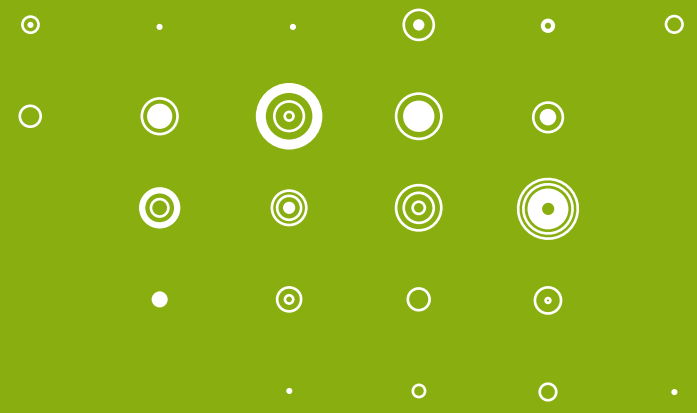


# KNOWING WHAT WORKS



## Capturing and contextualising results on a global level

GIZ's results data

## IMPRINT

As a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. GIZ's Evaluation Unit reports directly to the Management Board. It is separate from GIZ's operational business. This organisational structure strengthens its independence. The unit is mandated to generate evidence-based results and recommendations for decision-making, to provide plausible verification of results and to increase the transparency of findings.

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# 1. Aggregate results data

## 1.1 Capturing results on a global level

### What are results data and why are they collected?

How does GIZ contribute to solving regional and global problems? What does it do, say, to mitigate the impacts of climate change? How many people found employment worldwide last year thanks to GIZ projects? How many of them were women?

It is no longer just experts who are interested in the answers to these questions – the general public also wants to know more about the results achieved. In connection with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular, reporting in international cooperation focuses not only on funding and activities, but increasingly on the objectives and the results achieved. Like many other organisations, GIZ is therefore faced with the task of providing the best possible proof of the effectiveness of its work and communicating this in a verifiable and readily understandable way, not just for individual projects, but also on a global level. These are the reasons why GIZ collects results data across projects and countries each year on ten thematic areas, using aggregate indicators. This brochure presents the annual data collection process and describes the potentials and limitations of GIZ results data. Results orientation is one of the key quality features of GIZ's work.

Monitoring and evaluation therefore focus strongly on substantiating results and boosting impact. When formulating project objectives and indicators, care is taken to make sure they reflect the specific national setting and are tailored to the respective partners. Only by doing so they can provide a suitable basis for project steering and for learning within the project, as well as for promoting ownership by partners. Objectives and indicators thus differ widely even between projects in the same sector. How, therefore, can we combine results from individual projects that are implemented under different overall conditions and in different contexts?

### Objective and purpose: Illustrating results for the general public

GIZ has put a lot of effort into finding out how results can be captured across projects and countries. Using so-called aggregate indicators, it has been collecting global results data regularly since 2014. GIZ uses the aggregate data primarily for communicating with the public and for its dialogue with commissioning parties and clients. Data that provide evidence of results across project boundaries can reinforce the legitimacy of international cooperation.

# 1. Aggregate results data



## What are aggregate indicators?

GIZ defines aggregate indicators as clearly formulated indicators on which data can be collected from different projects and programmes – operating in different contexts and under different conditions – using the same methods and units of measurement, and covering the same period. The indicators must generate quantifiable data and be easy to measure.

## What are the particular features of GIZ's aggregate indicators?

### Mainly quantitative

Most of GIZ's aggregate indicators are quantitative. Although qualitative results can also be aggregated, these too are frequently combined in terms of quantity, e.g. by looking at the number of individuals whose working conditions have improved. Qualitative aspects are therefore usually presented using specific individual examples.

### Data collection at all results levels

Aggregate indicators can be measured at all results levels. It is generally easier to prove what outputs have been provided (output level) than to measure what direct short-term and medium-term results these generated (outcome level), and to which overarching development results these contributed (impact level). But deciding which results level is most suitable mainly depends on the individual sector and project approaches. It is particularly difficult to attribute the identified results to a specific project intervention. For this reason, GIZ also works with plausible estimates when collecting data on results at outcome and impact level.

### Complementary to project indicators and evidence of results in evaluations

Project indicators are an integral and binding part of project management and results-based monitoring and are used to steer a project and monitor its results on track to achieve its objectives. Project evaluations involve assessing a project's effectiveness and undertaking a retrospective critical analysis of the results achieved. Aggregate indicators, in contrast, aim to measure readily quantifiable aspects across projects. Often, therefore, this aggregate level calls for a plausible estimate (educated guess) based on empirical values, monitoring data and/or evaluation findings.

