

PLANNING FOR RESULTS: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

CHAPTER 2

“The true measure of success for the United Nations is not how much we promise but how much we deliver for those who need us most.”

UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon

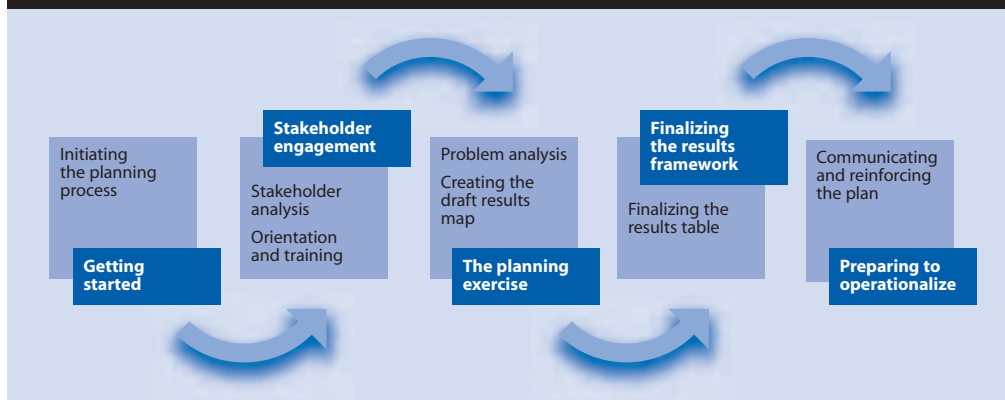
This chapter provides step-by-step guidance on how to undertake planning for results. It focuses on the tasks involved in planning for desired results and includes considerations for operationalizing results. As noted in Box 1, monitoring and evaluation are closely related to planning. Therefore in planning it is essential to bear in mind not only intended results, but also how results, and the process of achieving them, will be monitored and evaluated. In particular, planning needs to ensure that planned initiatives are evaluation-ready.

Planning can be done in many different ways. This chapter is designed to make the persons involved in planning more comfortable with the main steps involved in preparing a plan that can be implemented, monitored and evaluated. **The steps and approaches recommended apply generally to all planning processes, whether for a global, regional or country programme; a project; or a unit work plan.** This chapter is not intended to provide detailed instructions on preparing specific plans but rather to present the core approaches and steps generally involved in planning. At points, it will provide guidance for planning programmes and projects within the context of UNDP. However, for specific instructions on what is required for each UNDP planning document, the user should consult POPP.¹¹

This chapter is divided into five main sections as shown in Figure 3. Planning to monitor and evaluate, which is also a critical part of the planning phase, is dealt with in Chapter 3.

11 UNDP, ‘Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures’, 2008. Available at: <http://content.undp.org/go/userguide>.

Figure 3. Organization of the chapter



Development organizations often use a variety of tools throughout the planning cycle. Similarly, different organizations may require stakeholders to produce different sets of 'deliverables' as they go through the planning process. This Handbook will draw on some of the most commonly used tools. It will also walk the user through preparing eight deliverables that are normally used to develop and finalize programme and project results frameworks. Where relevant, the Handbook will show the relationship of the tools and deliverables mentioned with either United Nations Development Group (UNDG) or UNDP tools and deliverables. However, the Handbook is not intended to elaborate on UNDG and UNDP instruments. Instead, it is intended to be a how-to guide for doing planning, monitoring and evaluation based on good practices.

The eight main deliverables that will be covered are shown in Box 4.

Box 4. Main deliverables to be produced in the planning for results process

1. The initial **issues note** and draft **work plan** for the planning process (outline of activities and schedule and cost)
2. Stakeholder **influence and importance matrix**
3. List of **key problems identified**
4. **Prioritized list of problems**
5. Cause-effect diagram or **problem tree** analysis for each prioritized problems
6. **Vision statement** for each prioritized problem
7. **Results map** for each prioritized problem
8. **Results framework** for the programme or project document

Note: Deliverables 1 through 4 are normally part of the United Nations Country Team's plan of engagement or work plan (see http://www.undg.org/toolkit/toolkit.cfm?sub_section_id=301&topid2=on&topid=2 for additional information). Similarly, the Common Country Assessment (CCA) done by UN organizations, would normally include deliverables 3, 4 and 5. Guidance on the CCA preparation can be found at: http://www.undg.org/toolkit/toolkit.cfm?sub_section_id=267&topid2=on&topid=2. At the project level, deliverables 1 to 6 can be used in the 'justifying a project phase' of the UNDP project development cycle. All the deliverables would be used for the 'defining a programme' and 'defining a project' steps as these require results, roles, accountabilities and risks to be defined.

THE BENEFITS OF PLANNING

There are four main benefits that make planning worthwhile:

- **Planning enables us to know what should be done when**—Without proper planning, projects or programmes may be implemented at the wrong time or in the wrong manner and result in poor outcomes. A classic example is that of a development agency that offered to help improve the conditions of rural roads. The planning process was controlled by the agency with little consultation. Road repair began during the rainy season and much of the material used for construction was unsuitable for the region. The project suffered lengthy delays and cost overruns. One community member commented during the evaluation that the community wanted the project, but if there had been proper planning and consultation with them, the donors would have known the best time to start the project and the type of material to use.
- **Planning helps mitigate and manage crises and ensure smoother implementation**—There will always be unexpected situations in programmes and projects. However, a proper planning exercise helps reduce the likelihood of these and prepares the team for dealing with them when they occur. The planning process should also involve assessing risks and assumptions and thinking through possible unintended consequences of the activities being planned. The results of these exercises can be very helpful in anticipating and dealing with problems. (Some planning exercises also include scenario planning that looks at ‘what ifs’ for different situations that may arise.)
- **Planning improves focus on priorities and leads to more efficient use of time, money and other resources**—Having a clear plan or roadmap helps focus limited resources on priority activities, that is, the ones most likely to bring about the desired change. Without a plan, people often get distracted by many competing demands. Similarly, projects and programmes will often go off track and become ineffective and inefficient.
- **Planning helps determine what success will look like**—A proper plan helps individuals and units to know whether the results achieved are those that were intended and to assess any discrepancies. Of course, this requires effective monitoring and evaluation of what was planned. For this reason, good planning includes a clear strategy for monitoring and evaluation and use of the information from these processes.

2.1 GETTING STARTED

At the beginning of the process, the core planning team—usually from the government and UNDP or the United Nations Country Team (UNCT)—should discuss the planning exercise and how it will be approached. For global, regional and country programmes, projects and UNDAFs, UNDP or UNCT staff should consult their internal policies and procedures for information on the timelines, roles and responsibilities involved in these processes as well as the internal quality assurance and approval arrangements.

Prior to the first planning meeting, information should be collected on the major global, regional, country or community challenges that need to be addressed in the programmes or projects to be developed. This could be collected by either the government, UNDP or UNCT. Possible sources of information include national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, Millennium Development Goal (MDG) reports, national human development reports, gender equality documents, independent evaluations and reviews, country risk assessments, and so forth.

The information collected should be examined in relation to the comparative advantages of either UNDP or UNCT. The purpose of this is for the government and UNDP or UNCT to begin with fairly clear ideas on what the critical issues are **and in which areas UNDP or UNCT would be best prepared to provide support**. This will help manage expectations and ensure focus during the early stages of planning.

At this stage, attention should be focused on selecting broad areas rather than specific solutions. For example, in the initial discussions around a new country programme, attention should be focused on sectors and broad challenges such as governance, security, environment and climate change. At the project level, initial attention should be focused on the type or nature of the challenges faced (such as inner city unemployment, gender inequalities, national planning and monitoring capacity) rather than solutions (such as microfinance lending and gender awareness programmes). The aim is to ensure that the areas of work identified are broadly aligned with UNDP or UNCT mandates and capacities while avoiding the risk of predetermining the solutions. Section 2.3 addresses the more detailed process of problem identification and prioritization.

ISSUES NOTE AND DRAFT WORK PLAN (FIRST DELIVERABLE)

In the initiation phase, the team should put together a brief **issues note** and **draft work plan**. This can be refined as the planning process proceeds. The note should capture whatever information is available on the critical challenges that need to be addressed. This is the **first deliverable** in the planning process. The note may reflect key priorities in national, regional or global policy and strategy documents; concerns expressed by senior public and private officials or community members; as well as the findings of various analyses, such as a national or regional human development report, an MDG report, a community needs assessment, or an agency capacity assessment. The note should have at least three sections:

Section 1: Background and purpose of note

In this section, the core team should outline the rationale for preparing the note. This would generally include:

- Background to the note (why the team got together to initiate a planning process)
- The nature of the planning process that is being embarked on (preparing for a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, UNDAF, CPD, new project, etc.)

- Which stakeholders will be involved in the exercise (Section 2.2 of the Handbook can be used to prepare the initial list of stakeholders. The process should be fluid enough to involve additional stakeholders as more information becomes available during the problem analysis phase. Once the problems are better defined during the problem analysis process, it may be helpful to conduct a second stakeholder analysis to determine which additional persons should be involved.)

Section 2: Overview of priority issues

- Major development challenges identified
- Groups most adversely affected
- Critical areas of capacity constraints

The overview should, where possible, highlight the different impacts that the problems are having on men, women and marginalized populations.

Section 3: Work plan for completing the planning exercise

The core team should prepare a simple outline of the activities, schedules and resources for the overall planning process at this stage to ensure that the main issues are considered before additional stakeholders are engaged. The work plan should address a number of issues that the team should consider before actual commencement of the planning exercise. Specifically, the team should ask itself:

- What is the overall time frame we have for planning the programme or project?
- What are the key milestones in the process that we must meet to ensure that we produce the plan within the expected time frame?
- At what stage will we finalize the monitoring and evaluation plan? (It is usually better to do this as part of the process of preparing the plan so that the same stakeholders can be involved in the process.)
- How participatory should the process be given the context within which stakeholders are operating? (See Section 2.2 to help make the decision on how participatory the process should be.)
- What resources will be needed for the planning exercises? (For example, facilitators, venues, resource persons, important speakers, etc.)
- Who will be responsible for the different elements of the planning process? (For example, organizing workshops, inviting participants, contracting facilitators, etc.)
- How much will it all cost?

Table 2 provides a sample format for the work plan. An initial draft work plan can be prepared and subsequently finalized with greater details for specific activities.

Table 2. Sample draft work plan for the planning process (with illustrative examples)

Major Steps	Who Is Responsible for Organizing?	When Will It Take Place?	Notes
Recruitment of consultant for data gathering	UNICEF	10 May 2010	Terms of Reference to be prepared by UNICEF and shared with national planning agency
Initial brainstorming exercise	Resident Coordinator	15 May 2010	Resident Coordinator's office will convene initial meeting with key counterparts to prepare analysis
Stakeholder analysis	Resident Coordinator	15 May 2010	Will be done as part of brainstorming
Invitation to stakeholders	Minister of Planning & Resident Coordinator	30 May 2010	Resident Coordinator's office will send out invitations and make follow-up calls
Planning workshop(s):			
1. Orientation and training session for stakeholders	National planning agency	20 June 2010	Resident Coordinator's office will provide logistics support to the national planning agency
2. Problem analysis workshop	National planning agency	27-28 June 2010	As above, the session will include a presentation on planning with monitoring and evaluation in mind
3. Additional data gathering on identified problems	National planning agency and consultant	July 2010	(This could be part of a CCA process)
4. Workshop to complete problem analysis and finalize the results framework	National planning agency	14-15 August 2010	As above
5. Meeting to finalize arrangements for monitoring and evaluation	National planning agency	23 August 2010	As above
Review of draft results framework:			
1. Review by stakeholders (or by peers)	National planning agency	31 August 2010	
2. Review by Headquarters	Resident Coordinator	15 September 2010	
Preparation of plan for communication of results framework	Sub-team on communications	22 September 2010	UNFPA communications office to lead
Resources	Funding	Cost	Notes
Venues	UNICEF	15,000	Possible venues – Niagra Hotel and Tunoko Hotel as they are convenient for rural stakeholders
Facilitators	National planning agency	6,000	Need facilitators well trained in participatory techniques
Communications	UNFPA	10,000	Will need communication strategy targeting different types of stakeholders and the general public
Resource persons (e.g. M&E specialist, gender adviser, poverty specialist)	UNCT	10,000	Local experts from government and NGO sector to be involved; UN organizations to explore bringing in experts from respective Headquarters
Consultants (e.g. for data collection)	Resident Coordinator	10,000	
Equipment and material	Resident Coordinator	5,000	
Other	Resident Coordinator	2,000	
Total		58,000	

It is generally useful for the core team to think in terms of a series of meetings or workshops rather than one planning workshop. This approach is particularly relevant for programme planning but can be useful for large or complex projects as well. In either case, a clear work plan with a schedule and budget is highly recommended.

NOTE The issues note and work plan can be used as key elements in preparing the UNCT plan of engagement at the programme or project level and used in the ‘justifying a project stage’ for UNDP. Sample plans of engagement and work plans for the UNDAF preparation process can be found on the undg website at: http://www.undg.org/toolkit/toolkit.cfm?sub_section_id=301&topid2=on&topid=2.

2.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Inadequate stakeholder involvement is one of the most common reasons programmes and projects fail. Therefore, every effort should be made to encourage broad and active stakeholder engagement in the planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. This is particularly relevant to crisis situations where people’s sense of security and vulnerability may be heightened and where tensions and factions may exist. In these situations, the planning process should aim to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are involved (especially those who may be least able to promote their own interests), and that opportunities are created for the various parties to hear each other’s perspectives in an open and balanced manner. In crisis situations this is not just good practice but is fundamental to ensuring that programming ‘does no harm’ at the least and, hopefully, reduces inherent or active tensions. Perceptions of UNDP neutrality, and at times the success of the programme or project, depend on representatives of the different main stakeholder groups (including those relating to different parties of the tension) being equally consulted. In some situations, a planning fora that brings stakeholders together so that they can hear each other’s views may itself be a mechanism for reducing tensions.

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Any given programme, project or development plan is likely to have a number of important stakeholders. Effective planning is done with the participation of these stakeholders. Stakeholders are the people who will benefit from the development activity or whose interests may be affected by that activity. Therefore, a simple stakeholder analysis is generally recommended for all planning processes. A stakeholder analysis can help identify:

- Potential risks, conflicts and constraints that could affect the programmes, projects or activities being planned
- Opportunities and partnerships that could be explored and developed
- Vulnerable or marginalized groups that are normally left out of planning processes

Various stakeholder analysis tools can be used to identify stakeholders and determine the type of involvement that they should have at different stages of the process

(planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, etc.) These range from basic consultations and focus group discussions for simple programmes and projects to more elaborate workshops for large or complex programmes. The planning or management team should use their judgement to determine what is most appropriate, bearing in mind that the main objective is to properly identify key stakeholders who may have a strong interest in or ability to influence what is being planned. Generally, for UNDP programmes and projects, at least one UNDP officer and one government official would be part of the stakeholder group involved in planning.

TIP There is a tendency for core planning teams not to involve certain stakeholders in planning. This typically occurs with complex programmes and projects and work that involves developing policy. Marginalized groups, poor rural community members, minorities and others are often left out because planners assume that these groups are not well informed or educated enough to contribute to the planning process. This assumption often turns out to be very costly. A good planner should always ask: **“Whose voice is normally not heard on this issue?”** Planners are often pleasantly surprised at the insights that previously unheard stakeholders have to offer.

Tables 3 and 4 and Figure 4 are examples of three simple tools often used to conduct a stakeholder analysis. (For purposes of illustration, the tables contain some examples of the type of information that could be entered in the various columns for challenges related to public participation in an election support programme.) Table 3 seeks to identify the stakeholders, who may have an interest in the programme or project being planned, and determine the nature of that interest. Table 4 assesses the importance and influence of those stakeholders in the programme or project. Here, importance relates to who the programme or project is **intended for**, which may be different from the level of **influence** they may have.

