

# Tool

## RAPID RESULT

### Area of Application

**Capacity Building and leadership tool.** Small-scale experiments get quick results, generate learning insights and feedback about what it takes to achieve broader results. They are increasing confidence and unleashing implementation capacity.

### Objective

The **Rapid-Results Approach** is a structured process to help leadership groups mobilize teams to engage in this way—achieving results and learning as they go—in **successive waves of 100-day Rapid-Results Initiatives (RRIs)**. Each RRI aims to achieve a meaningful and challenging result. And each wave of RRIs is designed to generate new insights about longer-term goals, strategies, plans, and policies. The focus is on real benefit. The challenge is to produce results and not to try a process or theory and see if it works.

## 1 Context

Despite significant successes, many of the projects and programs undertaken over the last decades by international development institutions have not brought the hoped-for results. There is general agreement in the development community that the gap between aspirations and the ability to implement thwarts the most well-conceived efforts, partly due to the capacity gap. The Rapid Result Tool is an approach to project design and implementation that helps organizations bridge the capacity gap. It helps to learn how to take effective collective action by the design and launch of small-scale, results-producing, and momentum-building initiatives that can later be knit together into a larger scale strategy.

## 2 Description of the tool

This approach suggests an organic and adaptive path for driving change. The elements that characterize this approach:

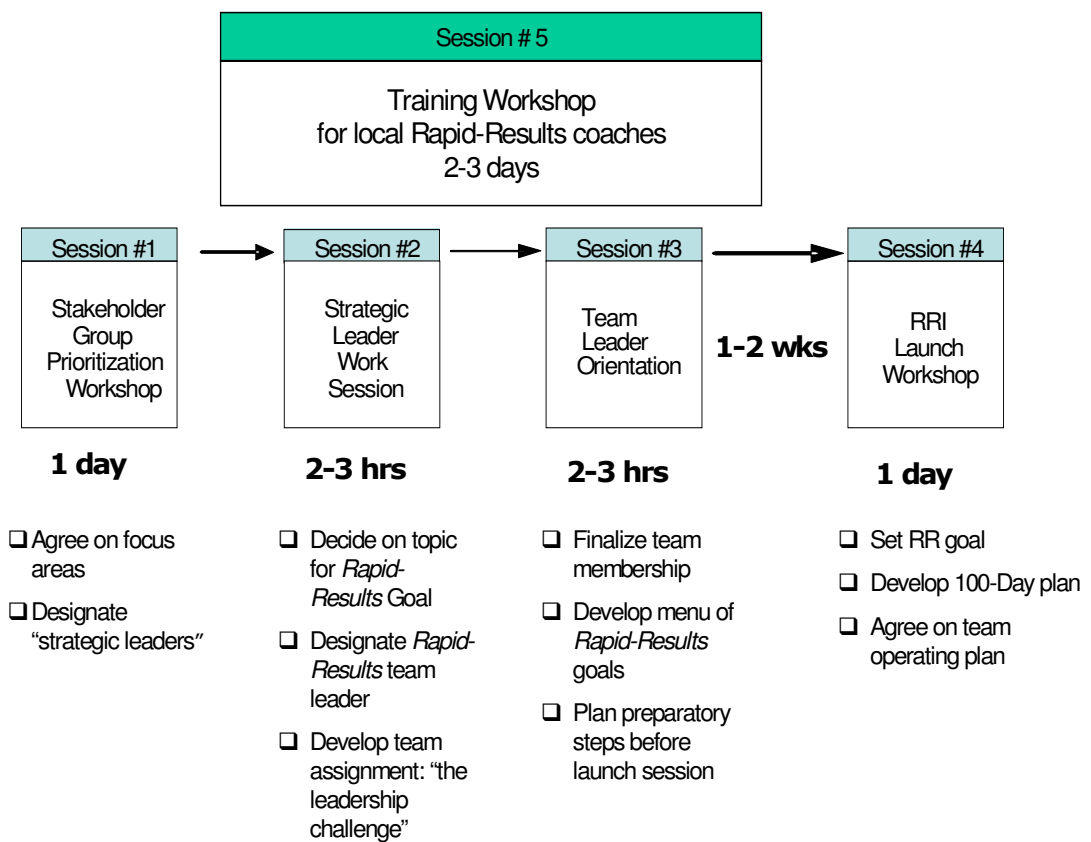
- Quickly move from an overall policy view of the comprehensive changes that may need to be made in favor of small-scale experiments designed to get results quickly and generate learning;
- Create an evolving portfolio of short-term results-producing initiatives linked with longer-term, more traditional activity-oriented projects. They are shaped and refined on the basis of what has been learned from the initial short-term work. Training, regulatory reform and infrastructure development are certainly necessary in most development efforts, but they are more likely to get the desired outcomes after short-term initiatives create the context for these activities.

- Get as many people as possible working on urgent results-producing initiatives to give people at all level the experience of success and to jump-start the virtuous circle of positive expectations.

Key elements for the realization of the approach are as follows:

1. Work with leadership teams to shape a strategy for applying the approach, and context to get Rapid-Result teams underway

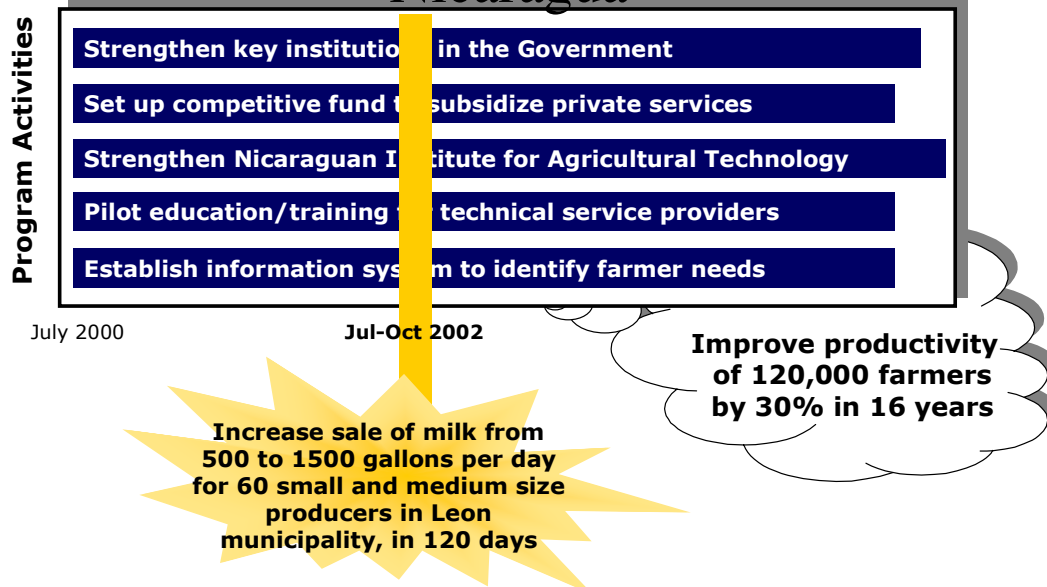
The step in detail :



2. During the process provide methodological and facilitation support to Rapid-Results teams and team leaders
3. During the process work with leadership teams to develop and drive scale-up strategies, beyond the 100 days
4. Accompany internal resources (HR, OD) to build their capacity to support and institutionalize the approach

Example of Nicaragua:

## Agricultural Technology Project in Nicaragua



# Nicaragua: Initial Wave of RRI's

Increase grade A milk production from 600 to 1600 gallons per day for 60 small and medium size producers in Leon, in 120 days

Ensure that by October 15, 2002, 80% of the enhanced seed is available in distribution warehouses and coupons are in the hands of targeted beneficiaries

Increase pig weight in 30 farms by 30 % in 100 days, using enhanced corn seed, plus increased chicken productivity by 20%

By Oct 30, incorporate Marango as an alternative for pig feeding in 15 farms in Pacific Area – and establish 5 purchase agreements for the pigs

Within 100 days, ensure that 150 small and medium size producers in the El Sauce region have commitments to contract for technical services, with 5-15% co-financing

## Nicaragua: 100-Day Results

### In three RRI's, the 100-day goals were achieved:

- ❑ *Clean milking:*
  - ✓ Tripled grade A production (600 gal/day → 1600 gal/day)
  - ✓ Parmalat agreed to buy additional milk
  - ✓ New procedures adopted, including using Centrifuge to check quality
- ❑ *Region Seca:*
  - ✓ 180 contracts signed, with quality checks
  - ✓ Exceeded targets for co-financing
  - ✓ Exceeded goal for women-producers involved
- ❑ *Seed Exchange:* 73% of seeds available in outlets on targeted date

### In two RRI's, the goals were not achieved, but momentum was generated; e.g.

- ✓ 30,000 acres of QPM will be planted next year

# Beyond the First 100-Days

## New wave of Rapid-Results Initiatives agreed on:

- ❑ Re-introducing sweet potatoes (Komote) in selected parts of country
- ❑ Mini-vegetables “planting to commercialization” cycle
- ❑ Network of farmer to farmer education program in El-Sauce Region
- ❑ Rapid-cycle policy paper development

## Two initial RRI’s targeted for managed scale-up effort:

- ❑ *Clean Milking:*
  - ✓ Launch multiple 100-day teams in various areas, each led by INTA extension agent
- ❑ *Region Seca:*
  - ✓ From contracts to service delivery
  - ✓ Extend initial 100-day goal to neighboring municipalities

The process started at the end of April. Five RRI’s were shaped in a workshop in July. All indications suggested that the RRI-teams will achieve their goals...

*The pigs are getting fatter  
The chicken are laying more eggs  
Cleaner milk is being produced  
Enhanced seed for the third planting season is in the warehouses and ready for distribution to farmers  
Meaningful, demand-driven contracts for agricultural services are being signed between farmers and service providers*

The Broader Impact can be described as follows:

- *There is a feeling of empowerment and enthusiasm within all individuals involved in the effort*
- *There is dialogue and collaboration among participating institutions*
- *Key players are stepping up to new leadership roles*
- *Team members are building basic management disciplines and skills with help and support from local capacity coaches*

It can be stated that the approach as a leadership tool can unleash implementation capacity and translate intent into action and results. The short-term and result-oriented approach contributes to overcome inertia and resistance to change. Implementation strategies can be refined and of course the short-term period reduces risks which are inherent in long-term strategies. The most important success factor of the approach is the “**Human Desire to Succeed**”, the real empowerment and accountability.

### **3 Use of the tool**

This approach has been developed by RHS&A (Robert H.Schaffer & Associates) an american consultancy to help corporations tackle a multitude of business challenges. The approach has been adapted to a variety of settings, including helping governments and organisations in developing countries address the complex challenges they face. The use of rapid-cycle projects can, in a short time, develop the capacity and multiply your power to make large-scale changes succeed.

### **4 Source**

Why good projects Fail Anyway, Nadim F. Matta and Ronald N. Ashkenas, Harvard Business Review, September 2003

Bridging the Capacity Gap, Nadim F. Matta, Ron Ashkenas and Francois Rischard, Leader to Leader, Number 23, Winter 2002

Nadim F. Matta (member of RHS&A) presentation of the Rapid Results Approach in gtz