What Results – Who Counts?
Effective development co-operation for the 2030 Agenda

Results Community workshop, hosted by the OECD
October 9-10, 2017
OECD Conference Centre, Paris

Key Messages from the Workshop
24 October, 2017

All workshop papers can be accessed on the OECD
Results in Development Cooperation website. Contact: DAC.Results@oecd.org

Highlights

➢ On October 9-10 2017, the OECD hosted a workshop of the Results Community titled: *What Results: Who Counts? Effective development co-operation for the 2030 Agenda*. The 118 registered participants included representatives from 28 DAC members; seven other providers of development co-operation; eight partner countries; four think tanks; and eight OECD divisions.

➢ The five sessions ranged from results-based management (RBM) within provider agencies (1) to the results implications of the pledge to *Leave no one behind* (2), via the linking of SDG targets and indicators to the results frameworks of providers and partners (3), to the challenges of communicating results (4), and "looking into the future" for the Results Community (5).

➢ The results chain and frameworks of development co-operation make it clear how provider performance (inputs, activities and outputs) feeds into development co-operation results and ultimately development impact and change. The SDG targets and indicators are particularly useful in providing common evidence and a platform for dialogue with partners regarding development change, including development co-operation outcomes. SDG progress information can feed into all three tiers of results frameworks.

➢ Providers recognise that results information is used primarily for accountability towards their own authorities and domestic audiences (for multilaterals: their boards). Using results information also for decision-making, learning and communication with partners and beneficiaries is a political challenge. However, providers and partners hope to make more use of the theories of change that link the three tiers of results information and create space for more flexible approaches which move beyond traditional attribution and accountability. This could enable enhanced use of results information for learning and direction by both partners and providers across a range of contexts.

➢ The SDG targets are a common framework for the WHAT of development co-operation. The pledge to Leave no one behind concerns the WHO. The pledge fits well with the goals of development co-operation, but requires strengthened dialogues among providers and partners to agree on who are left behind in particular contexts, and how they can be supported in reaching a faster rate of progress than average development in such contexts.

➢ Communication of results is part of the requirement for transparency and accountability. Raw results data are rarely communicated and used, but their accessibility is essential. Results communication is directed predominantly at domestic constituents in provider countries and adapted to them also language-wise. Partnerships can be strengthened through active results communication with partners and, ultimately, beneficiaries.

➢ Institutionally, the Results Community expressed a desire to continue to meet twice a year, with a core of results managers of provider agencies and OECD-DAC delegates, reaching out to partner country representatives and other providers. There is also interest in strengthening the online results community, for targeted discussion groups and exchange of material.

➢ Substantively, participants suggested further work on standards / principles for good RBM practice. The other main priorities for future Results Community efforts were: better use of data and new technologies; SDG-linked results frameworks; RBM in and by partner countries; and adapting RBM to fragile and other partner contexts.

Session 1. Strengthening the results chain: Results-based management by providers

Linking results to goals
Providers are seeking new models that address a shifting development landscape and acknowledged that results chains do not always represent the reality of how change happens. However, global frameworks such as the SDGs can cut through the complexity. One group suggested providers and partners should aim not for SDG *aligned*, but for SDG *accelerating* results frameworks.

In this context, it is increasingly important to focus on outcomes. However, the higher up the results chain the longer it takes to see results (impacts and outcomes), and this clashes with provider accountability needs. Narratives based on results information could therefore be more nuanced, and results frameworks could focus less on reporting on indicators (with each results Tier in isolation) and more on the theory of change that links the different tiers.

Similarly, participants asserted that corporate results frameworks do not cover all results and do not serve all purposes. Qualitative information can offer a contextualised and more detailed picture but can be selective, not necessarily fulfilling accountability needs. As such, there was a call to find ways to bridge the gap between quantitative and qualitative results information.

Country ownership versus attribution – beyond attribution?
Shared accountability for results with partner countries often takes lower priority than domestic accountability. However, the value for all of being able to track country-level progress at Tier 1 (development results) was noted, and in relation the importance of building national capacity for data and statistics. Working towards taking more of a country-led approach to results was recommended.

