REPORT ON RECENT MEETINGS
Room Document 1

DAC Meeting, 30 June 2009

This note is for INFORMATION under Item 7 of the Draft Annotated DAC Agenda [DCD/DAC/A(2009)10].

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REPORT ON RECENT MEETINGS

1. PARIS21 Steering Committee (4 – 5 June)

On 4-5 June, the PARIS21 Steering Committee convened the first of its twice-yearly meetings for 2009. Participants considered the progress of the partnership since the last meeting in November 2008, the priorities for its forward work programme, the role of PARIS21 in major international statistical programmes, the process of the upcoming PARIS21 evaluation, and preparations for the 16-18 November 2009 Consortium meeting to be held in Dakar, Senegal.

Among the decisions reached at the meeting, participants agreed several points on the Consortium, including: a slogan (“Statistics for Development: Renewing The Partnership” in English and “Statistiques au service du développement : Renouveler le Partenariat” in French); meeting themes and sub-themes; an agenda structure; and the draft text of the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held in the margins of the Consortium, on 18 November 2009 in Dakar.

2. GENDERNET Plenary Meeting (10 – 12 June)

Two workshops were held during the seventh meeting of the DAC Network on Gender Equality. A workshop on the impacts of the financial and food crises on women in developing countries explored what we know about the current and past crises and how donors are responding rapidly to “real time” situations in partner countries. Speakers emphasised the need for effective policy responses to build on women’s role as economic actors who are essential to the sustainable success of recovery efforts. Participants agreed on the need to ensure that financial resources are targeted directly towards women - whether through jobs, social protection schemes or access to credit. At the same time, it is important that whilst responding to immediate needs, donors and governments continue to be committed to achieving the MDGs, especially MDG3, so that the high “pay-offs” of current investments in health and education benefit future generations.

A second workshop on “country systems” challenged members to more effectively use public financial management reform to deliver improved development results for both women and men. Speakers from Ghana, the Philippines, Morocco and Tanzania shared their experiences of implementing gender responsive budgeting, expenditure and performance monitoring initiatives. Staff from the Aid Effectiveness Division identified potential entry points for contributions to and collaboration in the implementation of the proposed work programmes of the WP-EFF’s clusters. The GENDERNET expects to be able to use information from this workshop as the basis for further Issues Briefs on gender equality and aid effectiveness and as contributions to the planned products of the WP-EFF cluster on country systems and the GOVNET’s work on domestic accountability.

During the discussions on the implementation of the 2009-10 work programme and on planning for the 2011-2012 programme of work and budget, members reiterated that the Network should continue to focus on the core priorities of the DAC – statistics, aid effectiveness and peer reviews – whilst also being responsive to the outcomes of the DAC Strategic Reflection process.

Other presentations dealt with climate change, UN reform of its gender equality “architecture”, and the “state of the art” with indicators for gender equality and women’s empowerment. Several interesting side-events were held including: a briefing by representatives of the Governments of Liberia and Finland on follow-up to the International Colloquium on Women’s Leadership which was held recently in Monrovia; a United Nations’ hosted discussion on how donors could make better use of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in development
co-operation; and, the launch of a cutting edge pack on Gender and Governance by BRIDGE of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

7. The delegation from Korea made a strong commitment to work with the GENDERNET to systematically integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment into the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. South Africa participated for the first time in a GENDERNET meeting.

8. Further information is available at www.oecd.org/dac/gender/7thmeeting.

3. EVALUATION Network Plenary Meeting (15 – 16 June)

9. The meeting was chaired by Nick York (DFID). The meeting was informed that Mr. Frode Neergaard, Deputy Head of the Danish delegation to OECD, has agreed to be the new DAC Facilitator for the Evaluation Network.

10. The meeting included discussions on the Network’s effort to improve collaboration among members and increase the number of joint evaluations. The Secretariat presented the inventory of member’s evaluation plans and the progress made since the last meeting. The inventory now contains submissions from 20 members, including 621 ongoing and planned evaluations. The discussion that followed clarified that the inventory is useful in facilitating collaboration and that the effort should continue in order to foster more joint work. The Network is also working on a matrix which is to be used for monitoring the Network’s drive to increase joint programming of evaluations.

