



Summary Assessment of the Second Session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development*

Bangkok, Thailand
7-9 December 2011

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* Prepared by the Programme Planning and Partnerships Division based on feedback provided by government delegations that attended the second session of the Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development.

Summary Assessment of the second session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development

The second session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 7 December to 9 December 2011. A questionnaire was distributed towards the end of the session to obtain feedback from participants on its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The response rate to the questionnaire was 50.0%, corresponding to 14 of the 28 participating delegations.

The present assessment has been conducted on the basis of the feed-back received from delegations together with a qualitative analysis of the draft report of the session, bearing in mind the terms of reference for the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development, as contained in resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission.

I. Attendance

The Committee session was fairly attended, with 52.8% (N = 28/53) of ESCAP member States participating.

The majority of delegations that attended the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development comprised of High-level officials from the Capital of their respective country (57% N = 8/14). 21 % N=3/14 were mainly from representatives from Bangkok (Embassy) and 14% or N=2/14 came from a combination of Ministry of Foreign affairs, or the other entities.

II. Ownership

The sense of ownership by participants of the Committee was good, with the majority of respondents indicating that the committee session was owned and driven by member States who indicated (50%, N=7/14) to a greater extent and 43% (N=6/14) to a good extent. The majority 57%, N=8/14 indicated that overall outcome of the deliberations was a result of a collaborative effort, while 57% (N=7/14) indicated that the draft report adequately reflected the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the committee and that the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session (50%, N=7/14).

III. Relevance

The feed-back indicates that participants were of the view that the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development is a relevant mechanism for discussing issues and trends regarding macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development in the Asian and Pacific region. The majority of respondents agreed that the Committee session was relevant to issues and trends regarding in the Asian and Pacific region (64%, N=9/14 to a greater extent) and 36%, N=5/14 to a good extent, The majority also indicated that the needs and priorities of their countries were reflected in the agenda items, (71%, N=10/14)

to a greater extent and 21% N=3/14 to a good extent. A majority also indicated that the benefits of their delegation's attendance outweighed the costs (71%, N=10/14).

The most relevant agenda items for the delegations in attendance included (in order of relevance): (a) Agenda item 5: Challenges of poverty reduction and inclusive development, Agenda item 6: Accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific(c) Agenda item 4: Policy challenges for sustaining the dynamism of Asia-Pacific economies.

Efficiency

The efficiency of organization and conduct of the Committee session was rated highly by respondents. Half of the respondents agreed that the pre-session documents conveyed clear messages (50%, N=7/14 to a greater extent) and 36% N=5/14 to a good extent, pre session documents were issued in a timely manner (50%, N=7/14) to a great extent, while 43% N=6/14 indicated to a good extent, the majority indicated that Committee used efficiently the time provided (57%, N=8/14), 36% , N=5/14 to a good extent. A high majority 79% N=11/14 indicated that conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient and the organization of the work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee (ACPR, working groups , task forces, communication with the secretariat), 64%, N=9/14 to a great extent and 29%, N=4/14 to a good extent.

IV. Outcomes in light of ESCAP resolution 64/1

The majority of respondents agreed that the second session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development effectively addressed the issues outlined in resolution 64/1 that should be addressed by all Committees subsidiary to the Commission, including: to review and analyze regional trends (57%, N=8/14), identify priorities and emerging issues (64%, N=9/14), promote dialogue on regional and subregional approaches (71%, N=10/14), and promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges at the regional and subregional levels (64%, N=9/14).

The qualitative analysis of the session documentation concurred with the results of the questionnaire. For example, factors contributing to a slowdown in economic recovery, analysis of emerging macroeconomic challenges, including large volatile capital inflows to developing countries and their impact on future economic growth were discussed as priority issues for the region. Additionally, the meeting promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches, for example the Committee provided the secretariat with guidance on policy suggestions for consolidating and promoting economic growth.

Most and least successful

The exchange of ideas and experiences and the discussion on MDGs were rated as the most successful feature of the session by a number of delegations, whereas others highlighted the administration and coordination by the secretariat.

