

Country Performance Synthesis Study

by Joanna Wilkes and Dale Poad

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PREFACE

The Department for International Development (DFID) commissions a number of independent evaluation studies each year. The purpose of DFID's evaluation programme is to examine rigorously the design, implementation and impact of selected projects and to learn lessons which can be applied to current and future projects and programmes, and also to help strengthen DFID's accountability. It should be borne in mind that the projects examined are the products of their time, and that the policies they reflected and procedures they followed have often changed in the light of DFID's developing knowledge.

The Evaluation Department (EvD) of DFID is independent of DFID's spending divisions and reports to the Management Board through the Director General (Corporate Performance and Knowledge Sharing).

This study was designed to consolidate learning across DFID from the first full cycle of APPRs. The report itself is not a guidance document, but details actual experience, presents a diverse range of best practice and has fed directly into the development of new CSP guidance and the Development Effectiveness Report.

The synthesis report was written by Joanna Wilkes of Evaluation Department with assistance from Dale Poad. It was based on a literature review conducted by Mark Ireland & Allister McGregor, a 'process' paper by Douglas Saltmarshe & Allister McGregor of University of Bath and a content paper by Stephen Jones of OPM with Ursula Shaw .

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ABBREVIATIONS

APPR	Annual Plan and Performance Review
CP	Contraceptive Prevalence
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CSEED	Central and South Eastern Europe Department
CSP	Country Strategy Plan
CSPR	End of Cycle Review
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DC	Development Committee
DER	Development Effectiveness Report
DFID	Department for International Development
DFIDCA	DFID Central Africa
DFIDEA	DFID Eastern Africa
DFIDSA	DFID Southern Africa
DFIDSEA	DFID South East Asia
DPD	Development Policy Department
EAPD	Eastern Asia and Pacific Department
EC	European Commission
EECAD	Eastern Europe and Central Asia Department
EvD	Evaluation Department
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Gross Enrolment
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
IDT	International Development Target
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organisation
ISP	Institutional Strategy Paper
LAD	Latin America Department
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MTRF	Medium Term Resource Framework
NAO	National Audit Office
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
nssd	National strategy for sustainable development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPR	Output to Purpose Review
PAM	Poverty Aim Marker
PAN	Performance Assessment Network
PARC	Performance Assessment Resource Centre
PARP	Policy and Resources Plan
PCR	Project Completion Report
PIMS	Policy Information Marker System

POM	Policy Objective Marker
PRC	Portfolio Review Committee
PRGF	Poverty Reduction Growth Facility
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSA	Public Service Agreement
SDA	Service Delivery Agreement
SWAps	Sector Wide Approaches
TSP	Target Strategy Paper
U5MR	Under Five Mortality Rate
WAD	West Africa Department
WAS	Western Asia Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Over the past decade, almost all OECD countries have become much more results focused and have initiated reforms intended to improve the quality of policies and performance throughout government. There is increasing pressure for departments to be accountable not just for disbursed resources but also for the delivery of results.

2 Aid agencies have not escaped these pressures. For DFID, public commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Public Service Agreement (PSA) with the UK Treasury have meant a new drive to move beyond project activity-level monitoring towards tracking programme outcomes at the country level.

3 Against this background, DFID introduced a review process for country programme strategies in January 2000. Both Annual Plan and Performance Reviews (APPRs) and End of Cycle Reviews (CSPRs) were mandated with the aim of reporting country-level results and their contribution to wider DFID corporate-level objectives.

4 DFID's Evaluation Department undertook a review of the first full cycle of APPRs aimed at consolidating learning, listing key findings and making recommendations to strengthen the process. The report that follows is based on evidence from 22 APPRs and three CSPRs, completed up to August 2001. The study deals with issues around performance management in DFID, lesson learning versus accountability, and the use of global and country-level objectives for measuring organisational performance.

Purpose and utility

5 APPRs were set up with multiple and somewhat conflicting purposes. One was to facilitate lesson learning around country programmes to improve their relevance and design. Another was to assess DFID's impact on poverty eradication, in effect to demonstrate the results of DFID action; and another was to introduce a new system for reporting performance to Regional Managers and for corporate accountability.

6 Hence within the first year of the review process it became clear that the main purpose of the review was not known by staff or clearly articulated by management. Legitimate questions around its purpose soon emerged: was it for internal or external accountability or was it for team learning? How much detail was possible on an annual basis, particularly on programme impact? And who was the audience for the review: the Regional Director or the Development Committee (DC)? Flexibility in the application of the APPR instrument led to wide interpretation and lack of clarity as to what information and data was needed and in what depth.

7 This links to a general issue brought up by the increased decentralisation of aid programmes. In a process of decentralisation, how should leadership be provided in the design of performance assessment processes, such that centrally directed strategies are adhered to, but in a way that does not unduly constrain country teams?

8 Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that central guidance on reporting country-

level performance against the PSA added to the confusion. The exact role of the country-level activity in PSA reporting was not made clear by senior management and, in general, the double reporting requirement (i.e. against both Country Strategy Plan (CSP) and PSA objectives) caused more confusion.

9 The relationship between the APPR and the internal DFID resource bidding process, the Policy and Resource Plan (PARP), was not made clear. APPRs were not meant to create an additional burden but were meant to integrate into existing systems of programme management. One key way this was done was the merger of the APPR with the annual PARP process. In terms of the underlying rationale of performance management, where the allocation of resources should be governed by the ability to demonstrate efficient and effective performance, there is a strong case for linking the one with the other. However, a simplistic combination of the two processes is recognised as having the potential to interfere with the openness of the learning functions.

10 In summary, a balance needs to be struck between central direction and decentralised self-assessment systems. On one hand, over-central systems tend to be resisted, while on the other, self-assessment can lead to a wide variation in the quality of information produced in a way that makes aggregation across countries very difficult if not impossible. In general the purpose of the review and its audience needs to be made clear. **Is it for accountability or lesson learning?** Is it for learning or is it to report to the Regional Director? To avoid confusion and over-burdensome processes, the relationship to existing systems also needs to be clear.

Corporate-level performance

11 There is sufficient evidence to suggest that where it is combined with good leadership, the efficiency of the APPR as a learning tool outweighed the efficiency of the tool as a corporate accounting mechanism. Though lack of clarity around purpose is partly to blame (and perhaps easy to fix), a more difficult factor is the lack of continuity or logic between higher MDG-level objectives with corporate (PSA) and country-level (CSP or Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)) objectives.

12 In completed APPRs there was a lack of articulation of performance indicators for DFID country strategies below the MDG level. The limited usefulness of DFID APPRs as a measure of performance or results reflects a more general weakness of country strategy frameworks as currently applied by many donor agencies. As donors attempt to move away from narrow accountability for project inputs and outputs to more transparent results-based approaches they not only need to establish links between different levels of objectives and strategies but also confront the fundamental question of whose performance is actually under review.

13 Another complication was the relationship between formal reporting on the Public Service Agreement and reporting on country programme performance. In reality, the performance information that appeared in the APPR annexes was not used in the formal corporate-level reporting on the PSA, though it did allow country teams to assess how far the current PSA targets were relevant to their own work. The review therefore helped to

demonstrate the discontinuance or logical sequence of objectives into sub-objectives and lower sub-objectives, as well as clarity about who or which part of the organisation is responsible for delivery. CSP and performance reporting¹⁴ Although a key study finding was that APPRs could or logical sequence of objectives into sub-objectives and lower sub-objectives, as well as clarity about who or which part of the organisation is responsible for delivery.

CSP and performance reporting

14 Although a key study finding was that APPRs could in due course provide the basis for assessing and aggregating country performance, the present value of APPRs as instruments of performance measurement was limited by three factors:

- inadequate articulation in DFID CSPs of a framework of performance indicators for the DFID programme
- incomplete and questionable quality of the annual scoring at activity level that provides the basis for a link between activity performance and country strategy objectives
- substantial variation in content and approach between APPRs, reflecting the discretion granted to Divisions in developing guidance to country teams.

15 A common conclusion appears to be that while CSPs are highly effective as a means of communicating the broad features of DFID's analysis, programmes and policies at the country level, they have been much less effective as tools to guide DFID's own decision making or as monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

16 Annual score information is incomplete and lacks external checks or validation. The un-weighted summary information for a single time period that is reported provides only a limited basis for drawing comparative conclusions between countries and none yet for changes in performance over time.

17 It was not clear to country offices whether the review should be strictly internal or involve stakeholders. There is not enough evidence in the report to suggest that the involvement of stakeholders added or subtracted from the event, though there is some evidence that it helped to validate DFID's country strategy.

18 Emerging lessons early in the process were that the APPR was a useful tool for taking stock, agreeing forward work programmes and for increasing team cohesion around agreed goals. The opportunity to strengthen relationships and for team learning to take place also added value to the APPR process. But this was shown to depend on good team leadership as much as anything.

19 The wide range of current APPR formats has made it harder to make comparisons across the programme and foster cross-departmental learning in a clear way. APPRs are therefore limited as corporate accounting tools, even though they are contributing to informal

learning. In response, it is helpful to distinguish between an APPR as a document, which may have a prescribed format, and an APPR as a process whereby the document is produced.

20 As a document there would be merit in adopting a more standardised format, which would allow read across between programmes. A small core of performance monitoring information must be defined with strict rules about its format and content. This should be based on both project scoring and performance against country plan objectives. These objectives in turn should relate directly to support for the country- owned PRS.

Conclusions

21 CSPs have not provided an adequate framework of performance indicators that link DFID activities to higher-level objectives or that enable assessment of the impact of DFID activities, though they were not specifically set up to do so. The development of ‘smarter’, more responsive, Country Plans with an in-built framework for annual review would have the following characteristics:

- an overview of national development performance that is derived directly from the PRSP process
- a set of realistic objectives that are within the reach of the country programme given its available resources
- evidence that suggests a strong correlation or link between DFID programme objectives and higher national-level outcomes
- a monitoring framework to track organisational performance and the delivery of DFID outputs
- periodic evaluation to assess country programme delivery and impact on higher-level objectives.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to synthesis the main findings and lessons of the recent country performance synthesis study undertaken by DFID.

1.2 The purpose of the study was to review the first full cycle of the new review process for country programmes and to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the system.

1.3 As well as being of use to DFID management and country teams, it was always intended to publicise the findings more widely in order to contribute to global learning on country performance review amongst other donors, civil society organisations and development partners.

