

ANNEX 5

The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2

Technical Annex to Synthesis Report including List of Key Sources Consulted

May 2011



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1. Purpose

The Technical Annex has two aims:

- Firstly, to expand on the concise description of the Evaluation's approach and methodology within the main Synthesis Report.
- Secondly, given that this study is one of the largest joint Evaluations ever undertaken, to draw out lessons learned for any similar exercises in the future.

The text makes reference to a number of additional documents that were produced during the Evaluation process.

These are available on the OECD/DAC website or on request.¹

They will also be shared as part of the final repository of Evaluation information. A list of key sources consulted is also attached as part of this Annex.

2. Background and Initial Approach

The Paris Declaration (2005) contains a commitment to independent, cross-country evaluation, to provide an understanding of how increased aid effectiveness can contribute to meeting development objectives. The Accra Agenda for Action (2008) specifically committed to "assess whether we have achieved the commitments we agreed in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, and to what extent aid effectiveness is improving and generating greater development impact."²

In 2006, the OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation commissioned an Options Paper to help it select an appropriate way to follow up on the 2005 implementation of the Declaration. The paper concluded that, subject to some limitations, the Declaration was broadly 'evaluatable' and that an optimal approach would be a set of four connected but loosely integrated evaluation activities; the development of a common framework; country led evaluation initiatives; a set of thematic case studies across donors; and a medium to long-term programme of analytical work.³

The Options Paper was internationally circulated to both partner countries and donor agencies. Partner countries in particular expressed their interest in playing major roles within any future evaluation. Subsequently, the Evaluation was designed and implemented, applying a fully joint approach. The design called for two phases, which have been broadly shaped around the first three of the Options Paper components.

¹ Documents will be made available on the OECD website/the Extranet or contact IOD PARC.

² Accra Agenda for Action, para. 11.

³ Booth, D and Evans, A (2006) *Evaluation Network Follow-up to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: An Options Paper* (submitted for discussion at the fourth meeting of the DAC Evaluation Network, 30-31 March 2006).

Across both phases, the four main stages of development have been as follows:

Stage 1 (2005-06) Developing the initial approach

Formation of the international Reference Group (comprised of half partner countries, half donors) plus an Evaluation Management Group that was tasked to secure voluntary participation and funding; developing the Terms of Reference for Phase 1; the establishment of the Evaluation Secretariat (March 2007)

Stage 2 (2007-08) Implementing Phase 1

The implementation of Phase 1 (carried out at both donor and country level) which considered three main areas: trends or events around early implementation; influences affecting the behaviour of countries and their Development Partners in relation to implementing their Paris commitments; whether implementation appeared to be leading towards the five Principles.

Phase 1 included the "Linkages" study⁴ which proposed key elements of design & governance for Phase 2

Stage 3 (2009-10) Preparation for Phase 2

First meeting of the International Reference Group for Phase 2 (Auckland, February 2009) which resulted in the main Approach Paper for the study.⁵

Production of the Terms of Reference for the Core Evaluation Team (hereafter 'Core Team'). Procurement competition and appointment of the Core Team

Stage 4 (2009-11) Implementing Phase 2

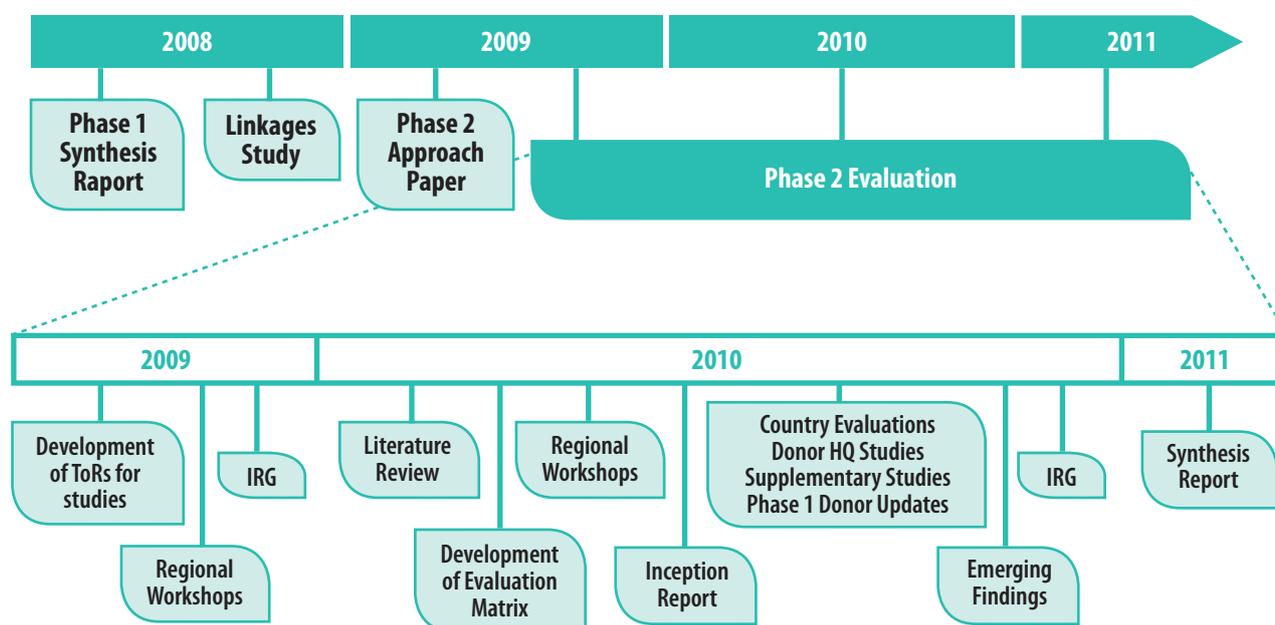
Implementation of Phase 2, which expanded participation to a wider group of countries and donor agencies than Phase 1. Completion of country evaluations and donor/agency studies and updates. Production of the Synthesis Report, working within the international and national level governance structures of the Evaluation, drawing on all the different components of the Evaluation (see Figure 2 on page 199).

⁴ Stern, E et al (2008) *Thematic study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*, Copenhagen: DIIS.

⁵ Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2: Approach Paper (25 May 2009).

The key events of the Evaluation are summarised in the timeline below:

Figure 1. Stages of the Evaluation Process



Components of the Evaluation

The main components of the overall Evaluation have been:

- In Phase 1 (2008): nineteen studies (eight in countries and 11 lighter-touch donor and multilateral agency reviews)
- In Phase 2 (2011): twenty eight studies (21 country evaluations and seven donor/agency headquarter studies) plus more limited updates from donors who were studied in Phase 1 (seven agencies).⁶
- Also in Phase 2, supplementary inputs including studies on “Development Resources Beyond the Current Reach of the Paris Declaration” and a Latin American Survey; the findings from a targeted literature review; and additional specific materials drawn upon as required.

The following diagrams (Figure 2) indicate the components of the Phase 2 Evaluation overall and the geography of the participating countries/agencies.

Phase 2

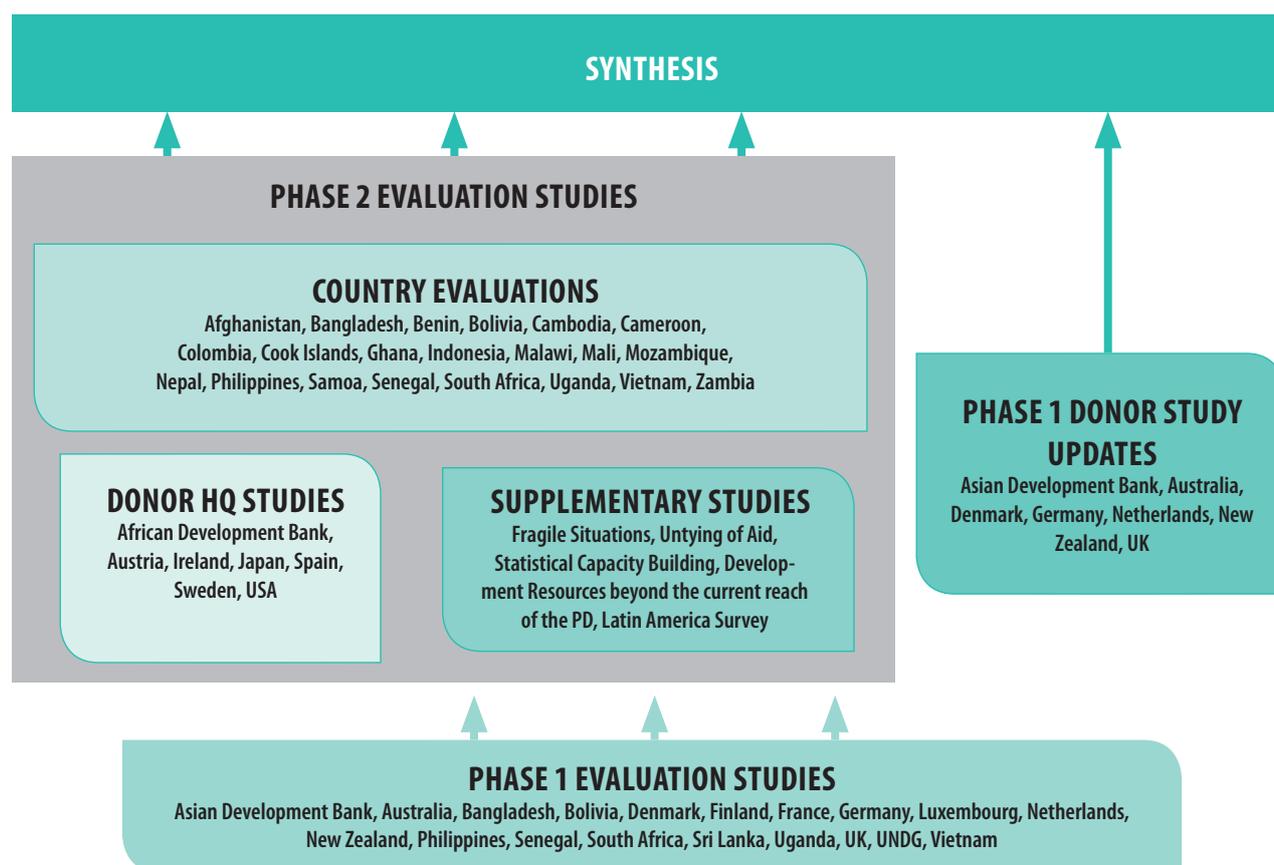
Phase 2 of the Evaluation commenced in September 2009 with the award of contract, following a competitive pro-

urement process, to IOD PARC⁷ a UK-based development consultancy. Members of the Core Team were subsequently appointed.

⁶ Two proposed country evaluations (in Kyrgyzstan and Sri Lanka) were cancelled because of political change and uncertainty. Considerable effort was made to expand the number of countries in Latin and Central America but Bolivia and Colombia were the only eventual participants; the Latin America survey aimed at addressing this gap in part.

⁷ IOD PARC is the trading name of International Organisation Development (IOD) Limited.

