

Context

Mandate: The “World Bank Group” comprises the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). The term “World Bank” refers specifically to two of the five, IBRD and IDA. The over-arching goal of the Group is to reduce poverty and improve living standards by supporting sustainable growth and investment in people. IBRD was established in 1945 and countries must be a member of the IMF to join. IBRD is the Group’s main lending organisation. IDA was established in 1960 to provide assistance to poorer developing countries that cannot meet the IBRD’s terms.

Size: IBRD’s commitments in FY 2006 totalled US\$14.1 billion for 112 projects in 184 member countries. IDA’s disbursements in FY 2006 totalled US\$9.5 billion for 167 projects. The Bank is a large institution with about 10,000 staff and over 100 overseas offices. The Bank’s headquarters are in Washington DC.

Key Issues: The World Bank remains the leading global development institution. It plays a central and effective role in efforts to reduce poverty. Its expertise on global debates on development issues and the high quality of its staff are well known and valued. The Bank’s comparative advantages mean it is well placed to tackle global challenges such as climate change. But the Bank needs to improve its focus on results, have a more nuanced approach to conditionality, and continue to become a better partner by ensuring more developing country voice and ownership in its decision making processes, and by increasing its in-country presence.

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Is the World Bank *BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE?*

Summary The Bank's reviews of its effectiveness and its analysis strongly influence development thinking and the knowledge base. No other multilateral agency subjects itself to such robust and self-critical evaluations. The issues it is grappling with – fragile states, governance, etc – are common to other agencies and its thinking and experience strongly influence other multilaterals, bilaterals and partner governments.

Commitment to Continual Improvement

Does the Board require management to act on performance results?

- ✓ Yes. The Committee on Development Effectiveness or its subcommittee discusses all major evaluations. The Audit Committee is also involved now. Each evaluation includes a Management Action Record (MAR), in which Management responds to the main recommendations. Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) – formerly Operations Evaluation Department (OED) - annually assembles and updates the full set of MARs and reports to the Board on the status of active recommendations arising from IEG studies. ¹

Building Knowledge and Lesson Learning

Does the Bank have adequate mechanisms for spreading lesson learning?

- ✓ Yes. The Bank devotes a lot of energy to lesson learning including virtual knowledge networks, sourcebooks, toolkits and good practice notes. IEG evaluations are an important source of lesson learning. Sector Boards also play an important role. (However, IEG's Knowledge Sharing Study found that more effort could be put into validating lessons learned). ¹
- ✓ One of the Bank's key strengths is its capacity and influence on policy dialogue and advocacy. ¹⁰
- ✓ The Bank plays an active role in global debates on emerging development issues and publishes substantive reports on key issues, e.g. World Development Report, Global Monitoring Report. ¹
- ✓ The Bank devotes considerable time and resources to lesson learning activities. ¹
- ⇔ IEG argues that the Bank needs to act far more selectively but Board members continue to extend its mandate. ⁸
- × The Bank's knowledge and technical assistance could be better used at the country level. ⁵

Results Based Management: To what extent does the Bank manage by results?

- ✓ The Bank began implementing its Managing for Development Results action plan in 2003. The plan calls for steps to (a) strengthen countries' capacity and demand to manage for results; (b) enhance the Bank's relevance and effectiveness in contributing to results; and (c) harmonise results-based approaches across development agencies ¹³
- ✓ The Bank's participation in the Common Performance Assessment System (COMPAS) is a good start to getting sharper results focus. ⁹
- ✓ Results-Based Country Assistance Strategies guide decision making at the country and regional levels. The Bank is working to improve the linkages between sectoral strategies, global programmes and monitoring the contribution of the Bank's work at the country level.

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- ✓ The establishment of a Results Steering Group with representatives from all Bank Networks and Regions is helping to communicate and monitor improvements in the practical application of results frameworks.¹⁶
- ⇔ The Bank has made progress in putting in place architecture for managing for development results, but more work is needed to extend this framework beyond country programmes and projects. The Bank's country partners are still at early stage in adapting to a results focus. The use of the results framework as an effective management and monitoring tool remains in question.¹³
- ⇔ Strengthening the specificity and use of sectoral results frameworks in guiding and assessing the Bank's contribution to results is a priority in Financial Year (FY) 2008.
- ✗ The Bank's Strategic Framework does not currently provide a focus or structure for monitoring, managing and reporting on performance.¹ But the Bank has recently launched a long-term strategic exercise to facilitate more effective monitoring of the execution of Bank strategy.

Staff Development

What is the average number of days training per staff member?

