and Actions Driven by Needs, (8) Evolving Plan Design, (9) Experiential Learning, (10) Mentoring Approach, (11) Systematic Documented Practice. The PST also developed the blueprint for the "TAMAM journey for school improvement" based on the experiences of the school teams and on the lessons learned through: (1) their professional development activities with the initial twelve participating schools, (2) the journey's processes, and (3) content and activities based on those TAMAM pillars, which also serve as guiding parameters for the school teams as they embark on their school improvement journey (Figure 1).

Figure 1- TAMAM School Improvement Journey



The conception and design of the journey, and the refinement of its various stages, was a direct result of the extensive, yet-to-be-refined and structured, monitoring activities performed by the PST. The PST members collected extensive data since the start of the project as they went ahead documenting their observations, reflections, decisions as well as the progress of the school teams while planning and implementing their schools' improvement projects. This elaborate database allowed the PST to consistently make data-driven decisions, and resulted in grounding the design and the journey, both in terms of content and approach, in the unique and diverse experiences of the 12 participating schools (Karami-Akkary, Saad, & Katerji, 2012). The process of developing the journey included data gathering (carried out by the PST) through observations

as well as through interviews, in order to capture the views of the participants. The PST members also continuously engaged in reflective dialogue about the representativeness of their emerging models both with the participating school teams as well as within the PST itself. The following representation of the journey reflects the most refined version to date of the design of the TAMAM professional learning experience.

The development of the TAMAM school improvement journey made it possible to provide some structure to the journey of transformational learning and change. Thus, as designed, the project's activities target three strategic goals. These are:

- ✓ Strategic goal I: Building leadership capacity in a school improvement team for school based reform
- ✓ Strategic goal II: Integrating the TAMAM professional beliefs and practices in the school culture (Re-culturing)
- ✓ Strategic goal III: Expanding the scope of the TAMAM experience to include other schools by building school improvement leadership teams in more schools

Accordingly, the professional development activities comprise of three main stages:

1-The first stage aims at building the capacity of a school improvement team and consists of selecting a school team that will work through an improvement project of its choice while receiving support from TAMAM coaches [PST, university coaches, and school based-coaches]. During that process, TAMAM knowledge, skills, and attitudes are developed under the shadow of team capacity building. The completion of the cycle of the school improvement journey by the school team would mark the end of Stage I of TAMAM's professional development activities.

2- The second stage involves role shifts, where the initial school team members become TAMAM coaches at their school, playing the same role that the PST played with them

during stage 1, and building leadership capacity of new members with the purpose of expanding the scope of the TAMAM project within those schools, thus institutionalizing its practices, and consequently impacting its existing school culture.

3- The third stage features the expansion of the TAMAM project beyond the existing schools to new schools in new countries or within the same country; where university coaches or school-based coaches would oversee the launch of the TAMAM project in these new schools.

While being used to guide the activities of the coaches working with new school teams in stage 2, the design of the journey and its pillars - which evolved from the activities in the first phase of the project - will be put to the test again during the second phase, and hence, be subject to modifications, refinements, and improvements based on the data that the coaches would continue to gather as they monitor the implementation of this journey in the contexts of the school teams they would be coaching.

Purpose of the Technical Report

In September 2011, after the TAMAM PST had developed the project's foundational principles [Pillars] and activities, the conditions were ripe to develop the design for the project's monitoring and evaluation activities. While the monitoring activities were ongoing during phase 1 of the project, they were mostly reactive rather than proactively planned, and consisted of extensive data collection that involved documenting as many aspects as possible regarding the experiences and reflections of the PST and the school teams, throughout their engagement in the project. Therefore, with the planned expansion of the project, and the need to preserve its integrity with new members becoming involved in the coaching activities, a clear plan for

monitoring the ongoing professional development activities became necessary to ensure that the content and the approach of these activities conform with the pillars, follow the guidelines of the journey and hence achieve the project's strategic goals.

This report documents and illustrates the experiences of the TAMAM project steering team (PST) that culminated in the development of the project's monitoring model. It illustrates the steps that the PST followed, highlighting the events that helped rationalize its development and design including the lessons learnt from the activities of the first phase of the project, and the subsequent evolution of actions that followed based on this learning. The report concludes by presenting a monitoring model grounded in lived experiences and mindful of the unique cultural characteristics of the participating schools' contexts.

In addition to introducing a brief background about the TAMAM project, and stating the purpose of the report, the remaining parts of this study will present a theoretical background about monitoring practices in the Arab World and in the international literature. It will also describe and discuss TAMAM's monitoring design: its conception, the journey that led to its development, and finally, its current design. The report will conclude with reflective notes and future plans.

Monitoring Practices: A Theoretical Background

Monitoring consists of a close examination of certain practices with the purpose of introducing formative changes to improve the quality of these practices rather than passing final judgments on their effectiveness. As such, it is considered to be a special type of evaluation, and its practice has been connected lately to school reform and its successful implementation

(Cottrell, 2002; Larney, 2003). Although monitoring has often been mistakenly viewed as a recent phenomenon, it finds its roots in evaluation and has been utilized informally by humans for thousands of years (Hogan, 2007; Madaus & Stufflebeam, 2000). A modest overview describing monitoring practices in the context of school improvement in the West, and in the Arab countries gives the TAMAM project a platform for its coordinates on the "evaluation map".

Monitoring in the International Literature

Current reform models in the USA and in the developed countries do not provide a simple recipe for designing effective learning environments. School improvement initiatives are prone to failure if they are not built on models that aim for life-long learning. Recently, scholars started viewing evidence-based or evidence–informed practice as a necessity for the success of such school improvement initiatives (Boudett & Murnane, 2005). They asserted that decisions about changes in approaches and methods adopted by practitioners, in light of their school improvement efforts, should be based on a systematic knowledge of intervention outcomes rather than an unsubstantiated judgment of these outcomes (Cottrell, 2002; Larney, 2003). Therefore, the significance of a monitoring design is that makes this process purposeful and highlights both data collection and evidence-based practice in the context of school improvement.

Stem, Margoluis, Salafsky, and Brown (2005) indicate that monitoring answers questions related to how well a project or strategy is working and identifies the conditions under which actions are likely to succeed or falter (Hatry, 1999; Blann & Light, 2000). They further affirm that monitoring can serve a dual role: (1) an early warning system for potential problems, and (2) a source of ideas for remedial actions (Hatry, 1999; Rigby, Howlett, & Woodhouse, 2000). In essence, monitoring and evaluation are seen to form the basis for improved decision-making. Furthermore, Kusek and Rist (2004) affirm that monitoring gives stakeholders information on

progress towards achieving stated targets and goals, and provides substantial evidence as the basis for necessary mid-course corrections. Additionally, they stress that monitoring is also important when it comes to receiving feedback regarding specific outcomes and consequences of actions. They discuss how without measured results, there is no way to document whether the efforts are actually achieving the expected outcomes or not.

In addition, it is critical to study the importance of stakeholder commitment towards the change process, as highlighted by the work of Berman and MacLaughlin (1976). A greater level of commitment is reported to be achieved when the decision to engage in change grows out of the stakeholders' desire to solve local problems (Rutherford, 2007), and when those stakeholders are actively engaged in the monitoring and evaluation of their actions (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln, 2005). Henry, Dickey, and Areson (1991) describe a stakeholder approach to develop an educational monitoring system where teachers, school superintendents, school board members, and education group representatives are involved in developing the system, in an attempt to shy away from the typically "top down" monitoring and evaluation approaches. A research study conducted by Dunsmuir, Brown, Iyadurai, and Monsen (2009) describe a "Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) System". This system sheds light on important aspects that must be taken into consideration when developing a monitoring design; namely: (1) establishing baselines, (2) requiring definition of specific measurable outcome descriptors that reflect the progress of the individual, team, or school receiving the intervention, and (3) providing a solid mechanism for target-oriented feedback. It emphasizes the use of a detailed action plan that will later become embedded into the project/intervention's evaluation.

Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, and Malik (2002) wrote about the critical elements in conducting results monitoring. These elements are closely aligned with the guidelines that were followed in the development of TAMAM's monitoring design. They can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Establish a baseline based on data to describe the problem or situation before the intervention
- ✓ Develop indicators for outcomes
- ✓ Establish data collection procedures that shed more focus on perceptions of change among stakeholders
- ✓ Gather output data and assess their contribution towards the achievement of outcomes
- ✓ Systematically report with qualitative and quantitative information on the progress towards outcomes
- ✓ Capture information on the success and failure of partnership strategies in achieving desired outcomes

Finally, Craig (1988) suggests that monitoring systems for education can be classified in various ways. "One approach consists of classifying them first by their underlying assumptions regarding what motivates educational improvement and then by the objective of the monitoring" (p.496). When classified in this manner, three types of monitoring systems emerge:

- ✓ Compliance monitoring: Monitoring for regulatory compliance, where the goal is to ensure that schools operate at some predetermined standard.
- ✓ Diagnostic monitoring: Monitoring for instructional diagnosis and remediation, where the goal is student improvement.

- ✓ Performance monitoring: Monitoring for school performance outputs, where the goal is school improvement.

Monitoring for regulatory compliance that involves the top down reinforcement defies the TAMAM spirit and culture especially since its goal is to ensure that participating schools are operating at some predetermined standard. Indeed, TAMAM certainly monitors for diagnosis and remediation, and for school performance outputs, by examining the impact of the experience on promoting improvement in school practices.

Monitoring in the Arab Context

Historically, educational reform in the Arab region had been mostly advanced in the form of top-down grand plans mandated through policies at the national level of school governance. Mandated initiatives with respect to these plans, when available, never addressed procedural issues at the micro level of the school and the practitioner (Bashshur, 1982; 2005). There is widespread agreement that the rationale of these policies did not stem from evaluative measures and did not grant evaluation its righteous role in guiding reform decisions and supporting change through evidence (El Amine, 2005; Karami-Akkary & Rizk, 2011). Ministries of education in Arab states rarely invest in funding or supporting individuals or institutions for the sake of conducting evaluative research that focuses on diagnosing local educational problems. In addition, there is no evidence that these grand reform plans followed a specific evaluative design that was purposefully planned or grounded in any form of program evaluation models. The data collected rarely originated from needs, assessment activities, monitoring of progress during implementation or summative evaluation of impact (Karami-Akkary & Rizk, 2011).

Moreover, in the few occasions where educational evaluation was completed in the Arab world, there was an obvious absence of stakeholders' involvement, and the obtained results were

typically not fed back into the improvement process. Stored on the shelves or drawers of the few Arab educational researchers, it seems as though educational evaluation in the Arab context, if performed, is seen as a goal in itself rather than a tool that could otherwise be used for effectively promoting change and improvement.

Monitoring in TAMAM: An Overview

TAMAM monitoring situates itself at the heart of the participative approaches to evaluation where school teachers, school principals, ministry and university representatives, all serve as pivotal key elements in: (1) the decision-making process, (2) the development and progress of the evaluation process, and (3) the process of the development of the project as a whole. In the following sections, we will attempt to describe how monitoring is conceived in TAMAM, what its purpose is, and what kind of journey motivated the building of its current design.

How is Monitoring Conceived in TAMAM?

