



Report of the UNEG Annual General Meeting 2005

Location: FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

Host agencies: FAO, IFAD and WFP

Date: 27 – 29 April 2005

This report, prepared by the UNEG Secretariat, encompasses the discussions and outcomes from the UNEG AGM 2005.

Summary of Agreements

1. The UNEG Annual Meeting for 2005 was held in Rome at the FAO Headquarters, from April 26 to 29. It was hosted by FAO, IFAD and WFP. The Meeting was organized by the Secretariat of UNEG, with collaboration and support from the host Agencies.

2. This year's meeting reflected an unprecedented level of participants and enthusiasm. The endorsement of the UNEG Norms and Standards (N&S) for Evaluation in the UN system was widely recognized as a concrete milestone achievement for UNEG.

3. The highlights of agreements are:

- A draft "Constitution/ways of working" for UNEG will be prepared by the Secretariat with the collaboration of some of the UNEG members and presented at the UNEG 2006 meeting for endorsement. This will establish, clearly, the modus operandi of UNEG including governance.
- It was agreed that UNDP will continue chairing UNEG and providing the Secretariat function. The Board of UNEG will comprise of the heads of evaluation units co-chairing the task forces and the host of the 2006 annual meeting (UNESCO). The board will therefore consist of FAO, OCHA, OIOS, UNDESA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, WFP and WIPO.
- Preparation of 2006 annual meeting: the Meeting will be hosted by UNESCO. The UNEG Secretariat will begin consultations with DAC Network and French Government on partnership event in Paris.
- As the Norms and Standards Group has successfully finalized their work, the task force was disbanded.
- The working group on 'How We Work Together' will not continue as a Task Force. However, the results of the questionnaire and the checklist developed by the TF will be circulated.
- Four UNEG task forces were agreed upon:
 - Evaluation Capacity Development co- chaired by UNODC, UNICEF and UNESCO. Deliverables: compilation of ECD service providers and contents for basic training modules for UN Evaluators.
 - Quality Stamp for Evaluation, co- chaired by UNIDO and WFP. As follow-up to Norms and Standards, all agencies committed to conduct self evaluations. This Task Force will cover peer reviews and DAC related multilateral quality initiatives, among other things.
 - Country Level Evaluations, co- chaired by UNDP, DESA, FAO and OCHA. Deliverables: Issues and options paper and some concrete cooperation, possibly including

evaluability assessment of UNDAF results matrix and joint country level evaluations on specific themes.

- RBM and Evaluation, co chaired by WIPO and OIOS. Deliverable: Issues and options paper.

Introduction

4. This report contains a summary of the main topics and issues presented and discussed during the 2005 UNEG Annual Meeting. The priorities and agreements for 2005, due to its relevance for the future of UNEG, have been included in the Summary of Agreements as well as a specific chapter.
5. In the frame of the Meeting, the UNEG Norms and Standards (N&S) for Evaluation in the UN System were approved by consensus. The endorsement of the N&S was considered a milestone in the history of UNEG as well as a concrete contribution towards harmonization.
6. This year's meeting counted with an unprecedented level of participants; seventy six evaluation professionals participants from thirty UN agencies and five institutional partners attended.

Minutes of the UNEG Annual Meeting

Opening remarks

7. In the Opening Remarks, the representatives of the three Rome-based Agencies which hosted the 2005 UNEG Annual Meeting (FAO, WFP and IFAD) and the UNEG Chair, welcomed participants and stated the importance of the Meeting.
8. On behalf of FAO, Mr. D. Harcharik, Deputy Director-General, underlined the significance of the meeting for the UN system as a whole. Taking as an entry point the agenda of the Meeting, he remarked that the event included a number of important organizational issues of central relevance to the evaluation function in the UN. A special emphasis was put in the role of evaluation for improving the quality of the UN's work, and in the relevance of the Evaluation Norms and Standards, expected to be endorsed in the Meeting, for working together, and lending better coherence to the UN System at the country level.
9. Ms. Caroline Heider, Deputy Director of IFAD's Office of Evaluation, delivered a written statement on behalf of Mr Lennart Båge, President of IFAD. She remarked that evaluation, in IFAD, has gained unprecedented momentum: an independent evaluation office has been put in place which reports directly to the Board; and an external evaluation of the agency has been carried out for the first time in the history of this organization. Within this context, she stressed that the meeting was as an opportunity for IFAD to share its evaluation experience as well as to learn from others.
10. The representative of WFP, Mr. M. Usnick, Director, Results-Based Management Division, stated that for WFP the expectation was that the UNEG Meeting provides an opportunity for a discussion on the evaluation policies of different UN organizations. He noted that, like IFAD, the evaluation function is in process of being strengthened, responding to the challenge of how to measure the effectiveness of WFP's US\$ 3 billion spent annually. In this context, he made explicit the strong interest of WFP in searching for ways to effectively evaluate humanitarian assistance, which makes up 85% of the budget, and encouraged participants to contribute to this effort.

