NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Aid Programme

MFAT guidance on developing an Activity Results Framework

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Contents

1. The Activity Results Framework

The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) uses a results-based approach to designing and managing Activities. To ensure that Activity performance reporting is based on clear and agreed results, a results framework is developed during the design stage. The results framework is used to track progress towards intended results.

The components of a framework includes a:

- Results Diagram
- Results Measurement Table
- Monitoring and Evaluation Workplan.

2. Results Diagrams

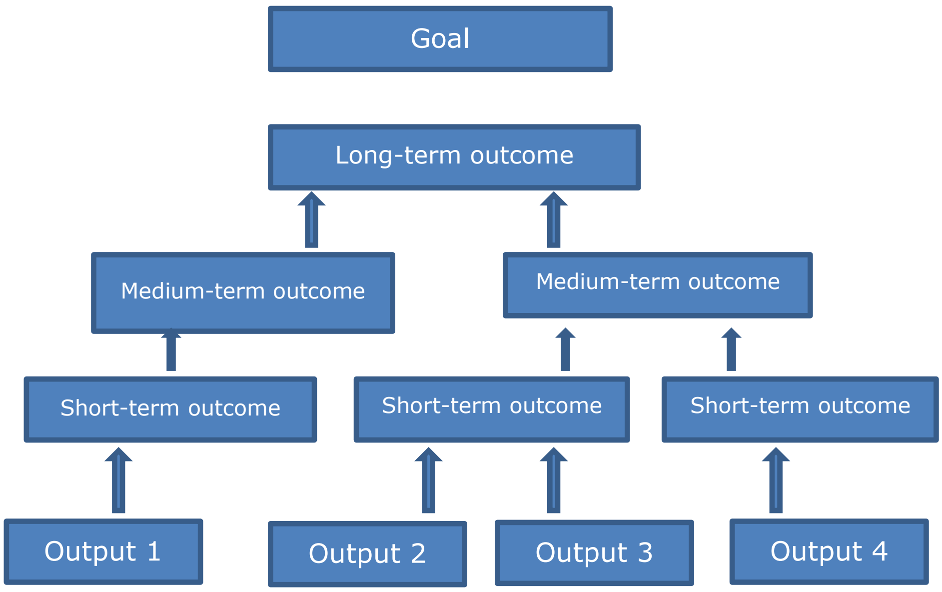
Results diagrams, and the process of developing them, help to ensure that the intended logic for an Activity is clear and agreed by stakeholders. The results diagram provides a visual representation of how the outputs will lead to achievement of the outcomes and ultimately the goal of the Activity. It identifies elements of Activities which are critical to success and provides the basis for results-based management of an Activity – during design, implementation and completion.

MFAT's standards for results diagrams

A results diagram:

- Is represented as a vertical diagram
- Describes the Activity's goal
- Identifies and logically links together the Activity's outputs, its short-term, medium-term and/or long-term outcomes
- Integrates cross-cutting issues by including outcomes for cross-cutting issues considered 'principal' or 'significant'
- Includes outcome statements that:
  - clearly identify the change that is desired
  - do not overlap with other statements
  - include one outcome per statement
  - are relevant, specific, tangible, achievable and measurable
- Includes output statements that:
  - clearly identify what is being produced and/or delivered
  - will meaningfully contribute to the short-term and medium term outcomes, including those outcomes which address principal and significant cross-cutting issues
  - include one output per statement
  - are relevant, specific, tangible, achievable, and measurable
- Includes activities and inputs that:
  - clearly identify the activities (tasks) required, which will lead to the outputs of an Activity
  - clearly identify the required inputs to an Activity.

Results Diagram Format



Note that the results diagram will have a differing number of outputs, outcomes etc depending on the nature of the Activity. These will all contribute to a wider Goal.

