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Managing for Development Results (MfDR)

Key Features

- Clarity of goals and objectives
- Results linked to planning and resource allocation
- Key Performance Indicators to focus on results
- Beneficiary participation
- A system for measuring performance and results
- Promotes a learning culture

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Improving Aid Effectiveness

Where are we?

Sri Lanka's position in the middle income bracket was partly responsible for the gradual reduction in concessionary loans in favour of commercial loans. However, following the global economic meltdown and the resulting run on credit, the need for aid - for bridging the public finance deficit keeps growing. Parallel to a possible increase in aid in the next years, there is likely to be growing pressure for policy reform, good governance and improved aid delivery and utilization mechanisms.

Despite the large number of international meetings and action plans for improving aid effectiveness, following the Paris Declaration in March 2005, which was signed by donors and governments, including the Government of Sri Lanka, many challenges still remain for changing the practices of both aid recipients and donors.

We examine Sri Lanka's position in relation to the key areas for improving aid effectiveness: national ownership of the development agenda, alignment of aid with national priorities, harmonization of donor practices, mutual accountability and management for development results.

Ownership: national focus

Ownership is manifest in the degree to which development programmes are nationally owned, the extent to which the process is nationally driven and development priorities nationally defined. In Sri Lanka as well as other aid receiving countries, ownership, so far has shown the greatest strength.

Alignment: use of country systems

The national budget, the public financial management system, including procurement, and the national results reporting system comprise country systems; About 77.6% of aid is channelled through the government budget, while 65% of disbursements use country public financial management systems and 50% follow national procurement procedures attesting to the credibility of the sys-

tems as well as the requirement that multi-lateral donors use the national system.

A study conducted by MPI in 2008 found that donors continue largely to rely on their own assessments, formats, procedures and strategies despite the call for a change in practice.

Harmonisation

Harmonization among donors has been low. There are initiatives in sector programmes extending from 'working together' (roads) to programme-based approaches (environment) and a sector-wide approach in education as well as joint donor assessments of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction and post-tsunami recovery and reconstruction.

Mutual accountability

No joint studies to access mutual accountability have been undertaken.

Managing for results

Results based management has been introduced to 35 of the 55 Ministries. Key performance indicators and medium term targets have been identified and results measurement will commence in 2009/10. Linking results to budget allocations and performance auditing is being discussed and will be taken forward to ensure sustainability of the initiative.

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) for implementing reforms to improve the effectiveness of aid was adopted in Accra last September by more than 100 Ministers and Heads of Agencies from developing and donor countries.

From Results to Resources- What Have We Learnt?

We are often asked how Managing for Development Results (MfDR) is institutionalised in the whole of government. We are still learning; but a few things stand out as important.

The **entry point** is the policy level—the Ministry, even when what we measure takes place at the operational and department levels. It is important to involve different units such as departments and Commissions because taking the long view, we consider the sector, not just the Ministry.

There is no standard way to introduce MfDR. The easy Ministries are those that have a strong planning and measurement culture, everyone uses e-mail, senior management is accessible and supportive, the core business contributes to the GDP with data updated every quarter and records go back thirty years.

There are no easy Ministries; the Ministries of Fisheries, Plantation Industries and Tourism, have some of these characteristics.

How we go about it is easier to describe than to carry out. First, the Secretary is approached; then the concept is introduced to a large group. At this meeting we discuss the core business of the Ministry—the reason it exists. Through this process we derive the “major thrust areas” and the expected outcomes they strive for. Then we create a Task Force drawn from the different units of the Ministry

with which we work to move the process forward.

We do not limit ourselves to working with just the planning unit because these units are weak and chronically understaffed in almost every Ministry.

Besides, working with technical people is more interesting. They are engaged in the substance and

care deeply about results. They welcome the chance to define indicators because operating without good data is a major frustration for them too.

Task Force members

discuss indicators, data availability, outputs, outcomes targets and problems. So far the private sector or civil society have not been included in these meetings.

Often, it is difficult to meet everyone together. Then we meet separately unit by unit. This takes a lot more time.

When the draft indicators have been identified they are discussed and adopted at a large group meeting.

We do not impose a standard way of working but try to adapt to how each Ministry wants to work. The process followed in

the Ministry of Public Administration was different from the one described earlier.

In Public Administration and Home Affairs, there was a strong commitment to measure results as well as an investment in their own method of performance planning and assessment.

We worked through internal “champions”; allowed time for discussion and dissent, and counted on the support of the Secretary and suggestions of senior managers for incorporating the Results Framework into the performance management system of each unit. It was slow.

Results measurement does not occur in a vacuum. Results have to be linked to budgets, to resource allocation, planning, management, and the regular audits.

The Department of National Budget participates in meetings and is interested in the measurability factor. These meetings are noisy because everyone starts by disagreeing before reaching consensus and all talk at the same time. The relationship with the Ministry of Finance and Planning is

crucial and continues to be strengthened through regular interactions.

Information exchange and knowledge management are achieved through this newsletter and the MPI website.

This is what we learnt:

Promote the concept with everyone within the organisational unit.

Link results to budgets and planning.

Don't compromise on quality; Aim for outcome indicators not output indicators.

Keep it simple. Even two good indicators are sufficient for each outcome or goal.

Build capacity as results measurement is implemented. Encourage managers to invest in staff training.

Sometimes we are asked how we define success. When the Ministry of Social Services decided to allocate resources for 2009 using the results framework as a basis, or when the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils plans to introduce results measurement to the Provincial Councils we considered them major achievements.