11. Ms. Saraswathi Menon, UNEG Chair and Director of the Evaluation Office at UNDP, opened the Meeting by expressing her gratitude to the three host agencies, FAO, IFAD and WFP. She remarked that UNEG has reached its 21st year, and at this age, is demonstrating maturity as a professional evaluation network of Evaluation Offices and Units of the UN System. Ms. Menon noted that indicators of this maturity, include, inter alia:

- Unprecedented level of participation and enthusiasm;
 - Unprecedented number and range of partners; representatives of ALNAP, GEF, SIDA, and professional networks, as part of this year's Meeting. Partnership and inclusiveness are therefore principles underpinning and guiding UNEG work;
 - Unprecedented range of topics and papers prepared for discussion: from normative to humanitarian to development to methodology to forms of collaboration. This is, undoubtedly an indicator of a shift from the original role of UNEG aimed at serving UN's more limited operational development function;
 - Remarkable ambition: a central item on this year's agenda, the UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation, if adopted will constitute a milestone in UNEG history and a concrete step towards harmonization;
 - Recognition of UNEG by the General Assembly resolution on the TCPR in 2004. Through this document UNEG was urged to make progress on system-wide collaboration.
- Importance, as a professional body, to be responsible and responsive in the face of diminishing confidence in accountability and transparency in the UN, and more supportive of each other in strengthening common and individual systems.

12. Ms. Menon concluded her remarks stressing that the Meeting is an unprecedented opportunity to chart the course of UNEG; and it is to be seen as an opportunity for reflecting on ways to move forward.

Session 1: UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation

13. The Session was chaired by Ms. Saraswathi Menon, UNEG Chair and Director of the Evaluation Office of UNDP.

14. As an introduction to the session, the Chair stated the importance of the Norms and Standards for enabling UN Agencies to improve the quality of evaluation and to approach the evaluation function in a more harmonized way.

15. Mr. Jean Quesnel, Director of UNICEF's Evaluation Office and chair of the Norms and Standards (N&S) Task Force (TF) introduced the N&S. He started by remarking that the Norms and Standards will allow UNEG members, among other things to leverage, improve, enhance and position evaluation in the international and national agenda. He highlighted that the version of the Norms and Standards, that was distributed was the result of an inter-agency team effort. The contribution of the TF's co-chair, Maya

Bachner from WIPO and the constructive comments made by different agency representatives previous to the meeting on the initial draft, was strongly acknowledged.

16. After the presentation, a **Plenary** discussion was initiated. Main points raised were the following:

- The N&S are a milestone for UNEG as it is the first concrete product UNEG has produced towards harmonization.
 - The N&S should be adopted as a guiding document in order to ensure that no interference with agencies' evaluation mandates occur.
 - It should be expected that each agency will flexibly utilize the N&S according to their needs and institutional realities.
 - A mission for the N&S should be stated as a preamble of the document. The mission should make explicit the nature and the purpose of the Norms and Standards.
 - The N&S should be presented as two self-contained documents: Norms for Evaluation; and Standards for Evaluation.
 - The Norms should be seen as abiding principles, while the Standards should be adopted as a living document that is expected to evolve in response to methodological advances.
- The N&S should be presented as a UNEG product, therefore a more appropriate title would be: UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System; and UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System.

17. The plenary agreed that the Task Force on Norms and Standards should incorporate the comments and recommendations discussed in a revised version that should be distributed to participants. It was agreed that the new version of the N&S will be discussed during the last day of the Meeting.

Session 2: Evaluation Policies and Institutional Issues

18. This Session was chaired by Caroline Heider, Deputy Director, Evaluation Office of IFAD; experiences presented by FAO, IFAD, WFP, UNDP.

19. Main aspects of FAO's Evaluation Policy, presented by John Markie, Director Evaluation Service, highlighted the following issues:

- FAO's Evaluation Policy is an evolving document. It covers the purpose, institutional framework, coverage and modalities of evaluation, and excludes monitoring and review.
- It is a formative policy aimed at enhancing accountability on results; and decision making for the benefit of FAO member countries.
- The evaluation policy is implemented, principally, by the FAO Evaluation Service whose main functions include, inter alia; evaluations for the governing body, evaluation of extra budgetary resources and self evaluations.

- Evaluations for the governing body are independent and reported to Governing Body Committee.
- All evaluations for the governing body are disclosed to the public in all UN languages.
- The policy ensures that a combination of independent and auto evaluation covers all programmatic work over a six year cycle, of which approximately one third is covered through independent evaluation.
- Quality assurance is carried out through reviewing all TORs and reports.

