

RESULTS TERMINOLOGY

“Results are real changes in poor people’s lives”

These definitions provide guidance on how the World Bank defines several key results-related terms. The overarching message to staff is that measuring, monitoring and achieving results should be practical, pragmatic, and appropriate to the country and sector concerned. The Bank has always been committed to measuring, monitoring and achieving results. More recently, the commitment has shifted to looking beyond the amount of inputs, outputs or products of an intervention and to consider how the *use of outputs* has changed peoples’ lives, which will help the Bank know more directly about its contributions to *outcomes* – or results on the ground.

For example, in addition to considering how many wells were constructed in a village under a project, one should look at how the new source of clean water affected people’s lives. Are the intended users now using more clean water? Did the school enrollment rates for girls increase because they spend less time fetching water? Did the incidence of diarrhea among children under 5 years old decrease with the availability of clean water?

Term	Definition
Results	Results are the outputs, outcomes or impacts (intended or unintended, positive or negative) of a development intervention. The Bank encourages results that support sustainable improvements in country <i>outcomes</i> - that is, evident changes in people’s lives or the behaviors of targeted households, firms or institutions.
Results Chain	<p>A Results Chain is a plausible, (and, where feasible, empirically based) causal relationship that describes how certain inputs will likely lead to intended outcomes.</p> <p>Results chains can be defined at the level of a Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), where the Results Chain specifies how a program of Bank-supported interventions will contribute to the achievement of CAS outcomes. At the sectoral level, sectoral Results Chains specify expected links between the Bank’s operational work in a sector (or thematic area) and outcomes in that sector/thematic area. Results chains - or the ‘storyline’ underlying the design of a particular project or intervention - can also be identified at the project level.</p>
Results Framework	Results Framework is a generic term employed at different levels to describe the context in which results are measured and monitored. At the <i>CAS level</i> , a Results Framework refers to the expected relationships between the portfolio of services (lending and non-lending) and CAS outcomes. At the <i>sectoral level</i> , a Results Framework (embedded in the Sector Strategy) articulates the outcomes that are the focus of work in the sector. The Results Framework at the <i>project level</i> explains how the project development objective (PDO) is to be achieved. It links together the PDO, the outputs, and the outcomes to be delivered by each component, and the indicators to be used to verify achievement of the expected PDO. The Results Framework also indicates how the indicator data will be used over the course of implementation.
Higher Level Outcomes	Higher Level Outcomes are the long-term goals near or at the top of the Results Chain, e.g., an MDG such as “Reduce Child Mortality.” Achievement of higher level outcomes is generally beyond the scope of a project. Nevertheless, it is important that a project identify the higher level outcome it seeks to influence, i.e., the country development goal in the CAS that the project together with other interventions (Bank and other donors) expects to influence.

Term	Definition
Impact Evaluation	<p>Impact Evaluation compares the outcomes of a program against a counterfactual that shows what would have happened <i>without</i> the program. Unlike other forms of evaluation, Impact Evaluation allows the attribution of observed changes to the program being evaluated.</p> <p>The Bank supports the use of impact evaluations when it is desirable to establish or validate a hypothesized linkage between an intervention and the achievement of a longer term or higher level outcome.</p>
Project Development Objective (PDO)	<p>The Project Development Objective (PDO) describes the intended benefits to a specific community/group of people or organizations/institutional changes that are to be realized through one or more development interventions. The intended benefits should be measurable and specific. By reading a PDO, one should be able to determine which group is being targeted directly by the project (e.g., students, farmers) and what they will be doing better or differently as a result of the project interventions (e.g., farmers adopting new techniques). The nature of the outcome described in the PDO should be based on a realistic (and evidence-based) assessment of what effect can be achieved with the available resources over the relevant time horizon using the approach being pursued.</p>
Outcome	<p>Project Outcome: A Project Outcome is the uptake, adoption or use of project outputs by the project beneficiaries.</p> <p>CAS Outcomes contribute to country development goals, can be influenced by the Bank through its interventions, and are achievable during the CAS period.</p> <p>PDO and CAS Outcomes. The PDO should describe the expected contribution of the intervention to the achievement of CAS outcomes.</p> <p>Intermediate Outcome. An Intermediate Outcome specifies a result proximate to an intended final outcome, but likely more measurable and achievable in the lifetime of a project to an intended final outcome. Example: Teachers use the new teaching methods (output/intermediate outcome) to improve learning among students (final outcome).</p>
Output	<p>Outputs are the supply-side deliverables, including the events, products, capital goods or services that result from a development intervention (e.g., construction of a school).</p> <p>The key distinction between an output (a specific good or service) and an outcome is that an output typically is a change in the supply of goods and services (supply side), while an outcome reflects changes in the utilization of goods and services (demand side).</p>
Activity	<p>An Activity is an action taken or work performed by which inputs are converted into specific outputs. Activities, such as providing training, constructing a facility, etc. are designed to deliver outputs.</p>
Input	<p>Inputs are the financial, human, and other resources mobilized to support activities undertaken by a project. Examples would include loan/credit funds and staff.</p>
Indicators	<p>An Indicator is a measure that can be used to monitor or evaluate an intervention. Indicators can be qualitative (in which case they usually entail verbal feedback from beneficiaries) or quantitative (derived from measurements of the intervention).</p>

Note – Additional information and guidance are available to support task teams. Staff are encouraged to consult their Region and/or Network Quality Units, the Results Secretariat in OPCS (OPCRX), and the resources available on the intranet.