



IDA 16 AND AID EFFECTIVENESS

SUPPORTING ISSUE BRIEF FOUR

Lead by example in Health, Nutrition and Population Programs

How does the World Bank work in Health, Nutrition and Population?

The World Bank from 1997 to 2008 provided US\$ 17 billion in support to country-level project financing for health, nutrition and population (HNP) programs in over 120 countries. In addition to project financing, this support largely took the form of policy advice and analytic work in the following areas: improving the quality, efficiency and equity of health systems and increasing access to service; reforming health finance; decentralizing health systems; supporting health insurance; encouraging public-private partnerships in health; strengthening institutional capacity; and reforming health sector management. The World Bank is also involved in over 30 global partnerships for health.

Have there been evaluations of these programs and what have they found?

The World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) in 2009 published an evaluation of World Bank Group support to HNP since 1997, focusing on the effectiveness of World Bank engagement at the country level. The evaluation found that the World Bank brings important institutional assets to country health system improvement, including long-term engagement in the sector, a wide breadth of international experience, sustained financing, strong links to country finance ministries, and cross-sector engagement. The evaluation also identified a number of key areas needing increased effort and made corresponding recommendations to guide the Bank as it seeks to increase the effectiveness of its support to HNP programs.

How are the findings and recommendations being addressed?

The World Bank Group's management in response to the evaluation's findings and recommendations drew up a *management action record* that provides a response to each recommendation. This response could be further strengthened by adding an accompanying action plan in which World Bank management commits to monitor-able actions to strengthen the Bank's support to country HNP programs in the run up to 2015, the due date for the Millennium Development Goals.

How can parliamentarians be involved?

In addition to the full IEG report, there are a number of country-specific case studies that MPs may find informative and helpful. Parliamentarians can ask their World Bank country office for a briefing session on the overall findings of the IEG evaluation, as well as those from any relevant country studies, followed by a discussion period. MPs can then work with the World Bank country office to create an action plan to address agreed-upon priority findings and recommendations.

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