



SESSION NUMBER & TITLE
Parallel session 14: Building Resilience and Accountability: Motivating Policy Makers to use knowledge and evaluative evidence
SESSION TAKE AWAY
The session will draw on findings from a series of recent IEG evaluations that illustrate the challenges in bringing together the producers and consumers of knowledge within the World Bank. The set of evaluations are largely focused on the production of diagnostic and other analytical work that identifies country-level institutional weaknesses (e.g., debt management, public investment management, public financial management, procurement, Debt Sustainability Assessments). While the Bank has generally been good at producing good quality knowledge products that identify systemic weaknesses, the assessments do not always inform operational priorities to the extent one might expect, missing critical opportunities to build resilience and address data and knowledge gaps outside the context of a crisis.
SUBTHEME
Sustainability and Resilience
ORGANIZATION/S
World Bank (WB) Independent Evaluation Group (IEG)
LEAD PRESENTER: [Jeffrey Chelsky, Manager, Economic Management and Country Programs Unit, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), World Bank]
KEY MESSAGES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Large scale erosion of fiscal space in lower-income countries even before COVID-19 compounded by the fiscal implications of COVID-19 and a failure to improve revenue has undermined fiscal and debt sustainability in many developing countries. Opportunities missed after the Global Financial Crisis and in the decade prior to COVID to build fiscal space and resilience. 2. Number of tax tools and diagnostics has increased significantly in recent years presenting challenges in ensuring that valuable analysis is integrated into operational work and priority setting. 3. Country partnership framework (CPF) is the central tool of management and the Board for reviewing and guiding the WBG's country programs and gauging their effectiveness. The CPF identifies the key objectives and development results through which the WBG intends to support. <p>Findings:</p> <p>Fiscal and debt-related conditionality did not always prioritize major country-specific drivers of debt stress. Often, low hanging fruit were prioritized.</p> <p>Track record in prioritizing the reduction in fiscal and financial sector vulnerabilities outside of a crisis context is mixed. Production and use of diagnostics frequently not prioritized outside the context of crisis.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p>

Building fiscal and financial resilience should be fully and explicitly integrated into country strategies, with a clear articulation of priorities.

More concerted effort needed to use diagnostic findings to systematically inform priority setting for country-level policy dialogue, capacity building, and operations.

Regularly take stock of the findings of relevant diagnostics tools and instruments to identify knowledge gaps. Where knowledge is incomplete, filling gaps should be explicitly planned for. Greater attention should be paid to data quality.

PANELIST/DISCUSSANT #1: [Erik Bloom, Principal Evaluation Specialist, IED, ADB]

KEY MESSAGES

ADB did an evaluation that focuses on the idea of knowledge management. It was a process evaluation, looking at desirable aspects of knowledge management: (i) build a model of ideal KM system; (ii) compare to ADB actual practices; (iii) some focus on knowledge outputs

Findings:

ADB has been talking about the importance of knowledge for years. However, there was mixed performance with diagnostics and sector; good knowledge products but not aligned and faced structural and cultural constraints, and limited collaborations.

Recommendations:

ADB needs to make a clear, high-level decision about the desired depth and scope of knowledge.

If a Knowledge++ Bank model is favored, ADB will need to adopt a comprehensive approach.

If a Finance++ Bank model is favored, the current pace of incremental reform can be maintained.

PANELIST/DISCUSSANT #2: [Charanjit Singh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, GOI]

KEY MESSAGES

1. National Rural Livelihood Mission – program funded by WB, which aims to create efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihoods enhancements and improved access to financial services.

2. NRLM evaluation: (i) assess the impact of NRLP program on institutional building, socioeconomic and empowerment outcomes; (ii) examine the role and contribution of federations; (iii) understand

3. There is value in evaluation, but academics could help make using results easier: (i) develop high-level summaries of research as learning notes, with less focus on the methods; (ii) highlight actionable results but consider the operational reality; (iii) research professionals to engage with policymakers; (iv) continuous engagement with the policymakers; (v) involvement of various stakeholders – dissemination of results; (vi) two-way communication – interesting stories

PANELIST/DISCUSSANT #3: [Tseveengerel Amgalan, Head of Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Authority of Government Supervisory (AGS)]

KEY MESSAGES

1. The consumers of the analysis/knowledge have to be political party leaders who are involved in leading the country and making the main decisions related to national development.

2. Changing the cultural context – evaluation as a learning and accountability. There is a need to draft guidelines, getting into the cultural context that will be valued and used.

MODERATOR: [Mark Sundberg, Chief Economist, Millennium Challenge Corporation]

3 KEY MESSAGES

1. One of the rigors of evaluation is keeping lessons simple.
2. Influencing governments to use knowledge management products is critical. Results chain should clearly lay down how evaluations influence policies.
3. Resilience in different perspectives – macro-fiscal aspects in dealing crises; affecting end-users in policy and crisis management resilience
4. A plethora of knowledge becomes a problem. It needs to be filtered to fit country circumstances around debt and financial sustainability aspects. Public expenditure review is one of the most valuable products for economists.

Q&A SUMMARY

How do you evaluate incentives?

Silos and decentralization make it hard to evaluate. Continuous dialogue is important. Getting people understand what evaluation is about. Understanding the rules is important in evaluating incentives.

How different approaches at state level were raised in lessons?

Federal system – learn from each other. It is a continuous process. Evaluation is a dynamic process. One should keep in mind context and diversity and avoid going through micro details. One may ask each state with own proposal, from the ground level – village. Bottom-up lending

Lessons: draw on crisis into policy stage, and how to leverage evaluation?

During the pandemic, there was scarcity of vegetables and fruits for city people. A scheme that provided vehicles to communities that can bring products to the city addressed this. Decide what kind of vehicle in different states. Other support possible can be provided was also considered.

Worst time to do knowledge work is during a crisis. Pressure makes it worse and go for low-hanging fruits.

Where do you see the greatest opportunity to change culture and mechanism that will allow people understand evaluation better?

Political will is important. Policy makers and donors working together would be helpful.

What knowledge products can influence operational procedures?

Culture and incentives are both essential in transforming operations. How far you want to take the transformation is crucial.

Encourage knowledge to supply instead of finding knowledge... is there a system in place? What practicality we can bring towards rural development and resilience of the farmers?

Building capacity and shelf life of diagnostics tools?

Diagnostics tools were adopted subnationally. It is important to be updated regularly.

To what extent can you leverage the variation in experience in different states?

Andra pradesh case study – constant engagement is critical. Capacity building of the officers at the state level and central level is really important.

How do you translate guidelines in Mongolia?

Relationship between the government and donors is important. Translation is done one word at a time. Collaboration is important in the policymaking process.

Jargons in reports? / Do you also consider how different cultures receive evaluation knowledge products?

There should always be a summary of report. People should be constantly involved during the implementation of the evaluation.

SESSION COORDINATOR

Bryan Noel Lazaro