



Independent
Commission
for Aid Impact

Updated ICAI Assessment Framework

We have carried out a review of our assessment framework based on our experiences to date and we believe that it still fulfils its purpose.

We have, however, reinforced our emphasis on impact for intended beneficiaries, including a specific mention of women and girls, as well as introducing a specific reference to robust programme management.

We have also made some changes to clarify existing questions or move them from one section to another. This means that:

- **Objectives** now includes programme design;
- **Delivery** is more focussed on how efficiently and effectively the delivery process is working;
- **Impact** includes a progression of questions to build up a coherent picture of impact, from monitoring of results to how well impact is being achieved and sustained to exit strategy; and
- **Learning** now incorporates how well learning is applied during the programme.

The new Assessment Framework will be used for our future reports and will be periodically reviewed. We would welcome any comments which can be sent to enquiries@icai.independent.gov.uk

| 1 Objectives: what impact is the programme¹ trying to achieve? | |
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| 1.1 | Does the programme have clear, relevant and realistic objectives that focus on the desired impact? |
| 1.2 | Is the programme based on both sound evidence and credible assumptions as to how its activities will lead to the desired impact (a theory of change)? |
| 1.3 | Are the programme's design and objectives responsive to intended beneficiary needs and to the context? |
| 1.4 | Is the programme well designed, with appropriate choices of partnerships, funding and delivery options? |
| 1.5 | Does the programme complement the efforts of government and other aid providers and avoid duplication? |
| 2 Delivery: is the delivery chain managed so as to maximise impact? | |
| 2.1 | Does programme roll-out actively involve intended beneficiaries and take their needs into account? |
| 2.2 | Is there good governance at all levels, with sound financial management and adequate measures to avoid corruption? |
| 2.3 | Is the programme leveraging resources and working holistically alongside other programmes? |
| 2.4 | Is robust programme management in place, ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery chain? |
| 2.5 | Is there a clear view of costs throughout the delivery chain? |
| 2.6 | Are the delivery arrangements flexible enough to respond to risks, opportunities and changing circumstances and has this in fact occurred? |
| 3 Impact: what is the impact on intended beneficiaries, including women and girls? | |
| 3.1 | Are there appropriate arrangements for monitoring inputs, processes, outputs, results and impact? Are the views of intended beneficiaries taken into account? |
| 3.2 | Is the programme delivering its planned results? |
| 3.3 | Is the programme maximising impact for the intended beneficiaries, including women and girls? |
| 3.4 | Are the results and impact of the programme likely to be long term and sustained? |
| 3.5 | Is there an appropriate exit strategy involving effective transfer of ownership of the programme? |
| 4 Learning: How is the programme contributing to learning? | |
| 4.1 | Are appropriate amendments made to the programme to take account of the lessons learnt? |
| 4.2 | Is there transparency and accountability to intended beneficiaries, UK taxpayers and other parties with a direct interest in the programme? |
| 4.3 | Is there evidence of innovation and use of global best practice? |
| 4.4 | Is there anything currently not being done in respect of the programme that should be undertaken? |
| 4.5 | Have lessons about the objectives, design and delivery of the programme been learned and shared effectively across the organisation and its partners? |

¹ Throughout this Assessment Framework references to "the programme" refer to the identified programme or ODA activity under review for any given report.