1.4 The working papers from this study together with a workshop held at the University of Bath in November 2001 have already fed into the new DFID Country Plan guidance that will replace APPRs and Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) with Country Plans (CPs), which will be agreed with partner governments and will include a framework for assessing on an annual basis DFID's performance in implementing the plan.

1.5 They have also informed the first Development Effectiveness Report. The Development Effectiveness Report (DER) was commissioned to provide a concise, accessible, systematic and independent assessment of the performance of all UK development assistance, not just bilateral country assistance.

DFID context

1.6 The publication of the International Development White Papers¹ signalled the shift from the Overseas Development Administration as an aid delivery organisation to DFID which intended to act as an international development organisation, that being 'one that thinks about all the policies that could affect the developing world'.²

1.7 The Secretary of State for International Development summarised the new agenda at the launch of the first White Paper in 1997. 'The challenge of development is to apply the lessons of success to enable the poor to work their way out of poverty. We are committing ourselves to refocus our international development efforts on poverty elimination. This can only be achieved through economic growth, which benefits the poor and through measures which provide education and health care and enable the poor to develop their talents . . . We will pursue the targets in partnership with developing countries who are also committed to them. We will offer such countries a longer-term commitment of support, more resources and greater flexibility in using those resources. Our aim is to ensure that

¹ *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century*, 1997, Cm 3789. *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor*, 2000, Cm 5006.

² Interview with Suma Chakrabarti then Permanent Secretary Designate, DFID, *Financial Times* 15 February 2002.

good governments succeed. The nature of our partnership will depend on the circumstances of each partner country and how we can best help.³

1.8 Through the White Papers, the UK government committed itself to poverty reduction, and this became DFID's mission.

1.9 Like others, DFID has now adopted the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in its work, which represent an evolution of the previously embraced International Development Targets. The MDGs are listed in **Appendix 1**. Commitment to the MDGs and shifts towards an evidence-based policy environment have meant a new drive within DFID to be more committed to tracking programme impact on poverty reduction. Although not facing a declining budget, DFID is still placing an increasing emphasis on performance assessment throughout the project cycle and at higher levels (i.e. sector, country, agency, relationships with multilaterals).

Study context

1.10 Prior to 1997, CSPs were produced for some countries as internal documents for departmental use. Since then, CSPs have been produced for all countries where DFID provides development assistance programmes. They are normally produced every three years. The papers, produced in consultation with governments, business, civil society, and others within the country concerned and within the UK, set out how DFID aims to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the country in question. They are shared with partners and have proved to be an effective means of communicating the broad features of DFID's analysis, programmes and policies at country level. They should also act as a guide to DFID decision making. 'A shift to country programming logically implies a shift to country programme evaluations.'⁴

1.11 DFID introduced a strategic review process for country strategies in January 2000.⁵ Evaluation Department (EvD) was tasked with undertaking a review of the first full cycle of APPRs aimed at consolidating learning, listing key findings and making recommendations to strengthen the process. The study was based on 22 APPRs that had been completed by August 2001: 6 for European, 9 for Asian and 7 for African countries (**Appendix 2**). The study also included CSPRs for Russia, Ukraine and Brazil.

Purpose of study and anticipated outcomes

1.12 The overall aim of the study was to clarify and strengthen the APPR process so that it could contribute more fully to the management and performance of country programmes and support programme managers in improving programme effectiveness.

³ Clare Short, Statement to the White Paper to the House of Commons, 5 November 1997.

⁴ DAC, *Evaluating Country Programmes*. Vienna Workshop 1999, p.13.

⁵ Portfolio Review Committee (PRC) 27 January 2000: Country Performance Review PRC (99) 41.

1.13 The **purpose** of the study was to synthesise lessons learned to date regarding both the **content** of APPRs, i.e. what they tell us about DFID programmes, and the **process** of APPR development. The study also looked at how this new instrument has been introduced and developed, and looked for good practice in its use. APPRs have provided an opportunity for self-assessment at country programme level. As a group, the APPRs are therefore a useful base from which to draw lessons on the quality and effectiveness of DFID programmes as seen from country programme teams themselves.

1.14 The study assessed the APPR data set as a whole in order to:

- highlight examples of good practice and synthesise the main lessons to date
- provide an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the DFID programme as seen in APPRs
- provide DFID senior management with a structured discussion of the potential key uses of APPRs and for adapting the process accordingly.

1.15 The interim outputs were:

- two internal working papers, one on APPR process and management issues and one on content issues.
- a literature review on donor experience of country programme review identifying key issues facing other agencies around programme-level review
- a workshop run by the Performance Assessment Resource Centre (PARC) which was an opportunity for discussion on emerging lessons on country programme-level evaluation with a broad audience, including DFID staff, other agency staff, INGOs, consultants and academics. (Members of the Performance Assessment Network (PAN) an informal network of DFID staff, were consulted both before and during the study and many also attended the workshop.)

A more detailed description of the study and its outcomes is given in **Appendix 5**.

1.16 This report is a synthesis of the working papers and literature review, taking into consideration the discussion at the workshop. It locates DFID's experience in the context of work by other agencies.

Report structure

1.17 The report begins with an examination of the objectives of the country review system in Section 2. Section 3 discusses the implementation of the review process and the consequences of the particular method of implementation. Section 4 examines the impact of the reviews on country programme management and effectiveness. Section 5 picks up the second main theme of the study and examines what the APPR data set said about the content of DFID programmes. The report ends in Section 6 with issues for further consideration and research.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME REVIEW SYSTEM

2.1 This section gives the context, both external and internal, within which the new DFID review system was introduced. It then outlines the system, compares it to general trends in performance assessment and highlights a range of questions that were asked early on. It concludes with comments on the relevance of the new system.

Background

2.2 Over the past decade, almost all OECD countries have become much more results focused and have initiated reforms intended to improve the quality of policies and performance throughout government. In the UK, the post-1997⁶ government has a strong administrative reform agenda, in which there is increasing pressure for departments to be accountable not just for disbursed resources but for their performance.

2.3 Aid agencies have also been subject to these pressures. For DFID, public commitments to the MDGs and shifts towards a much stronger evidence-based policy environment have meant a new drive to move beyond project/activity-level monitoring toward tracking programme impact on poverty reduction. The Portfolio Review Committee (PRC)⁷ mandated a systematic country strategy review process designed to encourage this thinking within DFID country programmes in January 2000.

2.4 The MDGs are long-term strategic global objectives. They represent the milestones against which global progress towards the elimination of poverty can be measured. The MDGs relate to the achievements of combined global effort in the fight against poverty. DFID's Public Service Agreement with the UK Treasury describes the objectives and targets through which DFID will measure its own contribution towards the MDGs. Linked to this is the Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) which operationalises the PSA and suggests how DFID is going to deliver on PSA targets. As such, it lays out a set of processes which DFID thinks it should support. Country Strategies describe DFID actions at country level and the new review system established a formal reporting system to track country-level performance. **Box 1** shows the different levels of reporting that were established.

Box 1: Levels of reporting and analysis

Targets	Actors	Reporting
MDGs	Global action	Global reporting mechanism
PSA	DFID action	Formal reporting to HM Treasury
SDA	DFID formal action	Formal reporting to HM Treasury
CSPs	Country level action	New review process to track progress

⁶ In the 1997 election, a Labour Government was elected after 18 years of Conservative rule.

⁷ This committee had project approval responsibilities within DFID at this time.

2.5 As well as external forces driving change, three key internal factors coincided and shaped the new review process. First, there was recognition that shortcomings in the strategic implementation of policy at country level needed to be addressed. In particular, early CSPs produced in 1998/99 generally lacked clarity in three key areas:

- whether a correct poverty diagnosis was made in developing the strategy
- whether the objectives of the strategy were consistent with this diagnosis
- whether the assistance and instruments chosen were adequate for achieving these objectives.

2.6 The inadequate linkage between poverty analysis, programme goals and programme activities was termed the 'missing middle' by Booth and White (1999).⁸ They defined this problem as involving both a failure to fully distinguish and rank the causes of poverty underlying the national poverty profile, and a failure to be clear about **how** DFID programmes proposed to break into circles of poverty causation and **why** the activities chosen were the best from this point of view. The review process sought to address this by asking regular questions about the impact of DFID's work on poverty and therefore making the link between activities and poverty diagnosis more explicit.

2.7 Second, there was shift within DFID to delegating more authority away from central committees and towards individual Regional Directors. This shift was paralleled by the formation of a new role for the central Development Committee (DC) in DFID. The DC became far more concerned with taking a strategic overview of DFID activities and policy. Contemporary analysis from DFID country programmes was therefore imperative in order for the DC to fulfil its function.

2.8 Third, there was a recognition of the need to develop a practical instrument capable of assisting country programmes retain a meaningful strategic vision in the face of constant changes in country context. The new review process sought to address this by creating a means to review CSPs regularly and therefore making them more operable as working strategy documents through allowing feedback to occur.

What was the new system?

2.9 Both **Annual** Plan and Performance Reviews (APPRs) and reviews at the **end of the CSP cycle**⁹ (named a CSPR) were mandated in January 2000 with the aim of facilitating lesson learning around country programmes and improving their design, performance and future impact. The intention of the two phase review process was not only to report on progress of activities and outputs but also to make regular judgements on whether achievement of the CSP purpose was still possible and, if not, to discuss why and to propose modified plans for implementation. In addition, the reviews were to act as a means

⁸ *How can country strategies be a more effective tool for poverty reduction? issues from a review of the 'new' CSPs*, by David Booth and Howard White 1999.

⁹ The CSP cycle was three to four years.

for assessing DFID impact on poverty eradication, in effect, to demonstrate the results of DFID action. The original rationale for these reviews is summarised in **Box 2** below.

Box 2: Original rationale for APPRs and CSPRs¹⁰

- to improve efficiency and effectiveness of country programmes
- to assist in making difficult choices across a range of options
- to inform policy dialogue with partners on strategic priorities
- provide a means for assessing DFID impact on poverty eradication
- contribute to the building of a performance culture
- strengthen accountability within DFID and its wider public.

2.10 Although mandated through the PRC, no central guidance for the format or the process of producing APPRs was developed in detail. Instead, regional departments were asked to produce guidance to reflect variations in regional context. Asia Division first produced guidance in April 2000, Africa Division in January 2001 and Americas and Eastern Europe Division in November 2000.

