

Independent Evaluation in DFID

Annual Report 2009

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

3ie	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
ARV	Anti-Retroviral drugs
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
CDR	Community Driven Recovery
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
EvD	Evaluation Department of DFID
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFATM	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HMG	Her Majesty's Government (UK)
IACDI	Independent Advisory Committee on Development Impact
IOD	Institute for Overseas Development
IRC	International Rescue Committee
NAO	National Audit Office
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NONIE	Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCR	Project Completion Report
PSI	Population Services International
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SUMMARY AND KEY MESSAGES

DFID is reinforcing its commitment to strong independent evaluation

- i The financial crisis and world recession provided a fast-changing policy environment for DFID, including publication of the new White Paper, 'Eliminating World Poverty – Building our Common Future'. This major new policy framework for DFID focuses on protecting the poor from the impact of the global downturn and promoting growth, major global issues such as climate change, building peaceful states and societies, and value for money.
- ii DFID published its first formal evaluation policy, ('Building the evidence to reduce poverty') in 2009, confirming its commitment to strengthening independent evaluation of development programmes and maximising value for money for the taxpayer.

KEY MESSAGES

- iii Evaluations of eight of DFID's most important country programmes in fragile states (see **Chapter 2** for details) show:
 - *Success in scaling-up programmes despite difficult working conditions*
 - *Progress in achieving goals on aid delivery and aid effectiveness, with DFID playing a key leadership and partnership role*
 - *Signs of innovation in approach to trust funds and other vehicles for scaling-up in places where budget support is often hard or impossible*
 - *Challenges in working with non-traditional partners, managing tensions between state-building and service delivery, and sustaining early successes in working across the UK government.*
- iv A synthesis of DFID's project reviews, self-evaluations that have been independently quality-assured on a sample basis by Evaluation Department – showed that:
 - *Overall, there has been a continued improvement in performance between 2005 and 2008, with 75% expected to achieve, or largely achieve, their objectives*
 - *This was achieved despite some increase in the average risk level of the portfolio*
 - *Results were better in Asia than in sub-Saharan Africa*
 - *The synthesis carried out a sample check on the quality of the review and found room for improving the quality of scoring – 80% were done satisfactorily but 20% were poorly done*
 - *The review did not, however, find evidence of systematic marking up and concludes that there is credible evidence that, overall, efficiency and effectiveness are improving*
 - *Finally, it identified that lesson-learning from the project reviews can be improved and they need to say more about impact. These issues are already being addressed in various ways in DFID's work on results.*

- v An independent stocktake of DFID's social exclusion policy produced important policy lessons. Some work around social exclusion has shown signs of excellence, but overall this has not been strategic, or clearly linked to public policy commitments. The policy has not gained much traction across DFID.
- vi A new series of portfolio reviews has been commissioned by DFID's Investment Committee, starting with health and education. These reviews have looked at value for money, what has been delivered with the resources and identify areas for improvement.
- vii There are signs of an increase in decentralised evaluations commissioned by DFID staff, for example by larger country offices such as India. This is a key area for the new evaluation policy.
- viii Evaluation Department's new structures to deliver the policy include staff working on capacity-building and quality, while maintaining a strong programme of independent evaluations of DFID's work.

CHAPTER 1



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

'Building Our Common Future' - the new White Paper

- 1 The policy environment for international development has continued to evolve rapidly over the past 12 months, and provides a fast-changing context for evaluation work in DFID which needs to stay relevant for decision-makers in the UK and in developing countries.

The UK government remains strongly committed to strengthening independent evaluation in international development.

Guided by the Independent Advisory Committee on Development Impact (IACDI), DFID's evaluation function is being reshaped and developed with a strong emphasis on building a culture of lesson-learning throughout the organisation. This aims at integrating evaluation into DFID's work at programme level, lesson-learning capacity and high quality evaluation.

Building evidence in a changing world

Box 1

The new White Paper published in July 2009, 'Eliminating world poverty - Building our common future' sets out the global challenges we face, how they affect developing countries, and how the UK is responding.

It deals with themes such as climate change, how the global downturn is affecting the poor, the importance of reducing conflict, and working across government to ensure that aid is well spent. Value for money and strengthening evaluation also feature strongly.

At the international level, the G20 summit in July 2009 brought together the world's leaders for urgent meetings on how to tackle the financial crisis and to mitigate the risks of the recession for developing countries. Meanwhile, the Call to Action focused attention on the Millennium Development Goals. Decision-makers are increasingly thinking about what will follow in 2010.

The summit on climate change in Copenhagen in December 2009 also will be vital for tackling arguably the single most important issue for developing and developed countries.

'Building the Evidence to Reduce Poverty' - DFID's new Evaluation Policy

- 2** In June, we took a major step forward by publishing DFID's new evaluation policy ('Building the evidence to reduce poverty') – the first Whitehall department to do so – which was accompanied by a three-year independent evaluation work-plan. The policy was endorsed by IACDI.
- 3** The policy and work-plan have been subject to full public consultation. They include important new areas such as strengthening work on multilaterals and civil society, rigorous impact evaluation and better communication and lesson-learning. As part of the implementation of this policy, DFID's Evaluation Department (EvD) has been restructured and has been given additional resources to deliver the new commitments. EvD is actively engaging with other parts of the organisation to take forward these new responsibilities.
- 4** As part of its focus on quality, IACDI commissioned in 2009 a thorough review by Roger Riddell, Burt Perrin and Richard Manning of the quality of DFID's evaluations, benchmarking them against work done by other bilateral agencies, and making a number of important recommendations including DFID's response to evaluations. Following from this, IACDI expect to develop a theme around lesson-learning in 2010.
- 5** See **Chapter 6** of this report for more information about how we plan to our build our capacity on evaluation.

CHAPTER 2



CHAPTER 2 FINDINGS AND PERFORMANCE

6 Evaluations and reviews have provided important findings this year on DFID's performance and impact. In this section we focus on two broad result areas:

- *DFID projects and programmes completed between 2005 and 2008 (970 projects)*
- *Country programmes in eight fragile states (Afghanistan, Cambodia, DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo), Ethiopia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Yemen).*

A) PROJECT PERFORMANCE FOR 2005-08

7 All DFID investments over £1m are reviewed annually and are then reviewed and scored at project completion stage. Although these are reviews rather than full independent evaluations, they provide a comprehensive coverage of the portfolio and are a vital component of DFID's performance management cycle (which includes ensuring value for money).

Full evaluations are expensive and are appropriate only for the larger and most strategic (or innovative) programmes. PCRs are typically commissioned by DFID programme staff and sometimes use external experts.

8 Following an earlier practice which was revived in 2006 to promote lesson-learning from these reports, EvD now regularly pulls together what we learned about DFID's performance from these reviews by commissioning a synthesis report. In 2009, the synthesis drew on a sample of reviews from some **970 projects completed between 2005-08**. This independent assessment (to be published shortly) provided an overview of DFID's performance, summarising lessons by theme/sector and examining the quality of DFID's project scoring (on a 5% random sample basis).

