

TRANSLATING THE PARIS DECLARATION INTO LOCAL ACTIONS

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has strived to incorporate the principles of the Paris Declaration in both its operations and its strategic planning. A key interest of ADB and its partner countries has been related to the crucial aspect of **adapting the Paris Principles to local needs and requirements within the country context**. ADB, together with its development partners, has been working with partner countries in Asia and the Pacific region to guarantee an effective process of localizing the Paris Declaration. In each partner country, different means and methods are being employed to translate the Paris Principles into local actions.

One interesting effort has been the development of agreements between development partners and national governments representing **localized versions of the Paris Declaration**. This has happened in **Viet Nam** (Hanoi Core Statement in March 2006), **Cambodia** (Cambodia Declaration on Enhancing Aid Effectiveness in October 2006), and the **Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)** (Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in November 2006). A similar initiative took place in the Pacific region when **Pacific Island countries** and development partners adopted the Pacific Principles on Aid Effectiveness in July 2007. These agreements set out joint commitments and targets for improving aid effectiveness at the country or regional level.

Another initiative has been the establishment of **institutional frameworks aimed at implementing the aid effectiveness agenda** at the country level. In the **Philippines**, ADB helped set up the Harmonization Committee in mid-2006, chaired by the national government, and responsible for directing the activities related to the implementation of the Paris Declaration. In Viet Nam, the Partnership Group for Aid Effectiveness (PGAE) was established to operationalize the Hanoi Core Statement (HCS). This group, comprising representatives from both the Government and development partners, has been focusing on achieving the targets set out in the HCS. As the HCS covers a wide range of issues, specific thematic groups were created under the PGAE. Similar institutional arrangements have also been put in place in Cambodia and the Lao PDR.

At the programming level, ADB has assisted some of its developing member countries (DMCs) in **preparing joint country strategies** with several key development partners. The joint country support strategy for the **Kyrgyz Republic** brings together five development partners, including ADB, to support the Government's development agenda for 2007–2010 with the objective of aligning development partners' support with the goals of the Kyrgyz Republic's country development strategy.



ADB has also been putting a lot of effort in assisting partner countries to adopt localized **Management for Development Results (MfDR)** approaches. In **Nepal**, ADB has taken a lead role in involving other development partners and working to harmonize capacity development support for institutions to improve aid absorption. The Government's ownership of MfDR is encouraged through extensive dialogue, joint working arrangements, and advisory technical assistance.

Last but not least, ADB has been actively involved in **implementing the Paris Principles at the sector level** and has supported sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) among its DMCs. In **Bangladesh**, ADB took the lead in 2005 of a SWAP in primary education with some very positive results. Similarly, in mid-2007, at the request of the national government, ADB has supported a technical assistance (TA) project for developing a SWAP in education in **Mongolia**. Under this TA, the Government has made strong progress in developing an effective approach to sector-wide planning. Development partner coordination in the Mongolian education sector is being viewed as a model by other sectors in the country. ADB has also worked with the Government of **Pakistan** to improve social sector outcomes at provincial and local levels.

LIST OF LOCAL ACTIONS BY COUNTRY

▲ Bangladesh

The Government is leading harmonization efforts by actively promoting greater cooperation between development partners and by improving the alignment of their assistance with the national poverty reduction strategy. External funding is coordinated by the local consultative group (LCG) that comprises sector/thematic working groups and provides a forum for exchanging views on development and policy issues. ADB plays a leading role in supporting several LCG subgroups. A SWAp has been adopted in primary education, led by ADB.

▲ Cambodia

The Royal Government of Cambodia and its development partners (including ADB) signed the Cambodia Declaration on Enhancing Aid Effectiveness in October 2006. This declaration represented the formalization of the activities included in the Government's Harmonization, Alignment and Results Action Plan, which was approved in 2006. Together, these two documents comprise a single framework of commitments for joint government and development partners' actions directed at promoting aid effectiveness in Cambodia.