Annual Plan and Performance Reviews (APPRs)¹¹

2.11 In these guidance documents, the primary purpose of an APPR was defined as to improve the performance and relevance of country programmes and to assess how effectively the current programme of activities was being delivered and their contribution to achievements of outputs and to verify that the outputs remained likely to meet the purpose and that the purpose itself remained consistent with country objectives. An APPR provided an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned in the previous year, including those around programme management and partnerships and to identify changes to improve programme effectiveness.

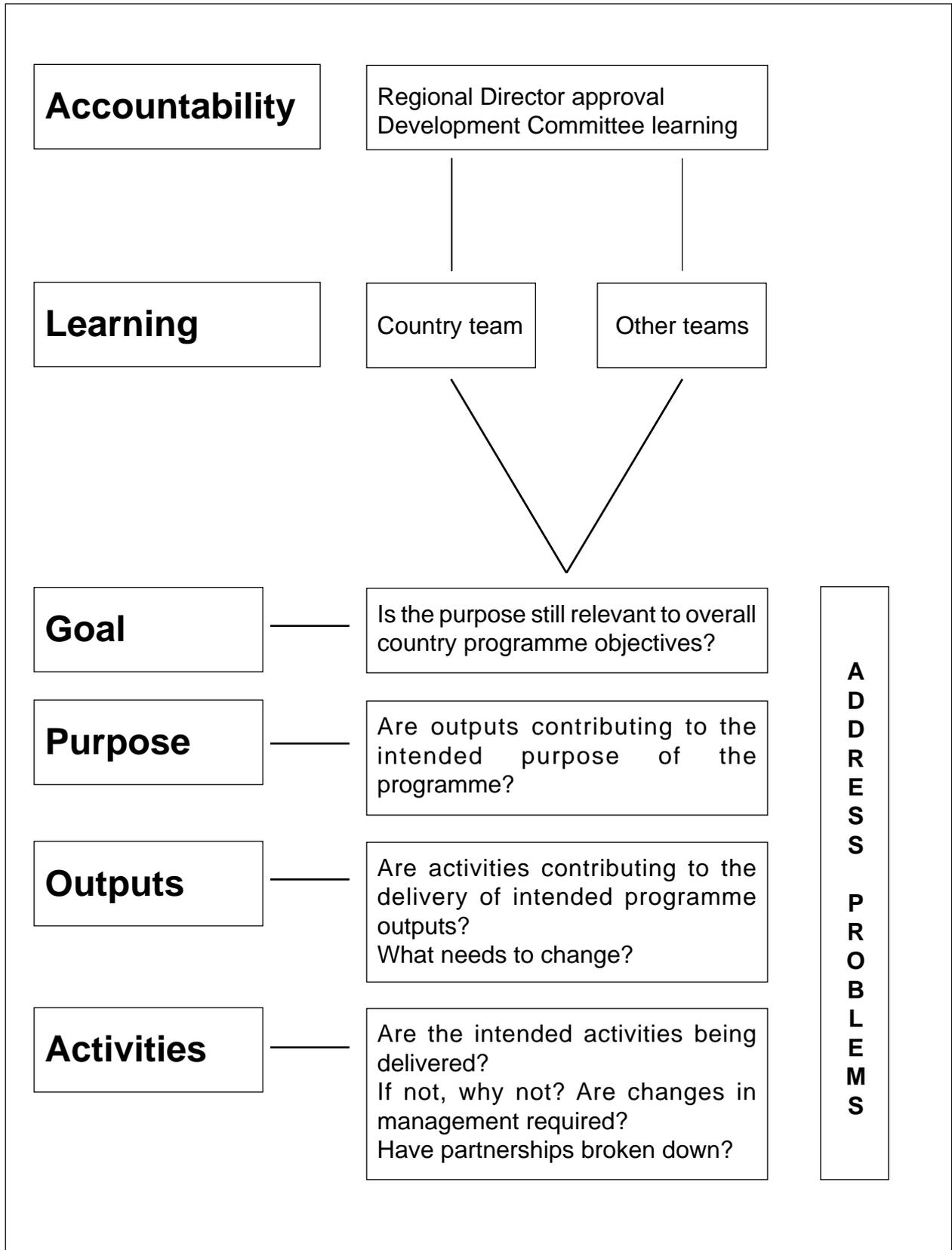
2.12 APPR documents were seen to have multiple functions. They represented both a means of aligning country strategies to corporate structures and a means of disaggregating DFID's strategy to a country level. Once completed, the APPR data set also gave senior management an overview of performance and strategic coherence. The process of creating an APPR allowed country staff to reflect on their CSP as a team.

The diagram in **Box 3** summarises the APPR process as originally envisaged.

¹⁰ PRC, Country Performance Review PRC (99) 41.

¹¹ PRC, Country Performance Review PRC (99) 41, paras. 17-19.

Box 3: The APPR process



End of Cycle Reviews (CSPRs)

2.13 The primary purpose of a CSPR was to assess the relevance, impact and effectiveness of DFID country programmes in relation to local development objectives towards the end of the CSP cycle. Key differences with the annual process included the following areas. The CSPR was to take a more in-depth look at the programme. In order to do this it should involve partners more centrally and include some independent external input. In fact, the PRC paper argued that the CSPR could be wholly contracted out and that in the medium term, DFID should seek to conduct reviews jointly with the partner government and other donors or, ideally, for the review to be led by the partner government.

2.14 These reviews were also to inform future strategies in the country concerned by yielding immediate lessons, both operational and strategic, for the new CSP. It was therefore hoped that the relevance of DFID intervention would improve over time. It was also suggested that the review would inform resource allocation over the medium term.¹² CSPRs were not just to evaluate project success - they were seen as an opportunity to think about how all activities feed into higher-level goals and objectives and to discuss what the programme is delivering and why and the short-, medium- and long-term impact of the programme.

2.15 This two-stage system placed DFID in line with other systems common to donor agencies. Across donors, three core tools and stages can be identified.

- country strategies where the country programme is the core unit of account
- annual review and plan
- formal evaluation of the country strategy.

'however, the specific reasons for carrying out a CPE may vary considerably between donors and even between different exercises conducted by the same donor. There are many potential roles for a Country Programme Evaluation'.

2.16 Importantly, the annual process in DFID was not originally linked to resource allocation. It was, however, suggested that the CSPRs would inform resource allocation over the medium term. Also, the evaluation of the country programme, while containing an element of external assessment, was nevertheless to be commissioned by the DFID country programme manager. They therefore could not be seen as independent.

2.17 In addition, it is interesting to compare the DFID system with recent global trends in performance assessment highlighted by the study's literature review. This is examined in **Table 1** below.

¹² PRC, Country Performance Review PRC (99) 41, paras. 31-48.

¹³ DAC, *Evaluating Country Programmes*. Vienna Workshop 1999, p. 13.

Table 1: Comparing global trends in performance assessment to the DFID system

Trend	DFID review process
1. Related to outputs not inputs	Trying to make explicit connections between inputs and outputs.
2. Related to intra- and inter-organisational learning	Learning within teams a priority. Learning loops unclear between teams or outside DFID. Reliant on DC for cross-departmental learning. The status of the review document as internal or external not mandated.
3. Aware of the importance of openness and transparency	Openness with partners not mandatory for annual review. End of cycle review should include partners and, ultimately, link to their review processes.
4. Contributing to actual performance improvements	The toolkit to relate findings to performance was not prescribed. The relationships between performance and resource allocation was not clear at annual review level. A resource allocation – performance link was anticipated in the medium term for end of cycle reviews. The incentives around this were not clear.
5. Empowering of beneficiaries	Reviews concentrated mainly on DFID processes. Empowering of country teams more than beneficiaries. The routes for beneficiaries to speak not clear.

Conclusions on relevance

2.18 As noted in paragraph 2.6 above, the ‘missing middle’ problem already existed in many CSPs. In essence, the APPR and CSPR process was an attempt to bolt a review process on to existing strategies. The extent to which these strategies could be systematically reviewed was problematic because of a lack of baseline information and an in-built monitoring framework. It was also the case that the systems focused on DFID’s requirements and did not clearly relate to national strategies even though partners were in fact consulted for some APPRs and all CSPRs.

2.19 Within the first year of the review process, key questions emerged in internal communications and in meetings of the Performance Assessment Network (PAN) around the following themes. Who were the primary audience for the reviews? What was their primary purpose, that is, for internal reporting, external reporting or team learning? What was a reasonable level of consultation to undertake? Was there a set of minimum requirements that senior management had not articulated but, in some sense, expected to see? Was the process for APPR development an internal one or an open one? How much

depth was it possible to go into on an annual basis, particularly on programme impact, i.e. the results of DFID action? What was the approval route and were the Development Committee always to be involved?

2.20 Even though the PRC paper had touched on these themes, careful reading of the original document did not, it was said in study interviews, yield enough information. This throws open several key questions. First, how do organisations learn? To a large extent the Development Committee were relied on for cross-regional learning and other routes for informal learning were either not clear. It also links to the question of which level of decision making do staff respond to? Regional guidance aimed to contextualise the review process but questions of how central decision makers would respond were still left open in some minds. Regional staff were left in a position of informing the DC but also trying to fill in the gaps left by the original central guidance.

2.21 The way the APPR instrument was launched from the centre is unusual within DFID. Flexibility was emphasised because each region has very different portfolios, but within the regions there was also an unusual degree of procedural freedom. While on the one hand this can be interpreted as an enlightened recognition of, and support for, the processes of institutional decentralisation, it can also be interpreted as a reflection of a lack of clarity over the purpose of APPRs. The approach of ‘letting a thousand flowers bloom’ caused some uncertainty and confusion amongst country staff. It also, however, enabled a diversity of responses to take place, which provides the opportunity for best practice to be identified.

2.22 This links to a general issue brought up by the increased decentralisation of aid programmes. In a process of decentralisation, how should leadership be provided in the design of performance assessment processes, such that centrally directed strategies are adhered to, but in way that does not unduly constrain country teams?