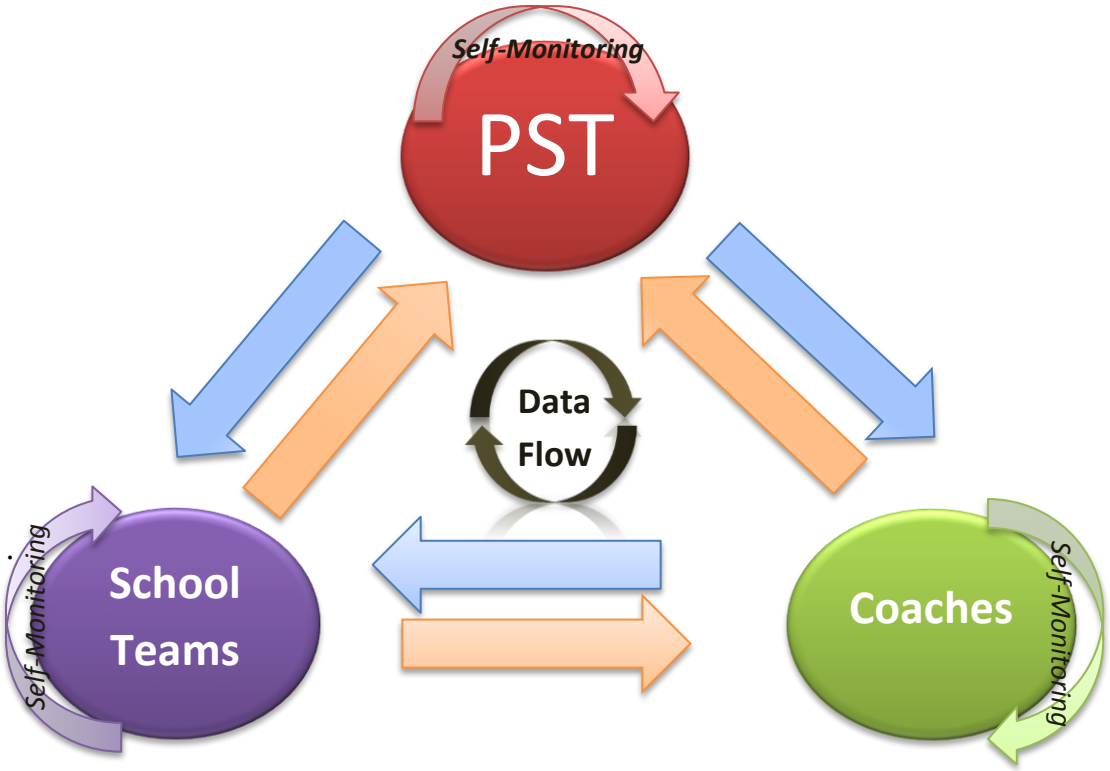
TAMAM monitoring is about collecting information that will help answer questions about the project through regular, systematic, and purposeful recording of its activities. This information can be helpful for: (1) reporting on the progress of the project's implementation, (2) informing its evolving plan and design approach, and (3) providing timely and detailed data for evaluating its impact. TAMAM monitoring allows ongoing learning and feedback throughout the designing, planning, and implementation cycles among all the participating teams in the project. On the one hand, it helps school teams assess how their improvement plans are working, and if their circumstances have changed. On the other hand, it gives the TAMAM Project Steering Team (PST) the information it needs to make decisions about changes that are necessary in the

design of the project's activities. Through this process, the constants remain the TAMAM vision and the need to abide by the spirit of the TAMAM Pillars. Another important feature of the TAMAM monitoring is giving the PST and the school teams multiple opportunities for celebrating various achievements as they identify what is working (and what is not) throughout the improvement journey. This would help boost the morale and the dedication of the school teams. In fact, Fullan (2007) argues that since change is a lengthy process there is a need to create and celebrate little successes along the way to maintain the teams' motivation and persistence in their endeavors of change and improvement.

Although the term "monitoring" is usually paired with supervisory actions, TAMAM monitoring distinguishes itself from the classic approach of these "supervisory" actions, where supervisory monitoring often happens with or without the knowledge of the parties engaged, for the ultimate purpose of assuring quality control. Indeed, the opposite is true of TAMAM that has a rather distributive mindset when it comes to monitoring, where every participant has a role to play and a task to complete. Panoramically viewed from a 360^{o} degrees angle, each project participant is involved whether that includes the PST, the coaches, or the school teams. They all actively engage in the monitoring practices and play a well-defined role in monitoring their own work - as well as that of the other participants'- in the project. Thus, they ensure a continuous and multidirectional data flow and ultimately ground their emerging decisions in evidence.

As such, TAMAM Monitoring is intended to be carried out by three groups of participants the PST, the university/school coaches, and the school teams.

Figure 2 – Monitoring Dynamics in TAMAM



The PST is responsible for monitoring the flow of work in TAMAM by overseeing its own activities, as well as those carried by the coaches and the school teams themselves. Similarly, the coaches monitor the progress of their own work as well as that of school teams. In the absence of the university/school coaches, the PST is directly responsible for monitoring the school teams. At the third level, the schools are responsible for monitoring their own progress.

To sum up, monitoring in TAMAM is conceived as a continuous reflective practice that serves the evolving design process of the TAMAM project. It has two main focuses: (1) Monitoring the work of the school teams and their progress; and (2) monitoring the work of the coaches [PST, University, and schools] and their progress as well.

Purpose of TAMAM Monitoring

The Purpose of TAMAM Monitoring is summarized as follows:

- ✓ Modifying project planning and implementation (TAMAM Evolving Plan, Mentoring Approach), through ongoing data collection on the school teams' progress in the project, and by means of identifying and providing support for resolving the challenges that the schools might face (Decisions and Actions Driven by Needs, Reflective Dialogue, and Practice).
- ✓ Purposefully collecting data as part of the systematic documentation of their practice.
- ✓ Providing the data needed for continuous feedback as a means for sustaining the capacity building momentum needed for the participating school teams in order for them to be able to carry on their schools' projects and maintain their motivation. This includes identifying the behaviors, habits, and values of the school teams that are in line with the TAMAM pillars and celebrating small successes along the journey as school teams reinforce the pillars and ultimately ensure the development of a "TAMAM culture" at the schools.

Mainly, monitoring in TAMAM attempts to answer the following questions:

- *In relation to the schools*: Are the teams fulfilling the requirements of the TAMAM journey? What is the impact of engaging in the journey in terms of the teams' acquisition and application of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with the TAMAM pillars?

- *In relation to the coaches*: How effective are the coaching strategies in helping schools undergo the TAMAM journey and apply/acquire the pillars? What type of actions do the PST members need to take based on the data collected from the schools during the monitoring stops throughout the TAMAM journey?

The Journey of Building the TAMAM Monitoring Design

In September 2011, after the PST had developed the project's roadmap and foundational principles [pillars], the conditions were ripe to embark on the project's monitoring and evaluation journey. An additional team member with a degree in Educational Evaluation and Research joined the PST to complete the task. The PST requested an assessment of the archived data and guidelines in order to organize it in a meaningful way so as to be able to easily retrieve information for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The PST also requested an assessment of the various monitoring and data collection practices carried in the first phase of the TAMAM project in light of the available guidelines outlined in the international literature about best monitoring processes. Finally, the PST requested recommendations based on that assessment for improving those practices and developing a comprehensive and systematic model that would provide structure and consistency within the project.

TAMAM Monitoring Practices in Phase 1

The assessment of the TAMAM monitoring practices and data in phase 1 was an attempt to find answers about its effectiveness through raising the following questions:

- ✓ Was the TAMAM monitoring serving a clear purpose, and was it guided by specific criteria?

- ✓ Did the TAMAM monitoring design include collecting baseline information in relation to the pillars?
- ✓ Were the procedures and monitoring stops following a well-designed plan to provide evidence of skill development and growth?
- ✓ Were the data collection sources/tools and monitoring stops sufficient in providing evidence of the school teams' progress and challenges faced in relation to the TAMAM Pillars?

Examining the bases for monitoring: the TAMAM pillars. The first evaluative step aimed at examining the availability and quality of the criteria that were adopted as bases for the monitoring process. This required a review of all the previous technical reports in order for the team to have a clear understanding of the project's goals, objectives, and overall progress of activities up to this point. This provided a comprehensive understanding of TAMAM's three strategic goals, and the process that led to the development of its eleven pillars from the perspective of the project's participants (see TAMAM Project Technical Report 4). At the conclusion of phase 1, the pillars were perceived as reflecting the TAMAM culture and spirit and were adopted by all the project participants as the "standard guidelines" towards which they had to aim. The Pillars were listed in the following order and terms:

1. Experiential Learning
2. Mentoring Approach
3. School Team Driven Decisions and Actions
4. Systematic Documented Practice
5. Collaborative Inquiry
6. Professional Collaboration
7. Reflective Dialogue and Practice
8. De-privatization of Practice
9. Leadership Capacity
10. Evidence Based Decisions
11. Evolving Design Planning

The next natural step was to examine whether there were measurable criteria derived from those pillars that were used to guide the data collection and analysis processes. Examination of the available documents, as well as interviews with the PST team members, revealed that the first few years of the project were characterized by an absence of clear and defined criteria for monitoring. Moreover, and though the PST engaged in various monitoring activities, these activities were, for the most part, done in response to immediate needs, and were reactive rather than pre-planned according to a preset agenda. Although the lack of criteria and measurable outcome descriptors safeguarded the naturalistic emerging quality of the results, it, however, negatively impacted the monitoring practices by leaving gaps in the data collected in terms of what is needed for assessing the quantity and quality of progress regarding the TAMAM pillars. Moreover, with the lack of a clear plan for the monitoring, monitoring stops often came out as ad-hoc interventions rather than as integral parts of the project activity itself. Consequently, the recommendation was then to derive measurable elements for each of the pillars as bases needed for developing monitoring criteria from the eleven pillars that encompass the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for successfully completing the "TAMAM Improvement Journey," and for determining scheduled monitoring stops in order to collect data along this journey.

At this juncture of the examination of the project's phase I accumulated data, the PST team decided to proceed with deriving the elements for the pillars. The developed elements of the pillars were used to judge the sufficiency of the data collected and the effectiveness of the tools and data collection procedures.

Looking for the baseline data. Examination of the available data revealed that one of TAMAM's original design fallouts was the failure to collect baseline data at the onset of the

project in relation to the expected outcomes. This came as a result of the project's commitment to the evolving design plan approach, which made the PST start the school improvement process by setting general goals. It then worked on developing and refining the project's design throughout the implementation process (See TAMAM Project Technical Report 4). Despite the PST's attempts to collect comprehensive data about the participating schools at the start of the project, the absence of the pillars and their elements at that stage resulted with data that came short of establishing a baseline for evaluating the impact of the project based on those pillars. Most of the data that the PST collected was demographic in nature, and there was no data found that captured what stage they had reached with respect to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that reflect the pillars and their elements. As a result, at the conclusion of phase 1, it was a challenge to describe the schools' progress in relation to their initial capacity prior to their participation in the project.

Baselines help identify the extent to which change has happened at each stage of the project and provide bases to compare future progress with. Therefore, creating a Baseline was recommended to establish what TAMAM was achieving and to monitor the progression of its impact. In addition, developing tools to collect the needed baseline data based on the pillars and their elements was also recommended, which is why the creation of the diagnostic checklist, along with the focus group interview questions, was as an integral part of the TAMAM monitoring design.

Data collection tools. According to the adopted guidelines, effective monitoring requires a data collection plan that utilizes tools that provide valid and sufficient data to evaluate the quality of progress based on the selected criteria for the project. A thorough assessment of the data and previously-used tools was performed to examine the monitoring procedures followed in

phase 1 of TAMAM. Thousands of files were saved in the TAMAM project's expanding database. Therefore, the logical next step was to organize and map these files to meet two main objectives: (1) Evaluate the type of data collection tools in terms of their usefulness in providing sufficient data, and (2) Evaluate the type of data that was collected in terms of its usefulness in providing evidence on the impact that TAMAM has based on the Pillars. The data collection tools/sources that were categorized and examined included the following:

- Reflection Papers by the school teams and the school team members
- Schools' Action Research Proposals
- Action Research Final Report
- Progress Reports written by schools
- Meeting Summaries (transcription, notes of AUB team)
- Individual Interviews with the project's participants
- Recordings (PST meetings with the members themselves, and PST meetings with the schools)

Two main questions guided the investigation of the available database:

- ✓ Does the document provide sufficient evidence of baseline data in relation to the TAMAM Pillars? (Establishing a baseline)
- ✓ Does the document provides sufficient evidence of the development of the TAMAM knowledge, skills, and attitudes targeted that must eventually be exhibited by school team members? (TAMAM Impact)

What follows is the presentation of the results of the examination of the sources of data and data collection tools that were used by the PST in the first phase of the TAMAM project, coupled with specific recommendations for improvement.

