

Results Based Management Guidelines

National Indicative Program (NIP)



Published by: NANGO

2nd Edition, Results Based Management Guidelines 2018

1st Edition, Results Based Management Guidelines 2014

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ISBN: 978-0-7974-6002-7

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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| CSOs | Civil Society Organisation (s) |
| EU | European Union |
| NANGO | National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NSAA | Non State Actors Apex Alliance |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| RBM | Results Based Management |
| RBR | Results Based Reporting |
| UNDG | United Nations Development Group |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 2012, the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO), with technical support from UNDP, conducted a Capacity Gaps Assessment in the Civil Society Sector in Zimbabwe. The baseline study on capacity gaps in civil society in Zimbabwe highlighted challenges that included the inadequate systems for project management and service delivery. In 2014, the European Union carried a Civil Society Road Map and similar gaps were identified. It was in light of this that a recommendation was made to carry out trainings in Results Based Management (RBM) for members of the civil society to enable them to meaningfully and effectively participate in developmental work.

Following the suspension of the application of the Cotonou Agreement's Article 96 appropriate measures by the European Council Decision of 24 July 2012, Zimbabwe and the European Union (EU) launched the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) programming exercise in August 2012. The exercise's first phase was completed in October 2012 with the submission of a draft Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2014-2014, agreed by the EU Delegation the National Authorizing Officer (NAO). The CSP identified three focal sectors of concentration for the 11th EDF in Zimbabwe, namely health, agriculture-based economic development and governance and institution building thus the 3 pillars of the National Indicative Program (NIP). NANGO as the umbrella body of all NGOs in conjunction with the consortium members i.e. Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST), Sam Moyo African Institute of Agrarian Studies (SMAIAS), Zimbabwe AIDS Network (ZAN) and the Zimbabwe Community Health Intervention Research (ZiCHIRE) will take the leading role in implementing the monitoring and advocacy of the NIP). With this, a recommendation is also made to carry out trainings in RBM for the civil society to meaningfully and effectively participate in developmental work during the implementation of the NIP.

These guidelines were originally prepared as an output of the RBM training that was held for members in March 2014 and a revised manual was done by Non-State Actors Apex Alliance in 2016 with support from EU. The training was attended by NSAA partners and members of the NANGO secretariat. The training focused on familiarizing partners on the context and rationale for RBM, as well as deepen the understanding of the results chain. It is envisioned that with the skills gained from the training and the support of these guidelines as a knowledge management tool, all of the members present will strengthen their work in human rights advocacy, monitoring and reporting.

NANGO is grateful to EU for the financial and technical assistance that enabled hosting of the RBM training and the production of these guidelines. NANGO would like to thank the NSAA and NIP partners for their expertise and support in the RBM training and development of the guidelines. In addition, NANGO would like to thank NSAA and NIP Technical Team for the development of these guidelines. Lastly, we wish to thank the NANGO team for providing additional editorial support.

Mr. L. Mandishara
Executive Director

INTRODUCTION TO RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)

This section provides an introductory overview of Results Based Management, definition and justification for the use of RBM as a tool to improve performance and demonstrate results. As a tool it should be adapted to suite the context in which it is applied. Implementation of RBM requires an investment of time, human and financial resources as well as continued training- it is not a once-off activity. RBM should be integrated into existing planning at organisational level.

What is RBM

Results Based Management (RBM) is a broad management strategy aimed at achieving improved performance and demonstrable results¹.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) defines RBM as a “management strategy by which processes, outputs and services contribute to the achievement of clearly stated expected accomplishments and objectives. It is focused on achieving results, improving performance, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and monitoring and reporting on performance.”²

Why RBM

As she came to the cross-roads, she saw the Cheshire Cat and asked, “ which way do I go?”
“Where do you want to go?” asked the Cheshire Cat
“I don’t really know” replied Alice
“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go”

Alice in Wonderland
Lewis Carroll

As Lewis Carroll illustrates in his book, Alice in Wonderland, if you do not know where you are going, any road will get you there. RBM aims to fix this lack of direction. It is about choosing a

destination first, then deciding on the route, checking progress against a map and making adjustments, as required in order to achieve desired results.

RBM is useful in answering questions such as:

- Why does an organisation/ program/ project exist and is it serving its purpose?
- Whose needs is the organisation/ program/ project intended to serve? Is it serving those needs?
- What is the organisation/ program/ project supposed to deliver? Is it delivering this?

Language and Culture

The language of RBM is significantly different from its precursor, Management-By-Objectives which suffered from a confusion of terminology. Take for example the term “objective” which has the following synonyms: aim, goal, intent, purpose and target, not to mention the use of the phrases general and specific objectives. The roles and relationships among these terms within the MBO approach was never really clear, with the exception of the hierarchy of objectives that was popularised by the use of the LFA, i.e., inputs, outputs, purpose and goal. While one can argue the semantic nuances between a well written objective and a well written result statement, the significant differences lie in how RBM terms are defined in relationship to one another. RBM terminology borrows heavily from systems theory and reflects the central role of causality, while taking into account the temporal dimension. The following selection of key RBM terms as defined by the OECD³ illustrates these concepts quite nicely:

¹ J.Z Kusek, R.C Rist, A handbook for development practitioners -- ten step to results Based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004, p56.

² Review of results-based management at the United Nations (OIOS), A/63/268/

³ OECD (2002), Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and RBM.

- Input:** The financial, human, and material resources used for the development intervention.
- Activity:** Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilised to produce specific outputs (Related term: development intervention 9).
- Output:** The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
- Outcome:** The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs.
- Impact:** Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Successful implementation of RBM is dependent on the organisation's ability to create a management culture that is focussed on results. It requires more than the adoption of new administrative and operational systems. An emphasis on outcomes requires first and foremost a results-oriented management culture that will support and encourage the use of the new management approaches.

CORE ELEMENTS OF RBM

This section provides an overview of the core elements of RBM that is, planning, (implementation), monitoring and evaluation. The section provides working definitions of the terms used and key stages in the RBM planning process, including conducting a stakeholder analysis, conducting a problem analysis and developing a solution/objective tree.

RBM as a life cycle approach: A solid RBM system rests on what is commonly referred to as a life-cycle where results are central to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and on-going decision making. The planning phase includes setting the vision and defining the results framework as seen in figure 1.

Planning is a participatory process which assists to analyse the existing situation and identify the causes of problems to ensure buy-in, informed decision-making and team work. It includes defining realistic expected results based on appropriate analysis and clearly identifying program beneficiaries and designing programs to meet their needs. Planning establishes a logical hierarchy of means by which results will be reached and identifies possible risks. The process of planning involves problem analysis, stakeholder analysis (where necessary), developing a results framework with a hierarchy of outputs and selecting a preferred implementation strategy.

Implementation begins once agreement has been reached to pursue a set of results through a programme.

Monitoring is essential to ensure that results are being achieved and tracks resources being utilised.

Evaluation provides invaluable information for decision-making and lessons learned for the future.

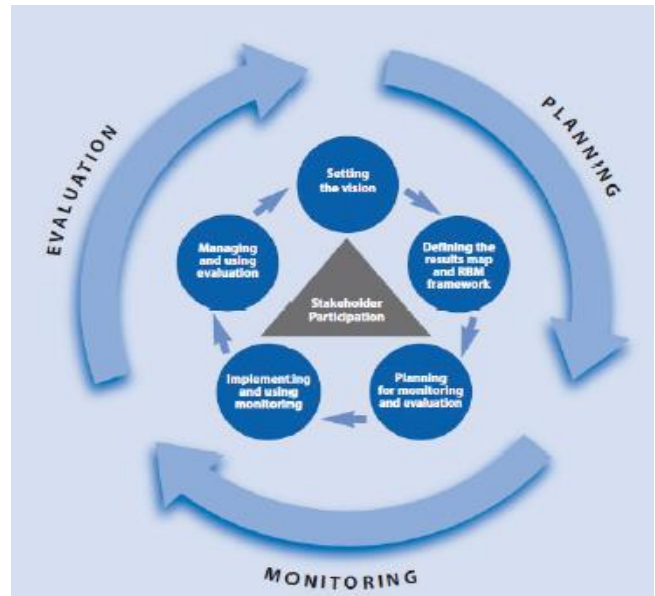


Figure 1: RBM cycle source: UNDP, Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, 2009

RBM IN PLANNING

The planning process: conducting a stakeholder analysis

A stakeholder analysis provides a means to identify the relevant stakeholders and assess their views and support for the proposed project or program. Stakeholders generally consist of target groups (those directly affected by the problem), other agencies (who have an interest in or responsibility for addressing development issue identified), delivery group (those responsible for delivery of proposed solution).

