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Paying for Impact:

Results-based Approaches in Development Finance,
Situating Canada's Efforts in a Global Context

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Introduction

This paper is a primer on results-based approaches in development finance. It fills a gap in the availability of basic, accessible information on results-based approaches. While large and growing in importance, data on results-based approaches is rarely consolidated. In many cases these initiatives combine public and private resources, and not all inputs qualify as "overseas development assistance". As a result, key information is not always available from conventional foreign aid data sources.²

The target audiences of the paper are civil society organizations (CSOs), researchers, analysts, policy makers, practitioners and the media working in international development.

The paper is based on a desk-based quantitative analysis of 20 results-based initiatives which include some of the largest and most well known in the space.³ Data and other information collected as part of the research is consolidated and made available through the Canadian International Development Platform (www.cidpnsci.ca).

Our analysis is centered on five main questions:

- What are the different types of results-based approaches i.e. how can they be classified?
- How do they stack up in terms of scale, both financial size as well as impacts?
- What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- What is Canada doing in this space and how does it compare with other donors?
- Finally, the paper is interested in transparency and accountability. We are concerned with availability of data and other key information needed to analyze the efficacy of these approaches. We look at three examples of how results-based initiatives discuss and quantify their outcomes and impacts.

Results-based approaches provide a particularly interesting case for the transparency and accountability movement in the development sector. Open aid data has grown by leaps and bounds. Yet the efficacy of this increased availability of information, in terms of making aid more effective and efficient, remains unclear. Results-based approaches provide an important testing ground to assess if and to what extent open aid data can be leveraged in order to link financial data with results and outcome information. We explore this issue by way of illustrative examples.

We conclude with recommendations aimed at CSOs advocating for greater innovation in development finance, and stakeholders aiming to bring greater transparency and accountability to development efforts through open data.

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2 Such as the OECD's Creditor Reporting System, or for that matter the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

3 Since one of the objectives is to situate Canada's efforts in a wider global context, special attention is paid to initiatives where Canada is active and/or leading.

Results-based approaches in development finance: what are they and how can they be classified?

All foreign aid programs and projects target specific outcomes or results. In this sense all aid is results-based. However, results-based approaches as referred to here have a specific meaning.

Result-based approaches have become an important feature of the donor programming toolkit in recent years. Result-based models aim to alter the incentive structure of aid allocation to link aid more directly to the achievement of quantifiable results (Klingebiel and Janus, 2014).

Results-based approaches emerged in response to concerns surrounding the effectiveness of aid spending. The capacity for donors to 'manage for results' was formally adopted as part of the international aid effectiveness agenda in the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness. It was reaffirmed as 'best practice' with the signing of the 2008 Accra Accord, and again at the 2011 High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan.

The basic results-based model can be employed in a number of ways and can be operationalized in a variety of forms using different combinations of partners, incentives (supply-side/demand side), indicators, and financing instruments. Results-based approaches are typically classified into three broad categories: result-based aid (RBA), results-based financing (RBF), and hybrid models (Grittner, 2013). For our purpose we add a fourth distinct category to this classification: challenge-linked financing.

Results-based aid is typically based on a contract between a bilateral or multilateral donor and a national or sub-national government body of a partner country (Grittner, 2013). Traditionally, in RBA models, the onus for implementing programs and achieving results rests, to varying degrees, with the recipient, where the disbursement of funds is linked to the achievement and verification of pre-defined results (Perakis and Savedoff, 2015). Most importantly, RBAs must be funded by aid dollars (Pearson, Johnson and Ellison, 2010). Examples of RBA include the EU MDG Contracts, performance tranches (such as the EC Budget Support), and Cash-on-Delivery (CoD) (Klingebiel, 2012).

Results-based financing includes several varieties of programs with various specifications. Broadly, RBF programs involve a relationship between a national or sub-national body within a developing country and an implementing agency or individual (as is the case for conditional cash transfer programs) (Grittner, 2013). The implementing agency involved in RBF programs can be any of a variety of actors, including NGOs, private organizations (both for-profit and non-profit) or a sub-national government. Moreover, RBF programs are funded by finance from any source, including, but not limited to, foreign aid (Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010).⁴

Hybrids combine elements of both RBA and RBF (Grittner, 2013). Hybrid arrangements involve a contract between a donor and an implementing partner, which can be either a private sector organization or an NGO (Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010). Some of the most notable hybrid programs include the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)⁵, the Global Partnership for Output Based Aid (GPOBA), and the Health Results Innovation Trust Fund (HRITF).

Challenge-linked financing, in line with Dalberg (2014) is a category of programs that comprise 'awards and prizes' and includes funds that offer "financial rewards for development solutions in a competitive selection process". The recent proliferation of new results-based programs aimed at rewarding innovative ideas and solutions by employing relatively low barrier to entry competitions, warrants this fourth category. Such funds include any of the Grand Challenge programs, the Small Medium Enterprise (SME) Innovation Trust Fund, and USAID's Development Innovation Ventures.

⁴ For a full list of the various results-based approaches, please see Pearson, M., Johnson, M., and Ellison, R. (2010).

⁵ Referred to simply as The Global Fund in the remainder of the paper.

How do results-based approaches stack up in terms of scale?

It is difficult to estimate the total size of the market for results-based mechanisms. While large and growing, due to a lack of consistent definition and reporting standards, data on results-based approaches is rarely consolidated. A recent exception is Dalberg (2014). The analysis looks at innovative financing for development, of which results, output and performance based mechanisms are a subset.

According to Dalberg (2014) the total amount of innovative financing for development mobilized between 2000 and 2013 was \$93.5 billion. This includes three main types of mechanisms:

- Securities and derivatives: which comprise bonds, guarantees, impact investing, microfinance, loans and other products. This accounts for the largest share (83% or around \$76.6 billion).
- Results, output and performance based mechanisms: which comprise advance market commitments, awards and prizes, debt swaps, development impact bonds and performance contracts. This category comes closest to the focus of our analysis here. It accounts for about 7% of innovative financing mobilized, or \$7.8 billion.
- Voluntary contributions and compulsory charges: comprise auctions, donations as part of consumer purchases (e.g. RED initiative) and specific levies (e.g. airline levy) account for the remainder 10% of innovative financing or around \$9.1 billion.

While \$93.5 billion in innovative financing may seem large it equates to only about 6.6% of the \$1.4 trillion in total foreign aid mobilized over the same period. Results-based mechanisms, according to Dalberg (2014) represents only 0.5% of foreign aid.

Our analysis and data differ from Dalberg (2014) in a few important ways. First, it is not possible to know which specific funds or initiatives are classified by Dalberg's analysis as the data are not open. Second, the criteria for classification are unclear.⁶ Third, the type of financial data used at the specific initiative/fund level, is not disclosed.⁷

Figure 1 below summarises our data. Three different types of financial data are given – actual disbursements, fund sizes, and sum of projects. These are not readily comparable with one another but are useful in providing a sense of scale, and provide a more apples to apples comparison where initiatives report the same type of data. Table 1 provides descriptions of how each fund or initiative incorporates results targeting, who the major contributors are, and how results data and information are provided.

