

Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Towards a Harmonised Approach

1. Major sources of the presentation:

ODI (2005), 'Relationships of other Donor Organisations with Multilaterals'

CIDA (2006), 'Bilateral Methodologies for Assessing Multilateral Performance: Survey Findings'

German Development Institute (forthcoming), 'Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment: Opportunities and Limitations for Harmonisation among Development Agencies'

2. Current practices in comparison

At present, 6 different methods for approaching assessments of multilateral organisations performance do exist:

Two common approaches involving several development agencies

- (i) the multi-donor initiative of bilateral agencies of the *Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)*
- (ii) the *Common Performance Assessment System (COMPAS)* designed by the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).

Four bilateral agencies reported their own methodologies:

- (iii) DFID established the *Multilateral Effectiveness Framework (MEFF)*;
- (iv) CIDA uses the *Multilateral Evaluation Relevance and Assessment system (MERA)*;
- (v) Danida has developed a comprehensive multilateral *Performance Management Framework (PMF)*;
- (vi) the Dutch have developed a *Multilateral Monitoring Survey System (MMS)*.

3. The Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)

- MOPAN is a network of nine “like minded” donor countries, which includes Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. France is about to join as 10th member.

- MOPAN conducts a joint Annual Survey of multilateral organizations' (MO) partnership behaviour with national stakeholders and other donor organizations at country level. Each year, the Annual Survey covers 3-4 MOs and is conducted in 8-10 countries. As a rolling exercise, the Annual Survey should, over time, be able to cover most of the major development MOs.
- MOPAN's assessment is an opinion survey, eliciting the informed judgment of MOPAN member embassy or country office staff. Country-level staff members surveyed are asked to give their perceptions on the performance of different organizations relative to their respective mandates in the countries in which they serve.

➤ *Road towards harmonization:*

MOPAN is considered as “the only game in town” currently involving several donors in a joint initiative on harmonizing multilateral performance assessments.

4. The Common Performance Assessment System (COMPAS)

- In response to international commitments on performance and accountability, COMPAS was proposed by the Multilateral Development Bank Working Group on ‘Managing for Development Results’ (MfDR).
- The coalition of MDBs involved in this initiative include: the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.
- COMPAS' objectives are to:
 - Pool information about how MDBs are contributing to development results (outputs and outcomes);
 - Monitor and synthesize MDBs' progress over time; and
 - Contribute to lessons-learning, accountability and transparency.
- It will seek to identify common definitions and results-based methodologies between these organizations that can be integrated into a common framework. COMPAS' goal is to facilitate comparability of data between MDBs (e.g. regarding program outputs and outcomes), and ultimately, to contribute to harmonization of practices between institutions.

➤ *Road towards harmonisation:*

With COMPAS, the MDBs have succeeded in drafting a set of common indicators that may form the basis of future reporting by the banks.

5. The British Multilateral Effectiveness Framework (MEFF)

- During 2003-2004, DFID set up the MEFF for assessing and monitoring the institutional effectiveness of international organizations it funds. The system was developed internally and DFID staff conducted the assessments. 23 organisations have been assessed.
- MEFF's key objectives include to:
 - o Provide information to strengthen DFID's accountability under its Public Service Agreement (PSA) objectives
 - o Provide inputs to DFID's institutional strategies for engagement with multilaterals
 - o Provide inputs to future financing decisions
- The MEFF focuses on eight corporate management systems (i.e. corporate governance, corporate strategy, resource management, operational management, quality assurance, staff management, monitoring, evaluation and lessons learning, and reporting of results).
- The measurement system covers three elements: internal performance, focus on country-level results, and partnership. It uses three main assessment instruments, comprising a checklist of indicators, expressed as questions; a scorecard rating data in the checklists; and a summary report, providing a brief, qualitative review of an organization's accomplishments.

➤ ***Road towards harmonisation:***

- The survey study of CIDA (2006) revealed general respect for MEFF among donor countries, and most respondents considered it to be a good starting point for progress towards the building of consensus and a harmonized approach towards measurement.
- Need for consensus with respect to both generic indicators and, at a more detailed level, organization-specific indicators.

