

**ISSUES IN AID EVALUATION**

**EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Donor Support and Experiences**

**Report for the**

**DAC Expert Group on Aid Evaluation, OECD**

Prepared by Henrik Schaumburg-Müller  
Consultant to Danida, Denmark  
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
Afdb	African Development Bank
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (Kenya)
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BAPPENAS	National Development Planning Agency (Indonesia)
CEO	Central Evaluation Office (now OESP, UNDP)
CDIE	Center for Development Information and Evaluation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DEG	German Investment and Development Company
DGIS	Directorate General for International Cooperation (Netherlands)
DSE	German Foundation for International Development
EC	European Community
ECB	Evaluation Capacity Building
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
FINNIDA	Finnish International Development Agency
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Administration (United Kingdom)
OED	Operations Evaluation Department (World Bank)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OESP	Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning (UNDP)
RRV	Swedish National Audit Office
SEK	Swedish Crowns
Sida	Swedish International Development Authority
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	The World Bank

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The changing role of the state has made evaluation an important instrument for accountability, performance management and organizational learning. Evaluation forms an integral part of public-sector reforms and efforts to support good governance and effective host-country use of increasingly scarce development resources. For developing countries the question is how to develop and strengthen effective evaluation systems which are useful for public managers and policy decision-makers. For donors, the question is how best to support these efforts.

The evaluation of development projects and programmes in developing countries has been dominated by donors, with almost each national and multilateral aid agency having established an evaluation unit with its own agenda. Less attention has been given to the development of evaluation systems in the host countries. However, project data from UNDP and USAID in particular show that donor support for ECB (evaluation capacity building) activities has taken place for at least three decades, starting in the 1960s. The level of activity has clearly increased over the years. Support for ECB is therefore not a new form of aid, and there should be good reasons for taking stock of lessons learned.

The renewed interest in the position and use of evaluation systems in developing countries, which arises out of the broader issues of participatory development and good governance, sees evaluation as a means to promote efficient public management not least in relation to accountability, transparency and learning processes, both in the public sector and in civil society.

Being in agreement with the benefits of effective evaluation systems, the Expert Group on Aid Evaluation of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (hereafter "Expert Group") considers the assistance to developing country governments in building effective evaluation systems to be part of its mandate. The Expert Group has as one of its four tasks:

**Seeking ways to promote and support developing countries, own evaluation capabilities.**

More recently, the Expert Group has aimed to answer the question of how best to support ECB. That question, however, is difficult to answer, since very little is known about the extent to which ECB is supported, how it is supported and what the experiences of the support are. Consequently the Expert Group initiated a study of the donor efforts in supporting ECB.

The overall questions the ECB study aims to answer are:<sup>1</sup>

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1. No distinction is made in this paper between evaluation capacity building and evaluation capacity development. The latter term is preferred by the World Bank and USAID.

- \* **Which are the most successful donor ECB policies and strategies?**
- \* **Which are the most appropriate developing country partner organizations for ECB efforts?**
- \* **Which donor activities and organizational approaches to implementation are effective?**

However, limited consolidated information was available of the extent and content of bilateral and as multilateral donor activities in supporting ECB in developing countries. As a first step, it was decided to make a survey of donor ECB policies and activities.

## **1.2 Background information and documentation**

The present report is based on various sources of information. A main source was the reports produced by the agencies in connection with their ECB support activities. These include 1) UNDP's monitoring and evaluation country monographs and the synthesizing report "Generic Issues in M&E: What Works and What Does Not" (UNDP 1993); 2) papers and reports from the various regional conferences and seminars on performance evaluation supported by DAC, the regional development banks and other donor agencies; and 3) the World Bank's report of the Task Force on Evaluation Capacity Development (1994). The Expert Group has itself actively supported several initiatives on evaluation capacity building together with other agencies in order to promote more active co-operation and exchange of experience between donors and recipient countries in this field (OECD 1988). The seminar organised by the Expert Group in 1987 was an important occasion for an exchange of views and experiences among professionals in evaluation from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America. After this seminar, DAC and the Expert Group sponsored three regional evaluation seminars in Asia, Africa and Latin America for professional evaluators from the public sector, the private sector and international organizations. The proceedings from each of these seminars are published. In addition, the Expert Group has had ECB issues on its agenda at several other occasions.

With the support of the DAC Expert Group, a donor survey of ECB activities, including members and observers of the Expert Group, was undertaken early in 1995 sponsored by Danida. Responses were received from eighteen bilateral donor agencies in seventeen countries and six multilateral agencies. Details of the design and results of the donor survey are presented in Appendix 1. The donor survey was designed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the policy framework and content of ECB activities supported by the aid agencies.

A final source was the 1996 Canberra Expert Group seminar, which included presentations of country cases and discussions between donors and recipients on evaluation capacity building issues (AusAID 1996).

## **1.3 The conceptualization of evaluation**

A broad definition of the concept of evaluation capacity building has been applied in the donor survey. It includes activities which provide support for systems of evaluation, audit, feedback and learning from policies, programmes or projects performed at various levels, mainly in the public sector. Although the concept is defined broadly, it excludes activities aimed solely at planning and appraisal activities. Also, the interest focuses on activities which are not just of a temporary nature but have the aim of supporting a sustainable evaluation function. Therefore, support for temporary monitoring and evaluation units connected with a specific aid activity is excluded unless it provides evaluation training of a more general and sustainable nature to host-country staff.

A more difficult part is to make a clear distinction between general management tools on the one hand and performance and effect evaluation carried out with a broader purpose than managing current individual operations on the other hand. Support for general management systems goes beyond the evaluation capacity

building concept, but activities strengthening evaluation and learning systems for the management of an organization are included. Pure monitoring with the aim of following and directing the implementation of a single activity might not be regarded as an evaluation activity. While an evaluation activity should have a broader scope for learning and decision-making, in practice it has often been difficult to place, for example, a monitoring system or management information system in one category or the other.

Auditing in the narrow sense of checking accounts etc. will not normally be regarded as an evaluation function but there is a trend to give auditing a broader scope. Performance auditing, for instance, brings the auditing function closer to evaluation, particularly in relation to the accountability objective, but performance auditing is also useful as a management decision-making tool.

## **2. EVALUATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

### **2.1 Institutional evaluation levels**

Already India's First Five-Year Plan from 1952 - as well as subsequent five-year plans - stressed that the increased investment in development called for a systematic assessment and evaluation of the outcome of public expenditure (UNDP 1992). Subsequently, other developing countries had central evaluation units put in place as part of their planning process, sometimes extending them to regional levels.

However, the degree to which evaluation is used and the availability of qualified staff and financial resources differ considerably from one country to another. The DAC report on evaluation (OECD 1988) found that in some countries, evaluation had become an integral part of the planning process and was staffed with trained and qualified people. In other countries evaluation was rather in its incipient stage, where scarcity of manpower and financial resources limit the scope, and where donor needs for accountability and programme management was the main driving force. Now the impression is that the value of evaluation has been broadly recognized in Asia and Latin America. While the same may also be true of Africa, the practical problems in making national evaluation systems a feasible and usable priority for managers and decision-makers is still a long-term proposition in some countries, given the scarcity of all human and financial resources.

Although evaluation organizations are more widespread today, it is often too early to demonstrate significant sustainable impact on policy and development management decisions. Some of the institutional and legally most developed evaluation systems have been designed recently, and their operational results will only be demonstrated in the years to come. In other cases, the political demand and legal framework for established evaluation functions has yet to be developed and grounded in administrative and political systems.

Evaluation can take place at various levels in the public sector. In many cases, the requirement for evaluation capacity refers - sometimes implicitly - to the national level and is restricted to an institutional system catering for the central government's need to evaluate and make the various public-sector institutions accountable. However, there are at least three other levels to consider: the sectoral level, the regional level, and the level of the individual public organization or programme. Some of the demands and requirements for evaluation capacity are similar at the various levels, while the purpose and nature of evaluations can also differ at national, sectoral, regional and organizational levels.

Countrywide evaluation systems at the **national level** are set up at the executive level of government, for example to support policy decision making, to control of national budget spending, to make public expenditure decisions, and to strengthen development planning. At this level, a specific mandate and a detailed legal framework for effective evaluation are required.

**Sector and sub-sector level** evaluation concerns performance and effects of sector-specific policies and programmes. This level typically covers line ministries or sectoral departments in such ministries. Evaluation will mainly serve the management of the (sub-)sector concerned.

**Regional decentralized** local government administration also has a need for evaluation in the decision-making process. Regional decentralized evaluation systems are found in many developing countries, particularly in Asia, for example Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Sri Lanka.

There are evaluation needs at the level of the **individual organization** or agency (e.g. directorate, public enterprise, project or programme unit), where management has a need to evaluate activities which can contribute to learning processes in the organization and improve implementation and decision-making for both management and staff.

Many developing countries have several evaluation systems operating at various levels: (a) at the national level, for instance attached to the planning process; (b) at ministry or department level where a monitoring and evaluation unit is responsible to senior management; and (c) at programme or project level. Particularly at the programme and project level, the establishment of M&E units is often donor-driven and financed. Although there are different evaluation needs at the various levels, an uncoordinated system risks wasting resources and creates confusion as regards the purpose and use of evaluation. Systems at the various levels are not substitutes but can complement and reinforce each other. It is, for example, difficult to imagine an efficient regional system without a central national level system. For Malaysia, the UNDP study pointed to the importance of the common national database for the decentralized regional evaluation systems (Khan 1991). The national system being established in Indonesia also build on decentralization where the individual department's management becomes responsible for current monitoring and evaluation. It is therefore worth considering the coordination and linkages of the various evaluation systems with respect to the different needs for organizational learning, management decision-making, accountability etc. Before embarking on new ECB activities, including donor-supported ones, it is therefore necessary to conduct a proper institutional analysis.

Much of the available ECB documentation deals with systems at the national level, and the relation between ECB and good governance focuses primarily on countrywide systems and institutions.

## **2.2 Demand for evaluation**

A wide consensus exists that demand and commitment at the top level are required to establish a sustainable and useful evaluation system. By top level is meant the political system, policy makers as well as executive senior managers in the civil service. However, in a broader perspective evaluation is demanded by all members of a learning organization. In addition, demand can come from outside, i.e. from public media and other institutions in the private sector and civil society.

The ultimate test of the effectiveness of an evaluation system and thus also of ECB assistance is whether it is being used effectively in a sustained manner and contributing to decision-making processes at the level for which the system is designed. Unless there is a demand and use of the evaluation results, sustainability will not be achieved.

The World Bank, as well as the UNDP studies, see large variations between countries with respect to the demand for and commitment to effective and sustainable evaluation systems in political and administrative

institutions. Commitment and demand may change over time, often depending on political developments in the country. The UNDP studies point to changing circumstances for evaluation demand in some countries, for example in Bangladesh, where demand has decreased with changes in government (Khan 1993).

The legal foundation of the evaluation function is an important indicator of demand. There are now several developing countries where evaluation is based on legislation. In Columbia, the requirement is even found in the constitution. Regardless of level, it is in any case important that evaluation has an independent mandate and authority to perform. At national level, a general audit institution may therefore sometimes provide the suitable legal framework for conducting performance assessments.

Requirements from donor organizations to have supported projects and programmes evaluated may also be seen as a demand-generating factor. However, both the UNDP studies and the World Bank regard the relationship between the development of national evaluation systems and donor-evaluation requirements as an uneasy one which is not necessarily mutually supportive. The UNDP study of Sri Lanka points to the multiplicity of evaluation systems, particularly at the project level, that the country has as a result of donor influence, which weakens the overall national system (Roy & Wijayasuriya 1992). The UNDP generic issues report finds high donor intervention in nine out of eleven countries, but with moderate or low success for the evaluation systems (Khan 1993).

Contradictions between building national systems and donors' own evaluation systems can arise because:

- donors can pay more and attract the most qualified professionals as consultants;
- donor requirements can lead to the establishment of parallel systems, with a waste of resources and lack of overall decision-making;
- the evaluation objectives of donors can dominate those of recipient governments.

The essence here is that donor requirements cannot substitute for local demand, and the design of sustainable ECB activities must consider national commitment and demand factors.

### **3. EXPERIENCES OF SUPPORT FOR EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING**

The information on ECB assistance is based on the responses from the donor survey covering 24 agencies, and additional documentation which has mostly been provided by the donor agencies. Details of the results of the donor survey are provided in Appendix 1.

#### **3.1 Donor ECB policies and strategies**

Donor agencies have supported evaluation capacity building for the last three decades. UNDP and USAID particularly were early supporters of evaluation functions in recipient countries back in the 1960s. However, activities were scattered, and there was little evidence of consistent policies or strategies to assist the development of evaluation systems in developing countries. At the DAC evaluation seminar in 1987 with developing-country participants, it was found that while some developing countries were able to implement certain evaluations independently and according to their own priorities, the fact remained that most recipient-

country evaluations were completely tied in with donor evaluation activities dependent on aid financing. At that time, the constraints on developing independent systems were identified as lack of financial resources and qualified evaluation personnel.

A marked change has taken place in recent years, with more developing countries institutionalizing the evaluation function or revitalizing existing systems. As mentioned earlier, this development is influenced by both the notion of good governance and increased accountability for scarce development resources. Development banks in particular have been active to promote and support national evaluation institutions.

There is a marked difference in the way multilateral organizations, i.e. development banks and UNDP, and bilateral donor agencies, have supported ECB. These differences refer to the explicitness of policies and the level of ECB of activities.

