

Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation  
Monitoring Framework

**INDICATOR 1A:**

**Development partners use country-led results frameworks**

Methodology

Draft for consultation

**Summary:**

The extent to which development partners guide their development efforts in line with country-defined priorities and development results is a fundamental aspect of country ownership. This indicator corresponds to SDG 17.15.

The original indicator 1a reviewed whether new development programmes and projects were aligned with country-defined objectives and results, and whether progress was monitored relying on countries' own statistics and monitoring and evaluation systems. The indicator only focused on project-level alignment. However, most development partners articulate their overall alignment to partner country priorities through country strategies or partnership frameworks, which then guide the focus of the projects to be approved in the country.

In the revised indicator, project-level estimates are complemented with an assessment of development partners' country strategies or partnership frameworks. The additional module provides a basic assessment of the results-orientation and country ownership of these strategic frameworks.

Note: The following draft methodology, put forth by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team of the Global Partnership, builds on the Nairobi Outcome document, the technical advice of the Monitoring Advisory Group, the lessons learned in the 2016 monitoring round, and inputs from experts on country results frameworks.

## Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognise the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (Global Partnership or GPEDC) as a solid foundation to drive more effective development co-operation. To meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda, the Global Partnership must deliver evidence and data that address the needs of countries in better monitoring the effectiveness of their development efforts. In the [Nairobi Outcome Document](#), the international development community stressed the need to “update the existing monitoring framework to reflect the challenges of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to leave no-one behind”.

To address these challenges, the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership outlined an inclusive strategy to refine the monitoring framework, following a three-track approach:

1. Strengthening the current 10 indicators to ensure their relevance for the 2030 Agenda context;
2. Adapting the scope of monitoring to address major systemic issues critical to the 2030 Agenda, such as climate change, gender equality, conflict and fragility as well as progressively reflecting all the modalities and development co-operation actors;
3. Enhancing the impact of the monitoring process by improving the quality and inclusiveness of country-level monitoring and facilitating follow-up and action on the results.

The refinement of the Global Partnership monitoring framework is guided by the Nairobi Outcome Document, the [technical advice](#) of the Monitoring Advisory Group and the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team, and lessons learned in the 2016 monitoring round, including feedback from participating countries. The refinement began in April 2017 and is drawing on the technical assistance of expert groups, related to specific thematic areas, paired with iterative consultations with relevant stakeholders and country-level testing.

The refined indicators will be used in the third Global Partnership monitoring round, scheduled to be launched in May 2018. Further revisions will be incorporated in subsequent monitoring exercises. Findings from the third monitoring round will feed into high-level political processes, in particular the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

## METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

### INDICATOR 1A: DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS ALIGN AND USE COUNTRY-LED RESULTS FRAMEWORKS

#### 1. Introduction

This document presents a proposal to refine the Global Partnership indicator [*indicator 1a*] measuring the **alignment of development partners' new interventions with development objectives and results defined by partner countries**. The indicator is part of the current Global Partnership Monitoring Framework, which is undergoing a refinement process to respond adequately to the effectiveness challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This indicator also provides information about the degree of respect for each country's policy space and leadership to establish its own policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development, which is SDG target 17.15.<sup>1</sup>

To inform the refinement of the indicator methodology, the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team has consulted experts on results frameworks and development planning in partner countries and development partners' agencies.

The document presents the current measurement of indicator 1a, the shortcomings as identified by the Monitoring Advisory Group<sup>2</sup> and the past monitoring round, as well as the feedback received from consultation with experts on results. A revised questionnaire is presented in Annex I of this proposal. Feedback from a public consultation and country piloting will also help inform the final indicator methodology.

#### 2. Rationale

##### *International commitments*

Country-led results frameworks (CRFs) define a country's approach to development results and their associated monitoring and evaluation systems, with focus on performance and the achievement of development results. These results frameworks typically include agreed objectives and results indicators (i.e. output, outcome, and/or impact). They also set targets to measure progress in achieving the objectives defined in the government's planning documents. In practice, country-led results frameworks defined at the country level are often broadly stated (e.g. long term vision plans, national development strategies) and operationalised in more detail at the sector level (e.g. sector strategies), where specific targets and indicators are set for a given timeframe (GPEDC, 2015).

