Evaluating development assistance
Experiences from the DAC Network on Development Evaluation

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• Works to increase the effectiveness of development cooperation policies and programmes by promoting high quality, independent evaluation.

• Members: evaluation managers and experts from bilateral development agencies & seven multilaterals.

• Partners and others participate in joint work and attend workshops and meetings based on interest.
What is development evaluation?

- Development evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of a development project, programme or policy, its implementation and results.
- Should provide credible and useful evidence to strengthen learning and accountability for development results.
- Core evaluation criteria: relevance, sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness, impact
The Network supports strengthening of evaluation by:

- developing and sharing norms and guidance to strengthen evaluation systems and improve quality,
- promoting and facilitating joint evaluations,
- supporting evaluation capacity development,
- knowledge management and information sharing.

Growing importance of country evaluation capacity in context of increased demand for demonstration of development results, good governance and mutual accountability.
The Network assesses and strengthens member evaluation systems:

- through peer reviews
- sharing of experiences
- development of an agreed normative framework

**Examples:** recent study on systems and resources, glossary, guidance.

Network experiences and the normative framework can be useful for others in strengthening the evaluation function, developing their systems etc.
Strengthening evaluation quality

DAC Quality Standards for Evaluation intended to:

• improve the quality of development evaluation processes and products
• facilitate the comparison of evaluations across countries
• support partnerships, collaboration and joint evaluation
• increase development partners’ use of each others’ evaluation findings
Joint evaluations

• “Collaborative approach to evaluation involving more than one partner country or development agency.”

• Lead role of the Network in promoting joint evaluations. *Example: Joint evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration.*

• Joint evaluations strengthen mutual accountability and can be a good way to build capacity.
Evaluation capacity development (ECD) has been defined as: unleashing, strengthening and maintaining capacities for evaluation, at three levels:

- Individual
- Institutional
- Accountability Environment
1. Capacity development must be locally-owned and driven.

2. Can build on international norms and experiences, BUT must be tailored to context, local needs and interests – there is no “blue print”.

3. Draw on others’ experiences, existing networks and learning platforms
4. Look at both the supply of and the demand for evaluation.

5. Find political support for evaluation.

6. Demonstrate utility and benefits of evaluation to ensure buy-in.

7. Cultivate networks of skilled “evaluation champions.”
8. **Build capacity by using it**: seize opportunities for participation in ongoing evaluations, i.e. joint evaluations with international partners.

9. Move beyond individual training to work on: incentives, institutional cultures, results based management, law, good governance.

10. Support an environment of accountability: role of civil society, media, open debate etc.
Knowledge management and information sharing

- **DAC Evaluation Resource Centre** contains more than 2,200 evaluation reports published by Network members and evaluation guidelines.
- Can be used by evaluators, researchers, programme staff and others to:
  - Browse lessons and findings to learn “what works”
  - Find examples of methodologies and approaches
  - Follow trends in development evaluation
- The “Front page” highlights findings on current events
- Visit DEReC:
  
  www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork/derec
Suggested further resources

- **Institutionalising evaluation**: review of international experience (DFID & 3iE, 2009)
- **Country-led M&E systems** (UNICEF et al, 2008)
- “Creating and Developing Evaluation Organisations” (IOCE, 2007)
- **Asian, African, LAC** Communities of Practice on Managing for Development Results
- **DAC Guidance on Managing Joint Evaluations**
- **Capacity development** good practice work, DAC
Thank you! Comments and suggestions are welcome.

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www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork