Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Guide to Results-Oriented Project Planning and Monitoring

Contents

Introduction and overview

The DAAD relies on results-oriented monitoring (ROM) to ensure that the goals of funding programmes and projects are achieved. As a higher education institution applying for funding programmes with ROM, you need to outline the intended goals of your project and the ways in which these are to be achieved. Further information about ROM and its benefits for higher education institutions and the DAAD is provided in this video (in German).

When drawing up your project application, you should read this Guide to ROM before completing the project planning overview and the project description.

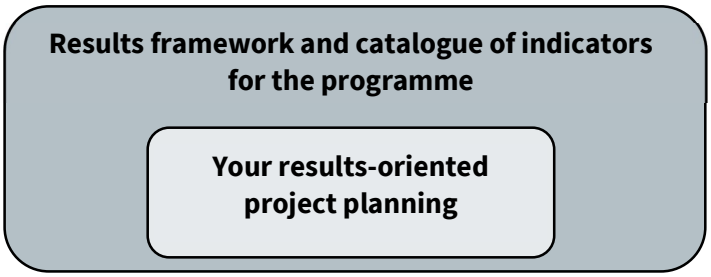
A short introduction with basic information about ROM is followed by a presentation of the most important steps that enable you to plan your project in a results-oriented manner. The results framework (in German: Wirkungsgefüge) and the catalogue of indicators for the funding programme serve as a basis for this. They can be found in the second part of this guide.

Please watch this video (in German) to learn more about applications with results-oriented project planning.

The answers to the most important questions about ROM can be found in our FAQ on results-oriented monitoring (in German).

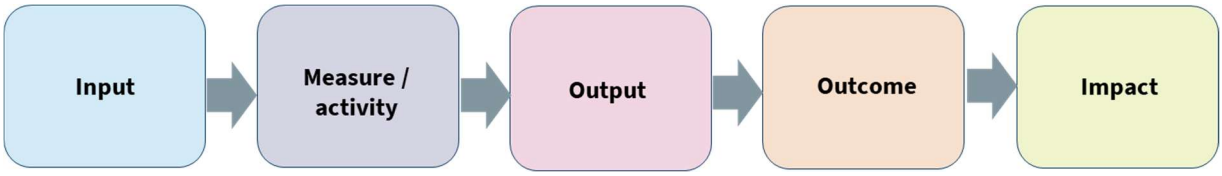
1. Results framework and catalogue of indicators as a basis for results-oriented project planning

The funding programme's results framework (see 3) and the catalogue of indicators (see 4) form the basis for your results-oriented project planning. The purpose of a results framework is to **visualise the funding logic** of a programme and to present the goals the DAAD aims to achieve with the programme. The catalogue of indicators clarifies how the DAAD reviews the effectiveness of the programme.



1.1 Levels of the results framework

The results framework comprises five result levels:



Longer-term effects (impacts)
The impacts describe the intended direct or indirect longer-term effects of a programme.

Objectives (outcomes)
The short and medium-term effects (= programme objectives) the DAAD would like to achieve with its funding programme are defined on the outcome level. The programme objectives result from using the outputs and they contribute to achieving the impacts.

Results (outputs)
The intended results, services and changes (outputs) that result from the measures/activities and that are intermediate steps on the way towards reaching the programme objectives (outcomes) are outlined on the output level.

Measures/activities
The measures/activities as of the results framework correspond to the measures in a programme that are eligible for funding (see funding framework). The programme results (outputs) are achieved by performing the measures/activities.

Inputs
Input is required to realise measures/activities. Inputs include funding from the DAAD, as well as human, professional and infrastructural resources of the grant recipient, the forwarding recipient and any additional parties.

1.2 Catalogue of indicators

The inputs, measures/activities, results (outputs) and short and medium-term effects or objectives (outcomes) listed in the results framework are assigned to programme indicators, which are listed in the catalogue of indicators (see 4). The DAAD reviews the effectiveness of its funding programmes by enquiring about the programme indicators in a structured manner in the annual substantive reports. The results also form the basis for the programme steering.