Figure 2. Evaluation Components



The **Core Team** comprised experienced development professionals from seven countries, with expertise in a range of

specialist areas related to aid effectiveness. Main areas of responsibility are summarised below:

Name	Location	Areas of responsibility
Bernard Wood	Canada	Team Leader; overall direction and oversight; lead author (Synthesis Report) and core drafting team
Julian Gayfer	UK	Project Director; overall planning and coordination of delivery; process support to country evaluations; core drafting team
Julia Betts	UK	Core Team; Literature review, process support to country evaluations, core drafting team, and lead author (Synthesis Technical Annex)
Florence Etta	Nigeria/US	Core Team; Africa region specialist and support
Dorte Kabell	Denmark	Core Team leading on support to donor headquarter studies and francophone evaluations
Mallika Samaranyake	Sri Lanka	Core Team; Asia region specialist and support
Francisco Sagasti	Peru	Core Team; Latin America region specialist and support
Naomi Ngwira	Malawi	Core Team; process support to Southern/East Africa country evaluations
Ronnie MacPherson	UK	Project support; Knowledge management and communications
Marika Weinhardt	UK	Project support; team process management, Core Team focal point for exchange with evaluation/study teams
Julianna Hyjek	UK	Literature Review

The Core Team organised itself around a set of defined workstreams, with regular team interaction through virtual meetings and face to face meetings at key milestone points in the process. The main phases were: orientation and team organisation (September 2009); inception, including preparation of Inception report (October-March 2010); support to country studies (May-September 2010); preparation for Synthesis process (September-November 2010); Emerging Findings meeting (December 2010); and Synthesis drafting (January-April 2011).

3. Developing the Approach and Methodology

Some aspects of Phase 2 were fixed; that is, they were predetermined before the Core Team were contracted. These included:

- **The joint nature of the Evaluation** – it would be conducted across donor agencies and partner countries, and within a governance structure that reflected this.
- **The governance structure**⁸ at national and international level, which was devised to ensure the joint nature of the process, above, the participatory, and consultative approach adopted, and to facilitate quality assurance. This briefly comprised: an international structure responsible for conducting the management and assuring the integrity and independence of the process overall; and a 'mirror' system reflected at country/donor headquarter level, with the same responsibility for individual studies.
- **The voluntary basis of participation**, which meant that inclusion in the sample of countries/agencies was essentially on the basis of self-selection.
- **The primacy of the country** as the main arena for evaluation, to allow a focus on how aid effectiveness reform has played out in practice.
- For **donor headquarter studies**, the application of the same Terms of Reference as those from Phase 1.
- **A trilingual exercise**, in order to serve the participants and intended users of the Evaluation as fully as possible, the process was organised to operate throughout in the English, French and Spanish languages.

From September 2009 through to June 2010, the Core Team, in consultation with the Management Group and through two rounds of Regional Workshops, focused on developing

⁸ Considerable effort was devoted to mapping out exact roles and responsibilities for the respective layers of governance. Full details are set out within the Evaluation Framework of 2009 (which contains a full section on Accountabilities and Responsibilities) and in the Note on Quality Assurance and Governance Arrangements (May 2010).

and refining the Evaluation's approach and methodology. Participants at the Workshops included, for Round One, mainly national coordinators and members of National Reference Groups, and for Round Two, national coordinators and the team leaders of country evaluation teams who were already contracted.

Regional Workshops

Round 1	Round 2
Asia: 27-29 October 2009 (Siem Reap)	Pacific: 3-5 March 2010 (Wellington)
Latin America: 4-6 November 2009 (Bogota)	South Asia: 20-22 April 2010 (Dhaka)
Anglophone Africa: 10-12 November 2009 (Lilongwe)	Africa: 27-29 April 2010 (Tunis)
Francophone Africa: 18-20 November 2009 (Cotonou)	South East Asia: 4-6 May 2010 (Ha Long, Vietnam)
	Latin America: 25-26 May 2010 (Bogota) & 16-17 August 2010 (La Paz)

Tasks at the Workshops included: defining the key principles of the methodology; shaping the Evaluation Questions; confirming the approaches to the methodology; working out how to operationalise the methodology; finalising the evaluation components; and setting out guidance on methods for country and donor studies. The sections below describe how these tasks were approached.

Principles Applied

As the Core Team's Terms of Reference stated, the Evaluation was intended to be summative and formative. It needed to allow judgments to be made about what has been achieved in terms of aid effectiveness and development results, whilst also supporting forward-looking policy development and improvement among different constituencies and stakeholders.

At an early stage (drawing on early inputs such as the Approach Paper), the Core Team identified some key principles to apply, endorsed by the Management Group. These were:

- **Utility:** Given the very high stakes involved, the Evaluation was intended above all to be useful – meaning that the evaluation processes, the findings and the way these are reported needed to be handled in credible, relevant and accessible ways.
- **A joint Evaluation:** The Evaluation's governance structures recognised that many participating countries and agencies would be closely involved in all stages of the process – consequently a process of full engagement would be needed to ensure the credibility and utility of the results.

- **The importance of context:** This built upon many of the inputs leading up to Phase 2 including the original Options Paper, was demonstrated by Phase 1, and was noted again in the Approach Paper and Core Team Terms of Reference. It was emphasised even more strongly as the basis for a major evaluation question in the Framework for Phase 2.
- **Comprehensiveness:** The Evaluation was intended to address all the five main principles of the Declaration.
- **Comparability and relevance:** Phase 1 showed the importance of a robust common basis for research and analysis if evaluation at an aggregate level was to take place with confidence, but the importance of treating country-specific issues was also encouraged.
- **Country ownership:** Given the centrality of partner countries and their experience within the Evaluation, this meant ensuring the fullest possible participation in the Evaluation design and applying a common approach, language and methodology across studies.
- **Partnership at country level:** This called for a focus on the workings of country-donor partnerships and development outcomes at country level, to explore the effects of donor policies as well as country-level actors on aid and country development prospects.
- **Knowledge-sharing:** The Evaluation hoped to build capacity in part through a process of continuous sharing of learning, support, peer review and quality assurance.

These principles have helped guide the Evaluation's conduct throughout, including governance processes, methodology design, implementation of country and donor studies, and analysis and synthesis. The following sections of this annex discuss each of these individual areas.

Shaping the Core Questions and Framework for Conclusions

The broad areas for the Core Questions for the Evaluation were outlined in the Approach paper. This drew in turn on the schema of the Linkages Study and subsequent discussions at the Auckland Workshop, and set out four classes of Evaluation questions for Phase 2. These were:

- the starting conditions in which the Declaration has been implemented;
- results in terms of aid effectiveness and development more directly;
- processes that can help explain results and make it clearer how far these results can be attributed to the Declaration;
- policy alternatives i.e. other ways of achieving the same results.

Two key issues shaped the final formulation of the Core Questions:

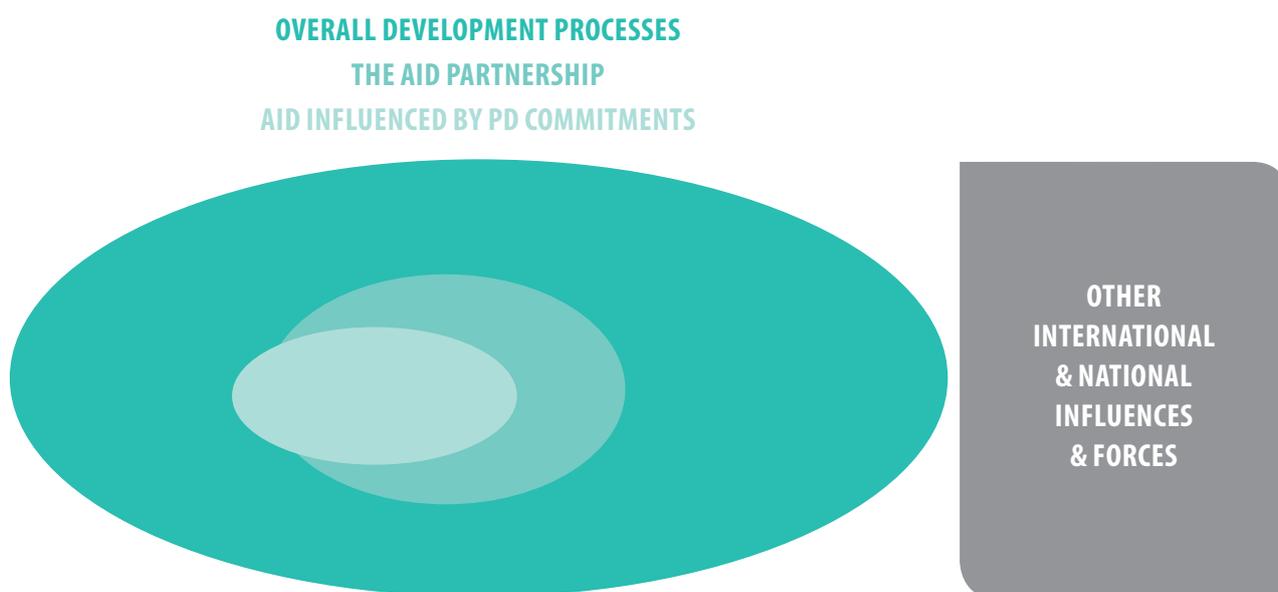
- The centrality of context and particularly the context pre-2005. As the Evaluation Framework (2009) set out, a key starting point was '*...to recognize that the 2005 Declaration itself brought together a variety of reform efforts and initiatives that had been underway in different settings for some years before. Thus the Evaluation should explicitly include assessment of these "upstream" or precursor steps as an integral part of its scope*'⁹
- The recognition that aid is only one part of the many different elements contributing to the processes of development and growth. Its contribution varies in different contexts according to its scale relative to other important factors (such as other resource flows and drivers or obstacles to development).¹⁰

In trying to capture some of these complexities, and work towards finalising the Core Questions, the following diagram was developed by the Core Team and shared in workshops. It illustrates the logic of the Core Questions and also tries to place the part of aid subject to Declaration commitments in its real context, relative to other sources of development finance and drivers of development in countries. This was intended to encourage a realistic assessment in all studies of the Declaration's (and aid's) possible contributions to development results.

⁹ See Figure 1. Sources of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; p.2 of Synthesis Report.

¹⁰ See Figure 5. The Context for Implementing the Paris Declaration: Complex Pathways to Change, below.

Figure 3. Aid Reform in Perspective



The Core Questions and sub-questions were then refined and finalised through the first series of Regional Workshops listed above. A participatory approach was adopted, with participants (mainly comprising national evaluation coordinators and reference group members) discussing the first draft suggestions in groups, with the aim of eliciting maximum input, debate and feedback. All workshop documents were posted on the Evaluation Extranet. Subsequently, the draft Framework and Workplan, integrating the results of all the regional workshops, was validated with the full International Reference Group (comprised in large part of regional workshop participants) in December 2009.

The final Core Questions of the Evaluation, confirmed in the Inception Report of June 2010, aimed to help explain:

1) To what extent the Paris Declaration has been implemented in different countries and donor/agency systems;

- *Core Q1. "What are the important factors that have affected the relevance and implementation of the Paris Declaration and its potential effects on aid effectiveness and development results?"*

2) What the effects have been in advancing the specific improvements in aid effectiveness targeted in the Declaration;

- *Core Q2. "To what extent and how has the implementation of the Paris Declaration led to an improvement in the efficiency of aid delivery, the management and use of aid and better partnerships?" (Process and intermediate outcomes)*

3) What contributions can aid effectiveness reforms plausibly be judged to have made to development results;

- *Core Q3. "Has the implementation of Paris Declaration strengthened the contribution of aid to sustainable development results? How?" (Development outcomes)*

These questions were supported by a number of sub-questions, set out in the Operational Matrix (described below).

Through the same process, the framework for Conclusions was also finalised. This was in good part informed by discussion at the Auckland Workshop, and eventually formed part of the narrative framework for the Synthesis Report.

Defining Terms

From a very early stage in the study, different understandings were apparent around some of the basic working terms of the Evaluation, including 'aid', 'capacity', 'social capital' and 'division of labour'. A Glossary was consequently developed and disseminated to teams. This applied OECD/DAC definitions where available. Specific guidance was also produced on more complex issues such as institutional capacity and social capital and on the use of the term 'aid' in the Evaluation (See 'Guidance' p. 210).

Approach to Methodology

The evaluation methodology for Phase 2 had to meet – as the main Synthesis text expresses – the challenge of assessing the effects of a broad reform agenda which is expressed in a political declaration and which is being applied to both partner and donor countries with widely differing circumstances.

