



Analysis of the Use of Joint Results Frameworks in EU Joint Programming

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Acronyms

AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
CS	Civil Society
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DoL	Division of Labour
EEAS	European External Action Service
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
EU MS	European Union Member States
EUD	European Union Delegation
HoCs	Heads of Cooperation
HoMs	Heads of Mission
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
JASMES	Joint Agenda for Strengthening M&E and Statistics
JP	Joint Programming
NAO	National Authorising Officer (of EDF)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations

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Executive Summary

The commitment and intention to use Joint Programming to deliver more and better results enjoys high level policy support both as an objective and as a fundamental motivation for Joint Programming. Improving the focus and enabling coherent EU programming will also contribute to more effectively achieving the 2030 Agenda and related global commitments.

The 2017 evaluation of Joint Programming shows that Joint Programming has a symbiotic relationship with results in two ways: (i) Joint Programming is more likely to succeed when it's focus is on delivering high level results (that require working jointly); and (ii) it is more likely that donors will focus on ambitious results when they work jointly. The Joint Programming evaluation also argues that a focus on ambitious results contributes to better policy dialogue¹, aid effectiveness and promoting democratic participation in national development processes (e.g. in providing incentives for non-state actors like the private sector to contribute). However, the evaluation also notes that more attention is needed to focus on results that matter if cooperation is going to contribute to strengthening domestic and partner government ownership.

Similarly, this analysis found that joint results frameworks are increasingly gaining traction and support at country level. Heads of Mission reports show that there is wide spread interest in developing and adopting joint results frameworks which are most commonly associated with improving visibility, policy dialogue leverage, reducing transaction costs and focusing on shared principles such as gender or human rights and in mobilising domestic revenue for global goods.

This study compared seven country cases where joint results frameworks have been adopted and utilised - Cambodia Kenya, Ghana, Laos, Nicaragua, Palestine and Senegal. Experience in using joint results frameworks suggests good progress in utilising outcome-based results, identifying baselines and means of verification. The comparatively short history of Joint Programming combined with the limited number of case-studies means the findings of this study, whilst being the best data available to date, are still somewhat anecdotal.

¹ Evaluation on Joint Programming... 2017:20 "The use of joint Results Oriented Frameworks for joint monitoring of results facilitated a strategic policy dialogue and stimulated partner countries' accountability for public policy implementation. In addition, proposing a wider, cross sectoral and more inclusive approach to programming through the use of sector clusters in JP (adopted in a couple of countries reviewed) also offered perspectives of a less fragmented approach to public policy making and monitoring, thus moving towards the wider, more inclusive and cross-sectoral approach favoured by the new international agendas (SDGs and AAAAA)." See: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation-eu-joint-programming-process-development-cooperation-2011-2015_en

Picture: Together for One Result – Building a Human Tower in Spain

The country cases also show that global commitments such as those to the Sustainable Development Goals and on gender, democratic governance and human rights also feature strongly. However, the evidence suggests that global commitments are incorporated in results frameworks only after the specific programming objectives have already been agreed. This implies that existing approaches to programming are being tweaked to deliver on high-level policy objectives, rather than high-level policy objectives being the primary consideration in programming from the outset. The commitment to strengthen partner country systems when it comes to results monitoring and evidence-based policy making is not translated meaningfully into programming. Notably, the country cases only demonstrated complementary or supplemental commitments to strengthening of partner country statistical or reporting offices.



Picture: Annual Dialogue in Cambodia



A survey of EU Heads of Mission reports shows that support for a joint results framework is stronger where structured political and policy dialogue is institutionalised at country level. Echoing the 2017 evaluation findings, joint results frameworks also get more traction when they are ambitious and focused on medium term strategic objectives. At country level, the key challenges appear to be in ranking and prioritising results, ensuring sufficient technical capacity to facilitate the coordination and consultation required to build a consensus and agreeing which donors should lead on policy dialogue and how they report back to other donors in the sector. At an institutional level, key challenges include the organisational incentives to respond to the ambitions of

the new Consensus for Development. In a similar vein, one of the biggest risks cited is that staff turnover results in a loss of institutional memory that can prove critical to sustaining momentum.

The study also focused on capturing lessons learned that could be applied to developing joint results frameworks in other countries. The need for a flexible approach that is led by a champion

at country level is one of the key lessons learned. Flexibility enables Joint Programming champions to do what is necessary to build consensus and adjust to the challenges that could impede a joined-up approach, challenges always unique to country contexts. This is vital to delivering added value to participating donors at partner country level. Joint results frameworks tend to enjoy support and buy-in when the focus is on local consultation, participation and dialogue rather than on meeting international commitments to improve effectiveness. Key lessons from the study include: (i) maintaining the focus on the high-level purpose of a joint results framework (being better results); and (ii) being realistic about the scope and structure of the framework in a way that enables participation (rather than setting high barriers to entry) but also encourages a focus on results, impact and outcome level indicators.

The work of developing a joint results framework is sustained by dialogue on the quality of data and systems as well as the need to continuously monitor and ensure that the intended impact on programming and partnerships is relevant in the partner country's political economy. The pursuit of better quality results is rarely sufficient motivation in and of itself to make progress. However, improving the relevance of programming to the national development context necessarily involves improving the definition and measurement of results.

The study concludes that, joint results frameworks would benefit from a focus on high-level strategic objectives including the complex challenge of mobilising domestic resources for public goods. Joint results frameworks are particularly important in communicating wide spread support for fundamental values such as in relation to human rights, democratic governance and gender equality. The authors of this study caution that the global and bilateral policy objectives are less likely to be pursued if joint results frameworks become primarily technical (i.e. a focus on what is easiest to deliver and measure) in nature: quality results are only of value if the results themselves matter to high-level policy and political aspirations. The biggest challenge here is in ensuring that the institutional incentives, that inform the careers of participating officials, are working to deliver on the ambitious objectives for which Joint Programming and joint results frameworks were originally intended.

'Building blocks' for Joint Results Frameworks are also included in the report – the building block approach means taking incremental steps towards a joint results framework over a period rather than designing a single joint results framework at a designated moment.

The short history of Joint Programming and use of Joint Results Frameworks means that the evidence on their effectiveness is anecdotal. Continued feedback from country offices about their experiences is of value to ensure Joint Programming results continue to strive to be more relevant, useful and effective in the future.

Introduction

“[Transparent,] country-led and country-level results frameworks and platforms will be adopted as a **common tool among all concerned actors** to assess performance based on a manageable number of output and outcome indicators drawn from the development priorities and goals of the developing country.”

2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (para 18.b)

“Joint monitoring and results frameworks will be core elements of the joint response to maintain momentum, inform dialogue and enhance mutual accountability.”

2017 European Consensus on Development (para 76)

The Council Conclusions on Stepping up Joint Programming (2016) is motivated by the shared desire of improving effectiveness of development cooperation, delivering more and better results. The European Consensus on Development (2017) also calls on Joint Programming to improve results. The 2017 Evaluation of EU Joint Programming noted that Joint Programming is successful when it is strategic and focused on a shared ‘intervention logic’ about what results can be delivered by participating donors collectively at country level. Joint Programming thus contributes to an enabling environment where participating partners focus on high-level priority results achievable together. In Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Laos, for example, Joint Programming enabled participating donors to use their combined resources to focus on more ambitious results in nutrition, something difficult to address as an individual donor due to the scale of the challenge.

The EU Joint Programming Guidance Pack (2015) also strongly recommends the inclusion of partner-country results frameworks aligned to national processes for results management² and delivering on global commitments. The 2016 EU Heads of Mission (HoMs) reports show that Joint programming documents are progressively incorporating joint results frameworks and joint monitoring arrangements. This increasing focus on results contributes to better policy dialogue and mutual accountability while reducing parallel systems (and transaction costs). When well contextualised and aligned to partner country systems, they provide the basis for dialogue and action in mobilising domestic resources for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2017, the EU initiated a rapid (twenty working days) analysis of the use of Joint Results Frameworks.

² See also the analysis and country studies included in an independent Evaluation of EU Joint Programming (2017) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation-eu-joint-programming-process-development-cooperation-2011-2015_en

Approach

The study was based on three sources. The first source is an analysis of seven recent country cases of completed or well-developed joint results frameworks in use in the context of Joint Programming. The second source of data is an analysis of the 2016 EU Heads of Mission reports extracting and comparing reporting on the use and/or intended use of joint results frameworks. The third source has been through interviews with EU Delegations and making use of the Cambodia example as the foundation for proposing methodological considerations that can help to inform development of joint results frameworks at country level.

The analysis of the **seven country case studies** covered Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Laos, Palestine, Nicaragua and Senegal. At the out-set the intention was to include Ethiopia as well but due to change over of staff, the data from Ethiopia could not be verified with confidence over the period of the study. For each of the country cases, the analysis has been summarised into tables, allowing easy comparison of country examples. Where necessary, desk analysis of these cases was reinforced with informant interviews.

Existing trends and plans to design joint results frameworks were drawn from the 2016 EU Heads of Mission reports. These reports were analysed and the findings codified in section two.