Figure 4. Stakeholder importance and influence matrix

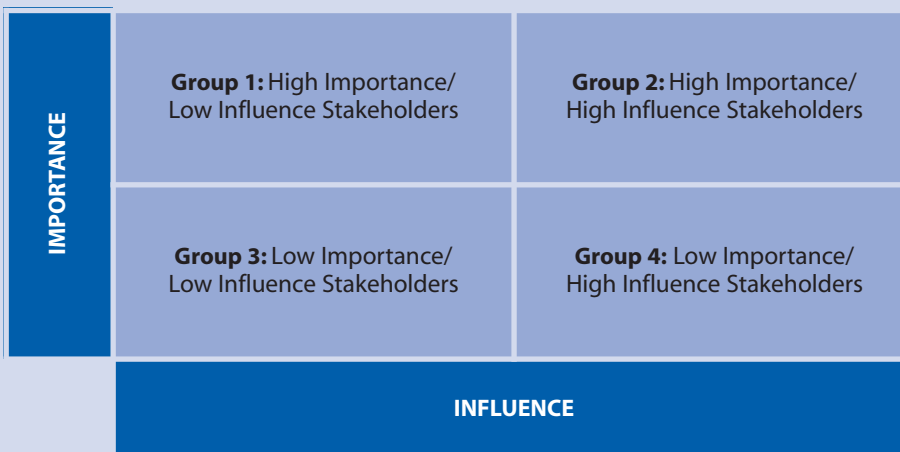


Table 3. Identification of key stakeholders and their interests

Stakeholders (examples)	Interest in Activity	Nature of Interest (+ve or -ve)*
Office of the Prime Minister	Greater citizen participation	+
Universities	Political culture and civic behaviour	+
Main political parties	Free and fair elections, opportunities for greater influence?	+ +/-
Religious umbrella organizations	Ethics in politics, fairness	+
NGO groups (e.g. a watchdog NGO)	Fairness, greater influence	+
Private sector organizations	Opportunities for influence, fairness	+/-
Minority group representatives	Opportunities to participate	+
Youth umbrella organizations	Opportunities to participate	+
Electoral administrative body	Maintain own neutrality	+
International observer group	Fairness	+
Citizens' organizations	Rights of citizens, fairness	+
Women's organizations	Rights of women, fairness	+
Informal political leaders	Threats to their power	-

Note: NGO indicates non-governmental organization.

* Positive or negative interest has to do with whether a stakeholder or stakeholder group would be supportive or disruptive of the programme or project being planned or in terms of whether their interest could help or impede what is being planned. In some cases, a stakeholder group may have both a negative and a positive interest, as would be the case, for example, if some umbrella private sector groups were supportive of a programme that others opposed.

Table 4. Importance and influence of stakeholders

Stakeholders (examples)	Importance (Scale of 1 to 5, 5 = highest)	Influence (Scale of 1 to 5, 5 = highest)
Office of the Prime Minister	5	5
Universities	3	2
Main political parties	5	4
Religious umbrella organization	3	2
NGO groups (e.g. a watchdog NGO)	3	3
Private sector organizations	3	4
Minority group representatives	5	1
Youth umbrella organizations	5	1
Electoral administrative body	4	3
International observer group	1	3
Citizens' organizations	5	2
Women's organizations	5	2
Informal political leaders	2	4

Note: NGO indicates non-governmental organization.

The tables and matrix can be helpful in communicating about the stakeholders and their role in the programme or activities that are being planned.

Stakeholder importance and influence matrix (deliverable two)

The stakeholder importance and influence matrix, which is the **second deliverable** in the planning process, becomes the main tool used to determine who should be involved in the planning session and how other stakeholders should be engaged in the overall process.

Group 1 stakeholders are very important to the success of the activity but may have little influence on the process. For example, the success of an electoral project will often depend on how well women and minorities are able to participate in the elections, but these groups may not have much influence on the design and implementation of the project or the conduct of the elections. In this case, they are highly important but not very influential. They may require special emphasis to ensure that their interests are protected and that their voices are heard.

Group 2 stakeholders are central to the planning process as they are both important and influential. These should be key stakeholders for partnership building. For example, political parties involved in a national elections programme may be both very important (as mobilizers of citizens) and influential (without their support the programme may not be possible).

Group 3 stakeholders are not the central stakeholders for an initiative and have little influence on its success or failure. They are unlikely to play a major role in the overall process. One example could be an international observer group that has little influence on elections. Similarly, they are not the intended beneficiaries of, and will not be impacted by, those elections.

Group 4 stakeholders are not very important to the activity but may exercise significant influence. For example, an informal political leader may not be an important stakeholder for an elections initiative aimed at increasing voter participation, but she or he could have major influence on the process due to informal relations with power brokers and the ability to mobilize people or influence public opinion. These stakeholders can sometimes create constraints to programme implementation or may be able to stop all activities. Even if they are not involved in the planning process, there may need to be a strategy for communicating with these stakeholders and gaining their support.

TIP The planning team should devote time to discussing the issue of how to effectively involve stakeholders. There are many examples of how to do this. For example, some teams have budgeted resources to assist certain stakeholders with travel and accommodation expenses. Others have rearranged meeting times to be more suitable to specific stakeholders. In most cases, official letters of invitation are sent to stakeholders by senior government or UN officials. This can be helpful in conveying the importance attached to stakeholder participation. The team should discuss the most suitable arrangements given the local context.

Based on the stakeholder analysis, and on what is practical given cost and location of various stakeholders, the identified stakeholders should be brought together in a planning workshop or meeting. This may be the first meeting to plan the UNDAF or a UNDP country programme or project.

NOTE The stakeholder analysis can be used to outline who the stakeholders will be in the UNCT plan of engagement or, at the project level, to outline the stakeholders in the draft proposal prepared by UNDP in the 'justifying a project' stage of project development.

STEP 2: ORIENTATION AND TRAINING OF STAKEHOLDERS

Orientation on the planning process

Stakeholders should be made aware of what the planning process will involve. Whether planning a national strategy, a UNDAF, or a global, regional or country programme, the process will often require a series of workshops and meetings over several months to analyse the problems, commission studies, undertake research, discuss and come to conclusions on priorities and approaches, formulate a results framework, and put together a monitoring and evaluation plan. Project-level planning may also involve a series of meetings and include one or more workshops based on the size and complexity of the project.

The planning team should provide the stakeholders with a copy of the draft issue note and work plan at the initial meeting. The work plan should include sufficient time for preparing the results framework and the monitoring and evaluation plan. It should

Box 5. Preparing a timeline for UN programme documents

The UNDAF is the main planning document for the UN team in a given country. The UNDAF is prepared with the government and other national stakeholders. In preparing the UNDAF, all the main steps discussed in this Handbook would be undertaken between June and December of the year preceding the completion of the five-year UNDAF cycle.

For UNDP country programmes, it is normal for the steps leading to the preparation of a draft country programme and results framework to be completed in parallel with the UNDAF process (between June and December) with greater elaboration of the UNDP components of the UNDAF between September and February of the following year. In March, the completed country programme is submitted with an evaluation plan to the UNDP Executive Board.

Many units use the CPAP process between March and September to refine their results frameworks (outcomes, outputs and indicators), develop monitoring plans, and refine their evaluation plans. This approach is often taken given that between March and September national partners would have begun engaging with UNDP on the specific projects to be developed and would therefore have more information on the relevant outputs, indicators and targets. However, in many other planning processes, the full results framework along with the M&E plan are developed and finalized at the same time that the plan is prepared.

Projects are planned at various points during the programme cycle, and there is no prescribed time-frame for when these should be done.

also allow for potential challenges in conducting stakeholder meetings in crisis settings when meetings between different parties can be sensitive and time consuming.

If appropriate, the stakeholders involved in the planning process should be provided with orientation or training on issues such as gender analysis, rights-based approaches to development, conflict-sensitivity and analysis, and capacity development. (When planning UNDAFs, it is also usually helpful to include a deliverable on the UN reform process and aid effectiveness to increase awareness of the direction in which the United Nations is moving globally and at the national level.) This initial session is intended to raise awareness of these issues and enable participants to adopt a more rigorous and analytical approach to the planning process. Some of the ways in which this can be done include:

- Having a gender expert provide an overview to participants on the importance of gender and how to look at development programming through a gender lens. This session would include an introduction to the gender analysis methodology
- Including a gender expert as a stakeholder in the workshop as an additional means of ensuring that gender and women's empowerment issues receive attention
- Having a presenter address the group on capacity development methodology as a tool to enhance programme effectiveness and promote more sustainable development¹²
- Having a presenter address the group on promoting inclusiveness and a rights-based approach to development¹³

Expert support in organizing and presenting these cross-cutting thematic issues can be obtained by contacting the relevant units in BDP, BCPR and the UN Staff College.

Considerations at the project level

This type of briefing for stakeholders applies equally to programmes and projects. However, most small projects are unlikely to have enough resources to provide expert trainers on some of the themes. In these situations, the planning team should consider cost-effective options for increasing stakeholder awareness. This may include preparing short presentations or briefing guides and circulating them to stakeholders ahead of the meetings. Also, it may be useful to invite persons with training in the particular areas to be stakeholders in the process. For example, a representative from a human rights, women's or gender NGO could be invited to be a project stakeholder. Similarly, gender or human rights analysts in national planning agencies or from other partner development agencies could be involved as stakeholders. This can be an effective way of ensuring ongoing focus on the issues, as opposed to only at the beginning of the planning exercise.

12 Refer to the UNDP policy note on capacity development: UNDP, 'Supporting Capacity Development: The UNDP Approach'. Available at: <http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=2141>.

13 Guidance can be found in the common learning package on UNDG website: UNDG, 'Human Rights Based Approach to Development'. Available at: <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=74>.

Orientation on approaches to dialogue

At the start of the planning process, it is important that all stakeholders start at the same point. They should all understand:

- Why it is important for them to work together
- Why they have been selected for the planning exercise
- The rules of the planning exercise and how stakeholders should dialogue, especially in crisis settings, where these fora could be the first time different parties have heard each others' perspectives and goals for development

It is important to bring stakeholders together not only for the resources they have but also because each has a unique perspective on the causes of the problems and what may be required to solve them. A government minister, a community member, a social worker, an economist, a business person, a woman, a man and UNDP staff may all be involved in designing a plan—and may all have different views on what they are confronting and what changes they would like to see occur. It is common in the early stages of planning for persons to use anecdotes to get stakeholders to see how easy it is to look at the same issue and yet see it differently.

The core planning team should find ways to encourage stakeholders to:

- **Suspend judgement**—Stakeholders should not start the process with any pre-set ideas and should not rush to conclusions. They should be prepared to hear different points of view before coming to conclusions.
- **Be open to all points of view**—In the planning exercise, all points of view are equally valid, not just those of persons considered important. The planning exercise should be conducted in such a way that everyone (men, women, marginalized individuals) feels free to express their views. The views expressed by stakeholders are neither 'right' nor 'wrong.'
- **Be creative**—Stakeholders should understand that long-standing challenges are unlikely to be solved by traditional approaches, many of which may have been tried before. They should therefore be open to fresh ideas, especially those that may, at first, seem unworkable or unrealistic.

The same approach to explaining these basic guidelines to stakeholders can be applied in both programme-level and project-level planning.

Once the orientation is completed, the stakeholders can proceed to the actual planning exercise.

NOTE It is useful to remind stakeholders that the planning process is not about developing a UNDP or UNCT plan but about developing a plan that addresses the needs and priorities of the country or community, which UNDP or UNCT will support as one partner in the process.

2.3 THE PLANNING EXERCISE

The planning process should help stakeholders design programmes or projects that address the right problems and the right causes of those problems. For this reason, stakeholders should undertake a thorough problem and situation analysis before developing goals and objectives or planning programmes or projects. A problem analysis, which is sometimes referred to as a cause-effect analysis, is a requirement for all UN and UNDP programming. For global, regional and country programmes, problem definition and analysis is useful to analyse what is happening in certain sectors and major global, regional and macro-policy issues. At the project level, the analysis may help in understanding specific challenges or issues within a sector, region or community.

A thorough problem analysis at the programme level may reduce the need for one at the project level. Once the problem is properly analysed in the national strategy, UNDAF, CPAP or other documents, projects can be developed at different times and by different agencies to address the specific causes without undergoing another problem analysis. However, in some situations, only a limited set of stakeholders would have been involved in the programme-level analysis. In other cases, the process may not have been based on a thorough analysis. In these situations, it should not be assumed that all the critical issues at the project or output level have been well identified. A project-level problem analysis involving additional stakeholders, particularly those most affected by the problem, will often help to ensure a better understanding of the challenges, constraints and possible solutions.

In general, the problem analysis plays a crucial role in:

- Developing a clear understanding of not only the surface problems, but also their **underlying causes** and constraints

Box 6. The Common Country Assessment

The Common Country Assessment (CCA) commissioned by UN development organizations can be a useful tool to aid in identifying and analysing problems. The CCA is most useful when the government, other national partners and the UNCT are involved in the assessment. The problem analysis described in this Handbook is very similar to the process normally used in preparing the analytical sections of the CCA.

The CCA is generally undertaken when there is inadequate data or analysis in place or when additional analysis is needed to better understand the issues. A rigorous CCA provides a strategic analysis of the major problems of the country and their root causes and effects on the population, particularly on excluded groups such as women, minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants and displaced persons. It also addresses the opportunities for (and obstacles to) free, active and meaningful participation by stakeholders in national governance and development processes and outcomes.

A well prepared CCA should provide enough information to inform the preparation of a UNDAF. However, additional analysis may be needed for the preparation of agency-specific programmes and projects.

Additional information on the CCA, including examples and tools, can be found on the UNDG website, at: <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=227>.

- Determining the real size and complexity of the problem and the **relationships** between different contributing factors
- Determining how the problem affects groups (women, men, marginalized populations) or may be caused by the **unequal treatment** of different groups in society
- Determining short-, medium- and long-term interventions that may be necessary for a **sustainable** solution
- Identifying the **partnerships** that may be necessary to effectively address the problem
- Assessing the **roles** that different stakeholders may need to play in solving the problem
- Estimating the **resources** that may be required to deal with the problem and its causes

Additionally, the **analysis plays an important role in building stakeholder consensus**. It is very difficult to develop a common vision and strategy if there is no shared understanding of the problems and their causes.

Considerations at the programme level

For large programmes or in situations where there are insufficient macro-level analysis and data, a series of workshops is recommended for the problem analysis. The analysis will often take several weeks while information is gathered. Partners may need to review existing studies or commission new studies. In some cases, a macro-level capacity assessment may be commissioned to assess key areas of strength and weakness in national capacity that may need to be addressed in the programme.

Considerations at the project level

For smaller projects, focus group discussions and consultations with various stakeholders may suffice to conduct the problem analysis. **However, it is generally recommended to bring different stakeholders together in one place so that the whole group may benefit from discussing different points of view.** Large or complex projects may require a series of workshops similar to a programme. Even in smaller projects, it should not be assumed that all the issues will be identified and clearly understood by the stakeholders based on only an initial discussion, which may also only involve a few persons. Stakeholders often underestimate the time required to study a problem. This can lead to numerous unexpected issues arising in implementation. Therefore, enough time should be set aside for proper consultation and research.

STEP 1: IDENTIFYING MAIN PROBLEMS

Once the stakeholders are gathered together, they should begin looking at the problems to be addressed. (This could be done as part of a CCA workshop, where initial analysis is presented then stakeholders identify priority problems that need further research.) At this stage, the aim is not to define a solution to the problem in the form of a programme or project but to correctly identify what needs to be addressed.

- Stakeholders should seek to identify the problems facing the region, country or community—not problems for UNDP or a particular stakeholder to solve. (This Handbook will later address how to prioritize and select challenges for UNDP or UNCT programming.)

