



Report of the UNEG Annual General Meeting 2006

Location: UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

Host agencies: UNESCO

Date: 27-28 March 2006

This report, prepared by the UNEG Secretariat, encompasses the discussions and outcomes from the UNEG AGM 2006.

Acronyms/ Abbreviations	
CEB	Chief Executive Board for Co-ordination
CL	Country level
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
CTBTO	Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
DSG	Deputy Secretary General
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
ECG	Evaluation Cooperation Group (of Multilateral Banks)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GA	General Assembly
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOS UNESCO	Internal Oversight Service, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
IPDET	International Program for Development Education Training
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
QSTF	Quality Stamp Task Force
RBM	Results Based Management
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
TF	Task Force
SGS	Société Générale de Surveillance
UNCDF	UN Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework

UNDESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG(O)	UN Development Group (Office)
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNEG	UN Evaluation Group
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCWA	UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	UN Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	UN Staff College
UNV	UN Volunteers
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Summary

This report presents a summary of topics and issues presented and discussed, decisions taken during the 2006 UNEG Annual Meeting in Paris, and the proposed work programme for the next year. The meeting took place in Paris, and was hosted by UNESCO IOS.

The agenda consisted of presentations, discussions and decisions on the outputs of the existing Task Forces: Constitution (renamed Principles for Working Together); Quality Stamp; Evaluation Capacity Development; Country Level Evaluations; Results Based Management. In addition, there was a discussion on the relationship between Evaluation and Oversight in the light of the recent JIU report: Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System, and the on-going study being conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers and Dalberg on Governance and Accountability in the UN System.

The work programme for 2006-2007 was agreed upon based on decisions taken during the meeting. Four of the existing Task Forces will continue: Quality Stamp, Evaluation Capacity Development, Country Level Evaluations, Results Based Management; and one new Task Force will organize an Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminar during the year. There will be two Working Groups to consider and produce agreed deliverables: Principles for Working Together and Evaluation and Oversight.

The AGM in 2007 will be held in Geneva, hosted by the UN agencies there with WIPO as the focal point.

Introduction

1. This report presents a summary of topics and issues presented and discussed, decisions taken during the 2006 UNEG Annual General Meeting in Paris, and the proposed work programme for the next year. A note on decisions taken and recommendations made during the joint UNEG DAC meeting which took place on March 29th are included at the end of the report. Sixty-nine participants representing thirty-seven member UN organizations and observers were present from OECD-DAC Evaluation Network and PricewaterhouseCoopers and Dalberg (who are jointly undertaking an ongoing study of oversight in the UN System). Attending for the first time as members this year were GEF and four of the five Regional Commissions (UNECA, UNECE, UNESCAP and UNESCWA). The agenda, list of participants, working papers and other documents are available on the UNEG website: www.uneval.org/uneval.

2. John Parsons, Director of UNESCO's IOS, who hosted the Annual General Meeting, welcomed the participants before they were addressed by UNESCO's Director General, Mr Koichiro Matsuura. Mr Matsuura, in his opening remarks, stressed the importance of evaluation for all UN system agencies as 'an essential tool for improving our learning, decision-making and accountability', adding that UNEG's collaborative efforts underscore the importance of working as 'one United Nations'. He commended UNEG's on-going work with regard to quality standards, and emphasized that by helping to strengthen the professionalism of evaluation, UNEG is helping to build credibility and trust in the work of the UN.

3. Ms Saraswathi Menon, UNEG Chair and Director of UNDP's Evaluation Office, added her welcome to the DG's, thanking him for welcoming us. She recognized the high expectations that are on UN evaluators, particularly since the adoption of the UNEG Norms and Standards last year, and said that evaluation provides the evidence and lessons for accountability and could contribute to UN reform. Evaluations should help our organizations to work better for those people faced with deprivation, insecurity and threats to human dignity. She expressed her hope that the meeting would achieve two important objectives: To strengthen the professional identity of UN evaluators, and to measure our own priorities and collaboration against the larger purpose of helping people and countries meet their own challenges. She ended by paying tribute to the variety of experience, professional knowledge and commitment represented by UNEG, and appealed for a bold, imaginative meeting, the results of which would make a difference.

UNEG Secretariat Report

4. Nurul Alam, Secretary of UNEG, presented the Annual Report of the Secretariat April 2005 – March 2006 which outlined the history of UNEG and also the main activities of the past year. In addition to the outputs of the Task Forces (detailed in the section below), the Secretariat provided support to the Board (constituted at the AGM 2005) for its regular meetings, to the website and UNEG Forum, and oversaw the process of producing a draft Constitution/Ways of Working document through the production of an issues and options paper, and initial discussions with the working group and UNEG Board, before handing over to a drafting group to produce the version taken to the Annual Meeting in Paris for wider consultation.

Task Force Deliverables and Discussions

Principles for Working Together (Chair: John Markie FAO)

Presentation:

5. John Parsons (UNESCO) presented the most recent draft of the Principles for Working Together.

Discussion:

6. The AGM discussed in detail all sections of the draft. The discussion concentrated on issues of membership (Section 4) and governance addressing: location of Secretariat, rotation/election of Chair, and the practicality of having more than one Chair (co-Chair or Deputy Chair) and, if so, how would responsibilities be allocated among them. The draft was re-worked and re-presented to the meeting on the second day and on the basis of the second draft, some sections were endorsed unanimously. The sections of the text of the Principles for Working Together as agreed by the AGM are attached as Annex 2.

