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SELF-REFLECTION GUIDE

Global Partnership Monitoring: Drivers of results and questions for self-reflection for development partners on their performance

Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

This guidance note was prepared by the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team. It has also benefited from the significant comments and contributions of colleagues from the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA): Anita King, Emily Bosch, Santhosh Persaud and Annika Karlsson. We gratefully acknowledge their time and contributions in improving this document.

How can reflection on your monitoring results help to ***translate evidence into action?***

The monitoring exercise of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (Global Partnership) *provides evidence on progress in implementing effective development co-operation commitments*; *supports mutual accountability among all development partners*; *tracks country-level progress in implementing the four internationally-agreed effective development co-operation principles* and *informs the SDG processes*.

As recognised in the 2020-2022 Global Partnership Work Programme, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, amidst the COVID-19 crisis, will require a global response guided by effective co-operation and partnerships. Improving how we partner and work together and taking data-driven action on the basis of the monitoring evidence is vital to inform global recovery and to reach those most in need.

Several Global Partnership stakeholders have been reflecting and acting on their monitoring results. In order to strengthen and support these ongoing efforts, stakeholders have access to **Tools** to guide self-reflection and subsequent action on monitoring results most relevant to them. This self-reflection guide for development partners is a key component of these tools. Furthermore, to ensure that country-level action is informed by the most pressing issues concerning the effectiveness of development co-operation in individual country contexts, stakeholders can participate in the **Action Dialogues (2021)**. These multi-stakeholder dialogues will be led by partner countries at the country-level in collaboration with their stakeholders and partners. The Action Dialogues aim to stimulate in-country reflection and dialogue on key effectiveness challenges and facilitate concrete action on monitoring evidence, and encourage behaviour change. Participation in previous monitoring rounds is not a pre-requisite for participation in these multi-stakeholder dialogue initiatives.

The reform of the Global Partnership monitoring exercise is currently underway. A new monitoring proposal will be submitted for endorsement at HLM3 in 2022. Action on results and multi-stakeholder dialogues, during this reform will enable engaged stakeholders to inform how the future monitoring exercise could produce results that are more actionable.

Facilitating the use of monitoring results also provides an opportunity for renewed focus on the 'unfinished business'[1] of the effectiveness agenda. Dedicated efforts to address monitoring evidence in a particular country or context may offer an updated perspective on which aspects remain most relevant.

What support from the Joint Support Team?

The Joint Support Team (JST) of the Global Partnership can provide support to stakeholders in using the Tools and in exploring the Country-level Action through Dialogues initiatives. All stakeholders are encouraged to approach the ***Joint Support Team Helpdesk Support*** for such assistance.

The JST can also assist with packaging monitoring results for consultations, multi-stakeholder and constituency-based dialogues, reports, international fora and events, as well as preparing inputs for Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for SDG targets reported on through the monitoring exercise.

[1] Note: The term 'unfinished business' is generally used to refer to those indicators in the current monitoring framework which refer to commitments made prior to the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011.

About this document

This document provides guidance to development partners on how to interpret and reflect on their own Global Partnership monitoring results. Recognising the diversity across development partners *(DAC providers, emerging or Southern providers, dual role countries, bilateral or multilateral providers)*, and their histories and practices, this guidance note is intended to provide broad questions, which can be helpful for all development partners.

The document begins with a dedicated focus on the monitoring indicators for which development partners can influence results through their policies and practices. The indicator-related questions can be used in conjunction with the online data tool, *Development Partner [DP] Data Profile Tool*, which generates an individual data profile and allows for comparison with global averages.

The global-level analysis of the latest monitoring results is contained in the Global Partnership 2018 Progress Report.

What action has already been taken on your results?

To facilitate peer learning and exchange of good practices across stakeholders and countries, the JST would appreciate notification of ongoing or planned efforts to reflect on and take action on monitoring results (e.g. past or planned workshops or dialogue events, commissioned reports on results, internal analysis and reflections, initiatives to disseminate results). Please let us know by writing to us at monitoring@effectivecooperation.org.

