

Tools and Resources for ITPP Projects

Results Based Management (RBM) in International Development

Background

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) launched its Corporate Renewal Initiative in 1994 in response to public demands on the Canadian federal government for more accountability on the use of tax dollars. Within this context, two years later CIDA issued its Results Based Management (RBM) Policy Statement and set in place key terms, basic concepts and implementation principles for development assistance programs supported across the Agency.

The process of developing and implementing the RBM approach has been one of learning and adjustment. As CIDA's partner organizations became more familiar with RBM applications, confidence grew in working with a results-oriented approach, and an increasing appreciation of its logic and benefits developed amongst users.

Within the International Twinning Partnership Program (ITPP), our RBM skills and resources are evolving and changing to better describe and guide the program and projects, and to provide more accurate information on results.

This document presents an overview of results based management within the context of the International Twinning Partnership Program and includes attention to new RBM terminology introduced by CIDA in 2008.

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Sources: RBM Tools at CIDA: A How-To Guide, [http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Public_Engagement/\\$file/RBM-How-to-Guide-e.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Public_Engagement/$file/RBM-How-to-Guide-e.pdf)

RBM Principles – Focus on Developmental Results

In times past, development projects often were based on an activity-orientation, with planning, reporting and achievements determined and described at the level of activities (*for example* – events conducted and numbers participating). Through the introduction of RBM, the emphasis shifted from the completion of activities to the achievement of developmental results.

Within the RBM approach, a **result** is defined as a change in state or behaviour that can be observed, described and measured in some way, and for which the cause can be identified. This definition implies that the change is brought about because of some action or conditions that the project has put in place. *For example* – reduction of soil erosion and improved soil fertility achieved through analysis, training, demonstrations, and discussion.

Results Based Management is based on five principles:

Partnership – For RBM to succeed, all major stakeholders should be involved in defining expected results and providing feedback on progress.

Accountability – All partners share in the responsibility for achieving the defined results.

Transparency – Results and the indicators that will be used to measure progress are clearly defined as is the process for monitoring, reporting and making necessary changes.

Simplicity – The approach focuses on a limited number of results within a specific timeframe. Indicators to measure progress should also be easy to understand and simple to apply.

Learning by doing – Monitor progress regularly, measure results, learn from experience, and make changes as necessary to improve performance.

The RBM process involves:

- ▶ Identifying specific **measurable** changes (**results**) that the project will achieve during the time it operates;
- ▶ Defining **inputs** and activities that will lead to the identified results;
- ▶ Identifying the **risks** that may hinder achievement of results and determining how those risks will be managed;
- ▶ Monitoring the **indicators**/measurements of results regularly, and adjusting inputs and activities as needed to ensure that the desired results are achieved;
- ▶ Reporting on results (progress, achievements) and the **lessons learned**.

RBM – Key Terms & Concepts

The RBM approach plans for and manages change from short, medium and long-term perspectives and is characterized by cause and effect relationships. This strategy is reflected in the following key RBM terms.

Results – The RBM approach is focused on results (also known as Outputs and Outcomes). A result is defined as a change in state or behaviour that can be observed, described and measured in some way, and for which the cause can be identified. This anticipated change is articulated in a *results statement*. At every level, the results statements:

- ▶ are simply worded
- ▶ contain only one idea
- ▶ are developed in a participatory, inclusive fashion with those who will be involved and/or affected
- ▶ include a directional verb (increased, improved, strengthened, reduced...)
- ▶ describe who, what, where
- ▶ can be measured
- ▶ are realistic, achievable and relevant

For examples and guidelines on developing effective results statements at each level of the Logic Model see RBM Tools at CIDA: A How-to Guide.

Results build in a pyramidal manner from the initial level of Outputs (many), to Immediate Outcomes (several), to Intermediate Outcomes (few), to the one final Ultimate Outcome in a series of cause and effect relationships known as the *results chain*, or the Logic Model.

Outputs (*project-level, very short-term, direct products*) – are the anticipated direct products or services resulting from the planned activities of the project. As the time frame for achieving output results is short and the connection between activities and outputs is relatively direct, project partners have a high level of control around attaining output results. If an activity is not producing the desired results, or if external conditions are preventing results from happening as planned, that will be observed quickly and adjustments can be made. Often Outputs are things, or events that can be counted (for example, 40 farmers trained in compost preparation; or five demonstration sites with compost application established). Output result statements are written as completed actions. Collectively, several outputs will contribute to achieving an immediate outcome for the project.

