



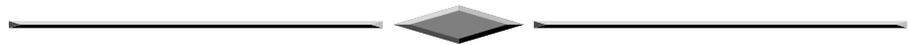
ROOM DOCUMENT NO. 8

DAC WORKING PARTY ON AID EVALUATION

DAC EVALUATION ABSTRACTS INVENTORY

Submitted by CIDA
Evaluation Division

Agenda item 4c



36th meeting
29-30 May 2002

1. Introduction

For over ten years CIDA has been managing the DAC Evaluation Inventory. Although we were responsible for the management of the Inventory it was located outside the Agency either at IDRC or Minisis Inc. This has limited our capacity to enhance the system and adjust it to the real needs of the DAC Working Party on Evaluation members and partners.

We are now pleased to announce that as of June 03, there will be a number of tests and adjustments in order to have the new system up and running by the end June, 2002. After that date, CIDA will assume the hosting of the DAC Evaluation Abstracts Inventory as well as its management. While this change will largely be transparent to users of the database it will translate into better management and the level of service that can be provided related to the Inventory's update, maintenance and performance.

Immediate changes you will notice include a different look and feel; how you can carry out a search, new display features and better coverage that has occurred because of a more proactive data capture approach. In the future we will also be improving how search results can be printed; the quality of the coding supplied and providing definitions of the terms used in carrying out searches so that users can better understand the results they are obtaining. These and other improvements are described in more detail below.

2. Recent improvements

Address

The new address to the site will be: www.dac-evaluations-cad.org. During the next four months, there will be an automatic re-routing to this site. You should try to bookmark the site as soon as possible, after the rerouting occurs. If your organization has a central point of access your information management officer should do this.

A More Appealing Welcoming Page

The welcoming page has been modified so that it fits entirely on one screen (assuming that an individual's display is set at 800X600). There is also a brief introduction to the site that will allow Internet search engines (Google, Yahoo, AltaVista, etc.) to more easily identify the site and what it is about. We have also tried to use the same font throughout the site as well improve the graphics displayed.

Search Template Improvements

We have introduced a simpler search template so that users can either undertake a group search (i.e., by region or sector category) or a specific search (i.e., by country or sub-sector). Users can also select more than one donor, region, country, sector area or sub-sector and

combine these to narrow and/or broaden their searches. You will be able to limit your search by the dates in which you are interested. If you do not select any criteria from one of the parameters then the default will always be "All" within the parameter. A help file will be found on the search page at the top.

Results

Before viewing the results of your searches you will have the option of specifying the number of results per page as well as how you want the results sorted. This can either be done by date, donor - which lists abstracts by the most recent date or by donor, date - which lists abstracts by contributor (alphabetically). For each donor the most recent date is displayed first.

Full Text

The full text of evaluation reports has now been tested and operates as planned. Users who wish to send pdf files of the full text of their reports will be able to do so and these will be registered and made available within the site.

Guidelines

Submission guidelines will be available within the site either a) within the submission's area or b) the What's New area.

Monitoring

A monitoring tool has been put on the new site and statistics related to use will be generated on an ongoing basis. These statistics will be reported to the Working Party and will impact how the Inventory is developed.

Quality Assurance

With the migration of the Inventory CIDA also took the opportunity to fix some of the search text as well as the coding that has been applied to individual contributions so that it better conforms to DAC definitions. Search results, therefore, should be cleaner although additional work in this area will be required.

3. What to Expect in the Future?

Definitions

In the coming months the definitions of all sector areas will be added to the Inventory so that users better understand the terms used. How this will be done is still being explored but in all likelihood it will simply be a Word file that will be made accessible.

French Help

The current help file is only in English. In the coming months CIDA will have this translated and made available.

Research Products

In the coming months, CIDA will also be exploring ways to provide additional research products using the Inventory. These might involve providing generic lessons related to a particular subject area or bibliographies.

Enhanced Printing Functions

Currently, only the listing of evaluation abstracts for any search result can be printed in its entirety. Individual abstracts of the search can only be printed one at a time. In the future users will have the option of printing either the listing and/or all of the project descriptions related to the search. This will be able to be done either to paper or to file.

4. Contributions in the past six months

Some contributors have been more active than others. In the past six months, for example, over 100 abstracts have been added from the Japanese International Co-operation Agency, which made available electronically its Year 2000 Annual Evaluation Report allowing us to format and register their evaluation summaries. Additional contributors have included BMZ, CIDA, DFID, SDC, SIDA, USAID, and the World Bank. You will find attached a table of contributions from members of the DAC Working Party on Evaluation.

We are now pleased to see that the Inventory includes more than 9,000 summaries that constitute an important source of information on evaluation accessible to the international development community. In order to increase the accessibility to the Inventory, we are having discussions to determine how and when the DAC Inventory would be accessible through the Gateway, therefore providing it new and enhanced visibility.