6. The Canadian Multilateral Evaluation Relevance and Assessment (MERA)

- CIDA has developed a standard template of questions called MERA. The purpose is:
 - (i) To better inform policy and financial allocation decisions on more solid evidence.
 - (ii) To better exercise CIDA's accountability and improve it's reporting to Canadian citizens.
 - (iii) For more effective Board meetings and better identification of areas requiring improvements.
 - (iv) To deliver on MPB commitment to complete the Multilateral effectiveness review, as part of the Agency Aid Effectiveness agenda.

- MERA covers three different themes: relevance, effectiveness and improvement measures in the management. MOs will be rated on a scale of 1 to 5 for each of the 3 themes.
- MERA provides a framework for comparing MOs receiving core funding within each Directorate. Assessments will be based on the submissions made by Program Managers of the MERAs, supplemented by additional information, such as the institutions reports, the field surveys, any reports indicating results achieved.

➤ ***Road towards harmonisation:***

MERA is regarded as an interim system requiring elaboration and specificity while awaiting a more harmonized and internationally agreed methodology (CIDA 2006).

7. The Danish Performance Management Framework (PMF)

- In 2003, DANIDA developed PMF. The objectives of PMF are to enhance the quality of Danish development cooperation through stronger focus on results; improve management and continuous learning, through better information and reporting; and strengthen accountability through performance assessments and measurement in the context of an increasingly decentralized management structure.
- PMF includes a number of tools such as analysis of organizational strategies, perception analyses (own embassies and through MOPAN), and assessments of MO evaluation and reporting systems. In the measurement of both organizational practices and field level results, the PMF relies on the objectives, targets and indicators established by the relevant organizations themselves as set out in the organization's own vision and strategies.

➤ ***Road towards harmonization:***

The Evaluation Department is in the process of piloting a “New Approach” to assessing the performance of MO. This new approach reviews the extent to which Results-Based-Management principles form the basis of the work of monitoring and evaluation units within the MOs. The approach adopts the principle that measurement of multilateral organisations should be based increasingly upon the evidence and documentation produced by the organisations' own monitoring and evaluation systems.

8. The Dutch Multilateral Monitoring System (MMS)

The MMS is an annual updated performance assessment for the most important UN institutions and IFIs at country level of the 36 Dutch partner countries. Primary sources of information for the Multilateral Monitoring Survey (MMS) are questionnaires answered by embassy, permanent representation of mission, and constituency offices staff. Staff and peers are asked to comment on a number of specific questions encapsulating corresponding indicators (e.g. good governance, poverty reduction, accountability and financial management, relevance to Dutch policies and strategies, etc.)

➤ ***Road towards harmonisation:***

Via MOPAN ?

9. Weaknesses of current practices

- Inadequate reporting on the MDGs
- Inadequate reporting on results in the field
- Inadequate inclusion of recipients' perspective
- Need for independent means for evaluating the accuracy and findings of evaluation reports

10. Towards a harmonised approach in line with the Paris Declaration

- Performance measurement is important to maintain public support for the multilateral system. However, although an important consideration in budgetary planning, measurement is not the only criterion in determining the level and type of financial and technical support by bilateral donors.
- Most donors do not have a defined methodology, and rather rely on a “considered weighing of strengths and weaknesses”
- MEFF and MERA are using specific indicators for performance assessment whereas both Denmark's PMF and the Dutch MMS employ a measurement process relying on feedback from representatives in the field following specific questions complemented with consultations. COMPAS is well advanced in the definition of indicators.
- A common strategy for MO performance measurement includes increased attention to the quality of monitoring and evaluation practices of the multilaterals themselves in order to make them more results oriented. Reporting by the multilaterals should reflect on progress towards the MDGs, analyze the extent of alignment of programs with the recipient country's own strategies, and indicate application of lessons learned.
- A well-coordinated process of harmonization of measurement systems among donors would reduce transaction costs and allow donors to form a common base towards change.
- Some type of institutional arrangement would be useful to assess independently the accuracy of performance measurement in order to reduce the “evaluation gap”.
- Harmonization of measurement practices would be in line with the Paris Declaration; it would avoid overburdening organizations with a multitude of donor-specific indicators; it would be an important means of exercising leverage and ensuring greater effectiveness.