In being an agreed set of principles and commitments to improve the effectiveness of aid (rather than a project or programme, the more usual object of a development evaluation), the Evaluation has more in common with the evaluation of policies or a strategy. As the main Synthesis text notes, the latter is a domain where evaluation is just beginning to be tested.¹¹ It was also informed by growing experience in evaluating policy influence.¹²

¹¹ Patrizi, P and Patton, MQ, "Evaluating Strategy" *New Directions for Evaluation*, No. 128, Winter 2010, American Evaluation Association.

¹² Jones, H (2011) *A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence*, London: ODI Background Paper.

To address this challenge, it was agreed to use a tested evaluation technique for assessing complex change processes. The Options Paper of 2006 had asserted that the “programme theory” or set of hypotheses that give the Declaration its logic had not been fully articulated. It also concurred with the earlier guidance that this evaluation would need to apply the “theory based” approach of most modern evaluation; that is, to bring to the surface implicit theories of change.¹³ On this basis the Core Team returned to the source of the evaluation object itself, the Declaration text, and drew from this the Declaration’s implicit “Programme Theory,”¹⁴ below. This described the underlying logic of the Declaration, including the desired goals expressed (desired outcomes), both intermediate (in improved aid effectiveness) and longer-term (in contributions to improved development results) and the description of how these goals would be generated (programmatic actions).¹⁵ This was presented in the Inception Report of May 2010.

To situate the Programme Theory in its real-world context, and to highlight some of the assumptions implicit within it, the Core Team also illustrated some of the “complex pathways to change” from development objectives to development results in a schematic also attached to the Inception Report (Diagram B, Figure 5 next page). This illustration depicts the many other powerful influences at work on development in different contexts; and the consequent potential and limits on the role of aid in contributing to development results.

Figure 4. Programme Theory

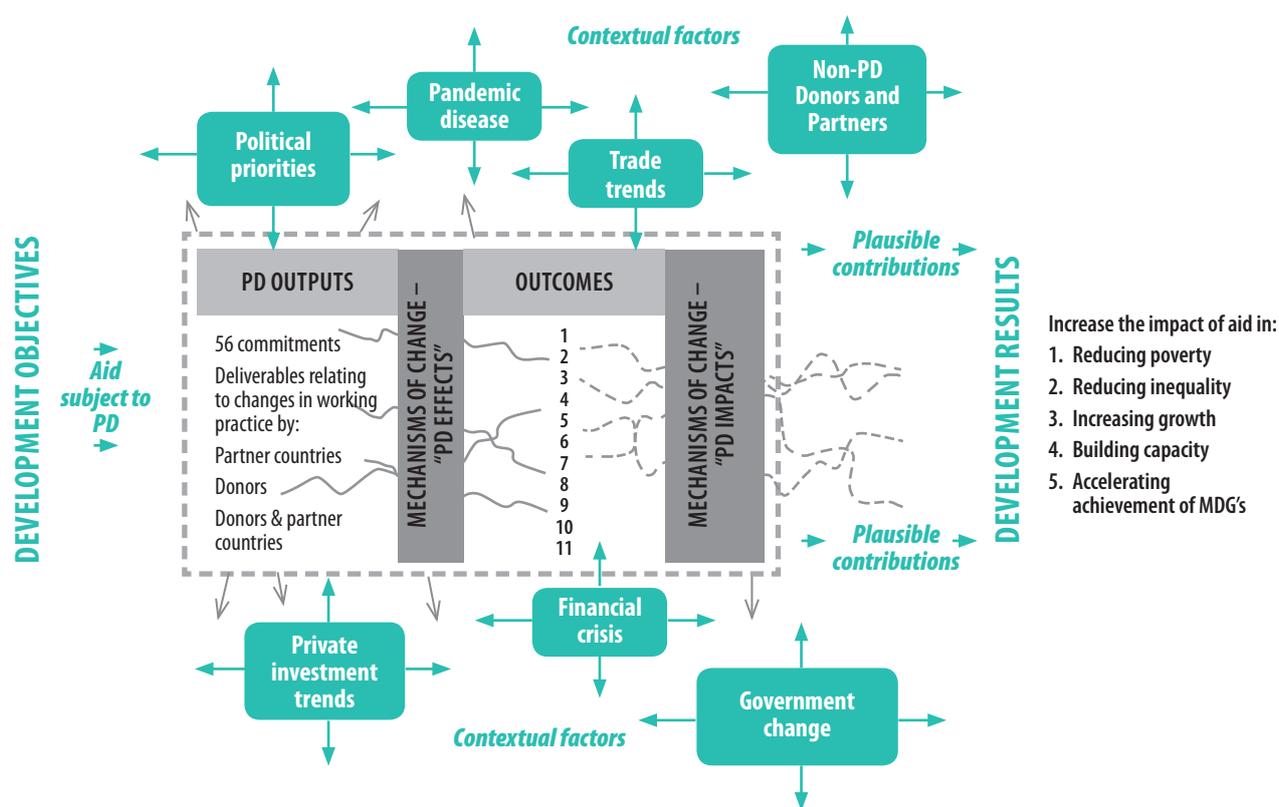
INTENDED DRIVERS	PROGRAMMATIC INPUTS/ACTIONS	PD OUTPUTS	INTENDED INTERMEDIATE (AID EFFECTIVENESS) OUTCOMES	INTENDED LONGER TERM (DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS) OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Continued high-level political support’ ‘Peer pressure’ ‘Coordinated actions at the global, regional and country levels’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Agreed political commitment to change’ ‘Backed by 56 Partnership commitments, progress measured against 12 specific indicators with targets for year 2010’ ‘Initiatives by partner countries and donors to establish their own targets for improved aid effectiveness’ 	56 commitments Deliverables relating to changes in working practice by: Partner countries Donors Donors & partner countries	I. “Stronger national strategies and operational frameworks II. Increased alignment of aid with partner countries’ priorities, systems and procedures, help to strengthen capacities III. Defined measures and standards of performance and accountability of partner country systems in public financial management, procurement, fiduciary standards and environmental assessments IV. Less duplication of efforts and rationalised, more cost-effective donor activities V. Reformed and simplified donor policies and procedures, more collaborative behaviour VI. More predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows to committed partner countries VII. Sufficient delegation of authority to donors’ field staff, and adequate attention to incentives for effective partnerships between donors and partner countries VIII. Sufficient integration of global programmes and initiatives into partner countries’ broader development agendas IX. Stronger partner countries’ capacities to plan, manage and implement results-driven national strategies X. Enhanced respective accountability of countries and donors to citizens and parliaments XI. Less corruption and more transparency, strengthening public support and supporting effective resource mobilisation and allocation”	‘Increase the impact of aid in: 1. Reducing poverty 2. Reducing inequality 3. Increasing growth 4. Building capacity 5. Accelerating achievement of MDGs’
		PD IMPLEMENTATION	MECHANISMS OF CHANGE – “PD EFFECTS”	MECHANISMS OF CHANGE – “PD IMPACTS”

¹³ Booth, D and Evans, A (op. cit.).

¹⁴ The classic definition of ‘programme theory’ is “a specification of what must be done to achieve the desired goals, what other important impacts may also be anticipated, and how these goals and impacts would be generated.” Chen (1990).

¹⁵ Examination of the background to the Declaration also shows that this programme theory also builds on the expected sources in the literature, i.e. “prior theory and research, implicit theories of those close to the program, observations of the program, and exploratory research to test critical assumptions.” Donaldson (2001).

Figure 5. The Context for Implementing the Paris Declaration: Complex Pathways to Change



Finally, the Core Team undertook a review and collation of key literature sources at national and international level in order to a) support country and donor evaluations and b) situate the Evaluation in the current research. This exercise was conducted from late 2009 up to May 2010, resulting in a set of three initial Digests on some key sources relating to the three finalised Core Questions. An updated list of key sources was also issued in October 2010, and sources were continually collected and reviewed thereafter (see attached selected list of Key Sources Consulted).

Integrating the principles of the Evaluation, the two key schematics and the approach envisaged in the early inputs into a single methodological framework to respond to the Core Questions was a challenging task. The final Evaluation Methodology opted to recognize that reaching the intended changes (articulated in the Declaration and reflected in the Programme Theory) should be conceived as a journey. It is likely to be travelled by different actors in different ways, in different periods, and at different speeds (context including the pre-2005 situation/other drivers of development). Consequently, the methodological approach adopted focuses on assessing the **direction of travel** towards the intended goals of the Declaration, and then the **pace and distance** travelled so far. This was reflected in the Operational Matrix (below).

Pursuing this approach required a means of addressing the thorny issues of **causality** and **attribution**. Paris Declaration

implementation is a multidimensional, multi-level process, affected by many factors, which can change direction, emphasis, and pace at different times and in response to many different influences. In finding a framework which could describe any relationship between Declaration implementation and accelerated development results, the following realities had to be reflected:

- much of the change process towards aid effectiveness started in many countries **before** the Declaration was formally signed and implemented (i.e. pre-2005);
- as Figure 3 makes abundantly clear, aid is only one of many potential contributory factors to development;
- that other features of a context (governance/political changes/economic crisis/institutional capacity etc) can have far greater effects on development results than aid reform or aid as a whole.

Traditional linear approaches to evaluation which would aim to causally 'attribute' change to the Declaration were consequently not appropriate here. As the main Synthesis Report makes clear, a political statement cannot by itself cause change; rather, what the Evaluation aimed to research is whether the operational commitments, relevant actors and motivational elements that it helped bring together from many sources have actually contributed to the intended improvements. It was therefore agreed with the International

Reference Group that, due to the diffuse nature of the Evaluation object in this case, the use of any simple 'counterfactual' in assessing progress would not be viable methodologically. Attempting to draw linear lines of 'attribution' between Declaration implementation and development results (in sectors or in the form of poverty indicators for example) would be even more flawed as an approach.

Consequently, the Core Team opted to steer a course in favour of '**contribution**' rather than direct attribution, drawing on the work of Mayne (2001)¹⁶ and others and also applied in recent multi-country studies of e.g. Sector Budget Support.¹⁷ Teams were asked to assess the '**plausible contributions**' of the Declaration in their contexts to development results; to clearly evidence any changes and connections observed; and to state as explicitly as possible any other plausible explanations.

To support the application of this approach, specific guidance was produced and circulated. The guidance proposed that teams trace back from the *development results achieved (Q3)* through to the *changes in the way aid has been delivered since the Declaration was enacted (Q2)* through to: *the context and the extent of implementation of Declaration principles (Q1)*, and to explore the links and connections between these processes.

To help them with the final question, teams were also reminded of the list of 'mechanisms of change' in the Approach Paper as potential tools for explaining and/or categorising change.

The final approach and anticipated methodology were clarified in the Evaluation Framework and Generic Terms of Reference for Country Studies, disseminated in December 2009. A workplan and final methodology was confirmed in the Inception Report of May 2010.

4. Implementing the Methodology

Operational Matrix for Country Evaluations

The approaches and methodology needed for such a challenging multi-country Evaluation are unavoidably complex. At the same time, they needed to be translated into a single operational tool, which could be applied across a range of diverse contexts, and which would allow for flexibility, whilst providing the consistency and commonality needed at Synthesis level.

To address this challenge at country level, an **Operational Matrix** was developed as the main evaluation instrument. Described as the 'spine' to the Evaluation, the Matrix was designed to help teams generate a robust and comprehensive response to the Core Questions. It provided a clear common

¹⁶ Mayne, John (2001) 'Addressing Attribution through Contribution Analysis: Using Performance Measures Sensibly' *The Canadian Journal of Programme Evaluation* Vol.6, No. 1, Canadian Evaluation Society.