2.23 As noted in paragraph 2.4 above, a further complication was the relationship between formal reporting on the Public Service Agreement and reporting on country programme performance. In reality, the information that appeared in APPR annexes was not actually ever used in the formal reporting on the PSA at all. However, it could be argued that it did serve the purpose of allowing country teams to assess how far the current PSA targets were relevant to their work.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 This section examines the practical implementation of the new review process. The varied team approaches to the APPR task are discussed. This is followed by key management responses to the process and delivery of APPRs. Finally, the extent to which the APPRs served as a corporate accounting tool is analysed and a summary of the costs and benefits of the new review process is presented.

APPR formats

3.2 APPRs began to be produced from September 2000 onwards. See **Appendix 2** for the production dates for country APPRs.

3.3 As there was no regional-based guidance produced there was a diverse range of APPR formats adopted. This diversity reflected innovation at country team level and allowed best practice to be identified. **Appendix 3** lists the different types of information that was provided in each APPR. The contents ranged from the simple, to the extensive. An example of each is illustrated in **Box 4**.

Box 4: Contents of the Malawi and Nepal APPRs

Malawi	Nepal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main objectives • Lessons learnt • Impact assessment • Next steps • Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary • Development in Nepal • Regional and global issues • Review of partnerships • Developments in country strategy and programmes • Ways of working • Forward plans <p>Annexes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against IDTs • Portfolio performance assessment • New projects and project concept notes approved • PAMs, POMs and PIMS markings • Examples of change models • APPR preparation process

APPR process

3.4 There were substantial variations in the level of effort committed to preparing APPRs and, as would be expected, their success as a learning tool for country teams has varied correspondingly. The PRC originally suggested that proportionality should be applied when preparing reviews and that the amount of time dedicated to reviews should reflect the size, nature and context of the programme.

3.5 In practice, decisions were made entirely at the country team level in terms of the amount of human resources to dedicate to the review. During interviews for the study there were some reservations expressed about the value of APPRs but, for the most part, they were seen in a positive light. Emerging lessons early in the process were that the APPR was a useful management tool for taking stock and agreeing forward work plans; and for increasing team cohesion around agreed goals.¹⁴ APPRs offered country teams the opportunity of learning and team building and allowed them to 'own' their programmes in a way that had not previously occurred. A key added value of the APPR process was that it provided an opportunity for staff to develop relationships within the team and for individual and team learning to take place, thus contributing to coherence and effectiveness.

3.6 Therefore, to have applied a strict notion of proportionality, i.e. related to team size or programme spend, would have run the risk of stunting programme development through failing to encourage smaller country programmes to take time out to discuss and analyse circumstances and activities as fully as they might. Even the smallest country programmes could benefit from undertaking a review, which entailed some form of collective engagement and reflection. Allowing space for the promotion of innovative thinking and the opportunity to work out how it can be linked to programme development is not related to programme size. The decision to use a loose directive on proportionality created intrinsic micro-organisation benefits and produced ideas of relevance across DFID.

3.7 An important finding in the study was that success in producing a rounded APPR event, i.e. not only the production of a review document but of team cohesion in support of the review process and additional benefits listed above, was related to the presence of firm leadership which had a clear strategic vision of the process required. Where this was not present, the evidence indicates that the lack of structure associated with the introduction of APPRs led to a more mechanical approach to the review process with those team members delegated the task of undertaking the review being more concerned about how their programme would be perceived at regional and divisional level than with lesson learning and improving their performance.

Involvement of stakeholders

3.8 Another major difference across teams in the implementation of the APPR was the extent to which partners and those outside DFID were consulted during the process and/or had access to the final document. As noted above, this was not prescribed from the centre for the annual process, even though the PRC stated that DFID reviews should not duplicate national reporting systems but should aim to bridge gaps in these systems.

3.9 At one extreme there was DFID's Romania programme, where a week was devoted to sending a group of 15 country staff and advisers to Bucharest for talks on strategy with the government of Romania. The process proved to be a great success. It opened channels within government, which assisted the validation of DFID's country strategy. Somewhere in the middle of the spectrum was DFID Nepal, which incorporated a series of meetings with peer reference groups comprising government and opposition representatives,

¹⁴ Internal communications from Asia Director, November 2000 and Africa Policy staff, June 2001.

academics, donors, INGOs, private sector and civil society representatives whose views were used to inform the review. In other cases the APPR was seen as a sensitive and exclusively internal document.

Integration of review process into existing systems

3.10 APPRs were set up to be integrated into existing systems of programme management, not to create an additional burden. One key way this was done was the merger of the APPR with the internal DFID bidding process, the Policy and Resource Plan (PARP). In several cases the elements of the APPR were simply slotted into the PARP (e.g. Nepal PARP 2001/02–2003/04). In other cases the bid for resources was appended to the APPR. The relationship between the APPR and the PARP became closer as a result of country offices seeing no benefit in maintaining a strict separation between the two documents. This was a divergence from senior management directives in January 2001 that the APPR was not to be used as a bidding document.¹⁵

3.11 Concern was expressed by some senior managers that the APPR is becoming overloaded and that it is not possible for one tool to be used for performance assessment, monitoring and applying for resources. Such voices have expressed scepticism that the PARPs and APPRs could be unified since they have different approval paths and different purposes.

3.12 In terms of the underlying rationale of performance management, where the allocation of resources should be governed by the ability to demonstrate efficient and effective performance, there is a strong logic to the closer connection of the APPR process to resource allocation. However, a simplistic conflation of the two processes is recognised as having the potential to interfere with the openness and learning functions of the APPR process. The challenge is how to best utilise the synergies that exist between the two processes, while providing safeguards against the possible negative consequences of conflation.

3.13 A further complication in the evolving relationship between APPRs and PARPs is that a significant number of PARPs are produced on a regional basis. The APPR process is bringing about increased confidence and ownership by country teams of their programmes. One consequence of this is that some country teams are seeking to disassociate themselves from the regional PARPs and to independently present their own bid for resources.

Management responses

3.14 Out of the 22 APPRs completed, eight were discussed formally at the Development Committee and the relationship between the DC and country teams in this process was

¹⁵ DPC minutes 18 January 2001 state that the DPC reaffirmed that the strategy paper reviews were not bidding documents for extra resources and should not raise expectations of a higher resource allocation, decisions on which were taken at the time of the PARPs and Resource Allocation Round. APPRs should be consistent with the current Aid Framework.

not clear. However, there was no strict criteria followed to choose this group.¹⁶ The lack of central guidance on APPR content and format understandably led to country programmes providing a substantial amount of detail to ensure that nothing was 'left out'. It followed that the Development Committee then spent considerable time discussing this detail rather than strategic issues and lessons. This added to the team work load in the first cycle of APPRs.

3.15 Interestingly, despite the apparent learning about their country programme that occurred, the majority of staff interviewed for the study thought that key audience was their Regional Director, not DFID staff or partners. This relates to the difference between who needs to know in terms of an approval path, to safeguard accountability, and those who could potentially benefit through learning from others' experience.

3.16 This links to the international theme of decentralisation and leadership. Decentralisation means new responsibilities and expectations of staff in country offices with respect to achieving results. While this is in itself new, there is the additional burden of complying with centralised systems of control and accountability, which are often perceived as necessary to keep a hold of the decentralised decision makers. These systems can easily become onerous for decentralised decision makers and can result in an allocation of resources away from the pursuit of the primary objective organisation to accounting for what and how decisions were taken. In this audit squeeze, a common casualty is learning. It can often be the complaint from staff that there is no time to consider whether they are 'doing the right thing' as too busy demonstrating that they are 'doing things right'.

3.17 In addition, the APPRs were set up to serve programme management purposes but also to satisfy internal and external reporting. For example, as the guidance from regional departments developed, it was suggested that country programmes relate their programme activities to key Public Service Agreement objectives. However, the exact role of country-level activity in PSA reporting was not made clear by senior management and, in general, this double reporting requirement caused confusion.

3.18 Decentralisation within DFID is perceived to have contributed to improvements in performance through a greater sense of staff ownership and commitment to country programmes. However, the study revealed strong feelings that the organisation has become over-strategised. In this the tensions between centralised strategy and control and the decentralised management of performance are clearly evident. These tensions are not just about struggles over the location of initiatives within DFID, but also about a lack of clarity about the roles of the different levels and management structures within the organisation.

APPRs as corporate accounting tools

3.19 APPRs were set up with the multiple aims of facilitating lessons learning around country programmes and improving their design, performance and impact. In addition, the

¹⁶ Bangladesh (PRC 28.09.00), Nepal (PRC 28.09.00), China (PRC 09.11.00), India (PRC 09.11.00), Mozambique (PRC 17.05.01), Tanzania (DC 21.06.01) Uganda (PRC 11/00) Malawi (DC 02/01).

reviews were to act as a means for assessing DFID impact on poverty eradication, in effect, to demonstrate the results of DFID action. In this DFID is in line with other donors 'Country Programme Evaluations serve as agency-wide, strategic planning tools as well as tools of programme management. By viewing their work in the context of specific country situations, donors acquire a deeper understanding of aid and development processes.'¹⁷

3.20 The study finding was that APPRs could in due course provide the basis for assessment and aggregation of country performance but presently the value of APPRs as instruments of performance measurement was limited by three factors:

- inadequate articulation in DFID Country Strategy Papers of a framework of performance indicators and targets for the DFID programme.
- incomplete and questionable quality of the annual scoring at activity level that provides the basis for a link between activity performance and country strategy objectives
- substantial variation in content and approach between APPRs, reflecting the discretion granted to Divisions in developing guidance to country teams.

Developing a framework

3.21 A common conclusion appears to be that while CSPs are highly effective as means of communicating (especially to an external audience) the broad features of DFID's analysis, programmes and policies at the country level, they have been much less effective as tools to guide DFID's own decision making or as monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

3.22 In completed APPRs there was a lack of articulation of performance indicators for DFID country strategies below the IDT/MDG level. Generally, there was relatively detailed text reporting on progress on reported activities but less information on outputs or results, and claimed impacts. Where results are reported, they are often at the overall national and sectoral level, with attribution of the DFID impact being difficult to establish.

3.23 The limited current usefulness of DFID APPRs as a measure of performance reflects a more general weakness of country strategy frameworks as currently applied by many donor agencies. As donors attempt to move away from narrow accountability for project inputs and outputs to more transparent results-based approaches they not only need to establish links between different levels of targets and strategies but are also confronting the fundamental questions of whose performance is actually under review? Whose strategy is it? Who has the right to a strategy? Who is the primary audience for the review? There needs to be a more inclusive process which better links the behaviour of donors, individually and collectively, to national processes.

