



Conclusions from the Core Group Meeting on 14 June 2011 in Brussels

Participants :

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The main topics for this core group meeting were a wrap up of the Annual Meeting 2011 in London, some questions regarding the strategic orientation of the Network, and a first discussion about an event the Network would like to organise during the EDD in Poland 2011.

1.1 Feedback on the Annual Meeting 2011

In order to get some ideas for the next time, a feedback on the Annual Meeting in London 2011 was given:

The choice of topics (e.g. transition, blending) and also the regional focus (East Europe and Northern Africa for transition) as well as in general the high-level speakers were much appreciated. The identification of Network activities including the Directors' points of view was also found useful to develop a program for the coming months.

For the next time it was concluded that there should be a meeting exclusively for Directors (with an open agenda but also dealing with some strategic Network issues), and that the agenda for the Network topics will be timed in a way that strategic questions will be discussed when a maximum of participants is present (i.e. not as the last item on the agenda), and with ample time allocated. Invitations and the agenda will be sent early enough to ensure good participation also of Directors.

In order to relieve the host agency from all or parts of the costs of organizing the annual meeting (e.g. conference room rent, catering etc.), the Network offers a lump sum of up to 3000 €. A potential additional "social" program outside of the meeting/the usual evening reception is at the discretion of the host agency (and to be paid by the host agency).

1.2 Strategic orientation

Some agencies faced difficulties with their Ministries in the past and precisely very recently due to the planned Network Workshop on South Sudan, because the Ministries fear that the Network will tamper with political issues. It was concluded that we have to emphasize in all communications that we work only on practical issues regarding implementation in order to avoid potential misunderstandings. The

Coordinator will draft a paragraph that is suited to be used as a general introduction/recapitulation of our focus in communications. We cannot, however, avoid having Ministries' departments as members or on distribution/invitation lists, as especially the smaller European agencies do not have an institutional separation between the policy and implementation level. We rather have to make our focus clear through the choice and denomination/description of topics we work on and to seek participation of those (especially if of Ministries) who deal with implementation on the ground.

Against this background it was decided to change the name of the thematic group on "Division of Labour/Modes of Delivery" into "Implementation of European Division of Labour". The new group on "Results based planning, programming and monitoring" will be changed in "Practical experiences with results-based approaches".

It was decided that, once DG DEVCO is fully organised in its new structure in September, a small group of Network members led by LuxDev will meet with DEVCO at high level in order to present the Network, objectives and activities, and to discuss the MOU that needs to be renewed (ended March 2011). It was also suggested to organise later in the year a meeting between Network members and our respective permanent representations or ministries for a better mutual understanding and knowledge of the Network's value added.

With regard to potential new members it was recalled that "European" is understood geographically and that we continue trying to increase membership (especially from the Nordics and Eastern Europe). The Network will like before focus on publicly funded agencies and administrations. Think tanks that sometimes also do lobbying, and foundations who often act rather as financiers, may weaken the uniqueness of the Practitioners' Network. They may be invited to selected workshops but not sought as members.

GIZ offered to organise an activity for the smaller East European partners on democratisation and neighbourhood policy in order to raise/increase their interest in the Network.

KfW is considering organising a regional seminar on operational collaboration in the Eastern Neighbourhood, which presumably could be of interest for Eastern European development agencies.

GIZ will get in touch with some agencies (SIDA, SNV, Bulgaria, Poland) to present the Network and to deepen contacts. KfW will contact IPAD. The Coordinator will post the Network flyer on the website so that it can be downloaded for marketing purposes.

It was decided that a calendar of Network members' events open to all will be posted on the website. KfW will draft a template to be filled in by the member agencies.

With regard to the European Parliament it was concluded that it is difficult to get the interest of the DEVE Committee for general topics. We should not further intensify our efforts to deepen general relations with it, but rather mention the Network in bilateral contacts. Only if there is a topic on the DEVE agenda that the Network wants to communicate a message on, we will approach it. The DEVE Committee is not working on the Financial Regulation which is dealt with in the Budget Committee.

1.3 European Development Days 2011 in Poland

The organisation of the EDD is late in time this year. The event will be smaller than the years before which will probably also entail a lower participation from the European

countries/agencies. The EDD theme will be “Development and Democracy” and will take place in Warsaw on 15-16 December.

After some brainstorming the Network concluded that an event on “Measuring results/Accountability” with a discussion on general good practice and the contrasting approaches of process orientation and pure quantitative “head counting” would meet a lot of interest. The core group agencies will as a first step enquire in their agencies about works on this topic and potential speakers and partners.

2. Work Program for the Practitioners’ Network

The Workshop on South Sudan from the group “Implementation of European DoL” was postponed to September. In order to know before which agencies are active there and to define the framework of the workshop, a table will be sent to the agencies soon so that they can fill in the planned activities.

The group on “Implementation of European DoL” will also organise a meeting in September between selected regional and sectoral heads of unit/department from DEVCO and from other European practitioners in order to get them know each other and facilitate future operational collaboration.

Other planned activities are:

- Thematic Group Climate Change, Workshop organised by EuropeAid in September 2011 in Brussels
- Workshop on Mediterranean Cooperation, organised by AECID, autumn 2011
- Workshop on Experiences in Result-based Approaches, organised by GIZ, autumn 2011
- Workshop on South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation, organised by GIZ, autumn 2011
- Debriefing discussion on Post-Busan – implications for practitioners, organised by Lux-Dev, January 2012

The exact dates, agenda and location will be communicated in due time.

The next Core Group Meeting will be on Thursday 22 September in Luxemburg (to be confirmed).