The largest category of results-based mechanisms are hybrid mechanisms, driven by the inclusion of the Global Fund in this group. The Global Fund is by far the largest initiative that explicitly makes use of results-based targeting. It also has one of the longest track records of all the initiatives analyzed. The Global Fund has disbursed over \$23 billion since its launch, and nearly \$4 billion in 2013.

The next biggest category is results-based aid. The largest initiatives among these include the US Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the EU Budget Support initiatives. Both have disbursed more than \$5 billion (us dollars, and euros respectively), with around \$1.5 billion in 2013. Both employ contracts and compacts to set ex-ante development targets and results, and incentivize better performance.

Results-based financing is the third biggest category and primarily comprises cash transfer and voucher programs. This category of results-based approaches has the longest track record and substantial variation across developing regions. We highlight data from World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank projects. The behavioural change incentivized in these is at the individual level.

⁶ This has an important bearing on total sizes. In some cases only specific sub-components within wider initiatives explicitly target results, outcomes or performance metrics. For instance GAVI is an example of a large innovative financing mechanism, but only the Health System Strengthening and Immunization Services Support sub-components explicitly target and pay for performance/results.

⁷ This can have a significant impact because in some cases data are only publically available for total fund sizes (or budgets) or as sum of projects, and not necessarily as actual disbursements.

FIGURE 1: Results-Based Approaches in Comparative Perspective

Type	Name	Type of data	Period	Amount							Disbursements 2013									
Hybrid	The Global Fund	Cumulative disbursements	2002-2013	USD 23,061M							USD 3,900M									
	Health Results Innovation Trust Fund	Cumulative disbursements	2007-2014	USD 153M							USD 41M									
	Ag Results	Total fund size	2012-2014	USD 118M																
	Global Partnership on Output Based Aid	Cumulative disbursements	2004-2014	USD 107M							USD 25M									
Results-Based Aid	Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC)	Cumulative disbursements	2004-2013	USD 5,738M							USD 1,683M									
	EU Budget Support	Cumulative disbursements	2006-2014	EURO 5,523M							EURO 1,500M									
	Program-for-Result	Total fund size	2012-2014	USD 1,400M							USD 141M									
	Amazon Fund	Total fund size	2008-2014	Brazililian Real 901M							Brazililian Real 8.1M									
	Gavi Alliance System Strengthening (HSS)	Cumulative disbursements	2007-2013	UDS 532M							UDS 119M									
	Gavi Alliance Immunisation Service Support (ISS)	Cumulative disbursements	2001-2010	USD 337M							USD 0M									
	EC MDG Contracts	Cumulative disbursements	2008 - present	USD 300M																
	Results Based Aid (UK-DFID pilot in the Education Sector in Ethiopia (Cash on Delivery))	Total fund size	2011/12 - 2015/16	British Pound (GBP) 32M							British Pound (GBP) 6M									
Results Based Financing	Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)	Sum of projects	1981-2014	USD 7,210M																
	Voucher Programs (World Bank)	Sum of projects	1993-2014	USD 1,072M																
Challenge Linked Financing	The Global SME Finance Innovation Trust Fund	Total fund size	2012-present	USD 528M							USD 12M									
	Grand Challenges in Global Health	Total fund size	2005-present	USD 458M																
	Grand Challenge Canada	Total fund size	2010-2014	USD 338M							USD 46M									
	Grand Challenge Exploration	Total fund size	2008-present	USD 100M																
	Development Innovation Ventures	Sum of projects	2010-2014	USD 43M																
	Grand Challenges for Development	Total fund size	2011-present	USD 32M																
				0B	5B	10B	15B	20B	25B	30B	35B	40B	0B	1B	2B	3B	4B	5B	6B	7B

Source: author calculation based on primary sources.

Finally, challenge-linked financing is the smallest of our four categories of results-based mechanisms. These are some of the newer forms of results-based mechanisms and comprise significant experimentation in terms of incentivizing innovation in development.

Based on the data above, the total cumulative disbursement to date that explicitly targets results is approximately \$13.1 billion. This excludes the Global Fund.⁸ Including the Global Fund, the total disbursement is approximately \$36 billion.

In addition, just over \$3 billion in results-based mechanisms are active currently in terms of their fund size. With few exceptions, data on actual disbursements linked to these funds is not publically available. To this, another \$8 billion in financing can be added, comprising data for initiatives for which only project level information is available (largely cash transfer and voucher programs which explicitly target performance or incentivize behaviour change).

The total size of results-based mechanisms in development finance ranges between \$24 billion and \$47 billion.

⁸ Not all of the Global Fund's disbursements are strictly results based. It is difficult to parse out the exact share at the aggregate level as only 'additional funding', beyond initial disbursement, is dependent on results (see Table 1).

Strengths, Weaknesses and Lessons

Results-based mechanisms promise to enhance the incentives for recipients to achieve development outcomes by explicitly tying aid to performance. While each result-based model operationalizes and uses incentives differently, the basic idea of changing the incentive structure to 'reward' good performance is common throughout result-based approaches.

The theory of change underpinning results-based approaches offers at least four explanations (Perakis and Savedoff, 2015). Firstly, linking payments to results encourages recipients to improve efforts to achieve targets due to their need for funding. In essence, compliance and performance become linked with the recipients' pecuniary interest.

Secondly, results-based models draw the attention of policymakers to outcomes in a manner that encourages a greater focus on achieving results. Unlike conventional programs, which tend to measure inputs more stringently than outputs, measuring results shifts focus towards program outcomes and is more likely to grab the attention of policymakers seeking to secure additional funding.

Third, results-based approaches create change by increasing government accountability toward constituents. While traditional aid approaches hold recipients accountable to funding agencies, results-based approaches can realign government accountability in cases where programs are designed around shared goals and when results are transparent and openly reported. To the degree that results-based programs are simple and openly communicated to the public, in terms of what is being measured and the payment amounts linked to performance, domestic constituents are able to monitor recipient performance and hold government to account (Perakis and Savedoff, 2015).

Fourth, results-based programs are theorized to improve development outcomes by increasing recipient discretion over spending. Specifically, results-based approaches may enhance recipient capacity by promoting ownership over the implementation process and creating opportunities for adaptation and learning. By encouraging recipients to assume greater control over development programs, recipients are said to engage more directly in capacity building (Perakis and Savedoff, 2015).

Challenges and lessons: although results-based approaches have the potential to improve aid effectiveness, these models are not without challenges.

One of the most significant concerns is that results-based approaches assume that partner countries political systems are open to incentives to achieve better outcomes. In general, results-based approaches (particularly results-based aid) transfer implementing responsibility to recipient countries in efforts to enhance ownership and build capacity. The inherent danger is that in some cases the pre-existing governance capacity may be too low for recipients to actively lead implementation (Klingebiel, 2012).

