

Note on the results of the Emerging Findings Workshop in Bali 7 – 10 December 2010

This summary record is being circulated and posted in English, French and Spanish for all International Reference Group Members, National Reference Group Members, and Members of the individual Evaluation and Study Teams. It sets out the results of this milestone meeting and the basis for the further stages of the Evaluation.

A. Overall assessment of the Workshop

The Management Group and the Core Evaluation Team found the workshop very useful as it provided an opportunity to test and validating the emerging findings as well as laying the foundation for the finalization of the evaluation.

Attached is the compilation of the participants' evaluation of the Workshop. It reports the overall response rate and ratings against each of the Workshop objectives (Annex 1), and compiles the comments by question (Annex 2). With the amplifications below – and some lessons from difficulties encountered – the Management Group and Core Team shared these general assessments made by participants themselves.

Please note that the review of the overall evaluation process conducted by Michael Patton and his team will continue, the next step being a web-based survey to be conducted in February. All stakeholders are encouraged to respond.

B. The substantive record

The attached PowerPoint presentation (in English, French and Spanish) of “Refinement of the Emerging Findings Report” constitutes the substantive record of the Workshop outcomes. It is supplemented by the more detailed breakdown of “Synthesis Steps”. Both will be posted on the Extranet and the Paris Declaration page of the DAC Evaluation Network website and will guide the finalization of the individual Phase 2 studies and the conduct of the synthesis work.

As agreed in the final session of the Workshop, not every point included in the “Refinement slides” (particularly from slides Q2i to Q3d) is accepted by all participants, but all of them will be seriously considered in extracting and synthesizing the findings from Phase 2 country and donor HQ reports. The more detailed records from each of the break-out working group sessions will also be consulted as necessary to clarify points raised.

Finally, most of the 16 suggestions and questions posted on the “ideas board” at the Workshop (mainly around methodological challenges) were discussed bilaterally with the submitters and were clarified in the final refinement presentation, and most remain important challenges requiring continued attention during the synthesis process.

C. Key requirements for finalizing reports

As country and donor HQ teams now go back to finalize their own reports, taking account of the overall guidance from the Workshop and from the individual feedback sessions that were requested, three major points should be emphasized.

First, evaluation teams should focus on issues/questions where evidence is available and findings can be substantiated rather than spending precious time on searching for new evidence.

Second, the content of the final country and donor/agency HQ reports is the responsibility of independent evaluation teams. This is key to the credibility of the entire evaluation and the integrity of the teams must be protected and assured. The Workshop should have aided in clarifying how this requirement can be managed in practice as the Evaluation moves into this crucial stage. The original, agreed-to specifications of roles and responsibilities of National Evaluation Coordinators (NECs), National Reference Groups (NRGs) and Evaluation Teams in the Evaluation Framework, which are reiterated in the Note on Quality Assurance and Governance Arrangements, remain in force. It must be stressed once again that if there are significantly different assessments by NRGs or NECs of what are justified findings, conclusions or recommendations by Teams, it is not only possible, but a positive sign of a sound evaluation, to record those differences in the final report itself (either in a footnote, in the text or in an annex).

Third, on a very practical point, it will greatly help to save time and resources in the further synthesis work if Teams submit two versions of their final report texts: a “clean” final text, and a second in “track-changes” mode highlighting the revisions made. Without such a track-changes version, the Core Team will have to go through a very laborious exercise of identifying changes in order to ensure that the assembled assessments for the emerging findings report are properly revised.

D. Deadlines and schedule for the remainder of the Evaluation process

3rd January 2011: Deadline for submission of final country and donor/agency HQ reports. The Synthesis team will work with what has been received by that date. For purpose of publication of the reports, copyedited versions can be accepted by 28 January.

8th March 2011: Draft Synthesis Report submitted for internal Core Team Quality Assurance and review by the Management Group.

7th April 2011: Draft Synthesis Report submitted (in English, French and Spanish) to the International Reference Group for review and comments.

27th and 28th April 2011: 4th Meeting of the International Reference Group to comment on the draft Synthesis Report.

15th May 2011: Final Synthesis report to Management Group for final clearing.

E. Preparing for dissemination and use of the evaluation reports

Products: As draft reports are finalized, teams are urged to use the opportunity to draw out and feature (e.g. in boxes) important “stories” illustrating key findings in their reports. Editing for readability and removing jargon and acronyms is very important for dissemination and ultimate use of the reports. Executive summaries in particular should be carefully edited to be accessible to non-specialists and acronyms and jargon should be particularly avoided.

Processes: It is not too early for National Coordinators, Reference Groups and Teams to start planning for dissemination and use. They might consider designating “champions” or teams for this phase, and getting specialized advice. Some of the experiences of other countries presented at the Workshop may be helpful.

Annex 1: Workshop evaluation results

No. of workshop participants (excluding CET members)	113
No. of responses	78
Response rate	69%

Workshop Objectives	Assessment of achievement: No. of responses				Average rating (where v. poor = 1, v. good = 4)
	Very Poor	Poor	Good	Very Good	
1. To share and validate emerging findings in terms of answers to the 3 overarching evaluation questions and assess evidence	0	3	40	34	3.40
2. Feed into the synthesis process	0	4	40	34	3.38
3. To confirm collective ownership and commitment to the evaluation process and products	0	1	43	33	3.42
4. To agree on and commit to the way forward to HLF4	1	5	43	26	3.25

Annex 2: Workshop evaluation: comments / suggestions from participants

Workshop Objective 1:

To share and validate emerging findings in terms of answers to the 3 overarching evaluation questions and assess evidence

- There were limitations related to:
 - Reports sent late
 - Reports not to be quotedThat interfered the efficiency / effectiveness of the sharing
- Les différents groupes ont effectivement répondu aux 3 questions posées.
- Pour ceux qui ont eu des problèmes pour comprendre les preuves, il fallait leur donner un exemple pratique d'utilisation de la Matrice.
- Not enough room / chance to manoeuvre to share; more variety of country groups is suggested
- Objective achieved in the small groups particularly
- More time should have been provided to clarify the differences in the findings and countries
- Little groups were very useful
- Good and frank discussions in breakout groups, but reporting back a bit tedious
- If all the country evaluation reports are available it will be better
- Clarification of some of the outcomes would have been very helpful
- Very well done
- Well managed process
- Need to look into/focus more critically at development results and PD/AAA linkages, why or why not changes/improvements happened after half a decade (of course taking into account country and global contexts)
- Good to highlight the evidence quality issue and independence issue
- Most teams seemed to own their own finding and more able to explain them – several of their findings seem really independent and of high quality
- A bit more systematic attention to Question 1 would have been good
- We might have made more progress had we used the smaller group format more
- Note USAID comments re: structuring responses to “direction, pace and distance of travel”
- It was difficult to achieve this at this stage as most reports were not finalised yet by country evaluation teams, let alone acceptable to gov't for submission
- This has been excellent
- A complex issue managed well with the various constraints – time, new entry people, divergent countries
- Some concerns over the way findings were summarised into fairly banal statements on ‘direction of travel’ – it’s the texture that matters
- There is still evidence of misunderstanding of some key concepts e.g. PD as a document vs PD as a framework to provide direction
- Groups well formulated, e.g. Mozambique-Zambia combination gave real value added for the discussion
- Sharing emerging finding = good; Validating emerging findings = poor

- Would have been better if participants read the first report carefully and referred to it specifically. This could have been easier in turn if the base reports had been available for citation and quotation
- In depth validation is expected after the Bali IRG
- Need to maintain consistency with regard to evaluation questions and responses from various countries
- Comments from the workshop to validate early findings
- I believe that many countries (coordinators and national evaluation teams) did not read the emerging findings report before the meeting. They were therefore not really in a position to crosscheck their findings with those in the synthesis. However, many countries are more interested in their own reports than in the synthesis report.
- Time was not bad in groups but chairs could have had a better brief and structure of report back should have been transparent to allow group to shape discussion better
- Sharing part is very good, validating might have needed more time – overall good
- Could have made better use of time through e.g. feedback – maybe have different groups looking at different outcomes and feeding back
- Most useful for Core Team, least for IRG members not directly involved – but that's OK

Workshop Objective 2: Feed into the synthesis process

- A great job from the CET; not an easy job the synthesis process
- Du temps aux participants pour lire et contribuer par mail
- Good organisation of discussion but need more sub-group discussion
- Not as good – too much plenary; should have had more small group
- HQ studies somewhat 'down played' (focus on Q2 and Q3, HQ studies rather Q1 and Q2)
- Very good report back from CET
- Synthesis of donor and country evaluation reports is a challenge for CET
- Care must be taken to avoid presenting a 'donor side' synthesis report which might create an impression that the onus of achieving the PD is a responsibility of partner countries
- Not enough time
- Has been instrumental to prepare the synthesis work
- Hard to accomplish, but enough was done to proceed
- Still a long way to go – overambitious at this stage
- The political nature and its sensitivities seem to be inadequately captured; what are the obstacles to implementing PD and how can these be overcome in developing countries will be critical
- Workshops, discussion were very rich and informative and also allowed for further reflection. Hopefully, the synthesis report would be able to capture the essence of the inputs
- Would have liked a bit more time to discuss approach and method for this but confident the team are and will be doing an excellent job
- Very important that teams and IRG had chance to meet and provide inputs and get impression of where we are
- I would have preferred to see more 'up front' emphasis on 'emerging donors'

- Late delivery of some reports hampered synthesis work
- The discussions have added to better defining the outcomes – highlighted the focus of synthesis findings
- Good, based on testimony of Core Team
- Possibly only became apparent to most participants at a late stage – because of the need to keep focus on emerging findings
- To reflect impact of PD as well as recommendations very clearly with respect to bilateral/multilateral donor
- Still unanswered questions but IRG and team very accessible
- Difficult task – addressing each and every question is not possible; effort to striking balance is great
- Formally and informally (CET very open)
- Need to maintain consistency with regard to evaluation questions and responses from various countries

Workshop Objective 3:

To confirm collective ownership and commitment to the evaluation process and products

- Good perception of ownership; good opportunity / space to participate
- Again, too much plenary discussion – too often only a small group of people speak up
- In particular cases (countries) donor/development partners still having limited ownership on the process; limited changes also in the donors behaviour
- Participatory process helped and constructive discussion mostly although some 'old' issues again come up
- Although it was good, I hope that we have succeeded
- Very much accomplished; ownership strengthened
- Availability of CET; confidence on future product
- Impressed with the degree to which holding clear interest and momentum on findings
- Very much welcome the process reflections and re-iteration of IRG responsibility as evaluators
- Enhanced sense of commitment from all parties to use PDE as a meaningful construct providing future direction
- It's not completely clear how much the evaluations shall be kept independent, how much the governments should influence them
- Not fair for me to judge – 1st meeting – I don't feel ownership myself
- Maybe too early to tell, but so far so good
- Inclusive process to be applauded (high investment – money, time – justified)

Workshop Objective 4:

To agree on and commit to the way forward to HLF4

- This will also be a very hard job (to 'get' to feed the HLF) BUT this will give sense of all the previous good work

- Good dissemination
- Not sure this was really done since time was limited and people agreed accordingly
- Need more campaign nationally and internationally to achieve better commitment for aid effectiveness for development
- Not primary purpose of the meeting, but clarified
- The further process to produce the draft synthesis report and finalise underlying reports is clear
- Not totally clear but adequate
- Too ambitious, not at this stage yet
- Discussed only on procedures
- Attract only several participants
- Less clear how the evaluation will link up to e.g. the monitoring survey, the INCAF process etc (do we expect it to?)
- Difficult to assess
- One query re: how PDE BIG STORIES / briefing papers will be done if contract for PDE ends in May?
- Presentation on Busan (by OECD/DAC member) could have been given earlier in the programme
- Exciting
- Was this not already determined?
- Still some way to go but the commitment is evident
- There is much good in the process – based on a thorough assessment of value added and lessons learned
- We hope so
- Perfunctory – good briefing and fortunately no senior disagreements – good homework? High levels of trust in the team?
- Useful: presence of OECD/DAC member – but continuous close interaction needed to make sure evaluation results are made full use of

Any other observations?

- The small group afternoon session was excellent. The group feedback on some questions from groups was not interesting. More small mixed groups would have been helpful. Evaluation session on Thursday PM was excellent. The CET had a very difficult job which they are doing as well as possible. Too much plenary. Thanks very much for inviting us.
- Améliorer la disponibilité de documents en français pour permettre une meilleure participation des francophones. Félicitations pour les conditions de travail
- Counterfactual not really addressed; Overly diplomatic at times, i.e. real reason for lack of ownership in some countries and alignment of donors to country systems (namely corruption issues); Clustering may be problematic but necessary to really understand some of the findings i.e. Afghanistan (nation building / security exercise?)
- Efficient time management is necessary; Chair should be more strict towards participants dominating the discussions / question sessions; good support from the Secretariat, especially host Bappenas should be acknowledged
- Poor time management (during sessions); Good hosting job by Bappenas and A4DES; excellent work by the team

- Not an observation but maybe a suggestion or clarification – is there a way or mechanism to ensure that NRG is actually overseeing or seriously doing its functions?
- Overall very good; Also nice with visits outside town; Excellent logistical support
- Great thanks for mobilisation, organisation and collective working process
- As the evaluation report should capture and serve the purpose of 'aid in the changing development context' at the HLF4 therefore the development factors that influence the aid agenda in general, to PD implementation in particular should be in focus
- It would also be helpful to ensure that the country reports interlink the principles on whether one is dependent on the other and whether it has an effect or not; Note – CSO application of PDE is dependent on the political environment and effectiveness of CSO will also be dependent on how much space and level of regulation is applied to them
- Country teams should be part of the validation process for the synthesis report; Extension of the deadline for submission of revised country reports to second week of January
- Thanks for the emphasis on strong evidence. However, consider the deadline for submission. Note all the issues that have been raised at this meeting. An extension will make the synthesis easier and faster.
- Good workshop overall. Perhaps the group work was a bit rushed. The challenge there was to validate the synthesis from actual findings of the evaluation and not from opinion of participants.
- Positive: collaborative spirit, confidence in the evaluation reinforced, confidence in core team reiterated, complexity of tasks clarified; Challenging: we have to wait and see whether some underlying reports will be reinforced, timeliness of submission of underlying studies, include other finding (some important ongoing evaluations e.g. anti-corruption evaluation)
- Morning of Day 2 unnecessarily tedious
- Q1 should have been emphasised as much as Q2 and Q3
- It would have been a good idea if the evaluators (external) met in order to share issues/constraints/limitations to their work and core team to listen to them, because their comments and observations could've been taken into account. Gov'ts and usually political and diplomatic language doesn't give a realistic picture of the evaluation.
- Patton review very welcome; beautiful venue – thank you
- Well prepared, managed – thank you very much. We are still in the evaluation process, however having a rich group of resource people from partner countries, we could have discussed how we should make much of these Emerging Findings or possible results of this event towards agenda setting / theme of HLF4
- The matrix that was used for the small group exercise on Day 2 appeared to be structured in a way that is a little too specific / detailed for discussions in such a small sized group. For some questions it was difficult to find a common ground for making discussions to the point. Would have been suitable for a bigger sized group discussion. Overall, an excellent and effective workshop.
- Thanks to the preparation of both the PDE Secretariat, the Gov't of Indonesia, the CET, the country evaluation teams and country ref groups, this was a very well organised and productive workshop. We have made a lot of progress towards our end goal. Looking forward to continued progress. Thanks and compliments to all.
- There is absolute need for everyone to understand 'ownership' as conceived in Paris 2005. Ownership is for the partner countries to lead the way with support from other stakeholders including donors. Ownership means government (executive, legislative and judiciary).
- In my opinion, this meeting will be remembered by all of us as the best result oriented workshop on PDE2. I believe the outcome of this workshop will help us in producing an excellent report
- The 3rd IRG meeting is a great milestone to achieve the aims and objectives of the PD. The outcomes of this meeting will help the donor and partner countries to go forward towards development effectiveness.
- Communicating PD and AAA in terms that are real for politicians in donor countries will be important. Avoid technicalities. Emphasise the political.
- Workshop was well organised; logistics and other arrangements were also equally satisfactory. The discussions were enriching especially the group discussions. Felt that there are differences especially among the donors about the relevance and application of PD in the context that ODA is often linked with foreign policies. Also felt that some of the

