EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT RESULTS ...

FINDINGS FROM A REVIEW ON MEASURING AND MANAGING RESULTS
QUICK REMINDER ON RESULTS

**Inputs**
- Financial and human material resources used

**Activities**
- Activities taken or work performed to transform inputs into outputs

**Outputs**
- Products, capital goods and services resulting in changes relevant to outcome
- 100 km of roads constructed

**Outcomes**
- Likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects
- Access to market increased, more products sold

**Impact**
- Positive and negative long-term effects produced (intended or unintended)
- Improved household income
WHAT IS RESULTS MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT?

A management strategy focusing on performance and the achievement of outputs, outcomes and impact.

It is about being clear on:

• what the institution wants to achieve,
• how performance will be measured,
• how results information will be used,
• how results and which results will be communicated to whom and for what purposes.
3 STEPS TO MEASURE RESULTS

- Design the system
- Select the indicators
- Collect and analyse data
MEASURING RESULTS – DESIGNING THE SYSTEM

Measuring means first agreeing on what we want to measure and how we will measure

- Clarifying expectations with a results framework
- Tracking progress with monitoring
- Understanding progress – or lack off – through evaluation

- Level 1: Progress on key development outcomes
  - MDGs

- Level 2: Results achieved by the organisation
  - Programme results

- Level 3: Operational effectiveness
  - Portfolio quality
  - Pipeline delivery
  - Monitoring and evaluation
  - ...

- Level 4: Organisational effectiveness
  - Human resources
  - Finance
  - Procurement
  - ...
MEASURING RESULTS – FOCUS OF TRACKING

In practice, DAC members and observers measure results at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project/activity level</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme level</td>
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<td>Sector level through aggregation</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country level through aggregation</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency-wide (corporate) report</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEASURING RESULTS – DESIGNING THE SYSTEM

Main difficulties with designing the results system:

- identifying clear objectives – with targets - in changing and complex environment leading to stakeholders confusion and misunderstanding

Solutions implemented by donors:

- Detailed and updated context and risk analysis
- Comprehensive approaches
MEASURING RESULTS – SELECTING INDICATORS

Choosing the right measure to feed the system is fundamental

But difficulties in selecting indicators that

- Provide reliable and useful information
- Measure relevant results id including long-term changes and not only the easy to measure
- In a manageable number

Difficulties increase with the issue of aggregation → tendency to develop (too) long lists of standard indicators
MEASURING RESULTS – SELECTING INDICATORS

Solutions implemented by donors:

- Capacity building and guidelines
- Selection based on technical expertise and working groups for ownership
- Align on strategy and budget allocation
- Start from the outcome and then go back to the output
- Use feedback loops for qualitative data while keeping an eye on the context
MEASURING RESULTS – COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA

Reliable data necessary to inform baselines and indicators but

Difficult access to quality data – including for baselines
→ providers develop parallel results systems

Resources are not always sufficient, especially in fragile contexts

And the link with evaluation is usually missing
MEASURING RESULTS – COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA

Some practical solutions

- Standard indicators shared among donors
- Inform frameworks steps by steps
- Pool funding
- Partnership with third parties, including local organisations
- Active use of the new information technology
USING RESULTS INFORMATION

Two objectives – accountability and better management – with a tendency to conflict

- Accountability: stronger focus on short-term effects that can be attributed for communication
- Management: stronger focus on long-term and understanding the results chain for decision-making

Different implications in terms of measurement: aggregation <=> specificity
USING RESULTS INFORMATION – CORPORATE LEVEL

Main uses

• Accountability to parliaments
• External communication
• Not towards intended beneficiaries

Different reporting tools

• Corporate results frameworks, standard indicators and qualitative information
• Transparency at project level
• When less pressure for accountability: contribution to partner country results
USING RESULTS AT CORPORATE LEVEL - WEAKNESSES

Needs for aggregation and attribution lead to focusing on outputs

Little analysis of performance despite an appetite from the public for understanding complexity
Lack of institutional demand for decision making and learning

Efforts made to build a results culture

- Incentives
- Training at headquarter and country levels
- Efforts to create an enabling environment
- High-level management responses and champions
Still slow progress in terms of linking budget with results information:

- Risk of perverse incentives
- Difficulties to associate resources to outcomes
- Addressing the risk level

When decision is made, it is on a case by case basis
USING RESULTS INFORMATION – INTERVENTION LEVEL

Main uses:
- Tracking progress
- Decision making
- Not learning

Similar difficulties as for strategic management:
- Lack of mature results culture
- Complex results frameworks
- Weaknesses in data collection
- Lack of feedback loops

Results frameworks still seen as an additional requirement, not an instrument for learning
SUPPORTING PARTNER COUNTRIES

International commitment: partner countries develop their results frameworks and donors use them.

In practice, donors support countries to develop their frameworks

• Capacity building on M&E
• Involvement of partners in the planning and assessments of results
SUPPORTING PARTNER COUNTRIES

International monitoring exercises cannot conclude if they actually use them.

And we observe a multiplication of results frameworks.

Arguments raised by donors:

- Difficulties to align to unclear priorities
- Results frameworks of poor quality when they exist
- Lack of data
KEY DIMENSIONS TO IMPROVE RESULTS MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT

✓ Clear purpose of the results system
✓ Mature results culture:
  • Strong leadership
  • Enabling environment to learn from positive and negative results
  • Hold managers and staff accountable while empowering them to make corrective adjustments
  • Appropriate incentives
KEY DIMENSIONS TO IMPROVE RESULTS MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT

✓ Buy-in form donor agencies and partner organisations
✓ Clear results set at country and intervention level
✓ Balance between short-term and long-term
✓ Manageable framework aligned to priorities
✓ Strengthened data availability and reliability
✓ Strong links with the evaluation function
WHAT’S NEXT?

Create guidance on measuring and managing for results to:

• Strengthen the application of good practices in results-based measurement and management.
• Strengthen the coherence between development agencies and partner countries results systems.