¹⁷ Williamson, T and Dom, C (2010) *Sector Budget Support in Practice: Synthesis Report* London: Overseas Development Institute.

framework for national evaluation, allowing for exploration of the Declaration implementation in context, whilst facilitating comparative analysis at Synthesis level.

The Matrix places the analysis of *context* at the centre of Phase 2. Core Question 1 is explored through a number of sub-questions, and the Matrix provides guidance on the sorts of indicators and evidence, as well as options for methods or forms of analysis, that teams could apply.

Core Question 2, which seeks to assess the effects of the Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, had proven a challenge for early design and approach work, with pre-2009 inputs highlighting the problems of the definition plus the broad range of possible hypotheses and sub-questions.¹⁸ In December 2009, at a meeting of the Core Team and the Evaluation Management Group, the Core Team proposed the use of the 11 original Paris Declaration "expected outcomes"¹⁹ as the main framework for assessment. This was to prove the major breakthrough in enabling the Evaluation to systematically assess the effects of the Declaration on aid effectiveness.

To operationalise this, the following results sequence was applied within the Matrix (as seen in the example below of one section) to map the progress towards the 11 expected outcomes: (Figure 6, next page)

The emphases of the Accra Agenda for Action were integrated into the results sequence by mapping them across to the progress markers (and highlighting them within the Matrix). The Accra-specific commitment on transparency and accountability for development results (Paragraph 24) was also highlighted within the Matrix (Outcome 10b) since it intensified and added more precision to the Declaration commitments.

Core Question 3, which tackles development outcomes, contains four sub-questions, which had arisen during regional workshops and which were confirmed by the Evaluation Management Group as being of importance. These were, in brief: development results in specific sectors, using health as a tracer sector;²⁰ the prioritisation of the needs of the poorest, including women and girls; increases in social and institutional capacity; and aid modalities.²¹ These questions were addressed sequentially within the Matrix. For all the sub-questions, a similar results logic applies; this is not linear,

¹⁸ Linkages Study, Notes from the Auckland Workshop.

¹⁹ Extracted directly from the opening paragraphs of the Declaration text.

²⁰ At the first round of regional workshops in 2009, health was debated and agreed as the standard sector given that it is a priority for virtually all countries and donors, a channel for many Declaration practices, is well documented and displays both PD and non-PD-like approaches to aid – such as the vertical health funds.

²¹ The mix of aid modalities – between projects, programmes, budget support, etc. – is, as the Synthesis text makes clear, not a development result in the same sense as the sub-questions of Core Question 3, but the findings against this question were considered fundamental, given the widespread assumption that the Declaration agenda is centred on increasing programme-based approaches to aid as a key to better results.

Figure 6. Matrix Results Logic

PD expected outcomes	Progress markers	Potential indicators of change/milestones	Methods/Forms of Analysis	Judgement on progress, especially since 2005	Key reasons & explanation
B Building more inclusive and effective partnerships for development					
iv. Less duplication of efforts and rationalised, more cost-effective donor activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of donor comparative advantage (relative strengths/complementarity) led by government 	<p><i>Clear views/strategy by Government on donors comparative advantage and how to achieve increased donor complementarity</i></p> <p><i>Evidence of reprogrammed aid according to statement of relative strengths</i></p>	A, C, D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial Some Little None Regression 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased 'division of labour' at country/sector level 	<p><i>Mapping process conducted/maintained</i></p> <p><i>Number and type/theme of formal Division of Labour arrangements</i></p> <p><i>Reprogrammed aid according to Division of Labour agreements/arrangements</i></p> <p><i>Cooperative/joint work between agencies within e.g. project modalities</i></p>	A, C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial Some Little None Regression 	

but maps the *plausible contribution* of the Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action towards development results as described above – that is, establishing the extent to which there is evidence of Declaration implementation having accelerated progress towards development outcomes.

For Question 3a) which asked about results in specific sectors, a separate Matrix was developed, linked to the main Operational Matrix but oriented at sector level: (Figure 7 p. 207)

To assess direction, distance, and pace of travel, teams were encouraged to make progress judgements to inform their analysis – evidenced by applying the results logic above – along a defined scale (mainly substantial/some/little/none/regression, with slightly different scales where relevant, as for the case of Question 1). A column for key reasons and explanations was included, in order that judgements could be properly explained and evidenced.

The Matrix was also designed around the DAC criteria for the evaluation of development assistance, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.²² These cut across all of the three Core Questions (and in particular the sector studies), though with some areas of particular emphasis. Relevance for example was explored substantially through Core Question 1, effectiveness and efficiency through Question 2 and impact and sustainability mainly through Question 3. Section 12 con-

²² See OECD/DAC Standards for Development Evaluation (OECD/DAC 2010).

tains a detailed account of the Evaluation's conduct against the OECD/DAC Standards for Development Evaluation.

To ensure a response to the Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action commitments on gender and exclusion, the Matrix was also comprehensively reviewed for the incorporation of these issues. This took place firstly by drawing on gender and exclusion expertise within the Core Team itself and secondly through quality assurance by a leading gender and aid effectiveness expert.

Finally, the Matrix was refined and agreed through an ongoing process of consultation with the International Reference Group, Evaluation Management Group, National Reference Groups and evaluation teams. This included its discussion in a further series of regional workshops, primarily for evaluation teams, most of which had not been contracted in time for the first round. The final version was applied in all countries of the Evaluation, and formed the basis of all national evaluation reports.

Donor Headquarter Studies

The Core Team's engagement with the donor studies began with their participation in a preparatory workshop on Agency HQ Evaluations in London September 2009. This confirmed that the Phase 2 studies would be working to the original Terms of Reference for Phase 1. The Core Team subsequently developed a Generic Terms of Reference for the Donor studies, which was based around the intent of the same Terms of

Figure 7. Matrix Results Logic: Sector Level

Intended development results (specify)	Interim development results	Contribution of aid (finance/ other) to the sector	Effects of PD on the aid relationship	Overall aggregate judgement	Key reasons & explanations
Effective, efficient and sustainable progress towards sector long term development goals	<p>Good progress against sector programmes, strategies, policies and related targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of progress towards policy goals? Sector plans implemented as intended? Sector strategies on track? Progress reviews indicate that delivery on-track to meet targets? 	<p>Overall scale of committed aid within the sector, predictability and disbursement.</p> <p>Active and productive policy dialogue in the sector?</p> <p>Alignment of aid with sector programmes, strategies, policies and related targets</p> <p>Sector strategies and plans jointly financed (government and donor) to meet agreed national targets</p>	<p>See note on "Guidance to sector study" – Annex C for detailed set of progress markers/indicators to work through in this column, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficiency in aid delivery Management and use of aid in the sector Partnerships 		

Reference used in Phase 1 while expanding it in line with the overarching Evaluation Methodology for Phase 2. This was approved by the International Reference Group in January 2010.

A Donor Headquarter Study Matrix was subsequently developed, which operationalises the Generic ToR and suggests integrating key elements designed to mirror questions from the country Operational Matrix. In April 2010 the Donor Matrix was shared with the Study Coordinators/Study Teams, to help guide the teams in their work and to ensure a level of commonality among the studies and consistency with both Phase 1 Studies and the ongoing Country Evaluations.

At the same time, the Core Team engaged with Phase 1 Donors to encourage them to develop Updates to their Phase 1 reports. Guidance on how Phase 1 Updates could also be approached in ways that would further strengthen the robustness of the Phase 2 Evaluation was also shared. This included reference to three key follow-on questions:

1. What changes have been proposed and implemented following the Phase 1 Evaluation?
2. Did the Accra Agenda for Action provide further impetus to the Declaration process and result in any specific changes?
3. What reporting has been made to domestic or international accountability structures on the implementation of the Declaration (with copies of the reports)?

Discussions at the International Reference Group in June 2010 confirmed the collective intent behind this approach. However, this intent has not been consistently reflected in the implementation of the studies. In some cases planning of particular studies was already well advanced, preventing the

application of e.g. the mirror questions within studies/or of the Donor Matrix itself.

Methods for Individual Studies

Making the judgements required by the Matrix on the direction, distance, and pace of travel – in both country and donor studies, as well as the mirror questions in the case of the donor studies – meant reviewing multiple sources of evidence and deploying varied techniques. In advising teams on the methods to apply, the Core Team had to strike a balance between providing guidance to ensure consistency, and recognising the independence of teams to select the appropriate methods for diverse contexts. Capacity and resource constraints also had to be taken into account.

A range of suitable methods were identified within the Evaluation Framework and Operational Matrix, some specifically responding to the challenges of demonstrating contribution. With a view to triangulation and validation, teams were expected to adopt a multi-method approach, using the full range of tools suitable for exploration of the different evaluation questions, and to apply any different methods from those identified if appropriate (in the event, none did).

To support studies, *Methodological guidance* was provided as part of the Evaluation Framework which outlined recommended methods to be employed. The Matrix itself also very specifically set out proposed methods against each evaluation question and sub-question, and also against the intermediate outcomes for Question 2. Again, the aim was not to be overly prescriptive, but rather to provide guidance for teams, to support triangulation by emphasising a multi-method approach, and to generate the essential level of consistency across studies. The Core Team also provided a number of guidance notes that were relevant for both country evaluation and donor

study teams, specified below (e.g. on use of evidence in evaluations) as well as detailed written commentary on proposed methodology in inception reports.

In summary form, the following methods were proposed as part of the Methodological Guidance/Country Operational Matrix. All studies applied some of them, many applied most, but none applied all.

i) Literature and documentation review: Including both the wider sources identified through the Synthesis level literature review, and other relevant current literature such as national and sector level statements, policies, strategies and plans, evaluations, reviews, audits and other assessments (national, international, local and external), statistical data etc.

ii) Quantitative/statistical analysis: Including trends around international, national, poverty, development, social and economic indicators, aid-specific data etc.

iii) Survey instruments: The use of a base common survey instrument (described below). (Most teams applied this to face to face interviews, while some adapted it for an online survey).

iv) Interviews and focus groups: Aimed at including a broad range of key stakeholders – government, parliamentarians and other politicians, donor agency, civil society and the private sector.

v) Stakeholder analysis: Especially relevant to Q1 on context, as well as to the pre-2005 environment. Key people/groups of people/institutions were suggested.

vi) Case studies: Where relevant to explore or illustrate specific themes or sectors. (In fact, the sector studies under Q3 were the only ones applied, mostly from a longitudinal perspective).

vii) Additional methodological approaches/forms of analysis: Including Outcome Mapping, decision analysis, appreciative enquiry and Most Significant Change. (A small number of teams proposed Outcome Mapping and Most Significant Change within their Inception Reports, but none actually employed these in their studies, perhaps due to resource constraints).

Country Survey tool: To help carry out surveys amongst key partners, a common *Country Survey tool* was developed, based around the key lines of enquiry of the Matrix. The tool was piloted and a finalised version made available to teams. The tool was very comprehensive, and was intended to be used as a basis for teams to develop their own specific instruments. It was widely used, with some teams adapting it to their own specific studies, and others applying it in its entirety.

Use of Evidence

Phase 1 had highlighted the importance of the use of evidence in substantiating findings. For Phase 2, it was essential to ensure that findings in individual reports were adequately

evidenced, to enable their use in analysis at Synthesis level. This was addressed in two ways. Firstly, a guidance note on the Use of Evidence was issued. This asked teams to ensure 'sufficiency' of evidence in their reports, using an agreed understanding of the term²³ and considering the relevance, reliability and validity of the evidence. Secondly, the guidance noted the use of the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey indicators as one relevant form of triangulation and verification alongside other sources of evidence. An illustrative example was provided.

