STRENGTHENING PROCUREMENT CAPACITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

OECD/DAC – WORLD BANK ROUND TABLE

Paris, 22-23 January 2003

SUMMARY REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Roundtable is a joint DAC – World Bank initiative. A Roundtable format is used to bring in developing countries from the outset to promote partnership approaches and ownership of products by donors and developing countries. The first meeting brought together a group of committed procurement experts from donor agencies (bilateral and multilateral) and developing countries that are obviously enthusiastic about this initiative. Generous support (financial and substantive contributions) from both DAC Members and the World Bank to launch this initiative has been greatly appreciated.

The overall objectives of the Roundtable process are to identify and address key procurement capacity building needs and to build procurement systems in developing countries around which donors can harmonise their procedures (building on the DAC Recommendation to untie ODA to the Least Developed Countries and linking up to the work of the DAC’s Task Force on Donor Practices). This first meeting (three meetings are planned over 2003-2004) had the objectives of arriving at a shared agenda between participants and setting out a business plan to work out a limited number of concrete and demand-driven products over the biennium.

The meeting demonstrated a broadly shared view of the key issues and desired products:

- **Mainstreaming**: Good procurement systems contribute significantly to key development goals such as trade liberalisation and the growth of local enterprises and markets; substantially lower cost of delivering public services; reduced corruption; and the ultimate goal of reducing poverty. Public procurement is big business and inefficiencies are very costly. Procurement needs to be mainstreamed as a core financial management and governance activity of government, closely connected in both policy and operational terms to other aspects of budgeting: planning and programming, control, monitoring, reporting and auditing. An important product of the Roundtable will thus be to establish more rigorous estimates of the development benefits and cost savings from good procurement practices. The research and analysis will test the assertion that procurement reform more than pays for itself. In addition an advocacy/communication strategy will be set out on how to use such “sound bites” to build support and mobilise resources (at home and from donors) for procurement reform. This will aim at generating political leadership and support that is essential for this reform process, as are assurances from donors to meet required levels and modalities of support.

- **Benchmarks and standards**: There is already much common ground on the hallmarks of a good procurement system – accountability, transparency, value for money, efficiency, etc. The

1 Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda.
Roundtable will develop a framework of benchmarks and standards, to provide baselines against which progress in strengthening the compliance, efficiency and effectiveness of local procurement systems may be measured, and proposals on how such a framework could be implemented, including establishing the required institutional structures and incentives. This product could then be tested through pilot projects in developing countries.

- **Capacity building**: Building the capacities to position procurement as a strategic aid management function (and not a mere clerical, buying and selling role) presents major challenges and creates important needs. It is important to move away from piecemeal (i.e. beyond bidding and award stages) and donor-driven approaches (to meet their requirements). The focus should be on building sustainable capacities (individual and institutional) to establish locally-owned systems around which donors can harmonise their procedures. For developing countries, this is an important objective of the initiative. Building on the Country Procurement Assessment Reviews (CPARs), the Roundtable will produce an overall strategy for capacity building as well as identify targeted initiatives for, e.g., major risk areas, high spending Ministries, areas of short-term gains, etc.

- **Indicators and monitoring and evaluation**: Monitoring and evaluation systems are critical elements in strengthening public procurement. They are important to demonstrate results, identify where corrective action is needed and to get commitment at home and from donors. The initiative will set out what a monitoring and evaluation system should look like and the indicators required for it, keeping in mind the need to keep it simple and affordable.

Based on the above themes and intended products, the Roundtable will now move into its active phase. The intended products of the initiative will be pursued through a combination of analytical work (e.g. the “benefits” of good procurement), small working groups on specific products (e.g. benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation) and a series of pilot country case studies (across the range of issues). The results of work in progress will be assessed and developed at the next Roundtable meeting (likely to be held in a developing country in October 2003). The initial website setup for the Roundtable will be further developed to service this work.

The main products of this initiative will thus include good practice papers for procurement reform, which will cover the following components:

- A “benefits study” on the savings from good procurement and a communication strategy for mainstreaming procurement reform, as a core component of public financial management, into national development strategies.

