

Managing for Development Results

Managing for results means managing and implementing aid in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses information to improve decision-making.

Managing for development results (MfDR) is an approach that uses sound information for policymaking; it involves practical tools for planning, risk management, monitoring and evaluation. MfDR signifies a shift from focusing on inputs and immediate outputs (“how much money will I get, how much can I spend?”) to performance and achievement of outcomes and long-term impacts (what can I achieve with the money?), for partner countries and donors alike.

In the Paris Declaration, donors and partner countries committed to use the MfDR approach – partners to strengthen the linkages between strategies and budgets, and endeavor to establish results-oriented reporting and assessment frameworks; and donors to link country programming to results and align them with partners’ assessment and monitoring frameworks, and harmonise reporting requirements.

The “MfDR cycle” involves five core components or stages:

- setting goals and agreeing on targets and strategies;
- allocating the available resources to activities that will contribute to the achievement of the desired results;
- monitoring and evaluating whether the resources allocated are making the intended difference;
- reporting on performance to the public;
- feeding back information into decision-making.

The development of a “performance culture” is a challenge: it requires capacity development, firm leadership, and political will – over a prolonged period of time.

The Paris Declaration recognizes that MfDR is central to the entire aid effectiveness agenda. MfDR means that stakeholders push partner country governments and donor agencies to demonstrate results, and that donors and recipients expect each other to demonstrate that they are meeting their commitments and promises. MfDR reaches far beyond aid management. It addresses the entire development process in partner countries and guides the allocation of all development resources in the most effective way.

Evaluation Findings and Challenges for the Future

Monitoring and evaluation findings show that there has been some progress on the Paris Declaration commitments on MfDR. Countries are making the most progress in improving access to information, but – with a few notable exceptions such as Tanzania and Uganda – most countries still have much to do to improve the quality of development information or put in place coordinated country-level monitoring and evaluation systems.



Several countries are working to strengthen critical capacity in the areas of planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and statistical systems, and donor agencies are focusing particular attention on helping countries upgrade their statistical capacities, which are crucial to meaningful country results systems. A number of country reports provided indications of strong progress in particular areas and ambitious near-term plans to launch strong national systems for results. However, there continues to be lack of clarity about the concept; progress was stronger at sector level rather than at the overall national level; and it proved difficult to find common ground on indicators, data sources, and use of national systems.

In Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean, Communities of Practice – regional networks of practitioners and policymakers – are facilitating peer-to-peer learning and mutual capacity development and are actively supporting the implementation of MfDR in partner countries.

For further progress, sustained leadership and commitment, clearly communicated guidance and priorities, and strengthened capacities in MfDR will be needed – in both partner countries and donor agencies.

Accra Agenda for Action

The Accra Agenda for Action calls on donors and developing countries to focus on delivering results, including being more accountable and transparent to the public for results. Developing countries will need to work to strengthen the quality of policy design, implementation, and assessment through improving information systems; and they will work with donors to develop cost-effective results management instruments to assess and adjust the impact of development policies, and to better coordinate information systems including national statistical systems. The AAA also calls for strengthening incentives to improve aid effectiveness, including managing for development results.

