

## *Draft Guiding Principles*

More than ever, development actors are called upon to join efforts and maximise the impact of individual and collective interventions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Managing for Development Results (MfDR) principles that were endorsed by development agencies at the international roundtable on results in Marrakech (February 2004) have enabled substantial progress in integrating results-based management into donors' planning, implementation and reporting systems. These principles however need to be adjusted to reflect identified shortcomings, the new context for development co-operation and the broader set of actors involved, and help stakeholders to address the recurrent challenges they have been facing in practice.

The Guiding Principles on Managing for Sustainable Development Results (MfSDR) aim to guide development stakeholders in setting-up or refining results-based management approaches that are fit for Agenda 2030. The guiding principles will also help to support institutional change and promote a culture of results. While they provide a framework applicable by all development stakeholders, public and private, at any level and across a variety of interventions, their operationalisation should be interpreted in the context of each organisation.

It is expected that through applying these principles, development stakeholders will maximise their contribution to sustainable development results, becoming more efficient and effective in collecting and using data to drive programmes, adapting to each context, and learning what works and what does not, alongside using information for accountability and communication purposes. It is also expected that applying the principles will lead to more efficient and harmonised results systems, conducive to more collaborative approaches. As a result, development stakeholders will maximise the effects of their individual and collective interventions on sustainable development, to the benefit of all communities in partner countries including those left behind.

The Guiding Principles are accompanied by a brief description of key elements to help explain and operationalise them. A guidance note providing more information on how the principles can be applied at the corporate, portfolio, thematic, programme and project levels of institutions, as well as at the national level, and comprising a set of good practices will be developed in the short term. It will show the variety of tools and strategies that countries, development agencies and private actors can use. Together with the principles, this guidance note will form a handbook for practitioners of results-based management in development co-operation.

The Guiding Principles will be subject to an evaluation in the medium term to assess how they are understood and used, and to what effect.

**Principle 1. Ensure that results-based management approaches support development goals and desired change**

**Principle 2. Adapt to context**

**Principle 3. Enhance national ownership and foster mutual accountability**

**Principle 4. Maximise the use of results information for learning and decision-making**

**Principle 5. Foster a culture of results and learning**

**Principle 6. Keep the results system manageable**

## **Principle 1. Ensure that results-based management approaches support development goals and desired change**

**Results-based management should maximise the impact of development efforts towards achieving social, economic and environmentally sustainable development that leaves no-one behind.**

### ***Key elements***

- Results-based management aims to maximise sustainable development results. The results system is inherently linked to the ultimate objective of development policy and contributions to achieving Agenda 2030 including the pledge to leave no-one behind.
- Results-based management is mainstreamed across all dimensions of management, spanning strategic management, operational and change management processes, partnerships, and performance and knowledge management.
- Results-based management ensures adaptability and emphasises learning, recognising the evolving and complex nature of development. Clear results objectives and indicators aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are set, and sound methodologies are designed and applied flexibly at corporate, portfolio, sector, programme and project levels to achieve these objectives.

## **Principle 2. Adapt to context**

**Management methods and approaches should be tailored to different organisational levels, operational contexts and types of partnerships.**

### ***Key elements***

- A balanced approach to compliance and empowerment allows staff to adapt to country-specific contexts, change processes and types of partnerships. Trust and mutual learning among partners are valued.
- Focus is put on achieving end outcomes rather than short-term outputs, which requires a sound understanding of the local dynamics, clear outcome goals and adaptable output results.
- Wherever relevant, cross-sector approaches are promoted and incorporated into the measurement and reporting systems, in line with the integrated approach of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **Principle 3. Enhance national ownership and foster mutual accountability**

**Results-based management should enhance national ownership and foster mutual accountability, aligning to national results frameworks, strengthening and using partner countries' statistical and monitoring systems, and promoting participatory approaches and transparency.**

### ***Key elements***

- Providers' internal reporting is aligned to national results frameworks. Providers prioritise national indicators that are aligned to the SDGs and synchronise planning cycles with partner countries' own cycles to minimise costs and avoid duplications.

- Providers strengthen and maximise use of partner countries' monitoring and statistical systems, enhancing national capacity to produce and analyse data, including disaggregated data to capture results related to populations left behind.
- Dialogue among partners focuses on results at all phases of any development initiative, and broad involvement – supported by appropriate capacity building – is sought in design, planning, monitoring, evaluation and use of results to foster ownership and ensure sustainability.
- Development partners foster mutual accountability when engaging in partnerships, with a clear understanding of the common goal and each parties' contribution to achieving shared outcomes.
- Transparency is promoted, results frameworks are shared, and data and results information are available to all stakeholders.

#### **Principle 4. Maximise the use of results information for learning and decision-making**

**While responding to communication and accountability needs, results information should systematically be used for learning and decision-making in order to improve delivery and enhance impact.**

##### ***Key elements***

- Results information is used for learning and decision-making, alongside communication and accountability.
- The purpose and ways in which results evidence from monitoring and evaluation is used are clearly specified; in particular how management, staff and partners use data for:
  - Steering and learning:
    - Steering the development co-operation programme and allocating resources to maximise effectiveness and impact
    - Adapting the implementation of a programme to evolving situations
    - Learning what works and what does not work and make changes where needed.
  - Communication: communicating on the programme, at different levels, and to various audiences, to raise awareness, build public trust in international co-operation and mobilise citizens into action for the SDGs.
  - Reporting and accountability: providing feedback to beneficiaries and other constituencies on achievements and challenges of the programme.
- Whether the interventions are successful or not, results information is used to foster learning and to support constructive and proactive management decision making.

#### **Principle 5. Foster a culture of results and learning**

**A culture of results should be promoted and sustained through consistent leadership, and supported by appropriate guidance, tools and capacity building as well as proper staff incentives.**

##### ***Key elements***

- Leadership widely communicates the purpose of results-based management. It uses results information effectively for programme management at the corporate level and strategically for policy influencing at a political level.

- A results and learning culture is promoted within the institution and with partners, and is supported by appropriate guidance and tools on how to implement results-based management.
- Promoting a corporate results and learning culture also requires a sound and coherent change management process, focusing on strengthening capacity; ensuring enough space for analysis of results information and peer learning on both successes and failures; and providing incentives to motivate staff to collect, report and use data and results information adequately to adapt and improve programme interventions.
- Careful experimentation and learning is valued to foster innovation for better results.

## Principle 6. Keep the results system manageable

**Measurement and reporting systems and frameworks need to be suitable to each organisation's capacities and needs.**

### *Key elements*

- Monitoring and evaluation systems are set up to produce credible quantitative and qualitative evidence that meets the needs and capacities of the institution.
- Measurement and reporting on results is kept as straightforward as possible, being tailored to focus on key results, ensure clear purpose for any data that is collected and support effective communication between stakeholders while minimising reporting burden.
- The results-based management system is reviewed on a regular basis, including the quality and use of the results information that is generated, in order to improve the system gradually, and maintain it fit for purpose, user-friendly and lean.