

Managing for Development Results

“Joint Learning Event on MfDR”

1st Progress Report January to July 2009

Submitted by **GTZ and MDF Training & Consultancy**
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Joint Learning Event on MfDR

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Executive Summary

MDF Training & Consultancy was contracted by GTZ to design and deliver ten training courses aimed primarily at senior staff of governments, development partners as well as civil society organisations. The objective of these courses reads: Participants are familiar with the concepts of MfDR and know how to apply these concepts in their personal, institutional and political context.

This report covers the preparation phase as well as the two JLE-MfDR pilot courses delivered in the first half of 2009. The third course will be conducted in Tanzania in September 2009.

Participation

To-date in 2009, two pilot courses have been conducted, in Zambia (19-21 May 2009) and Uganda (30 June-2 July). In Zambia, the country office of GTZ took over the role of lead donor in-country, where as in Uganda Austria together with Belgium acted as in-country lead donors.

A total of 74 staff have been trained with 32 (43%) from government, 29 (39%) from donor agencies, 13 (18%) from civil society organisations/private sector. The average of 37 participants per course is slightly above the target of 35. Participation of staff of civil society organisations and private sector was below target (18 % instead of, roughly, 30%).

The training team

Two trainers and one resource person delivered both pilot courses:

1. Dick van Blitterswijk, senior specialist MfDR, based in the Netherlands.
2. Loisa Kitakaya, trainer from MDF East and South Africa, based in Kenya.
3. Peter Ssentongo, resource person from the Centre for Performance Management and Evaluative Research (CPMER), based in Uganda.

In the first course, Herman Snelder, lead facilitator of the JLE-MfDR, was also part of the implementation team. To enable a proper kick-off of the events it was agreed that both lead facilitator and the senior specialist on MfDR act as trainers. As agreed previously, in the forthcoming courses it will be either of them.

The process up-to-date

In a competitive tender process according to international regulations MDF was identified as the consultant to implement the JLE on MfDR. An inception workshop was held in March in Kandersteg where the Executive Committee had the possibility to discuss the future design and contents of the JLE together with the consultants. This procedure was felt to be highly advantageous.

The courses themselves have taken participants through a 3-day MfDR Joint Learning Event:

- starting with general MfDR concepts, definitions and key milestones in MfDR thinking (OECD/DAC Policy Brief, High Level Forums, Round Tables);
- practising with specific MfDR tools (Result Chains and Key Performance Indicators, for Shared Goals and Objectives as well as use of information for Evidence-Based Learning and Decision Making);
- looking at the CAPScan (to review MfDR available capacity) and debating leadership aspects;
- culminating in the preparation of individual/sector action plans that identified the ‘vital few’ actions that they thought were most relevant and feasible to initiate after the course.

These country action plans form the basis for the follow-up work, which lies in the responsibility of the in-country lead donor.

Participant feedback on course delivery

Both pilot courses have been well appreciated by the participants. On average participants rated¹:

- Achievement of course objectives as: 3.4
- Content and Methodology as: 3.3
- Training Preparations and Logistics as: 3.2
- Trainer and resource person performance as: 3.3

Experiences and adjustments to course design

From the trainers' perspective too the courses can be judged as very successful in terms of the quality of delivery achieved and engagement of participants in the training process. After course follow-up will remain a challenge for all concerned parties.

The cooperation between EC-GTZ-MDF-lead donors works well.

Improvements are still possible in the following areas:

- Examples and tailoring of the events
- Develop case studies that illustrate examples with more (obvious) relevance (MDF will provide clear guidance to future resource persons in this regard)
- More and better use of country specific documents, e.g. PRSP
- Ensure that (part of) the personal action plan include realistic, individual goals that can be reached in the next months (and are suitable for a follow up)
- All materials should be developed in way that they can, as much as feasible, also be used as a self-use learning manual
- The identification of suitable host countries is still a challenge and alternative ways of promoting the events will have to be sought.