20. Mr. Kees Tuinenburg, Director of the Office of Evaluation, presented WFP's Evaluation Policy remarking that:

- The Evaluation Policy of WFP was approved by the Executive Board in 2003 with the main objective of fostering and enhancing an evaluation culture throughout the organization. Accountability and learning, in a context of independence, underpin the corporate evaluation function.
- Three levels of evaluations are recognized in WFP: self evaluations; evaluations managed by the Regional Bureaux or by country offices; and evaluations managed by the Office of Evaluation.
- The Office of Evaluation is committed to ensure independence; it reports directly to the Board and to the Executive Director. In this context, the Office of Evaluation, which is located in the Office of the Executive Director and within the RBM Division, is autonomous in the conduction of evaluations.
- Evaluations are undertaken by external evaluators; reports are available to public through the website of the Evaluation Office.

21. Ms. Caroline Heider, Deputy Director of the IFAD's Office of Evaluation presented the main features of the Evaluation Policy of the Fund:

- The main purpose, as stated in the Evaluation Policy document, is to promote accountability, through independent evaluation; and to generate learning in partnership with others.
- The policy outlines the role of the Executive Board, its Evaluation Committee, and the Terms of Reference of the Director of the Office of Evaluation.
- Key principles include: i) independence, meaning not reporting to management and autonomy in the planning and conduction of evaluations; ii) accountability implying assessment of results, impact and performance; and full public disclosure of all reports; iii) partnership between the main stakeholders, and iv) learning through a process intended to deepen understanding of recommendations, and promoting their implementation.

22. Mr. Nurul Alam, Deputy Director of the Evaluation Office explained the process that UNDP is undertaking in order to formulate a corporate Evaluation Policy: he mentioned that:

- The process of formulating an Evaluation Policy for UNDP included broad consultation through extensive practice surveys, workshops (including over 50 governments and 100 country offices), and a corporate discussion fora.
- The Evaluation Policy is expected to include clear principles and directives, namely:
 - Evaluation to be responsive to different contexts and to be aligned with national development priorities;
 - Evaluation to be aimed at supporting the attainment of MDGs and UN System objectives;
 - Evaluation processes to be conducive to ensuring ownership by stakeholders;
 - Methodological aspects to guarantee common understanding of concepts, terminology and instruments; and clarity on approaches and instruments.
 - Principles should allow flexibility and room for innovation and adaptation.
- The Evaluation Policy is expected to approach the evaluation function in a strategic and substantive way promoting both accountability and learning; and to provide an institutional basis for assessment in managing for results.
- The core principles defined for evaluation in UNDP are impartiality and independence, credibility, transparency, partnership, feedback and dissemination, and quality standards.

Plenary discussion

23. Main points and issues raised by participants as part of the plenary discussion:

- The term independence would need to be unpacked. From presentations it was seen that agencies' interpretation of independence varies significantly. Approaches to independent evaluation become meaningful when linked to relevance, enhancement, feedback, consistency, usefulness, partnership and learning; and when not confined to who conducts the evaluation.
- IFAD, illustrating the participatory dimension of their Independent Evaluation, mentioned that in this agency, each evaluation includes a Core Learning Partnership (CLP) composed by representatives of different stakeholders. The CLP members discuss the findings and recommendations to decide on actions to be taken in follow-up to the evaluation.
- Self evaluations are to be seen as complementary to independent evaluations; information generated through the former should be used as a basis and entry point for planning and implementing the latter.
- Evaluation should allow organizational learning at various levels. For ensuring usefulness, mechanisms for following up evaluation reports and for tracking adoption of recommendations should be put in place.

- Interdependencies and complementarities between accountability and learning appear to differ among agencies. It was agreed however, that learning and accountability are, or should be, mutually reinforcing. The challenge is to find the right balance.
- For addressing learning, main questions to be posed are: Who learns? What is being learned? How is learning being applied? For improving learning “old” institutional assumptions deserve to be challenged.
- Strategies for disseminating evaluation findings and lessons learned need to be unfolded, codified and agreed upon. Most agencies have adopted the policy to make evaluation reports public. Does the same policy apply for evaluations revealing failures?
- A basic premise underpinning decentralization of the evaluation function is the need to inform decision making, recognizing the fact that decision making occurs at different levels.
- Quality assurance of evaluation is a condition for credibility.

24. In the final part of the session, it was agreed that agencies will share their evaluation budgets as well as data on percentages of recommendations actually implemented.

