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Challenges, opportunities and approaches for increasing joint donor programming of evaluations

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Challenges, Opportunities and Approaches for Increasing Joint Donor Programming of
Evaluations

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Preface

The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) is a government-funded agency that conducts and disseminates evaluations of international development cooperation activities. SADEV's overriding objective is to contribute to the achievement of the goals of Swedish development cooperation. SADEV's reports are published in series, which are available electronically from SADEV's website, and in hard copy.

The new development paradigms – the Millennium Development Goals, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and, most recently, the Accra Agenda for Action – provide a strong case for more joint evaluation work. OECD/DAC, and especially its Evaluation Network, has long been at the vanguard of promoting the idea of joint evaluation. A number of studies on this issue have contributed to an enhanced understanding and knowledge of the benefits and potential challenges involved in joint evaluation.

While there is a general recognition of the major benefits of joint evaluations, the vast majority of evaluations carried out by the DAC Evaluation Network members remain sole donor evaluations. At the seventh meeting of the DAC Evaluation Network (February 2008) a study was proposed with the aim of building on previous work on this topic, and with the objective of taking the next step towards an increased reliance on joint evaluations among the DAC Evaluation Network members. SADEV was assigned to carry out the study. It was carried out by Viktoria Hildenwall as team leader, together with Peter Sjöberg and Inger Wikström Öbrand.

The study was initiated in mid April 2008, and finalised in November. Its draft set of recommendations were discussed within the Task Team on New Context for Evaluation in September 2008 and an agreement was reached on a number of high priority recommendations. The recommendations were subsequently adopted at the eighth meeting of the DAC Evaluation Network (November 2008). This should pave the way for more joint evaluation work, in line with the Paris and Accra commitments.

Gunilla Törnqvist
Director General

November 2008

Executive summary

In order to identify the challenges, opportunities and approaches for increasing joint donor programming of evaluations, a questionnaire was sent to all members of the DAC Evaluation Network, and subsequently complemented with telephone interviews (see References). This study is entirely based on the information collected through this exercise.

Based on members' perceptions, the report commences with a discussion about joint evaluations, and the wider utility of donors' individual evaluations. The report then briefly describes Network members' systems for planning and managing evaluations. Challenges for undertaking joint evaluations and (donor specific) factors affecting the opportunities of participating in joint evaluations are then presented, distinguishing between centralised and decentred/decentralised evaluations. Some factors affecting the opportunities for undertaking joint country level work are also set out. The report concludes with a number of recommendations and "best practice" approaches.

Specific challenges faced by individual donors in participating in joint evaluations have been identified within four broad areas: budgetary; human resources; administrative, legal and financial regulations; and institutional arrangements.

Recommendations are provided to the DAC Evaluation Network on measures for: i) facilitating participation in joint evaluations; and ii) an increase in partner country participation and ownership in joint evaluations, as follows:

- i) For facilitating participation in joint evaluations:
 1. Introduce joint evaluation clearly in the internal evaluation policy. (internal measure)
 2. Share (multi-annual) evaluation plans.
 3. Consider the development of a "global market place".
 4. Ensure that joint evaluation is considered where joint policies and programs exist.
 5. Establish a short-list of major issues and topics where joint evaluations would be fruitful.
- ii) For an increase in partner country participation and ownership in joint evaluation:
 6. Establish a common capacity building program in evaluation.
 7. Involve the partner country at an early stage.

The recommendations are further developed in Chapter 7. They are directed collectively, but imply individual action by members and the Secretariat.

Finally, the report lists a number of "best practice" approaches for facilitating participation in joint evaluation. These are already applied by some of the DAC Evaluation Network members, but are set out here to promote wider use of them within the Network.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in referring to DAC Evaluation Network members:

AFD	Agence Française de Développement – France
At	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Austria
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development – Australia
Be	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Belgium
Ch	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Switzerland
Ch Seco	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs – Switzerland
Cida	Canadian International Development Agency – Canada
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance - Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Denmark
De	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – Germany
DFID	Department for International Development – United Kingdom
DGCID	Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale et du Développement – France
DGTPE	Direction Générale du Trésor et de la Politique Economique – France
EC	European Commission
Es	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Spain
Fi	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Finland
Ie	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Ireland
IPAD	Portuguese Development Co-operation Institute – Portugal
It	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Italy
JBIC	Japan Bank for International Cooperation – Japan
Jica	Japan International Cooperation Agency – Japan
Jp	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Japan
Lu	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Luxembourg
MCC	Millennium Challenge Cooperation – USA
NL	Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Netherlands
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation – Norway
NZAid	New Zealand Agency for International Development – New Zealand
SADEV	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation – Sweden
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency – Sweden
USAID	United States Agency for International Development – USA
AfDB	African Development Bank
ADB	Asian Development Bank
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
WB	World Bank

Other abbreviations used

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEReC	DAC Evaluation Resource Centre
HQ	Head Quarters
JAS	Joint Assistance Strategy
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NONIE	Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SWAps	Sector Wide Approaches
3IE	International Initiative for Impact Evaluations

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1 Background

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and, at the country level, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps), have radically changed international development cooperation, challenging donors and partner countries to find more effective ways of working together.

The Accra Agenda for Action was endorsed in September 2008, in order to accelerate and deepen the implementation of the Paris Declaration. It provides specific commitments and renewed impetus for strengthening country ownership over development, building more effective and inclusive partnerships for development, and delivering and accounting for development results.

While joint evaluations have the potential to bring benefits to all partners in this respect, the vast majority of evaluations carried out by the DAC Evaluation Network members remain sole donor evaluations.

Joint evaluation is not a new feature on the international development agenda. The *DAC principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*, adopted in 1991, state that “joint donor evaluations should be promoted in order to improve the understanding of each others’ procedures and approaches and to reduce the administrative burden on recipients”.¹ The principles also underline the importance of involving the aid recipient as fully as possible. In 1998, the *Review of the DAC principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance* pointed out that joint evaluations “have proven to be satisfactory as they allow first-hand learning from each other, give greater results, facilitates feedback, mobilise knowledge, improve follow-up and save resources”.² At the same time, concerns were raised regarding higher costs, hidden agendas, different approaches, conclusions that are too general and overly diplomatic, increased complexity and delays, and different political objectives.³

DAC Evaluation Network members have recognised significant advantages in working together in joint evaluations. This recognition, and the desire to fully realise the benefits of joint evaluation, has been a strong motivating factor in members seeking to address the related challenges in moving to more joint evaluation work. In 2000, a practical guide on how to plan and conduct a joint evaluation was published: *Effective practices in Conducting a Joint Multi-Donor Evaluation*.⁴

Five years later, the DAC Evaluation Network commissioned a report to analyse experiences with joint evaluations, with the aim of supplementing the 2000 guide by identifying good practices along with emerging issues and new challenges in joint

¹ OECD (1991): *DAC principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*, p. 5, OECD, Paris.

² OECD (1998): *Review of the DAC principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*, p. 55, OECD, Paris.

³ [Idem], p. 55.

⁴ OECD (2000): Binnendijk, A.: *Effective practices in Conducting a Joint Multi-Donor Evaluation*, OECD, Paris.

evaluations: *Joint Evaluations: Recent Experiences, Lessons Learned and Options for the Future* (hereafter referred to as the “Breier report”).⁵

Based on the findings and recommendations of the Breier report, a revised and updated practical guidance for managers of joint evaluations was published by the DAC in 2006: *Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations*. The omission of the word “multi-donor” from the title reflects “the momentum in development cooperation towards broader partnerships and, specifically, joint evaluations undertaken with the participation of non-donor agencies”.⁶

It had, by this time, become clear that further clarification of the term “joint evaluation” was needed. Breier had suggested a typology based on the mode of how actors work together in a joint evaluation. The same typology is used in the Guidance of 2006:

Box I: Joint evaluations by degree and mode of “jointness”⁷

The DAC Evaluation Glossary defines joint evaluation as: “An evaluation to which different donors and/or partners participate,” and further states that: “There are various degrees of ‘jointness’ depending on the extent to which individual partners co-operate in the evaluation process”.⁸ Differentiation in the use of the term joint evaluation within three broad categories distinguishes between different types of joint working, and helps reduce misunderstandings and clarify expectations when partners work together.⁹

1. Classic multi-partner	Participation is open to all stakeholders. All partners participate and contribute actively and on equal terms. Examples include the Rwanda evaluation, the tripartite evaluation of the WFP, the UNFPA/IPPF evaluation, and the GBS evaluation.
2. Qualified multi-partner	Participation is open to those who qualify, in the sense that there may be restrictions or the need for entry prerequisites – such as membership of a certain grouping (e.g. EU, Nordics, UNEG, ECG, Utstein), or a strong stake in the subject matter of the evaluation (e.g. active participation within a SWAp that is being evaluated). Examples include the various EU aid evaluations, the evaluation of the road Sub-sector in Ghana, the Basic Education Evaluation, and the ITC evaluation.
3. Hybrid multi-partner	This category includes a wide range of more complex ways of joint working. For example: (1) Work and responsibility may be delegated to one or more agencies while other actors take a “silent partnership” role; (2) Some parts of an evaluation may be undertaken jointly while other parts are delivered separately; (3) Various levels of linkage may be established between separate but parallel and inter-related evaluations; or (4) The joint activities focus on agreeing a common framework – but responsibility for implementation of the evaluation is devolved to various partners.

The benefits of joint evaluation work were systematically presented in the Breier report, and divided into five categories of reasons for joint evaluation work.

⁵ OECD (2005): Breier, H.: *Joint Evaluations: Recent Experiences, Lessons Learned and Options for the Future*, OECD, Paris.

⁶ OECD (2006): *Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations*, p. 7, OECD, Paris.

⁷ [Idem], Box I is taken from the Guidance, p. 8.

⁸ OECD (2002), DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, p. 26, OECD, Paris.

⁹ OECD (2005): Supra note 5: In the report, 50 joint evaluations are catalogued according to focus and scope.

Box 2: Reasons for joint evaluation work¹⁰

1 Overarching policy reasons

- The DAC agenda on harmonisation, alignment and development effectiveness is calling for more joint efforts of donors and recipients. This is leading to peer pressure among and on donors to do more evaluation work jointly.
- Demonstrating development effectiveness in working towards the MDGs has become a central objective – and challenge – for policymakers and heads of aid agencies. Consequently, they are calling upon their evaluation services to do more joint evaluation work in order to show the results of the common aid effort.
- The need to evaluate together can also arise from public pressure – in the media, in the academic and research community, or in parliaments. Pressure can also originate in recipient country governments and in international organisations.
- Lastly, corporate governance decisions, such as mission- and values statements, may encompass strong stipulations with regard to the desirability of joint work. As a consequence, management and staff are constantly required to look for possibilities to realise these aspirations.

2 Evaluation strategy motives

- Analyses, findings, conclusions and recommendations of joint evaluations are based on broader knowledge, a wider range of inputs and contributions, joint rather than individual scrutiny and quality assessment, and multi-partner commitment. Therefore, these evaluations usually carry more weight, credibility and legitimacy, and are less easy to ignore.
- Closely connected with the preceding argument, joint evaluations are well-suited to promote advocacy for change, especially if some of the “good boys” of development cooperation participate in the evaluation.
- Joint evaluations should be the preferred mode of work if there are issues to be taken up in an evaluation that are too sensitive for one donor alone to tackle.
- As a rule, meta-evaluations will always require a multi-partner approach as the preferred mode of implementation.
- Similarly, in cases of evaluating multi-partner financed projects, programmes and other development cooperation activities, joint evaluations are the preferred mode of work. The same applies to the evaluation of the work of multilateral institutions.
- Joint evaluations contribute in a very significant way to transforming evaluation into a transparent and less threatening process.
- Finally, a joint evaluation can be a useful option to evaluate important but controversial development issues.

3 Developmental motives

- The new modes of aid that emphasise joint donor-recipient efforts, and basket- or other forms of co-financing, require the use of joint evaluations to look at results, outcome and impact. It is almost impossible to perceive meaningful evaluations in this area of cooperation that would allow for a single-donor approach.
- Joint evaluations are a powerful tool for working towards more ownership and participation of developing countries in aid evaluation.
- Joint evaluations are one way of contributing to coordination and harmonisation in the field of evaluation, both among donors and between donors and recipients.
- Joint evaluations help to avoid the danger of conveying to partner countries too many different and often conflicting evaluation messages, which are competing for attention and action, and are often difficult to reconcile.
- Joint evaluations contribute significantly to rationalising the development process and to making it transparent.
- Joint evaluations have the potential to reduce the transaction costs for developing countries, because such costs are higher if evaluation activities of different donors are undertaken separately and at different times.

4 Learning motives

- Joint evaluations are among the most effective tools for evaluation capacity-building, for both donors and developing countries.
- Joint evaluations are an efficient way of working towards identifying and distilling lessons learned and good practice.

5 Managerial, administrative and financial motives

- Findings from joint evaluations tend to be more readily accepted by management and decision-makers, especially with regard to multilateral development work.
- Joint evaluations can be a way of redressing a lack of evaluation capacity within an agency.
- Funding a share of the overall costs of a multi-partner evaluation can help to economise when evaluation funds are scarce.

¹⁰ OECD (2005): Supra note 5, p. 22 - 24. The list in Box 2 summarises Breier's categorisation.

Also, the Breier report identified some general challenges in carrying out joint evaluations. These include the tension between donors' individual accountability requirements and the time frames and transaction costs associated with joint working.

Over the last decade, the incidence of joint evaluation use within international development cooperation has risen. Two recent such evaluations are the evaluation on General Budget Support (GBS)¹¹ (which represents an important attempt to respond jointly to the challenge of demonstrating the results of a new modality in international development cooperation), and the evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration,¹² a multi-partner effort with the objective of providing a more comprehensive understanding of how increased aid effectiveness contributes to meeting development objectives.

Although some challenges remain, there is today a general recognition of the major benefits of joint evaluations. With an increasing number of donors having experience in working jointly on evaluations, it is a valuable exercise to capture these donors' perceptions of joint evaluation work. This should pave the way for finding opportunities and approaches for overcoming remaining obstacles, permitting an increased reliance on – and hence increased participation in – joint evaluations.

