

INTRODUCTION:

Results-Based-Management or performance management focuses on improving performance and ensuring that projects activities achieve desired results. It is thus defined as a project management strategy aimed at achieving social changes in the way that the targeted groups wish or desire.

RBM is concerned more with technical aspects of clarifying objectives, developing indicators, setting result targets, collecting data on results and analysing those results vis-à-vis targets. It is thus the process an organization follows to objectively measure how well stated project's objectives are being met as a means to achieve the desired social impacts.

The integration of RBM in our project implementation process is driven by two key aims:

1. **management improvement:** the focus is on using performance information for management learning and decision-making processes.
2. **performance reporting:** the focus is on holding partners accountable for the achievement of planned results and transparent reporting of those results.

The basic purposes of RBM system in the overall project management cycle are to generate and use performance information for accountability reporting to donor agencies, external stakeholder, targeted audiences and for internal management learning and decision-making. Our RBM system includes the following phases:

1. **Formulating objectives:** Identifying in clear, measurable terms the results being sought and developing a conceptual framework for how the results will be achieved.
2. **Identifying indicators:** For each objective, specifying exactly what is to be measured along a scale or dimension.
3. **Setting result targets:** For each indicator, specifying the expected or planned levels of result to be achieved by specific numbers, which will be used to judge performance.
4. **Monitoring results:** Developing performance monitoring systems to regularly collect data on actual results achieved.
5. **Reviewing and reporting results:** Comparing actual results vis-à-vis the result targets or other criteria for making judgements about performance.
6. **Integrating evaluations:** Conducting evaluations to provide complementary information on performance not readily available from performance monitoring systems.
7. **Performance information:** Using information from performance monitoring and evaluation sources for internal management learning and decision-making, and for external reporting to stakeholders on results achieved.

INTEGRATED RBM IN THE PROJECT MANAGMENT

RBM at the project level is concerned with measuring both the project's implementation progress and the results achieved; distinguished as:

1. implementation measurement: is concerned with whether project inputs (financial, human capital, and material resources) and activities (tasks or processes) are in compliance with design budgets, execution plan, and schedules;
2. results measurement: focuses on the achievement of project objectives (i.e., whether actual results are achieved as planned or targeted). In our context, results are measured at three levels: outputs, outcomes and impacts.

PHASE 1:

1.1. Formulating objectives

The first step in project performance measurement involves clarifying the project's objectives, by defining precise and measurable statements concerning results to be achieved: (outputs, outcomes, & impacts) and identifying the means (inputs & activities) to be employed to meet those objectives.

It is however important to note that, it might be difficult to formulate project objectives without a defined project goal: ultimate development or social changes to which the project contributes; the long-term social changes, we wish, want or desire to make in the society.

- Let us compare project goal with a walk that a person must take to reach a particular place. If the person does not know the exact direction to aim for, they will not know in which direction to walk towards.
- The same applies to any project, if a project developer does not define the project's goal beforehand, they might not be able to set precise and measurable objectives.

E.g.: the project goal is to build the capacity of young & adults' learners to advocate for menstrual health education in country-based education and training policy.

1.2. Conceptualizing project objectives

Objectives are thus conceptualized in a manner that allows developer and partners or beneficiaries to work toward achieving project goal at three levels: knowledge, skills, attitudes:

- What knowledge, skills and attitudes do project partners or beneficiaries need to acquire to achieve the long-term social changes they wish, want or desire to make in the society?
- By which means (tasks, activities or processes) are partners or beneficiaries able to acquire those needed knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve expect long-term social changes?
 - By taking a part in tasks, activities or processes, observable behaviour indicates what partners or beneficiaries can do to show that they have mastered the objectives.
 - By using outputs, measurable behaviour indicates how well partners or beneficiaries can organize, explain, or create to apply the objectives.

E.g.: at the end of the project, participants:

1. are familiar with menstrual health education framework and relevant educational materials and tools to apply it in practice. (knowledge)
 - ✓ this objective can only be met, if through experiential learning, a critical thinking learning activity on menstrual health education and relevant educational materials and tools to apply it in practice is held during a training course.

2. are able to create or develop effective menstrual health education training materials and tools. (skill).
 - ✓ this objective can only be met, if through experiential learning, a production learning activity on creating menstrual health education training materials and tools is held during a training course.
3. are able to apply created menstrual health education training materials and tools in practice. (knowledge & skill).
 - ✓ this objective can only be met, if through problem-based learning, a problem-solving learning activity on menstrual health education is held during a community-based intervention.
4. have a positive approach to menstrual health awareness and advocate enough to initiate period conversation in the society (attitude).
 - ✓ this objective can only be met, if through collaborative learning, an interactivity focus learning activity on menstrual health awareness and advocate engages young & adult audiences in an online period awareness campaign.

