

**Conclusions from the seminar**  
**“MDG Reporting and other development impact assessment tools”**  
**Held in Frankfurt, on 10 November 2009**

Participants : see the attached list

Presentations are available on the website of the Practitioners' Network [www.dev-practitioners.eu](http://www.dev-practitioners.eu)

**1<sup>st</sup> topic : Results and conclusions from AFD comparative study of project assessment tools used by several agencies** (The presentation can be downloaded [here](#))

It comes out of the study that the issue is particularly complex :

- Willingness to measure development results can originate from different kinds of needs : management, accountability, communication, and from diverse recipients : internal or external, operational or institutional services.
- Several approaches exist, each one having its advantages and weaknesses. Depending on the priorities of a particular institution, some approaches may be best suited (e.g. rating for management purposes). But it is impossible to cover all issues with the same tool.
- AFD has made the choice of using DAC indicators to assess development performance of projects at the monitoring and evaluation phases (management tool). For communication, AFD chooses a few standardised indicators and evaluates its contribution to expected results (vs attribution). It is planning to choose a limited number of indicators (8-10) and will try to follow them throughout the project cycle.
- Many questions remain, such as the issue of cost and work load, how to measure impacts of sector and budget support, how to measure real outcome of development aid rather than expected impacts etc.

EuropeAid quality monitoring is based on 3 different systems :

- Quality support groups (QSG) at the identification and formulation phases (DAC indicators). EuropeAid's trial to aggregate QSG criteria failed (only about 10% of the portfolio could be consolidated)
- Results oriented monitoring (ROM) during implementation – a quality rating
- Ex post evaluation: used for accountability, not enough for decision making (learning from experience)

KfW tried for two years to elaborate a system based on consolidation of impact indicators, but finally decided to adopt in a first phase the “MDG Reporting” tool (presented below). . Experience with this system can feed future reflexions on how to move to a rating system.

For the EIB, MDGs are not directly criteria, as priorities are rather on infrastructures and private sector. For other participants, they are too global, at least for management purposes.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> topic : Presentation of the ASPIRE software**

(The presentation and downloads can be found [here](#))

The software is designed for the evaluation of poverty reduction impact and sustainability of infrastructure projects, but is flexible and can be used for various modalities of aid at project level, but also at sector level. It can also probably be used at all stages of the project cycle, from ex-ante to ex-post evaluation (although perhaps too heavy for monitoring).

It is based on 96 indicators and results are presented in a visually easily understandable figure representing 20 key themes. Each indicator has to be given an evaluation and a written justification. Indications as to how to appreciate indicators have to be provided by the institution using the software, according to its own objectives and characteristics.

The software can be downloaded for a 30 days free trial. The licence fee (£250) is meant to cover mainly the cost of maintenance and support.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> topic : Presentation of KfW's MDG reporting tool**

(The presentation can be downloaded [here](#))

- The tool offers an assessment of the estimated direct and indirect effects of FC projects and programmes on the MDGs. Therefore 41 project/programme types have been defined to ascertain their anticipated contribution/effects to attaining the MDGs and to the goals of economic growth, good governance global environment.
- The tool rests on a number of assumptions but is simple and fairly automatic.
- It applies on a portfolio of development projects by applying MDG effects according to standardized MDG effects of pre-defined development sectors, instead of being a consolidation of individual projects.
- Assumptions have been set transparently and knowingly as a result of an expert consultation process within KfW and an additional scientific cross-check by researchers of the University of Göttingen.(cp. summary)
- It does not pretend to measure impacts, but, it provides an indication of the distribution of effects on MDGs and the a.m. additional goals.
- The tool has a communication purpose and must not be used as a management decision making tool in sense of a rating system.

## **Conclusions and way forward**

Participants showed an interest in exploring the possibilities to work more concretely on the following issues :

- Determining a set of indicators which could be monitored through the whole project cycle;
- Having a closer look at the ASPIRE software and how it could best fit our requirements;
- What common indicators could we chose to communicate on MDGs in 2010? How to measure the impact of each donor into the progress of MDG's?

Way forward :

- Participants and other interested institutions are invited to react on the 3 above proposals : interest in principle, expectations, possible contribution, proposed working method etc.
- The forthcoming AFD/OECD seminar on accountability of development agencies (15-16/12/2009) may provide us with additional food for thought. Wait for the discussions and conclusions and see if and how the two issues can be linked.
- If interest and content is there, one workshop could be planned at the beginning of 2010.

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**List of participants**

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