

Reference	SWG 2/4/2
Title	Proposals concerning evaluator's recommendations as regards PAC and CSR meetings as well as external evaluation cycles
Submitted by	Sweden and NDPHS Secretariat
Summary / Note	-

Proposals concerning evaluator's recommendations as regards PAC

Section 3.2.4

"3. The consultant recommends that the PAC-meetings will be held only **every second year instead of annually** – like e. g. already practised in the sister-organization CBSS -, and that the last CSR-meeting of a non-PAC-year will be officially mandated by all partners to be a decision-making-body for everything which has to be dealt with in the meantime. This saves one additional meeting and therefore reduces strain on resources."

Proposal:

As stipulated in the Oslo Declaration: "The Partnership Annual Conference (PAC) will constitute the highest co-operation structure of the Partnership. The PAC will meet every year and alternate between the Ministerial level and the level of Senior Officials so that Ministers and other designated high representatives will meet every second year."

Consistent with this, the SWG recommends the following:

It is vital that the current practice of holding annual conferences would continue in accordance with the Oslo Declaration. PACs play an important role in reviewing progress of the Partnership, carrying it forward and providing coherence and co-ordination for achieving its objectives. A solution to save one additional meeting and, therefore, reduce strain on resources is to abandon autumn CSR meetings every second year, when PAC is not held at a ministerial level. In such case the PAC held at a senior-representative level would need to deal with matters currently addressed during an autumn CSR meeting and a non-ministerial PAC. Modalities and preparatory process would need to be adjusted accordingly.

At the same time, side-events (seminars, conferences) could be organized in connection with non-ministerial PACs, and not only in connection with ministerial PACs. They would offer an opportunity for Partner(s) willing to promote discussion on a certain subject within the Partnership.

"4. The consultant recommends that the bi-annual PAC-meeting will [then] be specifically designed and prepared to allow the generation of **political legitimacy and endorsement of the best possible quality**. Wide-range lobbying of participating ministries in regard to participation will be a prerequisite, a side-event-programme which targets also a wider

audience and serves as a public-relations-event and inclusion of media-representatives should also be considered.”

Proposal:

This recommendation should be followed in principle. Themes and content of PAC need to be agreed by the Partners well in advance. It needs to be made clear that Partners should consider the preparations for a PAC meeting important and should be ready to support the Chair country and the PAC hosting country or organization with ideas and substantial input. Standard setting documents, which might be linked to the NDPHS mid-term goals; calls for action in the ND area, or other political documents that could be endorsed by PAC; side events; themes- conferences; special interventions from Expert Groups or invited guest speakers; are all to be considered as opportunities for increasing the attractiveness of a PAC event.

In order to allow the generation of political legitimacy and endorsement of the best possible quality, the NDPHS needs, for example, to

- a. Identify attractive themes that can have an impact in the Northern Dimension Region. The work of the SWG on identifying mid-term goals could support the finding of attractive and important topics that are needed for the region. Linking the identified PAC themes to the work of the Northern Dimension might also be an advantage to increase the political legitimacy.
- b. Focus of the themes should be on health and/or social issues so that the ministers closest to the NDPHS can identify their own areas of responsibility.
- c. Use its gradually growing network more pro-actively. Promoting a PAC event should not only be the responsibility of the Chair country. If a side event will be organised, Expert Groups and their national members, as well as departments dealing with the side event topic(s) in the Partner ministries, or organisations should be briefed and convinced to promote the event on a larger scale.

Process

1. One or more Partners, Expert Groups or Working Groups present their proposal(s) to the CSR to agree on the main themes(s) for PAC. The ideas and proposals are to be circulated prior to the meeting for CSR representatives to investigate the interest of their countries/organizations and ensure national/organizational commitment to take part in the work.
2. Once a vision for PAC was developed by the CSR, it needs to be followed up and fertilized as soon as possible, either by the Partner country/organization or Expert Group that has proposed the theme or by a task force. CSR should assign these responsibilities and might also consider setting a timeline for the delivery of a first working paper/concept note.
3. Develop a well designed and layouted concept paper/background paper that outlines the PAC theme(s) and at the same time advertises PAC to high-lever decision makers.

4. The CSR-Chair country sends out PAC invitations well in advance (proposal: no later than 6 months prior to the meeting) and reminders. Partner countries and Organizations will actively follow up on the invitations. Therefore, it is crucial that the vision for the PAC meeting (see No. 1) is agreed upon and followed up well in advance.
5. For ministerial PAC meetings, Chair country and hosting country should ensure the attendance of their minister(s) well in advance of PAC. The minister's expressed intention to attend PAC can then be used to convince ministers and high-level representatives from other Partner countries/organizations to attend PAC, too. A ministerial PAC should allow the possibility for side-meetings for the ministers on other – non NDPHS related issues. Therefore, Partners are encouraged to coordinate their work with other ministries and the ministries of foreign affairs, in particular.
6. All Partners should actively involve relevant government entities and other national collaborating centers that are able to provide a substantive input, be it scientific, political or promotional.

Proposal concerning evaluator's recommendations as evaluation

Section 4.2.6

"9. NDPHS should, in regard to evaluation of itself, repeat the exercise of an external evaluation every four or five years to update the look from the outside. To make this external evaluation more easy and therefore probably cheaper, self-evaluation activities could be performed in regular intervals (like e. g. yearly questionnaires); if recommendation 5 will be accepted, this will also help future external evaluators tremendously."

Proposal:

The evaluation of the NDPHS performed in 2008 has proven to be a valuable exercise. The Partnership's performance, working methods and structures, Partners' involvement, etc. have been reviewed and, based on this, structural and operational changes proposed. Also, the evaluation process greatly benefited from the assistance of an external consultant.

The SWG recommends that the Partnership would undergo an evaluation every five years, which would be aided by an external consultant. Periodic evaluations are important both for ensuring that the Partnership would continue to be responsive, focused, effective and efficient. They are also advantageous for making the Partnership credible in the eyes of others.