

**German Comments on  
the Draft Generic ToRs for Country Evaluations (Version Oct. 20, 2009)  
28 October 2009**

**Note:** These comments focus on the **substance** of the Country Level Studies (ToRs pages 1-9, Appendices A, B & G) which seems to be the most important issue to be addressed at this stage.

**1. Overall orientation of PD Evaluation Phase 2, including the core evaluation questions**

PD Evaluation Phase 1 focused on implementation, i.e. inputs, process and outputs. Phase 2 will now focus on **results (outcomes and impacts) in terms of aid and development effectiveness**. The conceptual clarity and strategic orientation of the *Linkages Study* and the Approach Paper with regard to the “impact chains” (inputs => outputs => outcomes => impacts), which had been visualized in two framework diagrams, could be better reflected in the Draft Generic ToRs.

- ⇒ We suggest to **visualize these impact chains** in the ToRs, attaching both diagrams elaborated during Phase 1 since they complement each other and can also be of didactic use during the regional workshops.<sup>1</sup> This would also help stressing the importance of the **five PD principles** around which “PD interventions” are normally grouped and discussed (ownership-alignment-harmonization-management for results-mutual accountability, see first diagram) and which should be updated according to the **Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)**. Also, the Synthesis Report pointed at **potential trade-offs** between these principles which seems to be a topic worth exploring more in Phase 2 (as mentioned briefly in Appendix B).

The **core evaluation questions** (p. 7) have been shortened and rephrased considerably in comparison to the Approach Paper. In part, they now follow the **impact chain** (Question 1: context; Question 2: process & intermediate outcomes; Question 3: development outcomes). However, they are now mainly put as “**yes/no questions**”, although the sub-questions in Appendix B point at the necessary complexity of the assessments.

- ⇒ Since this phrasing could limit the depth and quality of analysis and presentation of results, it should be reconsidered. **Questions 2 and 3** should rather be phrased “To what extent, and how has ...”. **Question 4** could return to the more encompassing phrasing in the Approach Paper and directly address potential alternatives to the PD.

In terms of substance, **Question 1** focusing on what is now called the “aid arena” seems to include both initial **country conditions** (which could be used for a comparative analysis of country study results) and “**PD inputs**” produced by countries and donors together (“PD configurations” according to the Approach Paper). The latter – as in Phase 1 – will need to be described in some detail and analyzed according to various criteria (adaptation to country circumstances, priorities among the five PD principles, changes after the AAA etc.).

- ⇒ It might be useful to **separate** the issues dealt with in **Question 1** into **two** core evaluation questions on **country context** (questions 1a, aspects of 1c,e) and **strategies of PD implementation** (questions 1b,d,f). Then, what is now Question 2 would also no longer need to focus on “process” since this would be covered under the second aspect of Question 1.

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<sup>1</sup> See attachments: Phase 1 Framework ToRs 4/2007:57 with diagram from Booth & Evans 2006 and Approach Paper 5/2009:8.

## 2. Draft Evaluation Matrix (Appendix B)

**Note:** comments at this point are mainly on the sub-questions, less on indicators, sources and methods. A general suggestion would be to better specify and make use of existing sources of data, like on-going monitoring processes in the context of the EU Code of Conduct on Division of Labour and Complementarity or the Monterrey Consensus.

### Questions related to the country context:

- **Question 1a:** relevant issues also to be considered are the **history of aid** in the particular country, the country's current state of "**aid dependence**" (comparing different indicators, e.g. ODA or CPA (Country Programmable Aid)/GNI, ODA or CPA/capita, percentage of ODA or CPA in total national budget etc.) and if it falls into the classifications of "**aid darlings**" or "**aid orphans**".
- **Question 1c:** pay attention to "**new donors**" and funding mechanisms
- **Question 1e:** pay attention to issues like the emerging **climate change regime** (new funding opportunities)

### Questions related to PD country-level implementation (inputs):

- **Question 1b: development cooperation is more than development finance.** The evaluation needs to trace changes in the overall aid system, including other aid modalities like technical cooperation.
- **Question 1d** is interesting but more descriptive and should be the **first** in this block.
- **Question 1f** is important especially in "Phase 2 only countries" (see below under point 4), should also include the implementation of AAA commitments and be described and analyzed in quite some detail with regard to the five PD principles and their subcomponents (e.g. division of labour among donors in the case of harmonization strategies). A key issue will be to trace if different degrees of progress in the five PD principles (e.g. much harmonization but little ownership and alignment) have consequences for overall progress in aid and development effectiveness.

### Question 2 (intermediate outcomes):

- The proposal to "test against the **original expected aid effectiveness outcomes**" (eleven commitments in the "Statement of Resolve" of the PD) is new and interesting but methodologically not very well developed yet (the Approach Paper only lists the 21 "indicative propositions" of the Linkages Study in Appendix 2; it remains unclear if these have been dropped completely). However, they should not only be "clustered by the major AAA themes" but need to be **expanded according to the new and/or stronger AAA commitments**. With regard to this assessment (not really a test!), given the ongoing methodological problems of the PD indicators and monitoring surveys, the PD evaluation should not strive for defining new indicators. The "third-best solution" seems to be the only feasible option.
- **Question 2a:** important issue; good initiative to design a specific survey tool (no comments on Appendix G which covers all relevant aspects).
- **Question 2b:** should be integrated into the overall assessment against PD and AAA commitments, since several address aspects of country capacity.

### Question 3 (development outcomes):

- Again, it would be helpful not to phrase these questions as "yes/no" questions (rather: "**To what degree and how ...**")

- “Implementation of the PD” is also a **matter of degree** (different progress with regard to the five principles etc.) – how can this more detailed analysis of impact chains be ensured?
- Overall, this block will depend less on individual evaluation questions and much more on solid contextual analysis of **plausible** connections.

#### **Question 4 (alternative approaches):**

- The phrase “is the PD the best way” is **misleading** since it seems to focus the evaluation on the **declaration** itself and not the considerable **structural and procedural changes** that have happened in the international aid system as a consequence. On the other hand, it is an interesting question if the international community has other instruments than a declaration for this purpose (e.g. stronger instruments like conventions or codes of conduct), but these are so far not addressed in the questions.
- In **questions 4a and b**, application of the PD suddenly seems to get reduced to certain new “modes of delivery” (like programme based approaches, budget support etc.). While the questions are relevant, they do not seem sufficient under this heading (**assessing “alternative approaches” is more than a comparison to “business as usual”**).
- **Question c**: this question seems to be less on “added value” of the PD than on the (very relevant) issue of the **relative contribution** the PD implementation can make to international development, given its limited adherence among other increasingly important actors and other important trends (e.g. economic & financial crisis).
- As stated above (under 2.), the **two additional questions in the Approach Paper** (Other strategies to achieve the same results? Same effects without the PD?) are also relevant in this block.

### **3. Different Treatment of Phase 1 and Phase 2 Countries**

**Phase 1** covered nine countries (including Zambia), **Phase 2** will cover 22 countries (eight repetitions, excluding the Philippines).

- ⇒ The ToRs should at some point make reference to the difference between “**Phase 1 countries**” (which need only an update on PD implementation and can also track follow-up on recommendations) vs. “**Phase 2 only countries**” (which need to describe and analyze in more details also the “PD inputs”).