Note:

An indicator is a (quantitative or qualitative) variable or factor that constitutes a simple and reliable instrument for measuring and reflecting the changes achieved through the measure.

2. How do I plan my project in a results-oriented manner?

In **results-oriented project planning** you need to start with the intended project objectives (outcomes), then plan the corresponding project results (outputs) and finally the measures/activities.

2.1 Completing the project planning overview

You present your results-oriented project plan in the **project planning overview**. This tabular project planning summary illustrates the results logic of your project. It is important that you provide a **short and clear overview** by indicating specific project objectives (outcomes), project results (output) and measures/activities[1]. You are welcome to use an example of a completed project planning overview (in German) for guidance.

When planning your project, you are free to choose the wording for your results (outputs) and objectives (outcomes) and the ways in which you plan to achieve your goals. The project objectives must correspond to the programme objectives indicated in the results framework.

[1] You do not need to specify any impacts for your project.

Please proceed as follows when drawing up your results-oriented project plan:

a) The first step is to define your **project objectives (outcomes).** You need to specify your intended project objectives based on the programme objectives (indicated in the results framework).

Example 1: Specifying the project objective (outcome)

Outcome (programme level)		**Outcome** (project level)
Researchers have gained international **research experience**.	▷	**Doctoral candidates** and junior **scientists** have **realised joint research projects**.

b) The second step is to define your **project results (outputs).** Intended outputs are visible and quantifiable. Based on the results (outputs) on the programme level you need to specify your intended project results (outputs) (e.g. which higher education institutions, which study programme, etc.).

Example 2: Specifying the project result (output)

Output (programme level)		**Output** (project level)
Graduates and **junior scientists** have received **further discipline-specific** and **methodological training** in mathematics and its applications.	▷	**Graduates and junior scientists** have received **further discipline-specific and methodological training** in mathematics and its applications, in **particular in the research area XYZ.**

c) In the third step, you should ideally determine only one **meaningful indicator** for each project-specific result (output) and objective (outcome), respectively. However, to be able to establish that an objective has been achieved, it may be necessary to specify more than one indicator (e.g. number of courses and number of participants).

- **Specification:**
  You may particularise programme indicators that apply to your project to match your purposes. You can also name your own indicators if needed.
  Project indicators should only be specified for key aspects of the outputs and outcomes of the project.
- **Benchmarks**:
  Specify for each indicator, how much should be deployed, implemented and achieved in the project within a specific time frame (**benchmarks**). This is vital to be able to check if objectives have been achieved. To determine benchmarks, you can refer to experience-based values from similar projects, references from your higher education institution or speak to partners and experts.
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Please make sure that the indicators for your project fulfil the **SMART criteria**:

Specific:	precise and unambiguous in terms of quality and quantity (Who? What? How?)
Measurable:	can be measured with reasonable effort and at reasonable cost
Attainable:	Goals are realistically achievable within the specified parameters
Relevant:	meaningful in terms of the intended changes
Time-Bound:	has a defined timeframe

Example 1: Specifying/benchmarking indicators for project objectives (outcomes)

Outcome (programme level)		**Outcome** (project level)
Researchers have gained international **research experience**.	▷	**Doctoral candidates** and junior **scientists** have **realised joint research projects**.
Indicator (programme level)		**Indicator** (project level)
Number of **research projects** realised (since funding started), differentiated by • **Title/topic** • **Implementation status** • **More than one foreign partner institution is involved (yes/no)**	▷	**3 research projects** on the **topics XYZ will be completed** in cooperation **with partner institution A** by the end of 2027.

Example 2: Specifying/benchmarking indicators for project results (outputs)

Output (programme level)		**Output** (project level)
Graduates and **junior scientists** have received **further discipline-specific** and **methodological training** in mathematics and its applications.	▷	**Graduates and junior scientists** have received **further discipline-specific and methodological training** in mathematics and its applications, in **particular in the research area XYZ.**
Indicator (programme level)		**Indicator** (project level)
Number of participants at continuing and further education events realised in the context of the cooperation (in the reporting year), differentiated by • **Topic of the respective continuing and further education measure** • **Gender**	▷	**10 master students** and **2 doctoral candidates of the AIMS Centre Senegal, 3 master students of the AIMS Centre South Africa** and **2 doctoral candidates from the German partner institution**, **including at least 3 women**, will have taken part in the **further education measures XYZ** at the **AIMS Centre South Africa** by the end of 2027.