- A benchmarking framework and ways to implement and use it.

- A strategy for capacity building efforts, including targeted efforts in specific areas.

- A monitoring and evaluation framework and its associated indicators.

Preliminary versions of these products should be developed for the next Roundtable (October 2003) and could then be tested in a pilot country, revised versions will then be submitted to the third Roundtable (Fall 2004).

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2 See [www.oecd.org/dac/partnerships](http://www.oecd.org/dac/partnerships)
DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Opening remarks

1. The Roundtable was opened by the Co-Chairs, Stephen Chard of the United Kingdom Department for International Development and Robert Hunja of the World Bank. They emphasised the importance of this work – procurement is big business and there are major benefits from doing it well – and its connections with the wider development agenda – public expenditure management, good governance, new modes of resource transfer such as budget aid, and the Monterrey (e.g. aid effectiveness, donor practices) and Doha (e.g. transparency in government procurement, WTO Government Procurement Agreement) agendas. They stressed the importance of focusing the work on a limited number of concrete problem areas and of developing practical products that will make a difference. This can only be done effectively through a real partnership process, with the Roundtable seeking to build a procurement community and network to launch specific initiatives and share lessons of experience.

2. Michael Roeskau, Director of the OECD’s Development Co-operation Directorate, recalled that donors and developing countries often feel drowned in policies; pointing out that most help is needed now with the delivery and implementation of concrete and demand driven initiatives, in line with the Monterrey Consensus. The work of the Roundtable emanates from the 2001 DAC Recommendation on Untying ODA to the Least Developed Countries and has strong connections with that of the DAC Donor Task Force on Donor Practices. The Roundtable should look to comparable products – good practice papers on capacity building and harmonisation of donor practices, and the tools and support needed to strengthen public procurement systems.

Session 1: Mainstreaming Procurement

Public procurement is big business and major savings are possible. The Roundtable will develop the “benefits” analysis to provide more robust estimates of the savings that can be made. An advocacy and communications strategy will be set out to build support and obtain resources for procurement reform, reinforced by effective sound bites, e.g. “procurement reform pays for itself”.

3. The discussion was opened by presentations from Bill Nicol (OECD/DAC) and Karl-Heinz Wäscher (Indonesia).

- Mr. Nicol’s presentation emphasised that public procurement is big business (averaging about 15% of GDP) and that the difference between doing public procurement well and badly is likely to be enormous. This perspective – procurement reform pays for itself – can be used to support demand for procurement reform and to identify “change agents”, “champions” and new techniques capable of getting broader commitment (including at political levels) for the strategies and tools to mainstream procurement as a strategic aid and budget management function.

- Mr. Wäscher’s presentation focused on the efforts to mainstream procurement in Indonesia; the main problems to be tackled and initiatives underway. Major challenges in mainstreaming procurement in Indonesia include co-ordinating public procurement

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3 These, and other presentations, as well as the background documents for the Roundtable, are available on the website created for the Roundtable – see www.oecd.org/dac/partnerships.
reforms with other financial management reforms, mobilising the engagement of different stakeholders and strengthening the enforcement of laws and procedures.

4. The plenary discussion covered the following issues:

Ownership and partnership

5. A key question, throughout the meeting, was how to forge effective partnerships between donors and developing countries around developing country procurement systems (see also the discussion on harmonisation in section 3). There are many different perspectives on procurement reform and there are different players with different views, needs and contributions to make. It was suggested that the best way to reconcile differences and strengthen partnerships is to focus on a core objective – building good public procurement systems that also visibly demonstrate that money is being well spent.

Benefits of good procurement

6. Public procurement systems are the public expression (both domestically and internationally) of how countries do business. There is a strong “prima facie” case to show that good procurement brings significant benefits. This analysis should be developed further and refined to provide reliable estimates at aggregate (global) and disaggregated (local) levels. The analysis could go beyond the monetary benefits deriving from better procurement to include links with e.g. credibility, good governance and democratic approaches to government. This work should generate powerful “sound bites” to promote support for procurement reform, including from those outside the specialised procurement community.