Section three discusses **methodological considerations**. It provides a comparison, reflection and collection of practices used in the seven country case studies detailed in section one, as well as experiences garnered and lessons learned by the Joint Programming global support team (a team of four Joint Programming experts contracted by the Commission). Methodological considerations are detailed in such a way as to provide actionable insights with the intention of outlining the building blocks for a section on joint results framework to be included in an update to the Joint Programming Guidance for EU Delegations.

The intention is for the findings of this analysis to be verified and better contextualised by way of a workshop in Brussels in late 2017 involving EU results experts, officials and other related colleagues.

EU Joint Results Frameworks: a key component of EU Joint Programming

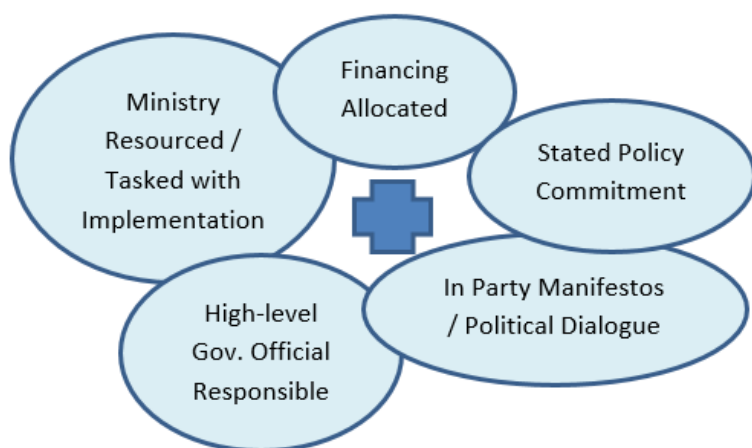
Based on the Busan Partnership commitments, the Partner Country's Results Framework (CRF) would ideally serve as the joint results framework for all donors. Partner country's results frameworks are particularly useful when they enjoy participatory multi-stakeholder ownership and are of sufficient quality and based on robust data to provide a valid reflection of development results on a national scale. A Joint Results Framework based on the partner country's results framework would make division of labour visible and identify indicators that would be used for monitoring progress in the priority areas of the joint strategy.

However, partner country results frameworks are not always accepted by development partners *inter alia* because:

1. Partner country results frameworks may suffer from questions of **legitimacy** either because they have been designed by external experts funded by international development partners and not the country itself or alternatively, because the policy making process has not been inclusive and does not therefore have the desired multi-stakeholder endorsement (see *Busan Partnership Agreement*);
2. Partner country results frameworks may be impeded by **quality** issues such as in not using outcome-based indicators, baselines of verifiable indicators;
3. Partner country results frameworks may not yet reflect the latest **global agreements** such as the *Sustainable Development Goals* and/or international commitments to human rights, democratic governance, gender and environmental protection.

Despite the shortcomings, sometimes development partners must accept that national quality is '**good enough**' for Joint Programming engagement, while highlighting the need to improve and identify how development partners can provide support.

Even when a country results framework is legitimated through an inclusive multi-stakeholder



process, is considered of sufficient quality and speaks to the latest global agreements, it still only exists within the **local political and economic context**. It is therefore necessary to understand the existing incentives and disincentives for different policy aspirations. When read apolitically, an exhaustive country results framework is too easily dismissed as being a 'shopping list'. In this case, Joint Programming and results

frameworks can help to provide more structure to the country framework by using joint assessments to inform which priority sectors enjoy political support and which might require additional incentives. Joint results frameworks can also facilitate division of labour to ensure coherent and complementary coverage of sectors.

The results framework, and, more specifically, the reforms and the activities implemented within it, need to be assured of **ownership and institutionalisation by the partner country participating donors, and other developmental actors.**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) redefine **results in terms of global goods** that will be achieved through joint efforts between international development partners, partner country governments and non-state actors. A key concern with the SDGs is the inter-linkages of action across defined sectors to achieve results. Joint results frameworks can help facilitate these linkages by identifying complementarity between projects and programmes implemented by participating donors and enabling division of labour to streamline coordination and cross-sector cooperation.

The tables in this report compare the use of Joint Results Frameworks in Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Laos, Palestine, Nicaragua and Senegal. These seven countries were selected because they have operational results frameworks as a part of Joint Programming strategies.

Table 1 below assesses the quality and policy priorities of selected joint results frameworks. The assessment is based solely on the observed presence of certain key dimensions in the joint results framework document itself. These dimensions include:

- (i) quality of results framework overall,
- (ii) incorporation of international commitments,
- (iii) relevance for the local context and
- (iv) ownership by participating donors.

Each of these dimensions requires consideration of several aspects, as noted in the Table.

Table 1: Joint Results Frameworks - Quality and Policy Priorities

The narrative explaining this table is presented in the section [above](#).

Note on scoring: The average* (final column) is given by calculating the average value and rounding the number up or down. The value of 3 is awarded if there is evidence of JRF incorporating and implementing identified dimensions (●), 2 if there is some evidence (○) and 1 to no evidence.

JRF dimensions	Country	Cambodia	Ghana	Kenya	Laos	Nicaragua	Palestine	Senegal	Average*	Note
Quality	Outcome Indicators	●		●	○	○	●	○	○	
	Baseline	●	○		●		●	●	○	
	Verifiable Results	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	Senegal - In some sectors, this is better presented than in others, e.g. nutrition.
	Country Monitoring System	●	●		○	○	○	○	○	Palestine - Results Oriented Framework
International Commitments	SDGs	●	●	n/a	○	●	○	●	○	Kenya - Joint strategy was drafted before the SDGs were adopted. Laos - SDGs implied in-country results framework but government is committed.
	Gender	●			●	●	○	○	○	Palestine - Gender is a core priority in the strategy but does not appear prominently in the Results Oriented Framework. Senegal - Gender is considered in many of the indicators but acknowledged as a cross-cutting issue that needs more attention. EU GAP is annexed to the Joint Programme.
	Human Rights	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	
	Environment	●	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	Senegal - Not cross-cutting issue, but it is present in water sector and others too.
	Civil Society	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	Nicaragua - Civil society is not

										explicitly addressed in the results framework, however the full JP document contains analysis and refers to the European partners' commitments, including those in the CSO roadmap.
	Democratic Governance	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	Nicaragua - Democratic governance is not explicitly addressed in the results framework, however the full JP document contains governance analysis and refers to the European partners' commitments such as those in the CSO roadmap.
Local Context Relevance	Evidence that partner country domestic resources are financing the objectives	○								
Ownership	Division of Labour for Sectors	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	
	Delivers value to HoMs and Political Dialogue	●	○	○	○		●	○	○	Senegal - Owned by Heads of Mission but not in a uniform manner - e.g. there is varying commitment between those HoMs that want development cooperation to be independent from the political work of Heads of Mission.
	Implemented by HoCs through a road map or work plan.	●			●		○			Laos – EUD has launched a service contract in 2017 that inter alia ensures implementation and monitoring is institutionalised as part of the capacity of the Government. Palestine – Results Oriented Framework being restructured to cover all five pillars of the joint strategy; a road map is also being

										developed. Senegal - Mid-term Review planned for 2020 (a six-year horizon).
	Clearly linked to design and implementation of projects	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	
	Institutionalised, e.g. through annual reporting and dialogue with partner country.	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	
Average		●	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	

In Table 1, the **quality** of the joint results frameworks is assessed based on the extent they use baselines, outcome-based indicators and partner country statistics (or alternatively programming resources to strengthen partner country systems). The information provided by the seven countries shows positive progress in moving towards the use of outcome-based indicators and verifiable results. There is little evidence that aid data such as that from the OECD DAC database or the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) yet features in the results framework. But, a notable positive is the inclusion of legitimate good quality baselines in four of the seven country cases. Whilst still overall positive, the use of country systems and specifically programming to support partner country results systems is less obvious in joint results framework than hoped for, particularly in light of the 2011 Busan Commitment identifying it as one of the priorities.

The information in Table 1 also suggests that joint results frameworks appear to be good tools to deliver on **cross-cutting priorities and international commitments** such as in regards to gender, environment and civil society. While Human rights, civil society and democratic governance are found to be reasonably well represented in joint results frameworks, the Sustainable Development Goals, gender and environment fare less well. This may be due to the fact that a number of countries are waiting for their next development strategy planning cycle or sector strategy update to fully incorporate the SDG results. It is expected that, as SDGs become more integrated into national results strategies, European Joint Programmes and associated results frameworks will reflect this.

Joint results frameworks, however, do **not** appear to be **locally contextualised** in the sense that they do not regularly demonstrate a relation to the partner government's ruling party's political objectives nor to how programming aligns with or changes the local political economy. This is problematic when recognising how important it is to use ODA as a catalyst for the allocation of domestic resources to the SDGs. In this regard, there is limited evidence to imply that the targeted joint results are leveraging increased domestic resource allocations to the identified development priorities that the Joint Programme is aligned to.

On the other hand, the results frameworks do demonstrate **good ownership by participating donors** evidenced by often well documented division of labour arrangements, clearly linked to the design and implementation of projects, and institutionalised through formalised reporting and dialogue with and to partner countries. What is less clear, however, is to which extent the results matter to the work and dialogue of participating development partners Heads of Mission, given that development effectiveness dialogue is increasingly process-driven, especially after the Nairobi High Level Forum in 2016. Problematically, the analysis of the results frameworks shows that more work is needed in operationalising the frameworks. This can be done through agreeing plans to undertake regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E), by ensuring resources are available for this M&E as well as agreeing a lead development partner responsible for facilitating and animating the M&E process (a coordinating role often played by EU Delegations). Additionally, it is important to recognise the need for senior management to provide sufficient incentives so that project managers actually revise and adjust activities should the findings of monitoring or evaluation require so.

HoM's views on the use of Joint Results Frameworks

“The use of joint Results Oriented Frameworks for joint monitoring of results facilitated a strategic policy dialogue and stimulated partner countries' accountability for public policy implementation. In addition, proposing a wider, cross sectoral and more inclusive approach to programming through the use of sector clusters in JP (adopted in a couple of countries reviewed) also offered perspectives of a less fragmented approach to public policy making and monitoring, thus moving towards the wider, more inclusive and cross-sectoral approach favoured by the new international agendas (SDGs and AAAA).”

2017 Evaluation on Joint Programming

This section is based on a review of the 2016 Heads of Mission reports on Joint Programming and what they reported about the use and planned use of joint results frameworks. The section also includes feedback from the country cases.

Results frameworks feature strongly in forward thinking in EU Delegations and especially in the context of Joint Programming. Evidently pressure to demonstrate value for money combined with aid and development effectiveness initiatives has translated into measurable will to better

Undernutrition in Bangladesh A Common Narrative



define results, measure impact and increasingly use evidence to improve policy dialogue with the partner country, civil society and other international development partners.

Enabler 1: Structured Dialogue

It appears easier for joint results frameworks to find a home in countries where there is **systematised joint policy and political dialogue**. Cambodia, for example, built its results framework in orientation to the “Rectangular Strategy” which represents the socio-economic platform of the Royal Government of Cambodia (as distinct from the National Strategic Development Plan), and Joint Monitoring Indicators (which are agreed between the Government and development partners, and regularly updated). A lead European partner is nominated to lead on the implementation, monitoring and policy dialogue on each of the outputs identified in the joint results framework and these activities are intimately connected to annual high-level policy dialogues. Similar dynamics have provided impetus in

Laos and Ethiopia. In Bangladesh, coordinated and high-level policy dialogue at sector level is

cited as a key motivation for the establishment of a joint results framework. Bangladesh highlights the value of building a **joint results framework on the back-bone of a joint approach at sector level**. Needing to make progress on nutrition and to do so through dialogue with the government on how to change the narrative from one on food security to one on nutrition has also contributed to Joint Programming in Ethiopia and Laos. In Jordan, in the absence of the national results framework, a Common Results Framework based on the on-going EU budget support indicators is being developed in the education sector. In Lebanon, too, a sectoral based approach features prominently in early discussions with some potential to use programming in education also as a starting point. Similarly, the results framework in Palestine originated from the Results Oriented Framework designed to frame the 'whole of government' type support to the Palestinian Authority.

Picture: Working for One Result from Joint Programming in Palestine Brochure



Enabler 2: Ambitious, Medium Term Objectives

Several EU HoMs have found that a joint results framework is enabled by agreeing medium-term and ambitious **programming objectives**. Some of these HoMs talked about advocating for a longer term strategic horizon of six or seven years (something that is the norm for the EU but not most donors) when designing projects and making allocations. Others mentioned that long-term programming objectives related to the sustainable development goals, for example, provide a compelling narrative for participating donors, such as in Nicaragua, to design a results framework. Clearly the observation that invoking a longer-term perspective and more ambitious programming objectives is desirable is an important lesson learned. However, it also points to problematic incentives in place in managing existing programming: after all, 'Country Programmable Aid' and medium-term envelopes have been in place for close to three decades

and ambitious programming objectives were as prevalent with the *Millennium Development Goals* as they are with the *Sustainable Development Goals*.

Challenge 1: Ranking and Prioritising

One of the biggest challenges in compiling a Joint Results Framework is ranking and prioritising results. With a dozen or more donors involved, unless results are ranked and prioritised a joint results framework tends to be nothing more than a compilation (or 'shopping list') of participating donor objectives drawn from the country results framework. Simply compiling results into a single matrix lends itself to producing a vast and often incoherent results matrix mixing outcome, output and activity indicators, something that many respondents claimed undermined the likelihood that the matrix would be followed or monitored. There is some evidence that a well-constructed **joint analysis** can play an influential role in both the design of Joint Programming and Joint Results Frameworks. Going through a joint analysis process tends to involve donors working together at the sector level to test their assumptions, identify gaps and potential overlaps. This process creates fertile ground for strategic discussions which leads itself to de facto ranking of desired results. Typically, the joint analysis will also cover perceived effectiveness of policy dialogue and in this regard also support ranking and prioritising results, because policy dialogue processes typically involve acknowledging that donors have limited access and influence over partner government decision-makers. Ranking of results, which can only be done effectively through a consultative process such as a joint analysis, thus appears as an important building block towards designing a joint results framework. A joint analysis was used as a starting point for the Moldova Joint Programming exercise, while a feasibility study in Afghanistan "values the existing EU Strategy for Afghanistan 2014-2016, which already brings the EU Delegation and MS together in ... assessment of the political context, joint objectives and results framework" and a sector-based analysis is intended to identify expected results in Zambia which will be used as the cornerstone for a joint strategy.

Challenge 2: Workload – Technical Capacity

A notable challenge is that compiling a joint results framework is a **significant amount of work** often perceived as additional to ongoing work done by development counsellors. The EUD in Senegal, for example, explained that "the exercise is onerous and needs up-front commitments from everyone.... support [available from the Joint Programming global support team] is useful but not enough as it lacks continuity." (EUD Senegal July 2017). Herein lies the crux of the joint results exercise. In principle, project managers and development counsellors should already be incentivised to ensure that their respective projects are strategic and delivering results that matter to policy dialogue with the partner government. However, in practice, there are often perceptions of a lack of ownership by donors themselves in terms of ensuring the projects they finance are influential and relevant to the partner country's political economy. What this means is that there remains the risk that programming is still justified primarily by the project's stand-alone objectives and not in relation to policy dialogue with the partner government. The consequence, then, is that a joint results framework or even a single donor results framework is not seen as the core work of donor officials as evidenced by it being frequently dismissed as extra work needing outside support. Moreover, there are no organisation incentives to recognise the importance of Joint Programming initiatives and provide impetus to individuals' engagement. Heads of Cooperation interviewed for this study indicated that Joint Programming required additional work and working in a different way that is not recognised in the organisational structure. Some Member States have started to issue specific guidelines for engagement in Joint Programming, which direct the activities at the country level and energises the process. If, project officers, project managers and development counsellors were incentivised to promote Joint Programming and ensure it is relevant in the local political economy context, a results framework would be easier to compile because ensuring results matter would be a core job function of the officials involved.

Challenge 3: DoL Arrangements

In the context of institutional ownership, analysis of the HoMs' reports imply that one of the biggest challenge remains in relation to identifying **who should lead and facilitate** the use of the Joint Results Framework and related reporting. Joint results framework has no one specific institutional home and thus tends to suffer from a lack of champions and unclear mandates as to whom should facilitate its use. In some of the countries which carried out a successful monitoring of the Joint Programme implementation, different mechanisms were adopted. In Cambodia, for example, the EU Delegation provides the coordinating role and brings together the different inputs provided by lead donors for each of the priority outputs. In Kenya, on the other hand, the annual monitoring exercise is led by a different EU donor on a rotating basis. Some Heads of Cooperation however noted that it was very difficult to promote Joint Programming and the use of related joint results frameworks because, contrary to the spirit of Joint Programming, the EU Mid-Term Review processes are mostly piloted from HQ, with no involvement of Member States on the ground.

Challenge 4: Institutional Memory

In cases where there is wide-spread support for a joint results framework, it needs constant monitoring and advocacy since the results typically cut across hundreds of millions of Euros in annual project design. Moreover, with donor officials that are always one step closer to rotating out to their next assignment, loss of **institutional memory** is also a major threat to the impact of joint results frameworks. In cases where joint results frameworks have demonstrable impact on programming they are typically housed within an external technical assistance project such as support to monitoring and evaluation or dialogue support systems (e.g. in Laos) or as part of a development effectiveness or coordination functions (e.g. in Ethiopia and Kenya). In this regard, it is worth noting that many EU Delegations are staff whose job description includes coordination or aid effectiveness in some form. However, there are rare circumstances, like Palestine, where the EU Heads of Cooperation ensured that there is a member of staff fully committed to operationalise aspects of a joint results framework and whose work was then complemented by external technical assistance.



Challenge 5: Programming as an Administrative Burden

In some cases, there are signs that joint results frameworks have been treated simply as **administrative exercises**. In these cases, the frameworks tend to involve a wide range of indicators which cover most of the programming of participating donors, thus effectively making joint results framework a synthesis of participating donors' own results frameworks not aligned to the country results framework. Alternatively, the frameworks might adopt only the high-level indicators of partner governments, regardless of how well they fit with the intended Joint Programme results. In cases like these, it is important to ensure that the utilisation of the results framework relies on the existing national or project monitoring processes, while promoting the use of joint monitoring and evaluation.

