

Evaluation and feedback from Participants to the BCO meeting: Hague, 29-31 August 2006

What was useful?

- Small groups discussions (OPR and IS) x 3
- Tina's session on how we perceive BCO and its added value/purpose x2
- Learning from others
- Sharing of information
- Openness of individual members
- Ability to discuss freely/democratic spirit
- Critical comments on reaching the BOC goals, the joined outputs/inputs, besides individual member goals
- Learning about the Impact Study through the presentation x3, dialogues around IS – what partners want to get out of it and out of their respective activities
- Partners contributions, sustainability of the BCO alliance vis a vis partners' perceptions
- Getting an idea of indicators other partners are using
- Spectrogram discussion re clarifying what was useful re BCO
- Case study was useful to clarify evaluation/IS concepts
- Discussion of workplan clarifying concept and implementation
- Having new partners in the group
- IS discussion of indicators
- Donor updates on their strategies and future policies x4
- OPR process – group work and partner reports x 2
- Website intro and presentation x2
- Knowing different partners better
- Communication strategy session
- Networking opportunity x2
- The entire exercise
- To know we want to continue with BCO
- Networking and knowledge sharing
- New format of partner reporting
- Presentation of D Souter
- Discussion around communication strategy with James Deane

What was not useful?

- Lack of clarity about communication strategy - circular discussion
- Circular discussions – need better process for closure
- Get a draft agenda out at least 2 weeks before the meeting
- Separate discussion between DFID and BCO funded partners to discuss reporting/operational issues from sessions – BCO wide
- Discussion on indicators and confusion of role of consultants
- Too many questions by consultants rather than proposals
- Insufficient opportunity to go deeper on some issues
- Long discussion about DFID OPR
- Discussion on IS was partly repeating earlier discussions due to bad preparation of members and consultants
- The many misunderstandings

- Still chaotic sessions with regression rather than progress on some topics
- “convincing” of outside partners (DGIS/IDRC) questionable

What would you do better next time?

- First day was very heavy, participation, energy, focus was lost at the end of day
- ISG should have thrashed out communication strategy issues ahead of the meeting
- Participation in the sessions
- With more time, it would have been a better use of time if we did not have “traditional reportbacks”
- More time for bilateral meetings/opportunity to network
- More time to discuss key issues in smaller groups (more opportunity for opinions/perspectives)
- Hotel closer to meeting venue
- Start by clarifying all our different intentions from our different perspectives
- More focussed discussions
- Specify the content of the session beforehand in order to improve the effectiveness of the discussions
- Getting clearcut proposals to decide on as a group
- Have a more positive attitude to the groups efforts and achievements
- Narrow the focus of the meetings...encourage depth on priority issues
- More time for indepth discussions on issues of common interest
- Preparation of everybody, including partners
- Set goals and possible deliverables for every agenda item
- Stick to the agenda and time schedule
- Partners must read the documents before hand
- Physical spaces for bilateral networking
- Agenda completed sooner
- Stricter chairing during formal presentations

Comments:

Keep up the good work

Good learning platform

In the end: this is a very useful network

Still a great networking opportunity

Co-hosting of 3 partners very attractive

Despite the agreed changes, frustrating that it was not changed

Governance and decision making needs to be clarified