# 1. Aggregate results data

## Overview – GIZ's results levels

### Results

#### Outputs

They describe the specific **changes we aim to achieve through the activities in our measures**. These include, for example, products, goods, services, transferred knowledge, new skills, and new or changed institutions and policies.

#### Outcomes

They are the **direct, short- and medium-term results** of a measure – either expected or achieved. Outcomes include both the benefits the target groups derive from the outputs, and any concomitant behavioural changes. The project objective is usually located at this level.

#### Impacts

These are the **longer-term, overarching development results** – including the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a rule, the programme objective is located at this level.

#### Results measured at a specific point in time

Aggregate indicators are measured annually and apply to a clearly defined measurement period. They do not, though, enable us to draw any conclusions about development over the course of time, e.g. how local conditions have changed in a specific sector over the years. This is due for one thing to the project population that takes part in the data survey, which changes every year. Some projects are completed and new projects begin. For another thing, it is more feasible to report on specific indicators relating to the overall project term and cycle (e.g. on reductions in CO2 emissions) at the end of the project, while other indicators can be reported on right from the start.

#### Not obligatory in the projects' results logic

At present, it is not mandatory to integrate aggregate indicators into the results logic when designing GIZ projects, because this poses a risk of changing the objectives and resources in order to obtain the highest possible values for the aggregate indicators. There is a further risk of creating a system that offers incentives to pick 'low-hanging fruits'. Such a shift towards easily achievable and short-term results and objectives might reduce the quality and sustainability of measures and approaches and divert attention from the qualitative changes that are also an important aim of project work. These risks should be taken into account in the current discussion surrounding the standardisation of indicators and their integration into the results logic of projects.

# 1. Aggregate results data

## 1.2 Annual data collection

### How does GIZ collect its results data?

In total ten topics were selected for the collection of results data. These included questions e.g. related to basic care for refugees and to the number of people who found employment through GIZ measures. The determining factor for the selection of topics was the level of public interest and whether GIZ's global portfolio provides sufficient data on these topics. The topics also needed to be related to the SDGs and the current special initiatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) (One World – No Hunger; Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees; and Stability and Development in the Middle East and North Africa).

#### Collecting data and verifying their plausibility

The results data are collected across the company each year by a set date (31 January) for the past calendar year, using 29 aggregate indicators in ten thematic areas. The indicators were formulated by the Sectoral Department together with the Evaluation Unit and the Corporate Communications Unit. Precise instructions were developed for each aggregate indicator, thereby establishing which measures should be included and which should not. During the survey period, project managers are asked to enter their data on these indicators in a survey portal (with support from the project team), based on measurements (data from the relevant M&E systems) or plausible estimates. Thus, for example, the

number of people who were reached by and benefited from a particular measure is plausibly estimated based on the number of water and sanitation companies that received support and the number of people living in the catchment area. After the survey is completed, the Sectoral Department and the Evaluation Unit check the plausibility of the data. The collected data are examined in terms of their content at country and project level, corrected if necessary or confirmed. Personalised enquiries play an important role here, offering the possibility of further clarification with the relevant project managers.

#### Criteria for formulating the aggregate indicators for results data

Aggregate indicators must

- be easy to communicate and worded clearly and understandably in order to convey an effective PR message
- be framed in substantive terms such that the largest possible number of projects in a sector can provide data
- map aspects of a sector that can be easily measured and quantified or plausibly estimated and must involve data that are not time-consuming to collect
- be precisely worded so that they can be understood easily and consistently in all contexts and under all conditions
- relate in some way to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- call for absolute figures because percentages cannot be aggregated without simultaneously recording the entire statistical population
- if possible, be able to provide information differentiated by gender

# 1. Aggregate results data

## 1.3 Overview of aggregate indicators

1. Employment	<b>1.1 People who have obtained employment</b> Number of people who have obtained employment as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>1.2 Additional employment</b> Number of people who have additional employment as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>1.3 Working conditions</b> Number of people who benefit from improved working conditions as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>1.4 Income</b> Number of people who benefit from improved income as a result of GIZ's contribution
2. Education and vocational training	<b>2.1 School education</b> Number of students who have received improved school education as a result of GIZ's contribution		<b>2.2 Longer-term vocational training</b> Number of people who have participated in longer-term vocational training measures as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>2.3 Short-term training measures</b> Number of people who have participated in short-term training measures geared to the labour market as a result of GIZ's contribution
3. Rural development and food security	<b>3.1 Food security</b> Number of people for whom GIZ's measures or projects have contributed to overcoming hunger and malnutrition		<b>3.2 Rural income</b> Number of people in a rural area who have increased their income thanks to GIZ's contribution	<b>3.3 Sustainable land management</b> Land used for crop-growing or grazing that has been managed more sustainably as a result of GIZ's contribution
4. Good governance	<b>4.1 Political participation</b> Number of people (citizens and/or members of organised civil society) who have participated directly in municipal, regional or national political consensus-building or decision-making processes with support from the project		<b>4.2 State services</b> Number of people who have obtained access to improved administrative state services as a result of GIZ's contribution	
5. Displacement	<b>5.1 Persons in the context of displacement</b> Number of refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and residents of host communities reached as a result of GIZ's contribution			



