Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices

DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE JOINT VENTURE ON MANAGING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

Held on 26 April 2005 at the OECD in Paris

This document is submitted FOR APPROVAL at the next meeting of the Joint Venture on Managing for Development Results.

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DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING
OF THE JOINT VENTURE ON MANAGING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

26 APRIL 2005

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

1. The meeting’s agenda as proposed earlier was accepted by the members.

Summary of the third meeting (agenda item 2)

2. The summary records of the fourth meeting of the JV were accepted by the meeting without proposals for changes.

Introductory remarks by the co-chair of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (the ‘parent’-body of the Joint Venture), Mr. Michel Reveyrand

3. Michel Reveyrand indicated that the Working Party (WP EFF) will meet at 30 and 31 May. It will then, amongst others, discuss the work programme for the coming 2–3 years, including the programme of the JV MfDR. Today’s discussions of the JV’s programme are therefore timely.

4. As to the JV programme itself, he mentioned as elements that he considers of special importance: (i) the dissemination of MfDR principles and practices, as he had the impression that the concept as such is not yet widely understood, (ii) the facilitation by the JV (-members) of work at the country level on development of MfDR practice.

5. On the current task B-3 of the JV, Michel Reveyrand urged the JV and its task team to coordinate work with other groups that operate under the DAC and that also will develop proposals for the DAC to improve on current aid allocation processes. It is important that no inconsistent proposals are being developed and good coordination is the way to prevent that.

Co-chairs message: Reflections on the Post HLF perspectives for the JV MfDR (agenda item 3)

6. The JV co-chairs had shortly after the HLF sent a letter to the JV members. This letter considered the very substantial commitments made by donors and by partner countries in the area of Managing for Development Results. The JV needs to consider what it believes it can and should do to support these commitments and ‘make them come true’! The co-chairs, together with the secretariat, have wanted to explore the possible implications for the JV’s work programme, and have tabled for today’s discussions a results-framework for the JV, that relates both the current tasks and possible new JV-tasks with the Paris Declaration ambitions.

7. Co-chairs also stressed in their message that active commitments by all members are needed that are commensurate with the ambitions and the tasks that the JV wants to take on board. They stressed that choices have to be made such that the new work programme will be a realistic one. They furthermore raised the question of the sun-set clause: when does the JV believe it will have completed its job and dismantle? Furthermore, the participation of partner countries in the work of the JV was suggested as an issue for discussion today, and finally, co-chairs suggested to explore the usefulness of the formation of a
“MfDR Blue Ribbon group”. All of the above mentioned topics are included in today’s agenda. Firstly, however, the chair invited the meeting to reflect in general terms on the messages in the co-chairs’ letter.

8. The co-chairs letter generated the following comments:

- (US). The Paris declaration is the right focal point for the JV’s results framework. The total of the proposals in that framework however looks somewhat over-ambitious. As the WP EFF has as its horizon 2008, there seems to be no reason why the JV would close earlier. The fast movers proposal sounds good, it is a laboratory from where lessons and experiences can radiate outwards. The JV should keep its various audiences well in mind when communicating its products. The capacity in USAID to support the JV is limited right now.

- (Norway) Scale down the programme, perhaps by combining proposals. Make ToRs that specify what the products will be, for what audiences they are meant, and what time schedules will apply. New JV activities should be oriented to MfDR capacity building at country level.

- (Sweden) intends to become more active in the JV and considers to provide more resources. It takes a special interest in the assessment of results and of aid effectiveness, and it has developed a position paper on results reporting that it wants to share with the JV and with the task-team D.

- (Austria) has not yet fully discussed the proposals at head quarters, but MfDR will be a distinct theme in its Paris follow up action plan.

- (Greece) supports the need of small donors for a MfDR good practice paper

- (Netherlands) supports the thinking in the co-chairs letter, and wants to emphasize the importance of partner country involvement in the JV. Also the role of statistics for MfDR is crucial, and the JV should seek cooperation with PARIS-21.

- (Canada) stresses that MfDR is not ‘easy’ and progress on this front is not likely to be fast! The JV should now focus on experiences in partner countries, for instance by selecting 5 or so, and involve the donors active in those countries. This proposal in the results framework is therefore strongly supported.

