PLANNING FOR THE CHINA-DAC STUDY GROUP EVENT ON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

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Dear DAC Delegates,

Planning for the China-DAC Study Group Event on Development Partnerships  
Beijing, 28-29 October 2009

The recently formed China-DAC Study Group aims to share experience and promote learning about growth and poverty reduction in China and African countries. Further information on the Study Group and its organisation and membership is attached.

As you may be aware, the Study Group is taking an events-driven approach, in order to associate a larger number of key stakeholders from China, African countries and the donor community in its activities. A series of events is planned on the topics of development partnerships, agriculture and rural development, infrastructure and the enabling environment for enterprise development. As well as having had a substantial impact on China’s growth and poverty reduction, these topics reflect the needs in many African countries today. Africans, and the international donor community, are consequently interested in understanding better how China developed its strategies and policies in these areas, how they were implemented and under what conditions, and what can be learnt from China’s experience.

Following a meeting of the China-DAC Study Group in Beijing on 24 July 2009, I am pleased to advise that the group’s first event on development partnerships has been scheduled to take place on 28 and 29 October 2009. The International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) will host the event at its premises in Beijing.

The main aim of this event is to bring out useable and transferable lessons on development partnerships that will help increase the impact and effectiveness of aid. The importance of effective development partnerships and strong local ownership to underpin the development process has become better understood in recent years. China has developed a strong framework to manage its various development partnerships, which can hold lessons for others. In addition, by bringing in lessons from its own development experience, China’s expanding economic relations with African countries can potentially have a substantial poverty reduction impact. DAC members can also learn from China’s approach to development co-operation, which is appreciated by many African countries.

After the formal opening in the morning of 28 October, the event will have two sessions, the first on development partnerships in China and the second on development partnerships in Africa. The two sessions will have the same format. Each session will commence with two keynote presentations which will be followed by short comments from three discussants (ideally, one each from China, Africa and the donor community). In the afternoon, there will be three parallel workshops on different subjects which will be preceded by a short plenary session where a common set of questions for the three groups to consider will be presented and introduced. Each session will finish with a reporting
back and discussion in plenary of each group’s main insights in relation to the common set of questions and other matters that may have arisen. There will be substantial time available throughout each session for open discussions. The event languages will be Chinese and English.

All participants are expected to be able to contribute actively to discussion, based on their close involvement with the themes of the event. The Study Group will invite around 100 people to take part (although this number could be increased to a maximum of 120, if necessary). Ideally, there will be equal numbers of participants from China, African countries and the donor community (bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental).

It is expected that the development partnerships event will be preceded by a reception given by the German Ambassador in Beijing in the evening of 27 October 2009. This will provide an opportunity for a broader, Beijing-based community to be associated with the event and the China-DAC Study Group.

DAC Members interested in proposing participants for the development partnerships event should notify Michael Stirnweiss (e-mail: Michael.Stirnweiss@bmz.bund.de) at BMZ in Bonn by 14 August (Germany is taking a lead role in organising this event on behalf of the Study Group). Invitations signed by the Study Group’s Honorary Co-Presidents, Wu Zhong and Eckhard Deutscher, will be sent to prospective participants in early September.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the China-DAC Study Group and our Chinese partners, the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC), for their support and collaboration. This has enabled us to arrive quickly at the point where the Study Group can move ahead with organising its planned events during the remainder of 2009 and 2010.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Carey

Cc: Members of the DAC Network on Poverty Reduction (POVNET)
Members of the China-DAC Study Group
THE CHINA-DAC STUDY GROUP

Sharing experiences and promoting learning about growth and poverty reduction in China and African countries

Why establish the China-DAC Study Group?

China and Africa have had very different development experiences in recent decades. By ensuring that growth was broad-based - across sectors and regions - and inclusive of poor men and women, China’s phenomenal economic growth has lifted a huge number of people out of absolute poverty. In Africa, a continent of 53 nation states, there has not been comparable progress in growth and poverty reduction. Why is this so? In the late 1970s, when it started its reforms, China had a worse poverty incidence rate and there were huge differences between China and most African countries in terms of agricultural production, education, level of inequality and institutional structures.

In recent years, China’s economic relations with developing countries have been expanding rapidly. In Africa, China is emerging as a key foreign player. Potentially, China’s trade, investment and aid could contribute substantially to reducing Africa’s economic marginalisation and create new opportunities for promoting growth and reducing poverty. But how can China’s co-operation with Africa be an effective vehicle for transferring lessons from China’s own development experience? What can members of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and other donors learn from China’s approach to development co-operation, which is appreciated by many African countries?