Most multilateral agencies have made some sort of policy consideration for support to evaluation capacity building. Although ECB does not necessarily figure explicitly in the policies of all the development banks, they all regard ECB as an integral part of their commitment to institution-building and public-sector reform programmes. As already mentioned, the World Bank had a Task Force looking at how best to support evaluation capacity development within member countries, realizing that support to ECB should form part of the Bank's country portfolio management work and of its support for public-sector management reform. ECB is an explicit part of the terms of reference of the Director General, Operations Evaluation, in the Bank. Similarly, the new Evaluation Office of the Inter-American Development Bank has support to ECB explicitly included in its mandate. The Asian Development Bank has also formulated a policy to support ECB in developing member countries, which is regarded as part of the Bank's overall effort to promote capacity-building. Similarly, the African Development Bank provides assistance in strengthening all phases of the project cycle, including evaluation, within its Institutional Building Policy.

UNDP has for many years been active in supporting ECB and sees it as part of its commitment to provide technical assistance for institution-building. Under the terms of EC-ACP cooperation, the Lomé Convention has articles which specify common evaluations as mandatory. This can be seen as a demand-generating activity which also provides a background to support the development of evaluation capacity in ACP countries.

Only few of the responding bilateral donors have explicit policy or strategy references to ECB. DGIS, Netherlands, has the most specified formulation of an ECB support policy. In its policy document *A World of Difference; A new framework for development cooperation in the 1990s* (1991:325) it says in connection with the future role of evaluation that the emphasis will be on:

- strengthening the monitoring of project activities, with attention paid to the accountability of the developing countries and to integration in local management structures;
- satisfactory preparation of evaluations with local experts on the spot, with a greater role played by diplomatic missions and sector specialists;
- systematic creation of networks with local research institutions, in cooperation with Dutch institutions (including research institutes) and others;
- strengthening of research management capacities in developing countries;
- coordination with developing countries and other donors so that evaluations may be better integrated into local management structures and an excessive number of evaluation missions may be avoided.

The Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands later stated: "It is Netherlands' policy to maximize recipient-country input into evaluations, both for the sake of efficiency and in order to promote the recipient's sense of ownership". In bilateral country programmes, DGIS has made specific provision for

support to strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacity at central level and with counterpart institutions at other levels.

In Sida's recently adopted evaluation policy it is specified that one of the tasks of Sida's Department for Evaluation and Internal Audit is to support and contribute to the development of evaluation capacity in recipient partner countries.

For many multilateral agencies, the mandate of their evaluation unit includes support for ECB activities. The scope of the mandate again varies from the obligation of the evaluation unit to work together with institutions in the recipient countries in the evaluation work to a more specific commitment to support institution-building activities at the operational level. In ADB, for example, the Post-Evaluation Office has been responsible for providing advisory technical assistance to the programme to strengthen post-evaluation capabilities in six Asian countries. Evaluation units in the development banks have also been a major actor in organising several of the regional ECB seminars. However, the Director-General for Operations Evaluation in the World Bank will no longer be responsible for major ECB operational activities. These are now seen as part of public-sector and other institutional programmes.

### **3.2 Policy-level assessment**

Most donors find the assessment of agency policies and strategies premature, since they have recently been formulated. ADB observes that its first phase of assistance was principally aimed at creating a general awareness of the concepts and methodologies of post-evaluation and feedback, and providing limited technical and institutional input to strengthening staff capabilities. Having had a policy of supporting ECB for a long time, the World Bank has given its analysis in the Evaluation Capacity Development Task Force report (World Bank 1994). The report realizes that the constraints on effective ECB activities include relatively weak demand for and "ownership" of evaluation in developing countries. Nevertheless, the Bank regards ECB initiatives as increasingly effective, though as with all institutional development, progress is often slow. The World Bank concludes that greater effectiveness will be possible when ECB is integrated with other public-sector reform and management measures.

While these findings by the World Bank mostly relate to policies aimed at the national and sectoral levels, the same is likely to be true for policies which have a focus on the level of the individual sector organization, which means that it is difficult to make an effective policy supporting only the evaluation function of individual organizations.

The survey material does not provide an extensive assessment of the experiences with joint evaluations but confirms the great variation of ways in which joint evaluation policies are formulated and practised. The main question which by and large remains unanswered is to what extent joint evaluations in themselves contribute to building sustainable evaluation capacities in recipient countries. There are obviously cases where the host country contribution is limited and where the joint element is mostly of a formal character. The EC has experienced cases in which the mandatory requirement for joint evaluation has been counterproductive because it has been difficult to reach common conclusions agreeable to both parties. Denmark has had problems in publishing joint evaluation reports.

### **3.3 Donor ECB Activities**

The donor survey does not attempt to make any sharp definition of what should be included as an ECB activity. The survey results covering 84 ECB activities show a wide range of different activities which donors have chosen to include. Evaluation is the dominant focus, though it is absent from some reported activities. In most cases there is a combined focus. Support for evaluation functions has in most cases been combined with assistance to general planning, monitoring and information systems. What has been reported is therefore a

broad range of activities which support host-country institutions at various levels in their efforts to improve performance and make sound policy and management decisions.

<b>Table 1 ECB activities</b>	
Type of Activity	Number
Staff training in recipient country	60
Staff training abroad	19
Technical assistance personnel	69
(a. long term)	(39)
(b. short term)	(49)
Equipment etc.	51
Conferences/seminars etc.	31
Study tours for senior officials	17
Other forms of support	12
Number of cases with two or more activities combined	60

As shown in Table 1, the majority of ECB initiatives consists of a combination of activities which most often include technical assistance personnel and staff training in the recipient country. In more than half the cases, provision is made for the supply of equipment and/or software. There are relatively few cases which include staff training abroad, while it is more common to support conferences etc. Support for study tours for officials is also rare.

In only six cases - most of them reported by CIDA - does the ECB activity include demand-generating activities. However, the responses reflect an uncertainty of what should be regarded as demand-generating activities. In some situations, a donor's requirement for a recipient institution's evaluation of development assistance is regarded as a demand-generating activity. In other instances, support for institutions with a mandate to require evaluations from other government organizations is seen as demand-generating. Demand elements are clearly included in World Bank programmes, but Japan's "Evaluation by Recipient Countries" programme can also be seen as demand-generating.

In addition to the above activities, there is no doubt that the increased frequency of regional evaluation seminars organized by the DAC Expert Group, the regional development banks and other organizations must be seen as an important demand-generating element. These seminars often gather key decision-makers from the region, contribute to the exchange of experiences and stimulate interest in using evaluation tools and common methodologies.

There are a substantial number of cases where donor country organizations have been involved in the implementation of ECB support provided by bilateral agencies. Most of these cases refer to projects where a consultancy firm or an institution from the donor country is the responsible executing agent or provides technical expertise for the entire project and not only for the ECB part. Where the project or programme has included more general policy or management functions, the donors, for instance some of the DGIS-supported ECB projects, have often used management consultancy firms specializing in support to developing countries.