9 The overall findings on results and performance:

- ***DFID's portfolio performance is improving as a whole and in key sectors.** The upward trend in the performance of DFID projects remained, as found in the previous synthesis. In 2000-01, 65% of projects being completed were expected to achieve or largely achieve their objectives (scored 1 or 2 on a 5 point scale) but this had risen to 75% in December 2008*

- *Portfolio performance (measured by the overall project rating) was relatively high (around 77% scoring 1 or 2) in Asia and in the Middle East, Europe, Caribbean and Americas, but this was lower in Africa (70%)*
- *Improvement has been sustained while DFID has taken on more and riskier projects. 18% of projects in 2005-8 were considered high risk compared with 12% in the previous period, with most projects (75%) rated as medium risk*
- *The 2009 synthesis report also found that projects have made significant contributions on key strategic objectives for DFID around aid delivery and institutional effectiveness. **The synthesis concludes that there is credible evidence that, overall, efficiency and effectiveness are improving.***

10 This evidence base is generated through the self-reporting of performance, although quality assurance and external input has been used. Is it reliable? To address this question, the 2009 synthesis included, for the first time, a detailed analysis of the quality of the scoring process for 5% of DFID's projects. Key findings are:

- ***80% were judged satisfactorily done, but scoring is not always rigorous, with 20% of scores in the random sample found to be poorly justified.** The evaluators recommend DFID needs to minimise the risk of introducing incentives that could undermine credibility of the scores, and to standardise quality assurance*
- *Despite the scope for improvement, **the review did not find evidence of systematic 'marking up'**, and it identified some factors that could explain the increasing improvement in purpose scores, such as the increasing emphasis on aid effectiveness*
- ***The PCR is not currently a vehicle for assessing impact. Accounting for performance takes precedence over impact assessment.** While there is some indication of impact on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa, PCRs mainly refer to performance against DFID's corporate priorities. Discussion of impact on cross-cutting priorities (for example, conflict, environment and gender) is not explicit. **The lack of information on potential impact arises from a lack of data and suitable project activities to assess impact.***

11 The review also makes recommendations on what factors can help improve the quality of project scoring, such as:

- *High-quality logical frameworks and project appraisal*
- *Clarity on how partnerships are reflected in scoring*
- *Developing approaches to reviews and scoring that work for budget support and new ways of delivering aid.*

- 12** DFID has been aware of these issues for some time and its Finance and Corporate Performance Division, with input from EvD and DFID economists, has developed improved guidance and training for logical frameworks in projects and economic appraisal. As part of DFID's new evaluation policy, EvD now has an agreed role in regularly reporting on the quality of scoring.

B) COUNTRY PROGRAMMES IN FRAGILE STATES

- 13** DFID has more than doubled its support to fragile states since 2004 and plans to increase this further. This is a key area of DFID's work, particularly for delivering the policy objectives set out in the new White Paper.
- 14** In our independent country programme evaluations (CPEs) over the last two years we have focused on a theme of fragile states and looked at progress in some of the most challenging and strategically important countries where DFID works.

We have completed studies this year on Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, DRC and Yemen (the latter two to be published shortly) and our synthesis report draws on these findings and on earlier studies in Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone. At the time of writing, the CPE synthesis is still being finalised, but preliminary findings are available, some of which are listed below.

DFID's Successes

- 15**
- *Scaling-up aid frameworks substantially in fragile states*
 - *Delivering services in particular sectors and regions in conflict settings*
 - *Using budget support has many challenges in these settings and DFID has in fact only used it in four of the eight countries. DFID developed other innovative mechanisms; pooled funds and Trust Funds have raised substantial resources and shared risk amongst donor partners. DFID has been proactive and innovative in setting them up, although many suffer from delays and management issues*
 - *Improving relations with other parts of Whitehall, especially through common funding pools and the co-location of offices overseas*
 - *In taking a leadership and partnership role in the donor community, DFID has championed international principles on working in fragile states, is recognised for its strong analysis and its awareness that progress in development rests on first achieving inclusive political agreements or stability. DFID has built effective partnerships with other donors*
 - *Employment of consistently high-quality staff in difficult, fragile and stressful working environments*

Challenges and areas of weaker performance

- *DFID needs to continue to develop its approach to working with other Whitehall partners. Progress has clearly been achieved and DFID has responded well to feedback from other departments and there are good practices developing. However, tensions have remained where political and security agendas diverge*
- *It remains a challenge to get the right balance between directly providing services and relief to the poor, while building the capacity of the state to do so. DFID has tended to concentrate on state-building, and on improving central government capacity. Allocating resources towards identifying and tackling the causes of fragility is also a challenge*
- *DFID can deploy technical assistance effectively but is less effective in delivering long-term local capacity-building. DFID needs to be clearer about managing change, to link with wider civil service reforms, and to work closely with other donors and multilaterals*
- *DFID finds it hard to influence non-traditional partners and needs to work more closely with them, especially where they play an important regional role or have a large funding weight. This includes using more caution when working through partners with limited capacity, and drawing up clear terms of engagement with implementing partners*
- *The approach to Poverty Reduction Budget Support in fragile states needs to be strengthened. It was used in four out of eight countries (Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Ethiopia, and Pakistan). A more robust underpinning analysis, especially around political risk, would have mitigated the risk of suspension of funds and/or strengthened DFID's influence. However, use of pooled funds and other innovative instruments helped compensate for this*
- *Quick Impact Projects brought direct humanitarian relief. But these did not become effective bridges between humanitarian and development assistance, and remained 'standalone' projects with no link to national strategies*
- *Despite the high quality of staff, staff recruitment for DFID offices in fragile states remains difficult. Turnover is high, and applicants are few. Adviser gaps have affected portfolio design and management. DFID imposed unrealistic caps on staff numbers when spending pressures grew (so making larger programmes, silent partnerships and budget support more attractive). Country office relations with DFID HQ have sometimes been strained; as fragile states become high-priority, pressures from the centre have increased workloads*
- *On monitoring and evaluation, there needs to be a better understanding of how complex interventions deliver impact and affect conflict in fragile states. There is also confusion between corporate reporting and country strategy-level monitoring. This may result in the absence of an effective country performance framework. DFID staff also face challenges in dealing with weak statistical systems in fragile states.*

CHAPTER 3



CHAPTER 3 LEARNING LESSONS

- 16** The purpose of independent evaluations is not just to measure performance and impact but also to promote lesson-learning, to inform decision-making that reduces poverty. It should improve the design and effectiveness of programmes and provide useful and relevant evidence on what works.
- 17** IACDI has identified better lesson-learning from evaluations and reviews as a key theme for its work during 2010.
- *EvD has a key role here both in synthesising and disseminating lessons from DFID's own independent evaluations and reviews. We are focusing more of our resources on communicating and sharing evaluation findings in an accessible way, and making sure that key evaluations from partners are shared within DFID*
 - *Effective lesson-learning also depends on DFID being a place where independent assessment leading to learning is valued. DFID staff need to make it a key feature of how we do business*
 - *The examples of decentralised evaluation work described in **Chapter 5** suggest that many DFID staff are already well aware of the importance of lesson-learning. The organisation generates a large amount of analytical and evaluative material of high quality from its policy, research and evaluation work*
 - *There is some doubt that this material is effectively used for decision-making. The IACDI quality review, previous reviews of management responses to evaluations, and the latest Project Completion Report synthesis all note that there is little evidence that DFID has developed a consistent culture of lesson-learning. This implies that evaluation evidence is not consistently used to inform decision-making, and that DFID systems do not effectively incorporate lesson-learning*
 - *DFID's approach to management responses to evaluations needs strengthening as highlighted by the IACDI review. EvD's recent work with DFID's internal audit department has introduced tracking systems for monitoring progress against recommendations. However, the feedback mechanism can be improved and there is a need for greater clarity about who is responsible for responding to recommendations, and to what timescale. Our experience has been that management responses can take a long time and demonstrate little ownership of findings. DFID staff and senior managers need to focus less on explaining away the evaluation findings and debating the quality of work of external evaluators, and instead concentrate on opportunities for lesson-learning and what action DFID will take.*

18 In the rest of this section we highlight some of the **key lessons** for DFID evaluation and review work published this year, focusing on four key areas:

- *DFID's work on influencing in the health sector*
- *A review of DFID's work on social transfers*
- *A recent policy stocktake on DFID's approach to social exclusion*
- *Lessons from country programme evaluations and projects.*

Health influencing

19 An independent review (to be published shortly) was commissioned by Evaluation Department from researchers at ODI (Overseas Development Institute) to provide a preliminary assessment of DFID's influencing and policy dialogue activities in the health sector, focusing on their cost-effectiveness.

