



CHARTER

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1. Background

After decades of experience of development co-operation, the international donor community is increasingly aware of the need for more effective aid. Donor harmonisation and alignment with country policies and procedures is an essential part of this. A broad common policy framework has been developed over the years both at country level and internationally, which includes:

- the Poverty Reduction Strategy approach;
- the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals;
- the Monterrey Consensus for Increased Aid Effectiveness;
- the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation;
- the DAC Good Practice Paper, “Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery”;
- the Paris Declaration and the following High Level Forums in Accra and Busan including Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation;
- The adoption of the interlinked and universal Sustainable Development Goals in 2015

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Partnerships among multiple stakeholders are expected to play an increasingly important role in implementation of the SDGs. Sustainable Development Goal 17 “*Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development*” is crucial as a means to deliver on all SDGs; it recognizes multi-stakeholder partnerships as important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources and capacity building to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals.



This new international development architecture presents donors and development agencies with challenges and opportunities that require staff to develop competences in a wide range of areas and at different levels. This can be done more effectively by pooling training, learning and continuous professional development expertise, materials and financial resources through joint initiatives. Joint competence development not only helps donors share resources and experience, but also creates a common understanding and language in development co-operation and fosters harmonisation among donors.

“Partnerships as a means of implementation have never before in the history of international cooperation been more important. A revitalized Global Partnership to deliver on all the Sustainable Development Goals will facilitate an intensive global engagement, bringing together Governments, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system and other actors, and mobilizing and utilizing all available resources, to transform the world for the better by 2030.”

(Partnerships for Sustainable Development: A legacy review towards realizing the 2030 Agenda (UN))

2. Vision, mission, objectives and basic principles of learn4dev

The **vision** of the learn4dev network is to promote improved aid and development co-operation effectiveness for poverty reduction through enhanced donor harmonisation in the field of competence development and learning.

The network’s **mission** is to add value as a facilitator of joint learning, open to donors and partners, in areas of high priority for aid and development co-operation effectiveness, by attaining the following **objectives**:

- Developing and delivering of joint learning programmes
- Networking around specific thematic areas by making use of available resources

- Knowledge sharing and exchanging experiences on effective approaches to training and learning
- Promoting and sharing open courses within the network

The network applies the following **basic principles**:

- Members are committed to donor alignment and harmonisation, and believe in donor co-operation
- All jointly developed learning materials are available as public goods
- Economies of scale are used to maximise value for money
- learn4dev is an open and flexible network in which all can contribute and personal involvement matters
- Participation in learn4dev is possible through the Expert Groups and initiatives

3. Structure and organisation of learn4dev

Learn4dev operates in the form of **Annual Meeting, Core Group, Expert Groups, Joint Initiatives and Focal Points**.

The **Annual Meeting** comprises all member organisations of learn4dev, who decide on the strategic objectives of the network and specific areas of co-operation according to the needs identified by the member organisations. Members discuss and adopt the **annual work programme** and elect the Chair of the Core Group. Member organisations take turns to host the Annual Meeting. Non-member organisations can be present at the Annual Meeting on invitation by the Core Group.

The **Core Group** comprises one or two representatives of the host organisations of the previous, present and future Annual Meetings, with a maximum of 12 representatives. Other network members may be appointed to form part of the Core Group as needed. The formal appointment of the new Core Group occurs at the end of the Annual Meeting. The formal handover of responsibilities takes place at the first meeting of the new Core Group (directly after the Annual Meeting).

There are two key positions in the Core Group: the **Chair** and the **Expert Groups Coordinator**. The Chair is elected at the Annual Meeting for a year-long term, the incumbent may be re-elected for a second term. The Expert Groups Coordinator is selected by the Core Group members. Other positions, if needed, can be defined by the Core Group.

The member organisations identify one representative who takes over the function of **Focal Point** of learn4dev within their organization and who is the contact person for the Core Group and the communication manager.

The Core Group under the lead of the Core Group Chair is responsible for:

- Leading the network
- Acting on the annual work programme as endorsed at the Annual Meeting
- Ensuring that the network's activities and programmes are agreed upon, aligned and meet the needs identified

- Monitoring the Expert Groups' performance against measurable objectives, and provide support and guidance when needed
- Designing and overseeing processes to support needs assessments, joint learning activities and evaluations
- Providing guidance and support to Expert Groups

Stimulating co-operation with new members, including setting membership conditions and requirements

- Delivering high quality communication and knowledge management
- Promoting the network's activities and achievements

The Expert Groups Coordinator is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Expert Groups develop annual objectives and work plans that contribute to the networks objectives
- Ensuring good communication, before and after Core Group meetings, with Expert Group leaders on progress and to give advice and support in achieving their objectives when needed and according to Core Group decisions
- Ensuring the Expert Group leaders are aware of and fulfil their reporting responsibilities
- Giving feedback on Expert Groups progress and lessons learned at Core Group meetings and the Annual Meeting
- Enabling good communication and knowledge sharing among Expert Group leaders
- Encouraging and supporting all Expert Group leaders to ensure they are clear about their responsibilities, and form Expert Groups with the skills and capacity to deliver their objectives