Reflection papers. Reflection papers were completed by private schools, in English or in Arabic, beginning in the fall of 2008, one year after the start of the TAMAM project. The time

given to complete the paper varied from one semester to one year. The questions asked were as follows:

- ✓ Did you change as a result of your participation in the TAMAM Project?
- ✓ As a result of your participation in the TAMAM Project, do you now see your role as an agent of change in your school? How?

Table 1 shows the frequency of the schools' reflection papers.

Table 1

School	Total Number of TAMAM Team Members (Fall 2008)	Total Number of Submitted Reflection Papers
I - Lebanon	3	2
II - Lebanon	3	3
III - Lebanon	3	2
IV – Jordan	3	2
V – Jordan	3	2
VI – Jordan	4	2
VII - KSA	2	0
VIII Girls -KSA	3	1
IX Boys - KSA	3	2
TOTAL	27	16(59%)

The review of reflection papers revealed, first, that many of the members did not submit a reflection paper, and second, that the schools did not receive directives to discuss specific skills, knowledge, or attitudes related to the TAMAM pillars. The content of the reflection papers was triggered by the previous questions which constitute general probes, leaving the content completely subject to be shaped by the nature of each team member's own development and

experience. As a result, evidence from the Reflection Papers, although representative of the context and the perspective of the teams, was insufficient with regards to providing enough data needed for establishing a baseline. It only provided evidence of certain skills identified by the pillars, and furnished scattered evidence of TAMAM's impact in relation to those pillars. As an example, statements from two reflection papers written by team members in school 1 provided evidence related to 6 of the 11 pillars:

- ✓ Reflection Paper #1: School Team Driven Decisions and Actions, Collaborative Inquiry, Professional Collaboration, De-privatization of Practice, Leadership Capacity, Evolving Design Planning.
- ✓ Reflection Paper #2: Professional Collaboration, Leadership Capacity.

Similarly, in school 2, the examination of three reflection papers revealed that they touched partially on 7 out of the 11 pillars as follows:

- ✓ Reflection Paper # 1: Leadership Capacity
- ✓ Reflection Paper # 2: De-privatization of practice
- ✓ Reflection Paper # 3: School Team Driven Decisions and Actions, Professional Collaboration, Reflective Dialogue and Practice, De-privatization of Practice, Leadership Capacity, and Evidence Based Decisions.

To sum up, the evaluator found that reflection papers could be a useful data collection tool utilized for collecting evidence for impact from the perspective of the team members (both individually and as a team). However, more emphasis should be given to providing probing questions that solicit their experiences and perceptions regarding all the elements of the pillars. Thus, reflection papers could be used a source for baseline data; however, they are more suited to provide data and progress during the journey. The recommendations were as follows:

- ✓ Reflection Papers should be completed individually at least once a year by all of the schools' team members as they are prompted with a series of reflective probes/questions designed in relation to the TAMAM journey and pillars.
- ✓ Reflection papers should include the dates by which they were completed.
- ✓ Guidelines for writing reflection papers should ask the practitioner to: (1) Describe previous practices (which will provide an additional source for establishing a baseline), and (2) Illustrate skills, development, and growth using specific examples he/she encountered through his/her participation in the TAMAM project.

Schools' initial proposals. School teams were asked early on in the project to prepare action research proposals. Team members were guided by a number of questions headed by three titles: Focus, Research Questions, Building a Data Collection Plan. Reports were written in English and in Arabic. The review of the schools' initial proposals revealed that even though they were intended to document an essential step in the development of the action research plan, their content neither provided data that could be used in establishing the baseline, nor helped reflect comprehensive evidence of the progress of the teams in terms of the emerging impact of their participation in TAMAM. Moreover, the guidelines offered to the teams did not include explicit directives that were conducive to collecting evidence on the teams' acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes intended by the Pillars. The only evidence that could be drawn from the content of the proposals was incomplete and fell under only two pillars: evidence based decisions and collaborative inquiry (more specifically, data related items). The following examples from the schools' action research proposals present evidence in support of the above conclusion: The percentages represent how many elements from each pillar were identified in the

proposal. For example if the pillar contained 10 elements, and only 3 elements were identified in the proposal, then the percentage of retrieved evidence would be 30%.

- Proposal # 1: 33% for evidence based decisions, 6.25% for collaborative inquiry.
- Proposal #2: 6.25 % for collaborative inquiry
- Proposal #3: 6.25% for collaborative inquiry
- Proposal #4: 6.25 % collaborative inquiry

As a result of this examination, the evaluator recommended developing a template to provide additional directives to complete the schools' initial proposals. The template was to be designed in such a way that it purposefully connected to the TAMAM journey and pillars, and induced sufficient evidence on the progress and quality of the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes based on the TAMAM pillars and their criteria.

Action research final report. The Action Research Final Reports were completed between 2009 and 2010 by the 12 participating school teams. The time given for completion ranged from one semester to one year. Schools had to follow a detailed outline that contained the following sections: introduction, methodology, results and discussions. Reports were written in English and in Arabic. The study of the Action Research Final Reports revealed that the documents provided limited data on the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified by the pillars, and as a result, they offered only scattered evidence of TAMAM's impact on the school teams' practices. The following are examples of the evidence that led to this conclusion. The percentages represent how many elements from each pillar were identified in the proposal. For example if the pillar contained 10 elements, and only 3 elements were identified in the action research report, then the percentage of the retrieved evidence would be 30%.

- ✓ *Action Research Final Report # 1*: 34% evidence of Experiential Learning, 10% Mentoring Approach, 17% School Team Decision Making and Actions, 34% Systematic Documented Practices, 57% Collaborative Inquiry, 7% Professional Collaboration, 28% Reflective Dialogue and Practice, 25% De-Privatization of Practice, 14% Leadership Capacity, 34% Evidence Based Decisions, and 34% Evolving Design Planning.

- ✓ *Action Research Final Report # 2*: 28.5% Evidence School Team Decision Making and Actions, 37.5% Systematic Documented Practice, 57% Collaborative Inquiry, 8.3% Evolving Design Planning.

- ✓ *Action Research Final Report # 3*: 17% Evidence School Team Decision Making and Actions, 12.5% Systematic Documented Practice, 21.4% Collaborative Inquiry, 7% Professional Collaboration, 24% Reflective Dialogue and Practice.

Accordingly, the evaluator concluded that the Action Research Final Reports can constitute an important part of the monitoring/evaluation process. Thus, she recommended major improvements on the existing guidelines: Instead of a generic outline for the expected content, the evaluator claimed that a detailed template is needed to improve the comprehensiveness of the documentation and to provide the needed evidence regarding the project's impact on the team members. As a result, numerous questionnaires, as well as other documents and data collection tools developed and/or adopted by schools were used in the action research process as part of the final report. These documents that were used mainly: (1) probe for detailed narratives about the teams' progress and learning in light of the elements of the pillars, and (2) solicit their reflections on their experience.

Progress reports written by schools. Progress Reports were completed during 2009-2010 by team members of participating schools. The time given to complete the progress report and the expected frequency of these reports were not specified. The teams were asked general questions as they reported about their schools' progress. Progress reports included general descriptions of what the schools have done so far and what they plan to do in the future. Few described the challenges that the teams had been facing, and the procedures that they had taken in order to overcome these challenges. Reports were written in English and in Arabic. Closer examination of the progress reports written by the schools' team members revealed that they provided limited evidence of acquisition of the many skills identified by the pillars. Collected Progress Reports only provided scattered evidence of TAMAM's impact in relation to the pillars. Statements from progress reports provided some evidence related to the following pillars:

- ✓ *Progress Report # 1*: There was evidence of the team members applying Reflective Dialogue and Practice, showing that the team members reflected on the performances and lessons learned throughout the action research experiences. Moreover, there was documented evidence that pointed out that the team members were indeed looking for adequate evidence throughout the process, and used it as the basis of subsequent decisions. There were also statements in the narratives provided by the team members that reflected their understanding and practice of the "evolving plan approach". They mentioned that the plan they adopted was supported with available research and literature, and evidence collected from the action research cycle they completed. Indeed the school teams asserted that: "the plan is continuously evaluated and reflected upon".

- ✓ *Progress Report # 2*: The narrative of the report included statements offering evidence of emerging Professional Collaboration among the different members. School teams clarified: "TAMAM team members were urged to think out loud and discuss means of training staff members".
- ✓ *Progress Report # 3*: This report included an account of how the team members "used the tools of action research" to conduct Collaborative Inquiry, and how they "had to modify their training approach" as evidence of following the evolving design plan approach.
- ✓ *Progress Report # 4*: Evidence of Collaborative Inquiry and Reflective Dialogue and Practice was also found in the progress report of the school 4 team. In fact, the team members related how they: "prepared questionnaires […] and wrote reflections about further steps".
- ✓ *Progress Report # 5*: This report included statements that reflected the school teams' understanding and practice of: (1) the Mentoring Approach, (2) Collaborative Inquiry, and (3) Professional Collaboration. Statements like "we completed another action research training", pointed at their mentoring activities. Similarly, statements like "the team identified the scope and sequence of activities", signaled Collaborative Inquiry. Finally, statements like "the TAMAM team works as the engine and guide of the schools' departments", highlighted Professional Collaboration.

As a result of these observations, the evaluator realized that the progress reports should include three sections:

- ✓ A narrative of the general progress of the school teams on their improvement journey, and the implementation of their school improvement project

- ✓ Specific examples on their progress regarding their acquisition of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to the TAMAM Pillars
- ✓ Their own reflections on the transformation of their understanding and the change in the practice they are experiencing

Moreover, the evaluator noted that the frequency [how many reports per cycle] of these progress reports should be specified as well regarding the particular juncture they should be written at throughout the journey. Therefore, she recommended that progress reports be submitted at least twice a year; one report 1-2 months prior to the annual gathering, and a second one at the conclusion of the academic year.

Meeting summaries (transcriptions, minutes). All through the first phase of the project, the PST kept written records of their meetings in the form of transcribed meeting proceedings, summaries, and minutes. A closer look at those documents revealed that they are essential in providing information about the coaching work of the PST. Additionally, they provided evidence for: (1) the mentoring approach, (2) the constant effort to induce reflective thinking, (3) the continuous support and responsive directives, and (4) the reflective dialogue and practice. The documents also provided details about the schools' progress in completing the action research study. Moreover, meeting summaries were found to be a valuable tool capturing specific information about various interventions and communications between the PST and the schools, and revealing the dynamics among the various PST members. However, and despite their extensive nature, transcribed meetings provided partial, non-systematic data that can be used for: (1) establishing the baseline, and (2) finding evidence of development and growth of the TAMAM pillars. Moreover, going through hundreds of pages of documents proved to be a time-

consuming process relative to the relevance of the data extracted for the sake of providing evidence regarding the impact of the project.

Reflective notes written by the PST team. The notes written by members of the PST team about the school teams' progress, following meetings, provided a source of partial evidence of the "Evolving Design Planning" pillar. Most of these notes revolved around documenting the school teams' challenges, the PST's perspectives on its sources, and the measures/actions that were taken to overcome them especially in terms of modifications introduced to the professional development activities (see TAMAM Project Technical Report 4). In fact, the reflective notes provided considerable information about the PST's concerns regarding the schools' progress, and were found to be essential sources of information that guided the planning of the professional development activities, thus helping the PST to deal with those concerns. Questions like: "Are there common patterns among the school teams in terms of the challenges they face?", "What do we need to focus on with the whole group and/or with a particular school's team?" were raised and answered based on the evidence documented in these notes.