Understanding your monitoring results: reflections on monitoring indicators

Following the structure of the online data tool, *Development Partner [DP] Data Profile Tool*, this section focuses on the Global Partnership monitoring indicators for which results can be influenced through policies and practices of development partners. For each indicator included in the DP Tool, this document provides a summary of factors that could influence performance on effectiveness and proposes questions to self-assess whether current policies and practices may be contributing to or inhibiting effective delivery.

Alignment to country priorities and use of country systems

SDG 17.15.1: Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development co-operation

Why is this important?

The extent to which development partners support their development efforts in line with country-owned priorities and development results is a critical aspect of country ownership and results focus. Alignment to country priorities and results means joining resources/efforts of the partner country, which will result in greater uptake of the projects and thus greater likelihood of sustainable results. Furthermore, the Global Partnership assessment of the use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools is recognised by the UN Statistical Commission as a measure of progress towards SDG Target 17.15. More specifically, with respect for partner countries' policy space and leadership to launch and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 46-52)*.

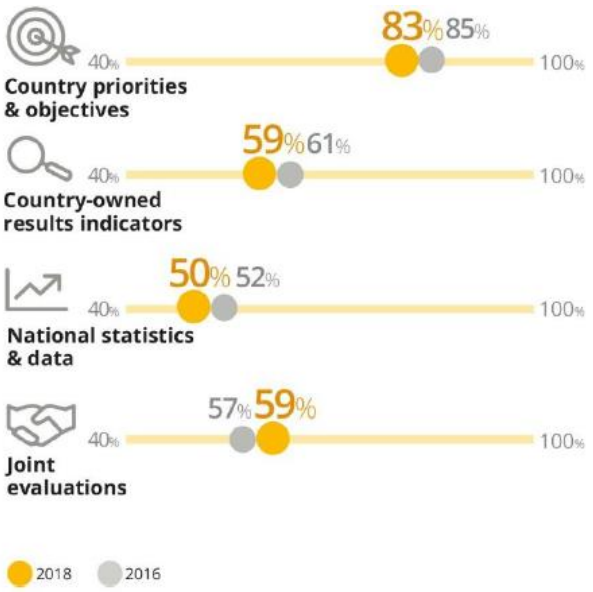
SDG indicator 17.15.1 is an average of three Global Partnership indicators:

- 1a.1: Alignment to country priorities and objectives
  Share of individual project objectives drawn from partner country strategies and plans
- 1a.2: Use of country-owned results indicators
  Share of results indicators drawn from country-owned results frameworks, plans and strategies
- 1a.3: Use of government statistics and data
  Share of results indicators monitored using data from national statistics and monitoring systems

In addition to the above, the Global Partnership monitoring also collects data on:

- Indicator 1a.4: Government involvement in final evaluation
  Share of projects with government involvement in final evaluation (out of those projects with planned final evaluation)

Figure 1. Alignment to country objectives, use of results indicators, national statistics and data and involvement of governments in project evaluations



Source: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2019 Progress Report*

What can influence results on the above indicator?

Country strategies and corporate requirements for project approval. Analysis from the 2018 monitoring round found that when a country strategy is in place and there is closer alignment of these strategies with partner countries' results frameworks, this often translates into better alignment also at the level of projects.

1. *Does your agency have corporate policies to guide the development of country strategies? Do these policies provide guidance on the engagement of partner country governments as well as non-state actors in the country (not only as implementation partners but also through core support to them as development actors)? Which steps are required by policies/procedures – which elements are discretionary?*
2. *Do your corporate policies provision for scenarios to deliberately support development areas (for example human rights and other sensitive governance challenges) that may fall under your own corporate priorities but not align with those of partner country governments? In such cases, do you proactively discuss such corporate policies with partner country governments in your dialogues with them?*
3. *What are your corporate/policy requirements for project approval, in terms of alignment to partner country priorities and explicit linkages to government plans? [You can look at your agency's templates for project appraisal/approval documents] Do they require operational/programme staff to describe the linkages to partner country priorities, plans and strategies? Are linkages made through consultation/dialogue with partner government counterparts? Are projects co-designed and/or jointly approved by the government?*
4. *[For members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)] Refer to chapter 5 of your latest peer review, which discusses how current strategic planning and programming processes support (or not) alignment with national strategies. What are some key findings that may be linked to the observed results in Indicator 1a?*