1.3. Logical Framework Matrix

The Project Logical Framework is an analytical tool used for conceptualizing project objectives. The logframe tool is built on planning concept of a hierarchy of levels that link project inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

There is thus an assumed cause-and-effect relationship among these elements, with those at the lower level of the hierarchy contributing to the attainment of those above:

1. inputs are used to undertake project activities that lead to the delivery of outputs;
2. outputs are used to undertake post-activities events that lead to the attainment of outcomes;
3. outcomes are used to undertake actions that lead to impacts, which contributes to project goal.

The analytical structure of the logframe outlines the causal means-ends relationships of how a project is expected to contribute to objectives. It is then possible to configure indicators for monitoring implementation and results around such a structure:

- a. displaying the project design logic (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts);
- b. identifying indicators and result targets that are used to measure progress and achievements,
- c. identifying the means of verifying progress, achievements and performance; and
- d. assessing risks about external factors beyond project management's control that may affect the achievement of results.

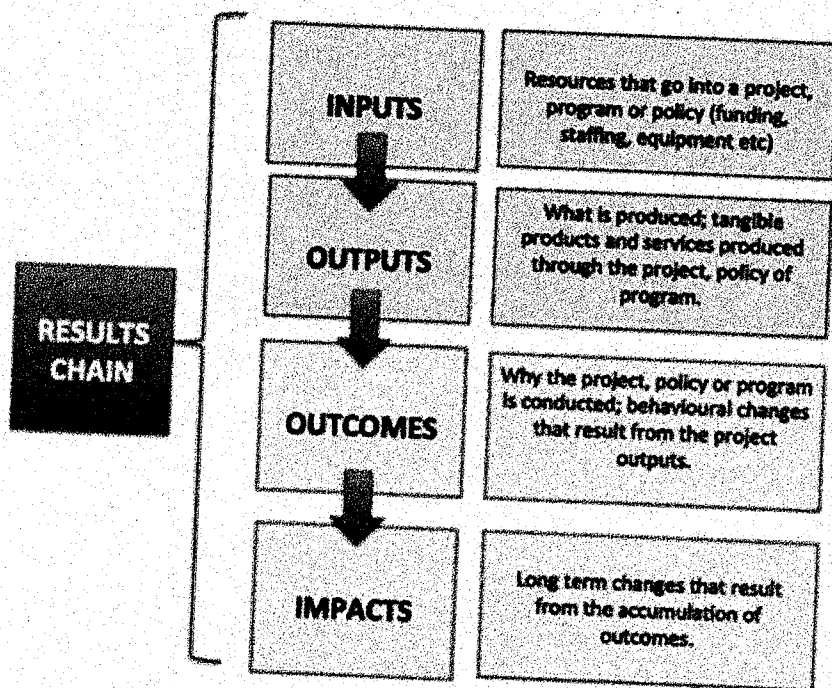
1.3. Logical Framework Matrix

Narrative Summary	Objectively, verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impacts: Build the capacity of youth organisations to integrate menstrual health education in their overall youth work.	Impacts indicators > Goal		
Outcomes:	Outcomes indicators > Impacts		
Outputs:	Output indicators > Outcomes.		
Activities:			
Inputs:			

The definitions below attempt to capture some of these common aspects:

- **Inputs:** financial, material and human resources (e.g., funds, staff time, equipment, buildings, etc.) used in conjunction with activities to produce project outputs.
- **Activities:** concrete interventions or tasks that project personnel undertake to transform inputs into outputs.
- **Outputs:** products and services produced by the project and provided to partner organizations or direct beneficiaries. Outputs are the most immediate results of activities.
- **Outcomes:** intermediate effects or consequences of project outputs on partner organizations or indirect beneficiaries: e.g. responses to and satisfaction with products or services, short to medium-term behavioural or other changes. Their timeframe is such that the outcomes are achieved within the project life cycle.
- **Impact:** ultimate development goal to which the project contributes, generally speaking they are long-term changes in the society, economy, or environment of the partner organisations. This is the most difficult to attribute to specific project activities. Their timeframe is such that they may not be achieved or measurable within the project life cycle, but only expect.

