

**Evaluation of the Implementation of the
Paris Declaration:
United States Government**

**Department of the Treasury
Office of Technical Assistance
Case Study**

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Department of the Treasury Preface

Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance was enthusiastic at the prospect of being included as an organization to be surveyed in connection with the USG Paris Declaration Study. When the Paris Declaration principles first appeared in 2005 we found that they were in extraordinary accord with the same principles that OTA had been successfully practicing since its founding in 1990. Country ownership and full partnership in change have always guided our financial technical assistance projects. Maintaining a confined focus on public financial management – budget, revenue, government debt, banking, and economic crimes - has built the reputation that caused the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review to call OTA “one of the most powerful repositories of interagency expertise.”

The following study fairly describes and represents how OTA conducts its business. Far from thinking ourselves without opportunities for change and improvement, we regularly adapt new ways of engaging with country counterparts, continue to expand the methods by which we evaluate our performance, and seek more productive ways to work with other USG partners.

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ACRONYMS

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AE	Aid Effectiveness
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DOL	Department of Labor
DOS	Department of State
DOS/F	Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance in the Department of State
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL)
KI	Key Informant
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OTA	Office of Technical Assistance (Department of Treasury)
PD	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
SI	Social Impact
SOW	Scope of Work
TREAS	Department of Treasury
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agricultural
USG	United States Government

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 2, 2005, ministers of developing and developed countries and heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions, meeting in Paris, issued a resolution to reform the ways they deliver and manage international aid. They established five principles to guide aid participants:

- **Ownership.** Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption;
- **Alignment.** Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems;
- **Harmonization.** Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication;
- **Results.** Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured; and
- **Mutual Accountability.** Donors and partners are accountable for development.

The United States is one of 134 nations to endorse the resolution, known as the Paris Declaration on AID Effectiveness. The United Nations is sponsoring a simultaneous, multinational review of the implementation of the Paris Declaration. This report reviews implementation within the U.S. Treasury Department's principal bilateral assistance arm, its Office of Technical Assistance, and is part of the larger review of implementation by the U.S. government as a whole.

The Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA) provides technical advisors to developing country governments on various aspects of financial management. OTA was created by Congress in 1991 "to develop strong financial sectors and sound public financial management in countries where assistance is needed and there is a strong commitment to reform." Initially, the OTA operated only in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, but Congress broadened its mandate in 1998 to allow support throughout the developing world.

Funding for OTA activities typically ranges in the \$30–40 million range annually, enabling the program to operate in fifty to sixty countries each year. Direct congressional appropriations for OTA are typically about \$25 million, with the remaining funds coming from other U.S. government entities, including the Departments of State and Defense, USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

The OTA operates in five areas: budget management; revenue production; banking and financial institutions; debt management; and economic crimes. Though the amounts vary year by year, the amounts allocated to each of the five areas typically fall between thirteen percent and thirty percent of the total appropriation.

The OTA modality is to respond to requests for technical assistance. These requests always come from potential partner governments, though references frequently come through American ambassadors, or from other donors, notably USAID and MCC. A preliminary mission is undertaken following such requests, in order to determine the nature of the assistance requested and the commitment of the potential partner government to the activities that might be undertaken. Where appropriate terms of reference can be agreed upon with the partner government agency, OTA proposes professional sector experts to carry out the work. If the

partner country agrees with the proposed terms of reference and the specific advisory team, the advisors are embedded in the government institution that agrees to support them with office space, project oversight and dedicated staff.

Looking at the OTA program in terms of the individual components of the Paris Declaration, one has to be impressed by the close alignment:

1. Country Ownership. The approach taken by the Treasury OTA embodies this more explicitly than most donor programs. It requires the partner country institution to work jointly with OTA to develop a program of action, with concrete steps and a timetable for their completion. The consultants are embedded in an appropriate government institution, with the partner country committed to providing office space and other support.
2. Alignment. The discussion above clearly indicates close alignment between OTA assistance and the goals of the partner government. No OTA advisors are assigned without a clear commitment by the partner government to provide support and to an agreed program of action.
3. Harmonization. OTA advisors embedded in ministries and other government institutions are expected to coordinate their activities with those of other donors. Because they are embedded, they are often an important source of information for other donors who “parachute” into the country for short visits, consistent with any confidentiality commitments to their partner country agency.
4. Managing for Results. Measuring the results of technical assistance projects is harder than for most other donor activities. Nevertheless, the OTA has developed a workable system to connect the work of advisors to positive outcomes at several levels. Where issues arise (e.g., the partner institution fails to provide expected support or to implement the agreed-upon reforms) the OTA approach is to send a senior staff member to discuss the issues with the partner institution. If this proves unsatisfactory, the OTA advisor is then withdrawn.
5. Mutual Accountability. As the previous paragraphs indicate, OTA agreements with partner institutions include mutual accountability. If an advisor is not meeting the needs of the partner institution, OTA commits to replacement with a more suitable advisor. Where the partner country fails to meet its commitments, OTA works to remind the partner of those responsibilities. In addition, as noted above, an unwillingness to be accountable for commitments would eventually lead to the withdrawal of the advisory team.

Issues with the OTA Approach

The short answer is that there are no issues. Clearly, the OTA assistance program is well aligned with most of Paris Declaration principles—arguably as much so as any other donor program. The only exception, probably insignificant, is that payment for OTA advisors is made directly by Treasury to the individuals concerned. Having short- or mid-term advisors paid through partner government budget processes would likely stress these systems, with the result that advisors might remain unpaid for significant periods of time. Despite this caveat, the entire concept behind OTA technical assistance is to strengthen the government processes in partner countries.

1 INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

Over 150 countries, donors and international organizations signed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD) in 2005, in an effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance. The Declaration was further elaborated on at the Accra workshop in 2008. This study focuses on the PD principles, including the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) of 2008.

