

Support to Quality Monitoring Systems and Methodologies
of Projects and Programmes of External Assistance

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Joint Monitoring Workshop

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ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
AIDCO	Office de Coopération EuropeAid
AMP	Aid Management Platform
BS	Budget Support
CARDS	Community assistance for reconstruction, development and stabilisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG	Directorate General
DP	Development Partner
EC	European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
ENLARG	DG Enlargement
EPA	European Partner Association
EUD	European Union Delegation
EU	European Union
FA	Financial Agreement
FED	European Development Fund
GBS	Global Budget Support
HQ	Headquarter
HRD	Human resources development
JAR	Joint Annual Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTR	Mid-term Review
NAO	National Authorization Officer
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OST	Open Space Technology
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PEFA	Public Expenditure Financial Accountability Framework
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
PFM	Public Financial Management
PG	Partner Governments
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRAG	Practical Guide for Contract Procedures
PSU	Planning and Statistics Unit
RELEX	"External Relations" Directorate-General
ROM	Result Oriented Monitoring
SBS	Sectoral Budget Support
SEGOR	Suivi Evaluation Global Orienté vers les Résultats
SPSP	Sector Policy Support Programme

SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank
JROM-E	Joint Results Oriented Monitoring Ethiopia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives and workshop format

The Overall Objective of the Joint Monitoring Seminar was to contribute to increasing EuropeAid's aid effectiveness through the definition of basic criteria for implementation of Joint Monitoring missions (Joint Monitoring) between EU Delegations (EUDs) and Partners Governments (PG) representatives. In spite of some logistical difficulties and the wide variety of participants in terms of provenance, background and expertise, the seminar can be considered a successful event. Not only because it answered a real demand, but also because it allowed a wide debate and a committed exchange of opinions and experiences on a multiplicity of topics, each one with a high level of relevance in development management.

In effect, the workshop format was to create an open space where the capacity of each participant to contribute to a "dialogue" and to "listen" would have been the basic condition to develop further joint Monitoring actions. The dynamic to connect the participants between themselves and with the subject in question was innovative for most, if not for all, of them. The Open Space Technology (OST), consisting on engaging all attendees by providing input from their effort leading to brainstorming sessions in a large set of topics, selected by themselves, provided a venue where most ideas and opinions were heard, noted and internalized, as the final comments and future plans presented by each participant demonstrated.

Outputs

All participants coincided with the fact that there is a strong demand to know more about monitoring, with special attention for internal / joint monitoring and their interrelations; the complexity of the issue is multiplied by the presence of different aid modalities (project, budget support, etc.), each one with some specific needs in terms of management, accountability, reporting.

At the same time what has been a positive surprise is to find out that that many participants already carry out some form of "joint monitoring", without actually calling it by that name. Besides the recurrent need to reach some agreement on a precise definition, which has been a common question in many workgroups, this fact again demonstrated that field activities show always richness in practices that it is worth exploring and disseminating, but also that there is the need for reflection and consolidation capacity, to avoid dispersion and to contribute to the accumulation of lessons learnt and knowledge.

The agreement on Joint Monitoring as important step toward the commitments on aid effectiveness agenda was complete as it is widely acknowledged that it can directly affect ownership, alignment and mutual responsibility for development results. However, whilst for most the need to carry out Joint Monitoring is somehow clear, nevertheless the question on how to do this whilst adding value to the entire process, without duplications, and avoiding the risk to create only more administrative obligations and procedures, remains unclear.

In addition to the “politically correct” adhesion to the aid effectiveness agenda, Joint Monitoring, in order to be fully shared and implemented, should be able to show some real “value added” in its capacity to help rationalize other current reporting tools or systems, better integrate and streamline monitoring and reporting processes and improve the underlying quality of results-oriented information that is generated and used. For this to happen an enhanced collaboration between stakeholders is needed as well as shifting the focus from activity based monitoring to results based monitoring, categorizations and planning processes, instil the usage of structured and consistent monitoring and reporting processes at all stages of interventions management. The focus is to have better and not more information.

“Guidance” or a similar document was identified as a necessary tool that still does not exist as most implemented modalities are either ad-hoc, procedure-poor, or nonexistent. This should be a flexible document that caters and aimed at all potential stakeholders without setting rigid guidelines to be strictly followed. Inconsistencies between different systems and different objectives between the partners involved can never be avoided. As there is not one approach to joint monitoring, this guidance must be modular, offering different options and connection points to local (national) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems. It should serve to explicit the relations between internal and external monitoring, and adapted to different aid modalities such as projects, sector programmes, budget support, etc. Besides a printed document, a good Internet portal that gives room for dialogue and contributions could be the more adequate approach. A challenge to be tackled will be to keep this guidance open enough to allow for easy incorporation of local approaches.

Joint Monitoring is a process more than an established procedure. A successful joint monitoring system should first of all focus on dialogue between the partners. Joint Monitoring can in effect offer a preliminary space for consensus / alignment / harmonisation by aggregating results from different sources and shared definitions of indicators and methodologies. The absence of a global joint vision on what Joint Monitoring is does not imply that such a vision cannot be established on a national or on a programme level. Open dialogue to engage people around a theme of common interest to search for common ground is the key word. Introducing joint monitoring systems is a change process and involves people and institutions in need for changing attitudes. Change management is essential to succeed in the transformation towards openness, transparency and institutional learning that should be the ultimate outputs of the exercise. Then EUDs should be prepared to facilitate and develop mechanisms that can help the involved partner institutions to change.

However, while the acknowledgement that the PG must be the key / leading actor in the Joint Monitoring process has been widely recognized, nevertheless it is well understood that the maturity of the recipient country’s institutions, including monitoring capacities, the organizational culture of involved institutions could be a constraint; here in particular the ability to institutionalize open dialogue with partner governments will play a decisive role. It can be assumed that to achieve acceptable results from the process some substantial resources need to be invested in a number of countries (and not only for PG’s human resources but sometimes also for EUDs’

staff). Capacity building of all stakeholders involved in joint M&E is a broad area and should include variety of methodological skills related to monitoring systems, systemic consulting skills, the facilitation of dialogue and more. Capacity building needs will vary from country to country and from programme to programme but will likely consist of a generic core applicable to most, if not all, countries and programmes. Internal monitoring should be a preliminary necessary step for Joint Monitoring but the uneven “internal monitoring” capacity at EUDs could be another constraint and require again specialised training or simply more pressure from HQ toward a compulsory reporting format, amongst other potential solutions.

Whilst no definite steps were recorded to have taken place regarding a EUD and PG to agreeing on holding a joint monitoring mission at the end of the workshop, where previously had been none, the topics and general ideas floating around did arise expectations, renewed the idea of holding joint monitoring, and in essence, widened the possibilities of carrying them in the future as long as some knowledge gaps are addressed. The plan to disseminate the workshop documentation and outputs has been the most commented “future step” declared by all participants.

