Capacity Enhancement through Knowledge Transfer

A Behavioral Framework for Reflection, Action and Results

Knowledge and Learning Group
Africa Region
The World Bank
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Knowledge and Learning Group
Africa Region
The World Bank
September 2005
“...we often talk about building institutions or building capacity. ...that sort of suggests you can come in like an outside contractor and bring some bricks and mortar and you construct capacity. It doesn’t work that way. You grow it. It’s got to be indigenous. It’s got to have indigenous roots... you can help people do it. But they need to do it themselves.”

Paul Wolfowitz

“Go to the people. Live with them. Learn from them... Start with what they know. Build with what they have. But with the best leaders, when the work is done, the task accomplished, the people will say ‘We have done this ourselves’.”

Lao Tzu
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>Analytical and Advisory Activities</td>
<td>IEG</td>
<td>Independent Evaluation Group</td>
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<td>AAP</td>
<td>Africa Action Plan</td>
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<td>(formerly the Operations Evaluation Department – OED)</td>
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<td>ACDTF</td>
<td>Africa Capacity Development Task Force</td>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<td>AFR</td>
<td>Africa Region</td>
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<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
<td>IK</td>
<td>Indigenous Knowledge</td>
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<td>ARDE</td>
<td>Annual Review of Development Effectiveness</td>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>AVU</td>
<td>African Virtual University</td>
<td>ISW</td>
<td>International Secretariat for Water</td>
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<td>CAS</td>
<td>Country Assistance Strategy</td>
<td>JSPE</td>
<td>Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy</td>
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<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
<td>KAG</td>
<td>Knowledge Adaptation Gap</td>
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<td>CDD</td>
<td>Community Driven Development</td>
<td>KDC</td>
<td>Knowledge Development Center</td>
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<td>CDF</td>
<td>Comprehensive Development Framework</td>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean Region</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>Capacity Enhancement</td>
<td>LILA</td>
<td>Learning Innovation Laboratory</td>
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<td>CFS</td>
<td>Client Feedback Survey</td>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>CPPR</td>
<td>Country Portfolio Program Review</td>
<td>MASAF</td>
<td>Malawi Social Action Fund</td>
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<td>CPR</td>
<td>Country Program Review</td>
<td>MCAT</td>
<td>Medical College Admissions Test</td>
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<td>CSIR</td>
<td>Council for Scientific and Industrial Research</td>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>C2C</td>
<td>Community-to-Community Exchange</td>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa Region</td>
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<td>EAP</td>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific Region</td>
<td>MIC</td>
<td>Middle Income Country</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
<td>Europe and Central Asia Region</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>E-IQ</td>
<td>Emotional Intelligence Quotient</td>
<td>NLTA</td>
<td>Non-Lending Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>EQ</td>
<td>Empathy Quotient</td>
<td>NWSC</td>
<td>National Water and Sewerage Corporation</td>
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<td>ESW</td>
<td>Economic and Sector Work</td>
<td>OED</td>
<td>Operations Evaluation Department (the new Independent Evaluation Group – IEG)</td>
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<td>EXT</td>
<td>External Affairs</td>
<td>OESW</td>
<td>Other Economic and Sector Work</td>
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<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year</td>
<td>OETF</td>
<td>Operational Effectiveness Task Force</td>
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<td>GDLN</td>
<td>Global Distance Learning Network</td>
<td>OPE</td>
<td>Overall Performance Evaluation</td>
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<td>GM/CCD</td>
<td>Global Mechanism/Convention to Combat Desertification</td>
<td>PESW</td>
<td>Programmatic Economic and Sector Work</td>
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<td>GoU</td>
<td>Government of Uganda</td>
<td>PIC</td>
<td>Public Information Center</td>
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<td>GRA</td>
<td>Global Research Alliance</td>
<td>PIU</td>
<td>Project Implementation Unit</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immuno-deficiency Virus</td>
<td>PLWA</td>
<td>People Living With AIDS</td>
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<td>ICR</td>
<td>Implementation Completion Report</td>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
<td>PRSC</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Support Credit</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Association</td>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
<td>QAG</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Group</td>
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<td>RLT</td>
<td>Regional Leadership Team</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRI</td>
<td>Rapid Results Initiative</td>
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<td>SAR</td>
<td>South Asia Region</td>
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<td>SAT</td>
<td>Scholastic Aptitude Test</td>
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<td>SIRIM</td>
<td>Standards and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia</td>
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<td>SFIA</td>
<td>Strategic Framework for IDA's Assistance to Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>TASAF</td>
<td>Tanzania Social Action Fund</td>
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<td>TBA</td>
<td>Traditional Birth Attendant</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTL</td>
<td>Task Team Leader</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>VHF</td>
<td>Very High Frequency</td>
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<td>WBI</td>
<td>World Bank Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDR</td>
<td>World Development Report</td>
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Critical success factors in country capacity enhancement

Capacity enhancement (CE) has increasingly been identified as a key priority in the World Bank’s development agenda. This paper proposes a framework for reflection and action by Bank staff to better broker and adapt knowledge to help countries and communities enhance their capacity to deliver results. The focus is on identifying potential actions that would help nurture critical staff behavioral competencies that underpin effective knowledge transfer.

The paper seeks to answer four key questions: what are the critical success factors in CE; how is the Bank doing in these critical success areas; what are the key challenges for the Bank in using knowledge for CE; and what actions at the various organizational levels might help meet these challenges? The analysis is based primarily on available data from two sources: the Africa Region’s Debriefing Program, which provides syntheses of reflections of teams and country partners on ‘what works and why’ in CE; and the Client Feedback Surveys (CFS), which provide information on country perceptions on how the Bank is doing regarding some of the critical success factors in capacity enhancement.

Capacity effectively translates into the knowledge of what to do and how to do it, and the capability to transform that knowledge into effective decisions and actions to solve development problems for both the short and long-term. To date, the Bank has generally tended to focus relatively more on the ‘what’ and not sufficiently on the ‘how’. The knowledge base of what needs to be done in a particular sector context is comprehensive. However, the Bank has been much less effective in how to effectively transfer that knowledge to the country partners and how to help the stakeholders transform that knowledge into action to deliver results.

The synthesis of staff and country stakeholder reflections reveals the importance of behaviors, including the following key success factors in CE:

- **Empowering the country partner**: It’s more about ‘creating space’ for the country stakeholders to ‘learn by doing’ than ‘filling the space’ with Bank-prepared solutions. The suggested approaches can be summarized as stepping aside for the country to get into the driver’s seat, but not becoming a ‘back seat driver’.
- **Adapting knowledge to the local context**: It’s more about creating the ‘best local fit’ than applying the ‘best global practice’. The suggested approaches can be summarized as looking at the issue through the lens of the particular country or institution, paying attention to local specificity, and involving local experts and knowledge sources to be part of the search for solutions to development problems.
- **Behaving as an enabler**: It’s more about nurturing effective behavioral competencies than strengthening staff’s technical skills. The suggested core competencies are: ‘listening’, ‘curiosity’, ‘patience’, ‘humility’, ‘flexibility’, ‘empathy’ and ‘building trust’.

Bank performance in the critical success areas for capacity

There are indications that Bank teams could do better in empowering the country stakeholders, adapting knowledge to country contexts, and in playing the role of enabler/broker to help countries enhance their capacity. The data from 78 CFSs undertaken Bank-wide during 1995-2003, and supplementary
information from other recent Bank evaluations bring out the following key messages related to knowledge transfer and capacity enhancement:

(i) countries perceive the Bank as being relatively less effective in empowering stakeholders and in helping enhance capacity of institutions, especially at the local level;
(ii) countries perceive a major ‘knowledge adaptation gap’ in the way Bank staff transfer knowledge to the countries and its stakeholders;
(iii) countries suggest that Bank staff could do better on some behaviors such as flexibility, realism and respect for local culture that are critical to playing the enabler role;
(iv) there are some variations by regional country groupings, which point to the need for an agenda for action that differentiates across regions. In some areas there are also large variations across countries, which points to the need to learn from the experience of the more successful cases of capacity enhancement through knowledge transfer; and
(v) Bank staff believe they are doing better than they are perceived by the countries on a number of dimensions related to capacity enhancement, knowledge adaptation and enabling behaviors.

Key challenges in using knowledge for capacity enhancement

Overall, the analysis suggests that the most effective approach to enhancing country capacity is to use or build on existing capacity, and in the process create learning opportunities that make sense in the local social and institutional contexts. To meet this challenge, the Bank may have to do business in a different way. This will require a change of mind-sets, behaviors, and the way staff think about enhancing country capacity to deliver results. Doing business in a different way will involve specific challenges.

Capability to broker knowledge for country learning and capacity enhancement: The analysis suggests that countries look to Bank teams to broker knowledge of successful practices from a variety of sources (including, but not limited to the Bank), while at the same time considering the knowledge systems that are embedded in local sources and practices. Brokering/enabling services provide opportunities for ‘creating space for the country stakeholders to learn’ in such an environment, and for Bank staff to learn from their country stakeholders.

Country feedback suggests that Bank teams are relatively more effective in playing the role of knowledge providers and less so as enablers of client learning. Country perceptions of Bank staff’s excessive focus on ‘best practice’, ‘condescension’ towards local knowledge and experience, and insufficient readiness to consider alternative solutions to adapt advice to the local context point to the issues that Bank teams need to address if they are to be more effective in their enabler role. It also suggests the need to look into the prevailing institutional incentive systems and signals, which may in fact be discouraging deviation from ‘best practice’.

Another challenge is to better recognize free-standing brokering/enabling services outside the regular operational products and services as important Bank contributions to the development process. It may, therefore, be necessary to revisit the existing institutional processes for resource allocation, outcome monitoring, etc., which may be more oriented toward the traditional operational products and may not provide the needed ‘space’ for inclusion and recognition of free-standing knowledge brokering services.

Capability to help stakeholders adapt global knowledge to local conditions: Country feedback suggests that adaptation of ‘global best practices’ to find the ‘best local fit’ may be at the core of an effective knowledge broker/enabler role to help enhance country capacity. Countries generally expect Bank teams to work collaboratively with stakeholders to leverage the various practices and adapt them to the local conditions to help obtain better results.

The Bank’s record in the area of adaptation appears to be mixed. While countries generally value the technical competence/soundness of the Bank’s knowledge and advice, they are often critical of the realism/relevance of such advice in the light of local circumstances. Nevertheless, there are some country level relative ‘bright spots’. These suggest that with the right combination of technical skills and behavioral competencies, Bank teams can make substantive contributions through effective knowledge transfer to help enhance country capacity to deliver results. Effective adaptation requires a combination of skills and approaches, and there is no one way of doing things.
Knowledge of global ‘best practices’ may be needed to do the ‘right things’, but finding the best ‘local fit’ will help do the ‘right things right’.

The importance of knowledge adaptation is likely to grow further as the nature of the Bank’s products and services evolves in response to the changing external business environment. Adaptation is not an end in itself, but a critical success factor in obtaining results. It needs to permeate our way of doing business. This implies a changing role for the Bank, from a depository of knowledge and development doing business. This implies a changing role for the Bank as a facilitator of country partner learning to enhance capacity. It also suggests that the Bank needs to build stronger staff competency in this area to help improve the impact of its services through more effective application of adapted knowledge.

Institutional capacity to recognize and nurture the needed staff behavioral competencies: Playing the role of broker/enabler effectively, and adapting advice to local contexts in a manner that contributes to CE, will depend to a large extent on Bank staff’s behavioral competencies. These competencies are facilitators of good learning and effective transfer of knowledge: listening opens up opportunities for learning new things about country needs and constraints; the patience of a good knowledge broker/enabler recognizes the fact that people, groups, countries learn and adapt at different speeds; it is the capacity for empathy that provides the context in which people develop trust and choose to readily exchange tacit knowledge or adopt practices recommended by others; intellectual humility and flexibility similarly help nurture trust and confidence that the provider of advice is seeking realistic answers, and not imposing pre-determined solutions.

Another challenge is to nurture mindsets that are consistent with enabling country partners through knowledge to deliver results. The same behavior can be manifested with different implicit intent depending on the prevailing mindset. The impact on the quality of the exchange with the country partner may vary depending on the mindset involved: listening can be done with the objective to confirm what one already thinks, or it can be seen to provide an opportunity to discover something new; in practicing patience, the intent may be either to ‘learn to listen’ or ‘listen to learn’; exhibiting humility may be with the intent to prove others wrong or with a willingness to admit one’s advice may be wrong; showing empathy may be with the intent to force others to accept one’s views or with a willingness to explore and learn about other viewpoints and approaches.

Currently, the Bank has very few systematic mechanisms to enable managers to determine whether staff possesses the needed behavioral competencies and mindsets. Furthermore, the institutional learning approaches and processes that help nurture such competencies are not yet very well developed. These issues have implications for building effective teams. In the past, the emphasis was on fielding good sector experts, while the current preferred practice is to seek good team players who can work across sector boundaries. As the Bank’s business evolves further in the direction of helping enhance country capacity to deliver results, the emphasis will have to be placed more on ‘striving for impact’ than producing quality outputs; and the importance of behaviors as sufficient conditions for higher impact is likely to grow further.

One way of responding to these challenges is to build teams that are ‘whole-brained’. A critical task for the leaders who build such teams will be to ensure that in addition to good technical and team skills, behavioral competencies such as listening and adapting are represented in the team. It is the combination of all these skills that is most likely to develop good enablers, i.e., practitioners who can help broker the most effective advice to the country partner and to help the stakeholders adapt it to the local context in a manner that empowers the stakeholders and provides them space to learn how to deliver better results.

Readiness to develop results frameworks in using knowledge for capacity enhancement: The analysis suggests that teams would be more effective in enhancing client capacity if the knowledge is transferred ‘just-in-time’, ‘just-enough’, is practical, and is adapted to the local context to ensure the ‘best local fit’. Country feedback reveals that Bank teams could be much more effective in reaching the critical stakeholders through knowledge products in a manner that is helpful to the recipient. Furthermore, the Bank has yet to develop robust metrics to monitor the behavioral competencies that underpin the effective sharing of knowledge to help enhance country capacity. Moreover, the current incentive structure
and the resource allocation processes tend to favor the creation of knowledge relative to its sharing, adaptation or adoption.

Results frameworks that systematically track the dissemination and adaptation record need to be made explicit and integrated into the design of operational work, especially the AAA products. Key elements to monitor are: how knowledge is adapted to fit the local context, how a knowledge product is disseminated to the country stakeholders, how many stakeholders it reaches, and what value it brings in terms of CE. The content dimension of knowledge is a necessary condition for bringing value to the country. Nevertheless, this may not be sufficient if the right mechanisms and approaches are not applied in sharing that content with the country partner. Emerging practice (e.g., in the Africa Region) provides a basis for developing specific methodologies to measure the knowledge adaptation gap using CFS data, and to assess the effectiveness of the dissemination of knowledge products.

Addressing these issues strategically through the CAS and other operational processes: The analysis suggests that the CAS and related operational processes could be used more effectively to address the issues that are raised in this study. Client feedback surveys have not yet been done in many countries. Where these have been carried out, the results may not have been systematically reported in the CAS. And, finally, where the results have been reported, the strategic implications of the feedback for the way we work may not have been systematically addressed. Similarly, there is a need to rethink the assumptions that underpin some of the operational tools and processes in terms of their contribution to the capacity enhancement agenda.

What actions might help the Bank meet the challenges?

The following suggested approaches are an initial attempt to stimulate a process of reflection around a few key potential actions that could be taken at various levels of the institution to address the issues that have been raised in this paper.

Country Assistance Strategy: The starting point could be to analyze client survey results in a strategic manner. The persistence of a large 'knowledge adaptation gap' could be an indication that Bank teams may not be very effective in transferring knowledge in a manner that is perceived to be useful and relevant to the country. In such cases the CAS could:

(i) address the issues related to knowledge transfer for capacity enhancement:
   • how capacity development needs are to be diagnosed, the capacity development support structured, and the key stakeholders engaged; and
   • what to do and how to do it to better adapt knowledge or disseminate it in a manner that reaches the people that need the material the most;
(ii) set specific goals to reduce the perceived knowledge adaptation gap;
(iii) propose mechanisms for monitoring progress in achieving these goals;
(iv) suggest more innovative approaches to project design:
   • look for more simple, and, where appropriate, community-based practices that help achieve development objectives and empower the communities;
   • design some operational missions as 'joint learning exercises with the country';
(v) identify entry points for more effective dialogue with the country on CE issues:
   • more strategic integration of country office staff as knowledge brokers;
   • more effective utilization of local knowledge and expertise in the country;
   • more systematic use of South-South knowledge and learning exchanges;
   • peer-to-peer learning exchanges facilitated by distance learning technologies, and focused on priority development challenges such as HIV/AIDS, could be especially useful in enhancing capacity at the community level.