When to develop a results diagram

The results diagram should be developed as early in the design process as possible. It will not always be possible to develop a comprehensive results diagram at the start of the process (e.g. concept note stage) as ideas may still be developing and key stakeholders may not be available. However, it is useful to develop a 'rough working' diagram at the concept note stage so that the outputs, and intended key long-term outcomes and goal are identified early. The results diagram should then be fully developed during the design stage (involving stakeholders), before being further refined at the start of implementation, and regularly reviewed during implementation.

How a results diagram works

The results diagram is developed as a vertical diagram representing the Activity's logic. The diagram shows how the Activity's outputs logically lead to key intended outcomes occurring over time and that contribute to the Activity's goal. The logic is shown by arrows. The components of the diagram therefore represent change over time and how the Activity will contribute to the overaching goal. Depending on the complexity of the Activity, the results diagram could have three to four levels: output-level, short-term, medium-term and/or long-term outcomes. It is also important to note the assumptions that underpin the logic supporting the Activity. Assumptions are external factors that have the potential to influence the success of an intervention, but lie outside the direct control of the implementers.

The goal of an Activity should reflect the overall impact that the intervention is expected to contribute towards. It is usually expressed as an intention and is often pitched at a community, sector, population, government or country level. It may link to the programme strategy, depending on the context. It is unlikely that achievement of the goal could be directly or solely attributed to the Activity, given other external factors/influences will impact on its achievement.

Involving stakeholders

Results diagrams work best when they are developed with key stakeholders. This helps to foster a shared understanding about the Activity, and each diagram will reflect the interactions and emerging understandings of the stakeholders. The diagram should reflect the Activity, be clear and simple, and provide stakeholders with a shared understanding and ownership of the intended results.

Using a results diagram

The results diagram is the basis for results-based management of the Activity. At the design stage, development of the results diagram provides a clear, agreed logic showing how outputs will lead to the Activity's outcomes and goal. It helps to plan the various activities and inputs required for the Activity to be successful. The results diagram is used as the basis for developing the rest of the results framework.

During implementation, the results diagram should also be used by stakeholders (along with the results measurement table) to engage in discussion about what progress is being made against the intended results of an Activity. It becomes an effective tool in managing for results and it helps identify any key decisions that are required to keep the Activity on track towards achieving its outcomes.