▲ Kyrgyz Republic

The joint country support strategy has been formulated in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The strategy is a joint effort of ADB, Swiss Development Cooperation, United Kingdom Department for International Development, United Nations Agencies, and the World Bank. The strategy will help support the Government's development agenda for 2007–2010; reduce transaction costs; and ensure a coherent, well-coordinated response to support the implementation of the country development strategy.

▲ Lao PDR

The Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was endorsed by the Government and 24 development partners in November 2006. Its associated country action plan, specifying 72 measurable actions, was endorsed on 31 May 2007. To facilitate the implementation process, the action plan identifies government lead agencies and development partner focal points and established sector working groups for discussion. The action plan is reviewed and updated annually for discussions at the annual roundtable implementation meetings between the Government and development partners.

▲ Mongolia

The development of a sector-wide approach (SWAp) is a key platform of the Education Strategic Master Plan. Established in 2005, an Education Donors Consultative Mechanism, co-chaired by the Ministry of Education, ADB, and the Government of Japan, provides an effective system to guide the partnership between the Government and its development partners. In 2007, ADB supported a technical assistance (TA) project for developing a SWAp in education. Because of this TA, the Government has made strong progress in developing an effective approach to sector-wide planning. Development partner coordination in the Mongolian education sector is now seen as a model for other sectors.

▲ Nepal

ADB is actively supporting the Government in adopting managing for development results (MfDR) approaches and has taken a leading role in involving other development partners. In particular, ADB is working with a number of development partners to harmonize capacity development support to weak institu-

tions to improve aid absorption. The Government's ownership of MfDR is encouraged through extensive dialogue, joint working arrangements, and advisory TA. ADB has provided two TA projects to support the Government's efforts to implement and institutionalize MfDR in the National Planning Commission, and ministries of education, local development, and physical planning and works.

▲ Pacific Islands

The Pacific Principles on Aid Effectiveness, adopted by Pacific Island countries and development partners in July 2007, is a result of efforts to translate the Paris Declaration to reflect the Pacific region's situation. The Pacific Principles provide a guide to more effective aid management practices, and, together with the associated indicators, allow Pacific Island countries to monitor their performance and that of development partners to ensure better outcomes at both the national and regional levels. ADB co-sponsored a Pacific regional workshop in April 2008, which reviewed how the Pacific Principles have been applied and implemented in selected Pacific countries.

▲ Pakistan

ADB has been working with the Government to improve social sector outcomes at provincial and local government levels. Working through local systems and procedures, the approach has focused on strengthening public financial management and resource mobilization to free up additional funds for social services and to undertake reforms on a sector-wide basis. Among the recent examples of such assistance are ADB loans for the Public Resource Management Program and Punjab Devolved Social Services Program. Among the actions taken under the two programs are the development of the health sector reform framework and the minimum service delivery standards for health care.

▲ Philippines

ADB has supported the Government in implementing the Paris Declaration through a technical assistance project, which encouraged coordination and monitoring mechanisms to assess progress of the identified country-level indicators. It also promoted the harmonization of development partners' procurement, financial management, and audit procedures and their alignment with the government's procedures; and strengthened the results orientation of government agencies. The Government has established an institutional framework under the Harmonization Committee, chaired by the Department of Finance with members from the National Economic Development Authority, the Department of Budget and Management, and the Commission on Audit.

▲ Viet Nam

The Government and its development partners localized the Paris Declaration into the Hanoi Core Statement (HCS) in mid-2005. In an effort to operationalize the HCS, the Partnership Group for Aid Effectiveness (PGAE), comprising representatives from both the Government and development partners, was set up. Specific thematic groups were created under the PGAE, including procurement, public financial management, environmental impact assessment, social impact assessment, official development assistance-on-budget, and cost norms. Reflecting the spirit of the HCS, Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006–2010 was prepared through an open, consultative manner, and with its results-based approach and orientation, is accepted as Viet Nam's poverty reduction strategy paper and used as the main reference for all the development partners' assistance strategies.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two thirds of the world's poor. Six hundred million people in the region live on \$1 a day or less. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance. In 2007, it approved \$10.1 billion of loans, \$673 million of grant projects, and technical assistance amounting to \$243 million.

Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City
1550 Metro Manila, Philippines
www.adb.org
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