To address some of today’s major development challenges and help increase the impact and effectiveness of aid, there is a heightened interest in promoting greater mutual learning among Chinese authorities, African countries and the international donor community. Following a proposal made by the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC), the China-DAC Study Group was established in January 2009 to provide such an international platform for synthesising available information and exchanging experiences. Improved mutual understanding will also facilitate possible future trilateral activities to promote growth and reduce poverty in developing countries.

What are the Study Group’s areas of focus?

To achieve its objectives, the Study Group is focussing on two themes:

- China’s experience of growth and poverty reduction, including the contribution of international assistance, and its relevance for other developing countries particularly in Africa.
- China’s economic co-operation in Africa and its impact on poverty reduction.

How does the Study Group operate?

The Study Group is taking an events-driven approach. Each of its two themes will be explored from different perspectives during a series of events on development partnerships, agriculture and rural development, infrastructure and the enabling environment for enterprise development.
As well as having had a substantial impact on China’s growth and poverty reduction, these topics reflect the needs in many African countries today. Africans, and the international donor community, are consequently interested in understanding better how China developed its strategies and policies in these areas, how they were implemented and under what conditions.

There is also an interest in knowing more about the experiences and lessons learnt from the partnerships that China developed with its donors. This reflects greater awareness of the importance of development partnerships and strong local ownership for increasing the effectiveness of aid, as emphasised in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

What are the Study Group’s planned activities?

During 2009-10, the Study Group is organising events on the following topics, which influence both the pace of growth as well as the extent to which growth contributes to reducing poverty:

- Development partnerships - in Beijing in late October 2009.
- Agriculture and rural development - in Africa in early 2010.

What are the Study Group’s expected outputs?

The main findings from the Study Group’s series of events will be synthesised and published in a joint report targeted at policy makers and the general public.

The Study Group will also distil from its findings a set of key recommendations for the attention of Chinese authorities and DAC members. These recommendations will be presented and discussed at a final event to be held in Beijing in early 2011.

Who participates in the Study Group?

The Study Group’s Honorary Presidents are Wu Zhong (Director-General of IPRCC) and Eckhard Deutscher (DAC Chair). The Study Group’s membership includes Chinese academics and government officials as well as representatives of several DAC members and observers (Belgium, the European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, the World Bank, the United Kingdom and the United States).

In order to associate a larger number of key stakeholders in its work, the Study Group will invite around 100 people - government officials, researchers and representatives from the private sector and civil society from China, African countries and the international donor community – to take part in each of its events.

How is the Study Group funded and organised?

The Study Group is self funded on a cost-sharing basis. The IPRCC contributes by hosting meetings and events held in Beijing and by providing resource persons. DAC members of the Study Group provide financial support to enable the Study Group to implement its agreed work programme (e.g. by funding consultants or researchers).

The IPRCC and the OECD’s Development Co-operation Directorate form the joint secretariat for the Study Group.

Where can I find out more about the China-DAC Study Group and its activities?

From the IPRCC’s Internet site: www.iprcc.org.cn/index.php/en
Organisation and Membership of the China-DAC Study Group

Honorary Co-Presidents: Wu Zhong (Director-General of IPRCC)
                        Eckhard Deutscher (DAC Chair)

Co-Chairs:            Huang Chengwei (IPRCC)
                        Richard Carey (OECD)

Director:             Li Xiaoyun (China)

Co-Leaders:           Li Anshan (China)
                        Li Xiaoyun (China)
                        Jean-Raphael Chaponniere (France)
                        Robert Haas (Germany)

Study Group Members:  Jennifer Adams (United States)
                        Peter Craig-McQuaide (European Commission) - alternate
to Maciej Popowski
                        Adrian Davis (United Kingdom)
                        Bruno Georges (Belgium)
                        He Wenping (China)
                        Philip Karp (World Bank)
                        Naohiro Kitano (Japan)
                        Mao Xiaojing (China)
                        Maciej Popowski (European Commission) - assisting Robert Haas
                        Tadashi Suzuki (Japan) - assisting Naohiro Kitano
                        Tori Tveit (Norway)
                        Wang Yantao (China)

Beijing-Based Co-ordinator: Yan Wang (OECD)

Project Management Team: Zhang Huidong (IPRCC)
                         Ran Jin (IPRCC)

DAC Secretariat Co-ordinator: Michael Laird (OECD)