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DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
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Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices

EVALUATION FOLLOW-UP TO THE PARIS DECLARATION

Briefing note for the WP-EFF

9TH MEETING, 8-9 MARCH 2007

This document is submitted by the DAC Evaluation Network for INFORMATION at the Working Party meeting on 8-9 March. It will be supplemented by an oral briefing on the outcome of the Reference Group first meeting to be held on 5-6 March 2007.

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1. Introduction

1. Alongside its strong focus on monitoring, the Paris Declaration also highlights the importance of exploring an independent cross-country evaluation process. The Declaration states that the evaluation process should provide a more comprehensive understanding of how increased aid effectiveness contributes to meeting development objectives and that it should be applied without imposing additional burdens on partners.

2. Further to the discussions at the third and fourth meetings of the DAC Evaluation Network, consultations on how to deliver this work have been taken forward with the Joint Venture on Monitoring the Paris Declaration, the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) and with partner countries. At the eighth meeting of the WP-EFF (5-7 July 2006) the Evaluation Network Vice-Chair (Finbar O'Brien) presented options for the evaluation follow-up to the Paris Declaration and invited partner countries to join a task team to co-ordinate the independent evaluation process. WP-EFF members strongly supported the initiative highlighting that the proposed approach would strengthen harmonised approaches to evaluation and would prioritise country-led evaluations building on existing in-country processes. It was noted that donors would also need to volunteer for evaluations. WP-EFF members agreed that the Evaluation Network should move forward with the evaluation process and with a view to preparing an initial report by the 2008 HLF. They recommended to aim for a lighter evaluation compared to the evaluation of general budget support and to also look at longer term issues beyond the HLF-3 in Ghana.

3. Within the Evaluation Network, Denmark has offered to lead and co-chair the process and Niels Dabelstein has represented the Network at the 2006 Regional Workshops on Aid Effectiveness in Africa and Asia to consult further with partner countries. The (then) Network Chair, Eva Lithman, represented at the Regional Workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean. At the regional workshops and at the WP-EFF partner country caucus, a wide range of partner countries reiterated their support for the proposed joint evaluation process and stressed its value added. A number of partner countries have indicated initial interest in joining or participating in the evaluation process.

2. Value Added of an Evaluation Process

4. The value added of an aid effectiveness evaluation process will include:

- Complementary to monitoring, by looking beyond the 12 indicators and considering the Paris Declaration commitments particularly relevant to the country context. Monitoring will identify what progress has happened, evaluation will answer questions about how it happened and why or why not.
- An evaluation will provide an opportunity for in-depth analysis of both partner and donor behaviour.
- An evaluation is a tool for practical lesson learning.
- An evaluation can provide a cross-country / cross-donor perspective.
- An evaluation will analyse underlying assumptions and review selected issues in depth.
- An evaluation can take a long-term perspective and look at the effects of increased aid effectiveness.

3. Purpose and Timing of an Evaluation Process

5. An evaluation will only be able to provide information about the end impacts and effects of increased aid effectiveness once donors and partners have worked to implement the commitments for some time and once sufficient monitoring data is available to feed into the evaluation process. However, it is important to start the evaluation process in 2007-08 in order to be able to highlight practical lessons learned on implementation and to contribute to ongoing aid effectiveness policy debates and to the 2008 HLF on Aid Effectiveness in Ghana. More *summative* evaluations could follow after 2008. The initial lesson learning evaluations would focus on issues such as: What have we learned so far from experiences in different country contexts? Under what conditions and why are benefits being realised or not realised? The focus should be on the twin questions are we doing things right and are we doing the right things.

6. The Evaluation Network commissioned an options paper in 2006 to review the feasibility of taking forward an evaluation process. All members of the Evaluation Network, of the Joint Venture on Monitoring the Paris Declaration (including its partner country members) and a number of representatives of civil society and of the WP-EFF were invited to input. The paper (www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork), which is also outlined in DCD/DAC/EFF(2006)13, presents a tentative approach for an evaluation process comprising four elements. The 4th and 5th EVALUNET meetings in 2006 and the WP-EFF meeting on 5-6 July 2006 supported the proposed overall approach:

1. ***The development of a common evaluation framework*** that would articulate the logic of the Paris commitments, including the implied linkages between aid effectiveness and development effectiveness. The framework should be developed through a collaborative process that identifies the specific evaluation questions and issues that are of interest to donors and partner countries.
2. A number of ***country-led country evaluations***. These should be undertaken in self-selected partner countries and designed within the common evaluation framework to ensure comparability of findings across countries while allowing flexibility for country specific interests. Each evaluation should be managed in-country, led by the government or by an independent body and supported by a management/reference group including interested donors.
3. A number of ***donor evaluations*** that would look at how the Paris Declaration is finding expression across a self-selected sample of donor organisations. Issues for evaluation could include relationships and links between headquarters and country offices and between bilaterals and multilaterals. Each evaluation should be led by the donor or by an independent body and supported by a management/reference group including interested partner countries.
4. ***A medium to long-term programme of analytical work*** which would draw together and analyse findings from the individual evaluation studies.

Work Plan (2007- 08)			
2007		2008	
January – March	Develop and agree evaluation framework	January – April.	Synthesis of component evaluations and other studies
March – April	Develop specific terms of reference for country and donor evaluations	July?	3 rd High Level Forum
March – April	Develop medium term programme of analytical work	August – September	Develop follow-up study programme 2008 - 2010
April – May	Contract evaluators	November -	Follow-up summative studies
May – October	Country and donor evaluations		

4. Managing the Evaluation

7. The *DAC Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations* should be a key reference document for managing the evaluation process. It is widely acknowledged that a Paris Declaration evaluation process should be decentralised, in the interests of efficiency, but with a sufficiently strong level of coordination to ensure that the evaluation delivers an effective “cross-country evaluation process” as stipulated in the Declaration.

Reference Group

8. The informal DAC Evaluation Network task team has been broadened to include partner countries (chiefly the members of the WP-EFF/JV-MPD) and reconstituted as a Reference Group. The Reference Group will endorse the evaluation framework and the medium to long-term programme of analytical work and comment as appropriate on draft component studies and on the synthesis report. Where possible, meetings would be organised back-to-back with meetings of the EVALUNET, WP-EFF or JV-MPD and seek to facilitate a close relationship with the evolving Medium Term Monitoring Plan. The Reference Group will have its first meeting 5-6 March 2007.

Management Group

9. A small management group comprising no more than 3 partner countries and 3 donors/multilaterals will be responsible, under the overall guidance of the Reference Group, for developing the draft evaluation framework, for coordinating and managing the joint evaluation process, for guiding the component studies, for developing the programme of analytical work and for the synthesis of findings and recommendations. The Reference Group will decide the composition of the Management Group. The Reference Group and Management Group will be supported by a small secretariat hosted and funded by Denmark.

Funding

10. The cost of developing of the evaluation framework, the medium to long term programme of analytical work, the synthesis report as well as meetings, workshops, reporting, dissemination etc. will be financed from a central pool or trust fund managed by Denmark. A very preliminary estimate suggests that the total cost 2006-2008 will not exceed USD 1,500,000. Some DAC members have already indicated willingness to contribute financing. The cost of country and donor evaluations should be borne by the donors and partner countries involved. Each country evaluation should cost no more than USD 200,000 and the donor studies no more than USD 150,000. The above estimates do not include the cost of possible follow up studies after July 2008.

Next Steps

11. As the reference group will only meet on 5 and 6 March 2007 a verbal briefing on the outcome of that meeting will be given to the WP-EFF