



## TOOL 3.3

# APPRAISAL OF QUANTIFIED TARGET VALUES AND MILESTONES

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP NO 7  
'PREPARING FOR THE EX-ANTE EVALUATION OF THE CAP  
STRATEGIC PLAN'

OCTOBER 2019

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## ACRONYMS

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CSP	CAP Strategic Plan
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
EC	European Commission
EIP	European Innovation Partnership for agricultural knowledge and innovation
EU	European Union
GAEC	Standards for good agricultural and environmental condition of land
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
LPIS	Land Parcel Identification System
MS	Member State
NVZ	Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
SO	CAP Specific Objective
SPR	Proposal for CAP Strategic Plan Regulation, COM/2018/392 final
UAA	Utilised Agricultural Area



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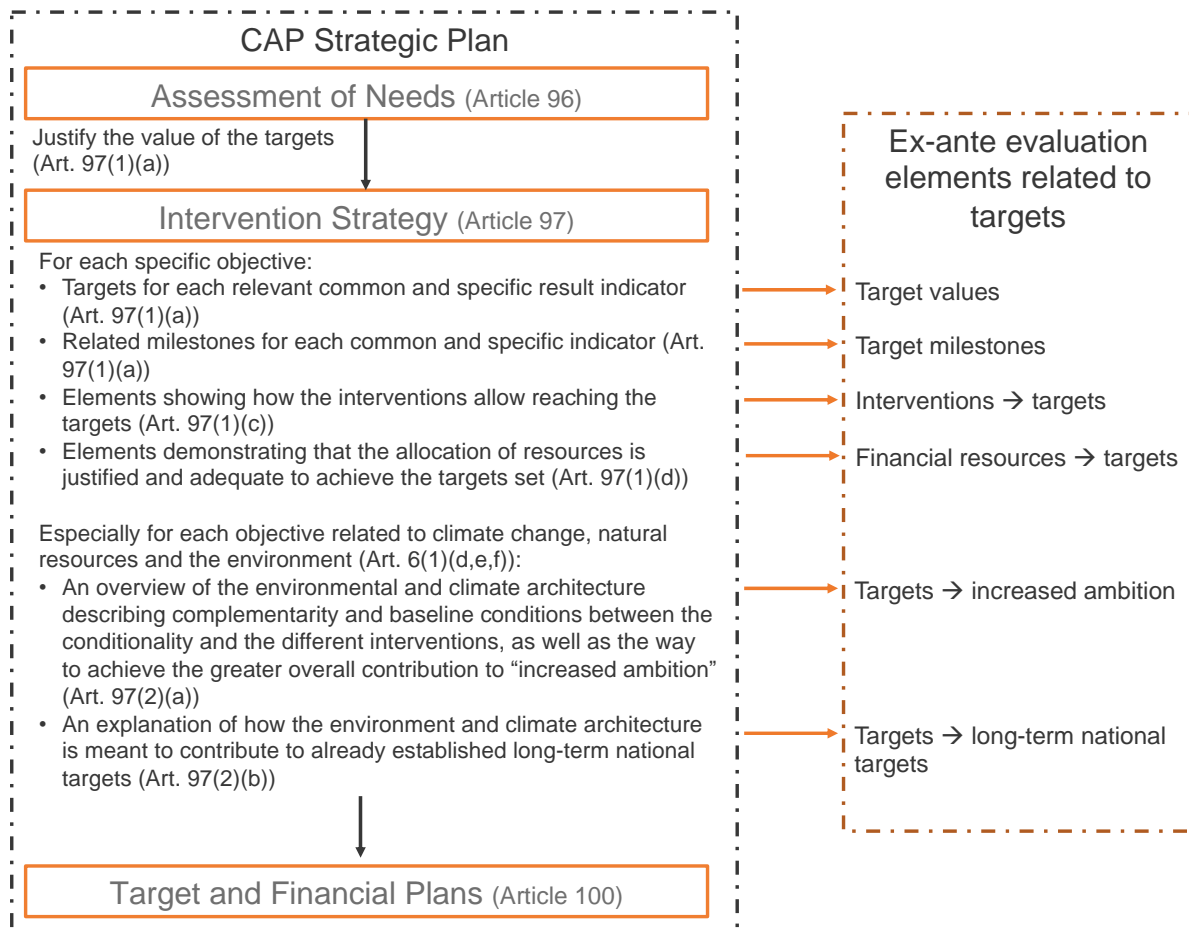