The extent to which development partners use country-led results frameworks in designing new development programmes and projects is a fundamental aspect of country ownership. The same is

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<sup>1</sup> Metadata for indicator 17.15.1 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-17-15-01.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The Monitoring Advisory Group (MAG) was established in 2015 to provide technical expertise and advice to strengthen the Global Partnership monitoring framework and ensure its relevance in the evolving post-2015 landscape. The group is composed of 12 high-level experts from developing country governments, development co-operation providers, think tanks and civil society organisations. From mid-2015 to late 2016, the MAG performed a full assessment of the 10 indicator monitoring framework and the monitoring process.

true for the use of countries' own results frameworks, and their monitoring and evaluation systems, to track progress on and achievement of results, minimising the use of other frameworks (OECD-UNDP, 2016). A CRF provides a foundation for implementing national development strategies and priorities and it is understood as led or originated by the government of the country itself, rather than being provided or imposed by development partners (GPEDC, 2017).

Recognising the relation between the use of country-led results frameworks and country ownership, 165 governments, with their endorsement of the **Busan Partnership Agreement**, committed to **rely on country-led results frameworks** to guide their support to partner countries and, to the extent possible, avoid parallel systems to monitoring and tracking results of their development interventions (GPEDC, 2011). Furthermore, in 2016 the Nairobi Outcome document reiterated the **use of country-led results frameworks as a matter of urgency** for development partners (GPEDC, 2016a).

Indicator 1a seeks to monitor the implementation of the above effectiveness commitments at country level by tracking the alignment of development partners' new interventions with country-defined development objectives and results.

### 3. Current methodology

#### *Substantive focus*

The current indicator 1a measures (a) alignment of development partners' new interventions (i.e. programmes, projects) with country-defined development objectives and results; and (2) development partners' progressive reliance on countries' own statistics and monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress of development interventions. These two elements reflect the two Busan principles of country ownership and focus on development results.

The behaviour change pursued by this indicator is for development stakeholders to plan their development co-operation efforts and assess their performance using CRFs and other similar country/sector planning tools, minimising the use of ad hoc or parallel results frameworks by development partners. CRFs can include most forms of government-led planning instruments where development priorities, goals and targets are defined in some detail (GPEDC, 2015).

The indicator was complemented by *indicator 1b*, which provided a descriptive assessment on the existence and characteristics of CRFs in the country.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Original data collection process*

The current methodology was developed in 2015 against the lessons learnt from testing a pilot approach in eight countries during the Global Partnership 2013-14 monitoring round, and through follow-up consultation rounds with groups of experts on results framework and development planning in partner countries and development partners.

The methodology was rolled out during the 2016 monitoring round. For each development intervention of significant size (USD 1 million and above) approved during the year of reference, the

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<sup>3</sup> Indicator 1b is also under review as part of the broader refinement of the Global Partnership monitoring framework.

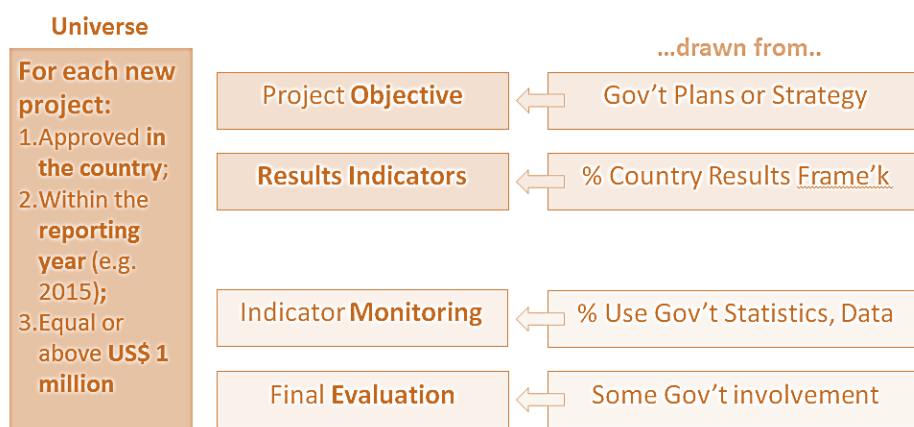
indicator calculated the degree to which objectives, results indicators and monitoring frameworks associated with new development interventions were drawn from government sources – including national, sector and subnational planning tools.

Measuring the alignment of development partners' new interventions to country-defined priorities and results served to estimate the use of country-owned results frameworks by development partners. It also provided information about the degree of respect for each country's policy space and leadership to establish its own policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development (SDG 17.15).

