

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE

MEETING SUMMARY

15th Workshop of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)'s Results Community

18-20 October 2023

This document contains the meeting summary and list of participating organisations of the 15th Annual Workshop of the DAC Results Community, "Learning Together for Better Results".
The workshop took place on 18-20 October 2023. It aimed to help development professionals use the new OECD Toolkit on results-based management (RBM), *Impact by Design*, and to benefit from a series of peer-learning sessions on a diverse range of topics faced by RBM practitioners.
The OECD DAC Results Community is an open community of practice dedicated to enhancing the impact of development co-operation. Its purpose is to foster exchange and drive collective learning among development co-operation providers, partners and other stakeholders.

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Detailed Summary



15th
OECD/DAC
Results Community
Workshop

LEARNING **TOGETHER** FOR BETTER RESULTS

18, 19 and 20 October 2023

Overview

On 18-20 October 2023, the OECD hosted the 15th Workshop of the DAC Results Community, “**Learning together for better results**”.

This year’s workshop registered the highest number of participants since the creation of the Results Community in 2014, with **304 attendees** from **77 participating organisations** across the three days.

These participants included representatives from 29 OECD member countries, 10 multilateral development banks, 23 United Nations organisations, 4 other international organisations, 3 members of the Arab Coordination Group, and 7 think tanks, civil society organisations and academic institutions. In the spirit of a member-driven community of practice, 50 members contributed actively to organise the sessions and share lessons from their experience in focusing on results.

In her welcoming statement, **Pilar Garrido**, Director of the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate, emphasised the importance of focusing on results, innovate, and stay agile for development impact in these volatile times. She invited members to show resilience in pursuing long-term objectives while being able to listen to partners, support locally led development, adapt to each context, and learn continuously.

During the three days, members shared updates on **trends and ongoing reforms** to strengthen their results-based management systems [Page 4].

Members actively engaged in **peer learning**, discussing challenges and solutions on several key topics:

A. How to improve results frameworks, systems and approaches:

- **Strengthening results frameworks** [Page 11]
- **Linking results and financing** [Page 14]
- **Using AI in results systems** [Page 17]
- **Adapting results approaches for fragile and conflict-affected situations** [Page 20]

B. How to improve monitoring:

- **New and innovative monitoring tools and approaches** [Page 23]
- **Getting and measuring the results of private sector engagement** [Page 26]
- **Monitoring locally led development** [Page 28]
- **Measuring the impact of capacity building initiatives** [Page 30]

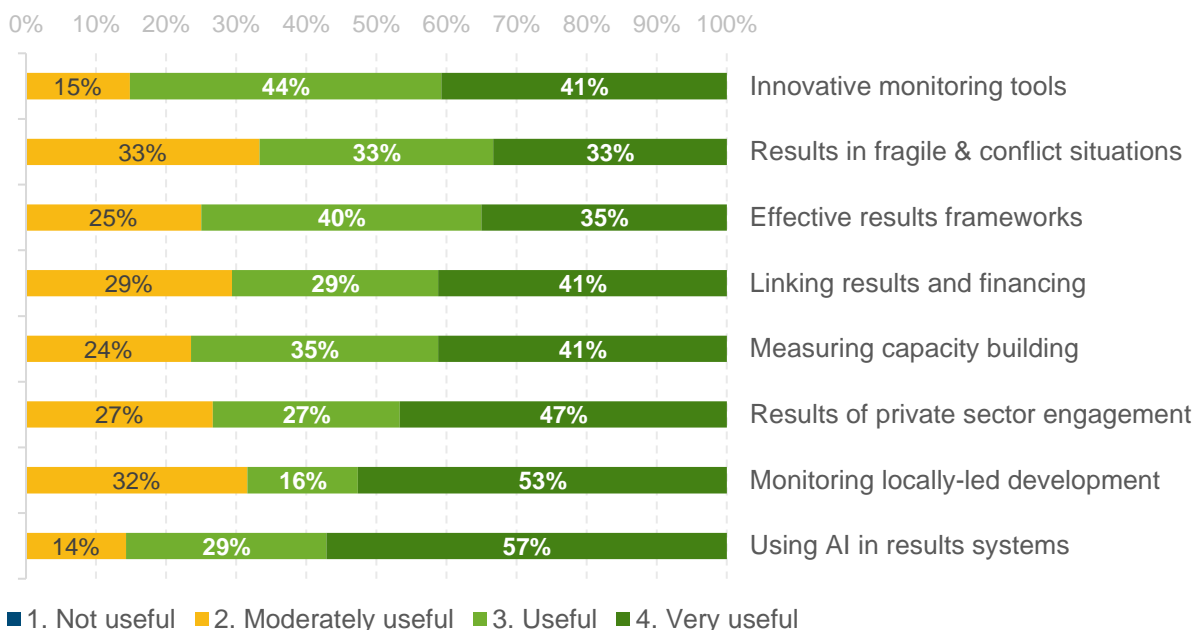
Next Steps: In closing the workshop, **Rahul Malhotra**, Head of Reviews, Results, Evaluation and Development Innovation at the OECD, announced the publication of a second iteration of the OECD Toolkit in the Spring and an upcoming reflection with core members on the future directions of the DAC Results Community. A series of webinars will be organised to dig further into certain topics, such as measuring locally-led development and outcome-based financing.

The next workshop of the DAC Results Community is scheduled to take place in Paris on **16-17 October 2024** in hybrid format.

2023 Annual Workshop: Satisfaction Survey

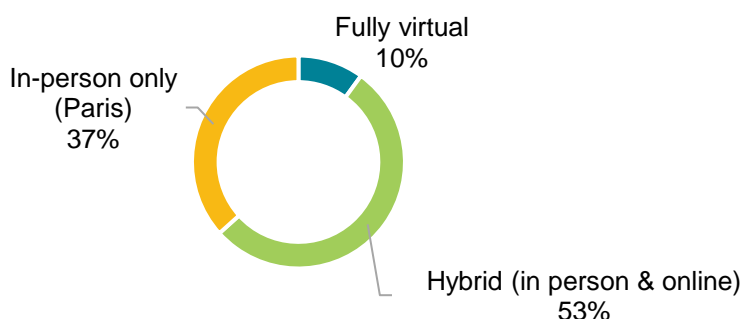
The workshop satisfaction survey was taken by 30 members. Overall, responses show a high level of satisfaction as regards to the range of topics covered over the three days. The most highly-rated sessions were “using AI in results systems” and “new and innovative monitoring tools”, with the rest of the sessions receiving positive remarks by 70 to 90% of participants. Attendees appreciated the **peer learning** focus of the sessions, the **coverage of timely topics** and the **diversity of speakers**, as well as the **facilitation of the sessions**.

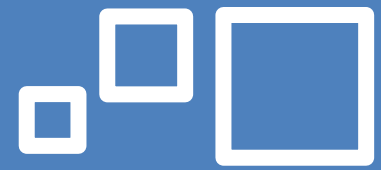
Reported usefulness of the sessions



For the **2024 annual workshop**, 90% of survey respondents would prefer a **hybrid** (53%) or **fully in-person** (37%) modality. Participants wish to see **further coverage of this year’s topics** (e.g. artificial intelligence, innovative digital tools, locally led development) as well as sessions containing practical guidance in results-based management.

Preferred format for the 2024 Annual Workshop





Part 1

Trends and ongoing reforms in results-based management systems during 2023

Trends and ongoing reforms in results-based management: DAC Results Community member updates

Highlights

Updates from ten members revealed a strong appetite for better (and better used) results data, and a drive to strengthen results systems and monitoring capabilities through reforms and innovations, by:

1. **harnessing digitalisation and technological innovations**, taking new initiatives to better use digital tools to streamline results measurement and reporting, and enhance learning, accountability and transparency in development co-operation;
2. **streamlining results frameworks** in order to develop guidance for better-aligned results frameworks at headquarters, country and project levels, streamline corporate results frameworks, and deepen the alignment with the SDGs and partner country priorities;
3. **strengthening internal capacity for results-based management**: developing guidance, tools and providing staff training; and
4. **promoting multisectoral, interdisciplinary approaches and embedding cross-cutting issues** to support integrated solutions that have greater focus at the impact level.

Presentations



Belgium, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation – Andreas Boogaerts presented how the Ministry's **staff capacity and RBM systems are being strengthened**, starting with highlights from 2022-23 which include:

- the finalisation of the learning trajectory on impact evaluations. Conducted by the Special Evaluation Office and the Federation of NGOs, this included 6 impact evaluations of NGO programmes, followed by a training session to capture lessons;
- the renewed evaluation policy of Enabel, which strengthens the strategic learning purpose of evaluations, prioritises quality over quantity, and strives to strengthen the involvement of partner countries and final beneficiaries;
- the organisation of training sessions on results-based management, to be pursued in the coming years to strengthen staff capacity; and
- improvement of *ex ante* analyses to better identify synergies and complementarities with non-governmental programmes.

In 2024, the Ministry will look at adjusting the monitoring and evaluation system to enhance strategic learning alongside accountability, and at ways to aggregate results data including qualitative information to make better use of it. This will involve reviewing the monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning system, with the support of the Special Evaluation Office (SEO). In parallel, a new strategic learning group involving the Ministry, Enabel and the SEO will promote a common culture of learning. Finally, the 2024-28 management contract under preparation with BIO, the Belgian investment company for developing countries, will include a number of impact targets.



European Commission, Directorate General of International Partnerships –

Giulia Camilotti focused her presentation on the **2023 results reporting exercise performed for the first time using OPSYS**. This IT system manages the EU's portfolio of external interventions and collects and aggregates results data from all EU-funded interventions. This results-reporting exercise feeds into different

corporate reports.

