

Assessing the Quality of Country Plans

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Presentation Outline

■ **Quality Assessment of FTI-endorsed Country Plans**

- ❖ Assessment Questions
- ❖ Criteria & Method
- ❖ Strengths of country plans
- ❖ Areas for improvement

■ **Approaches and Tools**

- ❖ Prioritization
- ❖ Monitoring, evaluation & accountability



Quality Assessment FTI-endorsed Plans

Assessment Area	Assessment Questions
1. Technical Quality	Is the plan credible and sustainable and does it address priority issues?
2. Country Leadership & Broad Ownership	Is there evidence of country leadership, broad ownership and political commitment to the plan?
3. M & E/ Accountability Arrangements	Is there a credible monitoring, evaluation and accountability framework?
4. Financial Aspects	Is the financial plan credible?
5. Fiduciary Safeguards	Are financial management and procurement systems adequate?
6. Institutional & Implementation Arrangements	Is the plan ready for implementation?



Quality Assessment FTI-endorsed Plans

Assessment Criteria (Total = 44)

1. Technical Quality (25)
2. Leadership & Ownership (4)
3. M & E/Accountability Arrangements (3)
4. Financial Aspects (3)
5. Fiduciary Safeguards (5)
6. Institutional & Implementation Aspects (4)

Purpose

- ❖ Identify systematic strengths & gaps **NOT** to assign scores or ratings to any country

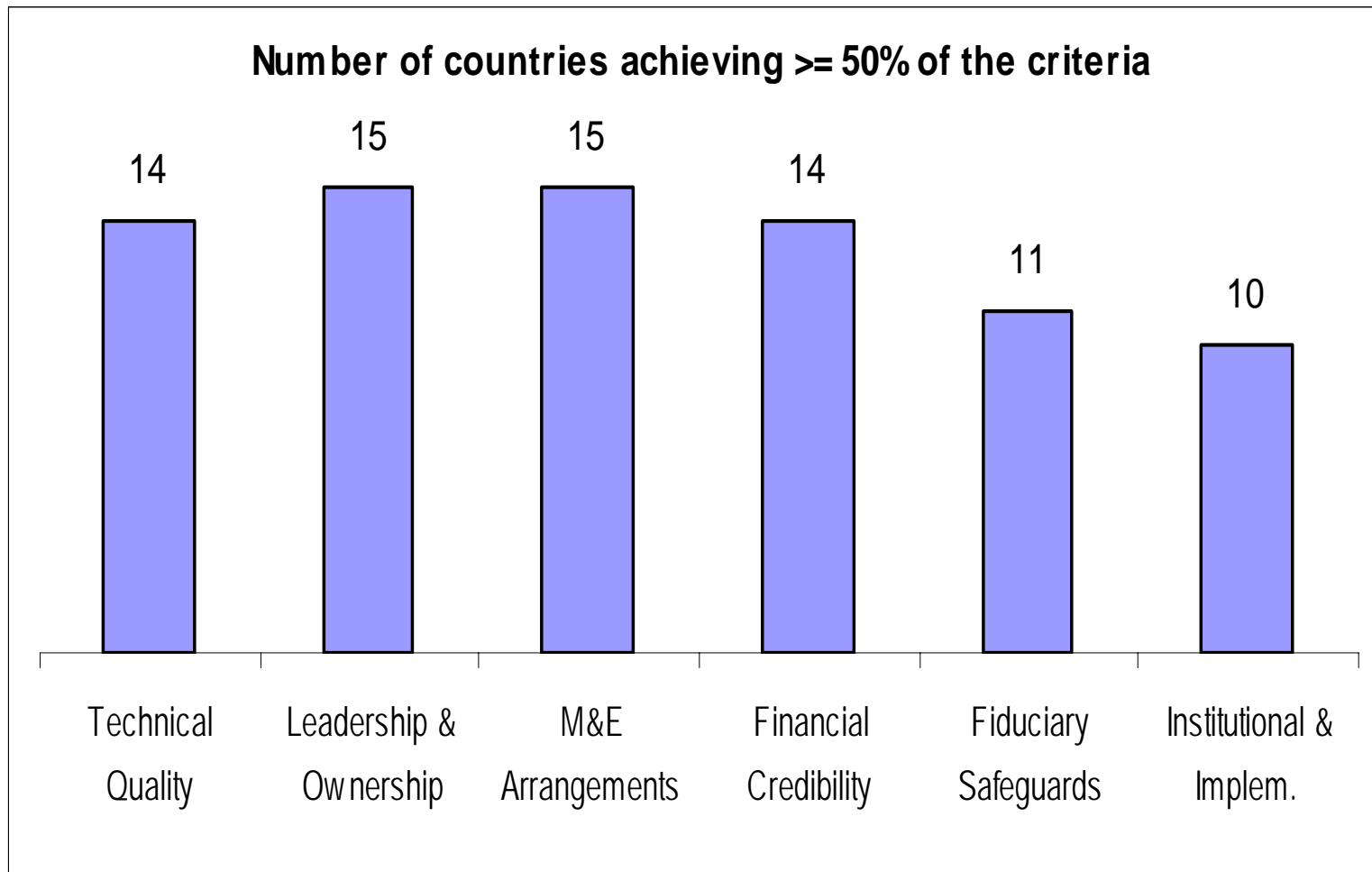
Coverage:

- ❖ 25 plans – all regions
- ❖ Local donor appraisals

Method

- ❖ Covered or not (0,1)
- ❖ No judgment re: adequacy except where local donor assessment

Results



Main Conclusions

General

- ❖ Vast improvement from a decade ago & over project approaches
- ❖ Uniformly, movement towards a sub-sector or sector-wide approach
- ❖ Countries are at different stages
- ❖ Balance of technical, ownership & capacity is highly context specific

Systematic Strengths

Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Sector Analysis and minimum data❖ Focus on education quality – inputs, measuring learning outcomes
Leadership & Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Evidence of political support (e.g. budget)
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Comprehensive financial framework, including domestic and external resources



Areas for Improvement

Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Poor & vulnerable children➤ Estimating costs & policies with a simulation model➤ Prioritizing interventions
Leadership & Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Stakeholder consultations➤ Participation of civil society in plan development➤ Donor coordination mechanisms
M&E/Accountability (when not omitted entirely)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Exclusive reliance on school census data➤ Many strategies but few impact evaluations➤ Accountability to beneficiaries not only to donors
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Embed in budget and country-wide MTEF
Fiduciary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Financial management and procurement



Options

Prioritization

- ❖ Defacto Prioritization
- ❖ Pro-active Prioritization conditioned by:
 - ➔ Uncertain reform environment
 - ➔ Weak implementation capacity
- ❖ Pro-active Prioritization based on likely impact and cost

Prioritization

A. Uncertain Reform Environment

- ❖ Visible results (fragile states)
- ❖ Incremental (possible) policy decisions—most common

Risk: *Key decisions will never be taken, but the only option.*

B. Weak Implementation Capacity

- ❖ Few key interventions + build financial management, procurement, M&E & policy analysis capacities and systems (Timor Leste, Pakistan)

Benefits: *Builds basics and capacity to manage more resources*

- ❖ Phase-In geographically (e.g. where management capacity is stronger or needs are greatest)

Benefits: *As above, also improves program design*

Risks : *Political & ethical acceptability*



Prioritization Tools

1. Financial Simulation Models

⇒ Identify & assess policy choices with large financial impact under assumptions of resource availability.

2. Budget models & MTEFs

⇒ Help prioritize across sub-sectors & program components based on actual budget ceilings

☑ *Combine to facilitate linkage with budget/MTEF*

3. Impact Evaluation -- **Are we doing the right things?**

Ex. Kenya: Cost of a year increase in primary school attendance:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twice yearly de-worming treatment | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School meals to pre-schoolers | \$36 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free uniforms | \$99 |



Impact Evaluation

Requirements

- ⇒ Identical control group not exposed to the intervention
- ⇒ The Gold Standard -- Randomized selection of treatment & control groups with baseline & post-treatment data
- ⇒ Randomization not always possible (targeted programs, voluntary participation, ethical dilemmas), other methods exist
- ⇒ substantial amount of information, time & resources.
- ☑ *Selectivity based on strategic importance and large cost impact*



Quantitative Multi-Purpose Surveys for M&E & Accountability

Are we doing things right?

Uses

- ⇒ *Check* on administrative data
- ⇒ *Diagnostics* - quantitative & qualitative data on service delivery & critical variations
- ⇒ *Accountability* – identify where institutions fail their obligations
- ⇒ *Benchmarking* - track service quality over time



1. Quality of Service Delivery Surveys (QSDS)

⇒ School surveys

⇒ Performance not measured by administrative data

⇒ Comprehensive or single issue (e.g. teacher absenteeism)

2. Citizen Report Card Surveys (CRCS)

- Verify access and family cost
- Measure of citizens' perceptions of quality & efficiency of services
- Seek suggestions for improvement

Example: Results from Zanzibar

- High satisfaction with teacher behavior (opposite in Ethiopia)
- High dissatisfaction with availability & quality of learning materials
- Most pay fees, 61% demanded by school authorities

Advantages	Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Simplicity➤ Low cost➤ Replicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Technical Competence➤ Involvement of providers & users in survey design➤ Advocacy follow-up, often by NGOs

3. Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS)

- Monitor if resources reach their destination
- Insights into financial management systems & accountability
- Examples: Ghana, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Cambodia, Uganda

Key Lessons

- Limit scope – the more categories, the more demanding
- Impact depends on Government action

	Uganda	Tanzania
Finding	87% of student grant diverted	57% non-wage expenditure diverted
Govt Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Published budget allocations ✓Posted info at District & schools ✓Trained communities 	Bureaucratic - published transfers to councils
Result	90% of grant received	More PETS



Main Lessons Across Methods

- ☑ Surveys should be carried out by third parties
 - eliminates MoE stakeholders as potential source of bias
 - Builds local capacity that is difficult, or unnecessary, for MoEs to develop in-house

- ☑ Must be accompanied by action and follow-up surveys



Discussion Questions

- Reflecting on your education plan, what would you identify as strengths & areas for improvement?
- What tools & processes have you applied to:
 - ✓ Prioritize
 - ✓ Improve information re: demand constraints and service quality
 - ✓ Engage civil society
- What constraints did you encounter? How did you address them?