PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS: STUDY OF EXISTING MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY (MA) BETWEEN DONORS AND PARTNER COUNTRIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

FINAL REPORT

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Abbreviations

AAA	Accra Action Agenda
AG	Advisory Group on CSOs and Aid Effectiveness
APF	Africa Partnership Forum
APP	Africa Progress Panel
APRM	Africa Peer Review Mechanism
CBP	Capacity-Building Programme
CDI	Commitment to Development Index
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
CGD	Center for Global Development
COMPAS	Common Performance Assessment System
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCF	Development Cooperation Forum
DRI	Debt Relief International
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FfD	Financing for Development
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
HLD	High-Level Dialogue
HLF-3	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
JV-MfDR	Joint Venture for Managing for Development Results
MA	Mutual Accountability
MDBs	Multilateral Development Banks
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network
MRDE	Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development

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PD	Paris Declaration
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability programme
SAI	Supreme Audit Institutions
SPA	Strategic Partnership for Africa
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TI	Transparency International
WP-EFF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness

1   Executive Summary

This review has been commissioned by the OECD-DAC Joint Venture for Managing for Development Results (JV-MfDR) with funding from UK, Spain and Sweden. Mutual accountability is of course one of the five partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration (PD). The relevant section of the Paris Declaration begins: "A major priority for partner countries and donors is to enhance mutual accountability and transparency in the use of development resources. This also helps strengthen public support for national policies and development assistance." There is consensus that the quality of accountability will be an important determinant of the quality of implementation of the Declaration. Although recent years have seen a proliferation of new mechanisms being established, there is a broad agreement that the mutual accountability element of the Paris Declaration has advanced less than other pillars. Some have described mutual accountability as the Declaration's 'orphan' pillar. The review is part of a broader effort by the JV-MfDR to develop a more complete understanding of mutual accountability and results at country, institutional and global levels. In particular, the study has coordinated with work being commissioned by Germany (on behalf of the JV) to understand better the progress on mutual accountability frameworks at the country-level. It is also designed to complement the work of the Joint Venture on Monitoring the Paris Declaration (JV-MPD) which is developing an Action Plan for Monitoring the Paris Declaration. Effective monitoring is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for well-functioning mutual accountability relationships.

The questions at the heart of this report are very practical ones. Do existing mechanisms that make up the Declaration's accountability framework at the international and regional level function effectively as a system that is fit for purpose? If not, are there operationally-feasible and politically-acceptable interventions that stakeholders can make to strengthen the system? These questions can be used to stimulate informed debate; in the first instance, highlighting where consensus might be feasible to help inform deliberations at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness ("HLF-3") in Accra in September 2008, as well as follow up action on mutual accountability.

This review is intended to contribute to policy dialogue on mutual accountability issues in the JV-MfDR and, subsequently, the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF), as priority issues and actions for HLF-3 are considered. The overall study consists of this paper, a Background Paper that reviews individual mechanisms and an additional Background Paper that summarises African perspectives on international and regional mutual accountability issues.

Accountability is about holding those with responsibilities to account with the purpose of securing more responsive, efficient and effective behaviour. It means ensuring that actions are answered for, that performance is evaluated, and that consequent steps are taken. In essence, *mutual* accountability is the process by which two (or multiple) parties hold one another accountable for the commitments they have voluntarily made to one another. But it is also more than that. It is a process through which commitment to, and ownership of, shared agendas is created and reinforced by: building trust and understanding; shifting incentives towards results in achievement of shared objectives;, embedding common values; deepening responsibilities and strengthening partnership; and openness to external scrutiny for assessing results in relation to goals. In the context of the Paris Declaration, and development assistance more generally, mutual accountability is used in this sense but tends to refer specifically to the mutually beneficial relationship between donors and partners. Developing and sustaining it is not simple. This is the case for all the commitments and indicators of the Paris Declaration, but is arguably all the more so for mutual accountability. Tensions can arise between the requirements of domestic accountability mechanisms and aid effectiveness commitments.

Another important issue is the power imbalance inherent in the donor-partner relationship. There is consensus that this power imbalance – reflected in traditional donor engagement - was a key factor reducing the effectiveness of aid. Donors could too often largely determine the contents of

their projects or attempt to impose conditionality on their assistance, but without the ownership of partner countries the result was too often disappointing or not sustainable. Also donors can reduce or cut off assistance, while partner countries do not have access to corresponding economic sanctions. The aid effectiveness agenda recognises the limitations of such imbalanced engagement and offers mutual accountability as a central mechanism to mitigate it.

The first step in addressing this issue is identifying the right framework. The international aid effectiveness agenda, and the Paris Declaration within it, should be considered within a 'collaborative' framework of accountability. This is distinct from 'harder' frameworks, like 'representative accountability', that characterise democratic oversight in both donor and partner countries (e.g. through elections, freedom of information legislation, public accounts committees and Supreme Audit Institutions. It is also distinct from the 'corporate' accountability models through which, for example, donors exercise their oversight of multilaterals and global programs.

Figure 1.1   Mapping accountability mechanisms for donor and partner performance
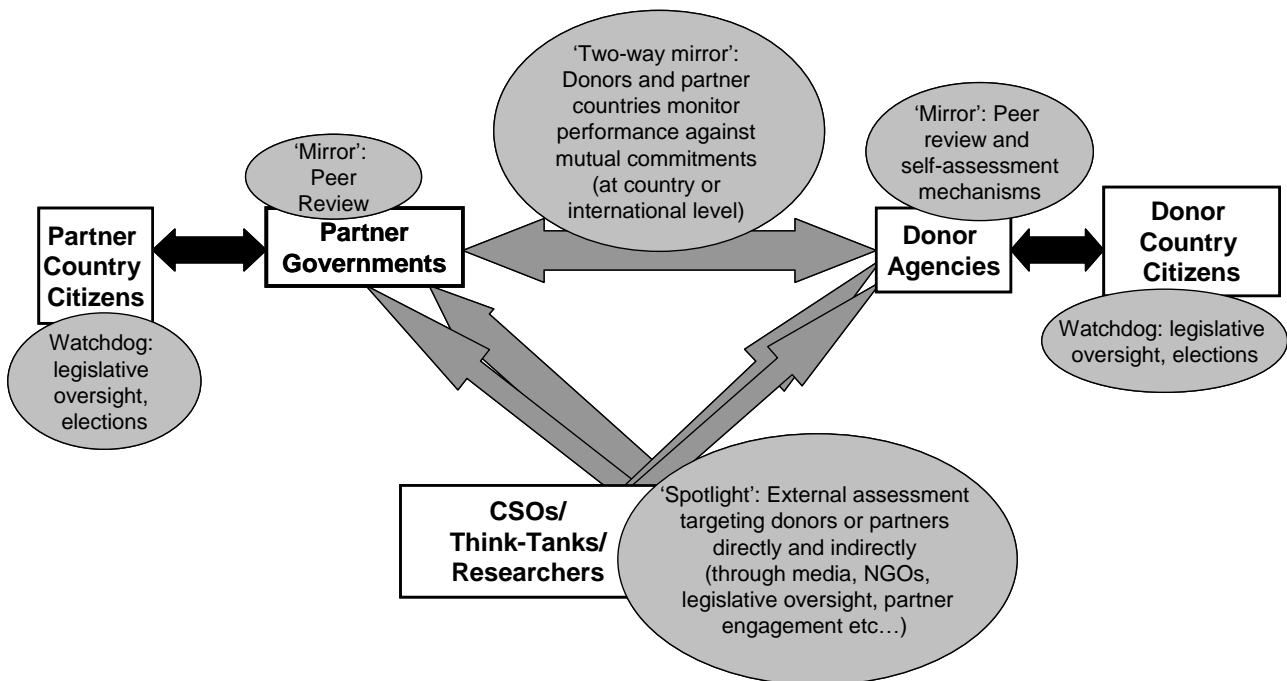
A 'collaborative' framework is an appropriate lens for compacts that bind members through shared values and commitments -- where building and maintaining the commitment of stakeholders is as important as enforcing compliance. Success is about creating and sustaining a "logic of participation" rather than a "logic of compliance". Sanctions for non-compliance tend to be social, political and reputational, although not to the exclusion of other sanctions (as discussed just above). This sort of approach is relevant in many areas of international cooperation – such as arms control, or environmental management. It is frequently characterised by complex agendas, consisting of over-lapping, and mutually-reinforcing commitments between peers. There is usually no single over-arching authority to monitor behaviour and compel corrections and the level of commitment and ownership varies between participants. The challenge is to build commitment, ownership and partnership, as much as it is to hold one another accountable. It is as much about generating mutual responsibility as mutual accountability. Such models do not presuppose equality between stakeholders. Indeed, they can function as effective mechanisms to bind in more powerful players to common rules, values and behaviour. Nor do they presuppose consensus between participants. Their evolution consists of (and indeed depends on) ongoing contestation, and challenge among players, to assure collaborative action toward achievement of shared results.

Our approach to this review reflects this framework. We have adopted an approach that is based on the four key elements of an effective **collaborative** accountability mechanism:

- **Evidence:** A measure of technical credibility based on definition, quality, clarity, independence and transparency of performance information (which is the 'currency' of accountability).

- **Ownership:** A key dimension in a collaborative framework reflecting the importance of building and sustaining consent, commitment, credibility, trust and common values.

- **Debate:** This concerns the extent to which mechanisms stimulate informed debate and ensure parties provide clear reasoning for performance – through informal or formal mechanisms.

- **Behaviour change:** The accountability impact of mechanisms – which follows from levels of Evidence, Ownership, and Debate.

These four dimensions can be seen as a set of mutually-reinforcing factors that constitute mutual accountability, in turn generating more aid effectiveness agenda which in turn increases development impact.

Based on a mapping of the relevant accountability landscape (set out in Figure 1.1) we have applied this approach to a set of individual mechanisms (listed in the box). Our review highlights that the existing mutual accountability system is young. Indeed, to even speak of a 'system' is premature. The landscape as a whole is delivering less than the sum of its parts. But it is a young and dynamic picture that is evolving rapidly. In a few years time the landscape could look quite different. We find that mutual accountability mechanisms have already contributed positively to the behaviour change that is happening across the international development community.

We also find several examples of overlapping, if not duplicating, objectives and functions within all categories. Equally, there are also several areas where clear gaps exist. Relatively few mechanisms involve partner countries substantively or provide them with a platform to express their voice. Further, relatively few define targets and methodologies in terms of partner country perspectives. This is perhaps surprising. If donors are the 'suppliers' of aid, partner countries are the 'consumers'. In a well-functioning market, consumer information, power and choice is an important drive of producer effectiveness and responsiveness. Many mechanisms monitor the overall performance and progress of donors as a whole, or sub-groups of them. Much less frequent is high quality, regular monitoring of the performance of specific, individual actors. More rare still is monitoring on the performance of specific donors in specific countries.

Box 1: Accountability mechanisms

Watchdog: (These mechanisms are not reviewed here.)
- Donor Agency domestic accountability frameworks (e.g. Parliaments, citizens, Boards, media). Other examples would include the World Bank Inspection Panel or its Independent Evaluation Group (IEG).
- Partner country domestic accountability (e.g. SAIs, Parliaments, CSOs, voters).