Individual interviews. In addition to the PST's ongoing documentation of its activities, the team also conducted individual interviews with the members of the school teams; as deemed necessary at various junctures of the project. The interviews were conducted between 2008 and 2009. They were completed in a sporadic manner, during the PST's visits to the schools. The individual interviews did not follow specific templates. They focused on inquiring about the interviewee's self-evaluation and progress within the TAMAM project; asking them about notable changes they introduced to their practice, and about their views on the added value the project brought to them, individually, and to their school, more globally.

Examination of the data from the collected interviews reveal that the data does not offer sufficient information that can be used to establish a baseline and/or to provide evidence on the team members' progress on acquiring/developing the TAMAM pillars. While it was useful regarding the schools' suggestions, and the needs from the PST, it was not efficient in evaluating the progress of the teams' learning with respect to the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and the overall application of the TAMAM pillars. Accordingly, the evaluator found that individual interviews can be used as a useful secondary tool for monitoring the teams' progress based on the TAMAM pillars. They can be a useful source of data with regards to documenting challenges, suggestions, and collaborative dynamics among different teams, as well as between these teams and their coaches.

Recordings (PST meetings, PST meetings with schools). All AUB team meetings and all AUB meetings with schools were tape-recorded and saved in the database. Since the beginning of 2009, it had become a team policy to tape-record and document meetings and discussions. While recordings might hold valuable evaluative information, they are time-consuming when it comes to evaluating the school progress based on the criteria derived from the pillars of the TAMAM project. As a result, the evaluator recommended that each recording be stored with a brief summary of its most important contents (in such a way that it can be easily retrieved by its date) that highlight evidence that can be used to track the progress of acquiring the pillars. Moreover, when saving the recordings, the TAMAM team was required to sort them out depending on how useful and valid they found them in evaluating the pillars.

Procedures and stops.

After examining the available database, and conducting many interviews with the members of the PST team, it became evident that the team did not have a set plan for monitoring, which was purposefully implementing. There were no pre-determined procedures and monitoring stops. Rather, the PST's monitoring practices, and decisions concerning the monitoring stops, were intuitive and spontaneous; lacking a purposeful scope and sequence. A major recommendation was to develop a monitoring plan with clear objectives, and corresponding procedures that would incorporate the monitoring stops into the TAMAM journey to provide a systematic and consistent flow of data for evidence-based decisions needed for a continuous monitoring process.

Setting the stage for the TAMAM monitoring design: Where to Go Next?

To answer the previously mentioned questions that guided the assessment of the TAMAM monitoring practices and data in phase 1, the evaluator found that: (1) the TAMAM pillars lacked measurable descriptive elements; (2) the PST's monitoring activities served the vague purpose of identifying the team challenges, and the needed support for school teams, and relied marginally on the partially defined pillars; (3) the design failed in providing a consistent and systematic flow of data that could be used to establish a baseline for drawing evaluative conclusions regarding progress and impact; (4) the collected documents and documented practices did not constitute a sufficient source of evidence of the school teams' progress in relation to all of the TAMAM Pillars, rather, they provided only partial and scattered evidence of skill development and growth; (5) the procedures and monitoring stops followed an ad-hoc rather than a cohesive comprehensive design.

While evidence of certain TAMAM skills was retrievable from certain collected documents, it was difficult to attribute their development reliably to TAMAM since a baseline was not established based on the pillars and their elements. The currently available data can support claims of progress and growth at schools; as testified by the various TAMAM team members. However, the compiled documents (minutes, reflective notes, reports) and tools used for data collection (interviews) are able to provide valuable information only when specific and clear guidelines are developed in the form of templates that are unified for all schools. Moreover, an important part of these guidelines should be focused on collecting data that can be used to provide evidence and measure the acquisition and practice of the criteria derived from the pillars.

The PST team members became aware of this realization when they took the decision to develop "templates" that were to be used as general guidelines by the school team members and the university coaches for the sake of planning, progressing along the improvement journey, and serving as a unified format to document the progress of the schools and coaches. Therefore, templates for reflection papers, progress reports, action research reports, and proposed initial plans of action were being developed. Along with the decision to design a monitoring process for TAMAM, these templates were thus developed further to serve a double purpose: first, as guidelines for facilitating the work of the school teams; and second, as tools assuring consistent and purposeful data collection for monitoring and evaluation. Designed as such, these templates would provide the framework that would ground the professional development activities and their related decisions, as well as bring together common elements and components from the TAMAM journey and the 11 pillars. The templates would also cater for a continuous, non-disrupted flow of data collected from the experiences documented on the TAMAM journey. Hence, suggesting a scope and sequence for the various monitoring stops would be considered as

part of the activities/tasks to be completed. Furthermore, formal observations, as well as individual and group interviews, needed to be set up in schools to provide the data necessary for monitoring the practical application of the pillars among the school teams.

These recommendations paved the road for the required future actions with regards to developing the TAMAM monitoring design. Establishing a baseline, identifying the project's monitoring purposes, developing the necessary and adequate tools and templates that could generate measurable results, in addition to designing the various monitoring stops and aligning them with the pillars, constituted the next steps in the process of developing the TAMAM monitoring design.

TAMAM's Current Monitoring Design

After assessing data, and identifying strengths and weaknesses, the PST came to the realization that the project's first phase of the data collection procedures, and monitoring stops, were ad-hoc and characterized by being mostly reactive; focusing solely on being responsive to the school needs. Nevertheless, following the experiential learning cycle, the thorough examination of these practices helped make them consciously noticed, reflected on, and, as a result, a new design was conceptualized and built to be put to the test again. Therefore, TAMAM's current monitoring design evolved from the project's practices and was conceived based on the lessons learned since 2007, as well as informed by the best practices documented in the international literature. Building the current TAMAM monitoring design included the following steps: (1) Adopting the focus questions guiding the monitoring activities; (2) developing measurable criteria from the Pillars and the components of the journey; (3) setting clear procedures to collect data including specifying monitoring stops; (4) specifying the sources of information from the existing documented data; and (5) developing tools for collecting data at

each of these stops. In what follows, an overview of TAMAM's monitoring design will be presented, followed by a description of each of the previously mentioned steps.

Overview

As mentioned previously, and in line with its philosophy, monitoring in TAMAM adopts a participative approach where all stakeholders (project steering team members, coaches, and school team members) play an active role in contributing to: (1) the criteria adopted; (2) the information provided; and (3) the judgments and decisions that emerge from them. TAMAM Monitoring is completed at multiple levels and is carried out by all those participating in the project: the PST, the coaches, and the school teams. The process is also inherently reflective and the data obtained is reflexive, meaning that each participant gets to contribute to the data by critically reflecting on his/her own work. So, in order to monitor the progress of learning of the school teams, data is collected from the schools themselves, as well as from the coaches' documentation of the progress and their reflections on it, in light of the pillars and the stages of the journey. Furthermore, the work of the coaches is also monitored via: (1) data that is generated from their own reflections on their work; (2) the school teams' work progress and their feedback on the coaches' work; and (3) the documentation that the PST and the coaches keep of their plans, and the technical reports that document their implementation.

The monitoring process in TAMAM comprises procedures and guidelines used for collecting information that is built into the TAMAM School Improvement Journey (see Figure1 TAMAM School Improvement Journey). As a result, a steady stream of information can flow into the project about the work and how it is carried out, as it constitutes an integral part of the improvement journey, and is incorporated with the rest of its activities.

Moreover, TAMAM's monitoring design takes a formative viewpoint and establishes a process that provides useful information on an ongoing basis to improve the project's activities and the manner in which they are implemented. As such, it puts into action the concept of the "evolving plan". TAMAM monitoring consists of five critical components:

1. *Setting Evaluative Criteria:* At the conclusion of TAMAM's phase 1, the PST had developed and established TAMAM's 11 pillars, their elements, and the TAMAM journey. In alignment with the literature on effective monitoring practices, the pillars' elements, and journey, were selected to constitute the criteria of the monitoring. These criteria help determine whether the schools are acquiring the targeted knowledge, skills, and attitudes while progressing along the journey's path. They also help diagnose the school teams' needs which eventually become the basis for determining which of the pillars' elements the professional development activities should focus on in the next step of the journey.
2. *Establishing a baseline*: An effective monitoring design requires establishing a baseline at the start of the TAMAM journey, in order to judge the school teams' learning and progress along the journey. Corresponding tools and templates are designed to ensure the systematic completion of that first monitoring stop.
3. *Ongoing Collection of data*: TAMAM monitoring is designed to ensure continuous collection of information about the school teams' learning progress, the coaching activities and their needs, the obstacles and challenges to be addressed, and the overall advancement of the school teams on the TAMAM journey. This continuous flow of information, is distributed along the journey, and constitutes the main source of information for TAMAM's evolving design.

4. *Analyzing data*: Depending on the type of data collected, qualitative and/or quantitative data analysis is completed.
5. *Translating results into conclusions*: The obtained results from the data analysis are summarized into conclusions that set the platform for further steps based on a reflective participatory feedback. This makes it possible to modify and refine decisions and actions related to the PST's work with the schools, coaches, coaching plans, and professional development plans.

Focus and Questions

TAMAM monitoring starts by setting the goals of its process. These include: (1) examining the outcome of the various decisions and actions; (2) analyzing the processes followed to achieve the project's goals; and (3) maintaining a continuous tracking of the flow of events and activities. Moreover, TAMAM monitoring provides much of the information that can be used as part of the evaluation process which would help determine: (1) the impact of the project at a later stage, and (2) the effectiveness of its design and the processes that it followed.

Monitoring for outcome requires collecting data from various sources to identify indications that the project's activities are making an impact on the school teams in such a way that they meet the set expectations based on the criteria derived from the pillars. Therefore, the results of this monitoring give a comprehensive idea of the acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the TAMAM pillars. Monitoring the process involves making sure that the improvement process the schools are following align with the TAMAM Journey, complete all its key stages, and conform to the approaches derived from the TAMAM pillars.

Consequently, the monitoring stops are set to collect data in order to provide answers to the following questions: (1) What progress are the schools making on the improvement journey,

and what behaviors, habits, and values of the school teams are becoming in line with the TAMAM Pillars? (2) What are the challenges the schools are facing and what do they need in terms of support for overcoming these challenges? (3) What kind of action is needed to sustain the momentum of schools' projects and maintain the motivation of the participating school teams? (4) How effective is the coaching process and how is it progressing? and lastly, based on all of the above, (5) What kind of modifications are needed regarding the planning of the project and its implementation activities?

Elements of the TAMAM Pillars

Monitoring the progress of the school teams based on the pillars required explicating each of the pillars into a number of elements and developing their measurable criteria as a critical step to moving towards systematic monitoring and evaluation in TAMAM.

Developing the elements of the TAMAM Pillars. At the conclusion of the first phase, the Pillars, which came to light as a result of the PST's experiences and interactions with the schools, did not have a documented specific understanding of what they stood for. Therefore giving them descriptive and measurable elements was a required and important next step. Accordingly, each pillar was analyzed separately, and as part of the whole set, thus gaining: (1) a TAMAM definition, and (2) descriptive elements that reflect a specific meaning of that particular Pillar in the TAMAM project. The process of developing the elements of the Pillars was long and required collaborative participation. To begin with, the PST evaluation specialist developed a first draft, and then presented it to the PST. Consequently, the PST, as a team, conducted several brainstorming sessions discussing each definition and each element, and digging into the literature. The team members kept negotiating until they reached a preliminary agreement regarding to what extent: (1) the elements of these pillars were an accurate reflection of the

culture work of TAMAM; and (2) the mosaic of these elements tiled an authentic illustration of what TAMAM's conception of that Pillar actually was. The Pillars, and their newly developed elements, were then sent to all of the pioneer schools' team members for reflection and feedback. The received comments - although limited in number due to a reduced number of respondents - were taken into consideration and necessary changes were made. To capture a broader base of respondents, the PST planned a full session during the TAMAM March 2013 gathering, dedicated entirely to working with the pioneer schools' team members on refining the elements and aligning them with their TAMAM experience. Valuable feedback was collected and adjustments were made accordingly. This continuous process of altering the pillars' elements, where all of TAMAM's participants contributed an input to shaping them, improved the Pillars' final form and made it possible to develop a master rubric that provides a measurable description of each element.

