

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK – CHECKLIST

Did you know that inadequate planning is one of the main reasons why projects fail? How can you ensure that your project becomes a success story rather than a failure?

The design and monitoring framework is a results-based tool for conceptualizing, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects. It provides structure to the project planning process and helps to communicate essential information about the project to stakeholders in an efficient, easy-to-read format.

Design Summary	Guidance
<p><u>Impact (previously goal)</u></p> <p>A statement of desired medium-term impact that is partly, but not exclusively, attributable to the <i>Project</i>¹</p> <p>Note: For PPTAs please state here the OUTCOME of the ensuing loan project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is the statement at the right level (not an outcome, output or activity)? Can a plausible case be made for this project to contribute in a significant way to impact attainment—is the statement too general or at too high a level? <input type="checkbox"/> At best, the impact statement should state an expected beneficial impact on people. <input type="checkbox"/> The statement should be phrased in such a way that the degree of achievement is capable of being measured.
<p><u>Outcome (previously purpose)</u></p> <p>The outcome that follows from having successfully produced the outputs. The outcome should be directly attributable to the project (subject to assumptions and risks) and be achievable by completion of the project.</p> <p>Note: For PPTAs the logical outcome is an agreed design for the ensuing loan project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is the outcome given as a single succinct statement of a desired development result? There should be only one outcome statement. <input type="checkbox"/> Is the outcome phrased as a development result and not as an activity (by containing verbs) or as a restatement of outputs? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the outcome plausible for having delivered the outputs (subject to assumptions and risks)? <input type="checkbox"/> Is achievement of the outcome solely attributable to the project? <input type="checkbox"/> Can the outcome plausibly be attained by the end of the project (subject to assumptions and risks)? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the outcome statement reflect an expected improvement from a baseline situation? <input type="checkbox"/> Is it clear from the outcome statement what is the problem or opportunity being addressed?

¹ The checklist uses the term *Project* as a synonym for all loans and nonlending products (NLP) i.e. PPTA, ADTA, RETA.

Design Summary	Guidance
<p>Outputs</p> <p>The physical goods, services, institutional and/or behavioral changes produced by the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Should be phrased as the main “deliverables” that arise from using inputs and transforming these through activities. ❑ There should be no words in the output description that imply action—these are activities. ❑ Can the outputs plausibly be produced carrying out the planned activities and with the inputs to be provided (taking account of assumptions and risks)? ❑ Components are not outputs although outputs can be grouped under component sub-headings.
<p>Activities</p> <p>Groups of tasks carried out to transform inputs into each output to be produced. Only the main activities should be included—in particular, those whose completion represent important milestone dates that will allow implementation progress to be tracked.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Have the main activities, necessary to produce the outputs, been included? ❑ Are activities grouped (numbered) by output so that the relationship between activities and outputs is clear? ❑ Do activities describe a transformation process rather than simply rephrasing outputs as activities? ❑ Can the activities plausibly be carried out with the proposed inputs? ❑ Are all important milestone events reflected as activities?
<p>Inputs</p> <p>The main resources (financial and in-kind) required to carry out the project provided by ADB, government, co-financiers, NGOs, beneficiaries and other stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Is funding by key cost category (civil works, equipment, consulting services, etc.) spelt out? ❑ Are complementary inputs by the DMC, co-financiers, private sector, beneficiaries, NGOs, etc., stated in financial or physical terms?

Indicators/Performance Targets

Indicators are the measures to be used for determining the level of achievement of a result area (impact, outcome, outputs), and milestones indicate the completion of activities. Indicators can be quantitative (i.e. no of students receive diploma increased by...) or qualitative (no of graduated students employed within 6 months increased by). Qualitative indicators are more meaningful and better suited to measure benefits.

A **target** is the timebound and desired level of achievement for a results area (impact, outcome, outputs), over a baseline level.

Checklist	Guidance
Impact, outcome and outputs have at least one measurable indicator with an explicit target.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ There is no point in having a planned result area (impact, outcome, output) if its attainment will not or cannot be measured or assessed.
Indicators and targets should be SMART (specific, measurable, attributable, relevant and timebound).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Being specific means that generalized statements are not acceptable. It should be very clear what is to be measured—the yardstick for success. ❑ Indicators should be measurable—in quantitative terms, either directly or through proxy measures, or qualitative terms through, for example, client/beneficiary satisfaction surveys. ❑ Achievement of the target should be attributable to the project (partially only at the impact level). ❑ The target and indicators should be relevant measures for design summary attainment—that is, they should allow assessments to be made of the extent to which the design summary statement has been achieved. In this regard, they should specify a base level situation and a desired target level. ❑ The due date for target achievement should be specified. It is given that the due date for outcome attainment is the project completion date. Milestone dates for completion of activities are desirable.