The PD is built around five principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. This evaluation is part of an independent international evaluation of the PD to examine its implementation and explore its impacts. Beginning in 2007 and ending in 2010, over thirty developing partner countries, and almost

twenty donor countries and international organizations, will participate in case study evaluations. The case study results will be incorporated into a Synthesis Report to be presented to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in December 2011 in Busan, Korea.

The U.S. government (USG) is participating in this effort by conducting an independent evaluation of its commitment to and efforts towards implementing the PD. To better reflect the reality of USG Foreign Assistance (FA), SI has prepared separate case studies for each of the four main agencies involved in providing U.S. foreign assistance: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of State (DOS), Health and Human Services (HHS), and Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and three smaller case studies on the Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Treasury (TREAS), and the U.S. Department of Agricultural (USDA). To enable comparative analysis, all case studies have used the same conceptual framework. A synthesis report draws on the data and information generated by the case studies.

1.1 The Assessment Approach and Methodology

The USG study, along with all the donor studies, assesses four broad areas:

- 1) Leadership and staff commitment to the PD principles;
- 2) The agency's (or agencies') capacity to implement the Paris Declaration and the steps that it has undertaken to enhance its capacity;
- 3) Incentives and disincentives for implementing the PD principles; and
- 4) Coherence, political framework and coordination.

Paris Declaration Principles*

Ownership - *Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.*

Alignment - *Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.*

Harmonization - *Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.*

Results - *Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.*

Mutual Accountability - *Donors and partners are accountable for development results.*

*www.oecd.org

The Paris Declaration is directed at the effectiveness of development aid, and specifically Official Development Assistance (ODA),¹ as the endorsers of the PD are governments and official agencies. This may include humanitarian and emergency assistance, and other aid in fragile situations.² The international management team guidance provided to the Evaluation Team stated that this should also include “vertical funds” that combine resources from several types of donors (bilateral, multilateral, private, corporations, etc.).

The guidance continued, “[a]t the same time, the Paris Declaration and AAA are also explicitly and repeatedly concerned with ‘other development resources’ and their inter-relations with the aid flows most targeted by the Declaration. . . .The evaluation design aims to place aid in its proper context. For this reason, the substantial domestic and external resources available for development other than ODA will be given major attention in the contextual analysis. Beyond their contextual importance, moreover, the evaluation approach recognizes that other providers of development aid and finance are concerned with ensuring and improving the effectiveness of their own contributions. Even if they have not been so directly targeted by the Declaration, they have nevertheless been participating or taking account of global reform initiatives.”

The SI Evaluation Team’s substantive approach to assessing these areas started with the question: “To what extent are U.S. foreign assistance policies and practices consistent with the five principles of the Paris Declaration?”, rather than limiting our research to those policies and practices specifically labeled, “Paris Declaration.” The team used a mixed-methods approach, including literature and documentation review, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews of senior and other selected agency headquarters staff. The SI Evaluation Team designed a Key Informant (KI) interview guide that included content and rating scales for the interviewers and interviewees to provide ratings and rankings on important topics/questions. This helped to ensure consistency in data gathering and allowed for greater comparability across agencies. Twenty-five of the fifty-five commitments apply to donors; the Team determined that eleven (at least one under each of the five principles) of them were key commitments that should be analyzed for the USG evaluation, as they are relevant and operational in the USG context. A commitment guide was created and used in interviews as a probe for interviewees less familiar with the Paris Declaration. It allowed the evaluators to find out what practices or processes are consistent with a PD principle, but not necessarily labeled as such.³ The Team also met with representatives from Treasury and the Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (F) and the USG Reference Group, consisting of representatives from each case study agency, to discuss and confirm the evaluation process and design. With a few exceptions, the case study evaluations do

¹ ODA as defined by the OECD/DAC: “Grants or Loans to countries and territories on Part I of the DAC List of Aid Recipients (developing countries) which are: (a) undertaken by the official sector; (b) with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective; (c) at concessional financial terms [if a loan, having a Grant Element (q.v.) of at least 25 per cent]. In addition to financial flows, Technical Co-operation (q.v.) is included in aid. Grants, Loans and credits for military purposes are excluded. For the treatment of the forgiveness of Loans originally extended for military purposes, see Notes on Definitions and Measurement below. Transfer payments to private individuals (e.g. pensions, reparations or insurance payouts) are in general not counted.”

² The general principles of the Paris Declaration are expected to apply in “challenging and complex situations.” to these forms of aid, with some special requirements for adaptation. (See PD para. 7). In the main, however, humanitarian assistance is excluded from coverage under the Paris Declaration and AAA.

³ Both the interview guide and commitment guide can be found in Annex 1

not include interviews with field staff. However, field perspectives will be assessed in the team's synthesis report, through survey and field interview data.

Each case study team worked with their agency representative to identify key informants from program, policy, and functional offices, in addition to senior leadership. The final list of key informants was subject to participant availability and willingness to participate. All interviews are confidential.

Successful implementation of the PD principles is not the responsibility, nor even within the reach, of any single government agency. Rather, it relies upon the combined efforts and actions of the agency being reviewed, as well as the host countries it intends to help, other U.S. government donor agencies, other donor countries, and non-government organizations. The purpose and nature of the assistance provided can also have an effect. This report will provide insights into the achievements, challenges, and varying incentives and disincentives to implementing the PD Principles, and present relevant considerations or implications to Treasury.

The approach in this case was to first review documentation provided by Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA), and then to conduct a set of structured interviews with OTA staff. The Washington office of OTA is small, with a staff of about forty professionals. Because it is a small agency, interviews were conducted with six professionals, about fifteen percent of OTA Washington staff. This included an interview with the Director of OTA and the Treasury Deputy Assistant Secretary responsible for overseeing OTA operations, and with two of the five associate directors. Two persons from the U.S. Treasury Office of Debt and Development Policy were also interviewed.

