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**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

DAC Network on Development Evaluation

Summary Record of the 17th Meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation

19-20 November 2014

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17TH MEETING OF THE DAC NETWORK ON DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION SUMMARY RECORD

WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2014

I. OPENING SESSION

1. The Chair Penny Hawkins (United Kingdom) opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests and invited new participants to introduce themselves. The draft agenda [DCD/DAC/EV/A(2014)2] was adopted and members approved the summary record of the 16th meeting [DCD/DAC/EV/M(2014)1].

II. FOCUSED PRESENTATIONS ON KEY WORK AREAS

Evaluating trust funds and global partnerships

2. Caroline Heider (Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), World Bank) introduced a draft note with seven guiding principles for evaluating global and regional programmes following up on the discussion at the last meeting. She clarified that further work would only move ahead if there was sufficient interest among members to collaborate.

Follow-up: Australia, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, the United States and the Secretariat indicated interest in taking work further.

Findings on budget support

3. Catherine Pravin, (European Commission (EC)) shared highlights from a synthesis of seven budget support evaluations. Budget support contributed in several main ways: through improved policy dialogue on sector reforms and strengthened public financial management systems. It also led to increased provision of public goods and services in agreed priority sectors and improved non-income poverty reduction. The synthesis found that budget support was a fully aligned modality and was most effective when there was a real partnership based on trust and confidence, though it is not a panacea. Key recommendations include the need to better target income poverty and reinforce partnerships around a strategic dialogue to nurture problem-solving. An update on seven ongoing or planned evaluations was provided - Burundi, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Paraguay, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, and Senegal - involving different management/financing structures. Next steps include disseminating the synthesis and a refresh of the methodological approach including consideration of robustness and allowing for comparison between instruments. Members were invited to join in the revival of the steering group.

Follow-up: France, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand, Switzerland, United States, IEG and the Secretariat expressed interest in further work. Next steps include dissemination of the synthesis study and a revival of the steering group. A policy brief or an *Evaluation Insights* issue with key lessons based on the synthesis would be useful to develop and share with a broader public.

Task Team on peer reviews of the evaluation functions of UN organisations

4. Co-chair Dominique de Crombrughe (Belgium) provided some background on the creation of the task team which took root in the need to ensure that evaluations produced by the evaluation functions of UN organisations could be trusted and effectively used by their constituencies. The peer reviews had

initially been viewed with some scepticism by the organisations being assessed. However, the process has evolved with UNEG taking ownership and many organisations now requesting a review. Indran Naidoo (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) co-chair of the task team completed the presentation with a status update. For 2015-16 seven peer reviews are in the pipeline (WHO, OCHA, ICAO, UNCDF, UNRWA, UNODC and ITC). Both co-chairs encouraged active involvement of members.

Follow-up: Austria, the EC, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand and Norway expressed interest in future peer review processes.

Collaborative evaluation initiatives

5. Claude Leroy-Themeze (Ministry of Economy and Finance, France) recapped the background of the initiative, which grew out of the joint evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and a discussion during the EvalNet meeting of February 2012. The aim is to transform the network of the Paris Declaration Evaluation into a platform for collaboration on evaluation. Eighteen country studies and four thematic papers were under preparation. A synthesis workshop was to be held in Manila on 2-4 December 2014, co-hosted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Philippines. Some 17 partner countries had confirmed attendance. Members were encouraged to participate and donors were asked to prepare a one page note on their experience with collaborative partner-donor evaluation and indicate whether they would be willing to pilot an evaluation project. The evaluation may already be in the work programme and should be opened to collaboration with the partner country. Members were also encouraged to consider joining the management group.

Follow-up: Expression of interest in this work was indicated by Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Korea, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, United States, AFDB, the EC and UNEG.

Capacity development task team

6. In view of staff changes in DFID, the chair of the task team will be Stephen Porter, as of January 2015. As no presentation was made on the update, members were invited to consult the written update made available as a room document.

Evaluating results-based funding

7. Hans Lundgren (Secretariat) informed members on an OECD workshop on results-based funding held on 19-20 May 2014 in collaboration with the German Development Institute (DIE). The workshop looked at various aspects of results-based funding including design, measurement and incentives. Emerging experience in sectors such as health, education, environment and governance were discussed. The workshop fed into a review on measuring and managing results in development co-operation which looks at challenges and practices among DAC members. The workshop concluded that there is a need for further evaluative evidence on results-based funding modalities. Members were invited to consider including such evaluations in their future evaluation programmes.