- (Denmark) supports much of what has been said by others: we need to be strategic, and focus our efforts. The sourcebook is a good reference work highlighting emerging practice.

- (Japan) also urges the JV to maintain focus, and the proposed results framework may be too ambitious. The number of tasks should be limited to perhaps four, with a certain sequencing: first content (i.e. the sourcebook), then dissemination and communication. Partner countries to be involved. The Paris Declaration is for a large part concerned with donor behaviour, including in the area of MfDR, and we need a kind of guidebook on post-Paris behaviour. Finally, Japan suggests that the JV ‘delegates’ some of the work it sees to Paris-21 and the Working Party on Evaluation.

- (UK) supports the thinking in the co-chairs letter. From the Paris Declaration the following issues have become prominent: (i) how to identify results (outcomes)? (ii) how do you (donor, partner) know whether you are approaching or reaching planned-for results? (iii) how is data used for analysis and decision-making? The mutual learning initiative in fast-moving partner countries should focus on these issues. Parallel to this the donor perspective is addressed in the current tasks B3 and D. On partner country representation: it is more important to have the right individuals at the table than have ‘countries’-representatives.
(African Development Bank) suggests to seek synergies with for instance the NEPAD mutual review process when selecting partner countries for participation in the JV or in specific tasks. Sunset-clause … not within the next 10 years! The suggestion is made to have JV meetings in partner countries.

(France) indicates that it is committed to bring task B3 on aid allocations to a good end. Regarding partner country involvement France suggests to organise a (new) round of regional seminars like was done by the WP EFF in the fall of 2004.

(World Bank) adds to what has been said already that the mutual learning implies a many ways communication: from the JV to donors and partners, but also the other way around, and also among partner countries. The mutual learning proposal is therefore well placed. Furthermore the bank stresses the importance of local capacity for MfDR. This is concerned with the capacity to collect data, but also the capacity to use it for planning and decision-making.

(Germany) indicated that some bilateral donors have only limited resources available to participate actively in the work of the task-teams.

In the subsequent discussion the following issues were addressed:

**Partner country involvement in the JV MfDR**

9. In the follow up to the HLF the partner country involvement in the WP EFF will be expanded, from the current 14 to perhaps 20 – 25 partner countries. In that case also the importance of the quality of the inputs is rated much above the formal representation aspect.

10. The fact that no direct partner country involvement in the JV exists up to now, and that decisions therefore are taken unilaterally by the donors can be considered as a weakness of the JV. Norway raised the question whether country partner representation in the JV should be drawn from the partner countries present in the WP EFF. The meeting felt that any kind of ‘formal representation’ of partners does not have much value added. Instead, informed and involved individuals from relevant partner country institutions that are involved in the JV’s tasks (such as mutual learning process) certainly will have such added value.

11. Co-chairs will in the months to come explore the options here, such as inviting partner country officials who are involved in some way in the JV’s tasks. They will then put more concrete proposals to the next meeting.

**“Communication Strategy” of the JV.**

12. In what form(s) will the products of the JV be disseminated and communicated to the various audiences of the JV? The meeting agreed that the sourcebook will be – in fact already is - the primary source both for donors and partner countries in search of the explanation of MfDR principles, concepts and approaches, and for emerging MfDR practices. Next to the sourcebook we may need other ways and tools to disseminate lessons learnt and good practices found, for instance in the form of short (1-3 page) tip-sheets. These should focus on how to manage for results, not why. Furthermore a serious web-site is needed, where not only the Sourcebook on MfDR can be accessed, but also other products of the JV, as well as links to other useful sites. On the additional need for a Good Practices paper opinions differed.

13. The meeting concluded that the JV needs a clear communication strategy, and it was suggested that the secretariat prepares a note on this subject in cooperation with some members who are presently involved in preparing products for delivery.
14. Michel Reveyrand suggested that the JV considers the organisation of a ‘big event’ on MfDR (a 3rd Round Table after Washington 2002 and Marrakesh 2004) in between now and 2008.

