



RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Harmonizing RBM concepts
and approaches for improved
development results at country level

October 2011



**UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**



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This handbook development exercise was spearheaded by the Results-based Management (RBM) Task Team of the United Nations Development Group working group on programming issues. The team was co-chaired by United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund and included the RBM focal points: United Nations Development Programme (Abdul Hannan, Shane Sheils, Patrick Tiefenbacher), UNICEF (Paulette Nichols, L.N. Balaji), UNFPA (Farah Usmani) the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS - UNAIDS (Dominique Mathiot), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (S.K.Guha), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Clare Sycamore), the United Nations World Food Programme (Kofi Owusu-Teiku) and the United Nations System Staff College (Ritsu Nacken-Morino). The team provided overall guidance, developed the scope and terms of reference for the exercise, made specific review comments, provided background documentation and references as well as drafted selected sections. The final unedited draft of the handbook was endorsed by the RBM Task Team members in October 2010.

The draft of the RBM Handbook was prepared by Francoise Coupal, President, Mosaic International, Canada through a consultancy supported by the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO). Support from DOCO (Eiko Narita, John Apruzzese) for the RBM handbook development exercise is recognized.

The draft handbook was reviewed by field colleagues from selected Resident Coordinator offices. These include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania, Turkey, Uruguay and Viet Nam. These offices shared the handbook with RBM specialists in their United Nations Country Teams and provided comments from a United Nations Development Assistance Framework and 'Delivering as One' perspective which helped focus the handbook on field issues and needs.

The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) provided detailed comments regarding RBM and evaluation linkages, including harmonization with UNEG norms and standards. The draft handbook has also been shared with members of the United Nations Strategic Planning Network. Review and comments on the draft were also received from UNDAF Programming Network colleagues including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization which have been addressed in this January 2011 revision.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and DOCO coordinated efforts to gather comments and input on the section on RBM in crisis and post-crisis settings through consultations with the undg Executive Committee on Humanitarian Assistance Working Group on Transitions. Thus, this handbook is also envisaged to facilitate harmonization of RBM concepts and approaches in crisis and post-crisis situations.



United Nations Development Group

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Endorsed by the UNDG RBM task Team and incorporating comments from
UNDAF Programming Network review and UNDG meeting of January 2011



ACRONYMS

CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSO	Civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the (OECD)
DAR	Development assistance for refugees
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
IMPP	Integrated Mission Planning Process
ISF	Integrated Strategic Framework
JMAC	Joint Mission Analysis Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MfDR	Managing for development results
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RRA	Rapid rural appraisal
RBM	Results-based management
RC	Resident Coordinator (of the United Nations system)
SWAp	Sector-wide approaches
TCPR	Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WGPI	Working Group on Programming Issues



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INTRODUCTION

In the late 1990s, the United Nations initiated results-based management (RBM) systems¹ to improve the organization's² effectiveness and accountability. A 2008 review of the status of RBM implementation in the United Nations system showed that different RBM definitions and terminology were in use among United Nations organizations. More importantly, these variations reflected a disparity in focus, understanding and perception of RBM within the system.³

The differences made it difficult to communicate on RBM issues using a common language. It is recognized that there is no single 'road map' to RBM and that each organization must adapt RBM to its specificities and mandates in the context of national priorities. Yet, there are also a wide range of commonalities among United Nations organizations that constitute a basis for harmonizing implementation of RBM system-wide.

Harmonization is particularly important in the context of United Nations reform with its emphasis on harmonized support to development activities at country level including joint initiatives/joint programming. In resolution 62/208 regarding the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR), the General Assembly stressed

that, "The purpose of reform is to make the United Nations development system more efficient and effective in its support to developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, on the basis of their national development strategies, and stresses also that reform efforts should enhance organizational efficiency and achieve concrete development results."⁴ United Nations system's value addition at country level to the national strategies and priorities is by support to achieving and sustaining national development results through its normative role and mandate based on the United Nations charter. The commitment of the United Nations system to achieve results in *full alignment with national priorities* is part and parcel of its shared identity and an important aspect of its legitimacy.

¹ See [JIU/REP/2004/6](#), Implementation of RBM in UN Organizations Part 1.

² Reference to United Nations agencies, organizations and system in this document includes all United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, unless stated otherwise.

³ [Results Based Management at country level: Systemic issues that prevent good UNDAF results and the use of UNDAF results information](#), Alex Mackenzie, 2008.

⁴ [TCPR resolution A/RES/62/208](#), paragraph 9. See also paragraph 33, which stresses, "results-based management, accountability and transparency of the United Nations development system are an integral part of sound management."

This RBM Handbook was developed under the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Working Group on Programming Issues (WGPI) in the context of General Assembly resolution 62/208 (and its directives in paragraph 100) to facilitate consistency and harmonization through commonly agreed results-based programme⁵ management concepts and approaches in the United Nations system.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The main purpose of the Handbook is to provide United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies with common ground for supporting national programme planning, implementation monitoring and reporting based on best practices in the RBM field. The Handbook responds to the evolving dynamics of RBM in line with TCPR commitments while taking note of developments within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/ DAC), such as the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

Toward this objective, the Handbook is expected to:

- contribute to harmonizing United Nations business practices around ‘contributing to national efforts for achieving development results’;
- provide a common framework for inter-agency collaboration to support countries in programme design, implementation and managing for development results, including monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
- Increase the quality and effectiveness of United Nations-supported interventions for achieving sustained results.



The Handbook is intended to be succinct, user-friendly and explain concepts and tools in ways that will facilitate operationalizing harmonized RBM approaches. It provides a common denominator for the use of RBM by all United Nations staff members and stakeholders, particularly when developing and implementing their United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Key concepts, principles and terminology are presented along with different frameworks, such as a results matrix, a risk mitigation framework and a results-based reporting framework.

It is not meant to be an exhaustive ‘how to’ manual. Web links and references are included to resources and tools that provide greater detail.

⁵ The focus of this handbook is primarily on RBM in the programme elements. However, the concepts and definitions are also applicable to management aspects. Other UNDG working groups are focusing on financial management and RBM and links with these are provided in the document.



INTRODUCTION (cont'd)

AUDIENCE OF THE HANDBOOK

The Handbook is addressed to all United Nations staff at country, regional and headquarters levels, especially those responsible for RBM planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), managing and reporting. National authorities at various levels (central, local) may also find the Handbook useful as it introduces key RBM concepts, tools and instruments used by the United Nations system in development as well as crisis, transition and post crisis situations. Other national actors, including international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and parties responsible for various elements of programming at country level for achieving developmental results would also find the handbook useful.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK

The RBM Handbook is arranged primarily around the programme cycle. Readers may also refer to [UNDG guidance on the Common Budgetary Framework](#) and other [business operations](#).

Part one provides an overview of RBM, explaining the importance of accountability, national ownership and inclusiveness as a backdrop for undertaking effective RBM. This is discussed in the context of

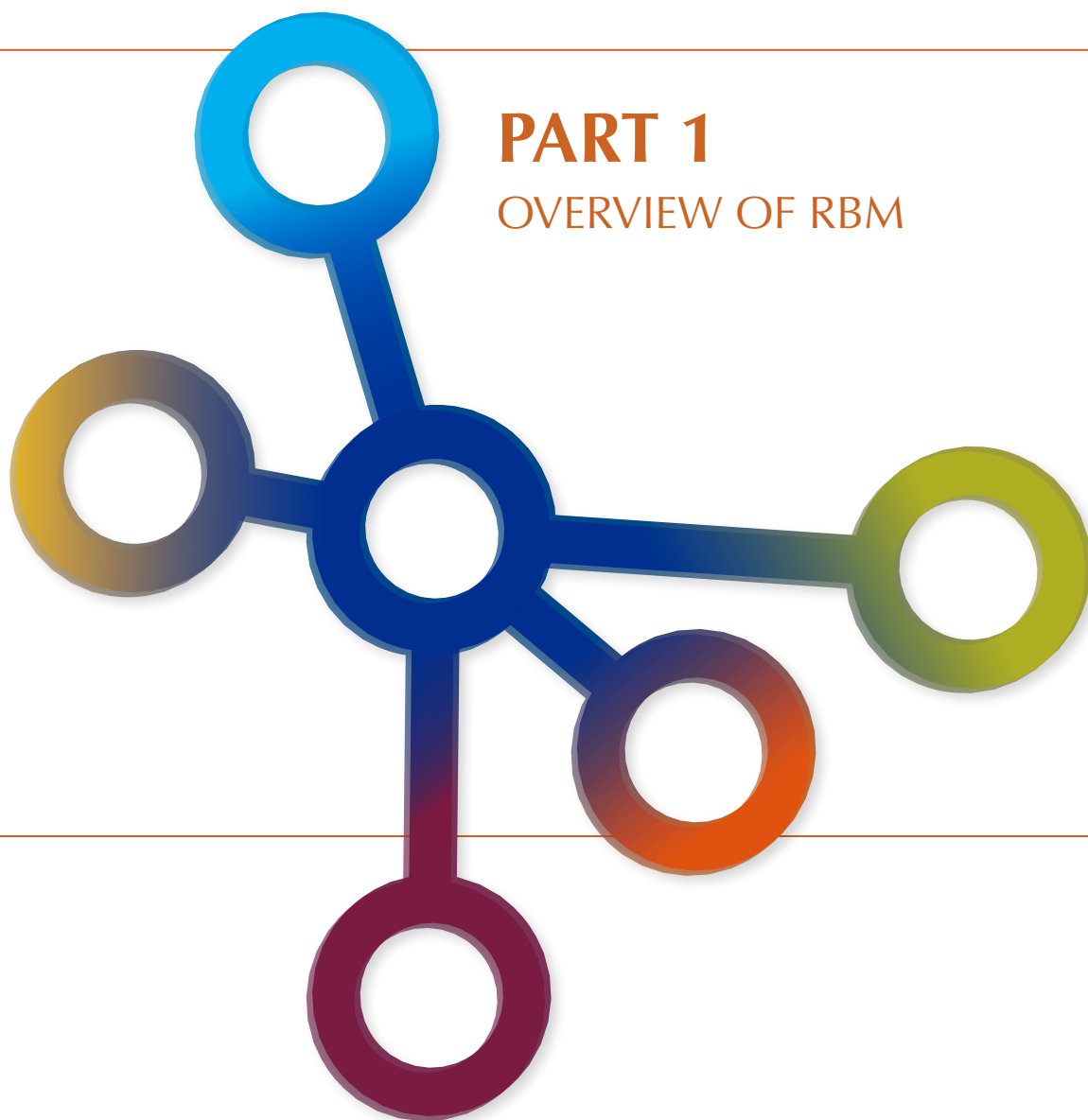
the rapidly changing aid environment with nationally owned and driven results, with the United Nations viewed predominantly as a contributor to achieving national results.

Part two examines RBM in the planning stages. It presents various planning tools, such as the results matrix, the M&E plan, and the risk mitigation strategy framework. Part three explores the importance of the management function of RBM, focusing on managing for results.

Part four presents monitoring as an essential component for assessing results on an on-going basis. Part five presents evaluation and its role in assessing overall performance, while part six encourages the reader to more effectively report on results by focusing particularly on outputs and outcomes rather than activities.

Finally, part seven discusses how to use RBM for learning, adjusting and decision-making. An additional section, part eight, which has been included based on field needs and reviews, highlights critical RBM issues in crisis and post-crisis situations as well as underlining the need for adoption of common RBM approaches and terminology in these settings.





PART 1

OVERVIEW OF RBM

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OVERVIEW OF RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

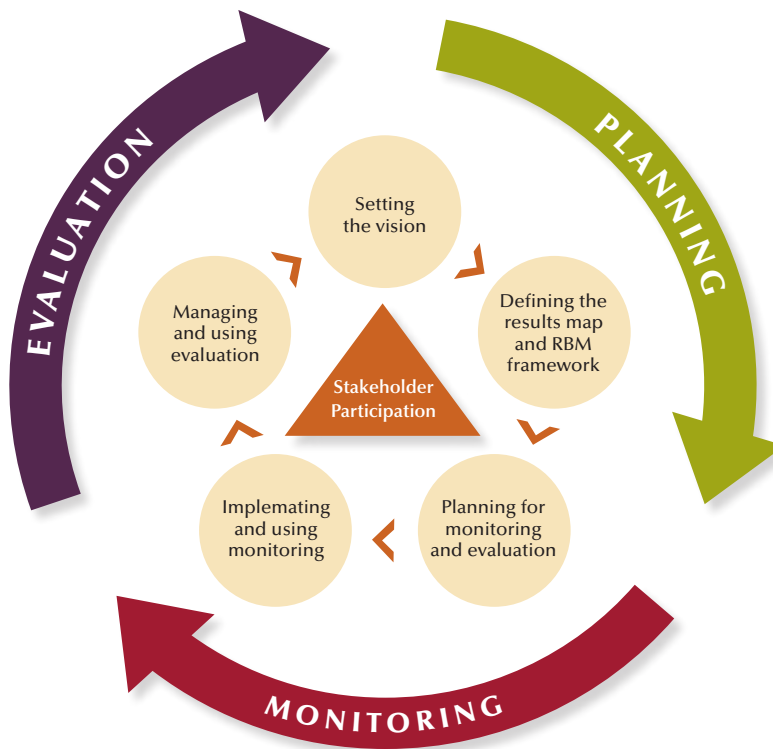
1.1 WHAT IS RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT?

RBM is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and higher level goals or impact). The actors in turn use information and evidence on actual results to inform decision making on the design, resourcing and delivery of programmes and activities as well as for accountability and reporting.

RBM is seen as taking a life-cycle approach (see Figure 1). It starts with elements of planning, such as setting the vision and defining the results framework. Once partners agree to pursue a set

of results through a programme, implementation starts and monitoring becomes an essential task to ensure results are being achieved. M&E provide invaluable information for decision-making and lessons learned for the future.

FIGURE 1: The RBM life-cycle approach



Source: UNDP, [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), 2009.

1.2 KEY RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

THREE KEY PRINCIPLES of RBM are:

- Accountability
- National Ownership
- Inclusiveness

ACCOUNTABILITY

TCPR resolutions have long stressed the need for United Nations development entities to achieve and uphold the highest levels of accountability when supporting partner countries in pursuing national development outcomes.⁶ More recently, a high level symposium of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Development Cooperation Forum discussed actions to improve mutual accountability at global, regional and national levels, as well as its forms and processes.⁷ In addition, the Paris Declaration indicators and related targets include accountability expectations from both national governments and donors.

The concept of mutual accountability has become established as criteria for development and aid effectiveness, although questions remain around actual implications. For the purpose of the UNDAF, mutual accountability is interpreted to mean the respective accountability of parties working together toward shared outcomes. This notion of respective accountability reflects the fact that accountability is not fungible and must, in the final analysis, be attached to a specific actor. Many stakeholders contribute to

UNDAF outcomes and each one of them is accountable for its contribution.

Below are accountability expectations of the various stakeholders at **different levels of engagement** in the context of a sequence of desired results at the national level.⁸

Governments: Governments are the primary owner and executing agents of cooperation programmes and are accountable to their people, through their parliaments, for delivering on national development objectives (sometimes referred to as national goals, priorities or outcomes). Results that occur at this level are primarily attributable to the government, although this may sometimes differ depending on the national context.

United Nations Country Team (UNCT):

United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies as members of the UNCT collaborate with national counterparts to determine the outcomes of the United Nations support in a particular country. The outcomes of United Nations support are framed in the UNDAF or other agreed common document and always derive from the country's national development objectives. UNCT members are accountable to the national partners on the basis of the Basic Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations and the host country on the one hand, and to partner governments funding development activities in the country through the United Nations, on the other.

Individual United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies: At the national level, each of these United Nations entities are

⁶ See, for instance, [GA resolution 62/208](#), paragraph 61, which calls on “the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to further improve their institutional accountability mechanisms.” Paragraph 113 further calls “to continue to harmonize and simplify their rules and procedures, wherever this can lead to a significant reduction in the administrative and procedural burden on the organizations and national partners, bearing in mind the special circumstances of programme countries, and to enhance the efficiency, accountability and transparency of the United Nations development system.”

⁷ [Enhancing Mutual Accountability and Transparency in Development Cooperation](#), ECOSOC. November 2009

⁸ A more macro perspective of accountability is provided in the [UNDG Management and Accountability System](#).

accountable for their specific agreed contribution to the selected UNDAF outcomes as per their agency mandate and comparative advantage in the country. At the same time, each entity is accountable to its own governing body. Upward reporting to governing bodies does not focus on national development performance. Instead, it focuses on the contributions made by individual United Nations agencies to UNDAF results and the influence of these on the national development objectives. The accountability for results of UNCT members to their respective governing bodies is limited to the level at which results can be attributed to the UNCT.

Implementation partners: Various partners including local authorities and civil society organizations have an implementation role and thus have mutual accountability for the delivery of goods and services to the national authorities and the local communities. Typically, the implementing partners are the key to achievement of outputs and activities.

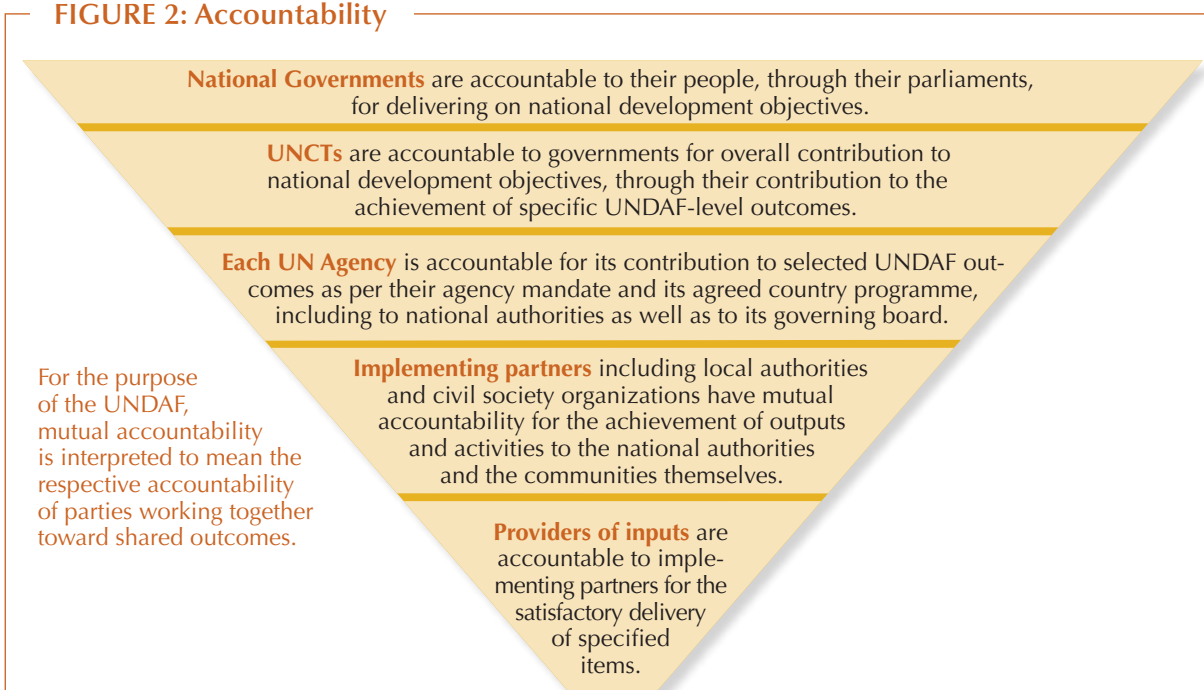
Providers of inputs: Finally, providers of inputs, such as vendors and contractors, are accountable to implementing partners for the satisfactory delivery of specified items.

Figure 2 delineates individual accountability within an overall flow of activity leading toward higher-level outcomes, with accountability established at each level. UNCTs may wish to consider using the figure as a way to clarify accountabilities within their UNDAFs. At each level, there is an expectation that an accountable party has the capacity to undertake its responsibilities to make its contributions to the results. If this capacity is not in place, then either capacity needs to be developed or, where applicable, alternative arrangements sought.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS

As stated in the TCPR 62/208, “each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and ...the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be over-emphasized in the achievement of sustainable

FIGURE 2: Accountability



BOX

1

SIX PRINCIPLES FOR UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TO RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

- 1) *Foster senior-level leadership in RBM in all organizations, with national actors playing a major lead;*
- 2) *Promote and support a results culture* by all actors, including national, sub-national and local governments, civil society organizations, communities, United Nations agencies and partner governments. In particular support:
 - an informed demand for results information;
- supportive country/ national systems, procedures and incentives;
- a results-oriented accountability regime;
- fostering learning and adjusting;
- clear roles and responsibilities for RBM.
- 3) *Build results frameworks* with clearly defined ownership on the part of national actors at all levels, and with the contribution and roles of the United Nations clearly agreed upon;
- 4) *Measure sensibly and develop user-friendly RBM information systems;*
- 5) *Use results* information for learning and managing, as well as for reporting and accountability;
- 6) *Build an adaptive RBM* regime through regular review and updating of frameworks.

Source: John Mayne, Best Practices in Results Based Management: A Review of Experience, July 2007, p.4.

development". To maximize national ownership and sovereignty, programmes and projects of the United Nations must be based on national priorities, strategies and local needs. They are envisaged to complement national efforts. Impact and higher level results are then predominantly owned by national actors with the United Nations contributing to these results. However, national ownership does not mean that the United Nations is not accountable.

A key aim of RBM is to ensure that national ownership goes beyond a few select persons to include as many diverse stakeholders as possible. For this reason, M&E activities and the findings, recommendations and lessons learned should be fully owned by those responsible for the results

and those who can make use of them. More detailed information on the concept of national ownership in relation to common country programming and aid effectiveness is available on the [UNDG website](#).

INCLUSIVENESS (or stakeholder engagement)

Finally, inclusiveness is another important RBM principle. A strong RBM process aims to engage stakeholders (including government institutions at national, sub-national and local levels, as well as civil society organizations and communities themselves) in thinking as openly and creatively as possible about what they want to achieve while encouraging them to organize themselves to achieve what they have agreed upon, including establishing a process to monitor and

evaluate progress and use the information to improve performance. Engagement of all relevant stakeholders in all stages of the programming process maximizes the contribution that the United Nations system can make, through the UNDAF, to the national development process.

Increasing evidence shows that sustainability is more likely when rights-holders are involved in peace-building or development processes from the outset – including during country analysis, defining results and indicators, implementation, and M&E of programmes and projects. One cannot expect rights-holders to be responsible for results and indicators they do not help define, negotiate or agree upon. Stakeholder analysis should consider the mandate and interest of various partners.

1.3 RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT AND MANAGING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

Managing for development results (MfDR) applies the same basic concepts as RBM (planning, monitoring, evaluating and learning) but seeks to keep the focus on development assistance demonstrating real and meaningful results. MfDR is oriented more toward the external environment and results that are important to programme countries and less toward an agency's internal performance.

MfDR is an effort to respond to the growing demand for public accountability in both the developed and developing worlds on how assistance is used, what results are achieved and how appropriate these results are in bringing about desired changes in human development.

An MfDR approach encourages development agencies to focus on building partnerships and collaboration and ensure greater coherence. Similarly, it promotes stronger focus on sustainability through measures that enhance national ownership and capacity development.

RBM approaches have traditionally focused more on internal results and performance of agencies rather than on changes in the development conditions of people. In RBM, like MfDR, 'results' are understood to go beyond management (systems, scorecards, metrics, reporting) and should be dynamic and transformative so that results inform decision-making and lead to continuous improvement and change. In this Handbook, the term 'results-based management' is used to cover both: (i) the results from development assistance; and (ii) an agency's internal performance and results.⁹

1.4 BASIC RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT TERMINOLOGY

It is recognized that many United Nations agencies are using different RBM definitions and terminologies, even though the concepts are, in many cases, analogous. The use of common terminology will help United Nations agencies move toward a common ground for supporting national programming (see Box 2).

When adopted across the board by United Nations agencies, these definitions can contribute to greater coherence and consistency and help when communicating RBM issues with national governments. The basic terminology used in this handbook is taken from several sources and is strengthened by best practices in the RBM field.¹⁰

⁹ More detailed information and resources on MfDR are available on the [MfDR website](#).

¹⁰ OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-based Management; [UNDG Results-based Management Terminology 2003](#). www.undg.org/rbm

BOX 2

DEFINITION OF KEY UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMMING TERMS

Results based management (RBM)

Results-based management is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to the desired results (outputs, outcomes and higher level goals or impact) and use information and evidence on actual results to inform decision making on the design, resourcing and delivery of programmes and activities as well as for accountability and reporting.

Results

Results are changes in a state or condition that derive from a cause-and-effect relationship. There are three types of such changes - outputs, outcomes and impact - that can be set in motion by a development intervention. The changes can be intended or unintended, positive and/or negative.

Results chain

The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve

desired results – beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in individual outcomes and those that influence outcomes for the community, goal/impacts and feedback. It is based on a theory of change, including underlying assumptions.

Impact

Impact implies changes in people's lives. This might include changes in knowledge, skill, behaviour, health or living conditions for children, adults, families or communities. Such changes are positive or negative long-term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental, technological or of other types. Positive impacts should have some relationship to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), internationally-agreed development goals, national development goals (as well as human rights as enshrined in constitutions), and national

commitments to international conventions and treaties.

Goal

A specific end result desired or expected to occur as a consequence, at least in part, of an intervention or activity. It is the higher order objective that will assure national capacity building to which a development intervention is intended to contribute.

Outcome

Outcomes represent changes in the institutional and behavioral capacities for development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of goals.

Outputs

Outputs are changes in skills or abilities and capacities of individuals or institutions, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention *within the control of the organization*. They are achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified. ►

◀ Definition of key United Nations programming terms (cont'd)

Activity

Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources, are mobilized to produce specific outputs.

Inputs

The financial, human, material, technological and information resources used for development interventions.

Performance indicator

A performance indicator is a unit of measurement that specifies what is to be measured along a scale or dimension but does not indicate the direction or change. Performance indicators are a qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of a programme or investment.

Baseline

Information gathered at the beginning of a project or

programme against which variations that occur in the project or programme are measured.

Target

Specifies a particular value that an indicator should reach by a specific date in the future. For example, “total literacy rate to reach 85 percent among groups X and Y by the year 2010.”

Benchmark

Reference point or standard, including norms, against which progress or achievements can be assessed. A benchmark refers to the performance that has been achieved in the recent past by other comparable organizations, or what can be reasonably expected to have been achieved in similar circumstances.

Results framework or matrix

A results framework or matrix explains how results are to be achieved, including causal relationships and underlying assumptions and risks. The

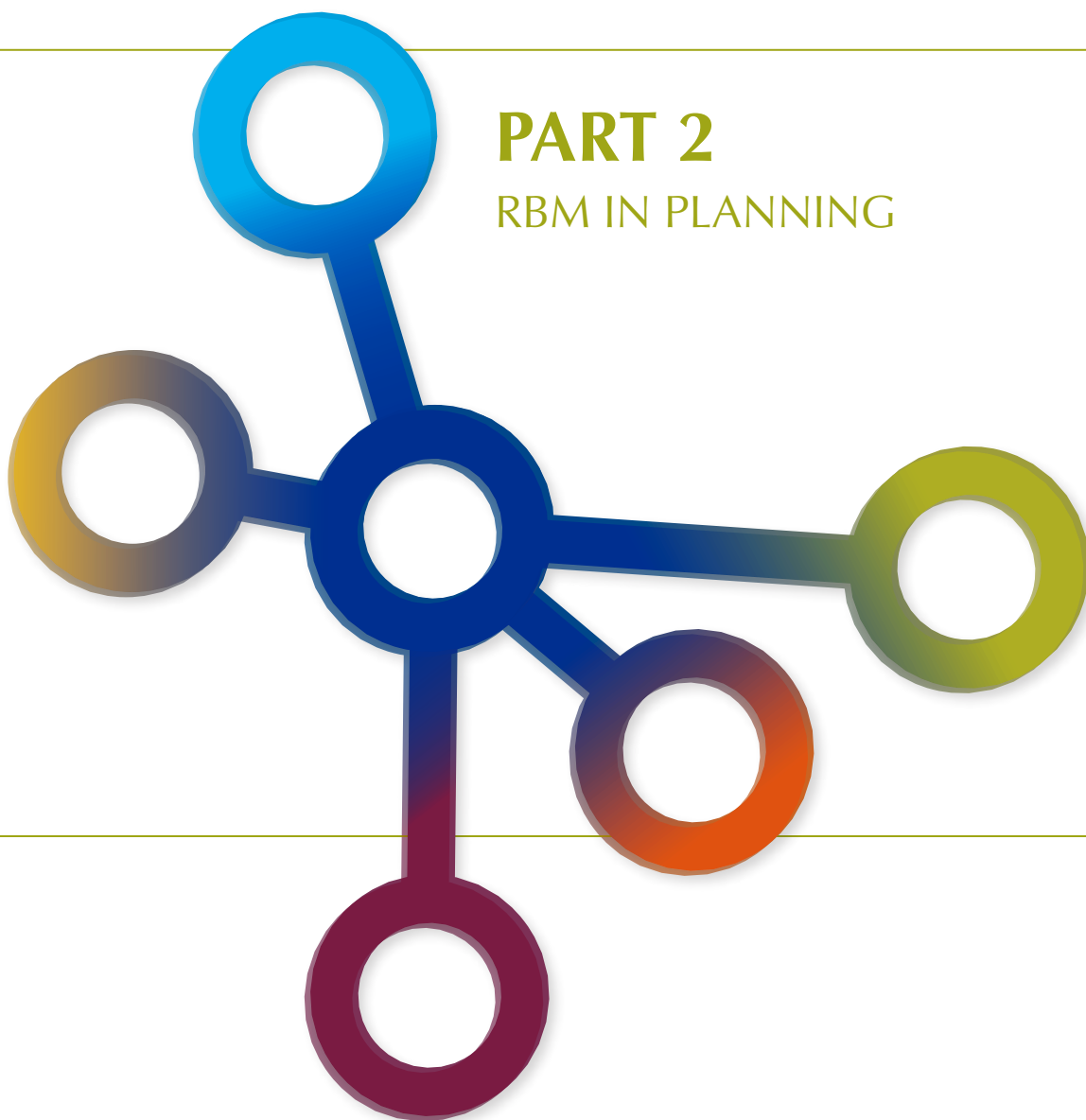
results framework reflects strategic level thinking across an entire organization, a country programme, a programme component within a country programme, or a project.

Performance

The degree to which a development intervention or a development partner operates according to specific criteria/standard/guidelines or achieves results in accordance with stated plans.

Performance monitoring

A continuous process of collecting and analyzing data for performance indicators, to compare how well a development intervention, partnership or policy reform is being implemented against expected results (achievement of outputs and progress toward outcomes).



PART 2

RBM IN PLANNING

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RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN PLANNING

Organizations use RBM most often when planning strategic frameworks, programmes and projects. This section discusses results and the results chain and then presents some related tools. The five United Nations programming principles, of which RBM is one, are also briefly discussed.

2.1 WHAT IS A RESULT?

A result is a describable or measurable change that is derived from a cause-and-effect relationship. There are three types of such changes – outputs, outcomes and impact - which can be set in motion by a development intervention. The changes can be intended or unintended, positive and/or negative. It is expected that careful management for development results within programmes using RBM will lead to positive change. However, this is not always the case. Change can sometimes lead to unintended or negative consequences. It is therefore important to continually manage for results so that programmes can truly result in positive change.

Moreover, results within the United Nations system correspond to three levels:

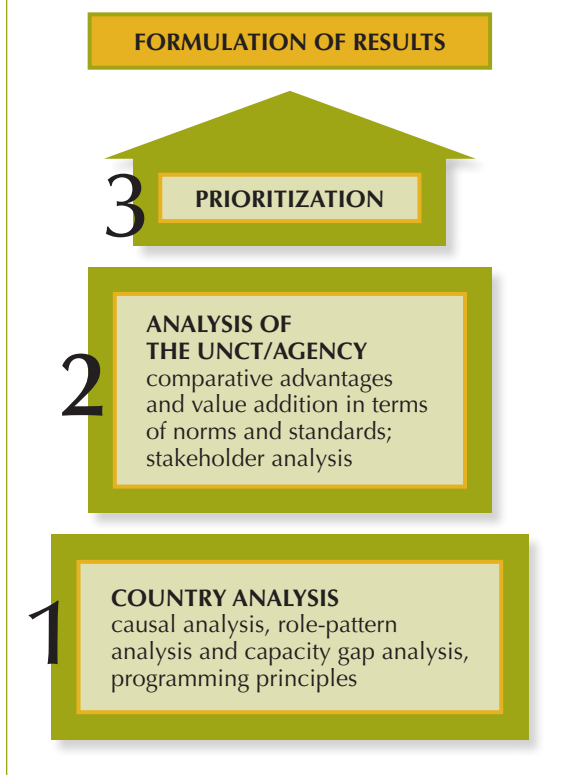
- 1. outputs of a programme/project,
- 2. outcomes, and
- 3. goal/national priority levels.

2.2 GETTING STARTED: HOW TO DEFINE RESULTS?

Defining results begins with an analysis of the country situation, review of the comparative advantages of the UNCT, stakeholder analysis and a vision of desired outcomes. When results form part of a national vision, strategy or plan, they are more likely to be achieved and

their effects sustained over time. Adhering to a national development plan or strategy helps orient and guide United Nations-supported interventions so that these interventions respond to national priorities and needs. Results should drive not only the planning, but also the management and M&E of development activities.

FIGURE 3: Key stages in formulating results statements



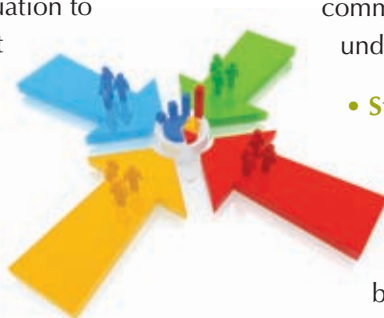
The key stages in formulating results statements are as follows:

- **Stage 1:** Conduct a country analysis that includes the following elements:
 - a) Gather information on the country situation in order to be fully apprised of the political, economic, social and cultural context influencing the environment. This includes reviewing existing national analyses to determine what the UNCT's analytical contribution should be.
 - b) Assessment made of the situation to shortlist major development problems or opportunities for deeper analysis.
 - c) Analyze the root causes, relationships between duty bearers and rights holders¹¹ and capacity gap issues. Enrich the analysis by using a role-pattern analysis as well as the lens of the five United Nations programming principles and other thematic issues, when applicable.¹² In post-conflict and conflict-prevention settings, a thorough review of conflict factors forms part of this analysis.¹³
- **Stage 2:** Assess the UNCT or United Nations agency's comparative advantages to determine

the specific areas in which to focus development assistance in the coming programming cycle. The assessment must consider the mandates, technical capacities available (in-country, regional or global) and resources of the UNCT or agencies. During this process, it helps to undertake a stakeholder analysis to map out different stakeholders' engagement in support of the national government's effort to achieve and sustain the MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals, or support the country to achieve commitments and standards of livelihood under various treaties and conventions.

- **Stage 3:** Conduct a prioritization process based on stages 1 and 2 in order to create a consensus on the strategic areas of focus for UNCT development assistance. This could be a workshop or informal discussions with the government and other development and peacebuilding partners.

After completing stages 1-3, the UNCT is ready to formulate proposed results based on national priorities. For detailed information on conducting a country analysis and stakeholder analysis, refer to the [UNDAF guidance package](#) and the [UNDG Toolkit](#).



¹¹ (a) Rights-holders are individuals and groups who have valid human rights entitlements; (b) Duty-bearers are primarily state authorities, institutions and others who have an obligation to respond. For information on [how to conduct HRBA and other programming principles](#).

¹² [Guidance Note: Application of the Programming Principles to the UNDAF](#).

¹³ [UNSSC / DOCO Conflict Analysis](#).

2.3 FORMULATING RESULTS

United Nations-supported results must balance the pursuit of international norms and standards with the achievement of national development priorities.

Results are about change. It is important to use 'change language' rather than the customary 'action language'.

The difference between change language and action language are:

✧ **Action language** (i) expresses would-be results from the providers' perspective – and usually starts with "by doing this or that"; (ii) can be interpreted in many ways because it is not specific or measurable (e.g., reduce HIV transmission); and (iii) focuses only on the completion of activities (e.g., to establish 25 new youth-friendly centers).

✧ **Whereas change language:** (i) describes changes in the conditions and/or quality of life of people; (ii) sets precise criteria for success; and (iii) focuses on results, and does not focus on the methods to achieve them (hence the need to avoid expressions such as "through this and that" or "by doing this and that").

UNDAF results should be formulated in change language (See Annex 2).

The following are some examples of results using change language:

- At least 80% of people in endemic areas sleep under insecticide treated bed nets;
- Child mortality from AIDS and related causes decreased from 80% to 40% by 2011;
- 90% of identified orphans and vulnerable children in model districts access social safety net packages by 2008;
- Female gross enrolment rate in primary school increased from 55% to 95% in 1,200 primary schools by 2012.

Confusion sometimes arises between activities versus results. Activities use action words or

verbs that reflect what will be done in a given programme or project (e.g., organize regional meetings, plan international conferences, prepare curriculum, undertake gender analysis, etc.). Results often include only limited information. The actions described at lower levels of a results matrix contribute to the results at higher levels. However, by themselves they will not be sufficient to achieve the results in their entirety.

“
Results are about
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to use 'change
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'action language'.
”

Table 1 shows the types of changes that can be typically achieved within the timeframe of a programme. Naturally, the situation may vary from country to country depending on the local situation, the level of capacity and how fast change can realistically happen.

TABLE 1. Changes reflected in results at different levels

Changes in conditions			
IMPACT	• MDGs • Social • Economic	• Cultural • Civil Society	
GOAL	• Environmental • Political		
<i>Results are primarily nationally owned</i>			
Changes in capacity and performance of the primary duty-bearers			
OUTCOME	• Changes in Behaviours & Attitudes • Social Action • Viability • Institutional	• Policy Formulation • Decision-making • Norms, Knowledge • Efficiency	• Competencies • Opinions • Standards
<i>United Nations contributes at this level</i>			
What all implementers produce			
OUTPUTS	• Goods & Services • Change in Skills & Capabilities • Systems • Evaluations	• New Products • Reports • Publications Produced	
<i>National actors, United Nations and donors</i>			
What all implementers do			
ACTIVITIES	• Develop Curriculum • Train • Evaluate • Recruit	• Procure • Facilitate • Develop Action Plans • Work with Media, etc.	
<i>Primarily national, often supported by United Nations and other partners</i>			
What all stakeholders invest in			
INPUTS	• Human or Financial Resources • Personnel • Equipment	• Technology • Time	
<i>Led by national actors</i>			

2.4 THE RESULTS CHAIN

A results chain will always be embedded in a given context that reflects the overall situation, needs, issues, priorities and aspirations of key rights-holders. A range of factors – economic, political, social, environmental or cultural – will affect the achievement of results. The general rule is that one size does not fit all and results chains will vary from country to country.

It is important that an output can be achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified. There is a need to curb the tendency to be too ambitious with results statements. Results should be commensurate with the environment, existing and potential capacities, and resources. If not, there will be a need to adjust the result statements. Moreover, it may raise undue expectations that cannot be met, which could undermine the overall programme.

TABLE 2. The Results Chain

IMPLEMENTATION		RESULTS		
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcome	Goal/Impact
Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.	Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.	The changes in skills or abilities, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention.	The institutional and behavioral changes in development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of goals. They are the intended or achieved effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners.	Positive and negative long-term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental, technological or of other types.
Example		Example		
Financial resources, human resources (i.e. technical expertise)	Series of preparatory workshops to train National Disaster Centre and Provincial Disaster Centre staff on the international standards for emergency preparedness plans	The National Disaster Centre and its provincial arms have the technical and financial capacity to develop and support the implementation emergency preparedness plans that meet international standards	National and provincial administrations implement disaster risk reduction policies, including emergency preparedness plans	Reduced risks and increased safety from natural disasters among the local population.

The results chain in Table 2 shows how there is a causality and attribution between input and activities and the results that are generated in the form of outputs, outcomes and impact. A results chain should clearly represent the change achieved through the cause-and-effect relationship between inputs and activities and the results (including the outputs, outcome and impact levels). While inputs, activities and outputs are elements of the project or programme, outcomes and impacts represent elements at a higher, national level. If it is not possible to clearly show attribution, or at least contribution, between elements in the chain, then they are not relevant or appropriate for a results framework.

2.5 DEVELOPING THE RESULTS MATRIX

The results matrix is the strategic management tool used by the UNCT to plan, monitor, evaluate and report on UNDAF results areas. The results matrix maps the collective United Nations contribution to the achievement of national priorities or goals as well as that of each United Nations agency involved. The results matrix provides an overall snapshot of the United Nations-supported programme, highlighting national priorities and goals to which related UNDAF outcome and outputs contribute. The results matrix sets the strategic direction and expected results of the United Nations system in the country. The UNCT fleshes out how it will deliver these results through various tools such as the [UNDAF Action Plan](#), agency action plans and operational documents, joint programmes and annual work plans.

This Handbook presents the UNDAF results matrix as it appears in the 2010 UNDAF

guidance package.¹⁴ There are two options available for developing a results matrix, option 1a (only to the outcome level) and 1b (a fuller version that includes also the output level). Both options for developing the results matrix contain the following six columns, including:

- 1. Outcomes and outputs¹⁵
- 2. Indicators, baselines and targets;
- 3. Means of verification;
- 4. Risks and assumptions;
- 5. Role of partners;
- 6. Indicative resources.

United Nations agencies are expected to achieve the outputs for which they are responsible and thereby contribute to UNDAF outcomes aligned to national priorities. The results matrix crystallizes the essence of a programme in a few pages clearly articulating the outputs and outcomes and other elements of the programme. This makes it a useful tool for implementing programmes, as well as for M&E and reporting.

The results matrix should be developed from top down – beginning with national development priorities and goals and moving to the outcomes. UNDAF outcomes that contribute to national development priorities are predominantly supported by United Nations interventions in the country. National development priorities and goals drive the development of UNDAF outcomes, which represent the joint vision of United Nations agencies along with other key stakeholders operating in the country. Outputs are then developed in alignment with the outcomes to which they contribute.

¹⁴ For detailed information on different options for developing an UNDAF results matrix, see [How to Prepare an UNDAF](#), (Part 1), *Guidelines for UN Country Teams*, January 2010.

¹⁵ Results matrix option 1b includes results at the output level. UNCTs can choose option 1a and include outputs in the UNDAF Action Plan or the agency action plans or operational documents.

TABLE 3. Results matrix with outcome and output levels – option 1b

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS					
	Indicators, Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Risks and Assumptions	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
Outcome 1 : <i>(List contributing UN agencies for each of the outcomes and highlight the outcome convener)</i>					
Output 1.1					
Output 1.2					
Outcome 2					
Output 2.1					
Source: Results matrix Option 1b in “How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I). Guidelines for UN Country Teams,” January 2010.					

The results matrix is used throughout the life cycle of the programme – from planning and implementation to monitoring, evaluation and reporting. At the planning stage, the results matrix allows stakeholders to articulate what their goals and results will be – based on the country situation and context and the vision set out for harmonized UN funds, programmes and specialized agency outcomes in line with national priorities or goals.

2.5.1 OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Outcomes describe the intended changes in development conditions resulting from UNCT cooperation. Outcomes relate to changes in institutional performance or behavior among individuals or groups as viewed through a human rights-based approach lens. Achievement of outcomes depends critically on the commitment and actions of stakeholders, as well as on results to be achieved by government and partners outside the UNDAF.

UNDAF outcomes are the collective strategic results for United Nations system cooperation at the country level, intended to support achievement of national priorities. UNDAF outcomes

are specific, strategic and clearly contribute to the achievement of national priorities, they must be linked to and supported by programme or project outputs.

Outputs are changes in skills or abilities, or the availability of new products and services that are achieved with the resources provided within the time period specified. Outputs are the level of result in which the clear comparative advantages of individual agencies emerge and accountability is clearest. Outputs are linked to those accountable from them giving the results chain a much stronger internal logic. As stated earlier, UNDAF results should be formulated in change language.

Indicators help measure outcomes and outputs, adding greater precision. Indicators ensure that decision-making is informed by relevant data.

Detailed guidance on how to develop outcome and output statements is available in the [technical briefs for outcomes and outputs](#). In addition [The Issues Note: Results-based Management in UNDAFs](#) can be used to support the development of relevant and robust results statements.

RBM: ONE OF THE FIVE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES

Since 2007 the United Nations has identified five underlying programming principles:

- ✧ 1. results-based management;
- ✧ 2. a human rights-based approach;
- ✧ 3. gender equality;
- ✧ 4. environmental sustainability; and
- ✧ 5. capacity development.

RBM, together with the other four principles, constitutes a starting point and guide for the analysis and design stages of the UNDAF. It is widely agreed that all five principles are necessary for effective United Nations-supported country programming that balances the pursuit of international norms and standards with the achievement of national development priorities.

The recently issued [Guidance Note on the Application of Programming Principles to the UNDAF](#) offers a conceptual framework to visualize how these programming principles complement one another and a tool to support their application during the four main steps of the UNDAF process:

- ✧ 1. roadmap;
- ✧ 2. country analysis;
- ✧ 3. strategic planning; and
- ✧ 4. monitoring and evaluation.¹⁶

Ways in which the other programming principles interface with RBM are presented below.



A human rights-based approach. A human rights-based approach brings to RBM the use of a conceptual framework to understand the causes of fulfillment or not of human rights and in doing so brings to light the underlying issues that impede development progress. Based on international human rights standards and principles, a human rights-based approach develops the capacity of rights-holders to claim their rights and duty-bearers to fulfill their obligations.¹⁷

Apart from its normative value as a set of universally agreed values, standards and principles, a human rights-based approach leads to better and more sustainable results. It does so by analyzing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations that are often at the heart of development problems and which pose a serious threat to development progress if left unaddressed.

Broken down, a human rights-based results focus on the following three main elements:

- ✧ 1. changes in the capacities of the duty-bearers to fulfill their obligations and rights-holders to enjoy their rights, enabling environmental, organizational and individual capacities;
- ✧ 2. focus on discrimination and the most marginalized;
- ✧ 3. the extent to which human rights principles have been incorporated into the development process.

A more detailed explanation is available in the Technical Brief on Measuring Rights-based Results as well as the UNDG webpage dedicated to [human rights-based approaches](#).

¹⁶ Refer to [Guidance Note: Application of the Programming Principles to the UNDAF](#).

¹⁷ Refer to Stamford consensus [Common Understanding among UN agencies on Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation](#).

WHAT DOES A HUMAN-RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH ADD TO RBM?

While RBM is a management tool to help reach a desired result, a human rights-based approach is a framework that helps define the results and the process by which results are achieved.

First, a human rights-based approach specifies the subjects of programming results: the rights-holders and duty-bearers.

Furthermore, using a human rights-based approach:

- outcomes reflect improvement in the performance of, or the strengthened responsibility of, the rights-holders and duty-bearers resulting from institutional or behavioral change;
- outputs should close capacity gaps;
- monitoring should reflect how programmes have been guided by human rights principles, such as non-discrimination, participation, and accountability, in the process of reaching results;
- the programming results should specify the realization of human rights as laid down in international instruments.

Gender equality. Achieving gender equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex are at the heart of a human rights-based approach. RBM helps to guide the achievement of gender equality by setting a framework for measuring results in gender mainstreaming and targeted gender-specific interventions. Through RBM, gender equality is translated into strategic UNDAF results chains and consequently into holistic programming for gender equality. Serious gender analysis and gender sensitive strategies should lead to the formulation of specific gender outcomes and outputs. [The UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#) establishes an accountability framework for assessing gender mainstreaming by the UNCT.

Environmental sustainability. Successfully mainstreaming environmental sustainability in country analysis and programming also depends on the application of RBM. This is important if

environmental sustainability is to have a tangible influence on the national development dialogue and UNDAF results. [The Guidance Note on Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability in Country Analysis and UNDAF](#) offers entry points, actions, and tools that can be used by United Nations staff and implementing partners, as well as examples of outcome and output results statements and indicators.

Capacity development. RBM approaches are critical in ensuring results focus when conducting capacity development assessments and planning strategies for effective national capacity development. The United Nations system responds to national capacity development challenges, contextualized in national development strategies, through the framework of its analytical work and the UNDAF. See the [UNDG capacity development policy and guidance](#), tools and resources.

2.5.2 INDICATORS, BASELINES AND TARGETS

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables that allow stakeholders to verify changes produced by a development intervention relative to what was planned. *Quantitative indicators* are represented by a number, percentage or ratio. In contrast, *qualitative indicators* seek to measure quality and often are based on perception, opinion or levels of satisfaction. Indicators should be expressed in neutral language, such as ‘the level or degree of satisfaction’ or ‘the percentage of school enrolment by gender’. Examples are provided in Table 4.

It should be noted that there can be an overlap between quantitative and qualitative indicators. Some statistical data or information stated with number can provide qualitative meaning. For example, a survey might measure on a scale of 1-10, which would reflect quality rather than quantity. More detailed information is available in the [UNDAF Technical Brief on Indicators](#).

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 turnout.

Process indicators directly measure the performance of key processes that affect expectations of countries, donors or communities. Process indicators that can measure, for instance, the effectiveness of the Paris Declaration and United Nations national coordination efforts or stakeholder participation and buy-in are important to measure. These might include indicators

such as the degree of harmonization between United Nations agencies as seen by the number of joint missions or joint evaluations, the application of programming principles and cross-cutting strategies of UNDG, the development and application of the UNDAF, or the use of national systems for M&E.

“Quantitative indicators are represented by a number, percentage or ratio. In contrast, qualitative indicators seek to measure quality and often are based on perception, opinion or levels of satisfaction.”

TABLE 4. Indicators

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS	QUALITATIVE INDICATORS
• measures of quantity • number • percentage • ratio	• perception • opinion • judgements
Examples: • # of women in decision-making positions • employment levels • wage rates • education levels • literacy rates	Examples: • women’s perception of empowerment • satisfaction with employment or school • quality of life • degree of confidence in basic literacy
Means of verification	
formal surveys or questionnaires	public hearings, testimonials, focus groups, attitude surveys, participant observation

Qualitative process indicators may also serve to measure the nature or intensity of interaction from a stakeholder's perspective and their satisfaction with inter-United Nations agency collaboration.

Baseline is the status of the indicator at the beginning of a programme or project that acts as a reference point against which progress or achievements can be assessed. A typical baseline in a primary education programme might be the enrolment rate at the beginning of the project, such as 90 percent of school-aged children enrolled in school.

The **target** is what one hopes to achieve. The target in the case of a primary education project might be reaching 100 percent enrollment for school-aged children.

Table 5 presents a checklist that can help practitioners select indicators. For each output or outcome results statement, there should be a maximum of two-three quantitative and qualitative indicators. It is important not to exceed this number of indicators per result or the collection

of data becomes cumbersome and expensive. Two to three indicators per result will ensure that the findings are corroborated by different indicators and/or sources of information and that the findings are solid and credible.

2.5.3 MEANS OF VERIFICATION

The sources of information are the persons, beneficiaries or organizations from whom information will be gathered to inform initial baselines and measure results. It is crucial for the sustainability of results that the beneficiaries or rights-holders are enabled to participate in the process of monitoring results that change their lives. In a health programme, the source of information may be those affected by HIV, community-based organizations or the Ministry of Health. The most direct source of information related to the indicator should be selected. The principle of "do no harm" and cultural sensitivity need to be emphasized. The United Nations should play a major role in promoting participatory monitoring among the subjects of and key actors in the development process during data collection, such as in interviews among community members.

TABLE 5. Checklist for validating indicators

Checklist for validating indicators	Yes	No
The definition of indicators has involved those who performance will be measured.		
Those who performance will be judged by the indicators will have confidence in them.		
The indicator describes how the achievement of the result will be measured.		
Each and every variable included in the indicator statement is measurable with reasonable cost and effort.		
The indicator is clear and easy to understand even to a layperson.		
The indicator lends itself to aggregation.		
The indicator can be disaggregated by sex, ethnicity or social condition.		
A baseline current value can be provided for each and every variable in the indicator statement.		
There is a target during a specified timeframe for each and every variable in the indicator.		
The indicator is not repeated in any of the results below or above the results framework.		

2.5.4 ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

Assumptions are the variables or factors that need to be in place for results to be achieved. Assumptions can be internal or external to the particular programme or organization.

Assumptions should be stated in positive language. For example, in a reproductive health service programme, an assumption might be that there are adequately trained personnel and extension services. In an election support project, if higher levels of voter registration among the rural population is expected to lead to higher participation in an election, an assumption would be that voting centers are actually operational and infrastructure are in place so that the population can reach voting centers on election-day.

The expectation from stakeholders is that if the outputs have been delivered and the assumptions in the programme document still hold true, then the outcome will be achieved.

Assumptions should be formulated after the results chain and before the indicators, even though in reality practitioners often identify indicators before assumptions. The sequencing is important as the identification of assumptions is crucial and can lead to a redefinition of the results chain. This is why it is better to define assumptions before indicators.

Risk corresponds to a potential future event, fully or partially beyond control

that may (negatively) affect the achievement of results. Since potential impacts can be both positive and negative, some agencies have chosen to widen the definition of risks to include both threats that might prevent them from achieving their objectives and opportunities that would enhance the likelihood that objectives can be achieved. Such a definition has the advantage that it enables a more balanced consideration of both opportunities and threats, thereby promoting innovation and avoiding risk aversion.

Risk assessments should consider a wide range of potential risks, including strategic, environmental, financial, operational, organizational, political and regulatory risks. 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 may make people reluctant to travel to voting centers on election day. On the other hand, a potential decision by the government to double the number of voting centers would represent a significant opportunity to increase participation since travel distances may be reduced.

Using a risk matrix, as in Table 6, enables systematic identification and prioritization of identified risks. In the risk matrix, risks can be ranked according to their likelihood of happening (low, medium or high) and potential severity (low, medium or high) if they were to occur. A risk mitigation strategy should also be defined for each risk to minimize the potential impact of risks on the achievement of results.



TABLE 6. Risk matrix

RISK MATRIX			
Risk	Likelihood of Risk (L, M, H)	Impact of Risk (L,M,H)	Risk Mitigation Strategy
Result:			
Risk			

Programmes and projects are expected to manage the risks related to their programme and project. The following are a range of risk mitigation strategies that may be considered:

- **Prevention:** Prevent the risk from materializing or prevent it from having an impact on objectives;
- **Reduction:** Reduce the likelihood of the risk developing or limiting the impact in case it materializes;
- **Transference:** Pass the impact of the risk to a third party (e.g., via an insurance policy);
- **Contingency plan:** Prepare actions to implement should the risk occur;
- **Acceptance:** Based on a cost/benefit analysis, accept the possibility that the risk may occur and go ahead without further measures to address the risk.

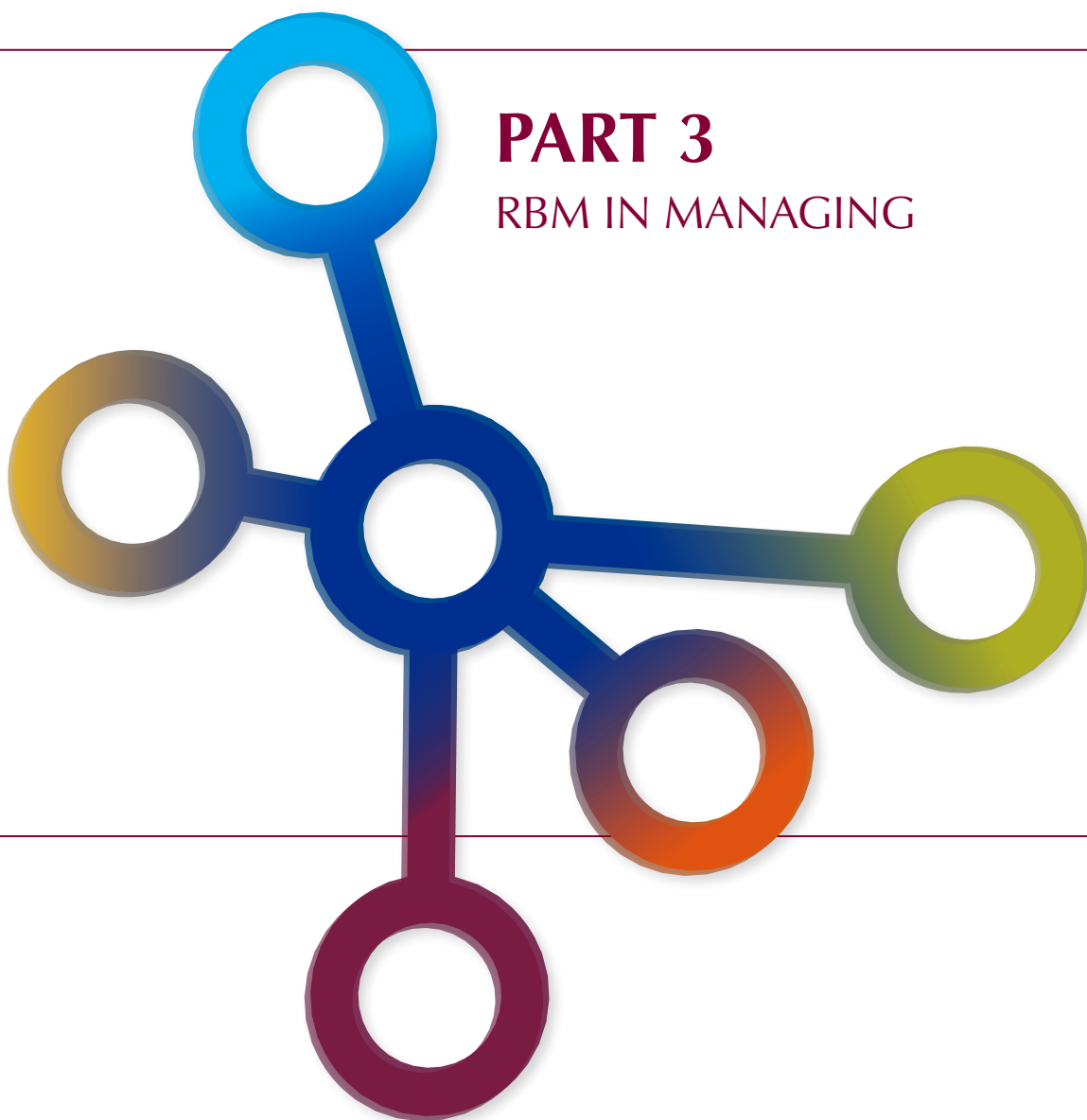
During implementation, it is a good practice to incorporate the planned responses to risks into the regular work plan of the programme or project, assigning staff members to be responsible for the actions and resources required.

2.5.5 ROLE OF PARTNERS

The responsibilities of the different partners - whether they are government or a specific ministry, United Nations agency, NGO or any other implementing agency - for the achievement of a given output and outcome should be indicated in the results matrix.

2.5.6 INDICATIVE RESOURCES

Indicative resources reflect an estimate of the resources required – financial, human, technical assistance and knowledge – for a given programme or project. It is critical that budgeting and allocation of resources is done on the basis of requirements for achieving agreed results. In some cases, indicative resources can be itemized by activity or output. Financial resource amounts in this column should specify if these amounts are from regular or other sources (i.e., trust fund, other participating United Nations agencies or donors). Additional guidance is available from the UNDG Common Budgetary Framework. It may be noted when these amounts are ‘in kind’ and not quantified in financial terms.



PART 3

RBM IN MANAGING

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RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN MANAGING

3.1 MANAGING FOR OUTCOMES

The 'M' in RBM is often overlooked. Yet without good management it is unlikely that results will be achieved. Managing effectively for better results requires the flexibility to change strategies and activities if and when needed. It also means using a team-based approach to ensure that all stakeholders concur with any proposed changes or actions. Good management ensures that results matrices are updated at least once a year with the agreement of all stakeholders.

TABLE 7. Key challenges and strategies to overcome them

KEY CHALLENGES TO RBM	STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES
Defining realistic results	Make results commensurate with available resources and reach.
Developing a results-based culture	Use RBM at each stage of a programme and project cycle, and reward results performance.
Reporting on results or the effects of completed activities vs. reporting on activities	Practice writing results based reports comparing them to your previous type of reporting.
Ongoing support, training and technical assistance in RBM	Establish RBM focal points and coaches, and organize training workshops.
Moving from outputs to outcomes	Underline the difference between outputs and outcomes and reward performance that manages for outcomes.
Ensuring a cause and effect relationship and coherence between programme outputs and agency/UNDAF outcomes and national goals.	Be realistic with the definition of results so that outputs and outcomes can be realistically achieved.

The most important element of RBM is ensuring that interventions lead to effective development and a positive change in people's lives. This requires that managers manage better, ensuring that their resources are commensurate with the results they hope to achieve. Results-based decision making is a key dimension of RBM that should not be overlooked. Identifying, developing and managing the capabilities (people, systems, resources, structures, culture, leadership and relationships) are essential for managers to plan for, deliver and assess results.¹⁸

3.2 MANAGING FOR UNDAF OUTCOMES

An important dimension of the UNDAF is managing for UNDAF outcomes. While the planning phase with government stakeholders and United Nations agencies serves to prepare a framework for joint collaboration, more attention needs to be placed on managing and monitoring UNDAF outcome results. Flow and consistency of results should be maintained among the various programming instruments, including the UNDAF, country programme documents, the UNDAF

¹⁸ Discussion on aspects of developing and managing capabilities is beyond the scope of this handbook.

Action Plan, country programme action plans, and other agency operational plans down to annual work plans.

Management of the UNDAF outcomes should reside with senior programme officers, often at the deputy representative level, and M&E officers. In some countries, these officers form a technical committee for the UNDAF process. It is often the case that too many programme officers and unit heads engage only in managing a portfolio of projects. Making the logical link to the country programme and UNDAF outcomes at the time of reporting is often difficult and coherence and synergy between projects is frequently lost. Effectively utilizing RBM, therefore, requires a proper management structure.¹⁹

A recent study found that while UNCTs are succeeding in applying results-based planning in their UNDAFs, difficulties remain in the collection of relevant data that can contribute performance information which in turn will improve decision-making and reporting.²⁰ Increased emphasis needs to be placed on the monitoring of UNDAF outcomes so that progress can be measured, monitored and fed back, ultimately influencing the implementation of the UNDAF and agency programmes.

Managing for UNDAF outcomes is a process. It needs attention in each UNCT meeting. It involves:



- Monitoring financial commitments, as per the UNDAF;
- Monitoring the completion of major activities and the achievement of outputs, and tracking that they are contributing to outcomes;
- Supporting government efforts to monitor outcome indicators - many of which should be aligned with indicators in the national development framework;
- Reflecting on the key assumptions and risks which underpin the UNDAF design and which are necessary for the achievement of outcomes;
- Using this evidence to engage more regularly and effectively with national authorities to discuss UNDAF performance and how to better align UNCT and government resources for greater effectiveness.

The UNDAF results matrix will facilitate the assessment of the UNDAF at an aggregate level as well as monitoring of the progress of individual United Nations agencies. Many countries, such as Lesotho, Mali and Mozambique, among others, monitor UNDAF outcomes and outputs through DevInfo databases. The DevInfo database contains basic socioeconomic country data – a broad set of indicators classified by goal, sector, theme and source.²¹ As a further effort toward harmonization, the 2010 UNDAF Guidance Package requires UNCTs to conduct an annual review of the UNDAF.²²

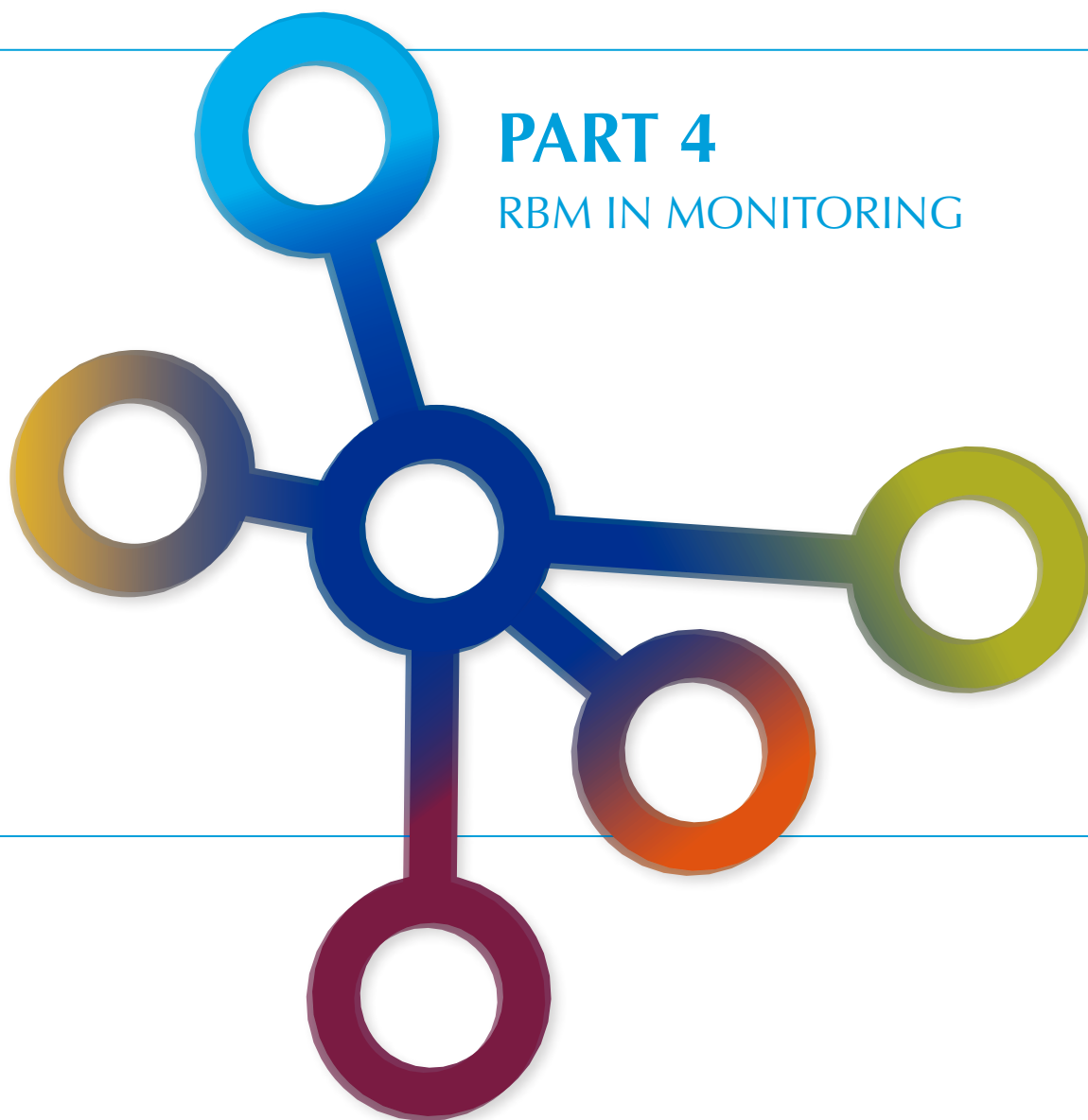
¹⁹ See section 5 of the [Standard Operational Format and Guidance for Reporting Progress on the UNDAF](#) for guidance on the suggested inter-agency mechanism for managing for UNDAF outcomes.

²⁰ MacKenzie, Alexander. "Results-based Management at the Country Level: Systemic Issues that Prevent Good UNDAF Results and the Use of UNDAF Results Information", September 2008.

²¹ See www.devinfo.org for further information.

²² See [How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part \(I\) Guidelines for UN Country Teams](#), January 2010.

NOTES



PART 4

RBM IN MONITORING

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RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN MONITORING

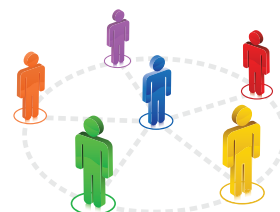
Monitoring is an important task in the life of a programme or project. It involves regular and systematic assessment based on participation, reflection, feedback, data collection, analysis of actual performance (using indicators) and regular reporting. Monitoring makes it possible to gauge where programmes stand in terms of international norms and standards. It helps the UNCT understand where programmes are in relationship to results planned, to track progress (on the basis of intended results and agreed indicators), and to identify issues and analyze relevant information and reports that become available as implementation occurs. The UNCT also monitors to fulfill accountability requirements; communicate, review and report results to stakeholders; adjust approaches to implementation if necessary; and inform decision-making. Monitoring feeds into evaluation and real-time learning.

Monitoring at the outcome level requires a good understanding of how outputs and related efforts in, for instance, advocacy, come together. The United Nations system - as one partner - is directly accountable for making its own agreed contribution toward the achievement of nationally-owned outcomes to which United Nations support is associated. It is responsible, together with other partners, for monitoring the gradual achievement of the overall outcome.

For high level results, such as national goals or sector outcomes, key stakeholders should typically form sector-wide or inter-agency coordination mechanisms around each major outcome or sector for monitoring and coordination. Whenever national structures for this already exist, the United Nations system should engage and participate in them. The United Nations should avoid parallel mechanisms or groups for such purposes. Sectoral/outcome-level coordinating mechanisms are not United Nations management

arrangements, but national mechanisms and structures that are charged with the coordination of the sector or outcome from

a development perspective within the national and local context. The United Nations system supports such national mechanisms and institutions, focusing especially on developing capacities for M&E. This support can extend to developing national monitoring systems.



4.1 TOOLS FOR MONITORING

The UNDAF results matrix and the M&E plan are the UNCT's key monitoring tools, outlining expected results, indicators, baselines and targets against which change is monitored. The results matrix will help the UNCT to stay focused on the expected achievements of programmes or projects.

The results matrix can be used in a number of ways. It serves as:

- ✧ 1. the centerpiece of a programme or project proposal summarizing in a nutshell what the programme or project hopes to achieve;
- ✧ 2. a reference point for management during team meetings and a guide for reporting on progress to help management make decisions based on performance information;
- ✧ 3. an aid for M&E, providing parameters for which results to measure and to account for with useful targets, baselines and means of verification.

Although the results framework is prepared at the planning stages of the results, it can be improved upon by the partners collectively at later stages. For example, newer and more effective indicators may be identified during the implementation phase, for example, during an UNDAF annual review.

An important element of monitoring effectively is ensuring that data systems are developed and information is collected on a regular basis. Data may come from a combination of national systems and the programme or project specifically. For example, if a programme aim is to increase literacy in country x, it should collect data that shows literacy levels for the country at the beginning of the programme. This data will then be compared with subsequent data in the future to measure change. Where baseline data does not exist, there may be need to derive baseline information through use of qualitative methods such as testimonials, focus groups

or Participatory, Learning and Action (PLA)²³ methods such as mapping, ranking and scoring to show change over time.

In some countries, DevInfo has been used to not only monitor MDG progress but also to monitor performance of other national development frameworks. For example, in Lesotho, the UNDAF is monitored along with the National Vision 2020 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy using DevInfo. An analysis of the data revealed that the government and partners need to urgently scale up multi-sector interventions to achieve a reduction in child mortality and improve maternal health. An important element of any database is using the information not only for reporting but also to inform decision-making, resource allocation and possible changes in activities to better meet expected results.

Another tool used by many organizations to monitor different parts of their results framework is *scoring*. In their simplest form, scoring systems can adopt a 'stop light' approach whereby progress on indicators is rated red, yellow or green on the basis of performance. This is a useful tool for organizations with limited experience in practicing RBM.

Other approaches allocate scores (such as A to D) against criteria at different agreed stages throughout the project cycle. This can significantly help analysis and aggregation of results information. For example, a development intervention could be very efficient (score A) – meaning that resources/inputs are used on time at planned cost and are producing agreed upon outputs. However, the effectiveness could be weak

²³ PLA is an umbrella term for a wide range of similar approaches and methodologies, including Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), etc. The common theme of these approaches is the full participation of people in the processes of learning about their needs and opportunities and in the action required to address them. See the PLA pages of the [International Institute for Environment and Development](#) website or the [University of Sussex](#) website.

(score C) if beneficiary perception of the outputs is poor. Also, the potential sustainability of the same intervention could be very poor (score D) if financial resources will not be available afterward to maintain benefits or if key cross-cutting issues such as gender, etc., are not mainstreamed.

4.2 DEVELOPING THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

In accordance with the 2010 UNDAF Guidance Package, UNCTs develop an M&E plan that accompanies the UNDAF results matrix. The M&E plan is used to systematically plan the collection of data to assess and demonstrate progress made in achieving expected results.

The M&E plan highlights mechanisms or modalities for monitoring the achievement of outputs and contribution toward achievement of outcomes.

The M&E plan incorporates some elements of the results matrix, such as indicators, baselines targets and means of verification. In addition, the M&E plan will elaborate on the methods to be used, frequency and responsibility.

The methodology for baseline collection and M&E plan indicators need to be considered. The methods used depend on the time and resources available and the depth required to adequately complete the monitoring or evaluation of the programme or project. There

are a range of methods to draw from, such as:

- semi-structured interviews;
- focus groups;
- surveys and questionnaires;
- workshops and roundtables;
- field visits;
- testimonials;
- scorecards;
- referencing existing reports from government, the United Nations or partners.

Frequency refers to the period that the M&E will cover. For example, M&E could take place once or twice a year, at the mid-term and/or at the end of

a programme cycle.²⁴ Finally, responsibility refers to the person or entity (unit or organization) responsible for collecting the information.

An M&E plan will ensure that performance information is collected on a regular basis that allows for real-time, evidence-based decision making. This requires that data be analyzed and used by the government or programme responsible for implementation. The M&E plan is developed through consultation with partners, the government, United Nations

agencies, local stakeholders and, when possible, beneficiaries. Inclusion of wide range of stakeholders – particularly the rights-holders – ensures the M&E plan is realistic and feasible.

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”

²⁴ In accordance with the 2010 UNDAF Guidance Package, annual reviews and end-of-cycle evaluations are mandatory. UNCTs are also required to submit at least one progress report per cycle to government based on the annual reviews. For more information, see the [Standard Operational Format & Guidance for Reporting Progress on the UNDAF](#).

4.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE UNDAF AS A SYSTEM

UNCTs need to ensure that an effective M&E system is in place to monitor and evaluate its work prior to the implementation of programmatic work under the UNDAF. In practice, monitoring has to be considered and initially planned in the planning and analysis stages when key issues such as data, national M&E capacities and stakeholder needs and engagement are first encountered. It is best to develop M&E plans at the beginning in the UNDAF process and then gradually strengthen them as the UNCT moves on to implementation stages.

Functioning inter-agency outcome or thematic M&E groups linked to national M&E mechanisms – for example, sector-wide coordinating mechanisms – are important to ensure that the United Nations system's monitoring is effective and relevant nationally.²⁵ Partnerships within the United Nations system and with external partners are key to outcome monitoring. United Nations inter-agency groups coordinating at the outcome level are expected to monitor and report regularly to the UNCT on outcome-level performance. As mentioned earlier, this reporting should, to the extent feasible, be based on the UNCT's credible engagement in, and use of, national monitoring mechanisms.

A number of tasks fall under the purview of these inter-agency outcome/M&E groups, including:



- meet regularly with partners to assess progress;
- conduct coordinated joint monitoring missions as appropriate;
- report regularly to the UNCT on the above and assist the UNCT to bring objective monitoring evidence, lessons learned and good practices to the attention of policy-makers;
- conduct and document annual progress reviews of the UNDAF, using the M&E plan as a framework.
- the UNCT can itself support group members in fulfilling these roles by: (1) recognizing their inter-agency responsibilities in assessing performance at the outcome level; and (2) ensuring that UNDAF M&E groups have resources and secretariat support.

In addition, an M&E calendar may be developed to improve coordination and M&E activities, as part of an M&E plan. The calendar provides a schedule of all major M&E activities. It describes agency and partner accountabilities, the uses and users of information, the UNDAF evaluation milestones, and complementary partner activities (see Table 8, page 32).

²⁵ The [Standard Operational Format & Guidance for Reporting Progress on the UNDAF](#) (section 5) provides an overview of a functioning UNCT M&E system.

TABLE 8. M&E calendar

FROM YEARS 1-5		
UNCT M&E Activities	Surveys/studies	Investigate a problem or assess the conditions of a specified population group. Surveys and studies can help to identify root causes, and findings are used to develop or refine programme strategy and/or define baseline indicators.
	Monitoring systems	Typically this will include UNCT support to national information systems, with regular and fairly frequent reporting of data related to UNDAF results. In particular, it includes UNCT support for national reporting to human rights treaty bodies and assures participatory monitoring that involves representatives of rights-holders.
	Evaluations	An evaluation attempts to determine objectively the worth or significance of a development activity, policy or programme. This section includes all evaluations of agency programmes and projects contributing to the UNDAF, and the UNDAF evaluation.
	Reviews	Reviews will generally draw on agency and partners' monitoring systems as well as the findings of surveys, studies and evaluations.
Planning References	UNDAF evaluation milestones	Timing and sequence of the milestones in preparing and implementing the UNDAF evaluation. These make use of the M&E activities above.
	M&E capacity development	A list of the major, planned capacity development activities to strengthen partner M&E capabilities.
	Use of information	Any decision-making processes or events that draw on the findings, recommendations and lessons from the M&E activities above. For example, national or international conferences, MDG reporting, reporting to human rights bodies, preparation of the national development framework, the prioritization exercise, and preparation of the UNDAF.
	Partner Activities	The major M&E activities of the government and other partners that use and/or contribute to the M&E activities above.
Note: For each activity list the (1) short name of the activity, (2) focus vis-à-vis the UNDAF results, (3) the agencies/partners responsible, and (4) the timing.		

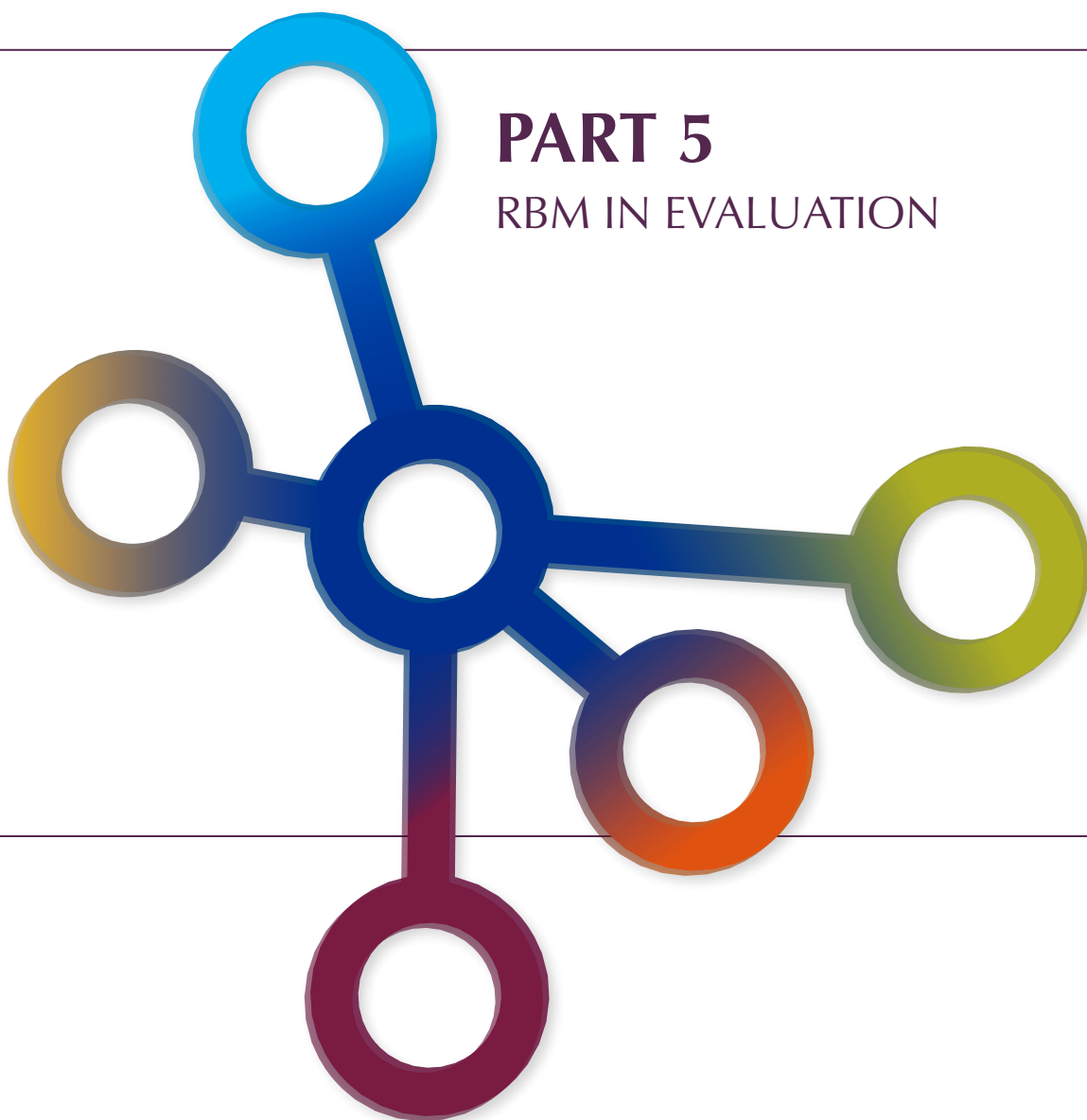
4.4 MEASURING PROGRESS IN POLICY NORMS AND STANDARDS

Special efforts are required to evaluate the effectiveness of United Nations work related to advocacy and policy. M&E frameworks must enable an understanding of how change has happened through policy and advocacy in terms of altered norms and standards and whether there is sustainable change. Capturing this social change does not necessarily occur in a linear way. It is important that M&E frameworks track how social change is unfolding by including negative and positive changes, reversals and backlash.

It helps to identify specific outcome areas that describe the types of change in individuals or within systems that are likely to occur as a result of advocacy and policy efforts. This should make it easier to know what to measure. For example, social change outcomes might include: public awareness, political will, policy adoption, and physical and social changes in lives and communities. Key stakeholders should be involved in determining the direction and level of change expected.

PART 5

RBM IN EVALUATION



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RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN EVALUATION

5.1 RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN EVALUATION

Evaluation is an essential step in the RBM life cycle and a requirement for the UNDAF. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards and norms seek to facilitate system-wide collaboration on evaluation by ensuring that evaluation entities within the United Nations follow agreed basic principles. They provide a reference for strengthening, professionalizing and improving the quality of evaluation in all entities of the United Nations system. Building on the UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards,²⁶ this section focuses on the linkages and role of evaluation when implementing RBM.

BOX

4

WHAT IS EVALUATION?

“An evaluation is an assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance, etc. It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual

factors of causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. It aims at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions and contributions of the organizations of the UN system. An evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible,

reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the organizations of the UN system and its members.”

- excerpt from [UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System](#), 2005, (p. 4)

It is important to distinguish the role of evaluation in RBM in the following two aspects:

- as a critical management tool for achieving better results; and
- as a quality assurance tool during RBM processes.

Evaluation has three key functions:

- 1. programme improvement;
- 2. accountability;
- 3. organisational learning.

²⁶ [UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System](#) and [UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System](#).

Programme Improvement: Evaluation is a management tool for achieving better results. Evaluation provides decision-makers with evidence and objective information about performance and good practices that can help them to improve programmes. Evaluation allows managers to make informed decisions and plan strategically.

The ability of organizations to carry out credible evaluations and use them to make informed decisions is critical when managing for results with a goal of improving development effectiveness. The focus is on what works, why and in

what context. Decision makers use evaluations to make necessary improvements, adjustments to the implementation approach or strategies, and to decide on alternatives.

Accountability: Objective and independent evaluations help United Nations organizations to be held accountable to their governing boards, donors, governments, national partners, the general public and beneficiaries. An evaluation determines the merit and quality of an initiative or programme. An effective accountability framework requires credible and objective information; evaluations can deliver such information.

BOX 5

ASSESSING THE USE OF AN EVALUATION

What information is needed?

Information on or about:

- the relevance of intended outputs or outcomes and validity of the results framework and results map
- the status of an outcome and factors affecting it
- the effectiveness of the UNDP partnership strategy
- the status of project implementation
- cost of an initiative relative to the observed benefits
- lessons learned

Who will use the information?

The intended users of an evaluation are those individuals or groups who have a vested interest in the results and who are in a position to

make decisions or take action based on the results. Users of evaluations are varied, but generally fall within the following categories in the United Nations context:

- United Nations management and programme or project officers, as well as others involved in programme or project design and implementation
- national government counterparts, policy makers, strategic planners
- development partners
- donors and other funders
- the general public and beneficiaries
- United Nations agencies' Executive Board and other national oversight bodies

How will the information be used? It can be used to:

- design or validate a development strategy
- make mid-course corrections
- improve project or programme design and implementation
- ensure accountability
- make funding decisions
- increase knowledge and understanding of the benefits and challenges of development programmes and projects intended for the enhancement of human development

Source: adapted from the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), UNDP, September 2009

Organizational Learning: Evaluations build knowledge for institutional learning, policy making, development effectiveness and organizational effectiveness. Evaluations are not an event, but part of an ongoing exercise in which different stakeholders participate in the continuous process of generating and applying evaluative knowledge. An evaluation framework that generates knowledge, promotes learning and guides action is an important means of capacity development and sustainability of results.

The intended use of an evaluation determines the timing, its methodological framework, and the level and nature of stakeholder participation. Therefore, the use has to be determined in the planning stage of the process. Box 5 above provides a set of questions to guide practitioners in assessing the potential of evaluations. However, these uses are not mutually exclusive and evaluation in general has multiple uses. Discussion on different types of evaluations is not in the scope of this handbook.

When an evaluation is aimed at developing knowledge for global use and for generalization to other contexts and situations, generally more rigorous methodology is applied to ensure a higher level of accuracy to allow for wider application beyond a particular context.



5.2 UNITED NATIONS EVALUATION GUIDANCE

A key tool used in planning an evaluation is the M&E matrix. The matrix allows users to easily review results achieved, determine progress against the baseline and targets, and assess how risks are mitigated or if assumptions still hold true. An evaluation will report on these aspects of the results matrix along with five other variables: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Instructions on evaluation of the UNDAF is provided in the UNDAF guidance package and more specifically in the UNDAF Evaluation Guidelines.²⁷ UNDAF evaluations focus on UNDAF outcomes, their contributions to national priorities and coherence of UNCT support. Individual agency evaluations focus on their country programme and could contribute to the overall UNDAF evaluation. Although the results of the UNDAF evaluation are meant to contribute to managing for results, it is an external function, which should be separated from programme management.

²⁷ 2010 UNDAF Guidance Package and the [UNDAF Evaluation Guidelines](#).

5.3 INTER-LINKAGES AND DEPENDENCIES BETWEEN PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Good planning combined with effective M&E plays a major role in enhancing the effectiveness of development programmes and projects. Good planning helps to focus on results that

matter, while M&E facilitates learning from past successes and challenges. M&E also informs decision making so that current and future initiatives are better able to improve people's lives and expand their choices.

BOX 6

UNDERSTANDING THE INTER-LINKAGES AND DEPENDENCIES BETWEEN PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Without proper planning and clear articulation of intended results, it is not clear what should be monitored and how; hence monitoring cannot be done well.
- Without effective planning (clear results frameworks), the basis for evaluation is weak; hence evaluation cannot be done well.
- Without careful monitoring, the necessary data is not collected; hence evaluation cannot be done well.
- Monitoring is necessary, but not sufficient, for evaluation.
- Monitoring facilitates evaluation, but evaluation uses additional new data collection and different frameworks for analysis.
- M&E of a programme will often lead to changes in programme plans. This may mean further changing or modifying data collection for monitoring purposes.

Source: Adapted from UNEG Training—What a UN Evaluator Needs to Know?, Module 1, 2008.

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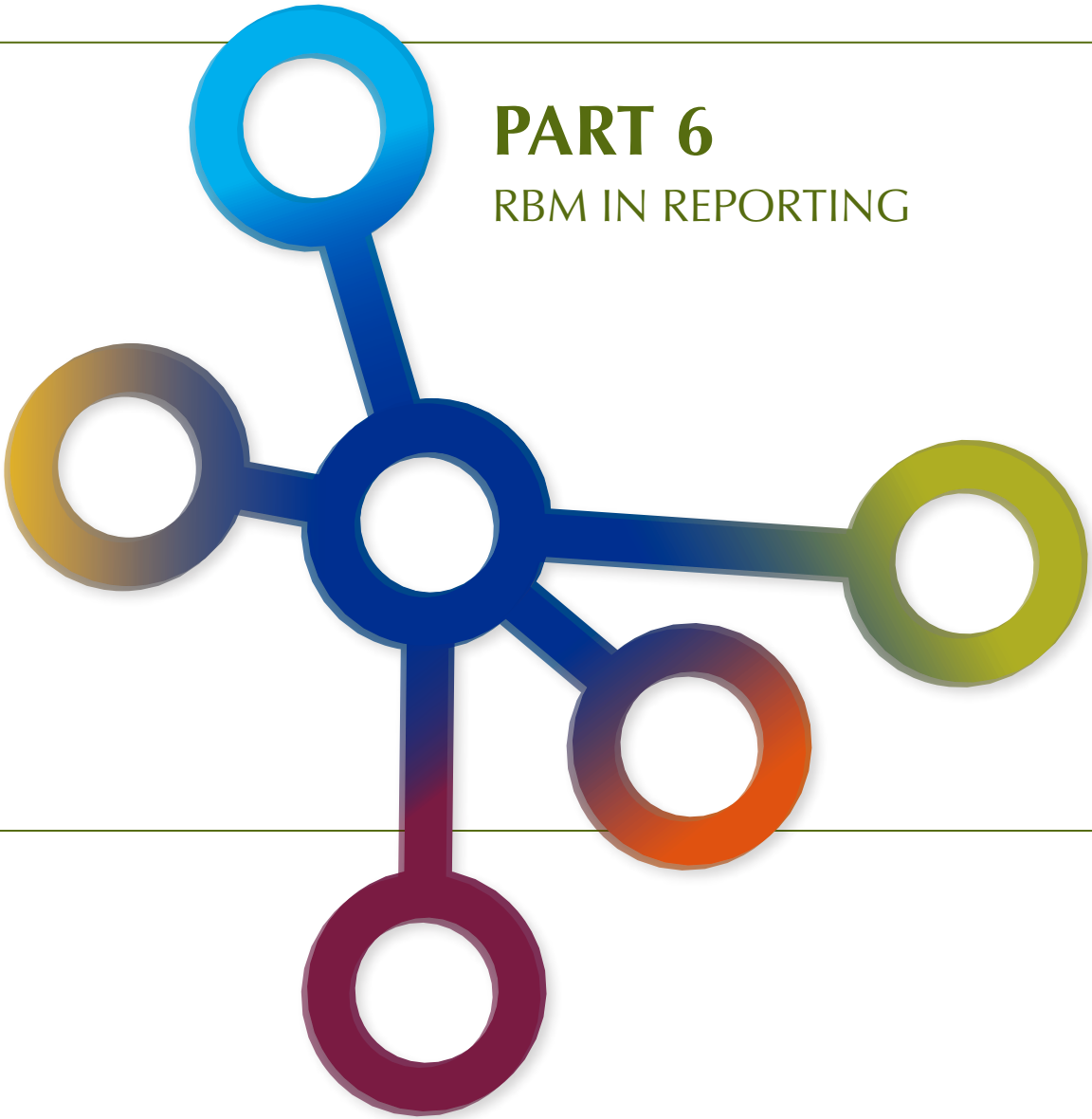
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NOTES

PART 6

RBM IN REPORTING





RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN REPORTING

Results-based reporting is one of the key challenges of RBM. All too often reports do not adequately tell the story of the effects that interventions are having. Results-based reporting seeks to shift attention away from activities to communicating important results that the programme has achieved at the level of international norms and standards in relation to national commitments to international treaties and human rights instruments, UNDAF output and outcome levels.

An important aid is the results matrix, which clearly articulates the results at the output and outcome level and the indicators, baselines and targets. These items, along with the review of indicators, assumptions and risks, should serve as guides for reporting on results.

Through RBM, United Nations agencies seek concise reports that systematically provide actual results using the indicators designed in the planning phase. Changes in baselines or in the achievement of targets should be documented in the results-based report. An effective results-based report communicates and demonstrates the effectiveness of the intervention. It makes the case to stakeholders and donors for continued support and resources. A results-based report can also be used to demonstrate accountability to governing bodies of United Nations agencies,

government and donors.

A results-based report allows Resident Coordinators and UNCTs to inform their decision-making.



The reporting matrix, as shown in Table 9, is a tool UNCTs can use to summarize and track results during annual reviews. This tool can help UNCTs when presenting the UNDAF progress report to national authorities (as stated earlier, at least once per cycle). The matrix helps keep the reporting focused on results at the outcome level and the United Nations contribution to these outcomes. (See [Standard Operational Format and Guidance on Reporting Progress on the UNDAF](#), January 2010).

In writing the results story, the UNCT should:

- describe what was achieved and list the indicators of success;
- compare actual results with expected results;
- quantify achievement whenever possible against a baseline;
- illuminate findings with quotes, testimonials, photos, etc;
- explain the reasons for over or under achievement;

FIGURE 4. Elements of an effective results-based report



- highlight any unforeseen problems or opportunities that may require new strategies or a redesign of the initiative;
- tell the story of how the results were achieved, and highlight when there is potential for wider learning of lessons;
- recognize the involvement of others (partners, stakeholders, rights-holders) and assign a degree of attribution, if possible;
- ensure there is sufficient data to describe the effects of activities undertaken.

By presenting credible, reliable and balanced information, the UNCT will be able to produce an effective results-based report. An effective report can also be one that highlights challenges and areas of inefficiency and poor results. Quality criteria for results reporting include the following five areas:

- 1. completeness;
- 2. balance (good and bad);
- 3. consistency (between sections);
- 4. substantiveness and reliability; and
- 5. clarity.

TABLE 9. Example of a results-based report

OUTPUT INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGET	END-LINE DATA
Overall progress on UNDAF outcome (including assessment of key strategies, their effectiveness and lessons learned): Greater access and equity in health services for adolescent and vulnerable groups. While the programme is in its initial phases, preliminary results look promising. Data collection around the access and equity on health services is showing a 5% increase per year. Special efforts have also been made to ensure that marginalized groups - like indigenous women and men and adolescent boys and girls - have greater access to health services. The special programme targeting adolescent youth and reproductive health with outreach and theater has been very successful in promoting the importance of reproductive health.			
Output 1: Strengthened national capacity to develop and implement a human resource development plan for safe motherhood, within the national human resource development plan.			
- Human Resource development plan for safe motherhood developed # of people trained	- Comparison of new development plan with the old development plan 0	- Assessment in 3 provinces of HR situation in regard to safe motherhood. 30 men and 70 women professionals trained.	- Human Resource Development Plan is developed and the report is available. - At the end of year two, target was achieved.
Overall Progress for Output # 1 (including assessment of key strategies, their effectiveness and lessons learned): The National Human Resource Development Plan for Reproductive Health with a focus on Safe Motherhood Initiative for 2008-2020 developed with technical assistance of UNFPA along with other stakeholders. An implementation plan for the National Human Resource Development Plan was also developed with the participation of various stakeholders which has led to increased commitments from civil society and government ministries. Implementation of the Human Resource Development Plan is progressing well and there is beginning to be an increase in use of adolescent sexual and reproductive health services.			
Output # 2: Strengthened reproductive health information and services for young people within the context of the national adolescent health strategy.			
- Life skills education incorporated into the adolescent health strategy. - Satisfaction of youth with reproductive health information and services. - Models for strengthening reproductive health and HIV/AIDS information and services for out-of-school young people created.	0 0 0	1 70% of youth satisfied 2 models	1 60% of youth satisfied with health services 2 models
Overall Progress for Output # 2 (including assessment of key strategies, their effectiveness and lessons learned): Young people's multisectoral needs, rights and necessary reproductive health related health skills have been incorporated into the adolescent health strategy, which is being finalized in 2009. Similarly, two models for adolescent sex and reproductive health information dissemination have been developed, which are currently functioning and operational. A survey of adolescent youth reveals about a 60% satisfaction level with the new health information and services in place. Youth made recommendations to increase the extension services available to them. Both the models are being handed over to the respected ministries – the Ministry of Public Health and the Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs - with the goal of scaling up these efforts in multiple provinces.			
Output # 3.....			

PART 7

USING RBM FOR
LEARNING, ADJUSTING &
DECISION-MAKING





USING RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT FOR LEARNING, ADJUSTING AND DECISION MAKING

Like all management systems for planning, as M&E becomes more results based, it is expected that the process of implementation will lead to greater learning, adjustment and decision making. This continual process of feedback and adjustment, as seen in Figure 5, seeks to make programmes more responsive to the environment within which they operate.

United Nations agencies need to ensure that they have adequate mechanisms for flexibility, revision, adjustment and learning. UNCTs need to work in tandem with government to operationalize the review process so that learning and adjustment can take place.

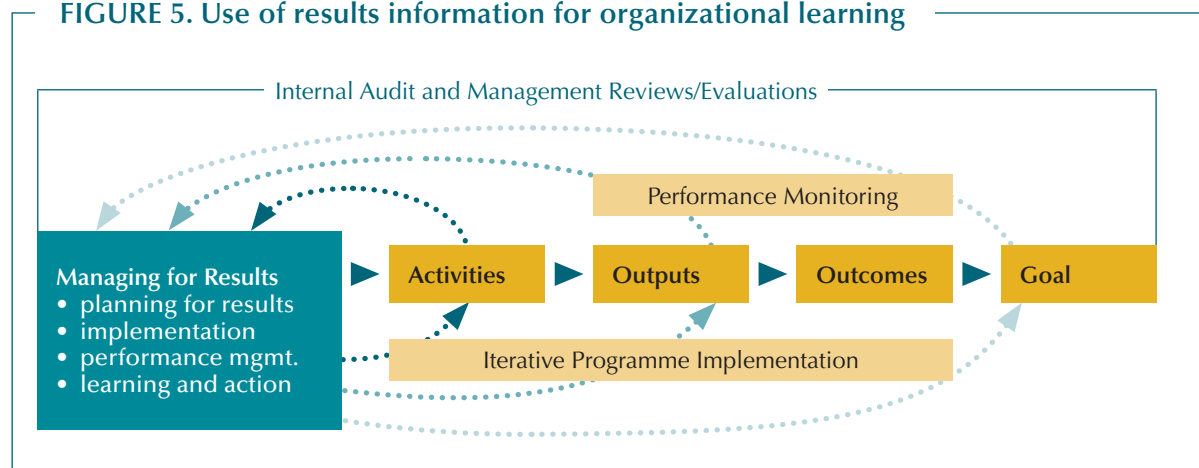
A number of mechanisms can be put into place to ensure this, including:

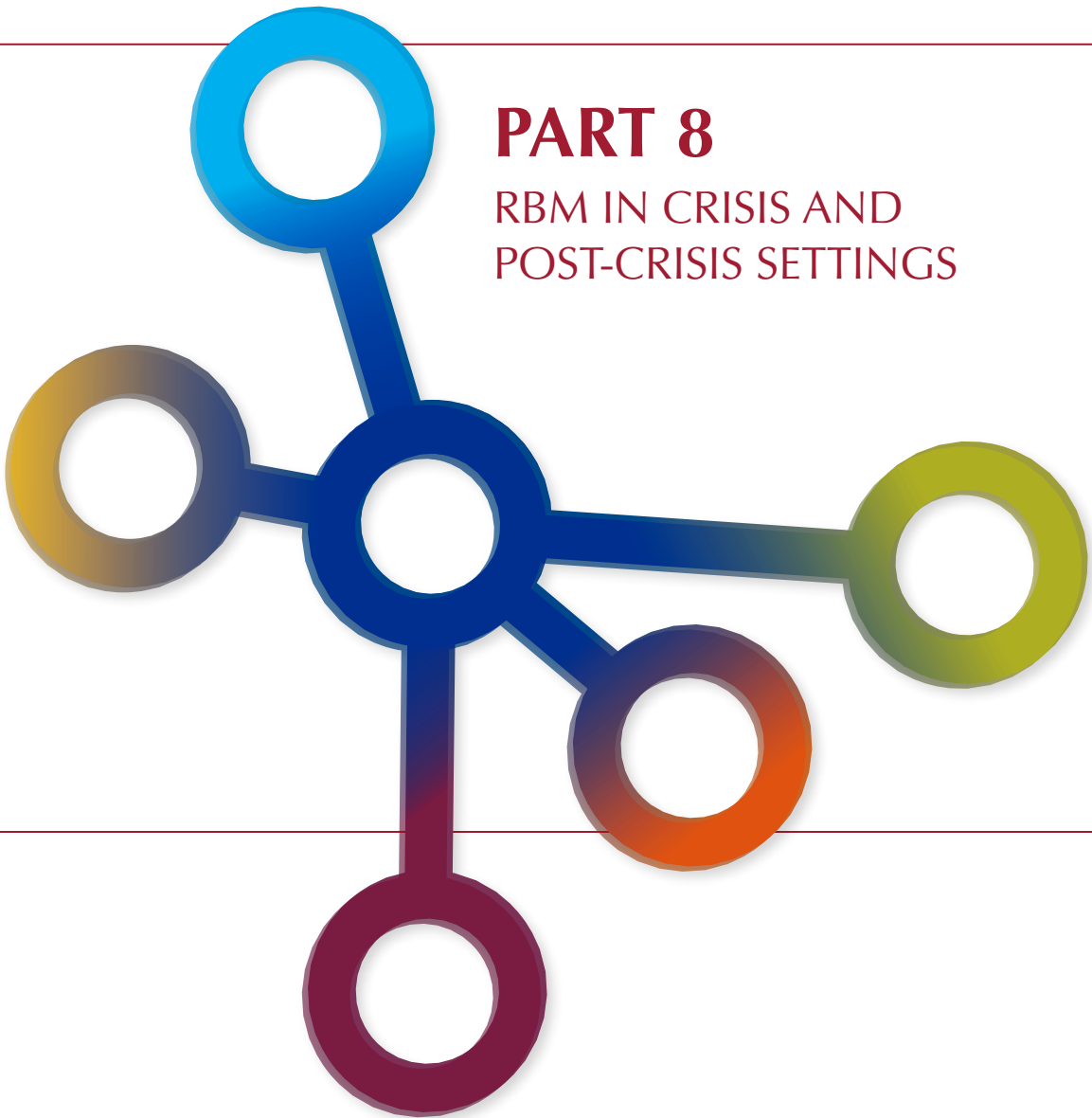
- establish and support data collection and analysis at the community level;
- utilize biannual meetings and yearly reviews to review programme performance;
- establish electronic systems to post questions, share technical information and offer assistance to facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange;

- organize cross-regional learning processes, such as workshops and retreats, to take stock and analyze results;
- explore UNCT events as venues for the dissemination of successful United Nations initiatives and practices to inform a wider audience;
- actively participating in ‘communities of practice’ –many of which are online – to share best practices and seek advice for ongoing challenges from peers and experts.

Optimizing performance between and among United Nations agencies and key stakeholders is the key to ensuring accountability, national ownership, buy-in and sustainability of development interventions and long-term change.

FIGURE 5. Use of results information for organizational learning





PART 8

RBM IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SETTINGS



RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SETTINGS

Generally, the principles of implementing RBM in crisis and post-crisis settings²⁸ are the same as in development settings. However, there are a number of key factors to be considered when using RBM in crisis and post-crisis settings.

First, in crisis and post-crisis settings there is a shorter timeframe for planning and reporting on results. There may be a different role for the government, especially in humanitarian emergencies. It is also important to ensure that articulated results respond to root causes of conflict and 'do no harm' during programme development and implementation. In crisis and post-crisis settings, the United Nations approach should take into account the full scope of humanitarian, recovery, peacebuilding²⁹, human rights and development activities of the system, and make an effort to streamline planning frameworks.

CONCERNS IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SETTINGS

Planning for results: Crisis and post-crisis settings bring in a multitude of actors working across a wide variety of sectors - peace and security, human rights, political, humanitarian and development. Each of these has their own planning frameworks, tools and processes such as the:

- Post Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA),
- Common Humanitarian Action Plan/ Consolidated Appeals Process (CHAP/CAP),

- United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF),
- Integrated Strategic Framework, and
- Integrated Mission Planning Process.

While these plans and processes follow different timelines and serve different purposes, they need to be complementary and mutually reinforcing to be able to ensure United Nations coherence. At the same time, they should support national peace consolidation, humanitarian, recovery, and development needs. In these settings, it is crucial for United Nations partners operating on the ground to work together, and to explore options for information and data sharing and consolidated results planning and reporting.

Monitoring and evaluation: The volatility, sensitivity and access constraints in crisis and post-crisis environments require highly-effective M&E systems that provide rapid evidence-based information regarding progress on results and the impact of United Nations interventions. This presents challenges: data is often not available, interventions must be implemented quickly, and it is difficult to measure impact during

²⁸ Understood in this report as including both political crisis and natural disasters.

²⁹ Peacebuilding in the context of the United Nations is 'a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development' (Secretary-General's Policy Committee, May 2007).

short programming cycles. There is growing recognition of the value of simple perception surveys and the use of proxy indicators in crisis and post-crisis settings.

As much as possible, monitoring frameworks should leverage existing data collection and monitoring capacity and experience within various United Nations entities (e.g., UNCT M&E groups, Joint Mission Analysis Centers (JMACs), results-based budgeting performance monitoring reports, etc.). Options for integrating efforts through benchmarking processes should also be explored.

Harmonizing RBM concepts and terminology:

The concepts and definitions employed in crisis and post-crisis settings are by and large the

same as those used in development environments (refer to Box 2 earlier in the handbook). Different terminology is, however, used by different actors.