- Stakeholders should refer to the original concept note that was prepared.
- They should be guided by a few key questions:
 - Are the initial problems identified the most critical problems to be addressed?
 - Are we adequately capturing the problems facing both **men** and **women**?
 - Are we capturing the problems affecting **marginalized groups and the rights of various groups**?
 - Are we addressing problems that relate to key issues of **national capacity**?
- A key part of the process should focus on discussing **what** is happening and to **whom**. This should involve discussing whether particular groups are affected more than others by a denial of their rights.
- Stakeholders should reflect on these questions as they start identifying the main problems.
- All stakeholders should brainstorm the major problems as they see them, though it may be necessary to limit the exercise to a certain sector or issue that is within the scope of the stakeholders to address.¹⁴
- Problems should be stated in terms of negative conditions or realities, and not in terms of specific things being unavailable. This is important, as very often the way the problem is stated influences what stakeholders consider to be the solution. For example, consider the difference between stating a problem as (a) “**minorities and marginalized groups do not have the right to vote**” versus (b) “**minorities and other marginalized groups do not participate in elections**” or (c) “**low levels of participation by minorities in elections.**” The first case (a) is an example of formulating the problem in terms of what is missing—in this case, the right to vote. The danger with this approach is that it may lead stakeholders to think that updating laws to extend the right to vote to these groups is a solution. This may then lead to a project being created to update those laws. If the aim, however, was to actually increase voting by minorities and other marginalized groups, then changing the laws may only be one component of the solution. In fact, changing the laws may not result in minorities and other marginalized groups actually voting if there are cultural, economic and other factors that constrain them. The second and third examples (b) and (c) would be better ways of stating the problem as they could lead stakeholders to analyse all the factors causing these groups not to participate or vote. In summary, the problem should be stated in a manner that facilitates thorough analysis and does not bias attention to one particular issue.
- Similarly, stakeholders should focus on the present and not the future. Problems should not be stated as “if we do not address X, then Y may happen”, or “in the future, X is likely to happen.” In the problem analysis process, which will be

14 This is a practical point that has to be managed during workshops: while it may be necessary to identify critical problems and not problems for UNDP to solve, at the same, it is necessary to guide the discussions so that the group doesn't end up preparing a complete analysis of, for example, the education sector problem, which UNDP would not address in its programme (although UNICEF or another agency might).

discussed later, stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the existing and potential consequences and effects of the problem. At this stage, the focus is on having everyone agree on what the problem itself is. Combining both too early in the discussion can often create confusion over what is to be addressed.

- Stakeholders should examine all the problems identified against the main questions noted above: Do they adequately capture concerns faced by men and women as well as marginalized groups, and do they address core concerns of national capacity?

Examples of problems that may have been identified in the process include the following:

- Lack of involvement of women, indigenous and marginalized populations in electoral processes
- Weak e-governance capacity in key state institutions to engage with the public
- Electoral laws, systems and processes disenfranchise voters, particularly women, indigenous and other marginalized populations
- Low levels of engagement of civil society organizations in the oversight of elections
- Weak capacity of national electoral management authority to administer elections in a free and fair manner

These are only examples of problems relating to governance and particularly elections. Other problems may also be identified in various sectors or themes, such as problems with the environment, climate change, education, economic development and culture.

The **list of problems** identified is the **third deliverable** in the planning process. While UNDP or the UNCT may not provide support to national partners on all the identified problems, it is important to have a record of them for analytical purposes and as a possible basis for advocating for action by other agencies or individuals.

NOTE The list of problems can be used as part of the UNCT's plan of engagement and the CCA. Different problems would be selected by different UN organizations to include in their specific country programmes as applicable. At the project level, one or more of these problems would be used in preparing the initial UNDP project proposal during the 'justifying a project' stage.

STEP 2: ORGANIZING AND PRIORITIZING MAIN PROBLEMS

Several major problems are likely to be identified during the problem identification process. Some of the problems may appear to be closely related, and some may appear to be causes or consequences of another problem. For example, one person may have identified “low levels of participation in elections by minorities” as a problem, while another person may have identified the problem as “minorities do not have the right

to vote.” When this happens, there should be further discussion on which of the statements best reflects the central problem that the group wants to address. In doing this, it helps to examine if some of the problems are actually part of other problems or consequences of those problems. If this is the case, then these should be noted for later discussion.

Once there is agreement on the major problems, stakeholders should prioritize them. The aim of prioritization is first to ensure that the problems are considered critical by the global, regional, national or community stakeholders, and second to determine what challenges UNCT or UNDP will support in the UNDAF or global, regional or country programme or project.

Many public and non-profit organizations use a simple model to determine the priority of problems and which problems to address. The model involves looking at the identified problems through three lenses: value, support, and capacity and comparative advantage. (This is the same model used in UNDG guidance for preparing CCAs and UNDAFs.) Using the earlier examples, the planning team would write down the main problems and ask the stakeholders to consider these using the model described in Figure 5.

The area where all three circles overlap—area 1—is often referred to as the ‘Just Do It’ zone, as it represents a challenge that is a major priority, and for which UNDP or UNCT would have partner support, internal capacity and comparative advantage. Problems classified in this area should be a high priority for UNDP.

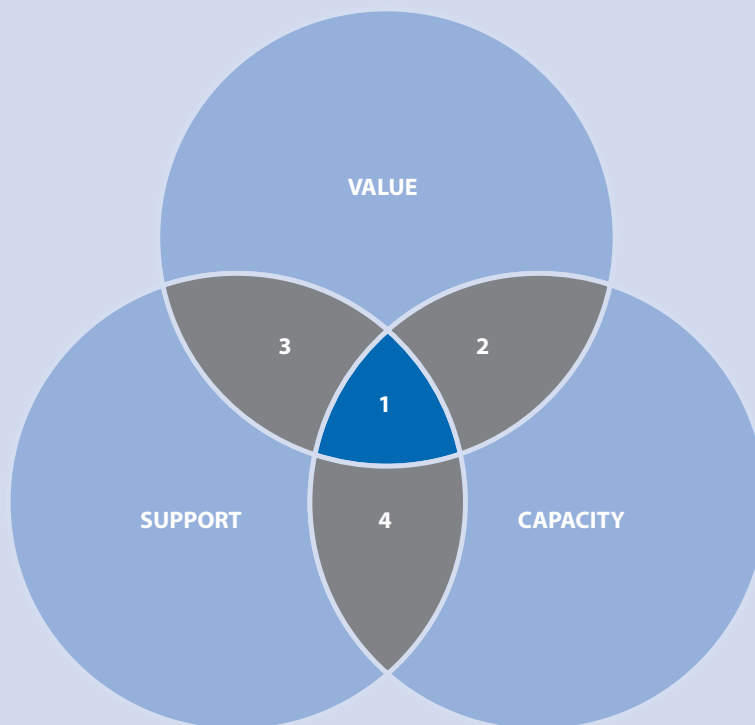
Area 2 is often a good area for advocacy—working on these issues could bring tremendous value to stakeholders, and UNDP or UNCT has capacity and comparative advantage. But efforts may be needed to mobilize support and build partnerships and further awareness.

UNDP and UNCT should generally avoid challenges in areas 3 and 4. With respect to area 3, other public, private or non-profit agencies with greater capacity or comparative advantage should provide support. For example, a UN organization engaged in discussions with national partners may not have sufficient capacity or mandate to engage on e-governance or education issues and may be better positioned to address mobilization of women and marginalized groups. Another partner may need to address the e-governance challenges.

Area 4 relates to challenges that may be within the mandate and existing capacity of UNDP—and therefore tempting for UNDP to take up—but may not be national priorities, have sufficient ownership by key stakeholders, or bring value to the community, country or region.

NOTE The prioritized problems would be the main ones elaborated in the UNDAF and the CPD. They would also provide the starting point for developing project proposals in the ‘justifying a project’ phase of the UNDP project development cycle.

Figure 5. The Value/Support/Capacity analytical model



VALUE	SUPPORT	CAPACITY & COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE
<p>Solving this problem would bring significant value to the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is a global, regional, national or community priority. ■ It supports the country or region in achieving an MDG or other major development priority. ■ There is regional, national or community ownership of the issues. 	<p>We would have support to work towards solving this problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is in line with our mandate (Executive Board or Senior Management Support). ■ We can count on the government and others to partner with us. ■ We can count on the support of those with decision-making power and resources. 	<p>We would have the capacity and comparative advantage to work on the problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We have the mandate to act. ■ We have or can put in place capacity to address the problem. (This includes having access to technical backstopping resources from Headquarters or other sources.) ■ We can provide support more effectively or efficiently than others. ■ We have unique resources and/or attributes (e.g., neutrality, legitimacy, reputation, convening role).

Once the priority problems for UNDP or UNCT support have been identified, stakeholders should put in place a process to gather more information on the problems to feed into the next steps. The **prioritized problems** are the **fourth deliverable** in the planning process.

STEP 3: THE PROBLEM ANALYSIS

For each priority problem selected, stakeholders should undertake a problem (cause-effect) analysis. This generally requires additional data. These may include summaries of analyses done on the problems or issues; data or statistics on the problem (**the data should be disaggregated by age, gender, socio-economic group and other variables if possible**); and results of macro-level capacity assessments, agency or community assessments and so forth. In preparing a UNDAF or country programme, the CCA should provide most of the problem analysis needed. However in some cases, this may not be available or sufficient. Also, additional analysis with specific stakeholders may be needed at the project level.

If research and data already exist, the stakeholders should rely on these. Otherwise, it may be necessary to commission new research to gain a better understanding of the specific issues. Stakeholders should review the findings from any studies prior to embarking on the problem analysis. This will help inform the quality of the group's analysis of the problems. In many planning exercises, this process takes place a few weeks after the initial problem identification meeting or workshop, in order to allow time for research and data collection.

There are many different types of problem analysis models, including the problem tree that is used in this Handbook.¹⁵ The models apply equally to programme and project-

Box 7. One difference between a 'project' and a 'results-based' approach to development

In some situations, the problem may have been previously identified and presented with an analysis and proposal for the government, UNDP or other funding partner to consider. A common problem in these situations is that many project proposals are presented to the funding agency with a fixed solution. Quite often, the solution presented only relates to part of a bigger problem. This is often because the agency presenting the proposal tends to be concerned with obtaining financing for the component(s) for which it has a strong interest. For example, an NGO may submit a proposal for assistance to strengthen its capacity to participate in monitoring national elections. While this may be an important project, it is likely that it would only address part of a bigger problem.

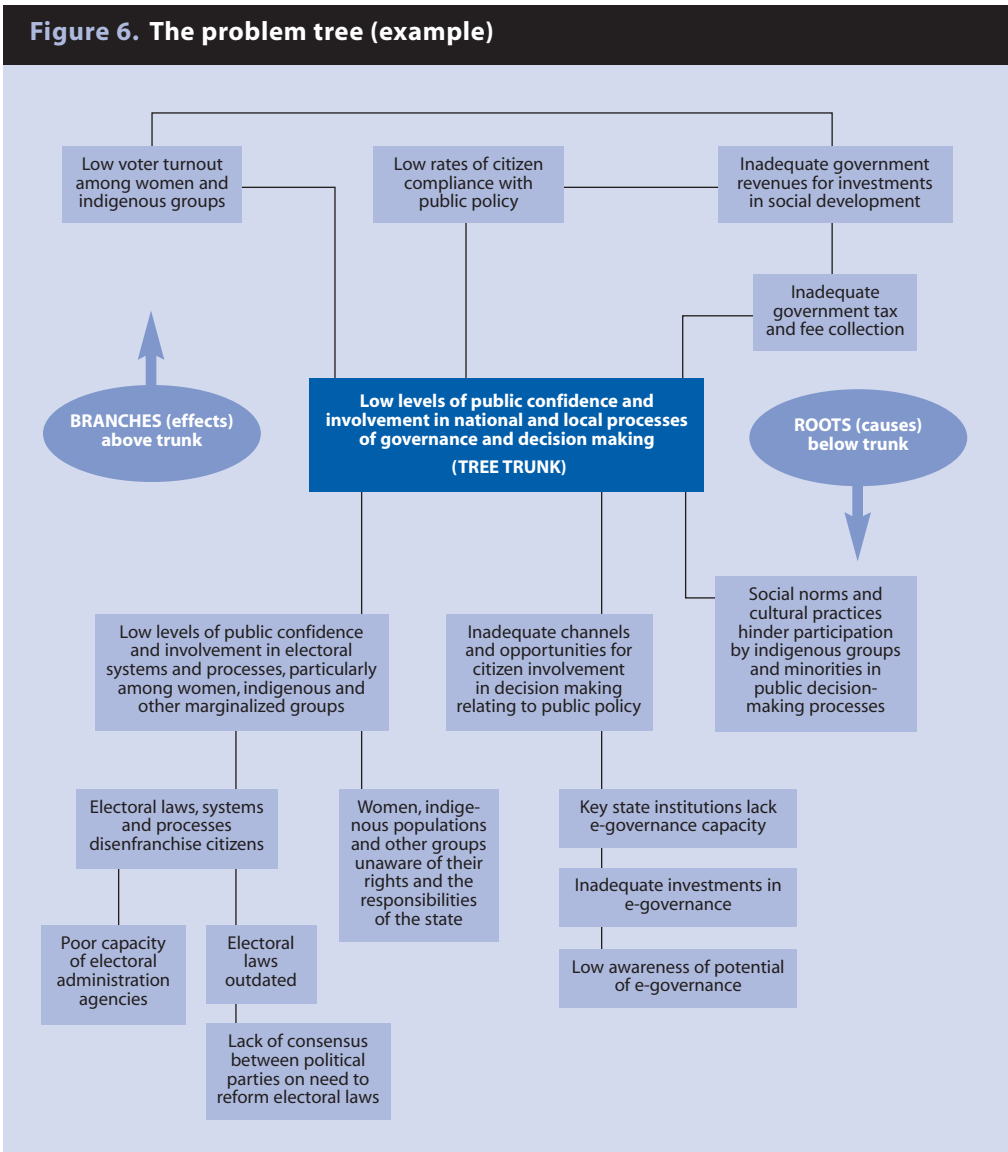
Good results-oriented programming requires that all project-level proposals be subject to a problem analysis to determine whether the stated problem is part of a bigger problem and whether the proposed solution will be adequate to address the challenges. The answers to these questions can sometimes be found, particularly in situations where the projects proposed are within the context of an already designed national programme (such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, UNDAF or country programme). However, in many cases, there will need to be deeper discussions of what the larger problem is and what other actions are needed by different partners to solve that problem. The aim in asking these questions is not to slow down the process of project review and approval but to ensure that problems are analysed properly and appropriate solutions are found. These solutions may involve actions beyond the scope of the specific project. This is one of the differences between a project approach and a results focused approach to development.

15 Development practitioners have come up with a range of other problem analysis models for use with different groups. Where there are major language barriers or differences in education levels, simpler methods may be better suited and equally effective. These generally include using pictures or images, allowing persons to draw, or using simple focus group discussions.

level problem analysis. The main purpose of these models is to study the root **causes** and major **effects** of problems in order to better design solutions. A well constructed cause-effect problem analysis diagram will make the process of developing a results map, covered in step 4, much easier.¹⁶

Using the **problem tree model** to undertake the **problem analysis (deliverable five)**, stakeholders will generally:

- Begin with a major issue or problem that was identified and write it down on the trunk of the problem tree (see Figure 6). For example, one problem identified may



16 The results map is what is sometimes referred to as an ‘outcome model’, ‘logic model’, ‘results chain’, ‘logical framework’, ‘programme model’, etc. At this stage, it is not important which terms are used, as long as the core concepts are properly understood and communicated in the planning process.

be “low levels of public confidence and involvement in national and local processes of governance and decision making.”

- Brainstorm on the major **causes** of the problem. It is often helpful to think in terms of categories of causes, such as policy constraints, institutional constraints, capacity weaknesses, or social or cultural norms.
- Brainstorm the possible causes of the problem by asking “What is causing this to happen?” Stakeholders should try to analyse the issues at a deeper level. They should explore the extent to which the problem has underlying root causes that may be based on exclusion, discrimination and inequality.
- Attach the answers to roots of the tree (see Figure 6).
- For each answer, drill down further by asking “Why has this happened?” Stakeholders should not stop at the first level of a reason or cause, but ask whether there is something else behind that cause.
- Repeat this exercise for each cause identified. Stakeholders should stop when they run out of additional reasons or ideas on what is causing the problem.
- Once the roots of the problem tree are complete, the group should look to see if it provides a good understanding of what has caused the problem. See if there are subcauses that are repeated on different roots. These are likely to be priority concerns to be addressed in the results framework.

In the example in Figure 6, the core problem illustrated on the trunk of the tree in the shaded box, “low levels of public confidence and involvement in national and local processes of governance and decision making,” could be considered a programme-level problem that could be taken up at the UNDAF and UNCT level. Below the trunk, a narrower problem has been identified, “local levels of public confidence and involvement in electoral systems and processes, particularly among women, indigenous and other marginalized groups.” UNDP and partners might address this challenge in the country programme and projects. For illustrative purposes, another lower-level problem has also been identified in the shaded box “social norms and cultural practices hinder participation by minorities in public decision-making processes.” In this case, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or another agency could take up this challenge in their country programme and projects. The choice of which level and type of problem to work on depends on the partners involved, their capacities and comparative advantages, and the resources available. The same steps in the problem analysis apply at all levels.