¹¹ The 2006 joint evaluation of General Budget Support (1994 – 2004) was the first major evidence-based assessment of direct budget support, conducted across seven countries: Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Uganda and Vietnam. It was initiated under the auspices of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee's Evaluation Network, and was led by DFID, with the assistance of a steering group composed of nineteen representatives of Bilateral Aid Agencies, five Multilateral Aid Agencies (including the World Bank, IMF, OECD-DAC, EuropeAid and IADB) and representatives of the seven partner governments selected as case studies. (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/38/36685401.pdf>)

¹² The evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration is an integral part of the Declaration itself. The first part of the evaluation, which was presented at the High Level Forum in Accra in September 2008, is an early evaluation example, and focuses on ways of improving and enhancing implementation, rather than making a definite judgement about effectiveness. It includes country-led evaluations building on existing in-country structures and processes (eight countries), and evaluations of the contributions of 11 development agencies to the implementation of the Declaration. The second part of the evaluation will provide information about the end impacts and effects of increased aid effectiveness. The evaluation was prepared through a consultative process during the fall of 2006. The overall evaluation is coordinated by a management group assisted by a reference group and a small secretariat funded by Denmark. (Synthesis report, July 2008: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/27/40900723.pdf).

2 Perceptions about joint evaluations

2.1 General challenges with joint evaluations

In relation to general challenges associated with joint evaluations, respondents raised accountability, costs, time and timing:

Accountability: Joint evaluations are generally seen as more appropriate for learning (i.e. in thematic or instrumental areas where participating donors' contributions don't need to be separated from one another) than for accountability purposes. As stressed by several respondents, there has to be a balance between joint and individual evaluations.

Costs: Joint evaluations are generally more costly than individual agency evaluations.

Time: The time-consuming planning processes for joint evaluations are commonly raised. Reaching agreement on scope, methodology, evaluation questions, and so on, consumes a considerable amount of time, requiring lengthy negotiations. The costs and benefits of conducting an evaluation jointly hence have to be considered.

Timing: Further, timing of the evaluation process was reported as a challenge. For an efficient use of joint evaluations, results need to feed into participating donors' decision processes in a timely manner. Timing becomes more challenging the more parties that are involved.

2.2 Do joint evaluations answer the right questions?

Most respondents answered positively regarding whether joint evaluations answer the "right" question. However there was also a significant emphasis on the importance of being active in the evaluation process. Those contributing the greatest amounts of financing to the evaluation tend to have their questions included while smaller contributors may feel that they compromise more in terms of their evaluation objectives. However, it was commonly recognised that participating in a joint evaluation always implies some negotiation, and that not all agency-specific questions can be expected to be accommodated.

Two Network members that responded more negatively on this question pointed out the risk of negotiations leading to a set of "less challenging questions", resulting in the agency needing to conduct its own evaluation in addition to the joint exercise. A recurring comment was that, the greater the degree of correspondence between the objectives of the various donors, the easier it is to conduct joint evaluations that answer the "right" questions for all.

2.3 Criteria for accepting another agency taking the lead

All respondents would accept another donor taking on and leading an evaluation on behalf of a number of evaluation partners. Having the opportunity to *review and approve both the ToR for the evaluation and the evaluation draft report* were the inputs most

commonly mentioned as requirements for participating in a joint arrangement. Some members mentioned receiving continuous information about the evaluation as a requirement for such participation (EC, De, Fi). There is a common recognition that more active participation, as lead or within the management group, is time-consuming, and hence staying outside the management group is, in circumstances of limited resources, considered sometimes the most appropriate option.

The question of *trust* was repeatedly mentioned in this respect: the extent to which a donor is prepared to delegate the responsibility to another agency obviously depends on the latter's credibility. If trust is high, delegating authority is an option likely to be exercised. If inter-agency trust is low, more active agency participation – providing greater control and opportunities to influence – will be required. An assessment of the final report in terms of its credibility would in most cases also be necessary.

Two respondents (AfDB, Be) reported involvement in the field studies of joint evaluations as a requirement for accepting another agency taking on and leading an evaluation on behalf of a number of evaluation partners.

3 Perceptions about the utility of others' evaluations

Although most evaluation departments regard evaluations produced by others as useful, there appears to be a common recognition that the utility of such evaluations could be much improved.

Presently, others' evaluations are mainly used as background information when initiating an evaluation within the same field – for ideas about appropriate evaluation methodologies and approaches, but also for comparative and corroborative purposes, in relation to lessons learned and recommendations. Broader thematic and country assistance evaluations appear to be more useful than more issue-specific evaluations. However, general factors constraining the utility of others' evaluations are, as reported: i) a lack of transparency concerning the conduct of evaluation; ii) a lack of synthesised and generalised evaluation results; iii) the language barrier; and iv) hesitations concerning the executing agency's credibility in terms of methodology rigour. The differences in interests, mandate and methods (in particular between development agencies and development banks) may also impede the utility of others' evaluations, as will evaluations explicitly focused on a particular agencies'/banks' accountability. Also, in view of the vast number of reports produced each year, identifying those of greatest relevance was reported to be a time-consuming exercise in itself. However, the DERECS and the EC's evaluation inventory lists were reported as useful sources in this respect.

Three evaluation departments (AusAID, Ireland, NZAid) reported having developed a system whereby others' evaluations are briefly summarised, drawing out some key points of relevance, for feeding into the agency's own work. This approach was positively mentioned by several other departments, but was also recognised as a very time-consuming exercise.

As to the question of whether another evaluation department's evaluation could be used *instead* of conducting an evaluation within the agency, a majority of the respondents responded positively, although with some reservations. Firstly, the evaluation must be considered to be credible and of good quality. For initiatives to which the agency has contributed funding, there is a generally recognised need to ensure that certain questions are answered in the external evaluation. This means that some participation in the evaluation process is necessary. Several respondents indicated it as more likely that others' evaluations would be used as an input for conducting an evaluation on their own rather than replacing an internal evaluation. However, respondents indicated that caution must be exercised to ensure work is not duplicated.

Network members that indicated that they would not use another agency's evaluation in place of conducting their own reported the following reasons: i) the evaluation must answer specific questions and another agency cannot, due to confidentiality,

obtain full access to all required basic information (IFC); ii) the evaluation must make recommendations that are specifically directed to national decision-makers (DGCID); iii) the differences in institutional arrangements are too large (EC); and iv) the IEG raised a mandate issue – the IEG’s mandate is to evaluate the activities of the World Bank Group activities – others’ evaluation can be used as a supplement but cannot really replace the need for the IEG to conduct its own evaluations (IEG).

4 Centralised evaluations

4.1 Evaluation departments' systems for planning and managing centralised evaluations

Who carries out evaluations?

The vast majority (32 of 36) of the Network members' centralised evaluations are carried out by consultants or by staff and consultants together. Four Network members (EBRD, IFC, SADEV and WB) rely solely on their own staff to carry out evaluations.

Main type of evaluations carried out, at centralised level and jointly

The two most common evaluation types carried out at HQ are country and sector/thematic evaluations (more than 80 per cent of the evaluation units of members surveyed do these). These also appear to be the types of evaluation most commonly carried out jointly. See **Appendix I**.

While most respondents estimated the proportion of evaluations conducted jointly as between five and 20 per cent, 10 respondents reported having conducted either none or a very limited number. DFID stands out in respect of joint evaluations: 50 per cent of its sector and thematic evaluations are conducted jointly.¹³

Decision-makers on the work plan at centralised level

For 10 (of 36) evaluation units, the head of the evaluation unit, together with the Director or the Director-General, makes the final decision on evaluation plans. For those whose decision-makers are outside their agency, these decision-makers include the highest political level (the State Secretary or the Minister) for Es, IPAD and Lu, while for the EC the decision-maker is the commissioner responsible for external relations.