If there is more than one target group or a diverse group (for example urban and rural households), aim to identify the motivation or constraints to change from the aspect of the target group(s), so as to understand the underlying causes to the problem that needs to be overcome. Relevant and up to date information from the literature review and direct engagement of stakeholders can be used to complete the stakeholder analysis.

Step 1 - Establishing a Team

- Initial Stakeholder Analysis to assemble a representative team to undertake planning.

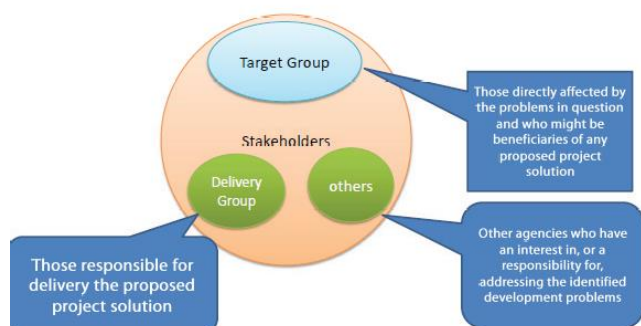


Figure 1: Stakeholder analysis incorporates target group, delivery group and others-source UNDG RBM Handbook

Results Chain

A problem analysis is a tool that helps to determine real as opposed to apparent needs. It analyses the existing situation and identifies underlying causes of problems and potential constraints. It identifies the size of the problem and likely resources needed to tackle the problem; identifies and analyses a number of alternative solutions. A problem tree will likely reveal multiple branches (cause & effect relationships) leading to the core problem. A cause-effect relationship is a relationship in which one event (the cause) makes another event happen (the effect). Planning is primarily a matter of formulating cause-effect hypotheses: IF we do this AND the assumptions are correct, THEN we will get that. For One cause can have several effects.

A results chain will always be embedded in a given context that reflects the overall situation, needs, issues, priorities and aspirations of key stakeholders. A diversity of factors – economic, political, social, environmental or cultural – will affect the achievement of results. This is why results chains may vary from country to country. What may be an output in one country may be an outcome in another country suffering a humanitarian crisis, where government structures may be weak or the capacity may be decimated or inadequate. Thus, one size does not fit all.

There is also a tendency to be ambitious with results statements. It is necessary to make sure that results are commensurate with the environment, existing and potential capacities and resources. If not, there will be a need to adjust the result statements.

Literature Review is a desktop-based research of previous projects and other initiatives that can inform and support the need for a project, as well as provide a foundation for the work to be undertaken. The review should identify what similar work has been done, what works, and what doesn't, to prevent reinventing the wheel. The review should have recommendations to inform the need for a project and the project design.

Conducting a problem analysis

A problem analysis is a tool that helps to determine real as opposed to apparent needs. It analyses the existing situation and identifies underlying causes of problems and potential constraints. It identifies the size of the problem and likely resources needed to tackle the problem; identifies and analyses a number of alternative solutions. A problem tree will likely reveal multiple branches (cause & effect relationships) leading to the core problem. A cause-effect relationship is a relationship in which one event (the cause) makes another event happen (the effect). Planning is primarily a matter of formulating cause-effect hypotheses: IF we do this AND the assumptions are correct, THEN we will get that. One cause can have several effects. An example is provided in the steps in a problem analysis section.

A problem tree analysis helps the planning of a project; provides a guide as to the complexity of a problem by identifying the multiple causes; Identifies particular lines of intervention and other factors that may need to be tackled with complementary projects; provides an outline of the project plan, including the activities that need to be undertaken, the goal and the outcomes of the project.

A problem tree analysis is valuable in that, it identifies factors that may not be addressed by the planned intervention. The problem analysis verifies the necessity of the project.

Steps in conducting a problem analysis:

1. Settle on a core problem

Identify the core problem that the program/project seeks to overcome. A vague or broad problem will have too many causes for an effective and meaningful program or project to be developed.

2. Identify causes and effects

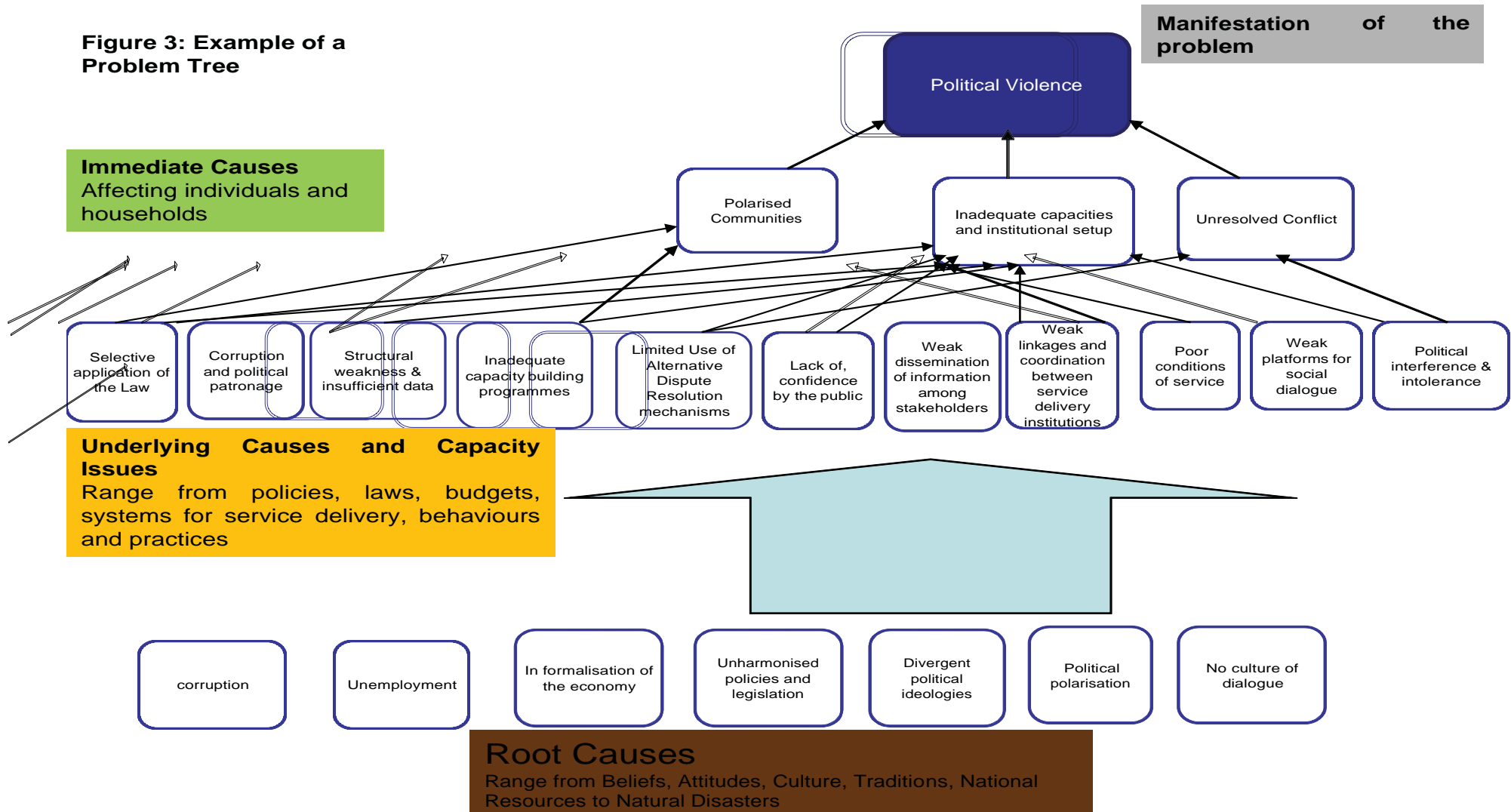
Once the core problem has been identified, consider what the direct causes and effects of the problem are. Each cause statement needs to be written in negative terms (for example, lack of confidence by the public or weak institutional mechanisms.)

3. Develop a problem tree

This entails mapping the focal problem against its causes and effects. In Figure 3 below (adapted from the NANGO-CCSF RBM training), the manifestation of the problem is identified as political violence. Immediate, underlying and root causes are identified using a cause and effect analysis.