Immediate Outcomes (*project-level, short-term/annual*) – are changes that are directly attributable to a collection of completed project outputs. Immediate level results flow logically from the activities and outputs. They represent the change in access, ability, or skills brought about by the provision of goods or services created through the activities. For example: training in new crops and demonstration sites (Outputs) result in more farmers with the knowledge and ability to apply new techniques (Immediate Outcome). Projects should aim to have a manageable number of Immediate Outcomes (five to eight is usually a good range) over the project term.

Intermediate Outcomes (*Program-wide, medium-term*) – are changes that are expected to logically occur after one or more immediate outcomes have been achieved. In terms of time frame, intermediate outcomes usually are achieved in the later stages of a program. Intermediate Outcome statements are conceived so that they are realistically achievable within the time period, budget allocation and intended reach of the project. For these reasons, the number of Intermediate Outcomes is limited, usually three to five Outcomes are a manageable total. They represent changes in behaviour or practices amongst beneficiaries, and the changes must be measurable. For example: farmers with increased abilities and knowledge (Immediate Outcome) are practicing several different new and effective approaches in response to changing climate conditions (Intermediate Outcome).

Ultimate Outcome (Program-wide, long-term) – is the highest level of change that can be reasonably attributed to a program initiative in a cause and effect manner. The Ultimate Outcome usually represents the *raison d'être* of a program and takes the form of a sustainable change of state among beneficiaries. The Ultimate Outcome is the result of the collective Intermediate Outcomes. For example: a strong scientific organization contributing to agricultural policy (Intermediate Organizational Outcome), coupled with farmers practicing effective responses to changing climate conditions (Intermediate Environmental Outcome) results in greater food security, enhanced human health and well-being (Ultimate Outcome).

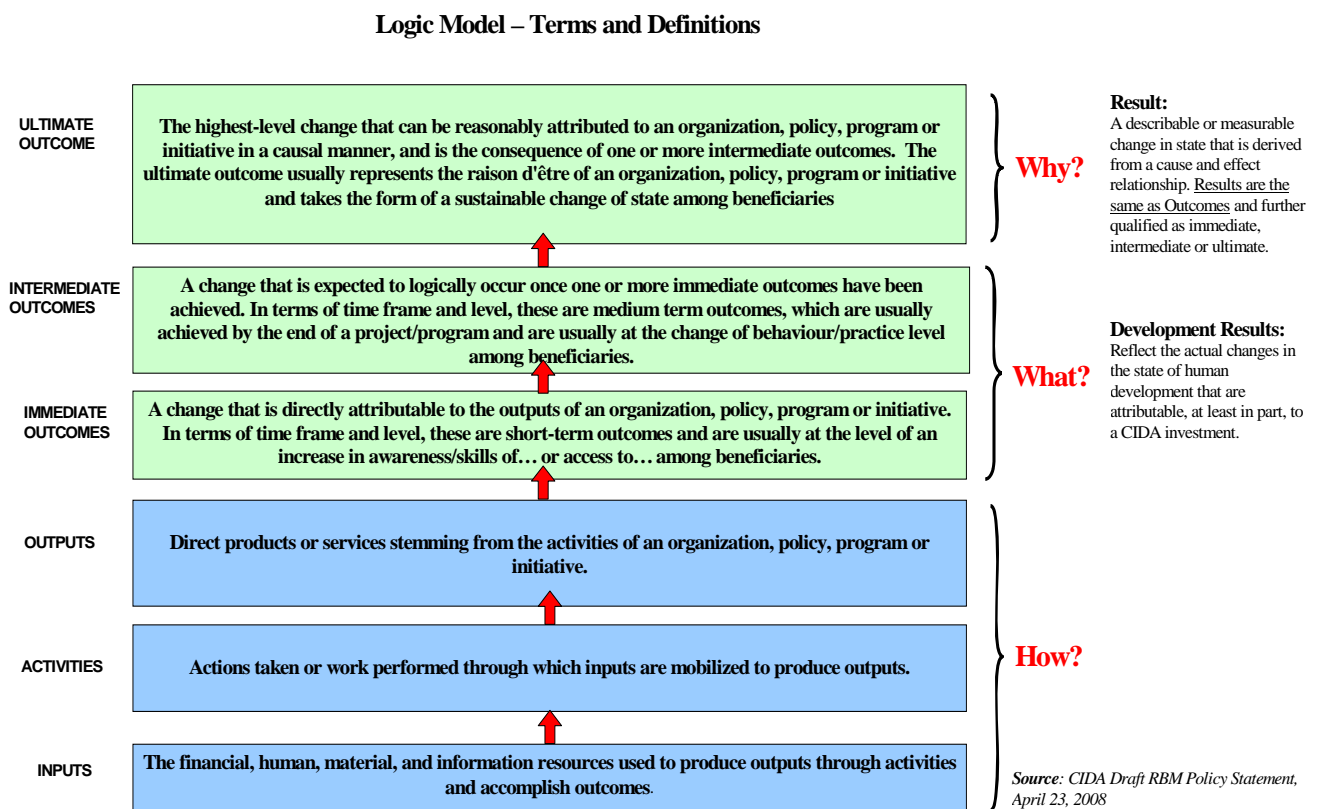
The Ultimate Outcome and Intermediate Outcomes for the 2011 ITPP are presented in a following section on the ITPP Logic Model.