Session 3: Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance

25. This Session was chaired by Mr. Tuinenburg from WFP. Presentations were held by DANIDA and ALNAP.

26. Mr. Niels Dabelstein, Head of DANIDA’s Evaluation Department, presented “The evolution of the evaluation of humanitarian assistance”.

27. The presentation comprised several key issues, among others:

- Humanitarian aid evaluation differs from other type of evaluation in the sense that they imply a much wider approach. An important factor to take into account is the significant number of organizations frequently involved in the delivery of the aid.
- The importance of formulating an exit strategy -- connectedness -- rather than seeking for sustainability. In humanitarian evaluations “sustainability” could only be understood as defining the moment when humanitarian assistance is no longer needed.
- Fast development of humanitarian assistance evaluation; a series of guidelines surfaced after the Rwanda evaluation guide the process.

28. Mr. John Mitchell Head of ALNAP presented: Key Findings from ALNAP Review of Humanitarian Action 2000-2005 – Meta Evaluation.

- A Quality Proforma for the Meta Evaluation was developed which included the assessment of the quality of: i) terms of reference; ii) methods and practice; iii) contextual analysis and the intervention; iv) the report.

- In relation to quality assurance it was mentioned that quality is essential in humanitarian evaluation. Experience has demonstrated that good quality evaluations lead to better humanitarian assistance, however quality makes little difference if evaluations are not used.
- Generic weaknesses relate to poor methodologies and little consultation with beneficiaries; gaps in implementation of recommendations; poor attention to cross cutting issues e.g. gender, among others.
- Relative strengths refer to good coordination, sufficient human resources and quality of management.
- Steps forward and challenges: more involvement of managers, continued decentralisation of evaluations to desk and country levels; more focus on sectoral and policy related evaluations and on joint evaluations.

29. The ALNAP presentation further stressed the lack of attention to protection issues. Evaluations of humanitarian aid are often too involved in looking at processes and sometimes miss the more eminent issues, such as life-threatening circumstances often prevalent in emergency situations. The final point made in the ALNAP presentation related to the fact that humanitarian assistance is highly complex and difficult to measure and compare.

Plenary discussion

30. The discussion that followed the presentations touched on several of the key issues brought forward. The areas discussed were:

- Learning from evaluation is weak; the need for formulating a common ground for developing a strategy for learning was emphasized.
- Post aid (transition) must improve. Concentration is needed on coping strategies and re-building of institutions.
- Humanitarian assistance evaluations have much stronger influence on policy makers than other evaluations. Therefore evaluation can play a strong advocacy role and this should be used more for positive change. Lessons for informing other types of evaluations should be derived.
- The ALNAP assessment does not allow for benchmarking between the different organizations included, but contributed to producing “good practice” examples.
- More participatory methods are needed in the evaluation of humanitarian assistance.

Session 4: Real Time Evaluation (RTE)

31. Four organizations presented their experiences with RTE. The presentations were given by Mr. Lefevre, WFP, Mr. Verwey from UNHCR, Mr. Back from UNICEF and Ms. Frueh from OCHA. This session was chaired by Mr. Kees Tuinenburg from WFP.

WFP: A proposal outlining a conceptual framework

32. The presentation started by posing the question: Why are RTE different? It was explained that the difference relates mainly, however not exclusively, to the context where humanitarian interventions take place. Emergencies require immediate large-scale response, flexibility and adaptation to rapidly evolving situations. In RTE it is also important to consider that no baseline data or specific parameters for comparisons should be expected and that ex post reconstruction of data is difficult if not impossible.

UNHCR: RTE of rapidly evolving humanitarian operations – frequently asked questions, April 2002, based on four RTEs.

- Main characteristics of RTEs are their interactiveness and the fact that they are expected to produce an early and immediate contribution. A high degree of flexibility for adapting to circumstances as they evolve is another important feature. RTE are to be seen as internal and formative processes where evaluators act mainly as facilitators.
- RTEs for UNHCR entail the main purpose of gauging the effectiveness and impact of a given emergency response or repatriation operation. It is aimed at being an immediate catalyst for improvements in organisational and operational performance.
- The strategy involves mechanisms for ensuring the validation and use of findings as well as of recommendations.
 - As the main advantages of RTEs, according to the experience of UNHCR, the following were mentioned: Timeliness: at the initial phase of operation and when strategic decisions are to be done.
 - Perspective: emergency to be approached from different angles; evaluators to be seen as a repository of knowledge to be applied in response to the specificities of each real time evaluations.
 - Evaluation format to be interactive for real time evaluation to actually occur.