Links with the Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey

With both the Phase 2 Evaluation and the 2011 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration underway concurrently, some participants expressed a need for a clearer understanding the relationships and differences between the two. They also raised concerns about confusion and demands for informants. A guidance note was produced and disseminated – in collaboration with the secretariat for the Survey – entitled: ***Evaluation and Monitoring of the Paris Declaration: Difference and Complementarities***. This set out the main substantive areas of commonality and difference; and explained governance, timing and workload issues. It clarified that while the Evaluation recognised the value of the Monitoring Survey, using its indicators within the Matrix (and suggested referring to the 2006 and 2008 Survey results where relevant) its questions and sub-questions are broader, requiring other methods to be applied.

5. Supplementary Studies

Under Phase 1, a number of thematic studies had been commissioned to deepen knowledge in particular areas of significance for the Evaluation. These included work on the Untying of Aid:²⁴ on the applicability of the Declaration in fragile and conflict-affected situations;²⁵ and statistical capacity-building.²⁶

To continue these efforts into the second phase of the Evaluation, a number of supplementary studies were commissioned

²³ 'Sufficiency has to do with the amount of information required to provide persuasive support for the contents of the evaluation report, i.e. will the collective weight of the evidence be sufficient to persuade a reasonable person that the observations and conclusions are valid.' Danida Evaluation Guidelines (2006, p. 69).

²⁴ Clay, E, Geddes, M, Natali, L and te Velde, D (2008) *Thematic Study: The Developmental Effectiveness of Untied Aid: Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration and of the 2001 DAC Recommendation on Untying ODA to the LDCs Phase 1 Report*, Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

²⁵ OPM/IDL (2008) *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: Thematic Study – The applicability of the Paris Declaration in fragile and conflict-affected situations* Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

²⁶ OPM (2009) *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: Thematic Study – Support to Statistical Capacity Building, Synthesis Report* Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

during 2009 and 2010. These included: a survey across the Latin America and Caribbean region (implemented in collaboration with the Organisation for American States) and work on Development Resources beyond the Current Reach of the Paris Declaration.²⁷

Four more special studies in particular were proposed but not conducted for different reasons:

1. Gender and social exclusion: The Core Team considered a Terms of Reference proposed, but recognised that the concept of “social exclusion” is not widely understood across the Evaluation countries (reinforced by the first South East Asia regional workshop). Consequently, the issue was further emphasised via Sub-question 3c and the indicators/progress markers of the Matrix.

2. ‘Transaction costs’: This term features heavily in the aid effectiveness discourse yet no internationally agreed definition exists. An initial piece of work²⁸ was commissioned by the Secretariat (‘Preparation of Concept Note and Terms of Reference for an assessment of the net transaction costs of the implementation of the Paris Declaration’) which showed the term to be unfamiliar to many, misapplied in the view of economists and generally an unhelpful concept for further analysis. Instead, in agreement with the Management Group, the concept of the respective burdens of aid management was integrated across the Matrix.

3. Managing for Development Results (MfDR): A concept note drafted by the Core Team was not taken forward by the Management Group on the grounds that the topic should be covered alongside other key issues within the normal treatment in the Evaluation Matrix. Instead, the Core Team was asked to deepen their enquiry on the MfDR issue through a review of recent literature and initiatives, which resulted in an internal working paper.

4. The Aid Industry Culture: This proposal arose at the second regional workshop held in Vietnam, but was considered beyond the scope of this Evaluation.

Finally, as part of exploring critical issues, the Core Team itself developed a number of internal working papers: including some work on existing knowledge on aid effectiveness in situations of fragility, Climate Change financing; the evolving position and work of civil society organisations vis-à-vis the Declaration and the Accra Agenda; and a review to deepen the knowledge base on managing for development results.

27 FORO Nacional Internacional (2010) *Development Resources Beyond the Current Reach of the Paris Declaration* Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

28 Lawson, A (2009) *Evaluating the Transaction Costs of Implementing the Paris Declaration, Concept Paper*.

6. Experience from the Country Evaluation and Donor Headquarter Studies: Applying the Approach and Methodology

Country evaluations and donor headquarter studies began work from April 2010. Starts were staggered; one country had begun its work in February 2010 and completed its report by August, while another was still negotiating national procurement procedures in October of the same year. Despite these exceptions, the majority of studies were well underway during the June to September period of 2010.

Support and Capacity Development

Recognising the complexities of the approach and methodology, as well as the parallel function of the Evaluation to develop capacity, the Core Team devised a targeted programme of support to country and donor headquarter studies. This had two forms. Firstly, technical support was provided to teams on an ongoing basis. Secondly, guidance on particularly challenging areas was developed and disseminated.

1. Targeted Support

Country evaluations: Recognising the challenges of robust analysis at aggregate level within a decentralised evaluation, the Terms of Reference for the Core Team required them to ‘*facilitate coherence and quality across country-level studies as well as donor/agency headquarter-level studies so as to ensure that these are reliable, authoritative and useful bases for synthesising*’. In May 2010, the Evaluation Management Group approved a proposal from the Core Team to intensify the level of targeted and tailored support to the Country Teams, on the rationale of the breadth and scope of the Evaluation at country level, the implications for capacity requirements, and the Core Team’s experience of country specifics.

As a first step, country evaluations, via the National Coordinator, were allocated a Primary Resource Person from within the Core Team, whose function was to provide advice and guidance on the technical aspects of the Evaluation.

This technical advice role had to strike the balance between recognising the autonomy of individual teams – that is, retaining objectivity and independence – and engaging sufficiently to allow for a relatively free flow of information in terms of questions, areas of clarification etc. After some discussion, the Core Team developed a programme of support which operated mainly around the interpretation and use of the Matrix and clarification on the tools, approaches, mechanisms and methodologies of the Evaluation.

Advice and support were provided through a combination of face-to-face meetings, telephone, videoconference, skype and email. During the period June to November 2010, at least one in-person meeting was held with all evaluation teams bar

four (Cook Islands, Senegal, Ghana and Mali, where interaction took place virtually). The level of support was tailored according to the requirements of teams; some required more intensive engagement, while some were content with the opportunity to ask questions as required and to engage in discussion at identified milestone points (inception, early analysis, draft report). Further individual discussions were held with a number of teams at the Emerging Findings workshop in December 2010.

By keeping in close contact with teams, and by keeping a watching brief on products emerging from the process, Core Team members had good insight into methods being applied (mostly standard qualitative and quantitative techniques), areas of challenge arising in respect of the Matrix (mostly around applying contribution analysis) and the application of the ratings scales provided (a source of hesitancy for some of the teams). Written comments were provided to National Co-ordinators on Inception and Draft Reports, following a standard template. At country level, this commentary recognised the primary role of the National Reference Group in providing substantive comments, and clarified that remarks from the Core Team were limited to assuring the report's contribution to the Synthesis process.

A further – but very critical – rationale for the support to teams was the aspect of capacity development. There is no doubt that the majority of evaluation teams found the Matrix, and the results logic it contained, very challenging; for several, the shift from direct attribution to contribution analysis required new capabilities and understanding. There were some teams for whom intensive support was clearly a pre-requisite for ensuring the completion of their evaluation to provide full input for the Synthesis level. The support provided, in the various forms of guidance, detailed explanations, the provision of examples around issues and the working terms of the Evaluation, plus comments on inception and draft reports, appeared well received by teams. Its value was noticeable when reports were later analysed at Emerging Findings stage (see below).

Donor headquarter studies: at donor level, support to donor headquarter study teams was provided in the form of one dedicated Core Team member, who responded to specific enquiries for advice from the study teams and kept abreast of general progress.

2. Guidance

Recognising the breadth and scope of the Matrix for evaluation teams, as well as the complexity of analysis required, a number of guidance papers were produced and disseminated. The topics included: the Glossary; Guidance on Contracting Country Teams; Guidance on Issues of Attribution and Contribution; Guidance on the Use of Evidence; Guidance on question 3c) on Institutional Capacity and Social Capital; and for specific cases, Guidance on handling the Declaration Phase 2 Evaluation in Fragile Situations.

In particular, because of the complexities surrounding the definition of 'aid' – a guidance note titled 'What is Aid in the Paris Declaration and the Evaluation' was developed and shared. This set out the main boundaries around the term 'aid' in the Evaluation, mainly but not exclusively referring to the OECD/DAC definition of Official Development Assistance.²⁹ It also provided a table setting out how the categories of different resources (e.g. those from providers who have and have not endorsed the Paris Declaration) should be treated.

3. Data resulting

The combination of a fairly prescriptive Matrix plus a process of targeted support and guidance showed clear results in the data emerging. As described below, when reports were analysed at Emerging Findings and subsequent stages, a firmer and more consistent evidence base than was available under Phase 1 was apparent. One area of disappointment was the lack of comprehensive application of the ratings scales provided; while some teams had applied these systematically, others had veered away from making such progress judgements. The Core Team's response to this challenge is described in Section 7 below.

7. Analysis and Synthesis Process

A lesson from Phase 1 of the Evaluation was the need for a clear direction on the Synthesis process from the start of the Evaluation. This is particularly important where the Evaluation brings together findings across multiple and varied contexts, even where the evaluation framework has been applied specifically to enable cross-case synthesis.

For Phase 2, the Synthesis exercise presented two main challenges. Firstly, a sufficiently robust approach to enable the bringing together of diverse material from a disparate range of contexts for comparability at aggregate level. Secondly, ensuring validity and reliability of the findings and conclusions at Synthesis level. The following section describes how these challenges were addressed.

Stage 1: Emerging Findings

The Core Team was required to produce an Emerging Findings note for a deadline of November 2010. With this in mind, country and donor evaluation teams were expected to submit their first draft reports by the end of October 2010, to enable analysis. Given the tight timeframe and awareness of some

²⁹ "Grants or loans to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients (developing countries) and to multilateral agencies which are: (a) undertaken by the official sector; (b) with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective; (c) at concessional financial terms (if a loan, having a grant element of at least 25 percent). In addition to financial flows, technical cooperation is included in aid. Grants, loans and credits for military purposes are excluded. Transfer payments to private individuals (e.g. pensions, reparations or insurance payouts) are in general not counted." Source: DAC Glossary of Key Terms and Concepts, www.oecd.org/dac/glossary.

late starts, it was anticipated that material received would be very diverse.

Analytical process: In order to successfully analyse the material within the tight timeframe, and to help meet some of the challenges above, the Core Team prepared a detailed filter template for analysis. This required the designated reviewers within the Team to identify and analyse findings from individual reports along the parameters of the Core Questions and sub-questions of the Matrix. Simultaneously, to ensure that the findings being sifted out were adequately supported by evidence (another lesson learned from Phase 1), reviewers were required to assess both the quality of the evidence presented and the clarity of the analysis.

The analytical tool included rating scales on the following parameters:

For findings	For conclusions
Data transparency and coverage	Extent to which questions were answered
Data reliability and accuracy	Clarity of analysis

Reviewers were also required to specify the main sources of evidence used per question, to enable an aggregate judgement on the main types of evidence, gaps etc.

As expected, some very varied material was made available to the Evaluation team by the Emerging Findings deadline. This ranged from one complete approved report, several final first drafts, some preliminary drafts, and some initial non-approved material which teams had helpfully shared for the use of the Core Team. In some cases, including two donor agencies and one country evaluation, no material was yet available.

It was evident at this point that the technical advice provided by the Core Team had paid off in terms of supporting teams in understanding the Evaluation's approach and working terms, in researching and analysing around the Matrix, and in dealing with issues of contribution and attribution. Generally, the evidence base available was promising, as reflected under the 'data reliability and accuracy' assessments. However, the quality and state of preparedness of material received remained highly varied. As indicated, in many reports, the recommended ratings were not applied at analysis stage, or at least not made explicit in draft material. An additional complication was that almost all of the material at this stage was still embargoed – that is, it had not been cleared by National Reference Groups or donor Reference Groups – so could not be used for quotation or citation (and therefore verification by individual teams) in the Emerging Findings report.

