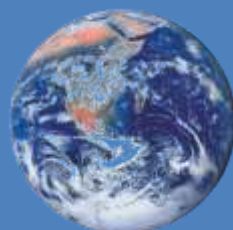


**THE DCED STANDARD FOR MEASURING RESULTS
IN PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT**

CONTROL POINTS AND COMPLIANCE CRITERIA

Version VIII, April 2017



DCED

The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development



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The DCED Standard for Measuring Results in Private Sector Development

Version VIII, 3rd April 2017

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Introduction

What is the DCED Standard for Measuring Results?

The DCED Standard is a practical framework for private sector development programmes to monitor progress towards their objectives. It comprises seven elements, listed in the box to the right, which are the minimum required for a credible results measurement process. By adopting these elements, programme managers can understand what is working and why, and use monitoring information to improve the effectiveness of their work.

The DCED Standard at a glance

1. Articulating the Results Chain
2. Defining indicators of change
3. Measuring attributable change
4. Capturing wider changes in the system or market
5. Tracking costs and impact
6. Reporting costs and results
7. Managing the system for results measurement

The underlying requirement of the DCED Standard is for programme managers to think through, and validate, the logic of their work. The first step is for managers to articulate the 'results chain', a simple yet powerful tool which maps the activities conducted by the project, and shows how these are expected to contribute to positive development impacts.

This format enables managers to be explicit about the assumptions that they make. Based on this, programmes formulate and monitor indicators which are designed to test these assumptions, assess attribution and broader changes to the market system, and use the results for reporting and programme management.

The DCED promotes a pragmatic approach to results measurement. It calls on programmes to measure results to a level that is complex enough to be credible, yet simple enough to be practical. In the words of John Maynard Keynes, “it is better to be roughly right than precisely wrong”. The key test of the DCED Standard is whether the approach taken by the programme would convince a reasonable but sceptical observer.

For those agencies and programmes that are seriously engaged in monitoring their results, the DCED offers an optional, confidential ‘audit’ service, which can lend additional credibility to the results measurement system. An audit involves an external, objective assessment of the monitoring system in use in the programme. The monitoring system is assessed against transparent and publically available criteria, giving every programme an incentive to improve and a goal to aim for.

The DCED Standard has to date primarily been used in private sector development programmes. This is reflected in the common indicators (below) and the case studies available online. The basic framework, however, is more broadly applicable. We would be interested to hear from programmes which are using it outside private sector development.

Why use the DCED Standard?

There are three main reasons to use the DCED Standard for Results Measurement: quality, credibility, and practicality.

- **Quality.** The DCED Standard represents a shared, inter-agency understanding of good practice around the estimation of results. In particular, it requires programmes to clearly articulate how the activities of the programme are expected to lead to outputs, outcomes, and eventually development impact. This process can improve design and management, as well as monitoring. The DCED Standard has been designed and revised in collaboration with field practitioners and results measurement specialists.
- **Credibility.** Programmes can be audited for their use of the DCED Standard, which provides an external assessment of the quality of the results measurement system. We encourage programmes to voluntarily publish their audit report, although it is kept confidential if the programme wishes.¹ Donors, evaluators, and others can use the findings of the audit to assess the credibility of self-reported results.
- **Practicality.** The DCED Standard recognises the limits of results measurement, and does not demand unrealistic levels of rigour or precision. Moreover, it lays out a relatively simple framework for programmes to improve their results measurement, removing the need for programmes to reinvent the wheel. Practitioners have access to guidelines and other support to make it easier to learn about and adhere to the DCED Standard.² By

¹ See www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard/auditing-the-monitoring-system/#Audited_programmes_and_published_reports for available audit reports.

² www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard/implementing-the-dced-standard

encouraging a worldwide community of practice, the DCED offers opportunities for exchange and learning with other programmes, agencies and consultants.

The elements of the DCED Standard are relevant for those seeking to solve ‘complex’ problems; that is, problems which are unpredictable and constantly changing. Success therefore requires an emphasis on trying out multiple approaches, continually monitoring progress and learning in real time to inform implementation. An effective management and results measurement system can identify which components are succeeding and should be expanded, and which ones are not. It can gather evidence which will inform the development of new approaches.