OCHA: Real Time Evaluation – Darfur

- The experience was based on Jan Egeland's initiative calling on agencies to participate in RTE. A core learning group was created to interact with CARE and OCHA. It counted with the participation of FAO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNIFEM, WFP and WHO,
- What worked well? The team demonstrated a strong ability to adapt the evaluation process to emerging events and to political realities; it also revealed a significant capacity for identifying systemic issues that needed to be addressed.
- What did not work so well? The experience showed that it was rather difficult to cope with the defensiveness shown by some actors in the field; that little time was devoted to focus on substantive issues; and that the tension between focusing on agency-specific details and becoming too general appeared difficult to deal with.

- The main challenges mentioned referred to i) striking the right balance between providing value-added for the on-going operation and providing external evaluation feed-back; ii) getting better engagement by the agencies and at the field level;
- How could it be improved? It was mentioned that in future experiences it would be worth including a testing method of appreciative inquiry to reduce field resistance; and finding ways for ensuring stronger research capacity.

UNICEF: Desk review of RTE experience

33. A RTE experience in the frame of the DFID project *Capacity Building for Humanitarian Assistance* in Liberia was presented. The RTE was implemented by staff of the Evaluation office and the Office of Internal Audit. The experience was characterized by its rapid response and by its short duration. Main focus was on UNICEF's Country Office performance; and lessons learned were formulated to benefit the corporate level. The methodology is expected to be codified and disseminated by 2006. In addition:

- As basic principles for RTE were mentioned: these types of evaluations are to be approached as light exercises with a flexible focus ("a la carte"). RTE are expected to provide immediate feedback to the Country Office, drawing on lessons learned and ensuring wide dissemination.
- The main challenges highlighted based on the experience presented were: to be aware of the risk of conducting, in practice, a "snapshot evaluation"; establishing quality standards; determining the cost / benefit relationship and finding the ways for linking evaluation process with learning.

Plenary discussion

34. A number of key points from the discussion that followed were raised:

- Flexibility is a key issue for real time evaluations; for ensuring flexible approaches, appropriate frameworks are required.
- In RTE documenting "what works" is key for learning from experience, especially for deriving lessons that could be used by the various organizations involved. Lessons learned are also expected to inform methodological approaches to RTE.
- When designing and planning RTE it is important to identify the key issues to focus on, to be realistic about what can be achieved (the limits of ambition).
- Should external consultants be used in RTE? The constantly emerging and changing context over a long period of time implies high costs if employing external consultants.

Session 5: Evaluation of Multilateral Organizations – External Independent Evaluations.

35. This session was chaired by Mr. Markie from FAO. Presentations were given by IFAD, UNCDF and WFP on their experience in evaluation of multilateral organizations.

36. Mr. Ashwani Muthoo, Senior Evaluation Officer of IFAD's Evaluation Office, highlighted the ambition of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of IFAD recognizing it as the first truly independent and external assessment of the Fund. The IEE included a review of IFAD's performance over the period 1994-2003, and included an unprecedented level of transparency and interaction through the process. Consequently, it was noted to be a lengthy process, initiated in December 2003 with consultations, with six deliverables as of April 2005. The recruitment of consultants was done through a 'technical evaluation panel' whose recommendation was endorsed by the IEE Steering Committee.

37. Mr. Stefan Rummel– Shapiro, Evaluation Specialist of UNCDF's Evaluation Unit, presented the results of the independent impact assessment (IIA) conducted in 2003 and 2004. The overall objectives were to assess and report to the Board whether UNCDF is performing as an effective, efficient and sustainable organization that has remained relevant in carrying out its mandate to reduce poverty. It also analyzed whether UNCDF had responded appropriately to implement a policy shift made in 1995, which narrowed the organization's focus to Microfinance and Local Governance interventions. The IIA was informed by two distinct processes: the Organizational Performance Assessment and the Programme Impact Assessment of UNCDF's Microfinance and Local Governance interventions. Findings were positive in terms of the policy and the poverty impact, the sustainability of interventions, and UNCDF strategic positioning at country level. The findings were being used by Senior Management to explore new business models and inspiring the on-going reprofiling exercise. However, the results of the independent assessment– even positive - did not solve for the time being. UNCDF's core problem, the financial viability.

38. Mr. Kees Tuinenburg, Director of the Evaluation Office explained that the joint evaluation of WFP was carried out under the supervision of a Steering Committee consisting of evaluators from the seven sponsoring donor countries and the Director of Evaluation at WFP. The evaluation was considered to be conducted at an international standard. However, at the conception stage, no real efforts had been undertaken to get buy-in from the Executive Board of WFP, although all members had been invited to join the initiating group. During the two year duration of the evaluation, consensus could not be reached in the Board on a formal discussion on the products of the evaluation, and thus the Board as a whole has yet to formally recognize the evaluation. Nevertheless, the majority of country directors judged the country evaluations to have been very useful indeed. Corporately, the findings and recommendations are taken into consideration by the secretariat in the preparation of various strategic and policy papers and management plans. In conclusion, it was seen to be an excellent evaluation technically, but with the political implications somewhat underestimated. The official transmittal of the final report is expected in May.