Massive methodological support was provided to familiarise staff with OPSYS as well as with the Global Europe Results Framework, with training and tools (guidelines and methodological notes) to ensure quality logical frameworks and effective use of the IT system for monitoring and reporting. Regarding the scope of OPSYS and its replicability for smaller agencies, Giulia explained that OPSYS covers not only results and reporting, but follows the whole programme cycle, starting with contracting. Implementing partners enter the data in the system and external technical assistance provides quality control.

A new EU Results Dashboard went live a few months ago. This results dashboard allows the aggregation and visualisation of all results data from OPSYS in a user-friendly way. The results dashboard has great potential to both support communication and analyse performance. One of the challenges ahead is to ensure that quality data feeds into the dashboard, which will be the focus of the work ahead.



Finland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Annika Kaipola presented their new **results-**

based management guidelines. The previous version dates back to 2015. The new guidelines take into account new developments that have happened since then: the adoption of the **DAC Guiding Principles on Managing for Sustainable Development Results**; the *Strategic Evaluation on knowledge management* conducted in 2019; the development co-operation management reform undertaken as a follow-up to the Strategic Evaluation; and the **risk-management policy** issued in 2021.

The new guidelines gather all guidance notes and legal documents in one place. They include the theory of change developed for each priority area and emphasise adaptive management when operating in fragile and complex environments. They also articulate the relationship between a human rights-based approach and RBM, and make the link with the new risk-management policy for development co-operation as well as with the new quality criteria that apply to select projects and programmes for funding. The guidelines do not call managers to impose a specific RBM approach on partners, but rather to encourage them to foster a culture of results, learning and risk management that supports development effectiveness, and to have monitoring and evaluation systems in place.



Ireland, Department of Foreign Affairs – Evelyn Maris detailed their **bidirectional strategy to strengthen results measurement at both headquarters and embassy levels. Aiming for a more cohesive system, Ireland has concentrated on improving the entire programming cycle from analysis to evaluation.**

Guidance on reporting and accountability frameworks is being developed to support staff in embassies. This will include a visual mapping of reporting requirements at macro (global and national policy commitments), meso (Ireland's international development policy '*A Better World*' and regional strategies), and micro (embassy-specific strategic objectives) levels.

Recent work at the headquarters level has focused on aligning the international development policy with priority areas—gender, climate, governance and humanitarian aid—and eventually synchronising this with embassy-level activities. Yet, challenges are manifold: reconciling diverse reporting systems,

accessing real-time data, aligning results with budget lines, and tracking broad policy impacts. Nonetheless, the OECD toolkit, *Impact by Design*, has proven effective in the design process, and a strong institutional appetite for improved data access and use persists within the Department of Foreign Affairs.



Norway, Norad – Matthias Egeland provided insights into Norway's **innovative approaches to portfolio and results management**. Norad is revamping its systems to enhance efficiency, improve dialogue for better impact and boost transparency. With EUR 2.6 billion managed by 270 staff, Norad is shifting towards uniform reporting formats and building in-house digital tools to assess and communicate results. This system aims to provide a cohesive approach across the agency, moving away from disparate methodologies.

The new digital tool will structure information for various analyses, feeding into government reports and public platforms, thus supporting accountability. A challenge lies in crafting a structured framework that is still adaptable to diverse sectors and programmes, requiring confidence in professional judgement without rigid reliance on predetermined frameworks. Norad's strategy is to maintain a 'light touch', avoiding cumbersome processes, and opting for agility in their results-management evolution.



Switzerland, Swiss Agency for Development Co-operation (SDC) – Reto Nigg announced an upcoming **survey to assess digital transformation** within development organisations. He underscored the rapid technological evolution and the need to harness innovation for development work. The survey aims to fill a knowledge gap by collecting data on the digitalisation efforts of peer institutions, fostering shared understanding and peer learning.

The SDC's survey will be concise, designed to extract valuable insights within a 10-minute timeframe, while also allowing for more comprehensive feedback. It will explore various facets of digital transformation, from data and collaboration to cultural and leadership dimensions, with a focus on results and project risk-management tools.



United States, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) – Casey Dunning shared the organisation's **new approach to**

aligning their portfolio with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). MCC, which focuses on poverty reduction through economic growth, has undertaken a **comprehensive review** of its 20-year project history, coding each project's actual results against the 17 SDGs and 169 underpinning targets. The mapping reveals that all MCC projects contributed to SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), with the majority also supporting SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) – areas reflective of MCC's infrastructure and institutional reform focus. SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) also received large contributions.

Going forward, MCC will update this mapping with new and completed projects, publish a detailed report and create a codebook to outline their methodology, which could help other agencies with similar efforts. Moreover, they plan to align their project outcomes with partner countries' voluntary national reviews to better support national priorities and identify areas where they can increase their contribution. This indicator-based assessment will also provide a more nuanced view of their development impact.



African Development Bank (AfDB) – Rudy Petras presented AfDB’s recent **advancements in results measurement**. These include: i) A new format for country development reviews, which is being piloted in Benin and Rwanda as part of the 2023 Annual Development Effectiveness Review; ii) the use of standardised core sector indicators across AfDB operations to enhance harmonisation; iii) the development of a **Joint Impact Model** to measure indirect jobs; and iv) the use of satellite images to assess project impact, such as the effect of unlocking groundwater resources on food security in Niger; of energy access on living conditions in Cameroon; or of a road corridor on employment in Zambia. Satellite imagery enables accessing information in remote locations; which is triangulated with other data to confirm its validity.

Looking ahead, AfDB is finalising a new corporate results measurement framework aligned with the forthcoming ten-year strategy. This framework will move from attributing results to acknowledging contributions, and will introduce a new bottom-up approach to setting targets. The AfDB is also integrating two key platforms into a single user-friendly gateway, **Map Africa**, which presents the spatial distribution of projects, and a **Projects Data Portal**, which provides comprehensive project information.



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Asian Development Bank (AsDB) – Lindsay Renaud highlighted three main points, starting with the Bank’s **new operating model to improve development effectiveness**, launched in October 2022. The restructure involves significant reforms with three strategic shifts affecting climate action, private sector development and ways of working, the latter aiming to support “integrated solutions” such as multisectoral initiatives. A set of key performance indicators is being introduced as an incentive to work collaboratively towards common priorities, bringing a new approach to cascading corporate indicators and ensuring that staff across departments/teams have more common targets in their work plans. Meanwhile, development impact is now part of the mandate of the economics department. This allows leveraging the team of economists to focus on outcomes during project design and to conduct relevant impact studies.

The AsDB is also piloting a new approach to self-evaluating country partnership strategies, which follows the revision of the results-based management approach at the partner country level. This new approach was co-developed by the AsDB’s departments on strategy and independent evaluation.

The AsDB has automated corporate results reporting, piloting the use of generative artificial intelligence. This is meant to reduce manual processes. Initial results are promising, and the pilot will be scaled up.

In terms of future directions, the AsDB is undertaking a midterm review of its corporate strategy. This will inform the new Corporate Results Framework to be developed in 2024. The new CRF should be streamlined with a reduced number of common results indicators.



UNESCO – Othilie Louradour du Souich highlighted the organisation’s enriched set of institutional guidance and tools. This includes a new interdisciplinary methodology, which builds on UNESCO’s multidisciplinary mandate to shift from a siloed to an **interdisciplinary approach**, internally and with stakeholders on the ground. UNESCO is also working to ensure that results frameworks at the organisational, thematic and project levels are sufficiently harmonised and interlinked. To do so, the RBM Formulations Toolkit was developed, a 26-page guidance tool which gives straightforward advice and examples that can be built upon to harmonise (rather than standardise) the formulation of activities, results, indicators, and assumptions. The toolkit also aims to better integrate UNESCO’s priorities and cross-cutting issues like human rights-based approaches.

Besides multiple capacity-strengthening events, UNESCO has focused in the last two years on codesigning interdisciplinary theories of change and is taking steps to better link humanitarian and sustainable development approaches.

On future directions, UNESCO is starting to develop its 2026-29 work-budget programme, which they plan to be integrated, interdisciplinary, harmonised and consistent. It will continue to participate in the OECD Results Community and the UN Strategic Planning Network, including in their working group studying how to institutionalise monitoring functions, and on issues ranging from the impact of earmarked funding to new innovative approaches like using AI, outcome harvesting methods, or community-based monitoring.

Part 2

Peer Learning Improving Frameworks, Systems and Approaches

- Strengthening results frameworks
- Linking results frameworks and financing
- Using AI in results systems
- Adapting results approaches for fragile and conflict-affected situations

