GUIDANCE ON DAC COUNTRY MEMORANDUM IN PREPARATION OF PEER REVIEWS

This document has been updated to take account of changes in the Peer Review Content Guide (DCD/DAC(2010)33/FINAL).

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Purpose of the Memorandum

1. The memorandum is an important input into the peer review process and the key working document to help guide members of the peer review team in their enquiry. In addition to offering an opportunity for each DAC member to present a picture of its development co-operation system at a specific point in time, the memorandum provides background information as well as insight into how the country to be reviewed is moving forward. It also allows the peer review team to select specific issues and themes that will be raised during consultations in the capital and in the field. For these reasons each DAC member is required to prepare a memorandum before undergoing a peer review. A whole-of-government approach is recommended in preparation of this memorandum. The document should be made available at least one month before the peer review team conducts its first mission to the capital or the field.

Key information needed

2. The memorandum should cover the following areas:

- Major changes that have taken place since the previous peer review as well as significant changes that are likely to impact on the country’s development co-operation in the future, e.g. changes in response to recommendation in the previous peer review, new legislation, reorganisation or policy shift.

- Lessons of interest to the DAC as well as any particular examples of good practice from the member’s experience that have been evaluated and that should be highlighted for wider reference among DAC members, e.g. in implementing the Paris Declaration, improving aid management, mechanisms promoting policy coherence for development, mainstreaming gender equality, mainstreaming environment and climate change issues, good humanitarian donorship, the whole-of-government approach or organisational and operational aspects.

- Potential challenges for which the peer review team or the DAC may be expected to provide some insight, guidance, or examples of practice from other members.

Style, length and format

3. The country memorandum should be simple, short (40 pages maximum plus annexes), factual and forward looking, with a two to three page executive summary.

- Ideally, it should broadly follow the overall structure of the Content Guide [DCD/DAC (2007)6/Final] focusing on the six chapters contained therein, namely:
  
  i) Strategic orientations;
  
  ii) Development beyond aid;
iii) ODA volume, channels and allocations;

iv) Organisation and management;

v) Aid effectiveness and results; and

vi) Humanitarian assistance.

It should not, however, attempt to answer all the questions posted in the guide. Rather, content should be focused on the key information indicated at paragraph 2 above.

- Use of a list of references at the end of each chapter, with links to major documents and websites, should permit the reviewed country to limit the amount of text in each chapter and guide peer review research.

4. **Annexes** should include:

   i) follow-up to the recommendations from the previous peer review in matrix form;

   ii) charts and tables on the organisational structure of relevant development co-operation agency or ministry, on human resource profile by work location (headquarters and field staff) and by specialty if possible, and on staff secondments to external organisations, if applicable;

   iii) in cases of large and complex development co-operation systems, some indication of the spread of responsibilities among the main agencies, ministries and/or federal departments for international development and governance of the country’s programme;

   iv) a glossary and abbreviations.

5. The memorandum should be in **WORD compatible** format.

6. This guidance will be reviewed periodically based on feedback from users.