# INTRODUCTION

## About this tool

The provision of target values and milestones for result indicators in the CAP Strategic Plan is a legal requirement. The ex-ante evaluation shall appraise the quality of the calculation of target values (and milestones) taking into account various critical factors. The objective of this tool is to provide evaluators with a structured approach for assessing the quality of the calculation of target values and milestones. Figure 1 below summarises what is required by the ex-ante evaluator to check in relation to targets.

Figure 1. Regulatory requirements in relation to target setting and ex-ante evaluation



## Working process

This tool has been prepared by evaluation experts by taking into account the legal proposal for the CAP Strategic Plans *COM(2018) 392 final (hereafter referred to as SPR)*. This tool is intended to serve as a non binding guide for evaluators and to be further adapted.

The drafting work has been carried out in the context of the Evaluation Helpdesk’s [Thematic Working Group no. 7](#). The suggestions and comments of evaluation stakeholders from the Member States have been collected through a written Sounding Board consultation in September 2019 and were used to refine the tool.

The most important specifications in the SPR proposal in relation to the appraisal of the quality of the calculation of target values (and milestones) are the following:

- The intervention strategy shall set out, for each specific objective, targets for each relevant CAP Strategic Plan result indicator and related milestones. (Article 97(1)(a) of the SPR proposal)
- The set of common indicators shall include result indicators relating to the specific objectives concerned and used for the establishment of quantified milestones and targets in relation to those specific objectives in the CAP Strategic Plans and assessing progress towards the targets. (Article 7(1)(b) of the SPR proposal)
- The targets shall be defined using a common set of result indicators set out in Annex I. (Article 91 of the SPR proposal)
- Target and financial plans. (Article 100(1) of the SPR proposal)
- Appraisal of whether the quantified target values for results are realistic, having regard to the support envisaged from the EAGF and EAFRD. (Article 125(3)(e) of the SPR proposal)
- Appraisal of the suitability of the milestones selected for the performance framework. (Article 125(3)(h) of the SPR proposal)

# TOOL FOR SUPPORTING THE APPRAISAL OF QUANTIFIED TARGET VALUES AND MILESTONES

## Focus of the tool

This tool focuses on the appraisal of targets and milestones for result indicators as defined in the SPR proposal. Before presenting the contents of the tool a brief overview of some key concepts are provided below.

### How are targets and milestones defined?

According to the SPR proposal, ‘targets means pre-agreed values to be achieved at the end of the period in relation to the result indicators included under a each specific objective’.<sup>1</sup> Milestones are defined as intermediate targets, which are set at various points in time during the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan and are determined in relation to the indicators included under a specific objective.<sup>2</sup> Both the evaluation and the performance framework refer to targets and milestones using result indicators in relation to each specific objective. The gap between outputs and targets is an indication of how the programme progresses and accomplishes its milestones.

### What are targets set for?

In the new CAP architecture, each common result indicator will have a target value that will concern several interventions (i.e. there will not be a target value for each intervention but a target value per group of interventions related to each respective result indicator). For instance, if the result indicator is farm modernisation, measured as the ‘share of farmers receiving investment support to restructure and modernise and improve resource efficiency’, then the interventions concerned may include, among others, productive investments and sectoral types of interventions implying an investment. If the target indicator is ‘adaptation to climate change’, measured as the ‘share of agricultural land under commitments to improve climate adaptation’, then the interventions concerned may include, among others, eco-schemes, environmental and climate commitments and sectoral types of interventions.