The six case studies looked at engagement with the Global Fund for Aids, TB and Malaria and by DFID staff in Zambia, Nigeria, Mozambique, India and Nepal on a range of issues including safer motherhood to equity of access for excluded groups and abolition of user fees.

The findings included:

- *Through its policy dialogue and influencing work, DFID appears to have made a significant contribution to policy changes that took place, either directly or indirectly by working with the wider donor community. In four out of the six cases, the policy change that DFID had aimed for had in fact been achieved*
- *An example of impact: In Nepal, preliminary data point to an increase in the availability of skilled birth attendants and use of health services which, if confirmed, is likely to have contributed to the recent reduction in maternal mortality*
- *Measuring impact and cost-effectiveness with precision was difficult, and changes in outcomes certainly could not be solely attributed to DFID's engagement*
- *However, the costs of influencing and policy dialogue work could be assessed and were found to be modest in comparison with the potential impact on national programmes and systems, and in comparison with the level of financial aid being spent in the sector*
- *Structured interviews with external stakeholders indicated that most felt that DFID's influence had been decisive for some of the key steps in the policy change process. Stakeholders also indicated that in the absence of the DFID influencing effort that policy would have taken longer to emerge and would have been less well formulated. DFID staff working on health saw influencing as central to their work and more than 70% thought DFID gets good value for money or high returns from influencing efforts.*

- *Key success factors identified by stakeholders for policy dialogue and influencing were: understanding political interests; effective collaboration with other donors; the quality and skills of DFID staff; and the flexible and rapid provision of technical assistance.*

The review suggested the following improvements:

- *DFID's approach to influencing could be more strategic, in fact only 20% of DFID health advisers felt it was already so*
- *Whilst the goals of the influencing efforts and programmes were clearly stated and understood by DFID teams, the specific outputs were not always explicitly defined in strategy or project documents*
- *In several case studies, the objectives and approach evolved in the light of the experience and the opportunities that arose. Only in the case of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) were policy objectives defined publicly and reflected in a log-frame*
- *Stakeholders also identified instances where DFID influencing had created tension amongst other bilateral donors and highlighted the risks of premature implementation of policy. Continuity of DFID staff was also a problem.*

The results of this study are consistent with findings in country programme evaluations. The need for a strategic approach is also highlighted in a study of influencing and policy dialogue work by the Netherlands on 'Playing Chess with Policy Makers' (IOB, 2007).

Findings have been fed into DFID's health portfolio review and are being followed up by a series of seminars organised by EvD in 2009 and 2010 to discuss in more depth the available methods of measuring influencing for civil society, multilateral organisations and policy.

Social transfers

- 20** EvD commissioned a review (in preparation for a full evaluation) of DFID's work on social transfers (covering work in 24 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe) This was published in June 2009. Despite a shifting policy context during the period of the review, social protection remains a particularly important part of DFID's work and is of course highly relevant to the issue of protecting the poor from the impact of the global downturn.
- 21** The review pulls together findings from four earlier studies to inform DFID's policy on social protection. One of these studies, by Devereux and Coll-Black (2007), looked at the impact of DFID's pilots of social transfer programmes in 16 countries. It found that:

- *Most social transfer interventions supported by DFID – unconditional cash, food or asset transfers, public works, school feeding schemes, agricultural inputs packages – do contribute to the objective of enhanced household food security in the short-term. They also contribute to reductions in the severity of poverty, though not necessarily to long-term poverty reduction*
- *Social transfers have significant positive impacts on household food security, by increasing food availability or access to food. Where social transfers are provided in the form of agricultural support, the impact on food security is through production rather than consumption. One notable success story is the ‘Targeted Inputs Programme’ in Malawi*
- *Well-designed public works projects can improve food security through creating infrastructure that supports agricultural production (for example, irrigation facilities) or market integration (for example, feeder roads that link isolated communities to trade routes and market centres). Evidence for these impacts is limited, because of methodological difficulties in quantifying and attributing the economic benefits of infrastructure. However, an evaluation of public works in Nepal, which attributed increases in crop yields and market access to the construction of irrigation facilities and roads, shows that measuring the impacts of infrastructure is possible*
- *The links between social transfers and economic growth are weaker. The potential of social protection to contribute to broader developmental objectives of poverty reduction and economic growth can occur through either (1) multiplier effects or (2) market integration. Only six of the DFID-supported case study social transfer schemes reported any impact – positive, neutral, or even negative – on economic growth and detailed quantitative data were not available. However, the main purpose of social transfers is to protect rather than promote livelihoods, so a failure to find evidence of economic growth impacts does not necessarily imply that the programmes reviewed were less effective.*

Social exclusion policy stocktake

22 In preparation for a full evaluation of DFID’s work on social exclusion, we carried out in 2009 a preliminary stocktake (to be published shortly) which has some sobering implications for DFID’s policy-makers. It found that:

- *Since it was published in 2005, there has been very poor awareness of, and adherence to, the Social Exclusion Policy*
- *Awareness of the Policy and its commitments is low at every level in DFID. The implementation architecture has not been taken up or deployed. This has severely constrained policy implementation, resulting in a weak basis for assessment and difficulty in monitoring and reporting on social exclusion*
- *Despite this poor take-up of the policy, there is some evidence of a growing body of quality activity on social exclusion within DFID. This is reflected in:*
 - *Significantly more analysis focused on social exclusion*
 - *Exclusion’s visibility within DFID’s new central research agenda*

- *DFID has committed a healthy proportion of civil society funding toward tackling social exclusion*
- *An increased focus on social exclusion issues within sample country planning and accountability frameworks*
- *An emerging discourse on exclusion within new policy areas such as conflict, fragile states and growth*
- *However, this increased activity is in response to the reality of development contexts and discourses, rather than being generated by, or attributable to, corporate processes*
- *There is little or no convergence between the Policy and actual development activity, and therefore they have not informed or influenced each other*
- *Activity appears to be constrained by a lack of momentum in developing a common and strategic discourse of social exclusion, within DFID and with external partners. Its poor corporate Policy profile is restricting external dialogue.*

23 While growing in significance and scale, the current body of social exclusion-related activity in DFID currently appears neither comprehensive nor (in aggregate) strategic.

At the time of writing, corporate systems and incentives have performed inadequately to enable a systematic addressing of the Policy commitments. This is resulting in a fragmented institutional response to generating the comprehensive body of exclusion-focused activity required to meet these commitments. Insufficient energy is being devoted to developing a strategic discourse of exclusion, both within the organisation and externally.

