

DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE

Chair's Summary of the Committee's Discussion on 9 April 2008 of the

- (i) **Asian Development Bank's Approaches to Partnering and Harmonization: In the Context of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; and**
- (ii) **Implementation of the Paris Declaration at the Asian Development Bank: A Development Partner's Study for an OECD-DAC Joint Evaluation**

1. The two special evaluation studies (SES) were carried out to (i) provide an independent assessment to DEC and Management on ADB's progress and challenges with respect to achieving greater partnering and harmonization; and (ii) provide ADB with inputs for the Third High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Ghana, being organized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Due to time constraints, the DEC only discussed the SES on Partnering and Harmonization.

Summary of Discussions

2. DEC noted two recommendations from the study, namely, (i) to include a progress report on the Paris Declaration commitments in ADB's new country partnership strategies (CPSs) and their mid-term reviews and completion reports; and (ii) to ensure, through training and other awareness-creating activities, that all concerned staff understand ADB's commitments under the Paris Declaration and their concomitant responsibilities.

3. DEC observed that ADB's achievements vis-à-vis the Paris Declaration commitments were often underreported, and expressed concern about the inadequacy of the existing Management Information System. OED mentioned that a time-recording system was necessary to analyse relative cost effectiveness of different operations, as previously recommended in the *SES on MfDR in ADB: A Preliminary Assessment* (DOC.IN.10-08).

4. DEC sought clarification on the limitations that certain charter provisions pose to ADB's harmonization efforts, such as those relating to procurement. Management explained that, on procurement, harmonization was being achieved by seeking waivers from the Board, if and when necessary.

5. Management explained that it was not necessary to include an additional progress report on Paris Declaration commitments in CPSs. There was already a monitoring mechanism in place that assesses progress at the country level. Management also explained that additional training programs were not a high priority, as these were also being undertaken at the country level.

Conclusions

6. DEC noted the progress made in strengthening long-term country development strategies, setting up institutional arrangements for country ownership, partnership dialogues, and aligning development partners' assistance programs with country priorities.

7. DEC noted that Management agreed with the SES' recommendations, except on the issue of giving high priority to additional training programs to create awareness about ADB's

commitment under the Paris Declaration; and on the recommendation to have a progress report on the Paris Declaration indicators at the country level.¹

8. DEC agreed that additional reporting for monitoring progress on implementation of Paris Declaration was not necessary at this stage. It could be taken up if and when there were indications of unsatisfactory progress in implementing the Paris Declaration. On the issue of training, DEC opined that existing training programs could incorporate a module on ADB's commitment under the Paris Declaration.

Ashok K. Lahiri
Chair, DEC

¹ DEC's recommendation for incorporating in existing training programs a module on Paris Declaration is now being acted upon (for example, in the Induction Program now being conducted, the session on MfDR was expanded to include Paris Commitments).