1.1.1 Limitations Specific to This Case Study

Implementation of OTA agreements takes place in the partner countries, through the governmental institutions with which it is partnered. The study would have benefitted from interviews with the counterpart officials of these entities, as well as with senior officials of those institutions. This would surely have provided a deeper level of understanding of the interpretations given to the implementation of PD principles, as perceived by partner country officials.

1.2 The Agency Program

1.2.1 Summary of Treasury's Assistance Programs

The principal source of foreign assistance provided by the U.S. Treasury is in the form of technical advisors provided by OTA. The U.S. Treasury also oversees U.S. participation in the International Monetary Fund and the multilateral development banks, but its involvement in these multilateral efforts is beyond the scope of this study.

Funding for OTA activities typically ranges in the \$30–40 million range annually, enabling the program to operate in 50–60 countries each year. Direct congressional appropriations for OTA are typically about \$20 million, with the remaining \$10–20 million coming from other U.S. government entities. The agencies which have provided additional funding for OTA include DOS, Department of Defense (DOD), USAID and MCC. Clearly, this level of resources makes

OTA a small player in the world of development assistance, and is dwarfed by a number of other USG programs.

The OTA operates through five teams:

- Budget and Financial Accountability;
- Revenue Policy and Administration;
- Banding and Financial Services;
- Government Debt Issuance and Management; and
- Economic Crimes.

Though they vary year by year, the amounts allocated to each of the five areas typically ranges between thirteen percent and thirty percent of the total appropriation.

The OTA modality is to respond to requests for technical assistance. These requests may initially come from potential partner governments, from American ambassadors, or from other donors, notably USAID and MCC. A preliminary mission is undertaken following such requests in order to determine the nature of the assistance requested and the commitment of the potential partner government to the activities that might be undertaken.

Once the initial decision to respond to a request for assistance is taken, the primary OTA connection is with the partner country government institution for which assistance is requested. OTA attempts to develop terms of reference with this institution for a program of technical assistance that is judged by the partner institution to be important, and by OTA to be feasible. If agreement at this level is reached, OTA identifies professionals it considers suitable to carry out the work, and proposes one or more names to the partner institution. The partner institution must agree on the specific individual, or individuals, who are to provide assistance. Typically, this involves a trip by the Treasury candidate to the country. If this preliminary visit confirms the suitability of the advisor, a longer-term advisory schedule is developed.

In all cases, such advisors are embedded in the partner government institution, provided with office space and other staff support, and work under agreed-upon terms of reference for the assistance. Once an advisor is embedded, a work plan for his/her goals is usually developed during the first one to two months in country. This work plan is agreed to by both parties, and becomes the measuring stick for progress in implementing the terms of reference. Where progress is unsatisfactory, a senior OTA official visits the country to discuss the problem. If issues cannot be resolved satisfactorily, OTA policy is to withdraw the advisor.

Table 1 offers a summary of the types of assistance provided to the fifty-two countries in which OTA had programs in fiscal year 2009. As indicated by the table, assistance embraced a wide range of countries. Assistance on economic crimes, a relatively new area, was the most frequent area of activity, for which support was being provided to twenty four countries. Revenue generation was second, with twenty-one partner governments, followed by debt, where nineteen countries were being assisted. Budget and banking projects made up the balance. As shown in Table 1 below, OTA advisors work in more than one area in twenty-two of the partner countries.

Table 1: Countries Assisted by OTA in FY 2009 – By Specific Area of Assistance

Country	Banking	Budget	Debt	Econ. Crimes	Revenue
1. Albania			X		
2. Afghanistan			X	X	
3. Algeria	X			X	X
4. Armenia				X	
5. Azerbaijan					X
6. Bosnia	X		X		X
7. Botswana					X
8. Burundi			X		
9. Cambodia				X	
10. Chile				X	
11. Colombia					X
12. Costa Rica		X	X		X
13. Ecuador				X	
14. Egypt					
15. El Salvador				X	
16. Georgia		X	X	X	
17. Ghana		X	X		
18. Guatemala				X	X
19. Haiti					X
20. Honduras			X	X	X
21. Indonesia			X		X
22. Iraq	X	X			
23. Jordan				X	
24. Kazakhstan	X				
25. Kenya			X		
26. Kosovo	X		X	X	
27. Kyrgyzstan				X	
28. Laos				X	
29. Lesotho				X	X
30. Liberia					X
31. Macedonia		X			
32. Madagascar		X			
33. Malawi				X	X
34. Mexico				X	X
35. Mozambique					X
36. Montenegro				X	
37. Namibia				X	X
38. Nicaragua			X		X
39. Nigeria			X		
40. Niger					X
41. Pakistan	X			X	
42. Paraguay	X	X	X	X	
43. Philippines				X	
44. Rwanda			X		
45. Tajikistan			X		
46. Tanzania			X		
47. Uganda			X		
48. Ukraine	X		X		X
49. Sao Tome				X	X
50. South Africa		X			
51. Vietnam	X			X	X
52. Zambia	X	X			
TOTAL	10	9	19	24	21

1.2.2 Legislative Origins and Directives

OTA was created in 1991 by a congressional directive “to develop strong financial sectors and sound public financial management in countries where assistance is needed and there is a strong commitment to reform.” Initially, the OTA operated only in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, but its mandate was broadened by Congress in 1998 to allow support throughout the developing world.

2 FINDINGS

2.1 Leadership and Commitment

2.1.1 Agency Awareness of the Five Paris Declaration principles and Their Implications

Leadership awareness

Both the Deputy Assistant Secretary responsible for OTA and the OTA director had direct involvement in the creation of the PD, either as a member of the U.S. team addressing the negotiations, or as an OECD staff member during that period. In sum, the OTA leadership sustain a sophisticated appreciation of the Declaration.