24 The implications for work on social exclusion are of interest in their own right – this is a major area of DFID’s work affecting large numbers of the very poorest people in developing countries. It is a significant finding that though this work is often of high quality, it is not part of a strategic approach or linked into delivering public policy commitments.

25 However, the lessons may be wider. DFID again needs to consider seriously the extent to which this reflects poorly on policy processes. Most DFID staff realise that there is a world of difference between publishing public policy commitments, and integrating them into operational decisions, business plans and decisions taken within country programmes.

26 An effective process is needed to ensure policy objectives are carefully prioritised within the overall framework provided by the new White Paper. Tracking delivery of the White Paper commitments is central to DFID’s approach to results. At the same time, DFID’s Development Committee has been looking at how to distinguish more clearly between:

- *Flagship policies: representing firm strategic commitments including a number of targets or priorities for delivery as part of DFID's programmes*
- *Best practice policy documents: pulling together the available evidence on an important issue for developing countries. They explain DFID's position but do not have the same implications for delivery of major programmes.*

Lessons from country programme evaluations and project reviews

27 The Project Completion Synthesis Report (to be published shortly) reconfirmed the validity of many operational lessons from our last comprehensive analysis of the portfolio in 2005. These included:

- *Scepticism on how far donors can or should use conditionality and donor power to influence, except in very specific circumstances*
- *The importance of local ownership and leadership, and identifying demand at local level, rather than working to a donor-driven agenda*
- *Building strong partnerships based on effective communication*
- *Broad lessons on improving the effective management of programmes.*

28 The latest synthesis concludes:

- *There is much less discussion of conditionality, suggesting that the need for country ownership had largely been mainstreamed in projects being completed after 2005*
- *On budget support, however, the performance tranche mechanism starts to emerge as an interesting innovation that “may contribute to better performance but governments need time to adjust their institutional arrangements” (Chapter 6)*
- *On humanitarian assistance, DFID funding has facilitated speedy and flexible responses to emergencies, implementing partners have addressed co-ordination challenges, and the capacity of governments to respond to emergencies may have improved.*

29 An important finding from the synthesis was that project reviews were not yet being used for sharing lessons more broadly across DFID. It concluded that:

- *Reviews were mainly used for learning within specific programmes and countries that have done them. Typically, the lessons are shared with partners involved in planning a follow-on project. At worst, the PCR (Project Completion Report) records no lessons at all for the archives. Occasionally, with a particularly significant project, staff members present the lessons to senior management or a wider audience*
- *DFID staff members mainly use other means to gain information relevant to their planning activities, often through professional networks, rather than searching for lessons in PCRs*

- *DFID could make it easier to do this by a greater focus on synthesising and analysing findings by theme, making the electronic storage of PCR lessons more user-friendly and putting time and effort into the dissemination of lessons*
- *A decentralised approach that empowers DFID staff to learn from experience recorded in PCRs could lead to better quality PCRs, lesson-learning and scoring. While DFID staff have responsibilities for accounting for results, this activity (including PCRs) is not as important for country-based staff as the preparation, planning and on-going management of operational activities*
- *To achieve a significant improvement in the quality of PCR records will require making the PCR process more clearly relevant to the key project planning activities and allocating adequate time and effort.*

CHAPTER 4



CHAPTER 4 EVALUATIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

- 30** Do evaluation findings actually change decisions in practice? Sometimes, evaluations have their largest effect long before a report comes out, and discussions in preparation for an evaluation or during the field work can result in important changes in how decisions are taken. How policy is made in practice is a complex and dynamic process, and sometimes involves a combination of factors coming together at a later stage.
- 31** In this section we highlight six examples of influential evaluations from DFID and partners which made a difference, where we can point to an important impact on how development is done. They are:

Box 2

Aid effectiveness: the evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 1 was a major undertaking from many partners and was deliberately timed to feed into the discussions at the High Level Forum in Accra in 2008. The synthesis and various thematic reports were ready just in time and the key findings fed into the roundtable discussions by Ministers. They had a demonstrable influence in shaping the outcomes that resulted in the Accra Agreement. Specifically, they provided a strong evidence base that implementing the Paris Declaration required greater high-level political commitment, and that donors needed to commit to greater use of partner systems.

DFID's performance monitoring and results delivery systems: in recent years, several evaluations and internal reviews have suggested that DFID's results frameworks need to be joined up more effectively and its approach to appraising and planning its projects need greater attention. While this is work in-progress, there have been a number of

important improvements, including DFID's Results Action Plan and the components within it, such as guidance on country planning, a more coherent approach to Departmental Strategic Objectives, training on log-frames, standard indicators, a renewed focus on economic appraisal, and the new evaluation policy.

Country programme evaluations: introduction of a senior committee with the role of peer reviewing and quality assuring country business plans before they are submitted to Ministers has helped to provide a vehicle for country evaluations to feed into decision-making. Designs of many of the major programmes have therefore been able to draw on evidence from a recent CPE, as in Nepal, Afghanistan and Cambodia. Several country offices (Kenya, Vietnam and Yemen for example) have also worked with Evaluation Department to make sure that the evaluation and planning cycles coincide.

Budget support: The multi-donor evaluation of budget support (which EvD led on behalf of the OECD DAC evaluation network and developing country partners) from 2005–2007 was a good example of a major evaluation of an aid modality that was influential in moving forward the debate on aid effectiveness. The evaluation framework already had a positive effect on policy design long before the evaluation was completed, but publication of the evaluation then also turned out to be extraordinarily well-timed to influence policy debates on budget support in many countries. The case studies in Rwanda, Mozambique and Uganda also proved to be useful for discussions in those countries. The joint evaluation helped to inform the value for money review of budget support by the National Audit Office which followed.

DFID’s evaluations of policies on gender and on HIV/AIDS: in discussion with DFID’s policy teams working in these areas, both these independent evaluations were timed to be able to feed into key decision points in the policy cycle. The launch of the UK government’s updated HIV/AIDS strategy (2008) was strongly informed by the evaluation, while the gender evaluation was one of the factors which led to a major change in DFID’s approach to mainstreaming gender; it is now a key part of DFID’s approach once more.

World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group work on health programmes: this had some challenging findings and focused high-level attention on the performance of these programmes which is already starting to have its effect.

CHAPTER 5



CHAPTER 5 HARNESSING DIFFERENT KINDS OF EVALUATION

Lesson-learning in programme design, assessment of impact and the quality of DFID's independent evaluations all depend on having strong self-evaluation systems and empowering different parts of DFID to generate their own evidence at the programme level.

Lesson-learning also can be strengthened by making use of relevant evaluation work done by partners and other parts of government.

A) DECENTRALISED EVALUATIONS

32 As part of the new evaluation policy, DFID is encouraging policy teams, country offices and programme managers to develop their decentralised evaluation capacity and share examples of interesting studies for lesson-learning.

Recognising outstanding contributions by local staff

33 While DFID has a long way to go in developing its work on decentralised evaluations, several country offices such as DRC, India, Nepal and Vietnam have already made good progress on developing their approaches to evaluation – largely due to the leadership and commitment of individual staff with existing expertise or interest in evaluation and lesson-learning.

34 Peer recognition for successes is important. The Head of Evaluation Department would like to recognise formally various outstanding contributions made by DFID staff and teams working on building evaluation capacity or managing studies during the year.