Legal requirements or agency-specific regulations affecting evaluations

The majority (28 of 36) of the respondents reported their decisions concerning what to evaluate are *not* affected by any legal requirements. Some are obliged to perform certain types of evaluation, or to conduct them with a specified regularity, but are not otherwise constrained by additional requirements. Legal regulations impeding participation in joint evaluations include restrictions about what to finance (ADB), obligations to evaluate national policies (Be, De¹⁴, NL, DFID), national policies and parliamentary statutes governing the choice of evaluations to be conducted (Cida), budget-

¹³ In the UK, the last year's decrease in the administrative budget and increase in the programmatic budget represents a strong signal from the decision-makers, introducing incentives to the organisation and its staff to conduct more joint evaluations. However, the challenge still faced is how to achieve adequate assessment of DfID's policy commitments through joint evaluations.

¹⁴ In the case of Germany, participation in joint evaluations requires the inclusion of development interventions financed by Germany.

ary decrees and obligations to report on internal auditing (Fi), and the governing constitution dictating the administration's obligation to demonstrate the impact of its activities (Ch).

Single- or multi-year planning?

The majority of the Network members (21 of 36) reported making multi-year evaluation plans. The most common planning cycle, used by 16 of these 21 respondents, is a two- or three year rolling plan.¹⁵ In the case of two-thirds of respondents, these rolling plans are updated annually, and are hence seen as annual plans.¹⁶ The remaining 15 members set their evaluation plans annually for the year ahead.

Flexibility in planning

Only two Network members (EC and EBRD) consider their evaluation plans relatively fixed. All other members¹⁷ regard their plans as more-or-less flexible, permitting adaptation to unforeseen changes and priorities, budgetary constraints or requests from higher authorities for a specific evaluation.

Initial proposal and final decision on the evaluation plan

The responding Network members indicated significant differences in the time schedules they observed for making initial proposals and final decisions on evaluation plans. May, June, July and September are the most common months for initial proposals, while November, December and January are the months where most (over two-thirds) members make final decisions about forward work plans. Only two Network members (AusAID and DGCID) hold their planning processes in November and December, while the Netherlands is the only member that makes their final decision in June/July. For further details, see **Appendix II**.

Budget structure

Four Network members (Ch, DFID, DGTPE and IFC) have resources reserved especially for joint evaluations. All other members reported that their ability to allocate resources for joint evaluations was determined on a case-by-case basis.

Human resources

Five Network members (ADB, AFD, At, EBRD and WB) reported having generally adequate human resources and staffing situations. All other respondents reported facing various human resource limitations, e.g. the number of staff within the department, skills, staff turnover and limited staffing resources related to function and activities to be covered.

Inclusion of partner countries in evaluation work

National partners' involvement seems to vary from evaluation to evaluation, and from one donor to another. The partner country's opportunities (in terms of capacity)

¹⁵The one Network member that stands out is the EC/EU, which plans seven years ahead. The reason for this high degree of forward planning is the complex negotiations that precede the setting of the evaluation programme.

¹⁶ Annual updates are conducted in order to ensure the ongoing relevance and feasibility of the evaluations, and also to reflect changes in priorities and timeliness of evaluations.

¹⁷ AusAID and Japan MFA did not respond to this question.

to be, and interest in being, an active partner in the evaluation process are often limited. The embassies or country offices often play a key role in connecting the evaluation unit with the appropriate local partners. Eleven units stated that they do not perform evaluations jointly with partner countries.¹⁸

4.2 Planning and management challenges related to joint evaluations

Domestic political commitment: Trade-offs faced by evaluation managers in obtaining and maintaining political commitment within their agencies towards a joint process as the process develops may pose an important constraint for more participation in joint evaluation work.

Network members having different planning processes and timetables: If individual Network members' different planning processes and timetables are not sufficiently flexible to accommodate adjustments, these inflexible processes and timetables pose challenges for planning joint evaluations.

Finding potential partners for joint evaluations: The number of potential partners may be limited in certain partner countries. At the same time, several respondents argued that donor groups that are too large pose significant challenges to joint evaluations. How to properly include the partner country was reported as another challenge.

Consensus and trust: Parties to a joint evaluation must enjoy high levels of mutual trust. This is a prerequisite for accepting another agency taking the lead, and for delegating authority to the management committee and the steering committee/reference group.

Management: Strong leadership is essential in joint evaluation. The management committee, trusted by the other participants, must be given the mandate to manage the evaluation process. Both delegation, and a clear division of labour from the beginning, are important. The process must be transparent, with regular updates provided about the progress of the evaluation.

Agreeing on purpose and objectives of joint evaluations: Participating agencies' different priorities may make agreeing on evaluation purpose and objectives a challenging exercise. The efficient agreement on evaluation questions, whereby all participants are satisfied, depends greatly upon the lead agency and on the mandate it has been given.

Agreeing on methodology: Since participating agencies may have different concepts of methodologies and approaches, agreeing on the joint evaluation methodology can be challenging. Several respondents reported having experienced a lack of transparency in this respect.

Agreeing on the composition of the evaluation team: Some respondents reported that getting the right mix of knowledge and skills in the evaluation team is crucial, but that it may pose challenges due to participating partners' different interests.

¹⁸ AfDB, EBRD, EC, Es, IFC, IMF, JBIC, Japan MFA, Norad, SADEV and USAID. Some of these donors have other agencies or other departments within the agency working together with partner countries.

4.3 Donor-specific factors affecting the choice to conduct joint evaluations

Budgetary factors

Global evaluation budgets – or earmarked budget for joint evaluations: Most respondents reported having sufficiently flexible global evaluation budgets that, if the incentives are at place, allow for joint evaluations. Some respondents (Ch, DFID, DGTPE and IFC) have a budget specifically earmarked for doing joint evaluation work. If the budget increases, which has been the case in DFID, this obviously facilitates an increased participation in joint evaluations.

With a *restricted evaluation budget* joint evaluations are not always prioritised (reported by Jp and Ch Seco). Conversely, limited resources may imply that smaller contributions to a joint evaluation are more appropriate than conducting an individual evaluation.

Human resources factors

Complementary skills: The intellectual benefit of drawing on expertise from many partners is commonly seen as favouring participation in joint evaluations.

Existence of internal expertise – or limited human resources: While some respondents (AfDB, Ch, Danida) reported possessing the necessary internal expertise as favouring participation in joint evaluations, others (AfDB, Ch, De, Danida, DFID, EU, Ie, It, Lu and Sida) highlighted the benefit of conducting joint evaluations when internal human resources are a constraint. In the latter cases, it might be even more important to be engaged in joint evaluations, since the staff time required may be less demanding on the agency. Nonetheless, staff and expertise constraints obviously limit the possibility of taking a lead role, or a time-consuming role within the evaluation management committee. A recurrently reported drawback (AusAID, Ie) in having limited human resources is the difficulties in engaging in various important networks that could facilitate joint evaluations (e.g. DAC, EU Heads of Evaluation, Nordic Plus, ALNAP). Also, the number of joint evaluations in which the agency may participate obviously becomes limited.

Staff turnover: Several respondents (Be, De, Jica, Jp, NL) reported staff turnover as a constraint for efficient participation in, often lengthy, joint evaluation processes, and also in hindering the building up of internal expertise and experience.

Local representation: A factor mentioned by some respondents as favouring joint evaluations is the presence of embassies/offices in the partner countries. This may imply less travel, and brings useful local knowledge.

Consultants: In general, the evaluation units in bilateral organisations outsource evaluations to consulting firms, while the evaluation entities in MDBs conduct evaluations internally. This difference may impede efficient collaboration in joint evaluations.

