Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices

DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD

Joint Venture on Procurement

22 October 2004

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WORKING PARTY FOR AID EFFECTIVENESS AND DONOR PRACTICES:
JOINT VENTURE ON PROCUREMENT

Summary Record
22 October 2004

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda
DCD/DAC/EFF/A(2004)11
1. Members adopted the agenda.

Item 2. Progress Report on outputs for OECD/DAC – World Bank Round Table on Strengthening Procurement Capacities in Developing Countries

2. The Chair and the Secretariat explained that the documents tabled for discussion were still work in progress. In terms of substance and detail, the Round Table believes they demonstrate that substantial progress has been made in coming up with good tools, strategies and practices for procurement capacity strengthening, but they are still in draft form. They will be presented for a final round of discussions at the 3rd Round Table meeting in Johannesburg where participants will be asked to endorse them (see Item 3 below).

3. The reaction to the documents in the meeting was generally favourable, except for the comments summarized below. At the conclusion of the discussions about all three documents, the Chair suggested that more time be given to members to complete their reviews and submit comments. It was agreed to extend the original deadline for submission of comments to 5 November 2004.


4. The Secretariat explained that the document tabled for the meeting was only one third of the intended final product for Benchmarking, Monitoring and Evaluation. These will be transmitted to delegates as soon as they are available. A question was raised concerning how the procurement-specific indicators included in it were linked to the PEFA (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability partnership) indicators which were being developed separately. The Secretariat explained that the Procurement Round Table has been working closely with the PEFA steering committee responsible for development of their indicators and, as a result, the Round Table indicators were being designed specifically to feed into and support PEFA’s higher level system.


5. One member asked how the Capacity Development paper would be linked with the other two Round Table products. Another felt that it needed to be made more operational in focus. It was essential to make sure that the Round Table recommendations are actually put into practice. Details about how this
will be done should be added, as well as more practical country-specific examples about how the recommendations could be used specifically for procurement capacity development. Others believed that there was inadequate attention paid to the involvement of the private sector and the many important procurement-related activities it can play. These comments will be taken into account in the next version of the paper. In addition, an Executive Summary document would also be drafted and made available to all participants along with the updated versions of the Round Table products currently under discussion. Regarding the implementation stage, the Secretariat referred to the draft Johannesburg Declaration, which contained a very preliminary section on future implementation arrangements. The draft Declaration would be discussed in Johannesburg and once there is a consensus about what next steps would be most effective, the results would be reported widely.

c) Draft Framework for Mainstreaming Procurement  
DCD/DAC/EFF(2004)16

6. Comments raised about the draft Framework document covered the following points: (i) the need for a clearer statement of the link between procurement and public financial management (PFM), (ii) the need for good country examples of successful mainstreaming (or otherwise) and (iii) the need for the Round Table documents to address more directly the issue of harmonization and the responsibilities of the donor community in this respect. Several members thought that some of the material in the Annexes could be brought forward into the main text. One member queried where good data about mainstreaming was going to be obtained. The Secretariat suggested that the Benchmarking, Monitoring and Evaluation indicators, which addressed the issue of mainstreaming as well as many other procurement issues, should become over time a good source of this data, once countries start to install the monitoring and reporting systems being designed.

Item 3. 3rd Round Table Meeting 30 November – 2 December 2004

7. A number of comments were made about the draft Johannesburg Declaration and about the draft agenda for the Round Table meeting. Many seemed to think the Declaration as drafted lacked sufficiently clear commitments that could be monitored. Specific references to the Round Table products should be added. While it was reasonably well detailed concerning developing country obligations, it lacked sufficient detail about donor commitments. One member asked what process would be followed to approve the Declaration.

8. In respect of the draft agenda, one member suggested that some important stakeholders be invited to attend the meeting in Johannesburg, e.g. training institutions, universities, etc. Another felt that more partner country input needed to be brought into the process. And another suggested that the Nordic + group be given a slot on the agenda to report on their efforts to harmonize their procurement policies and approaches and build in an explicit commitment to use the Round Table products.

9. A revised copy of the Declaration taking these matters into account will be sent to all participants in early November 2004.

Item 4. Reporting to the Second High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonisation  
DCD/DAC/EFF(2004)18

10. Members were briefed about the schedule leading up to the High Level Forum and advised that the Round Table results were going to be reported as elements of two broader documents: (i) an Issues Paper entitled “Framework for an HLF-2 Declaration and Agenda for Action”, and (ii) a draft HLF-2
Report on Progress Achieved and Remaining Challenges. The Chair commented that the Issues Paper as currently drafted was silent on procurement. A number of possible solutions emerged during the ensuing discussion, including adding references to procurement in several of the existing goals, merging it with the PFM goal or drafting a new goal that would address all the issues relating to procurement in one place. Specific comments were invited as soon as possible, although the deadline was subsequently extended to 22 November. The need for monitor-able commitments was stressed by one member.

11. The Chair summarized the discussion as follows. In general procurement needs to be made much more visible. In the progress report a stocktaking of the current situation relating to procurement needs to be included and future steps described. The Round Table results are an important input into the HLF-2 and need to be highlighted. There was broad support for procurement being made the topic of one of the Implementer’s Fora which are being planned shortly before the HLF-2. The Secretariat offered to draft a separate goal for procurement (the preferred solution for most members relating to these matters in the Issues Paper) and to provide suggested revisions and additions to the Report on Progress so that procurement was properly addressed.

Item 5. Update on Two Upcoming Global Fora on Corruption in Public Procurement

12. Members were briefed about the upcoming OECD Global Forum on Governance on “Fighting Corruption and Promoting Integrity in Public Procurement,” which is scheduled for 29-30 November 2004, and the DAC Development Partnership Forum on "Improving Donor Effectiveness in Combating Corruption” on 9-10 December 2004. The Chair stressed how important it was that the Round Table effort to come up with better ways to strengthen procurement capacities be publicly linked to the broader anti-corruption agenda. This message needs to be highlighted and combined with the Round Table efforts to improve procurement system capacities as a means of tracking and combating corruption.

Item 6. Other Business

13. There was no other business.
ANNEX 1

FINAL PARTICIPANTS LIST FOR WP-EFF MEETING ON THE JOINT VENTURE ON PROCUREMENT

22 October 2004

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