35 They are:

- *DFID India, including the Head of Office, the Results Team and staff leading on programmes on climate change, health, rural livelihoods and education*
- *DFID Democratic Republic of Congo, for work on results frameworks, impact evaluation and engaging on the country programme evaluation*
- *DFID's Director and country teams for the Middle East, Caribbean, Asia and the British Overseas Territories for leadership on monitoring, evaluation and lesson-learning*

- *Country offices in Cambodia, DFID China, DFID Yemen, for their timely and proactive approach. Also DFID Vietnam, who have provided consistent and constructive engagement on a range of M&E issues*
- *Professional advisers, including education, social development and health (particularly active on evaluation and use of evidence)*
- *Senior staff working to strengthen DFID's results framework, particularly those working on finance, corporate performance, value for money, and in the statistics and economics professions.*

36 In preparing this report, DFID teams have informed of us a range of interesting evaluations, reviews and evaluative studies at programme level. Typically these are carried out jointly with other partners, where DFID is a co-funder or has a strong involvement. They will be included in the database of decentralised evaluations that EvD is compiling.

37 Examples of decentralised evaluative work include:

- *In India, impact evaluation of all DFID's rural livelihoods programmes in four states and ongoing evaluations of programmes on health, education and poverty*
- *Impact evaluations of food security in Ethiopia and of community driven recovery in DRC*
- *In Nepal a major joint evaluation of the 'Education for All' programme. This had strong involvement from development partners and is regarded by DFID Nepal as a model for future partnership work on evaluation*
- *A joint evaluation with UNICEF of a £25m programme funded by DFID of girls' education in Islamic Northern Nigeria*
- *Case studies of DFID's work in influencing in the health sector in India, Zambia, Mozambique and Nigeria, and (at HQ) the GFATM*
- *External scrutiny of DFID country programme such as the value for money study carried out by the National Audit Office of DFID's programmes in Malawi and the International Development Committee's report on DFID's work in China*
- *An impact evaluation study of support provided to female health workers in Pakistan. This covered programmes completed several years ago but the methods used are still of great interest*
- *An evaluation of a joint international programme on developing microbicides to prevent HIV transmission and of the international initiative to develop new HIV vaccines.*

Impact evaluation and evaluative research

38 One aspect of these decentralised studies is rigorous impact evaluation of development programmes. This is a specific type of study which uses prospective data and rigorous research methods to assess what difference an intervention made to people's lives, comparing welfare outcomes for the poor with and without the intervention.

39 An important theme of DFID's new evaluation policy is supporting more and better impact evaluations. We have continued to take this forward in various ways:

- *Support to international research collaboration which channels additional resources into high-quality, relevant studies. DFID is a founding member of 3ie and also contributes funding to a trust fund for impact evaluations of human development in the World Bank, one of the leading research organisations in this field. 3ie is now fully functional, its full board of commissioners is in place and it has launched its first calls for proposals this year*
- *This year saw the publication of new NONIE (Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation) guidance on impact evaluation, which has been supported by DFID and other donors and developing country participants. The guidance draws together tools and methods to help with commissioning and carrying out high quality impact evaluations. NONIE brings together evaluation professionals from developing countries, OECD member states, UN agencies and multilateral banks. The guidance was written by two eminent Dutch experts in the field (Franz Leeuw and Jos Vaessens) and was the culmination of intensive work by DFID, the World Bank and other partners over two years.*

40 DFID's policy development work on impact evaluation has highlighted a range of methodological challenges, issues and questions. It also highlights that the evaluation context should strongly influence how impact evaluations are identified and combined, particularly when faced with more limited data environments and difficulties in reaching remote parts of the world. In highly insecure contexts, methodologies must be sufficiently flexible to allow research teams to manage the risks they face in the field.

41 It is also clear that demand for impact evaluation will need to come from policy-makers in-country if the results are to feed back successfully into policy. This requires local engagement by DFID staff.

42 Impact evaluation studies have been commissioned locally in India, DRC and Ethiopia, illustrating the potential for impact evaluations to be incorporated into DFID's work in future. **Annex 1** provides more detail on these three examples.

Linkages with DFID research

43 Following discussion with the IACDI, DFID's Director General for Policy and Research, the Head of Evaluation and the Director for Research and Evidence have been discussing how DFID should develop stronger links between evaluation and research.

- 44** One aspect concerns the joint funding of 3ie and other collaborators on rigorous impact evaluation and operations research. Work on social transfers is a key part of DFID's research strategy. DFID's Research and Evidence division is bringing together policy and academic experts to survey what we know from the research base on social protection, to identify what works and where the research gaps lie.
- 45** While this area of work is much broader than evaluation, it is a crucial part of how DFID develops the evidence base on its social programmes. EvD is involved in helping to make linkages to rigorous impact evaluation of social programmes, including the evidence base from experience with conditional cash transfers. More information on recent World Bank work in this area is provided later in this report.

B) EVALUATIONS BY DFID'S PARTNERS

- 46** Some of the most useful evaluation evidence which DFID draws on comes from studies which have been commissioned by partners – other donors, the UN and international organisations and multilateral banks through whom we channel resources for development.
- 47** Among the most significant for DFID this year are:
- **Climate change:** a joint evaluation led by Denmark and the GEF of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Climate Change Adaptation
 - **Ongoing evaluation of the Paris Declaration:** The joint evaluation on behalf of developing countries and OECD countries is now entering its second phase. Phase I reviews the implementation of the commitments in the Declaration and Phase II reviews impact
 - **International health partnerships:** In 2009, we have seen publication of the five-year evaluation of the Global Fund for HIV, TB and Malaria, and the evaluation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
 - **Development effectiveness of the World Bank:** The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) has published its annual report on development effectiveness (which focused on the environment) and on evaluations of programmes in health
 - **The European Commission** has published several evaluations, including a major study of the effectiveness of EC development spending channelled through civil society
 - **A joint evaluation of Bangladesh sector and joint assistance strategies:** published by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, DFID and the Japanese government. This included a detailed study of the education sector in Bangladesh, and an overview paper assessing the effectiveness of the four donors' harmonisation and coordination

- *A joint country programme evaluation of Uganda* was completed by the World Bank and African Development Bank
- *World Bank's survey of evidence on conditional cash transfer programmes* (*Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty*, 2009). Its analysis of more than 20 impact evaluation studies of these programmes shows that CCTs have led to higher household consumption, increased use of preventive health services, a reduction in child labour, and higher school enrolment.

48 More detailed information on two of these studies (climate change and conditional cash transfers) is provided in **Annex 2**.

C) DFID PORTFOLIO REVIEWS (EDUCATION AND HEALTH)

49 A new series of portfolio reviews commissioned by DFID's Investment Committee provides an important vehicle for DFID to look at its own performance and test its value for money.

50 The reviews are systematic, and are overseen by the Investment Committee, who draw on a wide range of evaluative evidence. These reviews are carried out mainly by DFID staff and advisers and are not intended to be independent evaluations. They aim to synthesise existing review material. In all cases, they cover sectors which will in due course be subject to full independent evaluations as part of EvD's work programme, as agreed with IACDI.

51 The two sectors covered are education and health (including social transfers). Further portfolio reviews have been commissioned by DFID's investment committee in other areas, including civil society and governance.