Plenary discussion

39. The issue of ownership was discussed and it was pointed out that evaluations that initiate without the support of the executive board or senior management face a lack of ownership to a higher degree than otherwise. Key points from the discussion that followed the presentations were as follows:

- An area that triggered intense discussions was the resource issues that follow an initiative of this nature. The mere scale of this type of evaluation translates into high amounts of time and funds.
- It was widely recognized that IEE are useful and relevant as it takes a holistic overview of the performance and impact of a given institution. However, some questions on the value added of these evaluations actually bring were also posed and the example of World Bank was brought forward. The World Bank has a substantial independent evaluation function and other evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms; accordingly, there is little demand for external evaluations.
- It was further pointed out that there is no link between the outcome of the evaluation (e.g. the usefulness) and the cost of conducting the evaluation. One opinion on this subject was that the cost-effectiveness of this type of evaluations could be measured by the seriousness of the senior management in implementing the recommendations.
- The discussions also touched on the fact that an independent external evaluation is more credible than an internal one in the eyes of the member states and that a quality stamp is needed in the evaluation units in the different organizations.

Multilateral Organizations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)

40. Mr. Back from UNICEF followed by Ms. Menon from UNDP, gave a short presentation of the MOPAN assessment. As a basic feature, it was mentioned that the MOPAN assessment is carried out in the field by circulating questionnaires to embassy staff regarding their perceptions of different multilateral organizations.

41. The presentation was followed by an intense discussion on the value and weight of this perception based assessment. The MOPAN assessment was seen as having a highly uneven focus, methodology and quality between MOPANs in different countries. It was pointed out that the results of MOPAN sometimes coincide with the results from more rigorous evaluations, but relying on MOPAN results alone as an assessment is risky because of its perceptive nature.

42. MOPAN was said to have been partly misused and should be reduced to what it actually is. Some participants in this session felt that the MOPAN assessment is very useful in providing the views of organizations at the country level and that it, therefore, fills an important function.

43. Towards the end of the session several observers (Executive Board members of IFAD, FAO and WFP) shared their opinions highlighting that the necessary information is not evidently being generated by the UN evaluation offices, which is why MOPAN has gained such credence among donors. It was also stated that many problems attached to the UN system as it stands today arise from the lack of evidence of

the UN System efficiency. There are also problems of inter-agency competition which is why evidence from alternative sources is sought by donors.

Session 6: Endorsement of the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation

44. This session aimed at reviewing and approving the final draft of the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. The session was chaired by Ms. Saraswathi Menon, UNEG Chair and Director of the Evaluation Office at UNDP.

45. The process implied collectively reading the documents and agreeing on changes based on suggestions made by participants. As a result of the session, the UNEG Norms and the UNEG Standards for Evaluation were endorsed by consensus.

Session 7: The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (TCPR), future of UNEG and the Work Programme for 2006-2009.

46. The session was chaired by Nurul Alam, UNEG Secretary and Deputy Director of UNDP's Evaluation Office.

47. Mr. Massimo D'Angelo, Chief, Development Cooperation Policy of UNDESA started by posing the question: Why should members of UNEG pay attention to the TCPR and GA/ECOSOC resolutions? He initiated by mentioning the strong focus TCPR has in the present for long term development and humanitarian action. He then stated that TCPR explicitly supports evaluation and that it is increasingly focusing on evaluation as a central component of the UN development cooperation. It was also mentioned that the TCPR demands for evaluation as critical input to the policy review process. Some other points strongly addressed as relevant for UNEG referred to the fact that TCPR is calling for a system wide approach to evaluation and that in 2004, the GA confirmed the request for an assessment of the overall effectiveness of the UN system. The presentation also described the scope of the TCPR evaluation work for 2005-2007: an overall assessment of the effectiveness of UN system's development cooperation.

48. The presentation on the TCPR was followed by interventions of participants which mainly asked for clarifications. Questions referred to the availability of the necessary capabilities for facing the challenges implied in the TCPR for 2005 -2007; the definition or understanding of impact, among others. It was emphasized that the UNEG could support through the identification of relevant issues in the TCPR analysis and getting appropriate recommendations adopted.

49. The next portion of the session was aimed at discussing and agreeing on key issues regarding the future of UNEG. Mr. Nurul Alam, on behalf of the Secretariat, emphasized that UNEG has generated a wide sense of ownership amongst the organizations and that the participation has increased considerably in the last years. He also mentioned that relevant discussions are being held, regularly, in the UNEVALFORUM. Finally the need for agencies to contribute with financial resources was highlighted for maintaining a professionally managed and service focused secretariat. A progress report of the UNEG Secretariat for the period April 2004- April 2005 was circulated.

