

Joint Evaluation of Implementing the Paris Declaration Guidance for Management of Country Level Evaluations

Country level evaluations should be undertaken in self-selected partner countries. Although it would be better for global learning to have a purposive sample of countries undertaking evaluation work, it seems too early for the major efforts that this would involve. The country level evaluations should focus on behavioural change among both partner authorities and development partners in the specific countries.

National Evaluation Coordinator

Each evaluation should be managed in-country, led by a National Evaluation Coordinator appointed by the government. The National Coordinator may wish to “team-up” with a development partner’s Evaluation Department to facilitate the evaluation and secure funding. Whether such an arrangement is made or not, the National Evaluation Coordinator should be supported by a *reference/advisory group* including relevant national stakeholders and development partners.

The National Evaluation Coordinator will be responsible for initiating, facilitating, contracting and managing the country level evaluation as well as for providing feedback to overall management and reference group. He/she will:

- Act as in-country focal point for contact to the Evaluation’s overall Management and Reference groups for the evaluation.
- Establish the in-country reference/advisory group comprising national stakeholders (including civil society) and development partners.
- Develop specific ToR for the country level evaluations (in consultation with in-country reference group and the overall Evaluation Management Group).
- Appoint and contract consultants for the country level evaluations (following consultations with in-country reference group).
- Sign off on country level evaluation report (i.e. approve after consultation with in-country reference group)
- Submit country level evaluation report to the overall Evaluation Management Group for use in preparing synthesis report and publishing.

In-country reference/advisory group

The reference/advisory group should include major stakeholders from government, donors, civil society and possibly academia. The purpose of this group is to ensure stakeholders’ buy-in to the evaluation process and results and to assure the independence of the evaluation. Ideally, the reference/advisory group should provide some standing capacity to follow up on the evaluation after completion.

Development of country-specific TOR

The common evaluation framework and Generic Terms of Reference provide a core set of questions that should be incorporated into all country-level evaluations; this would provide a basis for systematic cross-country analysis. Country level evaluation can go beyond the core questions to identify local evaluation questions of relevance to country specific processes. Thus major efforts should be made to adapt the common framework in ways that suit country-specific circumstances, so that local learning needs are met as fully as possible. Inspiration can be found in Annexes 1A-1E to the original Terms of Reference (You can access all documents about the

Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on the DAC Evaluation Network **restricted website** by clicking on: www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork and then click on **Members Site** in the lower right hand corner. login: **dacevaluation**, password: **evaluation**, then click on **Evaluation of the Paris Declaration**.

Based on the Model Terms of Reference country-specific TOR will be developed by the National Evaluation Coordinator. The country-specific TOR should be elaborated with due regard to information available from the baseline survey and other studies/evaluations completed or near completion.

Particular attention will be given to the identification of the sampling frame for the country level evaluation – both in terms of a focus on sectors and if relevant a focus on particular geographical intervention areas.

In regard to focus areas, it is suggested to select two sectors and one cross-cutting issue for in-depth studies. Ideally, the selected sectors should include social and productive sectors, and, the cross-cutting issue should address either human rights, gender, the environment or HIV/AIDS. Further, the selected areas should represent a spectrum of donor and partner behaviours. Alternatively a country can choose to focus on a specific kind of assistance, such as humanitarian assistance offered to the Tsunami victims.

In order to balance the strong capital-bias of the aid effectiveness dialogue in partner countries, it is recommended to include field reviews in the evaluation focusing in particular on two key PD aspects: how ownership and managing of results work at lower levels of government.

Financing Country level evaluations

Each country level evaluation should cost no more than USD 185,000.

The respective governments and donors using local funding mechanisms should finance the evaluations. Each partner country should team up with a few donors to secure funding and technical support.

They may also be financed by contributions from development partners' Evaluation Departments. Several development partners have indicated interest in doing so. In such cases the partner and donor need to work out the modalities. The Management Group/Secretariat may assist in establishing contacts and coordinate.

Finally, if the above two options do not work out, the Management Group may decide to provide funding from the central pool.

Selection of independent evaluation teams

The success of an evaluation depends on the composition of the evaluation team and the competence and personal abilities of the team members. This applies in particular to the team leader who should be the one concerned with the overall perspective, able to organise and co-ordinate the work of the team members, assess the quality and relevance of their contributions and act as a spokesperson for the team.

Members of the evaluation team should represent relevant professional areas, reflect gender balance and should include country and regional/international professional expertise.

To safeguard impartiality, members of the evaluation team should not have been personally involved in the activities to be evaluated; as well, companies/organisations conducting evaluations should not have been involved in the preparation or implementation of those activities. In the case of the Paris Declaration this may be a difficult requirement to meet for national experts/companies. It is therefore recommended to combine national with regional or international experts.

Quality Control

The National Evaluation Coordinator is responsible for assuring that the evaluation is of acceptable quality. He/she may draw on the Management Group in this respect.

Relevant national, regional or international Evaluation Quality Standards (e.g. the DAC or UNEG Evaluation Quality Standards) should apply.