Mid-level or program level staff awareness

Based on interviews with mid-level and program staff, there is good awareness of PD principles among these professionals. Several staff members mentioned previous involvement in PD issues, before joining OTA. OTA advisors were given a specific briefing on the PD at a conference in 2009. That conference preceded the decision to carry out this study, so it was a self-induced decision by OTA. In addition, an OTA advisor resident in Ghana participated in the 2008 Accra meeting, reporting the experience to the rest of the institution.

From the eight interviews conducted with Treasury staff, at both leadership and program levels involved with OTA or development policy, all eight were determined to be highly aware of PD principles.

Table 2, Leadership awareness of PD Principles				
Knowledge of PD principles	Highly Aware	Modestly Aware	Limited Awareness	None
8 Key Informants	8	0	0	0

2.1.2 Political Commitment

Leadership’s commitment to PD

As indicated above, the OTA leadership has shown an awareness and understanding of PD principles, but the OTA mission goes beyond this. In an important sense, their approach

embodies PD principles, to a substantial degree, strengthening the capacity of partner-country government institutions to provide efficient and effective financial management.

As the OTA leadership appears very cognizant, technical assistance programs tend to be *sui generis* in their results and effectiveness. Each one depends on a variety of factors—the chemistry between the advisory team and the leadership of the unit in which they operate, the stability of the leadership of that unit, the extent to which trained individuals in the unit continue in their positions after a change in government, and (notably) the capacity of the advisory team to provide assistance that is tailored to the specific needs of the assisted organization. One cannot visit a developing country government agency without finding reports from consultants that made recommendations that were hopelessly out of conformity with the current or near-term possibilities of that agency.

2.1.3 Concerns, Reservations, or Doubts

Although the OTA staff is directly involved in strengthening the ability of developing country governments to manage government finance, OTA staff members expressed concerns about the capacity of many ministries of finance to manage expenditures in a transparent and accountable fashion. They suggested that ministries of finance in many low-income countries would not have the capacity to manage donor assistance programs in a manner that would ensure proper use of the funds. Where ministries of finance are weak, other ministries are typically considerably weaker, and less capable of managing funding, assessing the effectiveness of programs, or preventing corruption or special dealing. On the other hand, OTA advisors were working in many countries to address this issue. They considered some higher-income developing countries to have adequate systems in place.

2.1.4 Current Strategy Documents, Policies and Practices Congruent with PD

As OTA approaches are largely congruent with PD principles, there seems no need for issuance of policy documents from on high for this purpose. As noted earlier, OTA advisors were briefed at a 2009 conference on Paris Declaration principles and their importance for aid effectiveness.

A concrete example might illuminate the general approach of the organization:

The Bank of Algeria and OTA signed a terms of reference for a technical assistance program in early 2008. The program was intended “to provide strategic and technical advice to facilitate the development of financial policies, governmental infrastructures, and the supervisory oversight of private financial institutions.” This six-page document, signed by the governor of the Bank of Algeria and the U.S. Treasury deputy assistant secretary for technical assistance, lays out the conditions under which one long-term advisor, along with an unstated number of short-term advisors, is to assist the bank. Conditions for supporting the advisors are established, with the proviso that the advisors maintain confidentiality about what they have learned during their work.

With this framework, an ambitious work plan was established to implement the terms of reference. These included “Objective 1: Providing guidance on the adoption of those provisions of Basel II that will be required within the Algerian context.” Five other objectives, aimed at assisting in computerization, developing training manuals and formally credentialing bank inspectors, are spelled out. For each of the objectives, specific steps, each with a specific date for completion, were identified.

Both the clear allocation of responsibilities of each party to the Algerian terms of reference and the subsequent work plan for assistance offer clear evidence of consistency with PD principles. Country ownership and alignment are evident in the Bank of Algeria’s governor’s signature on the terms of reference, with its references to mutual accountability. The specific timetables for completion of each important action are a clear vehicle for managing for results and for mutual accountability—two very closely-related concepts. Harmonization with other donors is absent from these documents, but this issue is discussed below.

2.2 Agency Incentives

2.2.1 Incentives

Allocation of resources for capacity building in host nations

The mandate of the OTA is to build capacity in partner country government institutions. All of its resources are channeled this direction.

Recognition given to staff for elements of PD implementation

OTA staff members are recognized for outstanding performance. As their task is to strengthen governmental institutions in partner countries, this is automatically a reward for PD implementation.

Use of host country organizations to manage the assistance

As discussed above, the OTA embeds its advisors in partner country institutions, and works to strengthen the capacity of those institutions. Clear lines of supervision by line officials of the partner government are a standard feature of OTA programs. These advisors’ primary role is to strengthen host government institutions.

2.3 Agency Disincentives

None could be identified.

2.3.1 Constraints to Agency Capacity to Implement PD

OTA’s mandate is to strengthen governmental institutions in partner countries. This is fully consistent with PD principles.

2.3.2 Congressional Directives, and Other Requirements

The congressional mandate to OTA is entirely consistent with PD principles.

2.4 Coherence

2.4.1 Political Framework

Generally, OTA operates “below the radar” of foreign assistance politics. Its work is so technical that political operatives in partner countries might remain unaware of this assistance.

OTA advisors are seldom involved in major issues of policy coherence. More often, they are in the bowels of government ministries, helping to strengthen computer oversight of expenditures, or identifying ways in which high-income individuals might be identified for tax purposes.