Opportunity: Country Systems

The lack of **systemic monitoring** in many countries means that instead of building on existing processes, joint results frameworks also need to contend with establishing and possibly financing monitoring specific to the joint results framework. In this case, the resulting mechanism would be narrow in focus and of limited development effectiveness benefit. This is, for example the case in Laos where after the finalisation of the Joint Programming document participating donors intend to put in place "monitoring of the joint strategy implementation (how, what, when)". Similarly, in Palestine, the eventual agreeing of a joint results framework could also be an opportunity to invest in the Palestinian Authorities' statistical, reporting and monitoring systems, a capacity gap cited as problematic by donors participating in the joint strategy.

Lessons learned in Design and Operationalising Joint Results Frameworks

Joint results frameworks are still a comparatively new tool even though they build on a long institutional history of investments in improving coordination, harmonisation and division of labour between the EU, Member States and like-minded donors. This section of the report attempts to provide initial insights into how the results frameworks are practically put together and operationalised. In this regard, the section draws on the Joint Programming support team's experience, but also leans heavily on the examples from the seven countries reviewed which have the longest standing active and operational Joint Programmes globally. The section also draws on the analysis of the seven country cases which is presented in table 2 and should be referred to in reading the section below.

The expected impact of the Joint Programming process is to increase development results. Joint results frameworks are typically developed as a response to a shared commitment to improve the quality of programming results, the quality of programming and the quality of the development partnership with the partner government and other non-state actors in country. These three dimensions are assessed in the seven country cases and summarised in the tables provided below.

Overall lessons

There is no standard template for a joint results framework. **Consultation and dialogue** throughout the Joint Programming process is noted as critical to the impact and results that can be achieved through the implementation of the Joint Programme. Intensive consultation, dialogue and consensus-building at the outset works to identify shared objectives and to build agreement on desired results. As noted by the European partners³ involved in Joint Programming in Cambodia, one of the key building blocks for ensuring effective achievement of joint results was to have an in-depth open discussion among participating partners about how each partner works and their strengths and weaknesses, the purpose and expectations from the Joint Programming, what benefits each of the partners as well as what the group collectively expects to get from the process, what is the desired format of the Joint Programming. All of this ensured the clarity about the expected and achievable results from the Joint Programme.

The direction of the Joint Programme and its implementation is informed by Heads of Cooperation perception of programming progress to date, its impact and influence among the participating partners and in country. This is what sustains the process, its narrative and purpose, and keeps it live at country level. As noted by Cambodian partners, by going through the review process and discussing it within the European group and with different (including non-state) actors, the need for reviewing the results matrix became apparent. This served to reflect the shift in the priorities during the first phase of the implementation of the Joint

³ In Cambodia, Joint Programming's participating donors comprise all the European donors (i.e. Switzerland) that maintain offices in country (and some non-resident ones), thus the strategy was adopted as a 'European strategy' as was also the case in many other countries.

Programme and to ensure that the strategy remained responsive to country-specific development challenges.

Shifting priorities may be perceived differently by stakeholders in the Joint Programming process, for example:

- Joint Programming stakeholders may need to incorporate global commitments such as SDGs which were agreed after the Joint Programmes implementation already started in most of the ‘first wave’ countries, including most of the countries reviewed in this study.
- Participating European partners may want to capture, for example, aspects of emerging development challenges such as migration issues in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda or reflecting on the recent European Consensus on Development (2017) which sets out the guiding principles for the European Union and its Member States development cooperation towards the implementation of 2030 Agenda. A particularly strong driving factor has also been the improved understanding of the role and comparative advantage of European donors in countries, which are fast approaching middle income status or increasingly draw development financing from non-traditional sources such as emerging donors, foundations or even through for-profit lending.
- Partner Governments and development partners may need to capture new international commitments e.g. new climate change commitments and nationally determined contributions in Cambodia.

The exercise of jointly taking stock of progress therefore provides an **opportunity to reflect on the adequacy and relevance** of European donor programming to the partner countries’ development agendas and the political economy that shapes public sector decision-making. In Nicaragua, this is instituted through regular six-monthly discussion among participating European development partners which serves to take stock of the political economy context and assess if adjustments need to be made to the joint response.

It is important to also recognise the **tensions** that can come from the longer-term development perspective (e.g. high-level ambitions such as changing institutional cultures and usually reflected in the joint results framework) and a shorter-term and more reactive political perspective (often achievable activity based indicators such as number of text books delivered) and how these can be managed through Joint Programming and Joint Results Frameworks. What has worked in some countries is to ensure that Joint Programming is a standing point on Heads of Missions’ agendas to continuously check that programming is relevant and coherent within the development-political nexus. In this regard, the most vibrant examples of continued focus on results tends to be where there is good internal dialogue and coordination between HoMs and Development Counsellors, particularly at critical stages in programming, dialogue and project design cycles. By building these additional considerations into the results matrix, donors go through iterative processes of reflecting on what is desired in programming which in turn contributes to a **virtuous circle** that keeps Joint Programming and results relevant, realistic and useful to strengthening the development cooperation partnership. Moreover, these additional processes of reflection may also allow European partners that might not have participated previously, to associate themselves with the Joint Programmes and related results frameworks, as was the case with Belgium in Cambodia. Whilst Belgium does not have a bilateral development cooperation programme for Cambodia, the fund partners active in areas of the Joint Programme. Belgium became associated with the Joint European Strategy for Cambodia in 2017, after participating in the HoMs discussion about results of the first monitoring report and subsequent reflection on how best to update the results framework to make it more relevant and responsive for global, national and joint European development priorities.

Having a results matrix is perceived as an important component for ensuring good implementation and follow-up of the Joint Programme. Evidence from the countries which have

used joint results frameworks to assess the impact of the Joint Programmes to date (Cambodia and Ethiopia) suggests that having joint results frameworks contributes to increased joint implementation in all its forms and modalities (e.g. delegated cooperation, co-financing, etc) and to working together, thus **strengthening cohesion** of participating donors' programming. This is however increasingly opposed by a "return to bilateralism", as noted in Cambodia and Kenya, and reduced interest by partner country Governments to foster coordination and exchange of information.

Having a joint results framework and undertaking joint monitoring provides **added value** to all participating European partners by creating, through division of labour, a wide range of resources and information that each partner can use for their own reporting. It also reinforces the trust between partners and deepens knowledge across the group related to progress in sectors where specific donors may not be present. Moreover, having a joint results framework can help to promote sensitive issues such as anti-corruption efforts. The dialogue with partner governments based on the joint results framework can also facilitate a technical and policy dialogue which is constructive rather than being perceived as "donor bashing of the country".

The importance of good counterparts and good relationships with partner government was emphasised, especially in terms of enabling meaningful dialogue on results and being able to obtain good data in a timely manner.

Purpose of Monitoring the Joint Programming document

The first step in designing joint results framework often takes place at the outset of Joint Programming process – by defining the purpose of the Joint Programme and, correspondingly, what to monitor to assess its progress. The purpose of the monitoring of the Joint Programmes in the reviewed country cases has, in practice, had several different perspectives:

- 1) "Development Results" - which monitors the results, and thereby the success, of the Joint Programme and informs future programming by assessing:
 - a. Whether joint results and outcomes identified in the JRF have been met?
 - b. What is the value-added and contribution of the joint results to overall development progress in partner country?
 - c. What is the overall direction of change in key reform processes?
- 2) "Effectiveness of Joint Results Framework" – which monitors the improvements in development effectiveness of the Joint Programming process by assessing:
 - a. progress made in terms of development effectiveness commitments (e.g. division of labour, fragmentations, use of common management arrangements); and
 - b. benefits that the Joint Programming process brings to the participating donors themselves (e.g. reducing transaction costs, creating economies of scale, etc.)

Table 2: Purpose of monitoring the Joint Programme

Cambodia	To monitor the key outcomes, outputs and related indicators, track progress towards development results of the European strategy, and generate lessons for future programming.
Kenya	(i) Measure progress made in terms of aid-effectiveness commitments which aim at better managing the diversity of donors on the ground (e.g. fragmentation, sector concentration, reducing proliferation of aid channels, etc.) (ii) Measure the benefits of the JP process to the donors themselves (e.g. building synergies, improved collaboration, economies of scale, reduced transaction costs). The monitoring exercise would be carried out annually and led by a different EU development partner on a rotating basis.
Ghana	(i) Monitoring of the results of Joint Cooperation in support of Ghana's development plan for 2018-2021 (ii) Monitoring of the aid-effectiveness of the JP process
Laos	To monitor the implementation of the Joint Programme and enable and improve evidence-based policy making.
Nicaragua	No formal monitoring of the strategy is foreseen.
Palestine	To acknowledge progress, inform policy dialogue and to inform decision-making on increasing/decreasing financial support.
Senegal	Annual reviews of implementation based on the results and indicators provided in the results framework.

Scope and Structure of the Joint Results Framework

In line with the European Consensus on Development, the European development partners are progressively adapting their individual and joint reporting systems to be consistent with the 2030 Agenda's follow-up processes and indicators, as well as with other international commitments. SDG indicators can help to foster harmonisation in results reporting.

Multiple programmes, especially when spread across several development partners, create the need for multiple reporting and monitoring arrangements. The need for monitoring arrangements specific to the projects will always be present. However, joint results framework can help to prevent fragmentation and increased transaction costs by identifying common higher-level indicators that are useful for a high-level results framework and associated joint monitoring of the 'big picture'. In other words, it is necessary to utilise and build on different layers of results reporting so that Joint Results Framework can facilitate reporting on results aggregated from multiple projects and programmes financed by donors participating in the Joint Programme. As such, the Joint Results Framework would not replace but would be complementary to results reporting at the level of individual project and programmes of participating donor agencies. In doing so, they need to be robust but manageable, so as not to increase transaction costs associated with joint reporting. This is achieved through focusing results framework on a limited number of outcomes and outputs, aligned with the national priorities, and based on the national results monitoring mechanisms to the extent possible. Limiting the scope of the results framework while making it into an effective monitoring tool requires time and negotiation among participating donors to ensure that the result reflects the essence of the intended impact of the Joint Programme. A simple reporting process, allowing a clear review through measurable targets, could help measure progress and impact on the ground with respective leads for each outcome collecting the relevant data.

The experience in using Joint Results Frameworks to date indicates that the Joint Results Frameworks can facilitate better focus and open discussion on what the participating European partners are trying to achieve. The formulation of joint results framework can also help to distil and bring to the fore the issues where European development partners have an added value such as inequality, good governance or anti-corruption.

As Evaluation of EU Joint Programming Process of Development Cooperation (2011-2015) noted, where the Joint Programming addressed sector issues, this has led to greater policy and strategy coherence. In countries like Mozambique, Nepal or Rwanda, where some components of Joint Programming such as joint analysis and even joint strategy are not seen as very useful at the national level, it is worthwhile focusing on sector level results. Finding coherence at sector level, in terms of joint analysis and common results, can provide foundation for moving to more strategic national-level coherence over time.

Table 3: Scope and structure of Joint Results Framework

	Level of results	Linked to SDGs	Using SDGs as Objectives
Cambodia	Original results framework 2014-2018: 5 Goals, based on the national strategy 6 European JP-specific outcomes 13 outputs, based on Government-donor Joint Monitoring Indicators 13 output indicators Updated results framework 2017-2019: 5 Goals, based on the national strategy 6 European JP-specific outcomes 21 outputs (11 based on Government-donor Joint Monitoring Indicators, 10 JP-specific) 21 output indicators (5 JP-specific) Baseline data	•	
Kenya	4 priority areas 8 specific objectives + Governance to be agreed 15 results + Governance to be agreed New strategy is currently being prepared and it is not clear whether it will include a results framework.	n/a	
Ghana	2 goals 6 objectives 19 expected results 51 indicators, based on Government plan	•	
Laos	Joint results framework: 1 overall objective, based on the national plan 8 sectors (7 sectors + 1 partnership) 22 specific objectives 59 expected results 114 main indicators Baseline data	•	
Nicaragua	6 priority areas, based on SDGs 12 specific objectives 22 results 38 indicators		•
Palestine	2 pillars 13 priorities 29 indicators		

Senegal	9 priority areas 25 specific objectives 50 outcomes 82 indicators	•	
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Some pitfalls of the Joint Results Frameworks (and joint strategies themselves), is that they can represent an aspirational pie in the sky. Whilst the strategies and related results frameworks should be aspirational, they should also be do-able and monitor-able. Several Heads of Cooperation noted that the first round of Joint Results Frameworks was too ambitious and that the future iterations should be more strategic, aiming to prioritise and focus on targeted objectives. Setting the result frameworks at the output level can slow the process down by generating a negotiation on details which can divert focus from monitoring the direction of change. Focuses on output level, can leave no option to look at moving forward in broad strategic priorities and can instead end up focusing on project level details. Moreover, focus on outcome level also helps to put aside “pet” issues of participating development partners and focus on the big picture of sustainable development.

The joint results frameworks reviewed relate only to aid-financed activities of participating development partners. Linking result frameworks to the SDGs, which are themselves complex, is a challenge. It was noted however that the Joint Results Frameworks to date have not addressed some of the partner government’s concerns regarding non-traditional sources of funding, blending and lending instruments, so the value-added of the results within the larger development picture is not always clear. The Joint Results Framework should also aim to reflect the financial envelope available for the Joint Strategies to ensure that results are better linked to resources and that Joint Results Frameworks are manageable and realistic. This financial envelope however should be more comprehensively capturing all forms of development cooperation provided by participating donors.

The European Consensus on Development noted that the principles of development effectiveness apply to all forms of development cooperation. This includes international public finance, such as ODA and south-south and triangular cooperation, concessional and non-concessional loans and activities by the civil society actors, private sector and philanthropic foundations. Correspondingly, the results frameworks should attempt to take a more comprehensive view of European development cooperation portfolio in the country and attempt to cover humanitarian aid, trade, migration, regional blending and investment facilities thematic programmes or other aspects of the policy coherence agenda. Consideration of how these rising development challenges can be incorporated into Joint Programming and related joint result frameworks, to broaden its scope, should be given more prominence. This would further enhance the links between Joint Programmes and policy, and will facilitate policy coherence. In many cases however European development partners at country level do not have control over these additional streams of funding and are therefore unable to ensure links and complementarity in intended results. It was suggested that better links between the headquarters – Directorate A – Geographical desks and Member States would help to improve the flow of information that is needed.

In countries that have significant experience in implementing global development effectiveness initiatives, it is reported that this requires significant additional work that can cause development effectiveness fatigue. These countries often have already well-developed coordination and monitoring and evaluation systems and structures at the country level.

In those cases, European partners require a careful consideration of what their common strategic objectives are, as a group, at country level and where and how joint results framework would add value to existing (and often extensive) monitoring processes. Hence, some of the partners interviewed expressed a preference for more strategic and pragmatic results

frameworks, with fewer targets and less ambitious frameworks. “Less ambitious” was often repeated expression during this study, noting that spending extensive time on the preparation of extensive results frameworks creates significant transaction costs and can cause process fatigue and disinterest in the implementations stages.

Quality of Data and Systems Strengthening

The New European Consensus on Development (2017) notes that the EU and its Member States will support capacity-building for nationally owned monitoring frameworks, quality data collection, disaggregation and analysis, also by means of digital monitoring tools and for policy coherence for sustainable development.

Table 4: Quality of data and systems

	Source of Data used in Reporting and Benchmarks	JRF includes programming to Strengthen Country Systems
Cambodia	Monitoring using the existing national statistical and monitoring systems and evidence-based planning processes at both national and sub-national level. Government’s <i>Actual</i> results framework and Government-donor agreed Joint Monitoring Indicators, SDG indicators, sector indicators, GAP, CSO Roadmap.	Yes, in selected priority areas. Also, indirectly strengthening systems, by using Government’s <i>actual</i> results framework and monitoring processes.
Kenya	Government’s or other recognised reporting e.g. WB business enabling environment	Only indirectly, by using existing national statistical and monitoring systems and evidence-based planning processes. The JP document also refers to opportunities for increasing the use of country systems, particularly financial systems for aid-funded programmes.
Ghana	Government’s own monitoring	Yes, donor-supported Joint Agenda for Strengthening M&E and Statistics (JASMES).
Laos	Data predominantly drawn from the National Development Plan (NSDP) defined indicators and targets, to ensure alignment. Relies on Government’s <i>planned</i> annual reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the NSEDP as the main mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of the Joint Programme.	<i>Commits too</i> but no financial allocation.
Nicaragua	Combination of government data and European DP data, with support from SDG indicators, GAP and CSO Roadmap.	Not obvious but in practice it is linked to capacity development of the national agency for statistics.
Palestine	Partner country sources used, notably Ministry of Finance and Statistics Bureau.	Not obviously, but Bureau of Statistics is supported by joint efforts and system challenges are identified in text and called for to be supported at sector/ pillar level.
Senegal	Partner country sources used, although the expected partner government’s annual reporting and monitoring is irregular.	Part of the Programming is to strengthen partner country systems, collection and analysis of data.

The practice shows that the first step in operationalising a joint results framework is to look at **data used**. The joint results frameworks should set indicators, preferably based on the partner government's indicators and monitoring frameworks for most of the sectors (as was the case for most of the countries analysed). Where there are no Government indicators available, the partners need to formulate their own. These could be based on common European country-level priorities and/or on the global commitments such as those embodied in the SDGs. Where possible, the data used for reporting should be disaggregated to provide information on marginalised groups, to better inform policy dialogue on inclusive and equitable development. The Mexico Communiqué (2014) drew additional attention to new concerns such as climate financing and big data that should also be included in the development effectiveness agenda and therefore in the Joint Programming processes.

In line with the global commitments, European development cooperation should support policies and information management systems to make development co-operation more transparent, and relying through open data international standards such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and the statistical standards of the OECD-DAC systems. However, there is no evidence of use of either IATI or OECD-DAC as sources in any of the reviewed Joint Programmes.

The discussion in the previous section, on the different levels of reporting and monitoring, indicates a need to consider the ways to build a robust, but light, result framework which will be fit-for-purpose locally. Developing a joint results framework requires a joint assessment of the country systems for monitoring development outcomes to identify gaps in the national monitoring capacity and statistical systems. Joint results frameworks and joint implementation can therefore help strengthen the country systems for monitoring development by including specific indicators related to **strengthening country systems** for monitoring results, such as Ghana's donor-supported Joint Agenda for Strengthening M&E and Statistics (JASMES).