Spotlights*:
- CGD Commitment to Development Index
- DATA Report
- African Monitor
- CONCORD EU Aid Watch Report
- Africa Progress Panel
- Reality of Aid
- HIPC CBP Analysis

Mirror:
- DAC Bilateral Peer Review
- IFI Comparative Performance Assessment (COMPAS)
- EU Annual Report on Financing for Development
- Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Two-way mirror:
- Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness (MRDE)
- Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) including Survey on Monitoring of the Paris Declaration
- High-Level Dialogue to assess implementation of Financing for Development (FfD)
- ECOSOC High-Level Development Cooperation Forum
- Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA)
- Africa Partnership Forum
- Global Monitoring Report (GMR) / Development Committee
- Country-level mutual accountability frameworks **(Not for review here)**

* Selected partner-specific spotlights outside the mandate of this review include: CPIA, Transparency International, PEFA, WBI Indicators, Freedom House Index, World Bank 'Doing Business' Database, Global Integrity Index, Afrobarometer, Latino Barometer, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Mo Ibrahim Foundation's African Governance Indicators

Across the landscape, accountability mechanisms, both official and non-official, have a range of different roles. Some principally provide information. Some provide a forum for donors and partners to answer for their performance. Some serve mainly to build further trust and momentum behind the agenda. This is a complex, multi-dimensional, organic system. As such, its shape cannot be determined by one specific entity or grouping. Nor should it be. There is no magic bullet that would transform the landscape overnight.

For now, the key challenge for the aid effectiveness accountability system is an incremental and evolutionary one. But this should not be taken to mean that a laisser-faire approach is appropriate. Policy-makers, and all stakeholders, do have tools that can positively shape this evolution. Based on our review, and its findings, we identify four strategic priorities:

- Firstly, in order to strengthen mutual accountability in aggregate, efforts should be made to **build a genuine 'system'**, in which individual mechanisms interact creatively and progressively and coverage is comprehensive. This mean building synergies between mechanisms, both official and non-official, harnessing their respective strengths. This would enable mechanisms to work more effectively, contributing more to the whole. 'Two-way mirrors' make better use of the evidence-base offered by other mechanisms so as to become genuine fora for donors and partners to review one another's individual achievements. 'Mirrors' would work more effectively to deepen commitment, partnership and trust. 'Spotlights' would fulfil much stronger 'challenge function' and information-provider roles. Linked to this is the need for greater willingness to scale back, or eliminate, the mutual accountability elements of international mechanisms that are not adding significant value to the whole.

- The second priority is the challenge of **empowerment of partner countries** within individual mechanisms, and the international-level system as a whole, to provide them with a platform to play their role properly. This includes seeking greater complementarity with country-level mutual accountability frameworks.

- In line with our guiding philosophy on the foundations of behaviour change and mutual accountability, another key challenge is **strengthening the 'evidence-base'** available through greater quality, independence and transparency of information on performance.

- Success on this agenda is also contingent on donors and partner countries **building greater 'ownership'** of the mutual accountability agenda by strengthening the legitimacy of individual mechanisms and their own commitment and willingness to be held accountable for their individual performance on aid effectiveness. The concept of ownership does not apply only to partner countries, although this is the sense in which it is used in the Paris Declaration. Ownership of other key stakeholders -- local governments, civil society, and program beneficiaries – also can impact on chances of success and sustainability.

Based on these strategic priorities, the independent consultants have identified a menu of complementary specific options for further consideration. These options are grouped in line with the mapping of categories:

Capturing the potential of international-level two-way mirrors
1. Joint commitment by donors and partner countries to take steps to enhance the overall impact of international-level donor-partner fora.

2. Measures to enhance partner voice and participation in the WP-EFF and Paris Declaration follow-up.

3. Joint recognition by donors and partner countries of the potential role of the DCF as a complementary forum to the DAC for mutual accountability on aid effectiveness, including the meaningful inclusion of emerging donors. This would include pushing to keep the DCF Report authoritative and analytically independent, bringing together performance assessment of donors and partners across a comprehensive range of aid effectiveness commitments.

Polishing mirrors to build commitment and action
4. Recognition by donors and partner countries of the value of peer reviews processes as an element in overall mutual accountability and commitment to strengthening their participation in these processes.

5. Relatedly, commitment by donors to strengthening the DAC Peer Reviews, particularly by providing more "voice" for partner countries and for results of independent external evaluations.

6. Commitment by other relevant groupings, like the EU or MDBs, to strengthening the 'mirrors' they are part of. The EU, in particular, which has a record of pushing the consensus forward, could commit to making the EU Annual Report into a best-practice 'mirror'.

Brighter, more integrated, spotlights to provide evidence and scrutiny
7. Donors and partner recognition of the role of good quality, relevant non-official monitoring and scrutiny as an important contribution to mutual accountability. This recognition would represent an important step in terms of 'legitimising' spotlights and leveraging their impact. Going beyond this, donors also commit to a systematic effort to integrate information from spotlights into official accountability mechanisms, where appropriate and feasible, as well as ensuring that they engage partners and reflect their perspectives.

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2   Introduction and Setting

The international community is determined to increase aid effectiveness.
The aid effectiveness agenda seeks to transform aid relationships to achieve a step-change in development results and impact. The guiding philosophy is ownership, based on the recognition that what partner countries do is far more important than what donors do, all the more so if the objective of aid is sustainable progress in achieving development objectives. It is for this reason that donors and partners have committed under the Paris Declaration to a broad set of principles and specific actions to support ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability. The last is the focus of this paper. The relevant section of the Paris Declaration begins: "A major priority for partner countries and donors is to enhance mutual accountability and transparency in the use of development resources. This also helps strengthen public support for national policies and development assistance."

The current aid effectiveness agenda did not, of course, start with the Paris Declaration. But the Declaration is now the central pillar of efforts, which survey results show to have a growing impact at the country-level. It offers an experience-based, intellectually coherent framework for the behaviour change that is necessary on all sides to reform aid, For donors, it implies radical shifts in approaches to aid management. For partners it demands, as part of a broader strengthening of development programs, serious investment in better donor coordination and public financial management. For civil society it offers greater space to support, shape and monitor donor and partner progress towards better impact.

Mutual accountability is central to the agenda.
In common with many other high-level development commitments and initiatives of recent years, notably the Monterrey Consensus, the Paris Declaration is framed as a compact of mutual responsibilities, actions and accountabilities between donors and partners. But the Paris Declaration goes further than other initiatives in that it recognises the need for strengthened mutual accountability at different levels. The Declaration itself, and subsequent Monitoring Surveys form part of an international-level mutual accountability mechanism through which donors and partners are held accountable to one another for their performance in implementing the commitments they have made. This process is led by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF), one of the international-level mechanisms included in this review. These international mechanisms complement country-level mutual accountability mechanisms, which are being reviewed in parallel, under the sponsorship of Germany, by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The conception of mutual accountability is consistent between these two reviews.

In general, accountability is about holding those with responsibilities to account with the purpose of securing more responsive, efficient and effective behaviour. It means ensuring that actions are answered for, that performance is evaluated, and that consequent steps are taken. In essence, *mutual* accountability is the process by which two (or multiple) parties hold one another accountable for the commitments they have voluntarily made to one another.. But it is also more than that. It is a process through which commitment to, and ownership of, shared agendas is created and reinforced by: building trust and understanding; shifting incentives towards results in achievement of shared objectives;, embedding common values; deepening responsibilities and strengthening partnership; and openness to external scrutiny for assessing results in relation to goals. In the context of the Paris Declaration, and development assistance more generally, mutual accountability is used in this sense but tends to refer specifically to the mutually beneficial relationship between donors and partners.

Another important issue is the power imbalance inherent in the donor-partner relationship. There is consensus that this power imbalance – reflected in traditional donor engagement - was a key factor reducing the effectiveness of aid. Donors could too often largely determine the contents of their projects or attempt to impose conditionality on their assistance, but without the ownership of

partner countries the result was too often disappointing or not sustainable. Also donors can reduce or cut off assistance, while partner countries do not have access to corresponding economic sanctions. The aid effectiveness agenda recognises the limitations of such imbalanced engagement and offers mutual accountability as a central mechanism to mitigate it.

Within the aid effectiveness agenda, the precise commitments and actions for which actors are held accountable (i.e. 'accountability for what') vary. They depend on the particular mechanisms. For example, for the Paris Declaration at the international-level, the scope of performance is defined by the twelve targets which are tracked in the Monitoring Survey, as well as the fifty broader commitments. But the coverage of country-level mutual accountability frameworks is defined on a country-specific basis by partners and donors. It may include some or all of the Declaration's indicators, as well as others relevant to the country in question. Similarly, the performance assessment in EU Annual Reports is defined by EU commitments.

Improving mutual accountability for aid effectiveness would represent a major contribution to better development results. But mutual accountability is not limited to the aid effectiveness principles of the Paris Declaration. It goes beyond them in three important senses. One is that aid management efficiency is not an end in itself but a means of improving development impact and reducing poverty. The second is that aid effectiveness is a complement to rather than a substitute for aid volume. So, for example, the DATA Report uses G8 commitments on aid to define its frame of reference. The third is that the power imbalance between donors and partner countries extends beyond aid per se to include the full set of trade, immigration and other policies that impact on development. Thus, the Commitment to Development Index of the Center for Global Development counts aid as only one among seven of its indicators. The focus in this report, carried out for the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, is on the mutual accountability pillar of the Paris Declaration. However, the report draws links to these broader dimensions of accountability in several places.

There is consensus that mutual accountability implies significant and interlinked, behaviour change on all sides, change that is complex and difficult to achieve. It is this that makes mutual accountability central to successful implementation. It also explains why there has been a proliferation of accountability mechanisms in recent years, in particular at the international-level.

But implementation is challenging. Incentives and accountabilities are not always consistent.

A central challenge is that the mutual accountability between donors and partners is not the only accountability flow relevant to aid relationships. On the donor side, the strongest channels of donor accountability are domestic oversight mechanisms --such as legislative committees, Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs), and, through elections, accountability to taxpayers and voters. Active civil society is central. Such oversight is an important driver of effective agency performance and should be recognised as such.

However, the incentives created by domestic oversight mechanisms will often not be fully consistent with accountability to the governments and citizens of partner countries. This accountability applies to performance against donor commitments on aid effectiveness at a range of levels: projects, programmes, strategies and international agreements. The reality is that there may be tensions between these two different accountabilities. For example, domestic accountability can often focus on accountability for use of inputs, or on results of particular projects or programs – most often measured using the donor's own evaluation methodologies. Here the short-run pressure may be for more donor control rather than more donor alignment. More than that, donors also have other objectives, political or economic. It is in large part this, for example, that has made it so difficult for the DAC to reach agreement on complete untying. This difference in objectives, and lack of understanding in donor countries of drivers of sustainable aid effectiveness, can weaken the priority given to meeting aid effectiveness commitments.

On the partner side, there are also tensions between domestic accountabilities and aid effectiveness commitments. In spite of international commitments, partner country incentives to manage aid better and shift donor resources onto budget may also be weak. First of all, weaknesses in institutional environments, including limited space for civil society engagement, may mean countries do not face high levels of accountability to their own citizens for how well they have used resources, including those from aid. Many countries also feel that more harmonization of donors (e.g. into SWAps or budget support) will make them more vulnerable to collective negotiations or decisions to suspend disbursements.