Education

52 The portfolio review for education concluded that DFID's investment in the education sector is having a positive impact on education outcomes. It also concluded that DFID could increase value for money and the effectiveness of the portfolio. Recommendations included an increased effort to influence others, to drive down costs and to focus on quality.

Health

- 53** The health review reported that overall, DFID's bilateral health programmes have improved their portfolio scores since 2002/03, but performance has varied. The review found that DFID was allocating resources effectively across countries and that support to health systems improved the effectiveness of other interventions. Recommendations for improvement included scaling-up on maternal and child health, spending more on better nutrition, and on more research on health systems and the cost-effectiveness of the private sector. A full evaluation of DFID's health work is planned in 2010/11.

D) NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE REPORT (MALAWI)

- 54** The NAO published its report on DFID's aid to Malawi on October 30, 2009. It is the first NAO report to focus on DFID's work in a particular country – previous reports have focused on cross-cutting themes such as Insecure Environments, Rural Poverty and Budget Support.
- 55** The NAO is totally independent of government, and has statutory authority to report to Parliament on the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector organisations. Therefore, evidence, comment and recommendations from the NAO on DFID's approaches to evaluation and lesson-learning are particularly useful and credible.

Summary of NAO Report

Box 3

The report found that DFID has taken steps designed to improve value for money through strengthening programme appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. It concluded that in Malawi DFID has learnt from evaluations to help improve its programme. The NAO designed their recommendations to support that work.

The report also set out some challenges and identifies areas for improvement – many of which are relevant to managing projects and programmes in countries in Africa and beyond:

- *Strengthening log-frames is vital. Specify the outputs and outcomes expected to be achieved so that it's known whether interventions are achieving good value. Ensure there are a smaller*
- number of smarter targets in our Country Assistance Plan (CAP) monitoring frameworks, so that targets are not reliant on political processes beyond DFID's control*
- *Measure the cost-effectiveness of programmes: set up monitoring frameworks to collect data needed to measure the benefits and costs*
- *Everyone in DFID must become more commercially aware, thinking critically about how money will actually be used to buy goods and services. The Malawi programmes reviewed show how important good procurement can be to project success and value for money.*

CHAPTER 6



CHAPTER 6 BUILDING CAPABILITY

Building DFID's evaluation skills

- 56** Following publication of the evaluation policy in 2009, EvD is now actively pushing forward on implementation and capacity-building work to start the process of delivering on its specific responsibilities under the policy, and also supporting DFID in this area and monitoring progress. These include:
- *Dissemination of the policy through presentations to heads of office, visits to DFID country offices and at retreats/conferences of advisory and regional staff*
 - *Between June and September 2009, EvD was completely restructured and new staff recruited to fill existing vacancies on independent evaluation studies and in key new areas such as capacity and quality, impact evaluation, communications, international and civil society*
 - *EvD's standards, systems and protocols are being improved in various areas, including a user guide for EvD staff in managing and procuring evaluations, a quality assurance panel and a database of studies*
 - *A help desk was relaunched for DFID staff in dealing with monitoring and evaluation queries and extended to provide assistance on log frames and indicators for projects. A more extensive proposal is being developed with other donors to provide support and resources on evaluation*
 - *A new evaluation competency framework has been developed, together with a process for accreditation for DFID staff to develop their professional skills in managing, commissioning and using evaluations*
 - *A baseline survey is being commissioned to provide a reference against which to monitor progress in key areas.*

Supporting capacity building for monitoring and evaluation in developing countries

- 57** Meanwhile, DFID has continued to provide support in various ways to developing monitoring and evaluation capacity in developing countries, not least through our role in the DAC evaluation network and similar collaborations with partners in the Nordic countries and with 3ie and NONIE on impact evaluation.
- 58** At the international level, we have helped to deliver new or updated guidance and standards on evaluation in development in three areas:
- *OECD DAC quality standards for evaluation, updated and revised*

- *Impact evaluation guidance from NONIE (the combined networks of the evaluation associations in developing countries, DAC member states, UN and multilateral banks)*
- *Conflict prevention and peacebuilding; guidance on evaluation which is being piloted in various countries.*

59 DFID also helped to organise and sponsor developing country attendance at two major conferences for developing countries on evaluation this year. Around 600 evaluators from Africa and elsewhere attended ‘Perspectives on Impact Evaluation’, a major conference held in Cairo and organised by 3ie, UNICEF and NONIE. DFID India and the World Bank helped the Government of India to organise an International Conference on Development Evaluation in October 2009.

60 Finally, DFID is supporting and helping to develop a new proposal led by the World Bank to develop regional centres for capacity-building on M&E. This aims to identify institutions in China, South Asia, Africa and Latin America that can become centres of excellence on evaluation and provide an institutional hub for local capacity-building.

ANNEX 1 IMPACT EVALUATIONS OF DFID PROGRAMMES

DFID INDIA - RURAL LIVELIHOODS

i DFID India has recently completed impact evaluations of all its rural livelihoods programmes. These are sizeable investments for DFID, several hundreds of millions of pounds in a country with more poor people than any other in the world. They are targeted on some of the poorest states. The impact evaluation work found that:

- *In Western Orissa, around 360,000 poor men and women were moved out of income poverty, also benefiting from significant improvements in development across a range of indicators. Gender empowerment was considerably higher, livelihoods and assets improved and there was a reduction in distress migration and in the number of days when households went short of food (down from 25% to 5%). This approach is now being replicated across the state in 600 watershed projects with \$45m of government resources being allocated*
- *In Madhya Pradesh, more than 24,000 poor households were lifted out of poverty and, like Orissa, there were improvements in other aspects of development, including climate change adaptation. Improved drought-coping capacity was reported by more than half of the marginal farmers*
- *In West Bengal, the evaluation found it was too early to comment in depth on poverty impacts. Initial indications were that income increased by 16-25% for nearly a quarter of the households and the rate of increase was higher in project districts. 80% of the households perceived an improvement in delivery of basic services.*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO – IMPACT EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY DRIVEN RECOVERY (CDR)

- ii CDR recognises that communities have a right to direct their own recovery, and focuses on building community-level institutions and systems that allow recovery to take place. A soundly designed CDR programme focuses on areas that are impacted by conflict, rural or remote, and where high returns are expected. CDR can also offer emerging transitional governments, donors and NGOs key learning opportunities in a rapidly evolving context. Through ongoing documentation and study, it can provide information on community attitudes, reconstruction needs and possibilities for local or community governance structures and systems, all of which could inform any future decentralisation effort.
- iii The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has been implementing CDR programmes for the last ten years in Rwanda and in Afghanistan. Through intensive study of these and similar programmes, it seems to have a stabilising force in the community, in promoting economic recovery and further developing the understanding and practice of governance in reconstruction, although the results are not yet conclusive.
- iv CDR presents a significant challenge for programme evaluation. Programmes are often initiated in chaotic relief or emerging post-conflict environments, and may also be characterised by high demands and expectations for results from communities, international NGOs, donors and governments. Given the more pressing immediate needs and priorities, and a

limited window of opportunity to demonstrate the ‘peace dividend’ (or in situations considered too fluid for sophisticated programme evaluations), the collection of rigorous data that would allow demonstrable evidence-based impact was often sacrificed.