The TAMAM rubric and criteria. After receiving a consensus from all of the stakeholders of TAMAM, the elements of the TAMAM pillars were clustered into three categories within each pillar: (1) knowledge, (2) skills, and (3) attitudes. Each element then gained a measurable description consisting of a set of criteria according to three levels: (1) does not meet expectations, (2) partially meets expectations, and (3) meets expectations. The compiled descriptions of all of these elements, based on these three levels, constitute TAMAM's master rubric. As a result, this rubric is able to give TAMAM participants an observable description of the desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The monitoring criteria thus identify the extent to which these elements are visible, and applied. Below is an excerpt from TAMAM's master rubric.

Pillar # 4 – Evidence Based Decisions			
Elements	***Does not meet expectations***	***Partially meet expectations***	***Meet expectations***
1. Team members know that decisions are to be guided by the best available evidence (P4.1) *K*	There is no evidence that team members know that decisions are to be guided by the best available evidence.	Team members sporadically use evidence while making their decisions, and tend to eliminate evidence that might lead them down an undesirable path.	Team members make statements reflecting their knowledge that decisions are to be guided by the best available evidence.
2. Team members identify the type of evidence needed for a decision (P4.2) *S*	There is no evidence that team members identify the type of evidence needed for a decision	Team members determine if the evidence needed is qualitative/ quantitative/ student achievement/ demographics/ attendance records … ***but*** find difficulties selecting the appropriate evidence required.	Team members determine if the evidence needed is qualitative/ quantitative/ student achievement/ demographics/ attendance records … ***and*** select the appropriate evidence required.
3. Team members systematically search for evidence before taking decisions (P4.3) *S*	There is no evidence that team members systematically search for evidence before taking decisions	Team members only gather evidence for decision making when instructed to do so.	Team members systematically look up articles from the available literature, school data, make interviews, and consult with other school members to gather evidence, before taking a decision.
4. Team members critically appraise the validity, reliability, and usefulness of data used to support decisions (P4.4) *S*	There is no evidence that team members critically appraise the validity, reliability, and usefulness of data used to support decisions	Team members tend to use data as evidence to support their decisions and rarely appraise the validity, reliability, and usefulness of this data.	Team members constantly investigate the characteristics of the data: (1) its bias; (2) its sources; (3) its statistics; and (4) the instruments used to obtain this data. and ask questions.
5. Team	There is no	Some of the team	Team members'

members implement actions driven by evidence (P4.5) *S*	evidence that team members implement actions driven by evidence	members' implementation plans and actions are derived from the collected evidence while others are not.	implementation plan and actions are mostly derived from the collected evidence.
6. Team members accept evidence as the basis for making decisions, regardless of whether it is positive or negative (P4.6) *A*	There is no evidence that team members accept evidence as the basis for making decisions, regardless of whether it is positive or negative	Team members make statements reflecting their acceptance of evidence as the basis for making decisions; emphasizing the positive and disregarding or minimizing the negative.	Team members make statements reflecting their acceptance of evidence as the basis for making decisions, regardless of whether it is positive or negative

Templates and Data Collection Tools

The review of the data collected in phase 1 of the project helped the PST determine possible sources of data that were made available as part of the documentation process in the project. In order to make sure that this data is sufficient for monitoring, specific guidelines were introduced to solicit the needed data, in the form of templates that the school teams are required to complete at different junctures of their school improvement journey.

Templates . The templates were developed to serve as guidelines for the schools as they progress along on the TAMAM journey. The use of these templates means that the schools are simultaneously documenting their practices and their progress, and providing the PST and coaches with valuable data that can be used for: (1) monitoring, during the journey; and (2) evaluation, at the conclusion of the journey. To serve that purpose, these templates are solidly

calibrated in relation to the pillars and the journey. What follows is a presentation of these templates along with a description of the guidelines they offer to the school teams.

Country's improvement initiatives templates. This template provides guidelines that solicit information regarding: (1) the roles and responsibilities of the ministry of education in school reform; and (2) the status of the ministry's previous and current educational reform initiatives.

School's initial plan template. This Template includes guidelines necessary for school teams to: (1) identify the nature of their need, and (2) select the innovative interventions. The latter occurs when school teams describe their ideal scenario and their improvement goals, and plan the improvement project by discussing the objectives and strategies of their initial design. In doing so, they thus outline the key aspects of the implementation process in terms of resources and strategies needed for: (1) overcoming anticipated challenges, (2) establishing a baseline, and (3) preparing the monitoring plan.

TAMAM improvement journey report template. This template is an extension that was built on the Initial Plan Template. It guides school team members in describing their whole journey: (1) their planning of the improvement project; (2) their implementation experience (which includes an overview of the implementation procedures and a description of the modifications that were made to the initial plan); (3) their final plan for improvement; (4) their evaluation plan and gained experience; and finally (5) their reflections on their learning throughout the journey, along with the challenges they faced, and other remaining concerns.

Evaluation plan template. This template helps school team members plan for the evaluation of the impact of the innovative project, and the effectiveness of its implementation process.

School team members are invited to discuss how they developed their evaluation questions, criteria, data collection processes, and analysis.

Progress report template. This template helps school team members report their progress through their: (1) description of the actions completed; (2) compilation of the data gathered as part of monitoring the implementation of the innovative intervention; and (3) reflections on the challenges faced and concerns felt. As a result of this progress-tracking, the school team members are thus able to propose the next steps and the requests that are required from the PST. The template also includes probes that encourage the team members to provide evidence on the progress of their learning based on the pillars and their elements.

Reflection paper template. This template, aided by a series of questions, guides school team members in their reflection on each pillar.

Decision making summary template. This template helps school team members develop a summary about the entire improvement journey, and *the results of the evaluation of* the impact that this improvement project has. It also probes team members to make decisions about future actions based on what they have learned from this experience.

Follow up visit template. This template is used during follow-up visits; whether maintained in person, or via Skype meetings. The guidelines include the following: (1) the purpose and focus of the visit; (2) highlights from the discussions that took place; and (3) emerging reflections and requests for follow-up from the schools, the coaches, or the PST. Furthermore, the template also probes for: (1) raising issues for discussions; (2) providing feedback; (3) noting successes; (4) planning for logistical matters; (5) planning for the next steps that need to be taken by the coaches or the school teams; (6) paying attention to certain immediate team needs; and (7)

requesting resources and any other subjects that may require dialogue. Additionally, and scheduled at the beginning of the school year, the focus of the follow-up visit is mainly for the sake of giving the PST/coaches the chance to discuss and finalize the school teams' proposed schedules regarding the implementation plan needed for their innovative initiative during the new academic year.

Meeting report template. This template helps school team members, PST team members, or coaches: (1) set the agenda of their meetings; (2) document the highlights of the discussions that took place; (3) record the decisions and action-items that need follow-up; and (4) include reflective notes regarding the conclusions that can be drawn based on the discussions concerning the progress of the project in light of the pillars.

Coaching plan report template. This template helps coaches set learning outcomes and design learning experiences for the school teams, guided by the elements of the pillars that help them build the needed capacity of school team members as leaders and agents of change. It includes guidelines for: (1) planning activities with timelines and resources; (2) identifying supporting and hindering factors; (3) deciding on the monitoring plan; and (4) documenting the reflections on the implementation process.

TAMAM gathering report template. This template provides guidelines for discussing and documenting the planning process for the gathering phase (preparation and implementation), as well as the final design phase. The guidelines of this template include the following sections: (1) background information about the progress achieved to date with respect to the project in general, and with regards to the schools' needs for capacity building in particular; (2) learning outcomes and strategies including the topics/skills that need to be presented as well as the

instructional strategies that are to be utilized; (3) a detailed daily schedule of activities that lists the role distributions regarding who will be leading each of the activities during the gathering; (4) a detailed account of the proceedings of the gathering including the modifications that were introduced (if any); (5) the analysis of the evaluative data that was gathered from participants; (6) a concluding reflection that focuses on the effectiveness of the workshop in relation to how accurately it achieves its short-term goals, and the impact it has on moving the project forward towards its long-term goals, based on the pillars and the journey; and lastly (7) essential concerns that are crucial to be followed-up on by the school teams and/or coaches.

Bi-annual report to the ATF (Arab Thought Foundation) template. The purpose of this template is to provide the PST with guidelines for reporting its activities to the funding agency. The report is submitted twice a year and includes a cumulative comprehensive account that summarizes the TAMAM progress during a six months period. This includes all of the activities that were carried out by the PST team and the school coaches, the planned events and gatherings, news about the updated website, the status of the current TAMAM research, a briefing on the progress of all the participating schools, and a layout of future preparations and action plans. The template's guidelines respond to the overarching project's goals and provide evidence of progress on all three fronts: capacity building, research, and dissemination in the educational community.

Email correspondences with schools. Although emails do not typically follow specific templates, they are, nonetheless, very efficient when it comes to monitoring data. As a key medium of communication among all of the members of the TAMAM community, emailing provides de facto documentation. Announcements, updates, meeting dates, feedback, questions and concerns, can all be part of the exchanges carried out through emails thus providing: (1) rich

data, which supplements the data on progress, and (2) unique insights into the coaching dynamics between the school teams and their coaches.

Data collection tools. Sources of data for monitoring were not only derived from the templates that guide the documentation of the school teams' experiences. In fact, a number of data collection tools were developed to collect additional data for the sake of setting the baseline and gathering evidence to assess the impact of the project and the effectiveness of the process. After reviewing the tools used in phase 1 of the project, the PST added a few tools and refined existing ones in order to make sure that they are in line with the adopted Pillars/elements/criteria, and that they can be used efficiently as part of the project's activities in such a way that they provide the additional data needed.

Diagnostic checklist. This tool is designed to collect baseline data from the schools' team members. Its purpose to: (1) identify what levels the school team members have reached in terms of their knowledge and skills of the TAMAM pillars, and (2) give a solid set of data for later developments and impact comparisons. It covers a set of detailed criteria based on the TAMAM Pillars that help establish a baseline of the initial capacity of the school teams according to the three categories: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It consists of a rating scale that is to be filled out by the schools' team members. The scale asks the team members to self-evaluate their knowledge and application of the detailed criteria of the TAMAM pillars. School Team members are also individually asked to complete the Diagnostic Checklist prior to the launch of the project or any TAMAM activity at their school.

Focus group interviews. Focus group interviews are used to collect two types of data: baseline data and progress data. As the project is launched in any particular school, the TAMAM

PST/coaches conduct a focus group interview (designed and developed by the PST), which includes questions soliciting experiences and practices that reflect the elements of the TAMAM pillars. This is done in order to gain a better understanding of the school teams' initial knowledge, skills, and attitudes in relation to the pillars. During the course of the project's implementation, focus group interviews are also used by the coaches for the sake of collecting data on the school teams' progress, and identifying the challenges that they are facing. They consist of questions related to the TAMAM pillars and give a better understanding of the school teams' habits of mind as well as their overall comprehension of the pillars While the questions are aligned with the progress of capacity building in relation to the pillars, they mainly focus on identifying the unanticipated challenges, and on getting the teams' input regarding actions that have to be taken at the project's strategic planning level.