The Expert Groups and other joint initiatives form the backbone of the network. An expert group can be set up at any time under the condition that the Core Group is informed and that it receives the group's Terms of Reference as well as the relevant information on membership. At least two member organisations need to join to form an Expert Group. The Expert Groups consist of representatives of member organisations working on priority themes identified and/or endorsed at the Annual Meeting. The learning resources, products, programmes and results developed by the Expert Groups in their subject areas are shared with all the members of the network. Minutes and draft documents of Expert Groups' meetings are shared through the learn4dev open group on capacity4dev and additional knowledge sharing platforms, maintained by the Expert Groups. Membership in an Expert Group is on a voluntary basis. Each Expert Group nominates one or more members to lead the group and set objectives, and reports to the Expert Groups Coordinator and the Core Group.

The Expert Group Leader is responsible for:

- Leading on setting realistic, timely and achievable objectives which are agreed by the Core Group and published on the learn4dev website
- Assessing resource requirements of the Expert Group, and ensuring that the Expert Group has appropriately skilled people and means to fulfil its objectives
- Managing the work of the Expert Group in relation to objectives and work plans, assessing the status of their project(s) and taking appropriate remedial action to address related risks
- Completing regular progress reports for the member organisations that support or fund the Expert Group's activities, the Core Group, and publishing the reports on the learn4dev website

- Ensuring effective communication within the Expert Group and the wider network
- Liaising with the Core Group's Expert Group Coordinator when the Core Group's support and advice is needed

Expert Group members are responsible for:

- Participating fully in the Expert Group's activities and discussions, and contributing to the Expert Group's output
- Participating in the Expert Group's decision-making
- Before joining an Expert Group, discussing with the Expert Group leader the amount of resources (money and time) involved, and the type of skills and experience required in the group
- Ensuring and declaring that they are mandated by their organisation and have the necessary resources (time and travel budget) to participate in the Expert Group

When necessary, the network may form temporary **task groups** to implement specific task.

Focal Points are responsible for:

- Ensuring visibility of the training and learning activities developed by his/her organization and open for the learn4dev members by publishing the information on the learn4dev website
- Disseminating information about learning opportunities provided by other learn4dev-members among the colleagues of his/her organization
- Coordinating needs and contributions of the members of the expert groups of his/her organization with learn4dev, including proposals of new burning issues
- Motivating colleagues to join expert groups

4. Membership in the network

The Joint Donors Competence Development Network is **an open forum** for organisations which are committed to the network's objectives and working principles.

Membership is open to all donor ministries and agencies, multilateral organisations and training or research institutions founded or funded by official donors that make a substantial financial, technical or scientific contribution to development co-operation and that meet the following **conditions**:

- Subscribe to the overall objective of the network
- Endorse the international policy framework described above and its underlying principles
- Consider competence development and staff training to be important ingredients in a professional approach to development co-operation and have developed experience in these fields
- Agree to be fully engaged in the work of one or more Expert Groups and contribute their own experience
- Have an open attitude to co-operation and are willing to open up their programmes to participation by other members of the network

- Are ready to contribute effectively to the activities defined at the Annual Meeting and set aside resources to contribute to the achievement of results
- Be prepared to organise and fund (in turns) the Annual Meeting or to contribute substantially to the organisation of the meeting

Participating **representatives** are senior officials from either training and research departments/institutions or technical and policy departments/institutions. They should have a mandate to speak on behalf of the organisation that they represent. It is essential that the network is composed of a balanced mix of representatives of different entities to ensure dynamics and good performance¹.

5. Observer status

The number of invited donor institutions and agencies will gradually expand according to the capacity of the network. **Temporary observer status** can be granted to interested donors, multilateral organisations and institutions to prepare them for full membership. Special consideration is given to countries in the process of developing or establishing an aid organisation.

Permanent observer status can be granted to agencies, institutions and networks based on their participation in the Expert Groups or other joint initiatives or the need to develop a strong functional partnership with these actors. Observer status gives access to the membership part of the website on simple request to the Core Group Chair.

6. Financial and other supportive arrangements

Learning activities developed by the network will be supported by participating members through joint financing arrangements. Members can also contribute to learning activities through scientific, technical or any other form of support.

7. Information sharing and communications

Information sharing and communications take place through the network's website www.learn4dev.net and www.capacity4dev.eu that connects the development community. Learn4dev maintains an open group under <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/learn4dev/>.

8. Voting rules

Members will vote by country, where each country has one vote. One vote is reserved for the multilateral member organisations of the UN System. All other multilateral organisations or institutions have each one vote.

¹ See also Annex 1: Becoming a member of learn4dev and maintaining membership

9. Conflict of interests

Members and observers are exempt from bidding on public tenders within the framework of learn4dev.

www.learn4dev.net

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JOINT COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT