Methodologies to assess the impact of aid for trade:

Monitoring and evaluating - projects and programmes

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Expert Group Meeting and Workshop on Aid for Trade and Africa's Trading Capacity

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Key issues for monitoring and evaluating aid for trade

- Assessing the effectiveness of aid for trade – at which level? Policy? Strategy? Projects and programmes? Different approaches.
- What are the key objectives and expected results of aid for trade? What do we want to achieve?
- Focus on the IMPACT of aid for trade. How do we ensure projects and programmes deliver results? What systems need to be in place to track progress? Developing results frameworks.
- Importance of building M&E into design and implementation of projects and programmes.

Purpose of results framework and M&E

- **Purpose of results frameworks:** translate objectives, etc. into specific targets through the use of indicators.

- **Purpose of M&E:**

  – To report against programme and project objectives.

  – To measure how well aid for trade interventions are being implemented - whether progress is being made as desired towards expected results (outcomes and impacts) to ensure results orientation and accountability.

  – To assess whether funds are being spent on appropriate areas to achieve the desired results, informing decision-making for optimal resource allocation and performance improvement.

Purpose of results framework and M&E

- To highlight barriers and difficulties that may have impeded achievement of results and identify ways in which these may be overcome.

- To scrutinise and understand what has, and has not, worked and where improvements can be made.

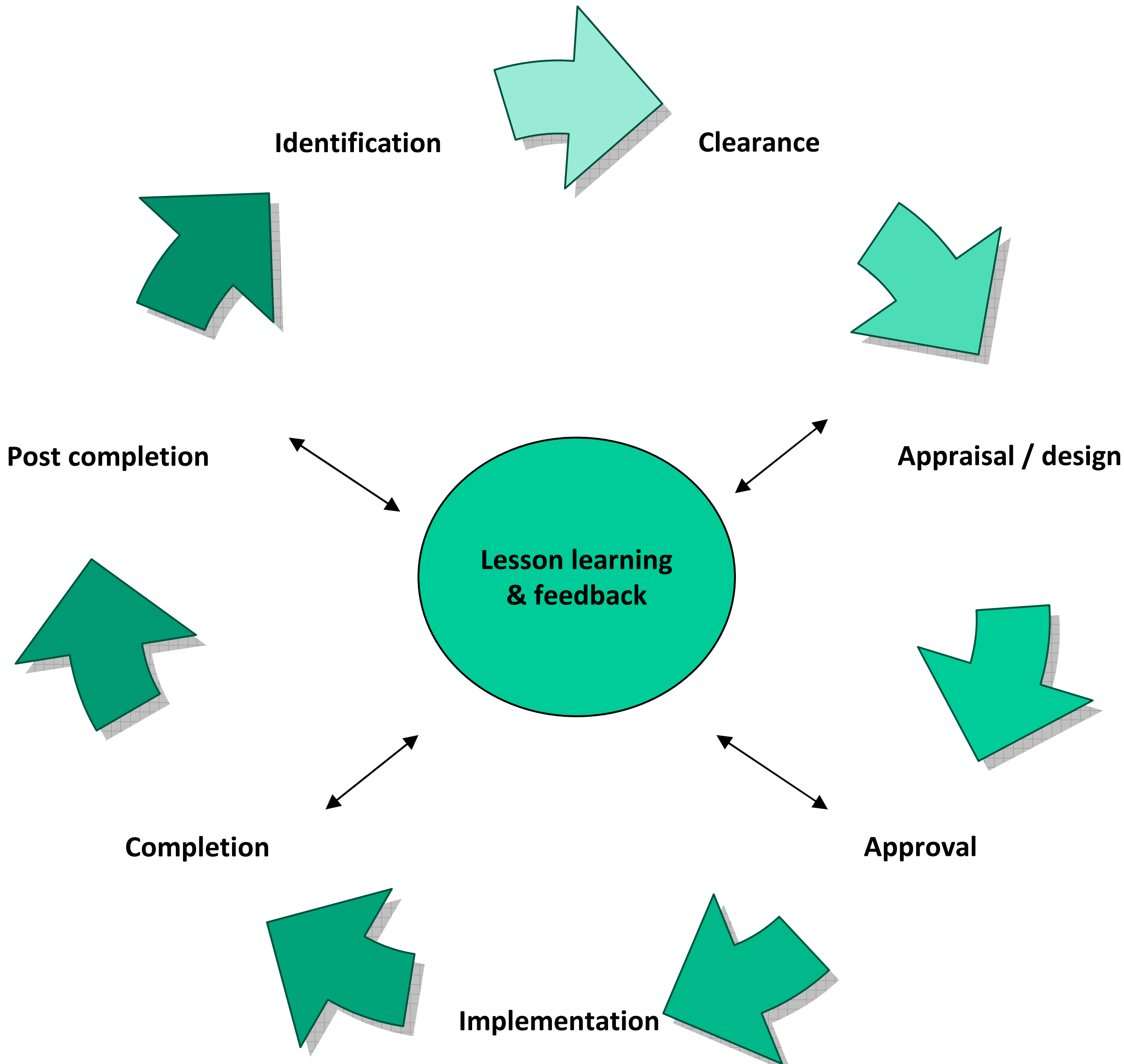
- To learn lessons

    - Inform future project and programme design and implementation.

    - Contribute to knowledge regarding effective approaches to strengthening trading capacity.

    - Identify and leverage good practice, facilitating learning and communication.

Project/programme cycle – M&E entry points



Developing results frameworks – the results chain

Inputs

Financial, human and material resources - e.g. expenditure, staff time, etc.

Activities

Tasks undertaken to transform inputs into outputs - e.g. developing one stop border posts with integrated border management

Outputs

Products and services produced/ delivered - e.g. number of one-stop border posts with integrated border management systems

Outcomes

Results achieved due to products and services provided

E.g. Reduction in trade costs (intermediate) ; increased regional trade

Impacts

Long-term widespread improvement in society

E.g. Increased growth and poverty reduction

Focus of results management and evaluation

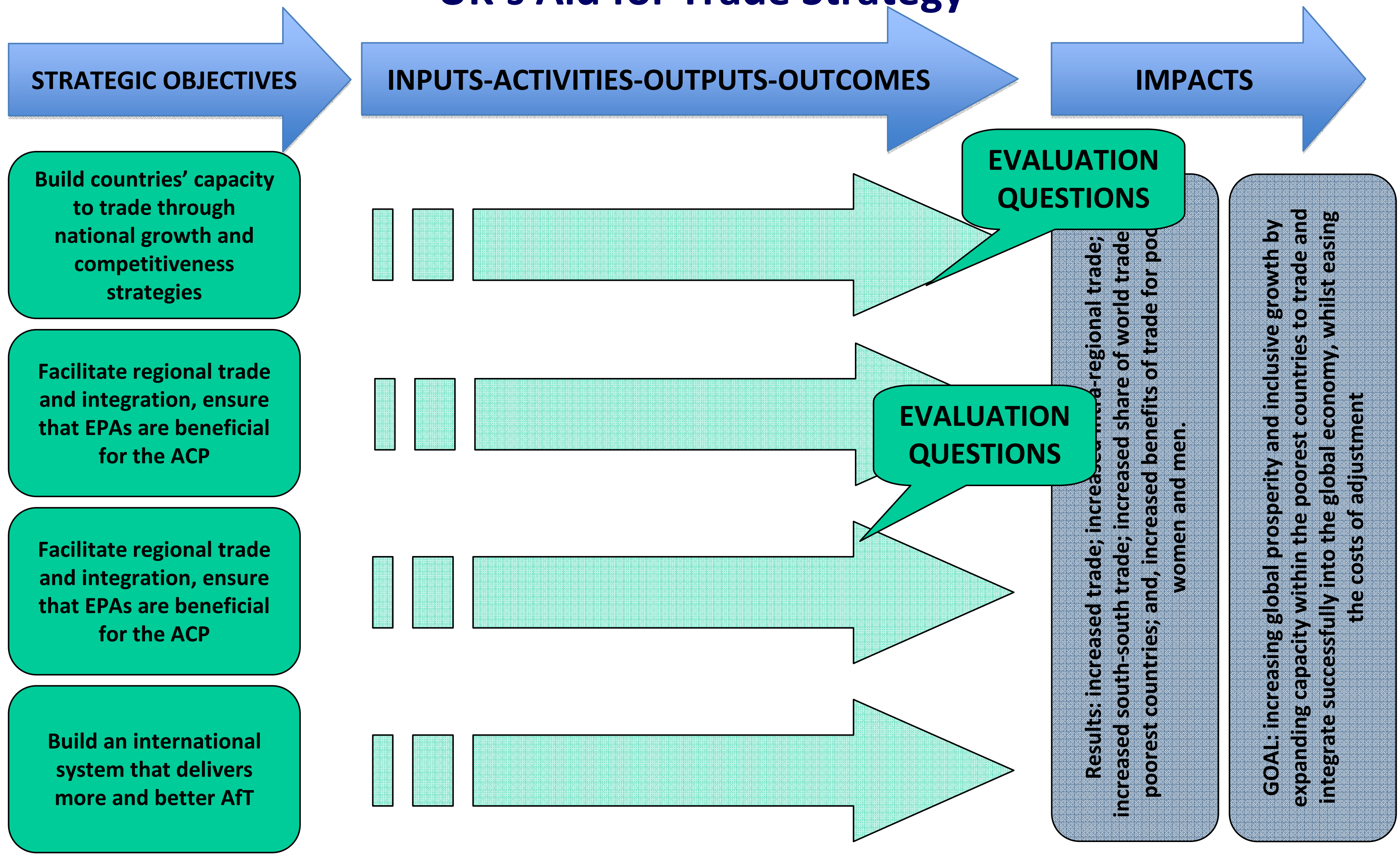
Problem of attribution: the 'missing middle'

Intervention logic

- 'Intervention logic' behind aid for trade interventions: understanding how inputs, such as expenditure and staff time, are intended to translate into outputs, outcomes and impacts.