Nevertheless, there are several cases (e.g., Iraq, Afghanistan) where OTA has responded to DOS encouragement to undertake programs of assistance to governments. It is to be expected that OTA's decision-making process on whether to proceed with a program, or to continue it in the face of serious problems, is more likely to be externally influenced in such high-visibility cases than in countries that are politically less important. In another case (Honduras), OTA suspended its assistance in response to guidance from DOS about a change in government that the U.S. government regarded as irregular. This withdrawal of advisors was not typical of OTA's response to such political changes, except where they directly affect its assistance program.

2.4.2 Supportive factors

OTA's strongest asset is the cadre of experts in relevant technical issues on which it is able to draw for appropriate assignments. Some are retired, and many have left positions at mid-career to pursue international work in their specialties. Nearly all advisors are contracted for specific work and are personal services contractors to Treasury. A small number of advisors are USG employees from other agencies on inter-agency agreements. Potential advisors are vetted by the partner country, usually after a short visit. The scope of work for the advisor (or the advisory team) is jointly agreed upon between Treasury and the cooperating entity. Usually, much more detailed terms of reference, with specific deadlines and commitments on both sides, are worked out once the advisory team has been in place for a few weeks.

2.4.3 Complicating factors

None, except as cited above.

2.4.4 Coordination and Consistency

As a very small organization (fewer than forty Washington staff) OTA seems to have developed none of the coordination and consistency problems that often plague large donor organizations.

The relationship between OTA and USAID was contentious in the early years, as each seemed to view the other as a competitor for funding and influence in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. This hostility seems to have disappeared, and coordination has become collegial in recent times, with USAID sometimes calling on OTA to provide technical experts.

As noted above, DOS and DOD may call on OTA in particularly strategic countries. And the OTA is likely to respond favorably to such requests, even if in-country conditions are difficult and sometimes dangerous.

With other bilateral and multilateral organizations in the field

OTA embedded staff are often an important source of information for visiting delegations from multilateral or bilateral donors wishing to understand important technical aspects of budget, revenue collection, or other financial issues. At the same time, their commitments of confidentiality, noted above in the discussion of the Bank of Algeria case, might sometimes limit their ability to be completely frank with donor missions.

Partnership with host countries in performance management and evaluation.

Most OTA assistance programs operate at a lower technical level than is suggested by this heading. The ‘big things’ in performance management and evaluation are the result of thousands of little things. OTA specializes in getting the little things right.

Assessing the value of technical assistance projects is typically difficult, as the extent to which improved practices are internalized and institutionalized is often difficult to determine. Over the last several years, OTA has worked to strengthen its performance management by instituting quarterly reports on project implementation. The quarterly report uses two dimensions: “traction” and “impact”; numerical scores are assigned in each area. Traction refers to the day-to-day carrying out of the work plan and the willingness of counterparts to work with the advisors. Impact, on the other hand, attempts to judge progress towards achieving the higher-level goals set out in the terms of reference for the assistance.

Still, it must be recognized that OTA’s partnerships are with governments, not countries. In cases where a new government chooses to replace the professional staff involved in performance management and evaluation, nothing OTA or any other donor could do would be able to assure “partnership with host countries” in this area. Based on discussions with OTA staff and reviews of workplans, OTA is seriously committed to building capacity in this area. But OTA, like other donors, is helpless in the face of cases where a new (or even an existing) government chooses to destroy its capacity to measure and evaluate performance by replacing trained professionals.

3 AGENCY ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The OTA appears to have a clear strategic approach and the capacity to implement it. As the OTA is aligned with PD principles, there is nothing to be done.

The table below identifies the OTA’s overall rating, as given by the case study assessment team. The Team used a 1-5 scale, with ‘5’ being the highest, to rate each agency on each PD principle. The rating consists of how the principle is practiced by the agency and its staff, any agency policies or procedures related to the principle and overall commitment to the principle by agency leadership and staff.

Table 3, Overall rating of OTA					
PD principle	Ownership	Alignment	Harmonization	Mutual Accountability	Managing for Results
Treasury OTA	5	5	5	5	5

As established earlier in this report, the OTA and Treasury leadership are fully committed to effective implementation of PD principles. There are no serious issues in the coherence of OTA’s approach to development. Unlike more high-profile sources of U.S. development assistance, OTA has not been weighed down by congressional restrictions on where and how it should provide assistance.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Interview and Commitment Guides

Introduction

The Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness 2005 has become a major milestone in development assistance. Designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance, it is built around five principles – ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. These principles are meant to guide interactions, relationships, and partnerships between development agencies and partnering countries. In addition to monitoring the progress of the implementation of the PD, OECD/DAC has launched a major evaluation of the PD to examine its implementation and explore its impacts.

The USG has joined this international effort and is committed to conducting an independent review of its commitment to and efforts towards implementing the PD. Since the USG review is a part of a larger study, its primary focus is consistent with those of other reviews conducted by participating donor countries. Consequently, the USG review will primarily focus on: commitment to PD principles, capacity to implement, and incentives.

The USG has contracted our firm, Social Impact, to carry out this project. To better reflect the reality of USG foreign assistance, we will prepare separate case studies for each of the participating organizations: USAID, DOS, HHS, MCC, DOL, Treasury and USDA. All case studies will use the same conceptual framework, approach and variables to enable comparative analysis. A synthesis report will then be written using data and information generated by case studies.

To inform the individual case studies, we are conducting informational interviews with senior and mid-level leadership at each organization. These interviews will be completely confidential and no names will be referred to in the reports generated. In addition, we would like to emphasize that this review is an attempt to understand the current state of affairs surrounding the USG's implementation of the PD, not to act as a grading system. Your candid responses will allow us to gain insight into the achievements, challenges, and varying incentives and disincentives to implementing the PD principles, and present relevant recommendations to the USG.

