



METHODOLOGY DIGEST

MOPAN 3.0

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For any questions or comments, please contact:

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1. Introduction

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is composed of 18 governments¹ who share a common interest in assessing the multilateral organisations they fund, including UN agencies, international financial institutions and global funds. The Network generates, collects, analyses and presents relevant and credible information on the organisational and development effectiveness of the organisations. This knowledge base is intended to contribute to organisational learning within and among the organisations, their direct clients and partners, and other stakeholders. Network members use the reports for their own accountability needs and as a source of input for strategic decision-making.

MOPAN 3.0, first applied in 2015-16, is the new operational and methodological iteration of how the Network assesses organisations. It builds upon the former *Common Approach*, implemented by the Network from 2009 through 2014. This digest offers a summary of the design and function of MOPAN 3.0. It draws on a more comprehensive Methodology Manual which is available on the Network's website: www.mopanonline.org.

2. Limitations

MOPAN 3.0 seeks to provide a diagnostic assessment, or snapshot, of an organisation at present. It will aim to 'tell the story' of an organisation's current performance. It is not an external audit of an organisation, nor is it an institutional evaluation. The assessments will not comprehensively assess all operations or all processes of an organisation, nor can it provide a definitive picture of all the organisation's achievements and performance during the time period of the assessment. MOPAN 3.0 will also not offer comprehensive documentation or analysis of ongoing organisational reform processes.

3. Framing questions and operating principles

FRAMING QUESTIONS

Achieving the right approach with MOPAN 3.0 depends on asking the right questions at the right time. These framing questions are:

- Do multilateral organisations have sufficient understanding of the needs and demands they face in the present, and may face in the future?
- Are the organisations using their assets and comparative advantages to maximum effect in the present and are they prepared for the future?
- Are their systems, planning and operations fit for purpose? Are they geared in terms of operations to deliver on their mandate?
- Are the organisations delivering and demonstrating relevant and sustainable results in a cost-efficient way?

1. Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

MOPAN 3.0 will aim to generate assessments that are credible, fair and accurate. Credibility will be ensured through an impartial, systematic and rigorous approach. MOPAN 3.0 seeks to balance breadth with depth by adopting an appropriate balance between coverage and depth of information from a variety of sources, through multiple streams of evidence. Quality of information will be prioritised over quantity, and structured tools will be applied for enquiry and analysis. An audit trail of findings will ensure transparency. Efficient measures of assessment practice will be applied through building layers of data, with a view to limiting the burden on organisations undergoing assessment. A focus on organisational learning aims to ensure utility of findings by multiple stakeholders.

4. Theory of Change

MOPAN 3.0 is based on the following hypothesis:



MOPAN 3.0 considers organisational effectiveness and development/humanitarian effectiveness as part of a continuum, rather than two discrete aspects. Its Theory of Change is generic, and will be interrogated, interpreted and refined through the assessment process.

The Theory of Change integrates the key international principles, commitments and criteria for humanitarian and development practice. These include: the OECD DAC criteria for development evaluation and those for international humanitarian evaluation; the principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2011 Busan Partnership agreement for Effective Development Co-operation; and the International Humanitarian Principles.

The full Theory of Change for MOPAN 3.0 can be found in the Methodology Manual.

5. Empirical design

The empirical design of MOPAN 3.0 is based on the Theory of Change. Its key elements include:

- A set of five performance areas, against which assessment will take place;
- An indicator framework on which performance will be measured;
- A set of four evidence streams, brought together in a combined approach.

PERFORMANCE AREAS

In MOPAN 3.0, organisations will be assessed against five performance areas:



INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

Analysis will take place against the MOPAN 3.0 Indicator Framework (see Annex) aligned to the five performance areas.

The MOPAN 3.0 Indicator Framework comprises eight Key Performance Indicators (KPI) aligned to the Performance Areas on Organisational Effectiveness, and four KPIs aligned to the Performance Area on Humanitarian and Development Results. Each KPI contains multiple micro indicators.

The MOPAN 3.0 Indicator Framework is geared to the Theory of Change. It has been intentionally developed as a generic model designed to be applicable to varying types of multilateral organisations and varying types of activities and interventions with limited need for adaptation. The indicators emphasise function over form, meaning they assess whether a system, behaviour or practice has actually been implemented with what effect. They aim for measurability, even when indicators are qualitative. Indicators are to be applied as relevant to the organisation's mandate and operating practice. For example, development results will be assessed according to the organisation's own corporate results frameworks and information systems.² If necessary, indicators may be removed if deemed irrelevant to the assessment of a specific organisation and the inclusion of up to five custom organisation-specific measures can be considered.