The Logic Model

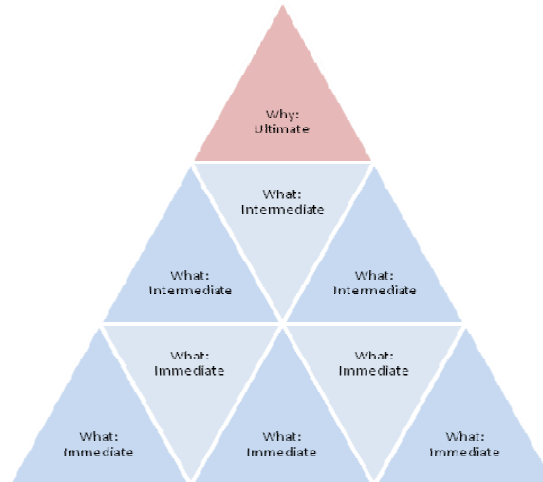
For further details, please refer to: Developing Goals and Outcomes, prepared for the 2009 International Partners' Meeting by Dinah Cepelis.

The causal or logical relationships between the levels of a given initiative are presented in an outline called the Logic Model (sometimes referred to as the “results chain”). The Logic Model is the key tool in managing an RBM-based initiative.

The Logic Model is divided into six levels with each level representing a distinct step in the cause and effect relationships within a program or project initiative:



The Logic Model is like a pyramid – it gets smaller the closer you move towards the highest level. Each level has fewer components with all working towards one Ultimate Outcome focus for the program.



The bottom three levels (not shown) – *inputs, activities, outputs* – address the “**how**” of an initiative and may be composed of many types of inputs (human resources, materials, transport, financial), numerous activities, and a range of outputs.

Designing a Logic Model that will serve as an effective management tool over the life-cycle of a development project is a participatory process and one that benefits significantly through the active involvement of beneficiaries and stakeholders at all levels.

Steps to Develop a Logic Model

The following outlines the general steps and stages in the preparation of a Logic Model. For more detail, helpful hints and examples see RBM Tools at CIDA: A How-to Guide.

- ▶ Identify the ultimate beneficiaries and stakeholders
- ▶ Ensure that the right people are at the table
- ▶ Identify the ultimate outcome
- ▶ Identify the main activities for partners
- ▶ Identify outputs for each activity
- ▶ Identify logical outcomes for immediate and intermediate levels
- ▶ Identify linkages
- ▶ Validate with stakeholders and partners
- ▶ Write the narrative text to illustrate linkages and explain the cause and effect relationships of the logic model (Refer to AIC Partnership Project Proposal Documentation)

ITPP Logic Model – Linking Program to Projects through RBM

For the AIC International Twinning Partnership Program, CIDA funds AIC for a *program* approach. This means that all ITPP projects must work within and support program-level results that are in accord with project-level results.

At the 2009 IPM held in Sri Lanka, representatives from all ITPP projects worked together to develop the top two levels of a Logic Model for the next Program. Participants articulated the Program's Ultimate Outcome, and four Program-wide Intermediate Outcomes:

- ▶ **Organizational**
- ▶ **Environmental**
- ▶ **Economic**
- ▶ **Social**

It was agreed that all projects would work towards the Organizational Intermediate Outcome and at least one of the other three Intermediate Outcomes.

Through preparing their proposals with the participation of beneficiaries and stakeholders, partners developed the project-level Immediate Outcomes to be achieved in support of each of the Program-wide Intermediate Outcomes relevant to their work.

