DAC Network on Poverty Reduction

DETERMINING POVNET'S PRIORITY WORK PROPOSALS FOR THE DAC 2009-10 PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET

30-31 (a.m.) October 2007, Room Roger Ockrent, Château de la Muette, OECD, Paris

This document is for DISCUSSION under Item XII of the POVNET agenda [DCD/DAC/POVNET/A(2007)13].

Like other DAC subsidiary bodies, POVNET is being asked to provide suggestions of up to 4 outputs to be included in the DAC’s 2009-10 Work Programme. These will subsequently need to receive a high priority in the DAC voting exercise in early 2008 and be funded with voluntary contributions before they can be implemented. It is thus important that POVNET members come to the October meeting with suggestions for priority outputs, for which their agency will also be willing to commit time and resources to support.

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I. Introduction and objectives

1. The DAC and its subsidiary bodies now need to start the process of preparing for the 2009-10 Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). The DAC has issued guidance on how to go about this (see Section II below) and proposals should take into account the results of recent evaluative exercises as these relate to POVNET (see Section III below).

2. In light of the very tight timetable set by the OECD for preparing the PWB, the October meeting will be the only opportunity for a discussion in POVNET concerning the work it wishes to propose to the DAC for inclusion in the 2009-10 biennium.

3. As the PWB must be demand driven, by Members, this note makes no “early” proposals as to the possible themes of POVNET work in 2009-10. Rather, it sets the scene for that discussion in POVNET, including by placing POVNET work in the broader context of the DAC’s and the OECD’s overarching objectives. Members are thus invited to come to the POVNET meeting prepared to make and discuss proposals which their agency is willing to support with time and resources. Like other DAC subsidiary bodies, POVNET will need to arrive at up to four priority work proposals to transmit to the DAC by 30 November 2007. Given these time constraints, the POVNET Bureau, supported by the Secretariat, will take the lead with drafting and finalising the templates to be prepared for each work proposal (see Annex 1).

II. Guidance from DAC for preparing PWB output proposals

4. The process for the preparation of the 2009-10 PWB was launched on 11 October 2007 in a letter from the Director of the Development Co-operation Directorate to the Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies¹. The main points are:

- DAC subsidiary bodies can submit proposals for up to four output results (the DAC itself may submit up to eight). Note that proposals for output results cover both core (e.g. statistical reporting, peer reviews) and non-core activities (which includes, i.a. POVNET’s work). Once the “long list” of proposals is established, non-core proposals will be subject to the voting/prioritisation exercise.

- Proposals are to be set out in the standardised template and in a maximum of two pages. There should be one template for each proposal. The template should set out clearly the final output result to be achieved. Among other things, it will be important to set out the demand/clients for the work and how it contributes to broader DAC and OECD objectives. We further suggest that

all proposals should include a communications and dissemination strategy and proposals on how to evaluate if the outputs are impacting, reinforcing and/or changing donor behaviour.

- The overall objective is to reduce the volume of DAC activities and to increase their quality and the value added of DAC products for the development community, and for development itself. Key aspects of preparing proposals will thus be to justify the value added of the output result, demonstrate why only the DAC/POVNET can produce this output, or produce it better, and which donor behaviours we seek to change and how to go about this.

- Work proposals may be new themes so far not undertaken by the POVNET, but equally they can be proposals to continue existing/on-going work e.g. in order to field test existing policy guidance developed in the 2007-8 PWB. Joint proposals may be made with other DAC subsidiary bodies or indeed with other OECD committees.

5. The timeline and milestones for the preparation of the PWB are set out in detail in Annex 2. The key initial ones are:

- **30 November 2007**: Final submission date for priority work proposals. This timing allows POVNET to have a full discussion about proposals at its meeting on 30-31 October.

- **22 January 2008**: DAC approves the long list of proposals to launch the voting exercise.

- The voting period is **22 January to 15 March 2008**. It will be important for POVNET members to be fully involved in the process in their capitals that decides each Member’s voting allocation.

- **September 2008**: First pledging window opens for voluntary contributions for 2009-10. Equally, it will be important for POVNET members to be fully involved in the process in their capitals that decides on the distribution of financial support across DAC activities and on the final priorities list.