¹ Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), Planning and Monitoring in Results-based Management of Projects and Programmes, 2011, p20 (http://www.unite-ch.org/12archiv/archiv08_method/PCM_Skript_engl.pdf)

Figure 3: Example of a Problem Tree



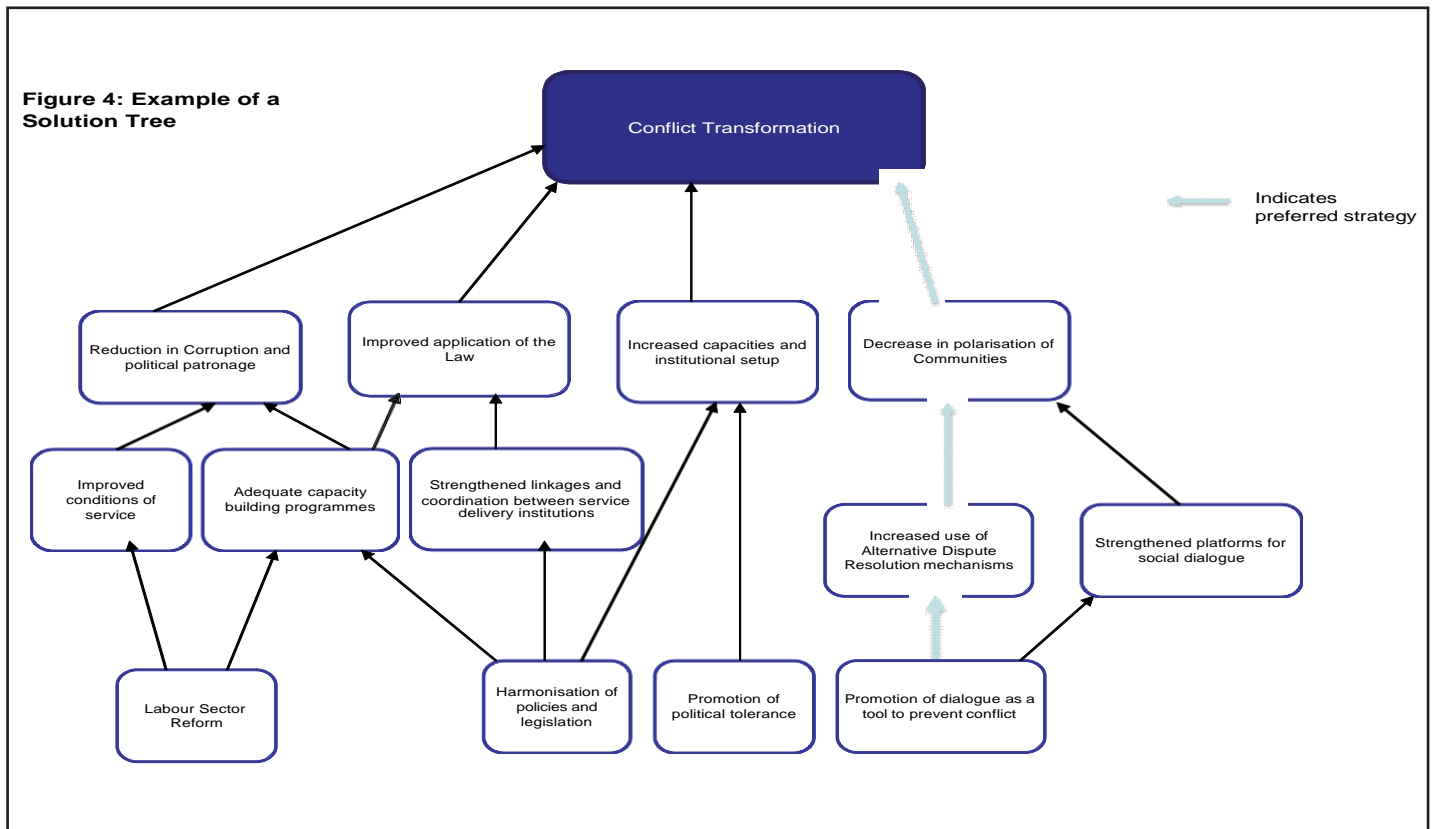
Discussion questions in the development of a problem analysis might include:

- Does this represent the reality? Are the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions to the problem considered?
- Which causes and consequences are getting better, which are getting worse and which are staying the same?
- What are the most serious consequences? Which are of most concern? What criteria are important to us in thinking about a way forward?
- Which causes are easiest / most difficult to address?

- What possible solutions or options might there be? Where could a policy change help address a cause or consequence, or create a solution?⁵

4. Develop a solution tree

The ultimate solution must address the causes and not the effects. A solution/objectives tree is developed by reversing the negative statements that form the problem tree into positive ones (developing a desired situation in the future) as illustrated in the diagram 4 below. For example, a cause (problem tree) such as “weak institutions” would become a means such as “strengthened institutions”. The objectives tree demonstrates the means-end relationship between objectives.



2 Evaluation Toolbox, 2010 (<http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/5258-problem-tree-analysis>) accessed 18 March 2014

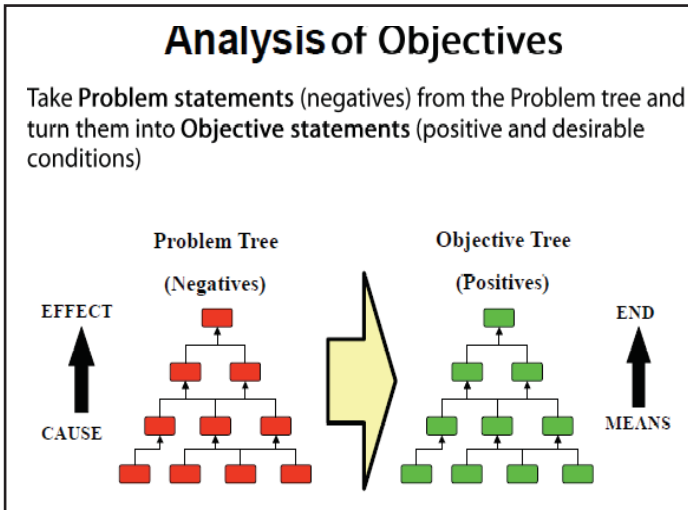


Figure 5: A summary of developing a solution/objective tree from an objective tree. Illustration from NANGO-CCSF RBM Training, March 2014

5. Conduct an alternative analysis

A theory of change is an evidence based analysis of alternatives. It explains all the major things that need be in place in order for development change to occur. It is not about what the organisation must do, but what all partners and non-partners must do to make real change happen. It is not about projects,

but all the different types of interventions necessary for change to happen.

Questions to be considered when developing a theory of change:

- Should all identified activities be tackled?
- What combinations of interventions are most likely to bring about the desired results and promote sustainable benefits?
- What evidence exists about the causal relationships?
- How strong and reliable is it?
- What strategy will best support institutional strengthening objectives?

Once, various alternate strategies are analysed and mapped, alternatives are then re-worked, showing solutions and a final intervention strategy is selected.

6. Select the preferred intervention

Interventions must not only be necessary, they should be sufficient to achieve the expected result. If a problem is caused by three conditions, all three conditions must be addressed.

