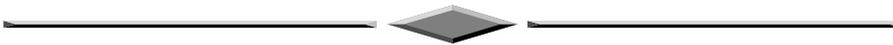


AGENDA ITEM VI. Multilateral Effectiveness

Drawing Lessons from Comprehensive Evaluations of International Institutions

This document has been prepared by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Evaluation Office for information at the 12th Meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, under Agenda Item VI.

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12th Meeting

23-24 June 2011

Drawing Lessons from Comprehensive Evaluations of International Institutions

Project hosted by the GEF Evaluation Office

Introduction

1. This project has been developed by a concerned group of evaluation specialists who have previously undertaken comprehensive evaluations of international institutions. Shareholders and donors are increasingly commissioning such evaluations to assist decision making regarding resource allocation and funding commitments for international agencies and funds (henceforth identified as international institutions). Over ten such evaluations have been undertaken in the last ten years at a total cost of about 20 million USD.
2. Other methods are available to judge the performance of international institutions (e.g. perception oriented surveys, peer reviews, expert panels, and high level advisory committees). But they do not carry the same weight as comprehensive evaluations since these are, at least in principle, capable of generating credible summative judgments about the effectiveness of international institutions (based on sound assessments of program results and delivery performance) as well as formative lessons of experience. However, not all international institutions are regularly evaluated and when they are the methods and processes used may not be as independent, rigorous or consistent as would be desirable. Nor have past comprehensive evaluations always been guided by global policy considerations regarding the international aid and cooperation architecture.
3. The current ad-hoc approach has resulted in comprehensive evaluations that do not yield optimum value for money. Some institutions escape evaluation altogether. Others may be subject to reviews that lack balance or rigour. Consistent methodologies are not used across institutions. The end result is that it is not possible for donors to reach coherent and valid conclusions that would facilitate effective resource allocation, or for stakeholders to take decisions on the mandates and roles of international institutions. While common principles, guidelines and definitions, etc. are available for evaluating development policies, projects and programs no generally accepted methodologies exist for organizational mandates, performance and results. Similarly no generic criteria are in place for deciding on the scale, scope, management, implementation, oversight and follow-up of comprehensive evaluations.
4. Importantly the international community also lacks institutional mechanisms through which the lessons from comprehensive evaluations transcend the institutions concerned. Few lessons of more general application have been drawn to-date despite a wealth of evaluative information generated by these evaluations. Finally, there is no consensus as to the circumstances which justify recourse to comprehensive evaluations as the most suitable tool to guide donors' decision making. The resulting evaluation gaps have consequences in terms of global policy formation since no coherent lessons of experience are available to help implement systemic reform of the aid architecture. Thus, discussions on the future of international cooperation, e.g. in the UN or in the framework of the Accra Agenda for Action, lack a solid basis in evaluative evidence regarding the performance and achievements of international institutions.

Purpose, audiences and approach

5. In the overall context of strengthening the cost-effective contribution of international institutions to sustainable and equitable global development, in light of the Accra Agenda for Action, and discussions on the international cooperation architecture, this project will deliver:

- a) A meta-evaluation of the existing comprehensive evaluations of international institutions;
 - b) Relevant comparisons of indicators that throw light on cost-effectiveness, development results and agency/fund performance;
 - c) A resource document for the eventual development of good practice guidelines for comprehensive evaluations.
6. The project is targeted to the following audiences:
- a) governing bodies, funders and senior managers of international institutions;
 - b) evaluation offices of international institutions and of the international community; and
 - c) evaluation teams undertaking comprehensive evaluations.