# 1. Aggregate results data

<b>6. Health</b>	<b>6.1 Strengthening health facilities</b> Number of health care facilities whose capacities have been expanded through a (significant) contribution by GIZ	<b>6.2 Use of services</b> Number of people who use health care and medical services that have been supported or improved as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>6.3 Social protection</b> Number of people who have received health insurance or improved health insurance as a result of GIZ's contribution	
<b>7. Water and waste management</b>	<b>7.1 Drinking water supply</b> Number of people for whom GIZ and its partners have contributed to improved drinking water supply	<b>7.2 Sanitation</b> Number of people who have better access to sanitation/wastewater treatment as a result of the contribution by GIZ and its partners	<b>7.3 Water resource security</b> Number of people for whom GIZ and its partners have contributed to the sustainable supply of safe drinking water	<b>7.4 Waste management</b> Number of people who have access to improved waste management as a result of the contribution by GIZ and its partners
<b>8. Biodiversity</b>	<b>8.1 Forest area</b> Size of forest area (sq. km) placed under sustainable management as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>8.2 (Nature) conservation areas</b> Size of conservation area (sq. km) that has been protected (better) as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>8.3 Ecosystem services</b> Number of people who have benefited from GIZ's contribution to preserving nature (ecosystems and their services)	
<b>9. Energy</b>	<b>9.1 Renewable energy</b> Installed capacity (kW) of renewable energy for generating electricity that has been added as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>9.2 Access to modern energy</b> Number of people who have received access to modern energy as a result of GIZ's contribution	<b>9.3 Energy efficiency</b> Electrical energy MWh <sub>el</sub> or thermal energy MWh <sub>th</sub> saved as a result of GIZ's contribution	
<b>10. Climate change</b>	<b>10.1 Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions</b> Quantity of reduced or avoided greenhouse gas emissions (in tCO <sub>2</sub> -eq/year) that are attributable to advisory services and activities provided by GIZ's projects	<b>10.2 Dealing with the consequences of climate change</b> Number of people who have been directly supported (i.e. in a manner attributable to GIZ's measures) in managing the consequences of climate change	<b>10.3 Adaptation capacities</b> Number of key stakeholders on the partner side who use the processes or methods supported by the project that are relevant for implementation to cope with the consequences of climate change	

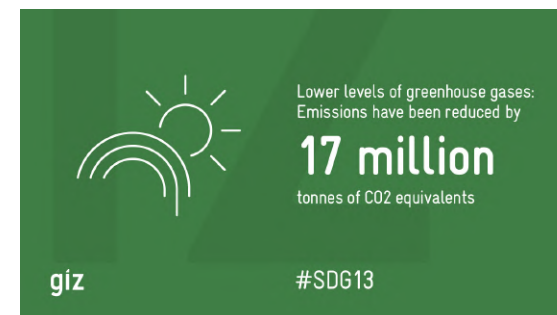
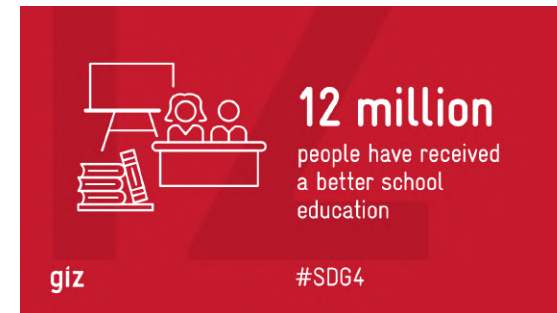
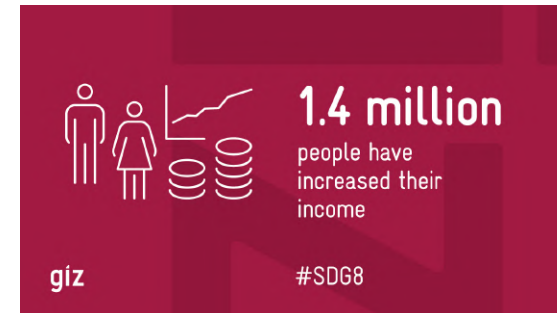
## 2. Use of aggregated results data

### 2.1 From the indicator to the statement of results

#### Findings for communication purposes

Projects implemented by GIZ are always based on joint implementation with local partner organisations, sometimes also with other donors. GIZ's work is therefore only one of the elements contributing to achieving the objectives. GIZ results data thus always report on its contribution towards the results in question.

