

Unclassified**English - Or. English****11 April 2024****DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE****Summary Record of the 1090th DAC meeting held on 11 May 2021 (Session 1)
and 12 May (Session 2)**

The Draft Summary Record [DCD/DAC/M(2021)5] was approved under Item 1 of the Draft Annotated Agenda [DCD/DAC/A(2021)7], without modification, at the 23 June meeting and is now issued as FINAL.

The Committee also agreed to declassify this final version.

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Summary Record of the 1090th DAC meeting held on 11 May 2021 (Session 1) and 12 May (Session 2)

SESSION 1: Tuesday, 11 May 2021

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Approval of Draft Summary Record

1. The DAC adopted the double-session draft agenda for 11 and 12 May without modification. The Committee then considered the draft summary records from the March and April DAC meetings. For the March summary record, Germany requested an extension to the initial deadline for comments by 10 May through the agreed written procedure, which was granted by the Chair. For the April Summary record, Canada proposed a slight amendment, which the Chair asked the Secretariat to incorporate into the final version. With this one revision, Members then approved the April summary record and agreed to its declassification. To avoid confusion, the Chair requested that the April summary not be declassified until the March summary had been approved and declassified.

Item 2. Thematic Discussion on COVID Response and Recovery

2. In this third special thematic discussion, members engaged in a discussion on lessons learned from the crisis and how to determine the DAC's strategic priorities going forward. The exchange was informed by a Secretariat note that highlighted the growing evidence of the impact of the crisis on developing countries and the unique role the DAC could play in the international response, which would be a focus in coming months at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM), Tidewater, and at the UN, G20, G7 and other global fora.

3. The Secretariat presented a list of recommended policy actions for the DAC to support developing countries in their response and recovery from the crisis, drawing on data and analysis from: the December 2020 Development Co-operation Report; November 2020 Global Outlook on Financing for Development; over 20 DCD COVID policy papers; the 2021-22 DAC PWB COVID-19 Package, an optional horizontal package of activities focused on financing, peer learning, and support for a green and gender-equal recovery designed to complement the COVID-related outputs mainstreamed in the PWB; and, the COVID-19 Evaluation Coalition. EvalNet Chair Mr Patrick Empey (Ireland) presented early lessons and emerging evidence from the COVID-19 Global Evaluation report, due for release at a peer learning event on June 18, with ongoing work on results and effectiveness continuing throughout the year.

4. Delegates shared information on significant progress to-date to support developing countries' COVID response in the areas outlined by the Secretariat, as well as on their priorities for individual and collective action going forward. Many reflected on the significant impact that the crisis was having on development co-operation planning and delivery, requiring new levels of flexibility to adapt to the new context and broader cross-policy discussions. There was broad consensus on the need to step up efforts on vaccine production and distribution in developing countries as an immediate response to the crisis, with many interventions also highlighting that an effective global response to the crisis required more attention to strengthening developing countries' health systems. A number of members drew attention to the need for stronger data and monitoring systems as well as other efforts to help manage the crisis and increase resilience against potential new shocks, including through further exploring the role of development finance with the broader agenda of financing global public goods. Several members highlighted the need to ensure the DAC's work promoted synergies, but did not duplicate, work going on elsewhere in multilateral system (for example, on crisis co-ordination, mobilisation of public and private financing, and managing debt sustainability), while others pointed to the DAC's added value on these topics, noting the importance of maintaining the ODA increase seen in 2020.

5. Throughout the session, members referred to the challenge of ensuring the right balance between the need to find flexible responses to the crisis in the short-term while remaining focussed on the DAC's longer-term support for SDGs and the goal of building forward in a fairer and greener way. In summing up, the Chair highlighted the whole-of-government nature of the COVID challenge. She stressed the importance of core DAC business during the crisis (including statistics, evaluation and peer learning), while also recognising that the crisis had provoked reflection on the DAC's business model and the need to ensure maximum effectiveness. In response to a request for further information on the PWB, the Secretariat was asked to share additional information to clarify which areas of the activities were mainstreamed in the PWB, and which activities were incorporated into the full optional COVID package under IOR 3.3 following the meeting. An MPI or other discussion on vaccines and health systems was also proposed, drawing on existing DCD collaboration with ELS and the OECD Sherpa, with a focus on where the DAC can add value.

Item 3. Summary of Conclusions

6. The Secretariat provided an overview of the decisions, action points, and next steps emerging from the day's proceedings. The Secretariat will circulate this overview to the Committee in electronic form.

Item 4. Any Other Business

7. This item was deferred to the following day.

SESSION 2: Wednesday, 12 May 2021

Item 5. Briefing by the DCD Director and DAC Chair

8. The Chair and Director reported to the Committee on a number of developments, including through communications issued in the previous days. The Chair noted that the date for the DAC Senior Level Meeting had now been confirmed, with a Save-the-Date distributed for 18-19 January. The meeting will take place either in virtual or hybrid format, to be decided closer to the event. In commenting on the revised Roadmap, the Chair noted that materials for Tidewater would be issued shortly. The meeting, to be held on 16-17 June in Dublin, will be followed by a post-Tidewater discussion scheduled for the DAC June meeting. The Chair flagged the need for reflection on how to ensure thematic discussions were as strategic as possible, and suggested that the planned Thematic Discussion on Open, Democratic and Inclusive Societies be delayed to allow more preparation time, with a decision on timing to be taken by the DAC Bureau at its meeting later in May. The Director provided an update on the Roadmap and drew members' attention to references to the DAC's work in the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Communique, released on May 5. He presented the latest Committee Progress Report, which provides members with information on all 15 output results and 49 intermediate output results implemented in 2019 and 2020, as well as detailed information on VCs. In addition, members welcomed the Director's update on the new reform process underway in the Directorate based on the five policy missions approved by members for the 2021-22 PWB.

