Summary Record of the 1075th DAC meeting held on 30 April and 4 May 2020

The Revised Draft Summary Record [DCD/DAC/M(2020)4/REV1] was sent to the DAC for APPROVAL via the written procedure.

No objections were expressed by the 12 June 2020's deadline; the record is therefore considered approved, issued as final, and declassified.

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Summary Record of the 1075th DAC meeting held on 30 April and 4 May 2020

Session 1: Thursday 30 April 2020

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda & Approval of Draft Summary Record
1. Due to the confinement of all delegates and Secretariat staff resulting from the Covid-19 crisis, this meeting was held virtually through the Zoom videoconferencing tool and divided into two separate sessions: the first on 30 April 2020 and the second on 4 May 2020. The DAC Chair invited delegates to approve the agenda, which they did without modification.

2. The Chair then invited the Committee to approve the draft summary record from the DAC meeting held on 26 March 2020 (Session 1) and 3 April 2020 (Session 2). Two delegations requested changes to paragraph 18 of the record. The Chair asked that the Secretariat revise the draft record accordingly and reissue it for agreement by the Committee via the written procedure. If no delegations object to the revised version by the deadline, the record will be considered approved, issued as final, and declassified.

Item 2. Briefing by the DCD Director and DAC Chair
3. The Director and Chair reported to the Committee on a number of developments and work streams, including through updates issued via email a few days earlier.

4. The Chair announced that the May DAC meeting has been moved from 13 May to 28 May (first session) with a second session likely to be held in early June. She then recommended that all DAC meetings between now and August be held in a virtual setting, possibly in double sessions. She then informed the Committee that discussions with the Paris Club on debt are advancing. The CSO dialogue meeting will be held in early June around the time of the DAC meeting.

5. In her capacity as co-facilitator of the DAC informal group on Major Policy Issues (MPI), the delegate from Iceland suggested to hold another MPI meeting very shortly to discuss Covid-19 lessons learned and work going forward. She asked if the DAC felt that the MPI is an appropriate venue for those discussions.

6. The Director thanked members for their responses to the Covid-19 survey. Although not all members were able to report their bilateral or multilateral support, he shared initial results, which he proposed to present in the form of a paper or a presentation for the Committee in the coming weeks. WP-STAT will also discuss in June how best to capture support to combat Covid-19 in the CRS.

Item 3. SIDS / Vulnerability / Short-term ODA mechanism
7. The Secretariat delivered a presentation on work supporting small island developing states (SIDS) including on sustainable ocean economies, joint work with the Centre for Tax Policy and Administration on enhancing domestic revenue mobilisation for sustainable development, and transition finance. Members expressed strong support for this very important discussion and the work being undertaken, underscoring the great vulnerabilities of SIDS along with the additional challenge of responding to the Covid-19 crisis.

8. Among the priorities for support to SIDS, the DAC identified sustainable ocean economy, resilience, climate action, domestic resource mobilisation, and transition finance. A number of members supported the creation of a ‘Friends of SIDS’ group, suggested a paper on the effects of Covid-19 on SIDS as a crucial input to future discussions, and encouraged drawing on existing initiatives such as the SAMOA Pathway.
9. No consensus emerged to pursue a special short-term ODA mechanism to respond to catastrophic humanitarian crises. The Chair concluded that this discussion will need to come back to the Committee soon. She proposed to reflect with the SIDS champions in the Committee on how to move forward on this agenda.

**Item 4. DAC Programme of Work and Budget 2021–22**

10. The Chair opened this item by referring to her letter of 27 April 2020. The Secretariat then presented the revised draft proposal of the DAC Programme of Work and Budget 2021–22. Several members intervened *inter alia* to state their positions, reiterate their priorities, share their views on specific points, and comment on intermediate outputs that could be reduced in scope and budget and others whose budget should be retained as proposed or increased. The discussion did not enable the Committee to approve the /REV3 of the PWB. Members agreed that the /REV4 ought to be the final version submitted for the Committee’s approval and that an informal or exceptional meeting of the Committee may be required to reach consensus.

11. The Committee agreed to the proposal to consolidate the DAC PWB into a single Output Area with the title “Development Co-operation”.

**Item 5. Summary of Conclusions**

12. The Secretariat provided an overview of the decisions, action points, and next steps emerging from the day’s proceedings. The Secretariat will circulate this overview to the Committee in electronic form.

**Item 6. Any Other Business**

13. No delegation raised any issue under Any Other Business.

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### Session 2: Monday 4 May 2020

**Item 7. Thinking: Implications of the Coronavirus Pandemic for the Global Economy, Developing Countries and Donors**

14. The Chair introduced and welcomed Mr. Martin Lees, Chair of OECD-IIASA Task Force on Systems Thinking, Anticipation and Resilience, part of the OECD-IIASA Partnership on System Thinking. She then emphasised the importance and timeliness of the discussion on system thinking and COVID19 considering the multidimensional impacts of the pandemic in developing countries and the need for the DAC to play to its comparative advantage and leverage wider OECD knowledge and efforts.