- Describing the intervention logic helps understand these linkages, and enables tracking of whether the results chain is being realised. It also identifies any potential bottlenecks in achieving desired results.

Intervention logic: inputs to impacts: UK's Aid for Trade Strategy



Indicators

Develop SMART indicators along the results chain:

- S-pecific
- M-easurable (monitorable)
- A-chievable (a-ttributable)
- R-elevant (r-ealistic)
- T-ime-Bound

The M & The E

MONITORING	EVALUATION
• Why monitor? • What will be monitored? • How and when will it be monitored? • Who will do the monitoring? • How will monitoring data be used?	• Why evaluation? • What will be evaluated? Which questions will be asked? • What approaches will be used and when? • Who will conduct evaluations? • How will evaluation outputs be used?

Key principles of evaluation

The key principles of the evaluations framework are:

- Facilitate better reporting on aid for trade by providing a **streamlined and consistent approach** to tracking and assessing progress.
- Appropriate integration with existing and related evaluations processes streamlining where possible in order to maximise **efficiency, coherence and consistency** with existing reporting requirements.
- The application of a combination of approaches to facilitate both **performance assessment and learning**, and a combination of ex-ante and ex-post assessments.
- The use of a **rigorous and evidence-based approach** to evaluation design, implementation and reporting.
- Based on agreed **evaluation criteria** – e.g. OECD DAC criteria for international development evaluation.

What are we evaluating?

Evaluation criteria based on the Paris principles of OWNERSHIP, ALIGNMENT, HARMONISATION, RESULTS, MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

1. RELEVANCE – the extent to which an aid for trade activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor and aligned to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

2. EFFECTIVENESS – a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.

3. EFFICIENCY – a measure of the outputs and outcomes, qualitative and quantitative, in relation to the inputs. Using the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results.

4. IMPACT – the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

What are we evaluating?

5. SUSTAINABILITY – concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.

6. COVERAGE – which groups are included in/excluded from a programme, and the differential impact on those included and excluded.

7. COHERENCE – the need to assess other policies and programmes which affect the intervention being evaluated, as well as the intervention itself.

8. COORDINATION (harmonisation and alignment) – the intervention of a single agency cannot be evaluated in isolation from what others are doing, particularly as what may seem appropriate from the point of view of a single actor, may not be appropriate from the point of view of the system as a whole.

How do we evaluate?

Summary of the evaluation process and phases (e.g. EC):

1. Inception and desk
2. Field
3. Synthesis
4. Dissemination and follow-up

How do we evaluate?

1. Inception and desk phase:

   – Establish what is to be evaluated?

   – Establish methodology including the approach, indicators to be used, the evaluation questions and detailed work plan.

   – Develop tools to be used in desk and field phases: e.g. documentary and data analysis, interviews, field visits, focus groups, modelling, cost benefit analysis, etc.

   – Logic of the project/programme - analysis of the log frame including context in which the project/programme has been launched; opportunities and constraints; needs to be met, problems to be solved and challenges to be addressed; objectives – including their translation into inputs, activities and expected results.

How do we evaluate?

1. Inception and desk phase (continued):

    - Evaluation questions:

        - Develop a series of evaluation questions focusing on key issues.

            - For instance, to what extent has the redevelopment of a border post contributed towards reducing trade costs? (impact) …with a strong probability of survival of effects after the end of the project? (sustainability) …to what extent does the activity correspond to the needs of the population concerned? (relevance)

        - The questions should cover the various levels of the log frame and agreed evaluation criteria in a balanced way.

        - Strategy for analysis – develop chain of reasoning for answering the questions. For example, change analysis, meta-analysis, attribution analysis, contribution analysis, etc.

    - Conduct stakeholder analysis and interviews

How do we evaluate?

2. Field phase

   – Interviewees: Building on the desk phase, conduct interviews and surveys with key stakeholders, especially intended beneficiaries, to establish how far the project/programme objectives were achieved in terms of the benefits for the targeted group and the wider impact, in line with the evaluation questions.

3. Synthesis phase

   – Present evaluation questions and answers, together with evidence, reasoning and value judgements pertaining to them, in an overall assessment of the project/programme.

   – Prioritised recommendations and lessons learnt

How do we evaluate?

4. Dissemination and follow-up phase

   – Decision-makers and designers use the evaluation to reform or renew the project/programme, to confirm or to change strategic orientations, or to (re)allocate resources based on clear, simple and operational recommendations based on credible factual elements.

   – Managers and operators use the evaluation findings to adjust management, coordination and/or their interactions with beneficiaries and the target groups.

   – Institutions conducting related or similar projects/programmes may use the evaluation through a transfer of lessons learned.

   – The evaluation may be used by civil society groups, etc., especially those representing the interests of the targeted groups.

Providing a comprehensive story on aid for trade impact

- Aggregating existing aid for trade **programme and project** evaluations – comprehensive versus sampling approach.
- Co-ordinate and aggregate existing **thematic** evaluations – trade-related assistance, private sector development, infrastructure, etc. Commissioning additional evaluations to fill gaps and synthesize lessons.
- Develop and conduct a programme of **specific AfT evaluations**