Financial issues

By July 2009, commitments up to the total sum of EUR 481,000 Euro have been made to finance the JLEs-MfDR. The eight co-financing donors are: Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany. So far, not all agreements have been submitted countersigned and only some of the commitments of the co-financing donors have been transferred to the account of GTZ International Services. This has to be followed up.

¹ 1= very poor, 2= poor, 3=good, 4= excellent

Introduction

1.1 Overview

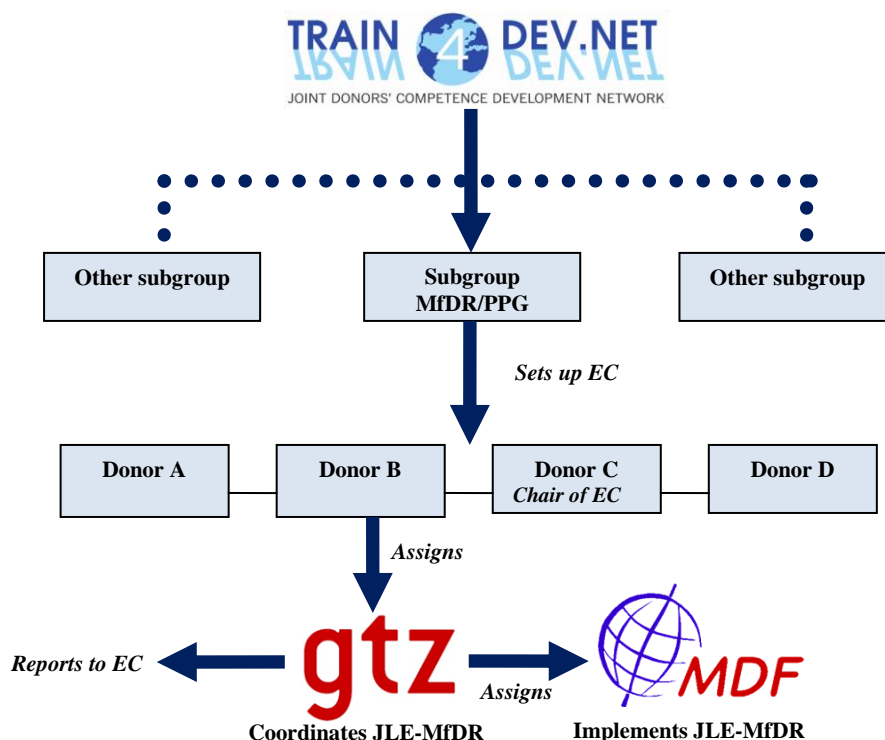
This First Progress Report on JLE-MfDR is prepared in compliance with the requirements of the contract between GTZ and MDF Training & Consultancy. The report is structured as follows:

- In this section 1 we present the objectives for this training programme in logframe format, with a summary of progress against relevant logframe indicators and the work plan
- In section 2 we present summary data about the participants who have attended the courses run to-date during 2009
- In section 3 we present our conclusions concerning the strengths and weaknesses of course preparations
- In section 4 we present the course evaluation data and analysis based on the course evaluation sheets completed by participants
- In section 5 we present a summary of the financial status of the contract

Detailed course evaluation ratings and comments provided by course participants, workshop outputs produced during the two pilot training courses in the first half of 2009 have been presented in separate documents (“course documentation”), which were shared with participants and members of the EC. The course documentations have also been published on the Train4Dev homepage (www.train4dev.net).

1.2 Roles and responsibilities of EC, GTZ, MDF Training & Consultancy

As the chart below illustrates, the JLE-MfDR is a programme of the joint Subgroup “MfDR/Pro Poor Growth“, within the Train4Dev network. This subgroup has established an Executive Committee (EC), comprising of the eight co-financing donors from Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany, to steer the Joint Learning Event on MfDR. The German Technical Cooperation/ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) has been assigned as lead agency for the JLE-MfDR.