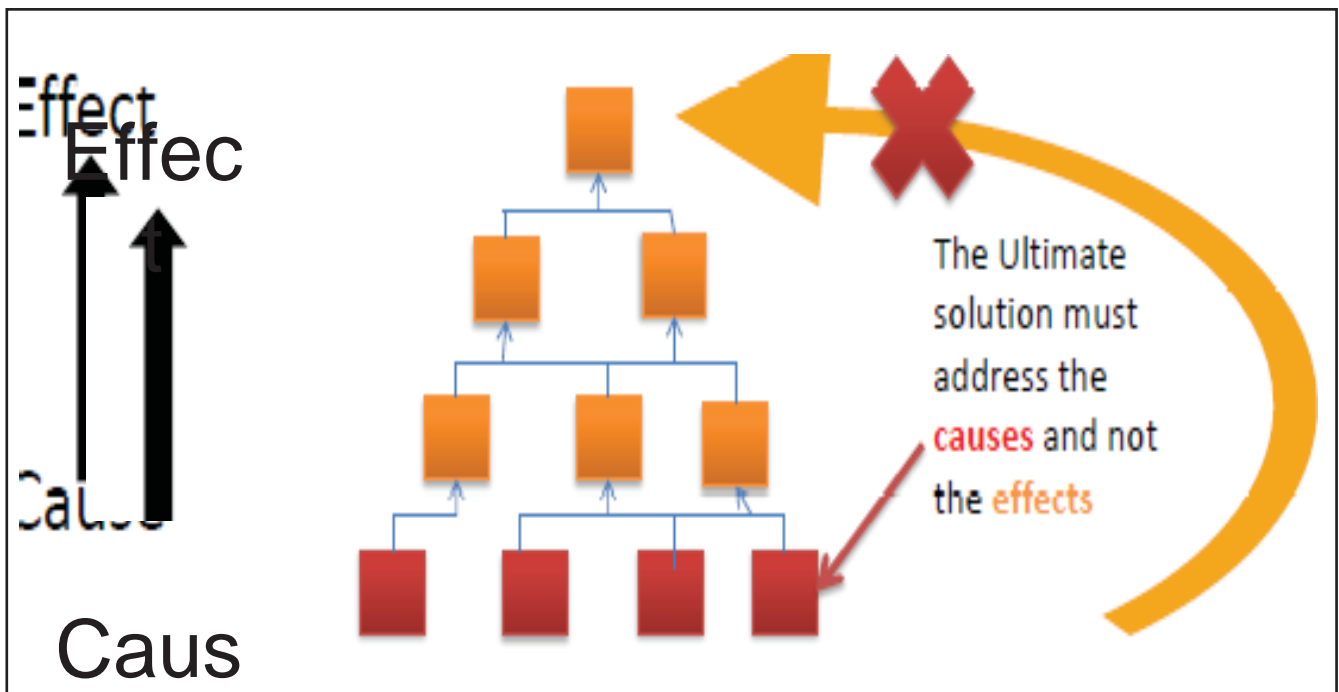


Figure 6: Preferred intervention must address causes (root) and not effects. Illustration from NANGO-CCSF RBM Training, March 2014

RESULTS CHAIN, LOG FRAME, RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This section provides an overview of the building blocks of RBM-developing a results chain and log frame. The section also discusses the hierarchy of results- level of change at impact, outcome, and output level. The section further provides guidance on developing indicators, targets, baselines, risks and assumptions.

As indicated in the previous section, defining results begins with planning- an analysis of the country situation (literature review), a review of the comparative advantages of the implementing organisation, a stakeholder analysis and a vision of desired outcomes.

A **result** is a measurable or describable change (sustainable). It is not the completion of activities.⁶ There are three types of such changes (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) which can be set in motion by a development intervention.

Results Framework refers to the logic that explains how results are to be achieved. The results framework is the application of the logframe approach at a more strategic level, across an entire organisation, for a national programme or even a project. The Logical Framework Approach was first used in international development by USAID in 1969. It has become a widely used instrument, forming the basis of results- and impact-oriented project cycle management. The core element of the matrix is the result chain, which defines the cause-effect hypotheses between inputs, activities, outputs, outcome and impact.⁷

Inputs are needed to undertake activities in order to produce outputs which in turn generate short and medium-term outcomes leading to long-term impacts. This is called a **Results Chain**. See diagrammatic representation below.

Inputs refer to the financial, human, material, technological and information (people, equipment, supplies and other ingredients) resources that make a project possible. Inputs include the time of staff, stakeholders and volunteers; money; consultants; equipment; technology; and materials.

The general tendency is to use money as the main input, as it covers the cost of consultants, staff, materials, and so forth. However, in the early stages of planning, effort should be spent on identifying the various resources needed before converting them into monetary terms.

3 United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Results-Based Programming, Management and Monitoring (RBM) approach as applied at UNESCO-Guiding Principles, 2010-2011, p18

4 Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), Planning and Monitoring in Results-based Management of Projects and Programmes, 2011, p13 (http://www.unite-ch.org/12archiv/archiv08_method/PCM_Skript_engl.pdf)

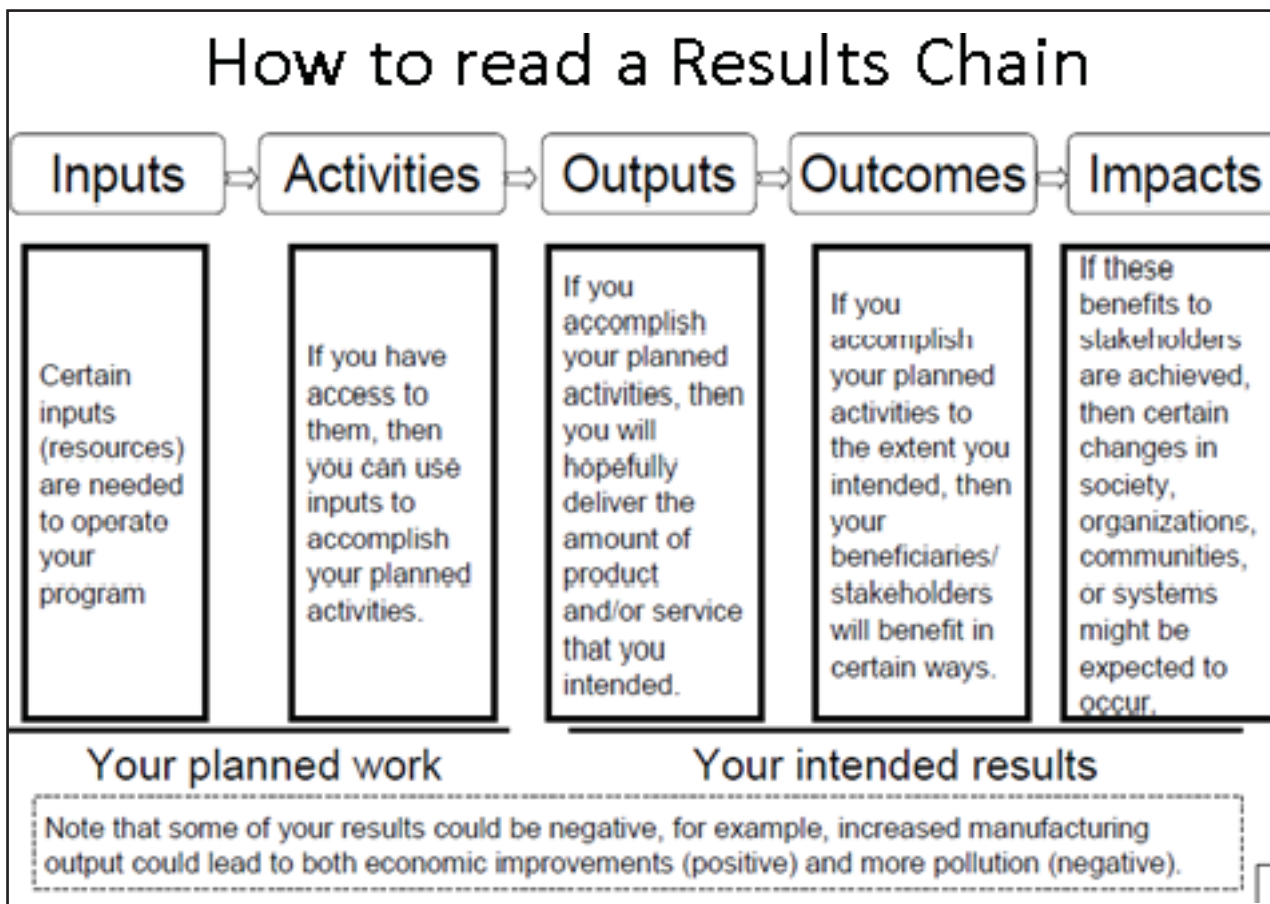


Figure 7: How to read a results chain NANGO-CCSF RBM Training, March 2014

An **Activity** is an action taken or work performed through which inputs such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs. Or simply put, activities represent the tasks that personnel undertake to transform inputs into outputs.⁸

In formulating activities, the following questions should be addressed: What resources (inputs) are necessary to undertake these activities? What actions are needed in order to obtain the output? Will the combined number of actions ensure that the output is produced? Typically, more than one activity is needed to achieve an output. Activities generally start with a verb and describe an activity or action. Using our example from figure 4 above, activities could include:

- *Organize workshops and seminars on dialogue*
- *Publish newsletters and pamphlets how to conduct dialogue at community level*
- *Provide technical assistance by experts in the area of peace building, dialogue and conflict transformation*

The organisation implementing the project must have the professional competence and capacity to carry out the planned activities within the specified time with the means available and produce the planned outputs of a satisfactory quality.