Others have raised concern that results-based approaches may inadvertently narrow the scope for 'meaningful' development outcomes and instead prioritize 'easy to measure' outputs over more systemic, and harder to measure, reforms (Klingebiel, 2012; Natsios, 2010). For example, although a performance-based payment scheme in Indonesia's health sector increased the number of women accessing midwifery services (74% of women receiving vouchers accessed midwifery services up from a baseline of 26.1%), the program raised concern that demand for services "could exceed health system capacity" (Gorter et al., 2003 in Brinkerhoff and Wetterberg, 2013). Without prior or simultaneous efforts to improve the institutional capacity for government to provide quality services, programs that focus on raising service access or coverage rates may be unable to affect the underlying causes of poor service delivery.

The emphasis on measurability has also raised questions surrounding the appropriateness and representativeness of measurement indicators and targets. Indeed, measuring the 'right indicator' is an ongoing challenge for results-based approaches.⁹

⁹ While there are several examples, Tanzania's experience in the education sector is seminal. In 2010, official statistics placed the country close to achieving universal primary education. Just as Tanzania received an "MDG award" for achievements in the improved rate of educational coverage, an independently conducted household survey found that more than half of grade-4 students were unable to read at a grade-2 level (Morisset, 2012). The two indicators offer very different interpretations of the state of universal primary education in Tanzania.

The predictability of results-based approaches has also become a key point of contention. By tying aid disbursement to observed results, there is a greater possibility that aid may be withdrawn if the desired results are not achieved. The unpredictability of aid has implications for developing countries that rely on continued and relatively stable levels of aid funding. The challenge for practitioners is to develop approaches that retain an innovative incentive structure without disrupting development progress by making aid less predictable (Periera and Villota, 2012).

There are further lessons that can be drawn from the recent experience of results-based approaches. Most results-based efforts are challenging at the start and slow to get off the ground. This can present challenges in terms of aid budgeting and forward guidance.

Take the case of the GAVI Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) support initiative which was an early effort that purported to be explicitly results based. In October 2009 the HSS was positively assessed in its evaluation, especially in terms of its speed of implementation, commitment and disbursement. However one of the weaknesses identified was that the weak annual review and reporting hindered the results-oriented ambitions of the model. By June 2010, HSS was being identified as a main area of under-spending, leading to changes to the architecture of the program (GAVI, 2012).

The take-away is that the logic of results-targeting and incentivizing change takes more time to materialize than is often anticipated by proponents. Moreover, as we see below, even when they do work, these approaches present other challenges.

Proponents often argue that the concerns typically raised about results-based approaches – diversion of efforts from other areas to capture results-based funds, prioritization of short term over long term results, gaming results, high cost and capacity required to monitor and verify results – fail to materialize in practice (Perakis and Savedoff, 2015).

However, let us look at the experience of UK DFID's education sector 'cash-on-delivery' (COD) experiment in Ethiopia. The program (which is operational, 2011-12 to 2015-16) published its first review in December 2013. Concerns emerged at the start of the program that the level of spending was lower and slower than had been forecasted (DFID, 2013). Moreover, given the nature of 'paying for results', the process of forecasting itself became problematic as forecasts become de facto targets, with recipients feeling "penalized for poor performance rather than rewarded for improved performance" (DFID, 2013).

The review presents an unflattering picture on most fronts. On the 'responsiveness of the government to incentives', 'value for money', 'data and evidence base demonstrating the impact of the RBA on results and aid effectiveness', 'government ownership of aid', 'more efficient use of resources', the program performed 'moderately below expectation' (DFID, 2013). Moreover, contrary to other analyses¹⁰, the official review points to the high cost of verification and data gathering compared to conventional programs.

The second review of the program completed in December 2014 presents a different picture – but also raises new issues. The program performance improves in a number of areas over time. In particular, 'government ownership' moderately exceeds expectation and the government is 'more responsive to incentives'. However, performance continues to fall short of expectation with respect to making 'more efficient use of resources' and the 'data and evidence base demonstrating the impact on results and aid effectiveness' (DFID, 2014a).

Overall, while the program performs moderately below expectations in the first two years (2012 and 2013), performance improves and meets expectations in 2014. More interestingly, the risk profile of the program, which was 'medium' in 2012 and 2013, is elevated to 'high' in 2014. A number of reasons are cited. These include the increased potential for diversion of funds to other needy areas, the risk that funds are used for upcoming election related activities at the regional level and that the risk of 'gaming' has elevated as the incentives of the pilot are beginning to be felt at the local levels.

To summarize, results-based mechanisms are challenging at the start and are slow to take off as the logic of results-targeting and incentivizing change takes more time to materialize than is often anticipated. However, it is only when they start to work that other challenges materialize. Proponents tend to downplay these weaknesses, when in reality deeper analyses of weakness offer important lessons for future program development and design.

¹⁰ Conducted by academics, as opposed to program reviewers.

Despite years of use as a tool for development practitioners, relatively little is known about the actual ability for results-based approaches to improve development outcomes in practice (Pereira and Villota, 2012; Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010; Klingebiel and Janus, 2014). Assessing the outcomes of result-based approaches is made problematic by the challenge of disentangling the effects of additional funding 'rewards' from other exogenous factors (Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010). With very few studies adopting the methodological rigor needed to meaningfully assess the impact of results-based approaches,¹¹ there is currently little hard evidence of improved performance stemming from results-based approaches (Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010).

Perakis and Savedoff (2015) is one of the first studies to systematically assess the impact of a subset of four results-based approaches - GAVI, DFID's COD program, the Amazon Fund, and Salud Mesoamérica - they find that while results-based programs are typically praised for providing strong financial incentives, in practice, their value may be more closely linked to the ability to draw attention to goals and progress. While Perakis and Savedoff find that traditional concerns about results-based aid programs generally fail to materialize in practice, as we analyzed above, with reference to official reviews of DFID's education sector COD program in Ethiopia, this may be overstating the point a little. Many of the concerns raised do show up in official program reviews.

What is Canada doing in this space? How does it compare with other donors?

Canada's commitment to 'managing for results' in development programming began in the mid-1990s following a major audit of (former) CIDA programming in 1993 (Morrison, 1998). The Auditor General's report called attention to the prior lack of clarity in (former) CIDA's development objectives and called for streamlined management processes and a greater focus on measurable results. Heeding the calls of the Auditor's review, (former) CIDA made 'managing for results' a key feature of programming.

In 1996, (former) CIDA released its first policy statement outlining the use of 'results-based management' within the development context (CIDA, 2008). The statement defined development results as a measurable change or output derived from investment in a developing country and marked Canada's first attempt to link aid programming to clearly defined and measurable results. Prior to the 1996 statement, (former) CIDA focused primarily on managing for development processes, rather than results (Morrison, 1998). By 2000, the agency was considered one of five bilateral donors with 'significant experience' in result-based management (Binnendijk, 2000).

