



ROOM DOCUMENT 8

Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs (GRPPs): Progress Report

This document has been prepared by the World Bank for information at the 8th meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 18-19 November 2008.

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Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs (GRPPs): Progress Report to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network

GRPP Evaluation Sourcebook

1. Since the last progress report in February 2008, we have reprinted an additional 1,000 copies of the *Sourcebook*, after running out of the first 2,000 copies. We are now averaging about 2,200 unique visitors a month to the GRPP Web site: www.globalevaluations.org. Since January 1, 2008, visitors have downloaded the entire *Sourcebook* 806 times, and individual chapters 2,418 times. The most popular chapters have been:

2. Prerequisites and Enabling Conditions for Effective Evaluations
4. Participation and Inclusion
6. Planning for Scope and Methodology
16. Preparing Evaluation Terms of Reference
17. Preparing Final Reports and Other Evaluation Products

2. We gave presentations on the *Sourcebook* and IEG's global evaluation work to the European Evaluation Society conference in Lisbon on October 1-3, 2008, and to the American Evaluation Association conference in Denver on November 5-7, 2008. These presentations covered both the emerging principles and standards for evaluating GRPPs and representative findings from IEG's recent Global Program Reviews (see below).

3. We continue to respond to frequent requests for advice in planning evaluations of GRPPs, even from programs in which the World Bank is not involved. For example, one such request came from the Global Earth Observations System of Systems (GEOSS) — a cooperative international effort to develop a comprehensive system of systems to collect and disseminate improved data and information on air, water and land measurements in order to monitor the state of the environment, to increase understanding of dynamic Earth processes, and to enhance forecasts of environmental conditions. We ended up participating via audio-conference in their recent meeting in Paris (September 10–11).

Good Practice Guidelines and Examples for Evaluating GRPPs

4. The preparation of this *Guidebook*, for short, continues to be the major focus of our work. The Governments of Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom are contributing financially to this effort. Since the last progress report, IEG's global team has moved from IEG's sector evaluations unit (IEGSE) to the corporate and global evaluations and methods unit (IEGCG) under the leadership of Mark Sundberg, which is the same IEG unit where the NONIE secretariat is located.

5. The preparation of the *Guidebook* has proceeded more slowly than expected. We are now aiming to complete the first draft by the end of January 2009, and to hold the two stakeholder consultative workshops later in 2009. On the advice of our Technical Advisory

Panel, we have now identified a representative sample of 55 recent evaluations of GRPPs that we are reviewing systematically for good-practice examples. This sample comprises a roughly equal number of knowledge and advocacy networks, technical assistance programs, and investment programs, as well as a subset of programs (about one-third) in which the World Bank is not involved.

6. Whereas the preparation of the *Sourcebook* involved synthesizing and applying existing evaluation principles, norms, and standards to global and regional programs, the preparation of the *Guidebook* involves reviewing a large number of evaluations and making judgments about good and bad practice. And only the most recent GRPP evaluations have had the opportunity to use the *Sourcebook* as a reference.

7. We held the second meeting of our Technical Advisory Panel in Bonn on October 7-9, graciously hosted by Michaela Zintl (BMZ). At this meeting, we reviewed each of the draft outlines for the nine substantive chapters in the *Guidebook*:

Governance and process issues:

1. M&E policies and planning
2. Monitoring frameworks
3. Evaluation design and methodology
4. Evaluation TORs & team selection

Content and criteria issues:

5. Relevance
6. Effectiveness (or efficacy)
7. Efficiency, or cost-effectiveness
8. Governance & management
9. Sustainability

8. Among other things, the Panel advised us that the *Guidebook* should focus only on the commissioning and conduct of independent (typically external) evaluations of GRPPs. Therefore, we might want to consider preparing and publishing chapters 1 and 2 as a separate product, since this will have a somewhat different audience at a different time in the life-cycle of a typical program. We have also made a decision not to produce a chapter or document on “Influential GRPP Evaluations” at the present time.