Section A: PDE Key Informant Interview guide (core questions)

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Respondent: _____ Gender: Male Female

Office/Title/Rank: _____ Length of Service: _____

Thank you for meeting with me today. As introduced in the email from X, I would like to ask several questions about the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 and how you see [your Department’s/Agency’s/Unit’s] response to it. Please remember that this discussion will remain confidential.

- 1) How and when did you first learn about the Paris Declaration principles?
- 2) What can you tell me about them?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

Highly aware	Modestly aware	Limited awareness	None
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Commitment:

- 1) How would you characterize the extent of awareness of the PD principles and their implications by the top leadership of your agency?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

High	Modest	Limited	None
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Probing Questions:

- o How has top leadership shown commitment to implementation of PD principles?
 - o If they have reservations about implementing the PD what are the underlying reasons?
- 2) [If applicable] How would you characterize the extent of awareness of the PD principles and their implications by the leadership of your agency in field missions or offices?

High	Modest	Limited	None
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Probing Questions:

- How does their understanding compare with that of top leadership at headquarters?
- Why?

- 3) How has your agency taken steps to adopt the PD principles and incorporate them into your strategic plans?

Scale for interviewer: Based on answer, rate the KI's awareness level of agency steps

Highly aware	Modestly aware	Limited awareness	None
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- 4) To what extent have these attempts been successful?

Scale for interviewer: (based on the answers, circle the most relevant answer below)

High	Modest	Limited	None
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Probing Questions:

- What attempts have been made to translate PD principles into policies, guidelines, and operational directives?
- If successful, cite some examples. If not successful, can you give reasons?
- Are there documents where these are reflected? E.g. guidance or policy documents. If so, can we have copies of them?

Capacity:

- 1) To what degree do you believe your agency has the guidance and capacity to support implementation of the PD?
- If little or none, what are the main things that are weak or missing?

Scale for Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the capacity:

High	Modest	Limited	None
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- 2) What steps, if any, are being taken to strengthen capabilities?
- 3) How has the PD affected cost-effectiveness of USG delivery of bilateral foreign assistance?
- If so, how?

Scale For Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the effect:

High	Modest	Limited	None
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Incentives:

- 1) Are there any positive incentives provided to staff to implement PD principles? (Provide examples, if any.) If so, how effective are they?

High	Modest	Limited	None
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- 2) Are there perceived disincentives amongst staff (at home and in the field) to implementing PD principles?

- If so, how constraining are they?

Scale for Interviewer: Based on answer, rate the level/intensity of disincentives present

High	Modest	Limited	None
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General:

- 1) How would you rate your agency on implementation of the each of the five PD principles on a scale of 1-5, with 5 the highest?
- 2) How would you rank the five PD principles in terms of effectiveness of implementation by your agency?
- 3) What would be reasons for the least effectively implemented principles?
- 4) How would you rate the USG, beyond your agency, on implementation of each of the PD principles on a scale of 1–5?

For the interviewer: Effectiveness of Implementation: Scale 1–5, with ‘5’ being the highest.

	Ownership	Alignment	Harmonization	Managing for Results	Mutual Accountability
KI's Agency					
USG as a whole					

- 5) What recommendations do you have to better facilitate effective implementation of the PD principles by the USG in general and by your agency?

Section B: Selected questions about aid processes/ elements that lie behind the Paris Declaration

Thank you for meeting with me today. As introduced in the email from X, I would like to ask several questions about the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 and the

aid processes that lie behind it in relation to your (Department's/Agency's/Unit). Please remember that this discussion will remain confidential.

[These questions may well vary by country and operating unit within [name of Department/Agency/Unit]

1. What role, if any, do host countries or other donors play in the process by which [name of Department/Agency/Unit X] formulates its programs in a country?

If needed for illustrative specificity:

- To what extent does [Department/Agency/Unit X] coordinate with other donors or with the host country in developing its purposes, strategies, policy dialogues, programs, periodic reviews and the like? What are the mechanisms for doing that?
 - Is there a common framework of conditions or indicators jointly developed by [Department/Agency/Unit X] and the host country in the areas of programming? Is there any mechanism to ensure that your operating units have been using that common framework? To what extent do they share the common framework?
 - Is there a common framework of conditions or indicators jointly developed by [Department/Agency/Unit X] with other donors in the areas of programming? Is there any mechanism to ensure that your operating units have been using that common framework? To what extent do they share the common framework?
2. Turning from planning to implementation to what extent, if any, does [Department/Agency/Unit X] use or rely on the recipient country's project implementation systems? What guidance, if any, is provided regarding use of recipient country systems?
 - For example, how common is it to use the recipient country's own institutions and systems for:
 - Procurement
 - Accounting
 - Project management
 - Project monitoring
 - Project assessment
 - What factors inhibit your greater use of host-country systems?
 - What about other donors? Does [Department/Agency/Unit] ever work out a division of labor with other donors, for example in carving out areas for your respective programming? If so, to what extent: is it common or rare? To do what extent does [Department/Agency/Unit] join in consortiums of donors? To what extent, in general, does [Department/Agency/Unit X] act as the lead donor in a

consortium of donors? To what extent does it follow the lead of some other donor or delegate responsibility to another donor?

- To what extent has [Department/Agency/Unit X] collaborated with other donors on joint missions for e.g. analytic work, planning, monitoring, or evaluation? If so, what have been the benefits of such collaboration? What were the constraints and costs? Did the benefits exceed the costs?
 - Does it make any difference for the effectiveness of cooperation with other donors if the program is “cross-cutting” like gender or fragility or conflict?
3. To what extent, if any, has [Department/Agency/Unit X] used its funds to augment the capacity of the recipient countries to formulate, manage, monitor or assess the programs it funds? What has been your experience in doing that? In general, has it made any difference in your subsequent reliance on the mechanisms of the host country?
 4. What measures do you use to assess the development outcomes or results of your overall assistance program (or activity) in a given country?
 - Do you use host country sources of information for this assessment? Why or why not?
 5. How do you use information on the results being achieved by your assistance?
 6. How is the results information you collect used in the implementation of your current programs and in the design of future programs?
 7. Do you meet with representatives of the host country to assess the performance of your assistance program and propose plans for future assistance?
 - If so, how often do you meet? Who calls the meeting? Who sets the agenda? Who chairs the meeting?
 - Are you satisfied with these meetings? How could they be improved?