In terms of the least successful feature of the session, there was a mixture of issues raised such as: Lack of participation from the floor and some agenda items difficult to understand.

V. Conclusion

This assessment concludes that the second session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development was successful. A good attendance and a high level of relevance of the topic for delegations enabled productive substantive discussions and agreement on a number of important issues for Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development in the region.

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Annex I Questionnaire Results

A. Overall relevance of the session

| 1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) |
|--|--------------------------|------------|-----------|-----|-------------------|
| a. The agenda items were timely and relevant to issues and trends regarding macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development in the Asian and Pacific region. | 64% (9) | 36% (5) | 0% (0) | - | - |
| b. The agenda items reflected the needs and priorities of my country. | 71% (10) | 21% (3) | 7% (1) | - | - |
| c. The benefits of my delegation's attendance justified the costs (travel, time, opportunity cost of absence from the office). | 71% (10) | 21% (3) | 7% (1) | - | - |

B. Organization

| 2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) | No answer |
|---|--------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| a. The pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda. | 50% (7) | 36% (5) | 14% (2) | - | - | - |
| b. The pre-session documents were issued in a timely manner. | 50% (7) | 43% (6) | 7% (1) | 0% (0) | - | - |
| c. The Committee used efficiently the time available for discussions. | 57% (8) | 36% (5) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | 7% (1) | - |
| d. The conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient. | 79% (11) | 21% (3) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | - | - |
| e. The organization of work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee (ACPR, working groups, task forces, communication with the secretariat). | 64% (9) | 29% (4) | 7% (1) | 0% (0) | - | - |

C. Substantive outcome of the session

| A. 3. To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below? | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) | No answer |
|--|--------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| <p>a. Agenda item 4, Policy challenges for sustaining the dynamism of Asia-Pacific economies</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are briefed on an updated growth outlook for countries in the region and the factors contributing to a slowdown in economic recover as well as emerging macroeconomic challenges, including large volatile capital inflows to developing countries and their impact on future economic growth.</i></p> | 64% (9) | 29% (4) | 7% (1) | - | - | - |
| <p>b. Agenda item 5, Challenges of poverty reduction and inclusive development amid high inflation</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the recent trends in income poverty and selected social indicators in countries of the region. Member States also share their experiences on the impact of high inflation and food prices.</i></p> | 57% (8) | 36% (5) | 0% (0) | 7% (1) | - | - |
| <p>c. Agenda item 6, Accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States discuss on the policies that would assist countries in accelerating their progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2015.</i></p> | 57% (8) | 36% (5) | 7% (1) | - | - | - |
| <p>d. Agenda item 7, Issues related to countries with special needs</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action that are relevant to the Asia-Pacific least developed countries. Member States are also briefed on the proposals for the final regional review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2012</i></p> | 36% (5) | 36% (5) | 14% (2) | - | - | 14% (2) |
| <p>e. Agenda item 8, Capacity-building for poverty reduction through sustainable agriculture</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the critical capacity-building requirements for improving the efficiency of existing agricultural innovation systems and modalities for the transfer of technology, with emphasis on developing a better policy environment and enhancing awareness of regulatory systems and new modalities that facilitate agricultural innovations and transfer of technology.</i></p> | 36% (5) | 43% (6) | 14% (2) | - | - | 7% (1) |

| A. 3. To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below? | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) | No answer |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| f. Agenda item 9, Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme <i>Expected outcome: Member States provide recommendations and guidance on the focus of the short- and long-term work in the area of macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013.</i> | 43% (6) | 43% (6) | 7% (1) | - | - | 7% (1) |
| g. Agenda item 10, Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session <i>Expected outcome: Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.</i> | 57% (8) | 29% (4) | 7% (1) | - | - | 7% (1) |
| h. Agenda item 11, Dates, venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee <i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the tentative dates, venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee, to be held in 2013.</i> | 57% (8) | 21% (3) | 14% (2) | - | - | 7% (1) |
| i. Agenda item 12, Other matters <i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed and decide on any other concerns related to the Committee on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development</i> | 43% (6) | 21% (3) | 14% (2) | - | - | 21% (3) |
| 4. What was the most relevant agenda item for your delegation? | | | | | | |
| 12 delegations (85.7 % of respondents) provided comments (see Annex II) | | | | | | |
| 4. | 86% (12) | - | - | - | - | 14% (2) |