Analytical and Advisory Activities: To help measure the quality of dissemination and assess whether the knowledge products and services provide 'just-in-time, just-enough' advice to the country and bring value where and when the key stakeholders need it most:

(i) ESW activity would be authorized only if the Concept Note includes a dissemination plan, including
‘who, what, when, how’, and monitorable outcome indicators;

(ii) **ESW task would be considered completed only after the dissemination plan has been implemented.**

**Other operational entry points:** The design and purpose of several operational products could be modified to help deal with issues such as adaptation and creating country learning opportunities:

(i) **Project Appraisal Document:**
   - critical risk section to list lack of knowledge adaptation as a risk;
   - lessons of experience sections to discuss the need to adapt to local contexts;
   - components designed to help the stakeholders develop knowledge and information sharing systems to facilitate peer-to-peer learning as well as better governance;

(ii) **Country Portfolio Program Review (CPPR):** redesign the exercise into a ‘learning CPPR’ that provides opportunities for Bank teams to play the role of broker/enabler to facilitate staff/client emergent learning;

(iii) **Implementation Completion Report (ICR):** abandon the current distinction between regular and learning ICR, and turn all such assessments into intensive learning exercises;

(iv) The Operations Evaluation Department and the Quality Assurance Group could revisit their approaches to evaluation of task quality and development effectiveness to:
   - focus more sharply on integrating CFS results into such assessments;
   - develop a methodology to evaluate the impact of behavioral competencies on the achievement of outcomes, especially in capacity enhancement; and
   - adapt the methodology for assessing the quality of ICRs by focusing more on whether and how effectively the task team may have adapted the initial design to respond to the changing local context.

**Recognizing and nurturing behavioral competencies:** To help leaders and managers to better nurture the behavioral competencies needed for effective work with country stakeholders on CE issues, the Human Resources will need to partner with the Knowledge and Learning Board and other operational units to:

(i) develop systematic tools for objective assessment of staff behavioral competencies;

(ii) adapt the Overall Performance Evaluation framework to specifically cover behaviors that are critical in bringing value to the client in CE;

(iii) design special learning processes and events to help nurture behavioral competencies;

(iv) identify incentives to promote desired behaviors;

(v) develop systematic mentoring/coaching programs for inexperienced teams:
   - include experienced staff (‘mentor/coach’) on the team, at least when the team is dealing with country partners. Such a role would be ideal for staff who are approaching retirement;
   - expect all future retirees who possess the needed behavioral skills to spend the last 9–12 months of their career in such a mentoring/coaching capacity;

(vi) introduce mandatory mentoring/coaching for staff who are assigned a task team leader role for the first time.

(vii) establish an “Exodus Program for Retirees” to capture some of the lessons of the experiences of Bank staff who are about to retire.

**“Walking the talk”:** A starting point could be for all managers and staff to ask themselves some pointed questions: Are we listening with the intent to discover something new?; Are we being humble, patient and empathetic to create sufficient space for the country partner to learn and enhance capacity to deliver results?
Capacity building has increasingly been identified as a key priority in the Bank’s development agenda. There is also consensus that enhancement of country capacity is critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This paper proposes a framework for reflection and action by Bank staff to better broker and adapt knowledge to help countries and communities enhance their capacity to deliver results.

Specifically, the proposed framework seeks to (i) explain the key role that brokering and adapting knowledge plays in enhancing country capacity; and (ii) identify actions to help nurture critical staff behavioral competencies needed for Bank teams to play the required broker/adapter role effectively. The paper builds on discussions at the corporate level over the past few years: in the Strategic Forums on capacity enhancement; with the Executive Directors on the role of knowledge in the Bank’s work; and most recently in the context of the Organizational Effectiveness Task Force, the Knowledge and Learning Environment—Achieving Results Together process, and the preliminary findings of the Operational Taskforce on Capacity Development in Africa.1

The paper focuses on four key questions. First, what are the critical success factors in capacity enhancement? Second, how is the Bank doing in these critical success areas? Third, what are the key challenges for the Bank in using knowledge for capacity enhancement? Finally, what actions at the various organizational levels might help meet these challenges? The paper is sequentially organized in four parts around these questions.

The approach of this study is to distil an implicit organizing framework by emergence, i.e., based on the experiences of teams as well as feedback from the country stakeholders. The lessons of experience that point to the critical success factors are based primarily on insights obtained from debriefings of country stakeholders and Bank staff in the context of the Africa Region’s Debriefing Program. The assessment of how well the Bank is doing in the critical success areas is based primarily on data from Client Feedback Surveys (CFS). Finally, information from the Operations Evaluation Department, the Quality Assurance Group and other sources is used to complement the primary sources of information. The analysis focuses primarily on the Bank’s programs in Africa, where the information obtained through the CFS and debriefings is most comprehensive. In addition, where available, data for other regions are used to complement the main analysis and draw preliminary conclusions that may have relevance Bank-wide.
Part I

Critical success factors in country capacity enhancement

“A key element for development effectiveness is the enhanced capacity of developing countries to formulate, execute and evaluate the outcomes of their own development strategies. This requires capacity to access knowledge, drawing from multiple sources and adapting them to local conditions, and to tap opportunities offered by new information technology...”

James Wolfensohn

Capacity effectively translates into the knowledge of what to do and how to do it, and the capability to transform that knowledge into effective decisions and actions to solve development problems for both the short and long-term. To date, the Bank has generally tended to focus relatively more on the “what” and not sufficiently on the “how”. The knowledge base of what needs to be done in a particular sector context is comprehensive. However, the Bank has been much less effective until very recently in how to effectively transfer that knowledge to the countries and how to help the stakeholders transform that knowledge into action for sustained results. Indeed, one of the findings of the OETF was that Bank teams can do much better in transferring knowledge to countries in a manner that is adapted to country needs.

Another issue is that the challenge of capacity building has been the subject of several studies and assessments going back more than a decade. The conclusions generally pointed to the fact that the Bank was much better at delivering specific lending products than in institutional development. In the early 1990s, a task force on technical assistance (TA) produced recommendations, which were followed by new operational directives codifying some of the lessons and what were considered as “best practices”. More recently, the focus had shifted to the capacity enhancement (CE) challenge.

In addressing this challenge and in the absence of an established conceptual framework, the typical approach has been to adopt action plans. For example, CE was a key topic at the Strategic Forum in 2001, which produced a detailed action plan. Yet, similar questions were being asked just before the Strategic Forum in January 2003. And, other task forces were formed in 2003–2004 to address the CE challenge again. Why so many attempts with so few results? In part, these action plans generally have not led to major breakthroughs because there are few standard quality assurance processes for the design of capacity enhancement activities, and actions were not routinely tracked, monitored and evaluated. And, in part, perhaps we have not been asking all the right questions about CE, and distilling appropriate operational implications.

Success factors in capacity enhancement

To address this challenge, the Africa Region Knowledge and Learning Group recently launched an innovative approach. Essentially, instead of starting with logical frameworks and charting action plans on how to go from point A to point B (i.e., the “linear approach”), the group has attempted to distill common themes/lessons (on what works and under what conditions) from debriefings of country stakeholders and staff involved in some of the success stories (i.e., the “emergence approach”). This work has been based primarily on a synthesis of over 100 hours of interviews which have been conducted under the Africa Region’s Debriefing
Program over the past four years. The focus of these debriefings has been on creating space for teams and stakeholders to reflect more on the “how” and to explore those aspects of the challenge that are generally overlooked or under-emphasized in the normal course of the Bank’s operational work.

The synthesis of these reflections has revealed the following key success factors:

- **Empowering the country partner:** It’s more about ‘creating space’ for the country stakeholders to ‘learn by doing’ than ‘filling the space’ with Bank-prepared solutions. The specific pointers on how to do this effectively are suggested in the debriefing synthesis which is presented in Annex 2. The suggested approaches can be summarized as stepping aside for the country to get into the driver’s seat, but not becoming a ‘back seat driver’.

- **Adapting knowledge to the local context:** It’s more about creating the ‘best local fit’ than applying the ‘best global practice’. The specific pointers on how to do this effectively are suggested in the debriefing synthesis which appears in Annex 3. The suggested approaches can be summarized as looking at the issue through the lens of the particular country or institution, paying attention to local specificity, and involving local experts and knowledge sources to be part of the search for solutions to development problems.

- **Behaving as an enabler:** It’s more about nurturing effective behavioral competencies than strengthening staff’s technical skills. The suggested behavioral competencies are described in the debriefing synthesis which is reproduced in Annex 4. The suggested core competencies are: listening, curiosity, patience, humility, flexibility, empathy and developing trust.

These factors highlight the relative importance of behaviors. This would suggest further that CE should be seen (i) not as a science but more as an art, where technical skills may provide the necessary, but not sufficient conditions for success; and (ii) not as an end, but as a means for empowerment and delivering results.

In designing CE activities there also needs to be a recognition of certain basic principles: CE should not assume a vacuum of knowledge, a void of institutions, a lack of skills or a deficiency of willingness; CE efforts without the opportunity to apply that very capacity in a local context are likely to be ineffective; and the enhancement of local capacity is a key to the empowerment of local communities and their effective participation in the development process.

Moreover, the literature on building capacity and institutions also stresses the importance of behaviors and values in understanding how they work. For example, institutions should be seen “…as sets of structured and lasting patterns of behaviors and relationships (roles) that are guided and supported by broad societal values, regulated by certain norms of conduct (rules), and put in practice by organizations.”

Past assessments of CE activities have typically not focused on such factors. The assessments, nevertheless, suggest that in general Bank’s interventions do not fully achieve their stated CE goals. Similarly, assistance strategies typically focus on what instruments to use rather than on how the instruments are designed and utilized in the dialogue with the countries. For example, the Africa Region’s strategy includes the scale up of capacity building efforts as a core element of the assistance strategy. Similarly, the latest Africa Action Plan focuses on achieving results, including in CE. Yet, these documents do not systematically address the behavioral issues or propose specific strategies for nurturing the kinds of behaviors that may be critical in achieving the stated objectives. Since CE activities constitute a major enterprise in the Bank, it is critically important to better understand what works and why.

At the core of the capacity development challenge is the transfer of knowledge into practice. There has been considerable work in the area of institutional economics on the role of knowledge in capacity development. Less attention, however, has been paid to studying the process of knowledge transfer. This paper tries to begin filling the knowledge gap in this area. How does one measure outcomes of knowledge transfer designed to enhance country capacity?

### Knowledge transfer process

Effective knowledge transfer should ideally end with adoption, where the adopter has gained the absorptive capacity (understanding) for sustained use of the acquired knowledge. Transfer efforts that do not result in adoption could be called failures from a capacity development perspective. Why do we see so many
failed transfer attempts? In part, the answer has to do with perceptions of what knowledge transfer means and the behaviors and mind-sets that underpin the process. To better understand the transfer process and to clarify several commonly held misconceptions, it is necessary to unbundle the process into its various operational dimensions. There are essentially five key dimensions whose interplay determines whether a knowledge transfer process is successful or not in enhancing capacity. These are:

- **form**: knowledge can be broadly classified into its two basic forms: explicit (i.e., codified); and tacit (i.e., the know how that resides ‘between the ears’ of the knowledge holder). The latter is much more difficult to exchange, and may require different transfer platforms. By looking at knowledge only in its explicit form, one runs the risk of underestimating the true effort required to transfer knowledge. Explicit knowledge can be passed on relatively easily through a variety of print and electronic tools. The transfer of the associated tacit dimension, however, typically requires close and often lengthy human interaction. For tacit knowledge to be exchanged effectively, people need to spend time together (i.e., have ‘patience’), develop trust in each other (i.e., ‘listen and hear’), learn more about each other’s contexts (i.e., have ‘empathy’) and jointly facilitate conversions of knowledge between tacit and explicit forms (i.e., be ‘flexible’ and open to ‘adaptation’). Without this comprehensive knowledge transfer, an adopter’s ability to understand, replicate or exploit new knowledge is severely constrained. Whether in tacit or explicit form, the essential element of knowledge transfer is its content.

- **direction**: the knowledge transfer process can be viewed in two basic directional flows: one-way (i.e., knowledge moves in one direction from the provider to the recipient); or two-way (i.e., a product of a learning exchange between the provider and the recipient). Although the former may be the dominant direction of knowledge flow during a transfer process, the successful adoption and implementation of such knowledge is highly dependent on the bi-directional flow between the provider and the recipient. Without two-way communication, which is predicated on a learning mind-set, there exists only a ‘strategy of hope’, whereby the provider generates ‘useful’ potential applications in the hope that they will eventually be taken up by some recipient.

- **diversity**: the more people/countries differ from each other in terms of levels of education, environment, culture, etc., the more potential exists to learn from each other. At the same time, the more people/countries differ, the more problematic it becomes for them to communicate or understand each other. This sometimes could lead to the complete breakdown of a knowledge transfer attempt, unless the participants come to the process with a mindset that is based on ‘empathy’, ‘humility’, ‘curiosity’ and willingness to try new approaches that may be out of the box of the ‘conventional wisdom’.

Another manifestation of this aspect of the puzzle is the tension between ‘global’ knowledge and ‘local’ knowledge. On the one hand, there is the proverbial ‘best practice’, and on the other hand the local context in which such a practice is applied. In the latter context, a ‘best practice’ may or may not be the most effective solution to a problem, unless it is adapted to the ‘local practice’ and is consistent with the indigenous institutions, culture and other relevant local conditions. If the knowledge transfer process is not sensitive to these realities, there is a risk of blind transfer of theoretically attractive practices, which may not make sense in the local context. An effective knowledge transfer process would seek to identify what may work best in a given context; with an acceptance of the fact that sometimes this may not be the theoretical first best.

In practice, however, this dimension is very much linked to the bi-directional flow issue mentioned earlier. The latter may be difficult to realize if the mere difference in the way the knowledge is produced, validated and stored in the different worlds represents an obstacle to its free flow. For example, “Western” knowledge is often highly systematized and organized (e.g., quality control is dominated by intensive codification—converting knowledge to book or paper form—and peer review). Indigenous or traditional knowledge systems may have evolved through generations of hands-on learning while meeting day-to-day livelihood challenges, especially of local communities. Such knowledge is transferred over time in folklore, societal norms, local management systems and social memory. Getting these two forms of knowledge to meet and
complement and enrich each other (by applying such behavioral competencies as ‘empathy’, ‘humility’, and ‘flexibility’) is an important part of the puzzle of capacity enhancement, especially when the targets are the local communities where the poor live.\textsuperscript{18}

- **targeting:** the knowledge transfer process ultimately involves people and institutions. Targeting the right people and the right organizations (and the right individuals within those organizations) is a very important part of the puzzle. This has implications for how Bank staff disseminate knowledge products (e.g., Economic and Sector Work—ESW), and whether the dissemination process is effective in reaching the right people at the right time in the right form. For example, an analytical report may make sense to a counterpart in a ministry, but it may not have an impact on a village leader unless the findings are synthesized (and sometimes translated into the local language) to make them comprehensible to the recipient. This has implications for the way one monitors and evaluates the outcome/impact of the knowledge products.

Similarly, the targeting dimension has to take account of the potentially different needs of the various clients. It is, therefore, important to design transfer approaches that differentiate by client type. For example, in a low income country Bank staff may have more flexibility in how they respond to the knowledge transfer need (e.g., free-standing services or activities that are embedded in lending operations). In middle income countries, where the Bank will increasingly meet a hard demand test for knowledge transfer in the absence of lending, the choice of transfer platforms as well as staff behaviors will have to be more adapted and responsive, lest the Bank be out of business in that country.

- **sequencing:** understanding capacity constraints and knowledge needs, and responding effectively to these needs involves trade-offs in terms of what to do (i.e., designing nuts and bolts procedures for knowledge transfer) and when to do it (i.e., sequencing the provision of such support), and how to link this to the process of institutional/sectoral development.

Thinking of the knowledge transfer process in its various dimensions\textsuperscript{19} and understanding the behaviors that may promote or hinder that process will help the Bank to deal with several issues. These include how capacity development needs to be diagnosed, the capacity development support structured, the players engaged, the most effective platforms for knowledge transfer designed, and the most appropriate behavioral competencies promoted. Addressing these issues will raise several questions. For example, is there a hierarchy of dimensions (i.e., some more important than the others) or are they recombinant?

The general premise of this paper is that there are no clear cut hierarchies, and that the important issue is the interplay between the various dimensions in a given context. For example, in one situation (e.g., a middle income country), the client may be satisfied with the Bank providing the knowledge in explicit form, which the client will then adapt to its own needs applying its own ‘know how’. Yet, in other cases (e.g., low income country), the client may need both the ‘know how’ (especially the tacit knowledge) as well as help in adapting the latter to the local context. Identifying the optimum combination of form, target, direction, sequencing, etc., will, therefore, be highly context specific. Similarly, it may be that for a given context a peer-to-peer learning exchange brokered by the Bank brings more value to the country than what may be contained in the Bank’s storehouse of knowledge.