The **Executive Committee** (EC), comprising of interested representatives of the co-financing donors, carries overall responsibility for directing the JLE, taking major decisions and acting as a Quality Assurance Group. Parallel to the JLE-MfDR, the EC also carries responsibility for a parallel Train4Dev JLE on Pro-Poor Growth.

As **lead agency** for the JLE, GTZ coordinates the activities on behalf of the EC, is responsible for practical arrangements, such as contracting consultants, organising the events and handling of funds. GTZ reports to the EC and ensures professional documentation of each event.

MDF Training and Consultancy is contracted to conceptualise, prepare for and conduct the JLE, both pedagogically and logistically, and to act as facilitator during its implementation. On content and logistics of the assignment, the consultant liaises with the Executive Committee (EC) through the lead agency GTZ. With regard to implementation of the courses, the consultant liaises with the lead donor in the country where the course is held.

1.3 Objectives of the Joint Learning Events on MfDR

The objective of the JLE reads: "Participants are familiar with the concepts of MfDR and know how to apply these concepts in their personal, institutional and political context."

By achieving this objective a contribution will be made to further strengthen the MfDR approach within governments and development agencies and to thereby enhance the poverty outcomes and impacts of development initiatives.

In the inception report a logframe was presented, which is again presented here together with a brief assessment of progress to-date against relevant logframe indicators.

Figure 1: JLE-MfDR logframe and summary of progress

Objectives	Indicators		Assumptions	
	Target	Progress as at July 2009	Desired state	Actual state as at July 2009
GOALS-IMPACT MfDR approach within governments and development agencies strengthened, which will contribute to enhanced poverty outcomes and impact of development initiatives.	Number of concrete examples of MfDR applications by the concerned organisations and institutions in management of sector programmes, general budget support and/or other development interventions	Too early to assess	N/A	N/A
PURPOSE-OUTCOMES Participants are willing and able to apply (components of) an MfDR approach in their personal, institutional and political context.	1, In each country, at least 50% of action plan tasks are implemented relating to organizational practices supporting an MfDR approach; 2. Appreciation of achievements (related to action plans ²) by lead donor.	Too early to assess; currently part of follow-up of pilot courses	Course participants have sufficient authority & influence to advocate successfully for MfDR organisational practices in their respective organizations. Identified actions are sufficiently in line with country MfDR priorities and policies	Participants in Uganda clearly seem to have sufficient authority & influence to make MfDR move. For Zambia it is still too early to assess. Action planning in Zambia seemed to be more in line with the country agenda than in Uganda.

<p>OUTPUTS Participants are familiar with the MfDR approach and the underlying concepts and principles</p> <p>Participants understand the implications for their own organization.</p> <p>Participants have identified practices in line with MfDR as well as those that can be improved</p> <p>Participants have got new ideas how to improve those (good examples).</p> <p>Participants have identified realistic follow-up steps towards a strengthened MfDR approach</p>	<p>General evaluation of the courses.</p> <p>Appreciation of participants of their own learning during the course (scoring linked to these outputs)</p>	<p>Appreciation of courses is high. Achievement of training objectives as well as relevance for own work score on average 3.4.</p> <p>General understanding of MfDR as well as more practical sessions on result chains and kpi's are regularly mentioned as valuable sessions.</p> <p>Action plans: too early to assess but action plans in Zambia seem to be slightly more realistic than those in Uganda. Follow-up in both cases is required.</p>	<p>In-course analysis & development of action plans reflects a valid assessment of opportunities & constraints towards MfDR</p>	<p>The joint character and the representation of different key actors in the sectors seem important contributions to the validity of the assessment of opportunities and constraints towards MfDR.</p> <p>While the focus in Zambia was more on operational aspects (tools, methods), in Uganda leadership, mandates, co-ordination, holding actors accountable, were some of the MfDR aspects that were heavily debated. This might very well reflect the "MfDR-state of the art" in both countries, Uganda starting already quite some years ago with Result Oriented Management.</p>
<p>ACTIVITIES See work plan</p>			<p>1. Donors and partner countries make their senior staff available to attend the training courses 2. Monitoring forums (or equivalent joint forums) acknowledge course as part of their ongoing dialogue</p>	<p>Staff was available to attend.</p> <p>In both countries sector working groups exist with all key actors represented, which seem the appropriate forum to monitor follow-up.</p> <p>Necessary to establish better connection to Communities of Practice</p>