D. Committee's general terms of reference

| 5. To what extent did the Committee session succeed in addressing its terms of reference? | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) | No answer |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| a) Review and analyze regional trends. | 57% (8) | 21% (3) | 7% (1) | 7% (1) | - | 7% (1) |
| b) Identify priorities and emerging issues, particularly those with implications for the work | 64% (9) | 29% (4) | 0% (0) | 7% (1) | - | - |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|---|-------------|
| of the secretariat. | | | | | | |
| c) Promote dialogue on regional and subregional approaches and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes. | 71% (10) | 14% (2) | 14% (2) | - | - | - |
| d) Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges at the regional and subregional levels. | 64% (9) | 21% (3) | 7% (1) | 7% (1) | - | - |
| 6. | 29% (4) | - | - | - | - | 71% (10) |
| 6. How can the Committee more effectively address its terms of reference (5 (a- d) above)? | | | | | | |
| 4 delegations (28.5 % of respondents) provided comments (see Annex II) | | | | | | |

Participation

| B. To what extent do you feel that... | To a great extent (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | Not at all (5) | No answer |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| a) the Committee session was owned and driven by member States? | 50% (7) | 43% (6) | - | - | 7% (1) | - |
| b) the overall outcome of the deliberations is a result of a collaborative effort by members of the Committee? | 57% (8) | 14% (2) | 29% (4) | - | - | - |
| c) the draft report adequately reflects the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Committee? | 57% (8) | 21% (3) | 7% (1) | - | - | 14% (2) |
| d) the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session? | 50% (7) | 29% (4) | - | 7% (1) | - | 14% (2) |

C. My delegation's attendance at the Committee session was:

| | |
|---------|---|
| 57% (8) | mainly from the Capital |
| 0% (0) | mainly from the Capital - Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| 21% (3) | mainly from representatives in Bangkok (Embassy) |
| 7% (1) | a combination of the above |
| 14% (2) | other: |
| | |

Annex II

Questionnaire Comments

What was the most relevant agenda item for your delegation?

- Agenda item 10.
- Policy challenges for sustaining the dynamism of AP economies (agenda item 4)
- Items 6 and 8 could have covered more depths and widths in their formulation. Discussion of the issue of sustainable agriculture solely from the perspective of ESCAP seems to be a bit weak and narrow. Item 6 could have been made more constructive and forward-looking in its formulation.
- Agenda item 5 i.e. challenges of poverty reduction and inclusive development amid high inflation was very relevant as most of the developing countries are passing through this situation.
- Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development.
- For My country, the Poverty Reduction was very important topic.
- Agenda 4, Agenda 5, Agenda 6, Agenda 9.
- Agenda item 6, Accelerating the achievement of the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific.
- Agenda items: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
- Item 4-6, and 8.
- Agenda item 5, 6, 8
- Agenda item 5.

How can the Committee more effectively address its terms of reference (5 (a-d) above)?

- The Committee should consider ways to improve coordination of inputs into the process especially in the pre-session preparation. A technical working group comprising relevant experts/officials from member countries should be considered to support this Committee.
- This forum should provide opportunity for discussion on the issues among the members and exchange of views rather than formal statements by the delegates.
- It could have been more effective if the discussion could have been in small group.
- The Committee can more effectively address its TOR through regular consultation with member countries so that up-to-date information is channeled through for analytical purposes.

Is there anything that could have been done to encourage higher and wider representation from your country at the Committee session?

- The Committee should clearly communicate its expectation for contribution from member including prior consultation with relevant ministries before the meeting.
- 1. High-level consultations of global importance, such as the G-20 consultations, should continue and be held earlier so as to draw the attention of Governments around the world. The visibility and voice of ESCAP should be further enhanced; otherwise it will be very difficult to make these conventional economic issues stand out in highlight.
2. Efforts should be made to identify and focus on a few areas (such as agriculture or others), so as to attract the participation of the relevant ministries/agencies of member country Governments.
- Disseminate the function and the outcome of the Committee to the key ministries in economic area of member countries.
- Timely supply of agenda materials.
- Provision of finding support by ESCAP, such that they will provide for hotel accommodation at the event and participants to worry about their fare.
- For more than one/maybe 2 delegations from each country for appropriate collaboration to draw a true picture of a country.

