

# BIRP - BATTERY OF INDICATORS OF PERSONAL RESULTS



Coimbra, May 2023

---

## PRESENTATION

---

### The need

For a dozen years, FORMEM - the Portuguese Federation for Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities - has been promoting a wide-ranging discussion on the indicators that can best reflect the impact of the activity and intervention of organizations that support people with disabilities. In the years leading up to the pandemic, the *benchmarking* groups were very active, providing a great deal of support for the organizations that continued along the path of quality certification, namely by following the EQUASS 2018 Standard.

This resulted in a significant number of documents:

1. *Compilation of Results Indicators - Annexes K | Equass Excellence in Portugal*, published in 2015;
2. *Cadernos FORMEM n°6 | Base de Benchmarking*, published in 2015;
3. *Reprint of the Compilation of Results Indicators - Annexes K | Equass Excellence in Portugal*, published in 2016;
4. *Benchmarking of Social Sector Entities (2013/2014/2015)*, published in 2016;
5. *Benchmarking in the Social Sector: A Road Traveled and Knowledge Shared*, published in 2018;
6. *Benchmarking of Social Sector Entities (2018/2019/2020)*, published in 2021.

A glance at the above-mentioned publications shows us the effort that has been made to find sets of indicators that are more meaningful to organizations that support people with disabilities. This evolution was only possible due to a continuous dynamic, which began in 2012, of sharing and openness among peers, namely by holding *Benchmarking Meetings and Quality Meetings* involving dozens of organizations, and by creating a team of auditors among FORMEM members, with the aim of carrying out reciprocal internal audits.

One of the conclusions of this decade-long debate, along with EQUASS' greater concern with measuring personal results, was that we had too many organizational performance indicators, also known as effort indicators. We did indeed have *inputs* and *outputs*, but we lacked *outcomes* - indicators of personal results. In 2020, and despite the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic, an *online* discussion was launched on the issue of identifying and measuring these *outcomes* /

personal results of people participating in vocational training and employment support programs.

As a federative body representing the sector, FORMEM needs data that characterizes the different nature of Vocational Training and Employment activities in Portugal and assesses their impact on the quality of life of the people they support, so that it can conduct a fruitful and well-founded dialogue with public policy-making bodies, legislators and funders.

In this sense, the Battery of Personal Outcome Indicators (BIRP) that we have been building is based on a set of nine domains defined by Ireland's National Disability Authority (NDA), which in that country are a mandatory reference standard for all support services for people with disabilities.

Systematically, we say that our Vocational Training is not just aimed at *know-how*, but includes support in all areas of a person's life. Among other things, BIRP aims to evaluate the impact of our activity in all these areas, which often escape the traditional tools for evaluating and reporting on activities, but which constitute the distinctive nature of the intervention we carry out.

Although at the outset the BIRP was not necessarily intended to be an instrument with psychometric properties, the results of the test sample indicated very significant and interesting statistical properties, which we will try to flesh out and deepen in a second and subsequent collection.

## The process of building BIRP

In the first instance, several Members were invited to take part in a working group that discussed the applicability and relevance of the nine domains proposed by the NDA, and came to the conclusion that there was no point in trying to invent a *new wheel*, because the domains and subdomains analyzed were an excellent guide and starting point.

Secondly, we asked the organizations participating in *FORMEM's benchmarking groups* to suggest indicators that would objectively express the issues in each subdomain. This provided a pool of several hundred possible indicators - some similar to each other, others with slight differences, and many others that it turned out did not measure personal results. From this *pool of* indicators, a group of seven experts met to make a selection, applying *focus-group* discussion methodology and Content Validity Index (CVI) analysis. 91 items survived this intentional purification process, in which there was a variation per item of between 0.57 and 1, which led to their being re-analyzed and reduced to 84

items. With regard to the full scale, a CVI of 0.92 was obtained - a very consistent result.

Also at this stage, and bearing in mind that EQUASS 2018 is the quality assessment standard most used by FORMEM members, there was a concern to establish a correspondence between each indicator produced and at least one of the standard's principles. This work was the subject of a paper presented at the *XI Jornadas Científicas Internacionales de Investigación sobre Personas Com Discapacidad - Calidad de Vida y Apoios - El Poder de la Evidência*, organized by INICO at the University of Salamanca in March 2022.

Once the indicators and domains had been validated, the BIRP was built. It is fed by two main questionnaires, part of which are collected through a self-report, to be filled in by the person being supported (or, if necessary, in an individual interview with the reference professional), and the others through a form, to be answered by the team that supports and knows the people. As they assess different indicators, these questionnaires are complementary and it is therefore essential to complete both.