Results-based management practices. Having robust internal results-based management (RBM) practices could be the starting point to align to partner countries' results indicators. RBM practices encourage the analysis of development challenges and identify possible solutions that address the needs and priorities of countries. However, a synthesis of DAC peer reviews between 2012 and 2014 (OECD, 2014) found that all DAC members were struggling to embed results-based management practices in their approach to development co-operation.

1. *Do your corporate RBM/programme guidance policies allow localised flexibility to encourage country offices to align with partner country priorities and use country results frameworks and results indicators? To what extent do your own internal RBM policies/practices facilitate use of partner countries results frameworks?*
2. *[Refer to the internal assessments of your agency's results-orientation of development co-operation, as well as - for DAC members – to your latest peer review, chapter 6 on results management]. To what extent has your ministry or agency adopted results-based management, and to what extent is that reflected in the way projects are designed, monitored and evaluated?*

Country context. In their responses to the 2018 monitoring round, several development partners cited data gaps and lack of disaggregated information as the reason country results frameworks are frequently not used. Results also show that only 35% of partner country governments reported that timely, regular and accurate government data are available for most indicators in their results frameworks.

1. *In contexts where there are capacity constraints, does your agency provide capacity-building support to the country, to increase data availability as urged by SDG 17.18? Are measures put in place to co-produce data and statistics with the government? Do you make available to governments, other domestic actors or other development partners in the country, any data and statistics that are generated through the projects you support, as a public good to fill broader data gaps?*

Indicator 9b: Development partners use public financial management systems (PFM systems) to deliver development co-operation

Measures the proportion of development co-operation disbursed to the public sector that is managed using the partner country's public financial management systems (PFM systems)

Why is this important?

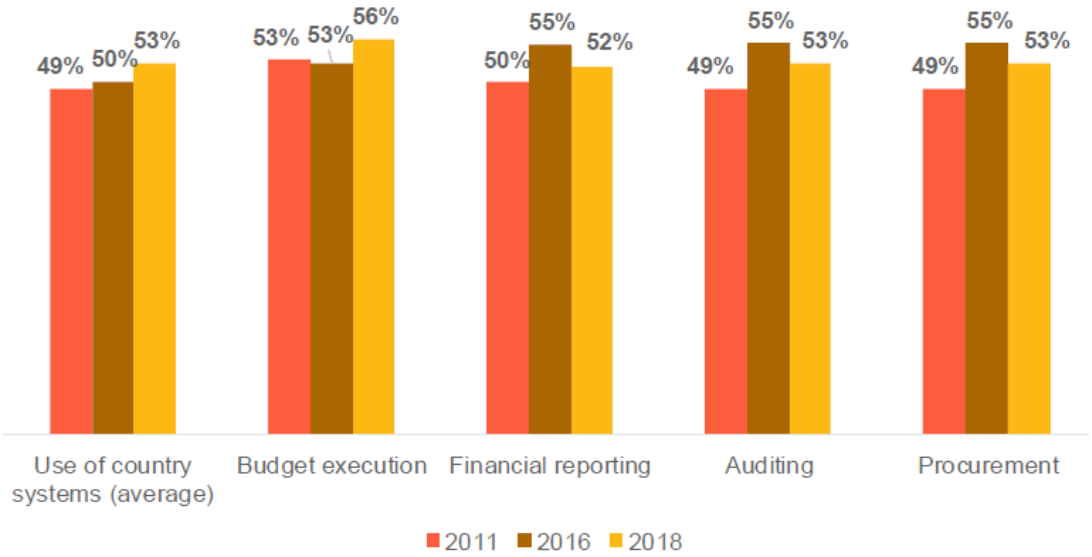
When partner countries' own procedures and systems are used in the delivery of development co-operation, there is a potential pay-off of increased investment in strengthening these systems, coupled with improved efficiency and ownership of the development programmes delivered. The use of country systems allows development programmes to be better integrated with countries' own expenditure, reducing a duplication of effort and increasing the leveraging effect of development co-operation resources and the sustainability of activities and results.