What was the most successful feature of the Committee session?

- It provides a useful platform for dialogue and excellent expert views to guide the discussion.
- Discussion MDGs.
- MDG's
- All delegation could share the idea that the MDGs is so important that many countries will go to.
- The opportunity for all participants of the sessions to attend the Nobel Laureate Professor Robert Mundell on global currencies and the chance to ask interested questions as well. The answer by this distinguished person addressed many problems and confusions to finish my department's report on global currencies.
- Session was well merged and coordinated.
- The sharing of country statements on their experiences, priorities, challenges and suggestions for the Asia-Pacific region.
- Sharing of experiences with members of other states representing their respective countries in this regional meeting.

What was the least successful feature of the Committee session?

- Participation and contribution from members especially in terms of building a consensus and having a stronger regional voice. It lacks of dynamism and sense of urgency.

- LDC's
- In the Chapter 1,3 of the draft report in Expert Group Meetings dated December 06, 2011, I have found that inflation rate for 2008, 2009, 2010 is different from those used in our country by National Statistics Commission as well as projection for 2011 of the inflation and GDR growth.
- The provision of urgent, priority resolutions for the Asia Pacific region.
- Session was comprehensive and informative. Congratulations. This is my first time to attend ESCAP meeting and it's my pleasure and honor to represent my country. I learnt a lot and hope to participate more in the upcoming UN meeting. Thank you very much.

Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Committee session and further suggestions on how we may improve on secretariat preparations for and the servicing of future session:

- The Committee should consider what are additional values it can provide on top of other forums and dialogues going on regionally and globally, through establishment of clear links to UN's works and programs and national priorities, as well as focusing on results.
- Secretariat should provide more information about likely way of conducting the Committee meeting to members and expectations from them. Additional information about availability and usability conditions for facilities like internet, food, water etc. would also be much helpful. Meeting framework should have been designed to be of more interactive and exchange of views oriented rather than attempt to compile statements from delegates.
- All delegates expressed success stories and best achievements in their statements during the meeting. Meanwhile, speakers, panelists and documents overview impediments, obstacles, feebleness of policy related to the issues. We suggest the delegates may submit country report prior the meeting related to the issues. The meeting then could focus on problem-solving discussions of policy constraints. The meeting also could draw conclusions as the commitment how to follow up result discussions or could recommend UN's wings and international organizations to participate on following up results of the meeting.
- I fully agree with Mr. Biman C. Brasad regarding the promotion of assistances from donor and partner countries in creating the infrastructure itself more importantly than capacity building and implementing socially beneficial projects. We need roads and railroads between different villages and districts located all over Mongolia. If you are aware Mongolia is the 18th largest country from 200 countries of the world in terms of territory. Secondly, the government of Mongolia established new Development bank this year for the very first time. This bank is 100% owned by the government and will not take deposits, it will invest in strategically important development projects like expert-oriented projects, value-added production projects and infrastructure projects. Our state budget is in deficit; therefore, there are no sufficient funds for the bank. Investments and foreign borrowings to this bank are highly appreciated. Before finalizing the draft report I would like to make above mentioned statements and following policy proposals that could be contributed to the final report. Mongolia

is very rich with mineral resources like copper, gold, coal and cashmere. However, I'm very much concerned that the government is giving too much cash to all citizens of Mongolia as dividends from mining sector wealth due to the political pressure. Of course, it negatively affects our macro-economic indicators like inflation, budget deficit and leads to the Deutsche Disease. Thus, the countries with above mentioned problems like Mongolia have to put much attention and emphasize on establishment of Sovereign Wealth Fund with the mining revenue. The principal amount or the first investment for the fund's establishment should not be spent, the most importantly. The financial instruments should be used to increase the return from principal amount and the increased return like interest income, capital gains can be effectively distributed to the citizens of Mongolia in the form of cash as dividends from national wealth.

