LOOKING FORWARD: DEALING WITH THE UNCERTAINTY

For 2020, IDEV set out new strategic directions aimed at: (i) focusing independent evaluations on interventions aligned with commitments under ADF-15, GCI-7, the Bank’s Ten-Year Strategy, and the High 5s; (ii) focusing independent evaluations where a gap in evaluative knowledge exists; (iii) increasing the utility of independent evaluations, by focusing more on incorporating knowledge from independent evaluations to inform policies, strategies, programs and processes; and (iv) proactively providing targeted evaluative knowledge to the Bank and its RMCs.

In 2021, this vision will continue to be operationalized by delivering evaluations that contribute to GCI commitments (the evaluations of the Non-Concessional Debt Accumulation Policy and the ADOA Framework), that are expected to inform the ADF-15 MTR (the evaluation of the Transition Support Facility) and the Bank’s future strategic directions (the evaluation of the TYS), and that meet specific knowledge needs (the evaluations of counterpart funding and the Bank’s support to RMCs in response to COVID-19). With 100 evaluations delivered since 2015, IDEV has a substantial body of evaluative knowledge to make use of, in addition to evaluations, research and analytical work done the world over by other development agencies, academia, think tanks and others. Many evaluations will therefore start with an evidence gap analysis, to focus efforts on areas where evidence is weak or missing.
With new staff coming on board in 2021, IDEV will strengthen its engagement with stakeholders throughout the evaluation cycle and will better map and meet their knowledge needs. In collaboration with stakeholders, it will strengthen its efforts to promote learning from evaluations and to enhance the feedback loop by which evaluative knowledge informs new policies, strategies, processes and projects. With the COVID-19 pandemic not yet abating, the demand for knowledge is expected to remain high, although the focus may shift from crisis response to “building back better”. IDEV will focus on helping the Bank to deal with the uncertainty by equipping it with critical knowledge that supports it in strategically planning for a volatile and uncertain future. At the same time, with little perspective of going back to the office or resuming traditional data collection and face-to-face contact with stakeholders, IDEV will likely need to maintain the ways of working remotely it developed in 2020.

2021 is the last year of IDEV’s 2019-2021 work program. IDEV will therefore organize comprehensive consultations internally and externally to prepare, scope, and prioritize its next work program (2022-2024) in line with the Bank’s needs, for discussion and approval by the Board of Directors. 2020 was a year of tremendous change for the entire world, and the future dictates a “new normal.” Looking ahead, IDEV will have to reflect on, and factor in, both the direct and indirect effects of COVID-19 in many of its country, sector and thematic evaluations. Where needed, IDEV will continue to adjust the conduct of the ongoing evaluations to the circumstances. We believe that 2021 will prompt broader and positive changes as part of lessons learned from 2020. Hopefully, IDEV’s new way of working will help to sustain these positive changes.