1. Strengthening results frameworks

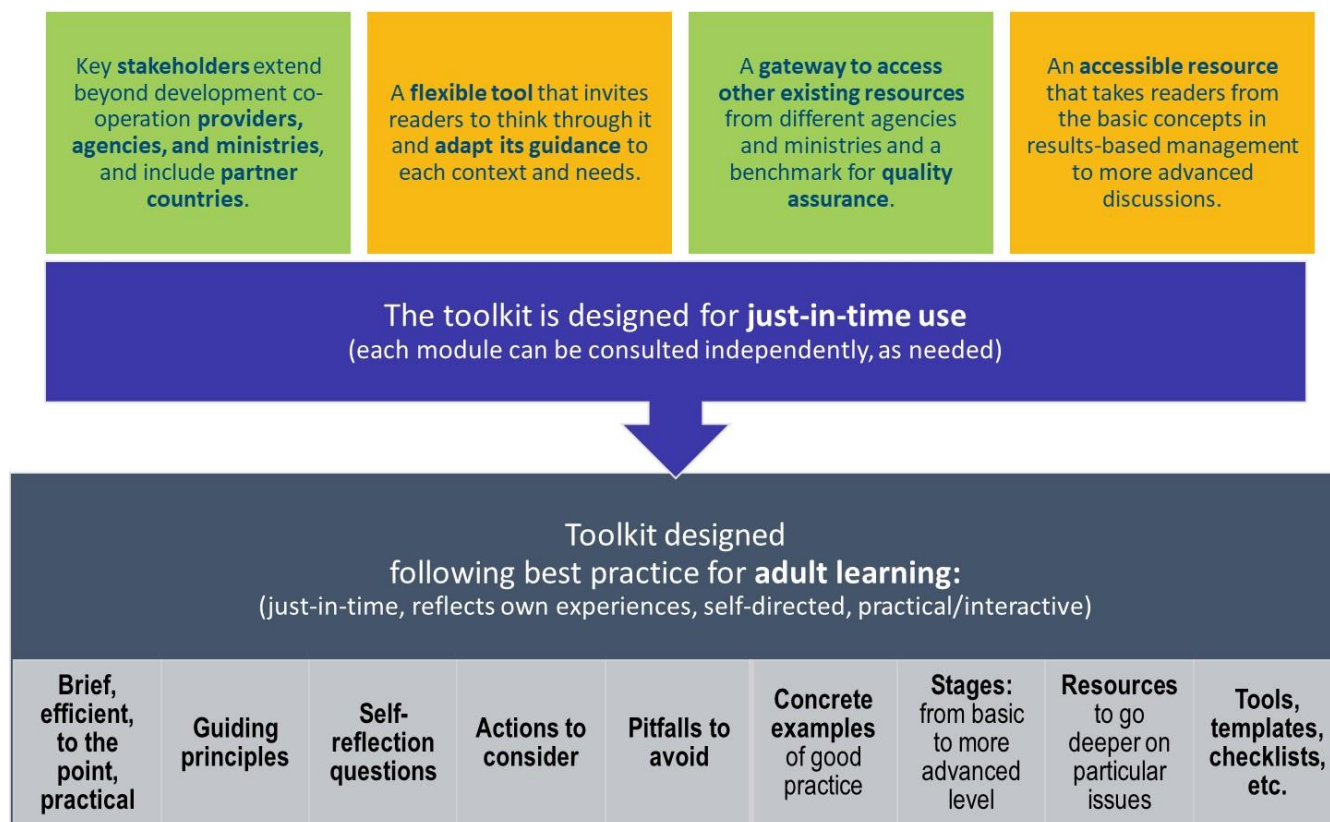
Highlights

- The OECD toolkit *Impact by Design* is becoming a reference within and beyond the DAC Results Community: 45% of participants said they have consulted it, 10% that they are very familiar with it. Some members have integrated it within their guidelines.
- There is demand for additional topics and formats. Members want the OECD toolkit to also offer advice on alignment and linkages between results frameworks, monitoring locally led development, measuring capacity building efforts, and adapting results approaches to fragile contexts. Members also suggest developing interactive tools to facilitate real-time use of the toolkit at all levels.

Presentations

This session followed an interactive format and aimed to present the OECD toolkit, *Impact by Design*, to the DAC Results Community. The session dived into some chapters to illustrate how the guidance and resources can be useful when developing and monitoring results frameworks.

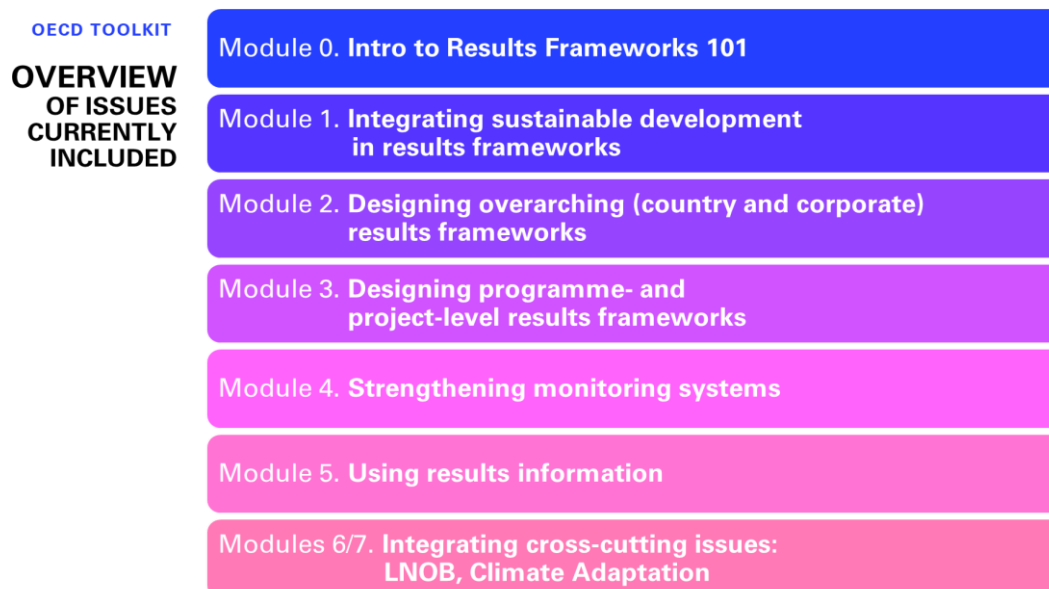
Chantal Verger and Alejandro Guerrero (OECD) presented the rationale behind the toolkit's design and the document's main features:



Both emphasised the need for integrating effective results frameworks not only at project levels but also at broader scales including country, corporate, and thematic levels. This approach helps in strengthening the alignment of development programmes with the [guiding principles of managing for sustainable development results](#).

The OECD Toolkit directly addresses critical pain points frequently encountered by heads of strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation. A notable challenge is the varied understanding and application of Results-Based Management (RBM) among operational and project staff. The toolkit provides a structured approach to bridge this knowledge gap, offering comprehensive guidance and practical tools. It simplifies complex RBM concepts into digestible formats, making it accessible for all staff levels. By fostering a uniform understanding of RBM principles and practices, the toolkit aids in aligning diverse teams towards effective and cohesive results framework implementation. This uniformity is crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness of development co-operation portfolios.

The OECD toolkit also includes guidance on sustainable development integration, monitoring systems, and utilising results information across various operational levels. Additionally, the toolkit addresses cross-cutting issues like inclusivity and climate adaptation.

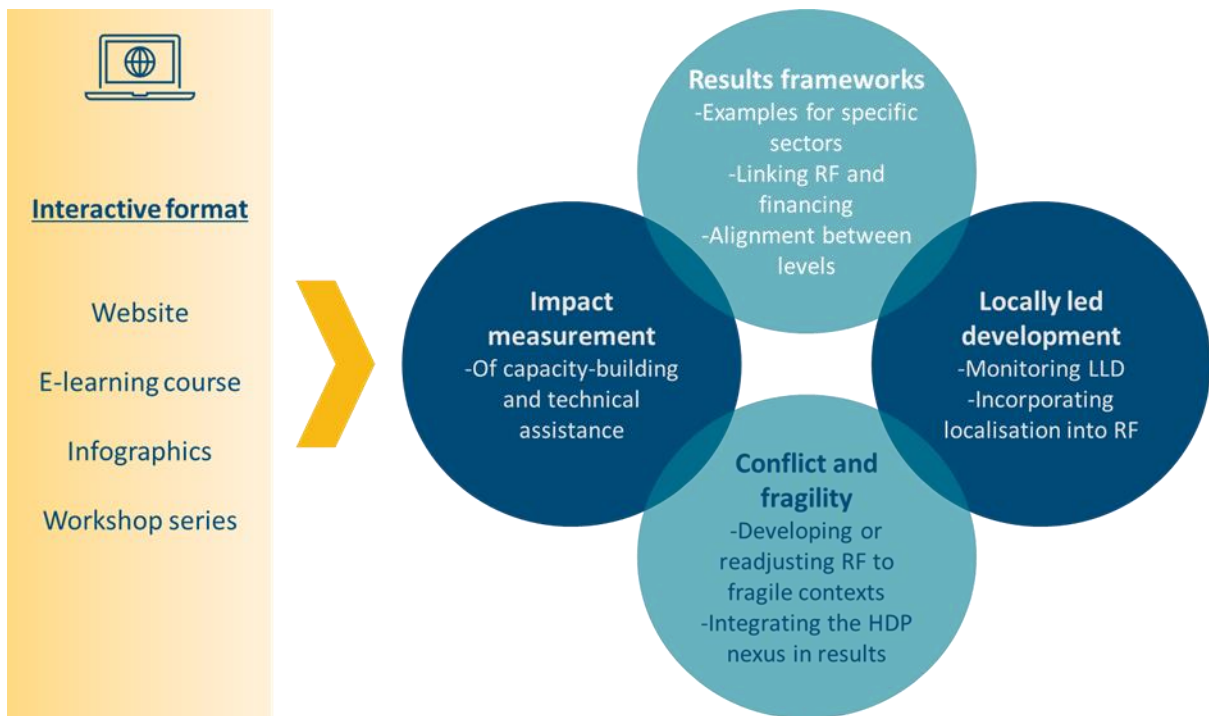


Reactions and directions for the future

Most participants (54.8%) expressed familiarity and some level of usage of the OECD toolkit, with some members sharing how they are integrating the toolkit guidance into their operational guidance or training materials. The OECD Secretariat thanked participants for helping in the dissemination of the toolkit, which has led to close to 40,000 online readers and about 11,130 downloads through all distribution channels (as of October 2023).

To keep the toolkit useful, the session sought members' feedback to continue expanding and updating the toolkit based on their organisations' needs. Participants suggested various topics and specific techniques they would like the new toolkit to include, from cross-cutting issues to state-of-the-art monitoring and strategic analysis tools, and digitalisation (including AI usage).

In terms of formats, the audience was interested in adapting the toolkit to digital or interactive formats that would allow users to select and explore specific topics, based on their needs at any given moment (i.e. just-in-time approaches). Most popular expectations as regards the format and content of the toolkit are presented below.



Note: RF: Results Framework

Finally, several attendees also shared how the toolkit's content resonates with the main challenges faced by their organisations and how they have been trying to include the toolkit in staff training. For instance, the focus that the toolkit puts on partner countries' ownership in the process of designing results frameworks, or the guidance provided on other topics such as alignment to the SDGs were mentioned as being particularly useful.

