

Final Report on the DCED Global Seminar on Results Measurement, Bangkok 14-16 March 2016

7th April 2016

The DCED Standard for Results Measurement has gained wide acceptance as a framework for monitoring effectiveness; it is now in use by an estimated 120 programmes in private sector development (PSD) around the world. Every two years, the DCED hosts a Global Seminar to deepen understanding on selected topics of particular interest to the community. This year's Seminar, which took place 14-16 March 2016 in Bangkok, featured presentations on cutting-edge themes such as measuring women's economic empowerment, assessing attribution, measuring job creation, and using results information to manage programmes. You can view the [full agenda here](#). Sessions included plenaries and break-out sessions, with time for discussion between the 130 participants.

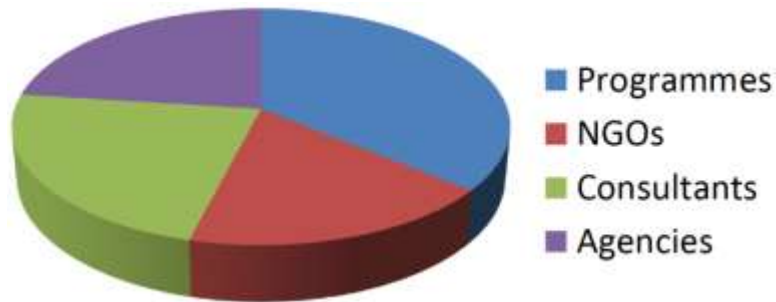


All of the material relating to the Seminar - including PowerPoints, case studies and links to further reading - is available on [the dedicated Seminar webpage](#).

For the first time, the main Seminar was followed by a one-day workshop on a “Real World” Approach to Results Measurement. This workshop focussed on practical approaches to results measurement under 'real world' conditions. It was led by Jim Rugh, a long-time evaluation practitioner and co-author of the *RealWorld Evaluation Handbook*.

Participants

130 participants travelled to Bangkok from 38 countries. They represented 52 organisations, field programmes and donor agencies. The approximate proportions of these different categories can be seen in the pie chart below.



Presentations

All presentations can be downloaded [here](#). They covered the following topics:

- Overview of the DCED and results measurement (3 presentations)
- Measuring employment (4)
- Women's economic empowerment (3)
- Learning and management (2)
- Experiences of applying the Standard in particular contexts (4)
- The audit process and evaluation (3)

Key discussion points

Deepened knowledge about the DCED Standard for results measurement



Since the Standard was launched in 2008, there has been a great deal of engagement with this approach. It was also evident from their questions that participants were very informed about the aims and structure of the DCED Standard. The progress made was remarked upon by several participants. This Seminar was the best attended, and showed the continuing enthusiasm in the community around PSD.

Several of the Seminar's presentations offered practical experiences of working with the DCED Standard in a variety of different contexts. In their feedback, participants remarked on how useful these discussions were, with one remarking that they provided "a great balance of useful insights that can really change the way we manage our projects."

Other presentations focussed on the ways in which the Standard can help in the management of PSD projects. For instance, [Aly Miehlbradt](#) emphasised the ways in which the Standard can help project leaders to develop effective management techniques. She argued that we need to develop effective working cultures of good management and honest reporting of results, while at the same time motivating staff to achieve good results.



Several other presentations also emphasised this point, arguing that results management is a core management task, which should not be completely delegated to external experts. According to the experience of CAVAC Cambodia and others, a flat management structure can be crucial in enabling results-based programme management; in [CAVAC](#) and [M4C](#), implementing staff play a key role in monitoring results and managing interventions with backstopping from results measurement staff and the team leader.

Flexibility in results measurement

Another recurrent Seminar theme was the need to measure results flexibly and in ways appropriate to the context. Across the many areas covered by the Seminar, presenters and participants spoke of the need to avoid rigid, “one-size-fits-all” approaches.



For instance, Hans Posthumus and Phitcha Wanitphon presented a framework for attribution that prioritises flexibility in selecting the correct method for assessing attribution. This was based on a [series of case studies, available on the DCED website](#). They emphasised that the most appropriate attribution method will vary from project to project. Only by paying attention to different contexts can we assess accurately the effects of interventions. This framework supplements the [DCED's guidelines for estimating attributable changes](#). Both the framework and the DCED's guidelines provide practitioners with practical advice for selecting the most appropriate method of assessing attribution.

Similarly, it was stressed that flexible and carefully selected approaches are also required in [Women's Economic Empowerment](#); sex-disaggregated data are not a panacea. Greater insight can be given by supplementing this data with qualitative information gathered in interviews, surveys and focus groups. The ways that projects count beneficiaries are of central importance. In the words of Sonia Jordan, “different counting of beneficiaries can lead to different stories from a gendered perspective.” The presenters agreed that gender aspects are a missed opportunity in understanding market systems, to date.



Four other presentations focussed on [measuring job creation](#). These presentations gave varying methods for measuring employment that comes about as a result in PSD programmes and provided participants with a range of possibilities to select from.

The workshop, following the Seminar, on RealWorld Evaluations continued on this theme. Jim Rugh, who facilitated the workshop, presented participants with a

role play scenario in which they prepared and defended proposals for evaluating a PSD programme. Many participants found that this practical experience was helpful in developing their understanding of applied evaluations in real world situations.

Participant feedback

63 participants completed the feedback form; 65% said that their expectations were fully met. The most appreciated presentations were on CAVAC, Attribution and ALCP. The participant Marketplace was also highly appreciated, and the overall organisation of the Seminar was scored at 3.67 out of 4. Specific comments included:



- *“The Seminar was very helpful and I particularly enjoyed the diversity of topics ... It really sparked interesting debate from a diverse group of PSD practitioners.”*
- *“The DCED should “showcase more failures.” There should be “more humility on case study sharing, self reflection.”*
- *“High quality, diverse speakers. Excellent!”*
- *“Good spread of tools, methodologies, frameworks, attitudes and theories.”*
- *“Have more experimental material, stretch the boundaries.”*
- *“It was a great opportunity to learn about the DCED Standard and see what peers are doing.”*
- *“Good networking event with enriching inputs.”*
- *“It was a great opportunity to catch up with many people and get to know more about their work. I really took a lot out of it.”*
- *“It was a wonderful balance of information exchange, networking and building connections/relationships, and fun! Thank you!!”*