

Summary Update Briefing: Emerging Findings
Core Evaluation Team
2 December, 2010

1. Purpose

This summary briefing should be read in conjunction with the Draft Emerging Findings Report provided to all participants in advance of the Emerging Findings Workshop in Indonesia 7-10 December 2010. **It is not a replacement for the Report, but provides a short overview of the key material and a few central questions for discussion in Indonesia.**

The Draft Emerging Findings Report provides all Evaluation participants with a preliminary compilation and assessment of findings emerging in the Evaluation process up to the beginning of November, 2010.¹ The Report will provide a key base at the Indonesia Workshop for discussion, validation and elaboration of the key findings of individual country and agency reports and the combined results. In turn, the outcome of that Workshop will guide the preparation of the Evaluation Synthesis report once final evaluation and study reports from Phase 2 are received by 31 December, 2010.

As a reminder, the objectives of the Workshop are:

- To share and validate emerging findings in terms of answers to the 3 overarching evaluation questions and assess evidence
- To feed into the synthesis process
- To confirm collective ownership and commitment to the evaluation process and products
- To agree on and commit to the way forward to High Level Forum 4 in Busan, Korea.

2. Limitations

The Report sets out a number of limitations on its content and use. These include:

- **Coverage:** The report focuses almost exclusively on the two most important sources for the overall Evaluation: the available draft reports of country evaluations and donor/agency studies² carried out in Phase 2. The Report does not yet attempt to integrate the other sources for the Evaluation identified in Paragraph 3 of the Report, or to raise the analysis to the level required in the eventual synthesis report.
- **Status:** Not all reports have been received and many have not yet been cleared for quotation or citation. This means it has not been possible to refer directly to individual draft reports.
- **Timeliness:** Several reports received are still at an early drafting stage, and most have not yet finally determined their findings or conclusions, so that the focus must still remain on findings at this stage. Explaining progress or lack of progress, and drawing conclusions will come in final reports and in the synthesis process. .
- **Timeframe for review:** A high volume of material was received with a short turn-around time, which has meant that not all the key findings may have been captured or accurately categorized in this first review.

¹ Only a very few further inputs have been received and analysed by 26 November, so the report has not been revised. The broad update presentations in Bali will take them into account.

² The results of which will need to be further integrated into the main framework around the Evaluation Questions.

3. Use of the Emerging Findings Report in the Workshop

To facilitate discussion, the Core Team has provided “early indicative findings” on each key question based on the analysis to this point. These come with the strong caution that these findings are likely to undergo considerable change as draft reports are finalized and further evidence is analysed and validated. The Workshop is part of this validation process.

Therefore, teams are asked to review the Draft Emerging Findings Report with the following questions in mind, and to reflect these points in the presentations of their own draft reports:

1. Do the emerging findings presented in the Report correspond to those identified by your own country evaluation or donor/agency study?
2. Were there important additional findings, or striking differences from the overall analysis emerging?
3. By the end of the Workshop: Looking at the overall base of evidence now emerging from the country evaluations and donor/agency studies, what do Workshop participants consider to be the most important additional areas for the synthesis to address from supplementary sources in order to adequately capture the key themes / issues surrounding PD implementation?

4. Indicative Findings

Core Q1: The Paris Declaration in Context

“What are the factors that have shaped and limited Paris Declaration implementation and its potential effects on aid effectiveness and development results?”

Emerging findings:

The reports have re-confirmed the importance of several aspects of context in understanding and assessing the effects of the Paris Declaration in improving aid effectiveness and strengthening the contribution of aid to sustainable development results. The reports draw out the distinctive effects of key characteristics of the country/agency and its situation, relevant national and international events, the place of aid and aid affected by the Paris Declaration, among other development resources, and how the Declaration relates to the key actors involved and their priorities.

In providing this, the reports should contribute to a much better-grounded set of assumptions and expectations about aid effectiveness and linkages to development outcomes, both in individual cases, and at the aggregate level through the synthesis.

Core Q2: Process and Intermediate Outcomes

“Has the implementation of the Paris Declaration led to an improvement in the efficiency of aid delivery, the management and use of aid and better partnerships? How?”

Question	Early indicative findings: Direction, pace and distance of travel
i. <u>Stronger</u> national strategies and operational frameworks. (Mainly country initiative/ responsibility.)	Overall, the direction of travel toward this outcome is positive but the distance travelled varies by country and by the different elements involved. No major backsliding or loss of commitment is recorded since 2005, and some recuperation of lost ground.