A key challenge facing country teams in the context of CE is, therefore, how to deal with the potential trade-offs involved in the knowledge transfer process. It may require a fundamental shift in the way the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) is written, projects are designed, quality assurance processes are formulated and implemented, and staff behavioral competencies nurtured. Ideally, it may become possible over time for country teams to look at the various dimensions of the transfer process in terms of a polygon (similar to the development diamonds) and identify the combinations that may be most suited to the nature of the dialogue with the country stakeholders and the strategic priorities for Bank assistance. Such an approach could eventually also help country teams to identify the optimum combination of tools, products, incentives, etc., that may be needed to respond more effectively to a country’s capacity enhancement needs.

Assuming that the implicit organizing behavioral framework by emergence outlined above accurately reflects some of the main challenges to obtaining bet-
ter results in CE, the next section tries to shed some light on the Bank’s performance in these critical areas. It is hoped that these considerations (i.e., the ‘how’ of knowledge transfer) could help inform the process of design, implementation and evaluation of CE efforts and complement the technical aspects (i.e., the content) of what needs to be done in these contexts. It should also help to identify the knowledge gaps, as well as point to the areas where more research is needed to explore better data collection methods and to help develop more robust metrics to measure the impact of behaviors in enhancing country capacity through knowledge transfer. Finally, it is hoped that this paper will complement the prospective findings of the Operational Taskforce on Capacity Development in Africa, as well as help identify specific actions to support a new way of doing business that will be needed to achieve the objectives of the Africa Action Plan.20
Part II

Bank performance in the critical success areas for capacity

“The central actor of development is now the country itself. The Bank should assess how much staff are instrumental in helping the country internalize knowledge and put it to work. People should be evaluated on how much the country itself was able to conduct its development—the capacity to apply the knowledge… value of knowledge is only by how much people understand it and implement it in their lives.”

A Bank Client

There are several indications that Bank teams could do better in empowering the country, adapting knowledge to country needs, and in playing the role of enabler/broker to help countries enhance their capacity. The most important indications come from the Client Feedback Surveys (CFS) conducted across the Bank since 1995. Overall, these surveys provide some preliminary information to help assess the country stakeholders’ perceptions of the Bank’s effectiveness on a number of dimensions related to capacity enhancement.

The data from 78 CFSs undertaken Bank-wide during 1995–2003 bring out three key messages related to knowledge transfer and capacity enhancement. First, clients perceive the Bank as being relatively less effective in empowering the stakeholders and in helping enhance capacity of country institutions, especially at the local level. Second, clients perceive a major “knowledge adaptation gap” in the way Bank staff transfer knowledge to the countries in the context of operational products and services. Finally, country stakeholders suggest that Bank staff could do better on some behaviors such as flexibility, realism and respect for local culture that are critical to playing the role of broker/enabler.

There are some variations by regional country groupings, which point to the need for an agenda for action that differentiates across regions. More importantly, in some areas there are rather large variations across countries, which point to the need to learn from the experience of the more successful cases of capacity enhancement through knowledge transfer to help identify a road map for the future.

It is important, however, to stress the limitations of the data that have been used in this study. This paper is not a product of research that includes a systematic data collection exercise designed to inform the analysis. Instead, the paper relies on existing information from a variety of Bank sources to draw some preliminary inferences. Unfortunately, the areas that are addressed in this paper have not been studied extensively before. Therefore, the available data may not be in a form that allows sophisticated analysis. But it’s all that we have at this stage. For example, given the data limitations, it is difficult to aggregate the data from all CFSs into one data set. The data used in this paper have, therefore, been grouped in three data panels, with inherent limitation in drawing inferences across them.

Furthermore, the questions included in the CFS may not always provide a basis for directly measuring attitudes on the success factors emerging from the debriefing synthesis that were described earlier. The analysis in this paper, is therefore, based on the use of proxies for assessing the client’s perception of the Bank’s performance on the three clusters of success factors (see Annex 6 for the list of questions used to construct the proxy indicators).

These data limitations point to the need for caution in interpreting the available information. Nevertheless, the analysis in this paper is an attempt to begin filling the knowledge gap about the role of
behaviors in Bank’s support of capacity development. It is hoped that this paper would stimulate further research in this area, including a strengthening of the data collection effort to underpin future inquiry. The following sections describe in more detail the assessments emerging from the CFS in each of the key success areas mentioned in the previous section.

**Empowering the client**

Country partner feedback on a cluster of questions related to the issue of capacity enhancement is presented in Chart 1 below. This cluster provides a reasonable proxy for shedding light on the issue of empowering country stakeholders by creating space for them to learn by doing. The most notable elements in this chart are:

(i) the fact that none of the scores fall squarely in the upper right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the country and where Bank staff are perceived to be most effective);

(ii) the fact that the majority of scores fall in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is least important to the country and where Bank staff is perceived to be least effective); and

(iii) the Bank is perceived as being least effective in building capacity at the community level, i.e., where the majority of the poor live. In fact, the score on the latter question is among the lowest five scores of all the 60 some questions that comprise the CFS.

Data by regional groupings (see Annex 7) also suggests that while there are some minor variations in the scores across the regions, the basic messages are, nevertheless, the same.

More recent data from 28 surveys conducted in 2003 are presented in Chart 2. Two features stand out:

(i) there has been a general improvement in country perceptions in the area of capacity enhancement

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**Chart 1: Country perceptions of Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts**

Source: 30 client surveys in AFR, ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
in that the absolute score values are higher and there are two scores above the mean (compared to none in the previous years). Nevertheless, there is an important caveat in interpreting this data. For example, in the latest surveys the question “making results and analyses readily available” is similar to “disseminating results of Bank studies and analyses to those who need them most” asked in the earlier surveys. It could, however, be argued that the absence of “...to those who need them most” in the latest surveys may have influenced the score upward. This would make it difficult to compare the scores on these questions across the two survey cohorts; and

(ii) the Bank continues to be perceived as least effective in building capacity at the community level.

The trend in perceptions on the latter very important issue is presented in Chart 3. It shows that despite improvements in country perception (over the period 1999–2003 for which Bank-wide data are available from 48 surveys), the Bank is still seen as relatively less effective (i.e., below the overall mean) in its efforts to enhance capacity at the community level. It also points to a key area of focus moving forward in the hope that the relative “effectiveness gap” in this area (i.e., the difference between the overall mean and the scores on capacity enhancement at the community level) is eliminated soon.

The CFS questions generally do not distinguish between the different delivery platforms use by the Bank to help the country enhance their capacity through knowledge. Thus, it is difficult to determine whether the impact of the Bank’s operational units is different from say the learning services that the World Bank Institute (WBI) delivers to country stakeholders. Nevertheless, WBI’s own evaluations indicate progress in several areas over the past few years. For example, the country focus of WBI learning programs has improved, making the learning material more relevant in the context of country strategies; there has also been a significant increase in the use of action learning approaches, which help to create space for...
clients to learn and adapt the proposed good practices to solving local problems, etc.  

The CFS results discussed in this section are reinforced by the findings related to knowledge and capacity issues that emerge from other Bank assessments and evaluations. For example, OED’s Annual Review of Development Effectiveness (ARDE) reports suggest that while institutional development outcomes (i.e., a proxy for capacity building) had reached a new high by 2002, they were only marginally above 50% substantial. Furthermore, a recent OED study of the Bank’s knowledge sharing agenda confirms that Bank teams could do better in helping countries enhance their capacity. “Many credited the Bank with having made substantial contributions to their personal analytical capabilities but viewed the Bank’s contributions to institutional capacity as negligible, particularly outside government institutions.”

A Bank Client

Country feedback on a cluster of questions related to the issues of knowledge transfer and adaptation is presented in Chart 4 below. The most revealing elements in this chart are:

(i) the magnitude of the “knowledge adaptation gap” as perceived by country stakeholders (i.e., the difference between country perceptions of Bank staff effectiveness related to technical competence and knowledge of international best practices and country perception of staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the country’s needs). Data by regional groupings (see Annex 8) also suggest that while the magnitude of the “knowledge adaptation gap” may vary somewhat across the regions, the basic message is, nevertheless, the same: Bank teams could do much better in adapting knowledge to the local context;

(ii) the fact that only two of the scores (i.e., technical competence and staff knowledge about international best practices) fall in the upper right

Adapting knowledge to the local context

“The local conditions and environment are different for all countries. The World Bank should refrain from using blue prints but rather should design, with local input, specific programs for each country.”

A Bank Client

Chart 3: Country perceptions of Bank effectiveness in building capacity at community level

Source: 48 client surveys in All Region (1999–2003)
quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is *most important* to countries and where Bank staff is perceived to be *most effective*); and (iii) the fact that majority of the scores fall in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is *most important* to the country and where Bank staff is perceived to be *least effective*).

The four questions/scores that fall in the lower right quadrant form an inter-related nexus with implications regarding the Bank’s ability to deal with some of the critical challenges described in the previous section. For example, incorporating knowledge and expertise available in the country and disseminating the results of Bank studies and analyses to those who need these most are related to how well the Bank helps enhance local capacity by using it. Similarly, staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to country needs is related to finding the “best fit” that is realistic in a given institutional context. Finally, respect for local knowledge and expertise is related to empowering the poor and other elements of civil society to participate in the development process both as users and contributors of knowledge. See Annex 12 for the correlation between 15 selected questions in the data set.

More recent data measuring only the effectiveness dimension (Chart 5) suggest that while there has been a general improvement in country perceptions, (i) the magnitude of the adaptation gap still remains fairly large; and (ii) the Bank is perceived as relatively less effective in sharing knowledge. In the earlier surveys when the question related to “Bank staff knowledge of international best practices”, the feedback was very positive (i.e., one of the highest scores among all of 60 some questions in the survey). However, in the latest surveys, this question was slightly modified to read “sharing knowledge about international best practices”. This slight modification apparently elicited a significant change in perception (in the negative direction) in that the score was much lower than in the earlier surveys. In fact, this was the only question in this cluster whose score declined between the two survey periods 1999–2001 and 2003.

**Chart 4: Country perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt**

*Source: 30 client surveys in AFR, ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)*
In the case of the African countries, the data set is extensive in both country coverage and time span. This allows some reflections on the emerging trends. For example, country perceptions of staff’s ability to adapt knowledge to country needs actually deteriorated slightly in 1995–97, but have been gradually improving since then (see Chart 6). Similarly, a comparison of the data on adaptation across the regions suggests that although the scores from African countries are lower than the comparable scores for the other regions, the pace of improvement in the case of African countries is faster than in the other regions during the period for which data is available for all regions (i.e., since 1999).

Issues of attribution notwithstanding, the relatively more favorable trend in the Africa Region has coincided with the Region’s efforts to raise staff awareness of the importance of local knowledge in the development process. Specifically, in 1998, the Africa Region launched the Indigenous Knowledge for Development Program in response to the first set of client feedback results and the call of leaders and civil society groups at the Global Knowledge Conference in Toronto in June 1997. One of the objectives of this program is to help improve Bank staff’s ability to adapt knowledge to the local context.

Qualitative feedback from stakeholders participating in the surveys lends support to this link. For example, in probing the issue of adaptation with the African stakeholders, one discovers that lack of Bank staff curiosity in the knowledge systems that are embedded in local communities is a key reason for the perceived inability of staff to adapt their knowledge to the local conditions. The country message is that unless there is an interest in knowing what works on the ground and why, it will be difficult for Bank staff to relate global best practices to the local setting and to make the kinds of modifications that may be needed to render such practices effective in the context of local institutional realities. Such soft spots in country perceptions of the Bank’s effectiveness are not consistent with the institutional goal of becoming a “Knowledge & Learning Bank”.

The preceding would suggest that raising awareness of the importance of local knowledge systems and, where appropriate, making a real effort to inte-
grate such practices into the design of Bank-supported operations could have a positive effect in changing country perceptions. Moreover, this way of doing business could also help the Bank achieve better results from its programs as well as make progress on the other dimensions of CE, notably country stakeholder empowerment. For example, valuing the knowledge of local communities and providing them space to use such practices in development programs that affect their livelihoods could become an effective source of empowerment for these communities.

The CFS results on knowledge transfer issues discussed above are reinforced by the findings of other Bank assessments. For example, the OETF concluded that “clients have identified a gap in Bank’s tailoring of global best practice to local conditions.” Furthermore, OED assessments indicate that despite the recent positive trends in the quality of portfolio at exit indicators, “…outcomes of country programs frequently differ from the aggregate portfolio performance of the country. Development effectiveness at the country level depends on the adaptation of strategies and instruments…to country conditions, not just project performance.” OED evaluations further suggest that the Bank must learn to “adapt global knowledge to local conditions.”

Similarly, the OED evaluation of the Bank’s knowledge sharing agenda mentioned earlier also suggests that Bank teams could do better in adapting knowledge to local conditions and disseminating knowledge to people who need it most. Specifically, the latter study pointed to several soft spots, including the following:

- **Degree to which Bank knowledge is “realistic in the light of local circumstances.”** Clients rated the “realism” of Bank knowledge in relation to local circumstances substantially lower than the “technical soundness” of Bank’s knowledge. They also stressed that technical soundness is meaningless unless it is applicable to the local context.
- **Bank’s record in dissemination.** “Virtually all respondents criticized the Bank’s weakness in disseminating information to people who need it. The majority of respondents blamed the Bank’s poor dissemination on its traditional practice of communicating primarily or exclusively with government officials. Governments lack either the institutional capacity to disseminate information throughout the country or fail to share it with other groups who could benefit from it.” This feedback is consistent with the client survey data which puts the Bank’s
dissemination effort in the lower right quadrant (i.e., where it is important to countries, but the Bank is perceived as relatively ineffective).

The analysis in this section suggests that countries generally expect Bank teams to work collaboratively with stakeholders to leverage the various practices and adapt them to the local conditions to help obtain better results. The modalities, however, may vary: middle income countries may look to the Bank to provide knowledge of global practices while relying on own know how to do the adaptation; on the other hand, most low income countries are likely to look to the Bank not only for global knowledge but also for help to do the needed adaptation.

**Behaving as an enabler**

The CFSs do not include direct questions on some of the specific behavioral competencies that were identified as critical success factors in the earlier section (e.g., how well Bank staff listen to country stakeholders, empathize with them or show intellectual humility in dealing with them, etc.). In the absence of better, more direct data, it can be hypothesized that behavioral elements such as listening, empathy, humility affect country perceptions of flexibility and realism for which there is some information in the CFSs. Country feedback on a cluster of questions that forms a nexus around the theme of flexibility/reality is presented in Chart 7 below. This cluster provides a reasonable proxy for shedding light on the issue of enabling the country stakeholders by brokering knowledge in a manner and form that is most relevant to them.

The most notable elements in this chart are:

(i) the fact that none of the indexes fall squarely in the upper right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the country and where Bank staff are perceived to be most effective);

(ii) the fact that several scores fall in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most

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**Chart 7: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors**

![Chart 7: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors](image)

*Source: 30 client surveys in AFR, ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)*
Data by regional groupings (see Annex 9) suggest that unlike the previous two issues (capacity and knowledge) there are significant variations across the regions: in the Africa Region none of the scores are above the regional mean on effectiveness, while in the East/South Asia sample the majority of the scores are above the regional mean, and in the ECA sample a smaller number of the scores are above the regional mean. Furthermore, it is important to note that in the Africa Region the lowest score of all the 60 some questions in the surveys was related to “providing flexibility when standard Bank procedures do not fit the country’s situation”. Could it be that the Bank performs best when the country partners are either new or more demanding?36

Unfortunately, in the most recent surveys not all questions were asked in all countries, and that makes comparison across the data sets difficult. Nevertheless, in the few areas where at least similar questions were asked (see Chart 8), the message is consistent with earlier survey data: Bank teams could do much better on flexibility in adjusting to changing country circumstances.

Chart 9 below shows that after some improvements during 1999–2001, the relative “flexibility gap” (i.e., the difference between the overall mean and the score on country perceptions of Bank flexibility) reappeared and with greater magnitude in 2003.37

The client survey results discussed above are reinforced by the findings related to behaviors that emerge from other Bank assessments and evaluations. For example, the OED study of knowledge sharing reports country frustrations with the Bank’s perceived inability to consider alternative perspectives. Clients generally found the Bank to be “…too narrowly focused in the analysis and “best practices” that it presents, with little or no attention to alternative perspectives. Many respondents expressed frustration about the Bank’s
insistence that its models and solutions represent the only viable approach to solving economic and social problems in their country. Several respondents complained that the Bank’s insistence that its approach is the only correct approach generates mistrust and suspicion of the Bank and substantially decreases receptivity to Bank information overall.”

The nexus of these behavioral competencies and how they can impact on country perceptions is well captured in the following excerpt from a recent back-to-office report: “Clients pointed out that some task team leaders “do not listen”, and are given to “lecturing”. It was reported that despite repeated requests from a client, a Task Team Leader adamantly refused to allow in the project scope, rehabilitation of small urban towns that had been burned and looted. The client was simply told that IDA could only finance investments in rural areas as part of post-conflict support. However, in a different post-conflict country, IDA is financing urban as well as rural rehabilitation (eight large cities and four small provincial towns)”.

