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Meg Hillier, MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
Committee Office
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From Tamara Finkelstein CB
Permanent Secretary
By Email

30/04/2020

Treasury Minute on ODA Effectiveness

Dear Meg,

I am writing to update the Committee on Recommendation 4 as requested in the Public Accounts Committee report on the effectiveness of Official Development Assistance expenditure. Recommendation 4 is shown below for completeness.

PAC recommendation: *'All ODA spending departments should report back to us in 6 months' time on the extent to which they will increase the proportion of their ODA-funded programmes that use performance measures based on impacts and outcomes.'*

Defra's ODA programmes use a range of performance measures based on impact and outcomes. This will continue and, in some cases, increase over time.

All ICF-funded programmes in Defra monitor outputs, outcomes and impacts in a logical framework (logframe), which sets out how we expect the inputs to deliver outputs and outcomes, and eventually impact. The results are reported through programme-specific indicators as well as one or more of a core set of ICF Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Some examples of ICF KPIs that report against outcome or impact include KPI 15 on *the extent to which ICF intervention is likely to lead to Transformational Change* (Impact), KPI 8 on *hectares of avoided deforestation* (Outcome) and KPI 6 on *net change in greenhouse gas emissions* (Outcome). All ICF-funded programmes also undertake annual reviews to assess performance using the logframe and evaluation evidence, which are then published on the DevTracker website <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk> and the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) registry <https://iatistandard.org/en/iati-tools-and-resources/iati-registry>

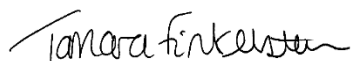
For new programmes e.g. the Biodiverse Landscapes Fund and Blue Planet Fund (Defra/FCDO) KPIs will be developed to measure impacts and outcomes. We are also developing new KPIs across Defra's ODA portfolio.

For existing competitive grant schemes (i.e. the Darwin Initiative and Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund) projects must meet set milestones relevant to their objectives. The approach to monitoring and evaluation at the project level is assessed during the selection process by the Fund Manager and expert advisors. A programme-level evaluation is underway to strengthen the approach to monitoring delivery and impact. We expect this to support the development of higher quality proposals, strengthen the ability to select the best proposals, and enhance our ability to monitor their delivery performance and impact.

Defra intends to increase our use of independent evaluations going forward, including the new BLF programme.

Some of Defra's ODA budget for FY21/22 is non-discretionary, funding multilateral environment agreements for which we have a legal obligation to pay. Annual reports are often produced for these contributions which can provide some information on the progress made towards objectives under each convention. However, due to the pooled funding nature of these contributions it is not possible to evaluate how the UK's contribution supports specific outcomes.

Yours sincerely,



TAMARA FINKELSTEIN
Permanent Secretary