

PERFORMANCE SCORES

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The monitoring and evaluation of development cooperation projects and programmes is often based on criteria issued at international level: they are not the only ones, but they are a common basis for assessing the projects and policies implemented. The Belgian General Directorate for Development Cooperation (DGD) is proposing to use the 6 OECD DAC criteria, including one focusing on two priority themes - gender equity and the environment - to measure the impact of projects.

01. WHERE DO THESE CAD CRITERIA COME FROM?

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is an international forum for many of the world's largest bilateral aid donors. It currently has 32 members. In 2019, the DAC Network on Development Evaluation adapted its evaluation criteria to the new development landscape and the 2030 Agenda. The criteria are widely used in evaluations of development programmes well beyond DAC membership.

Each criterion represents a different prism or perspective through which the intervention can be analysed - its implementation process, but also the results obtained. They bring complementary perspectives and provide an overall view of the intervention. They encourage deeper reflection on the nature of an intervention, its implementation, its process and its results, around six main questions.

02. THE 6 CRITERIA IN THE PERFORMANCE SCORES

02.1 / **EFFECTIVENESS: IS THE INTERVENTION ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES?**

The extent to which the objectives and results of the intervention have been or are being achieved, including results differentiated between populations. Note: the analysis of effectiveness implies taking into account the relative importance of the objectives or results.

Questions from the DGD

1.1 *To what extent are the results achieved and of good quality?*

1.2 *How likely is it that the specific objective will be achieved if the project is implemented as it is today?*

02.2 / EFFICIENCY: ARE RESOURCES BEING USED OPTIMALLY?

The extent to which the intervention produces, or is likely to produce, results in a cost-effective and timely manner. Note: the term "cost-effective" refers to the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes and impacts in the most cost-effective manner possible, relative to the options available in the context. The expression "on time" refers to meeting the set deadlines or deadlines reasonably adapted to the requirements of the changing context. This may involve assessing operational efficiency (the extent to which the intervention has been well managed).

Questions from the DGD

2.1 Do the resources used offer the best "cost-benefit" ratio for achieving the predefined results/objectives? For costs, reference is made to the budget as approved by the DGD.

2.2 Are the activities being carried out as planned and will the results/objectives be achieved within the timeframe set?

02.3 / RELEVANCE: DOES THE INTERVENTION ADDRESS THE PROBLEM?

The extent to which the objectives and design of the intervention are consistent with the needs, policies and priorities of the **beneficiaries**, the country, the international community and partners/institutions, and remain relevant in a changing context. Note: "fit" means that the objectives and design of the intervention take into account the conditions - economic, environmental, equity, social, political economy and capacity - in which the intervention takes place. The term "partners/institutions" includes administrations (national, regional, local), civil society organisations, private entities and international bodies involved in financing, implementing and/or supervising the intervention. Assessing relevance involves examining differences and trade-offs between different priorities or needs. It also involves analysing any changes in the context to determine the extent to which the intervention can be (or has been) adapted to maintain its relevance.

Questions from the DGD

3.1 How relevant is the overall objective of the project, given any changes that have occurred over the past year in the external context (country/partner/etc.) or within the organisation (as a whole and/or at country level, HR, institutional and/or financial)? To what extent have these changes affected the relevance of the intervention and how has the situation been addressed?

02.4 / SUSTAINABILITY: WILL THE BENEFITS OF THE INTERVENTION BE LONG-LASTING?

The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention will endure or are likely to endure.

Note: This includes an examination of the financial, economic, social and institutional capacities of the systems required to ensure the continuity of net benefits over time. This includes analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs between priorities. Depending on when the assessment is carried out, this process could analyse the actual flow of net benefits or estimate the likelihood of net benefits being sustained over the medium to long term.

Questions from the DGD

4.1 What is the potential for **financial sustainability** and, if applicable, economic viability of the intervention? For Education for Global Citizenship (ECM), the question relates to the methods, instruments and/or tools that have been developed as part of the intervention.

4.2 Are the conditions in place to guarantee the **social sustainability** of the benefits of the strategy applied, even beyond the period of the intervention (e.g. participation and involvement of beneficiaries, target groups/intermediary players, multiplier effect, anchoring in existing organisations, creation of a support base, integration into policy, facilitation of exchanges of expertise, etc.)?

4.3 What is the degree of **technical sustainability** of the intervention? Technical sustainability is linked to the types of knowledge that the stakeholders involved need to develop, master and use in order to ensure that the benefits of the intervention continue to be felt once it is over, as well as to the presence of the tools required to achieve this.

02.5 / COHERENCE: DOES THE INTERVENTION FIT IN WITH OTHER INTERVENTIONS BEING CARRIED OUT?

The extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions carried out within a country, sector or institution.

Note: The criterion seeks to examine how other interventions (particularly policies) support or undermine the intervention being evaluated, and vice versa. Interpretation of the criterion: Degree of compatibility with other interventions in a country, sector or institution. This criterion aims to examine the extent to which other interventions support or weaken the intervention in question, and vice versa.

Questions from the DGD

5.1 Will the intervention contribute as planned to the strategic targets of the Common Strategic Framework for Belgian academic cooperation?

5.2 To what extent have opportunities for cooperation been identified? Are the planned synergies and complementarities being realised?

02.6 / IMPACT: WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE INTERVENTION MAKE?

The extent to which the intervention has produced, or is expected to produce, significant and wide-ranging effects, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended.

In addition to the immediate results already assessed under the effectiveness criterion, the impact criterion aims to assess the indirect, secondary and potential consequences of the intervention, by examining the overall and lasting changes in systems or standards, as well as the potential effects on the well-being of populations, human rights, gender equality and the environment.

Questions from the DGD

6.1 Are gender-related measures implemented as planned? This may involve results or specific objectives that have a gender-focused objective, but also gender mainstreaming within a specific objective.

6.2 Are environment-related measures implemented as planned?

Sources

- » DAC evaluation, [Adaptation of evaluation criteria](#), OECD 2020
- » [A thoughtful application of evaluation criteria](#), OECD, 2023.
- » Template of the 2024 performance scores provided by the DGD.