Stakeholders often find it helpful to also show and discuss the **effects** of the problem. In this case, branches can be created on the problem tree to illustrate how the problem affects the region, country or community. The process involves:

- **Identifying the most direct effects of the problem**—They can be classified using the same categories as were used for the analysis of the causes, such as policy constraints, institutional constraints, capacity weaknesses, or social or cultural norms.

- **Identifying the main indirect effects of the problem**—For example, because of the low levels of public confidence in processes of governance, few people pay their taxes, a direct consequence or effect, which could lead to other indirect problems.
- **Discussing whether the problem affects men and women differently**—Both men and women should have an opportunity to comment during the discussions.
- **Discussing whether particular groups, such as marginalized populations (persons with disabilities, indigenous groups, etc.) are affected**—Asking whether their rights and interests are affected.

In the project tree example, the effects of the higher level problem are captured in the boxes above the trunk. For a lower level (such as project level) tree, the effects would begin with the immediate boxes above the shaded boxes. In both cases, one of the shared effects would be the low voter turn-out among marginalized groups.

The main difference in a problem tree diagram for a programme, as opposed to a project, is that the programme-level diagram would normally have a wider range of root causes than the project-level diagram. In other words, the higher the level of the problem identified, the more causes there are likely to be. For example, in the programme-level tree in Figure 6, the problem is stated as low levels of public confidence and involvement in both governance and decision making. As such, the causes involve problems with not only the electoral processes and systems, but also the capacity of the government to engage citizens through other means. Hence, at this level, there will need to be an analysis of both sets of problems, whereas the project-level analysis would focus on the causes and effects of only the problem related to the electoral process.

Box 8. Note on problem trees

While programme-level problems generally have a wider set of root causes and a more elaborate problem tree, many large or complex projects may also have elaborate problem trees with a wide range of root causes. Even in the cases where a project or lower level problem is the starting point, the analysis should nonetheless lead to the identification of higher level effects of the problem.

Through this process of **looking up** at the problem tree, stakeholders are likely to identify other causes of the effects of the problem and may conclude that the immediate solution to the project-level problem identified may not be adequate to address some of these other causes of the higher level effects. For example, assuming a situation where a project identified weaknesses in the electoral process and systems as a major problem, an identified effect would be the low levels of public confidence in the electoral process. In examining this effect, stakeholders should assess what other factors may be contributing to it. In doing so, they may decide to either undertake a bigger project, or they may seek to influence other partners and non-partners to take other actions to solve the higher level effects.

NOTE The completed problem analysis would provide critical data for the CCA, UNDAF, CPD and CPAP. At the project level, this problem analysis would be done at the beginning of the ‘defining a project’ stage of the UNDP project cycle.

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWING A PROBLEM TREE	YES	NO
✓ We have identified problems and causes that relate to the policy and legislative environment		
✓ We have identified problems and causes that relate to gaps in institutional capacities		
✓ We have identified problems and causes that relate to cultural and social norms		
✓ We have identified problems that affect men, women and marginalized populations, and the rights of different groups		
✓ We can see many layers of causes of the problems we have identified		
✓ We have defined the problems in the broadest terms, looking beyond the issues that individual agencies or stakeholders are concerned with		
✓ We have defined the problems and their causes without initially focusing only on the dimensions that one or more agencies have capacity to address through projects		

STEP 4: CREATING THE VISION OF THE FUTURE (DELIVERABLE SIX—THE VISION STATEMENT)

Based on the problem analysis, stakeholders should engage in a process of formulating solutions. This exercise may simply involve rewording the problems and their causes into positive statements or objectives. However, stakeholders should first engage in a visioning process before rewording the problems. The aim of this process is to visualize what the future would look like if the problems were resolved. The benefits of doing a visioning process before rewording the problems include the following:

- Visioning brings energy to the group. Rather than immediately beginning another detailed process of working on each problem, groups can be energized by thinking positively about what the future would look like if these problems were solved. This exercise encourages creativity and helps ensure that the process is not too analytical and methodical.

TIP It is not necessary for all stakeholders who are involved in a problem analysis and visioning process to have prior knowledge or understanding of the results chain or logical framework model. In fact, **in the initial stages of the process, it can be very useful not to introduce any of the results matrix or logical framework terminologies** (such as outcomes and outputs), as this could result in extensive discussions about the meaning of terms and detract from the main aim of the exercise. In many project settings, especially where there are language barriers or differences in education or skills between members of the group, it may not be necessary to introduce the results matrix and logical framework model. Instead, the process could be approached in a less formal manner to obtain the same information and present it in different forms, including maps, diagrams and pictures.

- The vision of the future may identify additional ideas that would not have emerged if the process was confined to simply rewording problems into positive results.
- Visioning is a good way to engage members of the group who are not relating well to the more structured processes of problem analysis.
- Coming to a shared vision of the future can be a powerful launching pad for collective action.

Vision as the changes we want to see

The objective of the visioning exercise is for stakeholders to come up with a clear, realistic and agreed upon vision of how things will have positively changed in a period of time (normally 5 to 10 years). They should think in terms of how the region, society, community or affected people's lives will have improved within the time period. Good questions to ask are: "If we were successful in dealing with this problem, what would this region/country/community be like in five years?"; "What would have changed?"; "What would we see happening on the ground?"

Stakeholders should re-examine their problem analysis and reflect on what they have come up with. After initial reflections, group members should discuss the situation as it now is, assessing the extent to which the problem analysis represents a true picture of the current reality. After reviewing the current reality, stakeholders should visualize and describe what a better future (development change) would look like.

Once the visioning is complete, stakeholders should articulate their visions in one or more statements or use drawings and images. The vision should be a clear and realistic statement of the future, positive situation. Using the example from the problem tree, the group may develop a vision of a "vibrant democratic society in which all persons, including men, women, youth and minorities, have equal rights and actively

Box 9. Guides to use in visioning

- Do not focus on how the situation will be improved, or what needs to be done to change the current situation.
- Focus instead on what the future would look like: What is different in the community? How have people's lives changed? How have things improved for men? For women? For marginalized groups?
- Looking at this problem (for example, low public confidence and involvement in governance), what should the country be like in five years?
 - In what ways would the lives of women, indigenous and marginalized groups be different?
 - In what ways would government officials and regular citizens behave differently?
 - How have the capacities of people and institutions been strengthened and are they working more effectively?
 - In what ways are men and women relating to each other differently?
 - What else has changed as a result of an improvement in the problem of poor public confidence and involvement in governance?

participate in the political process and in shaping decisions that affect their lives.” The vision can become an important tool for communicating the goals and objectives of the programme or project.

A **vision statement** can be created for each major problem that was identified and analysed. These statements become the **sixth deliverable** in the planning process. Once the broad vision statement is in place, stakeholders should be ready to embark on the next step.

NOTE The vision statement can help in formulating the statements of regional and national goals and priorities in UNDAFs, CPDs, CPAPs, regional programme documents and project documents.

STEP 5: CREATING THE DRAFT RESULTS MAP (DELIVERABLE SEVEN)

This step provides guidance on how to create a draft results map using what is commonly referred to as a ‘results mapping technique’. At the end of the section, the Handbook will illustrate how to convert the map into the specific tabular format used by UNDP.

Developing the draft results map can be time-consuming but is extremely worthwhile. The fundamental question that stakeholders in the planning session should answer is “What must be in place for us to achieve the vision and objectives that we have developed in the particular problem area?”

Creating a set of positive results

A good starting point in creating a results map is to take each major problem identified on the trunk of the problem tree and reword it as the immediate positive result with longer-term positive results or effects. For example, if the problem were stated as “low public confidence and involvement in governance” the immediate positive result could be “greater public confidence and involvement in governance.” This could **lead to** longer term positive results such as “wider citizen participation in elections, particularly by women, indigenous and marginalized populations” and “greater compliance with public policies, particularly taxation policies.”

Likewise, a challenge of “low levels of public confidence and involvement in electoral systems and processes, particularly among women, indigenous and other marginalized groups” could be translated into a positive result such as “greater public confidence and involvement in the electoral process, particularly by women, indigenous and other marginalized groups” **leading to** “higher levels of citizen participation in elections, particularly by women, indigenous and marginalized populations.”

Results should be stated as clearly and concretely as possible. The group should refer back to its vision statement and see if there are additional long-term effects that are desired. These longer term effects should look like a positive rewording of the ‘effects’

identified on the problem tree. They should also be similar to, or form part of, the broader vision statement already developed.

Note that the **first or immediate positive result**, that is, the result derived from restating the major problem identified on the trunk of the problem tree, is the main result that the stakeholders will focus on. (Other stakeholders may focus on some of the higher level results, possibly in a UNDAF or National Development Strategy.)

With this immediate positive result, stakeholders should be able to prepare the map of results. A **results map (sometimes referred to as a results tree)** is essentially the reverse of the problem tree. In some planning exercises, stakeholders create this results map by continuing to reword each problem, cause and effect on the problem tree as a positive result. While this approach works, a more recommended approach involves asking the stakeholders “What must be in place for us to achieve the positive result we have identified?” When groups start with this approach, the process is often more enriching and brings new ideas to the table.

A key principle for developing the results map is working **backwards from the positive result**. Stakeholders should begin with the positive result identified in the step before. This is the statement that sets out what the situation should be once the main problem on the trunk of the tree is solved. The aim is then to map the complete set of lower level results (or conditions or prerequisites) that must be in place before this result can be realized. These are the main tasks for this exercise:

1. Stakeholders should write down both the immediate positive result and all the longer term results of effects that they are trying to achieve. Going back to our example, this positive result could be “greater public confidence and involvement in governance.”
2. Stakeholders should then work backwards and document the major prerequisites and changes needed for this result. For example, using the result above, stakeholders might indicate that in order to achieve this, the country may need to have “greater public confidence in the electoral process and in government,” “increased awareness among the population, and particularly by women and indigenous populations, of their democratic rights and of the responsibilities of the state,” “improved capacity of the state electoral machinery to administer elections in a free and fair manner,” “changes to government policy to make it easier for women and indigenous groups to exercise their democratic rights,” “greater acceptance, tolerance and respect for minorities and indigenous populations,” and so forth. **Stakeholders should compare these conditions and prerequisites with the set of underlying causes identified on the problem tree. The conditions should read like a solution to those causes or should be closely related to them. Note that while they should be closely related, they may not always be the same.**
3. Next, stakeholders should document other lower level prerequisites that are needed for the first set of changes and conditions to be in place. For example, in order to have “improved capacity of the state electoral machinery to administer elections” there may need to be “bi-partisan consensus between the major political

parties to improve electoral laws and the administration of the electoral system.” These lower level results should be closely related to the lower level causes identified on the problem tree.

4. Stakeholders should note that these prerequisites are not actions that UNDP or any one group of stakeholders need to take, but rather the set of key things that must be in place. The question should be phrased as “If the country were successful in achieving this positive result we have identified, what would we see happening in the country or on the ground?”, not “What should be done by UNDP or the government?”
5. Once the various prerequisite intermediate changes have been identified, stakeholders should then identify the interventions that are necessary to achieve them. At this point, only general interventions are necessary, not their implementation details. For example, “bi-partisan consensus on the need for reform of electoral laws and systems” may require “training and awareness programme for key parliamentarians on global practices and trends in electoral reform and administration” or “major advocacy programme aimed at fostering bi-partisan consensus.” Likewise, a result relating to increased awareness of women, indigenous populations and other marginalized groups may require a mass-media communication programme, an advocacy initiative targeted at specific stakeholders, and so forth.
6. Throughout the process, stakeholders should think critically about specific interventions that may be needed to address the different needs of men, women and marginalized groups.

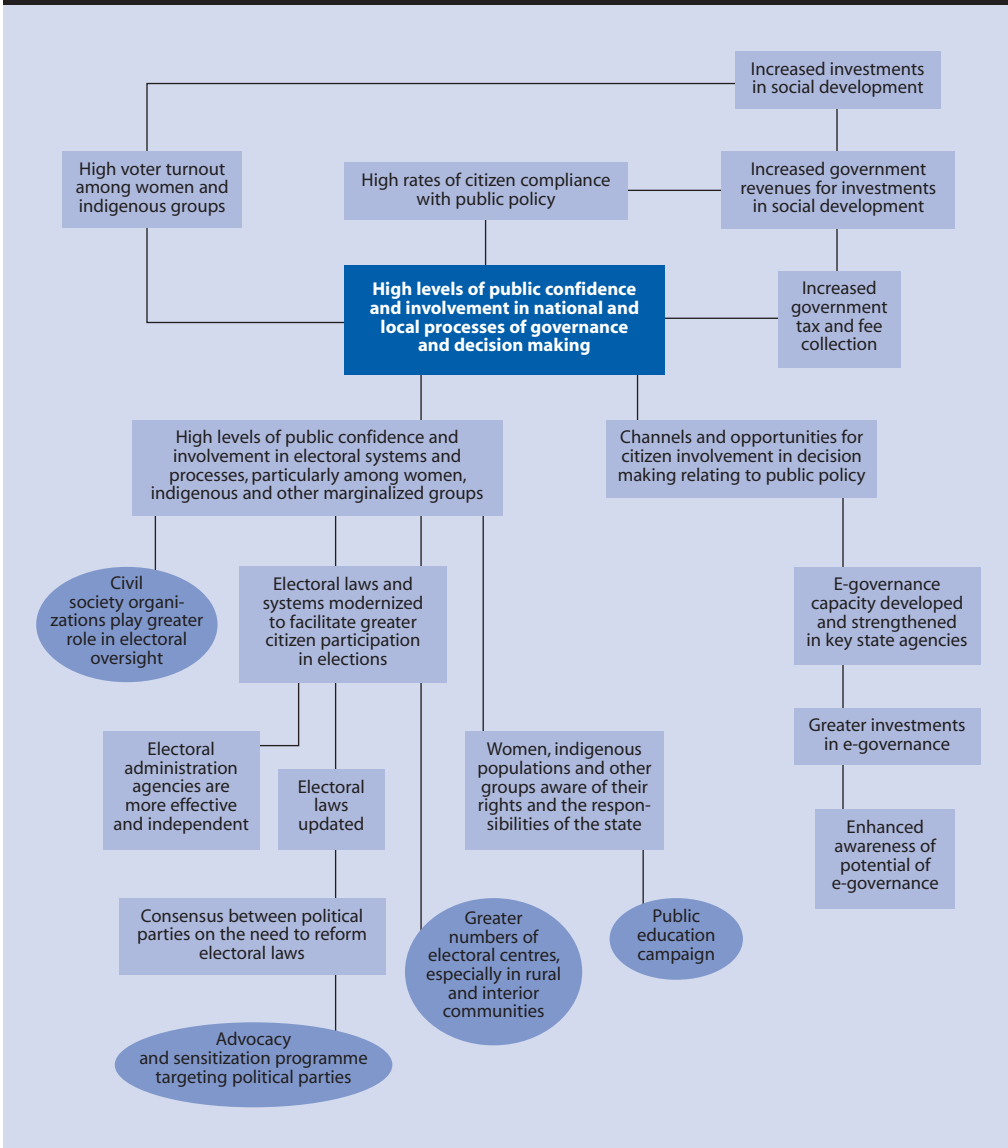
Stakeholders should be aware that the results map may need more thought and narrative documentation over time. In addition, the results map may change as stakeholders gain new information or more understanding about how the programme works or as they begin the implementation process. Therefore, the group should be open to revisiting and revising the map.

These maps initially avoid the traditional input-to-output-to-outcome linear tables, which tend to confine discussion to an agency’s specific outputs. In this model, the process focuses on all the things that need to be in place, irrespective of who needs to produce them. Returning to our example, a basic results map may look like Figure 7.

In this example, stakeholders have begun to identify additional ‘things’ that must be in place (oval-shaped boxes), some of which could be developed as projects.

TIP While lower level conditions or interventions are often referred to as outputs, every effort should be made not to label them as such at this stage of the exercise. If labeled as outputs or projects, the tendency will be to concentrate discussions on which agency or partner can produce the outputs, rather than on what needs to be in place, irrespective of whether there is existing capacity to produce it.