In 2008, Canada further simplified and clarified internal management processes (OECD, 2012). According to the 2012 OECD-DAC Peer Review, this update helped to improve the consistency in planning, monitoring, and reporting within programs. However, despite a strong culture for results-management prevalent within the agency, the OECD warned that (former) CIDA's risk-aversion may threaten to stifle innovation in aid programming.

Despite Canada's early adoption of result-based management policies, (former) CIDA's use of result-based approaches in outward aid programming has been relatively limited.

The main mainstay of Canada's outward results-based approaches are in the health sector, through support for GAVI and the Global Fund¹²:

- Canada is the 7th largest donor in GAVI, contributing about 4.65% of total donor contribution, or about \$470 million (2000-2014).¹³
- Canada is the 7th largest contributor to the Global Fund, contributing about 5% of total donor contributions, or about \$1.41 billion (2001-2013).¹⁴

¹¹ Ideally, assessing the rigour of these approaches would involve a natural experiment to compare intervention cases to a control group where an identical amount of funds are allocated through a different aid mechanism (Pearson, Johnson, and Ellison, 2010).

¹² Apart from these multilateral efforts, Canada's other forays in the results-based space have been relatively small and ad hoc. For instance, in 2003, CIDA provided funding to a World Bank-led program in partnership with Uganda under the GPOBA Initiative (Morgan, 2010), and in 2010 contributed funding to the UNICEF P4P program aimed at improving material and newborn health services in Bangladesh (UNICEF, 2011).

¹³ GAVI contributions: <http://www.gavi.org/funding/donor-contributions-pledges/> GAVI states different figures for the same donor on its contribution pages. Canada's contribution is about \$470mn.

¹⁴ Global Fund contributions: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/partners/governments/> Canada's total contribution, including the Affordable Medicines Facility for malaria, is \$1.41bn.

While Canada has engaged in some results-based efforts within the health sector (Grittner, 2013), there appears to be little publically available data or documentation surrounding the extent of Canada's engagement beyond program financing.

More recently, Canada's involvement in results-based approaches has extended to include efforts via three initiatives – AgResults, The Global SME Finance Innovation Trust Fund, and Grand Challenge Canada.

AgResults was established in response to calls from the international community to develop innovative solutions to problems of food security and agricultural development in the Global South. The program uses pull-mechanisms to reward the achievement of specific goals and targets, irrespective of the processors or technologies used to achieve outcomes. In essence, pull mechanisms work by providing a financial incentive for the private sector to overcome market imperfections and engage in agricultural innovation, research, and delivery to farmers in the developing world (AgResults, 2014a).

AgResults has launched three pilot projects to address some of the biggest challenges in global food security and agricultural development. Each pilot addresses a different market imperfection and employs a unique pull mechanism design. For example, the Nigeria Alfasafe Pilot, the first pilot launched by AgResults, uses an advanced market commitment pull mechanism by offering above market per-unit payment for every metric ton of high-Alfasafe maize delivered at designated collection points. Alternatively, the Kenya On-Farm Storage Pilot uses prizes to reward innovators for developing new on-farm storage technologies and supplying them to smallholder farmers.

AgResults is a \$110 million multilateral initiative funded by the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Canada has pledged \$40 million to AgResults over five years.

The Global SME Finance Innovation Trust Fund was launched in 2011. Canada was the inceptor and first contributor to the Fund, pledging \$20 million, and was later joined by contributions from Korea (\$0.7 million), the Netherlands (\$2 million), the United Kingdom (\$3.5 million), and the United States (\$4 million). The fund was opened to support the SME Finance Challenge, which sought to identify promising models for sustainable, scalable SME financing.

The SME Finance Challenge aims to find the best models for public-private partnerships that catalyze finance for SMEs, rewarding model creators through large financial prizes. The fund has provided financing to 14 challenge winners selected on the innovativeness, leveragability, social and economic impact, and the sustainability of the proposed initiative. Winning proposals were provided funding based on their need, with grants provided for technical assistance or capacity building, risk-sharing or first-loss capital, mezzanine capital, or investment capital. In essence, the challenge and the trust fund aim to provide an incentive for innovation in SME financing.

Grand Challenge Canada (GCC) was founded by the Canadian Government in 2010 to address specific 'grand challenges' that act as critical barriers and limit improvements towards better health outcomes in the developing world (Government of Canada, 2013). Each grand challenge is coupled with a targeted request-for-proposals aimed at sourcing the best ideas and innovative solutions to achieve clearly defined performance parameters (GCC, 2011).

The GCC model works by reducing the risks and costs associated with solution development for the innovator. Successful proposals begin by receiving smaller 'proof-of-concept' grants, transitioning to scale with larger grants and partnerships following initial success. By offsetting the cost of development, GCC aims to attract bold ideas with the potential for big impact towards improving global health.

Eligibility for GCC funding extends to investigators from low- and middle-income countries, including investigators working in conjunction with Canadian team members. Innovators from other countries are eligible under the leadership of investigators from low- and middle-income countries (GCC, 2011). To date, GCC has signed \$148 million in agreements to fund 538 projects in more than 70 countries (GCC, 2014).

How do Canada's efforts compare with those of other donors?

To contextualize Canada's efforts we compare them to the US and UK – each of these have become leaders in the results-based space in recent years.

United States' use of results-based approaches: The US pioneered the use of ex-post conditionality in aid allocation with the establishment of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) in 2004. Built on the understanding that aid is more effective in the presence of strong policy environments, the MCC is an independent US aid agency that provides aid exclusively to countries that have demonstrated a commitment to development. By using aid to 'reward' good performance, the MCC hopes to improve aid effectiveness by providing funding to countries with the potential to achieve the greatest results. The MCC was the first aid agency to operationalize ex-post conditionality in aid allocation and has received significant attention for its innovative approach to aid giving.

Given the longer track record of the MCC, there are substantial analyses of the impact of the MCC, including the so called "incentive effects" (Rose, 2013; Aune et al. 2013). Early analyses found strong support for the existence of the MCC incentive effect. Controlling for other factors, countries responded by making efforts to improve their indicators to qualify for MCC funding. These are further corroborated by recent survey evidence (Rose, 2013). However even these positive findings concede that effects are far from uniform across countries and policy areas. Recent quantitative analysis (comparing eligible vs. treatment groups) finds no evidence of an overall MCC incentive effect, however, concedes that countries which border MCC eligibility appear to have the incentive to improve in select areas (such as good governance) (Aune et al., 2013). Taken as a whole, the findings on MCC incentive effects are mixed at best.

In addition to the MCC, the US also operates its own innovation competition called the Development Innovation Ventures (DIV). DIV is an open competition that supports 'breakthrough' solutions to development challenges, prioritizing interventions that promise to improve livelihoods while cutting costs (USAID, 2014). DIV uses a tiered funding model, which allocates less money to relatively unproven models and provides additional support when concepts are shown to work.

The US also contributes to a variety of international awards and prize programs. Recent trends suggest the use of performance based incentives, especially in the health sector, may increase in the future (USAID, 2013).