7. The remaining section on the selection, role and function of the Chair and Secretariat remains to be agreed upon. Noting that it was not possible to achieve consensus on endorsement of these sections, given the different points of view expressed by participants, a vote was taken on whether to retain the current chair and secretariat arrangements until the next AGM as an interim arrangement. This was agreed by an 87 per cent majority. In the meantime, the Working Group will engage UNEG members in a wider consultation to fully review all issues relating to the remaining sections not endorsed, and will present draft proposals for consideration at the next AGM.

Decisions:

- a. The AGM agreed unanimously on:
 - i. Section 1: Mission statement and strategic approach
 - ii. Section 2: Membership
 - iii. Section 3: Governance: the role and function of the AGM and Coordinating Committee
 - iv. Section 4: Ways of working
- b. The Working Group will consult fully with all members and present a draft for consideration at the AGM 2007.
- c. The current chair and secretarial arrangements will continue until the AGM 2007.
- d. The Secretariat will hire a dedicated professional.

- e. The Regional Commissions will elect a representative to sit on the Coordinating Committee as their representative.

Quality Stamp (Chair: Kees Tuinenberg WFP)

Presentations:

8. Ms Donatella Magliani (UNIDO) outlined the Task Force (TF) status report and proposed follow-up.
9. Ms Sally Burrows (Consultant and author of the Baseline Synopsis Report) reported on the findings of the synopsis self-assessment report and the fact sheet which organizations had been asked to complete – giving their own self-assessment against the UNEG Norms and Standards.
10. Ms. Saraswathi Menon (UNDP) and Mr. Jean Quesnel (UNICEF) highlighted the main lessons learned from the process of independent peer assessment of the evaluation function of their organizations.

Discussion:

11. Use of fact sheet for benchmarking:
 - This exercise highlighted the difficulties in cross agency comparison.
 - Further analyses should include methods of weighting data to make it more comparable.
 - At the same time, this process produced useful benchmarking information and some evidence that could be used as a starting point for action – e.g. the percentage of units responsible for evaluation which were dedicating over 50% of their time to non-evaluation and programmatic activities.
12. Improving UNEG Standards:
 - Self assessment should be institutionalized with UNEG playing a key role in coordination.
 - The self-assessment instrument/methodology should be improved in the light of the exercise carried out in 2005. Data subsequently gathered would form the basis for a valid baseline.
 - As many UN organizations do not require evaluators to sign up to a Code of Conduct, ne area of follow-up work for the QSTF should focus on ethics.
 - Other areas for follow-up: To set standards for preparing knowledge products and how to address decentralized evaluation.
 - Over time and in the light of experience, a revision of the UNEG Standards will be required.

- The UNEG self-assessment, the DAC peer review of UNDP, the peer review of UNICEF including decentralized structures, and the UNESCO evaluation with a broad range of external reviewers all represent a useful evolution in approaches.

13. Recommendations for Next Steps by QSTF:

- The experiences presented provide a substantial basis for the TF to examine the range of experiences and decide on the role of UNEG in the follow-up to quality stamping.
- Move the initiative of ‘peer reviews’ from externally-driven to demand from within the organization.
- The use of a representative group of key stakeholders is a critical consideration in carrying out assessments of the evaluation function, including peer reviews, and enhances their utility.
- Collaboration with DAC on peer reviews could generally prove useful.
- The TF will explore alternative ways of UNEG producing an accreditation procedure (hence ‘Stamp’) and make a recommendation to the UNEG Annual Meeting in 2007. Four alternatives are to be considered: a) the current DAC peer review; b) an actual peer review by UNEG members; c) certification by an expert panel from outside UNEG; and d) certification by a certification company (e.g. SGS).

Decisions:

- a. The TF should analyze further the information gathered in the fact sheet, having weighted it for comparable analysis.
- b. Benchmarked self assessment should be conducted across UN organizations every three years.

Evaluation and Oversight (Chair: Luciano Lavizzari IFAD)

14. This agenda item was requested by Board members to discuss and move towards formulating a consolidated UNEG position regarding the oversight function (in particular with reference to the recent JIU report: *Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System* and to feed into the ongoing study by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Dalberg on Governance and Accountability in the UN system).

15. Mr Juan Luis Larraburre, one of the authors of the JIU Report and representatives of PwC and Dalberg attended this session.

Presentations:

16. Mr Jean Quesnel (UNICEF) presented a concept paper on distinctions between Evaluation and Audit:

- *Purposes and Approaches:* Evaluation is results focused and, within the UN, is about partnership, learning and best practice. It is used to (re)design policies, strategies, programmes, projects by assessing results and the satisfaction of the target clientele. Audit considers the way management is being conducted and aims to improve organizational effectiveness, ensuring management appropriateness and sound management practices.
- *Location:* Evaluation is part of the management cycle while audit stands outside as an oversight function.
- *Focus:* Evaluation asks whether the ‘right’ things are being done in the ‘right’ way (according to rationale, impact, sustainability and connectedness criteria), while audit considers how things are done and whether they are being well managed (relevance, economy, efficiency, effectiveness criteria). Evaluation begins with the beneficiary perspective, audit starts with the management or system.
- *Protocols:* Evaluation design is flexible and involves dialogues with stakeholders while audit protocol is highly structured, assessing performance against a norm.
- *Timing:* Evaluation can be done pre-, mid-, end- term, or ex-post whereas audit is real time and can be done at any point.
- *Professional Profiles:* Evaluators tend to be social scientists, planners or statisticians. Auditors tend to be accountants, management specialists, finance/data managers and regulators.
- *Scope:* While audit focuses at an administrative unit and considers management processes, evaluation is broader and more varied.
- Evaluation sits on the demand side; audit on the supply side.