2. Linking results and financing

Highlights

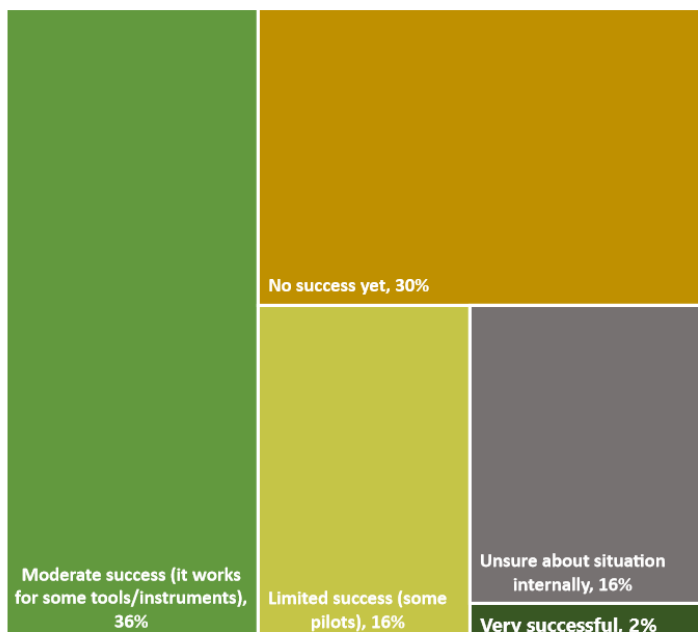
- **Persistent challenges in linking financing and results:** Efforts to integrate financing with results frameworks in development co-operation remain elusive, highlighting the need for innovative models that challenge institutional inertia.
- **Shift towards performance-based financing:** The EU's move to performance-based financing, or UNDP's renewed focus on results-based budgeting, exemplify a significant organisational shift towards outcomes across the development co-operation system.
- **Emergent outcome-focused funding models:** Innovations like the UK's impact bonds and UNFPA's strategic financing underline a trend towards outcome-oriented funding, offering the potential for more effective resource use in development co-operation portfolios.

[Presentations](#)

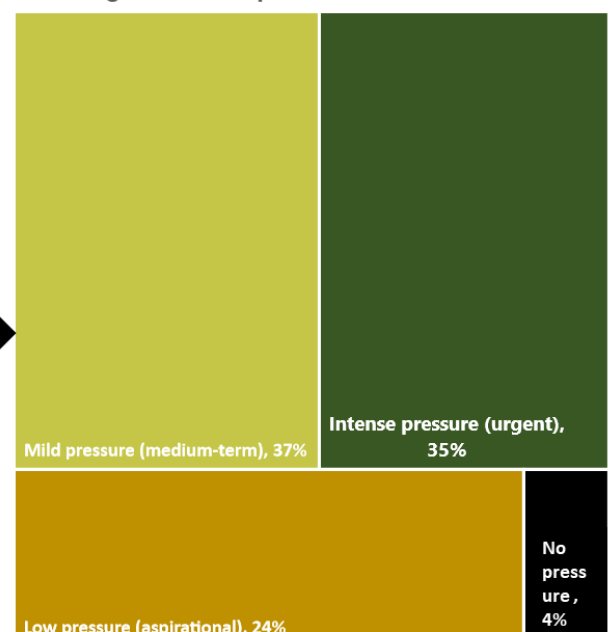
Linking development financing and results has been a long-standing challenge for development co-operation. Various approaches have been tested, focusing on integrating results frameworks with financing and resource allocation. Earlier experiments to link financing methods and tangible outcomes, like calculating the cost per person lifted from poverty, were not successfully implemented but they sparked a broader dialogue on cost-effectiveness and value for money in development projects.

Members face the complex task of aligning strategic plans with financial and budgetary considerations. The tension between strategic goals and funding models, and the impact of internal and external political factors on resource allocation, remain challenges, as reflected in the survey of 49 members:

A. Organisational success in linking financing and results



B. Organisational pressure to enhance the link



The session aimed to explore various approaches to tackle this challenging issue:

a) Performance-based financing in development co-operation. **Franco Conzato (European Union)** detailed the EU's approach to Performance-Based Financing (PBF), emphasising the shift from input-based to results-based methods. The EU uses '*financing not linked to cost*', focusing on outcomes rather than activities, with a strong reliance on indicators and logical framework matrices to measure results.

He explained that, while budget support has traditionally linked funding to results, the Commission is advancing this approach in the programme/project environment, though not without challenges. Tools like 'simplified cost options' and 'global price' contracts are used, where payments are triggered by achieving predefined objectives or producing high-quality deliverables.

Franco also highlighted the importance of simplifying procedures and revising incentive structures under PBF, arguing that this can lead to more efficient and effective resource allocation. Visibility and adaptability in programme management are crucial for justifying interventions and ensuring flexibility.

However, PBF's application is not universal. It is voluntary and context-specific, often suited to sectors like health, education and infrastructure, where indicators are more straightforward. Third-party assessments and a solid results chain are essential for its implementation. PBF also involves shared risk in achieving results, which requires careful consideration and acceptance by implementers.

The EU's pilot project in the health sector, with a 30% PBF component, was mentioned as an example. The agreement details included incremental payments based on additional facilities becoming operational. Franco acknowledged the need for more pilot programmes and stronger guidelines to establish clearer trends and operational effectiveness. He concluded by stressing the importance of team collaboration and legal considerations in implementing PBF, looking forward to more operational advances in the coming year.

b) Using impact bonds for better development outcomes. **Jemima Hodkinson (UK FCDO)** discussed the use of impact bonds to link financing and results for UK co-operation. Initially contextualising their approach within the broader framework of Payment-by-Results (PbR), she highlighted the challenges of underperforming programmes due to a lack of incentives, accountability or adaptability in changing contexts.

The FCDO's strategy, defined in 2014, focuses on paying implementing partners post-achievement of pre-agreed results, rather than funding activities upfront or reimbursing incurred costs. Development Impact Bonds, introduced in 2017, address the financial risk for implementing organisations lacking upfront capital. These bonds involve social investors providing working capital, repaid by donors with nominal returns upon achieving outcomes. Investors often assist in performance management and impact measurement.

The pilot included three diverse projects: physical rehabilitation (Red Cross), poverty graduation (Village Enterprise), and education (British Asian Trust). A comprehensive evaluation revealed several benefits: broader service-provider involvement, increased focus on outcomes, enhanced performance management, and greater efficiency and effectiveness compared to traditional PbR contracts. Despite high initial setup costs, negative outcomes like 'cherry-picking' easier targets were not observed.

Jemima noted that impact bonds could be valuable in projects needing enhanced performance management and outcome focus. They also serve as change management tools, aiding entities unfamiliar with outcome-based approaches. This mechanism suits partners unable to bear high financial risks.

Future plans involve scaling up projects to realise economies of scale and developing the wider ecosystem through collaborations, such as with Oxford University's Government Outcomes Lab. The FCDO also aims to adapt internal processes to support these mechanisms and expand their use across different sectors.

c) Financing for strategic high-level outcomes. Charles Katende and Tharanga Godallage (UNFPA) presented their approach to linking financing to transformative results. Charles set the context, explaining that UNFPA's strategic plan aimed to end preventable maternal deaths, unmet needs for family planning, and gender-based violence by 2034. Understanding the cost of achieving these results and matching funding sources, particularly domestic financing, to drive progress is key.

Tharanga elaborated on the solutions UNFPA has tested. The first step was costing their strategic commitments, detailed in the publication, "Transformations Costing Journal". They then estimated the benefit-cost ratio to understand the returns on investments in sexual and reproductive health. This research, demonstrating significant returns on investment, gained attention among key actors.

To sustain these initiatives, UNFPA introduced "Developing Investment Cases for Transformative Results", a publicly available toolkit used by many organisations. They identified a significant funding gap of \$222 billion needed to achieve these results by 2030. Emphasising the importance of unit-cost calculations, Tharanga highlighted the cost-effectiveness of certain interventions, like \$95 to avert one case of female genital mutilation.

UNFPA developed a model called "Impact for Zero", providing cost models for these results, now used globally. Investment cases are being developed in several countries using a standard toolkit to guide this process. Examples include small island states or humanitarian situations.

Key learnings included the criticality of transformative result costing, the effective use of investment cases, the importance of quality modelling and products, the need to move to sub-national levels for detailed analysis, and the relevance of unit-cost calculation. These efforts are crucial for UNFPA's strategic plan, aiming to accelerate progress towards its ambitious goals.

d) Transforming organisations via outcome-oriented financing. Mamadou N'Daw (UNDP) emphasised the organisation's shift towards impact measurement and alignment of resources for impact. He highlighted their renewed exploration of results-based budgeting, focusing on achieving outcomes rather than solely conducting activities – a typical consequence of highly earmarked funding structures. This approach aims to ensure that each dollar spent is impactful.

N'Daw elaborated on using the "value for money" concept, encompassing four aspects: economy (procuring inputs cost-effectively), effectiveness (achieving outcomes relative to the total budget), efficiency (maximising output/outcome value per resource used), and equity (fair distribution of benefits). He stressed the importance of adapting strategies to available resources rather than setting unrealistic targets based on full budget expectations.

An example given was reimagining how a budget for a workshop could be used more effectively to demonstrate a tangible increase in attendee capabilities, rather than simply conducting the activity. N'Daw's focus was on ensuring that every investment, no matter how small, makes a meaningful difference in the lives of the people that the UNDP serve. This approach also aims to ensure that programmes reach marginalised and vulnerable groups, aligning with the broader UNDP goal of leaving no one behind.

Discussion: During the Q&A session, panellists reflected on the challenges in linking financing to results. Franco discussed the increasing focus on performance audits and the difficulty of integrating high-level impact indicators into contractual agreements. He emphasised the need for evidence to influence decision-making and contractual arrangements, supported by an enabling environment internally.