<p>ii. <u>Increased</u> alignment of aid with partner countries' priorities, systems and procedures, help to strengthen capacities (Mainly donor/agency initiative/responsibility interacting especially with expected outcomes 2iii., x, 10b, and xi)</p>	<p>The evidence so far suggests that the direction of travel toward this outcome is positive in terms of the most basic goal, but the pace and distance travelled on its key supporting pillars varies by country and element. Finer-grained assessment by element/ by donor is yet to be carried out.</p>
<p>iii. <u>Defined</u> measures and standards of performance and accountability of partner country systems in public financial management, procurement, fiduciary standards and environmental assessments, in line with broadly accepted good practices and their quick and widespread application (Mainly country initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>The direction of travel is mostly positive for at least two thirds of the country evaluations with findings on this outcome, but the distance to travel appears greater than estimated in the Paris Declaration if it had been expected to see these conditions fully met by 2010. In addition to one country where it is claimed that this work is done, one third of the group each find considerable effort and progress, gradual and uneven progress, and little progress. In all these countries, there now appears to be significant internal commitment and momentum. Together with the record of effort and donor support, this would appear to suggest digging in for a longer journey, learning from success and setbacks, and finding sustained ways of working for further step-by-step improvements.</p>
<p>iv. <u>Less</u> duplication of efforts and rationalised, more cost-effective donor activities (Mainly donor/agency initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>Seen from the country level, while the overall direction appears right in these countries, the pace and distance travelled are far behind the implied expectations by this stage. Many experiments are underway, particularly at sectoral or thematic level, and joint funding arrangements may create a more conducive environment for reducing duplication. Untying is well-advanced for PD donors, but with specific concerns identified.</p>
<p>v. <u>Reformed</u> and <u>simplified</u> donor policies and procedures, more collaborative behaviour (Mainly donor/agency initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>Seen from the country level, significant, in some cases substantial, forward movement is found in 11 of the 17 country evaluations. While the drivers are varied, they mainly revolve around joint assistance frameworks of various kinds, different levels of programme-based approaches, and other types of multi-donor joint funding. There is evidence that these forward steps may be self-reinforcing, encouraging further collaboration. The Paris Declaration framework has been conducive to strengthening these processes. On the other hand, there is no evidence yet of reduced "transaction costs", and some evidence of persistent double burdens.</p>
<p>vi. <u>More</u> predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows to committed partner countries. [Has the nature of conditionalities been changed to support ownership in line with the AAA commitment?] (Mainly donor/agency initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>Across this group of countries, the direction, pace and distance of travel found are positive, if not spectacularly so. Half of the responding evaluations find improvement in aid predictability, some substantial. In the other evaluations, a mix of factors is found to impede progress, not all under the control of donors. Initiatives are spreading by countries to set up or strengthen their own tracking systems, and perhaps they will induce at least more complete and transparent reporting by donors, as they have in existing cases of such platforms. (See also 2x)</p>

<p>vii. <u>Sufficient</u> delegation of authority to donors' field staff, and adequate attention to incentives for effective partnerships between donors and partner countries (Mainly donor/agency initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>Progress in general is slow and very uneven, although a few donors/agencies have demonstrated the faster pace and greater distance that is possible. In general, only one third as many evaluations report progress on this front as those that find no progress. Twice as many as the cases of progress highlight the excessive centralization of many programmes. The reasons are primarily attributed to lack of political will and a determination to maintain tight control in HQs. This in turn is consistent with the finding that few have incentives in place to promote PD approaches.</p>
<p>viii. <u>Sufficient</u> integration of global programmes and initiatives into partner countries' broader development agendas (Mainly responsibility of global programmes and their supporters.)</p>	<p>The direction, pace and distance travelled on the integration of global programmes and initiatives looks to be unsatisfactory, with only a quarter of the reporting evaluations reporting progress, and others documenting the problems caused and the pressures exerted by the lack of integration of these major programmes.</p>
<p>ix. <u>Stronger</u> partner countries' capacities to plan, manage and implement results-driven national strategies (Mainly country initiative/ responsibility.)</p>	<p>The direction of travel is generally positive on this outcome, although there is evidence that the destination is not always clearly or commonly understood. With a small number of exceptions, the pace of progress is slow and the limited distance covered is noted as a source of frustration in several cases.</p>
<p>x. <u>Enhanced</u> respective accountability of countries and donors to citizens and parliaments (Donors and countries separately responsible)</p>	<p>[In countries only. To be complemented on the donor/agency side] The direction of travel, pace and distance covered are positive, with significant variations among countries, but definite general trends. Countries are taking in hand the need to secure and publish donor information about aid. Twice as many evaluations find that countries' own provision of information about aid has improved as those that do not. This has generally gone along with greater accountability to and through parliaments. Only six evaluations address accountability to organized civil society, with quite mixed findings.</p>
<p>10b) Progress towards commitments in the Accra Agenda for Action (para. 24) on transparency and accountability for development results (Donors and countries separately and jointly responsible)</p>	<p>Both the lack of widespread findings and their nature of those provided testify from this group of evaluations that the direction, pace and distance travelled toward this outcome are highly uneven and generally weak.</p>
<p>xi. <u>Less</u> corruption and <u>more</u> transparency, strengthening public support and supporting effective resource mobilisation and allocation (Donors and countries separately responsible)¹</p>	<p>The direction of travel on this outcome is found to be positive in almost all the evaluations reporting on it, but the pace and distance travelled fall short of what would be needed to strengthen public support. Transparency is found to be higher in half the countries, and a range of anti-corruption measures being attempted in even more, but appraisals by informed respondents and other sources can document little tangible progress as yet.</p>