There are, on the other hand, fewer cases in which a professional institution or company specializing in evaluation (or monitoring/auditing) in the home country is indicated as having taken part in support of the ECB activity. FINNIDA used an auditing company in a ECB project in Mozambique. DSE in Germany mentions its cooperation with the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions and the corresponding regional organizations. Sida's support for national audit offices in five African countries is perhaps the best example of twinning arrangements between the Swedish specialized institution, the Swedish National Audit Bureau, and host-country counterpart institutions (see **Box 1**).

Some donor agencies, for example DEG in Germany, AusAid and CIDA, point to the ECB element in their development management training and education

### **Box 1: TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORT FOR PERFORMANCE AUDITING**

Since 1988 Sida has supported the establishment and strengthening of audit functions - financial and performance (or Value-for-Money) auditing - in Southern African countries. The support has taken the form of a twinning arrangement between the National Audit Office in the respective recipient country and the Swedish National Audit Office (RRV).

The co-operation with Zimbabwe started in 1991 where the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor-General had earlier introduced a Value-for-Money auditing function. The main objective of the cooperation between this office and RRV is capacity building within the area of Value-for-Money auditing and promotion of a professional audit organization. At the end of the co-operation, the Value-for-Money auditing section shall be able to plan, implement and conclude audits of good quality on a regular basis, including providing training for its staff.

The design of the support was extensively discussed between the two offices at an early stage of the cooperation. It was considered that a long-term arrangement would facilitate the provision of the continuous support required for this novel type of auditing. A long-term adviser should be stationed in Harare. It was emphasized that the long-term adviser should really function as an adviser and not as a "gap-filler".

The transfer of knowledge has mainly been accomplished by internal courses and seminars, and through on-the-job training activities performed with the different project groups within the section. The fact that the long-term adviser has been stationed in Harare and worked together with the auditors, has made it possible, according to RRV, to adapt the content, level and timing of the courses to the specific needs of the section. The long term adviser has also been engaged in improving the planning and management work at the section. Sida's disbursement to the project since project start in 1991/92 has been SEK 14.7 million (1 US\$=6.5 SEK).

The parties involved find the following factors important for the establishment and implementation of a twinning arrangement:

- \* Initiative and identification of needs for change taken by recipient organization
- \* Agreement on the design of the cooperation/support
- \* Capacity building and ultimate self reliance rather than gap-filling

**Source:** AusAID (1996): **Proceedings of the DAC Expert Group on Aid Evaluation Canberra Seminar**

programmes. USAID has supported capacity building in private business and voluntary organizations in a number of cases.

The available information indicates that the resources allocated for support for ECB vary considerably between donors. Much of UNDP's assistance has a relatively limited budget, and ADB's technical assistance "package" consists of training, short-term consultancy and some equipment within a budget of around US\$ 100,000. Longer term support is typically found among bilateral donors, for example DGIS and Sida, where long-term consultants have been employed over several years. Disbursements to four of Sida's projects supporting auditing functions range between 13 and 15 million Swedish crowns (1 US\$=7 SEK).

In **Table 2** the different types of ECB assistance are summarized in six categories.

**Table 2. ECB Support Categories**

	Nation- (or area-) wide systems	Internal organizational systems
Specialized evaluation support	<b>Box 1.</b>  Mostly multilateral and some bilateral assistance - WB support to national eval. system in Indonesia - ADB technical assistance to country post evaluation units	<b>Box 2.</b>  Some bilateral and multilateral assistance - CIDA assistance to evaluation unit in Indonesian dept. of education
ECB as a component of strengthening public management and institutions	<b>Box 3.</b>  Mostly development banks' assistance and a few bilateral examples - WB & IDB public sector reform loans - CIDA support to Thailand's National Economic & Social Development Board - DGIS support for planning and development department in a province of Pakistan - Sida support for public reforms & performance auditing	<b>Box 4.</b>  Concentration of bilateral and some multilateral assistance - DGIS support for the ASAL programme management in Kenya - UNDP technical assistance to sector departments
ECB as a component of comprehensive development intervention	<b>Box 5.</b>  A few examples of bilateral area-based assistance - DGIS support for District Rural Development Programme in Tanzania	<b>Box 6.</b>  Concentration of bilateral assistance - CIDA support for family planning in Bangladesh

In **Table 2** the ECB interventions from the donor survey are categorized using two dimensions. One dimension makes a distinction as to whether the evaluation function is countrywide (or area-wide), evaluating the performance of other organizations, or is designed for internal organizational evaluations, serving management within an organization. The other dimension is concerned with whether the aid intervention is specialized and concerns only evaluation functions, is combined in an intervention with planning and management activities, or whether ECB is a component of a comprehensive intervention which includes broader types of development activities.

In many cases, donor supported internal organizational evaluation systems have not been linked to or coordinated with a broader national system, although there might be a central evaluation unit, for instance in a ministry of planning. Some recent efforts to strengthen and support nation-wide systems build on models establishing a common framework in which, for example, the individual government department or agency is responsible for performance evaluation, while a central unit coordinates the system and carries out supplementary studies. The case of Indonesia, where the National Development Planning Agency coordinates the national evaluation system, is an example (see **Box 2** page 15).

### **3.4 Assessment of ECB support**

In spite of more than two decades of support to ECB, there is very limited information available on whether it works and has been effective, and no common criteria for judging success. The donor survey questionnaire on individual donor ECB activities included a section for assessment, despite the realization that there would probably be few formal evaluations of donor supported ECB activities. However, it was found that the survey at least provided an opportunity for feedback on possible lessons learned.

Four agencies indicate that ECB activities have been included in an evaluation either separately or as part of a more comprehensive evaluation. Of the 84 individual responses, there are eighteen cases where the donor provides an assessment. In addition the World Bank provided a general assessment of its three programmes. However, several other donors have commented in various ways on the performance of their ECB activities.

For most donors, the situation has been that they do not have readily available documentation on which an assessment can be made. For the eighteen individual cases where the assessment questions have been answered, assessment is often based on the more comprehensive evaluation material of an intervention (project or programme), in which ECB is only one component among many. In these cases, there may therefore be very limited material specifically on how ECB activities have performed.

**Box 2:****THE INTEGRATED NATIONAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM OF INDONESIA**

In Indonesia, the Government is establishing an integrated and management-oriented performance evaluation system coordinated by the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS). The planning of this system has been designed based on the following principles:

- institutional analysis and needs identification
- clear aims
- focus on management's needs
- integrated approach
- sound legal and institutional basis

Before embarking on the design of an evaluation system, the Government examined the existing monitoring and evaluation capacity of its institutions and identified the requirements for strengthening the evaluation functions. As the Government already had systems for monitoring and inspecting of implementation procedures and processes, particularly with respect to inputs, the goal was to be the performance evaluation of results, outcomes, benefits, and impacts and effects. The Government needed a more immediate assessment of the overall results and benefits of its development projects.

Since performance evaluation must be truly useful to senior managers, the information should be generated when it is needed and is of most benefit to management processes. This is usually when projects are ongoing and not in the ex-post situation. The strategy for performance evaluation therefore has a double approach. Through performance indicators and mid-term evaluations managers will be informed of the more immediate results and benefits of their current development projects. The departments will be responsible and organize themselves how to develop and report performance indicators. The second element in the strategy is to perform more systematic and selective performance evaluation studies responsive to the needs of management. These studies should become an integral part of the management process. The departments will also be responsible for the evaluation studies. BAPPENAS is responsible for disseminating the lessons learned through evaluation studies to other departments. BAPPENAS can also initiate major evaluations studies which can address issues of importance to the Government as a whole, and feed into sectoral, regional and cross-sectoral reviews of overall plan implementation.

A committee of senior officials chaired by the Vice-Chairman of BAPPENAS will advise the Minister of State for National Development Planning/Chairman of BAPPENAS on all aspects of performance evaluation development in the Government. BAPPENAS will have responsibilities for overall guidelines and standards, and oversees departmental commitments regarding performance evaluation studies.

The policy statement, guidelines and standards for performance evaluation in Government of Indonesia are being prepared and will be issued through a Ministerial Decree.

**Donor assistance**

BAPPENAS has received assistance from the World Bank in the form of an Institutional Development Fund Grant to strengthen the performance evaluation capability. The Institutional Development Fund provides grants to undertake innovative actions in institutional development/capacity building. The grant to Indonesia has been used to carry out a diagnosis of existing performance evaluation capacity and to develop an approach to performance evaluation, complete with policies, guidelines and standards. A series of training sessions was also provided to initiate the implementation process. Further training and more workshops etc. will be needed.

The World Bank does not intend to assist the actual performance evaluation work, as this is, in the view of both BAPPENAS and the World Bank, the responsibility of the government. All concerned, however, realize that much more effort will be needed, and that the current exercise using the World Bank grant is merely a start.

**Source:** ADB (1995) **Post-evaluation and Feedback**

The responses cast limited light on which ECB activities in particular have been judged successful. Seminars and workshops are in most cases (13) judged successful, followed by short-term consultancies (12), local staff training (11) and supply of equipment etc. (10). In most cases it is a combination of activities that is judged successful, not a single activity.

All responses find that the relevant organization has been chosen for ECB support in the recipient country.

In the overall performance assessment of the eighteen cases, one is judged excellent and two unsatisfactory. The rest are more evenly distributed from fair to very good. However, the criteria used for the various donor assessments were not specified in the questionnaire. Answers to crucial questions therefore remain open. For example, does support based on a limited donor budget - as is often the case - have a lasting impact? Another open question is whether support given to internal evaluation functions in various organizations as a component of a more comprehensive project has an effect beyond the period of donor support. The efforts to establish an M&E system for the ASAL programme in Kenya are described in **Box 3**. The case illustrates some of the lessons which also appear from other donor supported initiatives to create M&E units within individual projects or programmes.

Most of the assessments of individual interventions have been provided by bilateral donors and therefore refer more to support for evaluation functions within individual organizations.

As a follow-up to its technical assistance ECB programme in 1990-94, ADB organized four in-country post-evaluation workshops and one regional feedback workshop in 1994-95. The feedback workshops in general showed that new knowledge and skills regarding evaluation methodologies and procedures had been established among participants. However, the seminars also revealed a number of issues which had to be addressed before a sustainable commitment to and use of evaluation systems could be established in the host institutions. There was a clear need for follow-up activities to strengthen technical capabilities further. But the feedback seminar also raised important policy questions of how evaluation lessons were used in the decision-making process, how links were best secured between evaluation and planning, and how to make the appropriate distinction between monitoring and evaluation.

Time and resources do vary to a large extent from small and short-term inputs primarily provided by the multilateral donors to bilateral agencies which have used long-term expatriates staying with the host institutions for several years financed by larger budgets. However, the size or duration of the support is not always a relevant indicator of success. Some of DGIS' experiences with long-term support have provided limited or unknown results on the capacity for operating and using evaluation systems on the management and decision-making levels. Often resources in the combined projects seem to have been concentrated on the establishment of management procedures and information systems.

Evaluation material from CIDA on a institution-building project including ECB in Guinea stresses the need to concentrate efforts at the highest possible level of authority of the institution concerned. These findings coincide with the World Bank's and other multilateral agencies' experiences and recommendations.

### **Box 3**

#### **SUPPORT TO PROGRAMME MONITORING & EVALUATION: THE ASAL PROGRAMME IN KENYA**

ASAL is an integrated development programme for Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands covering approximately 80% of total lands and 25% of the population. The ASAL programme has been coordinated by a department which in 1989 was upgraded to a ministry, only to become merged with two other ministries in 1993.

In 1992, it was decided to establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit for the programme to strengthen activities at district level and ensure environmentally and socio-economically sustained development. Besides monitoring for current management, the objective was also to ensure the avoidance of unintended effects on the fragile environment and the realization of planned impact. The establishment of an M&E system for ASAL has been supported with donor funding and expatriates.

The ASAL programme is a large programme, involving different ministries at national level, a large number of executing agencies in the districts, and it is being supported by several donors and NGOs. The programme includes therefore both management at the policy and strategy level as well as implementation of several projects within the programme framework. The ASAL programme may in this respect be similar to many other sector programmes, which at present are emerging as successors to the project type assistance.

The M&E project is continuing, and it is therefore too early to make a final assessment of its effects. The M&E system was conceived to learn systematically from experience in order to improve overall programme performance. However, in its infancy several problems were experienced which illustrate constraints in establishing and using programme M&E units.

After a couple of years engaged in setting up the M&E system for the ASAL programme, the expatriate reports the following barriers and constraints as main impediments to establish a workable system:

- \* Lack of qualified man-power and financial resources to operate current M&E functions.
- \* Too many actors involved, including several donors, with each their separate agenda.
- \* The project culture is not open to take into account suggestions for change. The use of donor short-term consultants for review and evaluation aggravates the communication problems.
- \* M&E information is provided too late for managers, and there is no effective mechanism for utilization.

Based on the experiences so far, the following lessons learned from the ASAL programme are offered:

- \* Proper monitoring procedures for financial and physical implementation has to be in place before entering into more complex impact measurements. There should be a clear distinction between monitoring of implementation processes and assessment of impacts.
  - \* Programme monitoring systems should use simple formats, build on existing data, and be easy to operate and maintain.
  - \* M&E should be defined as good management practices, and not as separate, additional exercise. Top managers, as main users, must provide political and financial backing.
  - \* Emphasis in M&E should be on interaction and communication of information, and not on collection and compilation of data. The purpose is to use information for improving performance.
  - \* M&E contributes to rational decision-making, which is only one method to reach decisions. Feedback from M&E systems will only be effectively utilized if the "project culture" and political environment are prepared and open for alternative arguments and change.
  - \* Rich descriptive information has a political potential if local communities and participants are empowered through access to relevant information. The demands for accountability and transparency can then start to emerge from below.
- Formal M&E procedures are important tools to review projects, but do not replace the assessment and judgement which is based on experience, observation, synthesis and informed intuition. An imaginative, integrated strategic vision depends on analysis, but also on involvement with details, and intimate knowledge of specifics.