Jemima expressed interest in discussing impact-bond mechanisms with other donors and offered to share links for further information. Tharanga highlighted the critical role of solid evidence in negotiations and the importance of identifying country-specific entry points, like health insurance or universal health coverage, to localise arguments. He also pointed out the need for effective incentives within organisations.

3. Using AI in results systems

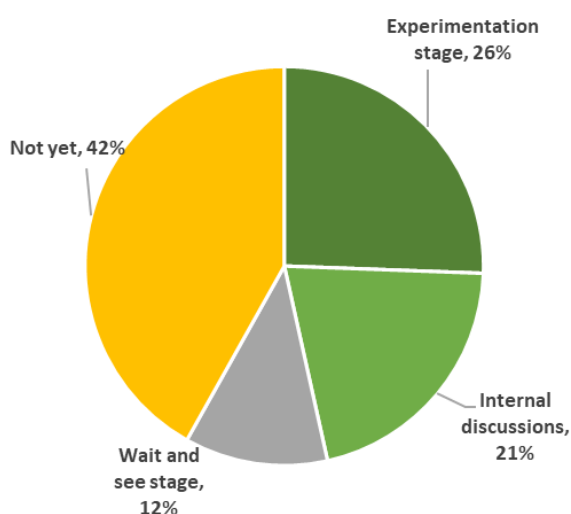
Highlights

- **AI will transform results-based management, with significant opportunities and risks.** AI can revolutionize Results-Based Management by improving data collection, analysis, and reporting, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of development co-operation, but the session also highlighted the need to set standards and boundaries for ethical AI.
- **'Centaur' approach in AI usage:** Panellists converged on the idea that combining AI with human efforts (the 'Centaur' approach), addresses limitations like data bias and contextual misunderstandings, leading to better quality and more reliable results.
- **Emerging AI applications in results systems:** Demonstrations of AI in evaluation, monitoring, and programming highlight its ability to process large data sets and enhance qualitative analysis, potentially contributing to more effective development co-operation. Yet in this initial exploratory phase, it is critical to focus on testing and learning.
- **Consensus around taking collective approach to explore AI in results systems:** There's an agreement on the need for a collaborative effort within the DAC Results Community (and beyond) to establish standards for safe and ethical use of AI in development, emphasising joint risk mitigation, experimentation, and knowledge sharing.

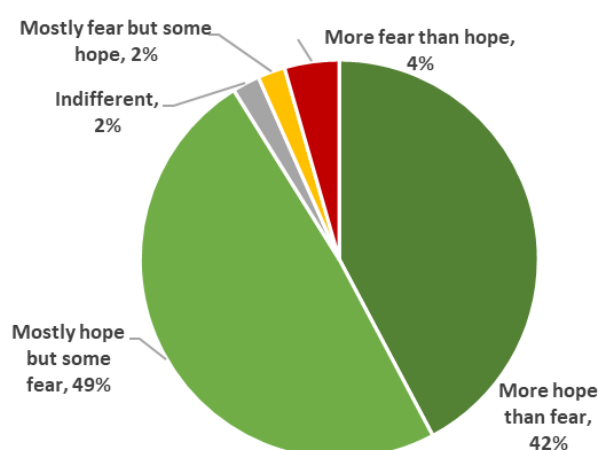
Presentations

The session garnered high attendance, indicating a broad interest in the role of AI in development co-operation. It focused on exploring AI's opportunities, examining its current applications, and establishing guidelines for its responsible usage. A survey revealed a spectrum of experiences with AI across members, ranging from experimentation to internal discussions, showcasing a cautiously to overtly optimistic outlook on its potential:

A. To what extent have you started using AI for any component of your results management system?



B. How do you feel about the use of AI in results systems?



Setting the Scene: AI in Results Systems – Opportunities and Risks.

Pascal Zimmer (Germany) and **Alejandro Guerrero (OECD)** highlighted the integration of large language models like ChatGPT in results-based management (RBM), positing that AI could revolutionise data-collection and analysis, accelerate report-drafting, and facilitate internal communication, including translations. They provided evidence of AI's effectiveness, pointing out its potential to enhance evaluation methods and efficiency across the RBM cycle. They underscored the importance of engaging stakeholders with RBM systems and addressed the ethical considerations and regulatory compliance in AI deployment. However, they also brought attention to potential risks, such as data bias in AI training models, AI tools' lack of contextual understanding and human bottlenecks that constrain the quality of results-based management (RBM). While embracing these innovations, they warned against 'technological solutionism' – the overreliance on digital solutions for complex problems – and advocated for a balanced approach that values human-centric solutions alongside AI.

Discussion: The open discussion revealed diverse experiences and views on AI. Participants expressed interest in AI's potential to ease human bottlenecks in RBM but emphasised the need for transparency and human oversight, especially in legislative reporting. The discussion also highlighted the 'Centaur' approach, where AI and human efforts are combined to improve output quality and efficiency. Participants also raised concerns about AI's limitations without robust data, suggesting that poor data quality could limit AI usefulness and exacerbate existing biases. Members emphasised the uncertainty around AI applications and the importance of creating experimental 'sandbox' environments. A DAC member shared their experience with AI in global health reporting, noting the ongoing experimental phase and comparing AI-generated insights with traditional human analysis methods.

Recent Experiences

a) **AI for Better Evaluation:** Antero Klemola (Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs) presented his team's exploration into AI for enhancing the management and analysis of large volumes of evaluative data. They embarked on this journey with a year of building understanding through workshops and consultations with AI service-providers, culminating in piloting AI in evaluations. The first pilot involved media analytics in development communications, using an existing media analysis service. The second, more complex, pilot focused on evaluating human rights in development policy, where traditional methods were challenged by the vast quantity of documentation. Antero shared insights from the testing phase, noting AI's ability to process large amounts of data and aid in quantifying qualitative questions. However, challenges included service providers' lack of familiarity with development policy nuances and difficulties in training language models, along with the need for tool fine-tuning and system security.

b) **AI for Better Monitoring and Reporting:** Navin Haram (UN Women) discussed the internal use of AI in their results monitoring and reporting processes. He outlined the journey from corporate planning aligned with SDGs to local outcomes, guided by country co-operation frameworks and programme documents. Despite the manageability of structured data, he noted the underutilisation of unstructured data such as narratives, images and videos due to their complexity. AI was explored to integrate and draw insights from both data types, aiming to create a more comprehensive narrative across various results levels. Proposed AI applications included text summarisation, sentiment analysis, automated talking-point generation, impact assessment, multilingual analysis, personal data detection, data quality assurance, and predictive analytics. Haram highlighted the early stage of AI exploration and the potential for collaborative advancement in enhancing internal processes.

c) **AI for Better Programming:** Vivienne Wang (UNFPA) delved into the organisation's pilot project integrating AI into their programme management cycle, focusing on 'better programming.' This encompasses the entire programmatic cycle, aiming to augment human capabilities and enhance operational quality and efficiency. Wang emphasised the need for self-transformation within UNFPA to drive global transformation. The pilot utilises AI for real-time data retrieval and analysis, document drafting and results monitoring. Vivienne introduced two practical AI use cases: streamlining the

identification and connection of expertise across the organisation and synthesising data for comprehensive results monitoring. This approach aids in performance evaluation, risk management and in-depth outcome analyses, supporting staff in understanding and improving programme effectiveness.

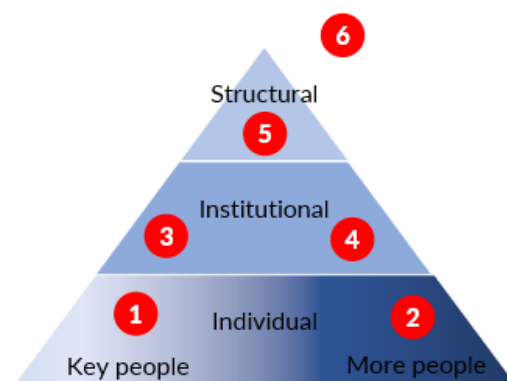
Final discussion and conclusions: Fernando Rivera (ITU) called for a collective exploration of AI's potential, risks and standards in RBM systems, emphasising the need to pool efforts and resources. Owen Edwards (UNDP) commented on AI's current efficiency-driven applications, questioning its impact on effectiveness. He suggested AI's potential to clarify and streamline complex planning systems, incorporating a systemic or integrated view on development challenges.

Participants emphasised the need for a collective approach to AI in results systems, noting the consensus on viewing AI as an opportunity to jointly uncover and mitigate risks, and the importance of experimentation, learning, and knowledge-sharing. It was proposed to initiate a collaborative effort across bilateral systems, DAC members, the UN and MDBs to establish standard practices for the safe and ethical use of AI.

Casey Dunning (MCC) discussed the results implications of MCC's transition from working in stable countries to operating in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. She highlighted the need to use the same results standards in all countries, while adapting the methods to achieve them in constrained environments. She spoke of the importance of establishing partnerships between MCC, their partner countries and other stakeholders with a focus on setting and achieving shared practical targets and results through co-creation (e.g. governments partnering with MDBs to bring in the technical expertise needed to complete country analysis in a timely manner). Casey also stressed the need to rely on innovative techniques to overcome challenges (e.g. using NASA's satellite technology to bridge data gaps).

Caspar Lobbrecht and Rens Willems (Netherlands/IOB) presented the results of a deep evaluation of Dutch contributions to stability, security and rule of law in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and the lessons that can be learned for future policy formulation and implementation. The methodology used for the evaluation involved reconstructing the theory of change and conducting three case studies in South Sudan, Mali and Afghanistan, with numerous interviews and a metareview of evaluations. In sharing the main conclusions and recommendations from the study, the speakers emphasised the need to: i) assess strategic objectives carefully and connect them with the actual sphere of influence of Dutch diplomacy; ii) develop more demand-driven and context-specific policies and interventions; and iii) invest in joint analyses to improve the coherence between the interventions of different departments. Being pragmatic and giving more resources to country teams, improving capacity for organisational learning and adaptive management, and investing in independent monitoring and evaluation of conflict sensitivity are other important requirements.

