EC EXTERNAL SERVICES

EVALUATION UNIT

OUTCOME AND IMPACT LEVEL

INTERVENTION LOGIC & INDICATORS

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH FOR INTERVENTION LOGIC AND INDICATORS
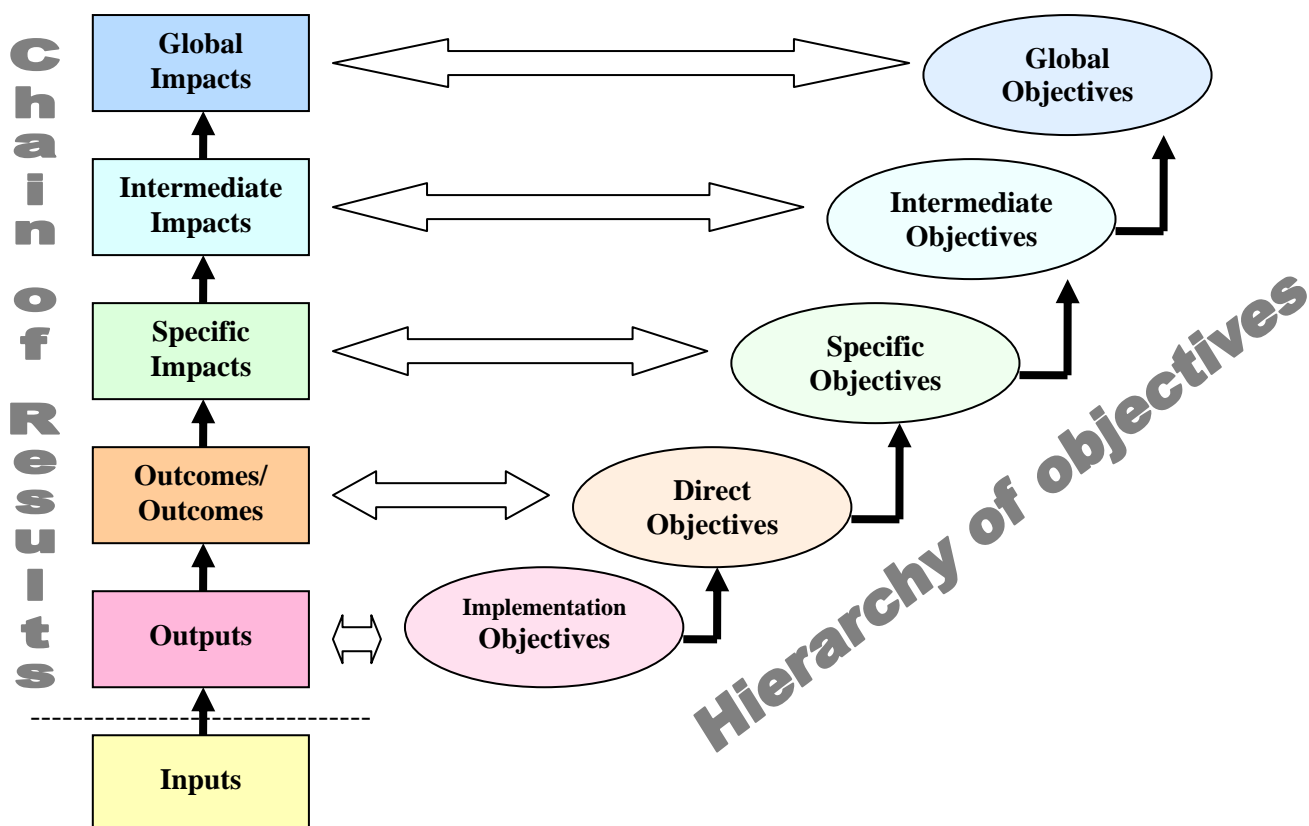
Introduction

This paper explains the methodological approach used in the development of five short working papers, which set out an intervention logic and indicators for the expected outcomes and impacts of development assistance. The sectors covered are: roads; water and sanitation; health; education; and agriculture and rural development

It is envisaged that these working papers will assist country teams to develop an intervention logic and set of objectives (with indicators) for the programming level and guide the production of documents such as Country Strategy Papers (CSP). It also aims to fill, as much as possible, the current 'missing middle' between outputs level effects (e.g. recruitment of teachers) and global impact effects (e.g. poverty reduction).

