



ROOM DOCUMENT 1

**SUMMARY OF APPLICATION PLANNING MEETING
DAC GUIDANCE ON EVALUATING CONFLICT PREVENTION AND
PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES
BERN, 21-22 JANUARY 2008**

This draft summary has been prepared by the Secretariat for information at the 7th meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 20 – 21 February 2008.

**DAC Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities:
Summary of Application Planning Meeting
Bern, 21-22 January 2008**

**A joint project of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation and the DAC Network on
Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC)**

The meeting brought together 36 participants from the Conflict, Peace and Development Network and the Development Evaluation Network, representing 18 different ministries, agencies and international organisations (see Annex for full list of participants). Participants included policy makers, evaluators, and programming staff.

Overview of proceedings

Through a combination of plenary and breakout discussion, the meeting:

- Provided useful insight on practical issues and challenges that members would need to consider during the application, including involvement of various stakeholders (including local governments and civil society organizations), how to deal with lack of baseline data, assessing the use, or not, of conflict analysis, whole of government approaches, identification of theories of change, and how to ensure the usefulness of an evaluation.
- Enabled members to share experiences and plans for evaluations where the guidance would be used and highlighted the significant scope for joint evaluations and increased collaboration that exists in several important areas.
- Gave participants the opportunity to map out concrete and possible evaluations in greater detail, elaborate further on possible challenges and firm up commitments, coordination issues and timeframes for undertaking specific evaluations.

During the plenary sessions, participants learned about recent and ongoing evaluation work: France presented preliminary lessons from an ongoing evaluation with case studies of Afghanistan, Guinea and Haiti. Although this work did not focus on conflict prevention and peace building per se, it highlighted the importance of proper information sharing and in-depth understanding of underlying dynamics and political dimensions before and during an evaluation.

The presentation on the Monitoring and Evaluation framework being developed in Mindanao, Philippines, gave useful insight to some of the challenges and lessons that the team had faced. Nonetheless, it illustrated how such an M&E system could be designed, and highlighted the importance of basing such a system on a national peace building framework and a proper conflict analysis and involving *all* stakeholders in the process.

The ongoing evaluation in Sri Lanka was presented, and included an overview of the process challenges so far. In particular, the presentation stressed the significance of proper internal coordination and information sharing, careful consideration of the security situation, the importance of proper timing of an evaluation to achieve impact, and challenges related to the involvement of government stakeholders.

A perspective from the South was offered in a fourth presentation, emphasising the importance of involving stakeholders and local beneficiaries in the whole evaluation process and noting: that fragility seems to be a concept to be applied to the South; that the cultural background of a country is important; that beneficiaries of an intervention and the designers of an intervention might have conflicting theories of change, but the way the dialogue is held by the donor might

prevent them from raising this, and that evaluation teams should consider including persons from the partner country.

Lastly, Norway presented the recently completed review of development cooperation in Timor Leste, and highlighted the importance of obtaining a proper understanding of local conflict dynamics before designing conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives. The review also points to the need for supplementing conflict analysis with an assessment of the conflict sensitivity of development cooperation by analysing how development cooperation interventions impact (positively or negatively) on the internal conflict formation.

Key outcomes and next steps

The meeting generated significant momentum for the application of the draft guidance on evaluating conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities. In particular, the meeting discussed issues related to the ongoing preparations for a joint evaluation in Sri Lanka, and were informed that a Terms of Reference is being finalised, and that the actual evaluation will likely take place later in the spring. Furthermore, the meeting served as a platform for participants to develop plans for possible evaluations of peace efforts in Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. For these possible evaluations members discussed scope and focus, available data sources, baseline information, risks and challenges. It was agreed that more consultations are needed among interested countries to firm up participation and it was suggested that an update of the planning of the different evaluations could be presented to the Evaluation Network meeting in Paris on 20-21 of February. The Haiti evaluation would tentatively aim to be commissioned in August, while DRC and South Sudan would more likely take place in 2009, with preparatory work being undertaken in 2008.

When planning and undertaking evaluations members were reminded that the purpose of the guidance is to improve evaluations in this field, and to generate findings and evidence that will improve policies, programs and projects. Members were reminded to keep the following in mind as they finalise preparations and implement applications:

- That evaluations are of use to the partner country and other stakeholders.
- The importance of maintaining a whole of government approach and paying specific attention to security and diplomatic dynamics during evaluations.
- The importance of assessing the applicability of the draft guidance to different types of evaluations (e.g. midterm reviews, appraisals etc), different levels (e.g. country, program, project and policy), and different conflict stages and contexts.

Members emphasised that the current draft would not have been possible without the consistent involvement of several key members and experts, and the fruitful and collaborative working relationship between CPDC and the Evaluation Network throughout the two year process. The meeting noted that a continuation and broadening of this relationship would be useful and to include other interested members would be beneficial to learning from the application of the draft guidance. The collaborative workstream in general should be highlighted as an example for replication in other parts of the DAC.

The importance of broad-based dissemination of the working draft guidance was emphasised, and members were encouraged to circulate the draft to both relevant ministries, regional departments and field offices, as well as to those consultancy firms and research institutions that would normally be contracted for specific evaluation exercises.¹ In addition, the meeting reiterated that

¹ The Draft Guidance is currently available in English and French, and Spain is exploring options for a Spanish translation.

proper feedback on the applicability of the draft will be crucial for its finalisation. As such, members were encouraged to include a specific point on this in the terms of reference for upcoming evaluations, drawing on the feedback framework in Annex 9, including reporting on the type of conflict analysis used and methods for overcoming constraints to data collection.

The meeting agreed to the following next steps:

- Switzerland and the UK have been leading the process of preparing a joint evaluation in Sri Lanka. A draft TOR will be circulated to interested donors shortly and the evaluation will likely get underway later in the spring.
- Norway is willing to lead an evaluation in Haiti and will continue to consult with other donors. Based on further discussions, the preliminary TORs will be revised and circulated to interested donors, as well as the UN Secretariat (OIOS) and UNDP. A scoping mission to Haiti is also envisioned.
- Belgium indicated willingness to lead a joint evaluation in DRC and the intention is to undertake a pre-study and develop TORs in August 2008, to enable the actual evaluation to take place early 2009.
- The Netherlands is willing to consider taking the lead for an evaluation in South Sudan, although there is still a need to firm up workplans. Several other donors also expressed interest in participating in a larger joint effort. It was suggested that this evaluation would take place in early 2009 taking into account the elections in late 2009.
- Given the time involved in organising the evaluations, it was suggested that the application period should be extended for another year. This would enable completion of several evaluations and thus provide a solid set of experiences on which to base the finalisation of the guidance.
- The Secretariat will circulate a summary of the meeting to both networks.
- Norway will present the outcome of the Bern meeting during the Evaluation Network meeting in February.
- Switzerland will present the outcome of the Bern meeting during the CPDC Network meeting in late May/early June.
- A follow-up meeting was suggested early summer 2008 to share preliminary experiences on developing TORs and coordinate the process.

Bern/Oslo/Paris
February 2008

Annex 1: Participants list

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