Personally, the best reward is the opportunity to be engaged in a process that is quietly creating an internal demand for using evidence as a basis for policy decisions.

We still have some way to go.

Mala Liyanage, Consultant

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The MfDR Plan of Action—2009

The MfDR Core Group set up to advise the MPI on strategy and direction held its first meeting for 2009 in March, to approve the future Plan of Action. The Core Group agreed on the following measures:

Increase awareness among government officials in Ministries and other institutions.

Develop capacity in Ministries and other institutions for data collection and coordination with the Department of Census and Statistics.

Build MfDR into the national budget system by linking the results framework and score card to the budget and action plan of Ministries.

Introduce performance budgeting using the ARF as the basis.

Conduct Performance Audits supported by the ARF and scorecard.

The new Core Group members

Ministry Secretaries

Ms. Dhara Wijayatilake (M/Implementation)(Chair), Mr. S. Ranugge, (M/Export Development and International Trade) and Mr. George Michael, (M/Tourism)

Auditor General

Mr. S. Swarnajothi

Office of the President

Mr. Dhammika Amarasinghe, Advisor to the President

Office of the Prime Minister

Mr. S.S. Miyanawala Additional Secretary

Ministry of Finance and Planning

Mr. V. Kanagasabapathy, Financial Management Advisor, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Ms. Sujatha Cooray DG/ Department of External Resources, Ms. Sudharma Karunaratne DG/Department of National Budget, Mr. H.M Gunasekera, DG/Department of National Planning and Ms. Suranjana Vidyaratne, DG/Department of Census and Statistics

Information and Communication and Technology Agency

Mr. Jagath Seneviratne, Programme Head (M&E)

MPI representatives

Mr. A Abeygunasekera, Additional Secretary and Mr. V. Sivagnansothy, Director General, Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring.

“WE CAN SUCCEED”

SECRETARY MPI AT JO'BURG

“Institutionalizing MfDR in whole of Government is indeed an ambitious initiative, but I can confirm that we have sustained the effort for over two years and have every reason to believe that we can succeed,” said Mrs. Dhara Wijayatilake, Secretary/ MPI delivering the keynote address on “*Challenges in leading the development of a country led Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation system in whole of Government*” at the Global Assembly of the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) held in Johannesburg in March 2009.

In a candid presentation which discussed the strategy adopted, process followed as well as the strengths and challenges experienced in implementing the initiative, Mrs. Wijayatilake emphasized that Sri Lanka’s effort as at this early stage deserves to be valued more for the vision and ambition with which it has been embarked upon, rather than actual achievements which will become visible only at a later stage.

There are no incentives on offer for those Ministries and officers who succeed in institutionalizing MfDR, except recognition and celebration as champions, she pointed out. “I hope that they will be inspired by their own contribution to the development effort of the nation.” The challenges include the need to ensure that even institutionalizing MfDR is results based; building capacity to identify legitimate goals and indicators; and collecting authentic data.

Commenting on the response of Ministries where MfDR is implemented she said “We are inspired by the splendid response we have received. The excitement that we have been able to generate is real.”



Meeting of the reconstituted Core Group, March 26th, at the National Operations Room, MPI.

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Participants from the International Programme for Development of Evaluation Training (IPDET) and members of the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) were in Sri Lanka in February to learn from the results based monitoring and evaluation system that is in place, in Sri Lanka.

According to the President of IDEAS and Co- Director of IPDET, Dr. Ray Rist, e- DIMS, EPMS and EIS taken together is internationally recognized as being one of the strongest systems in any developing country.

The tour group was introduced to the national electronic Project Monitoring System e-PMS, e-DIMS (for monitoring non- ODA development programmes of NGOs, and the Evaluation Information System (EIS)

when they visited the National Operations Room of the Ministry of Plan Implementation.

The participants also had an opportunity to meet with officials to discuss the Government -wide institutionalization of MfDR including details of how it is being introduced to selected projects and Ministries.

Discussions also included the implementation of the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness, within the Sri Lankan context.

In addition, the group was also briefed on the oversight committee for Parliamentary control of Public Expenditure and they met with officials from the Department of Census and statistics and officials of the Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition.

Evaluation Information System

The Evaluation Information System (EIS) is a web-based central evaluation database that captures the findings and lessons of all **ongoing, ex-post** and **impact evaluations** of the development interventions implemented with domestic and aid funds. The EIS forms part of the National Operations Room (NOR) of the Ministry of Plan Implementation. The objective of the EIS is to ensure more **effective feedback** of evaluation findings and lessons into the planning, budgeting and policy formulation process. The evaluation information helps Planners and Policy Makers to learn from the past efforts and to improve the design of future programs.

The EIS captures, on a project basis; evaluation data, key issues, overall assessment, lessons learned and follow up actions and recommendations.

The sectors under which evaluation feedback is available are: Agriculture; Land and Irrigation; Fisheries and Aquatic Resources; Roads; Private Sector Development; Water Supply and Sanitation; Science and Technology; Plantation; Education and Vocational Training and General, under which Poverty is included.

In the searchable database are included 121 lessons and 100 key issues drawn from 26 evaluations of 26 projects. It is available at www.fabm.gov.lk/eis

Our Mission

“To function as the National Focal Point for monitoring and evaluation of all government development programmes, projects and policies to ensure results and achievement of development objectives”



IPDET participants meeting with officials from government institutions to discuss the results frameworks

Join the MfDR (Sri Lanka) Community of Practice (CoP). Please visit the MPI website at <http://www.mpi.gov.lk/CoP-MfDR.html>