Helena Sterwe (UNDP) introduced UNDP's pilot for embedding impact measurement into conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities. One of the tool's backbones is multi-layered theories of change that focus on measuring results at six levels across individual, institutional and structural dimensions as shown here. A challenge faced when measuring the impact of interventions in conflict-affected countries is the difficulty of establishing attribution and causality, as well as the fact that framework-planning needs to go beyond short-term engagements.



The speakers' presentations were followed by a lively exchange with some participants who showed their interest in the methodologies, approaches and challenges discussed. In particular, the hurdles involved in using satellite technologies to overcome data scarcity sparked curiosity, and presenters explained that the main obstacle they had encountered when using publicly available data is that models have been trained on Western images or landscapes and therefore require adaptation before being applied to different contexts. Issues that constitute a conflict-sensitive approach in practice were also discussed, and speakers mentioned, as an illustration, the need to pay attention to ethnic considerations when supporting NGOs. They also shared lessons learned in terms of co-ordination and co-creation of results frameworks with country partners, such as the need for longer timeframes than usual when developing M&E plans in partnerships. Finally, when asked about the hardest result to measure in fragile states, contributors pointed to the difficulty of achieving and measuring institutional reforms.

Part 3

Peer Learning Improving Monitoring

- New and innovative monitoring tools and approaches
- Measuring the results of private sector engagement
- Monitoring locally led development
- Measuring the impact of capacity building initiatives

5. New and innovative monitoring tools

Highlights

- **Monitoring impact:** Crowdsourcing offers a dynamic, cost-effective method for real-time data collection on the effects of policies or programmes on end users, enhancing impact monitoring.
- **Measuring intangibles:** Innovative indices have been developed to assess the influence and effects of knowledge products on improving development effectiveness.
- **Shifting the organisation's focus:** A shift from output-focused models to those emphasising outcomes and impact marks a trend towards achieving more substantial and sustainable change. By the same token, comprehensive indices that combine strategic goals highlight the need for holistic planning and monitoring for systemic change rather than isolated interventions.
- **Higher level results:** The "many-to-many" integrated results frameworks at organisational and country levels support the need for integrated approaches to monitoring complex strategic goals.

Presentations

Session 1 centred on four lighting talks showcasing innovative monitoring tools and approaches. These innovations are helping address common issues like methodological challenges, data gaps and quality, stakeholder engagement and cost-efficiency.

Crowd-sourcing tools for impact monitoring. Clara Camarasa (International Energy Agency, IEA) discussed using [innovative crowdsourcing methods](#) to [monitor the impact](#) of energy efficiency policies. Traditional methods like surveys are inadequate and expensive, particularly in developing economies. To overcome this, the IEA employed crowdsourcing, where citizens used a smartphone app to collect data on appliances in stores, capturing details on type, price and energy efficiency. This approach provided immediate insights into product efficiency and pricing, and helped assess compliance with energy labelling regulations, revealing discrepancies and instances of unlabelled products. Implemented across Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, this cost-effective method allowed the IEA to gain a direct market perspective, aiding it to establish benchmarks for net-zero scenarios and efficiently enhance policy monitoring, market surveillance, and comparative analysis in developing markets. Crowdsourcing approaches to measuring impact from the end-user experience in real-time can have wider applications across other sectors and themes.

Key requirements for effective crowdsourcing of monitoring data:

1. *Survey design:* Developing clear, precise questionnaires that are easy for non-experts to use while capturing essential data.
2. *Data accuracy:* Implementing rigorous quality control for data validation, ensuring reliability for analysis.
3. *Cost-efficiency:* Balancing the affordability of crowdsourcing with comprehensive data collection across multiple regions.

Monitoring the influence of knowledge products and advice. Juliano Seabra and Lorena Rodríguez Bu (Inter-American Development Bank, IDB) presented a novel methodology for evaluating the impact of knowledge products on development effectiveness through their [Knowledge Influence Index](#). This index addresses the limitations of traditional metrics like download counts which fail to capture knowledge products' true impact.

The index comprises three dimensions:

1. *Building reputation*: This assesses the IDB's influence on stakeholder perceptions and public recognition of the Bank as a subject matter expert. It includes tracking social media to gauge reputation related to specific topics.
2. *Improving policy influence*: This dimension evaluates how IDB knowledge contributes to public policy decisions aligned with development goals. It uses metrics such as citations in government documents and academic research, indicating the role of IDB knowledge in policy formation.
3. *Benefiting IDB projects*: This aspect measures the citation of knowledge products in IDB's operational documents, reflecting their relevance in guiding the Bank's funded projects.

A pilot study on public spending and labour market informality tested the index's potential using existing data. The IDB plans to expand the index by incorporating more diverse data sources, including survey data from partners. Panellists called to collaborate in refining the index. They suggested sharing standardised metrics for the comparative analysis of knowledge influence within and across institutions.

Shifting the organisational focus to monitor outcomes and impacts. Mamadou N'Daw (UNDP) highlighted a transformative shift in impact management and measurement, aligning with the transition from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP has revamped its Results-Based Management (RBM) framework to focus more on outcomes and impacts.

Mamadou introduced an '*intermediate portfolio approach*', bridging the gap between tangible project outputs and broader outcomes. This approach is compatible with national development plans and starts with impact planning from project inception, emphasising a clear theory of change and concrete impact measurement. He spoke of the importance of narrative capture, using stories from communities to illustrate the transformative effects of UNDP's interventions. This approach is integral to fostering an organisational culture where every action is impact oriented. Mamadou also stressed the need for adaptive management, including by incorporating AI for narrative capture and sentiment analysis, to transition from a focus on activities to achieving meaningful development outcomes. This holistic strategy aims to make every level of the organisation accountable for contributing to impactful development work.

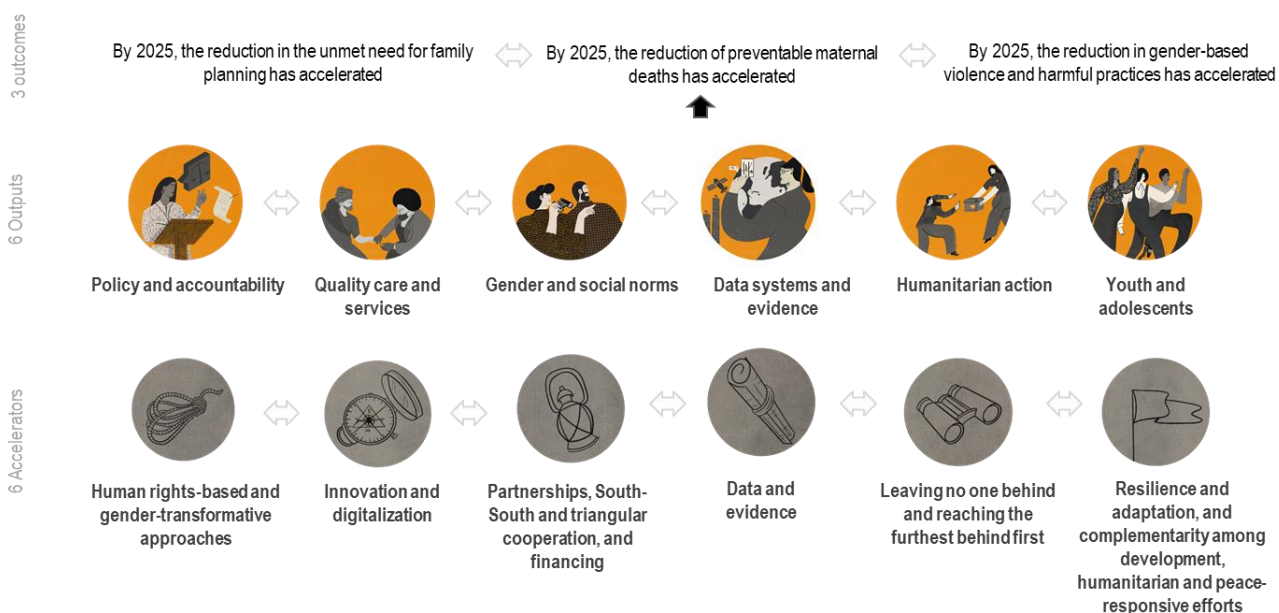
Monitoring higher-level outcomes at a strategic level. Tharanga Godallage (UNFPA) elaborated on the organisation's strategy for tracking progress towards three transformative results (TRs): ending preventable maternal death, addressing unmet needs for family planning, and eradicating gender-based violence and harmful practices. These TRs are integral to the SDGs and symbolise major challenges requiring accelerated action. To that end, UNFPA has developed the "Three TR Index," integrating these TRs to provide strategic insights into the challenges faced by over 150 countries. This tool aids in formulating tailored policies and approaches.

To measure the necessary *acceleration*, UNFPA assessed the efforts needed by 2030 to achieve each TR, the targets for 2050, and projections based on current trends. This benchmarking is vital for setting and tracking strategic objectives and targets. Additionally, UNFPA is creating country-specific acceleration profiles, offering a detailed view of the efforts required, current achievements, policy gaps, and future direction.

UNFPA's innovative "*many-to-many*" strategic framework diverges from conventional models, indicating that all strategic outputs contribute to every outcome, promoting an integrated approach to the TRs (see below). The approach also addresses challenges in lower-level acceleration monitoring, equipping officers to use these tools effectively, and developing indicators for integrated results.

UNFPA's Integrated Results and Resources Framework

Monitoring the shift of “*many to one*” to “*many to many*”



Discussion. In the Q&A, UNFPA discussed the organisational use of high-level indicators and modelling for projecting future scenarios in maternal and perinatal mortality projects, acknowledging the potential for private-sector collaboration to refine data. Meanwhile, UNDP highlighted the use of AI and sense-making techniques for capturing and processing beneficiary narratives, aiding in aggregating and understanding diverse impact stories across projects.