United Kingdom's use of results-based approaches: the UK Department for International Development (DFID) has become a leader in its adoption of results-based approaches (DFID, 2013). DFID supports a variety of approaches that attempt to link payment to results, including several multilateral initiatives, and has begun to test results-based approaches through the launch of four pilot programs (Rogerson, 2011):

- DFID is one of the few donors to adopt a clear 'Payment for Results' (PfR) strategy within its aid toolkit. As part of an effort to ensure that UK aid generates good value for money, PfR programming allows DFID to link funding directly to results. DFID is currently testing two PfR pilot programs in Rwanda and Uganda (DFID, 2014).
- DFID is utilizing the cash on delivery (COD) method to increase the rate of secondary school completion for girls in Ethiopia (Rogerson, 2011) and Rwanda (Muskar et al., 2014). The project works by providing a financial 'reward' for every additional girl who completes year 10. Payments may reach a maximum depending on the results achieved (DFID, 2013).
- In Uganda, DFID is testing a program designed to improve the provision of maternal and child health care. The program pays nonprofit providers for each treated child (under 5) and per pregnant women (Rogerson, 2011).
- In India, DFID is using results-based approaches in the energy sector. The DFID program provides a financial incentive to private actors that provide renewable energy technology to poor households (Rogerson, 2011; ESMAP, 2013).

Among bilateral donors DFID and the US MCC are leaders in terms of the clarity of their approach to targeting results. In both cases, overall strategy is clearly outlined in publically available documentation and policy statements. Furthermore, DFID and MCC also stand out in terms of transparency and accountability. More comprehensive and timely information – not only in terms of financial contribution but also outcomes and impacts – is available for these donors, than is typically the case for others.

Canada's largest contributions to the results-based space are through support for multilateral initiatives, especially in the health sector. The creation of Grand Challenge Canada (GCC) however provides Canada with an important outlet to engage more directly. GCC also counters some of the criticisms of lack of innovation and risk aversion in Canadian efforts. However, there is limited information in the public domain as far as independent evaluation of the efficacy of the GCC is concerned. The GCC communicates its impacts at the aggregate level (operationalized as 'number of lives touched').¹⁵

How are outputs, outcomes and impacts being quantified and communicated?

As Table 1 shows, there is wide variation in the level of results, outputs, outcomes and impacts data and information that is made available across initiatives.

The weakest group among the four in terms of providing data and information on results and outcomes, systematically and publically, either at the aggregate or initiative specific level, is challenge-linked financing. There is limited information in the public domain for this category.

Indeed, challenge-linked financing has come in for wider criticism in recent years as the number of prizes and awards has ballooned.¹⁶

Three initiatives stand out in other categories in terms of best practice in how they provide results and impact data for further analysis, as well as the effectiveness of their communication of results and impacts:

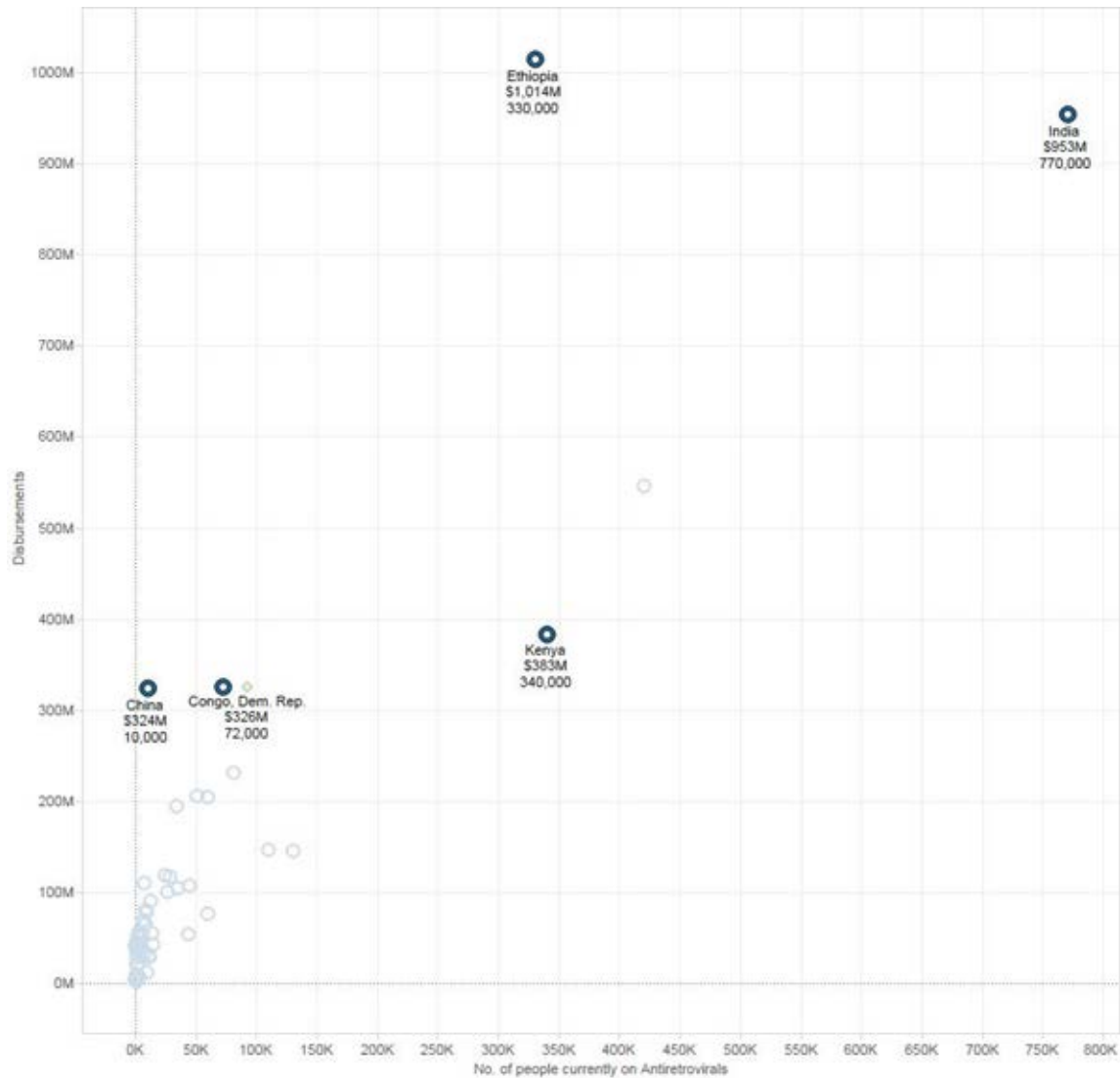
- **The Global Fund:** provides both detailed financial and results/impact data, which is comprehensive in that it is available at the initiative specific, country and aggregate level, and is timely. The Global Fund publishes data through its own online open data portal, as well as to the IATI standard.
- **US – MCC:** provides both detailed financial and results/impact data, which is comprehensive in that it is available at the initiative specific, country and aggregate level, and is timely. Moreover, the MCC links financial and objective/outcome data at the initiative specific level and presents this in the form of project level key performance indicators, through its own online open data portal. The MCC also publishes data directly to the IATI standard.
- **Results-based Aid (UK-DFID pilot) in the Education Sector in Ethiopia (Cash-on-Delivery):** despite its much shorter track record (given launch in 2011-12) DFID's education sector COD program stands out in terms of the availability of key performance data at the disaggregated level. Both performance and financial data are provided at the detailed level and in a timely manner. Data and other information are made available through the UK DFID's own open data portal (Dev Tracker) as well as published to the IATI standard. It is also worth noting that DFID publishes independently conducted annual reviews – that are often highly critical – directly to its IATI feed. This allows analyses – including our own, as discussed earlier – to benefit from these directly.

