DAC Network on Governance

Draft Agenda: THINKING AND WORKING POLITICALLY WORKSHOP

The need for more politically-smart programming

8 December 2015
OECD, Château de la Muette, Roger Ockrent Room

The main purpose of this workshop will be:
- To introduce the concept and the rationale for thinking and working more politically within development;
- To explore what it means in practice, highlighting the benefits and challenges of the approach;
- To identify future research and evidence needs for taking this approach forward.

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10:30-10:45  1. Opening and Welcome

• Brenda Killen, Deputy Director, Development Cooperation Directorate, OEC
• David Yang, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Democracy, USAID & Kirsten Bishop, Director, Governance Section, Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia, Co-Chair of the Governance Network

10:45– 12:00  2. Why Politics Matters! Doing Development Differently

A growing body of evidence tells us that development programmes focused exclusively on providing financial and technical solutions to problems often fail to deliver development results because the programme did not take sufficient account of political dynamics. This session will make the case for why it is important for practitioners to take better account of political factors in partner countries be they fragile or non-fragile. It will also outline what this means in practice: undertaking political economic analysis; initiating more flexible, problem-driven and adaptive programming that responds to changing political-economic contexts, and conducting programming that explicitly challenges existing power relationships in the political and economic spheres.

Moderator:

• Alan Whaites, Accountable and Effective Institutions Team Lead, OECD

Speakers:

• David Booth, Senior Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
• Heather Marquette, Director of the Development Leadership Programme, University of Birmingham
  Respondent:
• Lisa Williams, Senior Governance Fellow, Bureau of Democracy, USAID

12:30-14:00 Lunch and networking

14:00–15:30  3. Looking at the Evidence: Understanding the Benefits and Challenges of Thinking and Working Politically

This session will hear from a range of experts and practitioners on their experiences of putting ‘Thinking and Working Politically’ into action. It will seek to explore what benefits this approach has delivered in terms of programming impact and effectiveness across different sectors and across different types of countries and what challenges practitioners faced when adopting this approach.

Moderator: Kirsten Bishop Director, Governance Section, Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

Speakers:
• Laure-Helene Piron (DFID) on the emerging findings of DFID’s on-going review on political economy analysis
• Verena Fritz, Senior Public Sector Governance Specialist, World Bank
• Debra Ladner, Director, Program Strategy, Innovation and Learning, The Asia Foundation

15:30-15:45 Coffee Break

15:45-16:15 4. Doing and using everyday Political Analysis

At present most development administrations undertake country-level political analysis on an annual basis, outlining the major political trends in their partner countries. In addition, when projects start to fail or get into difficulties programme managers tend to carry out some sort of problem-driven political analysis. However, currently there is no tool for undertaking quick and easy political analysis on a more regular basis in order to get real-time information. This session unpacks what an everyday political analysis toolkit would look like, how it incorporates economic analysis, and how it can be used in practice.

Moderator: David Yang, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Democracy, USAID

Speakers:
• Sam Waldock, Governance Advisor, DFID
• David Hudson, Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, UCL and Deputy Director of the Developmental Leadership Programme, University of Birmingham

16:15-17:10 5. Putting Political Analysis into Practice

Participants will breakout into discussion groups and undertake an exercise in which they will seek to apply the ‘every day political analysis tool kit’ to a programme case study. The session will seek to identify what kind of question advisors need to start asking? Who do you need to be talking to? What changes are required to donors’ internal administrations to enable this approach to programming? And, how do we stop this becoming too clinical and keep it practical for programme management and action? The session will finish with some reflections by development co-operation providers on their experiences of putting political analysis into practice and the usefulness of the toolkit.

Moderator: David Hudson, Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, UCL and Deputy Director of the Developmental Leadership Programme, University of Birmingham

Speakers:
• Per Nordlund, Lead Policy Specialist, Democracy and Human Right, SIDA
• Ms Gülten Aka, Governance Expert, Belgium Development Agency (TBC)

17:10-18:00 6. Moving Forward: Research and Evidence Needs

Can we prove that it works, and how do we convince others that TWP can make a difference? What evidence do we need and how should we get it?

Moderator: Debra Ladner, Director, Program Strategy, Innovation and Learning, The Asia Foundation
Speakers:

- Heather Marquette - Development Leadership Programme’s research plans
- David Booth - Overseas Development Institute’s research plans
- Pablo Yanguas - Effective States and Inclusive Development (ESID) research centres plans
  (joining by video conference)