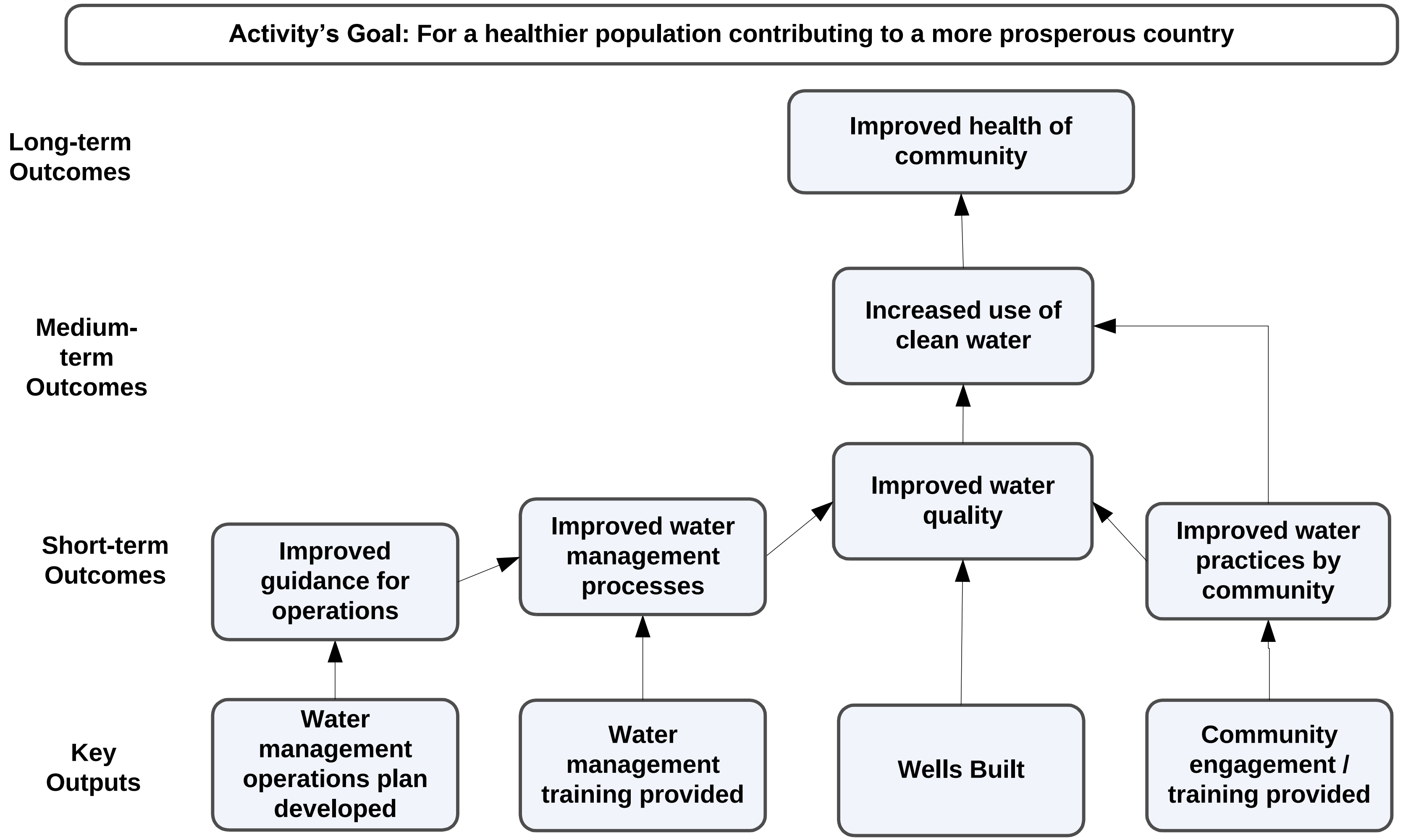
Developing a Results Diagram

The steps in the table below show a stepped approach to developing a results diagram. The steps are underpinned by the need for the process to be as participatory as possible as this will help to improve the practicality of the design and broad agreement and ownership of the Activity and its intended results. The process is best guided by a facilitator experienced in results diagram development.

Step	Action
1	Identify a facilitator
2	Develop (or ensure) a shared understanding amongst stakeholders of: ☐ What a results diagram is, and its purpose ☐ How the results diagram fits within the design and implementation ☐ The meaning of 'output' and 'outcomes' (short term, medium term, long term outcomes) and goal (see page 15).
3	Organise materials for developing a visual diagram of the logic e.g. white board or large sheets of paper, sticky notes, pens etc.
4	Discuss the aspects of the Activity that have already been determined (e.g. goal, long-term outcome/s, outputs, and the issue that is to be addressed.
5	Brainstorm the other outputs and outcomes required to achieve the long outcome/s
6	Write down (e.g. on sticky notes) the outcomes and outputs that have been identified (this can be done while discussing and brainstorming), and put these on the whiteboard/paper with the long-term outcomes at the top, followed by the shorter-term outcomes, and outputs at the bottom.
7	Move the sticky notes around until everyone is satisfied they are in the right place. Add, integrate, or take away sticky notes as necessary. Notes that are inputs or activities aren't to be included in the diagram but should be

	documented (e.g. below the diagram).
8	Draw arrows from the outputs up to first level of outcomes, then up to the outcomes at the next level (or if appropriate, skip a level). The arrows show how each output or outcome is intended to lead to another outcome/s. Arrows can only go up or sideways (minimise the latter). Using 'if then' statements can be helpful eg if we conduct pest management training then people will know how apply pesticides correctly.
9	Do a backwards check that the higher level outcomes can be achieved from the achievement of shorter-term outcomes. If not, amend or add to the lower-level outcomes. Make a note of key assumptions that underpin the logic supporting the Activity.
10	Take a record of the results diagram. The diagram will be used as the basis for the design and implementation (resourcing, activities, and timelines) of the results framework.