The Network has a significant interest in **cross-cutting issues**. MOPAN 3.0 understands these to be universal development and humanitarian aims, legitimised and mandated by global frameworks such as the SDGs.

2. With commentary to be supplied on the quality of the corporate results framework and the data sources supplying it – see Annex.

They will therefore be assessed *where there is a clear statement of intent* by the organisation to take these issues into account in their work, e.g. at strategy level. However, other than where they are, for example, treated as system-wide goals, assessments will not seek to apply an externalised benchmark or standard on which to assess performance. Rather, they will be interpreted as applied within a multilateral organisation's operating model, business practice and results.

EVIDENCE COLLECTION

For its assessment, MOPAN 3.0 applies the following methods to collect evidence: a document review, a survey, interviews and consultations.

The **document review** provides a key line of evidence for assessing both organisational and development effectiveness. It includes the review of a limited set of documents publicly available and documents supplied directly by the organisations to MOPAN. The documents are selected strategically to respond to the Micro Indicators (see Indicator Framework below). Beyond documents prepared by management and the evaluation function, other sources include relevant external initiatives such as external audits, UN Joint Assessment Unit reports, UN Office of Internal Oversight reports and/or peer reviews of evaluation functions.

Survey data enhances the value of the documentary review by providing insights (perception data) into how partners of multilateral organisations have experienced co-operation, both at headquarters and at country-levels. Placing an emphasis on "the right question to the right people", a limited set of questions are put to individuals with reasonable expected knowledge of the respective organisations. The respondent group includes Network member staff at the headquarters and country level, and direct partner/clients of the organisation.

Substantive interviews and consultations with management and technical staff of the organisations assessed serve to deepen the understanding of findings from document reviews and the survey. This phase seeks to elicit primary source of understanding of organisational agendas that may have evolved since the publication of reviewed documentation, and to deepen insight into, or refute, initial observations.

COMBINING EVIDENCE

To arrive at the final assessment, the methodology combines evidence from the aforementioned streams of evidence. In doing so, the assessors apply the following modalities:

A sequenced approach through a 'building blocks' model. Each layer of evidence is generated through the sequential assessment process, informed by, and building upon the previous one. Each layer of information in the sequence informs the next, to the best extent possible. In practice, the survey will be informed, if possible, by findings from the document review; interviews and consultations will be shaped by findings from both the document review and, when relevant, the survey.

By applying multiple lines of evidence to as many indicators as possible, a **holistic approach** ensures that findings are based on a solid evidence base. In particular, this will be reflected at the analysis stage, where findings from the different evidence streams are brought together to generate triangulated findings against micro indicators (see Section 9 for more information).

Systematic approaches will be applied for *data collection* through the use of structured frameworks for each evidence line. For *data analysis*, there will be structured analysis at aggregate level, applying the different lines of evidence within a composite analytical framework.

The emphasis in MOPAN 3.0 on function over form requires the ground-truthing and testing of corporate statements and intentions on field-level practice, particularly for development and/or humanitarian-focused multilateral organisations. Therefore, **country and/or regional level evidence** will be applied against all relevant indicators, through the different data streams including document review and survey information. Analysis/reporting will incorporate this information throughout, in aggregate form, with relevant examples provided where appropriate. Analysis will not result in an overall rating for an organisation's country level performance, but individual data pieces gathered from country level will be collated and stored as part of the assessment.³

6. Ratings

Following analysis against the indicator framework, assessment will then take place to provide a final rating for each multilateral organisation. As it is applied, effort will be placed on ensuring that evidence from separate evidence streams will be fully traceable within reports. A 'best fit' approach will be applied, where for each micro indicator, specific criteria will be assigned, which when taken together, represent international best practice. Assessment of the presence or absence of positive evidence will generate a rating against the individual indicator. A four-point rating scale will encompass an emphasis on evidence available, multiple sources (triangulation/validation), and reflect the application of criteria as a means of rating per indicator.

MOPAN 3.0 has sought to avoid a reductionist approach, in which the final rating becomes the sole statement on the organisation's performance. To avoid this, a strong narrative will be generated around the rating, both to contextualise it and to situate the rating on the continuum of change of the organisation. The Network does not compare ratings between organisations.