Strengthening the local supply base

7. Better public procurement regimes can be an important tool for promoting local enterprise development. Greater access to and opportunities from public procurement for competitive local enterprises should, in any event, be a natural consequence of improved procurement systems. The debate on affirmative approaches (e.g. preference margins) is still open. Are their higher financial costs offset by higher local economic benefits? Are preference margins the best approach or is it better to develop bid evaluation criteria going beyond cost and quality to include broader development impacts? In any event, it will be important to “work with the market” and to pay attention to longer term implications, such as the impact these short term “subsidies” will have on the sustainable competitiveness of domestic enterprises in international markets.

Broader context

8. It is important not to take a narrow perspective or approach to public procurement. Reforms in this area are part and parcel of, and need to go hand in hand with, strengthening governance in other areas, e.g. public expenditure management, budget reform, the PRSP process, etc of which procurement is a core component. There is a strong connection between procurement reform and promoting greater use of programme and budget support, fostering more effective co-financing arrangements, etc. – which require and rely on good local systems. However, we should balance the need for targeted procurement initiatives with the complexities of strengthening their various interfaces with various other reform agendas.

Getting started

9. The development of more rigorous estimates of the monetary and other broader benefits of good procurement mentioned above is a good first step, but it needs to be supported by an advocacy and communications strategy to be effective at building support for procurement reform.
Session 2: Benchmarks and Standards for Good Procurement

Benchmarks and standards and a reliable way to monitor progress are all important for the credibility of procurement systems. There is already much common ground on the hallmarks of a good procurement system, but little has been done yet to develop generally acceptable quantifiable and measurable performance indicators that can be used to benchmark a system and measure its performance over time. Work should set out what procurement standards should look like, what benchmarks should be used to determine whether a system adequately meets this standard and how ongoing performance can be monitored.

10. The session was opened by presentations from Richard Allen (PEFA Program), Pamela Bigart (World Bank) and Edgar Agaba (Uganda).

- Mr. Allen’s presentation focused on the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability programme (PEFA), and how procurement reform fits into the broader context of budget reform. Procurement reform is also a financial management issue – bad procurement has negative impacts on the achievement of aggregate fiscal control strategic resource allocation and operational efficiency. From this perspective, procurement should not be treated as a stand alone activity but integrated as a part of the overall public expenditure management system. Procurement considerations are relevant to many core public financial management reform issues that are not always associated with the procurement process, e.g., budget planning including medium-term expenditure frameworks, performance measures, accrual accounting, asset management procedures, integrated financial management information systems, internal control and audit, etc. The linkages between procurement and other aspects of the budget process are of key importance and this impacts on the arrangements for organizing and managing the procurement function within government; its role and responsibilities; its relationship with key ministries such as finance and economic development; and the required capacity, skills and experience of the cadre of procurement officers.

- Ms. Bigart's presentation focused on the development of a flexible benchmarking system that will provide the framework for developing countries and the donor community to use in prioritizing procurement reform initiatives leading to greater acceptance and reliance on national public procurement systems. The World Bank’s Country Procurement Assessment Review mechanism (CPAR) assesses the procurement systems that are in place but so far it lacks the baseline against which these systems will be benchmarked or measured. The Bank’s own rules are often used to do this but they are too project-specific to be used effectively as a model for government systems. So we need to build shared views of what good government procurement systems should look like (e.g. in terms of accountability, transparency, competition, etc.) and should deliver (e.g. value for money, the right goods to the right people at the right time, etc). An objective of work on standards and benchmarking should be to set out a roadmap of what needs to be done and how incentives can be developed (for both developing countries and donors alike) to use these standards and the benchmarking process as a strategic tool. Adopting a flexible approach will be essential.

- Mr. Agaba outlined activities of the Reformed Central Tender Board to promote and use benchmarking, based on the new legal and institutional framework for procurement in Uganda. Focusing on how to move forward, he outlined the main components of Uganda’s strategy, including the establishment of the legal and institutional structures,
developing benchmarks based on the legal framework and monitoring compliance as an important aspect of evaluating the procurement system.

11. The plenary discussion covered the following issues:

*The strategic role of standards and the benchmarking process*

12. Benchmarking plays an important role both during the time a system is initially evaluated and later when its ongoing performance is monitored for compliance against the agreed standard. Different benchmarks will be required for different levels of procurement systems, for example “strategic” or “systematic” benchmarks for measuring overall impact, compliance and effectiveness; “organisational” benchmarks to measure and compare the performance of different ministries, agencies and enterprises carrying out procurement; and “managerial” benchmarks to measure and compare the performance of individual procurement officers, and to create a linkage between performance, salary and other job incentives. In developing these benchmarks, we need to take account of the different stages of development in different countries (i.e. a “one-size-fits-all” approach will not work). We need to think of what authority the agreed benchmarks should have and how to use benchmarking to build credibility and recognition.

13. A key strategic role of benchmarking is to gain recognition of acceptable standards (or at least progress in that direction), which should induce donors to work progressively towards greater use of developing countries’ procurement systems.

*Principles and standards*

14. We need to develop a shared view of the hallmarks of a good procurement system. The fact that we have insisted on the use of parallel (donor/government) procurement systems for so long should be seen as a failure. We need to work towards standards that are agreed by all. In itself, this should not be too difficult – everyone agrees on the importance of transparency, fairness, openness, competition, efficiency, etc. The challenge is to agree on the quantifiable benchmarks that go with these principles, how to use them to measure how a system performs against these principles and how to link them with monitoring and evaluation systems.

*Incentives*

15. Progress as measured by performance indicators against agreed standards or benchmarks can also provide important incentives to the different actors. So, we need to think about what indicators all participants in the procurement process will respond to – e.g. efficiencies and cost “savings” for procurement agencies (and how to use it), greater “development” impact and reduced administrative burden for governments, reduced “fiduciary” risk and co-ordinated capacity building effort for donors and reduced transaction costs for the business community – Secondly, we need to think about how to use the indicators to promote benchmarking and encourage progress.

*Getting started*

16. “Keep it simple” should be the guiding principle. Build on common ground, as there is already much of it. Start with what is measurable/quantifiable and keep focused on output (not input) measures. Use the process of agreeing on standards and benchmarking tools to develop best practices, to learn from experiences and to publicise and disseminate achievements. Do not use it as a threat or punishment for non-compliance or underperformance. This is a priority area where a small working group could develop a concrete product – what a good standard and benchmarking system could look like and how it can be implemented.
Session 3: Professionalising Procurement/Capacity Building

This is an area of major needs and challenges, which goes beyond monitoring resources and using them effectively. It is important to move away from piecemeal (i.e. beyond bidding and award stages) and donor driven (to meet only their requirements) approaches to ones that build viable developing country procurement systems so that donors would be encouraged to accept their use for aid procurement. There is an urgent need to support demand for procurement reform, and to identify and implement strategies for sustainable capacity building across the procurement process.

17. The session was opened by presentations from Peter Pease (OECD/DAC), Glynis Davies (DFID/UK) and Blandina Nyoni and Ntando Nkinga (Tanzania).

- Mr. Pease’s presentation emphasised the still bleak situation in many countries (problems with training, attracting, mobilising and retaining skilled staff, low salaries, cost overruns, delays, corruption, etc.) and thus the need for sustainable capacity building. Present capacity building efforts are often piecemeal (focusing on only the bidding and award stages) when they need to address the whole procurement process (from agenda setting through to implementation and evaluation). They are still overly supply driven – to meet the needs of donors’ systems. We need to develop new approaches, treating procurement more as a profession, drawing in more of the relevant stakeholders, and thus developing more responsive curricula, specialisation, certification, standards, ethics codes and vision statements.