Figure 7. Basic results map (example)



Box 10. Results map tips

- Developing a results map is a team sport. The temptation is for one person to do it so that time is saved, but this can be ineffective in the long run.
- Time needs to be taken to develop the map. The more care taken during this phase, the easier the job of monitoring and evaluation becomes later on.
- In developing the map, focus should be on thinking through what needs to be on the ground in order to impact the lives of people. The exercise is not intended to be an academic exercise but rather one grounded in real changes that can improve people's lives—including men, women and marginalized groups.

In developing these models, stakeholders should consider not only the contributions (interventions, programmes and outputs) of UNDP, but also those of its partners and **non-partners**. This type of model can be extremely useful at the monitoring and evaluation stages, as it helps to capture some of the assumptions that went into designing the programmes. The draft results map is the **seventh deliverable** in the process.

NOTE The completed results map would provide critical data for the UNDP 'defining a programme or project' phase of the programme and project cycle.

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWING A RESULTS MAP	YES	NO
✓ We have identified results that relate to addressing policy and legislative constraints		
✓ We have identified results that relate to addressing gaps in institutional capacities		
✓ We have identified results that relate to addressing relevant cultural and social norms		
✓ We have identified results to improve the condition of men, women and marginalized groups		
✓ We have identified results that address the rights of different groups in society		
✓ We can see many layers of results		
✓ We have defined the results in broad terms, looking beyond the specific contribution of individual agencies or stakeholders		
✓ The results map provides us with a picture of the broad range of actions that will be needed (including advocacy and soft support) and does not only focus on projects or tangible outputs		
✓ The results map shows us where action will be needed by both partners and non-partners in our effort		

Identify unintended outcomes or effects and risks and assumptions

While elaborating the results map, stakeholders should note that sometimes well intentioned actions may lead to negative results. Additionally, there may be risks that could prevent the planned results from being achieved. Therefore, it is necessary to devote time to thinking through the various assumptions, risks and possible unintended effects or outcomes.

Assumptions

Assumptions are normally defined as “the necessary and positive conditions that allow for a successful cause-and-effect relationship between different levels of results.” This means that when stakeholders think about the positive changes they would like to see and map the prerequisites for these changes, they are assuming that **once those things are in place the results will be achieved**. When a results map is being developed, there will always be these assumptions. The question to ask is: “If we say that having X in place should lead to Y, what are we assuming?” For example, if stakeholders say that having “high levels of public confidence and involvement in governance and decision making” should lead to “higher levels of voter turnout in elections particularly among marginalized and indigenous groups,” then stakeholders should ask, “What are we assuming?” or “Under what conditions should this happen?” Often the assumptions relate to the context within which stakeholders will work towards the desired results. In many situations, interventions are designed assuming the government will take action or allocate resources to support achievement of results. There is often a general assumption of continued social, economic and political stability within the programme’s environment.

Stating assumptions enrich programme design by identifying additional results or inputs that should be included. They also help identify risks. Assumptions may be internal or external to UNDP and the particular programme. When an assumption fails to hold, results may be compromised (see Figure 8).

The assumptions that are made at the lowest levels of the results map can be expected to come true in most cases. For example, if stakeholders had stated that having “a good mass-media communication programme” and “an advocacy initiative targeted at specific stakeholders” should result in “increased awareness of women, indigenous populations, and other marginalized groups,” they may have assumed that sufficient resources would be mobilized by the partners to implement communication and awareness programmes.

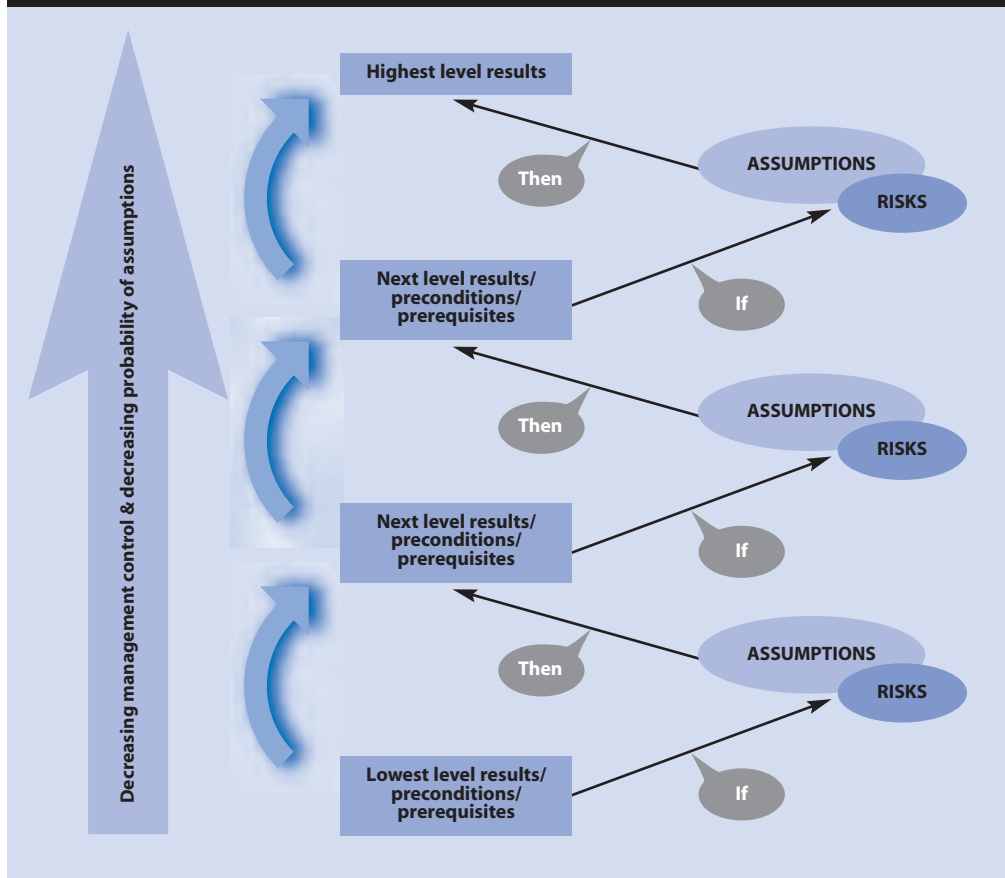
A different example is a situation where the result of “high levels of public confidence and involvement in governance and decision making” was expected to lead to “higher voter turnout.” The stakeholders in this situation may have assumed that sufficient budgetary resources would be allocated to constructing voting centres and improving roads used by rural marginalized populations to get to voting centres.

It could be argued that the assumption in the first example of being able to mobilize resources for the communication and advocacy campaigns is more probable than the assumption in the second example relating to the higher level result. This is because stakeholders usually have a higher level of influence on the lower level results and assumptions.

Additional examples of assumptions include the following:

- Priorities will remain unchanged over the planning period
- The political roundtable agreement for bi-partisan consensus will be adopted as expected

Figure 8. Assumptions and risks



- Political, economic and social stability in the country or region
- Planned budget allocations to support the electoral process are actually made
- Resource mobilization targets for interventions are achieved

At this stage, stakeholders should review their results map and, for each level result, ask: “What are we assuming will happen for this result to lead to the next higher result?” The list of assumptions generated should be written on the results map.

TIP Though stakeholders will focus most of their effort on achieving the positive result that they have developed, they must remain aware of the longer term vision and changes that they want to see. The assumptions stage is generally a good time to ask: “If we achieve the positive result we have identified, will we in fact see the longer term benefits or effects that we want?” and “What are we assuming?” In this process of thinking through the assumptions being made about the context, environment and actions that partners and non-partners should take, useful ideas may emerge that could inform advocacy and other efforts aimed at encouraging action by others.

Risks

Risks are potential events or occurrences beyond the control of the programme that could adversely affect the achievement of results. While risks are outside the direct control of the government or UNDP, steps can be taken to mitigate their effects. Risks should be assessed in terms of probability (likelihood to occur) and potential impact. Should they occur, risks may trigger the reconsideration of the overall programme and its direction. Risks are similar to assumptions in that the question stakeholders ask is: “What might happen to prevent us from achieving the results?” However, risks are not simply the negative side of an assumption. The assumption relates to a condition that should be in place for the programme to go ahead, and the probability of this condition occurring should be high. For example, in one country there could be an assumption that there will be no decrease in government spending for the programme. This should be the assumption if the stakeholders believe that the probability that there will not be a decrease is high. Risks, however, relate to the possibility of external negative events occurring that could jeopardize the success of the programme. There should be a moderate to high probability that the risks identified will occur. For example, in another country stakeholders could identify a risk of government spending being cut due to a drought, which may affect government revenue. The probability of the spending cut occurring should be moderate to high based on what is known.

Risk examples include the following:

- Ethnic tensions rise, leading to hostilities particularly against minorities
- Result of local government elections leads to withdrawal of political support for the electoral reform agenda
- Planned merger of the Department of the Interior and Office of the Prime Minister leads to deterioration of support for gender equality strategies and programmes
- Project manager leaves, leading to significant delays in project implementation (this type of risk could come during the project implementation stage)

Stakeholders should therefore again review their results map and try to identify any important risks that could affect the achievement of results. These risks should be noted beside the assumptions for each level of result.

The checklist on the following page can assist in reviewing risks and assumptions.

Unintended outcomes

Programmes and projects can lead to unintended results or consequences. These are another form of risk. They are not risks that a programme’s or project’s activities will not happen, but are risks that they will happen and may lead to undesirable results.

Once the results, assumptions and risks are in place, stakeholders should discuss and document any possible unintended results or consequences. The discussion should

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR VALIDATING ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS	YES	NO
✓ The assumed condition is outside the control of the programme or project		
✓ The assumed condition is necessary for programme success.		
✓ The assumed condition is not a result that could be included in the results framework		
✓ There is a high probability that the assumption will hold true		
✓ The assumption is specific and verifiable—its status can be checked by calling partners or donors		
✓ The assumption is stated as if it is actually the case		
✓ The risk is clearly beyond the control of the programme		
✓ The risk is NOT simply the negative restating of an assumption		
✓ The consequences of the risk are sufficiently grave as to pose a serious threat to overall programme success		
✓ There is a moderate to high probability that the risk may occur		

centre around the actions that may be necessary to ensure that those unintended results do not occur. This may require other small adjustments to the results map—such as the addition of other conditions, prerequisites or interventions. It is not necessary to put the unintended results on the map itself.

Box 11. An unintended result: “Our husbands weren’t ready for these changes”

In one country, an evaluation was conducted on a programme designed to train and provide capital to women micro-entrepreneurs. The programme was part of a broader strategy aimed at fostering women’s empowerment through increased income and livelihood opportunities. The evaluation found that the intended results were achieved: The training and micro-enterprise programme were successful and women who participated in the programme saw an increase in self-employment and income. Moreover, the women felt more empowered to make decisions for themselves and within their households.

However, the evaluation also found that many of the women were unhappy at the end of the programme, as there had been an increase in marital and partner problems and a few relationships had ended as a result of the changes in the women’s empowerment. Some of the women reported that their partners were not prepared for these changes and did not know how to relate to them. They suggested that maybe these problems could have been less had there been some counseling provided to their partners at the beginning and during the programme to better prepare them for the coming changes.

2.4 FINALIZING THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (DELIVERABLE EIGHT)

At this stage of the process, stakeholders should be ready to begin converting the results map into a results framework. In many situations, a smaller group of stakeholders are engaged in this undertaking. However, the wider group can participate in preparing a rough draft of the framework, using simple techniques and without going into the details and mechanics of RBM terminologies.

CREATING THE DRAFT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Table 5 provides a starting point for converting the results map into a draft framework for UNCT and UNDP programme and project documents. It shows how to translate some of the general terms and questions used in the planning session into the common programming language used by UNCTs and UNDP. The table can be used to produce an **initial draft** of the results framework with all or most stakeholders. It can be particularly helpful at the project level or in situations involving a diverse group of stakeholders.

Table 5. Rough guide for creating an initial draft of the results framework

Questions and General Terminologies	Equivalent UNDP RBM Terminology
<p>Terms such as: vision, goal, objective, longer term outcome, long-term results</p> <p>Questions such as: What are we trying to achieve? Why are we working on this problem? What is our overall goal?</p>	Impact
<p>Terms such as: first, positive result or immediate result, prerequisites, short- and medium-term results</p> <p>Questions such as: Where do we want to be in five years? What are the most immediate things we are trying to change? What are the things that must be in place first before we can achieve our goals and have an impact?</p>	Outcome
<p>Terms such as: interventions, programmes</p> <p>Questions such as: What are the things that need to be produced or provided through projects or programmes for us to achieve our short- to medium-term results? What are the things that different stakeholders must provide?</p>	Outputs
<p>Terms such as: actions</p> <p>Questions such as: What needs to be done to produce these outputs?</p>	Activities
<p>Terms such as: measure, performance measurement, performance standard</p> <p>Questions such as: How will we know if we are on track to achieve what we have planned?</p>	Indicators ¹⁷
<p>Terms such as: data sources, evidence</p> <p>Questions such as: What precise information do we need to measure our performance? How will we obtain this information? How much will it cost? Can the information be monitored?</p>	Means of verification ¹⁷

¹⁷ Because of the relative complexity, we have not introduced indicators and means of verification up to this point, so it would not be necessary to have the sections for indicators and means of verification filled in for the draft results framework.

FORMULATING STRONG RESULTS AND INDICATORS

Having a smaller group of persons with greater familiarity with RBM terminologies usually helps when undertaking this task. This is because it may be difficult to make progress with a large group given the technicalities involved in articulating the results framework. However, when using a smaller group, the information should be shared with the wider group for review and validation. In doing this, exercise stakeholders should:

- Use a version of Table 6.
- Refer to the guidance below on formulating the various components of the framework.
- Complete a table for each major result. Each major result (outcome) may have one or more related impacts. The expected impacts should be filled in for each major result (outcome). Likewise each outcome will have one or more outputs and so forth.

Good quality results—that is, well formulated impacts, outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators of progress—are crucial for proper monitoring and evaluation. If results are unclear and indicators are absent or poorly formulated, monitoring and evaluating progress will be challenging, making it difficult for staff and managers to know how well plans are progressing and when to take corrective actions.

The RBM terms used in this section are the harmonized terms of the UNDG, and are in line with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) definitions.

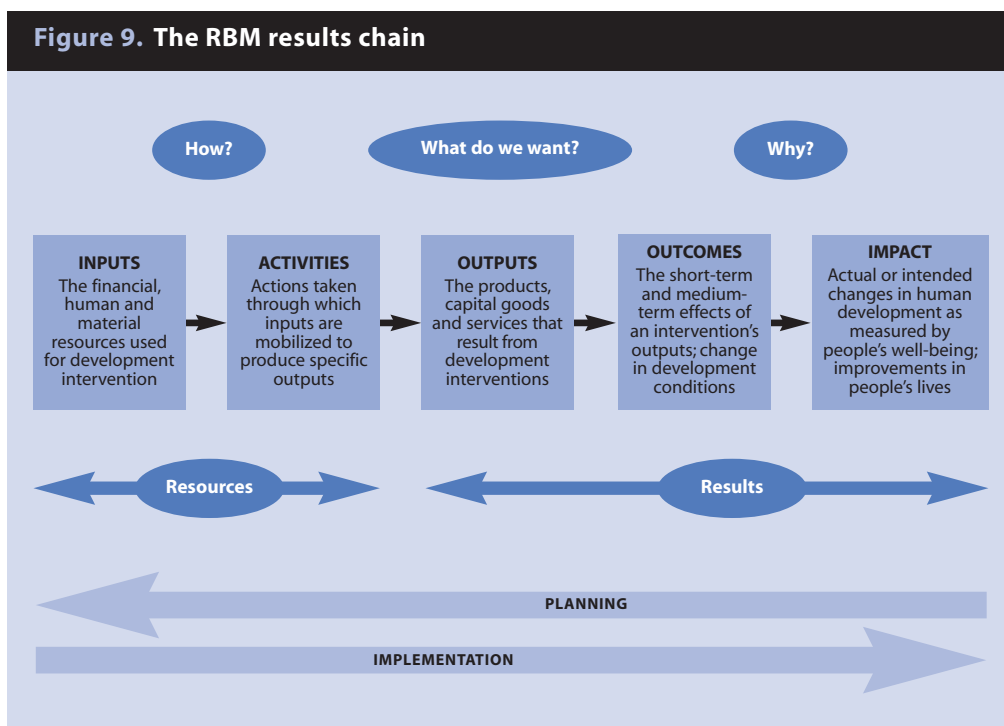
Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Risks & Assumptions
Impact statement <i>(Ultimate benefits for target population)</i>	Measure of progress against impact				Assumptions made from outcome to impact. Risks that impact will not be achieved.
Outcome statement <i>(Short- to medium-term change in development situation)</i>	Measure of progress against outcome				Assumptions made from outputs to outcome. Risks that outcome will not be achieved.
Outputs <i>(Products and services—tangible and intangible—delivered or provided)</i>	Measure of progress against output				Assumptions made from activities to outputs. Risks that outputs may not be produced.
Activities <i>(Tasks undertaken in order to produce research outputs)</i>	Milestones or key targets for production of outputs				Preconditions for implementation of activities.