17. Mr Juan Luis Larraburre (JIU) provided an overview of the JIU report. In brief:

- The purpose of the report was to look at the oversight system in view of the Volker report’s findings that although large-scale fraud was not reported, the oversight system was problematic.
- The report found that the mandate for oversight was adequate, but the function was not managed appropriately, in particular the investigative function.
- He noted the considerable variation in size, function and location of the evaluation function with UN bodies: with some concerned mainly with RBM (as cited in the Quality Stamp session), some with knowledge management and others with decentralized projects (e.g. UNDP, UNICEF).

- Recommendation 6¹ of the JIU report was specifically aimed at those agencies with a preponderance of RBM-type functions, which would be better served within an oversight entity.
- A footnote in the report refers to agencies which are project focused (such as UNDP) where it is logical to keep evaluation and audit separate. In these cases, there should also be coordination with investigation, audit and others.
- He noted that 16 of 19 agencies covered by the report were under-investing in evaluation as compared with the suggested ranges (based on benchmarks and best practices from within and outside the UN system) in the report. (While these benchmarks were not set in stone, they should at least be reviewed by executive heads, to assess adequacy.)
- Oversight in general, and evaluation in particular, deserve more attention and resources.
- This JIU study and report comes in advance of an ongoing, independent study. The JIU position was to avoid a unitary solution, and the report has concluded that there are no major problems with system with the exception of under-resourcing of the oversight system.

Discussion:

- While examples were given of agencies both outside and inside the UN where audit and evaluation coexisted productively (US Government's Office of the Inspector General, and UNFPA) it was noted that in the majority of cases within the UN system where evaluation had been merged into oversight units, there had been a notable reduction in the number of evaluators rather than the additional resources as the presentation advocated.
- While the advantages and disadvantages of joining the audit and evaluation under oversight were noted - advantages including complementarity, overlaps, lessening of transaction costs, unified lines of reporting and therefore potentially more 'clout'; disadvantages including the likelihood of the reporting line being primarily concerned with finance (audit related) rather than programming (evaluation related); the incompatibility of oversight's association with secrecy and evaluations with transparency – the disadvantages outweighed the advantages.
- Discussion ranged across different structures in different UN organizations: Oversight in UNFPA includes both audit and evaluation and manages the organization's risk primarily of reputation. Bridges need to be built between audit and evaluation for which oversight

¹ **Recommendation 6:** Executive heads should review the current structure of internal oversight in their respective organizations and ensure that: a) Audit, inspection, investigation and evaluation functions are consolidated in a single unit under the head of internal oversight reporting directly to the executive head; b) Any functions other than the four oversight functions should be positioned elsewhere in the secretariats and not in the internal oversight unit.

is the key. The issue is not audit versus evaluation but to add value to the constituent bodies. In WFP a previous decision to combine the two functions had been reversed after difficulties based around different approaches to transparency. The footnote 6 in the JIU report referred to above represents the rule rather than the exception and this should be highlighted more visibly in the report.

- The proposed budget range is financial and does not take into account reality of programme structures of evaluation.
- The report's reference to combining various functions in one oversight unit as normal practice was disputed. RBM rather than oversight is the common ground between the two, although it is an area where there is a gap in information and it is currently unclear who should monitor this.
- It was suggested that there should be both an immediate response (to feed into discussions around the JIU report's discussion by the General Assembly in early June or September) and a longer term need to clarify thinking on the relationship between evaluation and oversight.

Decisions:

- a. The Secretariat would produce a summary position for finalization through discussion immediately following the meeting².
- b. A working group would be set up to pursue the issue of the relation between evaluation and oversight further over the coming 12 months.

Evaluation Capacity Development (Chair: Alaphia Wright UNESCO)

Presentations:

18. Mr Backson Sibanda (UNODC) presented the TF strategy, ie to strengthen evaluation within the UN system and support Member States to evaluate their programmes. The TF activities are aimed at capacity building at four levels: individual, evaluation unit, UNEG, Member state. The strategy paper outlines approaches for working at each of these levels.

19. Mr Jean Quesnel (UNICEF) made presentations and delivered two papers; one on the Competencies for Evaluators in the UN System and the other on the Core Training Programme for Evaluators in the UN System.

² The original document has been widely commented upon, and the final version, which is appended as Annex 3, has been shared with the DSG, CEB Secretariat, JIU, PwC, Dalberg and UNEG Members for discussion with their own Executive Heads. It has also been shared for information with the DAC Network on Evaluation.

Discussion:

- A need to recognize the differential capacities of UNEG members was noted, and the strategy needs to accommodate capacity at all levels.
- To reflect more closely the activities of most evaluation units, the competencies should lay a greater stress on evaluation management, on the operational knowledge of evaluation managers and should weight the six competencies.
- The UN Staff College (UNSSC) has its own capacity and can also bring in additional partners to help with training. Currently the UNSSC focus is to enable country teams to develop CCAs UNDAFs. UNEG could feed evaluation material to the UNSSC for use in training country teams.
- It was suggested that in addition to training courses at the UNSSC, developing knowledge platform-based modules, and surveying what already exists would be useful (both inside and outside the UN). The possibility of producing UN-focused training modules (like, for example, the security CD Rom) could contribute to the professionalization of evaluators within the UN.

Decisions:

- a. The strategy on ECD was endorsed, but requires more work which will be completed by the Task Force by the end of June 2006.
- b. The meeting accepted the proposal to conduct a survey of training needs. This will be undertaken by UNICEF by June 2006.
- c. The module on Evaluation Design and Research Methods should be developed first.
- d. The proposed timetable for the TF was endorsed.