8. During the discussion several initiatives were highlighted including DFID's draft evaluation framework for payment by results initiatives which will be shared with members upon release. IEG will be reviewing the World Bank's programme for results (P4R) and Norway is commissioning two desk studies on experiences with results-based financing.

Follow-up: The Secretariat should be informed of any new evaluations or studies on this topic.

Analysis of evaluation plans

9. The Chair reminded members of the objective of the inventory and thanked them for submitting their plans. Angèle N'zinga (Secretariat) presented the inventory which is a user-friendly tool and provides information on planned evaluations by main sectors/themes and countries. It is available on the EvalNet [website](#). It can be used to keep each other informed on plans and for exploring collaboration in various stages of upcoming evaluations.

10. During the discussions Austria drew attention to the risk of over-load at country level when too many evaluations are going on at the same time. Australia mentioned difficulties related to gathering the information as implementation of evaluation is undertaken across the agency. Finland queried if use of statistical codes used by DAC-CRS/IATI would be helpful for members when reporting the information. Belgium noted the challenges faced in convincing colleagues that evaluations done by others are pertinent and useful. It was observed that when activities were jointly programmed it would also lead to more joint evaluations. A room document provided further analysis, highlighting potential opportunities for collaboration.

Follow-up: Network members should make their evaluation staff aware of the inventory. New or revised plans should be sent to the Secretariat to keep the inventory continuously updated and useful.

III. NETWORKING BEEHIVE

11. Members split into five groups and discussed issues faced by evaluation departments and priorities for future work. Many issues were raised in the small groups including:

- internal capacities (staff constraints in evaluation departments, need for continuous professionalisation, sharing or pooling consultants)
- ensuring uptake and learning (effective follow up on recommendations, dealing with politics, organisational challenges to learning, evaluation culture, role of evaluation in knowledge management)
- effective communication (to various stakeholders)
- role of evaluation policies (developing, implementing, revising)
- importance of quality at entry/evaluability and value for money in evaluations

12. While no decision was taken, the beehive permitted members to interact in smaller groups and share views on their challenges and priorities. It was noted that informal exchange and support among members in between meetings were enabled by the contacts made at the network meetings. It was also suggested that further analysis of some of the key issues be taken up in a study on evaluation systems.

Follow-up: The Bureau will consider which issues could lend themselves to more in depth discussion at a future meeting. The Secretariat will consult with the Bureau and members to develop a plan for an evaluation systems study.

IV. CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT: Recent evaluations and future priorities

13. Climate change mitigation and adaptation were identified among the top priorities for work in the recent member survey. A room document provided a short introduction to the field and background documents relating to the presentations were made available.

14. A brief report on the second International Conference on Evaluating Climate Change and Development, held in Washington D.C. on 4-6 November 2014, was provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Members who attended this conference also provided some feedback including the importance of using interdisciplinary approaches, the challenges of communicating complex studies to different audiences, and the need to involve policy communities in the discussions.

15. Monika Egger-Kissling (Swiss Development Co-operation) presented findings from the “Report on Effectiveness of the Swiss International Co-operation in Climate Change 2000-2012”. She described some of the challenges in the work such as the diversity of data and issues with measuring and aggregating. A further challenge was that climate change was not explicitly addressed in earlier projects with a resulting lack of baselines. The lack of a clear metrics for measuring adaptation was also highlighted. Through a clustering process the study covered an assessment of 423 projects of \$1.45 billion. A scoring system was used to assess results with climate change benefits. Lessons include that most of the climate change projects produce co-benefits and this needs to be better valorised in the future. Links between development and climate change needs consideration upfront. Another lesson is that a baseline climate change data is needed at the beginning of the intervention. This was a pioneer exercise with significant resources and a rather heavy and lengthy process but also with significant interest and uptake from stakeholders.

16. Tale Kvalvaag (Norad) shared lessons from the evaluation of Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative. She explained the advantages of conducting a real-time evaluation. A framework agreement was the opportunity to work with consultants experienced with the Norwegian development co-operation and the climate change topic. Despite the fact that baseline data had been collected, data was a key challenge in the evaluation. The issue was that the focus had changed in the programmes over time. Another issue related to “leakage” and the fact that deforestation may move elsewhere rather than in the observed area. There was strong policy and media interest but it required development briefs as the matter was complex to communicate. For this type of evaluation, covering several complex fields, teams need to be interdisciplinary. Norway is now in the process of planning another real-time evaluation of the initiative.