**Regional Communities of Practice (CoP’s) on MfDR**

15. Before entering into a discussion of the draft results framework, the chair invited Bruce Purdue, in his capacity as the AsDB representative, to introduce the Bank’s initiative to start a “Community of Practice on MfDR” (CoP) in the Asia region. Bruce explained that this initiative of the Bank intends to involve partner countries as well as donors at field level, in an exchange of information, which is at the same time a capacity development effort as it wants to promote ‘learning by doing’. The CoP would be an ‘on-line community’, a virtual learning network. A high level of interest by member countries is already recorded, and the programme can be considered to be demand-driven. The AsDB invites all members to actively participate in the CoP through their field level representatives.

16. The IADB indicated that it is initiating a USD30 million programme that has clear similarities with the CoP as presented by the AsDB. Of the 26 borrowing member countries of the IADB 16 have already signed into this MfDR capacity building programme, that starts with a diagnostic on MfDR in the countries concerned, and then develops a country specific action plan to build capacity in governments to manage for development results. There have been initial contacts with the World Bank and it is expected that both institutions will work together on this programme. Again, bilaterals may participate in this programme and are invited to indicate that to the Bank.

17. Various members positively reacted to these proposals. From the beginning there has been the risk that MfDR would be perceived as a top-down, or North-South movement, and these CoP’s may very well counter that impression in a good way. It raises however the question of the relationship of the CoP’s with the JV MfDR. Members agreed that the two should be considered as being complementary to each other. The JV should make sure to have an overview of what is happening, and it will want to support these regional/local initiatives in the ways it can. At the same time the initiators and managers of these initiatives are requested to maintain the information links to the JV, if only to help the JV to act as a clearing house and a platform for exchange.

**Draft Work Programme 2005/06 of the Joint Venture (agenda item 4)**

**Introduction: Draft Results framework**

18. On the draft results framework for the JV, members observed that the JV does in fact not yet have a forward agenda once the ongoing tasks are being completed. The results framework therefore is timely. It is at the same time relevant, as it attempts to link the JV programme directly to the Paris commitments on MfDR. Members however re-iterated that the JV cannot and should not make itself responsible for implementation of the Paris declaration as far as the results paragraphs are concerned. It is the governments of partner countries and of donor countries, and the other signatories to the declaration, that bear the primary responsibility here. The JV should identify what supporting role it sees for itself, and translate that role in its work programme.

19. The draft results framework in this sense was considered insufficiently clear by the meeting. Too many individual proposals do make an over-ambitious impression. The Chair indicated that the results framework is meant to provide an overview of current as well as possible new tasks that might follow from the Paris Declaration. In that sense it is a sort of menu to choose from. The Chair suggested to first discuss the ongoing tasks of the JV including the possible follow-up that the meeting considers relevant. Subsequently possible new tasks can be discussed.
(a) Discussion of current task and their follow up in the 2005/06 work program

*Task B2 – Sourcebook MfDR (status report attached as Annex A)*

20. The authors of the Sourcebook were commended on the excellent job done. There was broad support from the meeting for publishing the Sourcebook, both in an electronic – web-based – version and as a hard copy version. The Sourcebook is to be considered as a “living document” on which work will continue. A next meeting of the Review Panel is foreseen coming September. Two or three partner countries will be invited to participate in the review panel.

21. Some members suggested to limit the hard copy version of the Sourcebook to a summarised version. Many others considered the introductory – methodological – chapters very useful, as part of the communication by the JV of the MfDR principles and approaches, and did not support producing a summary version. It was agreed that the Review Panel will look into this matter. Members agreed that the Sourcebook should be published (hard copy) also in French and Spanish in order to maximize its impact. There was also agreement that it should be published under the OECD-DAC banner.

*Task B3 – Results-based Allocation (status report attached as Annex B)*

22. A short debate on the relevance of this work for the MfDR agenda once again demonstrated that views of members differ here. Paul Isenman from the Secretariat pointed at the parallel work of this task team and the LAP on Fragile States that is preparing work on the request of the DAC-HLM. In the discussions it was agreed that the subject of aid allocation involves many more aspects than (expected or observed) results-performance. The work done by task team B-3 is very useful at the systemic level, but needs to be complemented with other elements. The discussion of the wider issue of aid allocations needs to take place in another body than the JV, likely the WP EFF and the DAC, before presenting it to the SLM. It was concluded that the descriptive, technical paper of which a first draft has become available last week, should be completed. At the same time, cooperation with the LAP group is to be initiated, to see what joint work can be identified for the paper to be prepared for the SLM in December 2005.