Common Impact Indicators

All programmes and agencies are under pressure to report results that have been aggregated across the entire portfolio. That is only possible if a few, common indicators are consistently defined and measured. The indicators selected for aggregation should, in principle, influence the selection, design and implementation of programmes. Consequently, the definition of those few indicators is largely a function of the priorities and culture of the individual agency or programme.

One technical challenge is that common indicators are often only found at the impact level; all programmes contribute to impact, but through different routes. The DCED has therefore proposed three common impact indicators that many private sector development programmes aim to influence. At audit, however, there is no penalty for not using the three indicators suggested here, if the programme has documented reasons why they are not appropriate, and measures alternative indicators as far along the results chain as possible. The key is for programmes to be able to aggregate some element of their results in a credible way (reflected particularly in Control Point 2.3, below).

The three common impact indicators are **Scale**, **Net change in income** and **Net change in jobs**; further detail is given in the definitions section at the end of this document. As ‘impact’ indicators, they refer to changes for the people that the programme ultimately aims to benefit, rather than intermediaries such as businesses, NGOs, or governments.

How to use this document

Readers who are new to the DCED Standard, or who want a quick overview, should read the summary on pages 6-7. This summary lists each of the seven elements of the DCED Standard, and the ‘control points’ which summarise the minimum requirements that would satisfy the auditors for each element. Those control points labelled “Must” are deemed necessary for all participating programmes (and are shown in green); those labelled “Rec” (Recommended) conform to good practice, but may be difficult for some programmes to comply with at this point (shown in yellow). These recommendations may become “Musts” in the future as the field of results measurement improves.

Readers who are familiar with the Standard, or interested in having their results measurement system audited, should read the scoring sheet, starting on page eight. This scoring sheet provides more detail by listing ‘compliance criteria’ for each control point, which can be used by auditors to assess whether the control point was met or not.

Further sources of Guidance

The DCED offers a range of support and resources to programmes that are interested in applying the DCED Standard. Almost all of them can be accessed through the DCED website, www.enterprise-development.org/measuring-results-the-dced-standard. This includes:

- [Implementation Guidelines](#). The DCED has developed an implementation guideline for each of the elements of the Standard. They discuss each control point and compliance criteria, and explain what is necessary to meet the DCED Standard.
- [Thematic guidelines](#). The DCED has developed guidelines for implementing the Standard in challenge funds, conflict affected environments, and business environment reform.
- [Case Studies](#). The case studies give practical examples of how different programmes are working towards the DCED Standard.
- [DCED Standard Consultants Marketplace](#). The consultants' marketplace on the website lists consultants who have experience in the implementation of the DCED Standard.
- [Training Courses](#). The website lists upcoming training courses from the DCED and private providers, including those aimed at beginners and more advanced users.
- [Email newsletter](#). Keep in touch by signing up for the newsletter from the front page of the website. Alternatively, anyone can email the DCED directly at Results@Enterprise-Development.org.

The DCED Standard for Measuring Results

1. Articulating the Results Chain

No.	Control Point	Level
1.1	An appropriate, sufficiently detailed and logical results chain(s) is articulated explicitly for each intervention.	Must
1.2	Each intervention results chain is supported by adequate research and analysis.	Must
1.3	Mid and senior level programme staff are familiar with the results chain(s) and use them to guide their activities.	Must
1.4	The intervention results chain(s) are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in the programme strategy, external players and the programme circumstances.	Must
1.5	Each intervention results chain is supported by adequate research and analysis on gender.	Rec
1.6	Each results chain is supported by research and analysis that consider the risk of displacement.	Rec