¹⁷DAC, *Evaluating Country Programmes*. Viena Workshop 1999, p.14.

Project scoring

3.24 DFID operates a scoring system for projects over £500,000 spend value. Staff involved in project monitoring are asked to make an annual assessment on projects and programmes on a scale of one to five on whether the outputs are likely to be achieved and whether the achievement of the outputs is likely to result in the achievement of the project purpose. All scores should be accompanied by 1-2 paragraphs commenting on the rating, lessons learned, purpose, attribution and quality of scoring. This commentary helps lesson learning in terms of why interventions are successful or not. Project scoring information was presented in some of the APPRs, but there are concerns about its value.¹⁸ Annual score information is incomplete and lacks external checks or validation. The unweighted summary information for a single time period that is reported provides only a limited basis for drawing comparative conclusions between countries, and none yet for changes in performance over time. In most cases there is no systematic attempt to present or analyse project scoring level data, or to use this to try and identify changes in performance in the portfolio over time. This highlights the need within DFID to revisit the scoring system and to address the link between the lack of ownership of the system and the lack of compliance.

Harmonising formats

3.25 The wide range of current APPR formats has made it harder to make comparisons across the programme and foster cross-departmental learning in a clear way. APPRs are therefore limited as corporate accounting tools, even though they are contributing to informal learning. In response, it is helpful to distinguish between an **APPR as a document** which may have a prescribed format and an **APPR as a process** whereby the document is produced.

3.26 As a document there is merit in a more standardised format, which would allow read across between programmes. A small core of performance monitoring information must be defined with strict rules about its format and content. This should be based on both project scoring and performance against country plan objectives. These objectives in turn should relate directly to support of the PRS in-country.

3.27 As a matter of principle, however, it is argued that management should not seek to define the processes whereby annual reviews are produced too tightly. So long as the review contains the required minimum information and that its process has been conducted in accordance with a clear set of principles, i.e. the inclusion of relevant advisory and administrative staff, then the detailed design of the process should be left to country-level management.

Box 5 captures the key costs and benefits of the DFID APPR system in the first year of implementation.

¹⁸ Eleven APPRs report on Output to Purpose Review scores for at least six projects and eight for more than a dozen projects. The remainder provide little or no scoring information.

Box 5: Costs and benefits of original APPR system

Benefits	Costs
<i>Process and product</i>	
Useful management tool	High workload for the first cycle
Allowed teams the opportunity of learning and team building	No clear direction on who to consult and how much depth to go into. Costly in terms of time
Freedom in procedure meant no team potentially 'lost out' from additional benefits	Freedom meant focus on strong team leadership – if good then additional benefits, if not these were lost
Freedom in procedure meant teams could adapt the process to their own needs	Reports too long as teams not wanting to 'leave anything out'
Integrated with some existing DFID systems – gradually with the PARP	Too many purposes – learning and performance assessment and reporting to senior management and, increasingly, resource bidding
	Existing scoring system was not utilised
<i>Management response</i>	
Gave senior management new insights into programme-level activities and opportunity to comment and learn	Lack of clarity about the roles of different levels and management structures within the organisation
Attempt to integrate external and internal reporting system.	Internal and external reporting requirements caused confusion
<i>Corporate reporting tool</i>	
Diversity of responses provided the opportunity for best practice to be identified	Diversity of formats weakened APPR as a corporate accounting tool

Conclusions on efficiency

3.28 Judging the efficiency of the review system is a process of reviewing these costs and benefits. The costs in terms of team time and a process of second guessing what may be required in the light of no centralised guidance on format, process or consultation, should be balanced with the innovation that the freedom in the process produced and the generation of team learning through a process that was team owned. That said, the success of the APPR as a team learning tool depended heavily on team leadership. This is a necessary trend within a decentralised organisation, where greater power is devolved away from the centre.

3.29 The balance between accountability and lesson learning that is common to all evaluation activities is also relevant here. Team learning has occurred despite the key audience/purpose for the review being seen as a tool to ensure accountability to the Regional Director. This highlights the fact that the audience and purpose of the review must be clear from the outset. In addition, if the key purpose is to inform management decision making, then the route through which the information is transmitted and the way it is utilised in decision making over what time scale must be set out.

3.30 Such a concentration on reviewing DFID action meant that integration into national systems was compromised in the first cycle of reviews. The recent Peer Review of the United Kingdom by the DAC concluded 'While country strategies are designed in consultation with partner governments, the United Kingdom does not attach as much importance as some other donors to ensuring a high degree of ownership is held by the partner government.'¹⁹ While acknowledging recipient country strategies, a framework for monitoring DFID's own country plan is necessary in order to track organisational performance and the delivery of DFID outputs. Periodic evaluation is needed to assess country programme delivery and impact. That said, there are two issues. First, how can partners be empowered through DFID review processes and, second, how can DFID processes of review be more fully integrated into national planning and review processes? These issues are being addressed in the new guidance for the country strategy cycle within DFID and there is widespread acknowledgement of the need for a more inclusive process.

3.31 The new guidance also includes the formal merging of the PARP and annual review process, representing a key way that country team experience has influenced central procedures.

3.32 It is clear from the discussion above that the efficiency of the instrument as a learning tool outweighs the efficiency of the tool as a corporate accounting tool. In future, DFID is placing more emphasis on regional working and, building on the experiment with regional guidance for the review process, regional comparison of performance may be more useful and interesting than the cross-DFID comparison recently attempted. Senior management will also discuss review in groups to maximise learning about each region rather than each country.

3.33 To fully judge the effectiveness of the system in terms of meeting its original objectives we need to judge the impact of the system. However, the reported increase in strategic thinking and the merger of performance assessment and resource bidding processes are important steps forward towards building a performance culture within DFID.

¹⁹ DAC Development Co-operation Review: United Kingdom. Preprint *DAC Journal* 2001 Vol. 2 No. 4.

4 IMPACTS

4.1 In assessing the impact of the new review process, it is useful to revisit the original criteria set up for the system detailed in **Box 2** above and assess different levels of impact. It is also relevant to discuss the impact of the new system on different groups, namely country teams, senior management, partners and the general public.

4.2 The APPR was generally agreed to have been a useful management tool, which allowed country teams to review and assess what they have been doing and where they are going. As such it helped **improve the efficiency and effectiveness of country programmes** and **assisted in making difficult choices across a range of options**.

This was achieved through the following mechanisms:

- APPRs can make the delivery of country strategies more flexible through their capacity to identify shortcomings and enable feedback to occur.
- There is considerable evidence to suggest that APPRs reshaped the implementation of country strategies.
- There are strong grounds for claiming that organisational effectiveness is being improved as a result of APPRs compelling departments to think more strategically.
- APPRs are a useful means of capturing lessons which derive from project activity and thus of allowing strategy coherence to be maintained or strengthened.
- APPRs have drawn attention to mistakes being repeated as a result of consistent weaknesses in the dissemination of project lessons.

4.3 The increasing rigour which APPRs brought to the assessment of country programmes was welcomed by staff and management. The APPR process structured the way country teams thought by compelling them to think about how their programme was meeting stated objectives and about its future direction. Linking to paragraph 3.5 above, this suggests a potential link between a feeling of ownership of the programme and critical thinking about that programme.

4.4 In addition, as illustrated in Section 3 above, APPRs were very useful to DFID in building team cohesion around programme goals. Whether or not it was the intended purpose of APPRs, they have been used by a number of country teams as an opportunity to develop their capacity through building team consensus. Where this has occurred it has boosted staff confidence and contributed to a more dynamic and committed office environment. An additional feature of the APPR is that it provides a means of indicating how DFID can invest in the professional capabilities of individuals by providing them with an environment within which to exercise their professionalism.

4.5 In conclusion, the APPRs acted as a useful management tool for country programmes. The review found that APPRs impacted on new CSPs in several cases and, through acting

as a feedback mechanism, prompted substantial revision of existing country strategies. For example, in Vietnam the APPR was able to use information from a Poverty Assessment not available at the time that the CSP was written. In Tanzania the CSP was re-orientated around impact areas and programme delivery was re-organised around results teams. In Mozambique the APPR process has been used as a basis for rethinking how the links between DFID's country programme and DFID's objectives have been formulated. In Kenya, the APPR has been used to re-work DFID Kenya's programme strategy around 4 objectives and to re-organise the DFID Kenya team around the delivery of these objectives. APPRs contributed to team ownership of the CSP and to the building of better team relationships. However, this was only the case when leadership with a strategic vision was in place.

4.6 While lessons from project-level activities were identified, it is marked that no references were made to the results of any ex-post evaluations in any APPR documents. This points to the possible disjuncture between identifying lessons and the process of operationalising that learning.

4.7 There is less evidence to suggest that APPRs played a strong role in **providing a means of assessing DFID impact on poverty eradication**. While identifying some impacts at country level, the diversity of formats, lack of baseline data as a starting-point and inadequate monitoring frameworks in CSPs meant that it was not possible to use the APPR data set to assess DFID's corporate impact on poverty.

4.8 That said, the first full cycle of APPRs did prompt useful reflection on what effective country planning should contain which informed the new guidance on the country strategy cycle within DFID. This includes the establishment upfront of a monitoring framework, a stronger recognition of the role of partners and a clear identification of layers of reporting within the organisation. Through this process, DFID are joining others in moving away from heavy processes that involve detailed and lengthy evaluations to a shorter process with an emphasis on participation and ownership in the planning of the strategy for the next phase.

4.9 There have been tremendous benefits from APPRs directly because they are self-assessments of performance. However, the importance of accountability raises the issue of how far external review should feature in end of cycle reviews, which the PRC originally agreed should be self-assessments but including a greater degree of external review. DFID's external audiences will be concerned with the degree to which self-assessment is complemented by independent checks. We need to be more clear about what is meant by 'external review', what the purpose of external review is and how external voices contribute to DFID learning. The new guidance on country plans requires independent periodic evaluation of country programmes in order to assess programme delivery and impact. However, in order for the lessons to be learnt from independent assessments, a formal process of dissemination of lessons and incentives to ensure active learning from this needs to be put in place. In contrast, self-assessment provided an opportunity for instant learning.