At a general level, based on broader observations and experiences by the actors involved it is found that the composition of the supply-oriented package of support may not matter so much as demand-side conditions. On the demand side, it appears that a commitment at the policy level, combined with a high rate of recipient self-financing of projects and programmes, creates more favourable responses. In discussions on the issue, it has repeatedly been emphasized that evaluation systems must be individually designed according to the specific needs and conditions prevailing in the host country (or organization) concerned. Both the World Bank and UNDP find it necessary to design support for evaluation systems carefully, depending on the political and administrative environment. The agencies talk about different paths for the evaluation function to develop, depending on the institutional and political development of the country - there is no pre-determined path.

An important result arising out of some of the regional seminars is that in countries with a high rate of self-financing, there now exists substantial and well-established institutional know-how on evaluation practices, which can be shared with and used by other countries in the region.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS: STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE SUPPORT FOR ECB**

### **4.1 Conclusions**

The experiences of donor support for ECB activities lead to a number of conclusions but also raise issues, as the knowledge of how the support provides sustainable results and improves public-sector performance remains limited. Seen from a donor perspective, many of these issues are interrelated, but they are raised separately below.

Assessment results of ECB support are few. Donor documentation is scarce, and there is limited feedback from host-country users. It is hardly possible to formulate a set of best practices based on lessons learned with the limited documentation available and the large variation in donor intervention. Yet despite the shortcomings in our knowledge, the fact is that support for ECB has now been provided for more than two decades, and it should therefore be possible to consider strategies which can improve support in this field.

An uncritical transfer of ready-made evaluation systems has few chances of being adopted and used. The design and formulation of evaluation functions have to be tailor-made for the circumstances of the individual country and organization. While there might be common objectives at a general level, the specific institutional, political and management systems and approaches do need to be considered. A sustainable strategy has therefore to be build on host country decision-makers' and managers' needs and on the specific institutional and administrative circumstances under which the system has to operate. At the same time, new systems must also be seen in a reform context and provide performance and learning incentives for the public sector.

Another area of agreement is that building usable evaluation systems may take a long time. This is not so much because technical capabilities and workable systems have to be developed over time but rather because the demand for and use of evaluation results often require political and institutional changes. Careful demonstration is required that evaluations are not control systems but tools to improve performance and decision-making. There is therefore broad agreement that the demand side is very important but also more difficult to support.

It is also important to acknowledge that donors and host countries each have legitimate but sometimes different interests in evaluation. Also, a sincere long-term commitment to strengthening evaluation capacity in developing countries also means leaving more of the initiative and design of evaluations to the recipients. While much of the assessment of effects and impact should be left to the recipient country, donors will continue to require evaluation both for accountability purposes and to provide lessons of the adequacy of their aid delivery systems.

In sum, most agree that some progress has been made in achieving increased evaluation capacity, but more work is needed in the areas of political advocacy, local-level commitment and the commitment of donors to support a long-term strategy in ECB.

## **4.2 Issues**

### **Nation-wide versus internal organizational systems**

From an institutional perspective, the results of the donor survey underline the distinction between two types of ECB support 1) for management activities in organizations, with the main aim of evaluating performance and reporting back to the management on the organization's own activities; and 2) for national evaluation institutions in planning ministries, budget departments and national audit offices, which mainly evaluate and monitor the activities and performance of other government organizations. National-level institutions are in most cases supporting policy decision-making at the country or regional level.

There is no doubt that nation-wide systems are more demanding to establish and to make operational and need a long time to be developed and put in place in a government system. Internal organizational evaluation systems are often easier to make effective, since feedback linkages between managers/decision-makers, evaluators and stakeholders are more direct, and learning processes are more easily visualized internally in an organization. However, it is not appropriate to see the two systems as substitutes; they should be complementary. This indicates that there is a need for donor support for nation-wide systems as well as for internal organizational systems at various levels of the public sector hierarchy. However, there is a need to coordinate such efforts and to see systems in relation to one other.

### **The preconditions for effective evaluation**

As concluded above, it is crucial for a nationwide evaluation organizations to have a legal mandate for its operations in order for it to be effective. However, there are other requirements which must be met before evaluations can provide effective results, for instance, effective budgeting and accounting procedures. Such requirements are also needed to establish evaluation functions within organizations. Particularly in support for individual organizations, the question can be raised of how broad that support should be. The ECB component as part of a broad planning and management project may not receive sufficient attention, while isolated ECB support may not function when other basic management tools are not in place.

### **Host country institutions**

The donor survey shows that nation-wide evaluation systems can be placed in different host country institutions, for instance central planning organizations, budget departments or national audit offices. One institution need not exclude the other, but for a donor it might be a question of how to choose and concentrate its support capacity. A relevant consideration in making a choice is to regard the legal authority and mandate to perform evaluation as an indicator of demand from policy decision-makers.

## **Donor biases**

ECB support has often been based on pre-designed methods and systems. This tendency is reinforced when there is a close connection between ECB support and the donor's need to have its development assistance evaluated. The demand for evaluation has often been donor-driven, and the implementation based on consulting firms' standard packages of management information systems and approaches where evaluation is only a minor element.

## **Donor coordination**

The donor survey gave several examples where different donors provide support for ECB to the same country. For instance, five donor agencies mention that they support ECB in China. When different donors support ECB in the same host country several questions arise, for instance what is the requirement for a common terminology, and to what extent is there a need to ensure the coordination of methods and systems when support is made to different host institutions?

## **Donor supply potential**

Many bilateral donors have used home-country institutions or consulting firms as executing agents for their ECB support. In some cases, such as support for auditing, they have been specialized government agencies, while in other cases they have been private companies more specialized in planning and general management consultancy, with limited professional insight in evaluation issues and methodologies.

## **Joint evaluation**

As already mentioned, a demand for joint evaluations may not in itself create sustained evaluation capacities - on the contrary, it can be seen as donor-driven and sometimes create conflicts of interest. The issue is how and when joint and more participatory approaches to evaluation support host institution capabilities and learning. And how can donors - and particularly bilateral agencies - otherwise stimulate the demand side?

## **4.3 Approaches and strategies**

For operational purposes the experiences of recent years can be summarized under three headings: (i) approaches to strengthening evaluation functions; (ii) elements of donor support strategies; and (iii) the role of donor evaluation units and the Expert Group. The following recommendations and observations are broadly supported, although opinions may differ on specific issues.

### **Approaches to strengthening evaluation functions**

- \* Sustainable evaluation institutions need support at the highest policy and management levels and should be able to demonstrate its use to these levels. The design of evaluation systems must also take into account the specific government and administrative culture in the host country/organization.
- \* Political advocacy and senior management demand should be preconditions for ECB supply activities and must be linked to the issue of governance. A long-term strategy is needed for effective interventions in both cases.
- \* The scopes of national-level performance evaluation and performance auditing systems are moving closer to each other, although the former is likely to be more closely integrated in the planning process, while the latter tend to focus more on accountability to the policy-making level. The choice

of approach may, however, depend on other factors, such as political commitment, the legal framework and institutional capabilities.