Section C: Paris Declaration Commitments

Donors commit to: (11 commitments, chosen for emphasis by the evaluation team. We have changed the wording slightly to fit better with the U.S. context)

- 1) Ownership. Respect host country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it. (This is the only PD commitment for donors under "Ownership." It received a lot of emphasis in Accra.)

- 2) Alignment. Donors should base their overall support -country aid strategies, policy dialogues and development cooperation programs - on the country's national development strategy and periodic reviews of progress in implementation.
- 3) Alignment. Use country systems and procedures to maximum extent possible.
 - Avoid creating dedicated structures for day-to-day management and implementation of aid-financed projects and programs. [i.e., Project Implementation Units – “PIUs” - this is]
 - Progressively rely on host country systems for procurement when the country has implemented mutually agreed standards and processes.
- 4) Alignment. Predictability. Provide reliable indicative commitments of aid over a multi-year framework and disburse aid in a timely and predictable fashion according to agreed schedules.
- 5) Harmonization. Work together to reduce the number of separate, duplicative, missions to the field.
- 6) Harmonization. Make full use of the respective comparative advantages of donors at sector and country levels by delegating, where appropriate, authority to lead donors for the execution of programs, activities and tasks.
- 7) Harmonization. Reform procedures and strengthen incentives, including for recruitment, appraisal, and training, for management and staff to work towards harmonization, alignment and results.
- 8) Harmonization. Harmonized activities with respect to cross-cutting issues, including fragile states, gender equality, and environment.
- 9) Managing for Results. Countries and donors work together in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and the demand for results based management.
- 10) Mutual Accountability. Provide timely, transparent and comprehensive information on aid flows so as to enable host country authorities to present comprehensive budget reports to their legislatures and citizens.
- 11) Mutual Accountability. Jointly assess through existing ("and increasingly objective") country level mechanisms mutual progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, including the [55] Partnership Commitments.

ANNEX 2: Scope of Work

The Paris Declaration (PD) on Aid Effectiveness was endorsed in 2005 and has become a major milestone in development assistance. Designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of development assistance, it is built around five mutually reinforcing principles which should guide interactions, relationships and partnerships between development agencies and partnering countries:

**Ownership:* Developing countries must lead their own development policies and strategies, and manage their own development work on the ground. Donors must support developing countries in building up their capacity to exercise this kind of leadership by strengthening local expertise, institutions and management systems.

**Alignment:* Donors must line up their aid firmly behind the priorities outlined in developing countries' national development strategies. Wherever possible, they must use local institutions and procedures for managing aid in order to build sustainable structures.

**Harmonization:* Donors must coordinate their development work better amongst themselves to avoid duplication and high transaction costs for poor countries. In the Paris Declaration, they are committed to coordinate better at the country level to ease the strain on recipient governments.

**Managing for results:* All parties in the aid relationship must place more focus on the end result of aid, the tangible difference it makes in poor people's lives. They must develop better tools and systems to measure this impact.

**Mutual accountability:* Donors and developing countries must be accountable to each other for their use of aid funds, and to their citizens and parliaments for the impact of their aid.

The Paris Declaration provides a practical, action-oriented roadmap with specific targets to be met by 2010. It is a major international agreement on aid relationships which identifies appropriate roles for all major actors, specifies 12 indicators to provide a measurable and evidence-based way to track progress, and sets targets for the indicators to be met by 2010. At the Third High Level Forum (HLF 3) on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra in 2008, both donors and developing countries reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Declaration and agreed to speed up the process of fulfilling the Declaration's pledges. This agreement was codified in the Accra Agenda for Action, which was endorsed at the HLF 3.

2. Purpose of Statement of Work

In addition to monitoring the progress of the implementation of the Paris Declaration, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) has launched a major evaluation of the Paris Declaration. The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Paris Declaration and its contribution to aid effectiveness and poverty alleviation. The evaluation is being carried out in two phases.

The Phase 1 evaluation assessed the early implementation of the Paris Declaration. It focused on four central questions: What important trends or events have been emerging during the implementation? What factors and forces are affecting the behavior of recipient and donor countries in relation to implementing their respective commitments? And, is the implementation leading towards the adoption of the PD principles? If not, why not? The Phase I findings of the assessments have been finalized and a synthesis report has been written which provides empirically grounded conclusions and recommendations.⁴

The overall objective of this Phase 2 evaluation is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the Paris Declaration and its contribution to aid effectiveness and ultimately to development effectiveness, including poverty alleviation. The evaluation is expected to document the results achieved through implementing the Paris Declaration, highlight the barriers and constraints which might limit its effectiveness and impacts, and strengthen “the knowledge base as to the ways in which development partnerships can most effectively and efficiently help maximize development results through aid in different contexts – including varying degrees of ‘fragility’.” Phase 2 evaluation plans to undertake 15 country case studies to examine in depth the effects of the Paris Declaration on aid and development effectiveness. In addition, it also plans to commission five special studies to examine critical issues. The evaluation will then synthesize the findings, conclusions and recommendation of all the studies, reports and documents in a comprehensive report.