- ⇔ In FY 2007, the average number of days in training for Bank staff was 4.1 days.
- ✓ Staff are taught partnership, communication and convening skills.¹

What is the level of staff satisfaction?

- ✓ The Staff Survey of 2005 found that 91% of Bank Group staff surveyed agreed with the statement "I am proud to work at the World Bank Group".

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How well is the World Bank *MANAGING* its *RESOURCES*?

Summary The Bank has put poverty reduction at the forefront of its business in the poorer countries. In middle income countries and in its global programmes, a greater focus on poverty reduction could be achieved. The Bank continues to be asked to take on new areas of work by others and its work on global programmes has expanded in recent years. The Bank has strong internal systems and we assess that the Bank is making good progress in managing its resources.

Corporate Governance and Strategy

Is the Bank's corporate strategy based on a clear definition of mandate and comparative advantage?

⇔ Partially. The Bank's overarching mission is poverty reduction, under which it has two key pillars and a number of strategic initiatives. However, these are not articulated in a single corporate strategy. The Bank's 3-5 year Strategic Framework (SF) mainly provides a framework for the budget. Established in 2001, it defines the Bank's core strength as its global reach and its ability to integrate across all the major elements of development. It sets out a 'Framework for Selectivity' designed to help achieve the Bank's mission of poverty reduction, based around two key pillars of 'Building the Climate for Investment, Jobs and Sustainable Growth' and 'Empowering Poor People to Participate in Development and Investing in Them'. However, the SF is too broad to give guidance on selectivity, especially for global programmes.¹

✓ The Bank has made much progress at the corporate level in focusing its mission, assistance strategies, and instruments on poverty reduction.⁵

Staff Management

To what extent is staff recruitment, postings and promotions meritocratic and transparent?

✓ Yes - at Vice President level and below. Vice Presidents are appointed by the President in consultation with MDs, taking into account performance records, 'best fit', 360 degree feedback reports and diversity targets. Below this level, there are up to 120 appointments of Directors and Managers each year. Of these, 30% are filled through managed reassignments taking into account similar criteria. The other 70% of posts are filled through advertised open competition, with explicit technical and people management criteria. Overall, HR systems have improved in transparency and application of meritocratic principles.¹

Operational Management

Is the Bank sufficiently decentralised to enable it to respond flexibly to country demand?

⇔ Partially. The Bank continues to make steady progress along agreed strategic directions. However, less than 50% of operational staff are based in country offices, and 25% of tasks are managed in Country Offices. Decentralisation of Country Directors has led to significant delegation of decision-making to the field. The Bank recognises that it should decentralise more, and that the decentralisation of sector staff is a particular problem.¹

⇔ The Bank differentiates its approach to decentralisation by region, to take into account differences in programme, accessibility and cost. Over 60% of staff in the South Asia and East Asia regions are decentralised and the Africa region is also working to achieve 60% decentralisation. Bank management recognizes the value of being closer to the client and seeks to accelerate decentralisation.

What is the speed of project approvals and disbursements?

✓ Project preparation time fell from 24 months in FY1996 to 14 months in FY2005.⁴

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Resource Management

How well are the Bank's resource allocation criteria aligned with its corporate strategy and comparative advantage?

⇔ Allocation processes for the Bank's administrative budget are very complex despite being linked to strategic objectives.¹

What is the disbursement ratio (i.e. commitments versus disbursements: Paris Declaration Indicator 7)?

✓ 70% of disbursements on schedule and recorded by governments³. In 2004, IDA's total net disbursements made up 33% of the total net multilateral disbursements of ODA to developing countries.¹¹

What is the administrative efficiency ratio (i.e. average gross expenditure per staff member)?

⇔ In FY 2006, US\$2.07 million was disbursed for each staff member (US\$20.7 billion / 10,000 staff)⁷. The administration costs to disbursement ratio is 1:9.9 (\$US 2.10 bn / \$20.7 bn).

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How well is the World Bank managing its *PARTNERSHIPS*?

Summary The Bank has made strong commitments to being a better partner, recognising that it can dominate the development debate. It has fully signed up to the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness and has taken some measures to institutionalise better practice. However, internal staff incentives still need to be changed to ensure sufficient weight is given to this area and working relationships with other multilaterals organisations need to be improved. Developing country voice in Board meetings and decision making remains weak.

Voice

What mechanisms exist for developing countries to influence the strategy of the Bank?

× The influence of developing country members on the Bank is very limited with decision making being dominated by richer shareholders.²

⇔ The Bank is a dominant actor in development policy and cooperation and has a reputation for leading rather than listening, particularly in poorer countries.^{1,2}

How actively is the Bank promoting the participation of civil society?