III. POVNET aspects in the Council’s in-depth evaluation of the DAC and in the OECD’s Programme Implementation Reporting (PIR)

6. As background to the preparation of work proposals for the 2009-10 biennium, it is relevant to note how POVNET has fared in two recent evaluative exercises. In preparing for the 2009-10 PWB, these assessments provide food for thought on areas for improvement in the quality and effectiveness of POVNET work.

a) **The Council’s in-depth evaluation of the DAC, covering the period 2003 to early 2007**

7. While this evaluation is essentially about the DAC at the level of its Paris-based permanent delegates, it does make some references in respect of its subsidiary bodies. Concerning POVNET, two issues are signalled:

- **Relevance**: As measured by the indicator of capital-based participation in POVNET meetings, the evaluation notes that capital-based participation was relatively low in 2006 compared to most other DAC subsidiary bodies. While this evaluation does not look below the level of POVNET

itself (and thus does not take account of the broad and strong capital-based participation in its task teams), it is clear that efforts are required to make the work of POVNET more competitive, interesting and relevant to a broader range of DAC Members than has recently been the case.

- **Efficiency**: Some 63% of respondents voted POVNET pro-poor growth products as being of “high” or “very high” quality. However, this did not meet the threshold of two-thirds of the voters, set by the Council procedure to be rated “high quality”. Again, POVNET should reflect on how to increase the quality of future outputs, even if the 2006 DAC HLM welcomed and endorsed the POVNET products and the DAC Chair recently published an article stating that this work “has produced consensus within the donor community on an issue that has proved controversial for decades”.

**b) Programme Implementation Reporting (PIR) 2005-6**

8. The PIR is a regular OECD corporate exercise looking at how the OECD and its policy committees perform overall, as well as in relation to the effectiveness of its committees and organisational approaches.

9. In respect of POVNET work on economic growth and poverty reduction (and on a scale of 1 to 5 where 3 equals “medium” and 4 equals “high”), 2006 outputs (essentially the suite of pro-poor growth reports) scored 3.7 on quality (above the DAC average of 3.62) and 3.4 on impact (above the DAC average of 3.32). These are “decent” scores, but there is clearly room for improvement, particularly when seen in the light of comments made in the above Council evaluation.

**IV. Preparing POVNET’s priority work proposals for the 2009-10 PWB**

10. Since 2000, POVNET’s principle outputs have been the 2001 Poverty Reduction Guidelines and the 2006 policy guidance on Promoting Pro-Poor Growth. In 2003, in a joint piece of work with the World Health Organisation, POVNET developed a Reference Document on Poverty and Health.

11. The strategic orientation of POVNET’s proposed work for 2009-10 could fit into the OECD’s objective of being a hub of the globalisation debate and where the OECD promotes inclusive globalisation. Obviously, if POVNET is able to effectively implement its work on pro-poor growth, this will help poor people and poor countries to participate in, contribute to and benefit from globalisation. As such, it is a critical ingredient for the DAC’s and OECD’s strategic priorities.

12. Beyond this, Members may wish to see if or how proposals could connect up or contribute to the Ministerial Council Meeting’s and OECD Secretary-General’s priorities (e.g. in the fields of climate change, water and sanitation, health and migration), as well as to broader DAC work in areas such as enlargement and enhancement and the Heiligendamm process, scaling up, capacity development and policy coherence for development. These could be themes in their own right (e.g. impact of climate change on pro-poor growth) and/or dimensions of other work proposals (e.g. developing a stronger outreach dimension to other work proposals).

13. In addition to this, work proposals should reflect the medium-term environment for the international development agenda. Most particularly, this means setting our work in the context of the

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Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the extent to which developing countries will meet these goals, including that on poverty reduction, or will fall far short of them. The latter is likely to reflect the situation in many poor countries and POVNET work should aim to bring them as close to the poverty reduction goal as possible. Most DAC members have also set a target to scale up their official development assistance (ODA) by 2010, which is also the target year for measuring progress on implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Important questions are therefore whether we can convince donors to scale up aid in support of pro-poor growth activities, whether we can deliver it more in line with the aid effectiveness principles in the Paris Declaration and whether we can manage for results and achieve greater impacts in the field.