- Ms. Davies’ presentation drew attention to the importance of drawing lessons from advances elsewhere, in both the public and private sectors. Individual and institutional capacity building needs to go hand in hand. Organisations (including procurement agencies), to function well, need to operate in a viable institutional setting. The “change management” approach provides directions to strengthen institutions and push through capacity building initiatives. These include the need to establish a sense of urgency, to set out a vision and get high level political support to communicate it and press for reform, to create short term gains, and to institutionalise new approaches.

- Ms. Nyoni and Mr. Nkinga set out the main issues facing procurement capacity building in Tanzania and efforts underway to address them. These issues include the need to strengthen central institutions, to identify where specialist training is most needed (e.g. in high spending Ministries, in areas such as auditing and tendering), public awareness campaigns based on the new Procurement Act, and the importance of bringing in donors at an early stage and getting their commitment to support initiatives.

18. The plenary discussion covered the following issues:

**Major needs – and major benefits**

19. Capacity building needs, at institutional and individual levels, are large, and they cover many dimensions, including the legislative, policy and implementation levels. But, as seen from the discussion on mainstreaming (session 1), benefits can be sizeable. In Tanzania, for example, it is estimated that a 5% saving from better procurement would generate benefits of approximately USD 450 million. It would be worthwhile costing capacity building needs and comparing them to estimated benefits to test the assertion that procurement reform pays for itself.
Need for urgency

20. The costs of poor procurement systems, the expected gains from improvement, the need to strengthen local systems to facilitate programme and budget support and encourage donor harmonisation, all impart a sense of urgency to make concrete progress in this area. There is renewed interest – in developing countries themselves, from donors, and from the Monterrey and Doha agendas – on which we should capitalise. There is a real need to create and energise the demand for procurement reform. Showing the overall benefits from improving procurement system and delivery of short-term gains will help.

Skill needs

21. Skill needs must be mapped across the broad spectrum of the procurement process and supply chain, not just on the tendering, bidding and award stages as is often the case at present. We need to move from piecemeal approaches to more systemic strategies. The CPARs are a major tool to identify and help prioritise needs.

22. Questions were raised whether to build procurement professionals or financial management specialists, given the connections between procurement and broader budget reform programmes. In light of essential and major needs for “narrower” capacity building for procurement, would “broader” initiatives risk putting even greater strains on very limited capacities and resources, and would it weaken core procurement competencies? Finding good procurement specialists is becoming increasingly difficult. Should we keep these functions separate, but strengthen the interface between them?

Corruption

23. Public procurement is the single largest area of public scrutiny into acts of alleged corruption. Corruption represents a major cost to the system – not only in terms of lost money (Tanzania estimates about 20% of the government budget) but also in terms of credibility. Lack of political willingness to take the tough measures to control corruption is considered a fundamental problem. “Upstream” (e.g. laws, advocacy campaigns, transparency, less discretionary systems, ethics codes, better remuneration) and “downstream” (e.g. enforcement, apprehension, punishment, sanctions) measures are all required. Tackling corruption, and showing efforts are working, must be a central part of any strategy to strengthen public procurement.

Donor harmonisation

24. The impact of the multiplicity of donor procedures on weak capacities in developing countries is well documented. Capacity building support from donors has often been too focused on helping developing countries meet donor requirements and systems i.e. supply/donor driven. Developing countries expect that their efforts, in conjunction with the initiatives of the Roundtable, will encourage donors to progressively allow local systems to be used for aid procurement. For many, this outcome would be an important product of the process.

25. Of course, bilateral and multilateral donors have their own procedures required for their own accountability, and with legal consequences. The MDBs are in the process of harmonising procedures among the group; bilateral have their own rules and some have recently agreed on new ones. The idea of harmonising around developing countries’ systems is, of course, not intended to shift the burden back to donors (who might then have to work with a multiplicity of regimes in different developing countries). Nor is it to develop a “one-size-fits-all” system for all developing countries or uniform procedures for donors. Attention should focus on how to move towards agreed principles and standards as the core of developing countries’ own systems. This approach should avoid a “your system versus mine” debate. Instead, it should look at co-existence, graduation and thresholds as means to pursue harmonisation. Regional initiatives to
promote harmonisation such as that pursued by the UMEOA, also offer valuable avenues for donors to move in that direction.