1.4 Progress against the work plan

Figure 2 below presents the listing of activities planned for the first half of 2009, and a summary of progress against each activity. This listing is based on the activity planning as included in the inception report as well as the planning update, agreed during the EC meeting in Kandersteg, Switzerland, 12-13 March 2009.

Figure 2: Work plan and progress for the reporting period – January to July 2009

Tentative implementation schedule 2009	
Activity	Period
1. Discussion and agreement with GTZ on technical and financial proposal	Contract signed on 11 March 2009
2. Design course flow and samples of materials	Included in approved inception report
3. Submission inception report, including course flow and samples of materials	Draft submitted on deadline: 09 March, 2009
4. Update of inception report (Incorporate comments and suggestions and complete course design)	New deadline inception report, 25 March. Inception report submitted and approved.
5. Arrangements with in-country lead donor(s) for two pilot courses	March-April 2009. GTZ acted as lead donor in Zambia and the Austrian Development Cooperation and the Belgium Technical Cooperation acted as lead donors in Uganda
ToR resource person	After a short call for proposals (receiving 4), a contract was signed by MDF with the Centre for Performance Management and Evaluative Research (CPMER), Mr. Peter Ssentongo from Uganda for both courses.
6. Contracting resource person in close collaboration with in-country lead donor.	
7. Conduct two pilot courses (probably Zambia and Uganda)	May 2009 Zambia did take place in May (19-21) Uganda was postponed on request of the Ministry of Finance till 30 June-2 July.
8. Evaluation, analysis and half-yearly reporting on implementation to EC (through Lead Agency)	June 2009 Draft submitted 13 July 2009 (slightly delayed to enable incorporation 2 nd course results)
9. Incorporate experiences, comments and suggestions and adjust course design and materials	July-November 2009 Particularly: - discussion: core and optional modules - briefing note key performance indicators - design module on PIA/PSIA - upgrade training pack (enable “stand-alone” learning)
10. 4-Party Agreement	The agreement was shared with concerned actors in Zambia. The agreement was signed by all concerned actors in Uganda before the event.
11. Arrangements with in-country lead donors for four courses & implementation four tailored courses	July-November 2009 A third JLE is scheduled for 23-25 September in Tanzania. Discussions, among others, are ongoing for Cambodia.

2 Participation

2.1 *Analysis of participation in the two pilot courses*

Ideally, the three stakeholder groups (donors, government representatives and representatives from civil society/private sector) will be represented equally at the course to really enable a joint learning atmosphere. The ideal participant from a donor agency will be a field-based senior specialist, involved in or having experience with designing and implementing pro-poor growth related projects/programmes. The ideal developing country participant will be a counterpart with whom such donor staff members are working on a regular basis or a relevant high level representative of the civil society/private sector.

From 19-21 May the first pilot of the JLE-MfDR took place in Lusaka, Zambia. Although 35 is the agreed maximum number of participants, a total of 42 representatives (25 m, 17 f) from Government (16), Civil Society Organisations/ Private Sector (9) as well as Development Partners (17) participated in the event, illustrating the interest in Zambia for this joint learning programme.

From 30 June to 2 July the second pilot took place in Entebbe, Uganda. A total of 32 representatives (22 m, 10 f) from Government (16), Civil Society Organisations (4) as well as Development Partners (12) participated in the event. With only 4 participants, CSO's were slightly under-represented. The different actors were mostly represented at senior management levels.

Altogether, a total of 74 staff have been trained with 32 (43%) from government, 29 (39%) from donor agencies, 13 (18%) from civil society organisations/private sector. The average of 37 participants per course is slightly above the target of 35. Participation of staff of civil society organisations and private sector was below target (18 % instead of, roughly, 30%).

In line with the 4-party agreement, the nomination and selection process was the responsibility of a small coordinating group of donors in-country. In Zambia, the invitations were forwarded by the in-country lead donor, GTZ. In Uganda, the Ministry of Finance signed the invitation letters to all participating agencies and institutions.

With regards to the seniority of participants as well as direct involvement in MfDR, the programme seems to be well on track, with Uganda having slightly more senior people. This might have been a direct effect deriving from the fact that the ministry of Finance sent out the invitations. At the same time, interest in Zambia was very high (42 participants instead of the targeted 35).

Most participants in the Zambia event were involved in one of the six key sectors identified for this event: Health, Education, Governance, Water and Sanitation, Energy, particularly (Rural) Electrification as well as Environment and Natural Resources. The following five different sector groups were represented at the Uganda event Education, Governance, Health, Transport, Water and Sanitation.

Focussing on sectors (and working in sector groups) worked well. Having participants look at other sectors also brought new insights. Although the sectors were already limited to 6 during the preparatory phase, some participants expressed that this number is still rather high, to enable thorough debate per sector.

2.2 *Reflections on the selection process*

If feasible, having the Government in the lead is not only in line with the Paris Declaration but it might very well contribute to the adequate level of participation. On the other hand, with regard to the

Uganda event it was also postponed 10 days before the event, because it did not match sufficiently with the government calendar.

2.3 Proposed actions

No specific actions required at this stage. In-country lead donor is in the best position to steer the selection process.

3 Course preparations and documentation

3.1 Interface EC – GTZ – MDF Training & Consultancy

The interface between the JLE-MfDR Executive Committee, the lead agency GTZ and the implementing partner MDF Training & Consultancy has been operational and worked well so far. MDF was identified in a competitive tender process as the consultant to implement the JLE on MfDR. An inception workshop was held in March in Kandersteg where the Executive Committee had the possibility to discuss the future design and contents of the JLE together with the consultants. This engagement in an intensive preparation phase was felt to be highly advantageous.

3.2 Course material and training pack

After the two pilot courses, the training pack and related course material consists of:

- Fact sheet on Train-4-Dev network
- Course overview and outline
- Timetable
- Notes view colour copies of all PowerPoint presentations
- Briefing notes for the core technical modules (4, including the WB information on the CAP-Scan)
- Personal log book for individual reflection and learning

The training packs will be slightly adjusted for the next courses.

A CD-rom was not yet part of the standard training package. However, on request by participants this CD-rom was prepared by the lead donor at the events in Zambia and Uganda and it will be a standard part of the training pack in future.

Moreover, as hand outs are distributed:

- Instructions for development of action plans
- Participants list (distributed at each course)

With the permission of the World Bank Results Secretariat, information on the African Community of Practise on MfDR as well as the different discussion summaries were made available. The collaboration with the Results Secretariat is excellent and highly appreciated.

3.3 Selection of resource persons

The process by which resource persons are identified and engaged is as follows:

- Resource person TOR updated;
- MDF, in country lead donors and GTZ launch within their networks to identify possible candidates;
- MDF contacts candidates to determine their interest and availability, requesting for a financial proposal;
- MDF, in-country lead donor and GTZ discuss and agree on the resource person to be selected;
- MDF contracts the selected resource person. Initially both pilot courses were scheduled to be two back-to-back courses, and the selected resource person was therefore contracted to deliver at both courses;
- MDF liaises closely with the contracted resource person to assure the quality of their inputs.