Methodology

The working papers are founded on an intervention logic based on a chain of expected effects (i.e. outputs - outcomes - impacts) required for a successful programming. These effects correlate to a hierarchy of objectives found within CSP's. Figure 1 below provides a visual representation of this relationship, using the EC hierarchy of objectives[1]. The working papers are focused on level of outcomes and specific and intermediate impacts.
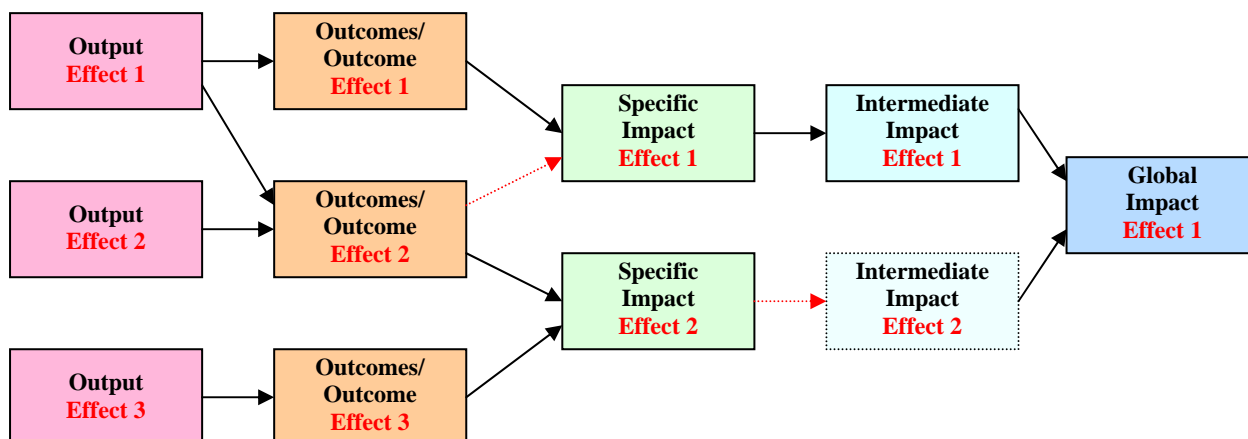
Figure 1: relationship between chain of results and hierarchy of objectives

---

[1] Based on the model presented in: 'Evaluating EU Activities: A Practical Guide for the Commission Services', July 2004 (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/evaluation/docs/eval_activities_en.pdf)

For each outcome and impact level there are a number of effects which should correlate to objectives identified within CSP's. Strong relationships between the various effects are represented by a black arrow and weak relationships by a red area. If an effect is weak (i.e. there is a more limited relationship between actions in the sector and the achievement of the effect), it is represented by a faded box and broken line (see intermediate impact effect 2 for an example of this).

Figure 2: representation of effect relationships within a chain of results

For each effect a set of example indicators are identified. These indicators verify and measure to what extend the effect has been achieved. See figure 3 below as an example of this. Indicators that are chosen for use within CSP's should contain both a base line and a target for the end of the period. The development of a base line and target will enable future Country Evaluations to clearly understand any positive or negative changes during the period of the CSP.

Figure 3: effect with example indicators

Effect	Example Indicators
Improved Use of Water & Sanitation	1. Irrigation requirements Example: Amount of water needed to produce xm² of x food 2. Water leakages Example: % of water lost through water systems due to leakages 3. Recycling of water Examples: Amount of sanitation water that is recycled Amount of water used in industry that is recycled

Each working paper adheres to the above methodology by outlining a full set of effects within an intervention logic diagram. Example indicators are provided for each effect and are also summarised in one page, attached as an Annex. When these are developed for each country they should use SMART criteria.

Examples of indicators used to measure the performance of past interventions in Country Evaluations are highlighted in the text of the working papers where appropriate.

Issues with Methodology

Although the intervention logic outlined in the working papers provides a useful simplification of reality, it should be noted that it does not cover the full complexity of actual interventions. The indicators provided are not standard indicators and are strictly provided as examples. Specific intervention logics must be developed on a country by country basis according to each country context and must be built upon solid sector analysis (souring this from external expertise, if it is not available in house). Whenever possible, key indicators should be drawn from government led and owned performance frameworks and sector strategies.

It is understood that while development actors may have a large amount of control over achievement of input and output indicators, it can only influence the achievement of outcomes and indirectly influence the achievement of impacts. The diminishing attribution between actions and achievement of outcomes is caused by the increasing number of exogenous factors, outside the control of the development actor, which are found at each level in the chain of results.

As aid instruments become more sectoral and macro in nature (e.g. provision of budget support), implementation interventions level are no longer strictly restricted to the output level within the intervention logic but will often also cover key indicators found at the outcome level.

It is understood that there are a number of different schools of thought on how to achieve longer term impacts within the various sectors. The working papers are predominately based upon thinking used within the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)[2] and leading coordination institutions for each sector (for example, the World Health Organisation for the health sector). Indicators are predominantly drawn from the internationally agreed MDG targets and where possible from internationally agreed lists.

Finally, it should be noted that crosscutting issues should be mainstreamed into the relevant indicators by disaggregating the data by topics such as gender, age and region.

---

[2] United Nations MDG's (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)