Outputs are products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention within the control of the organisation. It relates to the completion rather than conduct of activities. It must be deliverable within the respective programming cycle. Outputs are attributable to a project.

⁸ Laetitia Weibel-Roberts, Result Chain Indicators and Targets- Getting the Logic of our interventions right A refresher based on ILO Guidelines, Presentation (<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1xxuKg3vBo9qWq15Rn95tSAvZ6fH1MgMC-46J-s-kag/edit?pli=1#slide=id.i46>) accessed April 30 2014

When reading the results chain (outputs to outcomes), it is important to note whether the chosen project strategy has had the intended effect. The link between outputs and outcomes should be as direct as possible and exclude external influences to the greatest extent possible.

Outcomes are intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention’s outputs responding to national priorities and local needs. Represents changes in development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact. Attributable to several outputs which may be from interventions of various actors. For projects that are aimed at strengthening the capacity of people and/or organisations, intended changes at outcome level will often refer to changes and improvements in the skills and behavior of the target groups. That is, performance of organisations as a result of putting into practice the new knowledge or materials provided by the project.

Between the outcome and impact level in practice, it is almost difficult or impossible to attribute changes to a project (attribution gap). These changes are usually caused by other influences too. It is advisable to set modest impact goals and not to promise more than the project will be able to deliver.

Impact refers to long term positive and negative, intended/actual or un-intended changes in human development on an identifiable population produced by a development intervention. Effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental or technological. Impact level is the ultimate desirable state.

Figure 8 below provides another example of a results chain and a description of what happens at each stage.

Developing Indicators, targets, baselines, risks and assumptions

- **Indicators** are means of measuring what actually happens against what has been planned, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness for every level of result. Indicators are signposts of change along the path to development. Indicators are inevitable approximation.⁹ Where the intended change is more abstract, indicators help approximate the change. How will we know when we have achieved our desired outcomes? Progress needs to be monitored at all levels of the system to provide feedback on areas of success and areas in which improvement may be required. Setting indicators to measure progress in inputs, activities, outputs,

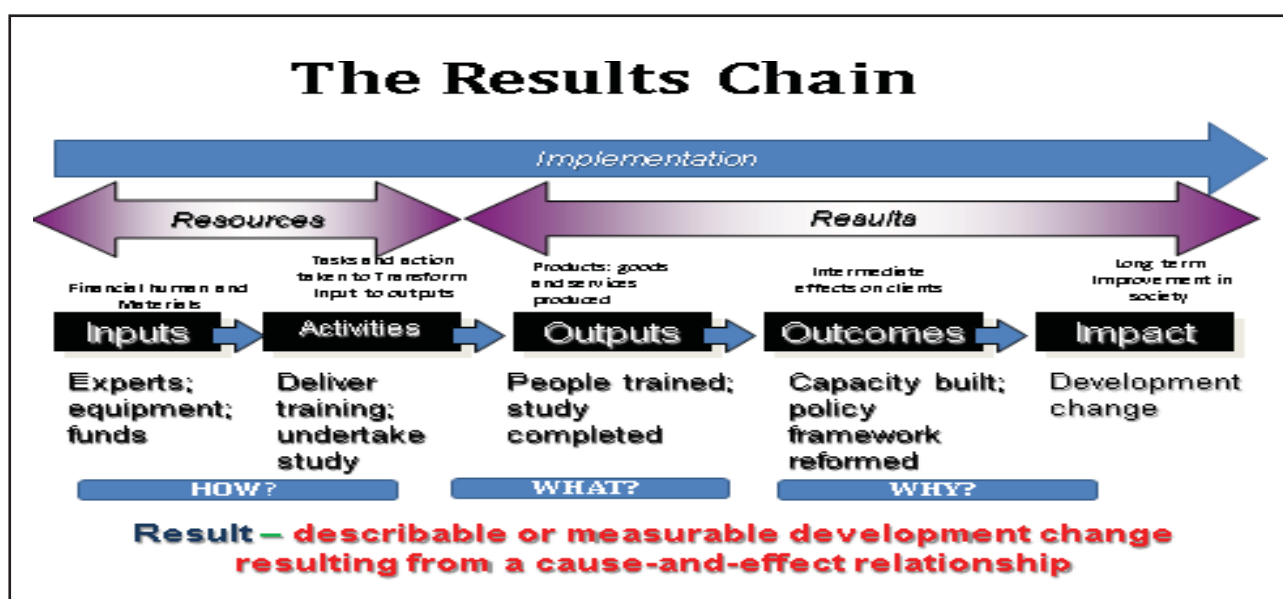


Figure 8: Illustration of Results Chain NANGO-CCSF RBM Training, March 2014

6 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), RBM in UNDP, selecting indicators, signposts for development 2002, p45

outcomes, and goals is important in providing necessary feedback to the management system.

It will help managers identify those parts of an organization or government that may, or may not, be achieving results as planned.

As far as possible indicators should be disaggregated by sex, age, geographic areas such as cities, districts and provinces. Indicators should be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound**. **Specific**- exact, distinct and clearly stated;

Measurable - It should be measurable in some way, involving Qualitative and/or quantitative characteristics;

Achievable/Attainable - It should be feasible within the human and financial resources available;

Relevant - It should measure the result;

Time-bound - It should be achieved in a stated time-frame.

- **Qualitative indicators** reflect people’s judgments, opinions, perceptions, behavior and attitude towards a given situation or subject. An example would be, “25% increase in the level of confidence people have in their ability to circulate safely in all areas in their community by end of project.” Another example might be, “10% decrease in fear of violence in village D in 6 months.” Most qualitative indicators contain a number.
- **Quantitative indicators** measure of quantity including statistical statements (number, percentage or ratio of). An example would be a 50% increase in the number of people who enroll their children in ethnically mixed schools by the end of the project. Another example would be, “500 disputes resolved by trained mediators over 18 months.”¹⁰
- **Proxy indicators** provide an indirect reflection of the situation. They are not a direct measure of the stated result. Proxy indicators are used when results cannot be measured directly. For example, a proxy measure of improved governance could

be, in some cases, the number of political parties and voter turn-out. Proxy indicators might also be used when there is a high security risk (i.e., humanitarian settings, post conflict settings) to collect data based on more concrete measurable indicators.¹¹

- **Baseline** value of a performance indicator before the implementation of projects or activities. It is the situation at the beginning of a programme or project that acts as a reference point against which progress or achievements can be assessed. Where we are at present relative to the outcome we are trying to achieve? It sets the current condition against which future change can be tracked. For instance, it helps to inform decision-makers about current circumstances before embarking on projecting targets for a given program, policy, or project. In this way, the baseline is used to learn about current or recent levels and patterns of performance. When conducting a baseline, only collect information that relates directly to the performance questions and indicators you have identified. Do not spend time collecting other information. Data sources may be primary (collected directly by organisation) or secondary (collected by other/external organisations).

As illustrated in Figure 9 below, when building baseline information, it is important to identify the data source, the data collection method, who will collect the data, the cost and difficulty in collecting data as well as who will analyse the data and use the data.