As a contribution to the Phase 2 evaluation, the USG has committed to conducting an independent evaluation (“USG Evaluation”) of its headquarters’ commitment to, and efforts towards, implementing the Paris Declaration, consistent with the terms of reference provided for such studies as part of the overall evaluation. The purpose of this SOW is to outline the requirements and deliverables for the design and implementation of the USG Evaluation. The SOW specifies evaluation questions, evaluation design criteria, data collection approaches, estimated level of effort required, time table, evaluation criteria and the deliverables.

3. Evaluation Questions

1. Are the top leaders of bilateral foreign assistance organizations aware of the five PD principles and their implications for the delivery of foreign assistance? Do they interpret them correctly? What sort of misconceptions, if any, do they seem to harbor?
2. Are the top leaders committed to implementing the Paris Declaration? Do they have any reservations about it? If so, what are these reservations? What are the underlying reasons for their reservations and concerns?

⁴ Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration:
http://www.diiis.dk/graphics/Subweb/paris_evaluation_web/index.htm.

3. Are the managers of foreign assistance programs aware of their leadership's commitment to the five principles and their implications for the programs they manage? Has the implementation of PD affected foreign assistance program's priority setting?
4. How is foreign assistance agencies' commitment affected by the mandates and requirements of the Congress and Office of the budget and management and the demands of the civil society?
5. Has each bilateral foreign assistance organization formulated and implemented a coherent strategy to adopt the PD principles in its policies and programs? If so, what are the major elements of its strategy? If not, what are their reasons for not developing a strategy to internalize and implement the Paris Declaration?
6. What attempts have been made by these organizations to translate the PD principles into their policies, guidelines and operational directives? To what extent, have such attempts been successful (cite examples)? If they did not make efforts to revise their policies, guidelines and operational directives, what were the main reasons for this omission?
7. Did foreign assistance agencies launch special training programs to prepare their staff for implementing PD principles?
8. Are assistance organizations' mandates, organizational structures, budgetary processes, and capacities suitable to implement the Paris Declaration? What specific mandates, organizational structures, budgetary processes, and operational procedures have facilitated or impeded the adoption and implementation of the PD?
9. Has the Paris Declaration affected USG delivery of bilateral foreign assistance and its interactions with the recipient countries? If so, in what way? What are the examples of such effects? Are there major differences in the commitment and behavior of different USG assistance organizations?
10. Are their perceived disincentives to implement PD principles both at the headquarters and the field?
11. Do bilateral foreign assistance organizations provide incentives to their headquarters and field staff to implement the PD principles? If so, what are these incentives? Did these incentives produce concrete, positive results (cite examples)? Did they also provide additional training to the staff in the field?
 1. Awareness of the five PD Principles and their Implications
 2. Political Commitment to the five PD Principles
 3. Strategy for implementing the Paris Declaration, if any
 4. Translation of PD Principles into Policies, Guidelines and Operational Directives
 5. Training for facilitating adoption of the PD principles
 6. Institutional capacity to implement the Paris Declaration

This section shall analyze the mandate, organizational structure, transfer of authority to the field, budgetary processes including congressional earmarks, reporting requirements and general

procedures to determine the extent to which they facilitate or inhibit the adoption of the PD principles.

1. Assessment of the direct or indirect impacts of PD on the organization/agency's
2. Findings, Lessons Learned , and Recommendations
 - i) Content analysis of the mandates, policies, budgetary allocation processes, procedures and selected programs documents of foreign assistance organizations.
 - ii) Review of principal reports, analyses, evaluations and other documents on PD implementation issued by participating bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, think tanks and other creditable sources. (Note: There now exist a plethora of information which will be helpful in framing questions, sharpening the focus of case studies and developing suitable recommendations.)
 - iii) Interviews with the senior congressional staffers, OMB, staff at the selected USG agencies.
 - iv) Semi-structured interviews with the senior officials of the foreign assistance organizations for which case studies shall be prepared.
 - v) Key informant interviews with partnering organizations, including contractors and non-profit organizations which implement foreign assistance programs and projects
 - vi) Telephone interviews with 1-2 host country officials in up to 10 countries based on selection criteria determined jointly by evaluation COTR and the contractor. Such interviews are necessary to understand their perceptions, concerns and assessment of USG's commitment to and efforts towards implementing the Paris Declaration. (Note: at least some of the countries selected shall be those undertaking country-level evaluations in Phase 2)
 - vii) Mini-surveys through internet and/or telephone with USG managers of assistance programs and projects in the field. It is suggested that each case study conduct one survey. The number of respondents shall depend upon the size of assistance programs, the number of countries in which they are located and the sectors in which they operate. (Note: at least some of the countries selected shall be those undertaking country-level evaluations in Phase 2)
 - viii) Attendance at up to three international meetings in Europe; no other international travel is anticipated.
1. A management plan
2. A comprehensive outline of the organizational case studies based on preliminary interviews with concerned agencies
3. Draft of organizational case studies
4. Revised case studies
5. Draft of the synthesis report*
6. Submission of the final synthesis report
7. A policy brief of no more than four pages summarizing the main findings and recommendations of the synthesis report
8. Three briefings or seminars** on the content of the synthesis report, accompanied by a Power Point presentation.
9. Brief monthly progress reports

ANNEX 3: Documents Reviewed

Department of the Treasury, 2009. “2008 Report to Congress on International Affairs Technical Assistance,” Washington, DC.

OECD/DAC, 2008. “The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, Paris.

OTA, 2007-09. Terms of Reference, Workplan, and Monthly Reports, OTA Assistance to Algeria, Washington, DC.

OTA, 2007-09, Workplan and Monthly Reports, OTA Assistance to Costa Rica, Washington, DC.

OTA, 2008. “Developing OTA Program Measures,” with program averages by Team/Key Performance Results for 2008 and 2009.

OTA, 2009. Talking Points on the Paris Declaration, for conference of OTA advisors, Washington, DC.