**Importance of donor support**

26. Mali is a telling example of the importance of donor support and co-ordination. A French study (in the context of the 2000 DAC review of the collectivity of donors’ efforts in Mali) reviewed the strengths and weaknesses in donors’ procurement procedures. It put forward recommendations to strengthen Malian procedures and to align donors with improved national procedures. Key lessons of the study were that harmonisation needs strong political will and commitment on all sides, as well as strong linkages by donors between headquarters and field operations. The study also argues that donors have to “let go” of more than they would initially like – and work towards standards that are “reasonable” rather than “top of the range”. All partners must have confidence that efforts will lead to progressive harmonisation.

**Getting started**

27. As with benchmarking (session 2), it is important to build on common ground. The CPARs are an important diagnostic tool that can help to identify where priority efforts are most needed and most likely to yield returns, e.g. in the main “risk” areas and in the main spending Ministries. To meet the identified demand, countries might also want to look at outsourcing, while building and retaining central competencies. In this context the costs and benefits of outsourcing need to be compared to “in house” approaches.

**Session 4: Measuring Progress – Indicators and Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation systems are critical elements of any strategy to strengthen procurement systems. They are important to demonstrate results, to get buy-in at home and with donors and to identify where corrective action is needed. Work should focus on setting out the broad dimensions of such systems, guided by the need to keep it credible, simple and affordable.

28. The session was opened by presentations from Jean-Jacques Raoul (World Bank), Kwaku Appiah-Adu (Ghana) and Hamza Cissé (West African Economic and Monetary Union - UMEOA).

- Mr. Raoul’s presentation emphasised the importance of monitoring and evaluation systems to demonstrate the results of reform and to devise corrective actions. Monitoring is important for publicising results and demonstrating accountability. Monitoring and evaluation has close links to benchmarking and indicators (session 2) and the need to develop recognised and acceptable indicators. In setting up systems to collect data (e.g. in procurement entities) and to analyse it (e.g. in separate or independent oversight agencies), the important point is to keep systems credible, simple and affordable.

- Prof. Appiah-Adu outlined the broad work underway in Ghana, following the CPAR’s identification of areas that need to be strengthened – such as the reform and use of public procurement as a tool for national economic development. The specific pilot project on transparency and accountability aims to follow the implementation of the new Law, to mobilise the support from stakeholders needed for its implementation, to develop ways to monitor progress and to identify corrective actions as appropriate. The initial emphasis of the project is on monitoring compliance, but it will also evolve to monitoring performance. In this context, risk
profiling will be a key element. Strong donor support for this initiative is needed to match already broad and high level support in Ghana to ensure that donors will “buy” the results.

- Mr. Cissé outlined work underway within the UEMOA to harmonise procurement practices within the eight countries in the Union. He hoped that this regional approach would provide a critical mass that would eventually permit donors to work with the resulting common system.

29. The plenary discussion covered the following issues:

**Monitoring and evaluation systems are important**

30. Monitoring and evaluation systems are a central tool to strengthening procurement systems. They are important for showing that change in the right directions is progressing and that such changes are delivering results. The monitoring and evaluation theme has important connections, on the one hand, with the discussions on benchmarking and indicators, and on the other, with the need to support demand for procurement reform and to show resources are being used productively.

**Indicators**

31. An important task will be to identify and use those performance indicators that are recognised and acceptable to all in devising and using monitoring and evaluation systems that generate the required data to draw conclusions. A question to be pursued is whether separate indicators are needed for monitoring compliance versus measuring progress.

**The importance of donor involvement**

32. It is important to have donor involvement and “buy-in” from the outset. Donors need to recognise and accept the results of monitoring and evaluation systems and react accordingly, i.e. in placing greater trust and reliance on developing countries’ procurement systems.

**Getting started**

33. Two key messages in developing monitoring and evaluations systems are: (i) keep it simple and (ii) ensure that they are affordable.

