



ROOM DOCUMENT 4

DAC Network on Development Evaluation

EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING (ECD) CONTEXT AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

The attached note has been prepared by the Secretariat for consideration at the Sixth meeting of the DAC Evaluation Network on 27 - 28 June 2007.

**6th meeting
27 – 28 June 2007**

EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING (ECD)

- Context and Issues for Discussion -

This brief note will outline the context of ECD work, identify objectives of the meeting discussion, describe current work by the Network and other recent developments, and outline some issues for discussion.

I. Purpose of the discussion at the Sixth meeting

The objectives of the meeting discussion are:

- To clarify the issues at stake and build consensus on ways to move forward
- To explore potential useful avenues for collective action, and what members can do to contribute individually, and jointly
- To clarify if better co-ordination is needed, and how this should best be done.
- To identify members who are interested in contributing to the work stream and willing to work with the Secretariat to develop this agenda further.

II. Background

Recently, the issue of capacity development has gained more prominence in Development Assistance Committee (DAC) discussions. Following the adoption of the Paris Declaration, with its strong emphasis on ownership and mutual accountability, increased attention is being given to capacity development as a cross cutting theme.

The DAC Governance Network has produced “The Challenge of Capacity Development – Working Towards Good Practice” which provides a general overview and reference guidance. Discussions are underway on how to strengthen further work on the topic by both the Committee itself and relevant Networks and Working Parties.

The Evaluation Network mandate includes a specific reference to evaluation capacity development, stating that the Network will “promote and support evaluation capacity development in partner countries”.

The Evaluation Network was actively involved in the ECD agenda in the 1990s principally through joint workshops with the regional development banks. These led, in some cases to action programmes and specific capacity support but were challenged by the lack of evaluation knowledge and awareness.

More recently, the Network has been actively engaging with several evaluation associations, notably AfrEA, IDEAS and EES. The Presidents of these associations have been invited to Network meetings, and the Network has had a visible presence in their respective international conferences through specific panels and roundtable discussions. Some limited financial support has also been provided to make the work and outputs of the Evaluation Network visible.

An important aspect of capacity development is the involvement of partner countries in joint work streams and joint evaluations undertaken by members and the Network collectively. For

instance, both in the GBS and the Implementation of the Paris Declaration evaluation, partner countries are active parties at country level and in the co-ordination arrangements.

At the Third International Roundtable on Managing for Development Results, held in Hanoi on 5-8 February 2007, capacity issues were a key dimension in the discussions. The conclusions of the RT underline the importance of renewed and focused attention to the matter.

III. Current context and ongoing work by the Evaluation Network

A number of new efforts and initiatives are currently underway or under consideration, including strengthened support by several development banks, members of the UN group and evaluation associations are also engaged.

In 2006, The Evaluation Network agreed to undertake, as a first step, a fact finding survey among all members. The aim was to find out the extent of member involvement and attempt to draw out some highlights of experience. This useful work was co-ordinated by Japan. Based on questionnaire responses, the survey found that 22 bilateral and multilateral agencies provide ECD support, with 88 interventions reported. There were different modalities of support:

- Training and scholarships (37)
- Workshops (31)
- Technical support to projects/programmes (18)
- Financial support (18)
- Joint evaluations (22)
- Dialogue at policy levels (10)
- Other types (8)

The survey also identified some challenges and constraints as well as key factors which contribute to success. The fact finding survey was presented at the Fifth meeting of the Network. Further and more in-depth review of some of these experiences may provide additional insights.

For the sixth Network meeting, a follow up discussion focused on concrete lessons and experience in Vietnam has been scheduled. Bringing the discussion to a practical, country level may help shape future work and identify entry points where the Network and its members can usefully consider strengthened involvement.

The knowledge base on ECD is growing and a body of work has been developed by a number of development agencies, notably by IEG, World Bank, with several country studies and comparative analysis of ECD experience.

Several members are supporting the IPDET effort which was created out of a recognition in the Network and elsewhere of the lack of suitable training opportunities. The IPDET initiative has grown considerably over the years and has developed into an important training facility and producer of new evaluation expertise and capacity in developing countries and donor agencies.

In April 2007, the Shanghai International Program on Development Evaluation Training (SHIPDET) was inaugurated. The SHIPDET is jointly sponsored by World Bank, AsDB, Asia-Pacific Finance and Development Center and PR China, Ministry of Finance. The Asian Development Bank will brief members on the SHIPDET initiative at the meeting.

The recent publication by IOCE “Creating and Developing Evaluation Organizations” provides lessons from building national and regional associations from various regions. It is also an important source of knowledge on ECD, particularly with regard to the role of the civil society sector. The publication will be made available separately at the meeting.

The Hanoi Round Table in Managing for Development Results included, as mentioned above, a specific session on capacity-development experiences in various regions. OECD chaired this session and co-organised the E & M work stream for the conference. Some emerging key lessons identified were: demand and ownership are critical to creating and sustaining systems; it is important to understand the policy and organizational context as well as the technical aspects; leadership and champions are needed; laws and regulations are not sufficient; and while reliable data are essential, system designers must be careful about data demands and “overdesign”. In designing systems, the guiding principle should be whether and how they will be used; and capacity development support needs to be tailored accordingly. Associations and networks can help facilitate knowledge sharing and support capacity development. However, capacity development can be supply-driven; where demand is weak it is important to raise awareness through a selective approach that can have a demonstration effect. ECD support needs to be harmonised and coordinated; and capacity development in E&M needs to be simple, user-led, and outcome-focused. The important role of civil society, the private sector and professional associations was stressed with several presentations made by these important ECD actors.

As a follow up to the Hanoi meeting, and building on the experience of the Asian community of practice on managing for development results (supported by the AsDB), a similar community of practice is being set up for Africa (with World Bank and AfDB providing initial lead). For Latin America, PRODEV, supported by the Inter American Development Bank is providing a similar network for officials across the region for dialogue on performance aspects of development management in a broad sense. However there seems to be limited attention to evaluation matters in most of these platforms. While there are of course linkages, these initiatives are mainly for information sharing, and the topics discussed are more about managing for development results in general.

IV. Issues for discussion:

- What do Members see as the most important avenues for possible collective action?
- What are the views of Members on the concrete suggestions for action detailed in the paper produced by MPI and VAMESP Vietnam? Would it be useful to investigate the feasibility and potential reach of specific suggestions?
- Is more co-ordination of initiatives and sharing of experiences needed?
- What are the challenges and constraints in implementing a partnership approach in ECD work and in supporting a transfer of more ownership of the evaluation agenda to partner countries and institutions?
- Does the Network need to strengthen its effort to dialogue and engage with partners and evaluation associations as part of efforts to include the ECD dimension in its work streams?
- Which members would be interested in joining a small task team to work with the Secretariat on these issues?