DAC Network on Poverty Reduction

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE POVNET RISK AND VULNERABILITY CROSS-CUTTING TEAM MEETING

Held on 20 September 2005, GTZ Office, Eschborn, Germany

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DAC POVNET RISK AND VULNERABILITY CROSS-CUTTING TEAM MEETING

SUMMARY RECORD

September 20 2005
GTZ Office, Eschborn, Germany

1. The purpose of the POVNET Risk and Vulnerability Team's meeting that took place on 20 September at the GTZ Office in Eschborn, Germany was (i) to agree on the contributions by the R&V Team to POVNET's overarching paper; ii) to agree on a strategy for completing and publishing the R&V Team's products; and (iii) to discuss future activities related to the R&V theme.

Where do we currently stand

2. Timo Voipio described the developments since the R&V Team met in Tunis. He especially referred to the positive reactions to the R&V Team's messages that had been received from the Steering Team for POVNET's overarching paper at its meeting in London on 1 July. Dorothy Rosenberg and Malcolm Ridout informed about the positive outcome of the side event on social transfers that had been organised by UNDP and DFID on 13 September 2005 in connection with the MDG conference in New York.

3. The DAC Secretariat referred to the e-mail from Bill Nicol outlining the Secretariat's view on the role and further contributions from the R&V Team to the present POVNET agenda.

4. The Secretariat also mentioned that the final products from other task team are now getting close to completion and that there should still be opportunities for the R&V Team to contribute. It was agreed that the draft reports will be distributed to the R&V Team as soon as final drafts are available.

Messages for the Overarching Paper

5. Timo Voipio introduced the discussion on the new draft Overarching Paper. The aim of the discussion would be to provide messages and inputs which could influence the results of the forthcoming meeting of the Steering Group for the Overarching Paper taking place on 27-28 September. He noted that a major improvement had taken place compared to previous versions and found that this paper had gained considerably from the adoption of a wider conceptual framework (opportunity, empowerment and security) in accordance with the suggestions formulated by the R&V Team at the Tunis meeting.

6. Given the short time available the participants agreed to split into two groups; one focussing on the section in the draft Overarching Paper which specifically focuses on security, risk, vulnerability and another group reviewing how risk and vulnerability issues are generally dealt with in the draft.
7. The first group had found it necessary to revise para. 66-69 in the Overarching Paper to reflect the UN Declaration of Human Rights in relation to the right to social security. They also emphasized that every person (not just the poorest of the poor) is vulnerable to the risks of poverty, and therefore in need of social protection. All societies have some mechanisms for sharing risk. The group also underlined that the vast majority of the poor are economically active, including PWD (people with disabilities) and PLWA (people living with AIDS). Having comprehensive systems in place to mitigate the impact of shocks on households is more effective than intervening after people have been trapped in poverty. Policy examples include social health insurance which prevents catastrophic medical costs or loss of labour capacity; transfers to households contingent upon participation in education or immunization programmes (Mexico’s Progresa/Opportunidades or Brazil’s Bolsa Escola/Bolsa Familia); or targeted transfers (such as Zambia’s Programme in Kalomo District, assisted by GTZ);

8. The second group reviewed the full document and found that there was still room for improvements regarding the way that risk, vulnerability and social risk management is dealt with in various parts of the paper. Timo Voipio compiled and synthesized the comments made by the Task Team members in a document sent to all members of the POVsNET Overarching Paper Steering Group, and titled: “PROMOTING PRO-POOR GROWTH (Version sept. 2005) - Comments by Timo Voipio and other members of the Task Team on RV/SP, as well as some colleagues from the Finnish MFA). That document as well as the comments provided to Timo Voipio in Track Changes format will be distributed to the members of the Steering Group and also made available on the POVsNET Secure website.

Strategy for completing and publishing the R&V team products

9. The discussion highlighted the cross-cutting nature of the R&V theme during the present phase of POVsNET. The main role of the R&V Team was seen as focusing on R&V elements and linkages to the present main themes of POVsNET and to provide inputs to the overall outcome of POVsNET. The Team had found that in the present stage it would not be meaningful to aim for producing a free-standing document on the R&V theme.