Behaviors such as those reported in the preceding paragraphs can produce a climate of mistrust which in turn affects the knowledge transfer process and the effectiveness of the Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts. In the absence of good listening and humility there is a risk of appearing to impose solutions that may not have a buy-in from the recipient of the advice. In fact, in cases where overwhelming knowledge is combined with the utter certainty that one’s way is the true way, the temptation can be very strong to impose “truth”. One Bank leader who was earlier responsible for one of the first PRSCs has suggested that “empowerment is let go”; i.e., even if the solutions that clients choose may not be up to global standards, the process is more valuable in terms of enhancing capacity.

**Are there any blind spots?** The country perceptions may or may not be shared by Bank teams; if they are not, then the institution may develop “blind spots”; if they are, the institution faces potential “bright spots”. The client surveys sponsored by the Africa Region were usually complemented by similar surveys of the Bank country teams concerned. Similar surveys were apparently not carried out systematically in other parts of the Bank and, therefore, the available data on staff perceptions over time are limited to Africa. An interesting finding from the surveys in the Africa
Region is that staff believe they are doing better than they are perceived by the countries on a number of dimensions related to capacity enhancement, knowledge adaptation and enabling behaviors.

Chart 10 shows the evolution of the top ten gaps in country-staff perceptions over three survey cohorts in 1999–2003 (including all questions in the surveys). The most notable elements of this chart are:

(i) over time, the gap in perceptions has generally narrowed (e.g., positive gaps have emerged, where the country perception is more favorable than Bank staff’s);

(ii) from period to period different major blind spots have emerged or disappeared;

(iii) the number of questions from the three clusters used in this paper (i.e., capacity enhancement, knowledge adaptation, behaviors) that appear in the top ten gaps has declined over time (from 7 in 1999 to 3 in 2003); and

(iv) three of the gaps that appear most frequently over the period are from the three clusters used in this paper (e.g., “respecting the country’s social priorities” appears in all three survey cohorts, “ability to adapt knowledge to the country’s needs” appears twice, as does “flexibility in adjusting to changing country circumstances”).

The evolution of the gaps in perceptions between African countries and Bank staff on all the questions used in this paper is presented in Annex 10. It reveals that over the period 1999–2003:

(i) in general the sizes of the gaps have narrowed and there are more positive gaps in 2003 than there were in the earlier years;

(ii) the negative gap has actually increased over time in six out of 30 cases (e.g., “Bank treats clients and stakeholders with respect”, “Bank helps to strengthen institutional capacity”, “Sharing knowledge about international best practices”, “Providing sound policy advice”, “Recommendation of programs that are realistic”, “Reflecting the diversity of views in the country”); and

(iii) the largest gaps in the latest survey cohort (2003) are concentrated in the skills and behavior cluster, with the largest single blind spot being about “reflecting the diversity of views in the country”. The latter point is relevant in particular to the behavioral issue of listening.
### Chart 10: Ten largest gaps between Country and Bank Staff perception (1999–2003)

#### Top Ten Gaps in Effectiveness (1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gap</th>
<th>1999 Gaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility in adjusting to changing circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping restructure projects that are not working well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for the country’s culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to bring relevant knowledge of dev. practices from the experience of other countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting the Government in its efforts to manage any negative project consequences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing recommendations that are practical</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respecting the country’s social priorities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Showing flexibility in applying procurement rules to the country’s situation and needs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to adapt their knowledge to country’s needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to submissions and requests</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Top Ten Gaps in Effectiveness (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gap</th>
<th>2001 Gaps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining information to measure, evaluate and monitor poverty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility in adjusting to changing the country circumstances</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistency of messages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respecting the country’s social priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting the Government in its efforts to manage any negative project consequences</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflecting the diversity if views in the country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building capacity at the community level</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping the Government to frame an effective poverty reduction strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to improve governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking account of the country realities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 10: Ten largest gaps between Country and Bank Staff perception (1999–2003) (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten Gaps in Effectiveness (2003)</th>
<th>−0.60</th>
<th>−0.30</th>
<th>0.00</th>
<th>0.30</th>
<th>0.60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening to people in villages and urban neighborhoods</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping to build an inclusive world economy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Being accessible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping to empower the poor</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to participate in their own development)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting the diversity of views in the country</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing sound economic advice</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing sound policy advice</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to adapt their knowledge to country’s needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to strengthen environment and natural resources management</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting the country’s social priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Scale refers to differences in mean scores (client vs. staff); negative value (purple/bronze bar, left side) = blind spot (i.e., client perception less positive than staff’s); positive value (beige/light bar, right side) = bright spot (i.e., client perception more positive than staff’s).
- Bronze bars indicate questions used to construct the 3 clusters: Capacity Building, Knowledge & Adaptation, Staff Skills & Behaviors.
The analysis presented in the previous sections points to several challenges that may be at the core of the Bank’s effectiveness in helping countries enhance their capacity and deliver results. The fundamental message appears to be that the best way to enhance country capacity is to use or build on existing, indigenous capacity and in the process create learning opportunities that make sense in the local social and institutional contexts. Indeed, as the debriefings of staff and clients suggest, what is needed is “creating space” for the client to “learn by doing” than “filling the space” with Bank-prepared solutions.

To meet this challenge the Bank will need to promote a different way of doing business, including changes in behaviors and in the way staff think about capacity development and their role in the process. In a nutshell, there is a need to essentially unlearn past behaviors and promote new ones that are more in line with the emerging challenges. Recent literature on organizational learning provides the theoretical underpinnings for the role of behaviors and mindsets in organizational change. This may not be easy as suggested by an old Buddhist saying: ‘There’s nothing more difficult than changing yourself.’ The challenge is to “let go” of the baggage we’ve acquired (i.e., values, beliefs and assumptions that serve as ground rules for the way we behave) and “let come” (i.e., open our minds to different values and assumptions).

Doing business in a different way to achieve better results in CE will involve specific challenges in the context of Bank-supported activities. These include, the ability to broker knowledge for country learning and capacity enhancement, the ability to help stakeholders adapt global knowledge to local conditions, the institutional capacity to recognize and nurture the needed staff behavioral competencies, the readiness to develop outcome-based results frameworks in using knowledge for capacity enhancement, and the commitment to address these issues strategically through the CAS and other processes, incentives structures and learning opportunities. Addressing some of these challenges may also require a mindset change and some fundamental re-assessment of what works in capacity enhancement and why. The following discusses in more detail these challenges and their implications for the way the Bank does business in helping enhance country capacity for delivering results.

**Brokering country learning opportunities**

The preceding analysis suggests that countries look to Bank teams to broker knowledge of successful practices/experiences from a variety of sources (and not only from the Bank, but also what may not be fully in line with Bank’s views), while at the same time considering the knowledge systems that are embedded in local sources and practices. Brokering/enabling services provide opportunities for ‘creating space for the country to learn’ in such an environment. However, brokering/enabling as a way of doing business poses two challenges for Bank teams in the context of regular operational products and services such as lending and ESW.

The first challenge relates to the ability of teams to behave as (i) providers of knowledge (i.e., advice on policies and practices that cumulated Bank experience considers as effective approaches to addressing development issues); and (ii) as enablers of country learning.
to help adapt that knowledge to the specific context. In a sense, operational teams are expected to play these two roles concurrently during their dialogue with the country stakeholders. This dilemma is further accentuated by the fact that operational teams that are tasked with developing lending programs may find it difficult to play the role of enablers of learning when they are also expected to negotiate conditions for lending. In fact, one observer has pointed to the potential moral hazard of Bank operational teams by arguing that when one asks lending teams to also help build capacity, they might end up building the wrong capacity.46

Nevertheless, it could be argued that separating Bank teams into “lenders” and “brokers of learning” may in fact make the operational teams less sensitive to the way they dialogue with the country stakeholders. The expectations of simultaneously creating country ownership and negotiating lending conditions may appear as a contradiction. Nevertheless, the Mauritania cases described in Boxes 6 and 7 below suggest that with the right behavioral competencies operational teams can indeed achieve outcomes that are technically sound, while also enabling country learning.

Country feedback through the CFS and other assessments cited earlier suggest that Bank teams are in general relatively more effective in playing the role of knowledge providers and less so as enablers of country learning. Country perceptions of Bank staff’s excessive focus on ‘best practice’, ‘condescension’ towards local knowledge and experience, and insufficient readiness to consider alternative solutions to adapt advice to the local context point to the issues that Bank teams need to address if they are to be more effective in their enabler role in the context of regular operational products and services47. It also suggests the need to look into the prevailing institutional incentive systems and signals which may in fact be discouraging deviation from one-size-fits all ‘best practice’.48

The second challenge is for the institution to better recognize free-standing brokering/enabling services outside the regular operational products and services (e.g., facilitating a knowledge exchange for country stakeholders, etc.) as important Bank contributions to the development process. To address this challenge, it may be necessary to revisit the existing institutional processes for resource allocation, outcome monitoring, etc., which may be more oriented toward the traditional operational products and may not provide the needed ‘space’ for inclusion and recognition of free-standing brokering services. This type of service is distinguished from free-standing technical assistance, which relies on external consultants to fill capacity gaps with sometimes questionable long term sustainability.49

There may be too few opportunities within the existing operational processes to treat brokering activities as free-standing services. This is especially relevant where the brokering activity does not necessarily lead to a discrete output that can be monitored through conventional processes (viz. the ambiguity with regard to non-lending technical assistance and other AAA in the context of various forms of knowledge transfer). Moreover, the budgeting process may contain an implicit hierarchy of value where analytical work is considered more “valuable” than say creating a peer-to-peer learning opportunity for the client (e.g., it is relatively easier to get analytical work funded than it is to fund a free-standing knowledge exchange event, etc.).

There have been recent modest attempts to codify free-standing knowledge transfer services in the context of the new guidelines that define non-lending TA. These guidelines distinguish between activities that generate original analytical content and dissemination/application of existing knowledge. This distinction implies recognition of the important contribution that the Bank can make through syntheses of knowledge and its dissemination in various forms to the countries. Finally, the guidelines provide potential “space” for brokering/enabling activities in that they recognize as output types such activities as “how to” advice and knowledge-sharing fora.50

QAG’s recent undertaking to assess the quality of non-lending technical assistance (NLTA) activities may also help to identify additional specific changes in the way such activities are programmed, implemented, and evaluated.51 It remains to be seen, however, if these welcome initial steps lead to a full recognition/appreciation of brokering/enabling services. There is a risk that these activities will be given lower priority compared to formal ESW or OESW and in the process perpetuate an implicit hierarchy of product value in the resource allocation process (from lending, to formal ESW, to other ESW, to non-lending TA, etc.).

**Emerging good practices:** A recent case involving brokering services in Eritrea highlights the various
Box 1: Brokering Knowledge to Help Eritrea Harness ICTs for Sustained Growth

- Four day technical mission to advise key officials on options for telecoms privatization.
- No formal report was produced—only a slide presentation at end of mission.
- Team distilled a number of positive and negative lessons from the experience of telecoms privatization in other countries.
- Team then worked through alternative scenarios for government to consider together with potential consequences. No single “best/right” answer was presented.
- Follow up work through video conferencing to clarify issues as the country considered the key messages and options.
- Subsequent facilitation of peer-to-peer learning exchange that allowed Eritrean officials to visit China and Silicon Valley to further explore latest technology platforms and implications for replicating them in Eritrea.

Box 2: Community-to-Community Exchanges

The Africa Region has facilitated more than a dozen community-to-community exchanges (C2Cs) in partnership with local NGOs and community-based organizations to enable communities to learn from similar experiences in other communities on how to address development challenges. The C2C represents an effective approach to enabling communities to share their knowledge and practices and in the process learn from each other. These exchanges have the potential of enhancing the capacity of the communities in addressing development challenges. For example, one such C2C in South Africa produced a measurable result in improving the well-being of the participating community. The latter learned through the C2C how to improve its marketing strategy and succeeded in securing a sizeable export contract for a local cash crop. The revenues from the exports are manifold the cost of organizing the exchange. Lessons of experience with several such C2Cs, including pointers on successful approaches to preparation, management, and evaluation of C2C, have been prepared to help practitioners in organizing such exchanges.

Another approach that may help in addressing the brokering/enabling challenge is peer-to-peer knowledge and learning exchange, of which there are at least three types: community-to-community within a country; South-South across countries or regions; and North-South across countries and regions, etc. Brokering peer-to-peer exchanges among local communities could be particularly effective in helping address the Bank’s relative weakness in creating learning opportunities for local communities. As highlighted in the previous section (see Chart 1), country feedback suggests that the Bank is not perceived to be very effective in a series of activities that revolve around enhancing capacity at the local level (e.g., “building capacity at the community level”, “helping to build expertise among local development specialists”, etc.). See Boxes 2–5 below for examples of peer-to-peer knowledge and learning exchanges, some using distance learning technologies.

Aspects of the brokering/enabling issue discussed above. The country sought quick Bank advice on telecommunications policy reform. To respond effectively to the country’s needs, the Bank team had to resort to several “out-of-the-box” solutions. These included a mission that did not produce a report, and funding the knowledge exchanges between Eritrea and other developing and industrial countries from a special regional allocation for knowledge sharing outside the regular country program. The goal was to help the country learn directly from the experiences of others. This knowledge broker service was highly effective in substantially influencing the country’s orientation for reform. Yet, it did not produce a visible “deliverable” in the prevailing conventional programming sense of the time. The case was subsequently cited in several fora as a good practice in brokering knowledge (see Box 1). Nevertheless, some have argued that brokering is not a “good practice” if it does not produce a report/output.53
Box 3: South-South Learning Exchanges between East Africa and South Asia

A group of about 20 policy makers, project officials and traditional healers from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda and their World Bank counterparts visited Sri Lanka and India in September 2002, to learn from successful integration of indigenous knowledge in traditional medicine and early childhood projects. In addition to discussions with the counterparts and visits to project areas in South Asia, the learning exchange included opportunities for the group to reflect on their learning through debriefings. This learning approach encouraged the participants to reflect on what they had learned, how relevant the learning was in the African context, and what adaptation to the observed practices will be needed to replicate it in Africa. During the field visits, the participants learned from their hosts on what works in the community context. They were able to ask questions on “how” the host communities dealt with their development problems, including specific areas of action of relevance to the visiting practitioners. The emergent learning was “just-in-time” and focused on the issues that the visiting practitioners were facing in their own communities. The visiting practitioners were able to enhance their capacity to deal with similar issues facing their communities.58

Box 4: Cross Regional Knowledge Exchanges Facilitated by Distance Learning

A partnership between Africa Region, South Asia Region, the World Bank Institute and the Global Distance Learning Network facilitated peer-to-peer learning on the use of traditional knowledge for the Millennium Development Goals. This was a good example of cross-regional collaboration to “learn from and with our clients”. Over 100 participants (e.g., policy–makers, researchers and academia, NGOs, civil society, etc.), engaged in a knowledge and learning exchange through the GDLN centers in Uganda, Tanzania, Sri Lanka and India. The use of distance leaning technology combined with collaborative learning approaches enabled participants to go beyond the traditional North-South delivery of training to explore the potential of South-South peer-to-peer learning exchanges. For example, some of the learning was developed in the North (e.g., National Institutes of Health in the United States), while other modules were delivered by traditional healers from the South. In addition to sharing experiences and technical knowledge, the participants felt empowered to challenge and debate conventional development paradigms/approaches.59 The event achieved the following specific outcomes:

- 10 national institutions initiated work on documentation and incorporation of local farming practices into their programs;
- 7 universities incorporated indigenous knowledge into teaching curricula;
- 4 ministries of Health and Agriculture promoted validation and protection of indigenous knowledge to support integration into national development projects and policies;
- 5 Bank-supported projects allocated resources to finance specific IK activities within projects;
- 65 participants adapted lessons of experience from other countries into their own work programs.
Box 5: South-North Learning Exchange between Scientists and Traditional Healers

The Africa Region partnered with the Global Research Alliance (GRA) to organize a learning workshop to develop a roadmap for the validation of traditional medicinal practices. This event brought together scientists and traditional healers from five continents to chart the way forward on collective validation of traditional practices that could help achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The event (i) enabled the participants to learn from each other’s experiences and helped bridge the gap in perspectives of the scientists and the healers; (ii) empowered the participants to develop their own design and approach; and (iii) created an opportunity for the participants to establish a community of practice which continues the dialogue through virtual exchanges, and is committed to carrying out pilots for validation. The Bank played the role of broker of learning. The first pilot, which is underway, focuses on the experience of the Tanga AIDS Working Group in Pangani, Tanzania, where traditional healing approaches have been used to help more than 5000 People Living With AIDS (PLWA). The latter community has reportedly succeeded in reducing the suffering of the PLWA and prolonging their lives by five years on average.60

Involves several feedback loops of action and reflection and testing of hypotheses to arrive at solutions that would make sense in a given institutional context; and (ii) might involve several events, including follow up virtual sessions, to continue investing in and benefiting from the learning loops that were sprung earlier. The focus of learning is on the participants to identify for themselves what lessons of experience are relevant to their specific country situations, and what adaptation may be required to make the selected practices realistic in achieving results in the country’s context. This approach has a good likelihood to contribute to client capacity enhancement.