2. Defining Indicators of Change, Other Information Needs

No.	Control Point	Level
2.1	There is at least one relevant indicator associated with each change described in the results chain(s).	Must
2.2	Qualitative information on how and why changes are occurring is defined for each intervention.	Must
2.3	A small number of indicators at the impact level can be aggregated across the programme.	Must
2.4	There are specific indicators that enable the assessment of sustainability of results.	Must
2.5	Mid and senior level programme staff understand the indicators and how they illustrate programme progress.	Must
2.6	There are specific indicators that enable the assessment of gender differentiated results.	Rec
2.7	Anticipated impacts are realistically projected for key quantitative indicators to appropriate dates.	Rec

3. Measuring Attributable Change

No.	Control Point	Level
3.1	Baseline information on all key indicators is collected.	Must
3.2	Monitoring information on all key indicators is collected.	Must

No.	Control Point	Level
3.3	Impact assessment is conducted to assess attributable changes in all key indicators in the results chains using methods that conform to established good practice.	Must
3.4	The programme implements processes to use information from monitoring and results measurement in management of interventions and decision making.	Must
3.5	The programme has a system for assessing and understanding differentiated results by gender.	Rec
3.6	The programme monitors to identify unintended effects.	Rec

4. Capturing Wider Changes in the System or Market

No.	Control Point	Level
4.1	The programme has an overall plan for assessing systemic changes at programme level.	Rec
4.2	Systemic changes are assessed at market system level and beneficiary level using appropriate methods.	Rec

5. Tracking Costs and Impact

No.	Control Point	Level
5.1	Costs are tracked annually and cumulatively.	Must
5.2	Programme-wide impact is clearly and appropriately aggregated.	Must
5.3	Costs are allocated by major component of the programme. (Applicable only to programmes with more than one main component)	Rec

6. Reporting Costs and Results

No.	Control Point	Level
6.1	The programme produces a report at least annually which describes results to date.	Must
6.2	Results of gender impact are reported.	Rec
6.3	Results of systemic change are reported.	Rec
6.4	Results are published.	Rec

7. Managing the System for Results Measurement

No.	Control Point	Level
7.1	The programme has a clear system for using information from the results measurement system in management and decision-making.	Must
7.2	The system is supported by sufficient human and financial resources.	Must
7.3	The system is well managed and integrated with programme management.	Must

Scoring Sheet for the DCED Standard

This scoring sheet has been prepared to outline the compliance criteria by which auditors would assess a programme against each control point outlined in the DCED Standard for Results Measurement. During an audit, each compliance criterion will be rated, based on the degree to which the programme meets the requirements. The rating will be based on examining a selection of individual projects/interventions within a programme, as well as the overall programme. The compliance criteria for the control points have been formulated to score programmes on whether they have the different elements in place, whether they are of good quality and on whether they are being used. A score of 100% on an audit does not imply that a programme has a perfect results measurement system, but one which meets the requirements of the DCED Standard. A lower score suggests that the results measurement system may have significant flaws. All programmes with an audit score of over 85% on the 'Must' control points are listed on the [DCED website](#), together with the main audit report where the programme has given permission for that. If a programme is not aiming to achieve systemic change, for example, the relevant control points would be marked 'not applicable' in an audit, and consequently not scored.

1. Articulating the Results Chains

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
1.1	An appropriate, sufficiently detailed and logical results chain(s) is articulated explicitly for each intervention.	An individual results chain is developed and documented for each intervention.	10
		Each intervention results chain shows all key changes, arranged in a logical order, and illustrates how the intervention is expected to lead to development goals.	5
		Each intervention results chain is sufficiently detailed so that quantitative and qualitative changes at each level are easily understood, including who or what is expected to change and the direction of the change.	5
1.2	Each intervention results chain is supported by adequate research and analysis	Critical external assumptions and risks that may affect the achievement of changes have been identified and are clearly documented.	5
		Each intervention results chain is underpinned by clear and convincing evidence that demonstrates the link between the intervention and overall programme and/or sector strategies.	5
		Each intervention results chain is underpinned by clear and convincing evidence that demonstrates the link between the changes outlined.	5