In all of our projects, we have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate their management, implementation and progress towards outputs, outcomes and impacts. The figure below shows the "results chain" as our assessment work is designed to cover the link between project and outcomes to meeting impacts.



PHASE 2:

2.1. Developing indicators

Once project objectives and the means for achieving them have been clarified, the next step is to develop indicators for measuring performance at each level in order to determine whether progress is being made towards implementing activities and achieving objectives.

Whereas an *objective* is a precise statement of what result is to be achieved, an *indicator* specifies exact observable and measurable milestones to be measured along a scale or dimension but does not indicate the direction of change.

E.g.: declines in period-based discrimination rates.

2.2. Types of indicators

The logframe provides the structure around which performance measures or indicators are typically constructed. Different types of indicators correspond to each level of the logframe hierarchy:

1. **Input indicators:** measure quantities of physical, human or financial resources provided to the project.
E.g.: resources used on project design and planning, number of staff-months of technical or training assistance provided, levels of financial contributions from the donors, contributions from partners or beneficiaries, etc.
2. **Process indicators:** measure what happens during implementation; expressed as a set of completion or milestone events taken from an execution plan and measure the time and costs required to complete them.
E.g.: the dates by which project tasks, activities or processes are to be completed, costs of developing project activities, training materials, intellectual outputs, or accommodation, etc.

3. **Output indicators:** track the most immediate results of the project; that is, physical quantities of product produced, or services delivered, and the percent, or numbers of beneficiaries that have access to or are served by the project.
E.g.: quantity of training materials or intellectual outputs produced, the percent or number of beneficiaries who attended or were trained in a project activity.
4. **Outcome indicators:** measure direct to medium-term effects of project outputs on partner organizations or beneficiaries such as the initial changes in their skills, attitudes, practices or behaviours, preferences or satisfaction with product or service quality by beneficiaries.
E.g.: trainees who transferred skills to their peers, beneficiaries attending community-based interventions who developed new attitudes on, percent of beneficiaries satisfied with quality of training materials or intellectual outputs and the rate of satisfaction.
5. **Impact indicators:** measure the longer-term and more widespread development changes in the society, social, economic or environmental to which the project contributes.
E.g.: integrate menstrual health education in education and training policy, reductions in percent of the population with socially and culturally stigmatised period behaviours, declines in period-based discrimination rates, reductions in child marriage rates, etc.

Implementation indicators: track a project's progress at operational levels.

E.g.: whether inputs and processes are proceeding according to execution plan, schedules and within budgets.

Results indicators: measure performance in terms of achieving project objectives.

E.g.: results at the output, outcome and impact levels.

Another type of indicator, referred to as *risk indicators*, are those that measure social, cultural, economic or political risk factors or assumptions, which are outside the control of the project management, but might affect the project's success or failure. Monitoring these types of data is thus important for analysing why things are or are not working as expected.

2.2. Addressing key performance criteria

Performance measures may also address a number of specific performance criteria, these usually involve making comparisons of ratios, percentages, etc.:

1. **Economy:** compares physical inputs with their costs.
2. **Efficiency:** compares outputs with their costs.
3. **Productivity:** compares outputs with physical inputs.
4. **Quality level:** compares quality of outputs to technical standards.
5. **Satisfaction level:** compares outputs (products/services) with beneficiaries' expectations.
6. **Effectiveness:** compares actual results with planned results.
7. **Cost-effectiveness:** compares outcomes or impacts and their costs.
8. **Attribution:** compares net outcomes/impacts caused by project to gross outcomes/impacts.
9. **Sustainability:** compares results during project lifecycle to results continuing afterwards.
10. **Relevance:** relates project-level objectives to broader country or agency goals.

Based on project type, it is important to place different emphases on these criteria, noting that, the performance criteria selected reflects the primary purposes of performance management system.

E.g.:

1. if a key aim is to reduce costs (savings), then it is common to focus on cost measures, such as economy and efficiency.
2. If the main objective is accountability, it is usual to focus on output measures, which are directly within the control of project managers.
3. If management improvement is the objective, emphasis is thus on beneficiaries' satisfaction, or effectiveness measures.

Though some of these dimensions to performance may present potential conflicts:

E.g.:

1. achieving higher quality outputs may involve increased costs; efficiency might be improved at the expense of effectiveness, etc.

Using a variety of these different indicators may help balance these tensions and avoid some of the distortions and disincentives that focusing too exclusively on a single performance criteria might create.