50. Each of the Topical Sessions chairs reported on the main issues, conclusions and where appropriate, agreements. The minutes of the topical sessions can be found as well as other reference materials, in the UNEG webpage. A number of the actionable issues were taken up at the latest sessions in the establishing of the Task Forces for 2005.

Issues related to the future of UNEG, presentation made by the chair, Ms. Saraswathi Menon, Director of the Evaluation Office of UNDP.

51. Ms. Menon stated that UNEG is a professional Network consisting of the evaluation units of all UN system organizations spanning development, humanitarian, normative and other mandates.

52. She mentioned that UNEG is committed towards the professionalization of the evaluation function in the UN System. An indicator of this commitment is the development of the Norms and Standards for Evaluation, endorsed in this Meeting. In the future, she remarked UNEG should demonstrate a higher concern on knowledge sharing, advancement of methodologies, innovation, delivery of high quality products and strategically working with partners.

53. A number of issues that would help to enhance cooperation among members were mentioned: staff exchange, peer reviews, capacity development, meta evaluations, joint evaluations, harmonization and simplification, among others. Some effort towards cooperation has been initiated, however, a need for more strategic and systematic work is needed.

54. In relation to different ways UNEG could improve its ways of working, the Chair suggested:

- Annual Meetings to be both thematic and objective driven; and if possible, scheduled back to back with other Network meetings i.e. DAC.
- Interim: Working groups with more clear objectives, results and products.
- To develop and exchange strategies and ideas for innovation.
- To formulate or make more explicit a partnership strategy.

55. The last issue addressed by the UNEG Chair referred to the governance of UNEG. In the interest of deepening and broadening the governance, she suggested the following alternatives: rotate chair with a permanent secretariat, continue present scheme with broader governance; or rotate chair and secretariat.

56. In addition, the following points were highlighted:

- UNDP is committed to professionalize the UNEG Secretariat.
- The importance of ensuring resources and of promoting resource mobilization;
- The relevance of developing strategies conducive to knowledge management;
- The necessity of defining or unfolding criteria for membership, and for clarifying the role of observers.

Agreements

- A draft "Constitution/ways of working" for UNEG will be prepared by the Secretariat with the collaboration of some of the UNEG members and presented at the UNEG 2006 meeting for endorsement. This will establish, clearly, the modus operandi of UNEG including governance.
- It was agreed that UNDP will continue chairing UNEG and providing the Secretariat function. The chairs of the working groups and UNESCO in its role of host Agency for the 2006 Meeting will work as the board of UNEG.
- Preparation of 2006 annual meeting: the Meeting will be hosted by UNESCO. The UNEG Secretariat will begin consultations with DAC Network and French Government on partnership event in Paris.
- As the Norms and Standards Group have successfully finalized their work, the task force was disbanded.
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 - Evaluation Capacity Development co chaired by UNODC, UNICEF and UNESCO. Deliverables: compilation of ECD service providers and contents for basic training modules for UN Evaluators.
 - Quality Stamp for Evaluation, co chaired by UNIDO and WFP. As follow-up to Norms and Standards, all agencies committed to conduct self evaluations. This task force will cover peer reviews and DAC related multilateral quality initiatives, among other things.
 - Country Level Evaluations, co chaired by UNDP, DESA, FAO and OCHA. Deliverables: Issues and options paper and some concrete cooperation, possibly including evaluability assessment of UNDAF results matrix and joint country level evaluations on specific themes.
 - RBM and Evaluation, co chaired by WIPO and OIOS; deliverable: issues and options paper.

Annex 1 - UNEG Task Forces 2005 (as of May 20, 2005)

Task Force	Organization	Name	Role	
Evaluation Capacity Development	UNODC	Backson Sibanda	Co-Chair	
	UNESCO	Alaphia Wright	Co-Chair	
	UNICEF	Jean Quesnel	Co-Chair	
	CTBTO	Silvia Alamo	Member	
	ILO	Carla Henry	Member	
	DESA	Jana Ricasio	Member	
	IOM	Christophe Franzetti	Member	
	UNIDO		Member	
	UNEP		Member	
	UNDP	Sukai Prom-Jackson	Member	
	OIOS	Demetra Arapakos	Member	
	RBM and Evaluation	WIPO	Maya Bachner	Co-Chair
		OIOS	Eddie Yee Woo Guo	Co-Chair
CTBTO		Anguel Anastassov	Member	
IOM		Christophe Franzetti	Member	
WMO		Tomiji Mizutani	Member	
UNIFEM		Elena Marcelino	Member	
UNIDO			Member	
IFAD		Caroline Heider	Member	
WFP		Michael Usnick	Member	
UNFIP			Member	
UNAIDS		Marina Bezruchenko-Novachuk	Member	
DESA		Juliet Wasswa-Mugambwa	Member	
UNICEF		Samuel Bickel	Member	
UNCDF			Member	
ITC		Ashish Shah	Member	
UNHABITAT	Martin Barugahare	Member		