1.3	Mid and senior level programme staff are familiar with the results chain(s) and use them to guide their activities.	Mid and senior level programme staff can fully and clearly describe the respective results chain(s) relevant to their work and the logic underpinning them.	5
		Mid and senior level programme staff use results chains to guide their work.	20
1.4	The intervention results chain(s) are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in the programme strategy, external players and the programme circumstances.	Intervention results chain(s) have been reviewed at least annually.	20
1.5	Each intervention results chain is supported by adequate research and analysis on gender.	Each intervention results chain is underpinned by clear and convincing evidence demonstrating that gender is being considered during intervention design	5
1.6	Each results chain is supported by research and analysis that considers the risk of displacement.	The risk of displacement has been considered in the development of the results chain.	10

2. Defining Indicators of Change and Other Information Needs

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
2.1	There is at least one relevant indicator associated with each change described in the results chain(s).	Indicators to measure each change in every intervention results chain are defined.	5
		Indicators to measure changes in each intervention results chain are specific and relevant.	5
2.2	Qualitative information on how and why changes are occurring is defined for each intervention.	Qualitative information needed to understand how and why changes are occurring has been defined for each results chain.	10
		The defined qualitative information needs are clear, specific and relevant to each intervention and sufficient to provide a thorough understanding of how and why changes are occurring.	20
2.3	A small number of indicators at the impact level can be aggregated across the programme.	Indicators for each intervention results chain include common impact indicators or alternative indicators that can be aggregated at the impact or nearest feasible level.	20
2.4	There are specific indicators that enable the assessment of sustainability of results.	Indicators to measure the likelihood of sustainability of changes for each intervention results chain are defined.	5
		Indicators to measure the likelihood sustainability of changes for each intervention results chain are specific, measurable and relevant.	5

2.5	Mid and senior level programme staff understand the indicators and how they illustrate programme progress.	Mid and senior level programme staff understand the indicators relevant to each intervention results chain.	10
2.6	There are specific indicators that enable the assessment of gender differentiated results.	Indicators to measure changes, differentiated by gender, in each intervention results chain are defined.	5
		Indicators to measure changes, differentiated by gender, in each intervention results chain are specific, measurable and relevant.	10
2.7	Anticipated impacts are realistically projected for key quantitative indicators to appropriate dates.	Projections showing changes in key quantitative indicator values for each intervention results chain have been estimated.	5
		Projections are supported by research and analysis, and clear and accurate calculations showing all key assumptions underpinning the calculation.	10
		Projections for each intervention results chain are reviewed at least annually and updated, where relevant.	20

3. Measuring Attributable Change

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
3.1	Baseline information on all key indicators is collected.	Plans to collect baseline information for each intervention results chain, covering market actors and beneficiaries, exist.	10
		The plan to collect baseline information is thorough, realistic, timely and in accordance with good research practice.	20
		Baseline information for each intervention results chain, covering market actors and beneficiaries has been collected, analysed and reported in a timely manner using good research practices.	30
3.2	Monitoring information on all key indicators is collected.	Plans to collect monitoring information in a timely manner for market actors and beneficiaries exist.	10
		The monitoring plan is timely, uses appropriate tools and processes and takes attribution into account for all levels.	20
		Monitoring information for each intervention results chain and covering market actors and beneficiaries has been collected, analysed and reported in a timely manner using good research practices. Attribution has been assessed.	30

3.3	Impact assessment is conducted to assess attributable changes in all key indicators in the results chains using methods that conform to established good practice.	Plans to assess the impact on market actors and beneficiaries of each intervention, in a timely manner, exist.	10
		Plans to assess the impact on market actors and beneficiaries for each intervention are thorough, realistic and in accordance with good research practices. The plan illustrates how attribution will be assessed.	20
		Impact information for each intervention has been collected, analysed and reported in a timely manner using good research practices. Attribution has been assessed.	30
3.4	The programme implements processes to use information from monitoring and results measurement in management of interventions and decision making.	Mid and senior level programme staff describe the process for using information collected through monitoring and impact assessments.	5
		Mid and senior level programme staff use the information collected through monitoring and impact assessments to manage interventions and the programme.	20
3.5	The programme has a system for assessing and understanding differentiated results by gender.	Plans to assess and understand differentiated results by gender of each intervention exist.	10
		Plans to assess and understand differentiated results by gender are relevant and appropriate.	20
		Gender differentiated results for each intervention have been collected, analysed and reported in a timely manner.	30
3.6	The programme monitors to identify unintended effects.	Plans to collect, analyse and report monitoring and impact information on unintended (positive and negative) effects exist.	10
		Programme staff use information on significant unintended effects, if any, to review interventions.	10