Adapting global knowledge to the local context

Another important country feedback suggests that adaptation of “global best practices” to find the “best local fit” may be at the core of an effective knowledge broker/enabler role to help enhance country capacity. Countries would like Bank teams to work collaboratively with stakeholders to leverage the various practices and adapt them to the local conditions to help obtain better results. The underlying premise here is similar to Schumpeter’s insight that progress comes from new combinations. Therefore, adaptation can be seen as finding the right combination of insight, knowledge and practices that can produce results in a given socio-cultural and/or institutional context. The preceding messages have two significant operational implications for the Bank. First, they suggest that the Bank needs to build stronger staff competency in this area to help improve the impact of lending or other products and services through more effective application of adapted knowledge that is relevant in the local context. Indeed, as the President of the Bank has said: “The World Bank is at its best when it helps at the local level to diminish suffering and unlock human potential.”62 Secondly, they point to the need to render the concept of “best practice” more relevant by introducing the notion of adaptation into the mission and strategy of the Networks.63

Indeed, there are growing voices in the Bank that challenge the efficacy of mechanical transfer of complex practices that may not be suited to the specific institutional contexts. For example, a recent publication suggests that “best practice”, a longtime mantra of development agencies that trust cookie-cutter formulas, has largely outlived its usefulness.
A strategy’s success in one culture does not mean it will work in another” and that “the debate over what makes effective policy within a country has to be informed by a process of dialogue, deliberation and continual experimentation within the country itself—rather than an unthinking application of ‘best practice’ guidelines that are little informed by the social and historical context.”

Others have cautioned “…against the wholesale scaling up of best practices identified in a few pilot settings, because the success of such pilot projects might depend crucially on local conditions that are not found elsewhere.” OED has suggested that: “Networks and regions should strengthen their respective procedures in the capture, validation, and application of lessons learned and good practices. The development of generic “best practice” should be augmented, and where necessary replaced, by development of knowledge adapted to local problems generated in collaboration with local expertise.”

Referring to the sharing of international ‘best practices’, a recent QAG paper states: “overuse of this term by the Bank and other institutions has been partly responsible for the mechanical export to developing countries of complex methods and systems unsuited to their local institutional environment, and especially to their administrative capacity, with adverse consequences for the efficiency and effectiveness of resource use and of development assistance.”

One could, therefore, conclude that practices which are inconsistent with culturally determined behaviors and values are likely destined to fail in the long term. This has important implications for achieving the results that are expected from the Bank’s operational activities.

The importance of knowledge adaptation is likely to grow further as the nature of the Bank’s products and services evolves in response to the changing external business environment. The trend towards programmatic and/or multi-sectoral operations (e.g., Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC), Community Driven Development (CDD), etc.), implies a heavier reliance on leveraging knowledge across disciplines to get better results. But it also implies a changing role for the Bank, from a depository of knowledge and development advice that is transferred to clients (i.e., the “one-way flow model” of a knowledge provider), and towards the idea of the Bank as a facilitator of country learning (i.e., the “two-way flow model” of a knowledge broker/enabler).

Adaptation is not an end in itself, but a critical success factor in obtaining results. It needs to permeate our way of doing business. For example, labeling new instruments (e.g., programmatic lending) “results-based” is not enough to deliver results, unless there is a shift in the way of doing business. A programmatic lending instrument is not just a serial loan, it is supposed to underpin a different way of thinking about development and relations with the borrower. For example, in working on programmatic instruments there is a need to move away from pretending to devise all solutions to all presently unknown future events, to a framework where we have mutual trust and confidence that we will jointly with the country partners develop options and solve problems as and when they come up. This would call for less polish upfront and more investment in joint analytical work, plus a lot of mutual trust.

The Bank’s record in the area of adaptation appears to be mixed. For example, the overall results of the CFS reported in the preceding section as well as the OED evaluation of knowledge sharing show clearly that while country partners value the technical competence/soundness of Bank’s knowledge and advice, they are critical of the realism/relevance of such advice in the light of local circumstances. These perceptions have been repeatedly confirmed by country leaders and partners.

**Emerging good practices:** The CFS data reported in this paper also contain some country level relative “bright spots” in the area of knowledge adaptation (see Charts 11–12). These suggest that with the right combination of technical skills and behavioral competencies, Bank teams can make substantive contributions through effective knowledge transfer to help enhance country capacity to deliver results.

The most striking elements in these two country charts for Mauritania and Azerbaijan are: (i) the difference in the magnitude of the “knowledge adaptation gap” (viz. much smaller) relative to the averages for the regional groups presented in the previous section (see Chart 4 and Annex 8); and (ii) the difference in the number of scores (viz. fewer) that fall in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the country and where Bank staff is perceived to be least effective). What explains the relatively very small knowledge adaptation gap in the case of Mauritania and Azerbaijan? Why, unlike the Bank average, are none of the knowledge-
Chart 11: Mauritanian client perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt

Source: Mauritania Client Survey (2001)

Chart 12: Azerbaijan client perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt

Source: Azerbaijan Client Survey (1999)
Box 6: Brokering and Adapting Knowledge to Help Mauritania Attract Foreign Investment

In the context of the dialogue on telecommunications reform $350,000 in Bank staff time and $1.5 million in IDA disbursement from mid-1998 to mid 2000 were leveraged to:

● Attract $100 million in private investment during 2000/01—equivalent to 10% of GDP
● Expand telephone penetration 15-fold between Sep. 2000 & Dec. 2001—from 5 to 75 lines per thousand inhabitants
● Create 300 micro-enterprises and over 2,000 informal sector jobs—for prepaid card and handset sale, telephone repair, etc.
● Establish institutional framework for regulation & privatization of all utilities.

Related elements solidly in the lower right quadrant in the case of Mauritania (and only two in the case of Azerbaijan)?

Debriefings of Bank team as well as country leaders involved in Bank-supported programs in Mauritania shed some light on these issues (similar information is unfortunately unavailable for Azerbaijan). Specifically, the debriefings reveal the following important observations:

● country perceives high value in Bank staff providing knowledge broker services;
● country’s perception of a relatively smaller adaptation gap in the case of Mauritania was associated with a real, tangible outcome. In essence, the Bank team succeeded in helping the country leverage huge amounts of foreign private investment, with the Bank’s input essentially focused on bringing to the table a highly customized/adapted solution by brokering knowledge of good practices in other countries (see Box 6).  

It’s a balancing act: The preceding discussion of the adaptation issue further suggests that effective adaptation requires a combination of skills and approaches, and that there is no one way of doing things. Adaptation also requires judgment in balancing the various elements that are involved. In a sense adaptation boils down to a “balancing act”. For example, knowledge of global ‘best practices’ may be needed to do the ‘right thing’, but finding the best local fit will help do the ‘right things right’ and in a manner that yields the optimum results in a particular context. Some of the main broad approach choices and the judgments that need to be made in the process of adaptation are summarized in Chart 13 above. The question that Bank leaders and teams need to ask is whether we’ve got our ‘act together’ on adaptation.

Recognizing and nurturing the needed behavioral competencies

The Bank needs to develop processes to better identify and nurture behavioral competencies needed for teams to play the enabler/broker role for country capacity enhancement. In a sense the behavioral competencies represent a complement (“sufficient condition”) to technical skills (“necessary condition”) needed to play an effective role in capacity enhancement. The literature on organizational effectiveness also distinguishes between technical, social and behavioral skills. However, for an organization such as the Bank where technical skills have traditionally received most attention, the proposed focusing of attention on behaviors may appear to be too much “out of the box”. Nevertheless, recent studies in a variety...
of disciplines stress the important role of behaviors.\textsuperscript{75} Even the economics discipline has recently been influenced by the important role of human factors such as intuition in decision making.\textsuperscript{76}

Key behaviors such as listening, patience, empathy, humility\textsuperscript{77} and flexibility are all facilitators of good learning and effective transfer of knowledge. For example, listening opens up opportunities for learning new things about country needs and constraints (financial, political, societal, cultural, etc.); a good knowledge broker/enabler is patient in recognition of the fact that people, groups, countries learn and adapt at different speeds; it is the capacity for empathy that provides the context in which people develop trust and choose to readily exchange tacit knowledge or adopt practices recommended by others; intellectual humility and flexibility similarly help nurture trust and confidence that the provider of advice is seeking realistic answers and not imposing pre-determined solutions. The question that Bank leaders and staff need to ask is: are we individually or collectively practicing such behaviors, especially in dealing with our country partners?

The CFS data reported in the earlier section clearly show that Bank teams could do much better in exhibiting the kind of behaviors that underpin successful capacity enhancement efforts centered on enabling countries to learn by doing. In fact, several questions from the behaviors cluster are strongly correlated with both the ability to adapt knowledge and with helping build capacity at the community level (see Annex 12).

**Emerging good practices:** As in the case of adaptation above, the CFS data also points to a few relatively brighter spots, suggesting that it is possible for Bank teams to engage the country in a manner that is perceived to be more flexible and empowering. Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors in Mauritania and Latvia are presented in Charts 14–15. The most revealing aspects of these charts compared to the Bank-wide pattern reported in Chart 7 are: (i) about half of the scores fall squarely above the effectiveness mean compared to only one in the Bank-wide pattern; (ii) there are a number of scores that fall in the upper right quadrant (i.e., where the item is of importance

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**Chart 14: Client perceptions of staff behaviors in Mauritania**

![Chart 14: Client perceptions of staff behaviors in Mauritania](image-url)

*Source: Mauritania Client Survey (2001)*
to the country and where the Bank is perceived to be relatively more effective) compared to none in the Bank-wide pattern; and (iii) in areas that are of importance to the country, the Bank is perceived to be relatively more effective on more than half of the items in the cluster of questions compared to none in the Bank-wide pattern.

Debriefings of Bank staff as well as country leaders involved in Bank-supported programs in Mauritania shed further light on these issues (similar information is unfortunately not available for Latvia). The insights from these debriefings suggest that Bank teams working on Mauritania were relatively more successful in using behavioral competencies in the context of new platforms such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) or other knowledge broker services. This enabled the teams to do business in a way that brought value to the country partner, especially by (i) creating space for the country to learn and enhance capacity by doing; and (ii) working collaboratively with the country on finding realistic solutions (i.e., not necessarily focusing on “best practice”, but finding the “best fit”) that have strong country ownership. The success factors underlying this experience are summarized in Box 7.

Debriefings of country partner and Bank staff further confirm the critical importance of behavioral competencies (e.g., listening, curiosity, empathy, intellectual humility, flexibility, patience, etc.) in delivering effective knowledge services. By flexibility the debriefees do not imply compromising on objectives and principles of sound advice that is grounded in analytical work. For example, on the issue of privatization of the telecommunications sector in Mauritania the development practitioners involved offer an important lesson: clarity on agreed fundamental objectives (e.g., access, cost, technology, etc.), and adherence to fundamental principles (e.g., transparency, due process, etc.) are very important; but, privatization per se may not be the only way to achieve the objectives (hence the value of flexibility). Thus, flexibility should be seen in the sense of the Chinese saying: “crossing the river by feeling your way around the stones.”

Interestingly, the debriefees stressed the fact that in reporting on their experience in Mauritania they were not talking about it as a “best practice”, rather

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**Chart 15: Client perceptions of staff behaviors in Latvia**

![Chart showing client perceptions of staff behaviors in Latvia](chart.png)

*Source: Latvia Client Survey (2001)*
they wanted to share a record of ongoing mutual and joint learning processes from which they hoped “effective practices” will emerge over time in the Bank. This perspective is in itself testimony to a new way of thinking about learning and development and the role that Bank staff could play in the process. These reflections also point to the future agenda for the Knowledge & Learning Bank in terms of the potential areas of action to prepare staff to play the emerging role of knowledge broker with behavioral competencies that are conducive to helping country partners to adapt knowledge to local contexts.

The Mauritania case also suggests that behaviors that are conducive to effective enabling of the country partner can be nurtured. For example, “the Country Office manager can play a critical role in framing the relationship between Bank staff and the country partner. It may very well be that there is a certain set of behaviors and messages that are sent by leaders and things that leaders focus on—that not only create an environment that is conducive for national staff in a country office to thrive, but also strengthen our relationship with our client”.

Other Bank leaders have also stressed the key role of behaviors: “Development is in large measure about fundamental changes in behavior, driven by shifts in preferences.”

If development is seen as a process of managing change, then policy is promoting that change, and ultimately capacity is the ability to effect change. This goes to the heart of how one measures success of development efforts. For example, does one do a project to build a school, a health clinic, a road, or change the way schools, clinics and roads are financed and maintained with local stakeholder involvement. Another way of looking at this issue is to ask whether it is about transfer of resources or knowledge in the context of a particular project or about creating a learning environment for local stakeholders to enhance their capacity for managing change to deliver results. This way of looking at development implies that development practitioners have to play the role of change agents; and that playing such a role effectively requires “client engagement” skills and other behavioral competencies that go beyond the usual technical skills required to do a “good project” in the conventional sense.

Whole-brained teams: What are the implications for building teams that can respond to such challenges? The above points to the need to build teams

Box 7: Enhancing Civil Society Capacity to Participate—Experience of Mauritania PRS

The Government interpreted ownership in a deeper context to include developing the capacity of civil society to participate in what was initially seen as a “technical exercise”. They called this process a “national attempt to listen”. The success factors below reflect the out of the box behavior of both the Bank team and the country partner:

(i) Bank team facilitated the capacity development process by understanding that the PRS had to be genuinely country-driven and owned. The country wanted assistance in understanding better what the people wanted and articulating this in the PRS. The Bank team understood that the country partner was asking for space to build its own capacity to develop perspectives on poverty reduction. A critical success factor was therefore the Bank team’s willingness to recognize the value of this space, and its willingness to “stay in the process by staying out”;

(ii) Country leaders sent strong signals of inclusivity by creating a governmental/civil society committee and creating space for the civil society and local officials to participate in the process with the help of several key actions:

- building capacity of 208 mayors through workshops and seminars;
- building capacity of civil society by asking 94 NGOs to send representatives to the four PRS thematic working groups. Since criticism was welcome, a strong message was sent about the government’s participatory stance;
- organizing four local workshops and a national seminar at which the PRS was approved;
- using print/radio/video material in local languages to communicate both process and content, and seek feedback on issues raised by the civil society.
that are “whole-brained”.

The evolution of teams in the Bank clearly shows a progression from an earlier composition focused on technical skills in a sector to the current practice, which is moving in the direction of seeking multi-sector skills. Whereas in the past the emphasis was on fielding good sector experts, the current practice is to seek good team players who can work across sector boundaries. This evolution has been in response to the changing nature of operational work (i.e., a growing emphasis on multi-sector approaches to lending). As the business of the institution evolves further and the emphasis is placed more on “striving for impact” than “driving for results” (the latter is sometimes interpreted as producing quality outputs), the importance of behaviors as sufficient conditions for higher impact is likely to grow even more.

Chart 16 below shows this evolution as well as the likely shape of teams of the future if they are to respond to the behavioral challenges discussed in this paper. For the “whole-brained” teams of the future the challenge will be to go beyond being good team players and providing perspectives of several sectors. A critical task for the leaders who build such teams is to ensure that in addition to good technical skills, and good team playing skills, behavioral competencies such as listening, brokering and adapting are at least represented in the team, if not demonstrated by all team members. It is this combination of skills that is most likely to develop good enablers, i.e., practitioners who can help broker the most effective advice to the country and to help the country stakeholders to adapt it to the local context in a manner that empowers the stakeholders and provides them space to learn how to deliver better results. These propositions could help in developing criteria for selecting Team Leaders or the proposed “Program Leaders” suggested by a recent task force; and perhaps in the promotion of managers.

Approaches to nurture behavioral competencies:

As suggested in the debriefings of staff and country partners, playing the role of broker/enabler effectively will depend to a large extent on one’s ability to listen, to empathize, to be patient, to be humble, etc. Assuming that the importance of behaviors in the way Bank teams conduct business with the country partner is accepted, are there appropriate mechanisms to enable managers to determine whether staff possesses such competencies? And, are there

Chart 16: Building teams for capacity enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sector</strong></td>
<td><strong>Multi-sector</strong></td>
<td><strong>Whole-brained</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agronomist</td>
<td>Technical skills</td>
<td>Technical skills plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Economist</td>
<td>Macro-economist...</td>
<td>Good listener...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial analyst</td>
<td>Agronomist...</td>
<td>Good broker...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociologist...</td>
<td>Good adapter...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driving for results</td>
<td>Striving for Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good experts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Good team players</strong></td>
<td><strong>Good enablers</strong></td>
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institutional learning processes/approaches that help develop/nurture such competencies? The short answer is very few. The following addresses these two issues in more detail.

