

CLEAR MTE

Factual Corrections, Key Comments, and Clarifications

From Secretariat

Factual corrections noted in red

Page No.	Issue	Correction/key comment/clarification	Response to key comment ¹
Secretariat comments			
i	CLEAR is financially supported by 12 partners	11 partners – not 12	Factual error corrected in final report
iii	No definition of what “success” looks like in development terms	CLEAR has a results framework and specific indicators in development terms. Another conclusion that the evaluation may wish to consider is that “success” was defined at too high a level for a program of this nature; defining success in “development terms” may be inappropriate for a program this size. The “global” success was to have established centers addressing evaluation capacity and the medium-term outcomes the centers achieve in the context of those strategies, working with relevant stakeholders in ways that make sense to move the specific national and regional M&E agendas forward.	
iii	Measuring “success” in terms of development results	It is unclear what the evaluation means by “measuring success in terms of development results” – an example would be useful	
iii	Internal and external contexts varies significantly and were not taken into account in program design	The program commissioned regional demand studies, regional consultations, and competitive bids. These contained information on contexts that informed program design. It would be helpful to understand what else should have been done.	

¹ Comments for which no response is noted in this column have been noted with thanks but have not led the evaluation team to make changes to the report.

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iii	Strategic long-term linkages with regional partners	This statement presumes that long-term linkages with regional partners are essential to the strategies to be followed by every center, which is not the case.	
4	Diagram of governance	The RACs need not include all of the different stakeholder groups displayed in the diagram. The RAC composition is determined by the centers and not based on stakeholder groupings. The RAC ToRs were modified in 2013	
5	Board composition	Technically, the Board is composed of donors providing \$500K or more, so not all agencies are full Board members. (Please see the Board ToRs)	
5	Five-year programme	It would be more accurate to say that "...the centers were established at different times as and when funding became available..." The statement as it is does not provide the full picture of why the centers were established at different times.	
5, and throughout report	Table 1.2, The Asia Pacific Finance and Development Centre (AFDC), China based at the Shanghai National <u>Audit</u> Institute	Shanghai National <u>Accounting</u> Institute	Factual error corrected in final report
6	WB oversight functions	The functions are not simply oversight; they are also to provide technical support and guidance.	
7	Implicit theory of change	The evaluation discusses using an implicit theory of change. Could this be captured as part of the methodology section?	
14	While CLEAR was originally intended as an experiment or pilot, this has not been strongly reflected in how the initiative was designed or managed.	CLEAR encompasses a learning-by-doing model. It was not conceived of as a formal experiment with pre-specified hypotheses but rather as an experiment in broader terms.	
17	Theory of Change	The theory of change is generic at the program level; it does not imply that the specificities of it would not be	

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		different depending on the center. Each center's strategy takes into account the different elements of the ToC -- how it defines the different outcome areas and the stakeholder groups it works with (implicitly or explicitly). This is precisely the reason that there are differences in how the concepts are operationalized. The operationalization of the program was not intended to be uniform across all centers, precisely because it is context driven and tailored to regional circumstances and realities.	
18	Discussion of results framework	Please see comment with respect to page iii (measuring "success")	
22	Annual report lacks focus on outcomes	It would be helpful if the evaluation could clarify why the discussion in the 2013 annual report on how the centers are contributing to the outcomes outlined in the results framework is not considered to be progress toward or contributing to outcomes. What other type of evidence is needed for progress toward outcomes?	
23	IEG was "selected"	This statement implies a conscious selection process. IEG established the trust fund and the partnership and was therefore the default office for the secretariat. It would be more accurate simply to say that IEG houses the Secretariat.	Rephrased to address comment
23	Secretariat workload	It would be more accurate to say that the Secretariat "workprogram" rather than "workload" (the latter is not reviewed by the Board). Once there was a discussion on the workload, but this has not been an ongoing Board concern.	Rephrased to address comment
23	Secretariat	It would be more accurate to describe the Secretariat's work not just as administration but also overall management, including operational strategy.	Rephrased to address comment
24	Reference to leadership	It would be helpful if the evaluation could elaborate on what is meant by "gaps in leadership" – is it to address the questions outlined on page 25?	
27	Contexts not sufficiently reflected in program design	It would be helpful to understand how contexts could be reflected better, beyond what the program did: conduct	

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		preparatory studies in the CLEAR regions and use a competitive process requiring the shortlisted institutions to provide information on the regions needs/demands and a strategy to address those needs/demands.	
28	Focusing on delivering vs. learning	The program's focus is on learning by doing (not either delivery or learning), although less than desirable emphasis has been given to learning	
30	Centers have had few opportunities to elicit inputs from regional experts	This statement is misleading because centers elicit inputs and views from a wide range of experts informally, which does not get reflected in formal documents.	Rephrased paragraph to address comment
34	Several centres experienced delays and challenges due to difficulties in aligning host institution rules and procedures with World Bank requirements. In several cases (especially in AA and FA) this led not only to delays in the transfer of funds to the centres, but also to inefficient use of professional staff, given that they were tied up with administrative tasks.	The delays were problematic not only for the centers but also for the Secretariat. WB procurement and related replies were timely, but often the documents were delayed more with the host institutions or host governments.	
AA comments			
35	A first grant agreement between the World Bank and Wits was signed In February 2012, for a grant of USD 940,513 for the period June 2011- January 2013. A second grant agreement for USD 2,997, 325 was signed in June 2014 for the period 2014-2018.	The first grant was signed by the World Bank in December 2011 and the second grant in May 2014.	Corrected in final version

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35	Thus the AA centre has effectively had no grant support for ongoing activities, besides resources it has raised on its own.	<p>The funds for the CLEAR Center have been in the Trust Fund. The lack of access to grant funds is related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delays from the Center in turning in a Project Document that had a structure and content that were ready to go through World Bank clearances. - Delays from Wits in signing the grant, providing information on the authorized signatories, providing banking information and registering in the World Bank Systems (client connection) to be able to access the funds. 	Rephrased to address comment, and shifted paragraph to other location in chapter to ensure better logical flow.
35	Note 69 -While the grant was signed by both parties in February 2012, the World Bank considers June 2011 as the start-up date.	Retroactive financing that covered activities from May 2011 onwards, meaning that the center could claim expenses backdating to May 2011.	Reflected in revised report-
38	The 2013 draft strategy has not yet been fully applied due to long delays in receiving the World Bank grant as well as current gaps in AA centre leadership and capacities	The 2013 draft strategy has not yet been fully applied due to long delays in being able to finalize the procedures necessary to receive the World Bank grant as well as current gaps in AA centre leadership and capacities”	Rephrased to address comment
39	Note 78 - While the CLEAR Secretariat indicates that Centres were free to develop their own theories of change, the AA centre reports that it was told to incorporate the overall ToC into its strategy document as it moved towards strategy approval by the CLEAR Board”	The Secretariat suggested using the program’s ToC because the Center had not yet envisioned a ToC on their own and there were already significant delays with the completion of the Project Document, which cause many of the issues highlighted in the evaluation.	Rephrased to address comment
47	While the World Bank committed funding to the	(General comment not limited to AA)	Corrected throughout the report.

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	<p>each of the CLEAR Regional Centres for a five-year period, the initial contract with the AA centre was for one year, and subsequent funding was linked to satisfactory performance.⁸⁹ While this might have addressed the World Bank's need to manage risks, it appears incompatible in the context of an experimental initiative such as CLEAR which naturally would take time to gestate.</p>	<p>Throughout the report there are references to the "World Bank funding" (and related phrasing). It would be better to say "multi-donor CLEAR funding administered through the World Bank".</p> <p>We also suggest adding a sentence early in the report as follows (please contact Maurya in the Secretariat on any questions related to this text).</p> <p><i>CLEAR grants to centers are administered through the World Bank's administrative, procurement, financial, legal and related arrangements. The grants use funds from the multi-donor trust fund established for CLEAR.</i></p> <p>It was the CLEAR Initiative that committed funding for 5 years, not the World Bank. The trust fund from which the grants are provided cannot make commitment of funds that it does not hold in cash. At the time the first grant was provided to AA, the TF did not hold sufficient funds to cover a longer period of time. For the second grant, the donors had already deposited additional funds into the TF account, so it was possible to make a 3 year grant.</p> <p>These issues are related to managing risks on behalf of the donors, since the funds are held in trust.</p>	<p>Added suggested sentence in section 1.1.</p> <p>Rephrased to address comment</p>
47	<p>The establishment of the AA centre was adversely affected by delays in finalising the original contract between Wits and the World Bank due to various due diligence procedures and other requirements of both institutions.</p>	<p>Please see comments above, under page 35, about World Bank's role in the delays.</p>	<p>Rephrased to address comment</p>