6. Getting and measuring the results of private sector engagement

Highlights

- Building a private sector engagement (PSE) facility requires an **iterative approach** to learn from others about appropriate systems and risk management tools, build staff capacities, identify partners, and develop the investment pipeline.
- **Aligning vision and values while understanding private investors' perspectives** is crucial and can be facilitated by using tools such as theories of change.
- While private sector investments are better monitored, **collecting, and making good use of results data from PSE is still challenging**. Digitalisation and better harmonised metrics can help to reduce collection costs, streamline reporting, and deepen data analysis. Still, a **flexible and balanced approach to data collection is needed** considering the diversity of private sector actors and limitations faced by some of them.

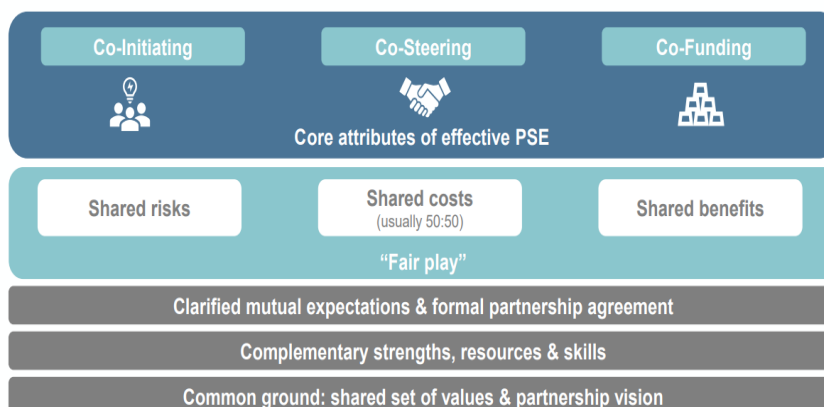
[Presentations](#)

The session focused on how to monitor the results of investments and partnerships with the private sector and ensure that the increased engagement with the private sector creates “shared value” and brings additionality in support of sustainable development.

Tapio Wallenius, who works as a consultant for **Finland's** Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), shared Finland's experience in setting up a facility for PSE, which was established in 2016. He described the risk profile of those investments and stressed the role that *intermediation* plays, requiring from the MFA to work through fund managers who have their own goals, results frameworks and systems. Key challenges for the MFA in setting this new mechanism included defining clear metrics and aligning the results frameworks of investment managers with the Ministry's framework; bringing new expertise in financial and legal matters to the ministry; and developing a risk assessment framework with clear criteria to make investment decisions. Managing the leadership expectations is another challenge, as developing the investment pipeline takes time, and getting results even more time. Tapio also noted that the dual objectives of additionality in terms of development outcomes and mobilisation of private capital can sometimes contradict each other, calling for balanced expectations.

Luca Etter from **Switzerland's** Swiss Development Co-operation (SDC) agency, focused on the challenges and progress made by SDC in monitoring the results of PSE, in response to a strong demand from domestic stakeholders. This engagement is multifaceted, involving structured funds, multi-stakeholder partnerships and in-country projects with different types of partnerships and contributions. This diversity, combined with the fungibility of funds and the fact that private investors and development finance institutions (DFIs) use different metrics and monitoring systems, makes it difficult to design a single reporting mechanism and capture individual contributions. SDC has established a data-collection tool that tracks all projects with a PSE component and enables reporting financial data on an annual basis, including the private sector's financial contributions. Having real-time data on those contributions allows SDC to adopt a more strategic approach to PSE. The next stage is to link financing with results and impact, streamlining the PSE M&E system further.

Quick context: Definition of PSE at SDC



Georges Weiers from the **European Investment Bank (EIB)**, distinguished between co-financing with the private sector for public or private sector operations, and engaging with the private sector as a client. He noted that the private sector often resists detailed reporting on results, advancing: i) legal or strategic reasons for not disclosing certain results; ii) the need to focus on operational effectiveness rather than on results data collection; and iii) the cost of monitoring and reporting. Absorbing the costs of additional reporting or lowering each individual cost by encouraging uniform reporting across organisations (e.g., establishing joint impact indicators like the existing model for GHG emissions) are two ways to address this challenge. He concluded by noting that although private sector reporting may appear weaker, it does not necessarily mean that the results are lower. As mentioned in the chat, the last G20 Independent Expert Group's report on Multilateral Development Banks calls bilateral donors to go through the MDBs to engage the private sector (especially for climate action) as they will get a better return on investment.

Discussion. The discussion provided more insights on specific issues. In particular, lessons from Finland's experience that bilateral agencies can draw on to establish a PSE facility include: i) recruiting staff with the right expertise; ii) learning from other countries, studying their instruments and tailoring them to their own needs; iii) taking an iterative approach, starting by partnering with DFIs and MDBs who have experience and can manage the risks involved, and learning from them; and iv) building a continuum of financial instruments that span different project development stages to avoid gaps. In the case of Switzerland, improving the results reporting of the PSE portfolio requires transitioning to a digital results system and rethinking the governance model to acknowledge the time it takes for PSE projects to achieve results. As a general point, rather than imposing public sector metrics on the private sector, it might be more useful to use alternative methods, such as collecting secondary data sets or jointly promoting a set of common indicators, taking a balanced approach between asking for data and acknowledging the costs involved for private entities.

Looking back at the findings from a similar discussion held in 2018 during the Annual Workshop of the DAC Results Community, the speakers agreed that progress has been made on various fronts: i) in understanding the diversity and specific roles of the private sector; ii) making better use of instruments such as theories of change; and iii) integrating PSE in monitoring and reporting systems, in response to the pressure for better data and results. Still, more can be done to use monitoring information to react and adapt when needed. There is also still work ahead to standardise metrics and to fully recognise the diverse needs and limitations of the private sector.

7. Locally led development and what it means for MEL approaches

Highlights

- **Accountability is a crucial aspect of locally led MEL:** local stakeholders' agency is needed to define who is accountable, for what actions, towards whom, and what standards are used to measure development progress in their communities.
- **Locally led MEL requires adapting performance management systems:** leaving more space for local partners in MEL and measuring "intangibles" such as trust is needed for their feedback to guide programming.
- **Capacity building for local partners is paramount:** a long-term vision for locally led MEL must rely on partner countries' capacity to collect and provide their own high-quality data.
- **Innovative digital tools will play a big role in the move towards locally led MEL systems:** digital solutions will be needed to aggregate and align local data with higher-level goals.
- **Locally led development must be supported at higher corporate and country levels.**

[Presentations](#)

This session of the workshop focused on the intricacies of locally led development and its implications for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL). The session aimed to explore adaptations of MEL systems to enhance local partner agency, align with local systems and utilise locally sourced evidence. The discussion also aimed to contribute to an updated section focusing on locally led MEL in Module 4 *Strengthening monitoring systems* of the OECD Toolkit [Impact by Design](#).

In her introductory remarks, the moderator **Joëlline Bénéfice** (OECD) emphasised that locally led development has gained prominence due to the urgent need to re-evaluate operational strategies in development co-operation. As part of a peer learning exercise conducted by the OECD, locally led development has been conceptualised in a working definition as a process whereby local actors have agency in the design, implementation and accountability phases of development co-operation.

What is the agency of the different local stakeholders in...?			
Framing	Design	Delivery	Accountability
Priorities: identifying challenges and needs and setting priorities	Strategies and programmes: designing and adapting strategies and programmes	Funding: accessing flexible & sustained funding and controlling use	Locus: defining the lines of accountability and learning
Standards: setting guiding principles and standards for accountability and learning	Mechanisms: designing partnership and collaboration mechanisms	Implementation: selecting processes, procedures, practices; choosing delivery systems (e.g., financial, auditing, procurement); and managing implementation	Monitoring, evaluation and learning: developing frameworks, and selecting, producing and sharing evidence etc.

Travis Mayo (USAID) presented a pioneering approach that USAID is piloting to leave more space for the voices of local partners in MEL. USAID's strategy aims not only to tell the donor's story but also that of participants. This includes monitoring participants' objectives and the relationships built through the programmes. To achieve this, USAID stresses the importance of measuring “intangibles” (e.g. degree of motivation, sense of agency, hope and trust felt by local actors) which are seen as factors that drive programme success. Tools exist to measure these intangibles (and are already used in peace-building programmes). Examples can be found [here](#). One challenge is to convince programme managers to measure these intangibles which are often overlooked in development co-operation due to their subjective nature.

Senja Väättäinen-Chimpuku (FINGO) presented Finnish CSOs' support to local MEL processes. In line with USAID's presentation, she recognised the need to consider the aspirations of people, emphasising that development is a holistic process intertwined with human emotions. As international CSOs supporting locally led MEL face challenges – MEL is traditionally seen as responsive to strict donor requirements – Väättäinen argued that re-evaluating power dynamics is needed, and presented some examples of tools that empower local partners, such as [outcome mapping](#) and outcome harvesting. Finally, she advocated for a nuanced role for intermediaries, navigating between donor expectations and grassroots realities, and called for reimagining partnerships, urging a transition to facilitation rather than implementation.

Andrea Ries (SDC/Switzerland) presented the approach taken by Switzerland to address the challenge of balancing corporate results frameworks (aggregated overview through standardised indicators) and local partners' results frameworks (locally driven and context-specific indicators). Digitalisation has enabled a transformative step in SDC's approach. SDC distinguishes three levels of results data (corporate, programme and project) and requires that a minimum of 50% of standardised indicators be used at programme level. Comprised of “aggregated reference” indicators and “thematic” indicators, these are aggregated and used at the corporate level. Meanwhile, context-specific indicators can be defined and used at project level and are collected together with standard indicators at programme level. This hybrid approach is designed to permit aggregation while allowing room for local nuances. When asked about the agency of local actors in the design of context-specific indicators, Andrea confirmed that many were indeed derived from their partners' own results frameworks, reflecting local agency and perspectives in their creation.