### What are the interventions in the context of the CAP Strategic Plan?

According to the SPR proposal, intervention means ‘a support instrument with a set of eligibility conditions as specified by Member States in the CAP Strategic Plans based on a type of intervention as provided for in the SPR Proposal’.<sup>3</sup> The new CAP Proposal and its Annexes, notably Annex I specifies that:

- The CAP Strategic Plan will contain **three key groups of interventions**:
  1. direct payments,
  2. sectoral interventions,
  3. rural development interventions.<sup>4</sup>
- Within these three groups of interventions, there are several **broad types of interventions**<sup>5</sup> (e.g. EIP, CAP support, decoupled direct support, risk management tools, coupled support, payments for natural constraints, payments for management commitments (environment, climate, genetic resources, animal welfare), investments, installation grants, cooperation, knowledge exchange and information).
- Within these broad types of interventions, there are several **specific interventions**, such as knowledge and innovation (under EIP), basic income support for sustainability or complementary income support for young farmers (under direct support), support for local infrastructure or support for productive investments in farms (under investments), investments in renewable energy (green energy, under payments for management commitments).

The description of each intervention specified in the strategy should include among other things, the specific design or requirements of that intervention, which ensures an effective contribution to the CAP specific objective(s). For environmental and climate interventions, articulation with the conditionality

<sup>1</sup> Article 3(i) of the SPR proposal.

<sup>2</sup> Article 3(j) of the SPR proposal.

<sup>3</sup> Article 3(c) of the SPR proposal.

<sup>4</sup> Article 95(1)(i) of the SPR proposal.

<sup>5</sup> Annex I to the SPR proposal.

requirements should show that the practices do not overlap.<sup>6</sup> Conditionality is not an intervention in the sense of Article 3(c) of the SPR proposal as specific support is not granted, although farmers are subject to administrative penalties if they do not respect the conditionality rule. Areas covered by GAEC have to be reported following the same principles as interventions.

There is an important distinction from the current 2014-2020 period, where programming refers to types of operations, which are a level below the types of interventions referred to in the programming period 2021-2027. However, Member States will still need to implement operations under each type of intervention and therefore the current experiences are still useful in this respect.

This tool suggests the following approach:

**Step 1:** Identify the types of interventions linked to relevant result indicators for which targets are set.

**Step 2:** Assess the link between targets and interventions.

**Step 3:** Assess the relevance of targets in relation to the identified needs.

**Step 4:** Assess the causal relationship from inputs, outputs to target values for results.

**Step 5:** Check the key factors to be considered in the setting of targets.

**Step 6:** Summarise the assessment.

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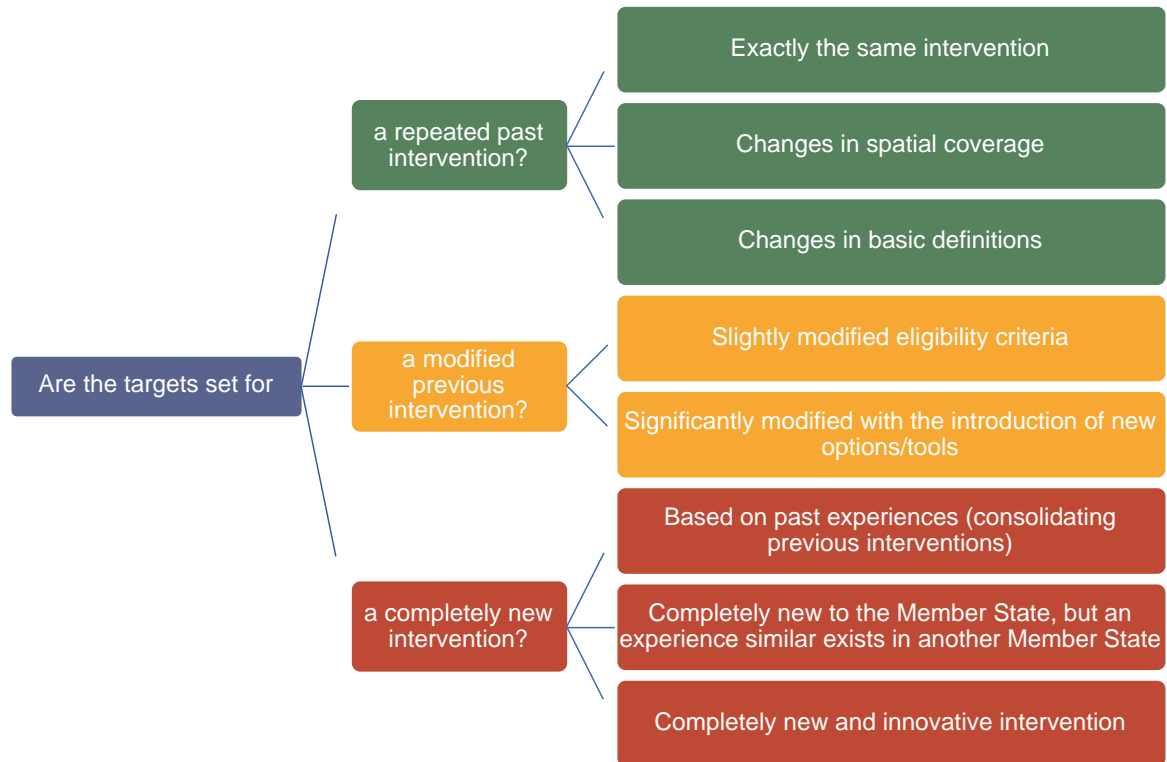
<sup>6</sup> Article 99(c) of the SPR proposal.

## Step 1: Identify the types of interventions linked to relevant result indicators for which targets are set

For each target, it is useful to identify whether the concerned interventions<sup>7</sup> are:

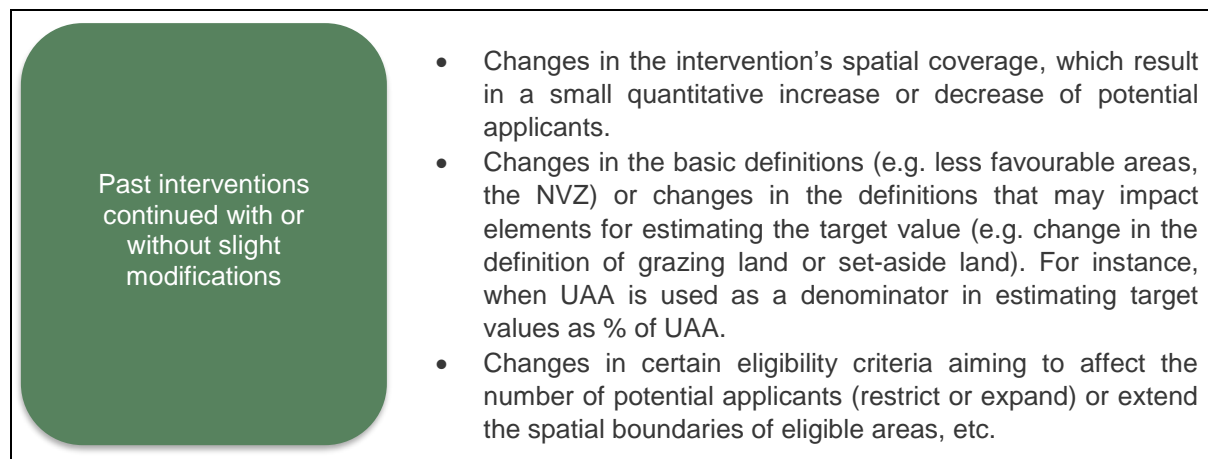
- previously applied interventions that are repeated in the CAP Strategic Plan;
- past interventions that are modified for inclusion in the CAP Strategic Plan;
- completely new interventions in the CAP Strategic Plan.

Figure 2. Types of interventions per target (example)



The appraisal of targets is based on a number of critical factors (see Step 4) and will depend on whether the targets are set for a past intervention (i.e. an intervention that is repeated or modified from previous programmes) or a new intervention. The following figure depicts how a past, modified or new intervention can be distinguished.

Figure 3. Non-exhaustive examples of distinguishing interventions



<sup>7</sup> Taking into account enhanced conditionality requirements.

<p>Significantly modified previous interventions or new interventions that are related to previous ones but cannot be considered as a continuation of past interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significantly modified previous interventions as a result of changes in the eligibility criteria or changes in the evaluation of applications that signal a change in the policy's focus. For example, past interventions may be significantly modified by assigning more weight to applicant farms located within Natura 2000 areas or specific watersheds.</li> <li>Other significant modifications may come from new interventions which, in essence, are based on previous interventions. These new interventions may consolidate a set of measures under one new intervention or may introduce additional measures, new monitoring and control processes and commitments, etc. These changes may address new segments of potential applicants or may affect the behaviour of previous applicants and their willingness to adopt the new intervention.</li> </ul>
<p>New interventions that have not been applied to the Member State before</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completely new interventions introduced, i.e. adopted and applied for the first time in the Member State, for instance, risk prevention due to forest fires that were not an issue in the past, or any kind of intervention for which no previous experience exists in the Member State.</li> </ul>

## Step 2: Assess the link between targets and interventions

The link between targets and types of interventions concerned can be visualised with the help of the following table. The source of the information will be sections 5a and 5b of the CAP Strategic Plan.