Despite these challenges, in preparing the report, the filter template was applied to the material in hand. It proved extremely useful in terms of both sifting out aggregate findings across a diverse range of material (and enabling a composite

template per question and sub-question to be developed); and identifying where gaps and weaknesses in the evidence remained. Reports were analysed as late as possible, to allow the use of maximum volume of material available while still providing draft materials to workshop participants in time for them to prepare.

Aggregating Emerging findings material: To bring together the diverse material available at this stage within the Emerging Findings report, the Core Team went through the following process:

- Extracting the first emerging findings in the filter templates alongside a first check of evidence, using the ratings above.
- Cross-checking templates between Core Team members to ensure rigour and completeness (each completed filter was then verified/quality assured by a second member of the team).
- Assembling findings from all evaluations into a compilation by question and sub-question.
- Analysing assembled findings across reports and categorising responses, at this stage with references to specific individual reports.

The Core Team's expectation of the country material being the prime information source for responding to the Core Questions was starkly borne out at Emerging Findings stage. The primacy of this material, and the extensive collaborative effort devoted to developing the Matrix for country evaluations, was therefore confirmed.

Once the internal Emerging Findings draft had been finalised, citations/references to individual reports were removed for the version for circulation, as required by the embargoed status (though retained by the Core Team for reference).

Emerging Findings note validation: The Emerging Findings note, including the gist of the main findings (without quotation or citation) was presented to members of the International Reference Group and donor headquarter studies and country evaluation teams at the Emerging Findings workshop, hosted by the Government of Indonesia in December 2010. All countries and donor agencies participating in the Evaluation were represented at the workshop other than Bolivia.³⁰

The Emerging Findings workshop had a number of aims:

- To capture key findings from the draft reports to 1 November, and the additions, clarifications, nuances, differences and questions brought out in discussions.

³⁰ This was due to logistical reasons beyond their control. A workshop was later held in Lima (January 2011) to feed back the results of the Emerging Findings workshop and to ensure the Bolivian contribution to the Evaluation.

- To follow the Evaluation Questions and Matrix produced in the regional consultations as the agreed framework, consistent with the preliminary Synthesis outline.
- To provide guidance for checking further points by Teams in finalising their reports and by the Core Team in preparing to analyse final reports and other inputs.
- To provide a sense of the likely emerging direction for the overall Evaluation, and to raise any concerns emerging.

The workshop involved a structured process of comment and validation, in which individual representatives presented their own reports and commented upon/validated the Emerging Findings draft text against them. This was particularly challenging given the inability to quote or cite emerging findings from individual reports – making it impossible for individual teams to verify directly whether and where their particular findings were reflected.

Given this major information gap, a composite list was generated of points of apparent agreement and disagreement between the gist of the Emerging findings in the report, built on the participants' articulation of shared findings and additional points of relevance. Overall, the reference to the yardstick of "direction of travel" (rated as positive throughout) was felt to convey too positive an appraisal of progress, although it had been stressed that this was only the most minimal threshold, and pace and distance of travel were far more significant.³¹ The Core Team then undertook to review the summary of workshop inputs in detail as final reports were considered and the Synthesis report was prepared.

A number of nuances and clarifications were also provided, which the Core Team also undertook to integrate into Synthesis drafting. Finally, the refinement of the Emerging Findings note – including the key limitations emerging, challenges highlighted at this stage (see below), major themes emerging from the workshop, areas of agreement and disagreement plus the nuances/additions proposed – were presented for any final commentary.

One major limitation apparent at this stage was the insufficiency of donor/agency coverage. It was clear that further steps would be needed to integrate donor/agency findings of Phase 2 studies and updates into the main Evaluation Matrix, and broaden and deepen coverage of donor aid effectiveness responses to the extent possible.

³¹ Some possible disagreements emerged: on Outcome 2v on 'reformed and simplified donor policies, more collaborative behaviour' (the Emerging Findings note found 'significant, in some cases substantial, forward movement is found in 11 of the 17 country evaluations') which was at considerable variance with participants' assessments of their evidence and insights. There was also doubt about Sub-question Q3b on gender and social exclusion, where the Emerging Findings note had found a positive trend. The Core Team undertook to resolve these as part of the Synthesis process.

Arising from discussions in Indonesia, the Colombian team, with input from the South Africa team, also carried out some additional work to draw out similar features drawing on the reports of five 'middle income' countries of the evaluation (Colombia, South Africa, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines). These contributions were presented for consideration in the Synthesis process.

Stage 2: Synthesis Report

The Synthesis stage required the Core Team to '*Synthesise] the results of all the component evaluations of Phase 2, together with Phase 1 and supplementary materials, in a major policy-oriented synthesis report in time to feed into the Seoul High Level Forum.*'³²

After the Emerging Findings Note had been validated, evaluation teams submitted final reports for review in early January, with some final approved versions arriving later in the month. In addition to continuing to analyse and synthesise the evaluation reports, the Core Team also worked to address the challenges identified at the Emerging Findings Workshop. Specific actions were as follows:

³² Evaluation Framework p.6.

Holding a 'special measures' workshop for Bolivia to exchange feedback from the Emerging Findings workshop	Held in Lima 13-14 January 2011 with Core Team and Evaluation Secretariat attendance.
Considering additional coverage of donors to complete the picture	The Core Team surveyed other potential sources of evidence. An attempt was made to try to use Monitoring Survey data for across the board donor comparisons, but this was not found comprehensive or credible. Interesting new efforts, including the recent Brookings' Institution/Center for Global Development Quality of Official Development Assistance ratings and the World Bank's 'Aid Quality and Donor Rankings' material were found still experimental (as their respective authors stress) and also heavily reliant on Monitoring Survey data. Ultimately, the Core Team was able to supplement coverage in areas where there was relevant new material from Peer Reviews and other DAC and the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and by revisiting again the Phase 1 findings.
Integrating material from supplementary studies and other resources	Consideration of the materials on fragile states, untying, statistical capacities, and 'middle income' features as well as the key other studies conducted (above); carrying out a brief update of the work and emerging position of CSOs vis-à-vis the Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.
Integrating data from the Monitoring Survey and other relevant Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and DAC materials	Analyses of past Monitoring Survey data undertaken February 2011; review of additional Peer Reviews conducted; integrating additional Working Party documents including the Beginnings Now analysis on country systems and predictability, donor decentralisation, transparency and documents on aid effectiveness and climate change financing/aid predictability.

Analysis: From January to mid-February 2011, each final Phase 2 report was analysed and updated against the matrix of Evaluation questions and sub-questions. Where feasible, filter templates were completed or updated; where the late arrival of the report or capacity limitations prevented this, findings were recorded in a continually-updated version of the validated Emerging Findings report, which included references and citations. This process applied the same parameters as the filter template around validity and reliability of information, with judgements being recorded.

This process resulted in a composite evidence base from which key themes could be identified, and critical elements in the narrative could start to be drawn for the Synthesis analysis. It included the findings from all country evaluations and donor studies against the Core Questions, sub-questions and intermediate outcomes of the Matrix. It has provided the main source of evidence for the Synthesis report. Bearing in mind the principle outlined above of the primacy of the country as the main arena for research, the vast weight of the evidence has been drawn from the country study reports, and particularly those from Phase 2.

Analytical pathways: Conscious of the international interest in identifying possible categories or trends (whether geographical, thematic or findings-related) in Declaration implementation and results, the Core Team closely examined the evidence to see whether any patterns were apparent. This evidence was drawn largely from the comprehensive set of contextual sub-questions asked in Core Question 1 and included considering countries by region, income and development status, scale of aid flows, length of engagement with the aid effectiveness agenda, extent of Declaration ownership, governance context, experience of natural or political upheaval, and several other potential categories.

Almost all of these possible categories either proved unfruitful, or presented a number of tensions/contradictions/outlying

cases which could not be explained by the data. The only two categories to emerge from the evidence as cohesive enough to merit specific treatment were those of fragility and middle-income status, as discussed in the report. Methodologically, the Evaluation has consequently concluded that applying pre-determined hypotheses or categories across a broad range of country contexts – particularly where these are self-selected – risks presenting dead-ends or artificial groupings which do not reflect the reality of implementing a political compact across a diverse set of nation-states.

Gender and Exclusion: As indicated, the evaluation Matrix was comprehensively screened to ensure the integration of gender and exclusion concerns throughout the data collection, analysis and reporting processes during the country studies. With a very few exceptions, such as the Vietnam report, the country evaluation reports in fact presented little evidence beyond that required by Core Question 3b, which relates specifically to these concerns. Therefore, the decision was made at Synthesis stage to aggregate findings on these issues into the report's treatment of this Question.

Integration of Phase 1 and Phase 2: Given that the Synthesis report needed to include the integration of Phase 1 evidence, a robust analytical approach to integrating the Phase 1 findings had to be developed. This including triangulating/testing for any tensions or contradictions that emerged around the Phase 2 Core Question 2 findings on aid effectiveness, since this had largely been the focus of Phase 1 at a more preliminary stage. The analytical approach to the Synthesis therefore included mapping the findings from Phase 1 against the Phase 2 findings (using the aggregate areas of analysis under the draft report structure), exploring in detail any differences/divergences/variations, taking note of any expansions or clarifications, and then revisiting these areas in depth before agreeing individual findings/conclusions. In particular, the Phase 1 findings were revisited at the level of donor performance, given the paucity of information on donors available from the country studies under Phase 2.

Applying data from the Monitoring Survey: During the course of the Evaluation, a number of critiques arose from country studies on some of the Monitoring Survey indicators. Since the Evaluation applied these only as a supplementary source of evidence, or form of triangulation, this did not affect the validity of the data received. However, critiques were noted and reflected in the Draft and Final Synthesis Reports.³³

The following table provides a summary of evidence on the Monitoring Survey indicators arising in the Evaluation (note: this is not a systematic or purposeful assessment of the indicators themselves, but rather a reflection of the findings that happened to arise within the Evaluation's country studies):

	Indicator relevant, useful measure	Relevant, but weak measure or sources	Not very relevant or very weak measures or sources
1. Partners have operational development strategies		X	
2. Reliable country systems		X	
3. Aid flows are aligned on national priorities		X	
4. Strengthen capacity by coordinated support			X
5a. Use of country public financial management systems	X		
5b. Use of country procurement systems	X		
6. Strengthen capacity by avoiding parallel implementation structures			X
7. Aid is more predictable	X		
8. Aid is untied	X		
9. Use of common arrangements or procedures		X	
10. Encourage shared analysis		X	
11. Results oriented frameworks			X
12. Mutual accountability		X	

Monitoring survey data was therefore applied in the Synthesis as originally envisaged: as a form of triangulation and validation where it was reported as relevant and useful, with sufficiently robust evidence to support it.

³³ The reports of Vietnam and Colombia provide some useful examples.

Report drafting process: The drafting process for the main Synthesis report involved a number of steps:

1. Against the composite evidence base (including Phase 1 studies, Phase 2 and all supplementary forms of evidence), extracting key themes for findings.
2. Tracking back to ensure the logical derivation of the themes from the evidence.
3. Once themes had been verified, drawing these together in narrative form.
4. Once the findings narrative was in place, drawing out conclusions.
5. Tracking back to ensure that conclusions were logically derived from the findings.
6. Distilling key messages and recommendations.

In addition to constant electronic exchange, two meetings of the three-person core drafting team were held in the period January to February 2010. The first session addressed the key themes emerging and the anticipated narrative framework. The second focused on the conclusions and anticipated recommendations.

For the Synthesis, three other elements, which became especially prominent after the Emerging Findings workshop, were also brought into the frame:

- Emphasising pace and distance over direction, since it was apparent from the material received at Emerging Findings point that direction was essentially uniform (forward). This was reinforced by the Emerging Findings workshop.
- Rating the degree of difficulty of achieving the different outcomes against specified criteria, since the Emerging Findings discussions brought home even more powerfully than the reports the very different challenges implicit across the outcomes.
- Integrating different starting points as well as degree of difficulty, since the importance of the pre-2005 context was strongly emphasised in both the material received at Emerging Findings stage and the workshop itself.