15. The Director thanked Mr. Lees for the excellent collaboration with the DCD in the OECD/IIASA Task Force, which led to the co-drafting of a chapter on development co-operation in the recent OECD-IIASA joint publication on System Thinking for Policy Making¹. He highlighted the opportunity to mainstream system-based approaches in DCD work, support DAC Members in this area, and deepen the collaboration with the Task Force, especially in the work on policy reform and peer reviews.

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16. Mr. Lees then addressed the DAC with a presentation on the systemic implications of the Coronavirus for developing countries and donors. He emphasised that development co-operation can adapt to the systemic impact of COVID-19 in six major ways:

1. Deepen the integration of development co-operation with mainstream national policies.
2. Introduce a systems-based policy framework for development co-operation.
3. Strengthen the capabilities and resilience in developing countries through international co-operation.
4. Revitalise multilateral co-operation to meet intensifying global challenges.
5. Re-establish government capacity to anticipate risks and integrate policies.
6. Generate public understanding and support for development co-operation.

17. He also highlighted the opportunity of the crisis to combine, within a systemic policy framework, policies and investments to counter the impacts of the pandemic with those aimed at reducing inequality and deprivation and creating a low-carbon, sustainable economy. The OECD and the DAC, together with IIASA and other partners, have the capability to assist Member countries in developing a framework of strategic policies to foster anticipation, preparedness and resilience in developing countries.

18. Members welcomed the presentation’s longer-term perspective on improving governments’ capacity to anticipate. Members and the Chair encouraged continued collaboration with the OECD-IIASA Task Force, which the Director stressed that the Secretariat would reinforce.

Item 8. Schedule of DAC Peer Reviews

19. The Chair introduced this item by observing that Covid-19 is affecting members’ ability to prepare for and host peer reviews, with three postponements already requested. In light of this, the Secretariat presented two options to the Committee – (i) pausing planned peer reviews for a period and re-setting the sequence or (ii) continuing where possible, if necessary using a lighter-touch approach. The Director and Head of Division (DCD/RREDI) noted the Secretariat’s preference for the second option.

20. Members confirmed that peer reviews are a core function of the DAC and emphasised the importance of safeguarding the integrity, comparability and quality of the process to the greatest extent possible. They underscored the importance of ensuring a developing country perspective through country visits. While Denmark expressed interest in piloting some of the elements proposed for an updated peer review methodology and approach, others felt that the outcomes of the update should not be prejudged, and that urgency should be given to advancing the reform of the methodology, incorporating lessons learned from the present situation.

21. One-third of members expressed interest in the first option, with many also open to a hybrid approach as proposed by the Chair. A further third supported the second option or were comfortable with either. As there was no clear decision, the Chair requested a revised note, calling for a temporary pause with the option to resume later in the year based on the context of individual members. The note should also set out a timetable for updating the methodology, including a Major Policy Issues group discussion, and a proposed calendar for 2021-22 following bilateral discussions with members concerned. Members were invited to provide written comments on the updated methodology and approach, as well as themes for virtual peer learning discussions in response to Covid-19.
Item 9. DAC Global Relations Strategy

22. The Secretariat and the co-chairs of the DAC Informal Group on Engagement (IGE) presented current and planned engagement activities within the DAC’s Global Relations Strategy. A summary of the informal group’s discussion from last week will be circulated shortly. The Committee confirmed that outreach is an essential aspect of the DAC’s work and shared its feedback, in particular on how to adjust the Committee’s approach to engagement in light of the ongoing Coronavirus crisis (exploring the use of virtual meetings).

23. The Chair and a number of members welcomed the use of existing OECD platforms and international fora, while maintaining the specific value of DAC dialogues. They called for targeting outcomes over the delivery of meetings, consulting with partners and emerging donors, and considering the likelihood of political-level participation to guide the identification of appropriate dialogue platforms.

24. Members requested that the Secretariat keep the ongoing events calendar up to date. They agreed that the Committee would revise its global relations strategy, working through the IGE as in previous years, and then adopt the revision in the DAC itself. The Secretariat will support the IGE co-Chairs and the DAC Chair in this process. Members also suggested to integrate the perspective of multilateral and regional organisations, proposed peer learning events with emerging economies (and in particular their development agencies) as the basis for outreach, and advocated to continue advancing the Committee’s standards globally.

25. The Secretariat invited member feedback on the scope for outreach within the subsidiary bodies and more broadly the DAC global relations strategy, which can be raised in the next IGE meeting.

Item 10. Summary of Conclusions

26. The Secretariat provided an overview of the decisions, action points, and next steps emerging from the day’s proceedings. The Secretariat will circulate this overview to the Committee in electronic form.

Item 11. Any Other Business

27. Switzerland (as co-chair of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation – GPEDC) and Canada (as co-chair of the informal DAC reference group on effective development co-operation) briefed delegates on the ongoing work on effectiveness. The reference group has developed and approved its terms of reference and begun reflections on inputs for the DAC High Level Meeting. The Canadian delegate requested an item in the June 2020 DAC agenda to brief on the work of this group and that of the GPEDC. The 19th GPEDC Steering Committee meeting will take place on 11-12 May, at which participants will discuss the work programme and Global Partnership monitoring reform.

28. The World Bank representative intervened to share a link to a website2 that presents data on the Bank’s projects and datasets – including responses to the Covid-19 crisis – through an interactive map.

2 https://maps.worldbank.org