Table 1. Links between targets and types of interventions/interventions and conditionality (example)

Target value	Intervention A	Intervention B	.....	Intervention Z	Conditionality
RI 1: ....	X				
RI 2: ....				X	
RI 3: ....		X		X	
RI 4: ...		X			X
.....					
RI 38: ....	X				

This table can help one to map the interventions/types of interventions that contribute to the target value of each result indicator and assess:

- whether each intervention is clearly linked to one or more result indicators;
- whether targets set for each relevant result indicator are based upon the designed interventions linked to this result indicator and take into account enhanced conditionality requirements.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criteria c, d and h in Tool 3.1.

### Step 3: Assess the relevance of targets in relation to the identified needs

Before embarking on the assessment of whether the target values are realistic, a **relevance check** helps one to identify if the targets are justified in view of the assessment of needs.<sup>9</sup>

This relevance check can be realised with the help of an analytical table like the one following.

Table 2. Link between targets and identified needs

Target value	Needs	Assumptions/justifications used
RI 1: ...	Need 1 Need 12 Need 15	.....
RI 2: ...		
RI 3: ...		
.....		
RI 38: ...		

### Step 4: Assess the causal relationship from inputs and outputs to target values for results

A **consistency check** can help one to assess whether the target values of result indicators are clearly linked to the outputs and inputs and whether the link is clearly explained and complete.<sup>10</sup>

Table 3. Links between inputs, outputs and target values for results

Target value	Links to expected outputs (for the interventions and conditionality concerned with the result indicator)	Links to planned financial inputs (for the interventions concerned with the result indicator)	Assumptions/ justifications used
RI 1: ...	OI 1 OI 3 ...	.....	....
RI 2: ...			
RI 3: ...			
.....			
RI 38: ...			

<sup>9</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion i in Tool 3.1.

<sup>10</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion b in Tool 3.1.

## Step 5: Check the key factors to be considered in the setting of targets

The factors to be considered will include different elements which will allow for the appraisal of whether the target values for each result indicator are **realistic**. Table 4 shows the potential critical factors<sup>11</sup> that should be considered in the setting of targets.

The checklist provided in Table 4 can further serve this end and can be adapted or specified further as needed and depending on the intervention (repeated, modified or new). The changes in the legal base (e.g. grouping GAEC and greening under conditionality or the introduction of ecoschemes) should be taken into account.

**Table 4. Indicative checklist with examples of factors to be considered when setting targets**

Information/key factors to be considered	Taken into account (Yes/No/NA) <sup>12</sup>	Comments
<b>Financial allocation</b> <sup>13</sup>		
The financial allocation to the intervention can generate the expected results, i.e. the financial resources are sufficient to achieve the target:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has the form of support (e.g. unit cost, lump sum) been adapted according to modifications?</li> <li>- Are there studies for estimating the forms of support of the intervention (for new interventions)?</li> <li>- Are the forms of support (e.g. unit costs, lump sums) realistic for the target?</li> <li>- Are the forms of support (e.g. unit costs, lump sums) and target in agreement with the proposed allocation of financial resources?</li> <li>- Can the estimated total cost of the intervention achieve the desired target?</li> </ul>		
<b>Past experiences/lessons learned</b> <sup>14</sup>		
Lessons learned for setting targets and milestones		
Availability of evaluation reports from other Member States (where they exist in English) and EU level evaluations, including lessons learned from the application of the intervention (especially for new interventions)		
Cooperation with the Managing Authorities of other Member States for exchanging experiences beyond evaluation reports		
Small scale pilot or benchmark studies in other Member States to learn from their experiences		
<b>The financial capacity and experience of beneficiaries</b> <sup>15</sup>		
The existence of additional private resources (e.g. own contribution, attendance of specialised laboratories) in case the intervention needs them		
The availability of additional private resources to applicants at a reasonable cost. For example, if private contributions are needed, is private capital available to constrained farms and is it available at a reasonable cost (interest rate)?		
The experience of beneficiaries in implementing similar interventions in the past		
The existence of additional human capital resources and skills from the applicants. For example, an innovative intervention may require computer and IT skills or dedicated agricultural machinery beyond those possessed by the average farm enterprise		

<sup>11</sup> See also Guiding Questions 2.5 in Tool 3.1.