Key questions

7. The meta-evaluation will aim to provide a full overview of the scope and ranges of the existing comprehensive evaluations and will identify areas of overlap and comparison. The key questions are:
- a) What do the comprehensive evaluations tell us about the comparative effectiveness and results of the international institutions?
 - b) Which areas of international governance and cooperation are covered by evaluations and where are gaps?
 - c) Which lessons emerging from these evaluations have meaning beyond the international institutions concerned?
8. On the issue of approaches, guidelines, resources and methodological questions, the following key questions will be covered:
- a) Which methods and tools for comprehensive evaluations can be identified as best practice?
 - b) What guidelines can be formulated for comprehensive evaluations, taking into account accepted and commonly applied guidelines and principles, definitions of OECD-DAC, the UN Evaluation Group and the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the international financial institutions, as well as the sourcebook for evaluating global programs¹.
 - c) How should comprehensive evaluations be managed to ensure independence, credibility and usefulness?
 - d) How can comprehensive evaluations fully represent stakeholders' diverse perspectives and be inclusive in their approach?

Implementation

9. In its inception phase the project is hosted administratively and managed by the GEF Evaluation Office. Both this Office and the Office of Evaluation of IFAD have provided an initial contribution to cover the inception phase. One senior evaluation consultant has been hired to undertake a desk review to prepare a framework for further analysis, which will be discussed at an international workshop to take place in the second half of 2011. The workshop will provide feedback and identify the issues that can most fruitfully be explored in the second phase.

10. The project is underpinned by a reference group which has previous experience of comprehensive evaluations. The initial group preparing this proposal forms the core of the reference group, but will be expanded in its geographical base and will include evaluation users. The reference group will meet virtually and electronically and interact to provide quality assurance to the project. It will validate products provide guidance for further work. Recently SADEV, the Swedish governmental development evaluation institute, has joined the project and participates in the reference group during the inception phase.

¹ Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank and the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, Sourcebook for Evaluating Regional and Global Partnership Programs, Indicative Principles and Standards, Washington, DC 2007

11. The conduct of the Project will be characterised by in-depth study, participation, openness to external inputs and wide consultation. It will not seek to “reinvent the wheel” and will utilise the wide body of existing internationally recognised evaluation guidelines and definitions, as developed by the international evaluation networks.² The Project will also identify areas requiring further research and norm development.

12. The base documents are:

- Previous comprehensive evaluations of international institutions (as listed in Annex 1) supplemented as found useful by evidence from other evaluations and studies at institutional level;
- The initial identification of issues as identified by the initiative group;
- Existing evaluation guidelines, including in particular, the Sourcebook for Evaluating Regional and Global Partnership Programs, Indicative Principles and Standards;
- Pertinent institutional studies and relevant literature.

Project Phasing

13. **Inception Phase (4 months).** This phase will focus on a first exploration of the comprehensive evaluations and relevant documentation, and will consist of:

- A preliminary desk study which will deepen the identification of issues; make an initial collation of available documentation and evidence; and provide annotated outlines for the subsequent deliverables as elaborated above;
- Circulation of the preliminary desk study for wide comment including from the three international evaluation groupings;
- A workshop with participation from the reference group which will critique and deepen the issues, may identify additional issues; and will suggest additional sources of evidence. It will finalise the content of the deliverables, consultations and manner of working for the remainder of the project.

14. **Development of Deliverables (12 months):** Work will be undertaken by a team of consultants. It is envisaged that there will be a base team of three to four (two senior consultants with experience of comprehensive evaluations, or a senior and a mid-level consultant and one or two research assistants). Between them the senior/mid-level consultants will combine both experience of UN system agencies and programmes, IFIs and “vertical funds”. Their work will be supplemented as necessary with specialist inputs.

15. Drafts, intermediate outputs and near final products will be submitted to the project reference group for comments and suggestions, critique and approval, and draft key products, such as the guidance and the lessons learned/coverage documents, will be circulated to the international evaluation networks for comments. A budgetary provision is included for travel for this purpose and a pre-final workshop would be desirable. Selected members of the reference group may be remunerated to ensure a time commitment to input the process.

16. **Dissemination of Deliverables (3 months):** Final deliverables will be edited in both summary and long format and made available on the internet and in hard copy. Desirably, at least, summaries should be available in French and Spanish in addition to English. Budgetary provision is also made to introduce the deliverables at appropriate international meetings.

² The evaluation networks of the OECD/DAC, UN and the IFIs, as well as the professional networks represented through IOCE and IDEAS

Budget and Project Management

17. The overall costs of the project are estimated at \$200,000, of which \$50,000 for the inception phase has been committed by the GEF Evaluation Office and the Office of Evaluation of IFAD. The funds are kept in the Special Initiative Fund of the GEF Evaluation Office, which is kept in trust by the World Bank Trustee. Project costs would go towards hiring consultants and travel costs for the workshop. The GEF Evaluation Office will also contribute “in kind” by making facilities available for the project. SADEV will also consider providing “in kind” support to the second phase of the project.

18. More information on the project can be obtained through the GEF Evaluation Office, through the Director, Rob D. van den Berg, who can be reached at rvandenberg@thegef.org. The consultant for the desk review in the inception phase is Mr. Paul Balugon. The reference group members are provided below.

Reference Group Members		
Name	Email address	Function
Rob D. van den Berg	rvandenberg@thegef.org	Director, EO, GEF
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Gunilla Törnqvist	Gunilla.Tornqvist@sadev.se	Director-General, SADEV

Annex 1 – List of documents

Comprehensive Evaluations				
Year	Title	Team	Team Leader	Management/Oversight
1999	Evaluation of the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)	ITAD Ltd.	Derek Poate	Multi-donor Steering Committee chaired by Ted J. Kliet
2002	Independent Evaluation of IDA, 1994-2000	OED/World Bank	Catherine Gwin	Bob Picciotto
2003	The CGIAR at 31: Celebrating Its Achievements, Facing Its Challenges	OED/World Bank	Uma Lele	Greg Ingram
2004	Independent Evaluation of the African Development Fund VII, VIII and IX	External	Keith Bezanson	
2004	Addressing the Challenges of Globalization: an Independent Evaluation of the World Bank's Approach to Global Programs	OED/World Bank	Uma Lele	Greg Ingram
2005	Joint Evaluation of Effectiveness and Impact of the Enabling Development Policy of the World Food Programme (WFP)	External	Luca Rosso	Michaela Zintl, BMZ
2005	Independent External Evaluation of IFAD	External	Derek Poate	Luciano Lavizzari
2005	Third Overall Performance Study of the GEF	ICF Consulting	Mark Wagner	Rob D. van den Berg
2007	FAO Independent External Evaluation	External	Leif Christoffersen & Keith Bezanson	John Markie, FAO
2008	Independent Review of the CGIAR system	External	Elizabeth McAllister	
2009	Five-Year Evaluation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	Macro International Inc.	James Sherry, Sangeeta Mookherji & Leo Ryan	TERG
2009	UNAIDS Second Independent Evaluation 2002-2008	External	Derek Poate	
2009	Fourth Overall Performance Study of the GEF	GEF Evaluation Office	Rob D. van den Berg	
2010	Mid-Term Evaluation of the EFA Fast Track Initiative	External	Stephen Lister	IEG/World Bank
On-going	Independent External Evaluation of UNESCO	External	Elliott Stern	
System-wide evaluations (for information purposes)				
Year	Title	Team	Team Leader	Management/Oversight
2003	Toward Country-Led Development: A Multi-Partner Evaluation of the CDF	OED/World Bank	John Eriksson	Greg Ingram

2003	Local Solutions to Global Challenges: Towards Effective Partnerships in Basic Education	External	Ted Freeman	Steering Committee: Rob D. van den Berg Management Committee: Ted J. Kliet
2008	Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration Phase One	External	Bernard Wood	Velayuthan Sivagnanasothy, Niels Dabelstein
On-going	Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration Phase Two	External	Niels Dabelstein	Cao Manh Cuong & Joakim Molander

Governance evaluations and reviews (for information purposes)

Year	Title	Team	Team Leader	Management/Oversight
2008	Governance of the IMF: An Evaluation	IEO	Ruben Lamdany	Thomas A. Bernes
2009	Repowering the World Bank for the 21st century	High-Level Commission on Modernization of World Bank Group Governance	Ernesto Zedillo	

Sourcebooks

Year	Title	Team	Team Leader	Management/Oversight
2007	Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs: Indicative Principles and Standards	IEG/World Bank	Chris Gerrard	IEG and DAC Evaluation Network