Administrative, legal and financial regulations

Network members are subject to different administrative and financial regulations, sometimes rendering it difficult to pool resources with other agencies. Different procurement and contracting procedures may impede participation in joint evaluations. The following points exemplify some of these constraints:

- The Austrian law on public spending sets out when a financial contribution to a joint evaluation is to be executed. Services that are not regulated in a written contract cannot be paid for with public funds. This poses a problem for joint evaluation, since few contracts between donors and partner countries are signed.
- Staff travel expenses are commonly not to be financed by evaluation budgets but rather by administrative budgets. As reported by some respondents, if the latter are limited, this may pose a constraint to participating in joint evaluations, where travel to evaluation process meetings may be required.
- The specific budget line for audits and evaluation in Luxembourg requires public tenders. Every time the unit wants to transfer money to another donor to participate in a joint evaluation, the unit needs a special waiver – which is usually granted, but it nonetheless adds an administrative burden on the evaluation officer.
- The EC can participate in joint evaluations as long as it does not require any money transfers, since this is prohibited by the European budget regulations.¹⁹ This obviously affects the ability of the EC to participate in joint evaluations.

Institutional arrangements

Differences in institutional arrangements between multilateral and bilateral donors: Joint evaluations between multilateral organisations should, in principle, be easier than working with a bilateral donor, since the methodological approaches correspond to a greater extent. The same can be said of bilateral organisations working with other bilaterals. However, even though multilaterals may share some common aspects in their institutional arrangements (e.g. dependence on a board, evaluations being conducted by internal staff, etc.) there may be significant differences in terms of legal, fiscal and administrative rules, posing constraints for working together on joint evaluations and joint programming of evaluations.

- When the IEG and the World Bank initiate a higher-level evaluation they often start with a number of evaluated building blocks, e.g. systematic project evaluations. Many bilateral donors do not have the same building blocs within their organisations, which can result in a lack of balance in a joint evaluation. This could be overcome with mutual efforts, but these are issues that need to be taken into account, since they complicate joint evaluations.
- For ADB, without a specific waiver from the board, procurement is tied to the ADB member countries. This may pose a constraint in the bank's ability to participate in joint evaluations that require pooled resources, beyond a mere division of labour.
- In general, MDBs have to balance their role as public entities, with their banking responsibilities, where client confidentiality may be requested. The latter responsibility may impede participation in joint evaluations.

Geographical factors: Several respondents highlighted their geographical location as a constraint. Travel to other capitals for meetings is time-consuming and costly. Another aspect of geographical position, as highlighted by AusAID and Japan, is that the agency is not active within the same regions as most other members of the Evaluation Network.

Languages: The language barrier was raised as a constraint by a number of respondents (At, Be, Es, France, It). Joint evaluations often require people to work in foreign languages. Conversely, Danida and other members in similar situations reported that,

¹⁹ According to the interviewee, regulations were changed a few years ago, but the D-G Budget still interprets this very narrowly – which hampers participation.

when collaborating with Francophone partner countries, the inclusion of a French-speaking donor in the evaluation is seen as an advantage.

Quality assurance rules and systems: Evaluation departments have different systems for quality assurance. It is hence important that these are discussed, and that common decisions on quality assurance rules are agreed within a joint evaluation group.

Factors affecting the choice to do joint evaluations are summarised in **Appendix III**, while a set of decisions criteria – taking into account donor-specific constraints by addressing questions that need clarification before entering into a joint evaluation – is proposed in **Appendix IV**.

5 ‘Decentred’ and ‘decentralised’ evaluations

At the outset, some terminological explication is necessary, in order to clarify the specific use of the terms *decentred* and *decentralised* evaluations in this report:

- *Decentred evaluations*: In the spirit of the Paris Declaration, the term *decentred* evaluations is here used for evaluations where the partner country fully participates in the steering of the evaluation.
- *Decentralised evaluations*: Evaluations managed by an agency’s field office are referred to as *decentralised* evaluations.

5.1 Evaluation departments’ systems for planning and managing decentralised evaluations

*Main types of evaluation carried out at decentralised level – and jointly*²⁰

Project evaluations are the most common type of evaluation carried out at a decentralised level, representing more than 60 per cent of all evaluations conducted at this level.²¹ Ten members reported not carrying out decentralised evaluations at all.²² A very low percentage of decentralised evaluations appear to be carried out jointly with other donors or with national partners. Jica is the exception in this respect, the agency stating that the great majority of its evaluations are carried out jointly with other donors and managed by national partners, because this is the evaluation form recommended in its evaluation policy.

Decision-makers on the work plan at decentralised level

Implementing units (operational departments) and senior management staff (programme or project managers, or the Director-General), most commonly based at HQ level, are the two main categories of decision makers for decentralised evaluations. Only a handful of the respondents reported that decisions are taken by field offices or embassies, or jointly with local partners.²³

5.2 Factors affecting the choice to conduct joint decentred and decentralised evaluations

For decentred evaluations, management by the partner countries is key. This requires capacity building within those partners, and also forward planning and agreement at the commencement of evaluation activities.

²⁰ Note that this section includes answers about reviews. Some donors have answered this section in the interview referring to reviews, while some have refrained from answering the section because they do not regard the reviews that they carry out as decentralised evaluations.

²¹ Five agencies reported carrying out country evaluations, while three reported carrying out regional evaluations. One agency carries out policy evaluations and other donor-thematic evaluations.

²² AfDB, EBRD, Danida, DGTPE, IMF, IPAD, JBIC, Lu, SADEV and WB.

²³ Be, Ie, Jica, NL and MCC.

As to decentralised evaluations, according to several respondents, little would be gained from a mere delegation to the field office. As reported from the Netherlands, the agency’s goal is in fact to scale-down field office (decentralised) evaluations, for two reasons: i) most of the questions that the project evaluations are to answer are already answered by other, more overarching, evaluations (such as sector evaluations); and ii) the quality of field office evaluations is very low. Similar arguments were raised by some other Network members (De, Ch Seco), and who also raised as a constraint the fact that agencies are organised centrally.

Conversely, some Network members (AFD, AusAID, Cida and DFID) argued that more decentralisation, in terms of field offices managing the evaluations, should be considered. The argument for this is that partnership and coordination of evaluation is simpler at the local level than at the HQ level. This requires HQ to transfer a mandate to country posts to join and manage joint evaluations.²⁴

General challenges for undertaking more field office evaluations mainly concern human resources. Several respondents²⁵ reported limited staff resources and lack of evaluation knowledge in field offices as constraints. To overcome this, capacity building of field staff would be needed. Another challenge reported in this respect was quality control, which would normally be the responsibility of central evaluation units. This task can often not be tackled due to resource constraints or a lacking mandate.

²⁴ DFID reported having transferred its mandate to country posts. However, problems relating to quality have been experienced and the department is now looking at quality assurance systems for decentralised evaluations.

²⁵ AFD, AfDB, At, AusAID, De, Es, It, IPAD, MCC, NL, NZAid and Po.

6 Factors affecting the choice to conduct joint country-level work²⁶

The following issues were raised as factors affecting the choice to conduct joint country-level work:

Donors' domestic requirements: Donors' domestic requirements for accountability may affect the choice to conduct joint work at the country level.

Planning and coordination: Planning is a core requirement to facilitate an increased level of joint country-level work. Improved exchange of information about ongoing and planned activities is necessary. Also, a clear division of labour when setting up joint country work is needed.

Mutual understanding: There can be differences in the emphasis donors place on various issues, for example partner countries' involvement in evaluations – multilaterals often do not include partner countries in independent evaluations,²⁷ which is contradictory to many bilateral Network members' objectives and, also, contrary to the Paris Declaration.