Session 5: Moving forward

The Roundtable brought together a committed group of experts from developing countries and bilateral and multilateral donors. There was a strong convergence of interests, not only on the central themes of the Roundtable, but also for its process, objectives and intended products. It will be important to keep this group together and, building on the momentum of the first meeting, by moving quickly in setting out a business plan that identifies the products needed and sketches the ways to develop them.

**Products**

34. There was broad consensus to move rapidly on to “working level” approaches. It was recognised that we should avoid taking on too much, and keep work focused on developing a narrow range of demand driven and concrete products. In line with the main discussion themes, these products could be along the following lines:
• **Mainstreaming**: research and analytical work to develop a more robust estimate of the benefits of good procurement system (monetary value and beyond), and an advocacy/communication strategy to use these results to help mainstream procurement reform into national development strategies.

• **Standards and benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation**: in each of these areas, develop a shared view of what the system could look like and how it could be implemented.

• **Professionalisation/capacity building**: More reflection is needed to identify the precise product. As a start we could set out the main thrusts of a comprehensive strategy for effective sustainable capacity building. Second, strategy should identify ways to link capacity building to standards and benchmarking and to monitoring and evaluation systems. Third, the strategy could identify targeted initiatives, e.g. in high risk areas, in high spending ministries, and where short term gains can be realised, etc.

35. The next steps should be to define these products and reach agreement on how to produce them. Progress reports on these products will be a major theme of the next Roundtable.

**Pilots**

36. The various pilots signalled at the Roundtable (and other future ones that fit well into our agenda) have an important role to play. Beyond the direct benefits to the pilot country, they should act as reality checks in translating ideas into practice. These pilots now need to be pursued actively in developing countries, mobilising support and resources, both domestically and from donors.

37. In addition to pursuing their own specific activities, the pilots should set out how they can best be connected to the strategic products of the Roundtable. They should set out what can be reported to the next Roundtable, as well as what they seek to achieve by the end of the process.

**Modalities**

38. The results of this first Roundtable should be assessed and recommendations that could make the initiative more effective should be formulated in consultation with all stakeholders.

39. Small working groups should be formed to carry forward work on the main issues. The indications provided at the Roundtable will be helpful in forming such groups. The discussion suggested that at least the themes of standards/benchmarking and monitoring/evaluation would lend themselves well to a working group approach. The working groups will probably wish to appoint an “animator” and agree on a balanced participation in the groups. Their first tasks should be to define the product and then start to develop it up to a point where meaningful discussions about how to move forward on that issue can take place at the next Roundtable. In other areas, we should think about organising small, informal workshops “in the field” to develop sharper ideas on some products (e.g. capacity building) or to assess progress e.g. with pilots. The secretariat will offer assistance to work with the different working groups and pilot projects to keep activities progressing towards the common goals of the initiative.

40. Bilateral donors could also think of developing a sort of informal procurement community to share ideas on what this initiative means for them and how they will be best able to contribute to and support it.
Feedback

41. All participants should report back to their capitals and/or principals on their assessment of this Roundtable in order to mobilise support for its work. Additionally, a report will be made to e.g. the High Level Forum on Harmonisation in Rome in February, as well as to the next meeting of the MDB Heads of Procurement, to connect our work to theirs.

42. More generally, and for sharing information and experiences between Roundtable participants, the website that has been created for the Roundtable will be developed to provide an active facility for the Roundtable process in general, as well as for working groups. The website will allow posting of papers on work in progress, pilot studies developments, ideas for the next Roundtable.

Next Roundtable meeting

43. Participants were in favour of an “earlier rather than later” approach to maintain the momentum of the first discussion. Initial ideas were to hold the next Roundtable in a developing country, possibly in October 2003. That meeting should be very business-like, possibly with break-out sessions to address interim products being developed. Its objectives should include a broad consensus on the shape of the products to be produced and how to progress them as far as possible in time for the final Roundtable within this two-year process.

44. In the meantime we should reach for constructive ways to expand membership to the Roundtable to include broader representation from both the private sector and civil society, while keeping the process manageable.
## ANNEX 1

### Final List of Participants

#### Co-Chairs

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<th>Country</th>
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