4.10 The extent to which the APPR system helped **inform policy dialogue with partners on strategic priorities** depended very much on team decision making around how far to

involve stakeholders in the APPR process and whether to share the finished document. From the available evidence, it is suggested that in general those contexts where partners were involved relationships in country were strengthened. We cannot, however, speculate far on how the APPRs done behind closed doors would have changed if the process had been opened up. Further research and comparison is needed in this area.

4.11 A further objective of the APPR system was to **contribute to the building of a performance culture** within DFID. There is not a strong evidence base to assess this but the reported increase in strategic thinking, and the merger of performance assessment and resource bidding processes are two important steps forward.

4.12 Finally, the review system was set up to **strengthen accountability within DFID and its wider public**. It is important to ask, which public? The PSA is a key accountability tool between the UK Treasury and DFID with results publicly available to the UK taxpayer. However, the APPRs played no role in the formal reporting mechanism on this agreement. In terms of stakeholders, the APPRs were not designed to be integrated into national systems of reporting and were only available to some constituencies.

4.13 In conclusion, the impact was greatest on country teams who benefited and learnt from the APPR process. Senior management were collectively better informed about work at the country level. The impact on partners and stakeholders depended greatly on country team decision making and the impact on the wider UK public was limited.

5 WHAT DO THE APPRS TELL US ABOUT DFID'S WORK?

5.1 The second aim of the country performance synthesis study was to provide an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the DFID programme as seen in APPRs and CSPRs. While it is difficult to draw firmly based conclusions on performance from this data set, it is a rich source of information on the major themes in DFID's work and the kind of challenges that DFID is struggling with at country level. These challenges arise both from DFID's own change processes, reflected in policy and administrative change and budgetary increases, and to changes at country level, for instance the development of the PRSP process. The common themes and key findings are grouped below as Programme Issues and Performance Assessment issues.

Programme issues: strategic objectives

5.2 There is evidence, especially in Africa and South Asia, that DFID programmes have been over-optimistic, particularly in expectations about the speed of institutional reform and the effective demand from government or civil society for improved governance. This weakness affects the on-going relevance of CSPs. **Table 2** provides examples.

Table 2: Relevance of the CSP as described in APPRs²⁰

Country	Relevance Issues
Tanzania	CSP required updating to new PRSP framework, and bilateral agreement. CSP over-ambitious in expectation of change.
Malawi	CSP overestimated demand for good government and underestimated impact of HIV/AIDs on capacity and impact of regional policy biases generating conflict. PRSP process implies need for changes.
Southern Africa	CSP lacks linkage between analysis and programme. No risk analysis or logframe. Provides little basis for setting priorities or measuring impact. Programme too driven by public administration reform agenda rather than broader poverty analysis.
Bangladesh	CSP broadly valid but pays insufficient attention to identifying agents for change.

Programmes in central and Eastern Europe generally report greater success in terms of impact, but they are less ambitious in their scope.

5.3 A frequent theme is that reforms that threaten entrenched interests have tended to prove harder to implement than was anticipated, as have reforms aimed at bringing about change in institutionalised or cultural discrimination against marginal groups. However, there is increasing confidence that even where corruption is endemic (e.g. in Kenya), it is possible to make improvements through well-designed programmes. For example, through

²⁰ Taken from Jones and Shaw (2001), *Country Synthesis Study Working Paper 2*, p. 3.

improving economic governance such as PRSP monitoring and evaluation systems and supporting fiscal and budget transparency.

5.4 The above evidence points towards the need for a better understanding of forces for change as well as poverty causes and dynamics. This requires both a sophisticated political understanding and a longer-term view of institutional reform.

5.5 There is recognition that building effective government and civil society ownership of the PRSP process requires time, and effective local demand. In several cases, particularly in Africa and in, for example, Bangladesh, a tendency on the part of DFID and other donors to overestimate the degree of effective demand for good governance was noted. However, even in cases where there is a lack of high-level political commitment to change, opportunities for effective action at lower levels have been identified. The Kenya APPR identified Kenyans at all levels who are committed to pro-poor change and developed support for those inside and outside government. In Bangladesh, pressure for change from the bottom up will help bring about support to rights-based organisations.

5.6 More generally, there are examples in the APPRs of ambitious DFID programmes that have been stalled by inadequate prior analysis of commitment. Examples can be identified in the areas of trade policy, privatisation, anti-corruption policy, implementation of pro-poor budgets, improving fiscal management and service delivery for the poorest. This relates to the need for DFID and others to know more on how effective demand for pro-poor policies can be fostered.

Choice of aid instruments

5.7 There is an emphasis across many programmes on reducing the number of separate projects, ensuring that activities are focused on priorities, and on developing more effective coordination with other donor agencies (particularly in the context of moves towards Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs) and the provision of budget support), and with fostering increased national ownership. Incoherence has been a problem in many donor agencies and there is a broad trend towards concentration on a limited range of sectors over a loosely linked range of projects and programmes that have evolved over time. However, there are concerns within DFID about the capacity of donor-supported and national programmes to reach the poorest. This was a concern raised in Bangladesh, China and Nepal. This raises questions about the extent to which the poorest can be reached in the short, medium or long term by government-run programmes. In response, there is a recognition of the need for a stronger analysis of poverty and poverty impact of DFID-supported activities and national efforts.

5.8 Budget support²¹ and SWAPs are becoming more prominent, though the speed of this shift varies greatly between countries. Budget support is seen as requiring to be complemented by selective technical assistance and strategic dialogue with other donor

²¹ Direct budget support is taken to mean the channelling of funds to a partners government using its own allocation, procurement and accounting systems.

agencies as well as with partner countries. Partly this reflects recognition of the problems caused by weakly coordinated projects from different donors and from micro-management by donors that threatens national ownership. There have been substantial attempts to support national efforts to take the lead in donor coordination. There have also been moves to undertake more joint appraisals with other donors (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania) and with governments to broaden perspectives, increase national monitoring and evaluation capacity (emphasised in Kenya and Mozambique), promote partnerships, and improve the efficiency of evaluation and permit more accurate attribution.

Influencing others

5.9 A variety of problems were identified in carrying forward the influencing agenda. One aspect relates to influence over the policies and activities of other donors or lending agencies that are providing greater financial resources – the attempt to exert leverage. In the case of Eastern Europe, DFID activity is directed at adding value to other donor programmes. However, in many cases, the APPRs describe what is better seen as ‘gap filling’ and helping countries gain access to other funding sources (particularly from the European Union) rather than exerting influence over these agencies. Elsewhere, a tentative conclusion that emerges from APPRs is that in practice policy and decision making might be seen as taking place on the back of International Financial Institution (IFI) activities, rather than successfully influencing IFI policy. This relates particularly to assessments of policy adequacy, which are often based on the existence or not of a Poverty Reduction Growth Facility facility. This has prompted consideration of the conditions under which exerting influence is a plausible objective.

5.10 The Brazil and Russia CSPRs focused particularly on issues of how to improve DFID's influence given the relatively small size of DFID's programme in these countries. Both reviews suggested that DFID's agenda had focused too much on multilateral funding agencies rather than directly identifying and focusing on potential points of influence within government.

Policy coherence

5.11 Joining up country strategies with the initiatives of other DFID departments, for example, an advisory group, was a point of concern for some teams. With the over-strategisation mentioned in paragraph 3.18 above, it is hard to keep up. There is a related issue of joined up approaches with other UK government departments. Can a DFID strategy ever be fully isolated from other UK government agendas? Both the Brazil and Ukraine CSPRs noted issues about the relationships between wide UK objectives pertaining to each country (respectively in relation to the global environmental goods agenda, and to considerations of regional security and long-term relations with the European Union) and DFID Country Strategies that were cast largely in terms of a poverty reduction agenda. In principle, the approach of defining a DFID country strategy may be valid so as long as there is not conflict with another UK policy interest (such as commercial development or regional security). However, these issues do not generally seem to be addressed either through the CSP preparation process or review.

Programme performance

5.12 Establishing measures of performance is made more difficult by the fact that in most cases DFID country programmes are both rapidly expanding and significantly changing in approach and focus as the policy directions set begin to influence the country strategy cycle. As a result, many activities reported on are in the design or very early implementation phases.

5.13 In most countries there have either been large increases in the scale of DFID activities over the period of the country strategy, or significant changes in the types of activities. Thus, a very high proportion of management and staff attention is on new activities or types of activities.

5.14 Areas of impact are defined for many programmes. For example, improved budget management in Malawi, increased social spending in Tanzania, improved donor coordination in Nepal. The fact that impact areas are not defined in a common way across countries makes comparison between programmes difficult. The reporting of progress is most systematic in cases where a framework of 'impact areas' for the programme has been developed furthest.

Monitoring and evaluation approaches

5.15 In terms of monitoring and evaluation approaches, there have been some attempts to build a results based approach through identifying realistic and monitorable intermediate indicators. A noteworthy example is the Medium Term Results Framework developed in Tanzania shown in **Appendix 4** which shows in an easily understood diagrammatic form how measurable outcomes in the short term ultimately contribute to the overall goal of the eradication of poverty in Tanzania. Other initiatives are noted in West Bank/Gaza, the Slovak Republic and Kenya.

5.16 Bringing about sustainable development through influence will always be difficult to capture because there tend to be no immediate measurable outcomes. Essentially, the discussion moves towards measures of behavioural change. The Pakistan APPR outlined useful lists of medium-term indicators of success for key programmes. These are detailed in **Box 6**.

Box 6: Medium-term indicators of success from the Pakistan APPR

Economic Reform and Restoration of Investor Confidence

Indicators of success

IMF programme approved and complied with;

World Bank 3 year structural reform programme agreed with initial SAL disbursed by April 2001;

medium-term budget framework at federal level implemented in FY02 and developed in FY03 Budgets;

expenditure on poverty reduction increasing as share of public expenditure; SAP financing meets agreements with donors;

trade policy progressing (TEPI compliance).

Devolution

Indicators of success

local elections held in free and fair manner by July 2001;

turnout of x% in local elections;

local governments established and empowered by August 2001;

plan for assigning revenue and expenditure powers to different levels of government by July 2001, implemented by July 2002/3 (?);

social services show marked improvement in quality and utilisation by 2002;

provincial and national elections held in free and fair manner by October 2002.