9. On other briefings, WP-Stat co-facilitator (Norway) reported on the recent successful dialogue with civil society organisations (CSOs) on the topics of Covid-19 response, private sector instruments, and climate and environment. She also flagged a range of upcoming meetings and events, including a workshop on ODA eligibility of R&D and Covid-19 activities on June 3 and the next WP-Stat meeting on 16-18 June. In other updates, the Secretariat updated the Committee on planning for upcoming CSO Days events, to take place on 27 April – 4 June, and the US delegate updated the Committee on preparations for the MCM on 31 May and 1 June.

Item 6. Small Group on Climate and Environment

10. The UK delegate briefed members on the process to date, including close collaboration with Environet and WP-Stat. This was followed by the Secretariat's update on the state of play for the matrix exercise and outline of next steps ahead for the group's work. EnviroNet Chair Ulrika Akesson briefed members on latest developments on the preparation of a proposal on reporting on HLM commitments. The Chair encouraged members who had not yet returned a response for the matrix exercise to do so as quickly as possible. She highlighted that these inputs would be critical in shaping the key questions for discussion on climate and environment at Tidewater, ahead of COP 26 in November.

11. The Committee discussed how to consult with developing countries in a meaningful and efficient way. The Chair called on the Climate and Environment Small Group, supported by the Secretariat, to identify open questions to put to different stakeholders and to come up with a plan to move forward on consultations and outreach. It was agreed that the Secretariat would consult with the Development Cluster and across OECD bodies and that a consultation of developing countries via GPEDC could also be considered. The draft agenda for the annual DAC-CSO Dialogue includes an item on climate.

Item 7. The 60th Anniversary of the Development Assistance Committee

12. The Chair opened the session by recalling the long history of the Development Assistance Committee and invited members to consider proposals for the event, as well as ideas on communications. The Secretariat briefed members on initial thinking the celebrations, suggesting a two-hour event with moderated panel discussions – one looking backwards, one looking forwards – as well as a DAC brochure and a strong social media campaign. Members welcomed the opportunity to reflect on this event, highlighting the need for an inclusive approach involving developing countries and development co-operation providers beyond the DAC. In addition, members suggested that the event should showcase the DAC's role as a driver of transition and modernisation, with examples of countries which had graduated, including those which had moved from being a recipient to a provider of development co-operation. In her summary, the Chair thanked members for the brainstorming, noting that she would continue to keep the Committee informed as the planning advanced.

Item 8. Toolkit on Policy Reform for Effective Development Co-operation

13. The Secretariat presented the advanced concept note on "Making Development Co-operation Reform Happen: A Toolkit for Change". The toolkit will enable DAC members and other providers to define and navigate their various reform processes in support of more effective development co-operation. In a rapidly changing world, the toolkit aims to provide development co-operation policy makers with the right evidence, tools and questions to advance reform tailored to context, opportunities and challenges. Using a policy maker perspective, the toolkit will explore incentives for reform (the "why" question), the nature and stakes of reforming (the "what" question), and the stages of the reform process (the "how" question).

14. In discussion, members welcomed the work to date and shared experiences on their own reform and change management processes. Members also emphasised the importance of keeping this work updated in an iterative way as implementation proceeds. Several DAC members expressed interest in sharing domestic reform experiences and to join the expert group that will support the development of the toolkit. A range of DAC participants and non-DAC OECD countries highlighted how this workstream was already supporting their respective reform processes and bringing them closer to DAC standards. The Secretariat thanked delegates for their feedback, which will inform the development of the Toolkit going forward and recalled the strong collaboration across DCD and the OECD, and with other relevant organisations, on this work. In the spirit of influencing and being influenced, the Chair also encouraged the Secretariat to continue to consult with development co-operation providers beyond the DAC.

Item 9. Summary of Conclusions

15. The Secretariat provided an overview of the decisions, action points, and next steps emerging from the day's proceedings. The Secretariat will circulate this overview to the Committee in electronic form.

Item 10. Any Other Business

16. One member, supported by a number of others, raised the issue of scheduling clashes for those delegates serving on the DAC as well as of OECD standing committees, in particular with the Budget Committee and Executive Committee meetings. These clashes have become increasingly frequent in the virtual setting with meetings often spread out over two or more days. The Secretariat noted that it was working to regularly signal clashes to other committees as they arose to identify alternative dates and would also raise the issue with the Council Secretariat. The Chair offered to reach out to the chairs of standing committees concerned, pointing out that while DAC meetings were scheduled well in advance, standing committees often scheduled their meetings without taking account of the existing DAC calendar.

17. In response to a question on the peer review timetable, the Secretariat updated members on the schedule of reviews for 2021-22, and noted members would be formally advised of any adjustments in the calendar by the end of June.