In terms of aggregate judgements on the pace of change and the distance remaining to achieve the intended outcomes for the Synthesis report, the Declaration's authors obviously understood that these intended outcomes would not all be fully achieved in five years. Instead, they specified the expected levels of achievement for the selected monitoring indicators. At Synthesis level, therefore, the standard of judgement applied on the intended outcomes was a dual one, blending relative and absolute standards. In relative terms, if reports on some countries or donors showed that they had been able to

substantially achieve the end condition in the intended outcome, this was taken as a measure of the possible. The pace and distance remaining of others were then assessed accordingly. If there was no such standard of basic completion, the assessment here applies an implicit standard that by 2010 the end condition has been at least half achieved, which would merit a 'fast' pace rating and 'little' distance remaining.

The final drafting stage involved raising the level of the report, to ensure that the text of the Evaluation was appropriately policy-oriented. This was a requirement of the Core Team's Terms of Reference and clarified in the Inception Report of December 2009: '*The Synthesis* report, given its nature and its intended uses and audiences, will be much more than a summary of the component [parts] ... Building on these foundations, the Synthesis report will add another level of analysis to draw out the more general trends, findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations arising around the implementation of the Paris Declaration and (to the extent possible) the Accra Agenda for Action.³⁴ Meetings of the International Reference Group, including the Emerging Findings session in December 2010 and a final meeting in Copenhagen in April 2011, were a critical stage in ensuring that the expected level had been reached.

The Inception Report's statement of intent around content was also borne in mind during the drafting process: '*The process of drafting the Synthesis Report will need to be grounded systematically and demonstrably in the data, findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations of the Country Evaluations, the Donor/Agency HQ Studies and the other agreed inputs, refer to them and be able to account for the evidence on which it is based, without becoming a heavy, densely-footnoted document.*' (p.9) During the drafting process, particular attention was paid to the usefulness of the report. An ongoing process took place of checking whether the material being developed met criteria of being useful to country and international aid policymakers and practitioners. Critiques which had arisen during the course of the process on the Monitoring Survey were, in the interests of transparency, included in the drafting content.

The draft text, as far as conclusions and recommendations, was circulated for wider Core Team commentary and validation in late February 2011. A second round of comments was elicited on a complete draft, including conclusions and main recommendations, in early March. A Draft version of the report was submitted to the Evaluation Secretariat on March 9th 2011.

Validation of the final Synthesis Report: The process for final validation was as follows:

- Late March-April 2011 – On receiving the Draft Report, the Evaluation Management Group submitted a joint round of comments. The Core Team responded to these and provided both a response to the comments (April 5th 2011) and a Revised Draft version of the report (April 7th 2011).

³⁴ Inception Report p. 9.

- April 2011 – the Revised Draft Report was validated with evaluation teams, and written commentary provided by the International Reference Group by a deadline of April 18th 2011.
- April 19th-25th 2011 – the Core Drafting Team reviewed International Reference Group comments received and prepared a full written response.
- April 27th-28th 2011 – the International Reference Group met in Copenhagen to finally review, validate and approve the Revised Draft Synthesis Report.

The final International Reference Group validation meeting in Copenhagen provided commentary and feedback on the **quality, credibility and clarity** of the Draft Report. In terms of quality and credibility, the report was felt to have met requirements. However, requests for more clarity in its presentation were received. The Core Team took note of the comments, and following re-drafting, a final version of the report, in the three languages of the Evaluation, was presented to the Management Group on May 23rd 2011.

8. Independence, Integrity and Ethics

The Phase 2 Evaluation's status as a joint international process meant that independence and integrity were critical to ensuring its credibility. Care was taken to throughout design and implementation to ensure this, in the following ways:

- Through the Evaluation's governance processes at both the national and international levels, which has ensured that evaluation teams alone are responsible for the contents of their reports – for example, the explicit responsibility of the National Reference Groups for assuring the independence of country reports.
- Through screening individual reports for independence and transparency as part of the Synthesis analysis process.
- Through the application of the OECD/DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, which have been emphasised throughout at both national and international levels (see below).
- Through the focus on a participatory and consultative approach throughout, both within individual studies and at international Synthesis level, as described above.
- Through an emphasis on transparency throughout, reflected in the sharing of key documents and drafts for scrutiny by external stakeholders at appropriate milestones, supported by the use of a web-based platform (the Extranet) for information-sharing (see below).

- Through a focus on meeting required ethical standards during the conduct of the evaluation, including the recognition of gender consideration and the securing of informed consent of e.g. interviewees through the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality etc.
- Through the integration in the Evaluation Framework and Matrix of aspects of gender equality, human rights and social inclusion, which are prominent in both the Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.

9. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance has received considerable attention throughout the process of the Phase 2 Evaluation. A paper setting out the provisions was approved by the International Reference Group and disseminated in May 2010. This clearly distinguished quality assurance and control from acceptance of the Evaluation's conclusions.

In brief summary, the quality assurance arrangements were as follows:

- At country level, each evaluation process was required to establish internal quality assurance and control systems. The National Evaluation Coordinator was responsible for quality assuring evaluation reports before submission to the Core Team for inclusion in the Synthesis. The Terms of Reference for the National Reference Group explicitly stated that the quality should be assessed against national, regional or international Evaluation Quality Standards (e.g. the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards) with preference for national standards where they exist.
- Within the Donor Studies Evaluation Coordinators were responsible for quality assuring the study reports before submission to the Core Team for inclusion in the Synthesis.
- The Core Team was tasked to support the quality assurance at national/donor level by engaging with and supporting the country evaluations and if requested the donor studies.

Quality assurance of the work of the Core Team had three levels:

- Internal quality control and assurance of the team's processes through the appointment of a senior team member of the contracted institution (IOD PARC) as Quality Manager.
- Quality assurance by the International Reference Group, who were tasked to oversee evaluation products, including the key documents produced by the Core Team.

- Quality assurance by the Management Group, who were tasked to review all products by the Core Team and to assess and sign off (approve) these.

These arrangements have been comprehensive and are considered to have worked well.

10. Limitations and Risks

The main limitations and risks of the Evaluation were recognised from an early stage of the process. They were reported in the Inception Report and confirmed at the Emerging Findings workshop in Indonesia. They include:

- The unusual character of a broad reform programme and political declaration as an evaluation object and the resulting limits on applying standard evaluation methodologies which imply more linear causality.
- The breadth and complexity of the goals of the Declaration and the wide variety of contexts and actors involved, meaning that very few robust analytical categories, groups or trends were found to apply.
- The paucity of data in some areas, including the limited participation by multilateral actors which has meant that very few robust conclusions could be drawn in relation to them.
- The limited time which has elapsed since the Declaration was endorsed in 2005 (and even less since Accra in 2008), meaning that there has been little scope for some of the fundamental changes expected to have been implemented.
- The expectation of breadth and comprehensiveness needing to be balanced with rigor and depth: the Matrix was broad and extensive, and it tested considerably the capacity of evaluation teams.
- The self-selected nature of participating countries and agencies, which limited the representative basis of the component studies, although in fact a reasonably representative distribution among partner countries was achieved.
- The eventually-unrealised hope of achieving sufficient coverage of donors'/agencies' policies and actions on the ground through the country evaluation reports, resulting in limited intersections between donor headquarter studies and country evaluations.
- The fact that the limited methodology for donor/agency headquarter studies from Phase 1 was carried over into Phase 2 – and that a number of key donors did not carry out such studies at all – also meant that the Evaluation

lacked equally targeted instruments to assess donor/agency performance as those for country evaluations, meaning that supplementary sources had to be used to fill the gap.

- Some significant timing failures and delays, particularly around evaluation team procurement and the approval processes for both country and donor reports. Although the Core Team had anticipated this eventuality, and proposed mitigation measures of special catch-up support where needed, material/reports were inevitably delayed both at Emerging Findings and Synthesis stages. This meant that the Core Team was working at various milestone points with material at very different stages of development.

11. Knowledge Management and the Extranet

As part of the contractual agreement of the Phase 2 Evaluation, the Core Team had committed to develop an interactive website. Its purpose was to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, information and experience across evaluation teams, and to reinforce the coherence and comparability of the Evaluation as a whole.³⁵

A secure, password protected Extranet was subsequently developed during late 2009. This was made available to Evaluation stakeholders – including members of the Evaluation Management Group, International Reference Group, and country evaluation and donor study teams – from December 2009. It consisted of a main ‘parent’ site, accessible to all registered users, and smaller sub-sites for use by each individual evaluation team. Evaluation teams were able to control the level of access other, accessible only to individual teams.

Specifically, the Extranet was designed to provide the following functions:

- A single repository for the primary information and instruments of the Evaluation, including the key background papers, tools (e.g. the Matrix), guidance notes, records of workshops and other information which could be swiftly uploaded then accessed from anywhere in the world, at any point in time.
- A glossary to promote a common interpretation and usage of technical terms.
- A contacts directory, listing all the participants and key stakeholders in the Evaluation, their roles and their contact details.
- A communications function, enabling individuals and teams to communicate directly via the extranet (although the discussions forum was not widely utilised).

³⁵ Core Team Terms of Reference p. 194.

- A knowledge-sharing platform for country and donor headquarter study teams through e.g. the sharing of individual reports at Emerging Findings and Synthesis stages.
- A forum for status reporting, making progress transparent and comparable across teams.
- A team-specific platform for sharing information internally and e.g. uploading draft versions of reports (individual teams were able to control the level of access other users could have to their sites, thereby enabling teams to work securely and share ‘private’ documentation amongst only immediate colleagues) and controlling document versions.
- Communicating the Evaluation milestones and progress through a calendar function and a timeline.
- An internal working platform for the Core Team, who were internationally dispersed and could consequently engage with working documents from anywhere in the world.
- A management tool for collecting data on usage by a particular country/region at specific points in time.

All material, including video tutorials, was provided in English, French and Spanish, with the Extranet allowing users to quickly switch between languages.

The Extranet was widely used by all stakeholders – over 350 individuals were registered as users. During the course of 2010, the site was visited over 5,000 times with visitors from 72 countries. To date, nearly 1,000 documents have been uploaded. A minority of teams, largely in Africa, reported difficulties in access related to broader connectivity problems in their locations; this was addressed by reverting to email where necessary.

While it required ongoing management and technical input, the Extranet enabled the very rapid dissemination and sharing of information, resulting in much greater coherence across teams than could have been achieved by other possible methods. It also enabled members of evaluation teams to identify themselves as part of a joint, global process, through their use of an interactive tool that located their study in relation to others. It is considered one of the successes of the Evaluation.