Availability of travel funds: More joint country-level work normally requires increased funding for travel purposes. Agency presence in the country may ease coordination and possibly obviate the need for some travel, however a common problem is a lack of adequate resources at field offices (see above).

Potential partners: Donors whose interventions are focused on a small number of specific countries or regions may struggle to find potential donor partners with whom to conduct joint country-level work in those countries or regions..

Harmonised work and methodologies: The possibilities for joint country-level work depend to a large extent on donor harmonisation at the country level. Joint programming facilitates joint country-level work.

²⁶ Joint country-level work may involve, for example, country case studies for thematic evaluations.

²⁷ It should, however, be noted that these are obstacles by virtue of the governance structure of the Multilateral Development Banks.

7 Recommendations

The recommendations provided in this chapter are the result of a survey among DAC Evaluation Network members (see questionnaire in Appendix V), subsequent interviews with respondents in these organisations, and discussions, within the Task team on the New Context for Evaluation, on a draft set of recommendations.²⁸

To anchor these recommendations more firmly within their wider context – in which the perceived major benefits of joint evaluations have been a strong driving force among Network members to improve knowledge about how to conduct joint evaluations – some references will first be made to the Breier report and to the Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations.

The Breier report concludes that there is an important future for joint evaluations, but that DAC members (and other evaluation stakeholders) must streamline evaluation to ensure its central place in development cooperation.²⁹ While some Network members have been hesitant about embracing joint evaluations, the new development paradigms – MDGs, the Paris Declaration and, most recently, the Accra Agenda for Action – provide a strong argument for the need for more joint evaluation work. Joint evaluation should hence be the primary choice of evaluation mode for, at the least, certain areas of evaluation.

In relation to the issue of finding potential partners for a joint evaluation, the Guidance indicates that: “problems occur when agencies share their evaluation forward planning too late to agree to undertake the evaluations jointly”³⁰. To overcome this, the Guidance point out that effective communication on planned evaluations is needed.³¹

In terms of appropriate issues and areas for joint evaluations, it is clear that, the greater the degree to which policies and subsequent projects and programmes correspond or are shared, the easier it is to evaluate jointly. In connection with this point, Breier raises the issue of whether the DAC should take a role in identifying priority areas for joint evaluations.³²

In relation to the issue of developing countries’ participation in and ownership of joint evaluation, the Guidance sets out that, too often, “joint evaluations are undertaken without the participation of key developing country partners”.³³ Since limited capacity hinders participation, the Guidance suggests that donors and partners prioritise support for evaluation capacity development.

²⁸ Meeting in the Haag on 24 September 2008.

²⁹ OECD, DAC (2005): Supra note 5, p. 73.

³⁰ OECD, DAC (2006), Supra note 6, p. 15.

³¹ [Idem], p. 16.

³² OECD, DAC (2005): Supra note 5, p. 72.

³³ OECD, DAC (2006), Supra note 6, p. 15.

Furthermore, both the Breier report and the Guidance stress that the possibility of undertaking an evaluation jointly (with developing country partners) should be considered during the design stage of new projects and programmes, and that partner countries should be co-opted before decisions are made about the evaluation's operational protocols, the ToR and the selection of the evaluation team.³⁴ This approach should increase the possibilities for active participation by the developing country partner.

The following recommendations should be read in the context of the above suggestions and issues raised by the Breier report and the Guidance. Since the DAC remains the obvious forum in which to carry forward the work towards facilitating more joint evaluations, the following recommendations are collectively directed to the DAC Evaluation Network, but also imply individual action by members and the DAC Secretariat.

7.1 Recommendations to the DAC Evaluation Network

1 Introduce joint evaluation clearly in the evaluation policy (Members' internal measure).

- *Why?* The clear explication, in the evaluation policy, of joint evaluations as a tool for assessing performance – and how to go about them – is a clear incentive for participation in joint evaluation.
- *How?* Identify areas amenable for joint work – e.g. major humanitarian and sector work, and emphasise joint evaluation as the default choice of evaluation mode in these areas. Single donor evaluations would then have to be explicitly justified. This is a logical implication of the Paris Declaration.

2 Share (multi-annual) evaluation plans.

- *Why?* Evaluation plans need to be shared within the Network in a timely manner in order to facilitate joint evaluation work. This information sharing is facilitated by various network meetings (DAC, Nordic+, EU). Also, the DAC Secretariat has developed an Excel-based tool (available on the members section of the DAC evaluation network website), to search evaluation plans by topic, donor, country and sector. However, to optimise this tool, it is necessary that members not only provide the DAC Secretariat with their evaluation plans, but that they do so in a timely manner. Generally, more systematic methods for the exchange of ideas on future evaluations appear to be needed.
- *How?* It is recommended that:
 - A communication strategy about sharing evaluation plans (e.g. sending these to the DAC secretariat) is agreed within the DAC network.
 - In connection with network meetings, a market-place discussion is established, at which evaluation plans are discussed.

³⁴ OECD, DAC (2005): Supra note 5, p. 72, and OECD, DAC (2006), Supra note 6, p. 16.

3 Consider the development of a “global market-place”.

- *Why?* Difficulties have been reported in finding appropriate partners for joint evaluations in a timely manner.
- *How?* It is suggested that the idea of developing a “global market-place”, where network members and other potential partners can identify and exploit “intersections” in their evaluation plans, is considered. Existing arrangements provided by the DAC Secretariat (see Recommendation 1) should form the basis for this global market-place, and could be complemented by, for example, a web-based discussion forum to open up this discussion to others. This could also be a way of supporting developing country partners that require advice and help in developing proposals for joint evaluations.

4 Ensure that joint evaluation is considered where joint policies and programmes exist.

- *Why?* A joint programme or strategy facilitates joint evaluations. Where joint policies and programmes exist or are being developed, the evaluator should ensure that joint evaluation is considered.
- *How?* Exploit opportunities for joint evaluation in areas where joint policies and programming exist, and where this would be most fruitful, in particular Joint Assistance Strategies and sector work.

5 Establish a short-list of major issues and topics where joint evaluation would be fruitful.

- *Why?* A short-list of major issues and topics appropriate for joint evaluations would facilitate forward planning for evaluation departments.
- *How?* The DAC Evaluation Network should consider identifying a short-list of major issues and topics where joint evaluations would be fruitful, and that the Network members should seek to prioritise over several years.

7.2 Recommendations for strengthening the partner country’s ownership of joint evaluations

6 Establish a common capacity-building programme in evaluation.

- *Why?* Capacity-building in evaluation appears to be strongly needed in order to promote a strengthened national ownership of evaluations. A common capacity-building programme would favour a harmonised approach.
- *How?* It is suggested that Evaluation Network members exchange existing individual capacity-building plans in order to identify areas in which collaboration would be fruitful. This could constitute the first step towards the development of a common capacity-building programme.

7 Involve the partner countries at an early stage.

- *Why?* Involvement of the partner country at an early stage increases that country’s ability to take the lead and to actively participate in joint evaluations.

- *How?* It is suggested that:
 - An agreement on evaluation and its leadership is included within the initial design and agreement of MoUs on projects and programmes with the partner country.
 - Intended partners for a joint evaluation meet at an early stage. Partner countries could be invited to the DAC Evaluation Network meetings, or intending donor partners to a joint evaluation could visit the partner country.