RESULTS AND RESULTS CHAIN

The planning exercise up to this point should have led to the creation of many results and an overall results map. These results and the results map can be converted into a results chain and results framework using the standard RBM approach and terminologies.

First, a ‘result’ is defined as a describable or measurable development change resulting from a cause-and-effect relationship. Different levels of results seek to capture different development changes. The planning exercise (see Section 2.3) led to the creation of various results that were labeled as visions, effects, results, preconditions, prerequisites, interventions and so on. In the traditional RBM approach, these results are linked together into what is commonly referred to as a results chain. The results chain essentially tells us what stakeholders want to achieve, why they want to achieve it and how they will go about it. This is not very different from the results map. Now we will convert those results into more specific RBM language and begin to add performance measures to them.

As shown in the draft results framework (Table 5), the vision and longer term goals developed in the results mapping exercise are the impacts that will appear in the results framework, the immediate positive results and some of their preconditions and prerequisites will appear as outcomes, lower-level prerequisites will appear as outputs, and so on. These can be shown in the format of a results chain where the lowest level prerequisites are labeled as inputs and the highest as impacts, as illustrated in Figure 9.



FORMULATING THE IMPACT STATEMENT

Impacts are actual or intended changes in human development as measured by people's well-being. Impacts generally capture changes in people's lives.

The completion of activities tells us little about changes in development conditions or in the lives of people. It is the results of these activities that are significant. Impact refers to the 'big picture' changes being sought and represents the **underlying goal** of development work. In the process of planning, it is important to frame planned interventions or outputs within a context of their desired impact. Without a clear vision of what the programme or project hopes to achieve, it is difficult to clearly define results. An impact statement explains why the work is important and can inspire people to work toward a future to which their activities contribute.

Similar to outcomes, an impact statement should ideally use a verb expressed in the past tense, such as 'improved', 'strengthened', 'increased', 'reversed' or 'reduced'. They are used in relation to the global, regional, national or local **social, economic and political conditions** in which people live. Impacts are normally formulated to communicate substantial and direct changes in these conditions over the long term—such as reduction in poverty and improvements in people's health and welfare, environmental conditions or governance. The MDG and other international, regional and national indicators are generally used to track progress at the impact level.

Using the example from the results map (Section 2.3, step 5), some of the longer term impacts could be "increased public participation in national and local elections, particularly by women, indigenous populations and other traditionally marginalized groups" and "strengthened democratic processes and enhanced participation by all citizens in decisions that affect their lives." These impacts would be part of the broader vision of a more vibrant and democratic society.

FORMULATING THE OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcomes are actual or intended changes in development conditions that interventions are seeking to support.

Outcomes describe the intended changes in development conditions that result from the interventions of governments and other stakeholders, including international development agencies such as UNDP. They are medium-term development results created through the delivery of outputs and the contributions of various partners and non-partners. Outcomes provide a clear vision of what has changed or will change globally or in a particular region, country or community within a period of time. They normally relate to **changes in institutional performance or behaviour** among individuals or groups. Outcomes cannot normally be achieved by only one agency and are not under the direct control of a project manager.

Since outcomes occupy the middle ground between outputs and impact, it is possible to define outcomes with differing levels of ambition. For this reason, some documents may refer to immediate, intermediate and longer term outcomes, or short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. The United Nations uses two linked outcome level results that reflect different levels of ambition:

- UNDAF outcomes
- Agency or country programme outcomes

UNDAF outcomes are the strategic, high-level results expected from UN system cooperation with government and civil society. They are highly ambitious, nearing impact-level change. UNDAF outcomes are produced by the combined effects of the lower-level, country programme outcomes. They usually require contribution by two or more agencies working closely together with their government and civil society partners.

Country programme outcomes are usually the result of programmes of cooperation or larger projects of individual agencies and their national partners. The achievement of country programme outcomes depends on the commitment and action of partners.

When formulating an outcome statement to be included in a UNDP programme document, managers and staff are encouraged to specify these outcomes at a level where UNDP and its partners (and non-partners) can have a reasonable degree of influence. In other words, if the national goals reflect changes at a national level, and the UNDAF outcomes exist as higher level and strategic development changes, then the outcomes in UNDP programme documents should reflect the comparative advantage of and be stated at a level where it is possible to show that the UNDP contribution can reasonably help influence the achievement of the outcome. For example, in a situation where UNDP is supporting the government and other stakeholders in improving the capacity of the electoral administration agency to better manage elections, outcomes should not be stated as “improved national capacities” to perform the stated functions, but rather “improved capacities of the electoral administration bodies” to do those functions. “Improved national capacity” may imply that all related government ministries and agencies have improved capacity and may even imply that this capacity is also improved within non-government bodies. If this was indeed the intention, then “improved national capacities” could be an accurate outcome. However, the general rule is that government and UNDP programme outcomes should be fairly specific in terms of what UNDP is contributing, while being broad enough to capture the efforts of other partners and non-partners working towards that specific change.

An outcome statement should ideally use a verb expressed in the past tense, such as ‘improved’, ‘strengthened’ or ‘increased’, in relation to a global, regional, national or local process or institution. An outcome should not be stated as “UNDP support provided to Y” or “technical advice provided in support of Z,” but should specify the result of UNDP efforts and that of other stakeholders for the people of that country.

- An outcome statement should avoid phrases such as “to assist/support/develop/monitor/identify/follow up/prepare X or Y.”
- Similarly, an outcome should not describe how it will be achieved and should avoid phrases such as “improved through” or “supported by means of.”

Figure 10. SMART outcomes and impacts

S	Specific: Impacts and outcomes and outputs must use change language—they must describe a specific future condition
M	Measurable: Results, whether quantitative or qualitative, must have measurable indicators, making it possible to assess whether they were achieved or not
A	Achievable: Results must be within the capacity of the partners to achieve
R	Relevant: Results must make a contribution to selected priorities of the national development framework
T	Time-bound: Results are never open-ended—there is an expected date of accomplishment

- An outcome should be measurable using indicators. It is important that the formulation of the outcome statement takes into account the need to measure progress in relation to the outcome and to verify when it has been achieved. The outcome should therefore be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).
- An outcome statement should ideally communicate a change in institutional or individual behaviour or quality of life for people—however modest that change may be.

The following illustrate different levels of outcomes:

- Policy, legal and regulatory framework reformed to substantially expand connectivity to information and communication technologies (short to medium term)
- Increased access of the poor to financial products and services in rural communities (medium to long term)
- Reduction in the level of domestic violence against women in five provinces by 2014 (medium to long term)
- Increased volume of regional and subregional trade by 2015 (medium to long term)

Using the previous elections example, the outcome at the country programme level may be “enhanced electoral management systems and processes to support free and fair elections” or “electoral administrative policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups.”

FORMULATING THE OUTPUT STATEMENT

Outputs are short-term development results produced by project and non-project activities. They must be achieved with the resources provided and within the time-frame specified (usually less than five years).

Since outputs are the most immediate results of programme or project activities, they are usually within the greatest control of the government, UNDP or the project

manager. It is important to define outputs that are likely to make a significant contribution to achievement of the outcomes.

In formulating outputs, the following questions should be addressed:

- What kind of policies, guidelines, agreements, products and services do we need in order to achieve a given outcome?
- Are they attainable and within our direct control?
- Do these outputs reflect an appropriate strategy for attaining the outcome? Is there a proper cause and effect relationship?
- Do we need any additional outputs to mitigate potential risks that may prevent us from reaching the outcome?
- Is the output SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound?

It is important to bear in mind:

- Outputs must be deliverable within the respective programming cycle.
- Typically, more than one output is needed to obtain an outcome.
- If the result is mostly beyond the control or influence of the programme or project, it cannot be an output.

Outputs generally include a **noun** that is qualified by a *verb* describing positive change. For example:

- **Study of environment-poverty linkages** *completed*
- **Police forces and judiciary** *trained* in understanding gender violence
- **National, participatory forum** *convened* to discuss draft national anti-poverty strategy
- **National human development report** *produced* and *disseminated*

Returning to our example, there could be a number of outputs related to the outcome “electoral management policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups.” Outputs could include:

- **Advocacy campaign** aimed at building consensus on need for electoral law and system reform *developed* and *implemented*
- Systems and procedures *implemented* and competencies *developed* in the **national electoral management agency** to administer free and fair elections
- **Training programme** on use of new electoral management technology *designed* and *implemented* for staff of electoral management authority
- **Revised draft legislation on rights of women and indigenous populations to participate in elections** *prepared*
- **Electoral dispute resolution mechanism** *established*

FORMULATING THE ACTIVITIES

Activities describe the actions that are needed to obtain the stated outputs. They are the coordination, technical assistance and training tasks organized and executed by project personnel.

In an RBM context, carrying out or completing a programme or project activity does not constitute a development result. Activities relate to the processes involved in generating tangible goods and services or outputs, which in turn contribute to outcomes and impacts.

In formulating activities the following questions should be addressed:

- What actions are needed in order to obtain the output?
- Will the combined number of actions ensure that the output is produced?
- What resources (inputs) are necessary to undertake these activities?

It is important to bear in mind:

- Activities usually provide quantitative information and they may indicate periodicity of the action.
- Typically, more than one activity is needed to achieve an output.

Activities generally start with a *verb* and describe an activity or action. Using our example, activities could include:

- *Provide* technical assistance by experts in the area of electoral law reform
- *Develop* and deliver training and professional development programmes for staff
- *Organize* workshops and seminars on electoral awareness
- *Publish* newsletters and pamphlets on electoral rights of women and minorities
- *Procure* equipment and supplies for Electoral Management Authority
- *Engage* consultants to draft revised electoral laws

FORMULATING INPUTS

Inputs are essentially the things that must be put in or invested in order for activities to take place.

Though not dealt with in detail in this manual, inputs are also part of the results chain. Inputs include the time of staff, stakeholders and volunteers; money; consultants; equipment; technology; and materials. The general tendency is to use money as the main input, as it covers the cost of consultants, staff, materials, and so forth. However, in the early stages of planning, effort should be spent on identifying the various resources needed before converting them into monetary terms.

The guidance above should help to prepare the first column ('results') in the results framework.

Table 7. The 'results' sections of the results framework

Results
Impact statement <i>Ultimate benefits for target population</i>
Outcome statement <i>Short to medium-term change in development situation</i> Normally more than one outcome will be needed to attain the impact
Outputs <i>Products and services (tangible/intangible) delivered or provided</i> Normally more than one output will be needed to achieve the outcome
Activities <i>Tasks undertaken in order to produce research outputs</i> Each output normally has a number of activities

Box 12. Note on results framework

The results framework can be completed with all the outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs that the stakeholders have identified. However, in many cases, a more limited framework showing only the specific outcomes and outputs related to a particular agency (such as UNDP) and its partners will be needed to satisfy internal requirements. In these cases where a more focused results framework is created, every effort should be made to show information on the broader agenda of actions being pursued and the partners and non-partners working towards achieving the overall outcomes and impacts in the narrative of the wider strategy document (such as the UNDAF; the global, regional or country programme action plan; or the project document). The strategy document should not be confined to only what the agency will produce. It should instead show how the efforts of different stakeholders will contribute to the achievement of the common overall vision and intended impacts. This will also aid the monitoring and evaluation processes.

FORMULATING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicators are signposts of change along the path to development. They describe the way to track intended results and are critical for monitoring and evaluation.

Good performance indicators are a critical part of the results framework. In particular, indicators can help to:

- Inform decision making for ongoing programme or project management
- Measure progress and achievements, as understood by the different stakeholders
- Clarify consistency between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts
- Ensure legitimacy and accountability to all stakeholders by demonstrating progress
- Assess project and staff performance¹⁸

18 UNDP, 'RBM in UNDP: Selecting Indicators', 2002, p 3.

Indicators may be used at any point along the results chain of activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, but must always directly relate to the result being measured. Some important points include the following:

- **Who** sets indicators is fundamental, not only to ownership and transparency but also to the effectiveness of the indicators. Setting objectives and indicators should be a participatory process.
- A **variety** of indicator types is more likely to be effective. The demand for objective verification may mean that focus is given to the quantitative or simplistic at the expense of indicators that are harder to verify but may better capture the essence of the change taking place.
- The fewer the indicators the better. Measuring change is costly so use as few indicators as possible. However, there must be indicators in sufficient number to measure the breadth of changes happening and to provide cross-checking.

Box 13. Note on performance indicators

A frequent weakness seen in formulating indicators is the tendency to use general and purely quantitative indicators that measure number or percentage of something, for example, “number of new policies passed.” These are often weak indicators as they merely communicate that something has happened but not whether what has happened is an important measure of the objective. For example, take a situation where an audit report finds 10 weaknesses in a business unit, 3 of which are considered serious and the other 7 routine. If the 7 routine issues were dealt with, an indicator that measures performance as “number or percentage of recommendations acted on” may capture the fact that some action has been taken but not convey a sense of whether these are the important actions.

In general, indicators should direct focus to **what is critical**. For example, there could be different ways of measuring whether an outcome relating to greater **commitment** by government partners to HIV/AIDS concerns is being realized.

Examine the following indicator: “**Number of government ministries that have an HIV/AIDS sector strategy.**”

Now compare it with another quantitative indicator such as: “**Number of government ministries that have an HIV/AIDS sector strategy developed in consultation with non-governmental stakeholders.**”

And further compare it with a possible **qualitative** indicator: “**Number of government ministries that have a strong HIV/AIDS sector strategy.**”

Measured by:

- Strategy was developed in **consultation** with non-government stakeholders (X points)
- Ministry’s **senior officials** involved in strategy development and implementation processes (X points)
- Ministry has in place a **budget** to finance implementation of strategy (X points)

In the first case, a strategy could have been designed with no stakeholder involvement, no senior management engagement and no budget. Simply counting the number of ministries that have done this would not be a measure of real progress against the outcome that deals with the real commitment of the government partners.

Box 14. SMART indicators

Specific: Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the results?

Measurable: Is the indicator a reliable and clear measure of results?

Attainable: Are the results in which the indicator seeks to chart progress realistic?

Relevant: Is the indicator relevant to the intended outputs and outcomes?

Time-bound: Are data available at reasonable cost and effort?

The process of formulating indicators should begin with the following questions:

- How can we measure that the expected results are being achieved?
- What type of information can demonstrate a positive change?
- What can be feasibly monitored with given resource and capacity constraints?
- Will timely information be available for the different monitoring exercises?
- What will the system of data collection be and who will be responsible?
- Can national systems be used or augmented?
- Can government indicators be used?¹⁹

Quantitative and qualitative indicators

Indicators can either be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative indicators are statistical measures that measure results in terms of:

- Number
- Percentage
- Rate (example: birth rate—births per 1,000 population)
- Ratio (example: sex ratio—number of males per number of females)

Qualitative indicators reflect people's judgements, opinions, perceptions and attitudes towards a given situation or subject. They can include changes in sensitivity, satisfaction, influence, awareness, understanding, attitudes, quality, perception, dialogue or sense of well-being.

Qualitative indicators measure results in terms of:

- Compliance with...
- Quality of...
- Extent of...
- Level of ...

Note that in the example used in Box 13 on the commitment of government partners, subindicators are being used to assess the **quality** of the strategy, "Did it benefit from

19 OCHA, 'Guidelines: Results-Oriented Planning & Monitoring', 2007, p. 11.

the involvement of other stakeholders?"; **the extent** of senior management engagement; and the **level of** commitment, "Is there also a budget in place?"

As far as possible, indicators should be disaggregated. Averages tend to hide disparities, and recognizing disparities is essential for programming to address the special needs of groups such as women, indigenous groups and marginalized populations. Indicators can be disaggregated by sex, age, geographic area and ethnicity, among other things.

