



ROOM DOCUMENT NO. 9

DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation

***PROPOSAL FOR A
GLOSSARY OF TERMS IN
EVALUATION AND RESULTS
BASED MANAGEMENT***

**Submitted by
The World Bank**

**31st Meeting
27-28 January 1999**

Proposal for a Glossary of terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

Objective:

Informal discussions among the DAC Secretariat, PUMA, and OED last year suggested that it would be useful to clarify basic concepts and definitions used in evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) that may have distinct uses or meanings within and across DAC member organizations. The proposed glossary would be designed to enhance clarity and understanding of these terms. In furtherance of the DAC goals expressed in *Shaping the 21st Century*, the glossary would be a tool for fostering transparency and strengthening partnerships among DAC members. It could also be a handy document for non-members. The primary objective of this exercise would be to help confirm agreed evaluation concepts, encourage harmonization, and reduce the terminological confusion that presently exists.

Purpose:

Although the evaluation and management disciplines have begun to converge, a results-oriented approach to development programming requires accelerated adaptation of conventional concepts and timely adoption of new and less familiar terminology. RBM, for example, is largely consistent with program monitoring and evaluation but incorporates distinct uses for terms such as “output” and “outcome” in addition to using more flexible and collaborative management concepts such as “reach” and “learning by doing.” With these developments in mind, the proposed glossary would be designed to achieve the following:

- i) to confirm agreed evaluation concepts, such as those set forth in the DAC 1986 agreed glossary;
- ii) to delineate the uses of new RBM and evaluation terms among DAC members;
- iii) to identify and harmonize differences between conventional evaluation terminology and RBM concepts.

The primary audience of the glossary of terms would be DAC members and our partners who manage development programs and projects. For DAC members, the glossary would provide a forum for clearly defining the standard uses of key concepts and language. For partners, the resource would offer a useful guide for program reporting and for the monitoring and evaluation of development projects.

Action Items:

This is envisioned to be a collaborative exercise that is grounded in the work and experience of DAC members and that emphasizes the practical needs and interests of members and development program managers. The OECD with the World Bank will help organize a taskforce of lead members to work on the project.

After identifying taskforce membership, initial action items will include: (i) a desk review of the latest DAC agreed glossary and of relevant documents from DAC members; (ii) development of appropriate criteria and processes for determining the terms to be included in glossary; and (iii) determination of a tentative time schedule for taskforce meetings, which can coincide with the timing of upcoming workshops.