***Individual interviews*.** Occasionally, individual interviews are used in order to follow up on a particular problem, or to receive additional detailed insight on certain situations that emerged from the focus group interviews. As the need arises, TAMAM coaches or the PST conduct interviews with individual school team members to collect data needed to examine their progress on issues related to teamwork, team dynamics, and collaboration. School team members' commitment to the project, and their understanding of its evolving nature, are also addressed. Individual Interviews can also be more generally conducted with school administrators in order to gain their insights and get their support so as to be able to attend to the school teams' concerns regarding any decisions related to the administrator.

Questionnaires. TAMAM's questionnaires are used to collect data that contribute to establishing the project's baseline, and providing background data about the schools and their culture/visions, the teachers, the students, and their various attempts at school improvement.

Developed and designed by the PST, these tools consist of three questionnaires. One questionnaire collects background information about the school principal, and the other includes questions about the school in general (i.e. demographics, organizational structure, services and resources, community and climate, professional development, and overall improvement. The third questionnaire gathers information about the team members' profile.

Gatherings' evaluation survey. At the conclusion of the annual gatherings organized by the PST, all participating TAMAM members (school teams and their coaches) are asked to complete a survey that inquires about their level of satisfaction with the gatherings' organization, design, choice of topics, activities, and the delivery of their presenters. Additionally, this survey also includes specific sections that solicit feedback on the clarity, added value, applicability and usefulness of the concepts discussed. Lastly, it investigates the likelihood that the team members would incorporate these concepts into their practice.

Observation checklists. The purpose of these checklists is to collect data that reflect the actual practice of the Pillars in a way that can be later analyzed and evaluated based on the Pillars' master rubric. They provide data that complements the data collected through focus group interviews and individual interviews in order to collect evidence that reflects the impact on practice of the school teams' participation in TAMAM. The checklists are mostly derived from the Pillars' elements under the skills category where evidence on the acquisition of these skills can only be obtained through observational data.

The aforementioned templates and tools for data collection are all considered as evolving working documents in TAMAM's database. Once the first draft is written, these tools are made available to the TAMAM project members (school, teams, and coaches) whose feedback is solicited and used to refine the tools accordingly. Additionally, the PST members closely

monitor the implementation of these tools and take note of any changes that are needed to improve their quality. As such, the templates and tools are being regularly examined and revised, and new improved versions are continuously introduced.

Monitoring Procedures

The results of the evaluative work completed after the conclusion of phase 1 also helped determine the procedures that needed to be followed during the monitoring process. The school improvement journey served as the backdrop of this process, where stops were planned along this journey to monitor the progress of the school teams and to examine the effectiveness of the coaching procedures conducted by the PST and the coaches. In addition, many of the reports developed by all of the participants in the TAMAM projects (coaches and school teams alike), for the sake of documenting lived experiences, constituted also sources of data for the monitoring process. Consequently, monitoring activities were integrated within the flow of the project as part of the on-going documentation, and were efficiently making use of the scarce time resources of the projects' members.

Central to the adopted monitoring procedures, is the fact that the PST has the main responsibility of overseeing the monitoring process, thus ensuring that the needed data is collected in close collaboration with the school teams and coaches based on a pre-set agreed upon plan that is in accordance with the improvement journey of the schools. Next, an overview of the monitoring process will be offered, followed by a description of the monitoring stops. Throughout the description, the procedures needed to monitor the progress of the school teams, as well as those used to monitor the coaching process, will be presented.

Overview of the monitoring procedures. Monitoring in TAMAM focuses on two main aspects: monitoring the progress of the school teams, and monitoring the coaching process.

Monitoring the progress of the school teams. Building the leadership capacity of the school teams is one of TAMAM's main project goals, and the focus of most of its current activities. School teams work on a school improvement project while being coached on how to approach their tasks in accordance to the standards outlined by the TAMAM pillars. Monitoring the progress of the school teams requires collecting data on the activities that the school teams have completed on the journey, to examine the gradual progress of those teams towards acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes as conceptualized in the TAMAM pillars. The responsibility for monitoring the work of the school teams lies primarily on the coaches that are working directly with the teams, and on the teams themselves.

In order to monitor their own progress on the school improvement journey, the teams are responsible for preparing a detailed monitoring plan as part of the initial plan of their school improvement project. Setting the necessary criteria, scheduling specific monitoring stops, and determining sources of data and the data collection tools needed are key components of this plan. Accordingly, the school team members are required to gather preliminary data about: (1) the impact of their innovative intervention and (2) the implementation of their improvement project design.

The university/school coaches collect the necessary data as part of follow-up activities with the school teams, and gather the completed reports. As such, they maintain an uninterrupted and continuous flow of information - essential for the monitoring process - from the school teams. In addition, the PST members (when not acting as the schools' coaches) oversee the

process of monitoring the school teams' progress and provide the team members, as well as the coaches, with any resources needed during the data collection and analysis process.

The results that the school teams obtain as they monitor their progress on the school improvement journey are shared among all parties. Conclusions concerning the next steps that must be taken at all levels (schools, coaches, and PST) are based primarily on the school teams' perspectives, regarding their emerging needs. The views of the coaches and the PST are communicated to each of the school teams, but merely as suggestions, and are only reinforced in very rare situations; namely, when the PST deems that a team's decision might compromise the integrity of the project and the adherence to its pillars. The PST and the coaches compile all the data collected on this journey, and engage in reflective and individual dialogue throughout the monitoring process. This is done to ensure that all the views are well-devised, lucidly communicated, and thoughtfully considered by all the parties involved (school teams, coaches, and PST), and that there is sufficient evidence to make the necessary and appropriate changes.

Monitoring the coaching process. In addition to monitoring the progress of the school teams, monitoring in TAMAM aims at regularly examining the effectiveness of the coaching process. This includes examining the work of the coaches that work directly with the school teams, and the work of the PST that functions as the team that is primarily responsible for setting the strategic directions and steering the project's activities. That said, the main purpose of monitoring the coaching process is for the sake of collecting the data needed to make evidence-based decisions in order to modify the coaching plan, and the capacity building activities during their implementation.

Monitoring the work of the coaches that work directly with the school teams includes the following: (1) ensuring the implementation of their coaching plan; (2) identifying the challenges

faced by the teams on their journey in order to provide them with the necessary support, resources, and training; and (3) determining the shortcomings of the coaching plan in addressing the needs of the teams with respect to additional capacity building based on the Pillars' elements and criteria. Data can be obtained from the data that the school teams collect as they progress along this journey, as well as from the data collected by the coaches during the coaching process. The latter comprises data entailing three major components: planning, conducting, and coordinating.

Collecting data on the *planning* of the coaching activities consists of the PST and the school coaches examining the short and long term coaching plans, and the training material developed by the coaches. This data can be collected from the following documents: coaching plans, meeting reports, and follow-up visit reports. Moreover, interviews with the coaches that the PST members conduct during their follow-up visits provide additional data from the coaches' perspectives on their rationale for selecting the training material. In addition, data obtained from the TAMAM gatherings' evaluation survey on the design of the gatherings' activities is also examined as it represents the views of all the participants regarding the effectiveness of the gathering design.

Data on *conducting* is generated by the PST and the coaches collecting data on the effectiveness of the delivery of the various capacity-building activities of TAMAM. This includes reviewing the follow-up visit reports while focusing on examining the quality of the feedback that the coaches have given to the school teams in relation to their alignment with the objectives set by the coaches and the TAMAM pillars. It also involves examining the feedback from the participants concerning the instructional methodologies that the coaches use for their capacity-building activities (e.g. follow-up visits, workshops, and gatherings).

Lastly, data on the coordination activities between the schools, the coaches, and the PST is generated by examining: (1) the quality of communication between the coaches and the school teams, and (2) the flow of information between the two groups and the PST. Follow-up reports completed by the coaches and tape-recorded meetings provide the needed descriptive and reflective data. In addition, data gathered through focus group interviews with the school teams during the follow-up visits to the schools provide insight into the effectiveness of the coordination activities carried out during the coaching process.

Monitoring the project steering process (the work of the PST). Since this team oversees the implementation of the entire project, the burden of monitoring the work of the PST lies on the members themselves, primarily, and on the ATF (the funding agency), secondarily. The criteria to be used for this monitoring are derived from the project goals of TAMAM, its foundational principles, its Pillars, and the design of its professional development activities (school improvement journey). In order for them to be able to claim that they are effective in their role, the PST members need to show progress towards the attainment of the goals of the projects as a whole, namely: (1) building leadership capacity for the school teams; (2) following the evolving design plan approach as they implement their professional development plan [school improvement journey]; (3) documenting and researching their experiences to build a theoretical understanding of school-based reform grounded in the context of the Arab region; (4) and disseminating the produced knowledge and experiences to new universities and schools in current and new countries. To monitor the progress towards these goals, the PST members have to engage in collecting various data from the school teams, the coaches, and from the reviewing and reflecting they do themselves on their own work.

Thus, and in addition to the progress data collected from the school teams and the data collected on the effectiveness of the coaching process, the PST members also rely on their extensive documentation of the project's progress as a source of data in order for them to be able to monitor their contribution to the project's advancement. This documentation includes the following: (1) technical reports, (2) yearly plans, (3) a cumulative account of the school teams' progress, (4) reflective notes on the emerging challenges and concerns that are common among most of the school teams, and (5) written documentations of the changes that the PST members introduce to their initial plans and goals along with the decisions they make regarding future steps and required follow-ups necessary for capacity-building.

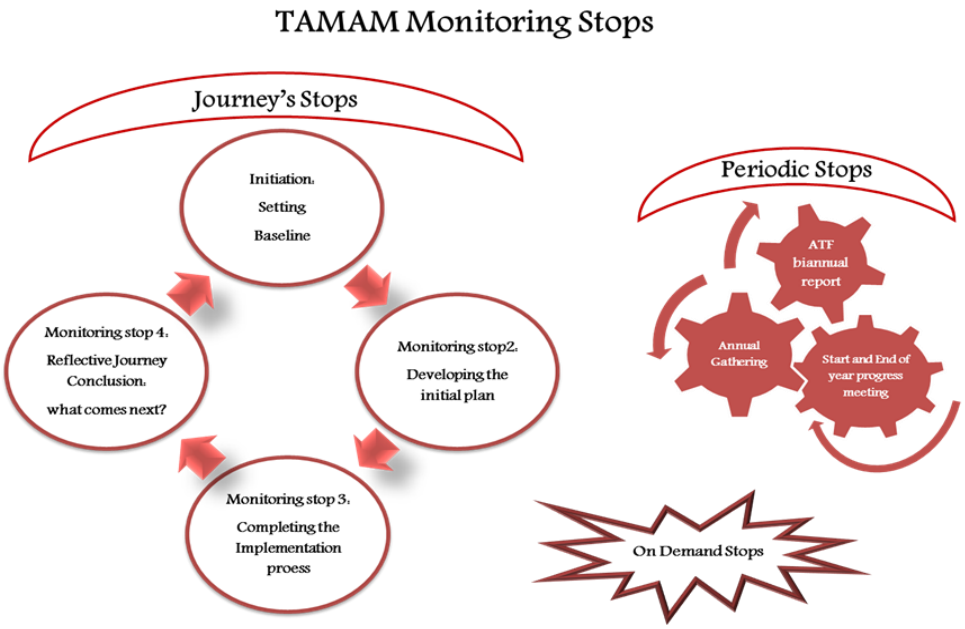
Another major source of data essential for monitoring the work of the PST is the elaborate report that the PST must complete at the conclusion of every workshop/gathering, which describes: (1) its plan, (2) its proceedings, (3) a review of the participants' evaluations, and (4) the PST members' reflections and lessons learned based on their observations and experiences during the gatherings. Additionally, the data on the work of the PST can also be drawn from the bi-annual reports completed for the project's funding agency [ATF]. These bi-annual reports provide a comprehensive narrative about the PST's contributions to the progress of the TAMAM project towards achieving its stated goals. Each report includes all the activities that were carried out, the planned events and gatherings, news about the updated website, the status of the current TAMAM research, a briefing from all of the participating school teams and their coaches, and a layout of upcoming preparations and plans for future action.