Figure 9: Illustration- building baseline information- source Kusek and Rist 2004

| Indicator | Data source | Data collection method | Who will collect data? | Frequency to collect | Cost and difficulty to collect | Who will analyze data? | Who will report data? | Who will use data? |
|-----------|-------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | |

Figure 9: Illustration- building baseline information- source Kusek and Rist 2004

7 United Nations Development Program (UNDP), RBM in UNDP, selecting indicators, signposts for development 2002, ibid.

8 United Nations Development Group Results-Based Management Handbook Strengthening RBM harmonization for improved development results, Clean Draft Version, 24 March 2010, pg9

- **Target** refers to specific, planned level of result to be achieved within an explicit time. It is a value, characteristic or condition to be observed or achieved at a specific date in the future. Targets are set based on known resources (financial and organisational) plus a reasonable projection of the available resource base over a fixed period of time.¹² Most targets are set annually but some could be set on a quarterly basis. It is not advisable to set targets that are more than 3-4 years ahead as there are too many unknowns and risks with respect to resources and inputs. As an organisation, it is important to set realistic targets. Be careful to set targets that are so modest and easily achieved that they will surely be met.
- An **Assumption** is a necessary condition/variable for the achievement of results at different levels. They can be internal or external to a particular program or organisation. Assumptions should be stated in positive language. For example, in a project where higher levels of voter registration among the rural population is expected to lead to higher participation in an election, an assumption could be that voting centres are operational and infrastructure in place so that the population is able to reach the voting centres on election day.¹³ Assumptions should be formulated after the results chain and before the indicators. The sequencing is important as the identification of assumptions is crucial and can lead to the redefinition of the results chain.
- A **Risk** is a potential event or occurrence fully or partially beyond the control of the programme that could adversely affect the achievement of the desired results. A threat to success. For example, in the context of the above mentioned election support programme, a potential risk may be that rising ethnic tension and violence in rural areas make people reluctant to travel to voting centres on election day.
- **Risk mitigation strategies** can be preventative (prevent risk from materialising or prevent it from having an impact on objectives); reductive (reduce the likelihood of the risk developing or limiting the impact in case it materialises); transferable (pass the impact of risk onto a third party); based on a contingency plan (prepared actions to implement should the risk occur); acceptable (based on a cost-benefit analysis that accepts the possibility that the risk may occur and go ahead without further measures to address the risk)

⁹ JZ Kusek, R. Crist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004, p63

¹⁰ United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Results-Based Management Handbook Strengthening RBM harmonization for improved development results, Clean Draft Version, 24 March 2010

RBM IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This section provides an overview of results based monitoring, evaluation and reporting. It provides tips for good monitoring, defines and provides examples for selecting the right mix of monitoring mechanisms to achieve desired results.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a periodic review of interventions, which include policy, programs and projects. It is conducted for the purpose of: (1) improving performance in terms of formulating, designing and implementing policy, programs and projects, and (2) enhancing transparency and accountability of

the organisations which implement the interventions to stakeholders and intended beneficiaries.¹⁴

In figure 10 below, Kusek and Rist identify ten steps in designing, building and sustaining an RBM M&E system. These include:

- *Conducting a readiness assessment*

This is a diagnostic tool that can be used to determine whether the pre-requisites are in place for building a Results Based M&E system.

- *Agreeing on outcomes to monitor and evaluate*

It is important to know where you are going and why you are going there as an organisation. Knowing where you are going before you get moving is critical to success. Establishing outcomes will illustrate what success looks like. In short, outcomes will show which road to take by identifying strategic priorities for the organisation.

- *Selecting key indicators to monitor outcomes*

Indicators should be developed for all levels of the RBM M&E system. Indicators to monitor progress with respect to inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes and to provide feedback on areas of success and areas in which improvement may be required.¹⁵

In building an effective RBM M&E system, it is important to note that the ten step model provided is not linear or sequential. In practice organisations will vacillate between the ten steps as the development and fine tuning of the system continues and information needs of the users

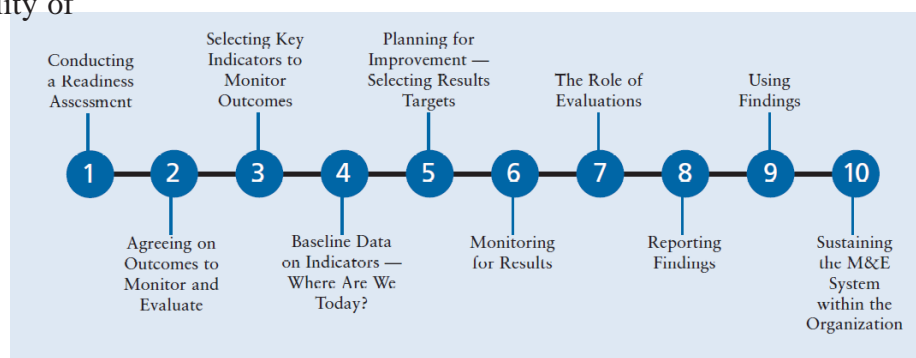


Figure 10: Ten steps to designing, building and sustaining an RBM M&E system- adapted from Kusek and Risk, 2004

change. A certain degree of adaptability and

flexibility in the system to identify new data sources, collection techniques and new ways of reporting is necessary.¹⁶

Traditional versus Results Based M&E systems

Traditional implementation-focused M&E systems are designed to address compliance—the “did they do it” question. Did they mobilize the needed inputs? Did they undertake and complete the agreed activities? Did they deliver the intended outputs (the products or services to be

¹¹ Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation System (SMES) project, Monitoring and Evaluation Training Manual module 1: Introduction of RBM and Evaluation, version 4, 2009, p2 (http://www.focusintl.com/RBM051SMES1_TM_02_Module_1_Intro_M&E.pdf)

¹⁵ JZ Kusek, R.C Rist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004, p65

¹⁶ JZ Kusek, R.C Rist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004, pg163

produced)? The implementation approach focuses on monitoring and assessing how well a project, program, or policy is being executed, and it often links the implementation to a particular unit of responsibility. However, this approach does not provide policymakers, managers, and stakeholders with an understanding of the success or failure of that project, program, or policy.¹⁷

Results-based M&E systems are designed to address the “so-what” question. So what about the fact that outputs have been generated? So what, those activities have taken place? So what, that the outputs from these activities have been counted? A results-based system provides feedback on the actual outcomes and goals of government actions.¹⁸

Monitoring is conducted, continuously and regularly as an internal management activity during the implementation of interventions. Under RBM, “good monitoring” means that monitoring is continuous, involves partners, and is focused on progress towards/against results.

Monitoring is important to review assumptions made during the planning process to ensure that they still

hold true. RBM monitoring tracks progress in the achievement of results; assists in assessing whether the original strategies are still appropriate and should be continued or modified. Finally, monitoring allows for necessary adjustments to be made to resources, both human and/or financial.

How to monitor

Good monitoring is anchored on choosing the appropriate tools in relation to the scope of the project. Tools should be organised in a monitoring plan. Figure 11 below provides an overview of the monitoring cycle and actions to be taken. For example, once annual targets have been set, field visits, collection, analysis and triangulation of data should form part of the monitoring plan. This should be complimented by a communication strategy on how will findings during the monitoring process will be communicated.

An **evaluation** is an assessment which is systematic and impartial as possible of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance.¹⁹ It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments,

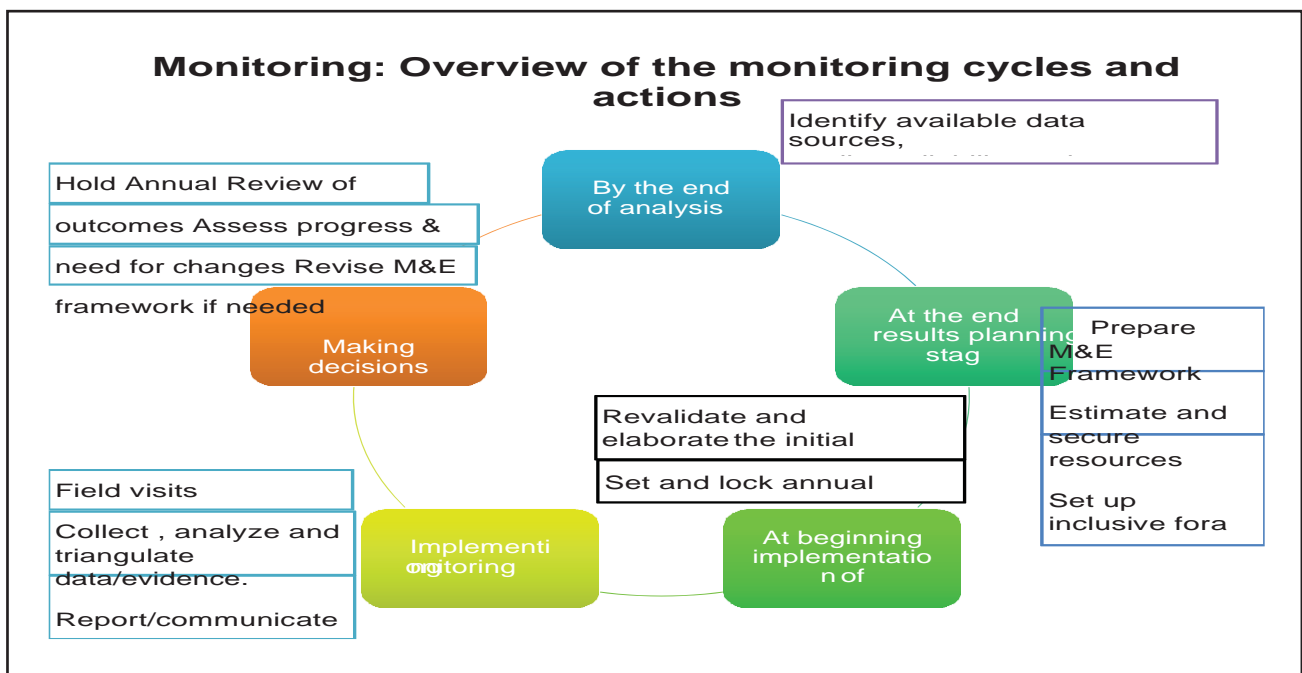


Figure 11: Example of a monitoring cycle NANGO/CCSF RBM Training March 2014

17 JZ Kusek, R.CRist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004, pg60-72

18 JZ Kusek, R.CRist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004pg85-90

19 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Handbook on monitoring and evaluating for results, New York, 2002

