



IDA 16 AND AID EFFECTIVENESS

SUPPORTING ISSUE BRIEF THREE Add a Peer-Review Dimension to CAS Progress Reports

What is peer review?

Peer review is the process of inviting others to evaluate one's work, with the goal of improving that work and its outcomes. Peer review mechanisms are applied in many fields of work today and are beginning to be used by a number of development cooperation partners.

Why is it important?

Peer review is universally recognised not only as a powerful external evaluation tool, but also as a way to increase accountability and transparency in the organisation undergoing the review, which in turn gives that organisation greater credibility. Peer review allows partner agencies, governments and civil society organisations to better understand how an organisation functions and to play a recognised role in the evaluation process of that organisation. This in turn provides the organisation with a wide variety of feedback and recommendations that it may not have considered previously. This feedback can help the organisation to further refine its way of working, thereby increasing its effectiveness— especially important when that organisation is working to alleviate poverty.

How can peer review strengthen CAS progress reports?

World Bank country offices regularly conduct a review of their Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), producing a CAS progress report. The CAS review process could be strengthened by introducing an *aid effectiveness peer-review* mechanism. These aid effectiveness peer reviews could first be conducted internally by inviting other World Bank country offices to apply specific aid effectiveness review criteria to an office's CAS. In time, this could become an external peer review program. The peer review process can help the World Bank to identify examples of good practice in increasing aid effectiveness at the country level, providing a basis for knowledge-sharing and learning.

How can parliamentarians be involved?

Parliamentarians can request that the World Bank country office present the findings of the CAS progress report and accompanying peer review at a special parliamentary session. In addition, World Bank country offices could extend the peer-review concept to include civil society and parliamentarians.

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