The resource person contracted for the pilot events was highly experienced and knowledgeable in MfDR. During the events it became clear that quality can still be improved by paying due attention to

the quality of transferring a message to the participants. This is related to adequate examples (as close as feasible to the participants working realities), fine-tuning with other sessions, quality of presentations and the use of visual aids. In future, it has to be ensured that the resource person has strong presentation skills. At the same time, MDF will provide proper guidance to the future resource persons, regarding appropriate examples and case materials.

3.4 Logistics and administration

Identifying and selecting the venues is the responsibility of the in-country lead donor. Both venues, one residential (Entebbe, Uganda), one close to the city centre (Lusaka, Zambia), were appropriate.

Administrative support was provided by the in-country lead donors and in both pilot events this worked out well. In general the cooperation with the in-country lead donors worked very well with excellent support before and during the event. The system of sharing responsibilities and tasks with (a team of) in-country lead donor(s) seems to work really well.

3.5 Reporting and course documentation

As agreed in the terms of reference for the JLE-MfDR, for each event a course documentation will be prepared by MDF. This course documentation contains an analysis of participant evaluations and documented group outputs from each of the modules. The course documentation is circulated to all participants and EC members and it is published on the Train4Dev homepage.

Furthermore, GTZ and MDF produce half yearly progress reports for the Executive Committee, at this mid-point of the year, and subsequently at the end of the year as foreseen in the contract. Format is based on previous experiences.

4 Participants' course evaluation data and feedback

4.1 Overview

For the end-of-course evaluation a format provided by the Train4Dev evaluation subgroup was used. The pilot courses were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Achievement of Objectives (2 categories)
- Content and Methodology (6 categories)
- Training Preparations and Logistics (4 categories)
- Trainer and Resource Person Performance (5 categories)

Course evaluation data indicate that participants rate the courses highly.

Figure 3 tabulates average evaluation scores for the first two pilots, revealing that: (1= the lowest, 4= the highest)

- On average, participants rated Achievement of Course Objectives as 3.4
- On average, participants rated Content and Methodology as 3.3
- On average, participants rated Training Preparations and Logistics as 3.2
- On average, participants rated Trainer and Resource Person Performance as 3.3

Figure 3: Average participant ratings for all courses
 (Ratings of >75% highlighted in green; ratings of <75% highlighted in yellow)

Ref.	Evaluation criteria	Previous Average		Pilot I Zambia		Pilot II Uganda				Average 1 st half 2009	
		Out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%
To what extent did the training meet its objectives?											
1	Achievement of training objective	n.a.		3.5	88%	3.2	80%			3.4	84%
2	Value added by being a joint programme	n.a.		3.6	90%	3.4	85%			3.5	88%
	Average rating of meeting objectives	n.a.		3.6	89%	3.3	83%			3.4	86%
Content and Methodology											
3	Meeting expectations	n.a.		3.4	85%	3.1	78%			3.3	82%
4	Relevance for content of work	n.a.		3.5	88%	3.3	83%			3.4	85%
5	Adequate balance theory and practise	n.a.		3.3	83%	3.2	80%			3.3	82%
6	Adequate mix of methods	n.a.		3.2	80%	3.0	75%			3.1	78%
7	Relevance of materials provided	n.a.		3.5	88%	3.4	85%			3.5	86%
8	Relevance of group exercises	n.a.		3.7	93%	3.4	85%			3.6	89%
	Average rating of content and methodology	n.a.		3.4	86%	3.2	81%			3.3	83%
3. Training preparations and logistics											
10	Relevance of pre-course information	n.a.		2.7	68%	2.8	70%			2.7	68%
11	Appropriate venue	n.a.		3.4	85%	3.3	83%			3.4	84%
12	Quality of accommodation	n.a.		3.5	88%	3.1	78%			3.3	83%
13	Quality of food and refreshment	n.a.		3.4	85%	3.1	78%			3.3	82%
	Average training preparations and logistics	n.a.		3.3	81%	3.1	77%			3.2	79%

