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**Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices**

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT VENTURE ON PROCUREMENT**

**Held in Manila, The Philippines on 8-10 February 2006.**

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**DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT VENTURE ON PROCUREMENT**

**MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 8-10 FEBRUARY, 2006**

**Background**

1. The core mandate of the Joint Venture (JV) on Procurement of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness is:
  - a) To facilitate the implementation of the Paris Declaration for its adherents as it relates to procurement; and
  - b) to instigate activities to ensure progress towards meeting the targets of the Paris Indicators relating to procurement.
2. To this end, the JV will build on the work undertaken by the World Bank – OECD/DAC Roundtable on Strengthening Procurement Capacities (2003-4) which resulted in development of an integrated set of Good Practice Papers on benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation, capacity development and mainstreaming procurement.
3. The focus of the JV on Procurement will be to foster harmonisation and assess how to best align donors rules and procedures with country systems.

**Objectives of the JV**

- Review Paris Declaration and the commitments of signatories.
- Reinforce the importance of close collaboration and exchanges with the Joint Ventures on Monitoring the Paris Declaration (JV MPD) and the Joint Venture on Public Financial Management (JV PFM).
- Present a draft Benchmarking Tool and Methodology to assess procurement systems and procedures, and share experiences from Pilot Cases.
- Discuss and reach agreement on the tool and methodology, which includes development of capacity development/risk mitigation strategies and a supporting roll out plan.
- Commitment from partner countries to implement the benchmarking tool and from donor countries to support the resulting risk mitigating strategies with adequate resources to improve systems, thereby supporting the use of country procurement systems whenever possible.
- Kick-start the process to give partner governments access to good practices in performance management of procurement systems to allow them to put in place a system that meets their particular needs.

## AGENDA/DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 1. Plenary Session I

4. Jocelyn Comtois, Co-Chair, opened the first meeting of the JV and introduced Secretary Roland Andaya, Department of Budget and Management, and Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, Office of the Ombudsman of the Philippines Government. The speakers thanked the organizers for having selected the Philippines to host such an event and for allowing the Philippines to showcase the work that has been undertaken in procurement reform.

5. The objectives set out for the JV by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness were then reviewed; there were no objections or comments from participants.

6. Jocelyn then introduced the draft agenda: the approach behind the agenda was intended to provide a mechanism for awareness raising and to facilitate an open and frank discussion and exchange of views. Plenary sessions would introduce subjects, followed by break out sessions in which participants could discuss and participate directly. Case studies presented by Partner Country participants would be used to share and learn from actual country level experiences to help anchor the discussions in reality. The participants accepted the agenda and the approach.

### 2. Plenary Session II

7. Christian Lehenbre, Head of the Aid Effectiveness Division at the OECD/DAC, presented an overview presentation on the Paris Declaration commitments and the structure and objectives of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. Micheal Lawrance, Procurement Advisor in the Aid Effectiveness Division, presented procurement indicator, 2b - the establishment of reliable country systems and indicator 5b – the use by donors of these country systems. This was followed by a second presentation of the overall monitoring process aimed at producing the two monitoring reports and a summary of the management process at the country level for the questionnaire.

8. Jocelyn then introduced the Revised JV Work Plan (2006 – 2008) taken from the Revised Work Plan of the DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (rev. 26 - Jan - 2006). The relation between the JV and the WP was highlighted as was the importance of close collaboration with especially the JVs on PFM and MPD. Jocelyn asked participants to consider over the next several days the option of naming a third co-chair from a partner country as has been done by the Working Party. Acceptance of the Work Plan was moved by the Uganda participant and seconded by the Australia participant.

### 3. Plenary Session III

9. Jocelyn then introduced Laura Pascua, Undersecretary of the Dept. of Budget and Management, who made the keynote country case study on the state of the procurement reform process in the Philippines. The procurement law was not successfully passed during its first attempt; the government learned from this experience and simplified the messages and enlisted “champions” in Congress and the House of Representatives. The Department of Budget and Management ensured ongoing consistency between procurement reform and national budget management. The National Textbook Delivery Program was highlighted for the results it produced following the introduction of reforms to its procurement processes: competitive bidding produced lower prices/text book and books were delivered on time. Savings previously lost to corrupt practices were largely realised in better prices and increased volumes of purchases. A key partner of the government in procurement reforms is civil society – coalitions of NGOs, the business sector and the media.