Recommendations

This initial exercise, for both the EUDs and the PGs, has already generated an important momentum that ideally could be best used to continue gathering data and learning from local experience. Some of the main further steps to be taken to consolidate and grow the interest and the commitments should be:

- mapping of existing cases and forms of Joint Monitoring in an extended definition to create an institutional memory of such experiences and develop more internal reflection on the experiences already had.
- address as soon as possible the knowledge gap needs in the shape of capacity building actions, preceded by a document that can aid in opening new ways of thinking on how to conduct joint monitoring in very different scenarios by all stakeholders involved.
- create a platform for further exchanges (possibly through capacity4dev or other open web platform)
- explore the possibility to set up regional seminars and/or trainings workshops
- structure and test some advanced format to collect the information (starting with the Internal Monitoring)
- study a form of a multi-approach and flexible Joint Monitoring guidance to allow for adaptation to the numerous local environments

1 AIM OF THE WORKSHOP

1.1 Objectives

The Overall Objective of this assignment was to contribute to increasing EuropeAid's aid effectiveness through the definition of basic criteria for implementation of Joint Monitoring missions (Joint Monitoring) between EU Delegations (EUDs) and Partners Governments (PG) representatives. Joint Monitoring shall contribute towards more effective management of the development cooperation portfolio at the level of EUDs.

The Specific Objective was to define realistic conditions for such missions through exchange of ideas and dialogue between all stakeholders that would enable PGs and EUDs to engage in the future in Joint Monitoring missions. The ideas and material produced during the seminar would eventually serve to update the Joint Monitoring Guidance, and provide participants with ideas and confidence to take next steps in the Joint Monitoring process.

1.2 Expected Outputs

- a)A clearer understanding among workshop participants (EUD and PG) as to why Joint Monitoring is being promoted, its expected benefits, what it entails, and how it might be implemented;
- b)A workshop report summarizing key issues raised during the workshop regarding: (i) the feasibility of implementing a Joint Monitoring approach, (ii) recommended modifications to the Operational Guidance; and (iii) follow-up actions required by EuropeAID HQ;
- c)A list of opportunities and challenges of Joint Monitoring;
- d)A series of brainstorming meetings designed on topics selected directly by the participants that reflect their needs regarding Joint Monitoring configuring a list of opportunities and challenges of Joint Monitoring;
- e)A conducive process that would indicate a set of common priorities to explore further. Four prioritised themes, agreed by common consensus and discussed;
- f)A draft action plan for follow-up action at EUD level.

2 IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Workshop methodology

The preparation of the Joint Monitoring Workshop was an iterative process in which the workshop objectives and the best workshop format were discussed and refined.

E5's requirements towards the workshop format were

- a)To adopt an interactive approach that would help the different stakeholders/workshop participants to brainstorm on the essential issues
- b)To utilize the knowledge existing in the group and facilitate the exchange of this knowledge;
- c)To use an open and participatory approach in particular as for many of the related subjects, no systematic expertise is existent. For example, although there are few examples for joint budget support monitoring, no donor has yet developed a proven methodology.
- d)To deliver inputs on key issues by technical experts
- e)To come to a joint action planning in the end of the workshop

The main facilitator suggested a workshop methodology that would ensure a maximum of interaction. This methodology is called Open Space Technology (OST) and it is applied in particular when the knowledge on a subject is scattered and people are expected to engage in a dialogue.

It builds on the knowledge and skills of the participants of the event and relies on the self-organizing potential of any given group of professionals. (Compare Annex F for more information on OST)

Given that all involved parties were aware that all implementation partners have experience and skills in monitoring programmes and projects, the workshop applied a mixture of interactive participatory training and team working techniques with more formal training sessions. This way, it was intended to make sure that all voices would be heard and EUDs, PGs and E5 personnel would collaboratively define the future of Joint Monitoring.

2.2 Logistics

The invitation sent from AIDCO's E5 to all EUDs in the beginning of August 2010, met great response. As the number of interested Delegations and PGs exceeded the workshop's capacity E5 decided to limit participation to countries which had either been involved in the previous phase of methodological discussions or which had confirmed participation of both the Delegation and Partner Government staff. The participation of the Partner Government and Delegation staff was also limited to one person per country. In total 15 representatives from PGs and 18 from EUD of 20 countries participated in the workshop as well as representatives of Europe AID, technical experts and the team of organizers.

Participants

From a practical point of view, it was decided that GFA/SQ2M would be arranging the flights, hotel bookings and other expenses for the 15 PGs

Out of these 15 PGs, two had to be cancelled as their respective EUDs cancelled their participation due to internal matters.

Conference Rooms

Initially, 2 rooms had been booked at the Hotel Bloom for the Workshop. The OST methodology combined with an increased number of participants made it a necessity to book an additional larger room for the first two days and a smaller extra room for the last two days of the seminar.

2.3 Agenda

Day 1

9.00 – 9.30	Registration of participants
9.30 – 10.00	Workshop introduction (by Francesca Mosca)
10.00 – 10.20	Challenges and potential benefits of Joint Monitoring (by W. Lubowiecki)
10.20 – 10.50	Keynote: Monitoring – “No Magic Wand” (by Holger Nauheimer)
10.50 – 11.10	Setting the context: EC ROM and project evaluation (by Daniel Clauss)
11.10 – 11.30	Coffee Break
11.30 – 13:00	Open Space introduction Theme of the Open Space: “Co-creating the future of Joint Monitoring – challenges and opportunities” <u>The final agenda of the open space will be defined by the participants.</u>
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 14.10	Finalization of the agenda for the day. Organizations of the open space sessions
14.10 – 15.30	Open Space Session 1
15.30 – 16.50	Open Space Session 2
16.50 – 17.00	Wrap-up of the day (facilitators)

Day 2

9.00 – 9.15	Morning briefing: summary of the day before (facilitators)
9.15 – 9.30	Finalization of the agenda for the day.
9.30 – 10.45	Open Space Session 3
10.45 – 12.15	Open Space Session 4
12.15 – 12.45	Open Space closing: summary of the achieved results
12.45 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	<u>Presentations by country delegations</u> • From internal Monitoring to Joint Monitoring

	<p>(Ethiopia experience)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From national Monitoring to Sector approach <p>(Malian experience)</p>
16.00 – 17.00	Joint Monitoring challenges and opportunities: what's next? (Prioritization of issues coming from previous discussions.)