	UNDP	David Rider Smith	Member
	OCHA	Claude Hilfiker	Member
Quality Stamp for Evaluation	UNIDO	Donatella Magliani	Co-Chair
	WFP	Kees Tuinenburg	Co-Chair
	IFAD	Ashwani Muthoo	Member
	UNFIP		Member
	ILO	Carla Henry	Member
	IOM	Christophe Franzetti	Member
	UNESCO	Alaphia Wright	Member
	UNCTAD	Masa Igarashi	Member
	UNDP	Nurul Alam	Member
	UNICEF	Jean Quesnel	Member
	GEF	Rob D. van den Berg	Member
	OCHA		Member
	UNCDF		Member
	FAO	Rachel Sauvinet Bedouin	Member
	UNFIP		Member
	OIOS	Eddie Yee Woo Guo	Member
Country Level Evaluations	DESA	Maurice Clapisson	Co-Chair
	FAO	John Markie Rachel Sauvinet Bedouin	Co-Chair
	OCHA	Susanne Frueh	Co-Chair
	UNDP	Fadzai Gwaradzimba Saraswathi Menon	Co-Chair
	UNICEF	Lucien Back	Member
	IAEA		Member
	UNCTAD	Masa Igarashi	Member
	UNCDF		Member
Constitution/Ways of Working	UNEG Secretariat	Saraswathi Menon	Chair
	UNHCR	Anton Verwey	Member
	WFP	Kees Tuinenburg	Member

	DESA	Maurice Clapisson	Member
	OIOS	Eddie Yee Woo Guo	Member
	IFAD	Luciano Lavizzari	Member
	UNICEF	Jean Quesnel	Member
	CTBTO	Silvia Alamo	Member
	UNIFEM	Elena Marcelino	Member
	GEF	Rob D. van den Berg	Member
	WIPO	Maya Bachner	Member
	OCHA	Susanne Frueh	Member
UNEG Secretariat	UNDP	Nurul Alam	Secretary
	UNDP	Ada Ocampo	Task Manager
	UNDP	Flora Jimenez	Admin. Assistant

Annex II: UNEG AGM Questionnaire Analysis Summary

57. The Annual meeting of the UNEG for 2005 was supported by the Secretariat of UNEG located in the Evaluation Office of UNDP and hosted by FAO, WFP and IFAD. The Meeting took place from 26 - 29 April 2005, in Rome, Italy at FAO Headquarters. A total of seventy-six participants (including observers) attended the meeting from over thirty UN agencies. Of the total participants, sixty were regular participants from which a questionnaire was polled.

58. Forty percent of the sixty participants completed a questionnaire, a total of 24 responses were received. The overall rating of the meeting, in terms of objectives, relevance, quality and logistics was good to excellent, scoring 1.8 on a scale of 1 – 5 (with 1 being excellent, 5 being unsatisfactory). Of the four areas, the question of whether objectives of the meeting were met ranked the highest (1.70), with relevance of topics (1.74), organization of the meeting (1.78) and quality of presentations (2.0) ranking second, third and fourth, respectively.

59. As for comments solicited on the combination of plenary and topical discussions and whether or not this was well balanced, sixty-five percent responded “Yes”, with some commenting that there all topics should be plenary while others said that there should be more working groups with less plenary. The overarching message was that these sessions/discussions should be more results-oriented.

60. With regards to the sessions that participants found more interesting or relevant, the great majority emphatically stated that the discussion and endorsement of the Norms and Standards for Evaluation was best. This was followed by the evaluation of humanitarian assistance, Real Time Evaluation, Evaluation Policies, Evaluation of Multilateral Organizations and the MOPAN respectively.

61. When asked what suggestions regarding the structure and format of the meetings could be made, the responses were varied and many, from using round tables to avoiding parallel meetings to allowing more time in working groups. The most iterated comment was that the work should produce concrete outputs/outcomes, such as the adoption of Norms and Standards. Working groups would then bring back concrete results back to plenary.

62. Lastly, most of the general comments involved congratulating the meeting, especially highlighting how well organized it had been. Participants also commented what a great learning opportunity it was to not only have smaller agencies learn from others, but also to exchange with colleagues.