4. Capturing Wider Changes in the System or Market

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
4.1	The programme has an overall plan for assessing systemic changes at programme level.	The approach for assessing systemic change, and its effect on market actors and beneficiaries, exists.	10
4.2	Systemic changes are assessed at market systems level and beneficiary level using appropriate methods.	The pathway of expected systemic change at market actors level and/or at beneficiary level is outlined.	10
		A plan for assessing expected systemic change at the market actors level exists.	10
		A plan for assessing and estimating the effect of expected systemic change on beneficiaries exists.	10
		Plans to collect, analyse and assess expected systemic change at market actors level are appropriate (considering the context and expected systemic change) and in accordance with good research practices.	10
		Plans to collect, analyse and assess expected systemic change and effect at beneficiary level are appropriate (considering the context and expected systemic change) and in accordance with good research practices.	10
		Expected systemic change at market actors level is assessed using good research practices, and takes attribution into account.	20
		Results of expected systemic change on beneficiaries are assessed using good research practices, and take attribution into account.	20

5. Tracking Costs and Impact

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
5.1	Costs are tracked annually and cumulatively.	A system to track in-country programme-related expenditure annually and cumulatively exists.	10
		The programme has annual and cumulative totals of all programme-related costs spent in country.	10
5.2	Programme-wide impact is clearly and appropriate aggregated	A system for estimating common impact indicators (or other programme-wide aggregatable indicators) at least annually exists.	5

		The system for estimating common impact indicators (or other programme-wide aggregatable indicators) is clear, thorough and appropriate.	10
		Aggregated impact is estimated annually. Estimates are supported by clear explanations of calculations, assumptions and take into account overlap.	20
5.3	Costs are allocated by major component of the programme. (Applicable only to programmes with more than one main intervention)	A system to estimate expenditure for each major programme component of the programme, for which impact is also estimated, exists.	10
		Expenditure for each major programme component of the programme, for which impact is also assessed, is reported.	10

6. Reporting Costs and Results

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
6.1	The programme produces a report at least annually which describes results to date.	A report that describes results and expenditure to date is produced annually.	10
		The report produced provides sufficient information on progress, achievements, and explanations on how, why and for whom changes are occurring.	30
		The report clearly explains where other programmes or actors have contributed to the achievement of reported changes.	10
6.2	Results of gender impact are reported.	The report outlines impact on gender.	10
6.3	Results of systemic change are reported.	The report outlines systemic changes at market actors level	10
		The report outlines systemic changes at beneficiaries' level	10
6.4	Results are published.	The report is publicly available.	10

7. Managing the system for results measurement

No.	Control Points	Compliance criteria broken down for Scoring	Max. score
7.1	The programme has a clear system for using information from the results measurement system in management and decision-making.	The system for how the programme will use information for management and decision making processes exists.	10
		The system is appropriate, practical and provides for regularly integrating information from the MRM system into management decision making processes.	20
7.2	The system is supported by sufficient human and financial resources.	Sufficient human resources, with appropriate skills, are allocated to manage and implement the results management system for interventions, sector and programme levels.	30
		Staff have access to sufficient guidance on how to implement all elements of the results measurement system.	10
		Sufficient financial resources have been budgeted for and used to manage and implement the results measurement system.	10
7.3	The system is well managed and integrated with programme management.	The quality of the results measurement activities and outputs are regularly and systematically reviewed.	30
		Roles and responsibilities in results measurement are clearly defined and described into job descriptions and integrated in human resource management.	20

Definitions

Note: Where possible, the definitions given below are in line with the *Glossary of Key Terms* developed by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation³. Definitions taken directly from the DAC Glossary are *given in italics*. In many cases, further detail has been added, to give the level of specificity required for the purpose of this methodology.

