RESULTS FRAMEWORKS IN WORLD BANK OPERATIONS: GUIDANCE NOTE

A. Overview

1. As the World Bank continues to improve the Results focus of its operations, it is increasingly important that Bank projects and programs contain robust Results Frameworks (RFs) that enable results-based monitoring and evaluation activities. This note describes the main features of a robust RF as they apply to investment lending operations (ILOs) and development policy operations (DPOs).

2. ***Project/Program Results Framework.*** A results framework is the program logic that explains how the project/program development objective(s) (PDO) is to be achieved, including expected causal relationships and underlying assumptions.[1] It links together the PDO, the outputs, the outcomes to be delivered by each component, and the indicators to be used to verify achievement of the expected objective (see Figure 1). The RF also outlines how the indicator data will be used over the course of implementation. A reviewer of an RF should be able to understand the development problem(s) that the intervention is trying to solve, what the desired objective(s) is, the outcomes that are critical for achieving the objective(s), the implementation process to most effectively attain the outcomes, and the required arrangements to measure progress toward the objective(s).

Figure 1. Example of a Results Framework

PDO	Project Outcome Indicators	Use of Project Outcome Information
Intermediate Outcomes	**Intermediate Outcome Indicators**	**Use of Intermediate Outcome Monitoring**

3. ***RF Use.*** An RF is a management tool that is useful at all stages of development interventions: (i) at the beginning, for strategic planning, (ii) during implementation, for day-to-day management and evaluation of project progress, and (iii) near the end, for overall project evaluation and feedback. At the design level, the RF is a planning tool that helps the client country, the World Bank, and other development partners set out the

1 Results Framework is a generic term employed at different levels to describe the context in which results are measured and monitored. At the *CAS level*, a Results Framework refers to the expected relationships between the portfolio of services (lending and non-lending) and CAS outcomes. At the *sectoral level*, a Results Framework (embedded in the Sector Strategy) articulates the outcomes that are the focus of work in the sector. See OPCS Results Terminology.

objectives and desired outcomes of a project or program as well as the necessary arrangements to measure progress toward those objectives and outcomes. By laying out the shared objectives as well as the arrangements for achieving them, the RF also helps build consensus and ownership among stakeholders. During implementation, the RF helps client countries, implementing agencies, other donors, and Bank's staff to assess progress toward the desired objectives and reexamine the program logic to see when they might need to adjust course. Upon project completion, the RF is helpful in evaluating the development intervention by providing information on its intended objective(s). Finally, as a summary that captures all key elements of a strategy for achieving a desired objective(s) the RF is also helpful as a tool to convey to third parties the purpose of the development intervention.

4. ***Elements of an adequate RF.*** The purpose of the framework is to translate the underlying 'results chain,' or logic, of an intervention into indicators that credibly measure the degree to which inputs are being transformed into specific activities and outputs and the degree to which these outputs are being used by a relevant target population (or institution/organization in the case of interventions designed to promote policy and/or institutional change). An effective RF should specify:

- The definition and proposed unit of measurement for indicators of intervention outputs and outcomes, and where feasible and meaningful, measures of impact. As country ownership over the development agenda is crucial for gaining results, a RF should build on the country results framework whenever existent or at least on a mutually agreed framework, and a common understanding of the results to pursue.
- The roles and responsibilities of both country institutions and Bank for the collection and analysis of these indicators; and well-defined expectations for the use of the data generated by these indicators in decisionmaking at the country level and by the Bank.

Joint results frameworks, shared with the country and other donors, are generally more effective than single Bank-frameworks.