Data Sources/Reporting Mechanisms

Data sources (who) are those that provide the information for measuring the attainment for each target/indicator.

Reporting mechanisms (how) indicate in which form the information is provided.

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There is a strong preference for using established sources of data from government or others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Established data sources are more likely to be available when needed and continue to be collected also after project completion. ❑ They do not require additional resources and do not burden the already stretched government systems with additional donor driven information requirements. ❑ If and when appropriate, strengthening existing or building new data collection systems can be included in the project as activities.
Data sources should be very specific.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ General statements such as “surveys”, or “statistical data” are inadequate.
Each indicator has at least one source of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ There is no point in including targets and indicators for which data is unlikely to be available.
The means of recording or reporting data are not data sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Executing agency progress reports, the project performance report, ADB and executing project completion reports, etc. are not data sources, they are means of reporting/analyzing data. We need to know where the information is going to come from that goes into these reports.
There should be no mention of Benefit Monitoring and Evaluation (BME) anywhere in project documents, including the design and monitoring framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ ADB no longer uses BME. It has adopted a project performance management system (PPMS) based on the design and monitoring framework.
It is not acceptable to simply replace the term BME with PPMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Application of the principles of PPMS is what is important, not simply changing the label.

Assumptions and Risks

Assumptions are conditions, events or actions that are recognized as being necessary for the cause and effect logic to hold true but which have not been included within the project scope and are the responsibility of others—they are collateral to it.

Risks are potential adverse events or actions that are outside the control of project management but which, if they occur, would negatively influence the attainment of impact, outcome, outputs or activities. Risks may be capable of mitigation, and provisions might be included as activities.

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<p>There are three levels of assumptions and risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ There is a horizontal logic between assumptions and risks and the design summary (impact, outcome, outputs) which starts at the bottom right field – inputs. The following sequence of questions will guide you through the horizontal logic: ❑ Are the inputs sufficient to carry out the activities? ❑ After the activities are completed what assumptions have to hold true and what risks should not occur to produce the respective outputs. ❑ Having produced the outputs what assumptions have to hold true and what risks should not occur to achieve the outcome. ❑ Having achieved the outcome what assumptions have to hold true and what risks should not occur to make a contribution to achieving the impact. <div style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" data-bbox="834 1247 1357 1528"> <thead> <tr> <th>Design Summary</th> <th>Performance</th> <th>Data Sources</th> <th>Assumptions & Risks</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>IMPACT</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>A & R</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OUTCOME</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>A & R</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OUTPUT</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>A & R</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES</td> <td>INPUTS</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Based on this horizontal logic ALL FIELDS OF THE RIGHT COLUMN ARE FILLED. 	Design Summary	Performance	Data Sources	Assumptions & Risks	IMPACT			A & R	OUTCOME			A & R	OUTPUT			A & R	ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES			INPUTS
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<p>Assumptions and risks are clearly identified as to which is which.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assumptions and risks are grouped separately under their respective headings. ❑ An assumption is a condition that is assumed to hold true. ❑ A risk is a possible event that would have a negative impact on the project. It either needs to be mitigated or leads to a design change, if it occurs. 																				

Assumptions and risks are specific to a particular level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ There should be no general assumptions and risks. They should be specific and be those that apply for attaining the result statement at the same level.
Assumptions and risks are external to the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assumptions and risks in a design and monitoring framework should only be those factors that are outside the scope of the project or the control of project managers but which are necessary for success (assumptions) or would hinder project (risks).
There are no “killer” assumptions and risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ “Killer” assumptions and risks are those that if they occurred would render the project unsuccessful. If such assumptions and risks are present, the rationale for proceeding with the project should be questioned, particularly if it is judged that there is a reasonable chance that the assumption might not hold true or the risk might occur. ❑ Design changes are necessary to eliminate these killer assumptions and risks.
The assumption and risk statements are capable of being monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assumptions and risks are monitored in the project and TA performance reports.
Each assumption and risk is recorded only once.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ All assumptions and risks should be unique to a level. Record assumptions and risks only once and at the highest level they occur (e.g. impact, outcome, output).