By way of illustration, we point to two examples below, the first using the Global Fund's open data, and the second which leverages DFID's IATI data.

¹⁵ Initiative specific impacts are reported in an ad hoc manner and not standardized.

¹⁶ The low barriers to entry underplay the amount of time and resources wasted given the very low percentage of proposals that are accepted in early rounds, and even lower proportion that graduate to scale. The approach has been criticized for emphasizing innovation over implementation, and for not really developing a market for impact – as is the promise – but further exacerbating the noise-to-signal problem (Starr, 2013).

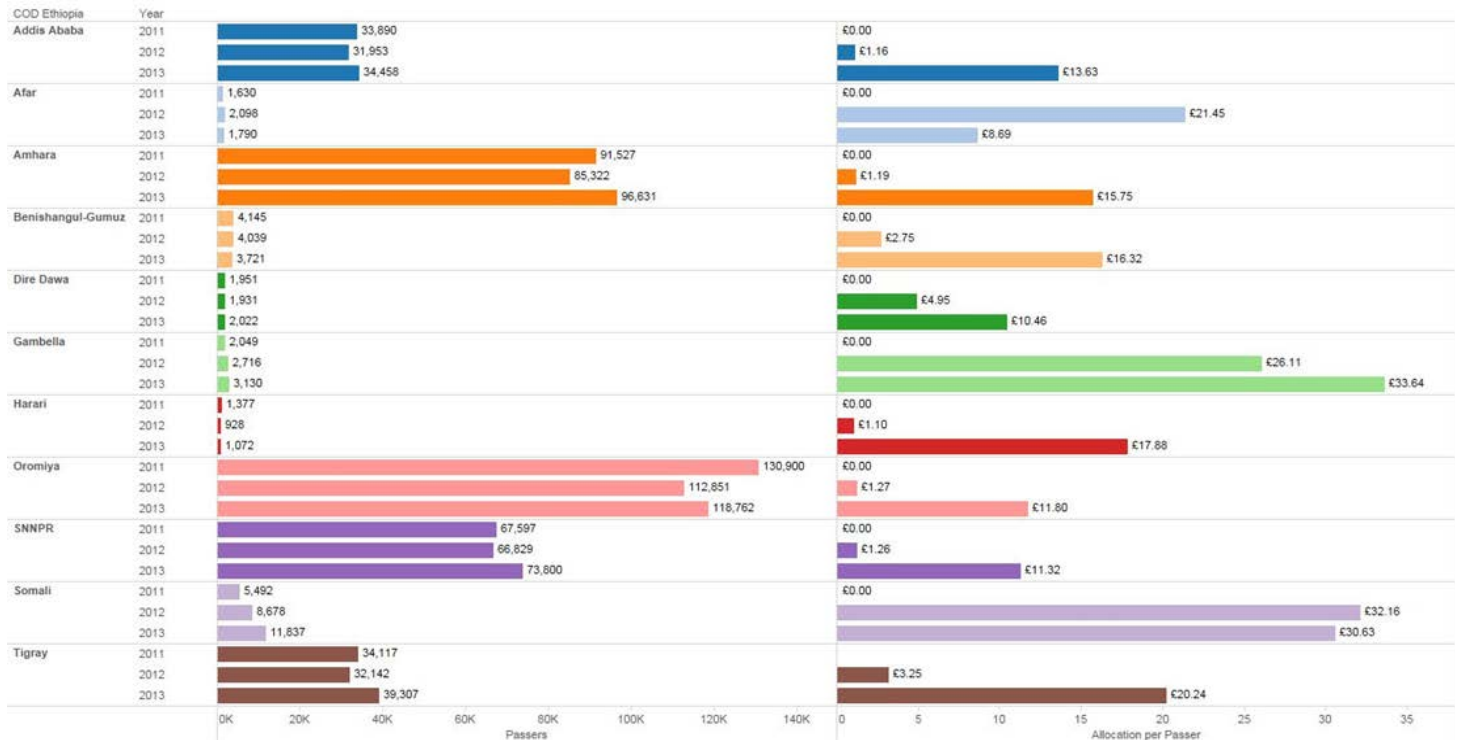
FIGURE 2: Disbursements to and number of people on antiretroviral (ARV) – The Global Fund



Source: The Global Fund, data analyzed on the Canadian International Development Platform.

Open data from the Global Fund in Figure 2 allows financial data on country level disbursements to be linked to performance data, in this case on the number of people per country receiving antiretroviral (ARV) treatment. Together these provide a sense of the dispersion in the cost of provision of ARVs across countries. For instance, China, Congo and Kenya have received similar amounts, but are different in terms of the numbers receiving treatment. These sorts of comparisons can facilitate further inquiry into factors influencing costs in different locations, which could eventually be linked to deeper analysis of outcomes.

FIGURE 3: UK DFID’s Education Sector Cash-on-Delivery pilot in Ethiopia



Source: DFID (2013). Data analyzed on the Canadian International Development Platform

Data in Figure 3 draws on DFID’s review of the COD pilot in Ethiopia. The data are made available through DFID’s IATI feed. The COD program targets improvements in the number of grade 10 passers (among other targets). DFID’s review data allow analysis of the trend of the number of passers per targeted district, as well as the financial allocation (i.e. ‘reward’) per passer made to the district. The data are useful in providing a sense of how different regions are faring, and could facilitate learning and knowledge sharing about what is working, and the factors behind the same.

Moreover, given that the approach is being tested in the same sector in other countries – for instance Rwanda – similar data are available to facilitate cross-country analysis, which increases opportunities for learning and sharing good practice (Upper Quartile and IPAR Rwanda, 2013).

While these are two basic illustrations of analysis made possible by linking financial and performance data, it is worth noting that for the majority of the other funds we reviewed, even this level of fairly basic inquiry is not possible given the lack of granular data. In this regard, examples such as The Global Fund, COD and US-MCC, have a lot to offer in terms of good practice for other initiatives in the results-based space.¹⁷

Expectations surrounding availability of results and impact information surrounding results-based initiatives are bound to be higher. Understandably, sharing such information in the public domain has risks. Not all initiatives work as expected, and so there is a natural disincentive to share too much information in the public domain. This limits the opportunity to learn and share best practice.