• **Country of origin** • **More than one foreign partner institution is involved (yes/no)** • **Institution** • **Status (master students, doctoral candidates, postdocs)**	

d) The fourth step is to name the **information sources** and **methods** required for collecting the data for measuring the indicators. Please refer to the Example of a project planning summary . (in German).

2.2 Completing the project description

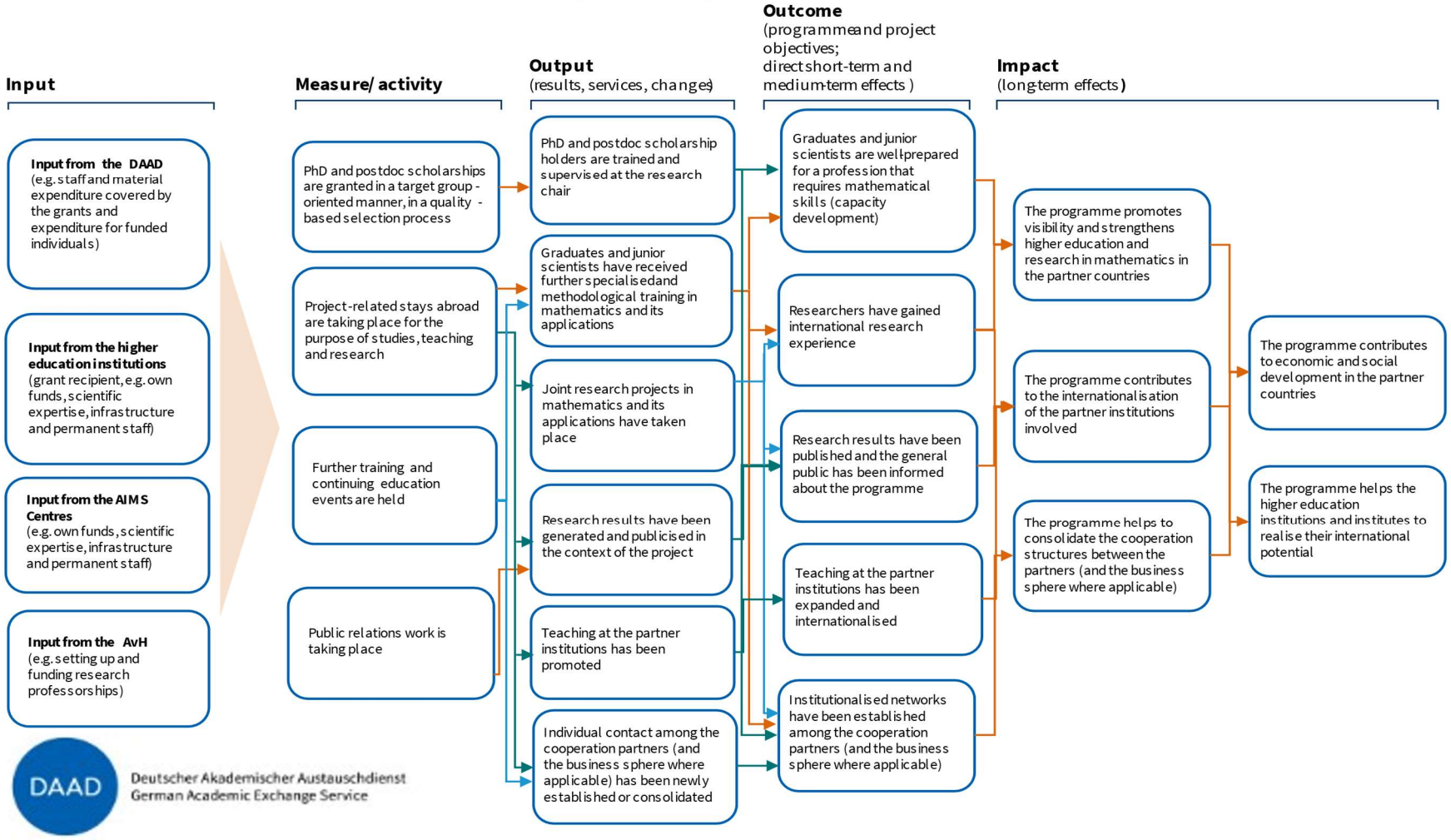
In the project description you need to outline your project with regard to its specialised content, as well as outlining the measures/activities in relation to your own project's objectives. You should take the results logic, programme objectives and selection criteria into account here. You also need to draw up a schedule for your project.