9. The Panel also gave us valuable feedback on a number of cross-cutting issues in the preparation of the *Guidebook*:

- Criteria for choosing good-practice examples, and how to effectively present these in the *Guidebook*.
- The extent to which the *Guidebook* should only focus on those things that are special to GRPPs, or also include some other things as well, in order to provide users with a one-stop shopping guidebook.
- What guidance, if any, to provide on the most effective use of standard evaluation instruments such as surveys and interviews, since the use of stakeholder surveys has been very problematic in many GRPP evaluations.
- How best to make references to methodologies and tools that we do not have space to discuss in detail.

- Presenting cutting-edge approaches to evaluation beyond what may be generally accepted in the evaluation profession, and that have not been tested and tried in the context of an actual GRPP evaluation.

10. We are continuing to employ a number of research strategies in the preparation of the *Guidebook*, including:

- Systematic review of existing evaluation reports
- Systematic review of evaluation TORs
- Systematic review of existing M&E policies and monitoring frameworks
- Structured dialogue with individual programs
- Systematic review of annual financial reports
- Literature review and additional interviews

11. We still plan to hold two back-to-back workshops (similar to the first workshop on the draft *Sourcebook* in September 2006) in order to obtain the needed level of feedback and input from a representative group of stakeholders. The two workshops will likely be held in Europe and Africa, respectively, each with 50–60 participants. This degree of participation is needed to obtain appropriate representation from different interested parties, including (a) the governing bodies and management units of GRPPs, (b) official evaluation networks (DAC, UNEG, and ECG), (c) professional evaluation associations, (d) individuals with unique experience in evaluating GRPPs, and (e) representatives of planning, funding, evaluation, and implementing agencies in both donor and aid recipient countries. The timing of the workshops depends on the preparation of the *Guidebook* and the availability of funding.

Global Program Reviews (GPRs)

12. Since the last progress report, IEG has completed two more Global Programs Reviews — on the International Land Coalition (ILC) and the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) — which are publicly disclosed on the IEG Web site. Another seven GPRs are ongoing:

- Global Invasive Species Program
- Global Forum for Health Research
- Global Water Partnership
- Global Development Network
- Mesoamerican Biological Corridor
- Stop TB Partnership
- International Tax Dialogue/OECD Global Forums

13. These reviews are contributing in a significant way to the *Guidebook* because these apply a systematic set of evaluation questions and criteria and because they involve, as a matter of course, interviews with the programs and the evaluators of the programs in addition to reviewing the evaluation reports. The IEG guidelines for preparing GPRs are available on the IEG Web site.

14. The following are some cross-cutting findings which have emerged from the nine GPRs that IEG has so far completed, which point to the continuing importance of developing consensus principles, standards, and guidelines for evaluating GRPPs:

- The **independence** of external evaluations is improving. However, the **quality** of some evaluations has been compromised by an inadequate budget, and the quality of almost all evaluations by a weak M&E framework for the programs. In the absence of such frameworks, few evaluations are finding much systematic evidence relating to the achievement of the programs' objectives at the outcome level.
- The objectives of most programs are **highly relevant** on the face of it. But this alone is not sufficient to justify the continued operation of a program in the absence of a well-articulated program logic or evidence of results.
- Programs that moved their secretariats from one organization to another lost time during their respective moves, limiting their outputs and reducing their efficiency during the transition period.
- Most programs received good marks for **transparency**. But there have been genuine **legitimacy, accountability, and fairness** concerns in the governance and management of the majority of programs.
- Beneficiary country membership on a program's governing body does not, in and of itself, ensure legitimacy. Involving beneficiaries in influential advisory committees, holding meetings in beneficiary countries, and engaging their practitioners in global-level activities may also be efficacious channels for them to exercise their voice meaningfully and effectively.
- It is important for a program's resource mobilization strategy to be consistent with the mixture of public and private goods that the program is providing. The **sustainability** of the benefits of their public goods activities is highly dependent on the program's ability to raise donor financing, which in turn depends on their legitimacy and their ability to demonstrate results.
- Effective **global-country linkages** do not happen automatically, even though they are important for most global and regional programs to achieve results on the ground. Stronger legitimacy of a program appears to foster stronger linkages.

15. As you know, IEG is now hosting the secretariat of one global program — the Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE) — and playing a leading role in the establishment of a second — the Regional Centers for Results-Based Management and Evaluation Capacity Development. Both are a new experience for IEG. We are attempting to apply the above lessons of experience in the establishment of these programs.

IEG – World Bank
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