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MULTI-PARTNER REPORT IDENTIFIES FRAGILE SUCCESS IN PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT; SAYS THOSE RECEIVING AID SHOULD HAVE MORE CONTROL

Washington, September 9, 2003— A multi-partner evaluation group of aid agencies, governments, and nongovernmental organizations issued a report today saying that developing countries receiving aid should have more control of aid-funded programs. The report, which focused on a new way of undertaking economic development and development aid, was released by the Operations Evaluation Department (OED), the independent evaluation arm of the World Bank.

The evaluation, *Toward Country-led Partnership: A Multi-Partner Evaluation of the Comprehensive Development Framework*, assesses the implementation of the principles of the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF): a long-term and holistic approach, results orientation, country ownership, and country-led partnership. The evaluation was published by OED, in collaboration with the Development Economics Research Group.

Intensive studies of six countries included in the evaluation show that “donors' bureaucratic requirements and visiting delegations are taking the poor countries' time and energy away from genuine development activities,” said Gregory K. Ingram, Director General of Operations Evaluation, adding that the study also found hopeful trends. “The developing countries are doing a much better job of taking their long-term visions and turning them into concrete plans that donors can support. And countries are involving their citizens in the decisionmaking process more than ever.”

Ingram said some of this improvement can be traced to the CDF concept, launched by World Bank President James Wolfensohn at the beginning of 1999.

The report was the result of research overseen by a 30-member global steering committee, including representatives of recipient countries, multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, and civil society and private sector organizations.

“This multi-stakeholder evaluation was an unparalleled and successful collaborative effort between both developed and developing countries,” said Evaluation Management Group member Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, Governor of the Bank of Uganda. “It will raise the profile of the CDF approach to reducing poverty.”

Tumusiime-Mutebile also noted that the report contains some tough messages for the developing countries. "If we want donors to support *our* own programs and budgets, instead of *their* pet projects, we as a group are going to have to do a better job of managing and accounting for funds and reporting on the development results we achieve with donors' money."

The report outlines findings and recommendations related to the four main principles of the CDF. These principles had been promoted individually by some donors and countries as conducive to development, but the CDF brought them together into one integrated package.

- 1) **The Need for A Long-Term, Holistic Approach to Development**—Greater efforts by recipient countries and donors are required to strengthen the links between strategies and budget processes. Donors need to provide reliable, predictable financing with transparent multi-year indicators.
- 2) **Results Orientation**—Development programs should be measured by their achievements, not by the money they disburse. Donors should integrate monitoring and evaluation activities into normal government (rather than donor) operations.
- 3) **Country Ownership**—Countries and donors need to broaden consultation with legislators, local officials, and marginalized groups, such as the very poor.
- 4) **Country-led Partnership**—Both donors and recipients need to change behaviors and processes to be more effective through joint action. Country leadership is hampered by overly complex procedures that differ from donor to donor. Donors need to counter resistance to harmonizing procedures, providing budget support, and reducing the use of expatriate consultants. Countries should enforce procurement and other accountability rules that will foster donor confidence. Independent country-level aid review panels would monitor partnership performance.

“This evaluation covers not only the way the Bank does business; it covers how development partners do business,” says Management Group member, Niels Dabelstein, head of the Danida Evaluation Secretariat of Denmark’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “While there has been some progress, [the evaluation shows that] significant changes in norms, behaviors and institutional practices are still necessary if today’s inefficient aid practices are to be transformed.”

The report concludes that there has been uneven progress toward fully implementing the CDF, and that nations that have applied one or more of the CDF principles over the course of several years have shown the most development progress. The report calls for increased transparency and mutual trust by development partners, and concludes that in the absence of greater learning and sharing from experience, it will not be possible to transform inefficient aid programs into the tangible progress envisioned by the CDF.

For more information, background information on the CDF, or to obtain a copy of the report, please contact Vivian R. Jackson at 202-473-0981.

The report may also be found online at: <http://www.worldbank.org/evaluation/cdf/>