

# Phase One Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration

## Analytical Framework for the Synthesis Report

1. Following the Workshop on Emerging Findings<sup>1</sup>, this note on the analytical framework for the synthesis report has been prepared to provide an explicit outline of how the synthesis work will be carried out.
2. The final product, the synthesis report, will be grounded in the evaluation reports received, additional input provided by the participants in the “Emerging Findings” workshop, studies such as the Independent Monitoring Report from Vietnam, and other data sources/references to be used selectively to inform the analysis or fill gaps where the treatment of the required topics would otherwise be unclear. The consolidated information will be organised and presented in a form that is accessible for the Accra High Level Forum and beyond.
3. The synthesis report will be based on the Terms of Reference for the Phase One Evaluation, taking into consideration the specific terms of reference (and adaptations in them) for the different country and Development Partner agency evaluations being synthesised. Without belabouring the limitations of the evaluation approach adopted and of the base provided by the evaluation studies produced,<sup>2</sup> the synthesis will have to acknowledge them clearly, and specify the roles it is intended to play and the boundaries of its representativeness and reliability.

<sup>1</sup> The Workshop held in Parys, South Africa, from 30 January to 1 February, 2008 with some 50 participants generated important feedback on the preliminary findings available – both in the direction of validating, invalidating or nuancing many points, and highlighting them for special attention in the final reports. It also helped identify additional issues and some important working hypotheses and underlying assumptions on the implementation of the Declaration. Reports of those workshop discussions will be circulated with the first draft of the synthesis report.

<sup>2</sup> These limitations include, for example: the self-selection of evaluation subjects; complex and differing methodologies; different degrees of independence among evaluators; the lack of control groups or clear baselines; and wide variability in the strength of the evidence and analyses in reports.

### Main Parameters

4. The synthesis will draw together the findings and conclusions from the various constituent evaluations of the early stages of the implementation of the PD to provide responses to the following **central evaluation questions**:
  - Are the “political support, peer pressure and coordinated action” of donors and partners changing? How/why, or why not?
  - Is this in fact leading to actions and changes in behaviour toward the Declaration’s five commitments of greater ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for development results and mutual accountability? How and why is this working, or not working?
  - What important trends or events are emerging in the early implementation of the Paris Declaration?
5. The responses to the above questions will form the core of the synthesis report and will be organised around the five commitments wherever possible. In addition, the synthesis will reflect the substantial number of expected findings and conclusions that apply to more than one commitment area, or to the overall implementation of the Declaration. In line with the Terms of Reference of the individual evaluations, the synthesis findings and conclusions will be assessed in relation to the “enabling conditions” of: the commitment or leadership of actors to implement the Declaration, their capacity, and their incentives. The synthesis will also report on the assessments in partner country reports on the utility of the Paris Declaration as a tool, including its clarity, relevance and coherence, and on their identification of emerging outputs on the ground.
6. The synthesis will not itself be an evaluation report, but a coherent and strategically-oriented product that will systematically bring together distilled and analysed key findings from the individual reports, and raise the results to a higher level of abstraction and forward-looking policy relevance. To the extent supported by the analysis,

the synthesis report will draw conclusions and include recommendations that are actionable, policy-oriented and forward-looking. The report will be a maximum of 60 pages, excluding annexes. The annexes will include, but not be limited to, the executive summaries of individual reports.

7. The primary target for the report will be those taking part in the Accra HLF and their colleagues at home, with a view to reaching broader audiences. Accordingly, the report will focus on drawing out strategic issues, the concerns of policy makers and lessons learnt. As a way of helping move the PD implementation process forward, the report will use the available evidence as a springboard to raise issues, pose questions, and to provide explanations for why and how progress in implementation of the PD is being achieved or not. The report findings will be put into context, both with regard to the process that led to the PD and what has happened since it was adopted, as well as the country contexts within which it is being implemented.

### Analytical Framework

8. **Central questions:** The report will respond to the central evaluation questions outlined in paragraph 3 above.
9. **Tools and techniques:** The primary tools and techniques to be employed will be:
  - Systematic review and analysis of submitted reports to extract and categorise key findings, explanations and conclusions. This process will bear in mind that the limits on the representativeness of the submitted reports and the fact that the information is primarily qualitative (focused on perceptions of behaviour) and based on different types and levels of survey research<sup>3</sup>;
  - Triangulation among results identified by members of the team based on their different samples of reports and different thematic specialisations, in order to identify outliers and minimise differences in interpretation and/or possible biases;
  - Rigorous internal peer review and by the external peer reviewers to ensure the inclusion of all key findings;
  - Identifying and highlighting the vital strategic issues, and policy concerns for policy makers in the findings and lessons learnt, including, for example, exploring such issues as the widely-reported increases in transaction costs in implementing the PD;
  - Quality management by the internal quality manager and Evaluation Management Group.
10. **Patterns:** The synthesis team will:
  - Apply methods of agreement and methods of difference – and a necessary measure of content analysis – to iden-

<sup>3</sup> Except insofar as the Synthesis will report on the wide variations of survey sample size and other methodological qualifications on the constituent studies, as well as unresolved issues identified by the peer reviewers, the Synthesis report cannot attempt to qualify different inputs for reliability.

tify the frequency, patterns, convergence and divergence of results reported among and between the two groups of evaluation reports;<sup>4</sup>

- Consider negative evidence – what is missing from all or some reports;
  - Analyse the changing overall context for the implementation of the Declaration and contextual influences in different groups of countries and agencies concerned; and
  - Draw out any broader patterns of causality where supported.
11. **The “model” or normative framework:**
  12. The normative framework for assessments of progress in implementing the Paris Declaration is quite explicitly set out in the commitments (and supporting sub-commitments) of the Declaration itself. The patterns identified will be reported in the synthesis against these norms. At the same time, it should be noted that significant confusion, overlap and differences in interpretations are reported around some of the commitments, and these factors will have to be reflected and assessed in the report.
  13. The evaluations and their synthesis are more exploratory about the “whys and hows” of performance or non-performance in implementation. It is evident that context is a crucial variable and the synthesis will take account of the important influence of political factors – not just technical/administrative ones – on the implementation of the Declaration, both within partner countries and within and among Development Partner institutions.
  14. **Skills and processes to be applied:**
    - Systematic document review and analysis
    - Expert contextual analysis
    - Identifying and connecting strategic gaps
    - Consistent team peer review
    - High level synthesis skills and policy sense
    - Structuring and writing skills to make information accessible and meaningful to policy makers and broader, non-specialist audiences.

<sup>4</sup> The work will also include testing of the interesting further hypotheses, particularly around the “whys and hows” of performance or non-performance, generated among participants at the Emerging Findings Workshop in January – February 2008.