✓ Civil society organisations were consulted on nearly all of the 31 country assistance strategies (CAS) approved by the Bank in FY 2006 and on 72% of new loans approved⁷

⇔ The Bank needs to strengthen its engagement with local authorities, local NGOs and wider civil society.⁵

Partnership Behaviour

What mechanisms are in place to seek feedback on partnership behaviour and what do the results show?

⇔ There are formal Bank mechanisms in place but the results are not published. The Bank's partnerships performance is variable and too dependent on individuals.²

Alignment

To what extent does the Bank promote or enable government ownership throughout the project/programme cycle?

⇔ The Bank is taking steps to align its country assistance programmes more with the priorities of the country's poverty reduction strategy, and to streamline conditionalities. However, a study of African HIPC governments reveals that this is not yet perceived to be having a major impact.¹²

What % aid flows to government sector is reported on national partner budgets?

95%³

What % of Technical Cooperation flows are provided through coordinated programmes consistent with partners' national strategies?

52%³

Does the Bank use countries' own public financial management and procurement systems strategies?

PFM systems 42% ; Procurement systems 41%³

Is the number of Project Implementation Units decreasing or non-existent?

Decreasing. Currently 228 in total; 7.4 average number per country³

⇔ Bank policy is to move away from PMUs, but the practice is dependent on the quality of country systems. The Bank has started to do this through PRSCs, but a number of PMUs still exist for traditional investment projects. OPCS has been providing leadership for the MDB community in the use of country systems.¹

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In what ways has the Bank been aligning its strategy/programme/projects with national strategies?

✓ The Bank has developed a number of joint country strategies with other multilateral and bilateral donors in support of national PRSs. ¹

⇔ The Bank's responsiveness can be limited by its relative lack of decentralisation. ¹

× Monitoring and reporting on PRS alignment could be improved to show how the Bank links its resources and procedure to country systems. ¹

✓ The Bank's regional VPs have key performance indicators on making progress on partnership, harmonisation and alignment. ¹

Harmonisation

To what extent does the Bank participate in local donor coordination activities such as sector working groups/thematic groups?

✓ The Bank engages effectively in donor coordination mechanisms. ¹

✓ The Bank's country strategies must include a discussion of the work of other donors and propose measures to improve coordination. ¹

⇔ The Bank should be more willing to allow other agencies to take the lead where appropriate. ⁵

⇔ Joint analytical work (especially with the IMF and UN) is limited. ¹⁰

× The Bank's working with UN members is poor and it is seen as a detached member. ²

✓ Differences in administrative culture and fiduciary arrangements have created obstacles to relationships with the UN family in the past and have presented particular issues in developing and implementing collective responses to crises and emergencies. The Bank is now working intensively with the UN to develop a fiduciary framework which will emphasise harmonisation and specifically provide for the possibility of joint preparation, appraisal and supervision of activities being supported by participating donors.

✓ The Bank has recently approved a new policy on rapid response to crises and emergencies. It is committed to improving the quality of emergency planning, which the Bank generally coordinates with the UN, to identify clear results, accountability and division of labour among national and international partners.

To what extent does the Bank share information with other donors?

✓ The Bank has increased its outreach and accessibility in client countries through a number of initiatives (e.g. expansion of public information centres, launch of websites for targeted audiences). ⁵

What evidence is there of harmonising procurement and consulting services procedures, disbursement policies and evaluation practices

Use of common arrangements or procedures 57%, joint donor missions 21% and joint country analytical work 48% ³

✓ The Bank is participating in pooled and harmonised procurement practices and local coordination efforts (e.g. joint donor CAS in Tanzania). ¹

⇔ There is often a gap between Bank rhetoric and reality on harmonisation. ² But the Bank is making considerable measured improvements in following up on the Paris Declaration and in its efforts to promote harmonisation at the country level, suggesting that any gaps are receding.

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What do we know about the World Bank's *COUNTRY/GLOBAL RESULTS?*

Summary The Bank's poverty reduction programmes have a mixed record over more than a decade. The Bank's country strategies have become more poverty focused and consistent with the needs of client countries. However, there has been a tendency to work in silos, undermining a coherent approach. Although the proportion of projects that are satisfactory has increased, one third of the Bank's country programmes were rated unsatisfactory in 2005. The Bank has adopted a results framework to improve the focus on results. However more work needs to be done to embed the approach, and in particular, strengthen data and countries' capacity to manage for development results.

Country/Global Results

What information is available on the Bank's performance at country level?