¹⁷ HRITF, GPOBA, GAVI and the Amazon Fund would be other examples of results-based initiatives where output, outcome and impacts data are provided to some extent, alongside financial data, to facilitate analysis.

Recommendations

Results-based approaches are an increasingly important part of the development finance landscape. They collectively represent new ways of delivering aid that are more closely aligned with recipient/beneficiary incentives to improve performance, increase innovation and incentivize behavioural change. The focus of this analysis has been to fill gaps in the availability of basic, accessible information on results-based approaches, with an emphasis on highlighting and contextualizing Canada's role in the space.

We conclude the analysis with three sets of recommendations aimed at specific stakeholders: the public sector, civil society and the open data community.

Public sector and public-private institutions and initiatives in Canada

Strategy on Canada's approach to innovation and results targeting in development financing

As discussed above, in recent years Canada has increasingly experimented with results-based approaches, going beyond its multilateral contributions. However, Canada lacks an overarching policy framework on its approach to results targeting in development finance. Other donors, active in this space, often conduct these initiatives as part of a broader strategy outlined in a framework document (DFID, 2014). From recent announcements it is clear that results-based and public-private initiatives will play an increasingly important role in Canadian assistance (Economic Action Plan, 2015). A strategy note could play a useful role in tying and bringing together a Canadian narrative surrounding these efforts, and may help guide future forays in what is likely to be a growing subset of development financing globally.

More detailed initiative level information on GCC

The signature Canadian initiative in this space is Grand Challenges Canada (GCC). Despite having been around for a few years GCC provides little by way of systematic and standardized data and information at the initiative level. More efforts could be made to make GCC data accessible and open. A concrete suggestion would be for GCC to set up its own data portal as other global initiatives like the Global Fund, US-MCC and others do. Or alternatively to publish data to the IATI standard, as Canada's DFATD does already.

Standardization and consolidation of where Canada is investing

The need for further standardization and consolidation of key information on where Canada is investing in the results-based space can be generalized beyond GCC. For instance, in our analysis, when we looked across various initiatives where Canada is playing a leading role – such as the SME challenge and innovation trust fund, and AgResults – we found the level and accessibility of information varied greatly. Moreover, data and information on contributions to these initiatives are not readily available through the various open data channels DFATD is already publishing too, including IATI.

Within the purview of a broad strategy on results targeting, Canada could make efforts to consolidate and standardize presentation of key data on what it is doing, where and to what effect. Such an effort could have a substantial effect on facilitating learning and knowledge sharing, and elevate awareness of the impact of Canadian investment.

Civil society stakeholders advocating for greater innovation in development finance

Don't just grab ideas for the sake of novelty, follow-up and follow-through

Civil society has played a key role in bringing attention to the results-based space especially in the Canadian context. For instance, Canadian civil society organizations raised the profile of the COD model in Canada and called upon the government to pilot programs similar to the UK initiatives (Parliament of Canada, 2012). Too often however, there is little or no follow up to see how those efforts are faring, and there is a tendency instead to gravitate to the next 'new' idea. Civil society can strengthen its role as a knowledge broker in stimulating greater innovation in Canadian efforts, by following up on ideas. In hindsight, given the early experience of the UK, COD proved more challenging and risky than proponents argued.

Use partners and stakeholders on the ground to collect, analyze and fill gaps in the data and information base on the efficacy of innovative approaches

The proliferation of data gathering techniques employing new tools (like mobile platforms) has opened up new avenues for the role civil society could play. One of the big issues in results-based approaches is data validation. The incentives to 'game' the logic pervades these approaches at various levels. Civil society can play a more active role in following up on reported data, conducting parallel data collection for validation, and developing narratives based on the same. Civil society organizations – for instance in the education sector in East Africa – have already played this role in challenging official data (Morisset, 2012). This is a concrete way in which civil society stakeholders can follow up and follow through in terms of advocating for greater innovation.

Open data, transparency and accountability community

Develop a non-technical primer on how 'results' information can, is being, and should be captured, at the initiative specific and aggregate level; and how data standards such as IATI could be further leveraged to capture results

Across the relatively small subset of initiatives studied for this analysis we have seen wide variation in the approach to results information. In some cases results data are purely narrative, while in others they are entirely quantitative such that they can be aggregated across various levels. The best results are had when quantitative data are combined with qualitative narrative information, but presented in a systematic, machine-readable and relatively predictable manner, with appropriate identifiers and contextual information such that they can be combined with other data.

Open data in international development has increased dramatically with increasing publication to the IATI standard. The standard makes specific provision for results. However the field is used inconsistently across reporters. For instance, in analyzing health financing data using IATI open data, information on results was sparse and inconsistent (Bhushan, 2014). The open data, transparency and accountability movement is at an important inflection point in terms of its efficacy. One of the key factors that influences whether and to what extent the data is used, is whether analysis (such as value for money) can be conducted more easily using this information. For this to be the case, more guidance will be needed on how open data standards can better incorporate key results and performance metrics.

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TABLE 1: Description of How Results are Targeted, Reported and Main Contributors

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Hybrid	The Global Fund	Contributes to the fight against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Recipient countries are responsible for program implementation; funding beyond initial disbursement is dependent on results achieved.	26 OECD-DAC donors, 24 major non-OECD donors, 21 major non-governmental organizations, foundations and private contributors.	Results data are made available systematically publicly, both at the specific country/intervention level as well as aggregate. Since 2002, the fund has helped 7.3 million people receive anti-retroviral therapy for AIDS; 12.3 million people have been tested and treated for TB; 450 million insecticide-treated bed nets have been distributed to prevent malaria.
	Health Results Innovation Trust Fund (HRITF)	Promotes progress to achieve health related MDGs, especially MDG 1c, 4 and 5. The HRITF uses a variety of mechanisms to provide financial incentive for the achievement of predefined results.	United Kingdom, Norway (administered by the World Bank)	Results are reported for specific projects, but not aggregated.
	AgResults	Promotes agricultural innovation to improve food security and good nutrition in the developing world. AgResults uses pull-mechanisms to encourage actors to innovate, rewarding applicants for results achieved towards pre-defined program goals.	Australia, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, United Kingdom, United States	After the first year of the Nigeria Alfasafe Pilot, farmers yield more than twice the normal yield. Farmers sold maize at 1.8% to 13.2% above prevailing market price.
	Global Partnership on Output Based Aid (GPOBA)	Uses OBA approaches to improve basic service delivery. Under an OBA scheme, a third party (private or public) is contracted for service delivery, receiving a subsidy to complement user contribution. The service provider pre-finances and implements the project, receiving reimbursement for the delivery of specific outputs as verified by an independent verification agent.	United Kingdom, Australia, The Netherlands, Sweden, International Finance Corporation	Access to basic services provided for 7,000,000 people. Project outputs data is available for fully implemented projects in the GPOBA annual report.