The key to good indicators is credibility—not volume of data or precision in measurement. Large volumes of data can confuse rather than bring focus and a quantitative observation is no more inherently objective than a qualitative observation. An indicator's suitability depends on how it relates to the result it intends to describe.

Proxy indicators

In some instances, data will not be available for the most suitable indicators of a particular result. In these situations, stakeholders should use proxy indicators. Proxy indicators are a less direct way of measuring progress against a result.

For example, take the outcome: "improved capacity of local government authorities to deliver solid waste management services in an effective and efficient manner." Some possible **direct** indicators could include:

- Hours of down time (out-of-service time) of solid waste vehicle fleet due to maintenance and other problems
- Percentage change in number of households serviced weekly
- Percentage change in number of commercial properties serviced weekly
- Percentage of on-time pick-ups of solid waste matter in [specify] region within last six-month period

Assuming no system is in place to track these indicators, a possible **proxy or indirect indicator** could be:

- A survey question capturing the percentage of clients satisfied with the quality and timeliness of services provided by the solid waste management service. (The agency may find it easier to undertake a survey than to introduce the systems to capture data for the more direct indicators.)

The assumption is that if client surveys show increased satisfaction, then it may be reasonable to assume some improvements in services. However, this may not be the case, which is why the indicator is seen as a proxy, rather than a direct measure of the improvement.

Similarly, in the absence of reliable data on corruption in countries, many development agencies use the information from surveys that capture the perception of corruption by many national and international actors as a proxy indicator.

In the Human Development Index, UNDP and other UN organizations use 'life expectancy' as a proxy indicator for health care and living conditions. The assumption is that if people live longer, then it is reasonable to assume that health care and living conditions have improved. Real gross domestic product/capita (purchasing power parity) is also used in the same indicator as a proxy indicator for disposable income.

Levels of indicators

Different types of indicators are required to assess progress towards results. Within the RBM framework, UNDP uses three types of indicators:

- Impact indicators
- Outcome indicators
- Output indicators

Impact indicators describe the changes in people’s lives and development conditions at global, regional and national levels. In the case of community-level initiatives, impact indicators can describe such changes at the subnational and community levels. They provide a broad picture of whether the development changes that matter to people and UNDP are actually occurring. In the context of country-level planning (CPD), impact indicators are often at the UNDAF and MDG levels, and often appear in the UNDAF results framework. Impact indicators are most relevant to global, regional and national stakeholders and senior members of the UNCT for use in monitoring. Table 8 includes some examples of impact indicators.

Table 8. Impact indicators	
Sample Impacts	Sample Indicators (i.e., “What can we see to know if change is happening?”)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased public participation in national and local elections, particularly by women, indigenous populations and other traditionally marginalized groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Overall proportion of eligible voters who vote in the national (or local) elections ■ Percentage of eligible women who vote in the elections ■ Percentage of eligible indigenous people who vote in elections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved educational performance of students in region of the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of students completing primary schooling ■ Pass rates in standardized student tests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduction in poverty and hunger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Poverty rate ■ Gini coefficient ■ Percentage of population living in extreme poverty ■ Level of infant malnutrition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ People are healthier and live longer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Longevity ■ Infant mortality ■ HIV/AIDS prevalence rate

NOTE Outcome indicators are not intended to only measure what an agency (such as UNDP) does or its contribution. They are indicators of change in development conditions and are therefore expected to be at a higher level than the indicators of the agency’s outputs.

Table 9. Outcome indicators

Sample Outcomes	Sample Indicators (i.e., "What can we see to know if change is happening?")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Electoral administrative policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of citizens surveyed that believe that the electoral management process is free and fair. (This is a proxy indicator. Instead of a general survey of citizens, a more limited survey could be done of a selected group of persons as well.) ■ Percentage of women and minorities surveyed that are aware of their rights under the new electoral administration laws. ■ Annual percentage increase in number of women registered to vote. (This is an intermediate indicator of progress, getting to the point when the impact indicator of how many of these groups actually vote can be measured.) ■ Annual percentage increase in number of indigenous people registered to vote. ■ Ratio of voter registration centres per population in rural areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Policy, legal and regulatory framework reformed to substantially expand connectivity to information and communication technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number and proportion of the population with access to the Internet, disaggregated by gender. (This could be occurring without the changes to the framework. It is useful to track an indicator of this nature because it goes beyond the immediate result and looks at the impacts that partners are concerned with.) ■ Number of key national policies on information technology that are revised and promulgated. (For example, this could be used where it is known that there are a few specific legislations that need to be reformed.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved e-governance capacity of key central government ministries and agencies by 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extent to which key central government bodies have strong online facilities for citizen engagement. This is measured by composite indicator totaling a selected number of points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key central government ministries have websites established (10 points) ● Websites contain functional contact information (10 points) ● Websites provide functional access to major government policy documents and publications (10 points) ● Websites facilitate access to persons with disabilities (or is available in second language) (10 points) ● Websites provide links to other major government departments (10 points) ● Websites facilitate online payment for important government services (taxes, motor vehicle registration, etc.) (10 points) ■ Percentage of property tax revenue collected through online payment systems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduced levels of corruption in the public sector by 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Corruption perception index. (This is usually measured by a composite survey indicator of the perceptions of national and international experts and the general population about corruption in the country.) ■ Overall conclusion or rating of government performance in addressing corruption in the Independent Audit Office Annual Report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduction in level of violence against women by 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of reported cases of domestic abuse against women.²⁰ ■ Percentage of women who feel that violence against women has reduced within the last five years (based on survey). ■ Proportion of men who believe that wife beating is justified for at least one reason (based on survey).

20 Care has to be taken in using indicators of this nature. In some cases, particularly where awareness programmes are implemented, reported cases may spike as more persons become aware and feel empowered to report cases. Over time, however, there should be a gradual reduction in the number of reported cases. A complementary indicator could track number of reported cases of violence against women at medical facilities. This might remove some of the element of awareness and examine cases where persons are being hurt to the extent that they need treatment.

Outcome indicators assess progress against specified outcomes. They help verify that the intended positive change in the development situation has actually taken place. Outcome indicators are designed within the results framework of global, regional and country programmes. Outcome indicators are most often useful to the UN organization and its partners working on the specific outcome. Table 9 gives a few examples.

In the second example in Table 9, an indicator on whether policies are being changed is used together with one on number of people with access to the Internet to give a broad and complementary view of overall progress against the outcome. It is often necessary to use a set of complementary indicators to measure changes attributable to reasons other than the intervention in question. Also, composite indicators can be used to provide more qualitative measures of progress. Stakeholders can agree on their own composite indicators in areas where no good composite indicator already exists.

Output indicators assess progress against specified outputs. Since outputs are tangible and deliverable, their indicators may be easier to identify. In fact, the output itself may be measurable and serve as its own indication of whether or not it has been produced. Table 10 includes some examples.

Table 10. Output indicators	
Sample Outputs	Sample Indicators (i.e., "What can we see to know if change is happening?")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draft new policy on electoral reform formulated and submitted to Cabinet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Level of progress made in drafting new policy (see Box 15)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National electoral management agency has systems, procedures and competencies to administer free and fair elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Percentage of electoral centres using multiple forms of voter identification measures ■ Number of centres that are headed by trained professional staff ■ Percentage of electoral management office staff and volunteers trained in techniques to reduce voter fraud ■ Percentage of electoral management office staff who believe that their agency is more professional and better run than one year ago
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ District school teachers trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of teachers trained by end of 2010 ■ Percentage of teachers trained that were rated as more effective in doing their jobs one year later*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National human development report produced and disseminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of copies of National Human Development Report distributed ■ Percentage of parliamentarians who receive copy ■ Extent to which National Human Development Report findings and recommendations were used to inform high-level policy discussions (can be composite indicator that looks at whether there was a discussion in Parliament, Cabinet, Meeting of Social Policy Ministers, etc. to discuss findings) *
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Civil society and community organizations in region have resources and skills to contribute to monitoring of local poverty reduction strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of NGO staff completing training courses in poverty analysis by end of 2009 ■ Percentage of trained NGO staff who feel that they are more effective at doing their jobs one year later* ■ Percentage of districts with Monitoring Committees ■ Percentage of districts with Citizen Community Boards

*These indicators represent **result** type indicators. It is useful to have at least two indicators for an output: one **process** indicator that gives an idea as to whether the product or service was completed or delivered, and one **result** indicator that addresses whether the completed output is bringing about intended changes. In this way, programme and project managers can discuss not only the progress of planned outputs and activities, but the quality and impact of those outputs and activities.

Box 15. Using 'level of progress made' as an output indicator

In many situations, people struggle with what type of indicator to use for certain outcomes, particularly where counting numbers of things produced may not be meaningful. In this Handbook, we suggest that for certain complex outputs or those outputs, where the quality and not the number of what is produced is most critical, one indicator could be 'level of progress made'. Targets would be set for the level of progress to be made each year. These level-of-progress indicators can be complemented by client satisfaction indicators assessing the extent to which persons were satisfied with what was produced.

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWING OUTCOMES AND OUTCOME INDICATORS	YES	NO
✓ The outcomes and their indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).		
✓ The outcomes clearly outline an area of work where the agency and its partners can have significant influence.		
✓ The outcomes are worded in such a way that they communicate what has changed, for whom (if relevant) and by when. (Outcomes should generally be achievable within five years.)		
✓ The outcomes clearly address the interests and concerns of men, women and marginalized groups (if relevant).		
✓ The outcomes address changes in institutional capacities and behaviour that should lead to sustainable development of the country or region.		
✓ The outcomes speak to changes in conditions and capacities and not delivery of products and services.		
✓ The outcomes have indicators that signal how the desired change will be measured.		
✓ The outcome indicators are measures of change that go beyond what one agency will produce or deliver. They are measures of change in the country or region and not measures of what projects will produce.		
✓ The outcome and its indicators provide a very clear and precise image or picture of what the future should look like, and is not so general that it could cover almost anything.		

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWING OUTPUTS AND OUTPUT INDICATORS	YES	NO
✓ The outputs and their indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).		
✓ The outputs are defined as products or services made possible by the resources provided in a project.		
✓ The language used to describe the outputs includes the noun or thing to be produced, as well as the verb describing what happens on completion of the output.		
✓ The outputs are defined as things over which one or more agencies have control and can be held accountable for delivering.		
✓ The outputs defined are necessary ingredients for achieving the outcomes.		
✓ There are indicators that measure both the process of producing the outputs (e.g. how many of something was done), as well as the quality and/or effect of what was produced (e.g. level of usage or user satisfaction with what was produced).		

Baselines and targets

Once the indicators are identified, the stakeholders should establish baselines and targets for the level of change they would like to see. It is often better to have a small group undertake the effort of researching the baseline separately, as stakeholders may not have all the data at the time. The baseline and target should be clearly aligned with the indicator, using the same unit of measurement. (For practical reasons, some indicators may need to be adjusted to align with existing measures, such as national surveys or censuses.)

Baseline data establishes a foundation from which to measure change. Without baseline data, it is very difficult to measure change over time or to monitor and evaluate. With baseline data, progress can be measured against the situation that prevailed before an intervention.²¹

21 Ideally, the baseline should be gathered and agreed upon by stakeholders when a programme is being formulated. However for some ongoing activities, baseline data may not have been established at that time. In this case, it may be possible to approximate the situation when the programme started by using data included in past annual review exercises. If this data does not exist, it still may be possible to obtain a measure of change over time. For example, to establish a baseline pertaining to local governance, one might conduct a survey and ask: “Compared to three years ago, do you feel more or less involved in local decision making?” When it is impossible to retroactively establish any sense of change, establish a measure of what the situation is now. This will at least allow for the assessment of change in the future. In some situations, a new indicator may be created, and this may not have a baseline from a previous year. In this situation and other situations, the team can agree to develop the baseline as they move forward with implementing the programme.

Once the baseline is established, a target should be set. The target will normally depend on the programme period and the duration of the interventions and activities. For example, within the context of a UNDAF, targets are normally set as five-year targets so as to correspond with the duration of the UNDAF. Likewise, global, regional and country programmes will normally have four- to five-year targets. While some development change can take a long time to occur, often 10 years or more, the inclusion of a target for the programme or project cycle is intended to enable stakeholders to look for ‘signs’ of overall change. If targets cannot be set for a four- to five-year period, then the indicator used was probably too high a level, and the team will need to find other indicators of progress within the short to medium term.

At the output level, targets can be set for a much shorter period, such as one year, six months and so forth. Relating this to our indicator examples above, Table 11 gives examples of baselines and targets.

It may not always be possible to have a strong or high output indicator target for the first year of implementation. For example, consider the indicator in Table 10: “percentage of electoral management office staff and volunteers trained in techniques to reduce voter fraud.” A number of actions may need to be taken in the first year before training begins in the second year. The target for this indicator could therefore be 0 percent in 2009. This does not mean that the indicator is weak. In situations such as this, a ‘comments’ field could be used to explain the target. This is another reason why having two or more indicators to capture different dimensions of the output is recommended (the same applies to the outcome). In this case, another indicator on “level of progress made” in putting in place basic systems, training materials and so forth could be used in addition to the numeric indicator. This would allow for qualitative targets to be set for each year and could address the things that are to be put in place to form the platform for activities that will occur in future years.

Means of verification

Results statements and indicators should be SMART. The ‘M’ in SMART stands for ‘measurable’, which implies that data should be readily available in order to ascertain the progress made in achieving results. In defining results and corresponding indicators, it is thus important to consider how data will be obtained through monitoring and evaluation processes.

Means of verification play a key role in grounding an initiative in the realities of a particular setting. Plans that are too ambitious or developed too hastily often fail to recognize the difficulties in obtaining evidence that will allow programme managers to demonstrate the success of an initiative. Without clearly defining the kind of evidence that will be required to ascertain the achievement of results, without fully considering the implications of obtaining such evidence in terms of effort and cost, planners put the integrity of the programme at risk. If results and indicators are not based on measurable, independently verifiable data, the extent to which an initiative is realistic or achievable is questionable.

Table 11. Indicators, baselines and targets

Indicator	Baseline	Target
IMPACT: Increased public participation in national and local elections, particularly by women, indigenous populations and other traditionally marginalized groups		
Overall proportion of eligible voters who vote in the national (or local) elections	2006: 42% of eligible voters voted in national elections	2010: 70% of eligible voters vote in national elections
Percentage of eligible women who vote in the elections	2006: 0% voted (women were not allowed to vote)	2010: 50% of eligible women vote in national elections
Percentage of eligible indigenous people who vote in elections	2006: 15% voted (no efforts were made to encourage or support voting by indigenous people living in the interior)	2010: 45% of eligible indigenous persons vote in national elections
OUTCOME: Electoral administrative policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups		
Percentage of public that believe that the electoral management process is free and fair	2006: 30% (based on last survey conducted)	2010: 80%
Percentage of women and minorities aware of their rights under the new electoral administration laws	2007: 20% of minorities said they were aware of their rights (survey done by [specify] agency; note: women were not allowed to vote)	2010: 70% of women and minorities aware of their rights
Percentage increase in number of women registered to vote	2007: 0% of women registered to vote (women were not allowed to vote)	20% annual increase in percentage of eligible women registered to vote
Percentage increase in number of indigenous people registered to vote	2007: 30% of eligible minorities registered to vote	20% annual increase in percentage of eligible minorities registered to vote
Ratio of voter registration centres per population in rural areas	2006: 1 centre to 11,000 people	2010: 1 centre to 4,000 people
OUTPUT 1: Draft new policy on electoral reform formulated and submitted to Cabinet		
Progress made in drafting new policy	2008: Agreement reached between major political parties on need to redraft electoral legislation	2009: 5 major public consultations held and white paper prepared on new policy
OUTPUT 2: National electoral management agency has systems, procedures and competencies to administer free and fair elections		
Percentage of electoral centres using multiple forms of voter identification measures	2006: 0% of centres used multiple forms of voter identification	2009: 70% of centres use two or more forms of voter identification, including fingerprint identification (annual targets may be set)
Number of centres that are headed by trained, publicly recruited professional staff	2006: 20% of centres were run by publicly recruited professional staff (based on study done by [specify] agency)	2009: 80% of centres run by professional staff recruited through public recruitment process
Percentage of electoral management office staff who believe that their agency is more professional and better run than 1 year ago	No baseline exists; survey to be introduced for the first time in 2008	2009: 70% of staff believe their agency is more professional and better run than 1 year ago
Percentage of electoral management office staff and volunteers trained in techniques to reduce voter fraud	2006: 0%	2009: 80%

Identifying means of verification should take place in close coordination with key stakeholders. Evidence on outcomes (let alone impact) will need to be provided by the target group, beneficiaries or development partners. Therefore, it is important that in planning programmes and projects, such stakeholders are involved in thinking about how evidence on progress will be obtained during implementation and after completion of the initiative. Clear means of verification thus facilitates the establishment of monitoring systems and contributes significantly to ensuring that programmes and projects are evaluation-ready.