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 58-61)*.

Indicator 9b is the average of the four elements:

1) *Share of development co-operation funding disbursed for the public sector that used national budget execution procedures*
2) *Share of development co-operation funding disbursed for the public sector that used national financial reporting systems*
3) *Share of development co-operation funding disbursed for the public sector that used national auditing systems*
4) *Share of development co-operation funding disbursed for the public sector that used national procurement systems*

Figure 2. Share of development co-operation disbursed to the public sector that used PFM systems



Source: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2019 Progress Report*

What can influence results on the above indicator?

Strong partnerships with partner country governments. The 2018 monitoring results show that a development partner's relationship with a partner country government is a strong determinant of its use of country PFM systems. The results also show that development partners that have increased their funding to the public sector have also increased their use of PFM systems between 2016 and 2018. Furthermore, data from the 2018 monitoring round suggests a positive correlation between the length of time that a development partner engages in a country and the likelihood it uses its PFM systems.

1. *From your results, do you see that use of PFM systems is higher in countries where you have been engaged longer and/or have a stronger relationship with the government?*
2. *Which policies do you have in place that facilitate (or inhibit) the use of country PFM systems?*

Partner country characteristics. Past analysis (OECD/UNDP, 2016) indicated that to some extent, development partners' decisions to use country systems were affected by the quality of a country's budgetary and public financial management systems.

1. *Which considerations guide your agency's decisions on whether to use country PFM systems? Does the quality of those systems play a significant role in determining their use? If not, why? Does your agency provide capacity-building support to the country to increase the quality of PFM systems and mitigate financial risk?*

2. *Do your policies establish eligibility criteria, or thresholds, based on some measurement of quality of PFM systems (e.g. PEFA Framework[2], World Bank CPIA[3]) in making decisions on eligibility of specific country systems (i.e. budgeting, financial reporting, auditing, and procurement)?*

Development partner focus on financial risk and upward accountability. The level of financial risk that development partners are willing to take in using partner countries' PFM systems may vary across different development partners. In deciding whether to use country systems, some partners take into consideration non-fiduciary factors, such as the human rights situation, quality of policies and pro-poor commitment, and/or macroeconomic stability. Internal governance and anti-corruption policies have been associated with a greater risk-aversion profile.

1. *In your agency, do you observe a propensity to use country systems more to support emerging democracies or promising reform-oriented leaders, and a retreat from using PFM systems in repressive regimes and those affected by governance disruptions?*
2. *To what extent does your risk management reflect the full range of risks and how does it balance the risk of unsustainable results and risk of corruption? How do you communicate on the need to manage and take risks in order to achieve your objectives? How does this affect decisions related to the use of PFM systems and overall risk management of use of your ODA?*

Predictability and forward planning

Indicators 5a and 5b: Annual and medium-term predictability

Indicator 5a assesses annual predictability of development co-operation, by measuring the proportion of development co-operation that was disbursed as scheduled by development partners at the beginning of the year.

Indicator 5b measures medium-term predictability of development co-operation, by assessing whether development partners have shared forward – looking plans with partner governments. These plans must include indicative annual amounts of development co-operation support to be provided over 1-3 years.

Indicator 5a: Annual predictability

Why is this important?

Unpredictable development co-operation has a negative impact on the management of public finances and undermines efforts by partner countries and development partners to achieve development results (Mokoro Ltd, 2011). Annual shortfalls and over-disbursements in the total amount of funding disbursed to the public sector can both have serious implications for development partners' implementation of projects on the ground. Similarly, on the government's ability to implement its development efforts as planned; these also can hinder effective planning, budgeting and execution (Celasun et al., 2008).