To support building up of evidence-based policy dialogue and deliver on commitments on effective development cooperation, joint results frameworks should also support strengthening the use of data for sustainable development, **building capacity** for quality data collection and statistical analysis to monitor progress and evaluate impact of public policy or development programmes. The joint results frameworks do not reflect the intent to address system-wide challenges, most notably in implementing the commitment to strengthen partner country results management systems, which represent a critical aspect for development effectiveness going forward. This is due to fact that results frameworks simply do not reflect some of the practical Joint Programme activities, such as those related to capacity development, that underpin the success of the Joint Programme. Similarly, the preparation of joint policy briefs in Cambodia which are developed to strengthen the common voice and communicate coherent messages on these key aspects identified in the Joint Programme and the results framework are not necessarily referred to in the Joint Results Framework itself.

Further it is important to note that some officials emphasise that when it comes to agreeing outputs and targets, it is important to ensure relevance to target audiences. The quality of data is as important as ensuring that the data matters to target audiences such as parliament, the council, international NGOs, the public and partner country elites and decision makers.

Intended Impact on Programming

Joint Programmes aim to achieve better results but recognise that to achieve this, attention is needed to ensuring visibility and stronger policy influence of. This is however not always clear in the results frameworks. The simplest way to ensure **increased visibility** is to ensure monitoring of results is regularised and institutionalised, and includes a planned dialogue with the partner government on results and ways in which the Joint Programme can help to achieve

those. It is advisable that the joint results frameworks be linked with existing European communication strategies to reinforce each other's impact. In Kenya, for example, the Joint Programming document itself covers visibility strategy, joint results and indicators. However, at times it can be difficult to link Joint Programming results to visibility because communication strategies are usually in the domain of Political Counsellors whilst Joint Programming is the domain of Development Counsellors. Therefore, there needs to be a concerted effort to facilitate dialogue between different domains of work within and between participating development partners agencies. In Cambodia, this was done by organising a retreat that brought together Development and Political Counsellors, to discuss how to use communication strategy to demonstrate joint results and to ensure complementarity of the work within the joint strategy with that of the European Human Rights and Democracy Strategy which is also usually the domain of Political Counsellors. In all the countries reviewed, the joint results frameworks have **influenced future programming**. Joint results framework seems to get most traction/provide most value to partners when they are short, manageable results matrix that identifies a small number of indicators for each priority area that can be used to demonstrate progress in development and trends in priority areas of the Joint Programme. Formulating such a result framework will require extensive discussions on pros and cons of each indicator in terms of capturing trends, and why it is necessary to look at a specific trend. This process of refining and deepening the joint analysis brings its own benefits in crystallising common priorities (confirming existing ones or identifying new ones) and helps to choose the core indicators that really reflect the selected priorities that European partners want to support jointly.

By having a joint results framework, the natural next steps to do is a monitoring and assess the performance over a given period, which can vary. In areas that are doing well, there can be opportunities for ongoing investment e.g. in policy dialogue, future programmes. Where things are not going well, joint monitoring can highlight the need for better understanding (joint analysis) of the root causes of why related reforms may be stalling and whether the Joint Programme is **adequately supporting the reforms**: assessing whether correct tools and expertise are being used (or not), whether clear policy messages are communicated to right people, making decisions to phase out etc. This can be further assessed through joint analysis enriched with **policy dialogue** with partner government, private sector, civil society and Parliament to ensure a reflection on a wide range of perspectives on how best the European partners can position themselves and their Joint Programme to add value to work in challenging sectors. During the first monitoring of the joint strategy implementation in Cambodia, European Heads of Cooperation engaged in an in-depth discussion on progress of the legal and judicial reform in Cambodia. Using inputs from external experts and agreeing on commonly perceived reform challenges, HoCs decided to continue engagement on the supply side of governance (using bilateral programming to provide technical assistance to Government ministry) while balancing it with strengthened support for demand side (using thematic funding for NGO initiatives). Proposed support was then discussed with civil society and Government to ensure it was appropriate and to confirm its links to policy making and implementation.

In most of the countries covered by this study, all participating European partners **support and align with the joint results frameworks**. In some cases, such as Senegal, while partners may programme bilaterally with bilateral results frameworks but they would nevertheless support a joint results framework (although in cases like this there are persistent risks of fragmentation and that the Joint Results Framework comes to be something to pay nothing more than lip service to). A Joint Results Framework provides a greater coherence among participating agencies programmes, along with increased opportunities for identifying complementary or joint initiatives that utilise different development partners' comparative advantages, be it in terms of type of financing, modality of implementation, technical expertise, etc. However, some of the bilateral monitoring and reporting exercises highly relevant for the Implementation of the Joint Results Frameworks are still done in silos. Some Heads of Cooperation expressed concern

that EU Mid-Term Reviews or Risk Management Frameworks are “conducted in silos”, however they would benefit from collective European consultation at country level.

Table 5: Intended impact on Programming

	Influence on European Visibility	Influence on Programming	Influence on intra-European Dialogue	Influence on participation by all European partners
Cambodia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, annual joint dialogue and ‘key messages’ exercise institutionalised.
Kenya	Not obvious	Not obvious	Contributes to	Yes
Ghana	Likely	Yes	Partially	Yes
Laos	Yes, central	Yes, especially on nutrition and governance.	Yes, joint dialogue strategy planned.	Yes, all participating and in support.
Nicaragua	Not obvious	Yes	Yes	Yes
Palestine	Yes, visibility also has an added emphasis in a joint strategic communication initiative.	Yes, especially when it comes to whole of government (e.g. PEGASE) or sector based programming.	Yes, although dialogue is not as well structured as many participating donors would like.	Yes, albeit with some subtle differences related to participating donors’ different political perspectives on Palestine.
Senegal	Not yet.	Yes, the results are for a long-term horizon and there are intentions to allocate resources to it.	Yes.	All participating donors supported the JRF but only some donors will programme jointly.

It was also noted that the use of results frameworks was not always linked to an improved policy dialogue. In cases like Cambodia and Nicaragua, discussion related to the Joint Results Frameworks enabled a dialogue between the Government and a larger group of development partners, which was a rare event. In other countries, the impact of the results framework on improving policy dialogue is yet to be observed. In other cases, like Palestine, the results framework was in use not only as tool for policy dialogue but also as tool for decision-making on financing. The use of the Joint Results Frameworks is also seen as useful in mitigating the reputational risk in some instances, as was the case with direct financial support in Palestine where the results framework was used to push for a policy dialogue linked to financial support, to recognise the progress achieved and to make an informed decision on whether to increase or decrease funding.

Several interviewees noted that “size matters” in that Joint Programmes and Joint Results Frameworks provide an opportunity to demonstrate the collective financial strength of European development partners which should be utilised more to help increase the visibility of the joint ambitions and results and to create opportunities for policy dialogue.

Intended impact on Partnerships

Experience from the countries that already undertook joint monitoring of results suggests that joint monitoring and evaluation should be **regularised and predictable**, to assess progress; ensure that the identified priorities in the results frameworks are still relevant and realistic;

enable joint policy dialogue around results and make timely adjustments to Joint Programmes if needed. The regular monitoring process was particularly important in cases where joint results framework incorporate sensitive issues which required a close follow-up. Experience, however, suggests that whilst monitoring processes are mostly in place, the quality of the process varies. In addition, monitoring was done to a higher quality in countries where there was capacity - either staff or external facilitator – dedicated to supporting the process.

Country experiences support strategic joint results monitoring mechanisms to bring greater analysis to the participating donors' discussions (e.g. in terms of choice of indicators) as well as ensuring regular feedback to the dynamic of the group on changes in context, on the needs to refocus messages and on emerging issues in the country. In those countries where it is difficult to reach a consensus, notably for political reasons, the discussion of Joint Results Framework can facilitate building common positions and intra-EU dialogue, in absence of a Joint Programming process. Moreover, having a Joint Results Framework with division of labour can create a "level playing field" which can cater to differing interests by different parts of European agencies in monitoring and evaluation.

In terms of consultation with stakeholders, the experience suggests that discussion of results and progress can be usefully undertaken through separate exercises. In Cambodia, for example, the dialogue on the progress and results of the Joint Programme took place first within the participating donors group, followed by consultation with civil society and the private sector before the dialogue with the partner government. This was then followed-up with an exchange with Parliament. This constituted a heavy process; however, the process provided several useful platforms for increasing the joint European voice as one, increasing the visibility and bringing certain policy messages to partners.

Joint Programming is recognised in Busan Partnership as a tool for inter alia enabling **mutual accountability for results**. Joint results frameworks are seen to enhance coordination, while allowing each partner to contribute with their individual result processes. In Laos, for example, participating European partners are enabling mutual accountability for results by using a joint results framework which is linked to monitoring indicators included in the National Socio-Economic Development Plan.

Most of the joint results frameworks imply a contribution to **strengthening multi-stakeholder ownership**. Those that explicitly do so, incorporate strengthening the voices of civil society, most often through linking the European roadmaps for engagement with civil society. They also promote gender equality and women's empowerment by incorporating the EU Gender Action Plans with their related result frameworks and indicators. It is important to note however that the lack of available data can influence the buy-in from partner governments. For example, the Cambodian Government was perceived to be pushing back on use of some of the indicators due to a lack of national data for indicators: The Government did not want to set itself up for failure by using these indicators even if it was well understood that they were relevant. Transparent and productive discussion on results can lead to increased Government ownership.