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Results-Based Aid	Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)	Allocates aid to 'reward' developing countries for a commitment to good governance and development as measured by a series of third-party policy indicators.	United States	Results data are provided systematically and publicly, at the specific intervention level and at the aggregate level. For instance, 148000 farmers trained and 82000 hectares of land under production; 4900 kilometers of roads under design and construction; over \$65 million disbursed in agricultural loans, reported in the latest available reports.
	EU Budget Support	The EU offers three budget support programs (Good Governance and Development Contracts, Sector Reform Contracts, and State Building Contracts) designed to address a specific development objective. The programs include fixed (base) and variable tranches. Fixed tranches are linked to eligibility criteria, while variable tranches are disbursed against progress towards specific indicators.	European Union	Results data are not available systematically publicly, for specific initiatives, or at the aggregate level.
	Program-for-Result	Provide incentives to enhance the quality and availability of services. Disbursement is linked to specified results.	World Bank, United Kingdom	Results data are not available systematically publicly, for specific initiatives, or at the aggregate level.
	Amazon Fund	Supports rainforest preservation, particularly in the Amazon region. The Fund uses an innovative fundraising model. International donors provide financial support to the Fund to 'reward' emission reductions achieved. Domestic actors then decide how to allocate funding across Brazilian states and actors to further reduce emissions and secure future funds.	Germany, Norway, Petrobras	33 environmental agencies strengthened; 71,472 km ² of land was registered; 1633 civilians were trained in firefighting techniques; 8121 km ² of conserved areas created; 53471 km ² of protected area created.

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Results-Based Aid	GAVI Health System Strengthening (HSS)	The mission of HSS is to improve the health system (infrastructure, supply chain for vaccines) in the targeted countries to make sure that supplied vaccines really reach the children on site. HSS is split up into programmed budget and performance budget. Following an initial 100% payment of program budget in the first year, up to 80% of program budget can be paid in the following years and an extra amount is paid for every additionally immunised child.	17 OECD-DAC donors, 4 non-OECD donors, 14 major non-governmental organizations, foundations and private donors.	Results are aggregated and provided at the country level. Since 2010, the proportion of countries meeting the minimum benchmark for equity in immunisation coverage has increased from 51% to 57%.
	GAVI Immunisation Service Support (ISS)	The ISS scheme aims to increase immunisation coverage. GAVI makes an initial investment in a countries' immunisation service for two years after which countries receive a US\$ 20 payment for each additional child (compared with the previous year) who receives all three-doses of the DTB3 vaccine.	17 OECD-DAC donors, 4 non-OECD donors, 14 major non-governmental organizations, foundations and private donors.	Results are aggregated, and provided at the specific project level. Since 2001, an additional 76.5 million children were immunized.
	EC MDG Contracts	MDG Contracts are a special form of General Budget Support which includes a payment that depends on the performance of the recipient country. The performance component is disbursed on the achievement of pre-defined measurable progress towards meeting the MDGs.	European Union	Results are not publically available for specific initiatives, or aggregated.
	Results-based Aid (UK-DFID pilot) in the Education Sector in Ethiopia (Cash-on-Delivery)	Provides financial rewards for the achievement of a single (or very few), pre-defined, verifiable outcome(s).	United Kingdom	Results data are provided, systematically and publically through the IATI standard; at the specific (sub-national) level and at the aggregate level. 3.4% more girls completed G10; 3.2% more students passed G10 according to the 2013 review.

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Results-Based Financing	Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)	CCT is a result-based financing instrument which targets the demand-side. CCTs reward the behaviour of an individual, where payment is conditional and compliance must be observable (e.g. enrolment list of a school to observe attendance of child).	Can be utilized by any donor. Numbers reported are from World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and Asian Development Bank.	Results reported for individual projects
	Voucher Programs (World Bank)	A voucher system can target demand- and supply-side mechanisms. Vouchers can be handed out to targeted individuals who then can redeem the voucher at service providers. Individuals can obtain vouchers for a cheap price and the service providers get reimbursed.	Notably, as reported here, by World Bank. Can be utilized by any donor.	Results reported for individual projects
Challenge-Linked Financing	The Global SME Finance Innovation Trust Fund	Promotes innovative ways to provide sustainable financing of SMEs in low-income countries. Using a public competition, the SME Finance Challenge, the fund identifies and supports new ideas to finance small and medium size businesses and help them grow.	Canada, United States, United Kingdom, Republic of Korea, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria Development Bank (OeEB), Calvert Foundation, KfW Development Bank, Deutsche Investitions (DEG), Netherlands Development Finance Company, Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund and Inter-American Investment Corporation, International Finance Corporation, and Overseas Private Investment Corporation	Results data, against baselines, are provided at the specific initiative level. However the data are ad hoc (both in terms of format and updates) and only available through interim progress reports.

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Challenge-Linked Financing	Grand Challenges in Global Health	Uses a family of grant programs to overcome bottlenecks in developing new tools and methods to improve health in the developing world. Using an open competition and tiered grant mechanism, top applicants receive financial support to pursue the development of their innovative idea or scheme. Successful initiatives are eligible for funding scale-up.	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	Results data are not available systematically publicly, for specific initiatives, or at the aggregate level.
	Grand Challenge Canada	Supports innovative ideas to overcome important health problems in low- and middle-income countries. Using an open competition and tiered grant mechanism, top applicants receive financial support to pursue the development of their innovative idea or scheme. Successful initiatives are eligible for funding scale-up.	Canada, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United Kingdom	Results are aggregated and presented as "number of lives touched, or beneficiaries who accessed products and or services". 1,200,000 beneficiaries touched in 2013-2014.
	Grand Challenge Exploration	Uses a tiered grant mechanism to support innovative ideas to solve key health and development problems for those most in need. Using an open competition, top applicants receive financial support to pursue the development of their innovative idea or scheme. Successful initiatives are eligible for funding scale-up.	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	Results data are not available systematically publicly, for specific initiatives, or at the aggregate level.

Type	Name	Basic Description	Main Contributors	Results
Challenge-Linked Financing	Development Innovation Ventures	Supports the discovery of new and innovative ways to address complex problems. DIV holds open competitions to field bold development ideas. It uses a tiered funding method, piloting programs through the provision of small incremental funding and scaling up ventures that have the greatest impact and are cost-effective.	United States	Results data are not available systematically publicly. Some results are available for projects that receive multi-level funding.
	Grand Challenges for Development	Encourages global innovators to develop new ideas and technologies to address development challenges. Using an open competition and tiered grant mechanism, top applicants receive financial support to pursue the development of their innovative idea or scheme. Successful initiatives are eligible for funding scale-up.	United States, Sweden, Norway, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada, The World Bank, World Vision, Australia, Duke Energy, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Germany, Open Society Foundation, Omidyar Network, Hivos, Institute of Development Studies, Ushahidi.	Results data are not available systematically publicly, for specific initiatives, or at the aggregate level.