7. Triangulation and validation

TRIANGULATION

MOPAN 3.0 applies three approaches to triangulation:

Methods triangulation will occur by checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods. This implies the deepening of enquiry via the sequential use of different data sources (for example, exploring findings from the document review through survey / interview and consultation data) described above. Second, by interrogating data where diverging results arise (e.g. the documentary review shows evidence of a particular policy in place and being used, but survey data indicates little knowledge or use of the policy).

Triangulation of sources will occur by examining the consistency of different data sources within the same method. For example, by comparing the extent to which corporate policies – as identified through the document review – have been taken up and used at the country and/or regional level.

Analyst triangulation will be applied through using multiple analysts to review findings for the documentary review and composite analytical phases. This will allow for a consistent approach to interpretive analysis.

3. Excluding interview data, which remains confidential, and with survey data available only at aggregate level, in order to protect confidentiality.

VALIDATION

Validation of findings will occur at several points of the process. Approaches include:

- The involvement of “Institutional Leads” for each organisation assessed. The Leads are representatives of the Network and have insights into the organisation’s programming, its practices, and the factors that influence its operations;
- The use of external evaluations and assessments of the organisations to help validate or question the findings on the performance areas;
- Debrief to assessed organisations, to hear the resonance of findings and judgements with insider knowledge of the organisation, and to test the accuracy of findings;
- Validation of findings within the Network and revision of draft reports taking into account feedback from members;
- The sharing of draft reports with the organisations assessed, and taking into consideration comments and feedback for the final draft of the respective reports.

8. Reporting

MOPAN 3.0 will generate individual institutional reports for each multilateral organisation assessed. The reports will be *accessible* – minimizing the use of jargon – *concise, and clear*. Country level data will be subsumed into the wider evidence base, rather than being individually reported. A contextualised rating will be embedded (or situated) within an evidence-based narrative of organisational change.



ANNEX



Indicator Framework

Performance Area: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities

KPI 1: The organisational architecture⁴ and the financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results

- 1.1 Strategic plan and intended results based on a clear long term vision and analysis of comparative advantage
- 1.2 Organisational architecture congruent with a clear long term vision and associated operating model
- 1.3 Strategic plan supports the implementation of wider normative frameworks and associated results, including Agenda 2030 and others where applicable (e.g. the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR), replenishment commitments, or other resource and results reviews)
- 1.4 Financial framework (e.g. division between core and non-core resources) supports mandate implementation

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels

- 2.1 Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for cross-cutting issues
 - 2.1a Gender equality and the empowerment of women
 - 2.1b Environmental sustainability and climate change
 - 2.1c Good governance (peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, reduced inequality, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels)
 - 2.1d Human Rights
 - 2.1e Any other cross-cutting issue included in organisational mandates/commitments [Added for tailoring]⁵

Performance Area: OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance, agility and accountability

KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility

- 3.1 Organisational structures and staffing ensure that human and financial resources are continuously aligned and adjusted to key functions
- 3.2 Resource mobilization efforts consistent with the core mandate and strategic priorities
- 3.3 Aid reallocation / programming decisions responsive to need can be made at a decentralised level
- 3.4 HR systems and policies performance based and geared to the achievement of results

4. Organisational Architecture is “a theory of the firm, or multiple firms, which integrates the human activities and capital resource utilisation within a structure of task allocation and coordination to achieve desired outcomes and performance for both the short run and the strategic long run” (Burton and Obel, 2011a, 2011b).

5. Any customisation to MI 2.1 should be matched with a corresponding adjustment of MI 5.5 and MI 9.8.

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability

- 4.1 Transparent decision-making for resource allocation, consistent with strategic priorities
- 4.2 Allocated resources disbursed as planned
- 4.3 Principles of results based budgeting applied
- 4.4 External audit or other external reviews certifies the meeting of international standards at all levels, including with respect to internal audit
- 4.5 Issues or concerns raised by internal control mechanisms (operational and financial risk management, internal audit, safeguards etc.) adequately addressed
- 4.6 Policies and procedures effectively prevent, detect, investigate and sanction cases of fraud, corruption and other financial irregularities

Performance Area: RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, to leverage effective solutions and to maximise results (in line with Busan Partnerships commitments)

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships

- 5.1 Interventions aligned with national/regional priorities and intended national/regional results
- 5.2 Contextual analysis (shared where possible) applied to shape the intervention designs and implementation.
- 5.3 Capacity analysis informs intervention design and implementation, and strategies to address any weakness found are employed
- 5.4 Detailed risk (strategic, political, reputational, operational) management strategies ensure the identification, mitigation, monitoring and reporting of risks
- 5.5 Intervention designs include the analysis of cross-cutting issues (as defined in KPI 2)
- 5.6 Intervention designs include detailed and realistic measures to ensure sustainability (as defined in KPI 12)
- 5.7 Institutional procedures (including systems for engaging staff, procuring project inputs, disbursing payment, logistical arrangements etc.) positively support speed of implementation