The experimental application of the first version of the Battery of Personal Outcome Indicators was carried out between June and July 2022. Members and partner organizations of the Benchmarking groups were asked to apply the questionnaires to their teams, to the people supported in Vocational Training and in the Resource Centers for Qualification and Employment (CRQE). In order to find out about the *inputs* and *outputs* of these organizations, we also asked them to fill in a form about their activities. We received responses from 17 organizations, which provided a total sample of 760 people supported, combining the two types of services - a very sizable number, which allowed us to draw an interesting first picture.

With the raw data from the first collection, an analysis of internal consistency / precision (Cronbach's Alpha) was carried out, as well as an exploratory factorial analysis, from which it was possible to discern which indicators had the greatest and least statistical relevance. Based on these results, the formulation of 12 indicators with less relevance was revised - as a rule, when indicators have low statistical properties, this means that they are unclear, or that they are being interpreted in different ways by the people who respond to them.

Also with a view to improving the study of the psychometric properties of the BIRP, two sociodemographic characterization forms were added, in order to provide a portrait of the supported population, but also of the professionals who provide support and accompaniment.

The way in which data is collected has also changed: the results summation forms have been replaced by three Excel documents: Activity Data, CRQE Questionnaires, and Vocational Training Questionnaires.

Having come this far, the BIRP - Battery of Personal Outcome Indicators is still an instrument under construction, and FORMEM invites participants in the data collection to share their impressions and suggestions.

## The Instrument

BIRP is made up of the following parts:

### **Battery of Personal Results Indicators**

The indicators seek to measure the benefits of support for people. In addition to the indicators, the battery contains:

- Indication of the domain and its subdomains, according to the *National Disability Authority of Ireland*;
- Alphanumeric code to identify the indicator;
- Metrics;
- Method of collection;
- Form of monitoring;
- Scope;
- Possible link to the EQUASS principles.

### **Form A1: Sociodemographic Characterization of People with Disabilities**

Questionnaire that collects complementary elements for a sociodemographic characterization and analysis of the population we support.

### **Form A2: Sociodemographic Characterization of Support Technicians**

Questionnaire asking for complementary elements for a sociodemographic characterization and analysis of the professionals who provide support to people with disabilities.

### **Form B: Activity Data: Organizational Inputs and Outputs**

It asks for elements of the activity and means involved, which are typically already collected systematically by organizations.

### **Form C: Questionnaire on Satisfaction and Evaluation of Vocational Training (VT) Services**

To be answered by each trainee. The answers are compiled in *Excel* by the technical teams of each organization.

### **Form D: Questionnaire on Satisfaction and Evaluation of the Services of Resource Centers for Qualification and Employment (CRQE)**

To be answered by each person supported. The answers are compiled in *Excel* by the technical teams of each organization.

**Form E: FP Indicator Registration and Evaluation Form**

To be completed by the Vocational Training Team using interviews or other means. The answers are compiled in Excel by the technical teams of each organization.

**Form F: CRQE Indicator Registration and Evaluation Form**

To be completed by the CRQE team using interviews or other means. The answers are compiled in Excel by the technical teams of each organization.

## Using the Battery of Personal Results Indicators (BIRP)

BIRP's outcome indicators seek to measure the impact of support services on the lives of this population, an indispensable process for improving the services provided and self-assessing the organizations' capacities. When the focus is on the impact generated in the various spheres of the lives of the people supported, the objectives of the intervention change: the results are no longer measured in terms of the quantity of activities undertaken and services provided, but in terms of the changes produced in quality of life, well-being, autonomy and integration.

In addition to being a useful tool for planning and monitoring individual support and for the internal management of organizations, BIRP has enormous potential for active *benchmarking* and *bench learning* between entities that provide the same type of support. Based on a set of common and broadly aligned indicators, the work of comparison, learning and improvement between peers is much easier.

Last but not least, obtaining tangible data on the activities carried out and their impacts is the key variable in the sustainability equation for social sector organizations. Being able to show society the results achieved in an objective and legible way is crucial if social sector organizations are to be seen as fundamental and necessary for providing effective and efficient responses to the community.

As in previous experiences, FORMEM undertakes to treat the data confidentially and only share the raw data with the organizations that contribute data to the BIRP, a logic of exclusive reciprocity that enables peer comparison. Processed, edited and anonymized data will be used for public exhibitions, namely annual "X-rays" of vocational training and employment of people with disabilities in Portugal.

Work carried out as part of the *Personal Results Indicators Battery* activity  
of the *Capacitar para Melhor Incluir* project co-funded by INR I.P.

