

Indicators and their Development

Indicators are measures of the degree to which intended results are achieved. They are a kind of signpost to which degree the expected changes have been taken place, like in the following example:

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.
But where the trees bow their heads
The wind is passing by.

The Wind, Christina Rossetti, 1830 - 1894

Social, economic and political changes will not be easy to realize after a short period of time like the wind cannot be seen as wind but only by using other elements like bowing trees and raised dust. But, how can you recognize social and political changes?

For this application the applicant shall develop indicators which measure:

- If and to what extent the project objective was reached
- If and to what extent the project results were used by the target groups.

Indicators should be time bound (yearly, until the end of 2014), and describe what should be different and for whom. They should also be measurable.

Example for indicators for the project objective

Example 1

Project Objective: Trade unions are capable of improving working conditions in the private sector.

Possible Indicators: By the end of 2014, trade unions and the management of at least 15 private sector companies will have agreed on the improvement of working conditions and/or higher wages, and/or better social benefits.

Until the end of the project, collective bargaining agreements have been concluded in at least 8 companies, where no collective agreements had existed before

One year after the training at least 80 trade unionist and/or officials have taken up negotiations with the management within their enterprises.

Example 2

Project Objective: Effective mechanisms of social dialogue are applied in certain companies involved in the project.

Possible Indicators: By the end of 2013, five of the eleven trade union networks have documents/agreements with company management that recognise their legitimacy as negotiation partners.

By the end of 2013, five trade union networks have established formalised structures of discussion, consultation and information as well as permanent negotiation with their respective company managements, which are used by both sides. By the end of 2013, the other six networks have formalised discussion forums with company management.

One year after the training, at least 80 participating trade unionist have taken up negotiations with the management of their companies.

Example for indicators for making use of the project results

Example 1

Project result: Trade unionists are trained to become trainers in collective bargaining.

Making use of the result: Trainers are used by the unions to train their members.

Possible Indicators: Until the end of the project, at least 60 percent of trainers trained in the project continue to give training themselves.

Example 2

Project result: Trade union leaders at company level are trained in labour law, negotiation, and analysing working conditions at the company level.

Making use of the result: Trade union members and leaders use their knowledge to initiate negotiations for improving working conditions with the management in private companies.

Possible Indicators: Until the end of 2014, at least 30% of the participants have taken up negotiations with their management for improving the working condition.

Example 3

Project result: Development and publication of a research on the consequences of changing working conditions for employees and the rise of new labour related diseases

Making use of the result: Participating unions have discussed the results of the study and developed corresponding policies.

Possible Indicators: Until the end of 2016, all participating unions presented proposals on how to improve the health and safety situation and which are build upon the results of the study to tripartite fora with employers and the government

OECD/DAC defines an indicator as follows: "A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor". The term "measurable" or "measure" is interpreted very generously: even observing whether something exists or does not exist, e.g. a union proposal on work and health for a company, in other words the attribution of objects to particular categories, counts as a measurement procedure.

The **development of indicators** takes place in a multi-stage process: the first step is to specify the results that need to be measured or described. Then precise indicators are formulated, as far as possible, which contain the following information:

- What will be observed? (1)
- To what extent should things change (or not change)? (2)
- By when (or within what period of time) should the change take place? (3)
- Who or what will be observed? (4)

Example:

At least 50% of workshop participants (4) have successfully put their newly acquired knowledge of results monitoring into practice (1) in the context of their planning within the following six months (3), i.e. they have succeeded in organising monitoring activities, collecting data, evaluating results and producing a report.(2)

A distinction is made between **qualitative** and **quantitative** indicators.

- Classifying qualitative indicators give information on non-scalable attributes.

Example:

The collective agreement negotiations were successfully concluded by ...(date).

- Scaling qualitative indicators give information on scalable attributes.

Example:

Members' satisfaction with the services offered to them by their trade union has increased during the project period by an average of at least two points on a ten-point scale.

- Quantitative indicators measure exact data

Example:

At least 50% of seminar participants have applied their knowledge.

Qualitative indicators can often be broken down into individual components, which then become scalable or measurable again.

Example:

A catalogue of criteria for a better quality of negotiation can be compiled, containing criteria including the following:

- unequivocal positions must be represented
- arguments must be based on workers' rights
- clear suggestions to improve the workers' situation must be put forward
- the conduct of negotiations and the outcomes must be transparent to the negotiators' own clientele
- any necessary compromises must be understandable.

The conduct of negotiations can then be classified and scaled according to these criteria. These quality criteria are influenced by the subjective element of how the project actors understand quality as it applies to negotiation. This also presupposes a political conciliation process on the "right" negotiation strategies, including the realisation that social and political change processes are not objectively measurable.

So indicators can either be expressed in terms of numbers (quantitative), or as categories in the form of a scale or the existence or nonexistence of something (qualitative). It does not matter so much whether an indicator is defined qualitatively or quantitatively. The main thing is that it really measures what it is supposed to represent (validity).

In addition, indicators must satisfy particular requirement criteria. A rule of thumb is the acronym SMART: indicators should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-related. What this means is explained in the table below:

Annex 7

Specific	The indicator must be formulated clearly and precisely.
Measurable	It must be quantifiable and capable of measuring progress.
Achievable	It must be stated in achievable terms.
Relevant	It must measure a salient aspect.
Time-related	It must contain a specific time-reference.