Strengthening Evaluation at USAID

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Evaluation Decline

1990 Growth of Performance Monitoring

2001 Drop in Evaluations

2002 “Knowledge Workers” Replace “Evaluators”

2003 to 2005 Funding and Staff Decline

2005 Short-lived “Evaluation Initiative” Fades

2006 Central Evaluation Office Dismantled
Revitalizing Evaluation

• “Evaluation is a key aspect of program management, not just for accountability, but as a source of learning”

• “Now is the time to reassert our evaluation leadership in the development community”

• “This means rebuilding our capacity to conduct the kinds of robust and objective evaluations that are fundamental to effective, evidence-based programming”

USAID Administrator, November 2008
Why Strengthen Evaluation?

• To improve development effectiveness based on empirical knowledge of what works & what does not.

• To report more transparently and accountably to Congress and the American People.

• To inform resource allocations based on timely information.

• To meet legislative and executive requirements to manage more effectively for results.
Clarifying Evaluation Policy

- Issued new Monitoring and Evaluation Directives (ADS 203)
- Published Evaluation Standards & Guidelines
- Established a Central Evaluation Unit
- Crafting an Agency Evaluation Strategy
- Developing an Agency Evaluation Agenda
Growing Evaluation Resources

• Adding new Evaluation Staff
• Maintaining existing M&E support contract (IMR2)
• Competing new Evaluation IQCs
• Revitalizing On-line Services (EvalWeb)
• Creating a Public Evaluation Portal
Strengthening Evaluation Capacity

- Evaluation Certificate Courses (100 trained)
- Program Planning and Performance Management Workshops (DC & field)
- Distance Learning Course
- DLI Training
- New & Updated Tools (M&E TIPs, Evaluation Wiki)
Promoting More Effective Collaboration

- USAID Evaluation Interest Group
- Foreign Affairs Evaluation Coordination Group (with STATE, MCC and PEPFAR)
- ACFVA Evaluation Sub-committee
- Joint Initiatives with DoD
  (Humanitarian Assistance, Joint PPME Framework, Multi-National Experiment, Austere Challenge)
Asserting Intellectual Leadership

- Returned to International Evaluation forums (EvalNet, 3ie. NONIE)
- Presented at Evaluation Meetings
- Revitalized publications (updated M&E TIPs)
- Participated on OMB’s Evaluation Experts Group
- Leadership for Paris Declaration Evaluation
Central Evaluation Priorities

• Supporting Operational-level Evaluators
• Strengthening Evaluation Capacity
• Collaborating with Development Partners
• Implementing More Rigorous Evaluations
• Re-establishing Evaluation Leadership
Some Evaluation “Best Practices”

- Private Sector Impact Evaluation Initiative (Evaluations of GMED & PROFIT)
- Impact Evaluations of Democracy & Governance
- Outcome and Impact Evaluation of the African Education Initiative
- Strengthening Evaluation Capacity (PVC)
- Global Health (PRH, MCH, HIV-AIDS)
Continuing Issues

- Balancing Learning, Management and Accountability
- Enhancing Rigor
- Assuring Independence
- Increasing Utilization
- Designing *appropriate* evaluations to answer significant program and policy questions