17. Karen Rot-Münstermann, (African Development Bank, Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)) shared findings from the independent joint evaluation of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF). The CIF evaluation covered two trust funds: the clean technology fund (\$5.5 billion) and the strategic climate fund (\$2.4 billion), implemented through five multilateral banks. It was mandated after three years of operation to assess the effectiveness of the CIF and to provide lessons for the benefit of the Green Climate Fund. A key issue raised by the evaluation was that the CIF had not clarified the interpretation of how and when to exercise the sunset clause which is causing uncertainty into operations. The governance structure achieved legitimacy but was complex and lacked a secretariat with a strong executive function which impeded efficiency. Government ownership of investment plans was secured and increased attention to gender over time. However, there were delays in project preparations due to complexity and other factors. The presenter also pointed out that while there were projects that would achieve significantly higher renewable energy production, they may not necessarily be scaled up or replicated due to policy, regulatory or macroeconomic situations in many of the countries. She concluded with some process reflections related to the fact that this was a complex evaluation with five MDBs involved and turnover of staff as well as a rush to complete ahead of the CIF partnership forum which put some pressure on the final stages of the process.

Follow-up: Members are invited to form an interest group to share experiences and consider areas for potential collaboration. Members interested in joining should inform the Secretariat who will take on initial co-ordination.

V. COMPLEXITY AND DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

18. USAID shared their work in this area and how they are piloting complexity aware monitoring tools in the field. During the discussion, several members indicated that they had done some work in the area, including DFID related to conflict and Belgium on post-conflict in Burundi. Canada drew attention to programme theory and how feedback loops during implementation influence a programme. While several members indicated they had so far limited practical applications to showcase, they also indicated interest in further exploring the subject, notably with experiences from concrete applications. It was suggested to invite external experts working on evaluation and complexity to contribute to a future discussion as they could bring insights and different critical perspectives.

Follow-up: A session on complexity should be organised for the next network meeting to which members will be invited to contribute.

THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2014

VI. WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS FOR SUCCESSFUL EVALUATIONS

19. In the style of a fishbowl discussion, members engaged in a panel discussion which led to a lively exchange. The Chair introduced the topic and asked panellists to share key factors to focus on in order to ensure that commissioning and management of evaluations is successful. Ole Winckler Andersen's article *Some Thoughts on Development Evaluation Processes* (published in IDS Bulletin, Volume 45, Number 6, November 2014) was a background document for this session.

20. Chris Barnett (ITAD consultant) was invited to open the discussion and described the mismatch in expectations that often plague evaluations throughout the whole cycle. He felt that this is commonly due to over- or under- specification in the Terms of Reference, and related this to the current procurement and management models – models that originate from the simple procurement of goods and services, and are less well suited to delivering complex evaluations. He suggested recreating a more flexible procurement model. Per Øyvind Bastøe (Norway) argued that recreating the procurement model may not be the only solution. He pointed to the importance of trying out different organisational models in implementing evaluations and going beyond the independence of evaluation to look at the credibility and use of evaluation findings as more fundamental. Ole Winckler Andersen (Denmark) highlighted three salient issues from his article: i) commissioners and consultants have a joint interest in this discussion. ii) There is now continuous dialogue between the commissioner and the consultant and this is a consequence of the fact that most evaluation studies involve evaluation of complex activities. Therefore the Terms of Reference require some flexibility throughout the evaluation process which may be difficult if processes and specifications are very rigid. iii) There is little systematic evidence on evaluation management and processes and how they impact the final outcome of the evaluations.

21. Overall, practices vary among members and between studies with regard to use and interaction with consultants during the evaluation process. During the discussion it was suggested to consider conducting an inventory of practices among members. It was also suggested that expectations in terms of mutual responsibilities during the evaluation process be more explicitly described in the Terms of Reference. When commissioning, focus should be placed on what the evaluation is trying to achieve and who it should

influence. The increasing use of evaluability assessment and an application of proportionality principles could also be helpful. Some donors had found that holding workshops with key stakeholders on evaluation recommendations before finalisation was also useful.

22. The ensuing discussion highlighted the need to have close relations with consultants throughout the process. Members mentioned the lack of flexibility they often face and the challenge of balancing budget and expectations. There is also an issue around how to create incentives for the evaluation market in order to ensure better quality. Several members described difficulties around building up a well-functioning team involving external consultants and the time spent briefing them on the culture of the institution and the programme. At the same time, consultants often provide value in terms of expertise and credibility. Evaluation units need to be demanding regarding the consultants' outputs and make sure they also provide them with the necessary information and support. During the discussion, it was also pointed out that some evaluation units may have too many evaluations going on at the same time which may lead to a lack of staff engagement with consultants.

Follow-up: As practice and perspectives vary considerably it was suggested that further discussion and collection of experiences would be useful. One possible avenue suggested was voluntary peer reviews for mutual learning. Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand expressed interest in exploring how to take this idea further.

VII. EVALUATION: 2015 AND BEYOND

23. Deborah Rugg (United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)) gave an update on the adoption of the UN resolution on "Capacity Building for Evaluation of Development Activities at the Country Level" by the second Committee of the UN General Assembly. The full adoption was expected end of November. Many of the UN ambassadors have actively supported the resolution. She also updated members on the activities proposed in 2015 by the International Year of Evaluation partnership. The list of events was provided in the background document. UNEG is working on improving communication outside its network emphasising several key messages such as how evaluation is critically important for countries pursuing the new post-2015 development agenda and how it can help establish incentives for effectiveness, transparency and accountability. The presenter also stressed that focus should be to strengthen capacity for monitoring and evaluation at the national level, including through greater involvement and engagement of civil society and the private sector.

24. Members shared the various initiatives planned for the Evaluation Year and several of them reported still being at a brainstorming stage. The 2015 International Year of Evaluation was proclaimed by evaluators but should also draw in other communities and partner countries. It was suggested that members consider disseminating their events virtually to reach a greater audience. The presenter requested that members document their initiatives in view of UNEG's effort to report on the Evaluation Year. Members interested in submitting an event for the EvalYear initiative should contact UNEG or visit the [EvalYear website](#) for more information.

Follow-up: UNEG will keep the network informed on further action related to the UN resolution on evaluation capacity and share the upcoming evaluation study on monitoring and evaluation lessons of the MDGs. Members should inform the Secretariat of forthcoming events and the Secretariat will keep a list of future events updated and available on the website. The Bureau should further discuss how to usefully add to the various scheduled events during the 2015 Evaluation Year when planning for the next network meeting. The topic of "learning" could be further explored.

Sharing of experience with evaluations that made a difference

25. Caroline Heider (IEG, World Bank) presented two fundamental principles which were successfully implemented at the World Food Programme (WFP): i) ensuring sufficient coverage to provide insight on overall health of the portfolio of the institution and ii) making strategic choices. The objective was to think about what the WFP would need to know in two years' time in order to make strategic choices. This allowed evaluating how the current practice would need to change in order to meet the ambitions of the future strategy. A similar approach is now being implemented in the World Bank with different challenges.

26. Jonas Heirman (United Kingdom) gave the example of a social cash transfer programme implemented in Zambia in partnership with UNICEF and the local government. DFID supported an impact evaluation which looked at the effects of a new model targeting households with children under the age of five. The RCT showed that the cash transfer had a strong effect on reducing poverty, food security, maternal and child wellbeing, and production. More studies are being conducted looking at why this model had strong effects compared to other programmes.

27. Shirley Hoffmann (USAID) described how USAID had experienced a revival of the development science concept. The first meta-evaluation looked at the quality and coverage of USAID evaluation from 2009-2012. The conclusions showed that quality had improved and the number of evaluations had increased. Another meta-evaluation was conducted on the implementation of the programme cycle which included the review of the design, the strategic planning and the monitoring and evaluation processes. In order to institutionalise the programme cycle, the Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research reconfigured its structure and work streams and focused on providing more support to the missions to fulfil their role in evaluation. New support mechanisms were created for short- and medium-term support relating to monitoring and evaluation. The presenter invited members to visit the Learning Lab external website: <http://usaidlearninglab.org/> and share experiences.

28. Bob Finlayson (Independent Evaluation Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB)) presented two programmes. Regarding the inclusive growth evaluation programme, findings showed that funding needed more balanced allocation to achieve improvement to outcomes. In terms of impact, the findings provoked a strong reaction from management and recognition of the gaps in strategic documents. The second study evaluated ADB's capacity to access climate finance. The evaluation concluded that ADB's strategy, policies and plans provided an appropriate enabling environment. The focus however, had been on mitigation, particularly in the energy sector and they now needed to look at how to broaden the approach into adaptation and other sectors. They developed a range of potential opportunities where ADB could enhance its performance and adjust the organisation's structure to help meet climate finance requirements.

Follow-up: Further concrete experiences of influential evaluations and effective take-up should be shared with the Secretariat. The topic is well worth revisiting.

VIII. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

29. Dereck Rooker-Smith (Australia) was elected vice-chair, nominated by Ireland; seconded by the United States. Karin Kohlweg (Austria) continues to serve as vice-chair.

IX. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30. James Melanson (Canada) gave an update on the development effectiveness review and the evolution of the MOPAN exercise. Canada and the Netherlands have jointly agreed to conduct development effectiveness reviews of the UNHCR, UN Women and UNFPA. Responding to members' concerns about the risk of overlap, MOPAN is devising a new methodology for its reviews (MOPAN 3.0) which will integrate the development effectiveness review methodology. During discussions some members suggested

more collaboration with multilateral departments. It was also suggested to include MOPAN assessments in the inventory of evaluation plans.

Follow-up: Members are encouraged to provide advice to colleagues in multilateral departments so they can effectively engage and support assessment approaches which are robust and evidence-based.

31. In June 2013, the DAC Evaluation Network co-sponsored with IEG a successful workshop on “Evaluating support to private sector”. It provided an opportunity for members to take stock and share recent experiences in the field of private sector evaluations. Though many have expressed interest in taking discussions forward, no one has stepped forward to take the lead. Further to the Secretariat’s call, Denmark, Germany, the EC and IEG indicated interest in exploring further collaborative work on private sector evaluations.

Follow-up: Members interested in joining the interest group and explore areas of collaborative work should contact IEG and the Secretariat.

32. Linking to earlier discussions, the Secretariat noted the suggestions made to update the study on “Evaluation in development agencies”. Members expressed interest in going beyond a mere update of systems and organisational structures, and conduct an analytical study which would look into the various approaches currently practised across development agencies and identify potential strengths, weaknesses and trade-offs based on agency experience.

Follow-up: The Secretariat will consult further with the Bureau and the members in drawing up a plan for the study so as to ensure that the key dimensions to be analysed will meet members’ needs and main interests.

33. Hans Lundgren (Secretariat) and the Chair thanked Megan Kennedy-Chouane, who is leaving the Secretariat, and Dominique de Crombrughe (Belgium), who is leaving his post in the Belgian Development Co-operation next spring, for their many excellent contributions to the network over the past years.

34. Spain announced the release of *Making Evaluation Sensitive to Gender and Human Rights*; a new publication which includes an overview of different approaches to this topic.

35. AFDB’s term as chair of ECG will come to an end at the fall meeting. IEG will take over as chair during 2015.

X. CLOSING SESSION

The next meeting will take place on 15-16 June 2015.

INFORMAL SESSION

36. Jonas Heirman (United Kingdom) described DFID’s partnership with the World Bank’s Development Impact Evaluation team (DIME) to set up the Impact Evaluation to Development Impact (i2i) facility specifically targeting impact evaluations in areas lacking strong evidence. Arianna Legovini (DIME, World Bank) highlighted key features of the programme and how impact evaluation affects project implementation positively. She underlined that i2i provides an opportunity for donors and governments to test which development interventions across different sectors are working and worth scaling up.

37. Korea EXIM Bank shared experience with testing the criteria of significance. This additional criterion is intended to enable EDCF to measure areas where they do not perform so well in terms of evaluating

implementation. Discussions highlighted that significance had been used by Germany in the past as a criterion but abandoned, partly due to its statistical connotation. The discussion also clarified that the five DAC evaluation criteria had been conceived to help structure the evaluation questions and that they should not be applied as a matter of compliance but rather used selectively according to the needs and focus of a particular evaluation. It was also noted that some other agencies use additional criteria.

38. Eileen Cronin (United States) briefed members on the update of the 2012 U.S. Department of State's evaluation policy. She shared the State department's experience in implementing the policy including the critical importance of leadership support and advocacy. Implementation involved a learning curve for both State staff and contractors. The new policy will include a new transparency policy for foreign assistance evaluations and will involve all types of evaluations including programmes, processes, and diplomatic initiatives. The new policy is planned to be released in early 2015 and will involve continued capacity building.

**Participants List for DAC Network on Development Evaluation
Liste des Participants pour Réseau du CAD sur l'évaluation du
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19/11/2014 - 20/11/2014

All Sessions

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