



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

**Invitation to agencies and programmes to join the DCED results measurement initiative**

27 January 2009

Dear colleague,

Every development agency finds growing pressure to report the results that it is achieving. There are of course many responses to this pressure, including more focus on logframes and baseline surveys. But in practice, these tools are not helping managers to quantify their achievements, particularly where programmes are aiming to have market-wide impacts. As a result, the achievements of the best agencies and programmes go unrecognised, and I am writing to you now with a possible solution to this urgent problem.

Last year, the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) worked with several PSD programmes in Asia, to identify the minimum elements required for the credible measurement of results. These elements are becoming 'just good practice', but few programmes have yet achieved them all; they include:

- Articulating the specific logic of the programme in a graphical format, so that programme staff can be clear about the anticipated sequence of events, from inputs through to impacts (often referred to as the causal or impact model, or results chain)
- Identifying those indicators that need to be measured, to validate each necessary step in the impact model; the DCED approach also includes universal indicators of impact at the enterprise level: scale, and changes in incomes and jobs (to allow impacts to be added across programmes)
- Good measurement practices (e.g. avoiding leading questions, having adequate sample sizes, etc.)
- Demonstrating attribution of the measured changes, to the programme
- Capturing wider change in the system or market
- Relating impacts to programme costs

Some of these aspects can only be addressed by programme managers; articulating the programme logic, in particular, cannot really be delegated to a PR or M&E professional. The DCED approach therefore relies on programme staff to measure results that they are achieving; credibility is assured by an external M&E professional, who audits the measurement process used by the programme. This initiative therefore supplements the work of M&E professionals (who often lack the data they need to do their work) rather than replacing it.

The DCED's work with its partners in 2008 demonstrated that the approach is both feasible, and in demand in the field. During 2009, therefore, the Committee wishes to involve more programmes in this initiative – coming from any 'branch' of PSD (reform of the business environment, value chain development, M4P, etc.) You are invited to apply; experience

suggests that this approach will save you time, and will help to enhance your effectiveness and focus. It will also support you to measure results in a credible way, so that you get the credit you deserve - and of course it signals that you are particularly interested in measuring those results. Finally, it will introduce you to a community of like-minded people, for mutual support and learning.

What is involved? We propose an introductory workshop of 1.5 days, in your region, in April, to 'walk you through' the approach; there will be no charge for this event, although you will need to cover your own travel costs. Alternatively, we can propose a consultant who is already familiar with the event, to visit your programme (at your expense). Following this, we recommend that you conduct a brief 'gap analysis', to identify which elements need further attention.

We will organise a training course, probably in early June, for staff of participating programmes; the course will last 3-4 days. Again, the cost of this to you will be essentially staff time and travel. M & E consultants are also warmly invited to participate in this course; there will be an extra day for those training to become auditors.

For those programmes that believe they are ready, audits will then be conducted in September or October; the DCED will nominate the auditors, although the programme will need to cover the cost of that person as a consultant (typically for 2 days in-country). Towards the end of the year, a larger Seminar will be held, to feature participating programmes, and to further expand the community of practice.

Ultimately, the vision is that these essential elements in the results process can become a Standard - and that programmes complying with the Standard will be widely accepted as being better than those that don't. Some donors might even require compliance, as a condition of funding. You can find more information and background here: <http://www.enterprise-development.org/page/measuring-and-reporting-results>

In the meantime, though, please note that the focus during this year will be on the methodology for measuring results, rather than on the results themselves; the DCED will not publish information about the results being achieved by individual programmes.

If you are interested to join this exciting initiative, please write to us at [Results@Enterprise-Development.org](mailto:Results@Enterprise-Development.org), giving us your contact details (including phone number), and a brief description of your programme. Any additional comments or thoughts are also welcome. We look forward to hearing from you!

With our best wishes,

Jim Tanburn, Coordinator  
DCED