by examining results chain, processes, contextual factors of causality in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. An evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling a timely, and incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organisations. It is conducted at certain periods of the implementation of interventions usually by external experts, who are equipped with technical knowledge and analytical as well as communication skills, hired by the implementation bodies. Evaluation reports, which cover the evaluation results, lessons and recommendations, are prepared by the experts and shared with the stakeholders inside and outside of the implementation bodies.

An evaluation provides information on

- a) *Strategy*-are the right things being done? (are we using the correct rationale, justification and is our theory of change clear);
- b) *Operations*-are things being done right? (Effectively, efficiently and with client satisfaction);
- c) *Learning*-are there better ways (alternatives, best practices and lessons learned?) A **lesson learned** is an instructive example based on experience that is applicable to a general situation rather than to a specific circumstance. It is learning from experience. Lessons learned can reveal “good practices” that suggest how and why different strategies work in different situations—valuable information that needs to be documented.

Types of evaluation

An **Outcome evaluation** focuses on whether, why and how an outcome has been achieved. It assesses the contribution of the organisation to a change in a given development situation. The scope of an outcome evaluation is broad and all-encompassing.

An outcome evaluation analyses the following:

- **Outcome status:** Has the outcome been achieved? If not, has there been progress made towards its achievement?

- **Underlying status:** what underlying factors beyond the organisation’s control can/will influence the outcome?
- **Organisational contribution:** Can the organisation’s output and other interventions be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome?
- Identifies direct or indirect beneficiaries and their perceptions of how they have benefitted from the organisation’s assistance
- Implementation/management issues including the degree of stakeholder involvement
- Identifies innovative methodologies to approach key development issues
- **Partnership strategy:** Has the organisation’s partnership strategy been effective and appropriate? Key partners in an outcome evaluation may include: national authorities, other civil society organisations; national institutions; UN agencies; private sector; funding/donor partners and academic institutions.

A **Project** evaluation focuses on inputs, activities and outputs. It is used to determine if and how outputs were delivered within a sector or geographic areas. It also assesses if direct results occurred and can be attributed to the project. The scope is limited to project objectives, inputs, outputs and activities. It is project based to improve implementation. It can be used to re-direct future projects in the same area or to allow for up-scaling of a project.

A **Joint** evaluation can be undertaken as a partnership between the funding partner and implementing organisation either as mid-term or end of project evaluation.

Preparing for an evaluation requires time and planning. The timing of an evaluation should be linked to its purpose. Stakeholder participation in evaluation can positively influence the degree of ownership of the evaluation results and sustainability.²⁰

²⁰ United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Handbook on monitoring and evaluating for Results, New York, 2002, *ibid*

Developing Terms of Reference (TORs) for Evaluation

Clear terms of reference must be developed for the team that is responsible for conducting an evaluation. The TORs should include an *introduction* which provides a brief description of what is to be evaluated (outcome, programme, project etc). The TORs should also include reasons for the evaluation (*objectives*) and a list of stakeholders and partners. The *scope* sets out what issues, subjects, areas and timeframe the evaluation will cover. The TORs should further set out the *products expected from the evaluation* (findings, recommendations, and lessons learned e.t.c).

The *methodology or evaluation approach* should also be set out in the TORs. The composition of the evaluation team and areas of expertise should be clearly highlighted in the TORs as well as the implementation arrangements (who will manage the evaluation and how it is organized).²¹

What happens if the M&E system produces bad news?

Although they are not desirable, errors and failures are part of development processes. If a project reports successes only, we may be forced to ask whether it is really contributing to the solution of relevant problems that people could not have solved themselves. A good performance measurement system is intended to flag problems-not just bring good news. Performance reports should include explanations about poor outcomes and identify steps taken or planned to correct problems.²²

21 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Handbook on monitoring and evaluating for Results, New York, 2002, *ibid*,p50

22 JZ Kusek, R.Crist, A handbook for development practitioners-ten steps to a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System, World Bank, 2004,p136

RESULTS BASED REPORTING (RBR) AND COMMUNICATING RESULTS

Reporting is an integral part of monitoring and evaluation. Reporting is the systematic and timely provision of essential information at periodic intervals.

Reporting can be used to demonstrate accountability and transparency. It is a means of communicating progress made, results achieved against provided human and financial resources.

Reporting can be used to educate. It assists with organisational learning. It can also be a tool to explore and investigate what works and what does not, reporting is a tool to document-record and create institutional memory and promote understanding of projects, programs and policies within an organisation. Reports can be used as tools to mobilise future funding. Quality reports can justify funding for future projects.

Reporting is important in engaging stakeholders to increase ownership of projects undertaken or as a means of (re) building partner trust and confidence. Most donors want evidence of a return on their investment-quality reports can strengthen these partnerships.

Results Based Reporting (RBR) focuses on results rather than on activities. RBR ensures that reporting goes beyond outputs to outcomes (short-medium term changes in development conditions). This normally relates to changes in quality of life or institutional/individual performance or behavior. RBR links results to expenditures and the cost of attaining them. It provides sufficient quantitative and qualitative evidence of achievements and disaggregation of data.

The value of information (often) decreases rapidly over time, so essential findings should be communicated as quickly as possible

(Valadez and Bamberger 1994)

RBR uses change language that is, it focuses on the differences that activities made in participants lives. Change language is detailed and specific. In Figure 12 below, the second example is detailed and specific as to the extent of change due to the intervention by NANGO. The first example is general and gives

Results focus

Weak Example

- NANGO's value addition has been concentrated on the technical support provided, the human resource personnel in charge of the program and the financial support.

Good Example

- NANGO helped to establish special courts to ensure speedy trials with relation to legal cases. NANGO support (through training and capacity development) has helped to shorten justice delivery time, making it less cumbersome and inexpensive, especially for the poor and vulnerable. As a result the number of remand prisoners has reduced by 60% and provision of legal aid to the poor and vulnerable has increased by 70% (Evidence: 2011 Annual Report, Prison Service and 2011 Annual Report, Legal Aid Scheme).

Figure 12: Example of weak and strong results focus reporting

no indication of value addition of the project in the lives of the beneficiaries.

Communicating for Results

Communication needs to be goal-driven. We communicate to achieve or change something; therefore it is important to define communications objectives properly in advance. It is important to make a difference between the project objectives and communication objectives. When communicating results, it is important to know and target the audience. Communication internally, between the partners as well as communication which is targeted to stakeholders outside partner organisations, including the general public should be easily distinguished.

The starting point is to understand and define what you and your partners want to achieve, and develop project-specific communications aims. A communication strategy with clear guidelines on who will receive the information; in what format; when; who will prepare the information; and who will deliver the information is useful at organisational level.

Data should be presented in short and concise manner, relevant to the target audience. Only the most important information should be presented. If there are multiple audiences (for example, those involved at project, program and policy level), the data may be packaged and formatted differently according to the main interests and preferences of each audience. Acronyms and jargon should be avoided.

Examples of Reports

There are generally four dimensions of reporting: written, oral and visual presentations.

As illustrated in figure 13 and 14 below, there are various data collection methods that can be used to enrich reporting and communication processes within an organisation. For example, *field visits* provide validation by direct observation.²³ They can take place

at any time of the year or can be planned for specific intervals during the year. Field visit reports should be action orientated and brief, submitted within a week of return to the office. Field visits involve an assessment of progress, results and problems. Emphasis is placed on observing progress made towards attainment of results at output and outcome level.