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47	The centre also experienced delays in identifying and appointing a Centre Director acceptable to the World Bank, and in preparing and approving a project contract for the period 2013-18.	The centre also experienced delays in identifying and appointing a Centre Director acceptable to the initiative's Board, not the World Bank.	Rephrased to address comment
47	The nature of the agreements between the World Bank and the AA centre (as well as the AA centre and Affiliate Centres) led to long delays between the conduct of an activity and reimbursement. (...) Interviews suggest that in some instances reimbursements could take up to 5-6 months for completed pre-approved programmes.	Reimbursements are made within a week or two by the world Bank. The delays were related to Wits taking time in submitting the paperwork to be reimbursed.	Rephrased to address comment
LA Comments			
58, 59	Delays in the processing of the CLEAR grant did not negatively affect centre activities, as the CLEAR LA centre was able to access funding from other sources. (...) The first CLEAR grant of USD 595,000 awarded to the LA centre in May 2013 was received in May 2014. Delays were due to a number of factors, including the need to reconcile policies and procedures of the CLEAR Secretariat, the Mexican government, and CIDE. “	<p>These statements seem to imply that there were delays from the World Bank side. The grant was signed at the World Bank on May 13, 2013 and the funds were available from that point on (not in November 2013, as the evaluation notes). The delays were related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal procedures at CIDE to comply with World Bank procurement and FM requirements - Delays in the signature of the grant by the Government of Mexico (The administration had just changed and the head of the office in charge of these signatures was not appointed) <p>Also, the fact that CIDE was able to leverage funds from other donors did not cause the delays. It was the other way around. It was actually getting these funds that got</p>	Rephrased to address comment

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	<p>“The grant seemed ready to be disbursed in November 2013, but at that point the LA centre asked the Secretariat to postpone disbursement to early 2014 as receiving the grant late in the year would have posed considerable administrative challenges. The process took another four months and funds were received in May of the following year. In the meantime, major donors that the centre was able to leverage were the Mexican Government106 (USD 500,000) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant (USD 186,395)”</p>	<p>CIDE to delay processing the grant, since the funds that they leveraged had to be disbursed quickly. Also, they wanted avoid having to deal with administrative processes (reporting, audits, etc.) if they were not going to use the funds.</p> <p>Leveraging funds was not a strategy to compensate for delays in the grant. It was a purposeful decision to attract more funds and expand the program. CIDE would have not been able to leverage the extra funds without signing the agreement with the Bank. And would have not been able to spend the funds it had leveraged unless it delayed the expenditures from the World Bank grant.</p>	
SA			
67	National M&E Office	IEO was disbanded September 2014.	Corrected
65	Threshold of a “large project”	Dollar thresholds of projects requiring clearance is provided in the grant agreements. The approvals had to do with the nature of the contracting – whether to do a sole-source or a competitive bid, in order to follow procurement rules.	Added this information
EA			
72	The East Asia centre is the only CLEAR centre whose host institution was not selected via a competitive process. Instead, the Asia Pacific Finance and Development Centre (AFDC) in China based at the Shanghai National Audit	<p><i>Suggested rephrasing:</i></p> <p>The CLEAR East Asia centre – based at the Asia Pacific Finance and Development Centre (AFDC) in China based at the Shanghai National Accounting Institute (SNAI) - is the only of the currently existing centres whose host institution was not selected via a competitive process. Before CLEAR was developed, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and other partners in 2007 came together to launch the Shanghai International</p>	<i>Rephrased according to suggestion</i>

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	<p>Institute (SNAI) was selected to host the EA centre based on its existing relationship with the World Bank around hosting and facilitating the Shanghai International Program in Development Evaluation Training (SHIPDET) since 2007 (see sidebar).</p>	<p>Program in Development Evaluation Training (SHIPDET). SHIPDET has enjoyed success in training evaluation practitioners, disseminating evaluation knowledge, and networking, not only in China, but also in the whole region. When the CLEAR program was begun to further promote learning on evaluation and results, AFDC was selected to host the EA centre based on its existing relationship with the World Bank around hosting and facilitating SHIPDET since 2007.</p>	
72	<p>To date, the EA centre has offered two kinds of regular training programmes: SHIPDET and training on Impact Evaluation. In addition, it has offered ad hoc training on Performance Budgeting. As shown in the sidebar, the centre has engaged in a number of advisory services, knowledge exchange activities, as well as internal capacity building efforts for its staff. To date, it has developed one knowledge resource.</p>	<p><i>Suggested adding at the end of the paragraph.</i></p> <p>In addition to the core course deliveries, like IPDET and Impact Evaluation, the SHIPDET program also has specialized courses (usually of two to three days) on a range of topics. Recent specialized topics include <i>Performance Based Budgeting, Introduction to Impact Evaluation, Cost-Benefit Analysis for Evaluators, and the Case Study Approach to Evaluation.</i></p>	<p>Added according to suggestion</p>
72	<p>The centre does not have confirmed data on the composition of its clients, but estimates that 50% of clients are government officials from different countries, 20% are from academia, while the remaining 30% are evaluation practitioners, including independent consultants, as well as staff from auditing and evaluating consulting firms.</p>	<p>Zhao Min from AFDC will send exact data.</p>	