Day 3

9.00 – 9.15	Morning briefing: summary of the day before
9.15 – 9.40	<u>Strengthening Internal Monitoring</u> (by Nicolas Leroy)
9.40 – 10.20	<u>Mali/ SEGOR toward the use of national monitoring for Sector Approach</u> (by André Lachapelle)
10.20 - 10.30	Coffee Break
10.30 – 12.00	<u>J-Mon for BS: a quality assessment procedure</u> (by Murray Smith)
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch
13.00 – 15.00	<p>Working Groups</p> <p>Discussing topics the following topics, amongst others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Monitoring for Budget Support Harmonization with national monitoring systems Capacity building for Joint Monitoring Developing a Joint Monitoring Guidance <p>2 rounds, in each round all the 4 topics running parallel.</p>
15.00 – 15.15	•Coffee break
15.15 – 15.30	Presentations of Working Group results

Day 4

9.00 – 9.30	Coffee break
9.30 – 10.00	Morning briefing
10.00 – 11.00	Action planning in country/functional groups Presentation of plans
11.00 - 11.30	Summary of key inputs and results of the workshop
11.30 – 12.00	Concluding remarks, workshop closure (EuropeAid)
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch

2.4 Activities developed

Day 1 and Day 2

Day 1 and Day 2: The day started with some keynotes on the essential issues of Joint Monitoring as they had been analysed by E5. Subsequently, all workshop participants jointly worked on the theme **"Co-creating the future of Joint Monitoring - challenges and**

opportunities". They had an opportunity to raise their concerns and needs and explore deeper those issues that were identified as priorities. The workshop approach made sure that all participants were able to contribute equally and that learning happened in an environment that supports mutual exchange of knowledge. The two days were facilitated with the OST approach, which is a common methodology applied for joint planning, design and learning processes.

At lunch time of Day 2, participants had

- identified the main issues related to joint monitoring,
- come up with practical solutions on how to address those issues,
- shared experiences in joint monitoring, and
- identified further needs for capacity building.

Additionally on Day 2, delegates from Ethiopia and Mali provided an input on their experience in joint monitoring.

The day ended with a prioritization of issues that came up in the Open Space part. In small groups, participants were asked to identify the 3 key issues that were mentioned in the break-out sessions. These key issues were clustered and subsequently, participants ranked the clusters (each participant had three votes). These were the results of this ranking:

- Harmonization (9 votes)
- Capacity Building (8)
- Guidance (6)
- Budget Support Monitoring (4)
- Accession countries (2)
- Tools (1)
- Best practice (0)

Day 3

On Day 3, after a number of expert inputs in regards to joint monitoring, a series of small training workshops were offered on different subjects related to the Joint Monitoring process (see attached agenda). Based on the results of Days 1 and 2, the proposed agenda of Day 3 was adjusted to cover the needs of the participants. Participants had the opportunity to attend two different working groups according to their individual preference. All working groups happened in an interactive and participatory manner, under the guidance of E5 staff and external experts on different aspects of Joint Monitoring.

Day 4

On day 4, the results of the first three days were reviewed and converted into action plans. There was a need for an action plan at the level of E5 but also at the individual EUD level. Finally, the experts summarized some key conclusions from the different group discussions, and presentations; and E5 closed the workshop with their concluding remarks on the issues and possible future steps in regards to Joint Monitoring.

3 WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

3.1 The common work sessions

Given the nature of this workshop, being a highly interactive and participatory one, the workshop outputs hold high importance in regards to the further stages of improving the Joint Monitoring approach. The outputs can be defined as two separate categories:

- 1)The presentations and knowledge passed from E5 and the invited experts, that can further support the country-level implementation of Joint Monitoring;
- 2)The outputs generated by the working groups, during the Open Space breakout sessions and the training working groups.

The following table summarizes the outputs at the different stages of the workshop:

Process stage	Methodology	Output
Presentations – Setting the context	Key note presentations	<p>Presentation (1): Monitoring – “No Magic Wand” (Holger Nauheimer, Change Facilitation)</p> <p>Presentation (2): Proposal: Towards a coordinated use of M&E (Daniel Clauss, E5)</p>
Open Space – Co-creating the future of Joint Monitoring – challenges and opportunities	A 1 ½ days workshop in which participants self-organized break-out sessions (see detailed description of the methodology in the Annex)	23 reports of proceedings from break-out sessions
Conclusions – Individual learning	A round of individual statements of all participants in the plenary on “What was your key learning during the last 1 ½ days?”	Sharing of individual learning experiences and points from participants
Country reports – Case studies	Presentations	<p>Presentation (3): From internal monitoring to Joint Monitoring – The Ethiopian experience</p> <p>Presentation (4): From national monitoring to Sector approach – The Malian experience</p>
Joint Monitoring challenges and opportunities – what's next? Priority setting	Groups of 3-5 participants identified 3 key issues each that had been mentioned in the Open Space workshop	<p>A list of Four main priorities, in regards to the further improvement of the Joint Monitoring approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Harmonization with national monitoring systems•Joint Monitoring for Budget Support•Capacity building for Joint Monitoring•Development of a Joint Monitoring Guidance
Presentations – Capacity building	Presentations	<p>Presentation (5): Strengthening internal monitoring (Nicolas Leroy, E5)</p> <p>Presentation (6): Mali/SEGOR toward the use of</p>

Process stage	Methodology	Output
		<p>national monitoring for Sector Approach (Andre Lachapelle)</p> <p>Presentation (7): Joint Monitoring for Budget Support: a quality assessment procedure (Murray G. Smith)</p>
Working groups – Specific recommendations	Facilitated working groups (each participant had the opportunity to participate in two groups)	<p>4 working groups ran parallel on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Harmonization with national monitoring systems (La Chapelle) •Joint Monitoring for Budget Support (Murray Smith) •Capacity building for Joint Monitoring (Holger Nauheimer) •Development of a Joint Monitoring Guidance (Jorge Vivar-Mariscal) <p>Their main points of discussion were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1)What is there already? 2)What needs to be (further) developed? 3)What are the next steps to be taken? <p>The working group reports include the key issues coming up during the discussions, and the next steps suggested by the groups.</p>
Country wise action planning	Work in country groups, followed by a reporting per group in the plenary	Action steps for each country (hand-in-hand EUD and PG representatives) and for E5, in regards to their commitments they take up in the implementation process of Joint Monitoring.
Wrap-up		Presentation (8): Joint Monitoring workshop summary (by the experts)

3.2 Proposed topics for Open Space breakout sessions

Below an overview on the proposed topics for breakout sessions in OST format is given, the detailed reports of the sessions taking place can be found in Annex B.

Tuesday 2.30 pm	Topic
1.1	To Learn from existing Monitoring tool systems applied by other Countries delegations
1.2	Other delegations experience on how to strengthen partner government M &E systems without neglecting EU accountability requirements
1.3	M&E the myth of statistics
1.4	Lessons learned How to create M&E systems which identify lessons that cannot be ignored
1.5	Is there a conflict or tension between accountability and results? If so, can it be resolved? What does this mean for the indicators?
1.6	How to improve the use of projects ROM and Project evaluations through a coordinated approach?

Tuesday 3.30 pm	Topic
2.1	How to conduct sound monitoring on the basis of the appropriate criteria set during the programming phase? How to improve the existing project documents regarding monitoring
2.2	Quel Ancrage Du Monitoring dans les processus d'apprentissage de Capitalisation Au niveau du pays, des projets, de la délégation, de la Commission Européenne
2.3	Monitoring Education System
2.4	Are the partner countries willing to provide adequately resources for M&E (Experience)
2.5	Is If there is no ideal M&E system is there an ideal format?... and what would it include?
2.6	How to structure M&E in HRD sector?

Wednesday 9.30 am	Topic
3.1	From project monitoring to program monitoring: aggregation?
3.2	Tools to create a comprehensive M&E system for the needs of all players involved
3.3	What is the problem with monitoring of sector policy
3.4	How to make ROM a simple objective and clear tool for better planning both for EU and partner country

Wednesday 10.45 am	Topic
4.1	Monitoring budget support: why do we always forgot about the budget constraint
4.2	Institutional framework for monitoring in the recipient countries / roles & responsibilities
4.3	M&E who need it most you! Me! They! Us! Why?
4.4	Joint monitoring who is leading? Who is following?
4.5	Budget support: Joint annual review experiences & limitations

3.3 Was the approach used during the workshop successful?

It can be said that the methodology worked out very well, as the following indicators can be appreciated:

- In the Open Space part of the workshop, there were 26 different topics raised by approximately 20 participants. All different groups (EUD, E5, partners, facilitators) equally contributed to this wealth of topics for breakout sessions.
- Throughout the Open Space part, and in the subsequent parts, most participants involved themselves actively and thoroughly in the breakout sessions and had intensive and partly very productive conversations.
- 21 reports from breakout sessions were produced documenting all key issues that were important to the participants.
- In the first summary at the end of the Open Space part, all participants mentioned a key insight, which they had during the first two days.

- In the final action planning, all country groups reported on actions they are going to implement soon to contribute to improve joint monitoring.

- In the final evaluation, there were the following assessments:

- 100% of participants stated that the content was relevant or very relevant to the EUD development programme

- 97% stated that the content was relevant or very relevant to their job

- 54% stated that the Open Space approach was very good or good, and another 42% said that it was satisfactory.

For a detailed summary of the workshop evaluation, please refer to Annex E.

When assessing the workshop success, one has to consider the following:

- Participants might have come with the expectation that they would get a cookbook of how to do joint monitoring.
- The workshop organizers, including E5, did not have ready-made solutions to offer (because there aren't much of them available).
- The Open Space approach moved participants out of their comfort zone. It was different from what they knew, and it was demanding.

4 RESULTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

4.1 Capacity Building

1. Capacity Building for what/why ?

- Improve capacity for decision makers
- Improve implementation/results
- Improve ownership/efficiency/achievement

Ownership means: *providing resources*
alignment of systems
accepting results
institutional anchorage
commitment → actions
is linked to ownership of programmes
link between projects and programmes is continuum

AWARENESS → INVOLVEMENT → COMMITMENT

- To explain why systems are changing (rules/procedures)

2. What (content)?

- Depends on the stage of collaboration (awareness/involvement/commitment)
- HQ to lead the process to reduce redundancy
- Set of tools/models/case studies
- Basic explanation of what monitoring is
- Different systems of accountability but also common ground (results)
- Encourage dialogue
- Increases ownership and is not donor driven

3. How?

- Precondition is that M&E systems must function properly
- Preconditions is that models for M&E are available
- Send experts (*this was partly meant ironically, because this has been the usual response*) – which ones?
- Look for internal capacities
- Develop local capacities in facilitating dialogue
- *National certification processes for capacity building might be counterproductive*
- *Donors are (gently) imposing their models*

Suggestions for capacity building

Action 1: Disseminate a Joint Monitoring workshop on a regional level

Action 2: Develop an internet platform for best practice/models/knowledge sharing (*is happening but will it be rich?*) **OPEN SOURCE!**

Action 3: Internalize existent templates and share them with PGs (with involvement of HQ)

Action 4: Implementing institutions to use the M&E templates (not as an obligation)

- Action 5:** Define capacity building for different aid modalities
- Action 6:** Joint Monitoring should be referred to in the PCM guidelines
- Action 7:** Develop checklists for internal monitoring
- Action 8:** Create a mechanism to get access/share reports
- Action 9:** Give guidance on simple project management platforms
- Action 10:** Use academics and train them
- Action 11:** Development of Joint Monitoring training for local partners

4.2 **Harmonization**

MAIN QUESTIONS

- Should the government establish its own monitoring system?
- Is Joint Monitoring an obligation or a recommendation?
- How can the different tools be complementary and not duplicating each other?
- Should all stakeholders share the same system and tools?

FINDINGS

- To increase harmonization through alignment is a shared objective by donors and PGs
- The adaptation to local environment should be the primary step
- The institutionalization of M&E should be led by PGs
- The National Development Strategy is the common framework for any M&E exercise
- It is still difficult to have common M&E because many donors have different requirements
- Almost all PGs have in place some system of monitoring and evaluation although the quality and the capacity are different and sometimes not satisfactory
- The establishment of an efficient system of M&E is a long term process and it is not advisable to expect short term results and efficiency

SOME SUGGESTIONS

- In the project-programme identification / design phase the assessment of the local capacities for M&E MUST be a decisive part of the analysis
- It should develop then some sort of validation process for the local capacities to be shared by all involved stakeholders
- In case the assessment finds that there is a need of “capacity building” for M&E specific resources should be allocated for it and for harmonization
- In this case “real” Joint Monitoring as working together could be used as “learning by doing” action

FUTURE TRENDS

- In the future Joint Monitoring or full alignment with local capacities could substitute the external ROM in most of the cases

- The external ROM should be used for special cases when PG and EU Del are aware of specific problems in the management or in case of special cases for better lessons learnt

4.3 Guidance

One of the key factors or common denominators for most if not for all participants during the seminar was the need for more information on how to carry out joint / internal monitoring for all aid modalities (project, SPSP monitoring, Budget Support, etc.). It was agreed that there was a knowledge gap between what people need to do and what they know about this topic. Therefore in lieu of having specialized training on this subject and for practical reasons, a guide (as toolkit or some kind of written document) was identified as the most feasible way to start tackling this shortcoming.