Checklist regarding results-oriented project planning as a selection criterion:

- ✓ Clear relationship between the **project** objectives (outcomes) and the **project** results (outputs)
- ✓ Clear connection between the **project** and the **programme** objectives (outcomes) and the **programme** results (outputs)
- ✓ The project description clarifies comprehensively which measures/activities are to be realised over the course of time, and how these contribute to the **project**-specific results (outputs) and objectives (outcomes)
- ✓ The **project**-specific indicators meet the SMART criteria

3. Results framework for the funding programme 'Higher Education Cooperation with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS)'

Results framework for the programme line: Higher Education cooperation with the African Institutes for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS)



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4. Catalogue of indicators for the funding programme 'Higher Education Cooperation with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS)'

The following **programme indicators** were set for the subject-related Higher Education Cooperation with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) programme, for which the DAAD requests data for the annual substantive reporting. This data supports the DAAD in its programme management and accountability.

Measures/activities and corresponding programme indicators

Measure/activity	Indicator
PhD and postdoc scholarships are granted in a target group-oriented manner, in a quality-based selection process	Qualitative description of the selection process for awarding scholarships (in the reporting year)
Project-related stays abroad are taking place for the purpose of studies, teaching and research	**Number of people funded in the context of the cooperation (in the reporting year), differentiated by**[2] • Gender • Posting country (DAAD key) • Country of nationality (DAAD key) • Destination country (DAAD key) • Status (PhD/postdoc) • Duration of funding • Type of funding
Further training and continuing education courses are held	**Number of continuing and further education events realised in the context of the cooperation (in the reporting year), differentiated by** • Title/topic • Event location/country • Duration (in days) • Format (e.g. seminars, summer schools, field trips) • Type of qualification (e.g. subject-based, didactic, interdisciplinary (e.g. methodologic), administrative) • Target group (e.g. master students, doctoral candidates, postdocs, experts, professors, administrative staff) • Degree of digitisation (e.g. classroom teaching, blended learning, online event)

[2] This indicator includes those supported at the AvH chairs and at the German universities

Programme results (outputs) and allocated programme indicators

Output	Indicator
PhD and postdoc scholarship holders are trained and supervised at the research chair	Number of DAAD scholarship holders at the AvH chairs (in the reporting year), differentiated by[3] • Gender • Posting country (DAAD key) • Country of nationality (DAAD key) • Destination country (DAAD key) • Status (PhD/postdoc) • Duration of funding • Was the obtained MA degree recognised at the start of the scholarship period? • Standard period of study of the PhD programme • Excepted completion date of the PhD programme
	Qualitative description of research activities and supervision of scholarship holders (in the reporting year).
Graduates and junior scientists have received further specialised and methodological training in mathematics and its applications	**Number of participants at continuing and further education events realised in context of the cooperation (in the reporting year),** differentiated by • Topic of the respective continuing and further education measure • Gender • Country of origin (participants from Germany/participants from the partner countries) • More than one foreign partner institution is involved (yes/no) • Institution • Status (master students, doctoral candidates, postdocs)
	Number of continuing and further education events attended with the support from the DAAD (in the reporting year), differentiated by • Title/topic • Provider name • Duration (in days) • Participants (from the project) • Type of qualification (e.g. discipline-specific, interdisciplinary (e.g. methodological), administrative)
Joint research projects have taken place in the field of	**Qualitative description of the research projects (in the reporting year).**