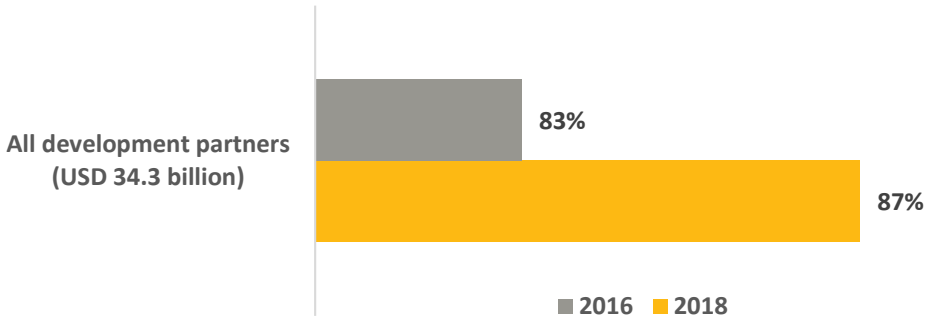
Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 53-55)*.

[2] Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Framework.
[3] Country Policy and Institutional Assessment

Indicator 5a is composed of two separate measurements:

- Indicator 5a.1: share of development co-operation funding for the public sector disbursed within the same year for which it was scheduled to be disbursed. It is the average value in those countries where disbursements were equal to or lower than the scheduled ones. **The target is 100%.**
- Indicator 5a.2: share of development co-operation funding for the public sector disbursed within the same year for which it was scheduled to be disbursed - beyond the original amount scheduled. It is the average value in those countries where disbursements were greater than the scheduled ones (accounting only for the amounts disbursed exceeding the amounts scheduled). **The target is 0%.**

Figure 3. Share of development co-operation disbursed within the same year for which it was scheduled to be disbursed



Source: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2019 Progress Report*

Indicator 5b: medium-term predictability (forward visibility)

Why is this important?

Medium-term predictability is a requirement of effective development planning. When development partners share forward expenditure plans on development co-operation with partner country governments, this information can be used for effective planning of medium-term policies and programmes and in the formulation of national budgets that are subject to parliamentary oversight.

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 35-37)*.

Indicator 6: development co-operation on budget

Assesses the share of development co-operation funds scheduled for disbursement by development partners that is recorded in the annual budgets of partner countries and submitted for legislative approval.

Why is this important?

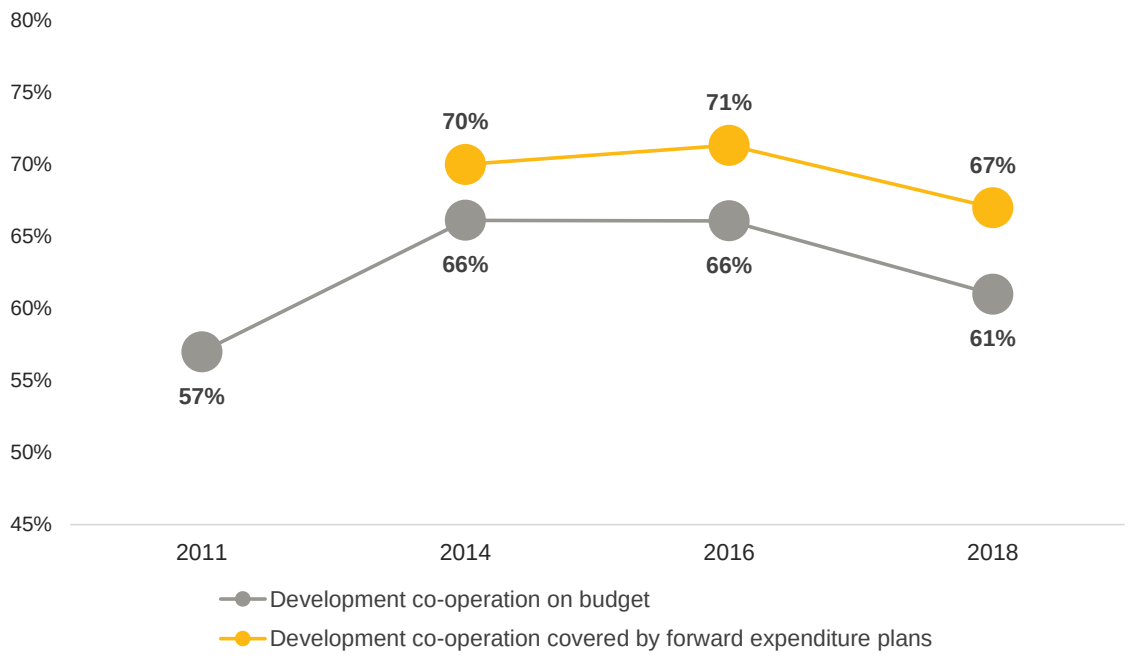
Including development co-operation funding in partner country budgets helps to align these resources with partner country priorities, contributes to strengthening domestic budgetary processes and institutions, and strengthens domestic oversight of development resources (CABRI, 2008). Both underestimated and overestimated development co-operation funding on national budgets weaken the ability of governments to account effectively for development co-operation to their domestic stakeholders.