To be sure, most effective leaders and managers have some idea of staff behavioral competencies to the extent that they have interacted intensively with the said staff over long periods. Yet, these may be subjective judgments. Institutionally, however, there are few systematic tools at the disposal of leaders/managers to assess these competencies in an objective and fair manner. For example, how many Overall Performance Evaluation (OPE) discuss behavioral competencies? In the absence of a systematic assessment, it is impossible to answer this question at this time with reasonable substantiation.

Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that such topics are hardly covered in the OPE. And, if they are, the treatment may be rather superficial. Partly, this may be due to the fact that such issues may not be considered by some Bank leaders as critical to staff effectiveness in dealing with clients. Another reason may be that the OPE framework simply does not pose the right questions regarding behavioral competencies. For example, the listed categories under the section “behaviors assessment” include client orientation, drive for results, teamwork, learning and knowledge sharing. The detailed list of behaviors under each category, however, does not contain references to such behaviors as listening, patience, empathy, humility, etc. So, it may be difficult to discern from an OPE the kinds of behavioral competencies that are at issue.

This may point to a useful role for Human Resources (HR) by compiling the relevant information from the OPEs and other sources. In addition, HR may want to look into the feasibility of developing systematic measures that could shed light on behavioral competencies. There are some pointers in a number of disciplines which could be studied and eventually adapted to the needs of the Bank.

Finally, there are few learning processes/events in the Bank to help nurture such behavioral competencies. The need to develop targeted learning opportunities for such competencies is dictated by the fact that the latter are not subjects that one can necessarily learn by reading instructional material. Behaviors are learnt over time and involve complex social psychological dimensions. More importantly, most behaviors are products of certain values and mindsets. Mindsets: As indicated in Chart 17 the same behavior can be manifested with different implicit intent depending on the prevailing mindset. For example, listening can be done with the objective to confirm what one already thinks, or it can be seen to provide an opportunity to discover something new. Consequently, these two mindsets will have different implications for the quality of the dialogue/exchange with the country partner. The same can be said about patience, where the intent may be either to “learn to listen” or “listen to learn”. Here again, the impact on the quality of the exchange with the country may be very different depending on the mindset involved. When Bank teams broker knowledge or enable the country stakeholders to learn to enhance their capacity they are in a sense engaging in conversations. The most effective conversations are those that create value from leveraging different view points.

The challenge for the Bank is to nurture not only the appropriate behaviors, but also the type of mindsets that render these behaviors most effective in the context of enabling country capacity enhancement. The “flexible mindset” side of Chart 17 points to the kind of behavior/intent that maximizes the potential for country learning and capacity enhancement. These issues are especially relevant in effective brokering: the appropriate combination of mindset and behaviors of the participants will increase the potential for empowered country learning and identification of actions that are realistic in a given country capacity context.

Changing mindsets leads to changes in the consequences that actions help create. This is especially relevant to the challenge of providing knowledge to country partners to help enhance their capacity. In this case, one can identify two contrasting mental model types: “knowledge transfer” and “knowledge sharing”. The former would generally be based on the following values and beliefs: (i) be in unilateral control to avoid questions about the fundamental assumptions of the knowledge or way of solving a problem that is at issue; (ii) strive to teach and have your suggestions adopted; (iii) maximize efficiency (i.e., here is the global “best practice”, apply it, etc.); (iv) favor the uni-directional flow of knowledge (i.e., where the actions of the provider are likely to control the knowledge transfer process).

The “knowledge sharing” mental model on the other hand would generally be based on a different set of values and assumptions: (i) promote real
collaboration between the provider and recipient of knowledge; (ii) strive to learn from the country stakeholders and adapt your knowledge to their local contexts; (iii) maximize effectiveness (i.e., look for the “best local fit” to obtain better results, etc.); and (iv) favor the bi-directional flow of knowledge (i.e., likely to lead to more mutual learning opportunities where the provider and the recipient of knowledge engage in a genuine learning exchange).  

From the perspective of helping country stakeholders to enhance their capacity through knowledge, Bank staff would be more effective if they applied the “knowledge sharing” model in their actions. Arguing for change is easy, changing the values that underpin changing actions is the more difficult challenge. “Changing actions without changing the values implicit in the theory-in-use is a recipe for gimmickry.” In this context, Bank staff may face a double challenge: adjusting own mindsets, while at the same time being an agent of change in getting the country counterparts to also adjust their mindsets.

An important issue in an organizational learning context is how to change mindsets and behaviors. For example, can certain behaviors be learned? In the case of empathy, some scholars have argued that to empathize requires the ability to suspend the prevailing mental frameworks and redirect the focus to another way of thinking. In development work this translates into the ability to see the problems through the eyes of the country stakeholders. At the same time, there is evidence that different competencies may in fact be controlled by different parts of the brain. For example, logical, linear functions which are typically associated with technical skills are controlled by the left side of the brain, while behaviors such as empathy which are typically associated with emotional intelligence are controlled by the right side of the brain. Similarly, the left side of the brain typically handles “what” is said, while the right side controls “how” it is said.

As mentioned earlier, in dealing with knowledge transfer issues in the context of CE the “how” is as important as the “what”. The preceding observations and the country feedback described in the earlier sections would suggest that Bank staff will be more effective in their enabler role if they made more use of the capabilities that are controlled by the right side
of the brain. The prevailing assumption is that such behaviors can be learned, i.e., learning to use the different sides of the brain.92

Assuming that behaviors such as listening and empathy can be learned or developed, the issue of incentives to promote such behaviors becomes a critical factor. For example, listening and understanding the local context to better adapt knowledge to the local circumstances may require time. Incentive systems that favor “efficiency” may in fact lead to assumptions about the value of listening (e.g., listening could be seen as “wasting time”). Yet, in the “knowledge sharing model” described here, investing time to better understand the context and country needs is a more effective way of doing business.93 In the Bank’s operational context, resource allocation processes need to take into account the implications of doing business differently, so that teams have the resources and the time to engage their country counterparts in a way that brings the greatest value to the country.94

**Experts and novices:** A final related issue is whether all task leaders are ready to play the role of broker/enabler (i.e., facilitate effective transfer of knowledge to the country). “Knowledge is experience” said Einstein; and experience is gained with time. Although different people learn at different speeds, some studies on this issue “…suggest that it takes about ten years to become an expert.”95 With the recent proliferation of tasks in the Bank, there are thousands of task team leaders who might in the course of their work face the issues that have been discussed earlier regarding brokering and adaptation. In some regions, however, the number of team leaders with less than three years experience in the Bank is relatively significant. For example, in the Africa Region the staff profile is becoming less experienced at a time when the operational challenges call for more experience, knowledge of what works and how to do it, and capability to help enhance country capacity.96 The challenges that these skill/experience patterns pose to the effectiveness of the Bank’s capacity enhancement agenda are two fold.

First, there is the issue of the way people with different levels of experience deal with problems.97 For example, experts with considerable experience tend to recognize meaningful patterns from lots of information (i.e., the mind recalls a similar case from past experience). The novices on the other hand tend to operate based on rules of thumb/guidelines, since they don’t have the experience to recognize patterns (i.e., do X when faced with Y, etc.). The problem with relying on guidelines is that the latter are usually empty of context, which typically forms the basis of judgments by experts. The experts it is argued make decisions/judgments based on patterns and intuition.

The novice vs. the expert dilemma has implications for Bank staff work with country partners in general and for capacity enhancement in particular. Take for example the issue of adaptation. The tendency of novices to rely on rules of thumb translates into a greater likelihood of applying “best practices” than exploring other alternatives that might fit the local context better. This is another manifestation of risk aversion (i.e., when in doubt, apply the rule). Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the greater the level of experience, the greater the likelihood of considering the merits of competing ideas and/or reliance on tacit intuitive aspects of accumulated knowledge to make decisions. Moreover, there is evidence of a correlation between the level of experience and quality of operational work in the Bank.98

The second issue is the speed with which novices can be transformed into experts. The literature further suggests that while appropriate mentoring can facilitate the process, it cannot fully substitute for actual experience that is gained seeing and reacting to contextual learning opportunities (i.e., it takes years to become an expert). The implication for Bank teams is that inexperienced task leaders may not be very effective in enabling the country to learn and enhance capacity. In fact, when inexperience is combined with lack of humility, there are great risks in conveying arrogance. The latter could in fact get in the way of staff effectiveness in transferring knowledge. Moreover, arrogance is a destructor of trust, and trust is the facilitator of knowledge exchange and receptivity of the client to advice.99

In the past, many “old time” Bank staff learned on the job in the context of a defacto “master/apprentice” model (i.e., more junior staff went on missions with seasoned colleagues).100 The value of an experienced colleague telling stories (sometimes exaggerated to make a point) of past adventures in development are not only entertaining, but also bring some of the contextual dimensions into play and may indirectly help the less experienced staff to think twice about applying the rule of thumb/guideline/best practice too quickly. The availability of an experienced mentor/coach in the team may not compensate fully for
the inexperience of the team members, but may help in guiding the team members onto paths that they may otherwise not explore.

The role of the expert mentor/coach is less to transfer knowledge and more to help the novice create own knowledge based on guidance from the expert in a contextual setting. “Deep smarts grow out of practice, but not simple repetition.” The objective of the knowledge coach is essentially to enable a guided experience/practice for the novice. This may involve four types of approaches: guided practice (adds the experience and skill of a coach to help the learner reflect on performance, etc.); guided observation (helps to unlearn or relinquish old assumptions and cognitive habits); guided problem solving (helps develop know-how and know-who as well as know what); and guided experimentation (helps in testing hypotheses where the boundaries can be set or to explore out of the box solutions/options in an open-ended learning context).101

Finally, these issues could also have profound implications for organizational effectiveness. For example, in reforming the way we do business, it may be more important to focus on mindset change than to change structures and functions. Typically, however, organizations are tempted to look for “quick” solutions and very often this translates into changes in structure, functions or business process, which are often seen as the “hard” issues. The expectation is that behavior and mindset transformation will follow structural change over time. Moreover, in this approach mindset and behavior challenges are often considered as “soft” issues.102 Yet, the “soft” is often the “hardest” part of transforming organizations. The fundamental challenge for leaders of knowledge-based organizations especially is to create an environment that encourages mindset and behavior transformation in their knowledge colleagues. In fact, recent studies point to the importance of focusing on transforming mindsets first.103

The challenges discussed above would also have to be factored into the implementation of some of the recent proposals to enhance operational effectiveness. For example, the role of the proposed “Program Leader” needs to be assessed not only from a technical skills perspective, but also from the behavior dimension (i.e., technical depth may be a necessary condition, but, more attention needs to also be given to the sufficient conditions such as behavioral competencies).

It is important to underscore what is meant here by behavioral competency. It is something that goes beyond “good team playing”, which recently has become a favorite term in the Bank and frequently used to lump everything that is difficult to measure.104 It means identifying and tracking those competencies that help build the “whole-brained” teams that were described earlier. A word of caution is in order when attempting to assess whether staff possess such competencies. The tendency in institutions is to look for the “quick fix” (e.g., develop a check list or a test and apply it in selecting team leaders, etc.). The problem with such approaches is that the process becomes very subjective and even potentially distorted by the mindset of the evaluators (e.g., the tendency to select in one’s own image, etc.).105

New learning platforms: There have been some recent initial steps in the Bank to help develop learning opportunities around behavioral competencies. For example, (i) Assuring the Quality of Bank Operations in the Africa Region has added a module on behaviors that impact on operational effectiveness; (ii) Communicating Effectively for Results is a relatively new training course to help Team Leaders enhance their capacity to inter alia listen, inquire and give feedback effectively; (iii) Leading Strategic Change seeks to help Team Leaders gain an understanding of how to enable & facilitate collaboration for change with multiple cultural frameworks; (iv) Team Leader’s Lab in the Africa Region utilizes action learning methods to promote some of the behaviors discussed in this paper; and (v) EAP-SAR Client Engagement and Communication uses role play to help staff recognize how their behaviors could influence the outcome of stakeholder consultations, etc.

These are promising steps that need to be built upon and replicated to help staff develop the behavioral competencies needed for effective broker/enabler role. Much more of the institutional investments in staff learning needs to be directed at such activities to help narrow the behavior learning gap. This also points to an agenda for action for the Knowledge and Learning Board. Finally, more broadly speaking, all of us need to begin asking the questions implied earlier in Chart 17. A key to results in capacity enhancement through knowledge transfer is in understanding how good we are in creating space for the country to learn and what changes we need to bring about in “how” we behave in the process.
Developing outcome-based results indicators for capacity enhancement

An important challenge for the CE agenda is to develop results frameworks that can track progress in achieving outcomes that go beyond such “metrics” as “you can recognize capacity where it exists”. Developing sector specific outcome definitions of CE is best done by the sector specialists concerned. The following addresses some of the issues associated with defining intermediate outcome measures especially in areas that have been discussed in this paper. For example, if country feedback indicates weaknesses in the knowledge transfer process, in adaptation or in the dissemination of Bank studies, how does one begin to track progress in overcoming such weaknesses? What are the specific challenges and possible approaches in: (i) assessing the value of the knowledge transfer process; (ii) measuring the knowledge adaptation gap; and (iii) measuring the effectiveness of the Bank’s dissemination of knowledge?

Knowledge transfer framework: In considering the Bank’s effectiveness in transferring knowledge to help countries enhance their capacity, there is a need to disaggregate the various dimensions of the transfer challenge as was suggested in Part I of this paper. Chart 18 below attempts to provide a simple framework for considering the most critical dimensions of effectiveness in transferring knowledge to the country. These factors are based on the messages that emerge from the analysis of the CFS data and the emerging good practices that have been described earlier. The proposition is that teams would be more effective if the knowledge is transferred “just-in-time”, “just-enough”, is practical and is adapted to the local context. For example, it was this combination of factors that enabled the team to respond so effectively to Eritrea’s needs (viz case mentioned earlier in Box 1). What would the country feedback have been, however, if the team had taken months to prepare a long report that was heavy on theory and more focused on “global best practice” in generic terms?

These considerations would also have implications for the decision making process on resource allocation in the Bank and the relative distribution between knowledge creation, sharing and application. Currently, the incentive structure and the allocation

Chart 18: Knowledge transfer framework for capacity enhancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer mode</th>
<th>K dimension</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>Just-in-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Just-enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Adapted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High Effectiveness Low
of resources tend to favor the creation of knowledge (i.e., the content dimension) relative to its sharing, adaptation or adoption. Moreover, the above framework would suggest that even when dissemination is undertaken, the choice of instruments (e.g., a report as compared to a synthesis of the main findings and lessons) may affect the perception of whether it is “just-enough”. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that there is a strong demand for Bank knowledge that is disseminated in synthesized form.106

Similarly, some of the Bank’s knowledge contained in a report may be of interest to some stakeholders (e.g., researchers), while other stakeholders may need more “just-in-time” advice with tailored solutions to specific problems. In the latter case, a report, even its synthesized version, may not respond to the country needs. Instead, a brokering service with help in adapting the general advice to the specific context may be a more effective approach in responding to the challenge and bringing value to the country partner.

Finally, a results framework (with logical results chains) for key products and services used in helping enhance country capacity would help to better understand the dynamics of the value chain.107 Currently, some internal measures of quality try to measure ex-ante some of the value propositions discussed above. But, there are typically few systematic processes at the product level to monitor ex-post the extent of use and value added both internally (to Bank teams) as well as externally (to country partners and stakeholders).108 WBI has developed a methodology for evaluating the determinants of its learning platforms in the focus countries, through which they measure relevance, effectiveness and use of the knowledge and skills that participants acquired through the learning events.109

Indeed, one of the recommendations of the OED evaluation of knowledge sharing was that Bank evaluations “…should look beyond the quality of underlying analytical work to the adequacy of the knowledge transfer processes and their impact on the development effectiveness of Bank-supported programs”. This also raises the issue of how well the Bank has been exploiting the rich content of client surveys. As demonstrated in the previous sections, there is considerable useful information in the client surveys to inform on the Bank’s effectiveness in using knowledge transfer as an element of capacity enhancement.110

More robust data collection and evaluation methods need to be developed, therefore, to monitor the capacity impact of knowledge transfer. This may pose special challenges. For example, capacity enhancement is a process, rather than a final outcome or an output (i.e., a result of capacity), and progress in capacity enhancement may have to be measured in degrees. Moreover, capacity and performance are not synonymous. Traditional performance indicators may, therefore, not be appropriate substitutes for capacity enhancement indicators, although performance outcomes may serve as proxies for capacity. WBI’s work in this area provides a basis for identifying the main issues and suggesting a way forward. One of the key issues is to relate indicators to particular contexts, since capacity cannot be enhanced in abstraction. The key questions are capacity for what; capacity for whom?111

These considerations are not applicable only to Analytical and Advisory Activities (AAA).112 Teams working on lending products also play a key role in transferring knowledge to help enhance country capacity. The behavioral aspects are just as relevant there. In fact, asking such questions in the context of all products and services will help to better identify the rigidities and obstacles in the way of responding to country capacity needs in a manner that is empowering, enabling, expeditious, enlightening and effective (i.e., the 5Es of capacity enhancement).