However, despite the fact it challenges country ownership in some contexts, some providers maintain that attribution of results to providers at Tier 2 serves domestic accountability, is about credibility and is therefore a valid need. We know that standard indicator sets designed for aggregated and attributed data can create perverse incentives and limit quality. In addition, attribution is increasingly difficult as more stakeholders are involved and the aid share decreases. Consequently, attribution (of aggregated results data) must be focused on outputs from easily quantifiable indicators.

Some maintain that attribution *with* alignment to partner country goals and results is possible, supporting country ownership and avoiding parallel reporting. In this context, 'soft attribution' or 'indirect attribution' was described by some as a valid middle ground (i.e. did providers play a conducive role in change?). This kind of approach makes it possible to use results information to meet multiple needs and accountabilities – but with added complexity – and therefore warrants further exploration.

Enabling learning from results
The Results Community agreed that our purpose is ultimately to make better decisions based on evidence: learning helps us to achieve results. In this context, the need to build a results culture is a joint effort between partner and provider, and should not be limited to donor agencies. As such, learning and decision making should be balanced with accountability and communication (while acknowledging that this is not the reality for many). In addition, while learning takes place at different levels, it cannot take place at *any* level without trust, flexibility and dialogue, and providers and partners could benefit from creating space for processes which allow these.

Changes to project and programme management are enhancing the potential to learn from results. Providers are adopting multi-phased, flexible and adaptable approaches with longer time frames to allow for more achievable results. Such projects allow for adjustability on the basis of outcomes and more flexible budgeting and country programming. Alongside this, new (IT based) results systems are being developed to track results from the 'bottom up' to meet multiple information needs at different levels. In some provider agencies results and evaluation are integrated at country level to enable real time learning, feedback loops and adaptive management. However, for many, there is a perceived *disconnect* between results and evaluation information that may be limiting learning.

Session 2: Delivering results to Leave no one behind

The importance of tracking and delivering results on Leave no one behind reflects the strong political imperative encapsulated in the pledge by world leaders "that no one will be left behind". The commitment is "to see the goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society." The SDGs are the WHAT (outcomes and changes that have to be delivered) and Leave no one behind is the WHO. Leave no one behind means that we have to understand who benefits from progress under the SDGs and who is left out, so that no one is left behind by reason of circumstance, geography or identity.

The requirement to show that the SDGs are delivering universal benefits with nobody left out, underlines the need for disaggregated data which can show how results are reaching the poorest, as well as vulnerable and excluded groups including disabled and older people, the LGBT community and those who are often missed by surveys and censuses such as refugees, migrants and internally displaced people. The challenge of measuring results for the poorest and often excluded people is both political and statistical.

➢ Political, because some groups are deliberately left uncounted – and because investing scarce resources in national statistical capacity and priorities such as civil registration involves spending choices.

➢ Statistical, because generating even basic disaggregations on who is/is not being reached requires information on, at a minimum, income quintile, geography, gender, age and disability status. But the data revolution is starting to deliver timelier and better disaggregated data, as well as the promise of being able to join up official statistics and citizen generated data that can help count groups who in the past have remained uncounted.

It was noted that the Leave no one behind approach covers both Goal 1 on ending poverty and Goal 10 on promoting equity. It also covers development and humanitarian situations as well as insecure environments. In the contexts of 17 SDGs, most providers and partners will focus on a limited number of priorities – but the Leave no one behind imperative applies to all SDGs, not only social sectors and basic needs.

It was also recognised that whilst most providers and partners already have a focus on a limited number of special priorities such as women and girls, disabled or older people, the Leave no one behind commitment implies the need for deeper and more comprehensive analysis. This includes understanding who is vulnerable and why policy prescriptions intended to promote 'inclusive, pro poor or broad-based growth' are not delivering on income or many aspects of multidimensional poverty for hundreds of millions of people – even in situations where averages are improving.