Country Level Evaluation (Chair: Susanne Frueh OCHA)

Presentation:

20. Mr Lucien Back (UNICEF) presented the TF strategy:

Guiding perspectives

21. The country level evaluation initiative is guided by the following perspectives;
 - Consolidation of joint country level evaluation approach and methodology (independence, credibility, usefulness)
 - Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review 2007 and 2010

- To support accountability and learning as part of UN reform process

Milestones

22. Key outputs of the TF to date are the following:

- Issues and Options Paper on country level evaluations
- Strategy paper reflecting consensus among task force members
- Identification of countries for CL evaluations in 2006
 - Request from Republic of South Africa
 - LDC/transition country (Sierra Leone)
- Implementation of two joint evaluations at country level in 2006
- Inventory and review of major country-level evaluations by UN organizations (June 2006)

Work plan deliverables for 2006-2007

23. The following outputs are scheduled for completion by the TF prior to the next UNEG AGM:

- Promotion and review of two joint evaluations at country level
- Review of major country level evaluations by individual UNEG members
- Web-based database of country level evaluations of UNEG members
- Further refinement of the concept and methodology of joint evaluations
- Substantive inputs into TCPR 2007, UNDG/DGO guidance etc.

Medium Term Perspectives

24. The TF will progressively refine the concept and approach of joint CLE and feed into TCPR and other UN reform processes.

Discussion:

- TF membership and evaluation coalitions are different, with each country evaluation being a joint venture that may not be of direct interest to all TF members, but which may include non-TF members with one agency as leader.
- The process of defining a focus area for a country evaluation is intended to promote interest and facilitate coalition building.

- To take advantage of the benefits of diverse collaborative arrangements among UN agencies and other interested parties (eg OECD-DAC), the TF will pursue a flexible approach to CLE, encouraging close coordination with related initiatives (coordinated evaluations in addition to joint evaluations).
- The importance of maximizing national ownership and leadership, and encouraging the participation of diverse partners was emphasized, with the UNEG Norms & Standards providing a good reference point to facilitate collaboration among country level evaluation partners.
- Preparations for the first CLE in South Africa are underway, with a scoping mission tentatively scheduled for May 2006 to draft the Terms of Reference.
- A draft inventory of agency specific country-level evaluations is being undertaken, identifying more than 270 evaluations. UNEG members will be requested to verify the relevance and quality of these evaluation reports before they are assessed and uploaded on the UNEG website.
- A meta evaluation will also be performed of CLE by different UN organizations.

Decisions:

- a. The draft strategy and proposed deliverables were adopted for 2006-7.
- b. The medium term perspectives underlying the CLE TF were affirmed.

Results Based Management (Chair: Claude Hilfiker OCHA)

Presentation:

25. Chandi Kadirgamar (OIOS) presented the results of the survey sent to 26 UN organizations to generate a body of knowledge on the present role of evaluation in RBM. This survey is a 'work in progress' and will remain open until March 31st to allow more agencies to complete it.

26. Comments were requested by the chair on:

- a. Should the survey be expanded to include non-UN partners?
- b. Should the TF look in depth at evaluation and RBM at the country level?
- c. Should the TF further define the expected role of evaluation in RBM?

Discussion:

- Given that a results matrix is developed as part of the UNDAF, it is frustrating that there is a disconnect between the UNDAF results matrix and M & E Plan. A greater understanding of evaluation by Country Teams would be helpful, as they use RBM.

- The disconnect between results at country level and monitoring of country programmes as they fit into organizational level results can be problematic. This can result in a conflict of interest between evaluation and RBM functions.
- While the resurgence of interest in RBM has provided an opportunity to promote a stronger evaluation culture, there is also a potential conflict of interest when the evaluation function has responsibility for RBM although, in small organizations, it is practically impossible to separate the two. However, while recognizing that they will be involved in setting up RBM, once this is done, the evaluation office should move away and not be involved in the long term.
- It would be helpful to look jointly at how organizations report against RBM benchmarks and what prevents organizations meeting these benchmarks.
- Recognizing the difficulties of defining indicators for normative and technical work, it would be helpful to smaller agencies if others, working at the country level, provided feedback on the impact of normative and technical work at the country level.
- Should the evaluation function have a role in judging the quality of information coming from RBM?

Decisions:

- a. The RBM survey will be completed by 31 March and the report is scheduled to be ready by the end of April 2006.
- b. The TF will sponsor an electronic discussion through the UN Evaluation Forum on the issue of conflicts of interest, and will produce a consolidated reply.
- c. The TF will draft a Lessons Learned/Concept paper on evaluation and RBM for consideration by UNEG in 2007. This note will identify good practices and a guidance note on the role of evaluation in RBM. This TF will have a ‘sunset clause’ to be reviewed at the AGM in 2007.

Work Programme for 2006-7

(Chair: Ms Saraswathi Menon UNDP)

27. A summary was presented by Mr Nurul Alam of issues which need to be taken into consideration in the work programme, based on the decision points of the previous sessions during the AGM.

Evaluation Exchange Seminar and Knowledge Sharing

28. Mr Simon Lawry-White (UNICEF) introduced the QSTF’s idea of holding an Evaluation Practice Exchange in which agencies would swap ‘better practice’ using examples of a) proven and transferable

experience, and b) innovations not yet fully proven but with potential for wider application. It is proposed that this is held in October or November 2006.