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 56-57)*.

Indicator 6 is composed of two separate measurements:

- Indicator 6.1: share of scheduled development co-operation funding for the public sector recorded on partner countries' national budgets. It is the average value in those countries where the amounts recorded on budget were equal to or lower than the scheduled ones. **The target is 100%.**
- Indicator 6.2: share of scheduled development co-operation funding for the public sector recorded on partner countries national budgets - beyond the original amount scheduled. It is the average value in those countries where the amounts recorded on budget were greater than the scheduled ones (accounting only for the amounts recorded on budgets exceeding the amounts scheduled). **The target is 0%.**

Figure 4. Shares of development co-operation covered by forward expenditures plans and recorded on national budgets



Source: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2019 Progress Report*

What can influence results on the above indicators?

Established relationships between a development partner and a partner country. Analysis of 2018 monitoring data shows that more forward expenditure plans are made available to partner countries where development partners have a country strategy in place or where a higher share of development co-operation is disbursed directly to the public sector. In those cases, there is a greater likelihood that the provider shares medium-term projections with the partner country on a regular basis.

Technical and structural factors in development agencies. Previous research (OECD, 2011a; OECD/UNDP, 2016 and 2018) found that the adoption of certain structures and processes – including "agency-wide multi-year rolling plans and budgeting frameworks; longer-term country partnerships and strategies; longer-term development co-operation instruments; effective tracking and reporting on disbursements" – resulted in increased predictability. Furthermore, shorter-term and fragmented country programming was found to inhibit predictable behaviour (Canavire-Bacarreza, Neumayer and Nunnenkamp, 2015).

Small country programmes. Fragmentation of support offered through smaller programmes across many countries has higher transaction costs, which may inhibit successful inclusion of scheduled finance on budget.

1. *Do you observe better predictability in countries where you have multi-year rolling plans and budgeting frameworks and/or longer-term partnerships?*
2. *Do your country strategies/programmes incorporate some sort of indicative estimate of potential funding for the multi-year horizon of the strategy? Is it disaggregated by year?*
3. *Are multi-year spending/strategies and plans well aligned with partner country medium-term planning and fiscal frameworks/timelines? Additionally, are annual funding plans made available to align with the budgeting calendar and fiscal year of the partner country*

government? How much flexibility do your own policies give for allowing localised timing adjustments in different partner countries?