- v To overcome this challenge, the IRC piloted one of the first randomised evaluations in a post-conflict setting, in Liberia, with academics from Stanford University. The aim was to understand impact, but also to find out if it was possible to work with control and treatment groups in a conflict-affected environment. The answer was a qualified yes, and consequently they initiated plans for scaling up these programming and learning efforts, using randomised impact evaluation in a new programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- vi The recent national elections and a democratic government potentially offers the DRC the best chance for many years to move to more sustainable peace and development. In this context, the IRC piloted two small CDR programmes with initial funding from USAID. The pilots eventually led to the development of a larger, more sophisticated CDR programme for three eastern provinces, amongst the hardest hit by war.
- vii Its smaller projects target 1.78 million people in around 1,400 villages, and 280 larger communities for public works schemes. It provides approximately £12 million in direct community funds to local populations who, through their representative committees and councils, will own and manage the money, with the technical support of consortium staff.
- viii The size and scale of the programme make it capable of having an immediate and significant impact. Equally, it provides an opportunity for insights, lesson-learning and development of appropriate methodologies to help governments, civil society and communities in the DRC, but also other countries, to better understand and respond to their transitional contexts.
- ix The project is undertaking a large-scale randomised impact evaluation, in collaboration with leading academics. Using a 3,000-person household survey in both control and treatment areas as one of several tools, it aims to assess with confidence the three primary aims of CDR:
 - *Does participation in the programme instil social cohesion?*
 - *Does participation in the programme promote better understanding of democratic governance?*
 - *Does participation improve the socio-economic situation of the population?*
- x With CDR gaining increased recognition and becoming more widespread in its use, the new DRC programme offers tremendous opportunities for both impact and lesson-learning. Its size and scale allow for direct impact in the DRC, providing a possible stabilising mechanism in regions long affected by war and the methodology will be studied rigorously, potentially providing new lessons to improve CDR practice both in the DRC and in other transitional environments.
- xi The outcomes will also be studied to inform or influence any new governance systems planned for the future and the evaluation strategy will not only certify programme impact, with more confidence, but also

provide insights into conducting randomised impact studies in fragile environments.

ETHIOPIA: SOCIAL PROTECTION

- xii** An assessment of the impact of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP), the largest social protection program in Sub-Saharan Africa outside South Africa, used 'Propensity Score Matching' techniques to assess the impact of the PSNP for the first 18 months of implementation.
- xiii** Chronic food insecurity has been a defining feature of the poverty that has affected millions of Ethiopians for decades. The vast majority of these poor households live in rural areas that are heavily reliant on rain-fed agriculture; and, in years of poor rainfall, the threat of widespread starvation is high.
- xiv** The policy response to the threat of famine has been a series of emergency appeals on a near annual basis for food aid and other forms of emergency assistance, delivered either as payment for public works or as a direct transfer. While these measures succeeded in averting mass starvation, especially among those with no assets, they did not banish the threat of further famine, nor did they prevent asset depletion by marginally poor households affected by adverse rainfall shocks.
- xv** As a result, the number of individuals in need of emergency food assistance rose from approximately 2.1 million people in 1996 to 13.2 million in 2003 before falling back to 7.1 million in 2004. The nature of the responses meant the provision of emergency assistance, often in the form of food-for-work programmes, was not integrated into ongoing economic development activities.
- xvi** In 2005, the Government of Ethiopia and a consortium of donors implemented a new response to chronic food insecurity in rural Ethiopia, under the umbrella of a three-year intervention called the Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP). The objective of the PSNP is "... to provide transfers to the food insecure population in chronically food insecure woredas [districts] in a way that prevents asset depletion at the household level and creates assets at the community level". The programme operates as a safety net, targeting transfers to poor households in two ways, through public works and direct support.
- xvi** Recent work has speculated that social protection programs may, in fact, be integral to policy frameworks that attempt to stimulate economic growth. In rural areas of Africa, there are pervasive credit and insurance market failures. This has two adverse consequences for agriculture: farmers find it difficult for farmers to purchase fertilizer, which discourages them from adopting new crops. By providing liquidity and a reliable source of income, social protection addresses both types of market failures.

ANNEX 2 EVALUATIONS BY PARTNERS

OPERATION OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND (LDCF) FOR ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- i The Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) for Adaptation to Climate Change was set up in 2001 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to tackle urgent and immediate climate change adaptation needs within poorer countries. A recently published evaluation from independent evaluation offices of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the GEF looked at what progress it has achieved and lessons for funding climate change adaptation going forward, including to inform forthcoming negotiations on adaptation financing in Copenhagen in December 2009.
- ii The evaluation concludes that whilst funding has been provided to meet the agreed full costs of preparing the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), implementation of NAPA priorities has proved difficult to realise. Greater use of public sector experts and less reliance on independent consultants would have improved the technical sustainability of NAPA outputs. Overall, the evaluation has identified problems of LDCF performance that are related to design and function and have resulted in very few LDCs so far being able to reach implementation of NAPA priority projects.
- iii In setting up global funds for climate change adaptation, the evaluation emphasises the need for an appropriate scale of financial resources and reliable arrangements for replenishment. Unfulfilled pledges can thwart the

performance of a fund as can setting up a financial resource channelling programme that is of an inappropriate scale for the size of the task at hand. Another key issue is the need for coherence between more recently established (for example, the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol) and emerging funds, and considering how they contribute to wider policy objectives.

- iv While the LDCF has been predominantly project and sector focused, the evaluation recommends that any replenishment of the fund should be sufficient to support whole National Adaptation Programmes of Action. The evaluation suggests that LDCs should take a stronger co-ordinating role so that adaptation focuses on their priorities and is mainstreamed into sector planning and policy reform. Development partner agencies should seek to align with LDC adaptation priorities and design support to implementation in a way that maximizes national capacity development on climate change adaptation implementation.

CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS: REDUCING PRESENT AND FUTURE POVERTY

- v An interesting report from the World Bank (Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty, 2009) recently takes stock of the evidence on the impact of conditional cash transfer programmes in reducing poverty. Conditional cash transfer programmes (CCTs) transfer cash, generally to poor households and to mothers, on the condition that those households meet certain conditions such as school enrolment and attendance, periodic health checkups, growth monitoring, and

vaccinations for children less than five years of age; perinatal care for mothers and attendance by mothers at periodic health information talks.

- vi As the report notes, CCTs are being adopted or considered for adoption in many different parts of the world, following the example of the Progresas/Oportunidades programme in Mexico. There are also now a large number of rigorous impact evaluations of these programmes, although the research work has until recently been concentrated mainly in middle income countries in Latin America. More research is needed of their effects in low income countries, particularly in Africa.

- vii In surveying the evidence from these studies, the report concludes that: *“There is good evidence that CCTs have improved the lives of poor people. Transfers generally have been well targeted to poor households, have raised consumption levels, and have reduced poverty by a substantial amount in some countries. Reductions in the labour market participation of beneficiaries have been relatively modest. CCT programs often have provided an entry point to reforming badly targeted subsidies and upgrading the quality of safety nets... CCTs have been an effective way to redistribute income to the poor and have led poor households to make more use of health and education services, a key objective for which they were designed.”*

However:

“...the evidence on improvements in final outcomes in health and education is more mixed. Thus CCTs have increased the likelihood that households will take their children for preventive

health checkups, but that has not always led to better child nutritional status; school enrolment rates have increased substantially among program beneficiaries, but there is little evidence of improvements in learning outcomes...to maximize their potential effects on the accumulation of human capital, CCTs should be combined with other programs to improve the quality of the supply of health and education services, and should provide other supporting services. They also suggest the need to experiment with conditions that focus on outcomes rather than on the use of services alone.”

- viii Given the lack of evidence that increased use of services has led to better outcomes, there is a need for a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding what works on CCTs and why. ‘Progresas-style’ rigorous impact evaluation could benefit from stronger linkages into other fields that have been using other methods to identify what works around social protection and human development for many years.

ANNEX 3 EvD SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES - OCT 2008 TO OCT 2009

THEMATIC EVALUATIONS

Topic		Publication	Evaluation Team	Commissioning Agency
Advance Market Commitment for Pneumococcal Vaccines	Report of the Monitoring and Evaluability Study	November 2008	Goss Gilroy Inc/HLSP	DFID/CIDA/GAVI
Aid for Trade	Approach Paper for the 'DFID's Aid for Trade Strategy 2008 – 2013: designing a framework for monitoring and evaluation'	November 2009	Sanaa Consulting	DFID
Anti-corruption	Literature Review	January 2009	Scanteam Oslo	Joint evaluation led by Norway
	Full Joint Evaluation of Anti-Corruption Interventions (underway). Country case studies in Zambia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Nicaragua.	Activity planned over 2009/11.	ITAD	Joint evaluation led by Norway
Citizens Voice and Accountability	Synthesis and 4 case studies	November 2008	ODI	Joint evaluation led by UK
Paris Declaration – Phase 1	Statistical capacity building	May 2009	OPM	Joint evaluation led by UK
Project Completion Reports	Synthesis	December 2009	ConMara Partnership	DFID

Topic		Publication	Evaluation Team	Commissioning Agency
Public Financial Management	Literature review	Jan 2009	Nicolas Pretorius	DFID
Social Exclusion	Stocktake of DFID policy on social exclusion (preparing for evaluation)	October/ November 2009	IOD/PARC	DFID
LIST OF EVALUATION WORKING PAPERS 2006-2008				
Health	DFID Influencing in the Health sector	October 2009	ODI	DFID
Voice and Accountability	Measuring Change and Results in Voice and Accountability work	October/ November 2009	Social Development Direct	DFID
Social Transfers	Evaluation Summary report	July 2009	Inst. Of Dev. Studies Centre for Social Protection	DFID
	Promoting Social Transfers: DFID and the Politics of Influencing	August 2009	IDS	DFID

DFID COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS

Topic		Country	Date of publication
DFID Country and Regional Programme Evaluations¹	DFID Country Programmes	Afghanistan Cambodia Zambia Ethiopia	May 2009 May 2009 May 2009 April 2009
		CPE Synthesis (Fragile and Conflicted States)	November 2009
	DFID Regional Programmes	Western Balkans Methodological Review	October 2008 January 2009
	Synthesis of Regional Programme Evaluations		October 2008
Joint Country Evaluation	UK, World Bank, Asian Devt Bank, Japan	Bangladesh	Ongoing

Note:

1. All DFID country and regional programme evaluations were commissioned through ITAD Ltd, using teams of specialists for each country.

OTHER EVALUATION WORKSTREAMS

Area		Timing
Independent Advisory Committee for Development Impact	Provision of secretariat and drafting papers for committee	Ongoing
	Review of the Quality of DFID's Evaluation Reports and Assurance Systems	December 2009
Evaluation policy and strategy	Update of DFID policy and strategy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>policy and thematic evaluations</i> - <i>country evaluations</i> - <i>impact evaluation</i> - <i>multilateral</i> - <i>evaluation of programmes and projects</i> - <i>capacity building</i> - <i>conflict and humanitarian.</i> 	June 2009
EvD Change Management Programme	To deliver the expanded role mandated by the new Evaluation policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>New EvD staff structure</i> - <i>Development of an evaluation Competency Framework</i> - <i>Review and strengthening of EvD's Evaluation Management Systems.</i> 	January to September 2009
Quality Assurance	Driving up the quality of evaluations: for example, Piloting of a small pool of experienced evaluators to act as Quality Assurance Assurors for the pilot phase of a quality assurance system, new guidelines in place.	Ongoing
Partnership on evaluation networks: DAC, Nordic Plus, EU Seconded national expert in EC	Chair of DAC, engagement in 4 networks	Ongoing
	Adviser based in Brussels	Ongoing
	DFID host Nordic Plus Annual Meeting of Heads of Evaluation	September 2009

OTHER EVALUATION WORKSTREAMS

Area		Timing
Impact evaluation	Network of networks on impact evaluation (DAC, UN and multilateral agencies)	Ongoing
	3ie – international initiative on impact evaluation (new funding agency)	2008/09 – 2011/12
	World Bank human development network – donor trust fund with Spain and UK	2008/09
Communication and dissemination	EvD communications strategy – implementation including publications and web pages	Ongoing
Evaluation training and capacity building	DFID training & external capacity building	Ongoing
Evaluation resource centre	Developing proposal for regional Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results (CLEAR) with the World Bank	Ongoing
Global Fund for Aids TB and Malaria	5 year joint evaluation – DFID representation	Ongoing
Independent Evaluation in DFID Annual Report 2009		December 2009

IMAGE CREDITS

FRONT COVER

Collecting water at a well in Mali

Photographer: Dieter Telemans

INSIDE FRONT

A pregnant woman reads to her children, India

Photographer: Ami Vitale

CHAPTER 1

Mother and baby from Orissa, India

Photographer: Ami Vitale

CHAPTER 2

Flood victims queuing in Bangladesh

Photographer: Khoteja Sultana

CHAPTER 3

Two girls living with HIV, Maggie and Ivone from Zambia

Photographer: Pep Bonet

CHAPTER 4

A farmer growing mint in Afghanistan

Photographer: Karen Triggs

CHAPTER 5

Children running to school in Ethiopia

Photographer: Chris de Bode

CHAPTER 6

Siblings collecting water in Mali

Photographer: Dieter Telemans

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

International development is about helping people fight poverty. This means people in rich and poor countries working together to settle conflicts, increase opportunities for trade, tackle climate change, improve people's health and their chance to get an education. It means helping governments in developing countries put their own plans into action. It means agreeing debt relief, working with international institutions that co-ordinate support, and working with non-government organisations and charities to find their own ways out of poverty.

WHY IS THE UK GOVERNMENT INVOLVED?

Getting rid of poverty will make for a better world for everybody. Nearly a billion people, one in six of the world's population, live in extreme poverty. This means they live on less than \$1 a day.

Ten million children die before their fifth birthday, most of them from preventable diseases. More than 113 million children in developing countries do not go to school.

In a world of growing wealth, such levels of human suffering and wasted potential are not only morally wrong, they are also against our own interests. We are closer to people in developing countries than ever before. We trade more and more with people in poor countries, and many of the problems which affect us – conflict, international crime, refugees, the trade in illegal drugs and the spread of diseases – are caused or made worse by poverty in developing countries.

In the last 10 years Britain has more than trebled its spending on aid to nearly £7 billion a year. We are now the fourth largest donor in the world.

WHAT IS DFID?

The Department for International Development, is the part of the UK Government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty. We work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals - a set of targets agreed by the United Nations to halve global poverty by 2015.

DFID works in partnership with governments, civil society, the private sector and others. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies and the European Commission.

DFID works directly in over 150 countries worldwide. Its headquarters are in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow.

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