29. Following a voting exercise by participants, the topics which received strong support and the organizations offering to contribute to these topics were:

- a. Extracting lessons to feed evidence-based policy development (OCHA, OPCW, UNDESA, UNIDO, UNODC).
- b. Innovation in disseminating lessons in user-friendly ways (UNEP, UNV, World Bank, WFP).
- c. Strengthening evaluation methodologies (CTBTO, OCHA, OIOS, OPCW, UNCDF, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNV).
- d. Management response to evaluation recommendations (including follow-up on management actions) (FAO, GEF, IAEA, IFAD, OCHA, OIOS, UNCTADM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNODC, World Bank, WFP).

Developing a Knowledge Platform

30. A scheduled presentation by Mr Peter Loewe on developing a UNEG knowledge platform was not given (due to changes in the schedule), but meeting participants recognized that knowledge sharing is a dynamic and collaborative learning process; that knowledge sharing should be integral to the work of UN evaluators and reflect a responsiveness to real time information demands and the goals of our organizations; that in developing such a knowledge sharing platform UNEG should consider mechanisms to sustain enthusiasm; and that the use of a facilitator to advance collaboration on experiences and ideas can enhance the success of knowledge exchange³.

Decisions:

- a. The planning for an Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminar should proceed.
- b. Move the knowledge platform from QSTF to the ECD TF for execution by the UNEG Secretariat.

Venue for AGM 2007

31. The venue for the UNEG AGM 2007 will be Geneva. The meeting will be hosted by Geneva-based agencies, with WIPO as the focal point.

³ Other points from the intended presentation included the need for agreement on which knowledge UNEG members want to share (public documents such as policies, handbooks) and for a common depository of evaluation reports with a powerful search mechanism; a common consultancy roster. Other success factors would include a proactive central webmaster who is not a technical person but one who is knowledgeable and actively chases members to upload agreed documents in the agreed quality; a network of focal points who feed the knowledge platform and some technical improvements of the site (in particular a search mechanism).

Work Programme 2006 - 2007

32. The meeting voted to have 5 Task Forces and 2 Working Groups with the following deliverables:
33. Annex 4 gives the composition of the groups as at the time of distributing the Report of the AGM (May 5th 2006).

Quality Stamp Task Force

- a. The TF will explore alternative ways of UNEG producing an accreditation procedure and make a recommendation to the AGM in 2007
- b. The fact sheet will be used for benchmarking after consideration of ways to weight the data for comparable analysis
- c. Actions to improve the UNEG Standards will include:
 - Improving the self-assessment instrument to address weaknesses for generating valid data
 - Do follow-up work on ethics
 - Revise the standards document at a future date
- d. Study options for quality stamp
 - Conduct a study and recommend an appropriate/optimal model for UNEG quality assurance for evaluation in members
 - Develop a list of member agencies interested in an external assessment of their evaluation function

Evaluation Capacity Development Task Force

- a. The final version of the strategy paper will be completed by June 2006
- b. Competency and training schedule:
 - Finalize core competencies by the end of June
 - Finalize core competencies for Heads of evaluation by the end of November
 - Finalize generic job description by AGM 2007
 - Finalize the survey on Training Needs Assessment by May 2007
 - Finalize Core Training Modules during 2007

- c. The knowledge platform will be moved to the ECD TF and executed by the UNEG Secretariat. Its development needs to consider recommendations made for successful platforms and knowledge sharing.

Country Level Evaluation Task Force

- a. Promotion and review of two evaluations
- b. Produce a web-based database of country level evaluations
- c. Review a selection of agency-specific evaluations
- d. Refine the concept of joint evaluations
- e. Produce inputs for the TCPR 2007 and UNDG/DGO guidance

Results Based Management Task Force

- a. Complete the Survey and produce the full report
- b. Conduct an e-discussion on UN Evaluation Forum on the conflict of interest between RMB and evaluation, and produce a consolidated response
- c. Draft guidance on the role and facilitation for using and integrating RBM at the country level

Evaluation Practice Exchange Task Force

- a. The Evaluation Practice Exchange Seminar is proposed for October-November 2006 for the topics agreed

Principles for Working Together Working Group

- a. UNEG members will be engaged in a wider consultation to review fully all issues relating to the remaining sections not endorsed, and a draft will be presented for consideration at the AGM 2007.

Evaluation and Oversight Working Group

- a. To build on the initial joint statement on the JIU report.
- b. The Working Group will define its deliverables.

Other decisions

- a. The current chair and secretariat arrangements for UNEG will continue until the AGM 2007.
- b. The Secretariat will hire a dedicated professional.
- c. The 2007 AGM will be held in Geneva and hosted by the Geneva-based agencies. WIPO will serve as the focal point.

UNEG and OECD-DAC Evaluation Network Joint Meeting

Paris, 29th March 2006

Introduction

The meeting highlighted some of the key challenges in development. These include a move from project support to programmatic and sectoral approaches in development. In this context, the focus is on the impact of total donor activity in development. This dictates the need for more joint work in evaluation and the need to develop a common agenda.

It also highlighted that the Paris Declaration is a compact for mutual accountability involving donors/development agencies and partner countries. Thus evaluation partnerships must include questions from the partner countries, and the scope should include evaluations of both donor performance and country-partner performance. Innovative ways for addressing challenges associated with capacity, institutional development and ownership were outlined.

The meeting established the following.

- The two groups have common grounds for working together. This serves as an excellent basis for collaborative work in the future. This form of partnership will enhance the productivity of the two groups and move the agenda from knowledge sharing and networking typical of the past.
- Future meetings should be held jointly between UNEG, DAC and ECG. This will bring the larger community of evaluators together.

The table below outlines the topics discussed for collaboration, the recommendations made for enhancing on-going work and the agreements for joint work between UNEG and OECD-DAC.