7.3 Best practice approaches

A number of best practice approaches already applied by some of the members of the Evaluation Network are summaries below, for consideration for wider use within the Network:

- **Facilitate access to your department's evaluation reports.**

DEReC, developed and maintained by the DAC Evaluation Network website, allows searching of evaluations by: i) Network member responsible for the publication; ii) sector focus; and iii) country focus. Since the efficacy of this tool depends upon the data provided by members, all DAC Network members should agree to actively use and contribute to this, by providing up-to-date information concerning all areas within the database. A short introduction note to an evaluation report, with key words, facilitates identification of the most relevant reports in the specific case. A similar note should also be prepared by members when disseminating a finalised report.

- **Commission an approach paper when initiating a joint evaluation.**

To reduce the, often lengthy, lead-times for planning joint evaluations (e.g. choice of methodology, quality requirements), the DAC Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations,³⁵ proposes that an initial approach paper is commissioned at the beginning of a joint evaluation and, after discussion, that this results in an agreed set of ground rules or protocols. These should determine the standards governing the evaluation, for example, whether the process should adhere to the DAC Principles for Evaluation and the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards, or to some other standards.

- **Opt for smaller management committees and a clear division of labour.**

Stronger leadership, with a clear division of labour and high levels of delegation, facilitates joint evaluation work. Best practice in this respect has proved to be creating smaller management committees (three to four partners) that work under broader evaluation steering committees or reference groups. Also, contracting consultants to manage the day-to-day process of the evaluation, thereby freeing partners to concentrate on the content and proper consultation within their own agency, facilitates joint evaluation work.

- **Strive for transparency throughout the evaluation process.**

More communication during the evaluation process is valuable in promoting increased confidence between partners, and also in making it easier to delegate authority. In improving such communication, it has proved useful to:

³⁵ OECD, DAC (2006), *Supra* note 6, p. 22.

- invite all participants to regular teleconferences for updates about the evaluations process; and/or to
- set up a website where key information and reports are posted; and/or to
- distribute a periodic news-mail, informing all participants of the evaluation about the evaluation process.

- **Use MoUs for all joint work.**

Several Network members have reported that, if public funds are to be spent on services, the services need to be regulated by written contracts. This poses a constraint in joint evaluations, in which contracts between donors and partner countries rarely are signed. Ensuring that MoUs are signed for all joint work will help to overcoming this constraint.³⁶

- **Target your own organisation.**

Targeting recommendations from joint evaluations more specifically to the specific organisational context facilitates an easier management response process. It should be considered whether additional work could be undertaken, following a joint evaluation, to target recommendations more specifically to the specific organisational context. This clearly does not imply changing the substantive content of the joint evaluation, but rather to interpret its implications in the specific organisational context.

³⁶ In this respect it is suggested that Network members that already use MoUs for joint work share the format of these MoUs with other members.

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Appendix I

Evaluations carried out at centralised level

Evaluation Department	Central Evaluation types				
	Project	Country	Sector/ Thematic	Policy	Other
AfDB	x	x	x	x	X(1)
AsDB	x	x	x	x	X(1)
EBRD	x		x		
EC/EU		x	x	x	X(2)
IADB	x	x	x	x	
IFC	x	x	x		X(1)
IMF		x	x	x	
WB	x	x	x		X(3)
Australia, AusAID		x	x		
Austria		x	x	x	X(1)
Belgium		x	x		X(1)
Canada, Cida		x	x	x	
Denmark, Danida		x	x		X(2)
Finland		x	X(4)	x	X(1)
France, AFD	x		X		X(2)
France, DGCID		x	X	x	X(1)
France, DGTPE	x	x	X	x	X(1)
Germany		x	X	x	X(3)
Ireland	x	x	X(5)	x	X(1)
Italy	x	x	X(4)		
Japan, JBIC	x	x	X		
Japan, JICA	x		X		
Japan, MFA		x		x	X
Luxembourg	x	x		x	X(1)
Netherlands		x	X	x	X(1)
NZAid			X	x	
Norway, Norad		x	X	x	X(1)
Portugal	x	x	X	x	X(1)
Spain		x	X	x	
Sweden, SADEV			X	x	X
Sweden, Sida		x	X	x	X(1)
Switzerland, MFA	x	x	X(4)		
Switzerland, SDC		x	x		
UK, DFID		x	x	x	
USA, MCC	x	x			
USA, USAID	x	x	x	x	X(1)

- (1) Partnership with multilaterals or NGO's.
- (2) Evaluations of aid modalities, impact-, meta-, and multi-evaluations
- (3) Global and regional programmes.
- (4) No thematic evaluations
- (5) No sector evaluations.

Appendix II

Initial proposal and final decision on the evaluation plans

Evaluation Department	Planning (Ip – Initial proposal; Fd – Final decision)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
AfDB								Ip		Fd		
AsDB								Ip		Fd		
EBRD	Fd								Ip			
EC/EU	Fd								Ip			Fd
IADB								Ip			Fd	
IFC	Ip ³⁷ /Fd					Ip ³⁸						
IMF						Ip					Fd	
WB, IEG ³⁹												
Australia, AusAID		Fd									Ip	
Austria						Ip				Fd		
Belgium					Ip						Fd	
Canada, Cida		Ip ⁴⁰ /Fd										
Denmark, Danida									Ip			Fd
Finland	Fd								Ip			
France, AFD				Ip					Fd			
France, DGCID												Ip/Fd
France, DGTPE	Fd								Ip			Fd
Germany ⁴¹	Fd	Fd										
Ireland								Ip				Fd
Italy	Ip/Fd											
Japan, JBIC ⁴²					Ip							
Japan, JICA				Ip						Fd		
Japan, MFA	Ip		Fd									
Luxembourg			Ip/Fd									
Netherlands			Ip			Fd						
NZAid						Ip	Fd					
Norway, Norad					Ip	Fd						
Portugal ⁴³												Fd
Spain				Ip							Fd	
Sweden, SADEV									Ip			Fd
Sweden, Sida									Ip			Fd
Switzerland, MFA						Ip		Fd				
Switzerland, SDC ⁴⁴	Fd											
UK, DFID		Fd						Ip				
USA, MCC ⁴⁵												
USA, USAID ⁴⁶												Fd

³⁷ For project evaluations.

³⁸ For thematic and country evaluations.

³⁹ Ip – winter, Fd - winter (internally), spring (CODE/Board).

⁴⁰ Ip – No specific month. Occurs year-round, but the proposals are incorporated when the plan is updated and presented for approval. This usually takes place from January to March.

⁴¹ Ip – Discussed throughout the year.

⁴² Fd – No final decision point.

⁴³ Ip – The new evaluation unit was recently established and it is therefore difficult to present a clear answer. The routines have not yet been set.

⁴⁴ Ip – Discussed throughout the year.

⁴⁵ Ip/Fd – Not relevant, follows project cycle.

⁴⁶ Ip – Set by project cycle.