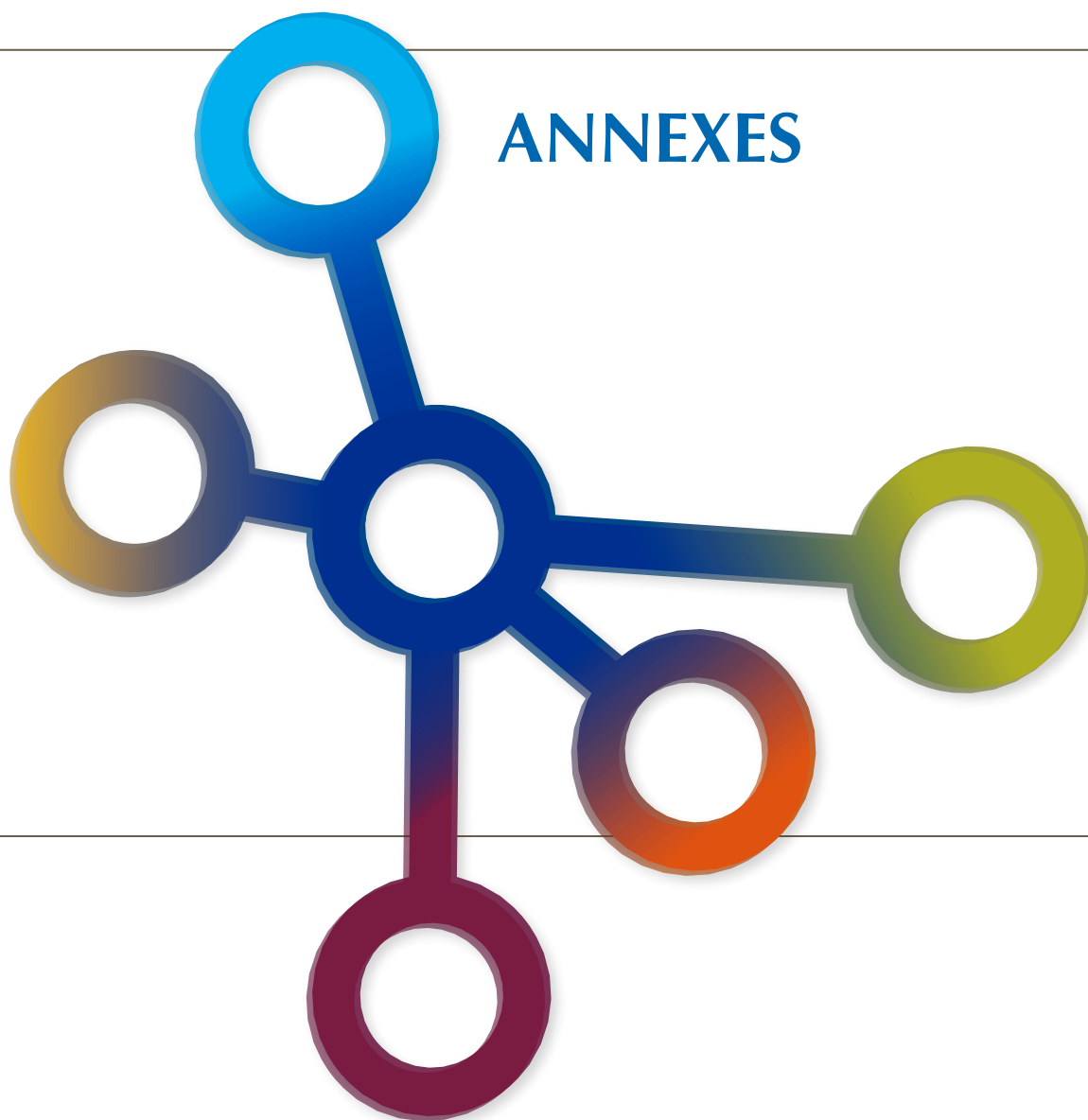
For example, terms like ‘activity’ or ‘goal’ generally have the same understanding across the board. But, a peacekeeping/political mission might use the term ‘accomplishment’ or ‘result’ when other United Nations entities would use the term ‘outcome’. Likewise, the use of ‘logical framework’ by peacekeeping/political missions is similar to ‘results framework’ in UNDG terminology.

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Crisis and post-crisis settings bring in a multitude of actors working across a wide variety of sectors - peace and security, human rights, political, humanitarian and development.

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ANNEX 1:

EXAMPLES OF UNDAF RESULTS MATRICES

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: REDUCE MATERNAL MORTALITY					
Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
UNDAF Outcome 1: By 2013, greater provision of high quality emergency obstetric care is achieved <i>(List contributing UN agencies for each of the outcomes and highlight the outcome convener)</i>	Indicator: Satisfaction of women patients with emergency obstetric care Baseline: To be conducted. Target: 70% of women patients satisfied with services. Indicator: # of women 15-49 years benefitting from comprehensive emergency care services Baseline: 35% of women 15-49 benefitting from emergency obstetric care services.	Sources: Women patients of emergency obstetric care Methods: Survey	Assumption: Women and communities are aware of the expansion of emergency obstetric care and there is no social or cultural barrier to seeking such care when needed	UN agency: Executing Agency Other UN agency providing technical assistance	\$125,000 for post training coaching and support
Output 1.1: Improved human and technical capacity to provide comprehensive emergency obstetric care by municipal health facilities	Indicator: # of skilled/qualified women and men health providers in all facilities at municipal level Baseline: 500 doctors, nurses and midwives Target: 800 Indicator: Doctors, nurses and mid-wives feel confident and competent to deliver emergency obstetric care. Baseline: tbd Target: 80% of doctors, nurses and midwives feel competent to deliver services.	Sources: Municipal Health Facilities Doctors, nurses and mid-wives Methods: Yearly reporting, survey and testimonials.	Assumptions: Doctors, nurses feeling motivated, confident and competent in using Emergency Obstetric Care services. Risk: High turnover of medical personnel	Other UN agency providing technical assistance, mentoring and coaching	\$150,000 for capacity building
Output 1.2: Emergency obstetric care kits distributed	# of Obstetric kits made available and used per year. - Doctors, nurses and midwives satisfied with kits and respond to their needs. Baseline: 300 kits Target: 600 kits	Source: Health Facilities Method: 6 monthly reporting & survey	Assumption: The allocated resource is sufficient to reach out to the remote provinces.	UN agency to review kits with local personnel.	\$30,000 for 600 kits

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY

Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
UNDAF Outcome 1: Increased number of development strategies (including PRSPs, SWAPs, post-conflict reconstruction strategies, and other nationally owned plans) incorporate gender equality in line with national commitments to women's empowerment (e.g. MDGs) and human rights (e.g. CEDAW and regional human rights commitments)	Indicator: # of countries that incorporate gender equality in line with national/global commitments to gender equality. Baseline: 40% of countries in which UN agency is involved in providing gender equality support Target: 60% of countries in which UN agency is involved in providing gender equality support Indicator: Extent to which national, regional and global plans and strategies incorporate national/regional/global commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. Baseline: To be determined at the outset Target: 70% of countries in which UN agency is involved in providing gender equality support	PRSPs, SWAPs, and department responsible for women's issues	Assumption: Continued national government commitment Risk: Change of government results in change of priorities	Lead UN agency to provide technical assistance. Programme administered by UN agency that has technical capacity on gender	\$250,000
Output 1.1: Strengthened skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into national development strategies	Indicators: Degree to which national partners acquire new skills and methods to better integrate gender equality in national development strategies Baseline: Low-to-medium level of gender equality skills and application. Target: Medium-to-high level of gender equality skills and application. Indicators: Level of satisfaction of national partners with the integration of gender equality priorities into national development strategies	National partners	Assumption: Training workshops well organized and well attended. Risk: High government turnover.	Lead UN agency to recommend capable gender equality trainers. Other UN agency will administer the workshop.	\$175,000

◀ NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY (cont'd)

Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
Output 1.2: Knowledge base on national action plans for women and on gender equality in national development strategies are up-to-date and easily accessible	Indicator: Knowledge base is operational Baseline: Database exists Target: Database relevant to gender equality needs and tracking	Ministry of Planning and Department for Women's Affairs	Assumption: Knowledgebase is up-to-date and functional Risk: Obstacles in obtaining up-to-date information	Lead UN agency to provide technical assistance to make database operational	\$75,000

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: IMPROVED GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESS TO RESOURCES, GOODS AND SERVICES AND DECISION-MAKING IN RURAL AREAS

Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
UNDAF Outcome 1: Enhanced government capacities to incorporate gender and social equality issues in agriculture, food security and rural development programmes, project and policies	Indicator: Collection and use of disaggregated data to inform decision-making Baseline: Data collection is done on a regular basis. Target: Quarterly meetings to analyze data and inform decision-making, policy formulation and budgets	Ministry of Agriculture	Assumption: National commitment continues to consider and plan development interventions to meet the gender differential needs, priorities and aspirations of men and women Risk: Inadequate data make it difficult to analyze trends in social and gender issues, identify needs and priorities and support the development of appropriate gender plans and policies.	Lead agency and other UN agencies working in agriculture	\$22.4 million
Output 1.1: Application of socio-economic and gender analysis (SEAGA) tool for policy formulation and planning.	Indicator: # of national institutions receiving lead UN agency's technical support that have adopted SEAGA tool for policy formulation and planning. Baseline: 10 Target 15 in 2 years and 22 in four years. Indicator: Satisfaction with the SEAGA tool by Government employees	National Institutions, FAO Ministry of Agriculture	Assumption: Lead UN agency continues to show commitment to achieving gender and social equality. {Not good: seems some agencies are not committed to gender equality}	Lead agency to provide technical support.	

◀ NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: IMPROVED GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESS TO RESOURCES, GOODS AND SERVICES AND DECISION-MAKING IN RURAL AREAS (cont'd)

Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
Output 1.2: Sex disaggregated food security and rural development data collected, analyzed, used and disseminated on a nation wide basis	Indicator: Number of countries that collect, analyze, use and disseminate sex disaggregated food security and rural development data. Baseline: 15; Target: 20 in two years and 30 in 4 years. Indicator: Degree of relevance of sex disaggregated food security and rural development data. Baseline: Medium; Target: High	Government of countries (survey)	Assumption: Data disaggregated at the local level making rolling up easy. Risk: Lack of consistency in the collection of data.	Lead agency to provide technical support.	

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT TO PREPARE FOR, ASSESS AND RESPOND TO ACUTE HUNGER RISING FROM DISASTERS

Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
UNDAF Outcome 1: Food security of vulnerable population is improved	Indicator: Degree of food consumption by poor households.	Ministry of Agriculture (six monthly survey)	Assumption: Adequate food supply for distribution. Risk: Food Security and disaster systems not fully operational.	3 key UN agencies working together to increase agricultural productivity, increase food stocks, and provide early disaster warning support.	70 million
Output 1.1: Adequate food consumption over assistance period for targeted households at risk of falling into acute hunger.	Indicator: Household food consumption score. Baseline: to be determined Target: Score exceeds threshold for 80% of targeted households.	Annual survey data (survey)	Assumption: Adequate food consumption Risk: Inadequate govt. stockpiles of food.	Key UN agency working with Government Ministry to distribute food.	UN agency total support: \$30 million
Output 1.2: Food and non-food items distributed in sufficient quantity and quality to targeted women, men, girls and boys under secure conditions.	Indicator: # of women, men, girls and boys receiving food and non-food items, by category and as % of planned figures. Baseline: Tonnage of food distributed, by type, as % of planned distribution Target: Quantity and quality of fortified foods, complementary and special nutritional products distributed.	Ministry responsible for food distribution. (monthly ledger)	Assumption: Distribution channels are operational. Risk: Transportation vehicles and routes inadequate. {Risk too high and should lead to mitigation measure}	UN Agency with Government counterpart to ensure logistics food aid.	

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES OR GOALS: REDUCE POVERTY AND IMPROVE SOCIAL SAFETY NET					
Results	Indicators , Baseline, Target	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks	Role of Partners	Indicative Resources
UNDAF Outcome 1: Government decentralized and restructured to promote efficient, effective and accountable delivery of integrated services for pro-poor and sustainable economic development	Indicator: # of ministries represented at the departmental level Baseline: 5 Target: 15 Indicator: # of programmes executed at the field level Baseline: 20 Target: 85 Indicator: Satisfaction of local population with decentralized government programmes. Indicator: Budget allocated to pro-poor and economic development. Baseline: \$ 500 million Target: \$800 million	Various Government Ministries (review and survey) Targeted Government Ministries of Health, Social Development, Economic Affairs (review and survey)	Assumption: Adequate personnel (M/F) and training at provincial and district level. Risk: National government remains highly centralized.	Provincial and district authorities 5 UN agencies to provide technical expertise and know-how.	\$100 million
Output 1.1: Strengthened capacity of Parliament and Justice Sector to address gender issues and cope with likely effects of HIV & AIDS, gender based violence and Human Security	Indicator: # of training workshops Baseline: 5 workshops Target: 15 workshops Indicator: Quality of new knowledge and its application. Baseline: Low Target: Medium-High	M/F Workshop participants. (Evaluation)	Assumption: Technical Expertise found. Risk: Gap between knowledge and application	Provincial and district authorities	
Output 1.2: Strengthened capacity of CSOs, CBOs, volunteer organizations, and particularly women led organization, to implement, manage and report on project execution, to build partnership and become full-fledged development agents	Indicator: # of projects executed by CSOs, CBOs and volunteer organizations. Baseline: 100 Target: 175 Indicator: # of new partnerships Baseline: tbd Target: tbd Indicator: Perception of CSOs, CBOs and volunteer organizations with regards to their capacity. Baseline: low-medium Target: Medium-high	CSO, CBOs, volunteer organizations (review and survey)	Assumption: Continuation of outside funding Risk: Government instability upsets execution of programmes by NGOs.	Provincial and district authorities	

Comments: Note the relationship between the outputs and the outcomes it generates. There should be a clear cause and effect relationship between outputs and outcomes. There should be no more than 3 indicators per output or outcome. Ideally, one should combine both quantitative and qualitative indicators to be able to fully measure the outcome or output.



ANNEX 2: CHANGE LANGUAGE

Example of an output: To strengthen the capacity of local politicians to do X by undertaking Y
To transform the above into change language the following four steps can be applied.

STEP 1

Use results language to emphasize the future condition

What can we say 'is the case' in 5 years time? What is the new 'situation'?

The capacity of local politicians to do X by undertaking Y is strengthened

STEP 2

Be specific, are there particularly weak or under resourced element/groups?

All local politicians may be too ambitious? Can we narrow it down e.g. geographically or perhaps only female, or young politicians? Also keep asking: capacity for WHAT?

The capacity of local politicians in the ten poorest districts to do X is strengthened by undertaking Y

STEP 3

Take out information that relates to either strategy or activities

While the 'how' of the result is important in the overall narration, any information that relates to activities or strategies, may be described elsewhere. The 'how' in the result is important from the sustainability perspective of UN's support – In the results statement, we want to describe a future situation.

The capacity of local politicians in the ten poorest districts to do X is strengthened

STEP 4

Bring change to the front, shift from passive to active language

This demonstrates the change, emphasizes what 'conditions' have changed. In 2012 one could say '*As opposed to the situation in 2007, local politicians in the ten poorest districts now'*

Local politicians in the ten poorest districts have the capacity to do X



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NOTES

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