- ✓ Number of Country-owned PRSPs rose from none in FY1996 to 46 full/52 interim in FY2005. ⁸
- ✓ Number of Country Assistance Plans rose from 1 in FY1996 to 38 in FY2004. ⁸
- ✓ Bank's lending and advice rose from 15 post conflict countries in FY1996 to 40 post-conflict countries and territories in FY2005 ⁸
- ✓ The Bank has done well in directing its financial support to countries with better policies, which can best use these resources for growth and poverty reduction. ⁵
- ✓ Bank lending has increased significantly for education, health and other social services (from about 5% of total new commitments in 1986 to about 30% in 2003). But there are concerns about the lack of attention and support on growth in poorer countries. ⁸
- ✓ IDA ranks above average scores on aid policies on an overall ranking of donors and creditors by selected HIPC. This reflects IDA's highly concessional, predictable, on-budget aid in support of government priority sectors and projects, although it is too tied up in conditionalities. Although IDA is seen as providing more flexible aid than many other multilaterals, there is a need for enhanced flexibility. ¹²
- ⇔ CASs link country development goals with CAS outcomes and Bank interventions but many performance measures lacked baselines and specific targets. ⁶

What evidence is there of the independence, credibility and utility of the Bank's own evaluations?

- ✓ The Bank has recently undertaken a range of operation evaluations and reviews of its effectiveness and the analysis strongly influences development thinking and the knowledge base. It should be noted that no other multilateral agency subjects itself to such robust and self-critical evaluations. ^{5,6,8,13,14}

What impact is the Bank having at the country/global level?

- ⇔ Review of the Bank's poverty reduction programmes finds a mixed record over more than a decade. ¹⁵
- ⇔ The Bank faces challenges at the country and project levels in articulating and measuring the linkages between its interventions and their expected and actual poverty outcomes. ⁵
- ⇔ More work to assess the impact of the Bank's assistance on governance is urgently needed. ⁵
- ⇔ The Bank's anticorruption efforts have helped support new laws and institutions in many countries. But once established, they have often proved ineffective because they lack enforcement capacity. ¹⁴

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⇔ The Bank's country business models and global programmes are not yet fully aligned with poverty reduction.⁵ The Bank is working with partners among global programmes and at the country level to better integrate global and country programmes. Results-based (RB) CAS now incorporate information on relevant global programmes and the Bank is an active participant in multiple ongoing discussions of the integration of vertical funds and country programmes. This work is a major focus in the replenishment of IDA 15.¹⁷

× The Bank's monitoring and evaluation framework is not sufficiently poverty focused.⁵ But the principle document for articulating and monitoring the Bank's contribution to development outcomes at the country level -RB CAS- is designed to support national poverty reduction strategies.

× Half of the CAS reviews completed by IEG over the past four fiscal years concluded that the Bank's assistance in rural areas had either not led to satisfactory outcomes or that rural poverty reduction required increased attention.¹⁴

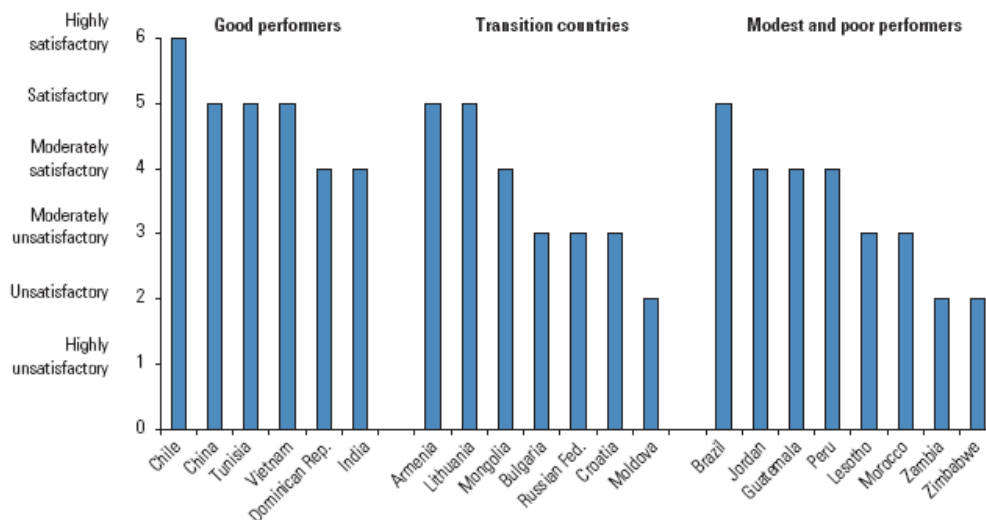
× Almost half of all Bank CAS reviewed by IEG in the past four fiscal years were found to be overly ambitious in two distinct ways. They either lacked selectivity or they were founded on unrealistic expectations for a reform programme that was incommensurate with the country's institutional capacity and political situation.¹⁴

Portfolio Quality

What is the % of projects/programmes which met their targets?