Example of Results Diagram



3. Activity and Inputs Table

The activity and inputs table identifies which activities (tasks) and inputs are required to achieve an Output. It will also form the basis of your draft outputs budget.

Outputs from the Results Diagram	**Activities (tasks) to deliver outputs**	**Inputs to resource activities**
Output 1		
Output 2		
Output 3		

Example of an Activity and Inputs Table

Outputs	**Activities (tasks) necessary to Deliver Outputs**	**Inputs necessary to instigate Activities (included in outputs budget)**
Water management operations plan developed	Develop operations plan - Including consultation, development - Collect feedback and revise - Prepare final plan	Funded as part of the Grant Ministry of Health Partner Government (MoH) will provide staff time Technical Advisor (NZ MoH): up to 5 days
Water management training provided	Develop training approach - Including consultation, development - Collect feedback and revise - Undertake training in each village - Pre and post training assessment - Feedback captured	Funded as part of the Grant Ministry of Health (MoH) will provide staff time Technical Advisor: up to 10 days
Wells built	Develop project plan - Including consultation, and development - Revise and agree on project plan Undertake building - Construction - On-site training / hand-over - On-site follow-up 3, 6 and 12 months later	Funded as part of the Grant MoH will provide staff time Technical Advisor: up to 40 days will be spent

Community engagement provided	Develop engagement approach - Including consultation, development, - Collect feedback and revise - Undertake engagement (workshops) - Pre and post engagement - feedback captured	Funded as part of the Grant MoH will provide staff time Technical Advisor: up to 7 days of the advisor's time

4. Results Measurement Tables (RMT)

The Results Measurement Table provides key information about how the results identified in the results diagram will be measured, or in other words, how the changes from the intervention will be identified.

MFAT Standards for Results Measurement Tables

A MFAT results measurement table:

- Has a row for each output and outcome (from the results table)
- Has indicators, targets, baseline information and methods (how, when and by whom) for measuring each output and outcome.

  Indicators:

  - clearly identify the achievement of each *output* and *outcome*
  - are a quantitative and qualitative variable that indicates state, amount or degree of something, including change, achievement, quality, quantity or performance
  - provide a balanced view of performance
  - must be clear, relevant, economic, adequate and monitorable, e.g. % of water samples that comply with drinking water standards.
  - include at least one or two indicators from the list of Direct Results Indicators (see our Managing for Results webpage and our Detailed Indicator Set document). Note: Indicators should be collectable at reasonable cost (human and financial resources).

  Targets:

  - state a desired level of achievement for an *indicator*
  - can be used to drive performance
  - must be realistic and time-bound, eg 90% of water samples comply by 2014
  - should be identified for each year of implementation especially for outputs and short-term outcomes
- Integrates cross-cutting issues by:
  - including outcomes and indicators for cross-cutting issues (gender, human rights and environment)
  - gender should be at least partially mainstreamed in all Activities and exceptions to this will require justification.
  - For specifics on integrating climate change as a crosscutting issues refer to MFAT's Operational Policy and Guideline: Delivery & Tracking Climate Change Related ODA.
- Is limited to no more than three pages. Keep it simple.

Who is involved in developing a Results Measurement Table

The Lead Agency will work alongside partners and other key stakeholders to develop the Results Measurement Table. MFAT staff should also be involved along the way ensuring that the design meets MFAT standards.

The process for developing a results measurement table should be as participatory as possible as this improves the practicality of the design and generates agreement and ownership about how results are to be determined.

Developing a Results Measurement Table

Follow these steps to develop a results measurement table.