Recommendations, Agreements and Actions

Topics for Discussion and for Collaboration	Recommendations	Agreements and Actions
Quality Standards and Stamping		
<p>Peer Review Processes:</p> <p>Both groups have task forces working on quality stamping. The meeting highlighted issues and lessons associated with the purpose, methodology, processes and respective benefits of the various peer review processes.</p> <p>Standard Setting:</p> <p>A considerable number of agencies are also involved are working on good practice standards. It is important to have a set of generic standards applicable to all agencies. The work started by the DAC groups needs to be further developed in collaboration with the on-going work by other agencies.</p>	<p>Develop a joint task force of quality standards and stamping that would: continue to update the peer review methodology; prioritize future peer reviews; and assemble peer panels in better ways than those which have been employed in the past.</p> <p>This task force should use the lessons learned from the UNDP experience as well as from the on-going UNICEF peer assessment and others as a basis for collaboration in moving forward.</p> <p>The meeting highlighted</p>	<p>Establish a joint task force in quality stamping and quality standards.</p> <p>DANIDA will host a meeting on a systematic approach to the peer review inclusive of both heavy and light peer reviews.</p>
Evaluation Systems and Capacity Development		
<p>Both the UNEG and OECD-DAC are working on capacity development but in two different areas. UNEG is focused on individual capacity development while OECD-DAC is focused on institutional systems.</p>	<p>Work on individual capacity development is already on-going through IPDET and universities. It is recommended that these institutions be used or built upon.</p> <p>Work on institutional capacity is a greater challenge. At issue is the systemic oversight function of evaluation and the relationship between evaluation, audit and inspection.</p> <p>All agencies are committed to capacity development in partner countries. The area presents several</p>	<p>Share information in general, and keep each other informed of progress on capacity development specifically.</p> <p>UNEG is developing a common position. It was requested that this be shared with the DAC group.</p> <p>Japan will take a lead role in mapping ECD activities in partner countries which will serve as the basis for doing more concrete</p>

Topics for Discussion and for Collaboration	Recommendations	Agreements and Actions
	challenges for evaluators and needs all to join forces to address these.	work in the future.
Country Level Evaluation		
<p>UNEG presented the principles, structure, plans and challenges for collaboration in country level evaluations. These include joint evaluations conducted by coalitions made up of UNEG members, and coordinated evaluations addressing complementary areas.</p> <p>The key issues raised included:</p> <p>The challenge of enhancing country leadership, capacity and national ownership in the evaluations;</p> <p>Harmonization to overcome the problem of donor-drive and out of context evaluations</p> <p>The institutional set up for ensuring the independence of the evaluations</p>	<p>There is an increasing focus an, and need for sector-wide work.</p> <p>One area that lends itself to effective collaboration is “generalized budget support”</p>	<p>Seek opportunities for joint evaluations at country level.</p> <p>Need to find areas for collaboration in further developing the concept and approach of country level evaluation.</p>
OECD DAC work on Paris Declaration		
		UNEG would like to participate in the evaluation

Annex 1: Evaluation of the Annual General Meeting

The organization for the Annual Meeting was supported by the UNEG Secretariat located in the Evaluation Office of UNDP, and also by UNESCO IOS. Sixty nine participants attended the meeting representing thirty-seven UN organizations, OECD-DAC and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

The UN participants were asked to evaluate the meeting via a website. To date twenty-one completed evaluations have been received.

50% of respondents rated the meeting good or excellent in terms of their objectives being met for relevance of topics, quality of presentations, and quality and relevance of agreements reached, with quality of presentations ranking highest (67%), relevance (53%) and quality and relevance of agreements lowest (29%). In terms of ranking the sessions for their usefulness, the Quality Stamp session was ranked most useful followed by CLE, ECD and Evaluation and Oversight together, Principles for Ways of Working and RBM were considered least useful.

Feedback from last year's AGM emphasized the desire for results oriented sessions. With regard to this meeting, over 75% of respondents rated ECD, QS and CLE and the session on Evaluation and Oversight as being 'sufficiently results oriented', while only 38% and 14% rated Principles for Ways of Working and RBM as being sufficiently results oriented.

Comments on the meeting included a general appreciation for the joint meeting with DAC and felt inclusion of other external bodies would have added to the meeting (although others felt differently); participants would like to have more time for sharing and discussion of evaluation practice and experience and how to enhance evaluation and less on process. Several commentators felt that tabling contentious issues near the start of the meeting created negative dynamics.

Respondents appreciated the online registration process, and provision of useful and timely information although access to the working papers further ahead of the meeting would be appreciated. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72%) felt that the meeting organization had been good or excellent. Two thirds of respondents would be happy to see the AGM moving towards a paperless system.

Annex 2: UNEG Principles of Working Together

(as agreed at the UNEG AGM in Paris in March 2006)

Preamble: The UN system seeks to improve its effectiveness in serving the peoples of the world. This requires the systematic evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the UN system's work. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) brings together the professional units and individuals responsible for evaluation within the UN system.

These principles for working together were adopted by the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of UNEG in Paris on 28 March 2006. They will enter fully into force following the Paris AGM. They will be subject to review by the 2007 AGM following the first year of their application and in particular additional provisions relating to the officers of UNEG are foreseen⁴. The Principles may be revised subsequently in line with changing circumstances and needs.

1. Mission Statement and Strategic Approach

1.1 Mission Statement: The UNEG's mission is to strengthen the objectivity, effectiveness and visibility of the evaluation function across the system and to advocate the importance of evaluation for learning, decision making and accountability.