[3] Differentiations highlighted in gray are only relevant for the outcome level.

mathematics and its applications	**Number of research projects realised (since funding started), differentiated by** • Title/topic • Type of application (e.g. Project applications, research applications) • Implementation status • More than one foreign partner institution is involved (yes/no)
Research results have been generated and publicised in the context of the project	**Number of publications published in the context of DAAD funding (in the reporting year), differentiated by** • Implementation status • Type (e.g. peer-reviewed sprecialist journals, non-peer-reviewed sprecialist journals, conference volumes, academic monographs, academic anthologies, reviews, project reports/technical reports/working papers (grey literature)) • Published in an open access medium? (yes/no/planned) • Is the publication the result of a doctorate funded via the programme (yes/no)
Teaching at the partner institution has been promoted	**Number of courses taught in the context of the cooperation (in the reporting year), differentiated by** • Title/topic • Event location/country • Duration (in days) • Target group (master students, doctoral candidates, postdocs, teaching staff, administrative staff)
	Number of participants in courses taught in the context of the cooperation (in the reporting year), differentiated by • Gender • Country of origin - Participants from Germany - Participants from the partner countries
Individual contact among the cooperation partners (and the business sphere where applicable) has been newly established or consolidated	**Number of consolidated contacts with existing partners (since funding started), differentiated by** • Status (researcher, higher education teachers, professors, entrepreneurs, others) • Field (science/research, business, other) • Institution • Value added to the project (free text, up to 300 characters)
	Number of newly established contacts for collaboration (in the reporting year), differentiated by • Status (researchers, higher education teachers, professors, entrepreneurs, others) • Field (science/research, business, other)

Programme objectives (outcomes) and allocated programme indicators

Outcome	Indicator
Graduates and junior scientists are well-prepared for a profession that requires mathematical skills (capacity development)	**Description and assessment of research activities of funded junior scientists (since funding started).**
	Number of DAAD scholarship holders at the AVH chairs (in the reporting year), differentiated by • Gender • Posting country (DAAD key) • Country of nationality (DAAD key) • Destination country (DAAD key) • Status (PhD/postdoc) • Duration of funding • Was the obtained MA degree recognised at the start of the scholarship period? • Standard period of study of the PhD programme • Expected completion date of the PhD programme
Researchers have gained international research experience	**Number of research projects realised (since funding started), differentiated by** • Title/topic • Realisation status - In concept - Submitted - Accepted - Rejected - In progress - Completed - Others • More than one foreign partner institution is involved (yes/no)
Research results have been published and the general public has been informed about the programme	**Number of publications published in the context of DAAD funding (in the reporting year), differentiated by** • Implementation status Type (e.g. peer-reviewed specialist journals, non-peer-reviewed specialist journals, conference volumes, academic monographs, academic anthologies, reviews, project reports/technical reports/working papers (grey literature), encyclopaedia entries/review articles, articles in newspapers/journals/online publications) • Published in an open access medium? (yes/no/planned) • Is the publication the result of a doctorate funded via the programme (yes/no)
	Number of talks as part of specialist congresses/conferences (in the reporting year), differentiated by

	• Name of the speaker • Name of the specialist congress or conference • Location/country (DAAD/key) • Title of the talk • Status of participants (doctoral candidates, researchers, higher education teachers, professors) • Institution • Type of contribution (presentation, workshop, participant of a panel discussion)
Teaching at the partner institutions has been expanded and internationalised	**Qualitative description of the improvement and internationalisation of teaching at the partner institution (since funding started)**
Institutionalised networks have been established among the cooperation partners (and the business sphere where applicable)	**Number of active cooperation partners in the funded partnerships and t AIMS network (since funding started), differentiated by** • Name of the institution • Location of the institution (DAAD key) • Type of cooperation (e.g. set out in the grant agreement (with MoU, additional partners with/without MoU) • Field (e.g. science/research, business) • Development of the partnership (new partner, unchanged, institutionalised, cooperation has ended)