12. Lessons Learned

The experience of the Evaluation has provided some valuable lessons on the complexities of conducting multi-country and multi-agency studies at the level of a political declaration. Several further stages in drawing lessons will follow, and the Core

Team will participate and contribute, but some of the most critical identified to date are summarised here:

- ***A fully participatory approach is essential but can add burdens of its own*** – to ensure common understandings, to manage consistency and to secure broad-based engagement, participation must be assured – though it also carries the risk of an overload of questions/issues to be addressed within the Evaluation.
- ***Dealing with context means dealing with complexity:*** the Evaluation has confirmed that the systematic analysis of findings across diverse contexts, often generated through diverse methods, requires a very clear central framework for analysis. This also facilitates the assessment of both the quality of evidence provided plus the substance of the findings at Synthesis stage.
- ***Balancing the need for autonomy at local level with the consistency of findings required for synthesis work necessarily involves trade-offs.*** Requirements include a clear common framework which contains a clear results logic, has been developed through a participatory approach, and ensures consistency whilst allowing for flexibility in context. Inevitably, however, some level of autonomy will be sacrificed for comparability.
- ***Balancing comprehensiveness with feasibility of execution in diverse settings should be considered at the outset:*** Some evaluation and study teams were able to start early enough and muster sufficient capacity and cooperation to successfully cover the full terms of reference with confidence. Other experiences were much more uneven, raising the question of whether narrower questions should have been attempted. Given the broad nature of the Declaration, however, this would have required some arbitrary selection, and risked reducing the relevance of the evaluation results.
- ***Where new approaches are required, capacity constraints need to be anticipated and addressed.*** Similarly, support to the technical aspects of individual evaluations is also crucial to ensuring consistency and commonality of approach. Adequate resources for specific technical support are an essential part of the Evaluation design; they should not be seen as 'additional' or to be drawn on 'if/where required'.
- ***The challenges of mapping the contributions of a political Declaration to changed performance and results cannot be underestimated*** – the value of contribution analysis is confirmed; a clear framework for exploring and explaining pathways of contributions is essential as guidance for evaluation teams; and a timeframe well beyond five years is needed to re-confirm direct connections between aid reforms and development results.
- ***Arrangements for designating and mandating national-level structures, contracting teams and approving and releasing reports are subject to country and agency procedures and requirements*** – these can be extended and should be allowed for within timelines.
- ***Where country evaluations and donor headquarter studies are to be carried out concurrently, ToR development and team procurement should take place concurrently where feasible.*** The fact that the donor studies for Phase 2 were already contracted or procuring on narrower ToRs constrained the questions which could be asked, and the consequent information that could be generated.
- ***Ensuring independence is critical,*** particularly where potentially contentious findings are likely to emerge. Strong procedures, as well as clear governance systems, need to be clearly articulated from an early stage, reinforced throughout the process, and checked and verified as part of ongoing Evaluation management.
- ***For a multi-site evaluation, the Synthesis process needs to be clarified from the start*** – the Evaluation has confirmed the value of developing a clear and robust analytical framework for synthesis as early as feasible in the process, to ensure that evaluation design, data collection and analysis are fully geared towards the Synthesis stage.

13. OECD/DAC Standards for Development Evaluation

The three Core Evaluation Questions themselves successively emphasise the criteria of efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. However, the following analysis provides a summary of how the OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation³⁶ have been applied in relation to the Phase 2 Evaluation.

³⁶ 2010 version.

No	Standard	Phase 2 response
1. Overarching Considerations		
1.1	Development Evaluation	Meets requirements of a 'process of determining the worth or significance of a development intervention.'
1.2	Free and open evaluation process	Transparency and independence assured through governance structures and an ongoing approach of transparency and knowledge-sharing.
1.3	Evaluation ethics	Integrity assured through a focus on meeting required ethical standards during the conduct of the Evaluation, and through the integration in the Evaluation Framework and Matrix of aspects of gender equality, human rights and social inclusion.
1.4	Partnership approach	A participatory and consultative process a cornerstone of the Evaluation throughout, reflected both the lead-up the process of implementation (e.g. two rounds of regional workshops and three meetings of the International Reference Group) and within national and donor agency level governance structures.
1.5	Coordination and alignment	Individual country evaluations/donor study reports asked to include details of fit/relationship with other significant ongoing or recent evaluations, evaluation plans or policies.
1.6	Capacity development	Support to country and donor headquarter studies provided with the explicit rationale of capacity building.
1.7	Quality control	A detailed strategy for Quality Management developed at an early stage. Ongoing peer review through the governance structure was also a key feature.
2. Purpose, planning and design		
2.1	Rationale and purpose of the evaluation	Rationale, purpose and timing stated on numerous occasions in inputs since 2006 (e.g. Approach paper and Terms of Reference for the Core Team); also reiterated clearly in the Synthesis Report.
2.2	Specific objectives of the evaluation	As above; specific objectives (a focus on development results as well as aid management) stated in the full range of documentation; reflected in the Core Questions. Effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability fully embedded in the Core Questions.
2.3	Evaluation object and scope	Evaluation object and scope summarised in the Synthesis report and comprehensively described in inputs to date. Intervention logic set out in the Programme Theory of the Declaration, which has been developed as part of the Evaluation (published in the Inception Report).
2.4	Evaluability	Discussions on the feasibility of the Evaluation by the International Reference Group and Core Team reflected in the Approach Paper and Evaluation Framework. Attribution/contribution (of development results to the implementation of the Declaration) comprehensively discussed and reflected in a Guidance Note to teams.
2.5	Stakeholder involvement	Ongoing participatory approach, reflected in the early International Reference Group involvement in the evaluation design and formulation of the Core Questions through to final validation.
2.6	Systematic consideration of joint evaluation	Reflected in all early inputs and all interim and final outputs, as well as the nature and process of the evaluation design. The Core Questions reflect questions of common interest to all partners; the Country Terms of Reference allow for specific questions of interest to individual partners. A contribution has been made to processes of harmonisation, alignment and an efficient division of labour amongst development partners both at international level (through the Evaluation's Governance Structures) plus national level (within the country structures of the Evaluation).
2.7	Evaluation questions	Core Questions, reflecting the Evaluation's objectives and areas of interest, developed through a joint process at an early stage. These have been the foundation of the methodology (Matrix). Cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment and human rights fully integrated and their presence quality assured.
2.8	Selection and application of evaluation criteria	OECD/DAC criteria applied throughout and emphasised within of country evaluations/donor headquarter studies. Reflected in both the Evaluation design and methodology (see the Evaluation Framework and Inception Report), within the country matrix and donor mirror questions, and reported within this Technical Annex.
2.9	Selection of approach and methodology	Approach and methodology developed in line with the extensive thinking of the Approach Paper and described in the Evaluation Framework and Inception Report, plus in more detail in the Technical Annex. The methodology specifies – without being prescriptive – suggested techniques for data collection and analysis at country/donor level. The Matrix itself draws out the distinction between different results levels (intermediate outcomes (Q2), outcomes and impacts (Q3)).

No	Standard	Phase 2 response
2.10	Resources	Resources for the evaluation agreed by the International Reference Group and Evaluation Management Group, and managed by the Evaluation Secretariat. Internationally agreed as adequate for enabling the Evaluation's objectives to be fulfilled.
2.11	Governance and management structures	Clear Governance structures designed to ensure the independence, integrity and credibility of the process, as well as transparency. Management function separately fulfilled by the Evaluation Secretariat.
2.12	Document defining purpose and expectations	Terms of Reference for the Core Team produced in a participatory way. Employed in conjunction with the Approach Paper to clearly set out the purpose, scope, and objectives of the Evaluation; suggestions for the methodology to be used; the resources and time available; reporting requirements; and all other expectations.
3. Implementation and reporting		
3.1	Evaluation team	A competitive bidding process, led by the Evaluation Management Group, ensuring an open and transparent procurement process for the Core Team. The Team composition provided a balance of gender, geographical mix, skills and thematic knowledge
3.2	Independence of evaluators vis-à-vis stakeholders	Members of the Core Team who are fully independent of aid management and implementation process – being independent consultants who are not employed by government or donor agencies. Supported by the Evaluation Secretariat and Evaluation Management Group to work in a cooperative way with stakeholders, including the International Reference Group and evaluation teams, and to secure access to information without impediment.
3.3	Consultation and protection of stakeholders	As above, a fully participatory approach embedded as a cornerstone of the Evaluation, from the early stages of design (pre-implementation). A broad range of stakeholders were consulted and have contributed at all levels. Evaluation teams asked to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents when reporting e.g., survey or interview data.
3.4	Implementation of evaluation within allotted time and budget	Evaluation conducted according to the milestones and deadlines outlined in the Inception Report with no 'slippage' on the part of the Synthesis team (though with delays to some country and donor headquarter studies, in some cases significant). Extensions to the budget approved by the Evaluation Management Group resulting from: an expansion in the numbers of participating countries and donors; the rationale for intensifying the Core Team support to country evaluations and the more intensive work than anticipated on the screening and analysis of reports agreed.
3.5	Evaluation report	A specific statement in the Inception Report and Evaluation Framework of the intention to use readily comprehensible, non-technical language, with minimal use of acronyms. Country evaluation Terms of Reference specifically requested this also. This point reiterated at the Emerging Findings workshop of December 2010; the Synthesis Report has aimed to stay true to this commitment.
3.6	Clarity/representativeness of summary	Approved by the International Reference Group as representatively highlighting the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons.
3.7	Context of the development intervention	Context located at the heart of the Evaluation; reflected in the inputs leading up to the Evaluation; in the Core Questions; and consequently in the Evaluation Matrix. Specifically highlighted in Diagram B of the Inception Report and addressed in Core Question 1, which asks a range of questions around the policy, development and institutional context.
3.8	Intervention logic	The Programme Theory, reflected in the Inception Report, makes explicit the intervention logic of the Declaration. Diagram B, on the Context for Implementing the Paris Declaration, also draws out some of the assumptions; and the Mechanisms of Change within the Approach paper (which evaluation teams have been urged to apply) provide hypotheses for the success or otherwise of Paris Declaration implementation.
3.9	Validity and reliability of information sources	Approaches to validity and reliability fully described in the Technical Annex; in summary: a transparent list of the sources of information used is available; a full and cross-validated assessment of validity and reliability of findings at report screening stage (initially Emerging Findings, subsequently for the full Synthesis) via the filter template is described; limitations of the evidence base are described.
3.10	Explanation of the methodology used	Evaluation Methodology described succinctly within the Synthesis report and in more depth in the Technical Annex, including limitations and constraints encountered and data collection and analysis methods.
3.11	Clarity of analysis	Synthesis report distinguishes between findings, conclusions, and recommendations. A step by step and rigorous approach to analysis has ensured that findings, conclusions and recommendations are logically derived from one another and do not contain assumptions or subjective opinion.

No	Standard	Phase 2 response
3.12	Evaluation questions answered	Synthesis Report, building on the Emerging Findings note, responds comprehensively to all three Core Questions and the Framework for Conclusions agreed; it does so at a level which reflects the strategic nature of the Evaluation, with detailed evidence available in the text.
3.13	Acknowledgement of changes and limitations of the evaluation	No discrepancies encountered between the planned and actual implementation of the Evaluation other than a) the withdrawal of two interested countries for reasons of political change or instability and b) decisions to conduct fewer Supplementary Studies than originally intended. The rationale and processes for these decisions clearly and transparently set out in the Inception Report and subsequent communications, and disseminated via the Extranet.
3.14	Acknowledgement of disagreements within the evaluation team	No major and/or unresolved disagreements encountered regarding the substantive findings of the Evaluation within the Core Team (reflected in commentary on the Emerging Findings note/final draft); thus none reported within the Synthesis text.
3.15	Incorporation of stakeholders' comments	Detailed commentary process conducted for both the Emerging Findings and the draft Synthesis report to allow for full stakeholder input and the opportunity to present disagreements/nuances/additions. Comments fully and transparently recorded, and addressed by the Core Team in subsequent iterations of the report.
4. Follow-up, use and learning		
4.1	Timeliness, relevance and use of the evaluation	The Evaluation aims to provide clear and relevant conclusions and recommendations specifically targeted at discussions at the High Level Forum in South Korea in 2011. Timing will allow for discussion of the recommendations in the lead-up to the HLF. A separate dissemination strategy has been developed, led by the Evaluation Secretariat and Management Group.
4.2	Systematic response to and follow-up on recommendations	To be led by the Secretariat and addressed at the High Level Forum..
4.3	Dissemination	As above, specific dissemination strategy developed by the Evaluation Secretariat and Management Group including the targeting of stakeholders external to the Evaluation (including key decision-makers). To be implemented following the report's acceptance by the International Reference Group.

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