4. *Do you observe better predictability in countries where you have longer-term development co-operation instruments and/or effective tracking and reporting on disbursements?*
5. *How do heads of missions/resident coordinators/operations chiefs in your embassies/country offices maintain the dialogue with partner governments on the country envelope/estimated allocations for the coming years? Is it a core part of the conversation in a systematic manner? Does the dialogue typically include the partner's ministry of finance?*
6. *What are your corporate policies regarding facilitating 1-2-3 year projections of funds to partner countries? Do these policies restrict the information that can be shared? Are you allowed to provide indicative estimates, or can only parliament-approved allocations (annually approved budget) be disclosed to partner countries?*
7. *What are the channels (e.g. which focal points in which [line] ministries), timelines, institutionalised practices for providing these plans to governments – is there a standard approach across partner countries?*
8. *In countries where no forward spending plans were made available to the government for the three years, what are main obstacles in providing these plans (e.g. absence of multi-year plans for those countries, lack of appropriate government focal point(s); timing/mismatch in fiscal years etc.)?*
9. *[For DAC members] Refer to chapter 5 of your latest Peer Review. The chapter usually describes medium-term reporting practices, recent trends and corporate constraints to improve those.*
10. *How do country teams approach partner countries' budget preparation processes? Do they proactively share information on your forward-looking estimates for that year? Do they respond to partner countries' requests for information? A mixed approach?*
11. *Is your development co-operation to governments reflected less often on national budgets submitted to parliaments when country programmes are comparatively small?*
12. *Some partner countries put more emphasis than others on receiving predictable spending plans from their development partners. What role does this emphasis play in whether you share spending plans? Have you seen evidence that your efforts to provide predictable information has been ''used'' by the partner country government (e.g. recorded in national budgets)?*

Transparency of development co-operation

Indicator 4. Transparent information on development co-operation is published at global level

Measures whether information on development co-operation has been made publicly available at the global level. It is based on three different systems and standards that provide online data on development cooperation - the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS), the OECD DAC Forward Spending Survey (FSS), and the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard (IATI).

Why is this important?

The availability of information on resources provided through development co-operation is vital to enhance the impact of development co-operation and to enable the participation of citizens in the long-term development of their respective countries. Accessibility of this information at country level is also important. Governments who have access to information on development co-operation can use this for development planning, budgeting, execution and monitoring and evaluation.

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 74-78)*.

What can influence results on the above indicator?

Development co-operation programmes delivered through multiple agencies/ministries. Multiple entities providing development co-operation are associated with higher transaction costs for collecting and processing data from various sources. This can make it difficult to improve timeliness or comprehensiveness of information.

Internal institutionalisation of 'information reporting' processes. Dedicated staff and organisational units responsible for ensuring the implementation of transparency commitments and policies together with good co-ordination within an agency or across agencies facilitates compliance with transparency commitments.

1. *What are the challenges encountered in reporting to the OECD systems or IATI? Are there any plans to improve reporting to those systems? Or to improve availability of information through country-level systems?*
2. *Are there transparency regulations requiring certain disclosure of information around your country's development co-operation programme (or a national access to information law that also covers development co-operation)? Do these regulations support practical reporting to international systems/platforms such as OECD and IATI systems? Do they require your ministry/agency(ies) to coordinate this reporting together?*
3. *Is there an organisational unit (at agency level or overall) responsible for transparency and external reporting? Is there significant staff turnover among those responsible for international data reporting or, conversely, has there been growing capacity over time? What other kinds of capacity constraints do you face with regards to transparency and external reporting?*
4. *What are the challenges in coordinating different sources of data across your country's development co-operation system, and what measures have you put in place to mitigate them?*
5. *Are there information systems in place within your national development co-operation system that allow for quick retrieval of information across various entities? How would your practice need to be revised to improve your performance in transparency?*

Untied aid

Indicator 10: Untied aid [DAC members only]

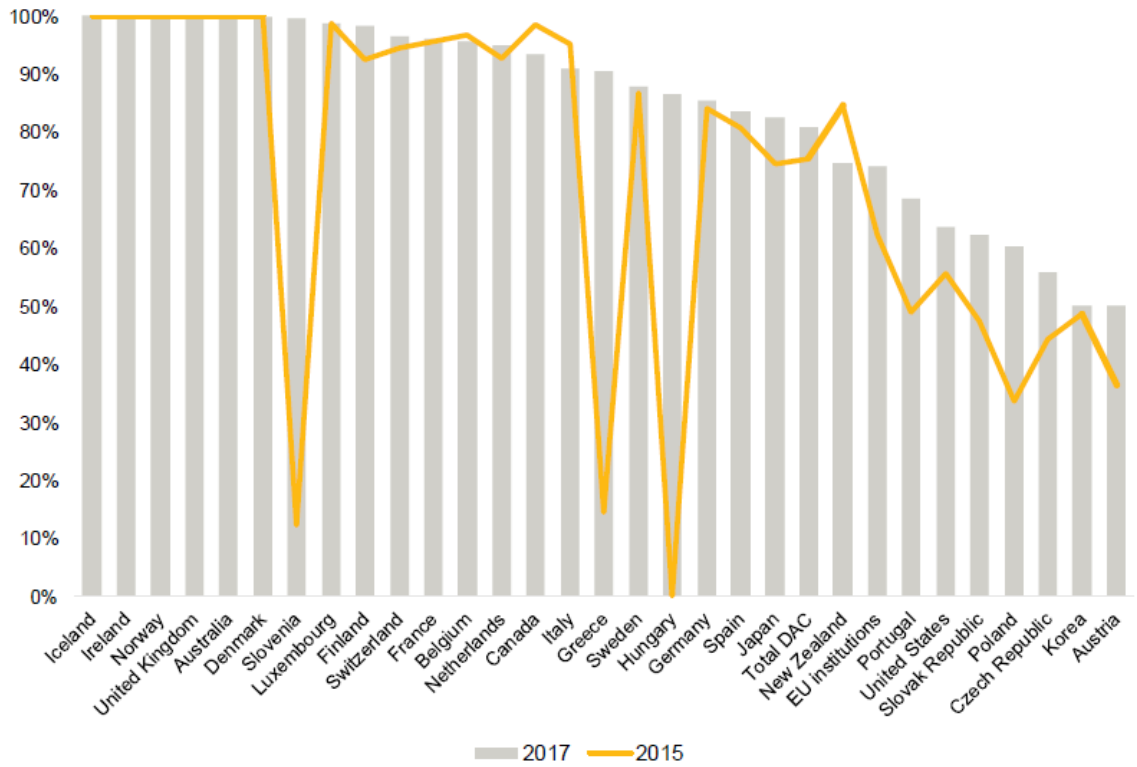
Measures the proportion of bilateral ODA with no attached condition for aid to be used to procure goods or services from the provider country. The indicator is calculated by dividing the amount of untied ODA commitments by the total amount of ODA commitments.

This indicator uses the most recent information available at the OECD Creditor Reporting System which is self-reported by the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Results are only available for bilateral development partners that report on untied ODA status to the OECD DAC.

Why is this important?
Untying ODA increases the effective use of funds in terms of value for money and promotes partner country ownership and alignment, as this gives the recipient of the funds the freedom to procure goods and services from anywhere in the world, including from domestic stakeholders (OECD, 2019).

Further information on the indicator, how it is constructed and other key definitions can be found in the 2018 Monitoring Guide *(pages 82-83)*.

Figure 5. Proportion of untied ODA, 2015-2017: 2018 global results



Source: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective: 2019 Progress Report*

What can influence results on the above indicators?

Influence of trade and domestic considerations on ODA. A common argument in support of tying is that it can increase business opportunities for companies in development partner countries, and that this may help promote support for ODA.

1. *Is there any policy or current trend within your agency/ministry in to tie bilateral ODA? If yes, what measures do you take to ensure transparency and communicate on the intent behind this practice?*
2. *Has any change to procurement policy been adopted in the past decade that discourages tying of ODA since the DAC Recommendation to untie aid was adopted in 2001, and follow-up commitments were made in 2008 and in Busan 2011?*

Governance challenges in recipient countries. These challenges also influence development partners' decisions on untying ODA.

1. *Use of partner country procurement processes and systems and tied aid are partially associated. Looking at your data, do you see a relation between lower use of partner country procurement systems and higher levels of tied aid? What steps could you take to mitigate potential fiduciary risks in partner countries while still meeting the commitment to untie aid?*

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