



**DAC
EVALUATION
CRITERIA**
EFFECIENCY

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

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.

Efficiency

OECD/DAC defines efficiency as the degree to which resources are being used well.

The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

Key terms

Economic is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes, and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context.

Timely delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed).

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?



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How parliamentarians can use the efficiency criteria

Parliament and Parliamentarians have a constitutional responsibility to oversee the work of the executive and ensure the efficient use of public funds. As part of this responsibility, Parliament approves the allocation of funds from the national budget for development programmes and interventions implemented in turn by government ministries and departments.

With programmes and policies, it is part of the Parliamentarian's role to question whether allocated funds have been used appropriately, whether programmes have been implemented as planned, and whether the programme has performed as expected.

Parliamentarians might also question whether there are alternative and more efficient strategies that can produce better results using the same, or fewer resources.

The efficiency criteria can help Parliamentarians formulate powerful questions to both examine how well public funds have been used in the past and to inform debates around the approval of future national budgets.

An understanding of the efficiency criteria places Parliamentarians on a sound footing to direct public resources in the best interest of their constituents and citizens in general.

Possible questions parliamentarians can ask to ensure efficiency

The following are examples of questions that Parliamentarians might ask about the efficiency 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: How effectively has the programme or policy used public resources to achieve its outcomes? Does it represent value for money?

B: What are the costs and effects of various alternatives?

C: Were the results delivered on time as planned? If not, what adjustments were made and why?

D: What factors have influenced the efficiency 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 efficiency

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/bddeffx8>



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