

Conducting the peer review

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) conducts periodic reviews of the individual development co-operation efforts of DAC members. The policies and programmes of each member are critically examined approximately once every five years, with six members examined annually. The OECD Development Co-operation Directorate provides analytical support, and develops and maintains, in close consultation with the Committee, the methodology and analytical framework – known as the Reference Guide – within which the peer reviews are undertaken.

The objectives of DAC peer reviews are to improve the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation policies and systems, and to promote good development partnerships for better impact on poverty reduction and sustainable development in developing countries. DAC peer reviews assess the performance of a given member, not just that of its development co-operation agency, and examine both policy and implementation. They take an integrated, system-wide perspective on the development co-operation and humanitarian assistance activities of the member under review.

The peer review is prepared by a team, consisting of representatives of the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate working with officials from two DAC members who are designated as “examiners”. The country under review provides a memorandum setting out the main developments in its policies and programmes. Then the review team visits the capital to interview officials, parliamentarians, as well as civil society and non-governmental organisations representatives of the donor country to obtain a first-hand insight into current issues surrounding the development co-operation efforts of the member concerned. The field perspective is gained by assessing how members are implementing the major DAC policies, principles and concerns, and reviewing practices in recipient countries, particularly with regard to poverty reduction, sustainability, gender equality and other aspects of participatory development, and local aid co-ordination. The peer review team consults representatives of the partner country’s administration, parliamentarians, civil society and other development partners.

The Secretariat then prepares a draft report on the member’s development co-operation which is the basis for the DAC review meeting at the OECD. At this meeting senior officials from the member under review respond to questions formulated by the Committee in association with the examiners.

This review contains the main findings and recommendations of the Development Assistance Committee and the analytical report of the Secretariat. It was prepared with examiners from Austria and Portugal for the peer review of Poland on 10 November 2016.