

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE

Chairperson's Summary of the Committee's Discussion on 29 September 2004 of the Country Assistance Program Evaluation for Nepal

1. The objectives of the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC) in discussing the country assistance program evaluation (CAPE) for Nepal were to review the results of the evaluation and to ensure that the CAPE's conclusions and recommendations were taken into account in the preparation of the new country strategy and program (CSP) for Nepal, which was to be considered by the full Board at a meeting the following week. In the case of Nepal, a new approach was piloted by which the CAPE and the CSP were prepared as parallel processes rather than in sequence. The key benefit attributed to this approach was that as lessons were learned from preparation of the CAPE, these were immediately fed into preparation of the CSP through interaction of the respective teams. By assessing how effectively lessons from the Nepal CAPE were being addressed in the Nepal CSP, the DEC could also provide an initial assessment of whether the parallel approach worked satisfactorily, or how it could be improved.
2. In this framework, the DEC concluded that it generally agreed with the CAPE for Nepal and assessed that its overall conclusions and recommendations were taken into account in the formulation of the new CSP for Nepal. The DEC appreciated that the CAPE's initial findings and recommendations had been endorsed by a stakeholder workshop in Kathmandu in mid-April.
3. However, the committee could not fully satisfy itself on specific linkages between CAPE recommendations and CSP details. For instance, some DEC members considered that the new CSP was not addressing key issues relating to gender and human trafficking brought out in the CAPE. Some DEC members attributed the gaps partly to the over-generic nature of the CAPE analysis; for instance, a more detailed grasp of why some sectors had worked better than others might have facilitated the review of sector strategies and programs in the new CSP. At the same time, the DEC as whole was not convinced that the parallel CAPE/CSP approach worked sufficiently as a knowledge management process. The DEC thought there should be a more sequential process with a longer time lag for reviewing and assimilating lessons between the CAPE and the CSP. The CAPE should provide independent inputs to CSP preparation. Correspondingly, sufficient lead time should be planned between the DEC's discussion of the CAPE and Board discussion of the CSP.
4. The DEC emphasized the CAPE's recommendation that the new CSP should embody a more sharply focused core program than in the past and, at the same time, that the formulated strategy should incorporate the flexibility needed to deal with the significant uncertainties facing Nepal due to the fluid political situation. DEC members suggested that lessons from the CAPE in regard to governance, need for institutional strengthening, and ownership of development programs by the Government should form the basis for initiatives formulated in the new CSP.

5. The DEC appreciated the substantive response to the CAPE that Management had provided. The DEC considered the concerns expressed by Management on certain aspects of the CAPE as a healthy sign of an active institutional dialogue on the lessons learning process. In the context of OED's organizational independence since the start of the year, the common challenge facing OED, Management, and the DEC is to perform their respectively enhanced responsibilities effectively in this process, so that the reports and discussions actually lead to tangible results.

Jusuf Anwar
Chairperson
Development Effectiveness Committee

15 October 2004