10. Timo Voipio gave an update of the documents which so far had been produced within the R&V cross-cutting theme. Revised versions had been received and distributed to group members regarding the following papers:

- Reconciling different concepts of risk and vulnerability: a review of donor documents (Rachel Sabates Wheeler and Lawrence Haddad, IDS)
- Risk and vulnerability: case studies of practical country-level instruments and approaches used by various agencies (Rachel Sabates Wheeler, Lawrence Haddad and Deepta Chopra, IDS)
- Managing risk and minimizing vulnerability: the role of social protection in pro-poor growth (Wouter van Ginneken, Ex-ILO)
- Cash transfers in the context of pro-poor growth (John Farrington, Paul Harvey and Rachel Slater, ODI)

11. In addition the Task Team has received a contribution (PowerPoint) from Koji Makino of JICA on Human Security. JICA has promised to edit this contribution into a full paper, if the Task Team would decide to produce a free-standing publication on the R&V theme. The Task Team had also received and decided to post on the POVsNET website a strong related paper on Poverty, Vulnerability and Policy by the Netherlands (Dr. Marion Eeckhout, Chief Economist of the Dutch Ministry (DGIS).
12. The group agreed that it is important to enhance outreach to other policy groups. It was suggested that much of the currently password protected information on the POVNET Secure Website could move to the Public site.

13. The representatives from the Secretariat described the new principles for web publishing of POVNET documents that are being introduced in connection with the integration of the POVNET website into the overall OECD web. The approach is now to increase access to the closed areas of POVNET's website to all those involved in the work of POVNET. At the same time the external area is intended only for more or less completed work. A procedure will be introduced for approval of each document to be released on the open POVNET web area.

14. Timo Voipio asked the members of the R&V Team to send any comments and/or objections that they may have to documents suggested for transfer to POVNET's open web area. They would be the four documents described in para 11, plus the paper by Marion Eeckhout (para 12), plus the JICA-paper, but only once they have edited it into the form of a full paper.

Discussion on future activities related to the R&V theme

15. The discussion focused on the R&V theme as a possible element in a future POVNET programme of activities. The Secretariat described the situation regarding the present DAC mandate to POVNET which expires in December 2006. A discussion and review has been initiated by the DAC regarding the future of all DAC’s subsidiary bodies (including POVNET). Under assumption that POVNET will get a continued mandate, the R&V Team agreed to suggest to POVNET that Social Protection and Human Security should be a major element in this mandate.

16. Malcolm Ridout informed about the international conference on social protection planned to be held in March next year. DFID is not in a position to fund this conference alone. It was agreed that the plan will be kept alive but the timing will remain undetermined until several more agencies have developed an interest for co-sponsoring the event.

17. A number of opportunities to bring the work of the R&V Team to a broader development community were mentioned. A list of events related to social protection is attached as Annex 1. Among the nearest important ones were the International Conference on Social Health Insurance in Developing Countries in Berlin 5-7 December, and the Conference “New Frontiers of Social Policy in a Global World” to be organized in Arusha, Tanzania, by the World Bank Social Development Department (with funding from several POVNET-members).

Next steps

18. The appropriate timing of the next meeting was discussed. Timo Voipio concluded that given the Team’s focus on providing inputs to the overarching paper, the best option at present will be to follow the progress in this respect before deciding upon a date. The decision about the timing of the next meeting can be done via email.
## ANNEX 1 - SOCIAL PROTECTION – INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event Title</th>
<th>Organizers</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.-7.12.2005</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td><strong>International Conference on Social Health Insurance in Developing Countries</strong></td>
<td>WHO, ILO, GTZ</td>
<td><a href="http://www.shi-conference.de">www.shi-conference.de</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.-15.12.2005</td>
<td>Arusha, Tanzania</td>
<td><strong>New Frontiers of Social Policy in a Global World</strong></td>
<td>World Bank Social Development Department (funded by Norway &amp; Finland)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Organizing Body</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Social Protection (?)</td>
<td>WBI</td>
<td></td>
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ANNEX 2 - PARTICIPANTS LIST FOR POVNET CROSS-CUTTING TEAM ON RISK AND VULNERABILITY

20 September 2005

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