✓ Bank's portfolio has improved over the past five fiscal years, with over three-quarters of completed operations meeting their stated objectives.¹⁴

✓ Bank has had satisfactory outcomes in 21 countries measured against CAS objectives even in modest and poor performers.⁸



Note: The time periods for these outcomes correspond to the review periods for the 21 CAEs, and range from 1985-99 for Chile to 1993-03 for Croatia and Moldova. See table C.1 for more details.

✓ The Bank's project outcomes improved in all but one region (Latin America and Caribbean) over periods FY1996-2000 and FY2001-2005.⁸

✓ The Bank had a detailed flow of statistical information on organisational performance and extensive performance reporting.¹

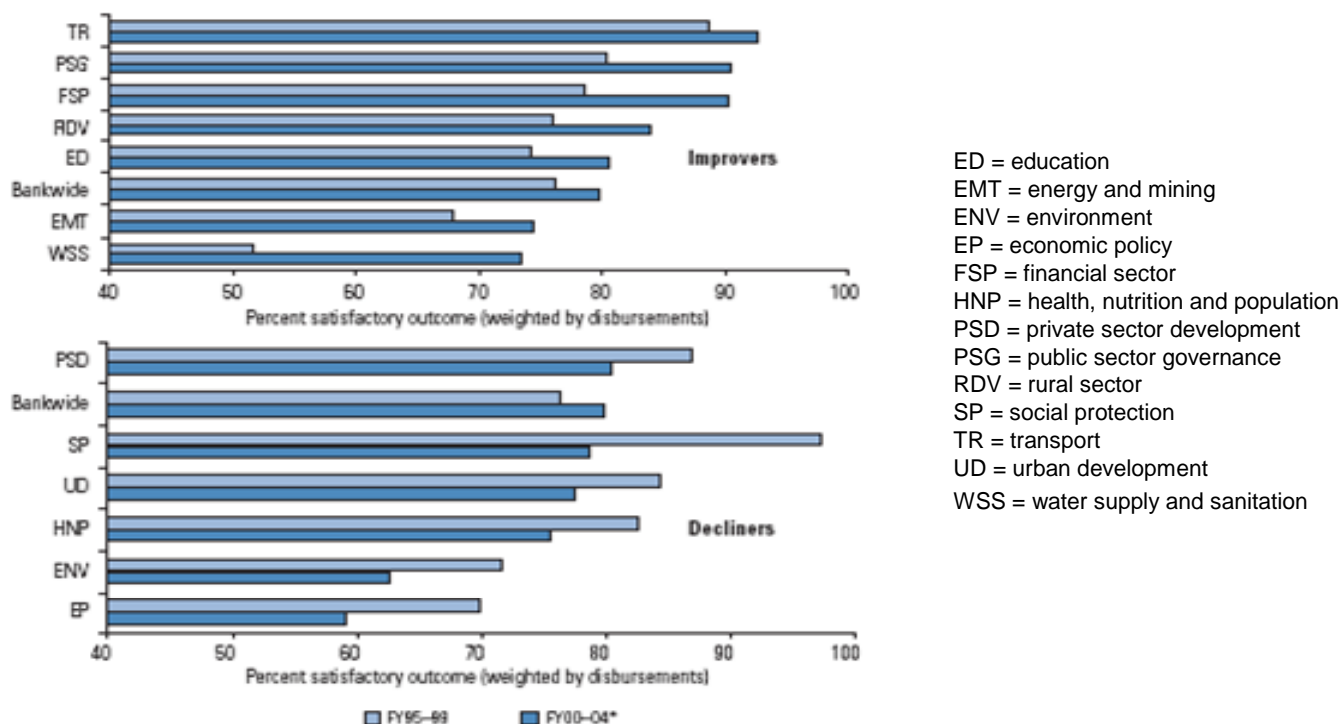
⇔ Satisfactory project outcomes increased from 69% in FY1996 to 78% in FY2004 but in 2005 one-third of the Bank's country programs were rated unsatisfactory.⁸

⇔ Despite excellent reporting on outcomes, specific linkages between outputs, outcomes and impacts are still weak.¹

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How does this vary across sectors, regions and countries?

⇔ Bank operations to the social sectors usually meet their targets but have been less successful in improving human development outcomes.⁵



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