



Introduction

Parliaments play a key role in development through their mandate to enact laws, represent the people, and hold the government to account. But how can Parliamentarians be assured that the policies and programs they have endorsed are strong, implemented correctly by the government, and improve the lives of the people? Could policies and programmes be improved?

Evidence from evaluation and the critical thinking it fosters can help Parliamentarians play more active roles in the design and implementation of policies and programmes that bring about better, fairer, and more sustainable development results.

The *OECD/DAC evaluation criteria* combined with a sound understanding of development interventions, can help parliamentarians to ask the relevant questions during parliamentary debates and portfolio committee meetings to ultimately ensure the maximum benefits for citizens.

Effectiveness

OECD/DAC defines effectiveness as the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.

Key terms

Analysis of effectiveness involves taking account of the relative importance of the objectives or results.

The term **effectiveness** is also used as an aggregate measure of the extent to which an intervention has achieved or is expected to achieve relevant and sustainable impacts, efficiently and coherently.

Parliamentarians, are you interested in becoming more effective representatives for citizens?

Are you interested in maximising the country's development by raising the relevant questions in parliamentary debates on behalf of your constituents?

Read this series of short brochures on the OECD DAC Criteria

RELEVANCE

is the intervention doing the right things?

EFFECTIVENESS

is the intervention achieving its objectives?

IMPACT

what difference does the intervention make?



COHERENCE

how well does the intervention fit?

EFFICIENCY

how well are resources being used?

SUSTAINABILITY

will the benefits last?

How parliamentarians can use the effectiveness criteria

Parliament has a responsibility to provide oversight of major development interventions implemented using public funds. By asking questions about the effectiveness of such projects, Parliamentarians can determine whether anticipated benefits for citizens are actually being realised.

Understanding the effectiveness of a programme and the factors that determine it, can help inform decisions as to how a programme might be improved in subsequent phases, whether it should be redesigned or replicated as is.

Asking questions around effectiveness can also reveal whether public funds have achieved the level of results expected. For example, when reviewing a poverty alleviation programme, Parliamentarians can ask for evidence of the number of families that have seen an increase in their income, by how much their income has increased, how many families have been lifted out of poverty and over what period the change has taken place. Such information can allow Parliamentarians to compare the effectiveness of the programme to alternative interventions that may use a different strategy.

Evaluation reports often highlight the effectiveness of the programme being evaluated and can help answer questions that Parliamentarians may have. By requesting these and learning more about effectiveness, Parliamentarians can also help to frame important questions about the programme or policy themselves.

Possible questions parliamentarians can ask to ensure effectiveness

The following are examples of questions that Parliamentarians might ask about the effectiveness of a public intervention, program, or policy. It's important, however, to be creative when asking questions and to take into account the country context, the nature of the intervention or policy, and the needs of the debate and policy decision-making process.

A: To what extent has the intervention achieved or is likely to achieve the planned short- and medium-term results considering their relative importance?

B: Were results achieved equitably across groups?

C: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of results, overall and across groups?

D: To what extent were the effects linked to the intervention?

E: What factors helped or obscured the effectiveness of the intervention?

Source: De Silva, S. (2021). Theory of Change For Development Success: Workbook. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka Evaluation Association

Resources to learn more about effectiveness

OECD evaluation criteria, retrieved from

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9835a6>



OECD (2022) Understanding the six criteria: Definitions, elements for analysis and key challenges. retrieved from

<https://tinyurl.com/bddefx8>



Published by



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