The Leave no one behind imperative includes the statement: "And we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first." Existing evidence on income growth since 1990 shows that the poorest 20% of people (the P20) have been, and continue to be, left behind. SDG 10 calls for steps to "progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% at a higher rate than the national average". However, to Leave no one behind, progress for excluded people has to be, not just at a higher rate than the national average, but fast enough to narrow the gap.

The discussion on results considered the political nature of the Leave no one behind commitment and the contention that whilst communicating 17 SDGs was a complex challenge, the idea of fairness underpinning Leave no one behind was intuitive and had both public and political resonance. Whilst the World Bank's inclusive growth approach focused on the bottom 40%, the advantages of an approach which focused on the more manageable poorest 20% - the P20 globally and in every country – was considered.

The results discussion recognised the additional costs of reaching the poorest and most vulnerable people and the policy, resource, targeting and cost effectiveness implications of a Leave no one behind approach. It also noted the comparative advantage of ODA in reaching those bypassed by growth and the market.

If Leave no one behind is not only applied to income, a key question is what results are needed to apply the same principle not just to SDG 10, but to all SDGs. The central principle should be that results need to show progress on reducing disparities in every sector and in a variety of development contexts. It was noted that the Leave no one behind imperative applied both to countries and to people within all countries.

Session 3: Strengthening results frameworks through SDG targets and indicators

The 2030 Agenda is a useful framework for providers and partners in development co-operation. With its 17 goals, 169 targets, 232 indicators and given deadlines (mostly 2030), the 2030 Agenda serves as a global and country-level results framework for sustainable development results, to which development co-operation contributes.

Development policies increasingly refer to all or some of the SDG goals and targets and the pledge to Leave no one behind. Some providers already incorporate SDG targets and indicators in their results frameworks, sometimes through standard indicators for use at country or corporate levels. Some partner country representatives described how the achievement of SDG goals and targets is incorporated in their national plans and budgets and even in their public sector performance agreements. Yet, caution was also raised against excessive reliance on SDG indicators – and quantitative indicators in general – which may bias results assessment efforts towards activities that can be measured.

The advantages of linking results frameworks to SDG targets and indicators include:

➤ The 2030 Agenda offers an internationally agreed framework for sustainable development results. Going beyond the broad goals to include SDG *targets* in results frameworks enhances the scope for coherent and operational goals-results links, since most of the SDG targets are concrete, substantive and monitorable. Some suggested 'adding' to the three tiers of results frameworks, because SDG-linked data feed into the areas between development and development co-operation results and between the latter and provider performance, i.e. 'Tiers 1.5 and 2.5' in the results frameworks.

➤ With a focus on SDG targets that aim at outcome change by the target date of 2030, providers and partners can acquire development results information for accountability, communication, direction and learning. The Results Team has developed an approach to identify SDG targets that aim at outcome change and are relevant to particular development co-operation objectives and portfolios. The approach offers a common, evidence-based platform for results dialogue between providers and partners. It can lift the dialogue to matters of development impact and change – the ultimate purpose of results information and development co-operation.

➤ Information on the means of implementation targets of the 2030 Agenda can feed into the output and performance assessment elements of providers' results frameworks, since they provide information on the efforts made by providers under relevant SDGs. Gradually, data will become available for countries and globally on progress towards the SDG targets as development results. There should be less need for provider-specific data collection for results frameworks.

➤ The data and information collected by partner countries and international organisations can contribute to all three tiers of results frameworks: development results; development co-operation results; and performance monitoring. The Results Team identified a menu of 42 outcome-focused SDG targets, supported by 53 robust SDG indicators, and 18 means of implementation targets, supported by 18 robust indicators.[1] The menu is indeed a menu, suggesting a set of SDG targets and indicators that are relevant to providers and partners, who should select and focus on the targets and indicators that are most useful to their development co-operation policies and portfolios.

Many providers are actively seeking ways to link their results frameworks to SDG targets and indicators, for which the proposed menu will be useful. Linking SDG targets and indicators to results frameworks should be a complementary process to mapping SDGs to development co-operation inputs and portfolios, which many providers are undertaking at either the goal or target levels. It was suggested that the Results Team examine the possibility of a decision-tree for providers and partners to assess and strengthen their existing results frameworks. Country-level dialogues based on SDG-progress information could strengthen mutual accountability for development results, while acknowledging that both providers and partners need additional, context-specific information in their results frameworks.