Ref.	Evaluation criteria	Previous Average		Pilot I Zambia		Pilot II Uganda				Average 1 st half 2009	
		Out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%	out of 4	%
4. Trainers & resource persons											
	Trainers										
4.1	Kitakaya Loisa	n.a.		3.1	78%	3.2	80%			3.2	80%
4.2	Dick van Blitterswijk	n.a.		3.7	92%	3.6	90%			3.6	91%
4.3	Herman Snelder	n.a.		3.2	80%	--	--			3.2	80%
	Resource Persons										
4.9	Peter Ssentongo	n.a.		3.0	75%	3.2	80%			3.1	78%

Only relevance of pre-course information rates below 3 on average. Although this should be a constant point for attention, this will be difficult to improve. Trainers have the experience that this item is frequently scored low (also in other settings and for other events). Apparently participants do not easily consider themselves “well-informed”. Late nomination of participants (within institutions sometimes the day before the event!) as well as relatively late sending out of invitations are practices which are difficult to change, but which do, of course, contribute to the dissatisfaction of participants on this point.

In future, better use of Train4Dev homepage will be made for upcoming events: e.g. publish course materials like briefing notes etc.

4.2 *Comments and suggested areas of improvements*

- In general, the pilot events were very well-appreciated. The design worked well, and the selection of different subjects was valued.
- More and better use of country specific documents, e.g. PRSP
- Ensure that (part of) the personal action plan include realistic, individual goals that can be reached in the next months (and are suitable for a follow up)
- All materials should be developed in way that they can also be used as a self-use learning manual
- Focussing on sectors (and working in sector groups) worked well and enabled hands-on exercises on result chains and key performance indicators. To do this effectively, the number of selected sectors should not go beyond 6.
- More emphasis is required on real life experiences and examples. Choosing relevant examples (linked to the participant’s situation and challenges!) as well as focussing on how to transfer the message of these experiences and examples will help to improve the learning further. This deserves additional attention, particularly since this is one of the key factors of success (for follow-up, participants should clearly see the link with their daily work).
- It is crucial to have the different actors being represented at the appropriate management levels. This will remain a challenge; strong involvement of the government during the preparation process might help.
- Preparatory and logistical support by the lead agency in country was good and very much appreciated by the trainer team!
- The identification of suitable host countries is still a challenge and alternative ways of promoting the events will have to be sought.

The next meeting of the EC is due at the end of August. That will be an opportunity to discuss possible adjustments to the course design.

In the next progress report (due 31 December 2009) it will be elaborated more on the achievement of the overall course objectives. This next report should cover another four courses.

5 Financial status

5.1 Total budget

The total budget for the JLE-MfDR is managed by GTZ International Services. The basket is jointly financed by eight bilateral donors which all signed agreements with GTZ International Services covering their individual contributions. By July 2009, commitments up to the total sum of EUR 481,000 Euro have been made to finance the JLEs-MfDR.

The eight co-financing donors are: Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany.

In accordance with the EC meetings the contributions are used for:

- Tendering process and coverage of travel costs for presentation of proposals.
- Preparation and facilitation of training courses through the sub-contractor MDF Training & Consultancy.
- GTZ administrative expenses and overheads.

Fee GTZ International Services.

5.2 Sub-contract to MDF Training & Consultancy

According to the contract with GTZ and in close cooperation with the Executive Committee, the sub-contractor MDF Training & Consultancy is responsible for:

- Preparation and subsequent revision of the training design and modules
- Organization and facilitation of a total of 6 courses in the year 2009 (four courses in 2010) in close consultation with the respective in-country lead donors
- Evaluation of the workshops
- Documentation of the workshops
- Preparation of half-yearly progress reports

Until to-date MDF Training & Consultancy performed all its contributions in time.

5.3 Future prospects

So far, not all agreements have been submitted countersigned and only some of the commitments of the co-financing donors have been transferred to the account of GTZ International Services. This has to be followed up.

An extension for the organization of an additional four learning events during 2010 will be considered upon satisfactory service of the consultant and existing demand for the course.