Pilot activities

5.17 Another important set of activities relates to examples where DFID is supporting pilot projects that are justified on the grounds of developing models for future replication. Critical questions for assessing the value of such pilots are the extent to which government and other development partners are receptive to the approaches being pursued, and the appropriateness and replicability of the approaches developed particularly in respect of their costs and administrative requirements. Some examples of such pilot approaches follow in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Examples of successful pilot activities

Moldova	Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project: Demonstration of successful cash crops has helped to influence policies to a more pro-poor focus. Also establishment of Savings and Credit Associations, Cooperatives, Agri-shop.
Bulgaria	Models of community policing; Community based social services in two pilot municipalities.
Slovak Republic	Regional development project. Helped establish examples of public – private sector partnerships.
Hungary	Management development and consultant training now operating on commercial terms nationwide.
Tanzania	Demand-driven school facilities construction programme in four poor districts. Local impact on enrolment but no comprehensive sector plan; Support for NGOs supporting community driven and managed water and sanitation services. Pilot with three urban authorities. Social marketing of insecticide-treated nets. Kernel of national scaling up exercise.
Uganda	Demand-driven classroom construction pilot project. Adopted nationwide as model for rapid and transparent decentralised classroom building.
Eastern Cape (South Africa)	School transformation approach now being expanded to cover all primary schools in province.
China	Gansu Basic Education Project: demonstrating ways to provide basic quality education and access for poor girls and minority groups.

5.18 The success of pilot projects is measured through the extent to which such pilots bring about adoption of new approaches. In contrast, the concentration of the APPR on reporting exclusively current activities coupled with the number of new activities, meant that no overt assessments were made of the impact of earlier projects of similar types, which, if they are being successful, should now be yielding sustained results. The Brazil CSPR also noted consistent weaknesses in the failure to disseminate project lessons and learn from past mistakes. Even though the APPR gave an opportunity for cross-departmental learning, the reviews also expose a weakness in learning from previous activities in-country.

Performance assessment issues

5.19 CSPs have not provided an adequate framework of performance indicators that link DFID activities to higher-level objectives or that enable assessment of the impact of DFID activities. More generally, CSPs do not generally function effectively as management instruments – they provide only limited strategic guidance, and are most useful as summary

presentations of DFID's analysis and activities to an external or partner audience.

5.20 The failure to set targets or define indicators at the country programme level prevented the construction of an evaluative framework beyond individual projects. In its recommendations for managing effective change, the Brazil CSPR noted the need for a systematic country-level review of projects against longer-term objectives, stronger and clearer action on the basis of OPRs and greater attention to personnel issues, communications and team building. All of these features relate to the role and function of the APPR and highlight the dual function of the tool if it is to be used to full effect. One aspect is concerned with the quantitative dimensions of planning and strategy and the other with a qualitative dimension associated with improving communications and human relations within the team.

5.21 One important and overriding question is whether DFID's organisation and procedures are developing sufficiently to meet the demands of increasing budgets and its commitment to meeting a range of performance targets. There is a common tension amongst donors between supporting the broader notion of performance assessment and establishing systems to understand progress against MDGs and the organisational requirements for information for internal learning and meeting targets for accountability.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 This section highlights issues for further research with regard to country programme-level review.

6.2 In the process of decentralisation, we need to explore how leadership should be provided in the design of performance assessment process, such that centrally directed strategies are adhered to in ways that do support and guide rather than constrain country teams. As DFID and other agencies increase in size, become more decentralised and the portfolio becomes more diverse, it is quite understandable that senior managers need to empower local management but remain concerned about how to keep on top of developments. A systematic and successful review process is a key way to enable the link between central management and country-level work.

6.3 Issues around organisational learning are also interesting. In DFID's case, the writing of a central paper, followed by regional-specific guidance written at regional department level were not considered adequate as a roadmap for country teams to approach the APPR task, even though many teams did so with great success. To a large extent the Development Committee were relied on for cross-regional learning and other routes for informal learning were not clear. It also links to the question of which level of decision making do staff respond to? Regional guidance aimed to contextualise the review process but questions of how central decision makers would respond were still left open in some minds.

6.4 There is also the question of how far it is possible to have a credible separate development agency agenda outside the rest of government? To be effective, should we consider government-wide planning rather than development agency strategies?

6.5 The whole area of consultation and links with national processes needs further exploration. Included in this is the question: how have APPRs produced through extensive consultation and with dedicated team involvement differed from those produced more quickly? We need to spell out the costs and benefits of different levels of consultation and ask whether there is in fact a demand for consultation.

6.6 From the discussion in **Section 4**, effective country planning requires a comprehensive analysis of poverty, a clear articulation of objectives and a set of performance indicators that relate to DFID's performance, the actions of other donors and to overall national performance. In DFID's case it could usefully contain three key elements:

- An overview of national development performance that is derived directly from a process involving all development partners and principal stakeholders, such as PRSP monitoring, reflecting a common analysis. This would report on performance against national and international development targets.
- Performance of DFID's country programme against performance indicators defined in the Country Plan. These indicators should be selected to provide as strong a basis for performance reporting and attribution as possible. These indicators should probably be nested within a longer-term strategic framework.

- Consistent scoring of the performance of DFID's activities at the output and purpose level.

6.7 Through this, DFID are joining others in moving away from heavy processes that involve detailed and lengthy evaluations to a shorter process with an emphasis on participation and ownership in the planning of the strategy for the next phase. However, it is still not clear which indicators should be used for this assessment. There is also the danger that, with an increased emphasis on measurement, only activities that can be easily measured are chosen and given emphasis at the expense of other less tangible but worthwhile aid activities.

6.8 In the literature review, five rationales used for country programme-level evaluations were identified. They were:

- to test donor's aid performance
- to test relevance of programme to country programme
- to test implementation of agency goals and results
- to contribute to the establishment of a country programme
- to demonstrate the effectiveness of aid in a given country – bolstering case for aid.

6.9 Each agency needs to be clear about which of these rationales is dominant, as this will fundamentally shape the review process. In addition, by focusing on country- level development objectives and the intermediate outcomes needed to achieve that objective, the timeframe necessarily becomes longer-term, outliving the comings and goings of individual project activities. This necessitates stronger programme information systems that go beyond the project level.

Appendix 1 Millennium Development Goals

Goals and targets	Indicators
Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
Target 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportion of population below \$1 per day 2. Poverty gap ratio (incidence x depth of poverty) 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Prevalence of underweight children (under 5 years of age) 5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education	
Target 3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education 7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 8. Literacy rate of 15–24 year-olds
Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women	
Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 10. Ratio of literate females to males of 15–24 year-olds 11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
Goal 4. Reduce child mortality	
Target 5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-5 mortality rate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Under-5 mortality rate 14. Infant mortality rate 15. Proportion of 1-year-old children immunized against measles

Goal 5. Improve maternal health	
Target 6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	16. Maternal mortality ratio 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	
Target 7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	18. HIV prevalence among 15–24 year-old pregnant women 19. Contraceptive prevalence rate 20. Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS
Target 8. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria 22. Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course
Goal 7. Ensure environmental sustainability^a	
Target 9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	25. Proportion of land area covered by forest 26. Land area protected to maintain biological diversity 27. GDP per unit of energy use (as proxy for energy efficiency) 28. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita)(Plus two figures of global atmospheric pollution: ozone depletion and the accumulation of global warming gases)
Target 10. Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water	29. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source
Target 11. By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	30. Proportion of people with access to improved sanitation 31. Proportion of people with access to secure tenure

	(Urban/rural disaggregation of several of the above indicators may be relevant for monitoring improvement in the lives of slum dwellers)
Goal 8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development^a	
Target 13. Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries (Includes: tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC's and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction)	<i>[Some of the indicators listed below will be monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked countries and small island developing states]</i> <i>Official development assistance</i>
Target 14. Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States (Through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the UN General Assembly)	32. Net ODA as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income (targets of 0.7 % in total and 0.15 % for LDCs)
Target 15. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term [Some of the indicators listed below will be monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked countries and small island developing States]Official development assistance	33. Proportion of ODA to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
	34. Proportion of ODA that is untied
	35. Proportion of ODA for environment in small island developing States
	36. Proportion of ODA for transport sector in landlocked countriesMarket access
	37. Proportion of exports (by value and excluding arms) admitted free of duties and quotas
	38. Average tariffs and quotas on agricultural products and textiles and clothing
	39. Domestic and export agricultural subsidies in OECD countries
	40. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacityDebt sustainability
	41. Proportion of official bilateral HIPC debt cancelled
	42. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services
	43. Proportion of ODA provided as debt relief
	44. Number of countries reaching HIPC decision and completion points

<p>Target 16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth</p>	<p>45. Unemployment rate of 15–24 year-olds</p>
<p>Target 17. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries</p>	<p>46. Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis</p>
<p>Target 18. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications</p>	<p>47. Telephone lines per 1,000 people 48. Personal computers per 1,000 people [Other indicators to be decided]</p>

^a The selection of indicators for goals 7 and 8 is subject to further refinement.

