Dear _____

My name is Gideon M Jonathan, final year MSc student at Stockholm University, Department of computer and systems sciences.

I am now working on my thesis which concludes my 2 years degree programme in computer and systems sciences. The research's objective is to create an artefact that can be used to do a project follow-up. One of the requirement of the thesis is that it should at least have one empirical research strategy. Due to time limitation and access to projects and stakeholders, I couldn't employ any other empirical strategy than expert evaluation of the final artefact. That's why I am approaching you to kindly ask you evaluate of my artefact.

Literatures in RBM in particular and project management in general have been used to derive new definition for the notion of **project follow-up**. The requirements and design of the method was all inspired by literature review. Demonstration of the artefact and evaluation of functional requirements were done through informed arguments. Experts are required mainly to evaluate the **practical relevance and rigour** of the artefact. Please see further criteria for evaluation on pages 37 and 38. The artefact to be evaluated appears at page 31. Demonstration of the method is presented with the help of fictitious case between pages 34 and 37.

I have attached brief summary of the thesis on the next page. Please also find the whole thesis in a pdf format should you be interested. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

I hope you would have the time to do this evaluation and I thank you in advance.

Best regards

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Introduction

The RBM framework presents a strategy where a life cycle starts with elements of project planning where goals and outcomes are designed (UNDG, 2010, p. 7). This is the stage where risk analysis of factors affecting the outcome of a project are made and goals are drawn. These factors (also referred as contextual factors) are ‘‘macro-environmental conditions’’ that can either contribute positively or negatively to the successful completion of a project (iMENTORS, 2013b, p. 12). The literature explored for this study indicate that both RBM and traditional project management are in agreement with the first activities of project lifecycle- planning. However, most of the debate revolve around introduction of efficient tools and methods to evaluate critical success factors for the short- and long term success of projects (Munns and Bjeirmi, 1996). There are methods that are currently being used to make risk analysis and define assumptions (e.g. iMENTORS, 2013a; Heeks, 2003).

However, none of the available methods can efficiently be used to make assessments between the different stages of development projects. Lack of such a method to capture the discrepancy between initial risk analysis and assumption, and outcome of projects at different stage of its life cycle needs to be addressed. The result of such a method can be used for many purposes. These include planning of corrective measures, knowledge base from past experience and as indicators for donors and other stakeholders. As more and more organisations adopt RBM framework, the importance of this method is timely. According to Hatton and Schroeder (2007), RBM has become a favoured project management strategy of agencies such as CIDA, DFID, USAID, EuropeAid, SIDA, AusAID, and DANIDA along with multilateral organisations including the World Bank and most of UN agencies.

So what is project follow-up?

For the purpose of this research, project follow-up is defined as a project management method that continuously measures and evaluates the gap between project design and actual results at different stages of a project lifecycle. Project design, in this context, entails the activities of identifying, analysing and quantifying different factors that may positively or negatively affect output in a project lifecycle and setting targets (i.e. outputs, outcomes and impact). Project follow-up is a continuous process that may be executed several times in the course of a project. Follow-up of completed projects may also be carried out by making analysis of the gap between the design and impact (short or long term) of a project after termination.

Methods

Using the design science methodology, the previous two chapters has shown how project follow-up could be performed using the artefact created. With the help of both theoretical and informed arguments, the artefact requirements and outline were shown to be in congruence with the main research question and objective of the research. Life cycle approach of projects is maintained throughout the development process. The demonstration of the artefact with fictitious case has also illustrated how the method can be used to perform project follow-up at different points in a project lifecycle. The modularity of the method can also serve evaluators to do follow-ups at any point and time of the project, even after the termination of the project- a feature that is lacking from many of similar artefacts.

The artefact created was evaluated with informed argument to make sure if it fulfils the high level (functional) requirements and some of the internal and external requirements. It is however, worth mentioning that some of the requirement could not be evaluated simply because these properties could not be evaluated objectively before the artefact is put in test (see section 4.5). However, for the purpose of practical relevance and rigour of the method, empirical evaluation was performed by qualified experts.

The artefact

Step	Activity	Evaluation
1	Choose a corresponding sector	
2	Select goal (impact)	
3	List indicators	
4	Select and evaluate indicators	Change in (goal) impact
5	choose outcomes	
6	List indicators	
7	Select and evaluate indicators	Change in outcome
8	choose outputs	
9	List indicators	
10	Select and evaluate indicators	Change in output
11	Choose inputs	
12	List indicators	
13	Evaluate indicators	Change in inputs

Evaluating criteria for experts

- *Comprehensibility* - the ease with which an artefact can be understood or comprehended by a user
- *Learnability* - the ease with which a user can learn to use an artefact.
- *Usability* - the ease with which a user can use an artefact to achieve a particular goal.
- *Customisability* - the degree to which an artefact can be adapted to the specific needs of a local practice or user.
- *Suitability* - the degree to which an artefact is tailored to a specific practice, focusing only on its essential aspects (also called inherence or precision).
- *Accessibility* - the degree to which an artefact is accessible by as many users as possible.
- *Traceability* (only for methods) - the ability to verify the history of using a method by means of documentation.
- *Maintainability* - the ease with which an artefact can be maintained in order to correct defects, meet new requirements, make future maintenance easier, or cope with a changed environment.
- *Flexibility* - the ease with which an artefact can be adapted when external changes occur (similar to maintainability; related notions are configurability, evolvability and extensibility).
- *Accountability* - the ease with which an actor can be made accountable for the workings of an artefact (a similar notion is auditability).
- *Generality* - the degree to which an artefact is relevant not only for a local, but also for a global practice.
- *Effectiveness* - the degree to which an artefact is able to achieve its goals (a special case is completeness).
- *Efficiency* - the degree to which an artefact is effective without wasting time, effort or expense.