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	SHIPDET		
73	Finding 52. The establishment of the EA centre took place in a regional environment characterised by national governments (in particular China) increasingly pushing for and establishing systems for M&E and performance-based budgeting. The supply of quality RBM/M&E services was scarce, and awareness of the benefits of high-quality M&E and RBM not yet wide spread or institutionalised. This context has not significantly changed.	While the finding is not incorrect, it underemphasizes the progress that the center has made in awareness raising and governmental changes within the region, and most especially with MOF in China. We request that the last paragraph in the narrative section be captured more in the finding. The EA center can provide more information on the influence that they have had (e.g., Recently as a result of MOF staff taking SHIPDET training, a Performance Based Budgeting Committee has been set up in China with MOF heading it and AFDC having the Deputy Chair role in this committee. The committee could be considered a quasi- evaluation association within a government setting. This is a direct result of the SHIPDET-CLEAR program on SHPDET and PBB and is an example of a result that could be highlighted. The AFDC team can provide more detailed/accurate narrative on this.)	
74	Finding 54. The EA centre, through its host institution AFDC, possesses strong managerial capacity. The centre's current professional capacity is weak and the delivery of capacity building services is reliant on a network of international resources.	While the overall finding and supporting notes are correct, it would be useful to emphasize more both (a) the nature of the AFDC staff trainers' work on the courses for China participants (in Chinese) with the staff taking over more teaching duties, and (b) the internal capacity building that the AFDC staff have done – i.e., participating in the IPDET program in Canada, attending international evaluation association conferences – to be able to build their knowledge and skills to take on more teaching duties.	
75	Finding 57: The EA centre is building strong partnerships with the government of China and with public finance institutions in the region. It has not proactively reached out to other development actors, including multilateral	The center has worked in partnership with WB, ADB, IFAD, UNDP, and 3ie. It is also exploring closer connections to evaluation associations in the greater regions and other actors. At roughly 2+ years in the program, the center is at a point where they are going to be stepping up their outreach/engagement. Though it is noted that the center has been somewhat conservative in its outreach approach – wanting to gain sound footing before reaching out too soon.	

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	and bilateral agencies, CSOs and academia.		
76	Finding 59: The EA centre has established a Regional Advisory Committee, but it is not yet operational. This has diminished the centre's ability to validate programming plans and decisions through a broader stakeholder group.	Please see other commentary on the overall CLEAR RAC arrangements in this note. At the same time, we agree that the program would benefit from having more non-Chinese participation in the RAC to advise the center on non-China opportunities/connections. We also note that the center has excellent arrangements within China related to the RAC and government connections.	
79	Resources from the CLEAR grant have been used almost exclusively for client capacity building activities, with only a small amount being used for internal capacity building of EA centre staff. The majority of activities conducted by the EA centre to date have, however, been paid for through other sources. ¹³⁴ The Chinese MoF has been supporting AFDC and thereby also CLEAR operation costs (mainly staff salaries) and has been sponsoring the participation of Chinese participants in various CLEAR training courses. So far, the Chinese government has contributed at least USD 3.5 million to the CLEAR EA programme.	Suggest adding more emphasis to the rather impressive contributions that MoF and AFDC have made to the program related to in-kind support – especially given the relatively low grant amount. It underscores the commitment of both AFDC and MoF to both CLEAR and evaluation within the region. This importance of this commitment gets a little lost in the text.	
79	Integration in and support from host institution: While AFDC has provided ongoing managerial, administrative, and professional support to	The paragraph mixes up a few things. While initially SHIPDET was a stand-alone program, it now is run under the CLEAR umbrella. It is fully aligned with CLEAR – however the AFDC team recognizes that the SHIPDET name had/has established name recognition	Rephrased to address comment