ITPP 2011 Ultimate Outcome (*Long term & Program-wide*)

Building on global agricultural partnerships through scientific and financial support and technological awareness, the Program strengthens capabilities of professional agricultural organizations in program countries through effective succession planning and engagement of women and youth to achieve development results with poor rural communities and vulnerable groups and to address in-country/domestic issues of:

- ▶ Promotion of greater food security, enhancing human health and well-being;
- ▶ Poverty alleviation and securing livelihoods;
- ▶ Strategies for improving land and water conditions, and for agricultural mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Organizational Outcome (*Medium term & Program-wide*)

Agricultural organizations participating in the ITPP achieve enhanced scientific and organizational capacity and gain greater recognition by stakeholders as leaders in developing and transferring Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) in land resource and environmental management and agricultural production with particular attention given to the needs of the rural poor and vulnerable groups.

Environmental Outcome (Medium term & Program-wide)

Through greater recognition of environmental issues, stakeholders in project countries increase adoption of policies and land use and farming practices that improve soil and water conditions and mitigate or adapt to climate change.

Economic Outcome (Medium term & Program-wide)

Greater economic resiliency and economic sustainability of rural households and communities participating in ITPP projects are achieved through increased skills (i.e. skills that improve economic capacity that are facilitated by society members) and participation in effective income generation systems and strategies.

Social Outcome (Medium term & Program-wide)

Rural households and communities participating in ITPP projects achieve greater equality between men and women, improved democratic processes, and increased capacity for full participatory decision-making.

Performance Measurement – Indicators & Baseline Data

Performance measurement is another important element of the RBM approach. Performance measurement is an on-going assessment of the changes (results) occurring through the project's endeavours. These changes (results) are measured by performance indicators which are reviewed against baseline data.

Performance Indicators

An indicator is a means to measure actual results against planned or expected results in terms of quality, quantity and/or timeliness. In measuring results, two types of indicators can be used: **quantitative** indicators that have a numerical value, and **qualitative** indicators that reflect perceptions, judgments or attitudes. Whenever possible, it is helpful to have both quantitative and qualitative indicators to ensure the validity of findings. For example, a quantitative indicator could be the number of women on the organization's executive body, while a qualitative indicator could be the women executives' perceptions of their ability to influence the work of the organization.

A **performance indicator** is an evidence-based unit of measurement that specifies what is to be measured along a scale or dimension. An indicator is neutral – it does not embed a direction or target. *For example*, in working towards an outcome of “Improved organizational governance”, indicators could include: representation of gender/age/minority groups, organizational assessment done, structures in place, number of participants at zonal meetings, etc. Note: Several indicators are used to assess the progress in achieving each Outcome.

Indicators also can be either **direct** or **proxy**. Example – if the desired change is to improve nutritional standards within a household, one direct indicator could be the frequency of consumption of green vegetables in that household, while a proxy indicator could be the change in space allocated to green vegetables in the household's garden.

The criteria for a strong performance indicator are:

Validity – does the performance indicator actually measure the result?

Reliability – is the performance indicator a consistent measure over time?

Sensitivity – when the result changes will the performance indicator be sensitive to those changes?

Utility – will the information produced by the performance indicator be useful for decision-making and learning?

Affordability – can the project afford to collect the information (personnel, time, cost)

For further details and examples, please refer to: Developing Goals and Outcomes, prepared for the 2009 International Partners' Meeting by Dinah Cepelis.

Baseline Data

To be able to measure change effectively over time, reliable baseline data is essential. If the starting point is unknown, the determination of change will be unreliable.

Baseline data is the set of conditions existing at the outset of the intervention. It is the quantitative and qualitative data collected to produce a profile of existing conditions. The baseline data sets the starting point of the scale or dimension that will be assessed by the selected indicators to determine change over the lifetime of the project. A baseline is needed for each performance indicator.

Using the baseline data, project partners/participants/stakeholders determine **targets** (a value for a performance indicator) to be accomplished by a future date. A target is what the project would like to achieve within a certain period of time in relation to one of its expected results (outcomes). Targets provide for tangible and meaningful discussion with beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners.

The baseline data for ITPP projects normally includes documentation on the partner organizations – number of members, demographics of members (including sex disaggregated data), active committees, governance structure, participation by membership, professional development opportunities – as well as baseline data for each of the project outcome areas.