KPI 6: Partnership working is coherent and directed at leveraging and/or ensuring relevance and the catalytic use of resources

- 6.1 Planning, programming and approval procedures enable agility in partnerships when conditions change
- 6.2 Partnerships based on an explicit statement of comparative advantage e.g. technical knowledge, convening power/partnerships, policy dialogue/advocacy
- 6.3 Clear adherence to the commitment in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation on use of country systems
- 6.4 Strategies or designs identify synergies, to encourage leverage/catalytic use of resources and avoid fragmentation
- 6.5 Key business practices (planning, design, implementation, monitoring and reporting) co-ordinated with other relevant partners (donors, UN agencies, etc.), as appropriate
- 6.6 Key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results etc.) shared with strategic/implementation partners on an ongoing basis
- 6.7 Clear standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiaries implemented
- 6.8 Participation with national and other partners in mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments
- 6.9 Deployment of knowledge base to support programming adjustments, policy dialogue and/or advocacy

Performance Area: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems geared to managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson-learning

KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function

- 7.1 Leadership ensures application of an organisation-wide RBM approach
- 7.2 Corporate strategies, including country strategies, based on a sound RBM focus and logic
- 7.3 Results targets set based on a sound evidence base and logic
- 7.4 Monitoring systems generate high quality and useful performance data
- 7.5 Performance data transparently applied in planning and decision-making.

KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming

- 8.1 A corporate independent evaluation function exists
- 8.2 Consistent, independent evaluation of results (coverage)
- 8.3 Systems applied to ensure the quality of evaluations
- 8.4 Mandatory demonstration of the evidence base to design new interventions
- 8.5 Poorly performing interventions proactively identified, tracked and addressed
- 8.6 Clear accountability system ensures responses and follow-up to and use of evaluation recommendations
- 8.7 Uptake of lessons learned and best practices from evaluations.

Performance Area: RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient way

KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved, and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals

- 9.1 Interventions assessed as having achieved their stated development and/or humanitarian objectives and attain expected results
- 9.2 Interventions assessed as having realised the expected positive benefits for target group members
- 9.3 Interventions assessed as having contributed to significant changes in national development policies and programs (policy and capacity impacts), or needed system reforms
- 9.4 Interventions assessed as having helped improve gender equality and the empowerment of women
- 9.5 Interventions assessed as having helped improve environmental sustainability/helped tackle the effects of climate change
- 9.6 Interventions assessed as having helped improve good governance (as defined in 2.1c)
- 9.7 Interventions assessed as having helped improve human rights
- 9.8 Interventions assessed as having helped improve any other cross-cutting issue [Added for tailoring]

FACTORS⁶ – REASONS WHY RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED OR NOT**External – context-related reasons**

- Operating context;
- Governance context;
- Financial context;
- Partner (national/regional partner, donor, wider multilateral) context.

Internal (signal positive or negative)

- Policy issues;
- Programme or project design;
- Objectives /targets – appropriate, realistic;
- Financial resource issues;
- Human resource issues;

- Implementation challenges;
- Oversight/governance of the institution;
- Risk management;
- Communication and decision-making systems;
- Use of innovation (specify).

6. These will be extracted as available from the evidence (particularly evaluations), with a view to informing findings against a range of MIs and for later collation, rather than to be assessed or rated as discrete data.

KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, and the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate

- 10.1** Interventions assessed as having responded to the needs / priorities of target groups
- 10.2** Interventions assessed as having helped contribute to the realisation of national development goals and objectives
- 10.3** Results assessed as having been delivered as part of a coherent response to an identified problem

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently

- 11.1** Interventions assessed as resource/cost efficient
- 11.2** Implementation and results assessed as having been achieved on time (given the context, in the case of humanitarian programming)

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

- 12.1** Benefits assessed as continuing or likely to continue after project or program completion or there are effective measures to link the humanitarian relief operations, to recovery, resilience eventually, to longer-term developmental results
 - 12.2** Interventions assessed as having built sufficient institutional and/or community capacity for sustainability, or have been absorbed by government
 - 12.3** Interventions assessed as having strengthened the enabling environment for development
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