<sup>12</sup> The column (Yes/No/NA) can be modified without necessarily requiring a 'Yes' answer to all information elements.

<sup>13</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion h(i) in Tool 3.1.

<sup>14</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion h(ii) in Tool 3.1.

<sup>15</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion h(iii) in Tool 3.1.



Information/key factors to be considered	Taken into account (Yes/No/NA) <sup>12</sup>	Comments
(especially for new interventions, e.g. in the areas of precision agriculture or integrated pest management)		
<b>Estimation of targets<sup>16</sup></b>		
Existence of a procedure for estimating the target that takes into account any changes in existing interventions like the number of additional or fewer units (e.g. through a proportional adaptation, expansion/contraction of past figures)		
Existence of a list of factors related to the new or significantly modified interventions, which are likely to affect the target		
For significantly modified past interventions or for new interventions, are the impacts of the changes on the targets quantified? For example, is there a rough assessment of the effects of these factors (e.g. positive or negative) at a scale 'low', 'medium' or 'high'?		
Existence of reliable data sources for the estimation of targets		
Information from research papers, studies (or surveys) for forecasting the adoption of a new intervention and for estimating the targets		
<b>Administrative issues</b>		
The administrative capacity (including IACS management, monitoring and control) to handle any modifications in existing interventions or any new interventions		
The administrative issues that may cause delays (e.g. creation of specific LPIS layers, issuing of application guidelines) or create obstacles (e.g. need for new legislation) and can have an impact on foreseen targets and milestones		
Dependencies created due to other government bodies or agencies (e.g. delays in updating or issuing Natura 2000 or River Basin management plans)		
<b>Specific issues related to climate change, natural resources and environment<sup>17</sup></b>		
<p>The target demonstrates ambitious environmental and climate change results by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing the number of potential applicants and eligible areas. For example, due to extended spatial coverage or changes in definitions (for past interventions)</li> <li>- changes and modifications through more stringent environmental requirements (for modified previous interventions)</li> <li>- addressing a completely new area of environmental protection/conservation, energy production and/or use of emissions controls. Or introducing an intervention addressing a 'known' issue with a completely innovative procedure (for new interventions)</li> </ul>		
The target demonstrates support to long-term national commitments for environmental and climate change policies (e.g. EU water policy, biodiversity action plan, emissions policy, ecosystem services)		
















<sup>16</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion h(iv) in Tool 3.1.

<sup>17</sup> See also Guiding Question 2.5, Criterion j in Tool 3.1.

## Step 6: Summarise the assessment

An assessment table, like the one below can be used to summarise the answers from the checklist for all targets.

Table 5. Examples of the summary of the assessment of targets

Targets	Lesson learned taken into account	Comparison of forms of support	Estimation of targets	Administrative capacity	Demonstration of ambition	...	Comments
Target 1							<p>No explanation provided for the forms of support (e.g. unit costs, flat rate, lump sum) used to calculate the financial allocation to interventions diverted from similar previous forms of support.</p> <p>Targets are arbitrarily estimated. Changes in support may increase the number of applicants and cause administrative delays.</p>
Target 2							<p>Reasons for failing to achieve targets in the previous period have not been analysed or have not been taken into account.</p> <p>New targets much lower than realised old ones without explanation.</p>
Target 3							<p>No explanation provided for the forms of support (e.g. unit costs, flat rate, lump sum) used to calculate the financial allocation to interventions diverted from similar previous forms of support.</p> <p>Absence of a procedure/rationale for estimating new targets.</p> <p>New targets much lower than realised previous ones without explanation.</p>
...							
...							



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