European partners in some countries, such as Kenya, have however lowered their ambitions, not wanting to include a results framework in the next generation of the Joint Programme because the previous one was not seen as useful. In this instance, participating donors may be reluctant to engage partner government in a single sector/area as there are policy platforms already in place for that dialogue. Also, partner government may not be interested in Joint Programming as part of future relationship with the EU. They might however be interested in broader political dialogue. In some cases, such as in Cambodia, Laos and Palestine, the joint results frameworks have been used to inform the EU-partner country dialogue mechanisms, either through Joint Committee type of dialogue or through bilateral dialogues by Member States.

Table 6: Impact on Partnerships

	Is Joint M&E regularised, expected	Division of labour in reporting on results	Will JRF contribute to mutual accountability	Does the JRF strengthen multi-stakeholder participation
Cambodia	Yes, jointly, on an annual basis and linked to the Government's review of the national development plan and national development policy platform.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kenya	Yes, although the partner government M&E system was not set up and never took off.	No, however the JP foresees rotating responsibility for annual reporting.	Likely, however it is dependent on political situation which is currently stalling the Joint Programming process.	Likely, but it is difficult to have a dialogue with the partner government due to adverse incentives such as increasing importance of non-ODA financing.
Ghana	Yes		Yes	Yes
Laos	Yes, although sector DoL needs work.		Yes, in annual high-level forums.	Not clear – more to be done in naming government officials responsible.
Nicaragua	No. Participating partners agree to ad hoc sharing of information on the progress of their programmes, evaluation and monitoring reports.	Yes	Yes	Not obvious
Palestine	Yes, quarterly and annual, qualitative and quantitative.		Yes, in fact the results focus at least partly originated from mutual accountability dialogue with the Prime Minister's Office.	Potentially – there is a commitment to strengthen the voices of civil society in programming but it needs to be implemented.
Senegal	Not in the matrix but aspirational references in the strategy.		Yes, anticipated to be reviewed with the government in dialogue on the partnership.	Not explicitly but implied.

As partner countries are progressively getting closer to Middle or Upper Income Country status, their own domestic revenues and other sources of domestic finance replace ODA as the main funding for national development. Policy dialogue can conversely become more challenging, as partner countries have both the resources and capacity to determine and articulate their own development vision.

In ensuring that our development assistance is suited to rapidly evolving national context, we need to look beyond traditional ODA relationships and towards the role of the private sector and other sources of development financing. Several interviewees observed that the European development partners can do better to capitalise on being one of the main donor group and one of the most important trading partners in the countries in which they work. Joint results framework conversely need to attempt to embrace and link different strands of programming and financing for development to ensure the results are more relevant to evolving development contexts.

Conclusions

Analysis of experiences to date shows that it is important that participating partners agree, at the outset, a shared vision for the purpose and scope of the anticipated results framework. Linking the joint results framework to the national level results and incorporating the SDGs is already a complex process. However, expanding Joint results Frameworks beyond aid, to include trade, migration and other emerging development issues can facilitate and promote policy coherence. The self-evident and achievable development effectiveness gains tend to be related to improving dialogue and ownership by aligning to partner country systems. The immediate impact is a better understanding of the relevance of programming within broader political and policy dialogue processes and in understanding the extent to which programming is addressing system-wide challenges. In this regard, the use of joint results frameworks, for example, draws attention to how infrequently programming is rationalised or contextualised within the partner country's political economy something that is essential if programming is to make deliver on the SDG goals of improving domestic resource mobilisation for global goods. Another observation is that joint results frameworks tend to expose gaps in strengthening partner country statistical and monitoring systems, something that is better addressed by donors jointly and comprehensively rather than bilaterally.

Joint results frameworks are an effective tool to raise the profile and importance of cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment and democratisation in all programming. Joint results frameworks also tend to be accompanied with or generated through a process of checking the quality and relevance of programming at country level. In the context of Joint Programming, the design of results frameworks appears to be particularly valuable because when multiple donors focus on desired results, the combining of programming resources tends to encourage a greater focus on outcomes rather than, for example, focusing on activity results. This encourages more ambitious developmental planning such as in the case of Palestine, where the fifteen participating donors provide more than a billion Euros annually in development assistance. When presented cumulatively, participating donors tend to acknowledge that their combined influence and ambitions are under-utilised at country level. This realisation makes it easier to identify and agree programming results that address higher-level or system-wide developmental challenges. For example, in Palestine, there is a major risk in that many partner ministries do not use statistics or evidence systematically in policy making. As participating donors cumulatively spend more than a **billion Euros annually**, the cost of improving statistical capacities becomes negligible when compared to the cumulative size of European development cooperation spending in Palestine. In this instance, participating donors are providing support

to boost the statistical capacity in Palestine, including through strengthened capacity for the production, analysis and dissemination of data, to inform policy and decision-making. Similarly, in Moldova, EU donors came together to develop a briefing book to reduce the system risk related to the lack of policy consistency through a period of sustained government change.

There are signs that joint results frameworks are still being designed as primarily technical exercises where the focus is primarily on what donors can feasibly deliver through bilateral ODA financing. The Sustainable Development Goals however put into stark relief the fact that the effectiveness of development cooperation will increasingly depend on donors' abilities to work in a joined-up fashion – within and between agencies- going beyond aid, and working in partnership with Governments to support mobilising domestic resources to deliver shared global goods. Some EU Member States, concluded in this vein, that the choice of indicators should be aligned with high-level aspirational policy goals – efforts need to be made to counter-act incentives that encourage a race to the bottom in terms of prioritising easily achievable measurable results over hard one deliverables that promise exponential returns. Whilst linking results frameworks to SDG agenda is already a complex process, more consideration should be given to how coherence policy agenda can be incorporated into Joint Programming and related joint result frameworks, to broaden their scope and support policy dialogue on system-wide changes.

Moreover, the joint results frameworks to date have not been sufficiently utilised to discuss how domestic resources are allocated. There is also limited evidence that joint results frameworks are sensitive to the local political context. Similarly, there is limited evidence to suggest that programming results reflect the ambition to mobilise domestic resources. Accordingly, the Sustainable Development Goals appear more as new programming goals than as encompassing a new way of programming development cooperation. At the same time, the joint results frameworks could demonstrate more how the Joint Programmes intend to strengthen country systems which in turn will contribute significantly towards achieving development effectiveness commitments.

As discussed earlier, it is also necessary to invest in the incentives for, recognise and reward staff efforts to promote Joint Programming and related results frameworks. There is a lack of organisational acknowledgements of the importance of Joint Programming and lack of corresponding career perspectives for donor staff engaging in Joint Programming, making it less motivating for staff to personally invest in the meaningful, but time-demanding, process.

Joint results frameworks also need to be acknowledged as important management tools, contributing a vital evidence base for policy making. Accordingly, they need to be designed in such a way to be incorporated into the management cycles and systems of participating donors so that they contribute to evaluations and to decision making. This means a greater emphasis on evaluation which focuses less on measuring results than on answering the extent to which the programming logic is viable and valuable within the existing context. This necessarily means an emphasis on the fact that the joint results framework is an indicator of the relevance of the joint strategy – if it does not deliver or proves less than relevant to the local context, these findings will require review and revision of the joint strategy itself.

Good practices in developing joint results frameworks appear to be correlated with several common features of programming at the country level. First and foremost, a well-functioning EU and EU Member state coordination forum appears to be a pre-condition. In this context, 'well-functioning' means that the coordination forum meets regularly (often monthly or even fortnightly) and the focus is on ensuring that programming complements and is relevant to high-level political and policy dialogue that targets ambitious outcomes or results. Good practices are also associated with identifiable coordination and secretariat capacity whether institutionalised

within the internal structure of one of the participating donors or in the form of dedicated technical assistance or as part and/or because of effective donor coordination at the national level. In this regard, it is worth noting that joint results frameworks depend on good EU and EU MS coordination but also benefit from institutionalised donor coordination at partner country level. In this regard, respondents reported that some of the strongest motivations to develop a joint results framework came from the desire to improve visibility and quality of policy dialogue and coordination within the partner country's wider donor coordination architecture.

The use of joint results frameworks is a positive development in and of itself. However, there are significant risks that the ambitions embedded in these results frameworks will not be met because in most cases resources are not allocated to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Incentives are built in many cases, such as in Cambodia and Kenya, in that the results frameworks feature in policy and political dialogue. However, in most cases there are no dedicated resources to ensuring they are implemented. Moreover, by their very nature, the joint results frameworks themselves do not enjoy a single institutional home that would be accountable for delivery. This means that the Achilles' heel remains: the effectiveness of the joint results framework relies in most cases on the good will and ambition of specific Heads of Cooperation. As such, there is an apparent need to institutionalise these practices, possibly by introducing a requirement to report on Joint Programming results in the annual reporting exercise to reinforce this new way of working /programming as outlined in the consensus, by identifying individual posts responsible for implementation, and in allocating programming resources where necessary.