Statements based on the aggregate indicators are prepared for communication with commissioning parties, clients and the general public in an easily understood form and in several languages, using graphics and short videos.



## 2. Use of aggregated results data

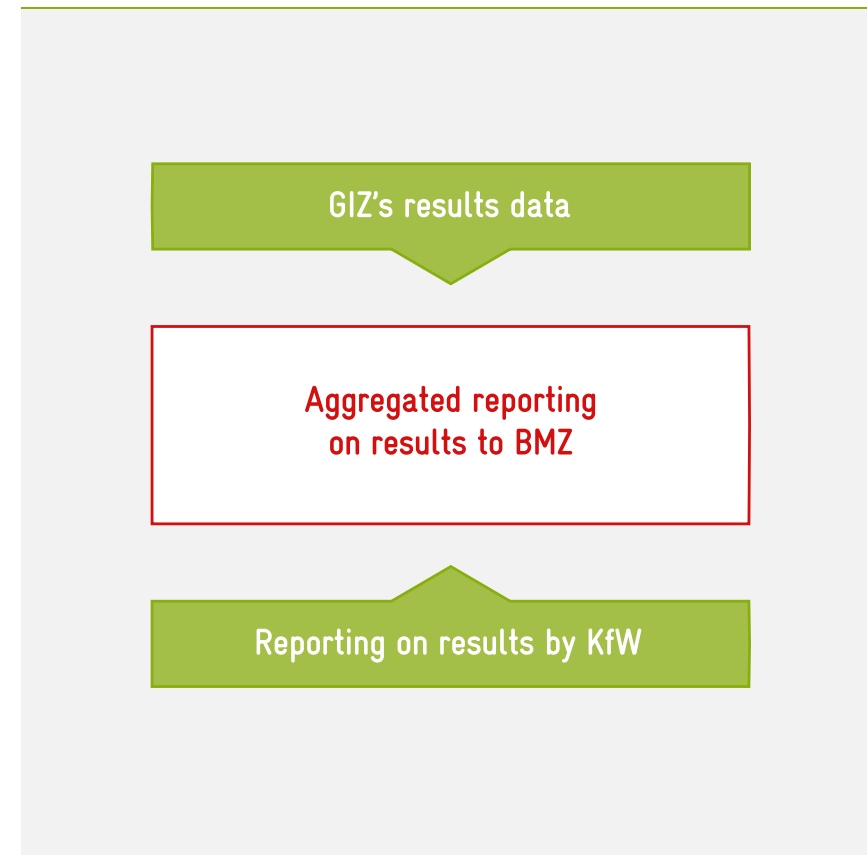
### 2.2 Joint use in German international cooperation

#### Aggregated reporting on results

In 2017, BMZ initiated aggregated reporting on results for the purpose of documenting the performance of official development cooperation in the form of verifiable and robust quantitative results that could be used for communications with the public and political stakeholders and for international reporting.

Since 2017, GIZ and KfW have jointly produced systematic, aggregated and quality-assured reports on the results achieved by official bilateral development cooperation projects in selected thematic areas.

At GIZ, these joint annual aggregated reports are built on aggregate results data. 21 of the 29 aggregate indicators for the collection of results data by GIZ are also used for aggregated reporting to BMZ.



## 2. Use of aggregated results data



### 2.3 Reflected use

#### Challenges when using the results data

Aggregate indicators are very broadly worded and do not refer to any specific context so that the largest possible number of projects can report on them. In general, they are therefore not suitable for steering the portfolio or projects. Nor can comparisons be made with other interventions in the sector, since only absolute figures are stated and no consideration is given to divergent contextual factors, which would be essential for making plausible comparisons. Finally, aggregate indicators only map easily quantifiable and partial aspects of projects, not their complete results logic. Although quantitative analysis can capture the effect of an intervention in figures, it cannot prove that the results envisaged in each case have been achieved.

GIZ's proof of the results of its work is therefore not based solely on the collection of results data. Results are tracked as part of results-based monitoring. Regular reports on results are provided to commissioning parties and clients; results are presented in an accessible way for communication purposes (results data), and the achievement of results is assessed in the final instance during (project) evaluations.





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