Based on this guidance, the team of stakeholders should refine or finalize the results framework for either the programme or project being developed.

Table 12. Sample results framework with means of verification

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification
IMPACT: Increased public participation in national and local elections, particularly by women, indigenous populations and other traditionally marginalized groups			
Overall proportion of eligible voters who vote in the national (or local) elections	2006: 42% of eligible voters voted in national elections	2010: 70% of eligible voters vote in national elections	Office of Electoral Administration's final report on elections
OUTCOME: Electoral administrative policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups			
Percentage of public that believe that the electoral management process is free and fair	2006: 30% (based on last survey conducted)	2010: 80%	Special survey to be undertaken as part of the electoral assistance project in 2008 and 2010
Percentage increase in number of women registered to vote	2007: 0% of women registered to vote (women were not allowed to vote)	2010: 20% annual increase in percentage of eligible women registered to vote	Office of Electoral Administration's database
Ratio of voter registration centres per population in rural areas	2006: 1 centre to 11,000 people	2010: 1 centre to 4,000 people	To be computed based on number of centres (Electoral Office database) in relation to population in rural areas (National Planning Agency's 2010 demographic survey)
OUTPUT 1: Draft new policy on electoral reform formulated and submitted to Cabinet			
Progress made in drafting new policy	2008: Agreement reached between major political parties on need to redraft electoral legislation	2009: 5 major public consultations held and white paper prepared on new policy	Report from government agency organizing workshops Record of Parliamentary proceedings (for submission of white paper) to be obtained from Office of Public Sector Information
OUTPUT 2: National electoral management agency has systems, procedures and competencies to administer free and fair elections			
Percentage of electoral centres using multiple forms of voter identification measures	2006: 0% of centres used multiple forms of voter identification	2009: 70% of centres use two or more forms of voter identification, including fingerprint identification (annual targets may be set)	Electoral Office database

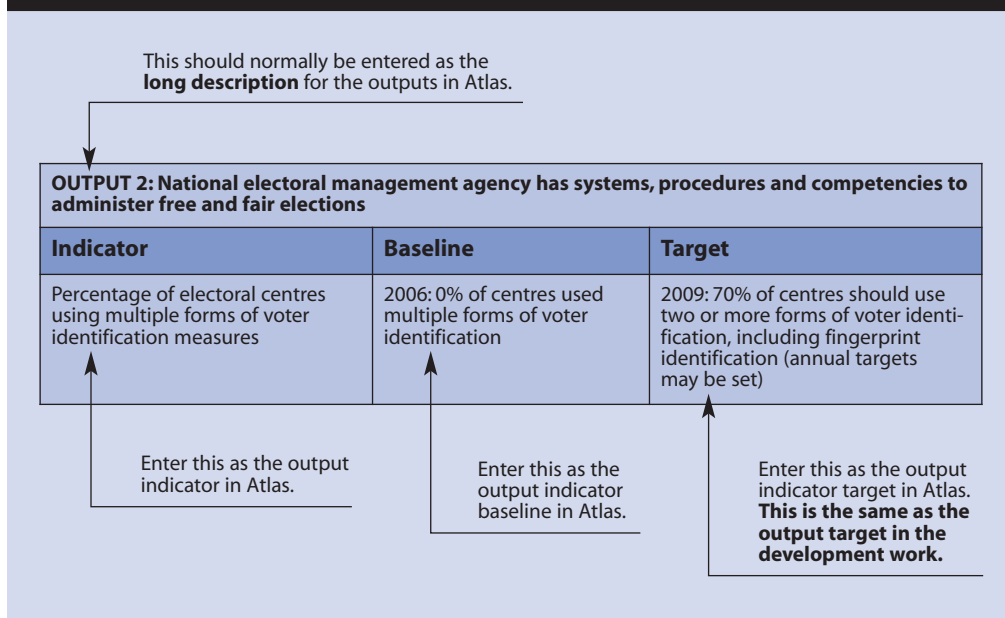
The formulation of a results framework is a participatory and iterative process. Participation is key to ensuring that stakeholders understand and support the initiative and are aware of the implications of all elements of the results framework. In developing a results framework, the definition of new elements (such as formulating outputs after identifying outcomes, or defining indicators after defining a particular result, or specifying the means of verification after defining indicators) should be used to test the validity of previously defined elements.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND UNDP RBM SYSTEMS

The data created in the planning exercise may appear at different times in various planning documents and systems. For example:

- The impacts and/or national priorities appear in the relevant sections of the UNDAF or global, regional or country programme results framework when these are developed.
- The impact developed in a global, regional or country programme would also be entered in the RBM platform (home.undp.org) in the global, regional or national goal field.
- Impact indicators are normally entered in national strategy documents and plans and in the UNDAF results framework. Reference can also be made to these indicators in the situation analysis and statements of objective in a CPD or CPAP.
- The analysis of what is causing the problems would normally be reflected in the situation analysis section of the respective programme or project document.
- The analysis of what needs to happen or be in place to achieve the goals and impact would also be reflected in the programme or project document, along with any government or UNDP action needed to influence partners and non-partners to take desired actions. This would be captured in the objectives and strategy sections of the respective documents.
- The specific outcomes that UNDP will support would be entered in the relevant sections of the UNDAF.
- The UNDP outcomes identified in the UNDAF are used to formulate the CPD that is approved by the UNDP Executive Board.
- The same outcomes (or slightly revised outcomes based on the CPAP process but with the same intention) would be entered into Atlas as part of the programme's project tree. These outcomes would then appear on the programme planning and monitoring page of the RBM platform.
- Outcome indicators would be entered in the relevant sections of the programme documents and the same indicators (or slightly revised indicators based on the CPAP refinement process) would be entered into the RBM platform at the start of the programme.
- Baselines and targets would be entered for the outcome indicators in both places as well.

Figure 11. Illustration of where results data should be entered into UNDP systems



- The UNDAF and CPD would normally include a set of outputs that the programme intends to produce.
- These outputs are normally refined in the CPAP process as stakeholders obtain greater clarity on the implementation details for the programme. This may occur months after the UNDAF or CPD has been finalized.
- The CPAP outputs would be created as output projects in Atlas, together with their indicators, baselines and targets. This information would then appear in the RBM platform to facilitate monitoring and reporting against these outputs. **As far as possible, the project outputs in Atlas should have, as their long description, the same wording as the outputs created in the results framework. Likewise, the indicators and baselines for the outputs are the same as should be entered in Atlas. The output targets are also the same as the annual output targets that are used in Atlas and are normally entered when offices prepare their development work plans and set targets for the year.** This is illustrated in Figure 11.
- The risks and assumptions would be documented in the relevant column of the programme results and resources table. The risks would also be entered in Atlas and related to an Award (the Award is a collection of outputs). These would then be reflected in the RBM platform for monitoring purposes.
- Information on partners would be entered in the results framework, and the programme document would explain the efforts of both partners and non-partners in contributing to the outcomes and impact. The role of partners should be included in the formal monitoring and evaluation process (such as in a joint

evaluation of an UNDAF). The efforts of non-partners can be monitored informally through meetings with them or other means.

Atlas and the RBM platform should serve as tools to enter the information contained in the results framework and to conduct transactions and monitor progress. The development work plan component of the platform is therefore a monitoring tool for the global, regional and country programmes (or CPAPs), as it captures the outcomes, outcome indicators, outputs, output indicators, budgets and key risks related to projects. The data should be entered by either the UNDP programme or project manager, with quality assurance conducted by the designated quality assurance officer. (See the POPP for more information on the roles and responsibilities in programme and project formulation.)

At the end of the planning process, stakeholders should therefore have as their **eighth deliverable**—a **results framework** that may look like the one in Table 13.

Table 13. Sample results framework				
National Goal/Priority	“Improved public confidence and involvement in national and local processes of governance” or “More vibrant democratic processes that involve a wider cross-section of citizens”			
UNDAF Outcome A1	Wider participation by citizens in national and local elections by 2015			
Programme Outcomes	Outcome Indicators, Baselines and Targets	Programme Outputs	Role of Partners	Financial Resources
1.1.1 Electoral administrative policies and systems reformed to ensure freer and fairer elections and to facilitate participation by marginalized groups	<p>1.1.1 Public perception of capacity of electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections (disaggregated by gender, population group, etc.)</p> <p>Baseline: 40% of public had confidence in electoral management authority as of 2008 (50% men, 30% women, 20% indigenous populations)</p> <p>Target: 70% of overall population has confidence in electoral management authority by 2016 (75% men, 65% women, 60% indigenous populations)</p>	<p>1.1.1 Advocacy campaign aimed at building consensus on need for electoral law and system reform implemented</p> <p>1.1.2 Adequate staff recruited and systems implemented in the electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections</p> <p>1.1.3 Training programme on use of new electoral management technology designed and implemented for staff of electoral management authority</p>	UNDP, Department for International Development (DFID), European Union (EU), US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank (all working on institutional reform of electoral management authority)	
1.2.1 Increased participation by women and indigenous populations in national and local electoral processes in five regions by 2016	<p>1.2.1 Percentage of eligible women registered to vote in 5 regions</p> <p>Baseline: 30% of eligible women registered in the 5 regions as of 2008</p> <p>Target: 60% registration of eligible women in the 5 regions by 2016</p>	1.2.1 Revised draft legislation on rights of women and indigenous populations to participate in elections prepared	UNESCO working on culturally relevant communications programme targeting women and indigenous populations	

In the UNDAF, all the relevant indicators for the UNDAF outcomes would also be included, along with the outputs of the different UN organizations contributing to those outcomes. Likewise, the national priorities would have their related indicators and outputs in the government's development strategies. UNDP staff (both programme and operations) should be familiar with these higher level results and performance targets in order to better manage for results in their own programmes and projects.

In UNDP and many other agencies, the information obtained from the planning process is normally used to develop not only the results framework, but also a narrative programme or project document. This document may have requirements that go beyond the issues dealt with in this Handbook. Users of the Handbook should therefore consult with their respective agency policies and procedures manuals for guidance.

2.5 PREPARING TO OPERATIONALIZE

The previous sections covered the steps for preparing a results map and the specific results framework that would be included in a UNDP-supported programme or project document. To realize the results envisaged in the framework, it has to be communicated, implemented, monitored and evaluated. In the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation, it will not be possible for UNDP, its stakeholders and partners to know whether the intended results are being achieved or if they should take corrective action to support the delivery of the intended results. Monitoring and evaluation are essential for effective programme and project implementation and to support UNDP accountability and learning. Chapter 3 covers the important steps in planning to monitor and evaluate. This section briefly examines arrangements for operationalizing the results framework.

At the end of the planning process, the stakeholders should devote time to strategizing how the framework will be implemented and how the goals and objectives will be reinforced. A results framework that is operationalized is:

- Broadly communicated to all stakeholders
- Regularly and formally reviewed and updated
- Clear on who is responsible and accountable for what components
- Used for decision making
- Consistent with the incentives systems in the organization

COMMUNICATION AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

In the last planning meeting, stakeholders should reflect on what methods will be used to communicate the major objectives contained in the framework. The purpose is to increase awareness of the programme and generate support for it.

Either an individual or a subteam should be tasked with developing the communication plan. For large programmes it could be useful to engage a communications firm to provide support. Box 16 and 17 include ideas for communication plans and an example of how one organization is executing its plan.

Box 16. Suggestions for communications plans

- In some situations, flyers and publicity material, such as the MDG flyers and videos, are created to capture the main objectives and targets in simple terms. These are then circulated to stakeholders.
- In other cases, there is an ongoing communication programme (radio, newspapers, etc.) on the main goals and targets. This is used to keep the plan and its objectives constantly in the minds of stakeholders, maintaining commitment and ensuring clarity on the common goals.
- In some private and public sector offices, open spaces and notice boards are used to present the main objectives of the plan, while meeting rooms often have whiteboards, flipcharts and other tools capturing the main goals and targets.
- In many organizations, meetings are held with slides showing the targets and progress against them.

It is frequently helpful to discuss in the last planning meeting how to build partnerships and teams to carry the work forward. For example, within development agencies (government, international and other) there is a tendency for staff to see programmatic work as the purview of the programme team. Operations staff sometimes do not feel ownership of the plan and are only involved in processing administrative transactions. This can rob the team of the broader energies, ideas and support it may need to move forward efficiently. Spending time to brainstorm creative ways of engaging both internal and external partners can therefore be quite useful.

Box 17. Sharing the vision

In one large U.S. hospital, every notice board carries key elements of the values, mission and objectives of the hospital. Additionally, different units have large boards displaying the performance indicators relevant to the unit and achievements of the unit in relation to those indicators. The hospital has consistently received some of the highest scores in client satisfaction and boasts some of the lowest error rates in patient treatment. It proudly displays its numerous awards and citations beside its mission statement and performance indicators.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES

Stakeholders should similarly reflect on who will be accountable for what elements of the framework and what types of incentives or sanctions could be used to encourage behaviour consistent with the framework.

Accountability

Often once the results framework or map is developed, the group moves on to discuss who will be responsible for coordinating the development of the various programmes and interventions. In some cases this may be an organization (United Nations or other), or an individual within an office.

- Stakeholders should review the results map or framework to identify areas where concrete actions will be needed to get things going. Individuals or agencies should be designated to lead on those actions.

- These agreements should be documented and used to form part of a simple implementation plan.
- The plan would also address issues such as approvals or policy decisions needed and the strategy for obtaining these.
- A smaller group can be asked to examine in greater detail elements of the results framework that may require focused action by specific stakeholders.
- Chapter 3 will address setting up the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

Incentives and sanctions

Stakeholders should brainstorm possible incentive arrangements and sanctions (if appropriate) that could promote implementation of the framework. Again, it may be possible to ask one or more persons to review the framework and come up with suggestions for the group. However at the initial stage, it may be worthwhile hearing a range of ideas from the group. These ideas should then be documented as part of the implementation plan.

2.6 PUTTING IT TOGETHER: PLANNING FOR CHANGE

Planning for real results requires thinking critically about desired change and what is required to bring it about. The process involves asking a series of questions:

- What precisely do we want to see changed?
- How will this change occur? What will make change happen?
 - Who needs to be involved?
 - What resources are needed?
 - What conditions need to be in place, and what will influence these conditions?
- How will we monitor and evaluate the changes?
- How will we use the information obtained from monitoring and evaluation?

The process should define all the building blocks required to bring about the desired long-term goal, and monitor and evaluate the extent to which progress is being made. Done in this manner, planning can become a powerful process that helps to:

- Achieve stakeholder consensus and commitment
- Communicate clearly with all stakeholders about the desired changes
- Motivate actions and mobilize resources
- Better define all the internal and external resources and partnerships needed to achieve results
- Better understand the interests, needs and concerns of different groups of stakeholders, including men, women and traditionally marginalized groups
- Set clearer performance indicators for monitoring and evaluation
- Allocate responsibilities

Box 18. Recap of key considerations in planning for results

- Planning should be focused on results—real development changes that help to improve people’s lives. It should not be done merely to meet the requirements of supervisors or Headquarters.
- Planning should always be seen as a process, of which the actual plan is only one product.
- The planning process should extend beyond only looking at results and performance measures. It should include a plan and mechanisms for managing, monitoring and evaluating and well-developed ideas for partnering and collaborating to achieve the desired results.
- The planning process should be highly participatory and very open, and should encourage frankness, creativity and innovation.
- Planning must be guided by core principles of development effectiveness. It should not lead to a neutral or generic plan but one that is based on lessons of what works or does not work in development programming.
- The most important outcomes of the planning process are: clarity on goals, objectives and a vision of the future; commitment and motivation of stakeholders; and clarity on the process to implement and manage the plan. The planning document can serve as a useful record of what has been agreed and a tool for communicating to new stakeholders.