During two sessions, held on the third day of the seminar, the participants agreed to focus on the main features this document should contain. Some important points were made that have provided the root or skeleton of what this document could encompass. Moreover, during the length of the workshop, informal and short interviews took place with most participants from the European Union Delegations (EUDs) and partner governments (PGs) regarding the monitoring systems they supposedly have in place. Some of the most common comments are:

- The document needs to be addressed to targets, PGs and EUDs (and other donors, if needed). Consequently the language used should reflect this. It should then avoid the use of EU jargon which characterises most EU documents: it should be more neutral or at least offering to explain some terminology which is often taken for granted by EU staff but not well understood by outsiders. By approaching the language and making the potential document less EU-oriented it can be expected to be better received and eventually used and applied.
- It needs to be a general “guidance” document in order to avoid being perceived as an EU-imposed set of rules that need to be followed.
- A frequent request was to avoid imposing any guidelines on the users or appearing to be doing so. To achieve this, the present seminar appears to be a first step toward the correct path. In this consultative process PG and EUDs were involved together in the initial design process. In spite of the proportion of participants in relation to the total of Delegations and PGs who attended the seminar, the attention and the quality of the debate provided a solid basis to view this potential document as the one of the results of this gathering and thus ownership of it can be expected to be positive.
- Another step to be taken to achieve a higher level of ownership is to make the document an open ended set of points to be followed to achieve some broad common goals. The document, in order to avoid being seen as instructions on how to achieve the goals intended, needs to provide ideas, and not set instructions, on topics which are essential for carrying out different types of monitoring. By providing the initial steps and serving only as a roadmap its appeal can be broadened and its likelihood to be used amplified.
- The advantages of setting a path but not a precise methodology are that the “guidelines” can be adapted to any country and most situations and thus ensuring the guidance is used. In spite of this broad approach results and outputs of joint monitoring exercises would have a certain level of similarity or homogeneity that will enable a degree of comparability, aggregation, and used for accountability purposes, whilst complying

with requirements according to the principles set in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.

Some specific features and characteristics were suggested by the PG and EUDs:

- A guide where all possible commonalities between all forms of monitoring for all the aid delivery methods can be addressed. It was then suggested to either address each individual characteristics of monitoring for each modality in different chapters or in (a) different document(s). The first option to have the advantage of having all in one document and the second to maintain one simple and concise one with optional annexes addressing individual aid modalities.
- Reasons for carrying out monitoring (all modalities): Indicating DAC areas more prone to be monitored, timing, what type of interventions to monitor, how to set criteria for monitoring, etc.
- Addressing inequalities imbalances: Joint monitoring might not always be possible as one party has different resources, priorities and human capacity to do so. An area to address these issues and mitigation efforts.
- Name and format: Toolkit as opposed to any reference made to guidelines. Even guidance, although different and less binding than guidelines, might be interpreted as the latter and assumed as an imposing material.
- Characteristics: Whilst addressing the topic, maintaining it broad and simple to allow all users from all institutions involved to be able to apply the principles in it according to individual country circumstances and relations between EUDs and PGs.
- Definitions: the definitions as understood by the majority of stakeholders. Provide alternatives definitions and explain when and who uses each.

The Skeleton of the document was indentified to contain, although not limited to, the following suggestions:

- Introduction
 - The participative approach used to making this document...
- Scope of the Tool Kit / Guidance
- Why Joint Monitoring
- Definitions
- Methodology:
 - Planning stage
 - Portfolio Management
 - Logistics and sequence of events
 - Case studies/examples
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Human resource management
 - Skills development training
 - Case studies/examples

- Revision of Documents
 - What Documents
 - Data Collection and Analysis
- Tools to be used for Monitoring
- Preparing reports
 - Information needed in the reports
 - Case studies/examples
- Quality control
 - Check lists and potential formats
 - Validation/finalisation
 - Case studies/examples
- Dissemination of results
 - Feedback sources
 - Case studies/examples
- Follow up activities
- Data Management
 - Data storage and quality control
 - Data accessibility
 - Data systems' case studies
- Annex I
 - Examples of formats and templates
 - Agreement on division of responsibilities
 - Project screening table
 - Joint Monitoring plan
 - Monitoring report and re-monitoring reports
 - Notes supporting the monitoring reports
 - Feedback forms

4.4 Budget Support

Introduction

The Joint Monitoring (JMON) workshop was held in Brussels on October 12-15, 2010. The workshop explored a Joint Monitoring Approach for Development Cooperation Interventions, addressed to staff from selected European Union EU Delegations and representatives of Partners Governments. This note focuses on the key points related to monitoring and potential joint monitoring of Budget Support.

The workshop focused on Monitoring or Joint Monitoring processes, but this note considers the issues in the broader context of monitoring and evaluation. Some of the findings of the workshop are reported about issues and recommendations.

Definition of Monitoring and Evaluation

The *DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management* states:

Evaluation The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or program. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention.

Monitoring A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.”

The DAC Glossary was prepared in 2001 and at the time reflected a project based approach, but two observations can be made. First the distinction between monitoring and evaluation is clear but the distinction is a matter of degree. Second, there are monitoring activities that are conducted and need to be conducted for the “systematic collection of data on specified indicators...with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds” for Budget Support.

Why is Budget Support important?

1. Budget Support has become an important modality for development cooperation in the last decade.
2. There are different types of budget support:
 - Bilateral funding by the EC of Sector Policy Support Programmes
 - Pooled funding for sector budget support involving donors, Multilateral Development Banks and the new vertical funds such as in the health sector;
 - Bilateral Budget Support by the EC;
 - General budget support with pooled funding; and
 - Pooled funding for regional organisations Programme Based Approaches

Differences between Budget Support and Project Support in Accountability

It is important to note that there are important differences between Budget Support and Project Support in the basis for accountability. This has implications for the monitoring and evaluation processes.

Project support is subject to financial accountability for the inputs and ROM monitors most effectively activities and outputs with less specific evidence on outcomes and impacts.

Evaluation assesses outcomes to some extent but the analysis does not usually influence significantly the disbursement of funds and implementation.

Budget Support has a results-based basis for accountability. Budget Support is disbursed, at least for the variable tranches, on the basis of achieving specific results indicators. At least in principle, this means that the focus of accountability for budget support is whether results are achieved. However, concerns have re-emerged among some donors about financial accountability for the expenditures.

What is the purpose of Monitoring?

The DAC definition of monitoring is clear but why do donors and/or partner governments engage in “systematic collection of data on specified indicators”? Motivations among the actors can differ in emphasis.

The specific purposes of Monitoring include:

- To provide information and input to Partner Governments and EU delegations on performance and progress.
- To provide information to EU Head Quarters (HQ) on performance and progress; which can be shared with the Parliament, Member States and other donors.
- To support the PCM cycle; to enhance the quality of programming and to support the dissemination of lessons learned and sharing of experience.

