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DAC Network on Poverty Reduction

POVNET COMMUNICATIONS PLAN: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

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POVNET COMMUNICATIONS PLAN: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Introduction and purpose

1. The POVNET meeting on 16-17 November 2005 raised the issue of communications and dissemination based on a note by the Secretariat on “How can we best disseminate POVNET messages?” [DCD/DAC/POVNET(2005)25]. The paper highlighted the importance now given to effective communications for all DAC activities, referred to the recently approved DAC Communications Strategy [DCD/DAC(2005)45], which provides a set of options for all DAC dissemination, and encouraged the POVNET to reflect on how the key messages emerging from the plenary and task teams can best reach the target audiences among policy makers and development practitioners.

2. The discussion at the November meeting was a first opportunity for POVNET to discuss the Communications Strategy and consider ways to apply it to POVNET activities. The particular focus was on types of audience (headquarters, wider development community, policy makers and field level actors), involvement of partner countries and most effective ways to exchange information, including websites and donor training. Members were invited to send information on upcoming events to the Secretariat, as inputs to a new note for discussion at the February 2006 meeting.

3. As most of the POVNET sub-groups are now finalising and seeking approval for their reports, there is an opportunity to focus on how to mainstream key messages into development agency policy and translate them into good donor practices. POVNET’s dissemination plan will be a key pilot for the DAC Communications Strategy and thus potentially establish good practice in this area. The purpose of this note therefore is to exchange views on options for (i) appropriate and desirable communications tools for reaching target audiences; and (ii) upcoming events where POVNET messages could be disseminated.

2. Communications tools

4. Developing some common, user-friendly tools for POVNET can facilitate dissemination, multiply the impact of key messages and ensure that they are consistent and directed to specific audiences and change agents. The Secretariat would take the lead in publishing the products (e.g. hard glossy publication similar to the 2001 Poverty Reduction guidelines) and in supporting the organisation of events if requested (e.g. a launch in Paris or validation workshop in the field), but it would be up to individual members to ensure the messages are disseminated and utilised and that policies are implemented. The following options and issues should be considered:

- i) ***POVNET Members’ events*** – POVNET members are already engaged in communication and dissemination processes through their regular channels of communication in headquarters, in capitals and with field staff. Members may wish to organise events in a more systematic way, such as through internal seminars integrating thinking on pro-poor growth from country and regional desks, policy staff, and practitioners.

- Are POVNET members already undertaking or planning dissemination events? If so when and how? What is the target audience? How are members assessing the impact they are having?
 - Are POVNET members interested in organising and supporting a dedicated launch event or field level validation workshop? Jointly or by Task Team? Where and when?
 - Is there interest in creating a POVNET communications group? - A small group of POVNET members could consider communications issues generally; whether or not to proceed with a dedicated web-site and the needs and gaps in this area; and to make recommendations for the next POVNET meeting?
- ii) **Communication tool kit** – A “tool kit” is currently being developed for dissemination of POVNET messages and will be reflected in the outputs for the 2007-08 Programme of Work and Budget for POVNET. These tools might include fact sheets; power point presentations easily adapted for different audiences; CD-ROMs, executive summaries, policy statements or policy briefs; and other promotional devices like posters and opinion pieces.
- What types of communication tools would the POVNET members be most interested in developing? For what purpose? (see table below) Are there any other options/tools that should be considered here?
- iii) **Tailor made training modules** – Training and seminars could be held at the level of headquarters, involving several donors for an exchange of experience, capacity building or with all field based staff from any one agency. The Joint Donor Training on Partnership for Poverty Reduction (Joint PRSP Training) was initiated in March 2002 by eight bilateral donors participating in DAC POVNET.
- Could this be a forum for exchanging experiences in implementing the new POVNET messages? Is there need for a new training package to be developed? Who would take the lead here?
- iv) **Linking up with other development/policy communities** – Reaching other policy communities or collaborating with other networks/expert groups will enhance the impact of POVNET messages. Specialised groups such as Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD), transport and energy networks, regional development banks and SME groups are among those where collaboration should be sought. Such communication efforts must build on momentum achieved in the context of NEPAD Mutual Reviews, OECD Global Forums, achieving the MDGs and other international events.
- How could POVNET best link up with other actors/agents of change? Are there already examples of good collaboration and dissemination? How can we best promote exchanges of good practice among donors in this area?
- v) **Strengthening virtual communication** – A number of POVNET members have expressed interest in an improved website dedicated to exchange of information and good practice among development practitioners on pro-poor growth. Some have referred to using websites as “joint interactive electronic bookshelves” or in creating a “virtual community of experts”. This is perceived as an important, modern communication tool, yet requires investments in time and money, continuous input from aid agencies, and skilled and dedicated resources for maintenance. The DCD/DAC Communications Strategy calls for a global, one-stop-shop web site for agency

and field staff which would allow staff to interact with each other, as well as access key statistics, analysis and best practice from the OECD, the World Bank, other Development Banks and the United Nations. This is perceived to respond best to target audience's needs. This year's Development Cooperation Report (DCR), for instance, has been put on line for the first time with interactive links, user-friendly statistics and graphs and other on-line services. Each agency will be given a dedicated link for the DCR, which will 'live' on agency intranets, accessible by field staff too. Members will be able to view the on-line DCR on February 6th. POVNET may also wish to consider interim measures for improving web communication:

