RESULTS
Pressures and Opportunities for Development Agencies:

How things look and feel inside AusAID

Alwyn Chilver

DCED Seminar on Trends and Results in PSD
Session 1, Friday 20 January 2012
Overview

> Rapid change, including for RESULTS
> Strong demand, questionable supply
> Reflections on early experiences (2011)
> The (rocky) road ahead
Changes at AusAID

> Commitment to scale up spend to 0.5% GNI

> An Aid Effectiveness Review leading to unprecedented:
  – clarity of focus on what we will/won’t do
  – commitment to engage with Australian business community
  – commitment to develop a PSD strategy
  – And budget clarity to 2015
  – Rethink of the workforce needs

> Demanding Minister, after results, not activities or spend
Changes at AusAID (RESULTS)

> 2010 Annual Report contains 200 ‘Results’

> The first ever agency-wide discussion on results:
  – What is Australia buying for a 4 year $$ commitment
  – Tier 1 – progress against development goals in partner countries
  – Tier 2 – the contribution of Australian aid to those goals
  – Tier 3 – operational and organisational effectiveness
  – Headline development results in 4 years (from Tier 2 & 3)
  – Annual reporting on progress towards these

> Emphasis on numbers
Results – the experience 1

> Panic!
> Few AusAID programs report results
> Few partner programs report results
> Results vary and cannot be aggregated
> Few agreed sector indicators or results
> Is ‘schools built’ ≡ ‘incomes increased’?
> Results by 2015, or from investment to 2015?
Results – the experience 2

> Surprising conservatism in projecting results
> Attribution, contribution approaches vary!
> Call for ‘results’ expertise
> Concerns about staff incentives:
  – Cash transfers delivered vs FTE jobs created
  – Chase the easy big numbers not transformational change
Results – the FSR experience

> Benefit of 8 outcomes for past 2 years (ATPR 2010)
> Chance to ‘road test’ indicators – do they work?
> Started embedding the Standard
  – Few projects
  – Portfolio level challenge
  – Long causal chains for research with uncertain impact pathways
> Guidance on attribution welcomed by others
Results – some wider issues

- Culture (frank and fearless’nt)
- Is the demand for credible results?
- Will it sustain?
- Will it drive program management?
- Not more processes and guidelines!
- Workforce development
The way forward

> Clarifying positions on attribution, aggregation, displacement
> Fewer simpler indicators
> Technical notes on application of indicators
> QA of results (a Standard?!)  
> Communicating results – different needs
> Integrating results into program management
> Dedicated Results Unit (P&Q network)