1.2 Strategic Approach: In order to achieve its mission UNEG will take concerted action to:

- Encourage the adoption and application of a common set of norms and standards for evaluation;
- Support common positions on objectivity, integrity and the role and function of evaluation;
- Strengthen the professional and technical competence of evaluation staff;
- Facilitate mutual support and learning through the exchange of knowledge and discussion of the state of the art in evaluation;
- Promote innovation and joint initiatives;
- Encourage the use of evaluation for learning, decision making and accountability, including its use in inter-governmental and inter-agency processes;
- Facilitate appropriate partnerships beyond UNEG; and

⁴ The officers of UNEG continue to be the chair and secretary from the UNDP Evaluation Office for the year 2006/07 as decided by the 2006 AGM. The 2007 AGM will decide on the arrangement of officers of UNEG for future years.

- Facilitate support to member countries in building evaluation capacity at national, level to better equip them to evaluate their own programmes.

1.3 The success of UNEG depends on the contributions made or mobilised by its membership. All members are therefore expected to contribute to joint activities, the Secretariat and the AGM.

2. Membership

2.1 UNEG membership is institutional and the unit with the main responsibility for evaluation in each of the United Nations Organizations, Specialized Agencies, Funds, Programmes, Commissions and UN Secretariat Offices have the right to participate in UNEG as members⁵. Such units should have, or aspire to have, the required professional knowledge, experience and responsibility for evaluation as defined by the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. The independent evaluation units of international organizations which carry out a major part of their work through funds provided to the UN system may also be members of UNEG.

2.2 The officers of UNEG in consultation with the coordination committee (see below 3.3) will decide upon applications for membership in line with the above criteria.

2.3 Members are entitled to participate in all meetings of UNEG, its task forces, networks and activities.

2.4 Recognizing that organizations outside the UN system can make a professional contribution to UNEG's mission, the Chair⁶, in consultation with the coordination committee can invite them to participate as observers in UNEG activities, including the AGM.

3. Governance

3.1 The **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will act as the overall governing body of UNEG. It will decide on UNEG's Principles for Working Together and their application. The AGM will:

- Review progress and results from the work-plan and budget agreed in the previous AGM;
- Decide on specific strategies and work programmes for the following year, including budgets, resource mobilization, priority deliverables, establishing and/or continuing task forces or sub-groups to work on these deliverables;
- Endorse the composition and chairpersonship of task forces/sub-groups and their representation in the coordination committee; and

⁵ The office in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs with responsibility for evaluation issues in the UN General Assembly is also a member of UNEG.

⁶ Chair and Officers of UNEG are possibly to be redefined by the 2007 AGM.

- d. Endorse the membership of the coordination committee and select the officers of UNEG.

3.2 Decisions at the UNEG AGM will normally be reached by consensus of the members. Voting will only take place in exceptional circumstances. Decisions apart from elections will only be put to a vote if a minimum of five members present requests it. Decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote of those present. Observers will not have votes.

3.3 The **Coordinating Committee** is convened and presided over by the Chair of UNEG. It is representative of the diversity of the UNEG membership and will comprise:

- a. The officers of UNEG;
- b. The member hosting the next AGM;
- c. Representative(s) of each task force (sub-groups within task forces may also be represented as necessary);
- d. Such other members as decided by the AGM in the interest of representation of the UNEG membership at large, and the needs of the work programme.

3.2 The officers of UNEG supported by the coordination committee have the task of facilitating and coordinating the ongoing work of UNEG in-line with decisions taken by the AGM. In particular they will:

- a. Facilitate and track implementation of the work programme agreed by the AGM, including cross-fertilization and coordination between task forces;
- b. Prepare the draft agenda and making arrangements for the next AGM;
- c. Oversee the work of the UNEG Secretariat; and
- d. Represent UNEG at appropriate fora.

4. Ways of Working

4.1 **UNEG Task Forces** comprise members who are willing to contribute time and resources to produce ‘deliverables’. Each task force will propose Chairs and, if desired, Co- and Deputy-Chairs, and their representatives in the coordinating committee and other meetings, and to report to the AGM. UNEG’s wider membership will have the opportunity to comment on such deliverables before ‘products’ are finalized.

4.2 **UNEG Secretariat:** UNEG will have a Secretariat with a professional staff to support members through the AGM, task forces and undertake such other tasks as decided by the AGM and the officers of UNEG in consultation with the coordination committee: e.g. maintaining a Knowledge Network accessible to all evaluation staff and partners. The UNEG Secretariat will be co-funded by members and other contributions. The agency of the Chair will underwrite the finances of the Secretariat in the event of a shortfall.

Annex 3: UNEG Statement on the JIU Report (as at 13th April 2006)

The 2006 Annual General Meeting of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)⁷ was pleased to receive a presentation by the UN Joint Inspection Unit and to engage in a discussion of the report “Oversight Lacunae in the United Nations System” (JIU/REP/2006/2)

In the view of UNEG, the report is very timely. Members appreciated the report’s acknowledgement of the UNEG itself as an effective coordination and cooperation forum for evaluation, and the recommendations of the report that pertain to the strengthening of the evaluation function to meet the demands of increasing accountability within the UN system. In particular, members welcomed the attempt to provide a more transparent base for budgetary decisions, but would like to suggest that the capacity to evaluate should not be calculated solely on the basis of the total resources of the organization⁸.