In light of this, the challenge of aid effectiveness implementation can be seen as a classic collective action problem. Donors and partners have a clear common interest in implementing the agenda. For donors it offers the prospect of much greater impact on poverty reduction, as well as on donor enlightened self-interest in stability and trade,. For partners it offers the potential for more flexible as well as more effectively used resources in support of their priorities. However, there are powerful incentives and accountabilities on each side that can undermine momentum towards the 'collaborative' solution. Addressing these inconsistent incentives and achieving greater aid and development effectiveness is, of course, not just a technocratic matter, but involves political and social (e.g. gender or ethnic) tradeoffs and priorities It is the recognition that this is a political process that lies behind the rationale for raising development issues to the political level through the UNDCF and the HLF.

The power imbalances of the aid relationship further complicate the challenge
Alongside the 'mutliple accountabilities' feature of aid described above, another key structural characteristic of aid relationships is the power imbalance between donors and partners. Put simply, donors hold the strongest cards. For example, they can reduce allocations, or suspend disbursements, to countries. They can use conditionalities and define modalities. They frequently have greater capacity for analysis and policy dialogue than partner countries. The aid relationship is also often one element of a wider bilateral relationship, covering commercial and diplomatic issues, in which the donor country is more influential.

In many ways, the aid effectiveness agenda at its heart is about reducing these asymmetries in power. There is consensus that development resources will be more effective when countries are in the driving seat. Mutual accountability offers a mechanism for donors and partners to move together towards a more balanced relationship. But partners face something of a 'Catch-22' situation. The issue is not that effective mutual accountability requires equality of stature or power between parties. Instead the problem is more of a practical one. The existing imbalance in the aid relationship is reflected in imbalances in the mutual accountability landscape. Donors have a number of mechanisms available to them to monitor the performance of, and sanction and reward, partners. These include those mentioned just above, such as allocations, as well as a range of monitoring mechanisms. Prominent examples include the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA), IMF economic assessments (e.g. Article IVs, PRGF Reviews), the Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index, the Performance Reports of the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) program and the World Bank Institute's Kaufmann-Kraay-Zoibo-Lobaton (KKZ) indicators[2]. There has been rapid growth in such indices and more continue to be developed[3]. It is worth noting that such partner scrutiny mechanisms far outnumber mechanisms for scrutiny of donor performance and donors have a greater appetite for supporting them. Several donors draw on these partner monitoring indicators to inform allocation. For example the UK and DFID use the CPIA. The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) draws on the KKZ indicators.

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[2] For a discussion of the role of such mechanisms in donor decision-making see 'Measuring Governance: What Guidance for Aid Policy? Julius Court and Verena Fritz (ODI) with E. Gyimah-Boadi (CDD) (August 2007)

[3] For a more comprehensive list see Governance Indicators: A Users' Guide (UNDP/EU 2004),

These monitoring mechanisms of partner countries are outside the scope of this review. But they form an important part of its context. As discussed below, there has also been rapid growth in international-level mechanisms to scrutinise donor performance. But overall, the tools and mechanisms available for partners to monitor donor performance, and in particular to sanction them, remain limited. The question is how to redress to some extent this unbalanced mutual accountability landscape to support effective implementation of the agenda as a whole.

How can the potential of mutual accountability be captured?
To summarise, mutual accountability offers an important tool in advancing the aid effectiveness agenda. The agenda demands significant behaviour change and, fundamentally, accountability is about shaping behaviour. But issues like 'multiple accountabilities' and 'asymmetries of power' mean that it is not simple to make it work effectively. This is reflected in experience. Mutual accountability has been referred to as the 'orphan pillar' within the Paris Declaration since it has received less attention than other areas and, arguably, made less progress. There is now renewed commitment to identify ways to capture the potential of mutual accountability. This review forms part of a stream of work and dialogue that seeks to do just that.

Some mechanisms seek to capture comprehensively this 'two-way' accountability relationship by monitoring both donor and partner performance. Examples include the High-Level Dialogue for assessing Financing for Development, the Africa Partnership Forum (APF), the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) and of course the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey. Country-level mutual accountability frameworks also include both partner and donor performance. But other aid effectiveness accountability mechanisms cover only one or the other. For example, DAC Peer Reviews, the Center for Global Development (CGD) Commitment to Development Index (CDI) or the CONCORD EU Aid Watch capture donor performance. Mechanisms like the CPIA and PEFA indicators cover partner performance. COMPAS covers Multilateral Development Banks.

Stakeholders are concerned with strengthening mutual accountability overall. 'Two-way' mechanisms seek to contribute to this. But it is not necessary for a mechanism to be two-way to contribute to mutual accountability. For example, the CDI, while not two way, helps partner countries to hold donors accountable. For that reason this report maps mechanisms – domestic and external – that contribute to mutual accountability.

This review of international mechanisms of mutual accountability will place more emphasis on accountability of donors than of partner countries. This does not reflect a lack of balance. Instead it is because the primary locus for partner country accountability is (rightly) at the individual country level. Indeed, the 'mutual accountability' indicator in the PD itself focuses on country-level mechanisms[4]. These mechanisms are currently being reviewed in the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) study, with which this review has coordinated. Further, it is beyond the mandate of this review to consider in detail the large number of partner country monitoring mechanisms, like CPIA, TI or the Freedom House Index. The essential question underlying this review is what sort of international-level aid effectiveness accountability mechanisms can best support the country-level behaviour change required to transform aid relationships. While country-level frameworks are central to advancing mutual accountability, there is broad agreement that effective international-level mechanisms are necessary to complement them - providing political and technical momentum, direction, visibility and institutional change.

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[4]   Partner countries and donors commit to jointly assess through existing and increasingly objective country level mechanisms mutual progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, including the Partnership Commitments (Indicator 12).

3   The state of the debate

The review has involved a wide consultation of stakeholders between October 2007 and January 2008. Interviews took place in the US, the UK, France and South Africa with technical experts and policy-makers representing bilateral and multilateral donors, partner countries, civil society organisations and academics. The interviews were aimed at achieving a systematic understanding of the perspectives of the relevant stakeholders. They also allowed an opportunity to ask questions, build understanding and gather ideas. The debate is complex and there are multiple perspectives. It is not possible to do full justice to this richness. However, we will attempt to set out the key characteristics of the views of key groups of stakeholders as a means of grounding the review in operational realities and the political context.

In general, there is a high-level of consensus that the Paris Declaration is a central part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the performance and impact of aid. There is also consensus that mutual accountability has advanced less far than other PD indicators and that faster progress is needed to underpin better results in other PD areas. Further, there is recognition that mutual accountability mechanisms have proliferated, that there is need for good quality information to underpin accountability and catalyse change, and that the system as a whole could work better.

DAC Donors
Evidence, including from the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration and donor action plans, as well as DAC peer reviews, confirms that essentially all donors take the Paris Declaration seriously. (Peer reviews confirming this point were carried out over the last year or so for the EC, US, Finland, Spain, Canada and Denmark). This is striking, clearly surpassing common pre-Paris expectations. However, interviews confirmed the common-sense view that there are striking differences between individual donors and groups of donors, including on mutual accountability. This includes a group of bilaterals, primarily Northern European, that are strongly supportive of, and want to go further than, the Paris Declaration's agenda for aid effectiveness, as well as to reach the aid volume target of 0.7% of GDP. Other large bilateral donors, both European and non-European, including G8 countries, emphasise the specificity of their situations and, while supportive of the Paris Declaration, demonstrate varying levels of "ownership" of its indicators as a metric to judge their own development assistance.

In general, the donors with the stronger "ownership" and internalisation of Paris Declaration are those that have in the past been among the 'like-minded' donors. In this context, they have generally been more active in supporting mutual accountability initiatives at the international level. For example, they have been at the forefront of providing technical and financial support to emerging mechanisms (e.g. the APRM), pro-active participation in self-selecting mechanisms (e.g. the SPA) and promotion of the agenda in international fora (e.g. commissioning reviews such as this one). Even among like-minded countries, though, performance on delivering selectivity, harmonization and use of country systems on the ground can be patchy. Equally, in spite of their support for greater accountability, they can find frank external assessment of their performance uncomfortable.

The 'situation-specific' donors tend to react with more caution to suggestions of new measures and mechanisms to enhance international accountability around aid effectiveness. In some cases the issue is a concern that the PD indicators do not reflect the aid effectiveness agenda in its totality. This leads to a resistance to being assessed purely in those terms. They stress that development assistance is becoming increasingly complex and multi-dimensional in a globalised world with important new financers emerging. They also sometimes cite the approach to aid effectiveness of some of the like-minded as excessively 'ideologically-driven'. They fear that a deepening of the accountability around it will become counter-productive if it doesn't reflect country-specific condition. Others describe the PD indicators more as advocacy tools to catalyse action rather than for concrete performance assessment. Some also stress the primacy of their own domestic

accountability mechanisms and the impracticalities of international accountabilities on development assistance. They stress that their taxpayers are risk-averse on the question of using country systems.

There are EU Member States in both these categories. Nevertheless, collectively the EU has agreed to go beyond the Paris Declaration commitments in some areas (e.g. multi-donor technical assistance, use of country systems, as well as the share of aid provided as budget support and SWAps). They have agreed that these additional commitments be monitored on an annual basis by the European Commission.

All of this said, all of these donors assert that some international mechanisms, particularly DAC peer reviews, as well as the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and the overall Accra preparation process itself, have traction, if to varying extents, in their countries. Furthermore, they express a clear willingness to review the accountability system as a whole and consider options to support its functioning.

Partner countries

The wide variety of partner countries (e.g. income, degrees of aid dependence, quality of policy and institutions and level of engagement in international aid effectiveness debates) is reflected in their approach to mutual accountability, as to other aspects of aid effectiveness. There is wide agreement among them, as indicated for example in WP-EFF discussions, that expect increasingly responsive and flexible performance from donors. They recognise the significant potential of the PD in delivering more effective aid, as well as concrete gains that are already being seen. They also recognise that the PD is a 'mutual' compact but feel that efforts need to be made for it to be as 'mutual' in practice as it is in principle. Some cite the process of agreeing PD indicators and of monitoring as highly donor-driven. They see effective mutual accountability instruments, at both the country and international levels, as an important tool to empower them in dialogue vis-à-vis donors.

More specifically, some suggest that the PD conception of aid effectiveness is not sufficient to reflect their own concerns. For example, they give emphasis to questions like flexibility to respond to shocks, conditionality, and concessionality, as well as aid volume. Some also question the salience of some Paris indicators for their situations. For example, while resolving fragmentation is usually a priority for countries with many donors, there are other countries, that seek more donors, particularly in order to increase the volume of aid. Furthermore, concerns are expressed that full harmonization of donors weakens partner countries' relative position in negotiations by raising the risks associated with disbursements being halted. And there are concerns about donor capacity to deliver. For example, some also cite the limits of country-level mutual accountability frameworks at securing behaviour change. They suggest that donors find it hard to deliver commitments on issues like predictable medium-term financing, or rationalisation of missions, even where partner countries have done their part in strengthening leadership and capacity.

Some partner countries raise the need for a proper forum for their views and perspectives. They question whether partner country participation in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, while very positive, is sufficient for this purpose, given the DAC's historical role as a 'donors' club' and given the lack of complementary partner country fora equivalent to the DAC's Senior Level Meeting and High Level Meeting. Some mention the UN as a forum with more legitimacy. Partners also stress the difficulties of fully engaging in international aid effectiveness debates and mechanisms, given the priority of their core management responsibilities within their own governments, and the scarce capacity they have available to carry them out. They also point to the emerging acceptance and traction of developing country peer pressure mechanisms to strengthen governance and policy. An example is the APRM, which is in its early days and remains optional but has considerable potential. More on partner perspectives in Africa is set out in the accompanying background paper 'African Perspectives on Mutual Accountability at the International Level' .