14. A number of major international events will take place in 2008 that will shape the development agenda as well. At this stage, it is not possible to incorporate the outcomes from these events in POVNET’s proposals for priority work areas. POVNET should nevertheless be ready to be guided by these outcomes as its work programme unfolds. Major events to take place in 2008 include the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) in Yokahama on 28-30 May, the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra on 2 to 4 September and the 2nd International Conference on Financing for Development (“Monterrey+6”) in Doha in the second half of 2008.

15. With the above background, POVNET is invited to consider its strategic orientation for the next biennium and discuss the outputs it would wish to propose for the 2009-10 PWB. The objective of the discussion is to agree on a limited number of priority proposals. It is suggested that Members come prepared to make and consider proposals on which their agency is prepared to commit time, effort and resources. It is recalled that proposals can relate to an extension of existing work and/or to new themes and can be joint propositions. The POVNET Bureau, with support from the Secretariat, can then flesh these proposals out and complete the templates.
ANNEX 1

TEMPLATE FOR PRIORITY WORK PROPOSALS

1. **Topic** *(please use keywords to identify your proposal e.g. Gender, Environment, Aid-for-Trade etc.)*

2. Please indicate if this work is:
   - a continuation or development of ongoing work in the 2007-2008 work programme, or
   - a new initiative

3. **Final output result** *(please give a short title)*

4. Describe the proposal in a way that is succinct and self-explanatory.

5. **Why is the DAC the most appropriate forum to undertake this work?**

6. Who will be the end-user of this final output result? What impact on donor behaviour do you expect to achieve with this work and what approach will be taken to maximise impact?

7. What contribution(s) do you expect from other stakeholders (e.g. partner countries, international organizations, civil society)?
8. Can the engagement of non-DAC donors add value to your work, and/or is it important in fulfilling the mandate of the Subsidiary Body? If so, what would be the most suitable form of engagement?

9. How does this proposal relate to, or use, the DAC’s core output results listed in the guidance for this template and to the implementation of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness?

10. Which OECD or DAC policy communities would you ideally seek to collaborate with to maximize the quality and relevance of this work proposal? In what way would this work contribute towards policy coherence for development?

11. Please indicate one of the following cost ranges for this proposal for the 2-year period: (Note that this cost range should not include the time of Heads of Division or central administration)
   - Between: 100 and 300 KEUR  300 and 500 KEUR  500 and 1 MEUR
   - Between: 1 MEUR and 2 MEUR

Proposal submitted by:

Name:

Role/Title: (e.g. Head of Agency, DAC Delegate, Chair of Subsidiary Body etc.)

Country or Subsidiary Body:  (indicate as appropriate)

Date:

Submissions must be sent to stephen.groff@oecd.org and hilary.balbuena@oecd.org by 30 November 2007. This deadline is strict and must be adhered to by all actors as the timelines in this preparatory phase are extremely tight. All fields of the template must be completed. The maximum length for the proposal cannot exceed two pages i.e. recto-verso of one sheet.
ANNEX 2

TIMELINE FOR PREPARING THE DAC 2009-10 PWB

- **11 October to 30 November 2007:** Preparation and submission of priority work proposals to the Secretariat.

- **12/13 December 2007 to 8 January 2008:** Strategic directions agreed to by the DAC Senior-Level Meeting will be used to fine-tune specific priority work proposals.

- **22 January 2008:** DAC approves the long list of final output results to launch the voting exercise.

- **15 February 2008:** Closing deadline for members to submit their votes.

- **4 March 2008:** DAC approves ranked list of output results based on outcome of voting exercise.

- **14/15 to end-May 2008:** Incorporation of high-level mandates and emerging priorities from the DAC High-Level Meeting into the 2009-10 PWB.

- **End May/early June 2008:** DAC approves draft 2009-10 PWB.

- **September 2008 (after 3rd High Level Forum in Accra):** DAC specifies and agrees work priorities for the Paris Declaration agenda to be included in the 2009-10 PWB. Pledging window opens.

- **14 November 2008:** DAC meets and takes stock of financing perspectives based on pledging round for voluntary contributions.

- **December 2008:** Final pledging opportunity for members/OECD Council approval of the 2009-10 PWB.