Building Blocks for section on Joint Results Framework in revised Joint Programming Guidance

1. Purpose of the results framework

The purpose of the results framework should be discussed at the outset of the Joint Programming process, to ensure common understanding of the purpose and of the resulting scope and structure. It is important to consider some key principles for a good quality results framework, such as influence of global agendas and commitments (SDG, Busan), political economy and incentives for delivering development results, accountability for the results (national, sector, agency level), manageability and monitorability of results framework.

2. Scope of the results framework

It is necessary for the participating development partners to discuss, at the outset, the scope of the results framework. Results frameworks can be quite detailed, specifying the information down to the activity level, or they can remain at the higher (outcome and output) level. The extent of the details is up to the country-level offices to agree; however, the experience suggests that higher-level results frameworks are more useful in terms of assessing the overall direction of change and on the progress in delivering specific outputs.

Whilst it is important that results frameworks capture the aspirations of the Joint Programmes, it is also important that they are manageable. Joint Results Frameworks should aim to be strategic, prioritising and focusing on outcome level, to avoid making them too detailed and thus diverting attention from the broad direction of change. This can also help focus on the big picture of sustainable development that the joint results are contributing to.

3. Core principles informing the formulation of the results framework

Consultative approach - Intensive consultation, dialogue and consensus-building at the outset works to identify shared objectives and to build agreement on desired results. One of the key building blocks for ensuring effective achievement of joint results is to have an in-depth open discussion among participating partners about how each partner works and their strengths and weaknesses, the purpose and expectations from the Joint Programming, what benefits each of the partners as well as the group collectively expect to get from the process. All of this ensures the clarity about the expected and achievable results from the Joint Programme.

Joint analysis of context – Joint analysis will inform the participating partners' discussion on how to design a coherent results framework. This framework may take into consideration traditional development contexts, but also humanitarian, conflict and post-crisis situations which will require a collective response that builds on a shared vision and articulation of collective outcomes.

Adequacy of the national results framework – Ideally, the joint results framework should be aligned to the national results framework. However, participating development partners should agree, through the joint analysis, whether the national framework is good enough to be a basis for the alignment. In absence of national results framework, participating partners should consider an alternative framework that incorporates high-level results that they can align to. It

can be SDG framework or it can be another higher-level results framework that is specifically identified to inform the joint results framework.

Assumptions and risks – Joint assessment should inform the consideration of critical assumptions in the local context, notably poor/weak governance issues, risks and mitigating measures. Attention should also be given to data, evidence generation, and support for national statistical and information systems.

Capacity development – Results frameworks should seek to maximise capacity development, support national ownership and leadership, develop institutional capacities and facilitate enabling environment for systems strengthening.

Policy coherence – Results frameworks should enable coherence across bilateral policy and programmes of participating partners, and facilitate consistent support for development results.

Cross-cutting issues and joint values – Joint Programmes are underlined by the common values of participating development partners which include commitments to promote gender equality, environmental sustainability, civil society, protection of human rights and promotion of democratic governance. These common issues should be reflected in the joint results framework in a way that facilitates reporting on related results.

Partnerships – Results frameworks can facilitate inclusive, strategic and mutually beneficial partnerships. This can be achieved by bringing together all stakeholders (at regional, national or sub-national levels) and their resources, in a dialogue that establishes policy coherence, effective implementation mechanisms and robust oversight mechanisms...

4. Formulating a Joint results framework

Joint results framework should have several of the following key components:

- *Introduction* – Explains the purpose and structure of the results framework.
- *Strategic priorities* - should consist of high-level strategic development outcomes that Joint Programme aims to contribute to. They will usually be a subset of internationally agreed standard indicators (SDGs, Busan) or national indicators (National Development Plan) and will be a result of the collective action of partner countries and all their development partners. Those strategic priorities (objectives) selected are envisaged to generate the greatest impacts in contributing to the achievement of the overall Joint Programming goals. Participating partners should take into consideration national priorities, and gaps in policies and legal frameworks as well as the institutional capacities of state and non-state actors. Priorities should be strategically adopted to demonstrate an understanding of the *local political economy* in such a way that promises access to and influence in policy dialogue relating to domestic resource mobilisation and using development cooperation resources to deliver on global goods (e.g. the SDGs).
- *Outcome indicators* – will contain indicators measuring outputs and intermediate outcomes which can be directly linked to Joint Programming interventions, as a collection of bilateral/multilateral/Joint Programmes implementation results.
- *Development effectiveness indicators* - These indicators aim to monitor improvements in effectiveness of participating partners' development cooperation, as measured by e.g. aid fragmentation, division of labour, use of country systems, etc.

- *Baselines* – Where possible, it is useful to have baselines included to help with assessing the progress in achieving the outcomes
- *Links to other strategies/plans* - Joint results framework should specify, where relevant, links to other joint strategies, such as CSO roadmap and Gender Action Plan. These plans will be incorporated as much as possible into the Joint Programme and their indicators will form a part of the joint results framework.
- *Division of labour* – Joint results framework should make the division of labour clear among the participating development partners by identifying roles and responsibilities for designing, monitoring and reporting on results.
- *Institutionalisation of results monitoring* – the joint results framework should define the frequency of monitoring and reporting on results of the implementation of the joint strategy. Participating partners should also specify necessary processes for coordination and delivery of monitoring and evaluation.

Annex: Terms of Reference – Review of Practices of Joint Results Frameworks

Context

The EU Joint Programming Guidance Pack (2015) highly recommended the inclusion of partner-country results frameworks for each sector at outcome/impact level. The recent Heads of Mission (HoMs) reports (2016) indicate that Joint Programming Strategies are progressively incorporating joint results frameworks and joint monitoring arrangements to track progress. The results frameworks are as much as possible aligned to national processes for results management⁴.

This development is a positive one and should become part of our policy dialogue particularly in view of fostering mutual accountability and limiting parallel reporting systems. Joint results frameworks may become multi-purpose tools for information sharing, monitoring, evidence-based actions, and mutual learning. They may help Partner countries report on SDGs implementation and integrating SDGs into national development strategies. By aligning as such the EU, MS and other participating donors or development partners jointly support and enable the achievement of the SDGs at country level.

Annex 1 provides an overview of references to joint results frameworks in the recently received HoMs' (and other) status reports on Joint Programming. Given the importance of joint results frameworks as described above (and the frequent reference to joint results frameworks in 'keeping Joint Programming alive'), a desk study is being conducted to collate methodological lessons learned in developing such frameworks.

A review of available joint results frameworks under JP processes is therefore to be undertaken to understand the extent to which these results frameworks can be utilised for moving the JP progress further.

Scope of review

Based on the inventory of cases where joint results frameworks are in place or in advanced state of development, the general objectives of the review are:

- i) to inform and discuss with Joint Programming practitioners about current experience in developing joint results frameworks.
- ii) to assess to which extent data quality mechanism are active in view of formulating approaches how to best engage in this process.

Activities to undertake

- Review recent Joint Programming Strategies on monitoring results and results frameworks and select seven for closer analysis (the cases selected are Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Laos, Nicaragua, Palestine, Senegal).
- Review the 2016 HoMs' reports paragraphs on joint result frameworks

⁴ See also the analysis and country studies included in an independent Evaluation⁴ on Joint Programming (2017) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation-eu-joint-programming-process-development-cooperation-2011-2015_en

- Analyse the use of results frameworks in the seven country cases and HoMs reports with regards to:
 - The process by which indicators were selected leading to a joint results framework (national basis, SDGs basis, national /sector level);
 - How quality standards have been used (sources of a data set, etc.);
 - The way results/monitoring processes are incorporated in Joint Programming Strategies;
 - The scopes of these results/monitoring processes: development results and/or benefits of the process of Joint Programming (improved Division of Labour, joint initiatives, policy dialogue; joint visibility of EU and EU MS);
 - Reference to Member States who may not be participating and explain how they relate to the development and use of joint results frameworks;
 - Development and use of parallel measurement of 'own' results framework and indicators by Member States, degree of "alignment" with joint results framework, degree of "alignment" with nationally developed results framework(s), analysing the reasons behind the choice to keep them;
 - The use of results frameworks: do joint reviews of the results (to have common understanding between partner countries and development partners about why results were achieved/not achieved) take place, and at what level; are results frameworks used for (sectoral) policy dialogue and mutual accountability; and
 - The institutionalisation of a review process of the results framework: are the framework and indicators revisited after several years to assess if these are still valid and appropriate (to keep the results framework and the process relevant).

Methodology

The assignment will start with a desk phase (inventory, initial analysis) of max 3 working days, on which basis the 'validation' phase will be shaped (questionnaire/interviews with Delegations, Member States). The assignment is desk-based for a total 20 days; any extension to be agreed and discussed with the project manager.

Deliverables/output

The assignment will lead to a report containing the following elements:

- Overall description of Joint Programming monitoring processes (development results and JP processes).
- Detailed analysis of 7 case studies where joint results frameworks in place, the 6 components above included.
- Methodological lessons learned by participating donors in developing joint results frameworks, including recommendations in the form of actionable points.
- Key findings reflecting on the extent to which country results framework can lead to result reporting on which participating donor reporting can be based.
- Building blocks (draft section on joint results framework) to be used in an upcoming Joint Programming Guidance for EU Delegations. Target group: EU, MS and Like-Minded programming practitioners.