*Task C – Monitoring and Reporting (status report attached as Annex C)*

23. The meeting confirmed that this task is very central in the JV’s programme of work. It is related to “Indicator 11” of the Paris Declaration, it feeds directly into the Sourcebook, and provides crucial inputs to a Mutual Learning task and into Communities of Practice on MfDR. The status report indicates that there are delays in the completion of the task.

24. The meeting acknowledged that Swedish SIDA has presented a concept paper on the urgent need to harmonize and align to country systems that generate results-information that is to be usable and relevant both for in-country results management and for results communication by donor agencies to their constituencies. Members’ comments are invited on the paper, to SIDA via the JV secretariat.

25. The suggestion was made by some members to combine the work of task-team C and the initiative taken by SIDA, as the two seem related. It was emphasised that we should not try to develop a single results-reporting model, as country-specific conditions and needs lead to multiple uses of the results information. The effort should however lead to various good practices and ‘tips’.

*Task D – Agency Performance (status report attached as Annex D)*

26. Two workshops have already been organized by this task-team, while a third is scheduled for the day after this JV meeting. It was unclear the way the results should be communicated, and regarding possible next steps. As to the first question it was agreed that the sourcebook is a good ‘outlet’ – and the
results of the first workshop (country programming) have already been mentioned there). Some members indicated that the good/emerging practices note that was produced after the first workshop in fact is being used in their agency.

27. The meeting also acknowledged that the monitoring of the Paris Declaration indicators in fact is about monitoring the (changes in) behaviour by donors and partners. It is therefore good to have a pause now in the work of this task-team, and see how the monitoring of the Paris Declaration takes shape, and how the much-needed inputs from partner countries in that monitoring will be organized.¹

28. The follow-up for task-team D will be discussed between the task team managers and co-chairs in the following weeks. Proposals from that discussion will be presented to the JV at a later stage.

(b) Possible new tasks to be included in the 2005/06 work programme

29. Co-chairs committed to present to the members on short notice a reworked results framework, plus concept notes on the new activities that they want to present to the JV for consideration. They urged the members at the same time that such proposals can only be considered realistically if the resource implications are also considered by the members. Reactions by members to the proposals therefore should both address substantial issues and the position with regard to the possible involvement of each member in terms of (i) active involvement in the task-team and (ii) possible funding of the activities involved. Several members underlined that the JV should focus its programme on a limited number of concrete contributions to the implementation of the Paris Declaration.

“Blue ribbon group” (agenda item 5)

30. Some members indicated to see advantages of having a platform of high-level agency officials with responsibility for the ‘behavioural’ changes that are needed in agencies if they indeed want to manage for results rather than for inputs and activities. Also the involvement of the ‘peers’ of such officials from partner countries seems to open interesting possibilities to enhance the mutual learning. However, most members indicated that they do not see the need for such a separate group, and would not support this initiative.

Monitoring the Paris Commitments (agenda item 6)

31. The possible involvement of the JV in the monitoring of the Paris Declaration targets – notably of the indicator 11 - is at this point still an open question. The monitoring needs to be arranged yet in the WP EFF in its meeting of 30-31 May. The possible role of the JV in helping to define concepts, discuss target-setting and assist in the monitoring of indicator 11 needs to be revisited at a later point in time.

Next Steps

32. Co-chairs will rework the results framework to make it more concise and transparent, and will come back to members with concise proposals for the mutual learning initiative and the support from the JV to the CoP’s. Members are urged to comment on those proposals on short notice (so that a draft work programme of the JV can be presented to the WP EFF. Members are also urged to indicate the support they may provide to that programme, both in terms of active involvement in its implementation and in terms of resources to be made available for tasks.

¹ In the workshop on agency performance assessment on the day after the JV meeting, some members indicated to take an interest in this matter, including DFID, World Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and perhaps also The Netherlands and German BMZ.
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