

ROOM DOCUMENT

Item VIII

DEReC

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

This note has been prepared by the Secretariat for discussion at the 9th meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 15-16 June 2009.



The DAC Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC) was launched in 2005 and now contains over 2,000 development evaluation reports published by Network members. DEReC is a free online resource centre designed to make evaluation outputs accessible to a wide audience of development partners, civil society, researchers, students and the interested public. DEReC, one of three websites managed by the Network Secretariat, helps users to quickly and easily access an array of key evaluation publications, including thousands of member evaluation reports as well as evaluation manuals, guidelines and tips. Each year, Network members contribute hundreds of new reports and DEReC continues to grow substantially. For the last three years it has been among the top hits in Google searches on development evaluation, an indicator of its status as a key reference in this field.

Extensive updates have been made throughout 2009 to continue to make DEReC more user-friendly and to expand its content.

Ongoing improvements

As highlighted at previous meeting, a key objective is to improve DEReC by making it easier to use and more widely known in the development community. To this end, a user poll was created last year to capture users' opinions about DEReC. The Secretariat is using the findings from the poll and inputs from users to improve DEReC and make it more widely known.

As part of this effort, the Secretariat has created "**DEReC News,**" a **periodic email publication to update members and others about the latest reports available** and improve visibility. The Secretariat has received positive feedback from members and colleagues on this new feature and it seems to have contributed to raising the profile of DEReC.

Earlier this year, the Secretariat also created another new feature called the **DEReC "Front Page" which highlights evaluation reports relevant to major world events** (see examples of recent editions below). This feature makes the DEReC website more lively and interesting with periodic new postings linking to topical evaluation reports. We hope to continue to use the "Front Page" to encourage wider interest in and use of development evaluation findings.

Improvements to the search function

The user poll and member feedback indicate that it has sometimes been difficult to find reports on DEReC. Several problems with the search function and classification of reports have been identified and the Secretariat and the IT personnel at the OECD have worked together to address this issues. The key word search function has now been enhanced and its accuracy greatly improved.

The 3 Network websites:

DEReC – The DAC Evaluation Resource Centre: A free, public website containing a searchable database of member development evaluation reports, sortable by sector, Network member or recipient country.

www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork/derec

The Network's main public site provides links to key documents, member profiles, information about the work programme and updates on various Network projects.

www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork

The restricted website is password protected and for Network members only. It provides links to ongoing work, meeting documents and other information not currently intended for the general public:

- Draft reports for ongoing evaluations (e.g. Paris Declaration)
- Members list and contact details
- Evaluation plans inventory
- Forthcoming meeting documents

www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/members

To support this effort, it was agreed at our last meeting that members would include key words for each evaluation report. Despite good feedback on this suggestion, only a minority of members have consistently implemented this practice. The Secretariat encourages others to follow suit as this kind of referencing is standard practice in many fields and would help improve accessibility to reports.

The Secretariat has also worked to rationalise and update the sector categories list (on DEREc under “Search by Sector”) to ensure that reports are properly categorised and reflect changes in the types of evaluations undertaken by members. New categories have been added (for example “human rights”) and some categories have been renamed or combined to more clearly reflect the reports available on DEREc. The re-categorisation of reports is currently underway and will be completed later this year.

Member participation

Over the past several years Network members have committed to making DEREc a key source for development evaluation by regularly sharing their completed reports. However, the Secretariat has noted a growing imbalance in the number of DEREc reports submitted by different members. A stock take of DEREc reports was undertaken to further explore this issue.

The results of the stock take (shown in the charts 1 and 2 below) show wide variation in member participation. While some of the discrepancy can be explained by the varied sizes of members evaluation units (i.e. some agency’s may in fact submit 100% of published reports to DEREc but simply do not produce very many reports each year), there appears to be considerable variation in terms of member submissions (*). Just three members account for nearly half of all reports with one member alone contributing nearly a quarter. About 75% of all reports are provided by just nine members, while the remaining 25% are split between the other contributing twenty-one members. The findings raise questions about the completeness and representativeness of DEREc.

This issue should be addressed to ensure that DEREc remains as comprehensive and accurate reference tool as possible.

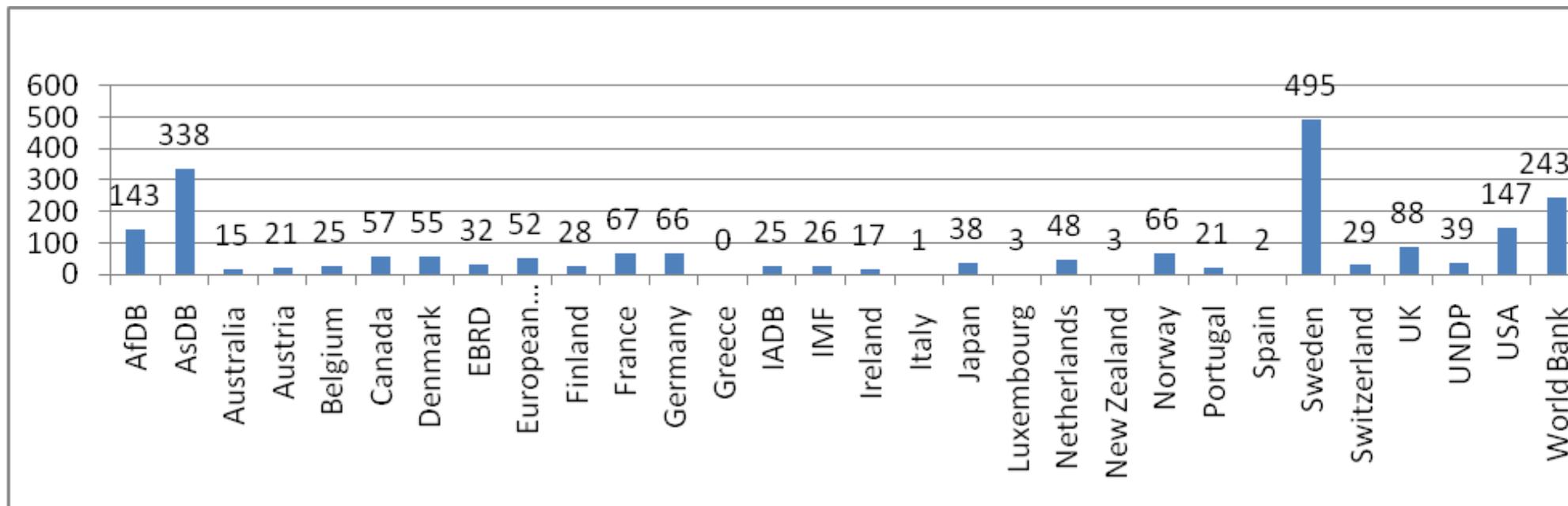
Discussion points

- Do members see DEREc as a useful tool in their work and for dissemination of their reports?
- To what extent are members willing to make an effort in order to reach more representativeness in the diffusion of their reports on DEREc?

Action points

1. Members are encouraged to systematically submit all completed evaluation reports to DEREc (with key words identified) via email to nathalie.bienvenu@oecd.org.
2. If you have suggestions for future topics for the “DEREc Front Page,” please email your ideas to nathalie.bienvenu@oecd.org.

Chart 1. Number of member reports on DEREc (including joint evaluations)

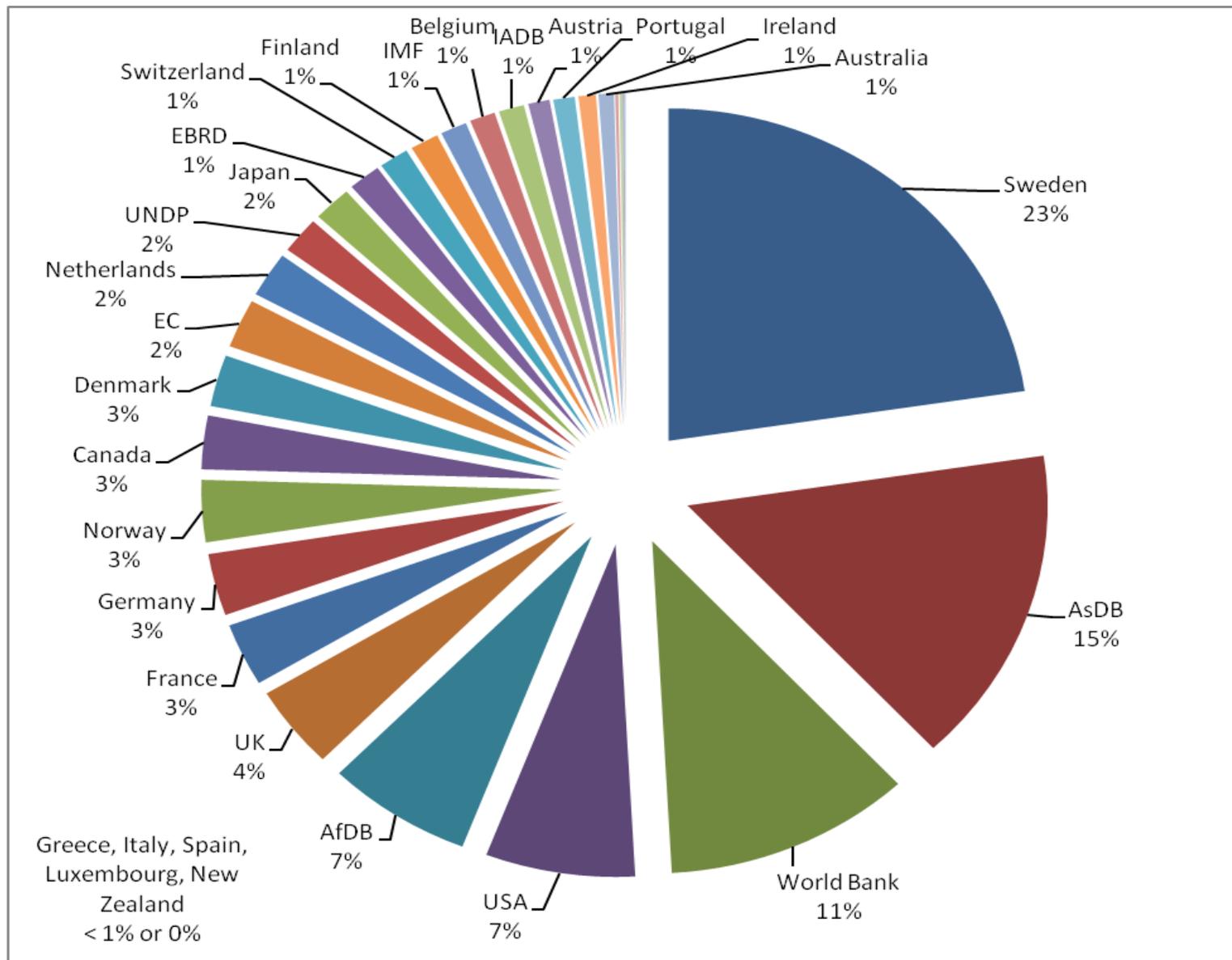


Average = 73 reports

Average excluding outliers (+/- 1 STDV) = 37 reports

Chart 2. Share of Network member reports on DReC (as of 4 May 2009)

Please note: This chart may not be entirely representative of member participation levels as it does not adjust for the varied sizes of members evaluation units (i.e. some agencies may submit 100% of published reports to DReC but simply do not produce very many reports each year).



Recent “DEReC Front Page” editions

The Front Page is posted periodically on the DEReC main webpage and features evaluation reports related to current world events.

February 2009



Olivier Laban/ Getty Images

Donors respond to Gaza Destruction

The recent war destroyed some 14,000 homes, 219 factories and 240 schools in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority is seeking \$2.8 bn in aid to help rebuild.

What can evaluation tell us about donors’ past efforts in Palestine and their strategies for emergency relief and reconstruction in other conflict affected regions?

8 March 2009



Scott Wallace/World Bank

International Women’s Day – March 8

What can evaluation tell us about the role of development partners in promoting women’s rights and gender equality?

More attention needs to be given to gender equality issues in evaluations of development activities. While more thematic evaluations of gender equality and women’s empowerment are now taking place, progress in incorporating gender perspectives into general evaluations of development assistance has been slow and uneven.

22 March 2009



Julio Etchart/World Bank

World Water Day – March 22

What’s the best way to get clean water and sanitation to the people who need it most?

More than 900 million people lack access to safe drinking water and 2.5 billion have no basic sanitation. Evaluation findings could be used to help achieve the goals of halving these numbers by 2015.

May 2009



World Bank/ Carnemark

Development Assistance in Pakistan

International donors recently pledged more than \$5 billion in assistance to Pakistan at an aid conference co-hosted by Japan and the World Bank.