What Advice Do Task Managers Need to Achieve High Quality Operations? Evidence from a Needs assessments Survey

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Presentation during the Plenary Session of the Operations Clinic during Bank’s Evaluation Week 2020

Abidjan, December 2, 2020
Outline

1. Why this needs assessment?
2. Who participated in the survey?
3. What is the current state of quality at entry of Bank operations?
4. How does it relate to previous BDEV evaluation findings?
5. What support do task managers need to improve quality at entry?
6. What is the demand for BDEV services?
7. The Operations clinic during Evalweek2020
1. Why this Needs Assessment?

- to identify the main constraints and challenges task managers face during preparation and appraisal stages of Bank’s project cycle (gaps in quality at entry);
- to identify areas where they need support the most, and the most appropriate types; and
- To tailor IDEV advice during the operations clinic.
2. Survey Participant’s Profile

- **Period**: July 29 – August 19, 2020 (22 days)
- **Target**: 80 TM and IO with current projects at concept note stage
- **(True) Response rate**: (56%) 39%
- **Sector**: Work on public sector (65%)/non-sovereign operations (35%)
- **Location**: HQ (52%)/Region (19%)/Country offices (29%)
- **Sector involved**: Finance sector (17%), Agriculture (15%), Energy (13%), real sector (8%), Transport (8%) Others (39%)
- **Operations Academy**: Have completed (33%)
- **Prior training in project management**: 80%
- **Experience**: Less than 3 Operations (17%)/ 3-5 Op. (17%)/More than 5 Op. (66%)
- **Already received support** for improvement of QaE: Yes (40%)/No (60%)
3. Current state of quality at entry of operations

Gaps in quality at entry during project preparation:

- Inadequate RBLF (poor targeting, weak M&E plan, absence of baseline data, etc): 45%
- Risk identification and management: 52%

Less problematic areas of project preparation:

- Implementation preparedness/readiness: 76%
- Clarity of development problem (based on evidence), identification of beneficiaries, incorporation of lessons learned: 87%
- Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues: 84%
3. Current state of quality at entry of operations

Major constraints to achieving high quality at entry:

• Too much work load: 85%
• Irrealistic deadlines: 81%
• Incomplete templates: 63%
• Too many directives, norms & standards: 59%
• Inadequate knowledge of RBM: 55%
• Inappropriate work conditions: 30%

Work conditions to be fixed:

– Difficulty to mobilise a multi-disciplinary team
– Headroom issues, Peer reviewers or PAT delays in providing feedbacks
– Too many committees, processes and reviews for PSD Operations

- **Key factors of quality at entry:**
  - Problem analysis and evaluability;
  - Economic and financial analysis;
  - Implementation readiness, and
  - Proactive risk management.

- **Sovereign operations quality at entry tools** fail to sufficiently target factors that predict the extent of achievement of outcomes.

- **Weakness in evaluability:** especially regarding non-sovereign operations

- **Misalignment of development rationale** in the PAR, ADOA and results framework

- **Lack of enabling environment for quality at entry** with gaps in (i) use of integrated system to manage operations data, (ii) evidence-based budgeting and mgt for project preparation, (iii) provision of training and support, (iv) consistent and appropriate staff allocation, (v) consequent mgt and incentives for quality.

- **Constraint in time** available to conduct thorough project reviews
How do the QaE Evaluation findings resonate with the survey results?

- **Confirmed gaps of quality at entry:**
  - Evaluability, particularly the RBLF
  - Risk identification and management
  - Time constraint is also found significant in both exercises

- **Unconfirmed:**
  - Implementation readiness.
5. Areas where support is needed and preferred type of support

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6. Demand for IDEV services

- 59% read IDEV reports
- 75% read when informed of the release
- 48% did not answer
- 96% never requested IDEV advice
- 69% attended IDEV events
7. IDEV Advice during the EvalWeek 2020

Prior Diagnostic of the PCN submitted – RBLF Score, Selectivity Index, QaEIP

One-Hour Zoom Session per TM/IO: based on the diagnostic results and the proposed QaEIP

Implementation of the agreed QaEIP