Activity: A discrete piece of work, typically represented by a contract between the programme and a contractor, partner or consultant. Interventions typically consist of several activities, that are intended to achieve change at various different points in the overall market system.

Aggregate: To combine the impact a programme has caused from various interventions; overlap must be considered when aggregating impact.

Assess: To gauge the change in an indicator using either or both quantitative or qualitative methodologies.

Assumption: *Hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of a development intervention.*

Attribution: *The ascription of a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention.*

Baseline: *An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made.*

Collaborating programme: A public programme (donor or government) with which the programme has a written agreement outlining collaboration and which has contributed to the attributable changes claimed.

Component: A part of a programme that forms a coherent set of interventions, typically around a thematic interest.

Copying: The target group of the programme (e.g. smallholder farmers, poor households, etc) copying behavioural changes that those affected directly by programme activities have adopted.

Crowding in: Enterprises (e.g. importers/exporters, wholesalers, retailers) other than the programme target group copying behaviours that those enterprises affected by programme activities have adopted. This term can also apply to government agencies or civil society organizations who copy behaviours of those who are directly involved in the programme.

Displacement: In a static market, expansion of some enterprises supported by the programme may come at the expense of the market share of other enterprises. This negative effect is referred to as displacement.

Impact: *Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.*

³ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>

Indicators: *Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development sector.*

Information gathering: The collection of qualitative and quantitative information to measure the changes resulting from a programme at any level of the programme's results chain and to estimate attribution.

Intermediate indicator: An indicator of change at any level other than the goal or final level.

Intervention: A coherent set of activities that are designed to achieve a specific system change, reflected in one results chain. An intervention is generally a subset of a component.

Job: Full-time equivalent, taken over one year (240 days/year); may be seasonal, paid in kind etc, but does not include unpaid family labour.

Methodology: A means to assess the value of indicators, for example a survey, focus group discussion or key informant interviews.

Monitoring: *A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.*

Net change in income: A sustainable net change in income (additional sales minus additional costs) accrued to the target group as a result of the programme per year and cumulatively.

Net change in jobs: A sustainable net change in the number of full time equivalent jobs created for the target group as a result of the programme, per year and cumulatively. "Additional" means jobs created minus jobs lost. "Per year" comprises 240 working days. Jobs saved or sustained may be reported separately.

Overlap: When two different interventions reach the same target group there is a risk of overlap. Programmes need to correct for overlap instead of adding the impact of all interventions (when overlap is likely) in order to avoid double counting.

Poor: There are multiple definitions of 'poverty'. Frequently used poverty lines include the \$1.25, \$2, and \$2.50 per day at 1993 purchasing power parity, and many countries have their own definition.

Primary research: Information gathering directly from respondents (enterprises, service providers, government agencies etc.) in the field.

Private contributor: A private enterprise that has contributed to the impact reported by the programme.

Programme: A programme is the typical unit of analysis for a donor, often contracted to one overall partner or company. A programme consists of several components.

Projection A reasonable estimate of future results, based on current, informed knowledge.

Reasonable: A conclusion that an external, unbiased and relatively informed observer would come to.

Results Chain: *The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes, impacts and feedback.*

Results measurement: The process of implementing a measurement system in order to provide rapid feedback on the results achieved, in order to improve project effectiveness and reporting.

Scale: Number of members of the target group who realize a financial benefit as a result of the programme's activities per year and cumulatively.

Sustainability: *The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long term benefits.*

(For measurement purposes, sustainability will be indicated by continuation of benefits at least two years after the end of a programme).

Systemic change: Systemic change is change in the underlying causes of market system performance that leads to a better-functioning, more pro-poor market system. A systemic change must have three characteristics: scale, sustainability and resilience. If a programme aspires to systemic change, it must define what is, and is not, systemic change. This must be in a format that can be monitored.

Target group: The type of people that a programme ultimately aims to benefit, typically poor producers, employees, or consumers. The programme must define its "target group."

Unintended impacts: Any changes that are due to a programme's activities and that were not anticipated when designing the activities. These impacts may be positive or negative.