



Conclusions from the Core Group Meeting on 22 November 2011 in Brussels

Participants:

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The main topics of this core group meeting were the event the Network organises during the EDD in Poland 2011, and the governance structure of the Network.

1. European Development Days 2011 in Poland

The **logistics** (EDD accreditation, Hotel, flights etc.) are well on track. Concerning the organisation of the panel content and roles of the speakers, an exchange via email and phone will be organised soon through the Coordinator.

The **costs** of the EDD for the PN will be around 7000 €. Our moderator Conny Czymoch was asked by the Commission to also moderate the EDD opening and closing session which allows us to save a bit on the flights.

LuxDev developed a promotional **flyer** for our event that will be sent to the EDD organizers in Poland to be included in a welcome pack for every visitor. Comments were collected from the Core Group on content and design. Alice Risch and Katja Legien will finalise the design and get the flyer ready for being printed and sent next week.

With regard to the **video** to be integrated into the panel discussion: Tassilo Droste presented the GIZ video on four different aspects of decentralisation and local governance (promotion of local businesses, public finance, civil society, local development planning). The core group also watched an AFD-video on public service delivery: construction of public transportation (spectacular cable car) in Columbia. It was decided to take both the GIZ-video part focussing on civil society participation, and the AFD video. The moderator will flexibly decide on the right moment to show them (separately) for raising questions and stimulating the debate.

Concerning any potential **meeting** during the EDDs: Due to the low participation of Directors to the EDD, it was decided not to hold a Directors' meeting, nor a core group meeting or any "official" social meeting, but rather to get connected through exchange of mobile numbers so that if wished informal meetings could be arranged, and to meet possibly during the general reception organised by the EDDs. The coordinator will send an email around asking for the member agency participants, their hotels and mobile numbers.

2. Governance Structure of the Practitioners' Network and Strategic Orientation

In an open exchange, several general remarks were made as feedback on the current situation:

The open, informal and flexible character of the Network that allows for different forms of activities (thematic on-going groups, ad-hoc workshops etc.), is appreciated. Due to the different nature of the network members, not every activity will be of same interest and importance to the various members.

The network is inside its members beyond the contact points and also outside of the member agencies not sufficiently known. The activities and results of networking activities as well as the fact that the Network offers an entry door to the most important European public development agencies and administrations should be more communicated (internally and externally). In addition, higher level representatives should be more involved into or at least informed about Network activities. The initiative of DG DEVCO/B1 to explicitly invite our practitioners (in addition to the official Member State representatives) to the recent Experts meeting on Results is a good example of the role we can play if sufficiently known.

Internet platforms like capacity4dev may be more explored to be used by the network, but there is the danger that due to the usual workload of staff there is only low participation in online-discussions and exchanges. The recently started DFID-led virtual group on CSO will show the potential of such initiatives which usually only work if there is a clear objective and specific results with value added to obtain. The NEFI (Network of European Financing Institutions) e.g. successfully uses email to raise questions that are then discussed and answered by other NEFI members.

As we are practitioners, the development of tool-boxes e.g. for the cooperation between different agencies might be of interest.

The challenge of a work program with value added lies in the niche of "being not political, but meaningful". LuxDev announced already earlier that after Busan, in January or February 2011, it will organise a workshop on the implications of the Busan outcome for practitioners. This offers also the possibility to discuss which topics are of interest for the Commission in communication with the practitioners, and to establish a work program on this basis. The Commission priorities for the upcoming High Level Forum on aid effectiveness in Busan on November 29-1 December 2011 are the following: the shift towards country level implementation (which will be one of the main outcomes of the Busan High Level Forum on aid effectiveness), Transparency, Division of Labour/reduced fragmentation, Results and Accountability.

In conclusion, the network's activities should be twofold:

- ad hoc workshops to exchange experiences and good practice;
- thematic groups working on subjects of interest for the EC, with clear objectives and outcomes.

Concerning the governance structure, it was suggested to rename the "Presidency" to "speaker" of the Network without changing role and functions. The Core Group rotation system should be maintained as it enables smaller agencies to get more involved in the Network at least during some time.

3. Annual Meeting 2012

The Annual Meeting of the PN will be on 19/20 April 2012 (Thursday - Friday like usual) in Luxemburg. The general structure will be similar like in the past years (1st day Directors' Meeting, 2nd day network business).

It was suggested to discuss in the beginning of next year the implications of Busan for Practitioners and to identify against this background the top issues that need to be worked on. These issues would then be presented to the Directors at the annual meeting to get their views and approval of these priority areas.

The discussion of the design of the Annual Meeting will be continued.

The next Core Group Meeting will be after the EDD in 2012 (no date fixed yet).