Presentation at the XII International Evaluation Conference

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OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

What is the DAC Evaluation Network?

- Network in the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
- Bringing together evaluation heads and managers of 30 OECD Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as development agencies, five regional development banks, the World Bank, IMF and UNDP
- Providing a forum for dialogue, exchange and knowledge sharing, with meetings approximately every 8 months, and task team meetings in between

A recent meeting…

What the Network does
Facilitating collaboration and joint evaluation work
Knowledge management & linking to policy communities
Synthesizing evaluation findings
Developing norms and guidance
Sharing experiences & peer learning

Developing norms and standards

The Network is widely known for:

- **The development of key norms and standards** for development evaluation – which are continuously used around the world!
- Highly used practical **glossary**, available in 15 languages
- **As well as specific guidance on evaluating:** humanitarian aid, conflict prevention & peacebuilding, multilateral effectiveness, budget support & managing joint evaluations

Strengthening evaluation quality

DAC Quality Standards for Evaluation are intended to :

- improve the quality of development evaluation processes and products
- facilitate the comparison of evaluations across countries
- support partnerships, collaboration and joint evaluation
- increase development partners' use of each others' evaluation findings

Benefits of using DAC quality standards

- Specific to *development* evaluation
- Provides a clear reference for quality assurance in design and management of the evaluation, and for review of completed reports.
- Brief and easy to apply in practical contexts.
- Provides guidance for evaluators/consultants so they know on what basis their work will be assessed.
- Easier to work together (shared understanding) and to use each others' reports.
- Builds legitimacy and credibility of evaluation work – based on internationally agreed norms.

Norms and standards cont.

- National and regional evaluation associations have developed standards, covering many dimensions, e.g. US, France, Germany
- UNEG standards for UN agencies
- Good practice standards for MDBs
- Evaluating humanitarian action – ALNAP
- Protocols for systematic reviews, e.g. Campbell, Cochrane

What is DEReC?
The DAC Evaluation Resource Centre

- An online resource containing over 3000 evaluation reports

- An easy to search database of members' evaluations

www.oecd.org/derec/

Sharing evaluation plans of members

https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/evaluation-plan-inventory.htm

Evaluation Insights

- Informal working papers, designed to highlight emerging findings and relevant policy messages from evaluation
- Series as part of the Network's ongoing effort to actively support the use of evaluative evidence in development policy making and debate
- Shortly out: ”Emerging lessons from refugee evaluations”

Review of Evaluation Systems

- A review of OECD members (37 evaluation entities) and 8 multilaterals
- Updates a 2010 review
- Requested by the DAC Evaluation Network, carried out by consultants, co-ordinated by a management group
- Covers evaluation governance and processes and individual profiles for each member

Overall trends 2016 vs 2010

- Focus on strategic questions of development – continued trend.
- Accountability and learning – still twin objectives but some now more focused on learning.
- Joint evaluations – fewer.
- Continued issues around rigour of decentralised evaluation and linking it with central evaluation.
- Use and knowledge management – improvements in management response systems but also challenges.

An evolving evaluation landscape

- Merger of ministries of foreign affairs, development and trade – Australia, Canada, New Zealand.
- New actors such as DEval (Germany) EBA (Sweden) and ICAI (UK).

DEval GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

EXPERT GROUP FOR AID STUDIES

ICAI Independent Commission for Aid Impact

- MDBs – overall less changes in evaluation governance structures.

  → More diversity of "models"

Culture matters – needs to be led by senior management

…the use of evaluation findings and recommendations depends on the organisational culture

If the evaluative culture is weak and is not driven by senior management, then the uptake of evaluation results is likely to be low

The use of evaluation is closely linked to the broader organisational knowledge management culture

88% of survey respondents consider their organisation's knowledge management systems to be only partly effective

Strengthen the evaluation culture

12 lessons on:

- The strategic framework for learning and accountability
- Delivering evaluations effectively
- Strengthening the culture of learning

Strengthen the evaluation culture

12 lessons:

1. Base development policy decisions on evidence
2. Make learning part of the culture of development co-operation
3. Define a clear role for evaluation
4. Match ambitions with adequate resources
5. Strengthen programme design and management systems
6. Ask the right questions and be realistic about expected results
7. Choose the right evaluation tools
8. Work together
9. Help strengthen partner country capacities and use them
10. Act on evaluation findings
11. Communicate evaluation results effectively
12. Evaluate the evaluators

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