



ROOM DOCUMENT 11

DAC Network on Development Evaluation

PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Item V: a

Memorandum prepared by France for consideration at the second meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation to be held in Paris on 9-10 November 2004



2nd meeting
9 – 10 November 2004

PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

1. BACKGROUND

In response to requests from different UN and civil-society organisations to take part in the thought processes of the DAC Network for Development Evaluation, France teamed up with the Network to organise a workshop entitled "Partners in Development Evaluation: Learning and Accountability"⁽¹⁾.

Held in March 2003, the two-day meeting was attended by almost 300 evaluators and aid evaluation managers from forty-three countries, including eighteen in the Southern Hemisphere. The 180 organisations thus represented encompassed the three types of partners that conduct such evaluations:

- * The donor community: bilateral aid agencies, development banks, and United Nations organisations;
- * Civil-society organisations: NGOs (non-governmental organisations), private foundations, trade unions and trade organisations;
- * Various components of aid beneficiary countries: authorities, civil society, etc.

The workshop allowed various evaluation professionals to meet, get to know each other, and discuss topics and concerns of common interest.

In September 2003, the steering committee of this event met to determine what to do next. It adopted three proposals, all based upon workshop conclusions: a) improving the exchange of information and the sharing of lessons between partners; b) establishing closer ties with other evaluation communities, particularly IDEAS (International Development Evaluation Association); c) forging concrete partnerships on precise issues in sub-groups which are open to other partners.

These proposals were presented at the first Network meeting in January 2004. It was suggested, first, to organise a second workshop in 2005 and, secondly, to look for synergies or cooperation with the conference planned by IDEAS in 2005.

2. WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE JANUARY 2004?

The events of 2004 show that the concept of evaluation partnerships continues to make headway.

Building ties between the Network and other communities

The Network has begun to invite closer involvement on the part of other UN organisations with the participation of not only the UNDP but also of other key members of the UNEG (UN Evaluation Group) in this meeting.

Certain delegations have invited NGO representatives to attend our plenary sessions. For instance, the January meeting was attended by Care International and F3E.

Some of the work conducted by the Network involves or will involve representatives from other types of evaluation partners (quality assessments, other?).

¹ The workshop's proceedings and papers are available at the following web site:
<http://www.minefi.gouv.fr/TRESOR/cicid/atelier/accueil.htm>.

Building partnership relations between countries

Certain countries continue to build up a partnership-oriented approach.

For example, France (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) continued to conduct geographical evaluations of ten years of cooperation in partnership with the beneficiary countries. After Niger, the MAE carried out an evaluation of this kind with Chad. This partnership took the form of a joint evaluation team and joint steering committees (participation of Chad's embassy to steering committees in Paris, organisation of evaluation follow-up committees in Ndjamená).

In order to maintain and boost this momentum, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs is examining a special programme to support public policy evaluation partnerships during the period from 2005 to 2008. The purpose of this programme would be to strengthen evaluation partnerships in order to improve the efficiency of cooperation projects and programmes. It would have three objectives:

1. carrying out joint evaluations (with other lenders) and partnership-based evaluations (with the beneficiary countries or organisations);
2. building up the capacities of France's partners in the Southern Hemisphere (primarily training);
3. providing non-government organisations in the Southern Hemisphere (associations and private initiatives) with support to establish and raise the professionalism of evaluation associations.

Also note the evaluation of the Dutch ORET/MILLIEV programme in China, conducted jointly by the IOB (Netherlands) and the National Center for Science and Technology Evaluation (NCSTE, China, which has forged a genuine partnership between the two partners.

Building exchanges of experience and information with the evaluators of countries in the Southern Hemisphere

IDEAS (International Development Evaluation Association) continues to build up its activities. Created with the support of the UNDP and the World Bank, this association groups evaluators specialised in development aid. Its members are from both lender countries and beneficiary countries. IDEAS receives individual support from certain DAC countries. The Network maintains close relations with this association and its members .

In July 2004 IDEAS organised the Rethinking Development Evaluation Symposium in Switzerland and is currently preparing a conference on the same theme in New Delhi in 2005.

Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie (inter-government agency of French-speaking countries) organised the first evaluation meeting for French-speaking countries in September 2004. This encounter was used to promote the exchange of information between evaluators and evaluation managers in the French-speaking countries in the Northern and Southern Hemisphere. It also showed that evaluation has genuinely come off the ground in the French-speaking African countries, sparked primarily by the monitoring/evaluation initiatives requested by the lenders, particularly within the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

In Africa, many national networks have been set up (in Niger, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania, etc.), some of which are extremely active as regards exchange of information (for ongoing evaluations they can help the DAC countries find local consultants) (2). The UNDP's efforts to help them organise themselves have been taken on board and are supported by lenders wishing to involve local evaluators in their work. In particular the monitoring of PRSP evaluations has created a significant market for local consultants.

2 See for example the site of the Niger RENSE network: <http://www.pnud.ne/rense>.

The third Conference of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) will be held in the beginning of December. The Network will send representatives to this meeting and moderate a session on partnerships.

3. PROPOSALS FOR 2005 AND 2006

In addition to the initiatives taken independently by each of our organisations to encourage and build partnerships, the Network can continue to promote this strategy and to contribute its evaluation and development expertise to and encourage evaluation partnerships for the developing communities. This orientation is helped by participation in IDEAS and AfrEA events and efforts to strengthen our ties with the networks of other lender communities.

The organisation of a major event like the workshop held in March 2003 acts like a catalyst, consolidating past achievements and generating a new momentum. It also shows that the DAC member countries are open to other evaluation communities and makes the Network a key player in the development evaluation platform.

In April 2005, IDEAS will hold a conference in New Delhi. We therefore propose organising another "Evaluation Partners" meeting in early 2006. France is offering to host this meeting in Paris, just before the Network meeting.

Target audience

It would be desirable for the development communities to be represented more broadly. The March 2003 workshop focused mostly on initiatives to step up the dialogue with UN and civil-society organisations, most of which are established in the Northern Hemisphere (NGOs and unions). While the partnership with the United Nations has continued to grow during the intervening period, relations with the NGOs appear to remain embryonic (even though the March workshop raised high expectations among NGOs) and the partnerships with the developing countries could be strengthened on the back of their improved evaluation processes.

The workshop in 2006 could thus: a) lay the groundwork for stronger partnerships with players in the Southern Hemisphere; b) look for ways to strengthen partnerships with other stakeholders in the Northern Hemisphere; c) enlarge the target audience, especially among private sector players and foundations.

Topics

The workshop could focus more particularly on: 1. analysis of concrete partnership results to determine what is required to strengthen partnerships (e.g. from involvement of local consultants to involvement of stakeholders in coordination of evaluations); 2. a few specific themes which remain to be determined; possible themes include:

- issues likely to be essential for the implementation of future partnerships, such as coherence of policies, harmonisation of aid, effectiveness of aid, etc.
- methods: dissemination and usefulness of evaluations, standards and norms, etc.
- evaluations needed and commissioned in and by developing countries (governments, civil-society organisations, etc.) and the specific partnership solutions for this type of work.

It is therefore proposed to form a working group of Network members interested in preparing this event.