Appendix III

Individual Network members' constraints in conducting more joint evaluations

Evaluation Department	Constraints in conducting more joint evaluations ● – constraint exists				
	Decision-maker on the work plan at high political level	Legal/financial requirements	Fixed work plans, with no flexibility	Constraints of human resources, possibly making it difficult to participate in joint evaluations	Geographic position posing constraints for participation in joint evaluations
AfDB	●	●	-	●	-
AsDB	-	●	-	-	-
EBRD	-	-	●	-	-
EC/EU	●	●	●	●	-
IADB	-	-	-	●	-
IFC	-	-	-	●	-
IMF	-	-	-	●	-
WB	-	-	-	-	-
Australia, AusAID	-	-	-	●	●
Austria	-	●	-	-	-
Belgium	-	●	-	●	-
Canada, Cida	-	●	-	●	-
Denmark, Danida	-	-	-	●	-
Finland	-	●	-	●	-
France, AFD	-	-	-	-	-
France, DGCID	-	-	-	●	-
France, DGTPE	-	-	-	●	-
Germany	●	-	-	●	-
Ireland	-	-	-	●	-
Italy	-	-	-	●	-
Japan, JBIC	-	-	-	●	●
Japan, JICA	-	-	-	●	●
Japan, MFA	-	-	-	●	●
Luxembourg	●	●	-	●	-
Netherlands	-	●	-	●	-
New Zealand, NZAid	-	-	-	●	-
Norway, Norad	-	-	-	●	-
Portugal	●	-	-	●	-
Spain	●	-	-	●	-
Sweden, SADEV	-	-	-	●	-
Sweden, Sida	-	-	-	●	-
Switzerland, MFA	-	●	-	●	-
Switzerland, SDC	-	-	-	●	-
UK, DFID	-	-	-	●	-
USA, MCC	-	-	-	●	-
USA, USAID	-	-	-	●	-

Appendix IV

Proposal on decision criteria to be considered when deciding whether to conduct an evaluation jointly or individually

PLANNING		
1	Evaluation focus	– What do we need to get evaluated?
2	Evaluation purpose	– Why does it need to get evaluated? (learning, accountability?)
3	Evaluation questions	– What are the minimum evaluation questions we need to get answered through this evaluation?
4	Timing	– When do we need the results of this evaluation? – Could a joint evaluation be expected to be finalised by this time?
5	Evaluation partners	– Who is interested in doing this kind of evaluation? – Do we share common interests? – What would be their minimum evaluation questions?
6	Inclusion of the partner country	– What role should the partner country have in this evaluation? – How should they be approached, and who should approach them?
7	Estimated total costs of a joint evaluation	– Do we have the financial and human resources for answering our evaluation questions through an individual evaluation and would this be cheaper/more appropriate? – How much would we contribute? – <i>Will contracts be signed?</i> – How is this funding to be provided? – <i>Pooled funding? Financing a proportion or particular evaluation part?</i> – <i>Do we have any legal or budgetary constraints in providing this funding?</i>
MANAGEMENT		
8	Who should lead the evaluation?	– Which of the partners would be most appropriate? Expertise, resources?
9	Should we sit on the Management Committee?	– What human resources and expertise do we have? – How often and where would we meet? – <i>Do we have the financial resources to cover travel expenses to attend meetings?</i> – <i>Could some or some parts of the meetings be held through audio-visual communication?</i> – <i>What language will we be working in?</i> – <i>Will travelling to the partner country be necessary?</i> – <i>Do we have local representaiton?</i>
10	Can we delegate authority?	– What are our requirements? – <i>Inclusion of our minimum questions to be answered?</i> – <i>Reviewing ToR?</i> – <i>Reviewing methodology?</i> – <i>Reviewing draft report?</i> – <i>Regular updates along the evaluation process?</i>

Appendix V

Questionnaire

Centralised evaluations	
1	<p>What main types of evaluations does your central evaluation department carry out and what proportions, in percentages, of each of these are done jointly with other partners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - project evaluations, - country evaluations, - specific sector in a specific country, - sector, - thematic, - policy, - partnerships (e.g. with multilaterals or NGOs) etc? - other, specify below:
2	<p>What is your planning process? If needed, answer separately for different types of evaluations (country, policy etc).</p>
a	<p>Do you plan annually, every 2, 3 years, or farther ahead?</p> <p>How fixed in stone are your plans for 2 or more years ahead, or are they somewhat flexible?</p>
b	<p>What specific months of the year do you make...:</p>
i	...initial proposals for evaluation topics for discussion?
ii	...final decisions on the forward work plan?
c	<p>i How are your budgets structured, i.e. do you have resources earmarked for joint evaluations?</p> <p>ii What limitations do you have on human resources?</p> <p>iii What are the budgetary and human resource factors which favour joint evaluations?</p> <p>iv What are the budgetary and human resource factors which work against joint evaluations?</p>
d	<p>i How are evaluation questions agreed?</p> <p>ii Do joint evaluation processes answer the right questions for your agency? (in connection to 3, below)</p> <p>If not, could they be managed to do so, and if so how?</p>
e	<p>i How do you decide on work with partner countries, for example country case studies for thematic evaluations?</p> <p>ii What is the process you use to agree these with different stakeholders?</p> <p>iii What are the factors that would make it easier or more difficult to do joint country work?</p>

	f	i	Who are the main decision makers on your work plan, inside and outside your own department?
		ii	Are there legal or other statutory requirements which affect the decision makers' choice? Yes, please specify: _____ No
		iii	What factors would make them favour (or not favour) joint evaluations?
3	a	What is your experience of the main challenges and constraints you have faced in working with other partners on joint evaluations?	
	b	What suggestions do you have for improving planning and management of joint evaluations?	
4	a	Do you find evaluations produced by other development assistance agencies useful? Comments:	
	b	How do you use them?	
	c	Would you ever be able to use another agency's evaluation instead of doing your own? Comments:	
	d	What suggestions do you have that might make it easier for you to use results from other agencies' evaluations?	
5	a	Related to this, would you accept another agency taking on and leading an evaluation on behalf of a number of agencies? Comments:	
	b	What kind of input would you want into such an evaluation (e.g. approving ToRs/drafts), if any?	
6	a	Are there any challenges and constraints, apart from those already mentioned, that prevent your agency from undertaking more evaluations with other partners?	
	b	What are your own recommendations for action for making it easier for you to increase the proportion of your evaluation work that is done according to the Paris principles (that is, i) in terms of increased ownership and alignment with the partner country and ii) in terms of improved harmonisation with other donors)	
		i	...to your own organisation?
		ii	...to EvalNet and other donors?
7		Some people have suggested a 'higher authority' or 'matchmaker' to make (or help) agencies work together, and others have suggested a joint resource centre for managing joint evaluations on behalf of a group of agencies. Do you have views or suggestions about either of these proposals?	

Decentralised evaluations	
8	<p>What kinds of reviews and evaluations are decentralised in your organisation?</p> <p>Project Country Regional Other, please specify below</p> <p>Comments:</p>
9	<p>Who decides on topics and approach and on what timescale?</p>
10	<p>a Who normally undertakes the evaluations?</p> <p>Own staff Consultants</p> <p>Comments:</p>
	<p>b How are national partners involved in this?</p>
	<p>c Optional additional question: If partner government officials or other national partners are involved in evaluations, are they given additional payments for this? How are these determined?</p>
11	<p>What proportions, in percentages, of your decentralised evaluations are...</p>
	<p>a ...joint with other donors or development agencies</p> <p>0-10 % 10-20% 20-40% 40-50% 50-70% 70-90% 100%</p> <p>Comments:</p>
	<p>b ...managed by national partners?</p> <p>0-10 % 10-20% 20-40% 40-50% 50-70% 70-90% 100%</p> <p>Comments:</p>
12	<p>a Are there any challenges and constraints that prevent your agency from undertaking more decentralised reviews and evaluations with other partners, or in national partners leading evaluations?</p>
	<p>b What recommendations do you have, both for your own agency and for Evaluation Network partners, to make it easier to increase the proportion of decentralised evaluations that are carried out according to Paris Declaration principles? (for example, capacity building.)</p>