5. ***Results Framework's in ILOs.*** The RF in ILOs is explained in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) Guidelines: Project design should be guided by a results framework […] intended to be useful for both project management and Bank supervision. This framework focuses on the project development objective (PDO) to be achieved, the intermediate outcomes expected [and the evidence base for that expectation]. This information should be used to track progress towards the PDO and to make changes in the project if necessary during implementation. The project RF does not repeat project activities or outputs, which are captured in the project description (PAD Main Text B.5 and Technical Annex 3) and tracked by financial management reporting on outputs. It also does not capture sector outcomes or other higher-level outcomes with which the project is aligned (PAD Main Text B.2). Higher-level outcomes are beyond the responsibility of the project and do not require M&E arrangements within the operation. It is important, however, that there be clear alignment between the project and the higher-order strategic, program, or sector outcomes to which the operation contributes. In particular where we deal with a programmatic approach, the operation should, if at all possible, make use of existing national M&E systems to monitor higher-order outcomes,

and in situations where those systems are not available, the operation should contribute to the dialogue with the Government for the development of those systems.

6. ***Results Framework's in DPOs***. As noted in the Good Practice Note "Results in Development Policy Lending," there are three key features of a useful results orientation: (i) a results framework, (ii) a system of performance indicators for M&E, and (iii) arrangements for collecting and using M&E information. The RF lays out the objectives of the operation, and the presumed causal relationships and underlying assumptions about how program actions will lead to the intended outcomes. The operation should base these causal relationships on evidence, if available, and if not, should dedicate the necessary resources to clarifying, with evidence, the causal relationships on which the framework has been built. A system of performance indicators enables tracking of the key links in the causal chains underlying the results framework. Appropriate, and where applicable joint, organizational arrangements, consideration of institutional capacity, and allocation of responsibilities for data collection, analysis, and utilization are key aspects of the successful implementation and use of a RF. The RF specifies expected linkages between the program of policy and institutional actions supported by a development policy operation, the objectives of the operation, and the broader or longer-term results aimed at in the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), based on a series of underlying results chains. The elaboration of results chains that extend from actions supported under the operation through to intended CAS outcomes (as laid out in the CAS) is key to improving the results orientation of development policy operations. The RF is summarized in the operation's Program Matrix and drives the exposition in the Program Document (PD), including the statement of the Program Objective (PO).

B. RF Quality: Criteria and Good Practice Examples

7. The following criteria will help teams develop a new RF or assess of an existing RF (subsequent paragraphs supply good practice examples of each criterion).

(a) Alignment to program and formulation of PDOs and indicators

- Are the PDO/PO and indicators clearly linked to CAS objectives and to country (sector) objectives?
- Does the PDO/PO address country capacity strengthening, while making the case for the use of country systems?
- Is the PDO/PO expressed as a measurable change in the behavior or condition of the target group?[2]
- Are the indicators relevant to measure PDO/PO progress?[3]
- Do the indicators contain baseline values and targets?[4]

(b) Institutional framework for results management

- Does the PAD/PD analyze institutional arrangements for data collection (responsible staff/units and time frames), the capacity of the responsible agency and the cost for the results based M&E? If M&E capacity of the

[2] Target groups can refer to individuals, households, firms, or organizations. For DPOs, is there at least one clear outcome for each main policy area (not for each action) that is expressed as measurable change in the behavior or condition of the target group?

[3] For DPOs, are the indicators relevant to measure progress of each outcome for each policy area?

[4] For more information on baselines, please see "Adequate Baseline Data in Implementation Status and Results Reports (ISRs): Guidance Note."

responsible agency is assessed to be weak, does the program provide resources to strengthen capacity?

- Does the PAD/PD draw the monitoring indicators in the results framework from the borrower's M&E system?
- Does the operation build on a harmonized approach with other donors, and hence does the PAD/PD present a joint results framework?

8. ***Linkages to CAS Objectives.*** A clear linkage means going beyond just mentioning that the CAS has a pillar or one objective that is related to the operation's PDO/PO. A clear link requires a more focused assessment of what specific CAS objective is related to the PDO/PO, in what way the individual operation directly contributes to this CAS outcome, and an analysis of the indicators (see Box 1).

Box 1. Linkages to CAS

The Bank's CAS for country X recognizes governance issues as the primary obstacle to poverty reduction and aid effectiveness in country X. The joint Government-Bank focus on governance provides the primary filter that led to the selection of Public Financial Management (PFM) as an area of Bank support because: (i) governance is a binding constraint; (ii) governance constraints have significant strategic importance for the poverty reduction program; and (iii) the Government is committed to reform in this area.

One of the core objectives of the CAS is to strengthen the Government's PFM capacity, which is a critical foundation for better pro-poor service delivery and reducing corruption. The Bank will support reforms that aim to reconstruct the institutional underpinnings necessary for a more effective and accountable public administration. These efforts, preferably jointly undertaken with other donors, will focus on strengthening PFM, moving toward the establishment of a meritocratic civil service, and increasing accountability to country citizens (see Table 1A). The Bank will also support increased transparency and accountability in PFM by joining with other development partners in building the capacity of the National Audit Authority and the parliament (National Assembly and Senate). It is expected that the project would support Stages 1 and 2 (and part of Stage 3) of the reform program over the next five years.

Table 1A. Improve Public Financial Management

Longer-term/higher-order country outcomes	*CAS outcomes the Bank Group expects to influence*
Improve service delivery through increasingly pro-poor incidence of public spending	Strengthened mobilization and management of public finance set the stage for improved services • Improved revenue mobilization and resource management • Improved financial management • Strengthened PFM oversight and accountability
Reduce corruption	Civil service management and incentives tied to performance set the stage for better service delivery • Merit-based pay and organizational reform piloted • Salaries increased and decompressed in key ministries • Strengthened performance management system implemented • Donor salary supplement practices rationalized

9. ***Measurable Change in Target Group Behavior or Condition.*** The PDO is expected to be concise and uncluttered by outputs and higher-level outcomes, and to have clearly identified key outcomes and target groups. Good examples of such PDOs are:

- "Targeted urban companies practice environmentally safe manufacturing."
- "Low-income households and micro and small businesses experience improved access to financial services provided by sound, profitable financial institutions."
- "Employability of young people improved by strengthening the relevance of secondary education in math and sciences."

- "Government's institutional capacity strengthened in the areas of budgetary planning and execution, investment and project planning, internal and external control, procurement, accountability, participatory monitoring, and reform constituency building."

10. ***Relevant Indicators with Baseline Values and Targets.*** A limited set of indicators (less then five) for a PDO should be available. Indicators should be "SMART": specific, measurable, attributable, realistic and relevant, and time-bound. Indicators should measure all aspects of the PDO/PO,[5] and each project component should also have indicators to measure progress. If baselines are not available, there should be an explanation, accompanied by detailed plans, of how they will be established during the first year of implementation. For example: the PDO for a project is "more and better trained students graduate from secondary school at reduced costs for parents, with increased equity of access by gender and by area (rural-urban)," and five indicators are proposed to measure PDO progress including baseline data and targets (see Table 2). The PDO contains several aspects (secondary completion rates, lower parent cost, improved rural and gender access) and the indicators cover all these aspects, are at the outcome level, and provide baselines values. They are SMART indicators:

Table 2. Examples of "SMART" Indicators

	Target Values					
Project Outcome Indicators	**Baseline 2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
• Gross Intake Rate in first grade of lower secondary	22%	26%	29%	33%	36%	40%
• Completion Rate at lower secondary	45%	48%	51%	54%	57%	60%
• Average Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) in lower secondary in the 18 less-covered provinces	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%	13%
• GER for girls in lower secondary	17.2%	19.3%	21.5%	23.7%	25.8%	28%
• School fees supported by families in public lower secondary schools in the 18 less-covered provinces	30,000	-	-	20,000	-	10,000

11. ***Institutional Arrangements.*** The PAD or PD is expected to clearly address issues regarding data collection, capacity, and roles and responsibilities for the M&E arrangements (see Box 2 for a simple approach to a challenging country environment).:

Box 2. Arrangements for Results Monitoring

Institutional issues. As this is a project with multiple secondary counterparts (the prime counterpart, the Ministry of Economy and Finance), most monitoring will be carried out by the agency directly responsible for a specific set of results. Thus the Supreme Audit Institution will keep its own records on the number of audits carried out, while the Anti-Corruption Unit will keep records of its own investigations and complaints registered by individuals. The only exception, information on public reactions, will either come from separate surveys or from more informal consultations. The indicators have been kept simple and tied to records agencies should normally keep. Moreover, a majority of the indicators were also used in the previous operation, a logical result of the linkage between the projects. The Coordination Unit's will consolidate the information from the various agencies. Although the long-term impacts of the endeavor are aimed at the X public as beneficiary, the time-frame for the project will mean that 'within-institution' changes are the most that can be measured realistically. The working hypothesis is that if these 'within-