Appendix 2 APPRs and CSPRs Reviewed

Timetable of APPRs

COUNTRY	DATE COMPLETED	DATE OF DC/PRC DISCUSSION	LEAD DEPARTMENT
AFRICA			
Kenya	July 2001		DFIDEA
Malawi	February 2001	February 2001	DFIDCA
Mozambique	May 2001	17/05/01	DFIDCA
Southern Africa	May 2001		DFIDSA
Tanzania	June 2001	21/06/01	DFIDEA
Uganda 1	November 2000	November 2000	DFIDEA
Zimbabwe	May 2001		DFIDCA
ASIA			
Bangladesh 1	September 2000	28/09/00	DFID Bangladesh
China 1	September 2000	09/11/00	EAPD
India 1	October 2000	09/11/01	India
Jordan	October 2000		WAD
Nepal 1	June 2001	28/09/00	DFID Nepal
Pakistan	June 2001		WAS
Vietnam 1	August 2001		DFIDSEA
W Bank & Gaza	2000		WAD
Yemen	November 2000		WAD
EUROPE			
Bulgaria	November 2000		CSEED
Hungary	May 2001		CSEED
Moldova	July 2001		EECAD
Poland	May 2001		CSEED
Romania	April 2001		CSEED
Slovak Republic	November 2000		CSEED

Timetable of End of Cycle Reviews

COUNTRY	DATE COMPLETED	LEAD DEPARTMENT
EUROPE		
Russia	December 2000	EECAD
Ukraine	June 2001	EECAD
LATIN AMERICA		
Brazil	April 2001	LAD

Appendix 3 Summary of Information Presented in APPRs

Country	PSA	Project scores	Number of IDTs reported and most recent date	Provision of project information	Lessons learned
Mozambique 2001	Y	8 OPRs 5 at '2' 3 at '3'	\$ a day 1996, NER primary 1997, GE 1995, IMR 1998, U5MR 1998, MMR 1995, contraceptive prevalence 1997, nssd -	Lists of 27 current and 32 forthcoming	Y
Jordan 2000	N	N	\$ a day 1997, NER primary 1995, GE 1980, IMR 1998, U5MR 1998, MMR 1998, CP 1997, nssd-	List of 9 on-going	N
Southern Africa 2001	Y	PCRs for 14 major projects closed in past 2 years all at 1 or 2 for output (2 not scored for output) and purpose 11 likely to be sustainable 69 OPRs out of 143 operational projects 41 scored at 1 or 2	South Africa \$ a day 95, NER 97, GE 99, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 98 Botswana \$ a day 86, NER 97, GE 96, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 88 Lesotho \$ a day 93, NER 97, GE 96, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR___, CP 91 Namibia \$ a day 93, NER 97, GE 97, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 92 Swaziland \$ a day___, NER 98, GE 96, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR___, CP___	36 approved in 1999 and 2000 15 planned	N, but peer and external review
Kenya 2001	Y	30 operational projects scored 50% of OPRs at 1/2	\$ a day 94 NER 97, GE 97, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 98	N	Y
Vietnam 2001	Y	N	National pov line 93, NER 97, GE 85 (but high), IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 96	15 approved	N
Bangladesh 2000		Almost all at 1 or 2 [Missing]	[Missing]	Projects approved	N

Yemen 2000	Y	N	No	2 projects	N
Pakistan 2000	N	PIMS PAMs POMs	No data on NER, MMR Female fertility rate used No dates specified	11 reactivated projects 4 newly approved projects 4 pipeline	N
Nepal 2001	N	13 individual OPR (?) purpose scores 4 at '2' 2 at 2/3 6 at '3'	No dates for most recent data Unclear whether figures for \$ a day and CP refer to baseline or recent data IDTs with both figures: NER, GE, IMR, U5MR, MMR	19 current projects new projects (unclear)	No, but change model
India 2000	N	22 individual OPR scores, out of 19 with scores for purpose, 10 scored '2'. Out of 12 PCRs, 8 scored '2' at purpose	\$ a day 97, NER 97, GE 96?, IMR 98, U5MR 98, MMR 90-98, CP 93, nssd 93	Broad sectoral split expenditure Expenditure split by instrument and sector over time List of 33 projects likely to be approved	N
Malawi 2001	N	18 OPRs in 2000, 10 scored at '1' or '2' 5 PCRs in 2000 all at '1' or '2'	\$ a day and national poverty line	List of 6 projects recently approved and 6 approved PCNs broad sectoral split of forthcoming DFID expenditure	No, but 4 areas identified in which DFID needs to develop understanding
Uganda 2000	N	Over 70% of OPR scores at '1' or '2'	GER 97, GE at primary 97, IMR 95, U5MR 95, MMR 95	N	N
Tanzania 2001	Y	77% of projects scored, scored at '2'	No specific dates for recent data GER, GE primary, IMR and MMR only	Expenditure split by instrument and sector over time	Y and MTRF
West Bank/ Gaza 2000	Y	6 projects scored. 4 water projects at '1' and '2' for outputs and purpose 1 at '3' for purpose 1 too early	\$ a day -, NER 95, GE 95, IMR 97, U5MR 94, MMR 90-96, CP 96	List of 32 current projects	N

China 2001	Y	Out of 7 individual PCR scores, 6 score '1' or '2' for purpose Out of 17 operational projects with OPR scores, 16 scored '1' or '2' at output and purpose	\$ a day 99, NER 98, GE p 98, GE s 96, IMR 98, U5MR 98, CP 98	List of 8 projects approved since November 98 list of 25 current projects	N
Moldova 2001	Y	1 score only '-2'	\$ a day 97, GE 96, IMR 99, U5MR 99, MMR 90-98CP 97	List of 18 current, on-going and completed projects	N
Slovak Republic 2000	N	Too early	N	List of 13 forthcoming projects (two started)	N
Romania 2001	N	Too early	N	Full portfolio of 16 current and forthcoming projects	N
Hungary 2001	N	Several OPRs undertaken but scores not reported	N	List of 10 current and forthcoming projects	N
Poland 2001	N	N	N	List of 12 current projects	Programme to end 2003 Study in late 2001 in conjunction with key donors to identify and disseminate lessons
Bulgaria 2000	N	Too early	N	List of 19 projects approved since publication of CSP	N

Appendix 4 Impact Area Framework – Tanzania APPR

International Development Goal - The Eradication of Poverty in Tanzania

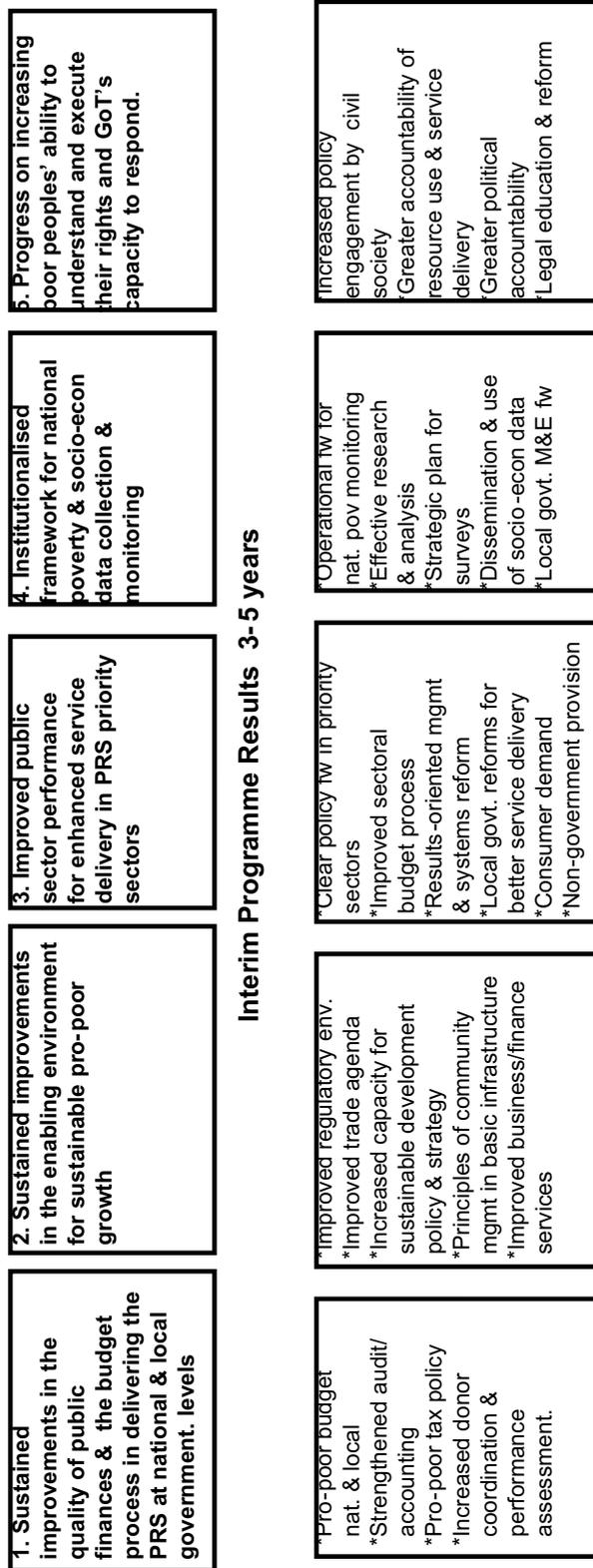
DFID Development Goal - To support Tanzania in institutionalising and implementing the PRS to achieve its key targets for reducing income poverty, improving health and education outcomes and reducing vulnerability.

DFID Medium Term Programme Goal - To deliver a high-impact poverty focused programme that builds on the principles of selectivity, client focus, partnership and results-orientation.



Poverty Reduction Strategy Budget Support

Medium Term Programme Results – 5 years



Appendix 5 Outline of Study

The main questions considered by each of the working papers were:

Process

- In what ways have APPRs contributed to the quality of CSPs, both in terms of effective actions and programme management?
- What have both country programmes and DFID corporately learnt from the process?
- On balance, is the APPR process an efficient review process in the context of the learning that is being gained and operationalised?
- What contribution have APPRs made to the on-going process of building a performance culture within DFID and how should they link with broader issues of performance assessment?
- Can an APPR satisfy internal and external reporting requirements simultaneously as originally envisaged?²²
- To what extent are other donors or institutions involved in the APPR process and do the documents cover the work of others adequately?
- What were the biggest challenges to APPR teams and what would they do differently next time round?

Content

- What themes emerge about DFID's work from the APPRs, in terms of key successes, common obstacles and sector focus?
- How successful have APPRs/CSPRs been as a performance assessment tool?
- How far have APPRs provided information on the extent to which country programmes have contributed to meeting corporate objectives and targets, including the MDGs?
- How is data to monitor MDGs used within the APPR?
- What do APPRs say about the effectiveness and impact of DFID programmes, both in terms of project spend, policy dialogue and work with other institutions?
- To what extent do APPRs raise issues for those working with Institutional Strategy Papers (ISPs) and Target Strategy Papers (TSPs)?
- How do APPRs deal with non-MDG issues such as HIV/AIDS, conflict and governance and what do they reveal about DFID's work in these areas?

²² PRC, Country Performance Review PRC (99) 41, para. 6.

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK Government department responsible for promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty. The central focus of the Government's policy, based on the 1997 and 2000 White Papers on International Development, is a commitment to the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals, to be achieved by 2015. These seek to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

DFID's assistance is concentrated in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, but also contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development in middle-income countries, including those in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

DFID works in partnership with governments committed to the Millennium Development Goals, with civil society, the private sector and the research community. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies, and the European Commission.

DFID has headquarters in London and East Kilbride, offices in many developing countries, and staff based in British embassies and high commissions around the world.

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