¹ See also template on Q2iii

Core Q3: Development outcomes

“Has the implementation of Paris Declaration strengthened the contribution of aid to sustainable development results? How?”

Question	Early indicative findings: Direction, pace and distance of travel
3a. Were results in specific sectors enhanced through the application of the PD principles?	The direction, pace and distance travelled here must all be assessed as positive . All of the 15 draft reports that cover this question find some, if uneven, sectoral contributions by the Declaration. These are mainly through its roles in catalyzing, strengthening and legitimizing a platform and framework for action and coordination in sectoral development efforts, and thus often facilitating greater investment, efficiency and results. Ten find at least some plausible contribution by PD - influenced aid to some area of improved health services or outcomes in the country. The experience reported with contributions in other sectors is mixed, and some interesting explanations emerge.
3b. Did the implementation of the PD help countries to improve the prioritisation of the needs [beyond income poverty] of the poorest people, including women and girls?"	Overall, the direction, pace and distance of travel on this prioritisation emerge as positive from these evaluation drafts. Two reports claim substantial development results, one with some help from the PD. Ten evaluations find varying degrees of progress, and most of them find various types of influence by PD-style operations. The contribution to developing partnership-based frameworks for dialogue, programming and monitoring for addressing cross-cutting issues is singled out in several cases. On the other hand, one evaluation reports concern that the PD has focused attention on the planning, systems and processes of aid delivery at the expense of policy dialogue and outcomes.
3c. Has PD implementation led to sustainable increases in institutional capacities and social capital at all levels to respond to development challenges? Why, how and where, and what are the effects?	The direction, pace and distance of travel in increasing institutional capacities are found to be falling far short in virtually all these evaluations, but the effects in increasing social capital are found much more positive . Most of the findings around capacity development are not particularly related to any role of aid or the PD, although one implies a negative role for aid. The extreme weakness of capacity in the fragile situation evaluated may suggest the need for more PD approaches in fragile situations, rather than less. Six of seven evaluations which have findings on social capital basically find that the PD principles have helped create or support an enabling environment for civil society at various levels.
3d. How and why has the mix of aid modalities (including general or sector-specific budget support) evolved and what has been learnt on the development results?	The findings in the evaluations to date indicate that since 2005 aid modalities have remained mixed in almost all cases. In general there is no rapid or linear move to budget support, or strong pressure to do so from any side, for diverse reasons. Instead there has been a learning process in all countries evaluated, with successful innovations in a majority, particularly in joint support at the sectoral level. These show stronger contributions to development results in five cases and strong potential in at least six others.

5. Conclusions

There has been **no attempt to include draft conclusions, lessons or recommendations in the first draft emerging findings report. This would be premature, given the partial and preliminary coverage at this stage.**

Moreover, the emphasis at this first stage has been on analysing and weighting early findings, and less on exploring the all-important explanations for progress or the lack of progress. Obviously, as the final reports are submitted and the synthesis process moves into subsequent phases, these elements will be fully included for consideration and discussion.

6. Synthesis process

The updates by the Core Team at the outset of the Indonesia Emerging Findings Workshop will also detail the further workplan for the Evaluation and synthesis process, in line with the Evaluation Framework and in light of the inputs in hand.