Finally, the preceding discussions on brokering, adaptation and behaviors point to the need for complementarities of approaches in the knowledge transfer process (e.g., in the case of adaptation, its not an either or proposition, but rather a balance between best practice and local fit, between technical expertise and behavioral competence, etc.). Moreover, these issues need to be seen in the broader context of institutional development (i.e., what makes good institutions, how do good leaders emerge, what allows them to flourish, etc.). Where there are strong institutions, some of the behavioral aspects may be less critical. On the other hand, in a weak institutional setting the impact of Bank teams may also depend on the existence of “champions”. Having the right champion/client may, therefore, become a very important determinant of success, even when Bank staff exhibit the right behaviors during the knowledge transfer process.

This raises the question of how to promote the emergence of effective champions, and what the Bank can do to help them succeed. As the case of the water utility in Uganda demonstrates, behavioral competencies can play a key role in creating the environ-
ment for the emergence of champions. The same can be said of approaches that energize a team to deliver results even in extremely weak institutional settings. For example, the Rapid Results Approach appears to be an effective way of achieving demonstrable results quickly, while empowering the client, unleashing the latent capacity, fully utilizing existing capacity, and developing new capacity through knowledge sharing and emergent learning. Teams start by prioritizing the areas they want to impact, and develop capacity as they go—in the context of achieving 100-day results. This has significant implications for the huge investments that are being made in capacity building and training initiatives: less “just-in-case” workshops and more “just-in-time” training and coaching; more learning by doing while achieving; and learning in smaller bites (see Annex 14 for details and examples).

**Measuring the knowledge adaptation gap:** In 1998, the Africa Region launched the Indigenous Knowledge Program with one of the objectives being to help the Region narrow the “knowledge adaptation gap” (KAG). This would be achieved by learning from local community experiences, adapting international practices to the local context and integrating IK-elements into Bank-supported operations. A simple framework was also developed to track progress in these intermediate outcomes.

The size of the KAG was initially calculated at ~0.2 in 1995–98. Since then, the gap has progressively been narrowed to under 0.17 in 2003, and the target for 2008 is set at 0.12 in the results framework. This would represent a 40 percent reduction in the size of the KAG compared to the baseline. The trend in the evolution of the Africa Region’s KAG is presented in Chart 19. Moreover, the number of projects with IK-related components has grown from a few to more than two dozen and the target for 2008 is at over three dozen.

**Measuring dissemination outcomes:** With regard to the dissemination issue brought out by the client surveys (i.e., clients perceive the Bank as relatively

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**Chart 19: Evolution of the size of “Knowledge Adaptation Gap” in the Africa Region**

Scale = ratio measuring difference in average scores of client perceptions on Bank’s effectiveness in 3 areas: A (Staff’s technical competence); B (Staff’s knowledge of international best practices) and C (Staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the country’s needs).

Ratio derived from following formula: \( KAG = \frac{((A+B)/2 - C)/(A+B)/2}{1} \)

*Source:* 46 Surveys in AFR (1995–2003) and projections
ineffective in disseminating the results of Bank studies and analyses to people who need them most, there are several challenges in developing meaningful indicators of progress. These relate to the dimensions of access, use and impact. For example, if an analytical report sits on the shelf and no one reads it, is there value from that investment in terms of value to the country? Therefore, the first critical indicator is to measure whether and how the study is disseminated to the country stakeholders (i.e., access dimension). Metrics that systematically track the dissemination record need to be made explicit and integrated into the design of the study.

The current general practice does not seem to meet this challenge (e.g., many studies do not have a record of how many people they have reached, the categories of people reached, and the use that has been made of the material, etc.). This tends to become even more problematic at a time of constrained budgets when one considers that the staff time devoted to producing a study of major consequence tends to run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the Bank’s total investment in analytical work is over a hundred million dollars a year.

Another set of questions could explore further for value as perceived by the reader/user. It may be that even if the study reaches only very few people, it can have major impact on policy as long as these are the “key people”. In doing so, the report may contribute to enhancing the capacity of the recipient. Conversely, the report could be read by a large number of people, none of whom are “key”. Operationally, the challenge for teams is to define key people in such a way that it encompasses the critical stakeholders.

The client survey feedback reported in the earlier section suggests that Bank teams may not be doing an effective job in reaching the critical stakeholders. For example, the OED study mentioned earlier conveys the following perspective of the respondents in the survey: “...in order to optimize the impact of its information on a countrywide level, the Bank must abandon its “top-down,” government-focused approach to information dissemination and be more proactive in its efforts to reach previously under-served individuals and groups.”

In fact, even with products that are assessed as highly satisfactory in terms of content and quality, there are often issues related to the dissemination aspects. For example, the Uganda Public Expenditure Review (PER, 2003), received a highly satisfactory rating by QAG. However, regarding dissemination and building capacity through knowledge transfer the assessment was more nuanced: “While the panel considers the dissemination of the report within government and among donors highly satisfactory, the dissemination and access to the PER outside these circles has limited its impact in building greater knowledge and stronger support for public expenditure improvements. In particular, more effort is needed by the GoU, supported by the Bank, in communicating this work to parliament, civil society and the media.” This confirms the importance of dissemination to a broader set of stakeholders, and in a more readable form and language—a consistent message from the client surveys.

The next challenge is to track the manner in which knowledge is disseminated (shared with country partners) to help develop country capacity. Here, the critical success factors are likely to revolve around staff’s attitude/behavior towards the country partners and the approaches used to share knowledge with them. As the Bank moves towards newer ways of doing business (e.g., more collaborative processes, facilitation of networks, brokering South-South knowledge and learning exchanges, etc.), developing clear metrics for measuring effectiveness with such new approaches becomes a priority. This poses special challenges because these new approaches involve not only technical skills but, more importantly, behavioral competencies (e.g., listening, patience, empathy, engagement skills, persuasion, etc.). The Bank has yet to develop metrics to monitor the behavioral competencies that underpin the effective sharing of knowledge to help enhance country capacity.

These issues point to the need for further improvements in the way product concept notes are prepared reviewed and implemented. For example, in order to track access, use and impact on country capacity, the concept note may have to be more specific on when a product can be considered “completed”. Defining completion as “green cover” stage (which is generally the current practice) may provide a good measure of outputs, but may not provide the basis for measuring outcomes. On the other hand, defining completion as after a systematic dissemination effort has been implemented would provide the basis for tracking some of the access, use and impact indicators needed to measure outcomes.

These issues are central to the value proposition of the Knowledge & Learning Bank and in doing a
better job in enhancing country capacity. For example, it may be that it’s not the “what” of the product (i.e., the content) that is the most critical success factor in bringing value, but rather the “how” (i.e., the way the Bank team collaborates and interacts with country stakeholders in preparing the product; and how it disseminates the results of the analysis). Clearly, the content dimension is very important and is a necessary condition for bringing value to the client. Yet, the point is that this may not be sufficient, if the right mechanisms and approaches are not applied in sharing that content with the country. Such considerations become critically important especially in the case of products that are designed to help enhance country stakeholder capacity.

Addressing these issues strategically through the CAS and other operational processes

Are the CAS process and related operational processes used effectively to address the issues that emerge from the analysis of client feedback discussed herein? The short answer is not quite. For example, CFSs have not yet been done in some countries. Where these have been carried out, the results may not have been systematically reported in the CAS. And, finally, where the results have been reported, the strategic implications of the feedback for the way we work may not have been systematically addressed. To shed more light on this issue, the following takes a closer look in the context of the experience in the Africa Region, where the breadth and depth of CFS coverage has been most extensive.

Country Assistance Strategy: A survey of the countries with CFS and CAS during the period 1996–2003 in the Africa Region shows that CFS results were not reported in nearly 40 percent of the CAS (see Annex 13 for details). Moreover, in those CAS that mention the client surveys, there is a wide range in terms of specificity, depth of analysis, and discussion of operational implications. For example, in one CAS, the reference to CFS was limited to “A Borrower Feedback Survey aimed at better identifying client needs.”

In terms of addressing the specific issues raised in the CFS, again there is a wide range of approaches. More specifically, very few CASs address the issues that have been discussed in this paper in a systematic manner (e.g., knowledge adaptation gap, building capacity at the community level, flexibility in dealing with the client, dissemination of studies to those who need them most, etc.). For example, on the issue of adaptation, only a few CASs even refer to the message from the CFS. Of the latter, very few draw operational implications for the way we work; even fewer set specific goals to deal with the issues. Yet, the existence of a “knowledge adaptation gap” was first highlighted in a 1998 regional synthesis report drawing on several surveys; and it has been raised in all subsequent similar syntheses reports as well as country specific survey reports.

It is worth noting that even in those CASs where such issues as capacity at the local level, adaptation, flexibility and other behaviors emerging from the surveys were acknowledged, the proposed actions were often: (i) not fully responsive to the issue. For example, in some cases the proposed actions to deal with issues of capacity at the local level, adaptation, flexibility, were focused primarily on improving communications and explaining better Bank policies and programs (i.e., the challenge was apparently considered to be one of public relations, and not one of changing Bank team behaviors); and/or (ii) lacked specificity in terms of how the objective would be achieved so as to enable systematic monitoring of progress (e.g., in response to the client survey, “the Bank will help set up efforts to strengthen partnerships in the country to share knowledge and best practices…”). The important lesson here is that understanding of the underlying reasons for a specific client perception is critical to identifying actions that can address the issue. Are such questions being asked systematically in the context of country team discussions in preparing a CAS?

To the extent that the analysis in the earlier sections is relevant to the Bank’s effectiveness in enhancing country capacity, it is surprising that CASs have not focused more often and more strategically on these issues. An emerging good practice in the case of the Malawi and Zambia Country Teams points to possible approaches that may help in addressing such issues (see Box 8). It also suggests: (i) addressing some of the issues raised herein will require time and concerted effort by country teams to raise awareness of the importance of such issues for the Bank’s effectiveness; (ii) the importance of identifying practical ways to change not only what we do to help the country partner, but more importantly how we go about doing...
Reflecting strategically on the messages that CFS bring out could also generate new ideas for doing business at the project/task level. For example, it should be possible to ask questions about what kind of design approaches could help address the issues of flexibility, adaptation and use of local knowledge, etc. It could be that there is a tendency to design complex operations, where a simpler one would be just as effective. A simple operation building on local practices and local institutional context is likely to provide a platform for dialogue that promotes better adaptation, flexibility in approaches and respect for local culture and priorities (i.e., areas where countries perceive Bank teams to be relatively less strong).

Recent OED studies provide further evidence that Bank-supported operations do better when building on indigenous institutions. For example, in the Iganga District of Uganda, traditional birth attendants in villages have been linked to the modern health service delivery system using simple adapted technology. This simple approach to leveraging traditional and modern knowledge systems in the context of community-based institutions has helped the citizens of Iganga to achieve impressive outcomes at low cost in a key MDG area (see Box 9 below).

The Iganga case is a compelling example of achieving results that make a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries. The relevant question to ask here is why such simple, locally adapted, and apparently cost-effective solutions that empower communities and achieve impressive results are not replicated more often and supported by the Bank? What is it about the mindsets of the teams in the Bank and their counterparts in the countries that accounts for such missed opportunities? These questions become especially relevant in the context of the Bank’s current emphasis on obtaining results, especially in the MDG areas.

**Other operational entry points:** In addition to CASs and design of projects, there are other operational processes that may provide useful entry points for nurturing practices and behaviors that enhance team effectiveness in helping countries build their capacity. For example, Country Program Review (CPR/CPPR) events provide opportunities for Bank teams to play the role of broker/enabler to facilitate staff/client emergent learning and help enhance country capacity.

A recent pilot in the Nigeria CPPR confirms this potential. As input to the CPPR exercise, Bank staff
Box 9: Traditional Birth Attendants & Health Workers Partner to Save Lives in Rural Uganda

In the Iganga District of Uganda, a UNFPA-supported project (RESCUER) seeking to reduce maternal mortality equipped Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA) with simple, appropriate communication technology. This involved the installation of a solar-powered VHF radio communication system that included fixed base stations at the Primary Health Center, mobile ‘walkie-talkies’ for the TBAs and ambulance vehicles. Improved communication and transportation links between the TBAs and the health posts resulted in increased and timelier patient referrals as well as the improved delivery of health care to a larger number of pregnant women. Getting connected bridged the perceived gap between traditional healers and public health providers. Building on the existing knowledge capital in the communities (TBA’s), empowered the stakeholders to help solve a key development issue in their community. A notable impact of the project was that maternal mortality reportedly declined by more than 50% over the period of three years i.e., about three-quarters of the applicable Millennium Development Goal for 2015!127


used the debriefing methodology to capture lessons of experience from country practitioners working with one of the rare projects in the portfolio that had satisfactory ratings. The challenge was to bring out through emergence and reflection the key success factors. These were shared with the other practitioners during the CPPR and created a learning opportunity where Nigerians learned from other Nigerians working on similar Bank-supported projects.128

The process also brought out the kinds of considerations that may have been difficult for Bank staff to stress in view of the sensitivity of the stakeholders. And, the Bank team exhibited behaviors that facilitated country learning. This is a good example of integrating knowledge capture/sharing techniques (e.g., debriefing) into the operational work to bring value to the country partner. Transforming the traditional portfolio review into a “learning CPPR” would, therefore, provide another useful platform for Bank staff to share knowledge for capacity enhancement.

Another potential entry point is the Implementation Completion Report (ICR). For example, the first version of the ICR on the Mauritania Telecommunication and Postal Sector Reform Project approached the task in a conventional manner focusing on outputs and timeliness of implementation, etc. The brokering and behavioral aspects that underpinned the success story (see Box 2 above) were not highlighted, although this was the most important aspect of the learning. The final version of the ICR, which benefited from the synthesis of the debriefings—of the task team and a key country stakeholder that was involved in the dialogue—brought out the lessons of experience, especially in the area of knowledge brokering and the behaviors that are required for Bank staff to play an effective role in capacity enhancement.129

This experience points to some questions regarding the purpose of ICRs. For example, the current practice allows for regular or intensive learning ICRs. The implicit message in this classification is that one is designed to focus on learning more than the other. This raises an interesting question: what is the point of doing an ICR if it is not focused on learning? In fact, shouldn’t the main focus of any ICR be on learning? If so, then why have two different categories of ICR? Answers to these questions would go a long way in clarifying the real objectives of this type of exercise. It would also help to focus the institution’s attention on the assumptions that underpin some of the operational tools and processes in terms of their contribution to the capacity enhancement agenda.

Similarly, the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) could provide the space to deal with issues such as adaptation and creating client learning opportunities. The PAD sections on critical risk and lessons of experience provide ideal platforms to raise issues of adaptation in project design to help achieve results. Moreover, project components could be designed to help the stakeholders develop knowledge and information sharing systems embedded in the project design to facilitate and support peer-to-peer learning as well as better governance (i.e., monitoring goals). In this regard, an innovative approach is underway in the context of the social action fund programs being implemented in Malawi and Tanzania (see Box 10).
Another aspect of lending operations that could have a profound impact on local capacity enhancement is the arrangement for project/program implementation. In the past, when projects were the main instrument of lending, the use of PIUs was normal practice. The assumption was that these units would help develop local capacity. With more programmatic lending instruments, there has been a growing trend to use national systems. The latter approach is assumed to be more effective in capacity enhancement. In fact, under the recent Paris Declaration, the Bank has committed to significantly reduce its support to PIUs.

Nevertheless, there are still cases where in the same country there is a mix of approaches (i.e., national systems are used for some operations or by some donors, while in other operations there is a continued use of “ring-fenced” arrangements). This re-enforces the argument in favor of a demand-based approach to capacity enhancement, i.e., if local capacity is not used it disappears. Moreover, flexibility, knowledge of local conditions and adapting solutions to the country context and not necessarily what makes sense to the Bank are also some of the systemic lessons which emerge from the group of projects which recently received highly satisfactory implementation ratings.

Finally, there is considerable potential to better integrate the country office staff as knowledge brokers. A good practice is emerging in the Philippines Country Office (CO). Essentially, the CO is using knowledge sharing (KS) as an integral part of the country program. The KS strategy is aligned with the major CAS themes, and focuses strategically on a few business lines: communities of practices; provision of ‘just-in-time’ information and knowledge advisory services; and proactive dissemination of knowledge generated as part of the AAA program. The former Public Information Center (PIC) has been transformed into a Knowledge Development Center (KDC), which is open to the public. The KDC operates with a network of about 10 local similar centers throughout the country. The intention is to further enhance the capacity of the local KDCs by expanding the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) to these centers. In addition, the CO website acts as a ‘one-stop’ on-line knowledge sharing channel for Bank operations in the country.