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[1] The number of "robust" indicators is expected gradually to increase, as methodologies are strengthened and more data become available. This enables providers and partners to update their results frameworks in response to better evidence on progress towards the SDG targets.

Session 4: Communicating results

For results to have impact, they must be communicated to the right audiences for the right purpose. The theory of change extends beyond the results to how we engage and communicate those results for maximum and sustained impact. Workshop participants discussed ten continua, or scales, relating to communication of results information[2]. Providers and partners put themselves at many places along each scale depending on the audience, so not all agreed that the continua were useful. However, the continua demonstrate tensions and challenges inherent in results communication. For example, providers need domestic accountability for ODA to be sustained, so communication for domestic accountability and mutual accountability are equally important. Providers stressed the importance of giving equal weight to both.

Many pointed out the need to be specific and upfront about the audience for communications – the *who*: whether reporters, parliament, the public, development practitioners, partners or beneficiaries. In this sense, we shouldn't assume parliamentarians and taxpayers have the same level of understanding when it comes to development – and we need to make it matter for different types of audiences. Partner and provider representatives agreed that communication to recipients, and creating beneficiary feedback loops is essential, still nascent and a challenge; but whose responsibility is it?

Being up front about the *why* or the purpose of communications is essential; whether it be for transparency, accountability, advocacy, fundraising or learning makes a difference to the messages that are delivered. Some noted the tension between transparency and telling stories: by telling stories are we controlling the narrative too much? And by emphasising transparency, are we failing to provide the necessary analysis?

Understanding the *who* and *why*, helps determine *what* type of results information will be communicated. We need to be able to contextualise data to create insights and nuance, going beyond a simple dichotomy of data versus stories. Providers are in need of good examples of this and acknowledge that communication specialists can help bridge technical and non-technical divides. New media creates opportunities for *how* we present results. Providers and partners can take opportunities to innovate and make results information more visual and interactive, drawing out a narrative that goes beyond just numbers.

Finally, the SDGs represent a rallying point for communication about development results and can link the efforts of providers, partners and other stakeholders. Most of the SDG targets and priorities deal with real-life change for people, communities, countries and planet earth. They are globally known and brand recognition is high, and therefore promise to be a unique opportunity for communication about results.

Session 5: Looking to the future

Session five concluded the workshop with a discussion about the future of the Results Community. Participants discussed several topics on which they felt the Results Community could benefit from further work including: measuring and using results in integrated ministries (i.e. results from development, trade, foreign policy, security etc.); understanding how to measure leverage from the private sector; sustainability of results; synergies and overlaps between development effectiveness, transparency, results and evaluation; and understanding the SDG reporting systems partners use and how providers can support them.

Providers commented on how the Results Community and its workshops function, noting the importance of *focus* and a varied format for future workshops. Annex 1 summarises responses to a survey handed out during the final session. The responses confirm that Results Community members wish to continue along the current path of theme-focused workshops, with a balance between new and wider topics, such as RBM in new dimensions of development co-operation (trade, security, private sector etc.), and a stronger focus on RBM in the current development co-operation partnerships of provider and developing countries. Respondents appreciate the *Results in Development Cooperation website* and supported continuing the current public website with options for a closed or open community of RBM practitioners. The bottom-line was a recognition of the value of active membership in the DAC/DCD Results Community.

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[2] See: Using evidence for engagement and impact: Ten challenges for communicating results

What Results – Who Counts? Effective development co-operation for the 2030 Agenda
Looking to the future: Priorities for the Results Community: Survey Results

Total number of responses: 55

1. THE WHAT: Priority themes for the DAC/DCD Results Community to address in 2018-19
Average score for each option (1-4)

a)	Developing standards for good practice of results-based management in development co-operation	**2.98**
b)	Results-based finance and new forms of development co-operation	2.40
c)	Better use of data and new technologies for results-based management	2.85
d)	SDG-linked results frameworks: mapping portfolios to SDG targets and indicators	2.75
e)	Results-based management in and by partner countries: lessons from capacity building approaches	2.82
f)	The results agenda beyond ODA: Private sector, security, climate finance etc.	2.58
g)	Adapting results-based management to different partner contexts (eg. fragile)	2.71

Two providers who supported option A above commented that they would prefer to see development of principles, or good practice guidelines over *standards*.