Baseline Data – Points to Note:

- ▶ Baseline data is collected at the beginning of the project during the design phase or during year one of a multi-year agreement.
- ▶ The type of baseline data required is determined by the needs and focus of the project.
- ▶ Information/data can come from secondary sources when available (i.e. it may be collected from existing research or documents published by, or data collected by, other organizations, government agencies, or donors).
- ▶ The source of data is important to the credibility of reported results – try to incorporate data from a variety of sources to validate findings.
- ▶ Techniques for data collection may vary and include a range of informal and formal methods (e.g., surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, analysis of records and documents, comparative study).
- ▶ The cost of collecting baseline data is planned in the project budget.
- ▶ The collection of baseline data is relevant to the specific area where the project is taking place.
- ▶ The criteria for selecting performance indicators apply also to the determination of baseline data.

Frequency considers the *timing* of data collection. Frequency describes and answers: How often will information about each indicator be collected and/or validated? And when will information about a performance indicator be collected – as part of ongoing performance management and reporting (quarterly, semi-annually), or periodically for baseline, mid-term and final evaluations?

Responsibility looks at who is responsible for collecting and/or validating the data. Where appropriate, responsibility can be shared with a variety of participants including beneficiaries and other agencies. For the ITPP, AIC is ultimately responsible for tracking the overall performance of the Program and for reporting on that performance on a semi-annual basis to CIDA, which is the funding agency. AIC depends on timely and reliable reports from the project coordinators to fulfill this responsibility, and project coordinators depend on reliable input from those vested with the responsibility of collecting and assessing data in each project locale.

Risk analysis determines how likely it is that the assumed conditions for success will **not** be present. During the project planning stage, in collaboration with stakeholders and beneficiaries, partners determine the potential challenges and risks that may be faced in implementing the project and in achieving the expected results. The types of risks and the strategies that will be used to overcome or mitigate risks are described in a Risk Assessment Register, which is prepared during the project planning stage.

Throughout the project duration, risks are monitored and measures are taken to minimize the effect of increased risk or changes in conditions. The Risk Assessment

Register is updated regularly. The Risk Assessment Register is available on the AIC website or as a Word document by contacting iadp@aic.ca.

Bringing it all together – Performance Measurement Framework

With indicators and baseline data determined, the next step is to develop a plan for maintaining information on performance – What, How, When, Who.

This plan is known as a **Performance Measurement Framework** and is developed at the beginning of the project. The Framework documents the major elements of the monitoring system for the project and will ensure that comparable performance information is collected on a regular and timely basis.

The Performance Framework helps partners to develop a well-designed, realistic and objectively-described project, and guides planning, monitoring and reporting on the basis of results.

The main components are organized in a matrix format as in the following example:

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline Data	Targets	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Frequency	Responsibility	Reporting Cumulative Results (Outcomes)	Reporting Variance (changes in plans, unexpected results)
IMPACT INTER. OUTCOMES IMM. OUTCOMES	Indicators for every result	Established at onset of project	Established once baseline has been determined	Various sources based on data to be collected	How will data be collected	Quarterly? Semi-annually? Mid-term? Final?	Identify who, specifically, is responsible for collecting and/or validating data	Semi-annually to AIC	Report any changes in plans, adjustment of results, targets, and any unexpected results both + and -

The Performance Measurement Framework used by ITPP projects can be viewed in pdf format on the AIC website. A Word version of the Framework is available by contacting iadp@aic.ca.

RBM Resources

This document provides an overview to the concepts of Results Based Management and how they are applied within the ITPP. However, it will be through the process of planning and implementing a project using the RBM approach that your skills and confidence will develop.

The AIC-ITPP supports RBM training for all ITPP partners. ITPP International Partners' Meetings include RBM update sessions and sharing experiences amongst partners. Project-specific RBM sessions can be arranged during professional exchange visits.

In programming countries, CIDA occasionally conducts RBM training for projects that receive funding through CIDA-supported programs, such as the ITPP. AIC can facilitate contact with the CIDA Development Officer responsible for your country to explore training possibilities.

In addition, the CIDA website provides a number of resource materials:

Results Based Management in CIDA, <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/NIC-31595014-KEF>

RBM Tools at CIDA: A How-To Guide, [http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Public_Engagement/\\$file/RBM-How-to-Guide-e.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUIImages/Public_Engagement/$file/RBM-How-to-Guide-e.pdf)

AIC has developed other ITPP-specific support materials including:
Developing Goals and Outcomes: IPM 2009 Reference Document
ITPP Performance Measurement Framework
Risk Assessment Register

Balancing a Results Based Management approach with a people-based approach takes skill and sensitivity. Keeping it simple and meaningful will go far in generating participation in the process and in achieving planned results.