- \* Development policy and aid tend to shift from a project/programme to sector/policy focus, setting new demands for host-country evaluation institutions.
- \* Sustainable and effective evaluation systems must have a legal foundation or a firm statutory organizational regulation.
- \* An evaluation unit's independence from line management is important, as is the security of career possibilities for evaluation staff and managers.
- \* Regional, sectoral and programme/project evaluations become more useful if they are based on a coordinated approach linked to a national evaluation system, particularly with respect to methodologies and data needs.

### **Elements of donor support strategies**

- \* The duration and scope of support should be flexible and balanced between the needs of long-term relations and ownership by host institutions.
- \* Making the choice of support for either a national-level evaluation or a performance auditing system should include considerations on the demand for its use and the legislative backing of the system.
- \* Efforts to institutionalize training in evaluation (including the training of trainers), particularly on the methodological aspects of evaluation.
- \* Long-term twinning arrangements will support professionalism. Increased use of the evaluation tool in developed country governments increase the possibilities of making long-term twinning arrangements with specialized evaluation institutions in donor countries.
- \* Support for training institutions and curriculum development, which on a broad base can strengthen evaluation capabilities in government and civil society.

### **The role of donor evaluation units and the Expert Group**

While the above-mentioned list provides possible ways for donors to strengthen support for ECB, the need for action by the Expert Group and donor-evaluation units must also be considered. While multilateral agencies' evaluation units may provide support to evaluation capacity building to various degree it is very unlikely that bilateral evaluation units can take operational responsibility for support to ECB. Their independence and capacity often make limitations on such involvement. However, this does not prevent bilateral evaluation units from using their professional competence to advise and support operational units' activities and promote ECB in guideline and policy formulation.

Areas where donor evaluation units may play an active role include:

- \* Promoting an agency ECB support policy or strategy, particularly in view of new aid forms being introduced, including programme assistance for institution and capacity building as part of good governance initiatives at national and sectoral levels.

- \* Advocating and stimulating the evaluation issue in country dialogues and sector programme assistance.
- \* Providing technical advice to operational units responsible for ECB support activities.
- \* Supporting the establishment of twinning arrangements between other domestic evaluation institutions and host country institutions.
- \* Arranging joint-evaluations with a genuine participatory approach, where the needs of both parties are incorporated from the start and where the capacity building element is taken into account specifically.
- \* Coordinating their evaluation programmes with host countries and other donors in order to optimize the use of resources and the constrained capacity of recipient countries' evaluation systems.
- \* Assisting in securing consistent evaluation methodologies and terminologies in the ECB support activities of the agency.
- \* Advising on training facilities and materials on evaluation issues.

The Expert Group can:

- \* Continue to promote a common methodology and terminology shared by donor and host countries.
- \* Encourage and facilitate members in coordinating sector and country evaluations and in sharing them with host-country evaluation institutions.
- \* Continue supporting regional networking to promote the exchange of expertise and to share evaluation information among recipient and donor countries.
- \* Support regional and south-south seminars and training.
- \* Facilitate the exchange of information on donor ECB support activities and promote the assessment of these activities.

Most of these proposals for the Expert Group can be combined with initiatives taken by donor agencies.

## Appendix 1: ECB DONOR SURVEY

### Survey Design

The donor ECB survey focuses on:

- a) provision of information on donors' ECB policies;
- b) content of actual donor ECB activities; and
- c) donor assessment of ECB activities.

The survey of donor practices is based on two questionnaires. One concerns the ECB policies and strategies of the individual donor, and the other is designed to collect information on individual ECB activity, with one part registering the content of the ECB activity and the other part asking for an assessment of the activity. The individual activity can be a project or a programme.

### Survey Responses

Of the 30 agencies covered by the survey and receiving the questionnaires, responses were received from 18 bilateral donor agencies in 17 DAC countries and 6 multilateral agencies. This gives a reply percentage of about 80%. Together, the responding agencies represent a much larger share of total DAC aid flows. The key survey figures are summarized in the table below.

<b>Appendix Table 1 Survey summary</b>			
	Bilateral	Multilateral	Total
Agencies receiving survey material	23	7	30
Responses to ECB policy questions	18	6	24
Agencies reporting on ECB activities	10	6	16
Number of individual ECB activities	71	13	84

### Donor Policies

Many agencies answered negatively as to whether they had an ECB policy, and five bilateral agencies answered that they had neither a policy nor ECB related activities. Three bilateral agencies were not able to provide further information within the time available. The responses from the remaining agencies include more detailed considerations on the policy questions, with information on ECB activities included in various forms.

Projects and programmes where ECB is the main activity are, of course, easily identified, but those cases where ECB is only one - perhaps a minor - component among several others may be more difficult to spot. In its detailed database, USAID, for instance, has identified a large number of projects which might include ECB activities. However, only a closer study of the projects identified can confirm the relevance of an activity in the present context. Agencies with a less comprehensive database have greater difficulties in identifying all ECB activities included in projects which have main objectives other than ECB. The point is that while the present survey is likely to be quite comprehensive with respect to projects and programmes where ECB is the main activity, it is much less complete with respect to ECB efforts which are embodied in more comprehensive development projects or programmes. Therefore, the survey cannot claim to be either exhaustive or necessarily representative with respect to ECB activities supported by donor agencies. On the other hand, for the first time it provides documentation of bilateral and multilateral support for ECB across agencies.

While in most cases specific ECB projects are directed toward evaluation institutions and activities at the national level, ECB activities as part of more comprehensive projects typically support evaluation units in a (sub-)sector, region or project. These latter ECB activities are therefore likely to be under-represented in the donor survey.

### **Donor ECB Activities**

In total, ten agencies reported on 84 individual ECB interventions of which 12 were funded by multilateral agencies and the remaining 72 activities by bilateral donors. However, the bulk of the bilateral reporting originates from a few agencies: DGIS (29), USAID (23) and CIDA (11). Information on some of the 23 ECB activities included from USAID was based on the USAID project database and not on answers to the more comprehensive questionnaire.

The other part of the material consists of information from donor agencies on ECB activities provided in various other formats. The World Bank has reported in general on three programmes used to finance ECB activities: Institutional Development Fund operations, the Operations Evaluation Department's ECD Program and Evaluation Capacity Development as a component of Public Sector Reform Loans. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan used the questionnaire format to report on supported ECB activities within five global programmes. Information from UNDP includes a print-out from the database of projects where an ECB activity is identified.

There is probably no sharp definition which donors have applied to determine what should and what should not be included as an ECB activity. The survey results show a wide range of activities which donors have chosen to include as ECB activities. The foci of the 84 reported ECB activities are as shown in Appendix Table 2.

