

Japan Holds 7th ODA Evaluation Workshop

MANILA, PHILIPPINES - On 28–29 November 2007, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan**, the **Japan International Cooperation Agency**, and the **Japan Bank for International Cooperation** held the **7th Overseas Development Assistance Evaluation Workshop** in Kuala Lumpur. By convention, the workshops seek to deepen understanding of evaluation in the Asia and Pacific region and contribute to the expansion of evaluation systems in partnership with Japan.

The 7th ODA Evaluation Workshop, which drew support from the **Economic Planning Unit** of the Prime Minister's Department in the Federal Government of Malaysia, focused on capacity development issues. Keynote addresses covered evaluation of selected Japan-assisted projects in Malaysia; evaluation of the implementation of the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; evaluation quality standards**; evaluation capacity development in **Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam**; and case studies of evaluation capacity development by the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Staff of the **Operations Evaluation Department** in ADB spoke on the department's experience in, and ongoing efforts and plans for, **evaluation capacity development**.

"Monitoring and evaluation can make a powerful contribution to managing for development results. But, there must be a clear statement of a measurable objective; structured indicators for inputs, activities, outputs, outcome, and impact; baselines and a means to compare against targets; and mechanisms for reporting and use of results in decision making. Where applicable, one should build in this a framework and methodology capable of establishing causation," says Olivier Serrat.

The **participants** easily recognized the importance of the five principles of the Paris Declaration, *viz.*, ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability, all of which rest on effective evaluation in partner and donor countries. That might be advanced if the countries and organizations that adhere to it (i) secure political commitment to evaluation, (ii) balance the learning and accountability functions of evaluation, (iii) engage policy makers at different stages and levels of the evaluation process, (iv) improve the quality of evaluation, (v) harmonize evaluation work, and (vi) promote regional evaluation networks.

Pertinent capacity development issues include (i) development of methods and skills in project management, data analysis, project goal setting, budget management, and performance auditing; (ii) availability, at the national level, of evaluation agencies that can provide evaluation services and training; and (iii) the need to differentiate the users of evaluation results.

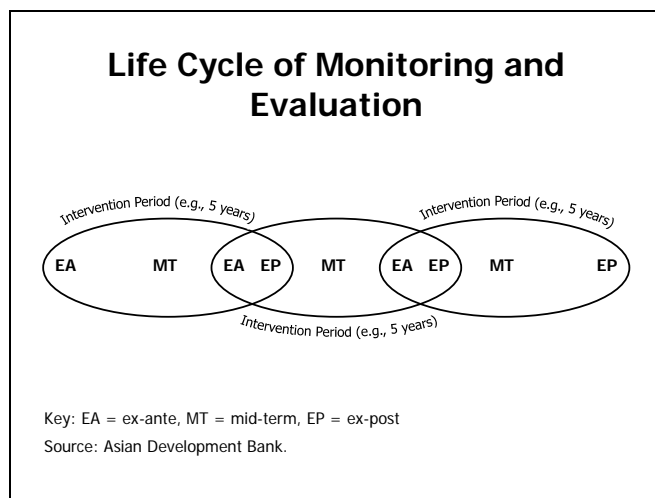
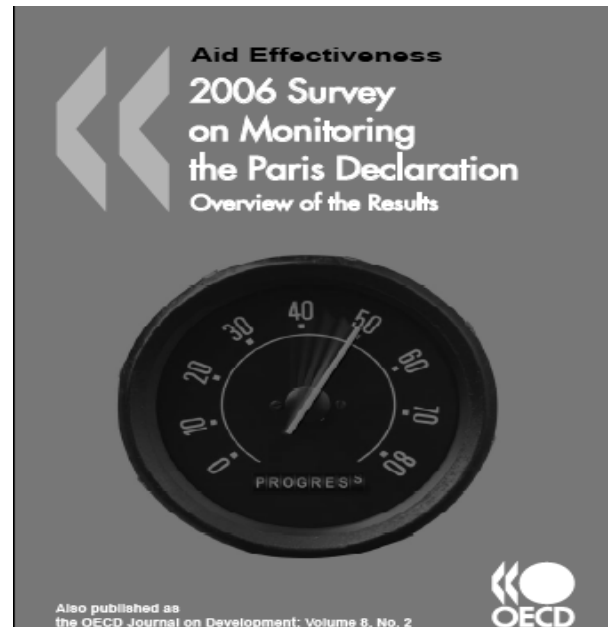
OED's presentation bore on concepts of monitoring and evaluation with particular reference to results chains. It exposed their challenges and limits, laid emphasis on the life cycle of monitoring and evaluation,

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and summarized corporate shifts in ADB's approach to evaluation capacity development. It highlighted the lessons of ADB's experience so far, and gave details of the ongoing regional technical assistance for *Capacity Development for Monitoring and Evaluation* funded by the **People's Republic of China's Regional Cooperation and Poverty Reduction Fund**. OED also presented the *Evaluation Pages on ADB.org* and ADB's *Evaluation Information System*. In group discussions, it underlined the need to (i) focus on demand; (ii) identify clearly the target audiences of evaluation products; (iii) emphasize utilization-focused evaluation; (iv) develop home-grown expertise in several types of evaluation, i.e., not just project or program performance evaluation; (v) facilitate partnerships and collaboration; and (vi) be cognizant of the harmonization work carried out by the **Evaluation Cooperation Group**.

effectiveness of evaluation capacity development, validating thereby the conclusions of the workshop.



Aside from this, the workshop made known that the Government of Japan is active in evaluation capacity development and that it seeks to play a greater role, even if the involvement of the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation is relatively recent. The accent that Japan places on evaluation capacity development is fitting given stronger regional demand for related knowledge products and services.

Considering the attention given to the Paris Declaration, the progress report that the **Development Co-operation Directorate** in the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development** gave on evaluation of its implementation attracted interest. The evaluation is intended to examine the utility of the declaration itself as a tool of aid effectiveness, and reveal changes in development partner and partner behavior as well as emerging results. To foster ownership, OECD-DAC opted among others to invite country-led qualitative evaluations. However, delay in the preparation of these in time for the **Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness** that will be hosted in Accra by the Government of Ghana on 2–4 September 2008 is being experienced. This may undermine the evaluation and raise questions about the

See Also:

- Special Evaluation Study on Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration at the Asian Development Bank: A Development Partner's Study for an OECD-DAC Joint Evaluation.** Available: www.adb.org/evaluation/reports.asp?s=1&type=4
- Evaluation in Organizations: A Systematic Approach to Enhancing Learning, Performance, and Change.** Available: www.amazon.ca/evaluation-organizations-systematic-enhancing-performance/dp/0738202681
- Creating and Developing Evaluation Organizations: Lessons Learned from Africa, Americas, Asia, Australasia, and Europe.** Available: http://ioce.net/resources/case_studies.shtml
- 2006 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration.** Available: http://www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_15577209_38521876_1_1_1_1,00.html
- How to Build Monitoring and Evaluation Systems to Support Better Government.** Available: http://www.worldbank.org/ieg/ecd/better_government.html