Other priorities suggested by respondents:
- Country ownership: Good practices of providers' joint efforts on country framework harmonisation, multiple / inclusive accountability, feeding results back to partners (4 comments)
- Linking results and evaluations - learning. Explore links with evaluation network to get a better understanding of how we can work together, learning from evidence (3 comments)
- Results-based budgeting (2 comments)
- More on Leave no one behind (2 comments)
- How to measure leverage (2 comments)
- Transparency and learning from failure: linking debates on transparency and results (2 comments)
- Other suggestions:
  - Results agenda of development co-operation vs foreign policy
  - Ex-post monitoring and evaluation, especially by and including partners and beneficiaries
  - Results monitoring methods
  - Fragmented earmarked funding vs. programmatic approach
  - Adaptive programming - producing results not just measuring results
  - Effective communication toward domestic parliament and domestic media / public
  - Innovative efforts to support SDGs beyond working in silos
  - Getting to "how" investments, data use, capacity change to enable results-based management
  - Access to beneficiaries in conflict zones

2. WITH WHOM: Participation in the DAC/DCD Results Community
Number of responses for each option

a)	Stay as is: Results managers of provider agencies at the core, with strong partner input	26
b)	With broader participation from think tanks, civil society and private sector	17
c)	Any other combination (see below in comments)	5

Comments
Ten respondents commented that if the Results Community is broadened it would be important that the focus on results and results-based management was maintained, and that participation should be broadened only for specific topics of relevance. For example: "Occasional input from CSOs and think-tanks. Risk that too big an audience can hamper the quality of interaction and progression", "Depends on the relevance and topic for broadening participation."

Four respondents called for greater participation by the M&E and evaluation communities. Suggestions of other stakeholders that could be included where relevant were: private sector (3), emerging donors (2), results experts from other public sector agencies, and expertise from the field.

3. THE HOW: Options for developing an online presence for DAC/DCD Results Community
Number of responses for each option

a)	Public website with resources, papers, links and Results Community news	16
b)	Public website *and* <u>closed</u> community where invited members can register, participate in discussion groups and share materials	**18**
c)	Public website *and* <u>open</u> community where anyone can register and participate in discussion groups on the results agenda (dependent on resources)	13
d)	Other suggestions (see below in comments)	1

Comments
Respondents suggested that it was important to be realistic about the options for an open or closed community and to ensure that it was well moderated, with one commenting on difficulties cost and efficiency wise (3 comments). As alternatives, one provider suggested just sharing contact details, while another suggested a closed LinkedIn group. One respondent commented on the overriding importance of including civil society in the conversation.

4. ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE RESULTS COMMUNITY?
(Including about the format of Results Community workshops):

Comments
Most comments were on the format of the workshops. Seven respondents supported a more varied workshop methodology, including use of open space technology and other participatory methods, and introducing more variety to the sessions in general. Four commented on the need for more *focus* in the workshop sessions. They suggested smaller overall workshop size and more in-depth sessions. In relation, two commented that they would like the sessions to be more concrete and solutions focused. There was a call to suggest more 'quick-win' topics, and for introduction of sessions which linked to other DAC communities.

Brief analysis of survey findings

THE WHAT:
The preferred option was continued development of standards, or principles for good practice. However, five of the seven proposed options were within a 10% scoring range. The broad support for these options suggests a value in developing good practice principles for work in particular contexts or situations, i.e. combining option 1a) with some of the other high-ranked options. The scores in combination with the comments also suggest there is support for continued work on RBM in partner country contexts, and building partner capacity. The responses will be used to help shape the work programme for 2018-19.

