

CO-CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Mr. Koh Tin Fook and Prof. Hiromitsu Muta

4 March, 2009

The 8th ODA Evaluation Workshop was organized jointly by the Governments of Singapore and Japan in Singapore on 3 and 4 March, 2009.

The plenary session of the Workshop was opened with the two remarks by two co-chairs, Prof. Hiromitsu Muta, Executive Vice-President, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Japan and Mr. Koh Tin Fook, Director, Technical Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Katsuki Oda, Deputy Director-General of International Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, gave a welcome speech, thanking the Government of Singapore for co-organizing the Workshop and for a warm hospitality extended to all the participants in the Workshop.

As the first presentation, Prof. Muta made a presentation based on the paper prepared by Prof. Ryokichi Hirono. Prof. Muta comprehensively elaborated on policy evaluation, including international trends and Japanese approach to policy evaluation.

The second presentation was made by Prof. John Wong, Research Director, East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore. He focused on flexible transition of the Singapore's economic development policies and the fundamentals of the East Asian Development Model.

The Workshop had two breakout sessions on the first day afternoon, WG A on joint evaluation between donors and partners and WG B on project-level evaluation.

In WG A, there were two presentations on joint evaluation by Mr. Cao Manh Cuong, Deputy Director-General, Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Vietnam, and Ms. Suthanone Fungtammasan, Director of Planning and Monitoring for Partnership Branch, TICA, Thailand. The discussion centred on the followings:

1. How do governments of host countries maintain a strong motivation to commit themselves to joint evaluations.
2. How do the beneficiaries in host countries maintain a strong motivation to participate in evaluation activities.
3. How can institutions necessary for improving evaluations such as laws, rules and regulations be developed.

4. How can human resources such as evaluators and evaluation users in host countries be developed to improve evaluation.
5. How do host countries establish institutional memory for more effective use of evaluation reports.
6. What kind of mechanisms should be established to use evaluation results effectively; How can evaluation results be fed back to beneficiaries and communities.

In WG B, there were two presentations: project-level presentation and feedback – A case of environment projects in Indonesia – by Mr. Minato, Effective use of project-level evaluation, and involving host countries' point of views by Mr. Mohan D.Manandhar. The participants discussed the followings:

1. Participation in the process of the evaluation design stage.
2. Confirming that the project direction fits the policy priorities of governments.
3. Confirm that projects' purposes/outcomes meet beneficiaries' needs and demand.
4. Indicators used for capacity development or institutional development.
5. Feedback on evaluation results acknowledged by stakeholders in the host county.
6. Involvement of interests of local communities.
7. Stakeholders' potential contributions on evaluation.

In the discussion that followed the presentation of each WG Summary at the second-day plenary session, there were a number of points raised, such as a) the difficulty of clarifying the targets of the evaluation and evaluation reports, b) the extent to which the local community and beneficiaries should be involved in evaluation processes, c) the significance of maintaining understandable contents, local languages and openness/accessibility of the evaluation reports for the public, d) the importance of the timing to conduct evaluation so that the results can be incorporated into national development plans, and e) the significance of the efforts by donors and partners in maintaining the institutional memory of evaluation results.

The participants in the 8th ODA Evaluation Workshop expressed their deep appreciation to the two organizers of the Workshop for their excellent organization of the Workshop and to the presenters for their comprehensive and encouraging presentation on their efforts and experiences pertaining to the main Workshop agenda items. They all expressed an urgent need for continuing this sort of candid exchange of views in order to improve evaluation quality through the capacity building. It also touched upon some advantages of establishing a regional network of evaluation professionals in the region.