#### 4. Plenary Session IV

10. Bernard Becq, the other co-chair of the JV, introduced the subject of the draft Baseline and Methodology Tool and the two presenters, Alfonso Sanchez, consultant for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, and Fernando Fernandez, IDB. Bernard focused on a few points. The methodology is meant to provide a tool to assess systems and procedures at the country level so that countries may benchmark them and thereafter take actions, supported by donors, to improve as may be needed, but is not in itself a tool to make decisions on increasing reliance on the use of country systems. While the focus of the tool which is currently on the so-called baseline indicators (the 4 pillars and 12 indicators from the OECD-DAC WB roundtable), the JV will need to address the issue of performance in implementing laws, regulations, rules and procedures. He also highlighted two important links for this work: 1) the Paris Aid Effectiveness declaration and the two procurement indicators (benchmarking aggregate indicator on country systems, and measuring the use of country systems by donors); and 2) the PFM/PEFA work which includes a procurement indicator that is not comprehensive enough to cover the ground.

11. Alfonso presented the draft tool he developed in collaboration with the World Bank and the IDB and highlighted remaining issues he suggested be discussed during the break out sessions, including: clarification on what constitutes “international accepted standards”, there are duplications of indicators and sub-indicators to be addressed, there is a need for associated performance indicators, very experienced evaluators are needed to do such assessments, a wide consultation process –including with civil society/business sector-- is needed and, as is a plan to manage external expectations.

12. Fernando explained the IDB has an existing fiduciary capacity evaluation system that includes the OECD/World Bank BIS, the PEFA financial management indicators and the 0 – 3 scoring system also used by PEFA. The output is a fiduciary assessment report, a customized action plan and ongoing monitoring of the action plan. The UK and the Germany participant queried the long term rationale of having several different tools in use by the various banks and the DAC, given the need to agree and use common tools. Jocelyn added there is a need of donors for a roadmap for capacity development and a shared risk assessment. Fernando and others agreed what is needed is a common tool to assess country systems and the capacity of government agencies to implement them, upon which donors can make investment decisions based on their differing risk tolerances.

13. Bernard then introduced the presenters for the two country case studies in which Partner Countries have used some kind of Benchmark Indicator System. Mustafizur Rahman Anm, Central Procurement Technical Unit, Bangladesh, described the use of the World Bank/OECD-DAC Procurement Roundtable benchmark indicators in an exercise to determine procurement reform priorities and to set an accompanying monitoring plan. The government found this exercise as a useful input into the definition of policy priorities. Edgar Agaba, Public Procurement Board, Uganda, described the exercise undertaken by the Ugandan Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority (PPDA) using the BIS of the World bank/OECD-DAC Procurement Roundtable. The public procurement system was assessed by the PPDA using a tool based on the benchmark indicator system. The results were reviewed by a working group of government and local donor reps, including UNDP, the World Bank, the Netherlands, DANIDA and USAID. The assessment concluded there is an acceptable legal and institutional framework in place but that there are deficiencies in the enforcement of regulations and in the collection of data.

14. The Japan participant asked Edgar how many resources were used and what were the difficulties encountered. The Ghana participant asked whether the process itself of validation of the indicators was fully or not achieved. Edgar indicated two people assessed 10 large ministries and engaged the private sectors and local donors over a one month period. It was difficult to collect data; ministries weren't found to keep good records. For his part, Rahman indicated that in Bangladesh the e-platform provides reliable data. Performance is a new target for measurement for which data has to be obtained from procuring units.

Only experienced staff in the procurement reform units were involved as well as bilateral and multilateral donors. Views were sought from the local working group on procurement (including these donors and procuring ministries) as to how best to validate results. The Ghana participant commented that the discussion confirmed a uniform approach to benchmarking is required. Guidance based on the common national level tool is needed at the sub-national level, although it may require a review before being applied at such levels where institutional and legal procedures may differ. The national level assessments need to be based on actual, operational level assessments. The Australian participant observed the problem in both cases is enforcement and asked where is corruption most likely to occur; Edgar replied it appears most likely in proposal evaluations in decentralised operations.

15. Bernard summarised the discussion by observing that these exchanges had reinforced the need for a single tool and approach and for experienced assessors to be involved. One obvious key issue will be to define the best way to assess/rate, qualitatively and quantitatively, the indicators, and how to aggregate ratings, in particular for each indicator from the sub-indicators. The baseline may have to be re-assessed from time to time if conditions change, and the tool/methodology should be seen as a living document to be improved upon. He also asked for suggestions as to possibly missing indicators.

16. Bernard then invited participants to separate into three groups in which to discuss the draft tool with the aid of a room document with suggested questions for discussion in the groups and to guide the group's presentation back at the plenary.

## **5. Plenary Session V**

17. Jocelyn invited the reporters for the three break out groups to present summaries of the group discussions (see below for the summaries); Pam Bigart, World Bank, was invited to summarise the messages received from the three groups which she did in this way:

- a) The next version should look hard at the proposed scoring methodology.
- b) There should be an examination of the link(s) between the baseline indicators and performance measurement.
- c) Textual remarks are needed in the tool as well as scoring number e.g. progress, indicators, explanations.
- d) An application guide is needed on how to apply the tool.
- e) For the roll out of the tool, listen to the comments that have been shared, produce the new version, implement pilots from which to learn and seek feedback.
- f) Address overlaps and inconsistencies.
- g) Incorporate a risk mitigation strategy that maps out capacity development needs even though each donor will assess, depending on its overall assistance and risk management strategy, how to put such a tool to use.

