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Evaluation and performance assessment - experience from DFID



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Introduction

- **Something about...**
 - evaluation and performance assessment
 - ‘modernising government’ and the ‘new development agenda’
 - DFID’s policy and performance framework
 - implications for evaluation: challenges and a new evaluation agenda

Why development evaluation?

- **Accountability**
- **Knowledge**
- **Organisational development**

*...**but whose accountability, knowledge and organisational development ?***

Modernising government

Long term goals, policy coherence



results!!

- evidence based policy

*Ownership:
decentralisation,
devolution, subsidiarity*

Partnerships for delivery

...plus ICTs

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New development agenda

Long term goals, policy coherence



results!!

- especially poverty reduction

*Ownership
& participation*

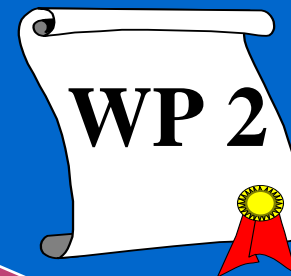
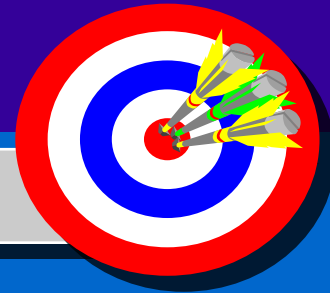
*Partnership
& collaboration*

What is DFID?

- **Department for International Development**
 - Independent department, created in 1997
 - Reflects ‘new international development agenda’
 - Results focus (IDTs now MDGs) - especially ‘poverty elimination’
 - Growing focus on globalisation challenges - and domestic policy coherence (e.g. trade)

Policy framework

Millennium Development Goals



target
strategy papers

Country
Strategy
Papers

Other
policy
papers

Institutional
Strategy
Papers

projects and programmes

Strategic overview

Vision

- **WP1, WP2**

Targets

- **IDTs \Rightarrow MDGs**

policy research

Strategies

- **TSPs**

PSA, SDA, MTF

- **CSPs**

CPR

- **ISPs**

IPR

etc

- **PARPs**

Operations

- **Projects,
Programmes,
Advocacy**

*PCM
(self)
evaluation*

Cannizaro conclusions

As DFID becomes a \$5bn. donor (0.4% UK gdp), Management Board will focus on:

- **prioritisation**
- **performance management**

Performance management - 1

- **Corporate level:**
 - New high level policy goals (IDTs)
 - Target strategies (TSPs)
 - Public Service Agreement, Service Delivery Agreement, Investment Strategy
 - ‘performance contract’ with UK Treasury
 - focus on results and ‘evidence-based’ policies

Significance of the IDTs/MDGs

- Commitment
- Results orientation
- Accountability
- Focus
- Partnership
- Policy coherence
- Optimism!

Challenges

- Need for new ways of working, individually and collectively
- Statistical limitations
- Attribution
- Timescale
- National strategies, targets

Performance management - 2

- **Country level**

- better country strategies (CSPs)
- new country performance review process (APPRs, CPRs)
 - but need to meet challenge of PRSPs and similar

Performance management - 3

- **Multilateral programmes**
 - new strategy papers (ISPs)
 - new strategic review process (IPRs)
 - but how to measure partnership, advocacy?

Performance management - 4

- **Sector programmes**
 - move to SWAPs, general budget support
 - renewed emphasis on collaborative and partner-led review
 - concerns around accountability, attribution and performance assessment capacity

Performance management - 5

- **Project level**
 - shift to programme focus
 - portfolio-based review
 - self-evaluation
 - concerns around aggregation, validation

Some interim conclusions...

- **More focused and coherent approach than before...**
 - Clear focus on goals
 - Policy debate and demand for measurable results
 - New performance management architecture and results orientation
 - More self-evaluation (short learning loop)
 - more informal networking and use of ICTs

Some interim conclusions

...but challenges remain:

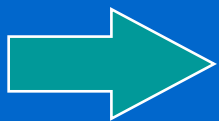
- policy ‘crowding’ (but how to deal with complexity?)
- ‘disconnects’ between goals and strategies
- structural ‘disconnects’: sector chimneys, implementation burrows, data graveyards
- partnership is difficult: takes time and skill!
- ownership: who needs to know what?

DFID's DER

- **Development Effectiveness Report (DER):**
 - a concise, accessible, systematic, independent assessment of DFID's performance
 - *what is being achieved, and how ?*
 - assessing links between DFID's activities and progress towards international development goals

DER working papers

- Assessing development effectiveness
- International Development Targets
- Country performance synthesis
- Multilateral performance synthesis
- Project / programme synthesis



**Development Effectiveness Report
2001**

Implications

- **Implications for development evaluation:**
 - Accountability
 - Knowledge
 - Organisational development

...but whose accountability, knowledge and organisational development ?

Challenges

- lack of experience in evaluation of complex policy issues
- time lag: rapid evolution of policy agendas leaves evaluation behind
- evaluation partnerships difficult to develop
- central evaluation unit remote from country level discussions
- **proper role to support building of partners' evaluation capacity?**

A new evaluation agenda

- **Policy focus**

- refocus on programme and corporate levels
- use external accountability pressures to promote learning!

- **Better systems and support**

- ensure linkage and integration with performance management systems: evaluation can compensate for limitations of RBM
- encourage more self-evaluation - but provide quality support and monitor standards
- facilitation, not policing

A new evaluation agenda

- **More and better evaluation partnerships**
 - joint evaluation
- **Better knowledge management**
 - networking and targeting: not just ICTs!
- **Build evaluation capacity**
 - for DFID and partners
 - key role for Performance Assessment Resource Centre (PARC)

Last word...

‘Government should regard policy making as a continuous learning process, not as a series of one-off initiatives. We will improve our use of evidence and research so that we can understand better the problems we are trying to address...

We will ensure that all policies and programmes are clearly specified and evaluated, and the lessons of success and failure are communicated and acted upon... We need to apply the disciplines of project management to the policy process.’

Modernising Government, March 1999: p 17