Step	Action
1	Identify a facilitator
2	Develop a table with headings as shown in the examples.
3	Place the outcomes and outputs that were identified by the results diagram in the table. Place long-term outcome/s at the top of the table followed by medium-term and short-term outcomes below. Outputs contributing to the outcomes should be placed below the outcomes.
4	Develop an indicator(s) for each output and outcome.
5	Identify the baseline data and identify targets (stretch but achievable) for each output and outcome. Note where any further analytical work will be required in the very early stages of implementation to determine baselines or targets
6	Include at least one or two indicators from the list of Direct Results Indicators (see our Managing for Results webpage and our Detailed Indicator Set document).
7	Note method/s for each indicator. This is a method to collect information about the progress towards achieving the outcome or output.
8	Any risks to achieving results that are identified during development should be transposed into the Activity Risk Matrix.

Results Measurement Table format

Results	Indicator(s)	Targets	Baseline Information	Methodology/Data Sources
Long-term Outcomes				
	•			
	•			
Medium-term Outcomes				
	•			
	•			
Short-term Outcomes				
	•			
	•			
Outputs				
	•			
	•			

Results Measurement Table: Example

Results	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Baseline**	**Methodology and Data source**
Long-Term Outcomes				
Improved health of the Community	1. Cause specific morbidity rates (per 100,000)* 2. Selected infectious diseases rates (per 100,000)*	460 (2012) and 400 (2015) 480 (2012) and 420 (2015)	Baseline: 450 (2005) and 470 (2010) Baseline: 460 (2005) and 480 (2010)	Information is available each October from the MoH. There is a one year lag in available information.
Medium Term Outcomes				
Increased use of clean water	% of households making use of clean water	All households using clean water (2013)	No information currently available	Information will be collected through a specifically designed survey and captured by the MoH. Available each November.
Short-Term Outcomes				
Improved water quality	% of water testing samples that comply with agreed quality standards 2. Incidence water borne diseases in the community	90% of samples comply (2012) 30 incidence (2012) and less than 10 incidence (2015)	20% of samples comply with quality standards 60 incidence per year	Information will be collected through a specifically designed audit process and captured by the MoH.
Outputs				
Wells built	Wells built to specification to time and to budget	12 wells by Jan 2016	No information available	Information will be collected through a specifically designed audit process and captured by the MoH. Information will be available in November.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation Workplan (M & E)

The monitoring and evaluation workplan identifies the key tasks that are required to implement the results measurement table.

MFAT's Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation Workplans

For each monitoring and evaluation activity the workplan must include information on:

- the methods, approaches and tools to collect the information required
- how and by whom the information will be used
- the timeframe
- respective roles and responsibilities
- estimated budget (realistic and appropriate to scale and risk)
- deliverables, such as reporting and dissemination requirements

When to develop the M & E workplan

The workplan should be developed during the design stage (involving stakeholders), refined at the start of implementation, and regularly reviewed during implementation.

How to develop and implement the workplan

The information requirements documented in the Results Measurement Table are reinterpreted into a series of tasks. The workplan is then be reviewed early in the implementation phase to ensure that it reflects the monitoring and evaluation needs of the Activity, and what tasks will be needed, by whom, and when. Once agreed, the workplan should be integrated into the Activity's implementation planning, and implementation progress reported regularly. Activity managers should engage closely with implementing partners to ensure full implementation of the results framework. Note that in general, Activities which are valued at under NZ$ 1,000,000 will not require a final external evaluation, but a final monitoring report may be more suitable.

Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Workplan

Follow these steps to develop a workplan

Step	Action
1	Identify a facilitator
2	Develop a table with headings as shown in the example below
3	Determine what monitoring and evaluation tasks will be required and include them in the left column of the table in chronological order. (Note that Activities valued at under NZ$1,000,000 will not generally have a formal evaluation, but a final monitoring report may be better suited)
4	Detail in the table (Approach column) the methods, processes and tools for each task.
5	Include the timeline for each task (incl. start, finish and any key milestones)
6	Identify in the table who is responsible and their role (designation and organisation) for each task
7	Identify what deliverables, reporting and information dissemination are associated with each task
8	Cost each task and include in the table (right-hand column)
9	Sum the costs and include a budget for monitoring and evaluation, and identify any shortfall.