Civil Society

Civil society, especially Northern NGOs, have been active on the question of accountability for aid effectiveness. In general, they are increasingly supportive of the Paris Declaration, seeing it as a major effort, with good intentions, to increase aid effectiveness. However, they tend to be quite critical at the pace of implementation and to support much stronger accountability mechanisms for official donors. CSOs in particular are concerned that the current accountability framework cannot support the necessary behaviour change. They rightly emphasise the power imbalances between donors and partner countries in terms of accountability mechanisms, particular donors' ability to cut off funding when they are dissatisfied with performance. Suggestions have included an aid ombudsman, perhaps at the UN[5]. In general, they are cautious on the value of internal peer review mechanisms, being more attracted to transparent models that have greater authority to secure behaviour change. Some CSO voices also express concern at the independence and data quality of some existing models, like the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey. Some also express concern at the lack of tools to empower partner countries vis-à-vis donors and question the legitimacy of the DAC as a central accountability mechanism. They also raise questions on the narrow coverage of the PD indicators. They point in particular to conditionality and to the lack of a specific target for untying as gaps, as well as stressing the risk that the Declaration reduces aid effectiveness to an excessively narrow agenda of management. In parallel, CSO dialogue is also increasingly – although to an uneven extent -- recognising the importance of the Paris Declaration as an agenda that applies to CSOs' own operations. Alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and accountability to partner countries are all major issues for them.

Many CSOs have, either individually or collectively acted to address these accountability deficits of donors through establishing new mechanisms. These include the Reality of Aid, the CONCORD EU Aid Watch and the DATA Report. These, and other, mechanisms are reviewed here. But they also stress the need for greater space for civil society engagement in official processes of dialogue and oversight around mutual accountability (both in country-level and international mechanisms).

In order to help bring CSOs more closely into aid effectiveness dialogue, the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness created the Advisory Group on CSOs and Aid Effectiveness (AG). Under the leadership of the Canadian government, the AG has been undertaking a process to explore the roles of civil society in development, including the applicability of the Paris Declaration to improving CSO aid effectiveness. The AG will make recommendations to the Working Party in advance of the Accra High Level Forum on issues related to CSOs and aid effectiveness. Some CSOs have raised concerns that the AG process has focused too much on their role as providers of aid, relative to their contribution in other areas, including mutual accountability. CSOs have also established a 'CSO Parallel Process' to the Accra High Level Forum, bringing together local, national, regional and international NGOs who are engaged in the aid effectiveness agenda. This process is coordinated by an International Steering Group (ISG). The ISG has developed a policy paper, a website and is representing civil society in the AG[6].

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[5] Making aid accountable and effective; The challenge for the Third High Level Forum on aid effectiveness. Accra, Ghana 2008. (ActionAid, 2007)

[6] From Paris 2005 To Accra 2008: Will Aid Be More Accountable and Effective? Written by the International Civil Society Steering Group (September 2007). Available at www.betteraid.org

4   Conceptual Framework and Methodology

The following section identifies an appropriate model of accountability and highlights the necessary features of an effective accountability mechanism consistent with that model. Three broad models of accountability relationships can be considered[7]:

Representative accountability has its roots in political theory and is often applied to public sector and inter-governmental agencies expected to be democratically accountable to citizens, parliaments, etc… Such accountability can be thought of as 'vertical' (such as elections and freedom of information legislation) and 'horizontal' (such as legislative oversight of the executive and judicial checks). The key avenue for sanction is replacement, through democratic channels, of elected leaders.

Principal-agent accountability is the model most appropriate for corporate entities. It focuses on the fiduciary responsibilities of agents (e.g. management) and the challenge for principals (e.g. shareholders) in establishing appropriate legal and economic incentives. Key tools for compliance are contractual and legal frameworks.

Collaborative accountability models[8] deal with cooperative compacts that bind members through shared values and commitments. They are appropriate for understanding partnerships between peers in pursuit of societal objectives (e.g. codes of conducts, voluntary standards, participation in peer review or other benchmarking exercises). In many cases the precise objectives, participants and indicators are open-ended and evolving. In these models, building and maintaining the commitment of stakeholders is as important as enforcing compliance. Sanctions for non-compliance tend to be social, political, reputational and relational. They are enforced by peer networks, on the basis of common information, and are complex and reciprocal rather than binary. One central feature is the emergence of 'social norms' which introduce collective standards of behaviour and serve to reinforce the incentives for the cooperation that is in everybody's collective interest. Such norms emerge from shared ideas, values, beliefs or evidence and become embedded over time. In these models, cooperation is underpinned and deepened by a number of factors. For example, participants need to consent to, and have **ownership** of, the standards that are set. This means that their **reputation** and 'social-standing' is at stake in the event of non-compliance (free-riding). Equally reputations are enhanced by good performance. **Information and monitoring** allows for effective scrutiny of performance. **Mutual trust** grows over time and underpins sustainability. Crucially, it is **internal mechanisms** (e.g. self-assessment, peers) rather than external compulsion that are central to ensuring compliance. **Participation** is sustained on an ongoing basis by members considering that it is in their own interests and **consistent** with their other rights and obligations. Such **models do not presuppose equality** between stakeholders. Indeed, they can function as effective mechanisms to bind in more powerful players to common rules, values and behaviour. Nor do they presuppose consensus between participants. Their evolution consists of (and indeed depends on) **ongoing contestation, challenge and creative tension** among players. It is important to stress that such mechanisms, once mature, do not necessarily have less of an impact on behaviour than compulsion. They can be very powerful drivers of behaviour. They can also provide the foundation for the development of more institutionalised legal enforcement mechanisms over time.

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[7] Brown, D & Jagadananda (2007) Civil Society legitimacy and Accountability: Issues and Challenges, paper prepared for the Program on Civil Society Legitimacy and of CIVICUS and the Hauser Center

[8] It should be noted that this type of model can also be termed as a 'mutual accountability model'. We prefer the term 'collaborative' to avoid confusion with the specific definition of 'mutual accountability' in the aid effectiveness context.

The model is relevant to international norms and agreements where legal or democratic avenues of compliance may not exist. International arms control and disarmament is one well-studied example. Another is cooperation on international environmental issues (e.g. Montreal Protocol, Kyoto Protocol). The success of such international cooperation is about creating and sustaining a "logic of participation" rather than the "logic of compliance"[9]. It depends on members continuing to believe that the benefits of participation outweigh the costs. Consistency with the reality of domestic legislative, political and accountability frameworks is also central.

The Paris Declaration as a collaborative accountability framework

The aid 'industry' features instances of all three models of accountability. Representative accountability relationships are seen in democratic oversight of the use of aid – in both donor and partner countries. A growing priority of donors in recent years has been to support partners' efforts to strengthen their own representative accountability mechanisms through governance and institutional-strengthening programmes. Principal-agent accountability relationships feature in donor oversight of intermediaries, like multilaterals and global programs. They are also used to oversee bilateral agencies, including within the internal performance management systems of those agencies, like corporate and staff incentives. Further, the ability of donors to cut off funding to partner countries where they are dissatisfied with performance is also a type of 'hard' principal-agent accountability relationship.

The international aid effectiveness agenda (and the Paris Declaration within it) fits into the collaborative model. The agenda is complex. It consists of a set of over-lapping, and mutually-reinforcing commitments between peers and there are differences over interpretations, definitions and indicators. (In other words, 'accountability for what' is not narrowly-defined.) There is no single over-arching authority to monitor behaviour and compel corrections. A useful metaphor is a bird's nest – in which a range of mechanisms of different strengths and types combine to deliver a coherent overall whole. Further, the level of commitment and ownership varies between participants. In short, it is an evolving collaborative accountability framework. The challenge is to build commitment, ownership and partnership, as much as it is to hold one another accountable. It is as much about generating mutual responsibility as mutual accountability.

Approach to the review

Our methodology for the review of individual mechanisms reflects the nature of this collaborative accountability framework. It is important to stress that a pragmatic methodology is required. The mechanisms to be assessed are diverse in terms of procedures, objectives and scope. Furthermore, accountability is an art not a science. The framework seeks to create a platform for analysis and dialogue around the strengths and weaknesses of different accountability mechanisms within the political context and overall architecture.

We have adopted an approach that is based on the four key elements of an effective **collaborative** accountability mechanism.

1. **Evidence:** This dimension concerns technical credibility based on definition, quality, clarity, lack of bias, and availability of performance information (which is the 'currency' of accountability). This evidence-base is delivered through effective monitoring. Key questions include:
- Definition: Are objectives, roles and responsibilities clearly defined?
- Transparency: Are findings and methodologies openly and easily available on a timely basis?
- Candour: How objectively and frankly does the mechanism analyse and communicate comparative performance?

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[9] 'Global financial governance and the problem of accountability: the role of the public sphere' R. Germain in 'Global Accountabilities: Participation, Pluralism, and Public Ethics' edited by A. Ebrahim and E. Weisband (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)

- Monitoring: Is performance monitored, benchmarked and reported on a regular basis?
- Capacity: Do mechanisms have adequate technical, human and financial resources to exercise their role?
- Rigour: Are processes intellectually rigorous and technically robust?
- Analytical independence: Are processes compromised by political sensitivities and interference?

2. **Ownership:** Within a mutual cooperation framework, this dimension is clearly crucial. Where frameworks are collaborative and voluntary, it is crucial to foster the emergence of stronger consent, commitment, credibility, trust and common values. Given the complexities of aid accountability relationships, effective mechanisms need legitimacy among a wide range of stakeholders, including donors, partners and civil society. They should also seek to reinforce commitment to the agenda, as well as building trust among peers, enhancing the quality of peer networks and promoting the emergence of common values. For example:

- Legitimacy: Is there 'consent' of participants? In other words do relevant stakeholders accept the role, existence and approach of the mechanism within the overall accountability 'architecture'?
- Commitment: Do mechanisms lead to increased ownership and commitment to the agenda? (Of course, levels of ownership and commitment by different stakeholders may differ within mechanisms.)
- Trust: Do processes build trust among peers and enhance the quality of peer networks?
- Coherence: Is the mechanism consistent with, and supportive of, Paris Declaration principles and aims (e.g. minimising transaction costs, supporting domestic accountabilities and country-level mutual accountability frameworks)?
- Values: Do mechanisms contribute positively to mutual understanding and expectations around commitments and goals?

- Participation: Do mechanisms attract and maximise the involvement of relevant stakeholders.

3. **Debate:** This concerns the extent to which mechanisms stimulate informed debate and ensure parties provide clear reasoning for performance – through informal or formal mechanisms. Questions include:

- Profile: Do mechanisms catalyse political, technical and social discussion – either in formal or informal fora?
- Awareness: Are relevant stakeholders aware of mechanisms and their messages?
- Responsiveness: Do mechanisms generate reasoning for actions taken?

Analytical Framework for Assessing Mechanisms

4. **Behaviour change:** The accountability impact of mechanisms – which follows from levels of Evidence, Ownership, and Debate -- can be termed **'Behaviour change'.** By extension, this is what leads to development results on the ground. Behaviour change can be secured through external compulsion (e.g. sanctions) or own-adjustment. Elements include:

- Traction: Do mechanisms catalyse actions, at the political, or senior technical, level?
- Enforcement: Do mechanisms ensure that, where necessary, corrections will be made?
- Impact: What is the impact of the mechanism in strengthening development results on the ground?
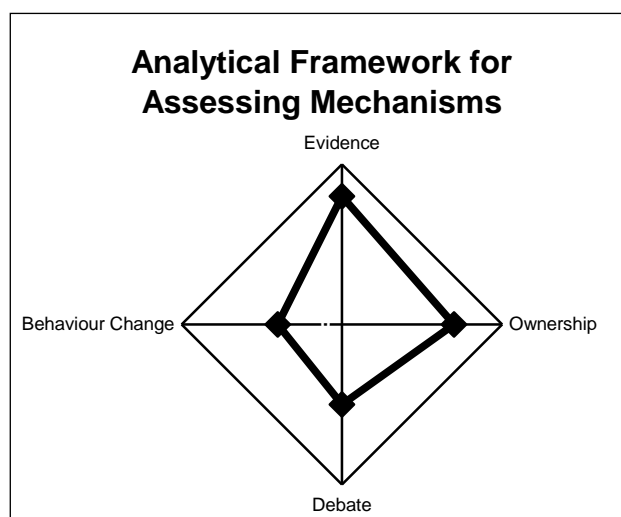
- Mutual learning: Do mechanisms catalyse adaptive learning processes?
- Potential: What is the potential of the mechanism to play a strengthened role in the future?

"Diamond charts" that illustrate these dimensions visually will be used. The chart sets out an example. The review of individual mechanisms is undertaken in the accompanying background paper. These four dimensions can be seen as a set of mutually-reinforcing factors that contribute to greater mutual accountability. This in turn will generate more effective implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda which in turn increases development impact and accelerates progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The chart below sets out a simplified visual representation of this dynamic.

Box 4.1   The foundations of mutual accountability and results impact
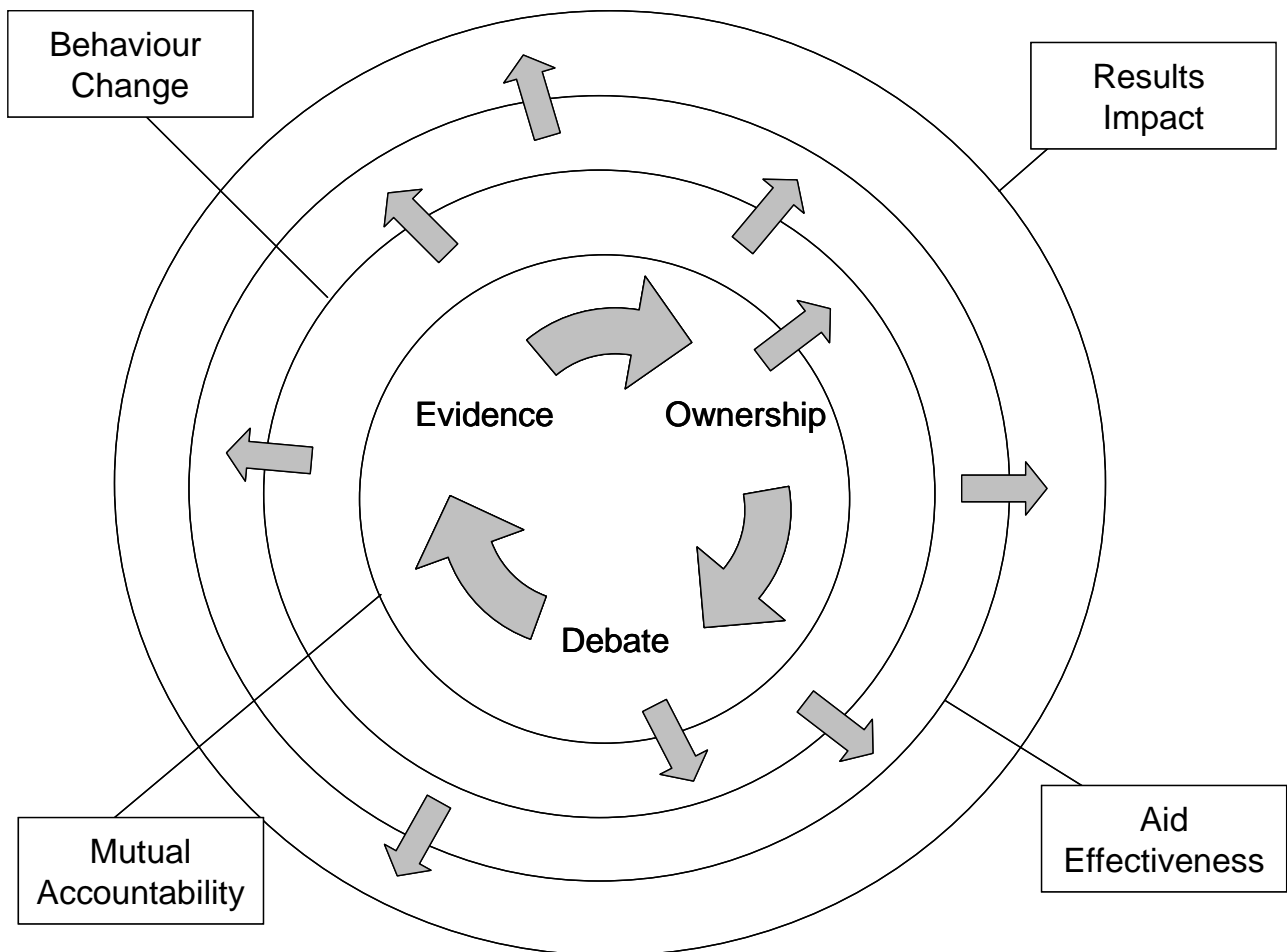
5 Mapping and classifying the existing accountability framework

We can now map the main individual accountability mechanisms that make up the overall aid effectiveness accountability framework. This will allow for the mechanisms to be assessed in a structured way using a methodology based on the conceptual framework already established. This process will provide conclusions on how the mechanisms are functioning individually and collectively. In turn, this will underpin some concrete options for consideration. Overall mechanisms can be thought of as belonging to one of four categories.

Figure 5.1   Classifying accountability mechanisms for donor and partner performance
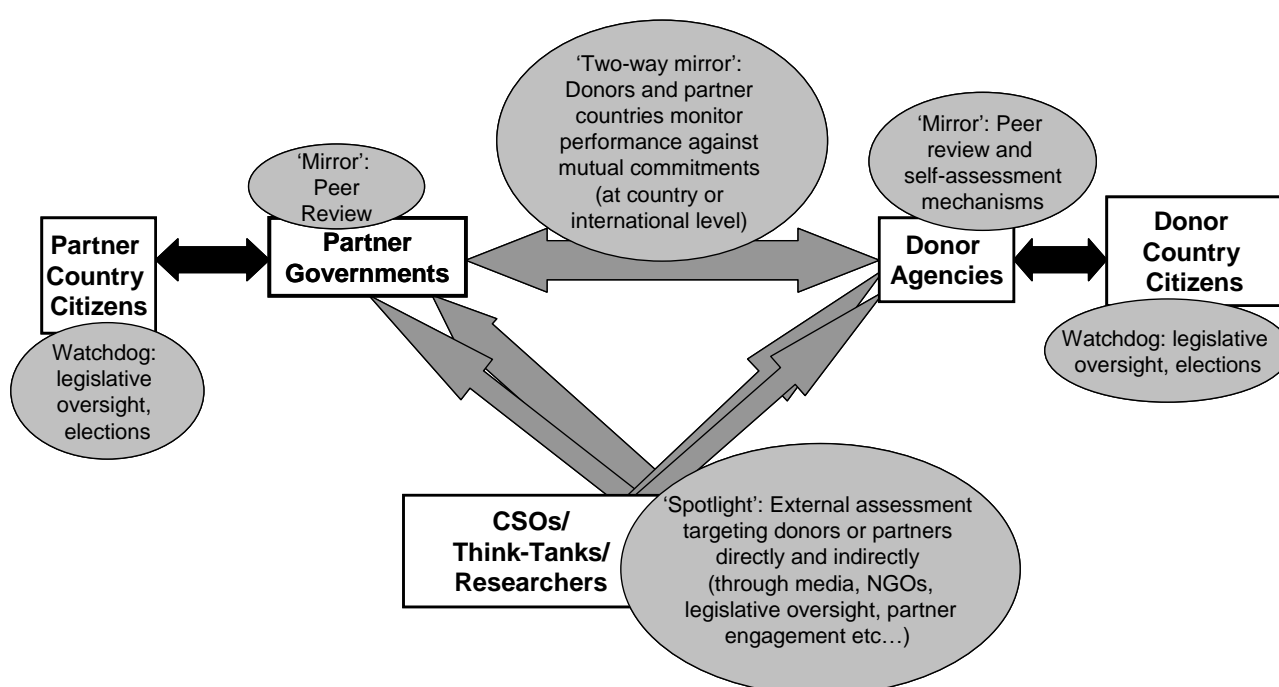
1. **'Watchdog':** This sort of mechanism involves the 'hard' contractual, legal and democratic tools of sanction and compliance associated with 'representative' and 'principal-agent' models. They include legislative oversight and performance management frameworks for development ministries, operating frameworks for development agencies, as well as elections. Oversight in partner countries (parliaments, citizens) of governments also fits within this classification. It is outside the mandate of this assignment to assess such mechanisms individually. We are concerned with mutual and international level mechanisms. However, 'watchdogs' are a fundamental part of the overall system, so it is useful to categorise them, and set out their role, within it.

2. **'Spotlights':** These are non-official mechanisms that seek to provide independent and frank information on issues like donor and partner performance. As discussed earlier, quality information is central to mutual cooperation frameworks. It functions as the oil that makes the machinery turn. The overall universe of 'spotlights' contains more mechanisms that address partner performance than donor performance. All of them contribute to mutual accountability in an aggregate sense. However, partner spotlights are outside the scope of this review since they are not directly-related to aid effectiveness. Donor spotlights range along a spectrum. At one end, they are principally advocacy tools to influence donors directly or else to use democratic channels like legislators, the media and citizen awareness to contribute to, and shape, debates. At the other end of the spectrum they are mainly technical instruments, aimed

at generating information, evidence or analysis that can support partners in assessing donor performance and in negotiations. Examples of such mechanisms include the Centre for Global Development's (CGD) Commitment to Development Index (CDI), the African Monitor, the Africa Progress Panel, the DATA Report and the HIPC CBP Analysis.

Box 1: Accountability mechanisms

Watchdog: (These mechanisms are not reviewed here.)
- Donor Agency domestic accountability frameworks (e.g. Parliaments, citizens, Boards, media). Other examples would include the World Bank Inspection Panel or its Independent Evaluation Group (IEG).
- Partner country domestic accountability (e.g. SAIs, Parliaments, CSOs, voters).

Spotlights*:
- CGD Commitment to Development Index
- DATA Report
- African Monitor
- CONCORD EU Aid Watch Report
- Africa Progress Panel
- Reality of Aid
- HIPC CBP Analysis

Mirror:
- DAC Bilateral Peer Review
- IFI Comparative Performance Assessment (COMPAS)
- EU Annual Report on Financing for Development
- Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Two-way mirror:
- Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness (MRDE)
- Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) including Survey on Monitoring of the Paris Declaration
- High-Level Dialogue to assess implementation of Financing for Development (FfD)
- ECOSOC High-Level Development Cooperation Forum
- Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA)
- Africa Partnership Forum
- Global Monitoring Report (GMR) / Development Committee
- Country-level mutual accountability frameworks **(Not for review here)**

* Selected partner-specific spotlights outside the mandate of this review include: CPIA, Transparency International, PEFA, WBI Indicators, Freedom House Index, World Bank 'Doing Business' Database, Global Integrity Index, Afrobarometer, Latino Barometer, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Mo Ibrahim Foundation's African Governance Indicators

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3. **'Mirror':** Internal mechanisms of peer review are a basic feature of mutual cooperation frameworks. In this context they can be thought of as donors holding up a **'mirror'** to one another. In the case of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), it is partner countries holding up a mirror to one another. Existing mechanisms include the DAC Peer Review process and the EU Consensus on Development.

4. **'Two-way mirror':** We use this term to describe the mechanisms that have emerged for donors and partners to oversee the performance of one another in the context of 'mutual' compacts like the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris Declaration. Such mechanisms include the Monitoring of the Paris Declaration itself, the High-Level Dialogue around the Financing for Development (FfD) compact, the Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA) and the Africa Partnership Forum (APF).

Based on our classification, in Box 1 (above) we set out the mechanisms that will be reviewed as part of this exercise. We have also opted not to include a number of mechanisms. This includes, for example, the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), which is a tool for selected bilaterals to review the performance of selected multilaterals at the field level. In addition, it would be premature to include mechanisms under development, such as the CGD Rating of Donor Quality. For similar reasons we have also excluded the Learning Group of Global Programs. This is a useful forum for information-sharing and lesson-learning but is not, at least yet, an accountability mechanism. Since our concern is with overall aid effectiveness, we also exclude mechanisms that deal with specific sectors or themes. There are many of these. One example is the DARA Humanitarian Response Index (HRI). Another is the CGAP Microfinance Donor Peer Review. However, discussions on some of these mechanisms contributed to, and reinforced, the design of the methodology.

6   Findings and Conclusions

The review of individual mechanisms according to the methodology is set out in the Background Paper. This section aims to synthesise the findings from that review and draw out a number of messages on the overall system. The assessments are necessarily subjective, based on a combination of stakeholder consultation, research and the experience of the consultancy team. If the approach is considered valuable, consideration could be given to extending it in the future through a modest-sized survey of stakeholders, including donors, partners and CSOs.

General messages

- Firstly, this is a highly dynamic picture, characterised by widespread interest, innovation and activity. **There has been a proliferation of mechanisms in recent years:** This is true across all categories. Aside from the Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA) and the DAC Peer Review all mechanisms reviewed were established this decade, and there are others in the design stage.

- At this stage, **speaking of an accountability <u>system</u> is largely unwarranted**. That term implies a level of coordination and linkages between individual mechanisms that barely exists. Some mechanisms clearly complement one another. For example, the civil society 'CONCORD EU Aid Watch Report' offers external oversight of the official 'EU Annual Report on Financing for Development' that covers EU delivery of commitments. However, by and large, existing mechanisms are self-standing and coordinate little with one another.

- There are several **examples of overlapping, if not duplication, of objectives and functions** within all categories. For example, there is overlap between the non-official 'spotlight' mechanisms like the African Monitor, the Reality of Aid, the DATA Report and the CONCORD Aid Watch (although the latter focuses specifically on European aid). There are also a high number of mechanisms specifically concerned with Africa. They include the MRDE, the APF, the APP, the APRM and the African Monitor.

- Equally, there are also several areas where clear **gaps exist**. This is the case in terms of coverage of mechanisms. For example, while several mechanisms monitor DAC bilateral agencies and, to a lesser extent, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), there are few mechanisms that effectively capture the role of 'emerging donors'. One that is able to, since it facilitates assessment by partner countries themselves, is the HIPC CBP Analysis. Global Programs and, by extension, the role of donors that take the decisions on setting them up and determining their funding and policies, are also scarcely covered.

- **Gaps also exist in terms of engagement in monitoring. For example, relatively few of these international-level mechanisms involve partner countries substantively** or provide them with a platform to express their voice. Further, relatively few define targets and methodologies in terms of partner country perspectives. This is perhaps surprising. If donors are the 'suppliers' of aid, partner countries are the 'consumers'. In a well-functioning market, consumer information, power and choice is an important drive of producer effectiveness and responsiveness. The HIPC CBP Analysis is an example of a mechanism that does define indicators in terms of partner priorities.

- Many mechanisms monitor the overall performance and progress of donors as a whole, or sub-groups of them. **Much less frequent is high quality, regular monitoring of the performance of <u>specific</u>, <u>individual </u>actors.** More rare still is monitoring that goes beyond this to present information on the performance of specific donors in specific countries. Some of the mechanisms that do this are the WP-EFF (through the PD Monitoring Survey), the HIPC CBP Analysis and, to a limited extent the Strategic Partnership for Africa (SPA).

- These shortcomings notwithstanding, **the behaviour change catalysed by the Paris Declaration and the aid effectiveness agenda is unprecedented. As our review shows, international accountability mechanisms have contributed to these changes.** As the summary charts show, a number of mechanisms stand out, including the DAC Peer Review,

Review of mechanisms

Legend:
- Evidence
- Ownership
- Debate
- Behaviour Change

Categories: Spotlights, Mirrors, Two-Way Mirrors

the WP-EFF, the SPA and the CGD CDI. This behaviour change builds on a clear trend over the last decade of changes in donor behaviour (particularly in allocation) in response to the evolution of the international aid architecture[10]. This traction is often downplayed or poorly communicated. However, that is not to say that there is not scope for significantly strengthened and accelerated implementation.
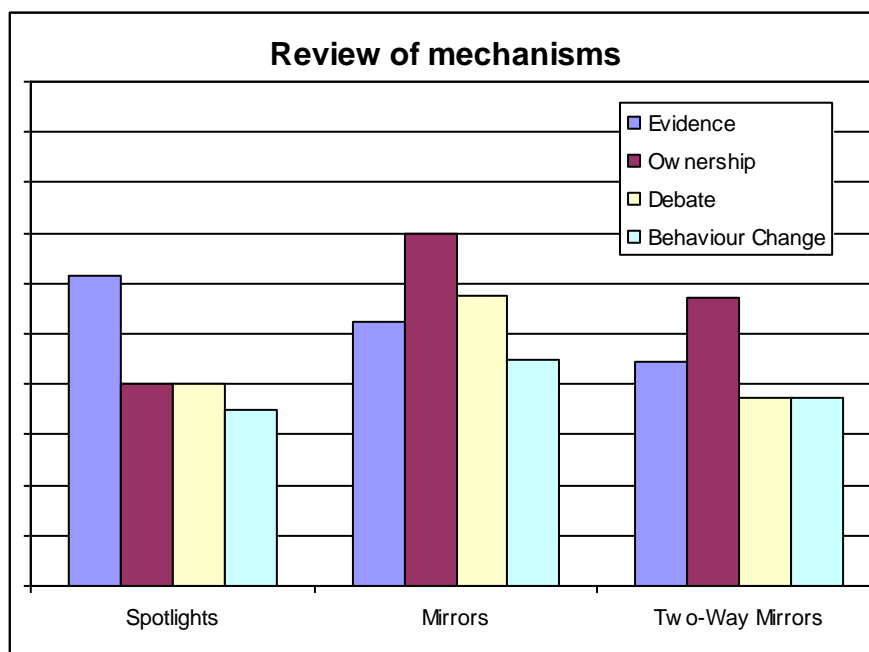
- Attribution of behaviour change to specific mechanisms is of course complex. It is also frequently poorly-communicated. For example, **our review suggests that 'mirrors' perform quite well on many dimensions.** Overall, they are also the most balanced mechanisms on average, with ratings similar on the different dimensions. But, this finding may not square with the perceptions of many, in particular among CSOs and partner countries. Further, as we have noted, the strength of the system as a whole is derived as much from the way in which mechanisms complement one another as from their individual strengths. This means that mechanisms do not have to be strong on all dimensions to add value – provided that they feed into other mechanisms. This is particularly true of 'spotlights' that serve to feed information into other categories (e.g. mirrors and watchdogs). Consequently, the appropriate response to the relatively low levels of 'ownership' of 'spotlights' may not be to seek ways to enhance it. Instead it might be to work to increase the extent to which other categories use information generated by 'spotlights' and strengthen the quality and understanding of that information.

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[10] 'Empirical Evidence on the New International Aid Architecture', Claessens, Stijn, Cassimon, Danny, Van Campenhout, Bjorn (IMF Working Paper, December 2007)

- **It is also clear that different types of mechanisms have different levels of impact with different donors. For example, 'spotlights' generate more debate and impact among the 'like-minded' donors than among other donors.** For example, the levels of parliamentary and media debate on the CGD CDI are much higher in Northern Europe. In the Netherlands, CDI ranking has become a formal indicator of development policy (although the Netherlands' high score on the CDI may be a factor). Equally, the traction of the DATA Report on G8 commitments appears to be the greatest in the UK, which is the country whose G8 Presidency delivered many of the relevant commitments.

Review of Spotlights
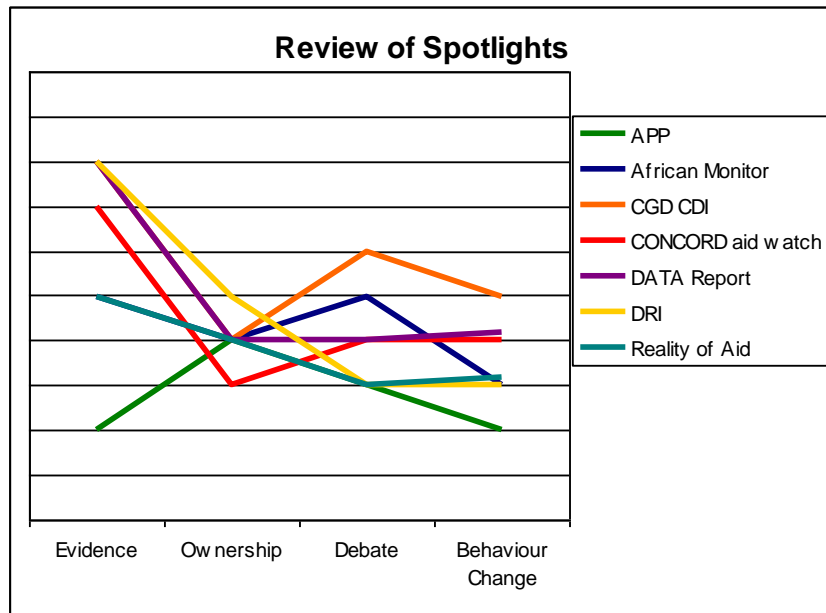
The effectiveness of 'spotlights' is driven by the commitment and political ownership of those monitored around the agenda as well as their consent to being monitored. Where such consent and commitment is absent, 'spotlights' will be politely ignored. **Where there is more caution about the agenda, and the parameters used to assess progress (e.g. in the 'situation-specific' donors), it is 'mirrors' that appear to have the greater traction.** For example, it appears that in the US, the DAC Peer Review catalysed significant reflection and institutional change in some areas, while there was relatively little change in response, for example, to the CDI index.
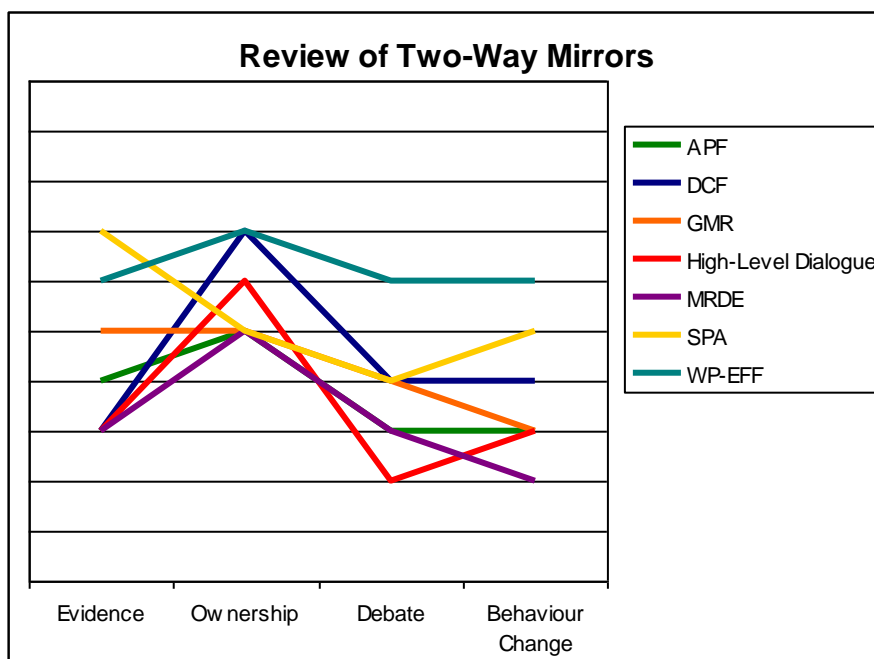
- Whatever the environment, **the quality, candour and availability of information is central to profile and impact.** Both the DATA Report and the CGD CDI (outside the US) are examples of mechanisms where a high-quality base of evidence has led to much greater impact than might otherwise have been expected. In the case of the CDI the key has been high-quality analysis and research, although oriented toward public and political opinion, rather than the academic community. For DATA it is more a question of presenting and