<b>Appendix Table 2</b>	
<b>Focus of ECB activity</b>	
Focus	Number
Evaluation	49
Performance monitoring	40
Audit	14
Development information system	37
Other	13
Combination of foci	49

Evaluation is the dominant focus, though it is absent from many of the reported activities. In most cases there is a combined focus. Support for evaluation functions has in most cases been combined with general planning, monitoring and information systems. What has been reported is therefore a broad range of activities which support host country institutions at various levels in their capacity to make policy and management decisions.

The sectoral breakdown using the DAC codes shows a concentration of ECB support to Public Administration and Development Planning and Services. Among the economic sectors there is a concentration on Agriculture (Primary Production Sectors), while the remaining activities are thinly distributed over various other sectors.

More than half of ECB activities (49) are part of a more comprehensive aid project or programme, which means that the efforts to strengthen evaluation capacity are combined with other development activities. The ECB component is sometimes of a relatively modest size, as, for instance, in a programme supporting the activities of a line-ministry department or similarly specialized development organization. This kind of support is more pronounced with bilateral than with multilateral agencies. The responses indicate that the survey material may underestimate the bilateral donor activities in this field. Many agencies report that it has been difficult for them to identify cases from their project files where support for an institutional evaluation function is integrated together with other components in a project or programme.

There are some examples of bilateral ECB assistance which consists of support to monitoring and evaluation units as part of more comprehensive development projects. Although the aim is to improve the institutional evaluation capacity in general, a strong motive is to strengthen management capacity and accountability for the donor-funded activities. In such cases, the aim and content of capacity building activities may not be specified in great detail.

The survey results with respect to the content of ECB activities are shown in Appendix Table 3.

<b>Appendix Table 3 ECB activities</b>	
Type of Activity	Number
Staff training in recipient country	60
Staff training abroad	19
Technical assistance personnel	69
(a. long term)	(39)
(b. short term)	(49)
Equipment etc.	51
Conferences/seminars etc.	31
Study tours for senior officials	17
Other forms of support	12
Number of cases with two or more activities combined	60

The majority of ECB initiatives consists of a combination of activities which most often include technical assistance personal and staff training in the recipient country. In more than half the cases, provision is made for the supply of equipment and/or software. There are relatively few cases which include staff training abroad, though it is more common to support conferences etc. Support for study tours for officials is also rare.

In only six cases - most of them reported by CIDA - does the ECB activity include demand generating activities. However, the responses also reflect uncertainty of what should be regarded as demand generating activities. In some situations, donor requirements for a recipient institution's evaluation of the assistance is regarded as a demand generating activity, while in others support for institutions with a mandate to require evaluations from other organizations is seen as demand generating. World Bank programmes clearly include demand generating elements, but Japan's "Evaluation by Recipient Countries" programme, for example, can also be seen as a demand generating activity.

In addition to the above activities, there is no doubt that the increased frequency in organizing regional evaluation seminars by multilateral agencies must be seen as an important demand generating element. These seminars often gather key decision-makers from the region, contribute to the exchange of experiences and stimulate interest in using evaluation tools.

There are a substantial number of cases where organizations in the donor countries have been involved in the implementation of ECB support provided by bilateral agencies. Most of these cases refer to projects where a consultancy firm or an institution from the donor country is the responsible executing agent or provides technical expertise for the entire project and not only for the ECB part. Where the project or programme has included more general policy or management functions, the donors, for instance some of the DGIS supported ECB projects, have often used management consultancy firms specializing in support to developing countries.

There are on the other hand, fewer cases in which a professional institution or company specializing in evaluation (or monitoring/auditing) in the home country is indicated as having taken part in support of the ECB activity. FINNIDA used an auditing company in a ECB project in Mozambique. DSE in Germany mentions its cooperation with the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions and the corresponding regional organizations. Sida's support to national audit offices in five African countries is perhaps the best example of twinning arrangements between the Swedish specialized institution, the Swedish National Audit Bureau and host-country counterpart institutions.

Some donor agencies for example DEG in Germany, AusAid and CIDA, point to the ECB element included in their development management training and education programmes. In a number of cases, USAID has supported capacity building in private business and voluntary organizations.

The available information indicates that the resources allocated for support for ECB vary considerably between donors. Much of UNDP's assistance has a relative limited budget, and ADB's technical assistance "package" consists of training, short-term consultancy and some equipment within a budget of around US\$ 100,000. Longer-term support is typically found among bilateral donors, for example DGIS, where long-term consultants have been employed over several years. Disbursements to four of Sida's projects supporting auditing functions range between 13 and 15 million Swedish crowns (1 US\$=7 SEK).

In 25 cases, the aid is directed towards ECB specific activities only. If we include the information on UNDP activities, there is a high concentration of ECB specific projects for the multilateral agencies with the main focus on supporting broader nationwide ECB systems. However, in two World Bank programmes, ECB forms part of a more comprehensive programme to support public-sector reform initiatives. Multilateral assistance is mostly provided to ECB functions located in national centralized agencies like the ministry of finance, the planning commission, the President's Office etc.

Bilateral donors report fifteen cases where the aim is ECB alone. Including Sida's support for national audit offices in Sub-Saharan African countries, the number is even higher. Some of these projects, particularly those of CIDA and Sida, support central institutions at the national policy level, which means that there is also experience within the bilateral donor community on support to countrywide evaluation systems.

There are only a very few cases in which aid is combined with establishment of a new organization. In more than 90% cases, assistance is provided to an existing organization in the host country. This supports findings from other sources which indicate that many recipient countries already have established evaluation-type functions for national evaluation systems and/or for internal organizational evaluations.

### **Assessments**

Four agencies indicate that ECB activities have been included in an evaluation either separately or as part of a more comprehensive evaluation. Of the 84 activity responses, there are 18 cases where the donor provides an assessment. In addition, the World Bank provided an assessment of its three programmes. However, several other donors have commented in various ways on the performance of their ECB activities.

For most donors, the situation has been that they do not have readily available documentation on which an assessment can be made. The eighteen individual cases where the assessment questions have been answered are often based on more comprehensive evaluation material for an intervention (project or programme), where ECB is only one component among many. In these cases, there may therefore be very limited material specifically on how ECB activities have performed.

The responses cast limited light on which ECB activities in particular have been judged successful. Seminars and workshops are in most cases (13) judged successful, followed by short-term consultancies (12), local staff training (11) and supply of equipment etc. (10). In most cases it is a combination of activities that is judged successful, not a single activity.

All responses find that the relevant organization has been chosen for ECB support in the recipient country.

In the overall performance assessment of the eighteen cases, one is judged excellent and two unsatisfactory. The rest are more evenly distributed from fair to very good. However, the criteria used for the various donor assessments were not specified in the questionnaire. Therefore, answers to crucial questions remain open. For example, does support based on a limited donor budget - as is often the case - have a lasting impact? Another open question is whether support given to internal evaluation functions in various organizations as a component of a more comprehensive project has an effect beyond the period of donor support.

Most of the assessments of individual interventions have been provided by bilateral donors and therefore refer more to support for evaluation functions within individual organizations.

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