Monitoring and Evaluation Table format

Monitoring and Evaluation Tasks	Approach	Timeline	Roles and responsibilities	Deliverables and Reporting	Indicative Costs
Monitoring					
Step 1: Design monitoring system					
Step 2: Collect baseline data					
Step 3: Implement monitoring					
Evaluation/ Final Monitoring Assessment					
				TOTAL INDICATIVE COSTS	**$**
Overall Monitoring and Evaluation Budget					
				Funding source	$
				Funding source	$
				TOTAL BUDGETED	**$**

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6. Results Outcomes and Outputs Terminology

RESULTS	DEFINITIONS	DESCRIPTION
Goal	The overall impact that a development intervention is expected to contribute towards, usually expressed as an intention (eg To… or For…). It is unlikely that achievement of the goal could be directly or solely attributed to the intervention.	***Overall impact that the Activity is expected to contribute towards***
Long-term Outcomes	The effects (or intended change(s)) resulting from the achievement of one or more medium-term and/or short-term outcome(s).	***Long-term results:*** *conditions, social, economic, civic, environmental*
Medium-term Outcomes	The effects (or intended change(s)) resulting from the achievement of one or more short-term outcome(s) and or output(s) and leading to one or more long-term outcome(s).	***Medium-term results:*** *behaviour, practice, decision-making, social action, etc*
Short-term Outcomes	The effects (or intended change(s)) resulting from one or more output(s), and leading to one or more medium-term and/or long-term outcome(s).	***Short-term results:*** *access, learning, knowledge, skills, etc*
Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result directly from the inputs and activities of a development intervention.	***What we do:*** *deliver services, develop products, construct, provide materials, train, etc*

Annex 1: Glossary

Activity	Activity (with a capital 'A') is used to refer to a discrete grouping of actions taken or work performed, through which inputs are mobilized to produce specific outputs and outcomes. This is commonly referred to as the project. 'activity' is a task which contributes to the achievement of an Output.
Activity design document	All applicants, whose concept is recommended by the Panel, must submit an Activity Design Document to the Partnerships and Funds Team for consideration. The Activity Design Document becomes the base document for contracting and implementation. The Activity Design Document is the product of an Activity design process. The Activity Design Document will provide a costed proposal that presents a strong rationale and justification for the investment based on analytical work. It includes the results framework including: a goal; long, medium and/or short term outcomes expected and outputs/tasks to achieve these. It sets out implementation arrangements, risks and risk management and how results will be measured.
Aid	Financial or other assistance that qualifies as Official Development Assistance
Applicant	A charitable, other not-for-profit, private sector, or public sector organisation that meets the eligibility criteria and submits a proposal to the Partnerships Fund on its own, or as part of a consortia proposal led by another organisation.
Appraisal	An overall assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of a development Activity prior to a decision to fund and or implement.

Direct activity support costs	These are in-country costs usually at the particular geographical site where the Activity takes place. These may include costs such as transport and travel, salaries and benefits for project (usually technical) staff fully or partly dedicated to this Activity, operational costs for an office on site, capital equipment and monitoring and evaluation. They should be calculated on the basis of their dedicated support for this particular Activity and cannot cover general overhead or operational expenses.
Effectiveness	Effectiveness is the extent to which the Activity's intended results (outcomes and outputs) are expected to be achieved.
Efficiency	Efficiency refers to how economically resources (funds, expertise, time, etc) are expected to be converted to results (outputs and outcomes).
Evaluation	An Activity evaluation is a systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed development Activity. Activity evaluations vary in their purpose, focus, scope and objectives. They are undertaken when there is a need for evaluative information to inform management decisions. Activity evaluations also contribute to learning, improvement and accountability.
Gender	Gender refers to the social attributes opportunities and roles associated with being female and male and the relationships between and amongst women and men, girls and boys. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman, man, boy or girl in a given context, society or culture at a specific time and place.
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. Gender equality does not mean that women and men, girls and boys become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male.
Goal	The overall impact that a development intervention is expected to contribute towards, usually expressed as an intention (eg To… or For…). It is unlikely that achievement of the goal could be directly or solely attributed to the intervention.
Impact	Positive and negative long-term effect(s) produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Impact may not

