

## BUILDING A COHERENT APPROACH TO EVALUATING THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE



There will be strong pressure to account for the results of the massive aid effort that is currently being delivered and that will be brought into Haiti. Evaluation of the relief and development efforts, if done right, can contribute to learning and support accountability for the results on the ground. The DAC Network on Development Evaluation, the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), and the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) are working together to ensure a coherent and collaborative approach to evaluation in Haiti. Interested partners are invited to join this effort at a meeting in London, United Kingdom, 18 – 19 May 2010.

### **Background**

Following the Haiti Earthquake in January 2010, and the large-scale relief effort that has been mounted, a number of evaluative efforts have already been initiated or are being planned by diverse stakeholders. These include various bilateral and multilateral donors, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, multilateral UN agencies, coalitions such as the UK's Disasters Emergencies Committee, the Canadian Humanitarian Coalition, and the Dutch Samenwerkende Hulporganisaties, as well as various individual agency efforts. The number of evaluation initiatives will likely continue to grow as pressure to explain and account for the results of aid efforts in Haiti mount.

One of the lessons of the Indian Ocean Tsunami events is that high accountability pressure led to an “avalanche” of fragmented, individual evaluations. This type of fragmentation not only results in duplication and wasted effort, but can overwhelm local systems and undercut opportunities for learning about broader impacts. The responsibility for ensuring a more co-ordinated and useful evaluation effort in Haiti lies partly with evaluation managers. But it also depends on demands made at the policy level. DAC members and other development partners will be asked to respond to questions from parliaments, media and the public about the results achieved in Haiti. When translating this accountability need into demand for evaluations, policy makers need to be aware of the opportunities for collaboration and help ensure a co-ordinated and joined-up evaluation approach.

### **Joint effort**

The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation, ALNAP, and UNEG have decided to collaborate to bring together key players involved in these evaluative efforts with operational and policy-level decision makers, in a joint meeting in London on 18-19 May. The aim of the meeting is to draw on experiences from evaluations of past disaster responses, establish a shared understanding of the evaluation aims and priorities, and start working collectively towards a coherent and cost-efficient process for commissioning and undertaking evaluations. It is hoped that this meeting will contribute to a more strategic and use-focused approach to evaluation in Haiti over the next months and years, thereby strengthening both learning and accountability of the international response.

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