Review of Mirrors
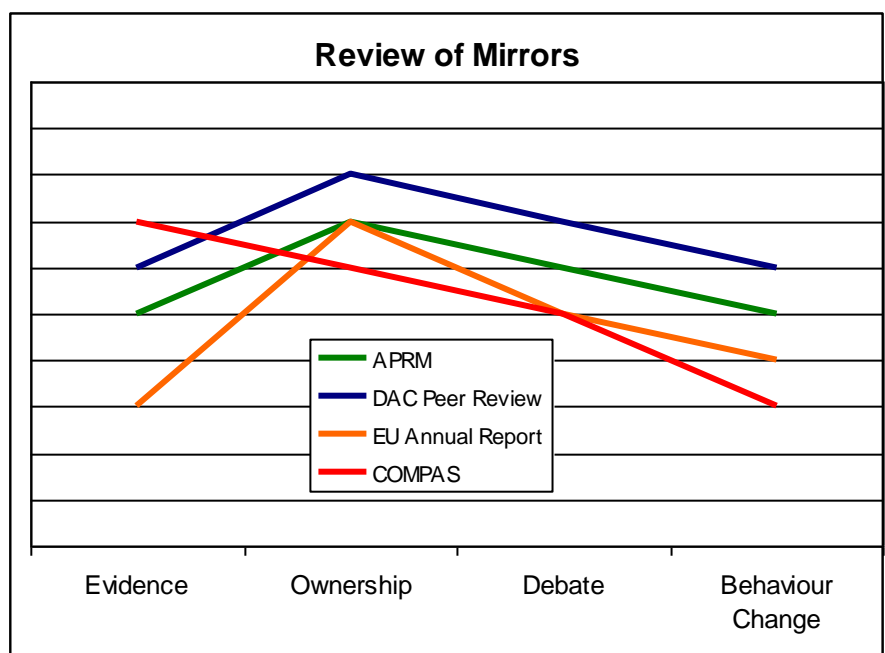
analysing existing data in an engaging way.

- Conversely, many 'two-way mirrors' with high-levels of political credibility and ownership have delivered much less mutual accountability impact than might have been anticipated. Examples include the High-Level Dialogue, the MRDE and Global Monitoring Report. Many of them deliver robust monitoring of overall progress on the aid effectiveness agenda. This can underpin greater understanding and ownership of the challenges. However, they tend to be constrained from the substantive presentation and discussion of individual donor (and partner) performance necessary for genuine accountability. This makes the point that strong political legitimacy as a forum for policy dialogue and aggregate monitoring does not equate to legitimacy as a forum for accountability.

- Clear trade-offs exist in terms of the numbers of mechanisms and the scope of the performance indicators they track. At present, there is a wide variety of mechanisms. There is also a wide variety of sources of information and definitions of indicators. This has some advantages. For example, an excessively narrow definition of targets

Review of Two-Way Mirrors

Legend: APF, DCF, GMR, High-Level Dialogue, MRDE, SPA, WP-EFF

Categories: Evidence, Ownership, Debate, Behaviour Change

risks an 'ideological' approach that does not reflect the complexities of realities on the ground. Furthermore, variety allows more stakeholders to have mechanisms they 'own' that assess performance in terms of indicators they support. For example, the DAC Peer Reviews have strong ownership with DAC donors but are less highly-regarded by partner countries and CSOs. Equally, UN fora have higher legitimacy among partner countries and CSOs as the proper locus for mutual accountability, but donors are more circumspect, partly because of the tendency in these fora to avoid direct criticism of partner countries, particularly at an individual level.

- However, variety also muddies the waters. Effective accountability demands clarity of evidence. **The more mechanisms and indicators there are, the harder it is to achieve.** Competition is healthy, particularly in the short run. However, over time, the overall accountability system would perform better if there were a relatively few highly credible and broadly accepted mechanisms and, consistent with good practice in evaluation, a manageably limited number of indicators.

- **In general, the analysis suggests a number of potential synergies are not being exploited.** As the chart highlights (on the basis of simple averages), 'spotlights' score relatively well on evidence. However, their ownership and legitimacy lags behind 'mirrors' and 'two-way mirrors'. This constrains impact on behaviour change. Conversely, as discussed, 'mirrors' and 'two-way mirrors' struggle to combine to match their solid levels of legitimacy with clarity of evidence. Again this constrains impact. For example, DAC Peer Review makes relatively limited use of, and reference to, available non-official quantitative

data that is available. In the case of 'two-way mirrors', like the High-Level Dialogue or the GMR, donor caution has been a factor pushing against greater clarity of performance information. In the case of the MRDE, reluctance from African partner countries has constrained disaggregation of information.

In summary, the review has highlighted that the existing mutual accountability system is young. Indeed, to even speak of a 'system' may be premature. The landscape as a whole is delivering less than the sum of its parts. But it is evolving rapidly. In five years time it is likely to look very different. We have found that mutual accountability mechanisms have already contributed positively to the behaviour change that is happening across the international development community. But we have also found that there is clear potential for them to increase their positive impact in the future. In the following section we set out a number of strategic priorities for evolution of the system derived from our approach and findings.

7   Strategic Priorities

We are dealing with a complex, multi-dimensional, organic system. As such, its shape cannot be determined by one specific entity or grouping. Nor should it be. The implication of our analysis is that there is no magic bullet that would transform the landscape overnight. For now, the key challenge for the aid effectiveness accountability system is an incremental and evolutionary one. The metaphor of a garden may be useful. While it is not possible to control precisely what emerges and the direction of growth, interventions can be made to shape the overall landscape. Some plants can be nurtured, watered and fertilised. Others can be cut back or neglected. A key problem is how to avoid having weeds, or not very useful or pretty plants take over.

It is important to stress that a laisser-faire approach is not warranted. Policy-makers, and all stakeholders, do have tools that can positively shape system development. Based on the review, and its findings, four strategic priorities can be identified:

- Firstly, in order to strengthen mutual accountability in aggregate, efforts should be made to **build a genuine 'system'**, in which individual mechanisms interact creatively and progressively and coverage is comprehensive. This 'systemic-thinking' means building synergies between mechanisms, both official and non-official, harnessing their respective strengths. This would enable mechanisms to work more effectively, contributing more to the whole. 'Two-way mirrors' make better use of the evidence-base offered by other mechanisms so as to become genuine fora for donors and partners to review one another's individual achievements. 'Mirrors' would work more effectively to deepen commitment, partnership and trust. 'Spotlights' would fulfil much stronger 'challenge function' and information-provider roles. Linked to this is the need for greater willingness to scale back, or eliminate, the mutual accountability elements of international mechanisms that prove not to add significant value to the whole.

- The second priority is the challenge of **empowerment of partner countries** within individual mechanisms, and the international-level system as a whole, to provide them with a platform to play their role properly. This includes seeking greater complementarity with country-level mutual accountability frameworks.

- In line with our guiding philosophy on the foundations of behaviour change and mutual accountability, another key challenge is **strengthening the 'evidence-base'** available through greater quality, independence and transparency of information on performance.

- Success on this agenda is also contingent on donors and partner countries **building greater 'ownership'** of the mutual accountability agenda by strengthening the legitimacy of individual mechanisms and their own commitment and willingness to be held accountable for their individual performance on aid effectiveness.

Based on these strategic priorities, the independent consultants have identified a menu of complementary specific options for further consideration. These options are summarised below. They are set out in more detail in the Annex that follows.

Capturing the potential of international-level two-way mirrors
1. Joint commitment by donors and partner countries to take steps to enhance the overall impact of international-level donor-partner fora.

2. Measures to enhance partner voice and participation in the WP-EFF and Paris Declaration follow-up.

3. Joint donor and partner country recognition of the potential role of the DCF as a complementary forum to the DAC for mutual accountability around aid effectiveness, including the meaningful inclusion of emerging donors. This would include pushing to keep the DCF Report authoritative and analytically independent, bringing together performance assessment of donors and partners across a comprehensive range of aid effectiveness commitments,.

Polishing mirrors to build commitment and action
4. Recognition by donors and partner countries of the value of peer reviews processes as an element in overall mutual accountability and commitment to strengthening their participation in these processes.

5. Relatedly, commitment by donors to strengthening the DAC Peer Reviews, particularly by providing more "voice" for partner countries and for results of independent external evaluations.

6. Commitment by other relevant groupings, like the EU or MDBs to strengthening the 'mirrors' they are part of. The EU, in particular, which has a record of pushing the consensus forward, could commit to making the EU Annual Report into a best-practice 'mirror'.

Brighter, more integrated, spotlights to provide evidence and scrutiny
7. Donors and partner recognition of the role of good quality, relevant non-official monitoring and scrutiny as an important contribution to mutual accountability. This recognition would represent an important step in terms of 'legitimising' spotlights and leveraging their impact. Going beyond this, donors also commit to a systematic effort to integrate information from spotlights into official accountability mechanisms, where appropriate and feasible, as well as ensuring that they engage partners and reflect their perspectives.

It is worth noting that some have proposed an Aid Ombudsman, or even a regulator, perhaps at the UN, that would have the power to rule on compliance with Paris Declaration commitments and enforce behaviour change. It is true that one means of securing behaviour change is through compulsion – the creation of a powerful, external, institution and a set of rules and enforcement mechanisms (like a legal system). Some feel that it is only through such a mechanism that the power imbalance between donors and partner countries can be redressed. However, while such approaches are standard at the national level (e.g. to keep law and order or to provide public goods like education), at the international level, in a world of sovereign states, consent for them is less frequently seen. Examples are the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism and the European Union. But these are groups based on common values and shared objectives that had emerged over long periods and that consented collectively to shift to a 'compulsion' approach to accountability (in some areas). In the area of aid effectiveness, the conditions do not exist for such an approach, at least at this stage.