## **6. Plenary Session VI**

18. Pam was asked to make a brief presentation to review the work on performance measurement produced by the Procurement Roundtable. Based on the evidence of recent tests of these indicators, Pam indicated more work is needed to refine them. Recent issues include:

- a) Lack of reliable and comprehensive data collection systems.
- b) Lack of local analytical capacity and resources.
- c) The value of the data being collected is of dubious value for measuring performance.

d) There is no common understanding as to what constitutes “good” or “bad” performance.

19. Bernard introduced the presenters of the two country case studies: A.B. Adjei, CEO – Public Procurement Board of Ghana, and Estanislao Granados Jr, Executive Director – Procurement Service, Dept. of Budget and Management

20. Mr. Adjei introduced a presentation sharing Ghana’s experience in assessing the performance of the country’s procurement system. In Oct 2005, in collaboration with the Swiss NGO IDEAS, Ghana launched its first performance assessment using an integrated assessment tool that includes qualitative and quantitative indicators, enables comparison between sectors and procurement entities, highlights risks and weaknesses and identifies areas of improvement. The assessment tool incorporated the 14 performance indicators developed by the Procurement Roundtable and examined both the benchmark indicators and the performance indicators. The Public Procurement Board plans on implementing 200 assessments by the end of 2006 (including revisiting those already assessed in order to monitor improvements) and is planning capacity development programs for assessors and increased training for ministry procurement officers.

21. Mr. Granados introduced the presentation of the Philippines’ e-procurement platform, the government’s single portal for the purchase of all common goods and for information related to works and services. It includes an electronic bulletin board (featuring opportunities and notices of awards), a supplier registry (15,000 are registered so far) and an electronic catalogue. There are benefits to the government and to suppliers: reduced costs, increased competition and opportunities, automatic notification and savings on paper and logistics. According to the government, the savings from paper and advertising have paid back the government’s original investment costs. Phase II of the project, in continuing collaboration with the main donor, CIDA, will begin in 2006/2007 and will focus on involving all of the national government and state and municipal governments, as well as universities.

22. Bernard thanked both presenters for their excellent presentations, and summarized the session by highlighting that clearly both qualitative and quantitative indicators were important to ensure performance assessment and measurement; how difficult it is to conduct a performance assessment that holds for all institutions and agencies which calls for discriminating among them and allowing for different risk management options; and there is a need to be careful regarding the application of the scoring methodology. Jocelyn then invited participants to separate into the same three groups as was done for the first break out session with the view to discuss the performance indicators developed by the Procurement Roundtable. As before, this would be done with the aid of a room document with suggested questions for discussion in the groups and to guide the group’s presentation back at the plenary.

## **7. Plenary Session VII**

23. Jocelyn invited the reporters for the three break out groups to present summaries of the group discussions (see the document annex); Jocelyn summarised the messages received from the three groups in the following way:

- a) quantitative indicators are clearly important a good proxy to measure effectiveness in applying good principles, as well as the link with baseline more qualitative indicators
- b) reliability of data is of the essence, although it is recognized how difficult it is to collect data. Guidance regarding the choice of procedures such as sampling techniques to gather the right inputs will be essential.
- c) transparency, time and resources are key concerns

**8. Plenary Session IX: Next Steps**

24. Jocelyn and Bernard introduced the new third Co-Chair who had been selected by the Partner Country participants during the JV. The other Co-Chairs invited Henry Malinga of South Africa to join them at the head table for the presentation of the next steps.

**1. *Version 2: Guide and Methodology for Assessing Country Procurement Systems***

- a) revised draft circulated to an informal working group (Three Co-Chairs, Alfonso Sanchez, Pam Bigart/WB, Fernando Fernandez/IDB and Micheal Lawrance/OECD-DAC) by April 7
- b) informal working group to meet in Washington to review – April 18/19
- c) draft version 2 circulated to JV participants – week of April 24
- d) comments due back within three weeks – week of May 15
- e) version 2 approved by Co-Chairs and ready to “road test” – week of May 22

**2. *Regional Meetings***

- a) Volunteer Partner Countries to be invited to “road test” version 2 of the Guide from Africa, the Americas and Asia.
- b) Regional meetings in Africa and the Americas – Fall 2006.
- c) Regional meeting in Asia – (to be confirmed).

**3. *Next meeting of the JV on Procurement***

25. After the regional meetings – December 2006?

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