- At the end of each agenda discussion there should be solid priority agreement for all the countries, for future actions.
- All the presentation (includes: slides) should be sent to participants by email.

Annex III
Qualitative Assessment of the substantive outcomes of the Committee session

| Agenda Item Expected outcome | Quantitative questionnaire response | Qualitative assessment based on a review of the draft report of the session | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Agenda Item 4, Policy challenges for sustaining the dynamism of Asia-Pacific economies | Member States are briefed on an updated growth outlook for countries in the region and the factors contributing to a slowdown in economic recover as well as emerging macroeconomic challenges, including large volatile capital inflows to developing countries and their impact on future economic growth | 93% (13/14) agree to a great or good extent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee requested the Executive Secretary, amongst other things provide an analyses of the document” Policy challenges for sustaining the dynamism of Asia-Pacific economies: growth outlook, emerging headwinds and policy agenda for inclusive and sustainable development”, to provide an updated growth look for countries in the region and analyse factors contributing to slowdown in economic recovery including macroeconomic challenges, volatile capital inflows to developing countries and their impact on future economic growth. |
| Agenda item 5, Challenges of poverty reduction and inclusive development amid high inflation | Member States are informed of the recent trends in income poverty and selected social indicators in countries of the region. Member States also share their experiences on the impact of high inflation and food prices. for disaster management in the region and examine the possible role(s) of the secretariat; | 93% (N=13/14) agree to a great or good extent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee requested the Secretariat to review recent trends in income poverty and selected social indicators in countries of the region and secretariat was also requested to explore the high impact of inflation and food prices on poverty, inclusive development and |

| | | | the Millennium Development Goals. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agenda item 6, Accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific | Member States discuss on the policies that would assist countries in accelerating their progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. | 93% (N=13/14) agree to a great or good extent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee requests that the secretariat provide policies that would assist countries to accelerate their progress in achieving the Goals |
| Agenda item 7, Issues related to countries with special needs | Member States are informed of the priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action that are relevant to the Asia-Pacific least developed countries. Member States are also briefed on the proposals for the final regional review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2012 | 72% (N=10/14) agree to a great or good extent | <p>The expected outcomes were met to a great extent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on “capacity building for Poverty reduction through sustainable agriculture” (E/ESCAP/CMP(2)/6, member countries would share views on issues raised and provide the secretariat with guidance on further work in the area. |
| Agenda Item 8, Capacity-building for poverty reduction through sustainable agriculture | Member States are informed of the critical capacity-building requirements for improving the efficiency of existing agricultural innovation systems and modalities for the transfer of technology, with emphasis on developing a better policy environment and enhancing awareness of regulatory systems and new modalities that facilitate agricultural innovations and transfer of technology. | 79% (N=11/14) agree to a great or good extent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcomes were met to a great extent. • The secretariat provided an overview of the strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 of the subprogramme on macroeconomic policy and inclusive development, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | | resolution 65/244 and the outcome of f the Committees deliberation to be integrated into the planning for the strategic framework and programme of work for 2014-2015. |
| Agenda item 9, Consideration of the future focus of the suprogramme | Member States provide recommendations and guidance on the focus of the short- and long-term work in the area of macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013. | 86% (N=12/14) agree to a great or good extent | The Committee acknowledged that the Secretariat would invite member States to circulate in advance proposals and or texts of draft resolutions on priority issues relating to macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development for the consideration of the Commission at its sixty-eighth session. |
| Agenda item 10, Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-eight session | Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session. | 86% (N=12/14) agree to a great or good extent | The Committee would deliberate tentative dates, venue and provisional agenda for its third session to be held in 2013. |
| Agenda item 11, Dates, venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee | Member States are informed of the tentative dates, venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee, to be held in 2013. | 78% (N=12/14) agree to a great or good extent | The Committee would raise any matter not covered under the items raised at the second session of the Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development. |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| I). Agenda item 12, Other matters | Member States are informed and decide on any other concerns related to the Committee on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development | 64% (N=9/14) agree to a great or good extent | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|