A cross-cutting takeaway from the presentations was the feeling that locally led development is still at an incipient stage, and participants highlighted that as a first step, it is necessary to find compromises and convince relevant actors of the importance of introducing local approaches in their development co-operation strategies. The ensuing conversation underscored the complexity of local contexts and the necessity for nuanced, adaptive strategies in monitoring and evaluation.

Discussion: Some members shared their own approaches centred on bolstering national statistical systems in partner countries. By pairing with their national statistical bureau, they aim to enhance local capacities for reliable data collection, which in turn informs local decision-making and development monitoring. In addition, the audience delved into the practical applications and theoretical nuances of locally led development and monitoring. A couple of interventions pointed out the difficulty of defining who constitutes local actors, especially in fragile contexts, given the existing variety of voices in partner countries (from government agencies to grassroots organisations) and in capturing “local feelings” in politically sensitive contexts. The session moderator acknowledged these concerns and noted that the OECD's working definition has taken the approach of accepting local actors' diversity.

8. Measuring the impact of capacity-building initiatives

Highlights

- **Capacity-development interventions extend beyond training**, and their assessments require a structured framework that aligns with learning outcomes and developmental goals.
- **Accurate assessment involves multiple indicators and evidence**, considering both immediate and long-term impacts.
- **Establishing feedback mechanisms is crucial for learning** from capacity-development initiatives, ensuring iterative improvements and the optimal use of resources.
- **Measuring the *influence* of capacity-building interventions can be more appropriate** than measuring long-term impact in specific contexts.

[Presentations](#)

The session addressed the question of how to better assess the long-term outcomes of capacity-building initiatives. In setting the scene, **Juan Casado** (OECD DAC Environment Network) explained why capacity development, popular among donors since the 1990s, is vital for social change, and encompasses a broad array of modalities like training, technical assistance, scholarships, e-learning and more, each requiring distinct measurement approaches. Financially, a significant share of ODA includes a capacity-development component, highlighting the importance of effective and sustainable capacity building.



Maurya Westmeiers from the **World Bank** shared extensive insights into the complexities of assessing capacity-development initiatives. She introduced the World Bank's [Capacity Development Results Framework \(CDRF\)](#), which categorises capacity development activities and maps their progression from learning outcomes to socio-political changes, policy instruments, organisational arrangements, and eventually, development goals. The multi-layered nature of capacity development calls for a comprehensive approach that involves different learning outcomes, change processes and change agents. It also calls for planning for and capturing evidence of these changes at multiple levels, from the individual to the systemic. Various assessment models can be used, including the [Kirkpatrick Four Levels](#), which measure reactions (level of satisfaction), learning, behaviour (application of learning),

and results (value added of learning).

Maurya also discussed the challenges in measuring outcomes due to issues like timing, attribution versus contribution, and the need for latent capacity – i.e., reserves of capacity for future demands. She recommended the incorporation of feedback loops in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to inform and improve capacity-development efforts. She encouraged collaboration with experts in both capacity development and its assessment, and stressed the long-term commitment required for capacity development to yield sustainable results.

Marta Collu from the **Italian Agency for Development Co-operation (AICS)** presented the case of gender mainstreaming, describing the development and piloting of the agency's operational guidelines on gender equality. This tool aims to support gender mainstreaming across programmes and policies, providing guidance on conducting gender analysis, which is critical for gender-responsive projects and policies. Consultations with field offices and the aid effectiveness team ensured practical relevance, strategic alignment and compatibility with existing results systems. A particular challenge to address was how to simplify complex inputs while offering detailed data collection methods, especially as regards primary data in contexts lacking national statistics. Future challenges involve updating the monitoring and evaluation system to be gender-responsive, and addressing the need for human resources, expertise, and time. Cultural and institutional change is also a priority, requiring ongoing training and outreach to instil the importance of gender analysis and activities targeting gender gaps.

Discussion: The subsequent discussion offered an opportunity to go deeper into several questions. **Owen Edwards** (UNDP) emphasised the need for comprehensive approaches that go well beyond training to changing organisational culture and behaviours. He relayed concerns about the costs and skills required for monitoring capacity-development and measuring outcomes at a large enough scale to be representative. Focusing on influence and behaviour change over impact can be easier and more appropriate: the case of capacity-building initiatives in peace-keeping operations was mentioned. It is also important to work with leadership to showcase the value of evidence, presenting them with options and associated costs for different levels of evaluation. Highlighting the need for leaders to understand the trade-offs between comprehensive evaluation and budget constraints, Maurya pointed out that her team primarily conducted level one and three evaluations in the Kirkpatrick Four Levels, occasionally blending levels three and four, which were satisfactory for their needs. She emphasised the importance of having well-informed teams to guide leaders through these decisions.

The complexity of attributing results directly to capacity-development interventions was also raised. Establishing causality with precision is difficult, particularly at higher levels. While attribution is feasible at foundational levels, like knowledge gain it becomes complex and costly when assessing utilisation and impact, which are influenced by many factors. A good practice is for stakeholders to consider the necessary level of precision for attribution claims, taking into account cost-benefit decisions in measurement. Contribution-focused assessments – considering whether the interventions contributed to change, along with other factors and interventions – can also be valuable.

The following resources were shared by Maurya during the session:

- [Learning purposefully in capacity development: Why, what and when to measure?](#)
- [Roger Kaufman's Resources](#)
- [Performance Evaluation: Proven Approaches for Improving Program and Organizational Performance](#)
- [Understanding Dimensions of Organizational Evaluation Capacity](#)
- [International Society for Performance Improvement](#)

Annex

Final List of Participants to the 2023 Annual Workshop

Participating Organisations

OECD/DAC Results Community – 15th Workshop

DAC MEMBERS

Australia/Australie

- Australian Delegation to the OECD
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Austria/Autriche

- Austrian Representation to the OECD
- Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Belgium/Belgique

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
- Enabel

Canada

- Canadian Delegation to the OECD
- Global Affairs Canada

Czechia/Tchéquie

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Denmark/Danemark

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Estonia/Estonie

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Estonian Centre for International Development (ESTDEV)

European Union/Union européenne

- Directorate-General for International Partnerships, European Commission

Finland/Finlande

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

France

- Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

Germany/Allemagne

- Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Greece/Grèce

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hellenic Aid

Ireland/Irlande

- Department of Foreign Affairs

Italy/Italie

- Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (AICS)
- SOGESID SpA

Japan/Japon

- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Korea/Corée

- Korean Delegation to the OECD
- Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)

Lithuania/Lituanie

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Central Project Management Agency (CPVA)

Netherlands/Pays-Bas

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Norway/Norvège

- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)

Poland/Pologne

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Slovenia/Slovénie

- Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Spain/Espagne

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation

Sweden/Suède

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida)
- Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA)

Switzerland/Suisse

- State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

United Kingdom/Royaume-Uni

- Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

United States/États-Unis

- US Mission to the OECD
- Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)
- US Agency for International Development (USAID)

DAC PARTICIPANTS**Qatar**

- Qatar Fund for Development

United Arab Emirates/ Émirats arabes unis

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DAC OBSERVERS

African Development Bank (AfDB)/
Banque africaine de développement (BAfD)

Asian Development Bank (ADB)/
Banque asiatique de développement (BAfD)

European Investment Bank (EIB)/
Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI)

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/
Banque interaméricaine de développement (BID)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)/
Fonds monétaire international (FMI)

UN Development Programme (UNDP)/
Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD)

World Bank/Banque mondiale

OECD (NON-DAC) MEMBERS**Chile/Chili**

- Agencia Chilena de Cooperacion Internacional para el Desarrollo (AGCID)

Colombia/Colombie

- Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (APC-Colombia)

Latvia/Lettonie

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

OTHER MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)/

Banque asiatique d'investissement pour les infrastructures (BAII)

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)/

Banque européenne pour la reconstruction et le développement (BERD)

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)/

Organisation des Nations unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)/

Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique (AIEA)

International Energy Agency (IEA)

Agence Internationale de l'Energie

International Finance Corporation (IFC)/

Société Financière Internationale (IFI)

International Labour Organization (ILO)/

Organisation internationale du travail (OIT)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)/

Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)/

Union internationale des télécommunications (UIT)

International Trade Centre (ITC)/

Centre du Commerce international (ITC)

Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/

Organisation panaméricaine de la santé (OPS)

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/

Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (OCDE)

United Nations Secretariat/Secrétariat de l'ONU

UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)/

Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (UNICEF)

UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO)/

Département des opérations de maintien de la paix

UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO) /

Bureau de Coordination du Développement des Nations Unies

UN Development Programme (UNDP)/

Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD)

UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)/

Commission économique et sociale pour l'Asie et le Pacifique (CESAP)

UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation la science et la culture (UNESCO)

UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)/

Institut des Nations Unies pour la formation et la recherche (UNITAR)

UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)

UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)/

Entité des Nations Unies pour l'égalité des sexes et l'autonomisation des femmes (ONU Femmes)

UN Environment Programme (UNEP)/

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE)

UN Human Settlements Programme
(UN-Habitat)/
Programme des Nations unies pour les
établissements humains (PNUEH)

UN Population Fund (UNFPA)/
Fonds des Nations Unies pour la
population (UNFPA)

World Food Programme (WFP)/
Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM)

World Meteorological Organization
(WMO)/
Organisation météorologique mondiale
(OMM)

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Cordaid

Development Gateway

Fingo (Finnish Development NGOs)

**International Committee of the Red
Cross (ICRC)/**
Comité international de la Croix-Rouge
(CICR)

ACADEMIA & THINK TANKS

Condes Ltd

**German Institute of Development and
Sustainability (IDOS)**

Institut d'études politiques de Paris
(Sciences Po)