donors are very reluctant to go for SWAP, GBS like modalities. Instead, it is felt, they prefer to continue with project modalities primarily to justify their citizens and tax payers and also to claim credit for contributions. The level of participation was somehow low. As PD is a political commitment and to get it implemented policy makers or the people drafting policies should have been invited. Not only the level of political input was low, but also most if not all participants came from evaluation sections or divisions. This leaves with a question, rather a big question: will the policy makers be considering the conclusions or findings of the evaluations?

- A common voice can be formed in the HLF4 to boost up aid more effective. In addition to the Paris principles more dimensions can be addressed there like 'aid for development', 'aid for resolving unemployment' etc. Accountability may also be added with transparency. Country system and predictability issues to be more emphasised in Busan. Also political masters to be involved in this process to make aid more effective to achieve development results.
- Fantastic effort by the CET to do the preliminary analysis to enable the discussion when so many reports came in quite late. Welcome responsiveness by the Management Group and CET to issues raised by the IRG. For IRG could there be a bit more space to discuss methods and analytical issues (even on a self-selected optional basis for evaluation types) in addition to only focus on the actual findings.
- I hope the Core Group obtained what it needed from the IRG. The role of the chair is key to keeping group on task – Joakim did very well, firm but light touch.
- The date given as final is too near. With the holidays in between in puts country evaluation teams under pressure and will compromise the quality that is of the concern already to many of the participants. My proposal would be to let the countries submit the reports by mid January. This will give time for reflection of the discussions from this meeting.
- Many issues were clearly explained. I feel more confident as an evaluator to proceed with the work to its final conclusion.
- The group work was more productive than the plenary. More of the schedule could have been given over to group work on specific topics. Some plenary sessions were poorly designed, leading to a rather unfocused discussion.
- It's been a constructive and good process – impacts on individual country representatives will vary but we feel that we have enhanced capabilities to progress in this area
- Good time management
- I would recommend that a new, more specific agenda of evaluation research topics and modalities for 'joint/collaboration' research between donor countries be considered and funded – you've created assets and momentum on which to build a more sophisticated agenda of research – or maybe in DAC?
- Feedback from CSO/NGO/INGO could have been better
- Very good management, logistics, venue selection. Evaluation methodology and quality assurance part is fair. Some participants blindly went for numbers and figures but I believe getting nearer to people, talking and key informants, physically observing the context, situation can give more real and practical information than numbers can do. Sometimes merely numbers may mislead if parameters are wrong. This evaluation process has good triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data.
- Perfect logistical support – thanks
- Should the evaluation feed into the overall development effectiveness process? If so, it is not clear to me how. If not, why not?