Challenges in Monitoring and Evaluating GBS

Monitoring is focused on systematic collection of data on indicators, but the issue of which indicators are to be utilised is a subject for evaluation. Although the definitions are distinct, conceptually monitoring and evaluation are linked.

Both the ROM methodology and evaluation methodology for projects are relatively well established, (although both ROM and project evaluations frequently abstract from the problems of attribution, the effects of other factors, and budget fungibility or substitution effects). In fact both ROM and project evaluations can analyse project activities and outputs and assess outcomes to some extent. Broader outcomes and impacts are difficult to measure and counterfactuals about what differences a particular project made are both difficult and controversial. Rigorous impact evaluations are conducted very seldom and are often subject to dispute.

Budget Support in the form of Sector Policy Support Programme (SPSPs) are inherently much more complex because of their breadth, the provision of joint inputs, the fungibility of funding, and the nature of their objectives than project support. General Budget Support (GBS), whether bilateral or pooled funding is broader in scope, fungibility issues are more significant, and is also the most challenging to monitor and to evaluate.

The monitoring and evaluation of GBS programmes raise exceptionally complex issues, in a number of ways:

1. The initial inputs are themselves complex – a combination of funds with specific provisions and specific conditionalities, with some forms of supporting technical assistance and capacity building and with commitments for harmonisation and alignment.

2. It is difficult to identify either inputs or specific activities. Most of the initial inputs are not discrete even if the GBS funds are clearly and separately identified, (often not the case) since the other inputs are frequently bundled with non-GBS inputs by the partner government or from other sources.
3. The results chain is difficult to trace and the desired ultimate effects are complex (including poverty reduction, gender equality and sustainable development in a number of dimensions across diverse countries).
4. Actual changes in outcome and impact indicators will be partly (and sometimes predominantly) the results or effects of other causal factors (effects of non-GBS inputs, or exogenous factors such as fluctuations in world markets or weather related effects).
5. The chain of causality is a long one, both in terms of links between inputs activities, outputs and potential impacts and over time. Following a results chain all the way from inputs to impact is known to be challenging, particularly when moving from counting outputs to measuring outcomes and impacts. Even in ideal circumstances, the time lapse between inputs and their immediate outputs to achieving the desired outcomes and impacts will be significant and often occurs over several years. When desired effects are expected to result from processes of institutional or policy changes, then the plausible interval for outcomes to be achieved is longer still. Moreover, results may be such that they are measurable only periodically, with difficulty and with considerable time lags; this lengthens the interval, in practice, before results can be ascertained. In some cases, moreover, confidence in the reliability of a link from hypothetical causes to observed effects may require repeated observations and evidence that the effect is persistent.
6. In the case of SPSP or GBS, many of the intended outcomes are not in themselves straightforward to measure, let alone to attribute proportionately to multiple causes, particularly in a dynamic context where GBS is only one of the influences on country and regional systems that are continually changing.
7. The logic of causation in the results chain is often itself controversial. Suppose for example, that even if it could be demonstrated that GBS leads to the adoption of a particular policy designed to reduce poverty, then the appropriateness and efficacy of the policy – either generally or in a particular country context – could be disputed and it is difficult to assess the counterfactual. Thus there are at least two questions. First, was the change in policy linked to or “caused” by the GBS? Second, what difference did the policy change make and what was actually achieved in terms of outcomes and impacts?

While there are challenges to assess results achieved especially in terms of outcomes and impacts with Budget Support, it should be recognised that these are challenges for Project Support also. The apparent simplicity and precision of measuring inputs, activities and outputs of projects becomes more opaque when one attempts to measure outcomes and longer term impacts. At the level of outcomes and impacts the challenges of monitoring or evaluating project support and budget support raises similar challenges.

Findings of the Workshop: Challenges

The following challenges were identified by participants in the Workshop.

1. It is evident that there is monitoring of Budget Support by both partner governments and by delegations in terms of systematic collection of data about indicators. To some extent there is some “joint monitoring” but this is on an ad hoc basis and usually consists more of regular communication than joint monitoring. Partner governments expressed the view that they were bearing much of the reporting burden, but delegations also found it burdensome.
2. Some delegations expressed concern that they were getting guidance from HQ on monitoring of Budget Support but they were unable to share this guidance with the partner governments.
3. There are serious challenges with public financial management and the quality and timeliness of statistics. Beneficiaries believed that the conditions imposed on Public Expenditure Financial Accountability (PEFA) processes were burdensome and intrusive.
4. There was less concern expressed by either delegations or partner governments about the reporting on macroeconomic conditions. Most indicated that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV reports and staff work facilitated this process. However, some partner governments indicated that there were challenges with the frequency of this reporting since data became available slowly. It was noted that some countries had challenges with the macroeconomic stability conditions in light of the financial crisis.
5. Some Budget Support programs had too many indicators. This was burdensome for the monitoring process and led to problems of timeliness of indicators and data collection.
6. Indicators can be volatile and inconsistent. Examples were cited such as budget support for education in Mauritius where intended results in pass rates in poor schools were achieved but absenteeism went up at the same time. This contradictory result in the indicators implied that the variable tranche was not released. Since indicators often fluctuate it is difficult to ensure that all indicators improve. A number of partner governments expressed concerns about the monitoring of indicators for the release of variable tranches. This could be a problem with the design and selections of the indicators as with the monitoring process itself, but these were linked by partner governments.
7. Should ROM be adapted to JMON budget support? How can HQ support monitoring of budget support? There was a perception expressed both by partner governments and EU delegations was that there was inadequate HQ support for monitoring of Budget Support. It is an open question whether the ROM for SPSP is an appropriate tool and whether it could be adapted for GBS but there is no analogous support available to delegations to support monitoring of Budget Support.

Recommendations

The following were recommendations where there seemed to be some consensus among delegations and beneficiaries although there were differences in emphasis:

1. There should be continuous dialogue for mutual accountability. This is a point expressed more by delegations than by partner governments but it was shared by some partner governments that regular dialogue and some limited forms of “joint monitoring” were desirable. However other partner governments found the reporting of indicators for Budget Support onerous and that most of the burden was on them.

2. There should be more HQ support for joint monitoring of budget support. This was a recommendation from delegations.
3. Real partnership in setting and adapting results targets. This perspective was expressed by both partner governments and delegations but most strongly by partner governments. The view was strongly expressed by partner governments that there needs to be more flexibility in the selection and adaption of partner governments. It could be argued that this is not a problem for monitoring but it is a design problem for the Budget Support programs. However, a number of partner governments stressed the need to have joint review of the choice and level of indicators for Budget Support.

