

Chapter 4



Man sifting seeds along the Red River in northern Vietnam; photo by Quy-Toan Do, courtesy of the World Bank Photo Library.

Lessons and Opportunities

Practical Lessons for the Near Term

Some practical lessons emerge from this analysis. The increasing disconnect between Bank and IEG project ratings needs to be reversed by renewing attention to project reporting and self-assessments consistent with standards set by IEG. The drop in 2007 project ratings also must be watched carefully.

To improve the focus on results, steps are needed: (a) at the project level and in global and regional programs, to enhance the quality of the M&E systems, especially by working to put in place good baseline information, to elucidate clearly the link between project outputs and targeted outcomes, and to extend evaluation requirements to global programs beyond those supported by DGF; (b) at the country level, to simplify results frameworks and thus make them more useful in guiding and evaluating programs; and (c) at the institutional level for the Bank and in partner countries, to manage and learn from a growing number of impact evaluations, including by better integrating them into country programs and exploiting cross-country synergies in conducting and sharing studies.

Directions for the Overall Bank Agenda

The development community's focus on results on the ground has also generated interest in the Bank's overall development impact. The IDA15 replenishment exercise reinforced the importance of articulating the results (both outputs and outcomes) of Bank operations to donors and other external stakeholders.

Despite increased international interest, the Bank is not yet well positioned to articulate the results of its interventions. The IDA RMS and the AfricaRMS aim to report on the Bank's achievements in a systematic manner, but for a specific set of countries. The Bank is considering a corporate-level results report, which is expected to synthesize the Bank's contribution to results, in place of the Sector Strategy Implementation Update.

The experience of developing M&E systems at the project and country level, and for the IDA RMS and AfricaRMS, provides lessons and challenges for developing a Bank-wide results report, including:

- Performance measures should be limited to a manageable number that capture the critical elements reflecting development effectiveness and can be measured and monitored rigorously.
- A monitoring system should be designed not only to report on results but also to manage for results, that is, to collect performance information to assess whether the Bank is on track to achieve its corporate strategic objectives, make changes where needed, and allocate resources. Opera-

tional use of the performance measures would provide an incentive for managers and staff to organize, collect, and analyze the data.

- The Bank would need to ensure that its information systems are aligned, to supply the in-

formation and minimize the data assembly costs, for example, by standardizing project and country performance indicators as much as possible (a move already under way in the Africa Region and in several networks).