- Are there perceived gaps in information exchange on pro-poor growth issues? Are existing sites such as World Bank, etc. sufficient to cover the literature and practice in this area?
- What priority do POVNET members attach to a website? Who do members see as the key clients for a POVNET site (headquarters and/or field staff)? What information/purpose is most important when accessing this site?
- Is there another model of a website which POVNET members might like to follow? A few examples are attached for inspiration: <http://www.eldis.org/poverty/analysis.htm>; <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork/derec>; [Global Finland](#)))

3. Targeting communications tools to specific audiences

5. The following table offers suggestions for which communications tools might best suit which audience. Ideas and feedback will help to develop this work further. A full kit could be sent to headquarters, and HQ staff would be invited to disseminate only the most useful tools to field staff, policy makers in parliaments or beyond. The Secretariat would be responsible for creating the primary tools and disseminating full kits to agency headquarters and some wider development community organisations or individuals. If required and where possible, the secretariat would also be willing to provide speakers and representatives at key meetings or events, and participate in planning for training.

Headquarters	Field staff	Policy makers	Wider development community
Publications			
On-line version	On-line version	On-line version	On-line version
Executive summary			
Policy brief			
Fact sheet	Fact sheet	Fact sheet	Fact sheet
Power point			
Posters	Posters	Posters	Posters
Opinion pieces		Opinion pieces	
Speeches		Speeches	
CD-Rom			
Training manuals/guidelines	Training courses		
DCD/DAC speakers	DCD/DAC speakers	DCD/DAC speakers	DCD/DAC speakers
DCD/DAC attendance at meetings and events	DCD/DAC attendance at meetings and events	DCD/DAC attendance at meetings and events	DCD/DAC attendance at meetings and events
Comms plan for agency launch of policy			
Web-site			

4. Upcoming international events

6. POVNET members were requested to share with the Secretariat any events that were coming up where policy messages could be disseminated. The following are some events/networks/groups which are listed for information. Members are requested to complete the list at the upcoming POVNET meeting in February.:

- *OECD Global and Regional Forums*
 - Global Forum on Agriculture – Constraints to Development of Sub-Saharan Africa, 16-17 May 2006 at the OECD in Paris
 - OECD Regional Workshop on African Agriculture
- *UNU WIDER Conference on Aid: Principles, Policies and Performance* (www.wider.unu.edu), Helsinki, 16-17 June 2006
- ABCDE Conference with session on infrastructure, Tokyo, 29-30 May 2006
- International Workshop on *Public-Private Dialogue*, 1-2 February 2006, <http://www.publicprivatedialogue.org>
- Deepening Voice and Accountability to Fight Poverty Workshop, 30-31 March, organised by DFID, World Bank, OECD
- World Economic Forum on Africa: *Going for Growth*, 31- May – 2 June, Cape town, South Africa
- Séminaire : Croissance Pro pauvre, organised by World Bank, Agence française de développement, Kreditanstalt Für Wiederaufbau, in Bamako, Mali, April 2006
- *Global Donor Platform on Rural Development* – recent and upcoming activities:
 - January - first online discussion forum through the improved Platform website on the product 'Joint Donor Rural Concept'. The forum will be open to the Focal Points of the Platform as well as the registered users on our website (all from our member organisations).
 - January 22-24 (still TBC), a kick-off workshop for Platform activities in Cambodia will take place. The Technical Working Group on Land and the Platform will discuss together a roadmap for the preparation of a PBA in Land as well as the Platforms role in this endeavour.
 - January, 26-27, a regional workshop on Program-based Approaches in the productive sector in Central America will take place in Nicaragua. Together with the Regional Unit of Technical Assistance (RUTA) and the Inter-American-Development Bank, the Platform will organize this event and present its experiences so far in Nicaragua.
 - February 6, another kick-off workshop for Platform activities will take place in Burkina Faso. After several consultancies provided by the Platform over the last year, the commitment by the government and donors alike has been established to move jointly in the direction of a

harmonized approach in the agricultural sector. The Platform will support this concerted effort through its facilitation service.

- Early 2006 - The two upcoming products 'Global analysis of the new architecture for aid delivery in the rural sector' as well as the 'Analysis of the Rural Focus of PRSPs' will be initiated by FAO and IFAD respectively who are championing these Platform products.