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**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

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Working Party on Aid Evaluation

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30TH MEETING

held on 27-28 May 1998

Annual Report for 1997. Briefing on the Results of the DAC Review Meeting of Subsidiary Bodies. Promoting Joint Evaluations and Evaluation Partnerships in the Context of Implementing the Shaping of the 21st Century Strategy. Follow-up to the Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance. Review of Other Ongoing Work and Work Programme. Exchange of Information on Evaluation Developments and Future Events.

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30TH MEETING

1. The meeting opened with Mr. Niels Dabelstein in the Chair.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA [DCD/DAC/EV(98)1]

2. The agenda was adopted.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 29TH MEETING
[DCD/DAC/EV/M(97)2/PROV]**

3. The summary record of the 29th meeting was approved.

**III. ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1997 [DCD/DAC/EV(98)1] AND BRIEFING ON THE RESULTS
OF THE DAC REVIEW MEETING ON SUBSIDIARY BODIES ON 5 FEBRUARY 1998**

4. The annual report for 1997 by the Chair was submitted for information. The Chair thanked the Netherlands for the report and noted that the contribution of Finland as the lead agency should be fully recognised in the section on the NGO evaluation synthesis study.

5. The Chair briefed members on the presentation he made at the DAC review meeting of subsidiary bodies held on 5 February 1998 and on the outcome of the review. At the review meeting, DAC Members expressed strong support for the Working Party and for the value added the evaluation work brings to the Committee's efforts in advancing the goals of the Partnership strategy. Joint evaluations between donors and partners and of aid for poverty reduction were encouraged.

6. The Secretariat (Mr. B. Wood) noted that the recent review of subsidiary bodies by the DAC was a novel feature in the Organisation which was likely to be spread in view of increasing resource pressures. He informed participants that the Committee would have a first discussion on the 1999-2000 work programme on 17 June and that the new DAC work programme will contain a clear focus on results and outputs of all activities.

7. The DAC Chair (Mr. J. Michel) underlined the importance of the poverty reduction agenda for the DAC. The details of the work on poverty reduction were to be elaborated by a first meeting of the DAC informal network on poverty reduction on 8 June. He encouraged the Working Party to help advance work in this area and noted also other main activities of the Working Party.

V. PROMOTING JOINT EVALUATIONS AND EVALUATION PARTNERSHIPS IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTING THE *SHAPING 21ST CENTURY* STRATEGY
 [DCD/DAC(98)13, ROOM DOCUMENT NO. 1 AND NO. 2 AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENT NO. 1]

8. Mr. S. Weissman (World Bank) presented recent developments in the Special Programme for Africa on multidonor sector programmes and the implications for monitoring and evaluation. Joint sector programme support provides a clear rationale for joint monitoring and evaluation. Members were encouraged by the Chair to take the information back to capitals and to consider, in liaison with the respective Africa departments, the possibilities for programming joint sector evaluations in relevant countries and in key sectors in “Shaping the 21st Century”.

9. Ms. A. Binnendijk (United States) introduced the document “Donor Experience with Joint Evaluations -- A Typology and Lessons Learned”. Members welcomed the draft and expressed support for further work building on the discussion and possible further material. During the discussion the value and importance of joint evaluations was generally recognised. Past experience demonstrated that joint evaluations have had positive impacts on donors and recipients as they support the development of a common evaluation culture, increase awareness on different approaches and methods; contribute to the spread of good evaluation practices; and help in strengthening partnerships. Some members raised the issues of how stakeholders could be better and more fully involved and how joint evaluations could be more efficiently organised.

10. Although delegates generally stressed the benefits for all stakeholders from joint evaluations, several members noted the practical difficulties in implementing joint evaluations. Therefore, an important issue to address in the paper and in future work would be what incentives/mechanisms could be put in place to facilitate more effective implementation of joint evaluations.

11. Summing up the discussion, the Chair stressed the importance of continuing work on joint evaluations following several tracks. He noted that further work by the United States to refine the paper was strongly welcomed by members. Members should continue to look for opportunities to work together including within the context of the SPA programmes. Submissions to the Sector matrix [Background Document No. 1] were encouraged and Denmark would accordingly update this tool to facilitate the planning of joint evaluations. Sharing of work programmes and plans in a more systematic and timely fashion was another tool [see also Item VI g].

V. FOLLOW UP TO THE REVIEW OF THE DAC PRINCIPLES FOR EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE [DCD/DAC/EV(97)8/REV1]

12. Several Members related their efforts in following up internally on the results of the review. The self-assessment (phase I) and the user survey (phase II) had provided useful information for taking further steps to promote an in-house dialogue on the use of evaluation results in agencies. As for the various documents produced in the review, it was agreed that these should be brought together and an unclassified document should be prepared by the Secretariat to enable the sharing of the review results in a single document.

13. In following up on the review, a two-pronged strategy will be followed. Members should be encouraged to take steps internally to implement the recommendations of the review as appropriate in individual agencies and circumstances, or in cases where there is still lack of conformity with Principles to

consider how better compliance can be achieved by drawing up an internal next steps agenda. As a second cluster of activities, the principles should be complemented/reinforced in key areas. It was noted that the review had resulted in agreement to keep the principles and not to revise them as the key principles remained useful and valid. However, complementing them with guidance for evaluators in terms of guidelines or good/best practices in certain fields would be useful, notably in areas such as feedback and communication of results; how to promote an evaluation culture within Ministries and agencies; country programme evaluations, humanitarian aid, joint evaluations and partnerships in evaluations. As work proceeded in these areas the subjects would move into the work programme with specified outputs and dates.

VI. REVIEW OF OTHER ONGOING WORK AND WORK PROGRAMME

a) Best practices in evaluating humanitarian aid [Room Document No. 3]

14. Members reviewed the draft report on evaluating humanitarian aid. It was agreed that the end product should aim at providing guidance for evaluation managers on how to evaluate humanitarian aid. Members should send any further comments they have to Denmark and to Mr. John Borton, ODI by mid-July. A revised version will be issued in the autumn well in advance of next meeting.

b) Lessons of donor support for institutional capacity development in environment [Room Document No. 4]

15. Mr. T. Kliest (the Netherlands) presented the background of the study noting the earlier agreement by the former Chairs of the WP-EV and WP-ENV to conduct work in this area following contributions by the WP-EV to the work of other DAC subsidiary bodies, e.g. gender and PD/GG. The consultant (Mr. Wardell) presented the study and in the following discussion it became clear that members views varied considerably on the content and quality of the report. Summing up the discussion, the Chair noted that this was a draft text and outlined the next steps including the revision of the report building on comments received at the meeting and further written comments to be provided by mid- August. In addition to content, editing would be needed to make the text shorter and the messages clearer and more to the point. In terms of process, the Chair would consult with the Chair of the WP-ENV to clarify their view on appropriate feedback to and from the WP-ENV. It was noted that sufficient time should be allowed for a consultative process to bring on board useful suggestions by members and specialists in the field.

c) Gender/WID and evaluation [DCD/DAC/EV(98)]

16. Members welcomed the questionnaire prepared by Sweden and the process as outlined leading up to a seminar/workshop in June 1999 which would be hosted by Sweden. Next steps include some minor revision following suggestions made at the meeting and possible further written input from the Chair of the WP on Gender Equality. The questionnaire will be distributed over the summer to members of the Group. It is important that members respond to the questionnaire by 31 October to promote the full value added of this joint exercise.

d) Preparation of forthcoming workshops*Performance measurement and evaluation workshop [Room Document No. 5]*

17. The Working Party welcomed the proposed performance measurement workshop and the note prepared by Sweden. Several delegations indicated their willingness to contribute their experience to date and some members noted that this would provide them with a good opportunity to benefit from other members knowledge and efforts in this field. It was agreed that a Steering Group should meet after the meeting to advance planning for the workshop, scheduled for 5-7 October in New York, UNDP.

Evaluation Seminar in Abidjan [Room Document No. 7]

18. The Chair thanked the African Development Bank for the initiative and noted the support expressed by members for the forthcoming Seminar and recalled that Evaluation Capacity Building constituted part of the core mandate of the group. Based on comments by members he suggested that role of African partners be reinforced in the programme and that the names of countries and invitees be clarified to facilitate for those members who were willing to provide support.

Country programme evaluation seminar [Room Document No. 6]

19. Ms. B. Dekrout (Austria) introduced the outline prepared as a basis for the planning discussion. Building on expressions of support for the seminar, it was agreed to create a small steering group of interested members to prepare for the seminar. Work on the seminar would be set in motion as soon as possible for a seminar date in March 1999 hosted by Austria. Considerable new experience had been acquired since the last seminar on the subject held in 1994 and it would be important to take stock of developments and to attempt to define key elements of country programme evaluations based on a wide range of experience.

e) Evaluation Inventory [Room Document No. 8]

20. The Chair thanked Canada on behalf of the members for managing the Inventory and for having put it on the Net in early 1998. The possibility of submitting full text evaluation reports was welcomed. Several members suggested that the site needed to be promoted as it was not yet well known to our developing country and NGO partners nor to the research community and the interested public. Members were invited to create a link between their home pages and the Internet Website of the Inventory [minweb.idrc.ca/daclog.htm] as had been done for the DAC web site. Members and CIDA were encouraged to consider other appropriate ways to make the site better known. The Secretariat was asked to include members web addresses in the list of members and addresses.

21. Several members welcomed the new possibility to submit full page texts of reports and it was agreed to come back to a discussion of the content and users at a later meeting.

f) Poverty Reduction and evaluation [DCD/DAC(98)18]

22. In the discussion, it was noted that several evaluation studies had pointed out the lack of solid findings on the contribution of development assistance to poverty reduction. It is therefore encouraging that several new studies using different approaches, at least partially, are under implementation, notably by the United Kingdom and Finland. The work by the World Bank would be important in this context with a planned conference on evaluation and poverty reduction for April 1999 and major analytical work for the World Development Report year 2000 which will focus on poverty.

23. As new evaluations are ongoing it would be useful to come back to the issue of a methodological seminar/workshop at the next meeting. The United Kingdom expressed an interest in hosting such an event at a suitable date in 1999 and to prepare a brief outline for the next meeting. In addition, the Chair and the Secretariat will develop a proposed approach on how to synthesise evaluation experiences. Some caution was expressed by delegations about the extent of work this synthesis might involve, as poverty reduction results were often "hidden" in other findings of sector, country and programme evaluations. Analysis of specific poverty reduction programmes would only provide a subset of data. A balance in the effort will need to be struck between retrospective synthesis work and stocktaking and forward looking methodological work. It would also be important to know more about the work plans of the DAC Informal Network on Poverty Reduction when such plans had been firmed up and to establish constructive collaboration with the Network.

g) Review of other items of the work programme and possible additional suggestions [DCD/DAC/EV(98)2]

24. Members reviewed items of the work programme not covered in the previous discussion. It was agreed that: i) members should come back to the item in the programme on communication of evaluation results as there was need for more specificity in the text in terms of the expected output of such work; ii) in the area of assistance to conflict for peace building and conflict resolution, Germany will, at the next meeting, provide an overview of work with six country cases and the methodology used for the evaluation.

25. The Chair noted that there had been useful discussion of joint evaluations and urged members to use and contribute to existing tools for planning of new efforts. The matrix and the sharing of evaluation plans were two instruments at the disposal of members for this purpose. Mr. Doyle (EC) wished to know how the information on planned evaluations should be structured for the CIDA Inventory. Mr. Rahman (Canada) undertook to issue a note clarifying what information and format were required for Member submissions of this information to the Inventory. The sharing of plans in a timely manner could contribute to facilitate the planning of possible joint efforts.

VII. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON EVALUATION DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE EVENTS

26. Members shared information on planned and ongoing evaluation work. The representative of the World Bank (Mr. Picciotto) briefed members on ongoing work in the Evaluation Co-operation Group in which the multilateral banks participate. The UNDP representative (Mr. Malik) informed members of the agenda of the UN Interagency working Group. Ms Binnendijk (United States) related recent efforts in USAID to implement the Performance and Results act and work on country development indicators.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

27. Mr. Karanko (Finland) informed members that he would leave the Group before next meeting to take up the post as Ambassador to Namibia. He thanked the members for good collaboration over the past years. The Chair noted the many contributions by Mr. Karanko as the representative of Finland to the work of the Group, including leadership with the important NGO study and a number of interesting evaluation efforts in areas not always covered by others such as ethical values and culture as part of the evaluation agenda.

ANNEX 1

DAC WORKING PARTY ON AID EVALUATION

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Item 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Annotated Agenda 	DCD/DAC/EV/A(98)1
Item 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary Record of the 29th Meeting 	DCD/DAC/EV/M(97)2/PROV
Item 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1997 Annual Report by the Chair of the Expert Group on Aid Presentation by Niels Dabelstein, Chairman of the DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation 	DCD/DAC/EV(98)1 DAC Meeting / 5 February 1998 (room document no. 4)
Item 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Program for Africa: Moving Toward Common Implementation Arrangements in Sector Programs: Monitoring and Evaluation Donor Experience with Joint Evaluations. A Typology and Lessons Learned Sector Matrix Strengthening Partnerships for Development 	Room Document No. 1 Room Document No. 2 Background Document No. 1 DCD/DAC(98)13
Item 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance -- Final Report 	DCD/DAC/EV(97)8/REV1
Item 6a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Practice in Evaluating Humanitarian Aid 	Room Document No. 3
Item 6b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons of Donor Support for Institutional Capacity Development in Environment 	Room Document No. 4 + Background Document
Item 6c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 	DCD/DAC/EV(98)3
Item 6d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on Performance Measurement and Evaluation Follow up Seminar to the Regional Conference of Strengthening Evaluation Capacity Building in Africa Workshop on New Developments in Country Programme Evaluations 	Room Document No. 5 Room Document No. 7 Room Document No. 6
Item 6e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update of the DAC Evaluation Reports Inventory 	Room Document No. 8
Item 6f	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshalling Expertise to Reduce Poverty: The Contribution of DAC Subsidiary Bodies 	DCD/DAC(98)18
Item 6g	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Programme 	DCD/DAC/EV(98)2

ANNEX 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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¹ Présent le 27 May 1998 / Present on 27 May 1998.

² Présent le 28 May 1998 / Present on 28 May 1998.