5 LESSONS LEARNT

5.1 Logistics and methodology of the workshop

Logistics/Selection of Participants

Whilst invitations to participate in the workshop were sent out in advance, confirmation of participants was left in some instances to the last moment, with last minute cancellations and arrivals.

The timing of the event was scheduled for a conference-busy period in Brussels initially posing some difficulties regarding the venue and lodging for participants.

The number of participants in terms of the ratio against facilitators, space, and the resources allocated for this event was appropriate.

The attendees came from a myriad of countries, from all corners of the world, bringing with them not only different regional experiences (ENLARG, ACP, EPA, etc), but also different perspectives and priorities (projects/programme/BS). It was observed by the very participants that this mixture could prevent convergence in some topics of interest to them as well as sharing exchanges of good practices.

Methodology

The chosen format, Open Space Technology (OST), was welcome by the majority of the participants as it enabled them to open up and put forward ideas that were shared with other people from other parts of the world. The format also encouraged people to participate who under different circumstances would not have participated or shared their knowledge or experiences with others in public. As the **Open Space Technology** workshop has shown, it is possible to engage people around a theme of common interest to search for common ground.

The physical space booked to host this methodology proved to be adequate with some minor adjustments made in order to separate some of the sessions as sound disruption became an issue with one of the rooms used.

The workshop's length in terms of days spent was considered by most participants adequate. In spite of this feedback, workshop fatigue was evident on some of the participants by day three. This can be expected from an exercise of this kind where passiveness is not encouraged.

However, some participants had a limited engagement in the activities of the workshop due to their limited knowledge of the chosen language which was English. In order to mitigate this language gap some material was translated into the French language.

5.2 Joint Monitoring approach

The seminar has been an enriching process. It was known from the start that having a unique system for Joint Monitoring set up was not to be expected. However, the high level of experiences shared and opinions produced a space rich for more reflections and to germinate new approaches. Although the struggle will remain for time to come regarding the correct and shared definitions, it can be observed that some forms of concrete Joint Monitoring approaches are already implemented on the ground. (See Annex D on countries sheets)

Joint Monitoring is an approach, a process, rather than an established procedure. It comes in different shapes from joint meetings to joint missions to joint reports.

But it could also be a continuous dialogue full of exchange of information toward joint decisions

Different Context & Local Conditions (Resources and Capacity Building)

As stated at the very beginning of the exercise, there is no magic wand or quick fix, i.e. no system that fits all. Monitoring (in any of its modalities) and Evaluation (M&E) is a culture practice that organizations involved in development assistance need to assume to produce better outcomes. The non-existence of a universal M&E system is even more valid for the appropriate design of joint monitoring which depends on a variety of factors including

- the objectives of the programme/project and of the system; maturity of the recipient country's institutions, including monitoring capacities;
- organisational culture of all involved institutions; here in particular the ability to institutionalize open dialogue;
- costs and resources available for Joint Monitoring;
- the ability for institutional learning;

Capacity building of all stakeholders involved in joint monitoring is a broad area and includes a variety of methodological skills related to monitoring systems, systemic consulting skills, the facilitation of dialogue and more. It can be assumed that some substantial resources need to be invested in a number of countries on PG and EUD level.

Items that need to be solved in order to execute Joint Monitoring include:

What quantity and which resources are needed to implement it?

Do PGs really have the resources to make it long term sustainable?

Introducing joint monitoring systems is a change process and involves people and institutions in need for changing attitudes. Change management is essential to succeed in the transformation towards openness, transparency and institutional learning.

It is not sufficient to count with the resources, capacity building and the willingness to carry out joint monitoring. PGs and EUDs need to justify adopting and executing this approach. There must be a clear benefit to changing methodologies or adopting a new system in order to validate a shift in strategy

Items that need to be solved in order to execute Joint Monitoring include:

What is the added value of doing Joint Monitoring?

Aggregation and Accountability

The aggregation / consolidation of data for overall performance and accountability, even if it can be solved at a national level once a local system is in place, could remain an issue for large international donors such as the EU.

ROM provides a useful platform to offer aggregated data however, during the seminar it appeared that EU ROM seems to be somehow misaligned (in some instances not [well] known by PGs) as:

- it is an external system
- monitoring reports are not always distributed to PGs
- ROM's methodology is unique and not known to other donors

Items that need to be solved in order to execute Joint Monitoring include:

To solve the question, if it is correct to think of Joint Monitoring not as a part of ROM but as a complementary tool? If so, the new predicament to answer would be if it is an additional tool or a substitute one?

5.3 Specific lessons learnt in GBS

It is evident that there is monitoring of Budget Support by both partner governments and by delegations in terms of systematic collection of data about indicators. To some extent there is some “joint monitoring” but this is on an ad hoc basis and usually consists more of regular communication than joint monitoring. Partner governments expressed the view that they were bearing much of the reporting burden, but delegations also found it burdensome.

Some delegations expressed the concern that they were getting guidance from HQ on monitoring of Budget Support but they were unable to share this guidance with the partner governments.

There are **serious challenges with public financial management and the quality and timeliness of statistics**. Beneficiaries believed that the conditions imposed on Public Expenditure Financial Accountability (PEFA) processes were burdensome and intrusive.

There was less concern expressed by either EUDs or PGs about the **reporting on macroeconomic conditions**. Most indicated that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV reports and staff work facilitated this process. However, some partner governments indicated that there were challenges with the frequency of this reporting since data became available slowly. It was noted that some countries had challenges with the macroeconomic stability conditions in light of the financial crisis.

Some Budget Support programs had too many indicators. This was burdensome for the monitoring process and led to problems of timeliness of indicators and data collection.

Indicators can be volatile and inconsistent. Examples were cited such as budget support for education in Mauritius where intended results in pass rates in poor schools were achieved but absenteeism went up at the same time. This contradictory result in the indicators implied that the variable tranche was not released. Since indicators often fluctuate it is difficult to ensure that all indicators improve. A number of partner governments expressed concerns about the monitoring of indicators for the release of variable tranches. This could be a problem with the design and selections of the indicators as with the monitoring process itself, but these were linked by partner governments.

Reliability of statistics remains a basic condition for any monitoring on BS/SWAP/SPSP

Should ROM be adapted to Joint Monitoring budget support? How can HQ support monitoring of budget support? There was a perception expressed both by PGs and EUDs was that there was inadequate HQ support for monitoring of Budget Support. It is an open question whether the ROM for SPSP is an appropriate tool and whether it could be adapted for GBS but there is no analogous support available to delegations to support monitoring of budget support.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Logistics and methodology of the workshop

Logistics

This kind of event needs to be planned well in advance taking into consideration the timing during the year in order to avoid constraints of choice of venues and paying a premium price for it.