In conclusion, this broad-based, incremental agenda may not be as eye-catching or dramatic as some may wish. But that does not diminish its importance. Implementation of the recommendations above would take considerable effort, including increased willingness by donors to redress the "donor deficit" in mutual accountability in order to achieve better development outcomes. The potential prize is an international development system working in closer harmony in support of the transformations that can drive progress towards the MDGs and other development objectives.

Annex A   Specific Options for Consideration: Independent Consultants' Recommendations

Capturing the potential of international-level two-way mirrors:

Vision: These mechanisms have solid legitimacy but, as our review shows, perform less well in bringing a candid evidence-base to bear and in providing space for frank dialogue. A strengthened system would see donors and partners making more effective use of **'two-way mirrors'** to review one another's achievements on their respective sides of the aid effectiveness bargain as a means of building trust, momentum, participation and accountability. There would also be better linkages between country-level mutual accountability frameworks and the international-level.

Options for Action:
1. **Donors and partners could reiterate the value they attach to international-level donor-partner fora. They could also recognise that although the field is crowded it is under-performing.** They could re-commit their willingness and openness to being accountable for their individual performance against their commitments and **create a process that would work to maximise the impact of such fora**. The process would seek to strengthen the mechanisms that are performing well as well as offering a means of consolidating, or eliminating, the mutual accountability functions of those that are adding little value. The conceptual framework of this review could offer a first step for this process. Selected strengthening measures that this review has identified are:

   i.   A strengthened process of "Big Table" meetings at Ministerial level probably on an annual basis, between African partner countries and DAC donors that would be independent of the WP-EFF. It would review issues of aid effectiveness linked to the Paris Declaration in the context of a broader review that would include aid volume as well as the coherence of overall donor policies affecting development and achievement of development results.

   ii.   The 2008 MRDE could review the performance of selected donors in Africa.

   iii. APF meeting reports could include an assessment of the performance in Africa of the country currently holding the G8 Presidency, or the incoming Presidency.

2. The WP-EFF is one of the strongest two-way mirrors. To build on this strength, **an option for action is to enhance partner voice and participation in the WP-EFF and Paris Declaration follow-up.** As the review has set out, the WP-EFF is a key mutual accountability mechanism. But, while partners participate, it cannot be reasonably described, in terms of seniority of participation and operation in practice, as an adequate platform for partner country voices. This has been implicitly acknowledged in the Accra HLF preparation process by the establishment of an ad hoc consultation process to establish partner priorities. This commitment could include:

   i.   The provision of technical, logistical and analytical assistance to support the emerging partner caucus in the WP-EFF to evolve into a more coordinated and effective voice. This assistance should not involve the creation of any new secretariat or mechanism.

   ii.   Occasional meetings of the Working Party at the senior civil servant or Ministerial levels of both partner countries and donors.

iii. Implementation of steps to ensure analytical independence for the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey. For example, there could be agreement on an independent review, which could refer to issues of specific donors and partner countries, drawing on and supplementing that prepared by the WP-EFF.

3. **Donors and partners could recognise the potential role of the DCF as a complementary forum to the DAC for mutual accountability around aid effectiveness and support its emergence as such.** The DCF is a key potential forum for taking account of aid volume, donor policy coherence, and development results, as well as meaningful inclusion of emerging donors. Specifically, they could commit to:

   i. Provide active support for the DCF, including committing to full and senior participation (in both the event and in preparation) as well as funding necessary activities, like independent analytical work and preparatory meetings.

   ii. The DAC Secretariat agreeing a structured coordination framework, and division of labour based on comparative advantage, with the DCF, following up on discussions under way. An example is the potential of the DCF to take forward meaningful inclusion of emerging donors.

   iii. Push for the DCF report to be analytically independent (in the same way as the Human Development Report (HDR)) rather than being a political document (as is the case with the High-Level Dialogue). Stakeholders might consider the potential for the DCF Report to be a vehicle for bringing together available performance information for donors and partners across the range of their aid effectiveness commitments in a comprehensive manner. The report could evolve into an authoritative and comprehensive source for mutual performance information. The outcome of the 'Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus' to be held in Doha at the end of 2008 will also of course be relevant to the evolution of the DCF.

We have also classified country-level mutual accountability frameworks as a form of two-way mirror. It is crucial that the international-level system complements country-level mutual accountability frameworks. The German-sponsored ODI study is assessing this area and will add knowledge. We therefore use this opportunity to highlight ideas that have arisen in the course of our review but it is premature to express them as concrete options. They are being tested in the context of the surveys undertaken for the ODI study.

An idea is for an **international (or regional) level advisory back-stopping facility that would support country-level mutual accountability frameworks.** This would be a source of technical and financial resources and back-up for country-level mechanisms available at the request of partners. The facility would have the capacity to share good practices, support design of frameworks and help with establishment of procedures. It would focus primarily on independent advisory mechanisms facilitating aid effectiveness efforts of partner countries and donors, drawing on the examples set by Tanzania and, more recently, Mozambique, although it could usefully consider country level mutual accountability mechanisms more broadly. The facility could suggest, on request, credible independent eminent persons to play a monitoring or facilitating role, although it is preferable that the identification of such persons – international as well as local -- take place primarily at the country level. This should not involve the establishment of a new institution. Considerations on institutional home would need to take account of legitimacy to both partners and donors as well as technical and managerial capacity. A few high-quality independent research and policy institutes from both North and South might be able to fulfil the role. **In support of this, a second idea is support for independent monitoring of country-level mutual accountability frameworks** – generally by think tanks or CSOs and academia -- of donor and partner

performance in country-level mutual accountability frameworks[11]. Support would be provided at the impetus of civil society. This element would be relatively more important for countries that do not have independent advisors of the Tanzania or Mozambique type.

Polishing mirrors to generate commitment and action:

Vision: The review highlights the behaviour change impact of many mirrors, in particular the DAC Peer Review. It also identifies scope for strengthening, including on clarity of evidence and engagement of partner countries. Over time, a stronger system would involve donor agency ministers and officials (as well as multilaterals and Global Programs) being increasingly engaged in answering to their peers for their performance on aid effectiveness in **'mirror'**-type fora supported by a robust and candid evidence-base[12]. This would be matched by vigorous 'mirror' processes between partners that were able to demonstrate progress on their side of the aid effectiveness agenda.

Options for Action:
4. **Donors and partners could recognise the value of peer review processes as an element in overall mutual accountability.** They could commit to strengthening their participation in, and commitment to, peer review.

5. **Donors could commit to strengthening the DAC Peer Review[13] to demonstrate their willingness to push their own implementation challenge.** DAC Peer Reviews have, as noted, credibility among donors and are credited with contributing to progress in aid volume and quality; and they now give consistent coverage of coherence of donor policies affecting development as well as aid. There is ongoing discussion within the DAC on how to strengthen the peer review process, including its follow-up process. From the perspective of 'mutual accountability', key elements would be:

   i.   introduction of systematic partner participation in reviews, with a relevant expert (not necessarily a government official) either as reviewer or as part of the Secretariat team, so there is a partner country voice within the review process rather than just among those consulted.

   ii. taking account of analysis from credible external evaluations of donor performance – specific to the donor being reviewed or across donors;

   iii. reviewing the extent to which donors being reviewed are building the spirit of the Paris Declaration into their internal incentive and accountability processes;

   iv. in the course of the usual field visits, looking at implementation of the Paris Declaration by donors as a group, as well as by the country being reviewed.

6. **Other relevant groupings could commit to strengthening the 'mirrors' they are part of.**

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[11] This has some parallels with the idea of 'systematic independent assessment of the quality of donors' relationships with their diverse sets of stakeholders, focusing on behaviour and values as well as achievements' proposed in 'Making Relationships Matter for Development' by Rosalind Eyben (Paper for Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development Symposium, December 2007)

[12] Such a dynamic would only succeed if it was consistent with increased donor domestic accountability for aid effectiveness. For more on complementarities between multilateral networks and domestic policies, see "Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism" by Robert O. Keohane, Stephen Macedo and Andrew Moravcsik (Institute for International Law and Justice (IILJ) Working Paper 2007/4, (Global Administrative Law Series))

[13] Clearly, this review has not included a detailed review on the Peer Review process.

i. The EU, which has a record of pushing the consensus forward, could commit to making the EU Annual Report into a best-practice 'mirror'. They could make more systematic use of external information. They could also engage partner countries in the process. There is also scope for an answerability mechanism through which EU donors would have to respond to the mechanism's assessment of their performance. Building on the European Consensus on Development, EU countries could also consider the additional step of exploring the feasibility of a dispute resolution mechanism to arbitrate on country-level disagreements between individual EU donors and partner countries.

ii. MDBs could do more to integrate aid effectiveness issues into the COMPAS.

iii. Equally the members of the APRM could commit to deepen the mechanism.

Brighter, more integrated, spotlights to provide evidence and scrutiny:

Vision: Spotlights can enhance results-focus by playing an important 'challenge function' role through the provision of high-quality, regular and accessible information. The vision is for this evidence-base to be as strong as possible and to be increasingly reflected in discussions by legislators, the media and donor agencies. Information provided by spotlights should also increasingly be integrated into official 'mirror' and 'watchdog' processes. Technical-type **'spotlights'** (like the HIPC CBP Analysis) would also increasingly serve as a tool to empower partners in their engagement with donors by providing good quality information on donor performance at country-level.

Options for Action:
7. **Donors and partners could recognise the role of good quality, relevant non-official monitoring and scrutiny as an important contribution to mutual accountability.** This recognition would represent an important step in terms of 'legitimising' spotlights and leveraging their impact. **Going beyond this, donors also commit to integrating information from spotlights into official accountability mechanisms, where possible**, as well as ensuring that they **engage partners and reflect their perspectives**.

i. At one level, DAC donors could commit to review the scope for integrating information from 'spotlights' in their domestic accountability frameworks. This would serve to increase the consistency of incentives between domestic accountability mechanisms and international aid effectiveness commitments. The introduction of scoring on the Center for Global Development's (CGD) Commitment to Development Index (CDI) as a formal indicator of Dutch development policy is one example (although not required by relevant Dutch law). This would serve to increase the consistency of incentives between domestic and international accountability mechanisms. The information generated by the HIPC CBP Assessment, as well as the SPA, also offers potential for better reflection of partner country perspectives in domestic accountability.

ii. At another level, donors and partners could commit to a systematic effort to reflect spotlight information in international-level mechanisms. The examples of the DAC Peer Review and the EU Annual Report have already been raised. Another example would be strengthening the Africa Partnership Forum through integration of the African Monitor instruments.

Finally, our analysis points to issues for non-official stakeholders to consider. Greater coordination of activities, consolidation of mechanisms and standardisation of indicators could deliver greater overall impact through fewer, pre-eminent, mechanisms. One option that could be explored is whether it is feasible to bring together available performance information for donors across the range of their aid effectiveness commitments in a more comprehensive and authoritative manner. As part of this agenda, those creating new mechanisms (e.g. the CGD's index of aid quality) could commit to ensure that they are not just robust individually but also coordinate with, and

complement, the collective landscape as a whole. Some spotlights could also commit to explore how to strengthen their links with partners. For example, experts from partner countries could participate in their review processes or else southern research institutes and think-tanks could be more involved in analytical processes.