Members also welcomed the report’s intent to enhance the overall efficiency and improve coordination of oversight. However, many members did not agree with the proposal to consolidate the functions of evaluation, audit, investigation and inspection into a single unit under the head of internal oversight reporting directly to the executive head (recommendation 6, p. 9). Members felt that this proposal did not discuss the merits and demerits of the co-location of these functions based on the experience of UN agencies. In several agencies, evaluation is located within oversight services, but in the majority it is not. Where it is not, this intentionally reflects the role of evaluation not only as an instrument of oversight⁹, but as one that also serves a learning function supporting management. For the majority of UNEG members, evaluation is not, nor should be part of oversight services for two critical reasons:

- The independence of the evaluation function is critical to ensuring its integrity. The professional Norms and Standards require that the head of evaluation has the full independence to supervise and report on evaluations (Norm 6.2), and to relate directly to the Governing Bodies and/or Heads of organizations who are responsible for appointing the head (2.5) and ensuring the function’s independence and impartiality (2.3 and 2.4). This independence is also recognized in the OECD/DAC principles for evaluating development assistance as well as by the benchmarking exercises of the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the International Financial Institutions. In no IFI is the evaluative function combined with the audit, inspection or investigative function. Not only would it be inappropriate for the UN system to disregard or abandon this best practice, some

⁷ Held at UNESCO in Paris between the 27-28th March, 2006

⁸ The report proposes a range of US\$ 125 to US\$ 250 million per evaluator as guidance for deciding the number of evaluators per agency. UNEG members felt that other dimensions, including the average amount of funding per intervention, the subject of evaluation, the availability of data, the complexity of partnerships, levels of co-financing should also be taken into account.

⁹ The report does recognize possible exceptions in the case of project-orientated organizations requiring extensive evaluation skills (Footnote 13, p. 9). While appreciating this reference, UNEG members noted that the necessity of specific skills is central to all evaluation functions, irrespective of orientation. Further, this reference recalls an outdated modality of development cooperation, which now seeks to identify how best to use evaluation within the context of wider programme and other processes in the advancement of development effectiveness.

stated that they have experienced the undermining of the evaluation function where subsumed under the head of oversight, as proposed. Equally, others expressed concern for the independence of the function if incorporated within operational management.

- Evaluation in the UN system, through GA resolution 59/250, is mandated to support member countries to conduct their own evaluation through joint work, capacity development and the sharing of best practices through partnership. This mandate necessitates evaluation to be conducted collaboratively and openly, and evaluation reports are considered public goods. This is quite distinct from investigation and inspection, which are necessarily conducted in absolute confidence, and in many cases reports are confidential. Some members thus felt that co-locating evaluation with audit, investigation and inspection under the internal oversight function may give the function an aura of “policing”, which could negatively impact upon efforts to build a culture of learning from evaluation.

In conclusion, the UNEG feels that the report has raised a number of important issues, but that Recommendation 6 should have explored other, or differentiated solutions to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of oversight. These solutions may include improved modalities of collaboration between the functions that have oversight responsibility in areas of mutual gain, and may be adjusted to the mandates and sizes of the agencies.

The members were also appreciative of the participation of PricewaterhouseCoopers and Dalberg Global Development Advisers in this meeting, and hope that UNEG can support them in the study on Governance and Accountability in the UN system.

Annex 4: Task Forces and Working Groups¹⁰

Task Forces

Evaluation Capacity Development

Members:

IOM (Christophe Franzetti)	OIOS
UNDP (Oscar Garcia/Azusa Kubota)	UNEP
UNECA (Urbain Zadi)	UNESCO
UNFPA (Olivier Brasseur)	UNICEF (Ada Ocampo)
UNIDO	UNODC (Backson Sibanda)
WFP	
Focal Point: Backson Sibanda (backson.sibanda@unpdc.org)	

Quality Stamp

CTBCO (Silvia Alamo)	FAO (John Markie)
GEF (Rob van den Berg)	ILO (Carla Henry)
IOM (Christophe Franzetti)	OIOS (Eddie Yee Woo Guo)
UNCTAD (Masahiro Igarashi)	UNDP (Sukai Prom-Jackson)
UNICEF (Simon Lawry-White)	UNIDO (Donatella Magliani /Peter Loewe)
WFP (Kees Tuinenburg/Annemarie Waeschle)	
Co-Chairs: Kees Tuinenburg (kees.tuinenburg@wfp.org); Donatella Magliani (d.magliani@unido.org); Rob von den Berg (rvanadenberg@thegef.org)	

Country Level Evaluations

FAO (Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin)	IAEA
ILO	OCHA
UNAIDS	UNCDF
UNCTAD	UNDESA
UNDP	UNFPA

¹⁰ Names given where confirmed since AGM 2006

UNICEF	
Chair: Lucien Back (lback@unicef.org ; Deputy Chair: Rachel Bedouin (rachel.bedouin@fao.org)	

Results Based Management

CTBTO	IAEA
IOM	ITC
OCHA	OIOS
UNAIDS	UNCDF
UNDP	UNESCAP
UNESCWA	UNFPA
UN-HABITAT	UNICEF
UNIDO	UNIFEM
WHO	WIPO
Focal Point: Chandi Kadirgamar (kadirgamarc@un.org)	

Evaluation Exchange Seminar

IOM	UNAIDS
UNDP	UNECE
UNEP	UNICEF
UNIFEM	WFP
Focal Point: Simon Lawry-White (slawrywhite@unicef.org)	

Working Groups

Evaluation and Oversight

FAO	IAEA
ICAO	IOM
GEF	OIOS
OPCW	UNDP
UNESCO	UNFPA
UNICEF	UNODC

WFP	WMO
Focal Point: Eddie Yee Woo Guo (guoy@un.org)	

Principles for Working Together

FAO	GEF
IOM	OIOS
UNDESA	UNDP
UNECE	UNESCO
UNICEF	UNIFEM
UNFPA	
Focal Point: John Markie (john.markie@fao.org)	