11. The meeting reviewed progress with phase II of the evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration. Phase II will examine the influence of the Paris Declaration on development effectiveness by identifying outcomes and results. The evaluation will comprise country level evaluations, including a wider range of stakeholders than in phase I; headquarter studies of donors not part of phase I; supplementary studies; and a synthesis report to be presented to the 4th HLF in 2011. An international reference group has been set up and is co-chaired by the Netherlands and Sri Lanka. It includes members of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation who actively support the evaluation, partner countries who conduct country-level evaluations, multilaterals and CSOs.

12. A proposal for a study of member evaluation systems and resources was presented. The study will be conducted by the Secretariat and draw on DAC Peer Reviews and other existing information sources to generate individual member profiles and an analysis of current trends and challenges in development evaluation among Network members. Members enthusiastically welcomed the proposal and expressed strong support for a stock-take of evaluation systems. It was suggested that a launch event for the study could be considered, possibly to be held in conjunction with the next DAC Senior Level Meeting, or another appropriate occasion, to help raise the profile of evaluation.

13. Many Network members and a considerable number of partner country representatives took part in a workshop on the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation in Auckland in February 2009. At the meeting, New Zealand updated members on the workshop and changes made to the Standards, based on suggestions from the workshop and experiences collected during a three-year test phase. Members welcomed the revised Standards and were invited to provide more detailed suggestions in writing. The Secretariat will then revise the Standards as needed and circulate for approval under written procedure, ahead of submission for DAC approval.

14. The Secretariat presented an overview of the Network’s work on evaluation capacity development and a paper on key emerging lessons. Members welcomed the review of experiences and expressed support for this work and for the idea of a practical tip-sheet for evaluation managers. Partner country input came from Tamirat Yacob of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ethiopia,
who described the monitoring and evaluation capacity work of the African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results. There was general appreciation of the need to continue to collaborate with other actors on capacity development and to focus more on the challenge of addressing the demand side of evaluation.

15. One session explored approaches to assessing multilateral effectiveness. MOPAN (the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network) briefed members on their work. The World Bank is elaborating guidance for evaluating global and regional programmes. The ECG is starting up an evaluation of the MDBs Common Performance Assessment (COMPAS). Cida recently completed a multilateral review and presented some highlights and a suggested joint donor approach for assessments. The discussion revealed clear interest among many members for issues around assessing multilaterals but no consensus on the approach to take it forward. Cida offered to host a meeting with interested members to take forward the discussion and explore the underlying questions and issues in more detail. It will also be important to see how the mandate of the DAC will evolve as this might influence the Network’s approach in this area.


4. ENVIRONET Plenary Meeting (18 – 19 June)

17. On 18 – 19 June the Development and Environment Network (ENVIRONET) convened its twice yearly plenary meeting for 2009. New co-Chair and Bureau were elected: Ms. Birgitte Markussen, of Denmark and Mr. Jonathan Hobbs of the UK and will act as Co-Chairs of ENVIRONET while the Bureau will comprise of Mr. Erwin Kuenzi, of Austria), Mr. Matti Nummelin, of Finland and Mr. Tomonori Sudo, of Japan. Participants discussed the priorities for future work, in light of the outcomes of the Joint DAC-EPOC High Level Meeting. They noted, in particular, the Joint HLM ‘request to deepen ENVIRONET collaboration with the Environment Policy Committee on three substantive areas: first, deepening joint work on climate change adaptation; second, examining opportunities for pro-poor low-carbon development strategies; and, third, intensifying work on capacity development for environment building on the respective capacities of the two OECD Subsidiary Bodies. They also agreed on the need to actively disseminate the Guidance on integrating climate change adaptation into development, in advance of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December 2009. ENVIRONET Members also noted the urgency of work undertaken with WP/STAT to develop a statistical approach to track ODA in support of climate change adaptation.