	be directly attributable to the intervention.
Implementing partner	An organisation with which MFAT has a contract or grant to implement an aid Activity. The implementing partner is responsible for maintaining oversight of the implementation of the whole Activity, not only those parts that they are implementing directly.
In-country support costs	These are in-country costs, not necessarily at the site where the Activity takes places. For example, this could include costs associated with a head-office in-country (usually in the capital) from where Activities are co-ordinated and supported. These may include salaries and benefits (usually of support staff such as Procurement, HR, National Director, Finance staff, Programme Manager etc), transport and travel, operational or overhead costs.
Joint Commitment for Development	An agreement between the New Zealand Government and a developing country partner government which sets out the priorities for the New Zealand Aid Programme in that country, records the commitments made by each government and agrees how results will be measured.
Lead applicant	The accredited charitable, other not-for-profit, private sector, or public sector organisation in a consortia application which will have the most significant role in coordinating and delivering the proposed Activity.
Monitoring	The systematic collection and analysis of information about a development intervention while it is being implemented. Monitoring provides information about how allocated funds are being used, what outputs are being delivered and whether progress towards expected outcomes is being achieved.
Monitoring and evaluation workplan	See Results Framework.
New Zealand based support costs	These costs relate to New Zealand-based expenses associated with supporting the implementation of the particular Activity from the applicant's own offices. These may include for example salaries and benefits, transport and travel and operational/overhead costs. These should be shown as GST exclusive in your proposal budget.

Official Development Assistance	International aid. A grant or loan from the government with the promotion of economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.
Outcomes	Short, medium or long-term effects of a development intervention that contribute(s) to other outcome(s) and/or a goal.
Proposal	All applications to the Partnerships Fund must be submitted in the form of a concept note using the Partnerships Fund Proposal Template. This outlines the proposed Activity including its purpose, expected results, funding implications, risks, possible implementation methods, governance, rationale and analysis.
Relevance	Relevance is the extent to which the Activity aligns and remains consistent with beneficiary priorities, country priorities and partner and New Zealand Aid Programme policies.
Results	The output(s) and outcome(s) that achieve the goal of the Activity. Outcomes are further qualified as short-term, medium-term and/or long-term.
Results diagram	See Results Framework.
Results framework	A Results Framework comprises three components: a Results Diagram; a Results Measurement Table; and a Monitoring and Evaluation Workplan. They set out the development intervention's goal, outcomes and outputs, and how these will be measured, monitored and evaluated over the life of the development intervention. • Results Diagram Describes the development intervention's goal and identifies the intended change occurring over time by logically showing the links between the Activity's outputs and intended short, medium and long term outcomes. • Results Measurement Table Identifies how intended change will be monitored and measured by recording indicators, targets and baseline information • Monitoring and Evaluation Workplan Details the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation tasks.
Results measurement table	See Results framework

Sustainability	Sustainability is the likelihood of continued long-term benefits after major assistance (e.g. Partnerships Fund funding) has been completed.
Sustainable economic development	Sustainable growth of, and improvements in, a country's economy, reflecting increasing productivity and resulting in higher levels of material wellbeing.
Value for money	Achieving the best possible development outcomes over the life of an Activity relative to the total cost of managing and resourcing that Activity; and ensuring resources are used effectively, economically and without waste.