DAC Network on Poverty Reduction

MEETING OF THE POVNET TASK TEAM ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

Summary Record

16 April 2007

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE TASK TEAM ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT, 16 APRIL 2007

I. Adoption of the Agenda

1. The agenda for the meeting [DCD/DAC/POVNET/A(2007)6] was adopted.

II. Enhancing Dialogue with Labour Representatives

2. TUAC (the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD) introduced itself. Among other issues, TUAC stressed the importance of making contacts with labour and business representatives, and with those in a position to represent the informal sector. TUAC suggested ways for the task team to engage with trade unions / trade unionists that are organising workers in the informal sector.

III. Terms of Reference

3. The discussion focused on the need for the Task Team outputs to be evidence based and results focused.

4. General comments concerning the draft ToR [see DCD/DAC/POVNET(2007)5] included the following:

   • Overall, there appears to be broad agreement on the proposed outputs though the framework in which they are set requires some more thinking.

   • The connection between social protection and empowerment (SPE) and rights based approaches could be mentioned and with it the links to equity and redistribution issues.

   • The focus could be on proactive measures to promote pro-poor growth and poverty reduction more generally by helping poor people and governments take the steps and adjustments needed for the poor women and men to move out of poverty. There should be a strong empowerment focus and, with it, attention to how the various groups most affected could take up the opportunities created by SPE policies.

   • It will be important to draw on the past work on risk and vulnerability (R&V), to show the links between SPE and pro-poor growth. Earlier papers from the R&V Task Team should be shortened and synthesised in ways helpful to the present work on SPE.

5. Two objectives were proposed:

   • to demonstrate that well planned investments in social protection and empowerment can bring powerful economic and social benefits for society and its poorest members

   • to create awareness, dialogue, understanding and capacity amongst policy makers and practitioners in both donor and partner countries.
Participants also highlighted the need for

- greater specificity on synergies between the TT on Social Protection and Empowerment and TT on Task Team on Employment and Labour Markets.
- some categorization/priority ordering for different risks and exclusions.

The discussion on the good practices notes and other Task Team outputs focused on the need for these to be evidence based, results focused and to take as the entry point for work the various risks and exclusions faced by poor and vulnerable people. A short list of the key themes that will be collected for guidance notes should look at the appropriate social protection and empowerment instruments, impacts and cost-effectiveness to tackle different risks and exclusions.

Members’ interest and possible willingness to contribute in different thematic areas covered the following:

- France is interested in macro shocks and price fluctuations, food insecurity, women’s empowerment and vocational training.
- Germany made an offer to work on health related issues. It is also interested in micro-insurance, accident prevention and generational issues.
- Switzerland is interested in the use of cash in emergency situations and literacy/empowerment issues.
- Sweden is interested in the linkages between social protection, poverty reduction and economic development. It is also interested in the institutional framework of a comprehensive social policy agenda, including how to tackle social protection and employment issues, the decent work agenda and the informal sector for social protection.
- The UK is interested in HIV/Aids and issues related to orphans and vulnerable children, agriculture/food security, climate change adaptation and weather insurance, migration, disaster risk reduction, scaling up social protection in fragile states, employment issues and social exclusion (particularly gender and disability).
- Finland is interested in institutional development and capacity building (e.g. twinning) in comprehensive (national, regional and global) social and employment policies, including social protection, empowerment, employment, disability-related policies and pro-poor growth.
- The World Food Programme is interested in food security, natural disaster risk management, weather insurance and the choices among social protection instruments.
- Denmark made an offer to look at leveraging private sector resources through CSR approaches and connecting this to global value chain issues.

In respect of the interests signalled, these seem to cluster around the following – health and related issues (human development), climate change adaptation, agriculture, the informal sector and institutional aspects of social protection.
10. Members suggested that guidance notes will need to be reader friendly, evidence based, propose clear options for adaptation in different cultures, and build on earlier work done and consultation with partner countries. Scope for linkages to other existing working groups was also highlighted.

11. For the next meeting of the Task Team\(^1\), and based on discussions to be undertaken in the Bureau, we should discuss concrete proposals for the good practices topics to be prepared (including a discussion of their structure, who can contribute to them and the use of possible consultants) as well as an outline for the policy statement.

\(^1\) 6\(^{\text{th}}\) June 2007, OECD, Paris