Moreover, and as part of its participative philosophy, the PST also often solicits external and internal feedback. All throughout the project's implementation, the members continuously ask the school teams and their coaches for their comments and reflections about their satisfaction with the various types of experiences they are going through. In addition, the PST takes hold of

every opportunity to share its work with the general educational community and welcomes feedback from its members. For instance, the PST gave a presentation at the American University of Beirut's Educational Forum held in March 2013 to an audience of non-participating schools, university scholars, ministry representatives and members from other educational institutions. Audience feedback was obtained via a question and answer session, and via a feedback questionnaire that all those in attendance completed. The Forum was also recorded, and the PST prepared a summary of its proceedings. Data that was collected gave the PST a new perspective on its work, and the critical reflections received helped revise and refine some aspects of the capacity-building activities.

Monitoring Stops. The monitoring process in TAMAM includes three types of stops: one that consists of pre-set pauses that take place as the school teams progress along on their improvement journey, a second that consists of periodic pauses that take place during every academic year, and a third type that consists of on-demand stops that are determined based on the emerging needs that arise during the project's implementation phase (see Figure3).

Figure 3 – General Monitoring Plan in TAMAM

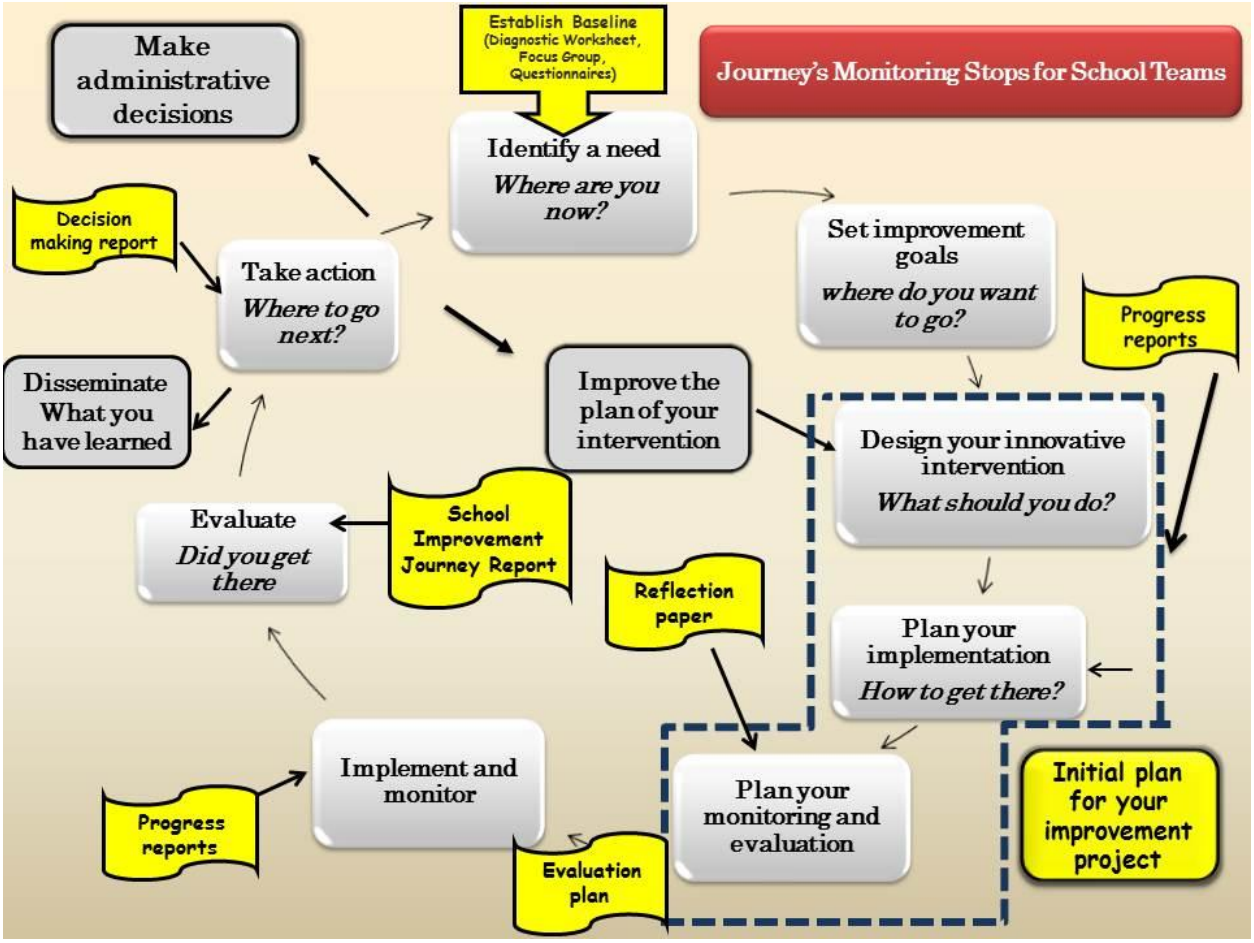


The journey's monitoring stops. As mentioned earlier, monitoring stops in TAMAM are planned during the school improvement journey, at key junctures of this journey, in order to reflect on the available data obtained as part of the documentation required from the school teams. These monitoring stops take place at the end of the following junctures: (1) the initiation of the project, (2) the setting of the initial plan, (3) the completion of the implementation, (4) the evaluation for impact, and (5) the decision-making for the next strategic improvement steps that must be taken. At these stops, team members would have completed a set of required reports about the stages they went through, as well as three reflection papers: the first after the conclusion of the initial planning process, the second at the conclusion of the implementation, and the third at the conclusion of the first cycle of the improvement journey. In addition, the school teams would have submitted two additional progress reports to the coaches and the PST: the first at the beginning of every academic year where teams revisit what has been achieved to date and outline the scheduled activities for that year, and the second at the conclusion of that year in order to report on what has been achieved, and evaluate the progress made during that year.

Figure 4 entitled "TAMAM's Journey Monitoring for School Teams" illustrates the monitoring process and the pre-scheduled data collections carried out during the first stage/cycle of the improvement journey by school team members. The yellow flags represent the pre-scheduled data collection stops, which are part of the documentation process. Thus, as the school teams progress throughout the journey, the monitoring process starts with the school teams collecting baseline data. It is then followed by consecutive stops where the school teams can collect and analyze the relevant data found in the first progress report, the initial plan report, the

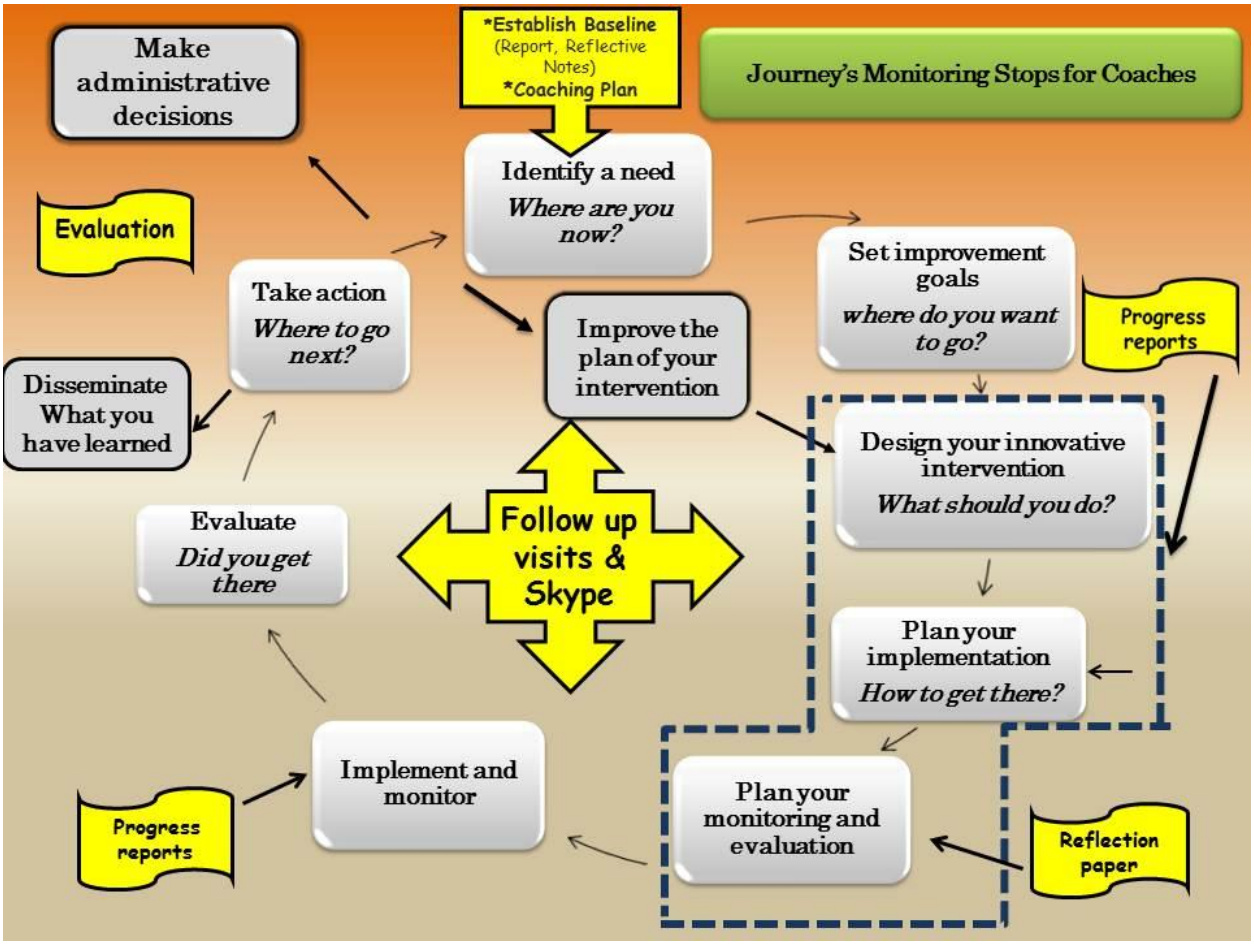
first reflection paper, the evaluation plan, the completed Improvement Journey Report, the decision summary/plan for future actions, and the final reflection paper.

Figure 4 – TAMAM's Journey Monitoring for School Teams



Similarly to Figure 4, TAMAM's Journey Monitoring Stops for School Teams, Figure 5 illustrates the TAMAM's Journey Monitoring for Coaches. The yellow flags and arrows represent the pre-scheduled data collection stops, which are part of the documentation process. The TAMAM coaches share the completed plans/ documents/ reports with the PST for review and feedback.

Figure 5 – TAMAM's Journey Monitoring for Coaches



Initiation: establishing the baseline. Establishing a baseline for the project is a central component of the monitoring and evaluation plan needed for determining the project's impact, and assessing any noticeable changes that may have resulted from the TAMAM experience. The conclusions that are reached drive all planning and implementation changes, and are communicated to all stakeholders.

Prior to the start of their work on their school improvement project, the school teams are asked to establish a baseline. Data is collected using three different tools: the diagnostic worksheet, a focus group interview with the school teams, and three demographic questionnaires.

Diagnostic checklists and demographic questionnaires on the team members are filled out by the school team members individually. Questionnaires about the school are filled out by the principal or the head of the administrative board of the school. Focus group interviews with the members of the team are conducted by the coaches that will be assigned to work with the teams. Moreover, the coaches are asked to write a brief report highlighting: (1) the roles and responsibilities of their ministry of education regarding school reform, and (2) the status of the current national educational reform initiatives. As part of the baseline data, this helps clarify the educational context of the country where the schools are located.

At the conclusion of this first stop in the monitoring process, the PST receives all the collected data and prepares the preliminary analysis which is then sent to the schools and their coaches for a member check before the finalization of its findings. The results become the baseline for comparing any significant growth in relation to the TAMAM pillars, and also help the coaches in identifying the skills that the team members need to develop in order to be able to better plan for professional development activities (workshops and follow-up visits).

In addition, baseline data is recorded in accordance with the coaching process. It comprises of the reflective notes that the coaches prepare in light of: (1) the tasks they are expected to complete, (2) their self-perceived readiness for it, and (3) the identified needs of the school teams. The latter become the basis for the setting of the learning outcomes and the planning of further follow-up visits and gatherings.

***Monitoring stop 2: Developing the team's initial plan*.** This monitoring stop is one of the most critical monitoring stops planned, given the extensiveness of the data that it offers, as well as the stages that it encompasses on this improvement journey. After establishing a baseline, the school teams launch their school improvement journey and progress along its stages

systematically: (1) identifying a need (a problem or a need for improvement); (2) forming a vision for the improved situation; (3) setting specific goals; (4) selecting an innovative intervention that addresses this need; (5) designing the interventions which include setting specific, measurable, and attainable objectives, determining the indicators of success, setting the scope and sequence, and identifying the necessary resources; (6) setting a plan for the implementation of the innovative project, which includes specifying the role of the school teams in introducing the change, and identifying the anticipated obstacles and the measures that have to be taken in order to minimize these obstacles' negative impacts; and lastly (7) developing a plan to monitor the progress of the implementation of the innovative project by specifying the different ways the school teams can evaluate the quality and impact of their intervention. At the conclusion of this juncture, the school teams would have documented all the previous steps in a comprehensive report that would be considered as their initial improvement project plan. This initial plan intends to capture a rich array of experiences, and offers multiple indicators for progress, and evidence of learning.

In addition to the initial plan, school team members and all other participants in TAMAM are also required to complete a reflection paper in which they take stock of signs of improvement and reflect on their transformation throughout the different stages of the journey, bearing in mind the TAMAM pillars (Template D). Principals, school team members, coaches, the university, and the representatives of the Ministry of Education are all asked to describe: (1) the changes that resulted from their TAMAM experiences, and (2) the added value that TAMAM appears to be bringing to their individual practices. Reflection papers do not only document the "individual" development of school team members but also shed light on the group transformations as well.

The initial plan and the reflection papers are read by both the team coaches and the PST. The PST and the coaches examine this data seeking to find evidence of progress that the team members are making (relative to the established baseline) by acquiring the habits of mind and practices that align with the TAMAM pillars. Data analysis of these documents also involves: (1) looking for evidence of progress on the implementation of the designed intervention, (2) investigating signs of initial impact of the intervention, (3) identifying unanticipated obstacles that might hinder the flow of the implementation, and (4) keeping track of further resources that may be needed in the form of additional coaching, time, materials or members/experts. As a result of this particular monitoring stop, multiple feedback cycles take place between the coaches and the school team members for the purpose of improving the plan, responding to the emerging needs of the team members, and making decisions regarding the content of upcoming workshops and gatherings.

Monitoring stop 3: Completing the implementation of the innovative intervention. By the time the school teams reach this monitoring stop, they are expected to have completed the implementation of their innovative intervention, and to have executed their monitoring plan. During this period, the coaches and the PST closely track the teams' progress through regular follow-up visits or on-demand Skype meetings. Follow-up reports prepared by the coaches and the PST constitute major sources of data at this juncture. In addition, schools are asked to write a progress report that documents the events that took place during the implementation (obstacles faced, resources introduced, as well as the modifications made to the initial plan) and concludes with the modified innovative project design and implementation procedures.

This monitoring stop also offers the coaches a chance to pause and reflect on what they have achieved so far especially with regards to building the team capacity (skills, knowledge and

attitudes) based on the TAMAM pillars, discovering what their areas of weaknesses are regarding their approaches, and working on improving these weaknesses in order to attain better results from the school teams.

Monitoring stop 4: Concluding the first cycle of the journey. After the school teams complete the implementation of their innovative intervention, monitor its progress, and make the necessary modifications to its initial design, they move on to the next step: evaluating the impact of this intervention on their practices, and examining the extent to which they were able to achieve their project's goals. After finishing the evaluation of the impact of their school improvement project, the school team members report the results of their evaluation and reflect on those results in light of their improvement of: (1) their own project's goals, and (2) the general goal of the TAMAM project as a whole; namely, building the capacity of a school team in order to make it lead change initiatives at the school level. To achieve this goal the school teams design an evaluation plan, implement it, and draw conclusions, thus reapplying many of the skills that they have already acquired up to this point of the journey.

Data obtained at this monitoring stop consists of complete narratives that capture the teams' experiences throughout the TAMAM school improvement journey. These narratives include: (1) a refined design of the innovative project along with the rationale for the modifications that were introduced, (2) evaluative data on the extent of its effectiveness in achieving the set improvement goals, (3) the evaluation plan, (4) the cumulative monitoring data that has been collected up to this point, and (5) the progress data collected during the evaluation process. The data also includes the teams' plans for future action, as summarized in the decision-making report. This report gives a brief summary about the teams' decisions and is supported by evidence based on their own experiences with the TAMAM project.

While most of the data collected at this stop serves the purpose of evaluating the impact of the innovative project at the level of the school and at the level of the project as a whole, it also serves the additional purpose of providing the PST with evidence on the extent of the impact that its capacity-building activities had on the school team members' acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes targeted in TAMAM. The data even has the potential to become the basis for establishing the new baseline and providing the context for setting the improvement goals for stage 2 where the schools would be required to strategically move beyond building capacity for a leadership team towards focusing on institutionalizing the practices that transform their school culture into one that sustains continuous learning and improvement.

Lastly, by providing evidence on the progress of the team members with respect to meeting the expectations set by the Pillars and their criteria, this monitoring stop gives the coaches and the PST a final chance to assist the team members in acquiring as much of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes as possible. This is necessary as it helps them identify areas where the team members still fall short of meeting expectations as they move on to the second stage of the improvement journey and the project.

Though positioned towards the end of this journey, this data collection stop is critical since it offers unique data that can inform future strategic decisions both for the school teams and their coaches. It comes at a juncture where the team members have multiple opportunities to comprehend, apply, and internalize the knowledge, skills, and attitudes targeted throughout the TAMAM experience. In fact, and after completing their school improvement journey, the school team members discuss the project's results and develop conclusions supported by evidence. As a result, they find themselves at a crossroad where a collaborative decision needs to be made regarding where to go next and what implications need to be identified for further investigations.

Periodic monitoring stops. Given the project's commitment to the "Decisions Driven by School Needs" Pillar, the time to complete the TAMAM school improvement journey varies among the participating teams based on the nature of their project, the amount of time that they have, their skills, and the resources that are available for its members. Consequently, data collection on each team obtained from the journey's monitoring stops trickles in at different times, which makes it a challenge for the PST to plan for its joint activities, and set its budget and deadlines. As a result, and in addition to pausing for the monitoring stops that are scheduled along the journey, the TAMAM project participants also pause for monitoring stops that are periodically scheduled around the academic and fiscal calendars in order to account for these variations and to have regular monitoring stops where data is collected from all the participants at the same time.

The periodic stops consist of the following: (1) stops at the beginning and end of the school year to guide the yearly budget plan; (2) and a midterm stop to inform the planning of the TAMAM annual gathering.

While all of the participants contribute to these stops, the PST initiates them and ensures that all the data that is needed, is available. Therefore, at each of these periodic stops, the PST reviews the data available to date, and determines if any additional data needs to be collected. Often this means scheduling follow-up visits for the sake of obtaining additional data deemed necessary, or for the sake of further analyzing available data, and looking for patterns, trends, and common emerging challenges. School progress reports and reflection papers, notes and reflections from the PST and the coaches, biannual reports to the ATF, as well as previous gathering reports, constitute major sources of data at these periodic stops. They provide the PST with insight about the statuses and positions of the members throughout their school

improvement journey, and help reveal important needs that must be addressed by the PST, and included in their yearly action plan. These stops also help determine the strategic direction of the project in terms of: (1) the progress at the school level, and (2) the need for support and professional development that the PST and coaches can offer.

On demand monitoring stops. Continuous reflection is an integral component of TAMAM's project activities and serves as the main catalyst driving its reflective dialogue and evolving design plan approach. It offers TAMAM participants an opportunity to listen again, see again, and therefore revisit individually, and with others, the events and processes in which they are involved, whether directly or indirectly. In addition to the scheduled monitoring stops, and the ongoing documentation coupled with the open communication among the PST members, the coaches and school teams also provide the TAMAM participants with the data that they need for reflecting and gaining insight of what actions need to be taken next on their improvement journey. This is with respect to both planning and designing, and is also in relation to the capacity building of the participating teams, and the additional skills they need help in developing. The monitoring stop becomes particularly critical, when the school teams' progress on the improvement journey is hindered by unanticipated challenges. In instances like these, the coaches and the PST resort to increasing the frequency of the monitoring stops, and collecting data beyond that which is produced through the project's documentation. Follow up visits, Skype meetings, as well as email correspondences are all used as forums for conducting individual or group interviews where coaches and team members gather data on specific issues in order to solve problems and overcome barriers. Follow-up visits, can occur at any point in the journey and are determined based on the school teams' needs. During these visits, the PST does not only monitor the progress of the learning, but also provides feedback that helps keep school teams

motivated and focused on the right track. TAMAM PST/Coaches offer strategic advice and encourage the schools' team members to ask for any needed resources. TAMAM monitoring is made possible through the use of several sources: (1) Documentation, (2) content of follow-up visits, and (3) TAMAM Templates. Data collected during follow-up visits is obtained either through individual meetings or through focus group meetings conducted with the whole team. Questions raised during these meetings are generated by the reflections that the coaches, the PST, and the school teams have on progress. The follow-up meetings always conclude with a reflective dialogue that focuses on gathering the teams' perspectives regarding what they need, and where they plan to go next. The rich insights discovered are typically used by the PST/Coaches for the sake of determining the next steps that need to be taken. Conference calls and Skype meetings constitute a valuable substitute for in-person follow-up visits especially when it comes to providing help for the geographically distributed PST/Coaches and school teams.

Conclusion

This report documents a work in progress that is aimed at designing a monitoring process for the TAMAM project. One of the main characteristics of this design is that it is integrated within the flow of the activities of the project, and capitalizes the use of the available documentation. A second characteristic is its participative and comprehensive nature. In this project, all participants contribute to the data collected and their work is subjected to thorough examination. This is done to assess the work in terms of its effectiveness in achieving the goals of the individual school teams; a vital stepping stone necessary for achieving the overall goals of the project as well. A third characteristic is that it follows the evolving design approach, and at the same time, also

provides the data needed to put this approach into action throughout the different phases of the project.

Completed at the conclusion of the first phase of the project, and grounded in the lessons learned from its experiences, the design presented is currently put to the test as the PST members, in collaboration with the available coaches, try implementing it with the new schools that joined the project as part of its expansion activities. With the planned systematic documentation of all the activities in the project, the implementation of the monitoring plan is itself being monitored, and decisions about modifying its components are being made after in-depth consultations take place with all of the project's participants. Finally, TAMAM's core philosophy logically necessitates, and encourages, that the learning adventure continues. This project is one which prioritizes the journey and not the destination. Essentially, it emphasizes the importance of understanding the intricacies of this journey. And ultimately, it aims to refrain from considering the results obtained as the final products. Instead, TAMAM prides itself on its vocation to constantly monitor its own work, thus sustaining the evolving nature of designs and their planning processes.

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