[6] The PDO can be focused on a single issue (e.g., increase enrollment of primary students in all public schools in 10 districts), or on more than one issue (e.g., increase enrollment of primary students and improve teaching performance in all schools in 10 districts). Each of these aspects of the PDO must be measured by relevant indicators.

institution' changes can be effected, the improved use of public resources will bring more benefits for all citizens. However, within the life-of-project, it would be very difficult to measure that effect.

Data collection. Data will be both qualitative and quantitative. Most will be derived directly from the office outputs (budgets, number of audits, trainees, investigations, rules and document designed) with some additional external evaluation of quality. While there is always room for manipulating results, this type of primary data (with the exception of the qualitative assessments) is less susceptible to this effect.

Capacity. As all these offices tend to be short-staffed, collecting the data may be a challenge but the approach proposed is rather basic. Efforts put into collecting and presenting data normally kept by the entities will be counted as counterpart in-kind contribution.

12. ***RF Monitoring Indicators and Borrower's M&E system.*** The PAD or PD should contain an in-depth explanation of the national or sub-national data systems, how they will be used, supported, or complemented through the operation (see Box 3 for a good practice write-up drawn from a PD).

Box 3. Monitoring and Evaluation System

Systemic Changes. The Program Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU) is responsible for (i) monitoring and evaluating the impact of the overall program on public primary schooling, and (ii) overseeing implementation of certain key components of the reform program itself, such as textbook and stipend distribution. It has revamped the Education Management Information System (EMIS), and the systematic strengthening of monitoring data by PMIU has made their dynamic database the reference point on public school data for the province.

Output and Outcome Indicators. The proposed credit will support the region in accomplishing the outputs and outcomes listed in the Matrix of Policy Reforms. These indicators are also aligned with the monitoring matrix developed by the Government for the education sector in the PRSP, and with the MDGs. After the third credit, updated indicators (including quality indicators) and baselines will be established for Phase II, and also included in the terms of partnership.

Outcome Indicators. The outcome indicators that are included in the PRSP monitoring framework are being used, including enrolment rates for primary and middle school levels, and completion rates at the primary level. Some of these indicators are household-based measures. Currently the education database does not have the ability to track individual pupils through the system given that it does not assign or collect unique student identification numbers. Recognizing this gap in data, the government is now putting in place measures in the school census to enable it to determine drop-out and completion rates for public sector schools. The introduction of a system of unique student identification numbers would provide information on public school completion rates. However, overall completion rates, including private school completion rates, would have to be obtained through household survey data.

Baseline and Impact Data. Baseline data on public school enrolment is available from the Education Department's district profile prepared in April 2003. A public school census was conducted in February 2004 to fill the gaps in this database, and repeat censuses were conducted in October 2004, May 2005, and October 2005 to assess the enrolment trends and other critical school data. The recent Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey also provides data on overall school enrolments, showing an increase in net primary enrolment rates. The reduction of teacher absenteeism is one of the operation's main objectives. Through the ongoing monitoring conducted through the Chief Minister's monitoring teams, over 25,000 schools have been visited during 2005. The monitoring teams found low teacher absenteeism. However, this cannot be considered as a baseline as the data were gathered through a one-time visit to schools and did not include repeat visits. The government is committed to establish a more systematic measure of this important PRSP indicator in Phase II. Questions on teacher presence have been included in the current round of third-party validations.

Independent Third-Party Surveys. External agencies have been contracted to conduct independent third-party surveys to verify implementation of program interventions. In addition to the textbook and stipend validation surveys, independent TPVs are also being carried out on procurement and PMIU data systems on an annual basis. Altogether, this constitutes a significant achievement in internal and external data harmonization.