



ROOM DOCUMENT 3/A

Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE)

The attached note has been prepared by the Chair of NONIE for information at the 7th meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 20 – 21 February 2008.

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NONIE was formed at a meeting of the three official agency evaluation networks (UNEG, DAC and ECG) held in Paris in November 2006. Participants at the meeting agreed on the need for 'more and better' impact evaluation, and that NONIE should coordinate activities to move this agenda forward.

The main areas of work for NONIE were identified as:

- Preparation of impact evaluation guidance
- Developing a program for coordination and collaboration on impact evaluation
- Creating a resource platform for information sharing in impact evaluation

A number of sub-groups were formed to take the work forward. Each sub-group comprised approximately a half a dozen members drawn from across the various agencies represented in NONIE. Three of these groups were to work on different parts of the evaluation guidance notes, another to look at coordination and consultation mechanisms and a final one to consider the proposed resource platform.

NONIE members were keen to identify developing country partners. Initially an ad hoc trawl was made of agency contacts, which, after screening, resulted in three developing country members joining NONIE.

The first NONIE meeting was held in The Hague in May 2007. The primary purpose of the two day meeting was to review drafts of the Guidance. These drafts were then taken back to the subgroups for further revision. There was a presentation of the resource platform (www.worldbank.org/ieg/nonie). The meeting also agreed a governance structure for NONIE, with a one year term for Chair (currently held by DFID) and IEG to act as NONIE secretariat. Funding for the secretariat was pledged by DFID, IOB, Sida, NORAD and BMZ.

It was agreed to deepen the developing country membership through a systematic process involving the regional evaluation associations. There are now approximately 15 developing country members in NONIE. These members fall under a 'fourth network' operating partly under the auspices of IOCE.

The resource platform includes a database of impact evaluations compiled from members' submissions. This database has only partial coverage and so will be updated, possibly in collaboration with 3ie. A selection of studies has been written up as working papers which are available from the NONIE website. (They will also appear as a special issue of the *IDS Bulletin*).

A second NONIE meeting was held in Washington D.C. in January 2008. More complete versions of the Guidance were presented at this meeting, as well as an operationally-oriented presentation on managing impact evaluation from AFD and DANIDA.

Following the meeting the governance structure was revised to create a Steering Committee; an interim Steering Committee has been formed with representatives from each of the networks.

The Washington meeting was held alongside a World Bank conference entitled Making Smart Policy: using impact evaluation to inform policy, which was attended by all NONIE members present at the meeting. Some NONIE funds were used to pay for the attendance of additional developing country participants who also attended the NONIE meeting.

Future plans include

- Finalization of Guidance as a consultation document within the next three months
- Revamping the resource platform
- Conducting meta-analyses to inform planning of members' impact evaluation programs
- Further development of coordination plans
- Using existing regional networks and country associations to disseminate information on impact evaluation
- A further NONIE meeting, alongside the EES conference in Lisbon in October 2008
- A joint AfrEA and NONIE (and possibly 3ie) impact evaluation conference in March or April of 2009

Each of the three NONIE meetings has been attended by 50-60 people, demonstrating the high level of continued interest in, and commitment to, the NONIE agenda. NONIE has become a firmly established part of the international impact evaluation architecture.

An important issue is the relationship between the different initiatives on impact evaluation. Whilst this remains a matter for discussion, a division of labor can be seen as follows:

- NONIE creates awareness about the need for impact evaluation and a better understanding of what it is. It sets standards for members through use of the Guidance and through peer review processes.
- 3ie is a funding mechanism for demand-led impact studies. NONIE members can identify opportunities for impact studies which are then funded by 3ie. 3ie will not directly engage in capacity building but encourage studies which are led by developing country institutes, incorporating capacity building partnership arrangements where necessary.
- The World Bank has a number of impact evaluation initiatives, the most important of which is DIME. These initiatives also provide training courses which will help build awareness and capacity. With the greater awareness created by NONIE, governments can demand that Bank supported projects contain quality impact evaluation, pointing to the support available through DIME.