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## **Institutionalising Performance Management in R&D Organisations: Key Concepts and Aspects**

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**ABSTRACT** In an era in which accountability, cost effectiveness and impact orientation are at premium, Research and Technological Organisations are under pressure not only to improve their performance but also to be able to demonstrate this improvement. This pressure is particularly hard-felt by agricultural research organisations, where funders' perceptions of a lack of evidence for the uptake and impact of products and services are raising questions about their efficacy and existence. Such pressures can be traced back to several factors, including changes in management trends and the growing scarcity of donor funding in the face of proliferation of Non-Governmental Organisations. These pressures have focussed R&D Organisations attention on the need to develop monitoring and evaluation systems that are capable of ensuring and demonstrating improved performance. In recognising that the developmental impact of research is notoriously difficult to assess, the paper is predicated on the belief that indicators of organisational uptake can provide reliable proxies, or 'leading' indicators of development impact. The background to this paper is a DFID-funded pilot action research project that ran between September 2001 and December 2002. The project aimed to adapt and test a novel approach to performance management within three agricultural research and development agencies. The key concepts and aspects of this novel approach and similar work done are discussed.