Selection of attendees should be more stringent as the geographical areas and points of interest already create divisions that are even widened by their professional experience and capacity. A more homogenous atmosphere could be conducive of a higher return on participation and more focus on the participants' priorities. Also from a logistical point of view this would be of advantage as participants would speak a common language. During the selection of participants it has to be stressed that a proficient level of the workshop language is required to attend the workshop.

Methodology

Open Space Technology has proven to be efficient and deliver results in terms of getting people to actively participate and not remain passive during a public event. It can be useful to consider this approach for future exercises as the cost benefit versus other conventional approached is positive.

OST's methodology requires ample areas for people to move from one topic session to another. Whilst these sessions need to be under the same facility, they also need to be separated from one another in order to prevent distractions and disruptions from each other.

In spite of the mostly positive feedback on the duration of the workshop, it can be argued that the same results can be achieved on a reduced version comprising only two and a half days. Not only can the same outcomes be attained but it can also be more cost efficient, and easier to set up.

6.2 Joint Monitoring approach

Through the workshop it was pointed out that there were not only several interpretations and current methodologies used for monitoring, but that the term "Joint Monitoring" also needed to be clarified. Whilst attempting to arrive to some common definition might prove lengthy, and inconclusive, a set of different definitions need to be made available and if possible be categorised in order to differentiate them one from another for stakeholders to understand what kind of monitoring they need or intend to carry out.

BEST PRACTICES

- 1 - **Mapping of existing cases** and forms of Joint Monitoring in an extended definition and create an institutional memory of such experiences. Develop more internal reflection on the experiences already had.
- 2 - **Create a platform for further exchanges** (possibly through capacity4dev or other open web platform)
- 3 - Explore the possibility to **set up regional seminars** and/or trainings

4 - Structure a format to collect the information (**starting with the Internal Monitoring**)

5 - Study a form of a **multi-approach and flexible Joint Monitoring guidance** to allow for adaptation to the numerous local environments

Learning from Best Practices

It was found out throughout the workshop and by carrying out a survey on local monitoring systems on each PG and EUD country, that there are many instances where joint monitoring is already taking place. Most of it is ad-hoc and in most instances is not even called joint monitoring in spite of the emblem characteristics of the exercise they perform. For others Joint Monitoring should start as a learning process probably using other available formats as preliminary steps. For this, the wealth of information which already exists but is yet undocumented can be exploited to benefit others and to systematise systems which are not yet institutionalised. For the EU, other large donors and some PGs, learning by comparing other joint experience from the World Bank, the United Nations, Asian Development Bank, and others can be extremely useful. For this there needs to be more official cooperation and exchange of information as other institutions can also benefit from this institutional barter.

Create a platform for further exchanges

Rather than printed products, a website (with printable documents related to specific methodologies) will be more instrumental and practical; in particular if this website is open for feedback and contribution from users. It seems that Capacity4Dev could be an appropriate portal for this. The platform could also contain a section with a collection best joint monitoring practices from EU, PGs, and other donors' programmes.

Explore the possibility to set up regional seminars and/or trainings

Continue to facilitate dialogue on regional, national and programme level. Encourage local stakeholders involved in programme planning, implementation and evaluation to design their own systems based on their particular local needs but also on a common framework of standards. Other participatory workshop approaches, including Open Space Technology, can help to establish a culture of openness and learning.

Nevertheless, in order to improve the efficiency of any gathering or training exercises, clusters of countries dealing with similar issues, problems, region, country size, priorities, (and if possible, similar languages) need to be grouped together. For this a modular capacity building programme could be designed. This can be open for both EUDs and PGs focusing on training of methodological skills, including but not limited to:

- Joint monitoring and monitoring systems in general;
- data collection;
- interviewing;
- general communication skills;
- systemic thinking and change management;
- facilitation of dialogue and learning forums.

Resources and Capacity Building

Not only through the workshop but by experience of several support and E5 staff it can be appreciated that capacity levels vary widely from one country to another, from one government ministry to another, from one department to another and from one EUD to another. The capacity to understand, absorb new information and retain it are variables too great to be addressed entirely in this document, but nevertheless need to be pointed out as the need to equalise capacity and homogenise knowledge is a prerequisite to engage institutions in Joint Monitoring. Joint Monitoring can be executed successfully only when both parties can extract the required information and possess the skills to translate joint monitoring into useful documents that can lead to improved aid effectiveness.

There is a need for capacity building on all levels (EUD, PG, other donors). However, it is not very clear what capacities are actually needed. Joint Monitoring is a multi-dimensional undertaking and requires skills such as:

- subject matter,
- development background
- tools for monitoring,
- communication,
- systemic thinking skills,
- facilitation skills,
- reporting skills.

Starting with the Internal Monitoring

Internal monitoring should be a preliminary necessary step for Joint Monitoring but the uneven “internal monitoring” capacity at EUDs and PGs can be a constraint and require again specialised training or simply more pressure from management toward a compulsory reporting format, amongst other potential solutions.

Develop a multi-approach and flexible Joint Monitoring guidance

EUDs as well as PGs need guidance for Joint Monitoring. As there is not **one** approach to joint monitoring, this guidance must be modular, offering different options and connection points to local (national) systems. Such guidance should include checklists and a variable toolbox. It should serve for internal and external monitoring, and for different aid modalities such as projects, sector programmes, budget support, etc. The predicament then will be to keep this guidance concise and open enough to allow for incorporation of local approaches whilst for the EU to be able to aggregate data from different regions and countries.

Dissemination

First of all a better dissemination of the monitoring reports already available (at least the ones produced by ROM) must be a priority.

As far as the guidance, it is suggested that, besides a hard copy document, a reliable Internet portal that gives room for dialogue and contributions seems to be a plausible option.

Application of the tool

Lessons learned coming up in many reports do not or do not sufficiently translate into change of systems, projects or programmes. Participants of the workshop repeatedly mentioned that lessons learned are often ignored. A watered down or simplification of joint monitoring systems would need to take that into account.

Items that need to be solved in order to execute Joint Monitoring include:

What to do with the outcomes? Should they be used to trigger “payments”?

6.3 Specific recommendations on GBS

There should be continuous dialogue for mutual accountability. This is a point expressed more by delegations than by partner governments but it was shared by some partner governments that regular dialogue and some limited forms of “joint monitoring” were desirable. However other partner governments found the reporting of indicators for Budget Support onerous and that most of the burden was on them.

More HQ support for joint monitoring of budget support was requested. This was a recommendation from delegations.

Real partnership in setting and adapting results targets. This perspective was expressed by both partner governments and delegations but most strongly by partner governments. The view was that there needs to be more flexibility in the selection and adaption of systems by partner governments. It could be argued that this is not a problem for monitoring but it is a design problem for the Budget Support programs. However, a number of partner governments stressed the need to have joint review of the choice and level of indicators for Budget Support.