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	<p>centre activities, it has made limited investments in CLEAR in terms of allocating senior and full time staff resources. This limits the centre's capacity to engage in strategic (financial and programmatic) longer-term planning. Also, given that most of the centre's work has been linked to SHIPDET, the question arises whether the additional services and profile brought by the CLEAR centre provide sufficient incentives for AFDC to continue hosting the centre (given the administrative and reporting requirements), or whether it might be more beneficial for AFDC to go back to merely hosting SHIPDET.</p>	<p>within Asia, so the center has kept the name SHIPDET and essentially operated in a co-branding arrangement.</p>	
79	<p>Context: Document review and stakeholder consultations indicate that there is ample demand for M&E capacity building services in China as well as in the larger East Asia region. The Chinese MoF will almost certainly continue its support for the operation costs of AFDC, as well as its sponsorship of Chinese participants for training courses such as SHIPDET, regardless of whether these are provided through AFDC or CLEAR. While the Chinese</p>	<p>Would be good to explore with MoF and the AFDC team whether the Chinese government is unlikely to be interested in investing in the expansion of the EA centre's current work. It might be better to say "we're unsure if the Chinese government is likely to..." instead of "unlikely to"</p> <p>As a side note, the AFDC team has expressed relatively fewer complaints about reporting than the other centers. So not sure how much they look at reporting as a heavy burden as they already have an established norm to collect and report the basic data requested. It is noted that as a next step, they would benefit from reporting more on outcomes/results to highlight achievements in the region, but in terms of providing input, activity and</p>	

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	<p>government is unlikely to be interested in investing in the expansion of the EA centre's current work (e.g. deepening its regional approach, or adding a more distinct research component), other donors with an interest in the East Asia/Pacific region (e.g. the ADB or AuSAID) may be willing to explore related options.</p> <p>Overall, there are a number of positive factors that can support the financial viability and continued relevance of the CLEAR EA centre (in particular the demand for M&E capacity building and the availability of likely sources of funding). The bigger question, however, is whether the benefits of hosting a CLEAR centre (in terms of financial resources, contacts/networking opportunities, reputational affiliations) outweigh the drawbacks for AFDC (e.g. added reporting obligations and administration).</p>	<p>output information, it doesn't seem to be a terrible burden for AFDC.</p>	
80	<p>AFDC has to decide whether (or under what conditions) hosting CLEAR continues to make sense for AFDC.</p>	<p>Suggest revisiting this as AFDC, we believe, has not questioned whether it makes sense to host CLEAR. All other findings seem reasonable/good.</p>	
FA			

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81	Initially the centre was operating with one full-time person (the coordinator), one part-time training specialist, one financial officer who later left the centre, and a part-time procurement officer.	Financial officer had to leave due to unsatisfactory performance. Currently, there is a financial specialist (who oversees all the donor-funded programs within CESAG) who partially works for CLEAR with support of his assistant. A part-time procurement consultant has been hired since May 2014.	Addressed in revised version
81	An intern joined the team in 2013	An intern officially joined the team in February 2014.	Corrected
83	Capacity development activities conducted to date appear to have been guided by the broader objective to establish the centre as a provider of customised M&E training and capacity development services with a focus on strengthening the supply side of M&E.	The Project Document refers not only to “training/workshops” but also to “advisory/knowledge service, evaluation and applied research”.	Addressed in revised version
83	While the demand study indicated that the centre’s work during its first year would place particular emphasis on the three countries covered in the study, this has only been visible for Senegal, but not for Benin and Mauritania.	The demand study indicates the potential for CESAG M&E offerings to the country; however, this did not mean that CESAG planned to place emphasis on all three countries at once. The assessment helped rule out Mauritania due to its low score on all M&E elements.	
86	The centre has not yet developed an explicit (or indicated the existence of an implicit) regional or country-specific Theory of Change.	The centre is in the process of developing a regional specific ToC together with the Strategic Plan.	
88	The complexity of regulations around the CLEAR grant has slowed down the payment of accounts. (Most consultants	This is due to CESAG’s cumbersome and bureaucratic accounting procedure, not because of the regulations around the CLEAR grant.	

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	interviewed said they had waited six months or more for their accounts to be settled.)		

A number of additional comments that were not included in the table above were provided by the five CLEAR centres and the Board. However, with one exception these did not address factual errors. Only the South Asia centre noted a number of corrections required in Volume II, Annexes. These **corrections were made and are reflected in the revised Volume II**. The evaluation team noted all other comments with thanks