The original indicator looked at behaviour in designing new interventions:

- Whether objectives and results indicators were drawn from country-led results frameworks, plans and strategies; (alignment & use)
- The share of results indicators that will have relied on country sources of data to track progress; (use of national monitoring & evaluation systems)
- The percentage of new interventions that planned to engage the partner country government to some extent in evaluating the results. (use of evaluation)
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Or, visually,



#### 4. Overall assessment

The indicator remains highly relevant within the context of the SDGs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, where development partners committed to align activities and funding with national priorities, to promote country ownership and to support a focus on results (GPEDC, 2016b). The existence of country-led results frameworks (indicator 1b), coupled with partners' alignment to those frameworks and joint monitoring of progress (indicator 1a) facilitates mutual accountability toward results.

The 2016 monitoring round provided useful information on the extent of use of country-led results framework by development partners<sup>4</sup> and is informing both the Financing for Development's review process as well as the SDGs report. The results indicate that development partners are increasingly using country-led results frameworks in the design of new interventions. However, they need to do more to ensure that country-led results indicators and data are used to monitor these new interventions, and to engage the country governments more in evaluating development impacts (OECD-UNDP, 2016).

The Monitoring Advisory Group (GPEDC, 2016b) carried out a technical review of the Global Partnership indicators and recommended the following improvements to the methodology for indicator 1a:

- Capturing more detailed information on the behaviours of development partners (e.g. including **alignment of their country strategies** with relevant CRFs, indicating whether they are committed to assessing results);
- Deepening the understanding of the **underlying reasons for not using** country-led results frameworks by development partners;
- Assessing the **role of development partners in strengthening** country statistical, monitoring and evaluation capacities and systems<sup>5</sup>;

The experience of the 2016 monitoring round also served to identify some methodological and process issues:

- Respondents had **different interpretations of key concepts** related to “alignment/use” and “output/outcome”, which may have led to reporting errors. More clarity in guidance provided to respondents can avoid this situation in the future.
- Some respondents expressed that reporting at project level was **time intensive**. This was the case for officials in development partner country offices as well as for national co-ordinators, who had to individually review and validate the assessment for each reported project. Some simplification of the reporting approach may be needed as well as more detailed guidance on how to carry out the data collection.
- Reporting might not always be comprehensive at “project/programme level” as respondents can be **selective in the projects** that they choose to report on (e.g. excluding non-aligned projects) – an agreed, transparent list of project being assessed needs to be disclosed to national co-ordinators from the start.

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<sup>4</sup> In the 2016 monitoring round, 2,819 projects have been reported for this indicator for a total amount of USD 73 billion.

<sup>5</sup> This recommendation is not specifically addressed for indicator 1a but will be addressed as part of a broader assessment of the role of development partners in strengthening government capacities.

- Alignment to national priorities also happens at the **level of country strategies** and partnership documents. These strategies often guide partner interventions in terms of sectors and project/programme priorities in a specific country. Assessing alignment of development partner country strategies with country-led results frameworks would add valuable information to what is already captured under the current methodology.

The workshop of the Results Community held in October 2017<sup>1</sup> was also an opportunity to discuss the refinement of indicator 1a and to collect feedback from participants. The experts consulted confirmed the relevance of assessing the extent development partners' **alignment to CRFs at strategy level** while keeping the project level assessment which remains relevant as it generates useful information that can put peer pressure on the behaviour of development partners. In line with the Monitoring Advisory Group recommendation, it was also suggested the introduction of additional questions for development partners to explain the reason behind non-use of country results frameworks. (GPEDC, 2017b)

## 5. Refinement proposal

Taking into account the Nairobi Outcome document, the technical advice of the Monitoring Advisory Group, the lessons learned in the 2016 monitoring round, and inputs from experts on results frameworks, the following adjustments are proposed to enhance the relevance and efficiency of this indicator:

- **Complementing project-level assessments of the extent of use of country-led results framework (alignment in *programming behaviour*) with an assessment at strategy level (alignment in *strategic intentions*).** This is done by adding an additional module to the questionnaire (module 1, Annex I) with specific questions about the existence of development partners' country strategies/partnerships, their main characteristics and their alignment to existing CRF in the country of intervention, and the extent to which they reflect the SDGs.
- **Reducing the burden of project reporting while maintaining relevance and comprehensiveness of information.** Reporting is to be done for the six largest development interventions approved within the reporting year (e.g. 2017). Focusing on the six largest interventions avoids overburdening reporting officials and national co-ordinators in the data collection and validation while still capturing a representative sample of all the interventions in the country. An analysis of projects reported to the OECD Creditor Reporting System shows that on average development partners approved 5.6 projects per country of intervention in 2016 (OECD, 2017).<sup>6</sup> In line with this, reported data for indicator 1a in 2016 confirms that most development partners (86%) tended to report up to six projects). The analysis of the 2016 monitoring results showed no significant bias in the results that could be attributed to the size of the interventions. (OECD, 2016). Thus, focusing the attention on the six largest interventions should help both in reducing the reporting burden, enhancing the timeliness of development partners reporting to governments, while maintaining representativeness in the sample of reported projects. The more focused approach, which starts with a joint identification of the largest projects by the government and development partner, should also mitigate the risk of selection bias in choosing specific projects for which alignment with national priorities and results is known to be higher.

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<sup>6</sup> The analysis is based on the projects reported in the OECD Creditor Reporting System for the year 2016 and for an amount equal or above one USD million.

- **For each individual project being reported, providing a space to detail the factors driving limited use of country results frameworks.** The complementary qualitative information will help identify institutional or practical constraints in relying further on country-led result frameworks, results data and systems that can drive country-level policy dialogue and support. In the reporting tool, respondents will be able to detail the reasons behind non-use of CRFs.
- **Providing a better definition of concepts such as “alignment/use” and “output/outcome” to avoid misinterpretations and reporting errors.** This is done by better defining the questions and providing clear guidance in the monitoring guide.

## 6. Methodology

### *Modules and questionnaires*

The revised indicator is composed of two complementary modules, described below and detailed in Annex I:

**Module 1: “Strategic level: Development partners use country-led results frameworks in defining their country strategies”** – Includes six questions that assess alignment at strategy level. Development partners answer these questions for each of their partner countries. Their answers will not affect the numerical calculation of indicator 1a but will provide complementary information to better understand the development partner policy on the use of CRF, and drive policy dialogue and changes at global level.

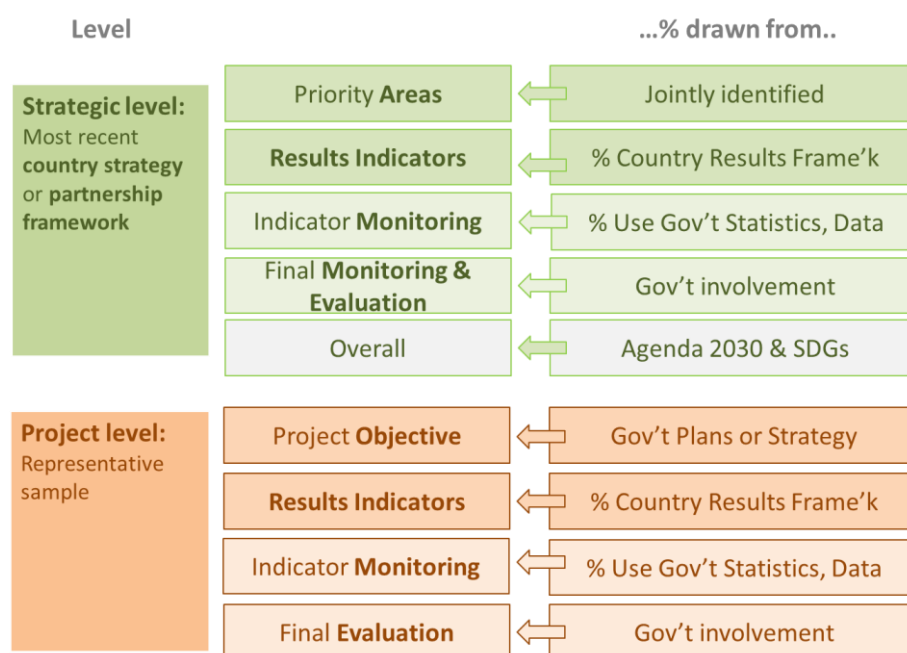
**Module 2: “Programming level: Development partners use country-led results frameworks in defining their development interventions”** – Is organised around a ten-item questionnaire. Development partners in country offices are asked to answer these questions for each of the **six largest development interventions approved during 2017**. The information collected at project level is aggregated for each specific development partner and for each specific country to ensure comparative consistency across countries and within each country, and across providers of development co-operation.

Evidence generated by this indicator will encourage greater focus on results that meet partner countries’ priorities, better understanding of the national context for strategic planning, and will help identifying areas where institutional strengthening could be most helpful.

The figure below presents a visual representation of the interlinkages between development partners’ strategies and projects at country level with partner countries’ own results frameworks and statistical/monitoring systems.



**Figure 1. To what extent development partners rely on countries' own results frameworks**



#### *Data collection and validation methods*

The overall process for data collection does not change. It is expected that the information needed to report on this indicator continues to be provided by country offices or embassies of development partners to national co-ordinator and validated by the government. Development partners may co-ordinate internally with their headquarters.

For development partners without a country presence (e.g. the case of most vertical initiatives or global funds), governments can obtain the information directly, or by liaising with the headquarters focal points appointed for this exercise by those organisations.

To validate the data submitted by development partners, national co-ordinators are encouraged to liaise with other government departments or line ministries to review and validate as needed. To help the validation, national co-ordinators can triangulate the data with their existing country's information management systems or aid management systems, when available.

The suggested steps for reporting on this indicator are the following:

1. The government's national co-ordinator and the development partner agree on the list of (up to 6) largest projects that need to be included in this exercise.
2. The national co-ordinator shares a customised data reporting tool with its development partners. The reporting tool includes the questionnaires for module 1 and module 2.
3. Development partners report on module 1 (if they have a country strategy or partnership framework for that country), and on module 2 (if they have approved any projects in the reporting year), providing the requested details for all the new projects approved in the reference year. If more than 6 projects have been approved, development partners should report on the 6 largest projects.
4. Development partners send back the requested information to the national co-ordinator.
5. The national co-ordinator reviews and validates the data reported by development partners.

6. OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team helps in the validation of the data, involving development partners' focal points to ensure that data gaps and data incongruences are addressed. Any updated information is shared with the national co-ordination, for consideration and to ensure data quality.

## ANNEX I. METHODOLOGY FOR INDICATOR 1A

### 1. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

#### *Questionnaire*

The revised indicator is composed of two complementary modules:

**Module 1:** “Strategic level: Development partners use country-led results frameworks in defining their country strategies” – Includes six questions that assess alignment at strategy level. Development partners answer these questions for each of their partner countries.

**Module 2:** “Programming level: Development partners use country-led results frameworks in defining their development interventions” – Is organised around a ten-item questionnaire. Development partners in country offices are asked to answer these questions for each of the **six largest development interventions approved during 2017**.

#### *Data collection and validation methods*

The information needed to report on this indicator is provided by country offices or embassies of development partners to national co-ordinator and validated by the government. Development partners may co-ordinate internally with their headquarters.

For development partners without a country presence (e.g. the case of most vertical initiatives or global funds), governments can obtain the information directly, or by liaising with the headquarters focal points appointed for this exercise by those organisations.

To validate the data submitted by development partners, national co-ordinators are encouraged to liaise with other government departments or line ministries to review and validate as needed. To help the validation, national co-ordinators can triangulate the data with their existing country’s information management systems or aid management systems, when available.

## 2. PROPOSED QUESTIONNAIRE

### Module 1. Strategic level: Development partners use country-led results frameworks in defining their country strategies

**Q1. At this moment, is there a country strategy or a partnership framework that guides your development interventions in the country?** [Yes/No]

*If yes, please indicate the period it covers and provide the link to the document or include an electronic copy of it when you submit your answers to the questionnaire.*

**a. If yes, has the national government signed it off?** [Yes/No]

— Development partners that answered yes to Q1 continue the survey —

**Q2. How many priority areas for interventions are identified in the country strategy or partnership framework?** [Number]

**a. And among these priority areas, how many have been jointly identified with the government?** [Number]

**Q3. Does the country strategy include a results framework with strategic objectives, results indicators and targets to measure progress in achieving the objectives?** [Yes/No]

**a. If yes, how many of these results indicators are drawn from the partner government's results frameworks, plans and strategies?** [Single answer among the following options]

- ☐ None
- ☐ Few ( $\leq 25\%$ )
- ☐ Some ( $\geq 25-49\%$ )
- ☐ Many ( $\geq 50-74\%$ )
- ☐ Most ( $\geq 75\%$ )

**b. If yes, how many results indicators will be monitored using partner government official data and statistics?** [Single answer among the following options]

- ☐ None
- ☐ Few ( $\leq 25\%$ )
- ☐ Some ( $\geq 25-49\%$ )
- ☐ Many ( $\geq 50-74\%$ )
- ☐ Most ( $\geq 75\%$ )

**Q4. Does your country strategy/partnership framework include monitoring and evaluation arrangements?** *[Multiple answer possible]*

☐ Monitoring

☐ Evaluation

**a. If there are, how is the partner government involved?** *[Single answer among the following options]*

☐ No government involvement

☐ The government is periodically informed on progress

☐ The government is involved in the monitoring and/or evaluation process

☐ The government is involved in the monitoring and/or evaluation process and in a discussion around the results

**Q5. How are the 2030 Agenda and SDGs incorporated or referenced in the country strategy or partnership framework?** *[Multiple answer among the following options]*

☐ The 2030 Agenda/SDGs are referenced at strategic level [in the narrative]

☐ SDGs are referenced at goal level [in the narrative or results framework]

☐ SDGs are referenced at target level [in the results framework]

☐ SDGs are referenced at indicator level [in the results framework]

☐ There is no reference to the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in the current country strategy or partnership framework

☐ There is no reference to the SDGs as the strategy was approved before September 2015.

**Q6. Please indicate the main constraints your agency faces, if any, in the use of country-led results frameworks for defining the country strategy or partnership framework.**

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## Module 2. Programming level: Development partners use country-led results framework in defining their development interventions

Questions to be answered for each of the six largest interventions (programmes/projects) approved during 2017 in the country<sup>7</sup>. For each intervention reported, development partners must provide the link to the project document<sup>8</sup>.

**Q1. Name of the intervention:** *[Name of the programme/project]*

**Q2. Approved amount for the intervention:** USD \_\_\_\_

**Q3. Approval date:** *[Month / Year]*

**Q4. Type of intervention:** \_\_\_\_ *[Note: options offered in the data submission tool]*

**Q5. Implementing institution:** \_\_\_\_ *If multi-sectoral, mark up to three options. [Note: options offered in the data submission tool]*

**Q6. Sector that the intervention targets:** \_\_\_\_ *[Note: options offered in the data submission tool]*

**Q7. Where are the objective/s<sup>9</sup> of the intervention drawn from?** \_\_\_\_ *[Note: options offered in the data submission tool]*

**Q8. Does the intervention have a results framework or logical framework?** *[Yes/No]*

**Q9. How many results indicators<sup>10</sup> are included in the results framework or logical framework of this intervention?** *[Number]*

**a. Among the indicators included in the results framework of this intervention, how many are drawn from existing government results frameworks, plans and strategies<sup>11</sup>?** *[Number]*

**b. How many results indicators will be reported using sources of information directly provided by existing government monitoring systems or national statistical services<sup>12</sup>?** *[Number]*

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<sup>7</sup> The amount should refer to the total budget of the intervention approved in 2017 even if the implementation of the project continues beyond the year 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Development partners are invited to share the electronic document (or a scanned copied of the original document) with the national co-ordinator if the document is not available online.

<sup>9</sup> Objectives are the ultimate outcomes of the intervention.

<sup>10</sup> Result indicators are a measure used to demonstrate change in a situation, or the progress in, or results of, an activity, project, or programme. For the purposes of this monitoring exercise, respondent are asked to focus on assessing ONLY the set of outcome indicators included in the results framework of the specific intervention reported. In case the result framework includes only output indicators, respondent can refer to those instead of outcome indicators. In the event the intervention did not establish any results framework, mark as zero and indicate the reason for the lack of inclusion (e.g. small technical co-operation, extension of project financing, untied transfer).

<sup>11</sup> For this question, respondents will have the possibility to indicate the reason for not drawing the indicators included in the result framework from existing government results frameworks, plans and strategies.

**Q10. Is there an evaluation planned for the intervention<sup>13</sup>? [Yes/No]**

**a. If yes, to what extent is the government involved in the evaluation? [Note: options offered in the data submission tool]**

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<sup>12</sup> For this question, respondents will have the possibility to indicate the reason for not using sources of information directly provided by existing government monitoring systems or national statistical services.

<sup>13</sup> Self-assessments are not considered as evaluation for the purpose of this questionnaire.

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