WITH WHOM:
The responses suggest clear support for retaining the current composition of the Results Community. However, the comments also suggest that participants favour broader participation (eg. evaluators, private sector, additional think tanks) around specific topics of interest.

THE HOW:
The most popular option was for the Results Community to move towards a partly closed community where members can exchange and discuss topics (18). However, almost as many respondents (16) favoured retaining the website in its current state, and a high number (13) favoured the addition of an open community. The DCD Results Team will explore these options further, including a platform where the Results Community can interact on specific topics.

Comments on the workshop:
The majority of additional comments were about the workshop format, with support for varying the methodology of the sessions – as well as a call to introduce more focus. This will be taken into account for planning the next workshop. A final note: The 55 respondents included DAC member providers, other providers, partners, think-tanks, and OECD staff, with no possibility for distinguishing the responses.

ANNEX 2: Workshop Agenda

Monday 9 October 2017

09.00-09.30 Coffee and registration

09.30-10.00 Welcome

- Introduction to workshop objectives and format: Karen Jorgensen & Poul Engberg-Pedersen, DCD, OECD

10.00-13.00 Session 1: Strengthening the results chain: results-based management by providers

Key questions:

- o *How can providers develop a results approach which emphasises goals and outcomes?*
- o *How can less of a focus on attribution enhance country ownership of results?*
- o *How can performance and results information strengthen a learning and results culture?*

- **Chair:** Rosie Zwart, DCD, OECD. **Panellists:** Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom, World Bank
- Group discussions and feedback to plenary
- Conclusions on good practice for results-based management by providers

15 minute coffee break at 11.00

13.00-14.15 Lunch break

14.15-18.00 Session 2: Delivering results to Leave no one behind

Key questions:

- o *Why is the pledge to leave no one behind important to development co-operation results?*
- o *What information is needed to leave no one behind? What role for partners / providers?*
- o *What concrete steps can providers and partners take to address leave no one behind in their results frameworks?*

- Address from Jorge Moreira da Silva, Director, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD
- **Co-Chairs:** Judith Randall & Tony German, Development Initiatives. **Panellists:** Peru, Tanzania, Switzerland (SDC), the UN, Development Initiatives
- Group discussions and feedback to plenary
- Conclusions on delivering results to leave no one behind

15 minute coffee break at 16.00

18.30-20.00 Drinks reception in the OECD Chateau (Roger Ockrent room)

Tuesday 10 October 2017

08.30-09.00 Coffee

09.00-13.00 Session 3: Strengthening results frameworks through SDG targets and indicators

Key questions:

- o *What are the steps needed to incorporate SDG targets and indicators in results frameworks?*
- o *What SDG targets and indicators can be used for the three tiers of results frameworks?*
- o *What use can providers and partners make of a menu of SDG targets and indicators?*

- **Chair:** Poul Engberg-Pedersen, DCD, OECD. **Panellists:** Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Togo, Finland, the EU

- Group discussions and feedback to plenary

- Conclusions on incorporating SDG targets and indicators into provider results frameworks

15 minute coffee break at 11.00

13.00-14.00 Lunch break

14.00-16.15 Session 4: Communicating results

Key questions:

- o *How can results communication better reflect different audiences, objectives, messages, politics and data?*
- o *What are the strengths and weaknesses in current suites of results communication products?*
- o *How can the inclusion of SDG targets and indicators in results frameworks improve results communication?*

- **Chair:** Rahul Malhotra, DCD, OECD. **Panellists:** Malawi, Nepal, Germany, Development Gateway

- Group discussions and feedback to plenary

- Conclusions on good practice for communicating results in the context of the 2030 Agenda

15 minute coffee break at 16.15

16.30-17.30 Session 5: Looking to the future

Key questions:

- o *WHAT priority issues should the Results Community address in the coming 1-2 years?*
- o *WHO should participate in the Results Community?*
- o *HOW should the Results Community operate?*

- **Chair:** Karen Jorgensen, DCD, OECD

- Presentation of the Results Community website

- Conclusions on next steps for the OECD DAC/DCD Results Community