An Annual Project Report is a monitoring and reporting tool that can be prepared every 12 months. It should provide an accurate update on project results, identify major constraints and propose future direction. It analyses underlying factors contributing to any lack of progress so that the project management team can learn from experience and improve performance.

An annual project report should be brief and provide an analysis of project performance over the reporting period, including outputs and where possible information on the status of outcome. It should highlight constraints in progress towards results and reasons for the constraints. At most three major constraints towards achievement of results should be highlighted; and clear recommendations for future approach to addressing the main problems contributing to lack of progress.

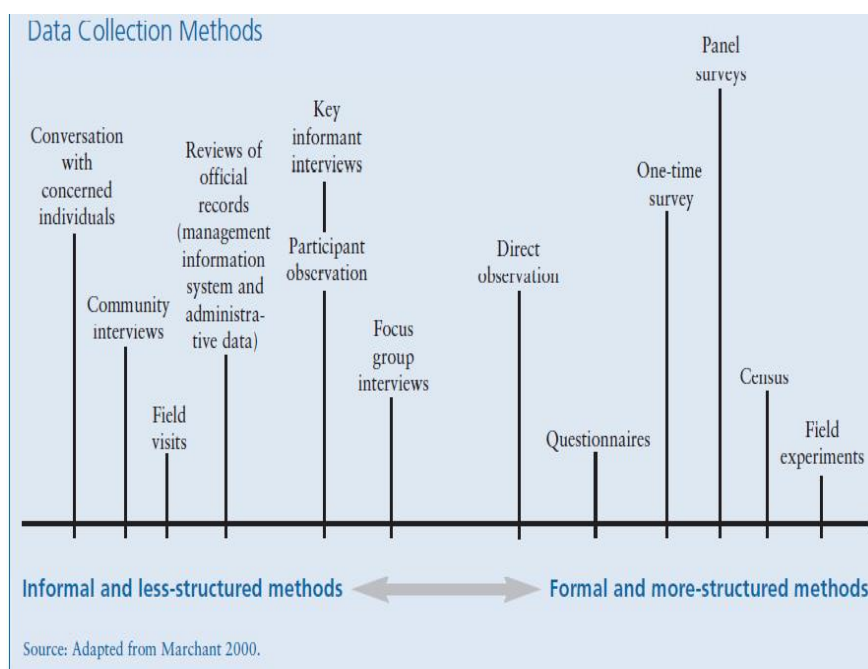


Figure 13 Examples of data collection and reporting methods

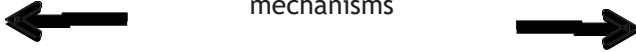
23 United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results, ibid,p36

Figure 14 SELECTING RIGHT MIX OF REPORTING MECHANISMS

Source Handbook on monitoring and evaluating for results- UNDP

| REPORTING AND ANALYSIS | VALIDATION | PARTICIPATION |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Annual Report | Field Visits | Outcome groups |
| Progress and/ quarterly Reports | Sport-check-visits | Steering Committees/ mechanisms |
| Work Plans | External Assessments/ monitoring | Stakeholder meetings |
| Project/ Programme delivery reports | Client Surveys | Focus group meetings |
| Substantive project documentation | Evaluations | Annual review |

Learning takes place through all monitoring tools or mechanisms



Visual presentations

For external audiences, charts, tables and graphs are also helpful in highlighting key points and performance findings. They can illustrate directions and trends at a glance. There are a variety of charts (pie, flow, column, time series, scatter plot, bar, range, and so forth) and graphs (line, scatter, bar, pie, surface, pictograph, contour, histogram, area, circle, column) that should be considered in presenting data to the target audience. Charts and tables can provide impact and visual interest, encourage audience acceptance and memory retention, and show the big picture. Charts and tables should present data simply and accurately, and make the data coherent. They should engage the audience. Tables are best used for presenting data, and highlighting changes, comparisons, and relationships.

Oral Presentations

Oral presentations also can be used as a communication tool, either alone or in conjunction with a written report. In addition to rehearsing and getting feedback, one needs to consider the following in preparing for an oral presentation:

- Who is the audience?
What should they remember from the presentation?
- How much time is there for the presentation?
- What are the available delivery resources?
- What handouts should be provided, if any?

Oral presentations like written ones should be simple, clear, and tailored to the audience. Complex language and detailed data should be avoided. If possible, use an interactive format with the audience, and be prepared for questions.

ADOPTING AND SUSTAINING RBM AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL

As illustrated in the sections above, RBM is a useful tool in improving organisational performance and demonstrating results. This section provides tips on what to consider when adopting RBM as a management tool.

Organisations should note the following when adopting RBM as a management tool.

- 1. RBM should be customised to fit an organisation/program/project context.** Simply replicating a standardised RBM system will not work. Each organization needs a system customized to its own situation.
- 2. Sufficient time is required to implement RBM:** Rushing implementation of results-based management doesn't work. The approach needs to be accepted within the organization, indicators take time to develop, data collection on the indicators takes more time, and results often take more time to appear than aid agencies allocate in a project cycle. Many of the current criticisms of results-based management in aid agencies focus on the difference between the time it takes to achieve results, and aid agencies' shorter reporting timelines.
- 3. RBM should be integrated within existing organisational planning**
Performance measures, and indicators, should be integrated with strategic planning, tied to organizational goals, and management needs, and performance measurement and monitoring need high-level endorsement from policy makers.
- 4. The cost of implementing RBM should be considered and adequately planned for.** Building a useful results-based management system is not free. The costs need to be recognised and concrete budget support provided from the beginning of the process. While organisations may have in place substantial internal structures

to support results reporting, additional budget support, planning and resources should be given to processes such as baseline data collection.

- 5. The importance of developing a results culture:** Successful implementation requires not simply new administrative systems and procedures but the development of a management culture, values and behaviour that really reflect a commitment to planning for and reporting on results.
- 6. Stakeholder participation is critical in the implementation of RBM:** stakeholder participation both from within and from outside of the organization will strengthen sustainability, by building commitment, and pointing out possible problems before they occur. Adequate resources including time and money should be invested into genuine involvement of stakeholders in analysis of problems, collection of baseline data on the problems, specification of realistic results, and on-going data collection, analysis and reporting.
- 7. Continued training on RBM:** Training support is needed if results-based systems are to be effectively implemented, because many people don't have experience in results-based management. Training can also help change the organizational culture, but training also takes time. Introducing new RBM concepts can be done through short-term training and material development, but operational support for defining objectives, constructing performance indicators, using results data for reporting, and evaluation, takes time, and sustained support.²⁴

²⁴ Greg Armstrong, Results Based Management BlogSpot Op.cit (www.gregarmstrong.com) accessed 18 March 2014

CHALLENGES IN THE APPLICATION OF RBM

The implementation of RBM is not without challenges. This section outlines the limitations and challenges of RBM.

As a broad management strategy, RBM does pose a few challenges for those working in the governance discourse. Firstly, RBM assumes that social changes can be predicted, controlled and reduced to a single overarching problem. The reality of programming in complex and evolving democracies is that social results and impact normally lie **outside the control of an implementing organisation** (whether is a Non-Governmental Organisation or other entity), and may take years to emerge. There are many factors that influence impact so results cannot be attributed to a specific organisation's work.

Initial **plans are never completely accurate**; local circumstances and priorities change during a project so plans are not a reliable guide for action. Actions often have unintended consequences, not included in an original logframe.

Some of NGOs' most **important goals cannot be easily measured** or assessed. Changes may be subjective and intangible (like increases in confidence).

The logframe language that is used in RBM may not be suited to poor, illiterate or marginalised grassroots communities.

Whilst logframes are convenient for donors and senior managers because they can encourage better analysis, they are **generally not used** by field staff after initial planning, because they do not fit with how NGO work really happens on the ground. For many organisations, once funding is secured and implementation begins, staff do not refer to the logframes. What is written may be divorced from reality at the planning and reporting stages of the cycle.²⁵

²⁵ Greg Armstrong, Results Based Management BlogSpot ibid. (www.gregarmstrong.com) accessed 18 March 2014

CONCLUSION

Results Based Management is a useful tool in the assessment of performance at both project and organisational level. These guidelines are not an exhaustive assessment into RBM. They simply provide a starting point for organisations and program/ project managers to implement RBM in their work as a way to showcase results. Continuous and adequate training in RBM is critical in ensuring that RBM becomes part of the work of the organisation, program or project. Equally important is adequate budget support for training, implementation and evaluation of the use of RBM in an organisation, program or project.

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