



DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE  
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

Cancels & replaces the same document of 15 May 2003

Working Party on Aid Evaluation

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37TH MEETING

27 - 28 March 2003

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## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE WP-EV

### Item 1: Opening Session

- a) The agenda was adopted.
- b) The Summary Record of the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting was adopted.
- c) DAC Subsidiary discussion – state of play

1. Mr. Roeskau (Secretariat) presented the proposal for the overall revision of the DAC architecture and the transformation of the WP-EV into a “Network of Evaluation Experts” [DCD/DAC(2003)12]. Several Members expressed unease with the new title of the group, and stressed the costs of abandoning what had become a ‘brand name’. Concerns were also voiced regarding future levels of resources under the new setting.

2. The United States delegate (Mr. Kammerer) who had been closely involved in the negotiations on the architecture, informed Members that the proposed change was not intended in any way to be interpreted as a way to decrease the allocation of Secretariat resources devoted to this activity from the Part I budget. Resources would continue to depend on the quality of work carried out, which thus far had been regarded with great respect inside and outside the DAC.

3. In response to the various questions raised, Mr. Roeskau pointed out that the new setting would not imply any subordination of the Network to other DAC subsidiary bodies, but rather an enhanced degree of autonomy. He also stressed that the Network would be called upon to develop synergies with the newly created WP on Aid Effectiveness and reiterated that no decrease in allocations of financial or staff resources was foreseen. He also indicated that the intention was to make the Chair of the Network an ex-officio member of the WP on Aid Effectiveness. Mr McGill (Secretariat) pointed out that the DAC meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May would help to more clearly establish the areas of linkage between the new WP and the Network.

4. Concerning the name of the group, the Chair noted the preference expressed by Members for the ‘DAC Network on Development Evaluation’ rather than ‘Network of Evaluation Experts’. He welcomed the reassurances regarding sustained levels of resources dedicated to the Network. He finally asked Mr. Dabelstein (Denmark) to attend the ensuing DAC meeting to inform DAC Members of the views expressed by WP-EV Members and to report back on the deliberations.

### Item 2: Workshop on Partners in Development Evaluation – Learning and Accountability

5. Mr. Kamelgarn (France) summarised the main highlights of the workshop which had preceded the WP meeting. The Workshop clearly demonstrated the interest and need to communicate among evaluation development partners. During the discussion, a number of Members noted that the event had been an excellent opportunity for dialogue and congratulated France on hosting this successful workshop.

6. Next steps identified include the following: a letter on behalf of the WP-EV to be sent to the French Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry, Mr. Mer, by the Chair; a questionnaire to be developed to assess the needs and ideas of workshop participants for follow-up action; the website developed for the workshop will be maintained as a tool for sharing information and exchanging views. The Chair concluded by thanking France for the success of this event and the members of the Steering group for their contributions in preparing the workshop.

### **Item 3: Review of evaluation synthesis studies**

#### ***Review on gender and evaluation***

##### a) Gender and evaluation

7. The Review on Gender and Evaluation was discussed at the WP-EV statutory meeting on 27 March, 2003. Ms. Tjoelker (Netherlands) and Ms. Thioléron (Secretariat) attended the meeting on behalf of the WP-GEN.

8. Ms. Tjoelker was invited to make a short statement on the WP-GEN's initial response to the Review which was positive and agreed with the basic recommendations. Mr. Ellis (Australia) which co-sponsored the study together with the Netherlands presented the methodology of the Review, the selection process for the evaluations and some of the salient features. Comments were generally positive with some questions on the methodology and notably on the definition and assessment of what was a good evaluation study in the report. It was agreed that the study would be revised as required and the results would then be disseminated in electronic format to broaden its distribution, including on the Development Gateway. It was also agreed that findings should be integrated into the WP-EV's work on evaluation capacity building and relevant capacity building seminars, rather than holding a specific workshop on the subject. The group welcomed the interest of the WP-GEN to take the conclusions of the study forward, and should a workshop be arranged, the WP-GEN might wish to consider inviting interested Members of the WP-EV as required.

##### b) Lessons learned in donor support to decentralisation and local governance

9. Mr. Schou (Consultant) presented the main conclusions of the report. Members generally welcomed the report and found that it had benefited from the workshop held in September 2002, when the earlier draft was reviewed and further inputs were collected. It was agreed that the consultant should do some further work in order to distinguish more clearly between the findings, conclusions and lessons learned, and some further editing was also needed.

10. It was recommended that the report be published, once final revisions were completed, in the evaluation series and be widely distributed, including at the Africities conference the Club de Sahel is involved in preparing.

### **Item 4: Client survey of peer reviews: follow up to the recommendations**

11. Mr. McGill (Secretariat) thanked Members for the useful work done leading up to the client survey study which had been most useful and whose recommendations continue to contribute to shaping future peer review processes. He expressed hope that collaboration would continue.

12. Members welcomed the suggestions contained in the note "Follow up to the Client Survey of Peer Reviews [DCD/DAC/EV(2003)2] and several members (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland) indicated that they would be willing to join an informal support group to discuss methodological and related issues. Others indicated interest in continued work and would be prepared to contribute methodologically to relevant material such as Country Programme Evaluations guidelines. It

was noted that assessment frameworks in the area of field visits might be one issue to start working on but it was also emphasized that work should be demand-led and have realistic expectations. It was clarified that the group would be open to all members willing and interested in contributing in keeping with the tradition of the WP.

#### **Item 5 Joint evaluations**

13. The session was introduced by two brief presentations by Mr. Dabelstein (Denmark) and Mr. Ingram (World Bank). Mr Dabelstein highlighted the benefits and costs involved in conducting different types of joint evaluations [Note on Joint Evaluations; Room Document no.2]. Mr. Ingram outlined the Multi-stakeholder Evaluation of the Comprehensive Development Framework, focusing on the implementation process.

14. Further background to the discussion was provided by Room Document no.3 (Lessons Learned from World Bank Experience in Joint Evaluations) and Room Document no.4 (Highlights of Joint Evaluations) as well as the DAC WP-EV publication *Effective Practices in Conducting a Joint Multi-donor Evaluation* (2000).

15. Summing up the discussion, the Chair stressed the firm and widespread recognition among Members of the value of joint evaluations, not only where there is joint financing. He noted that joint evaluations are often heterogeneous in character and are difficult to compare. There seemed to be a need for elaborating common criteria for case studies selection and measurement of transaction costs, as well as more attention to the issue of quality. To work further on these issues, and to help facilitate further joint evaluations and collaboration, several Members (Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the World Bank) expressed interest in the creation of a 'task team on joint evaluations' to be convened by Denmark. The Secretariat pointed out that, as in the tradition of the WP-EV, the task force would be open to all members willing to participate in the future.

#### **Item 6: Future work**

##### a) General introduction on future work

16. The Vice Chair (Mr. Dabelstein) reported on the discussions being held simultaneously in the DAC meeting. He informed Members that DAC Members had agreed to re-name the WP-EV and that it would henceforth be called the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, as outlined in DCD/DAC(3003)12/REV1 (revised version).

17. The Chair noted the various suggestions for joint work and joint evaluations that had arisen from yesterday's informal session on joint evaluations (the suggestions were also distributed). He encouraged members to bring these ideas back home and consider how to take them forward and use the network of interested members.

##### b) Monitoring Effective Aid Delivery/Harmonisation of Donor Practices

18. The Chair thanked Mr. Isenman (Secretariat) for his presentation on the planned work of the new Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices. Although the mandate for this new group is yet to be defined, he noted the willingness of many members to contribute to its work including with regard to advice on evaluation and monitoring systems. He underlined that the WP had a history of collaboration with other subsidiary bodies of the DAC which had produced useful results.

## c) Evaluation of budget support

19. Mr. Kirk (DfID) presented the main outcomes of the recent workshop on evaluation of budget support and programme aid held in Glasgow on 3-4 March. He noted that the workshop had fulfilled its objectives in identifying emerging issues for future evaluation/research and outlined the main lines of possible future work on this topic (Room Document no 7).

20. The proposals were widely welcomed by Members and it was agreed that interested members should meet in a technical group for work to proceed, with DFID as lead co-ordinator (the following members indicated interest in the initiative: Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UNDP and the Secretariat). An inventory with a stocktaking of GBS initiatives will be undertaken by the Netherlands as a first step in what was agreed to be a step by step approach to take this work further.

21. Following a specific question, the Chair also clarified that this technical group of interested members was not intended as a 'new body'. Rather, it would follow the way the WP had always organized its work by letting interested members work together in a participatory fashion with no closed doors to other members of the group. He hoped that a wide group of members would participate in steering the work, and noted that some partners in the technical group may wish to take more active roles while others may wish to play more of a backseat role in terms of analytical support. Hence, the level of involvement would vary according to various members' interests.

## d) Impact evaluation

22. Mr. Feinstein (WB) reported on the informal meeting held in Washington DC (November 2002). During the discussion, several members (Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, UNDP, the World Bank and the Secretariat) expressed interest in future work and collaboration.

23. The Chair noted that members employed different terms and methods in their approaches to impact evaluation and that, while recognising the need for further experimentation among the evaluation community and involving the research community, further work would be needed to clarify such differences and explore possible harmonisation. To this effect, it was suggested that a session of the next meeting of the Network on Evaluation be dedicated to preliminary findings and future joint work in impact evaluation, as well as to the possible organisation of a thematic workshop in the near future.

## e) Results management and evaluation: follow up to the DAC Forum on "Managing for development results and Aid Effectiveness".

24. Mr. Lundgren (Secretariat) presented a "Proposal for further work on assessing results management systems" [Room Document no 9] which drew on earlier work by the WP-EV and the outcomes of the DAC Development Partnership Forum on Managing for Development Results and Aid Effectiveness [DCD/DAC(2003)6]. Members generally welcomed the proposal and its attention to the perspective of the partner country and the issue of the interaction with donors' results management systems, and some indicated that they would be willing to positively consider also financial support. Several suggestions were made on the draft proposal, including the need for careful selection of countries for case studies, and to build the desk phase on existing material including ongoing and recent evaluations addressing issues related to results-based management, such as the CDF and the PRSP evaluations. The importance of linkages to accountability systems and incentive structures was also noted.

25. Summing up the discussion, the Chair noted the support for the work proposed, and asked the Secretariat to revise the draft proposal to take into account the various helpful comments that had been

made during the discussion and submit a revised note to members. He also invited WP-EV members to share with the Secretariat any current or planned work which would be relevant to the assessment.

f) Country programme evaluation

26. Mr. Dabelstein (Denmark) noted the useful report prepared by the Inter American Development Bank "Summary report on the informal workshop on country program evaluation: Lessons learned from the recent evaluations of Bolivia, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua". In order to synthesise lessons and issues in a systematic way from these studies, he indicated that he would be willing to look into financing a consultant to undertake this work and report back to a future meeting of the WP-EV.

g) DAC Evaluation inventory

27. Mr Ellis (Australia) indicated Australia's interest in conducting a review of the quality of evaluations as a result from earlier discussions highlighting issues of quality. Mr Ellis proposed for example, that an examination of quality standards of evaluations contained in the CIDA inventory could be undertaken. The Chair welcomed the suggestion of a discussion of quality of evaluations and noted that Members' evaluation functions are reviewed in the peer reviews but not the quality of their individual evaluations. This would require resources and common standards, and possibly additional mechanisms. The Chair asked Members interested in developing the idea to contact Australia directly and it could then be taken up again in the full plenary at a future date.

28. Mr Feinstein (World Bank) announced that the aid effectiveness section of the development gateway is available and is a useful addition to the work of the inventory as a possibility of having greater leverage within the whole development community.

29. Mr Singh (Canada) affirmed that the website has unrestricted access and contributions are being welcomed from outside sources so as to broaden the Inventory. Statistics have shown a moderate increase in access to the inventory. A continuing increase in the use of the inventory depends on the quality and the scope of the material available and members were encouraged to contribute. Measuring direct and non direct hits (for example links through the World Bank Gateway) have proved a problem for keeping track of statistics since non-direct hits are not recorded.

30. The Chair acknowledged the need for further discussion of this issue and the linkages between various websites. It was suggested that a fuller discussion be held at the next meeting of the Network.

h) Conflict/ peace building and evaluation

31. Mr. Dybfest (Norway) reported on progress with an ongoing study on results and lessons learned by the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo. It will be ready in July and a conference is likely to be held in Norway in mid-November. This work could be an important basis to build on. It may also help clarify the need for possible further work by the WP in synthesizing lessons in the area of peace-building and re-construction.

i) Strengthening links with development evaluation communities, research institutions and evaluation associations.

32. In view of the lack of time to deal in a substantive way with the issue, it was agreed to postpone this discussion until the next meeting.

j) Other business

33. The Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of members to Elisabeth Barsacq, Jan Dybfest and Fernando de Soto who will leave the group before it meets again. He noted the useful support and many contributions provided by them and expressed his best wishes for the future.

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Item 1	i	Draft Annotated Agenda	DCD/DAC/EV/A(2003)1
	ii	Summary record of the 36 <sup>th</sup> meeting	DCD/DAC/EV/M(2002)1/PROV
		The DAC Subsidiary Bodies	DCD/DAC(2003)12
Item 2		Workshop on Partners in Development Evaluation – Learning and Accountability	DCD/DAC/EV(2003)1
Item 3	i.	Lessons learned in donor support to decentralisation and local governance	DCD/DAC/EV(2003)3
	ii	Review on gender and evaluation	Room document 1
Item 4		Follow up to the Client Survey of Peer Reviews	DCD/DAC/EV(2003)2 DCD/DAC(2002)28 and Ann 1
Item 5		Note on joint evaluations, Denmark	Room document 2
		Lessons learned from experiences of joint evaluations, World Bank	Room document 3
		Highlights of joint evaluations – members responses to request for information	Room document 4
Item 6	i.	Excerpt from the Programme of Work and Budget	Room document 5
	ii.	Rome Declaration on Harmonisation	Room document 6
	iii.	Budget support – possible future work	Room document 7
	iv.	Impact evaluation	Room document 8
	v.	Results management and evaluation: Report of the DAC Forum on Managing for Development Results	DCD/DAC/(2003)6
		Proposal for further work on assessing results management systems	Room document 9
	vi.	Country programme evaluation	Room document 10
	vii.	DAC Evaluation inventory	Room document 11
		Reponses to information request on recent developments in evaluation	Background room document 1 and Background room document 1 Addendum
		Country led evaluations: A discussion note	
		Provisional list of participants	
		List of Working Party Contacts	



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