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**Box 10: Knowledge & Information Systems under Social Fund Projects Create Learning Opportunities for Local Capacity Enhancement in Malawi and Tanzania**

The objectives of these systems are to help enhance capacity at the local level by creating opportunities for exchange and learning, while at the same time contributing to internal efficiencies (‘just-in-time’ information for MASAF/TASAF Management Unit and field staff) and to external efficiencies (making available appropriate and timely information electronically, in hard copy and through interpersonal meetings to MASAF/TASAF MU/field staff to assist them in their interactions with the local governments, communities, NGOs/CBOs). In both instances, the primary knowledge nodes are the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) function and the M&E function. Given that Social Fund field managers are often managing up to 100 plus sub-projects in implementation, they need to have access to information regarding problem-solving approaches employed by other colleagues in the field. Again, due to attrition in the workforce, new managers have very little time to familiarize themselves with the methodology of the overall project and with the sub-projects they are managing and therefore need a readily available and accessible knowledge base (project manuals, write-ups on problem-solving approaches in the different sectors of operation, FAQs, etc.). Effectively, the Knowledge Sharing System at the central Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be linked to and work with the District-based Knowledge Systems since Districts will also have IEC and M&E functions.
None of the issues raised in the previous sections separately may signify the existence of a serious problem in the institution. However, taken together they should generate some concern about the Bank’s capabilities to carry out its mission and achieve the stated goals on country capacity enhancement for results. To help focus attention on the kind of approaches that might be considered to help Bank teams be more effective in helping countries enhance their capacity, the following suggests a few opportunities for action that could be exploited. These actions may have to be adapted to fit the specific operational circumstances in capacity enhancement in the various country/regional contexts. Moreover, these suggested action areas do not claim to be an exhaustive list of all possible steps that could be taken. Rather, they should be seen as an initial attempt to begin the process of reflection around a few concrete actions that could be taken to address the issues that have been discussed in this paper.

**Country Assistance Strategy:**

The CAS process is ideally suited to identify areas for action to help improve the Bank’s effectiveness in country capacity enhancement. The key questions to ask are: how to help unleash latent capacity; how to help utilize existing capacity, and how to help develop new capacity. The starting point could be to analyze client survey results in a strategic way. For example, the existence of a large knowledge adaptation gap may be an indication that Bank teams may not be very effective in transferring knowledge in a manner that is perceived to be useful and relevant to the country to help develop capacity. In such a case for example, the CAS process could develop a strategy to:

(i) **address the issues related to knowledge transfer for capacity enhancement:**
   - how capacity development needs are to be diagnosed, the capacity development support structured, and the key stakeholders engaged (e.g., dimensions of targeting, sequencing and the trade-offs therein);
   - ‘what to do and how to do it’ to better adapt knowledge or disseminate it in a manner that reaches the people that need the material the most (e.g., dimensions of content, form, diversity)[134];

(ii) **set process goals** (e.g., more collaborative analytical work; definition of some missions as joint learning exercises, etc.), **as well as outcome goals** (e.g., to reduce the adaptation gap by X amount over Y years);

(iii) **propose mechanisms for monitoring progress in achieving the goals** (e.g., develop a results framework with results chains and monitorable outcome indicators, etc.);

(iv) **suggest more innovative approaches to project design:**
   - look for simple, community-based practices that help achieve development objectives and empower the communities;
   - design some operational missions as ‘joint learning exercises with the country stakeholders’. Such an approach could provide incentives for the team to play the role of enabler of country learning and, therefore, contribute more effectively to country capacity enhancement;
identify entry points for more effective dialogue with the country on CE issues:
- more strategic integration of country office staff as knowledge brokers;
- more effective utilization of local knowledge sources in the country;
- more systematic use of South-South knowledge and learning exchanges;
- peer-to-peer learning platforms would be especially useful in promoting capacity enhancement at the community level (e.g., community-to-community exchanges around development issues such as HIV/AIDS).

Other operational entry points:
Several operational products and processes provide suitable entry points to deal with issues such as adaptation and creating client learning opportunities that are so critical to a successful CE approach:

Project Appraisal Document (PAD) provides the space for addressing relevant CE issues:
- critical risk section could list lack of knowledge adaptation as a risk;
- lessons of experience sections could discuss the need to adapt to local contexts and specific aspects of the project design to help achieve this objective;
- components could be designed to help the stakeholders develop knowledge and information sharing systems embedded in the project design to facilitate and support peer-to-peer learning as well as better governance (i.e., monitoring goals);

Country Portfolio Program Review (CPPR) design could be revisited to turn such an exercise into a “learning CPPR” that provides opportunities for Bank teams to play the role of broker/enabler to facilitate staff/client emergent learning and help enhance country capacity;

Implementation Completion Report (ICR) design and purpose could also be revisited with a view to rendering all such assessments as intensive learning exercises. This would imply abandoning the current distinction between regular and learning ICR.

Analytical and Advisory Activities:
To better track the manner in which knowledge is disseminated (shared with countries) to help develop country capacity, managers and their teams could adopt practices that enable a systematic monitoring of the quality of dissemination. For example, simple changes in the way we do business generally could go a long way in developing the bases for measuring whether knowledge products provide ‘just-in-time, just-enough’ advice to the country stakeholders and bring value where and when they need it most:

(i) ESW activity would be authorized only if the Concept Note includes a dissemination plan (i.e., who, what, when, how) and monitorable outcome indicators (i.e., to measure access, use and value) as appropriate;
(ii) ESW task would be considered completed only after the dissemination plan has been implemented.

OED and QAG assessments:
The approach to evaluation of task quality and development effectiveness could be revisited to:

(i) focus more sharply on integrating client feedback into such assessments;
(ii) develop a methodology to evaluate the impact of behavioral competencies on the achievement of outcomes, especially in capacity enhancement through knowledge transfer;
(iii) adapt OED methodology for assessing the quality of ICRs by focusing less on whether the team adhered to the initial project design and more on whether and how effectively the team may have adapted the initial design to respond to the changing local context. The latter approach would strengthen incentives for teams to engage more readily in adaptation, and reduce risk avers behaviors of especially the less experienced staff.

Implementing recommendations of recent task forces:
The following actions may help in improving the likelihood that the recommendations of recent task forces
WHAT ACTIONS MIGHT HELP THE BANK MEET THESE CHALLENGES?

produce tangible results in terms of CE effectiveness of service to the client:

(i) define the profile of the proposed new Team Leaders to go beyond technical skills and such behaviors as good team work and mentoring to also include behavioral competencies that would help develop ‘whole brained teams’ (e.g., listening, empathy, patience, humility, etc.);
(ii) amend the mission statement of the Networks to specifically include the objective of ‘knowledge adaptation’ to complement the objective of identification and sharing of ‘best practices’;
(iii) integrate the behavioral dimension and the measurement of the effectiveness of the Bank’s knowledge transfer activities into the terms of reference of the Knowledge and Learning Board.

Recognizing and nurturing behavioral competencies:

To help leaders and managers to better nurture the behavioral competencies (e.g., listening, patience, empathy, humility, etc.,) needed for effective work with countries on CE issues, there is room for several innovative initiatives. For example, Human Resources could partner with the Knowledge and Learning Board and other operational units to help:

(i) develop systematic tools for objective and fair assessment of staff behavioral competencies;
(ii) adapt the OPE framework to specifically cover behaviors that are critical in bringing value to the client in CE;
(iii) design special learning processes/events to help nurture behavioral competencies. Since such competencies are not subjects that one can necessarily learn by reading instructional material, the proposed learning events would need to be targeted and incorporate a variety of approaches that could begin to give results over time. Therefore, attending a course may not be sufficient to achieve the objective and there may be a need to design a process of monitoring behaviors over time;
(iv) identify incentives in the form of rewards as well as sanctions to promote desired behaviors;
(v) develop mentoring/coaching programs for inexperienced teams: In putting together teams, managers/leaders could be helped to be more pro-active if they had access to appropriate mentoring/coaching arrangements to compensate for any perceived weaknesses due to the level of experience of the team members. The following approaches merit consideration:

• systematically include an experienced expert (‘coach’) to be part of the team at least for the critical period when the team is dealing with the country partners. Such a role would be ideal for staff who are close to retirement;
• expect all future retirees to spend the last part of their career in such a mentoring capacity, provided they possess the needed behavioral skills. Spending at least the last 9–12 months of a long career in such a role seems sensible, although it could be argued that the period should be longer, perhaps up to eighteen months to cover a project preparation cycle. This and/or other similar approaches could go a long way in providing the inexperienced team members with the wisdom and pattern recognition that would otherwise not be apparent to them, etc.;
(vi) introduce mandatory mentoring/coaching for staff who are assigned a team leader role for the first time: in the absence of systematic tools and processes to assess behavioral competencies, it would be prudent to assume that a new team leader could benefit from mentoring/coaching. As in the previous case, staff close to retirement who are known for their behavioral skills would be ideal for such a role;
(vii) establish an “Exodus Program for Retirees” to capture some of the lessons of the experiences of Bank staff who are about to retire. This would help in preserving at least some of the tacit knowledge and wisdom that has been accumulated over time but that risk to walk out the door when staff retire or leave the institution.

Strategically exploiting data from client surveys:

It is surprising how little strategic use is made of the data from country feedback surveys. A mind-set that puts the country in the driver’s seat would also listen more to what the country has to say, and would deal with such feedback not as a public relations matter, but rather as a strategic effectiveness issue. In addi-
tion to the CAS, the following are some of the potential entry points for exploiting the client survey data: OED and QAG evaluations, CE task forces, etc.

“Walking the talk”:

In promoting behaviors that may be needed to be more effective in helping enhance country capacity, an appropriate starting point could be for managers and staff to ask themselves some pointed questions.

For example, regarding the prevailing mindset issues discussed in this paper: Are we listening with the intent to discover something new? Are we being humble, patient or empathetic to create sufficient space for the country to learn? Are we able to avoid imposing old mental frameworks on emerging operational realities? The answers to these questions could help deal with some of the fundamental issues at the personal, team, and organizational levels that are raised in this paper.
1 At the time of the completion of this paper, the final report of the ACDTF was not yet published. Nevertheless, based on the emerging key messages therein (e.g., external partners must engage existing capacity in all African countries), it appears that the main findings of the present paper are consistent with and complement the general messages of the ACDTF. See Callisto Madavo, “Five Key Messages: Recommendations for Capacity Development in Africa”, in Development Outreach, World Bank Institute, September 2005, pp. 12–14.

2 There is no one common definition of capacity enhancement. Some observers have defined the term narrowly focusing on individual ability to carry out a task. Another school (e.g., UNDP) considers capacity to be more than the sum total of individual capacities and integrates action-oriented notions of performing functions, solving problems and achieving objectives. More recently, the focus has shifted to acquisition of knowledge, and the acknowledgement of indigenous capacity, etc. For a very useful review of the various definitions of CE see Yemile Mizrahi, “Capacity Enhancement Indicators: Review of the Literature”, WBI Evaluation Studies, No. EG03–72, June, 2003, p.2. The ACDTF uses the following definition: “Capacity comprises the skills, incentives, resources, organizational systems and structures—as well as the broader enabling environment—that allow individuals and organizations to plan, implement, and monitor their development.” (see Development Outreach, September 2005, p. 12).

3 The Bank has produced extensive analyses and advice on what needs to be done to build institutions and enhance capacity in various sectors. See for example, World Development Report (WDR) 2002, Building Institutions for Markets, World Bank, 2002. Another recent publication looks at the lessons of experience in strengthening public administrative capacity; see Brian Levy and Sahr Kpundeh (editors), Building State Capacity in Africa, The World Bank, 2004. The Bank has also used an array of instruments for this purpose, including free-standing technical assistance operations, sector-wide or cross-sector operations with major capacity building aims, capacity enhancement activities integrated into the components of projects, and other training services by the World Bank Institute (WBI).

4 See OED, Lessons and Practices, Number 7, May, 1996. For example, of the projects with institutional development goals approved in 1971–1991, in more than two-thirds the impact on institutional development was modest or negligible.


6 In addition to these efforts, there have been other attempts at assessing capacity building: in 2002 OPCPD proposed a stocktaking of capacity building (see: Approach Note: Taking Stock of the Bank’s Capacity Building, Draft, July 2002); in 2003 the Africa Region formed a task force to address the CE issue; in 2004, OED launched an assessment of the Bank’s efforts to build public sector capacity in the Africa Region; and, in late 2004, the Operational Taskforce on Capacity Development in Africa started its work.

7 These are some of the conclusions of the recent OED evaluation of capacity building efforts in the Africa Region. See “World Bank Support for Capacity Building in Africa”, Draft, February 4, 2005.

8 The material developed under the above initiative is available online at: afr/debriefing/capacity. It is organized around: (i) a six minute video synopsis of the key messages; and (ii) three clusters of key success factors that have emerged from the synthesis. The specific elements underpinning these success factors as narrated by clients and staff have been
synthesized into short video clips. Under each cluster, there are 20–30 clips (average 3 minutes/clip), which focus on “how to” solutions to the issues/challenges identified by clients and staff. The contents of the thematic clips mentioned above are a work in progress and will be continuously updated as additional insights are gained from future debriefings. Several of the themes that have emerged from this synthesis are repeated in a similar synthesis on the lessons of experience with PRSP/PRSC and have been used to compliment the material on capacity enhancement. For a synthesis of the PRSP/PRSC theme see afr/debriefing/prsp Readers may also want to visit the Debriefing Library online: afr/debriefing for lessons of experience in other areas of strategic relevance to Bank’s work (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Results-based CAS, M&E, mainstreaming indigenous knowledge, etc.). For a description of the debriefing methodology for capturing and communicating experiences, see Annex 1.

9 This stems from a basic principle applied in education and learning theory. In essence, people construct new knowledge based on what they already know and believe. A range of prior knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and concepts influences the way in which they receive and interpret external knowledge. By extension, teachers (or suppliers of knowledge such as Bank staff) need to pay careful attention to the existing knowledge of learners (recipients of knowledge). Accordingly, in transferring Bank knowledge, one should avoid the pitfall of assuming that one is pouring knowledge into a vacuum. If the initial understandings, beliefs and pre-dispositions of the recipients are ignored, the new understanding that they develop can be very different from what the supplier of knowledge intends. See also U.S. National Research Council, “How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School”, National Academy Press, 2000.


12 For example, various assessments over the past few years have suggested that about a quarter of the Bank’s investment lending in many countries is targeted for CE. In addition, a significant portion of Analytical and Advisory Activities (AAA) seeks to help enhance country capacity. In the Africa Region, at the end of FY04, the portfolio of some 440 projects with about $17 billion in total commitments contained about $2.7 billion that was targeted for CE components, i.e., about 15 percent of the total commitments. In some country specific cases, the share of CE activities was substantially higher. For example, in about ten countries over 25 percent of the total value of the country commitments was allocated for CE activities (in two cases, the share was actually above 50 percent).


14 It could be argued that the behavior of the recipient (i.e., country partner) is also a determining factor. For example, in terms of disseminating knowledge to those who need it most, how the country partner behaves through approaches to such issues as consultation, transparency, outreach, and locally-driven analytical work could make a difference in the level of impact of knowledge transfer activities supported by the Bank. In this paper, the focus is primarily on Bank staff behaviors. The author is indebted to Dirk Roux (CSIR, South Africa) for some of the insights related to dimensions of knowledge exchange.

15 The concept of explicit and tacit knowledge was originally considered in a dialectic model where the tacit and the explicit while different in fact represent inseparable aspects of knowledge. See Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy, University of Chicago Press, 1974. This concept was later popularized by two Japanese scholars but in the form of a dualistic model. See Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi, The Knowledge-Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation, Oxford University Press, 1995. More recently, complex adaptive systems theory has been applied to
the understanding of the dynamics of knowledge exchange. In this school of thought the key aspects of knowledge are content and context. The latter itself can be approached through two different aspects: abstraction and culture. The culture aspect in this reasoning is similar to the characteristics of the diversity dimension described below. On the issues related to complexity theory and knowledge sharing, see David Snowden, “Complex acts of knowing: paradox and descriptive self-awareness”, Journal of Knowledge Management, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2002, pp.100–111.

17 This is especially applicable in the case of institutional building. “Best practice' in institutional design is a flawed concept”, WDR 2002, p. 4.

18 The concept of indigenous knowledge is similar to the concept of “metis” in ancient Greek writings. Metis was distinguished from “techne” or “episteme” which represents knowledge of an order completely different from metis. Where metis is contextual and particular, techne is rational, analytical and universal. In modern terms one could see similar parallels between indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge. The dilemma for development practitioners is how to balance these knowledge systems for optimum results. Pascal is reported to have said that the great failure of rationalism is “not its recognition of technical knowledge, but its failure to recognize any other.” According to another observer, “modern research institutions, agricultural experiment stations, Third World developers, and the World Bank officials have, to a considerable degree, made their successful institutional way in the world by the systematic denigration of the practical knowledge that we have called metis.” For a detailed discussion of these concepts and the sources for the quotes see James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed, Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 309-341. For further reading on the important role that indigenous knowledge can play in the development process, including in helping achieve the MDGs, see the publication marking five years of the World Bank Indigenous Knowledge for Development Program: World Bank, Indigenous Knowledge: Local Pathways to Global Development, 2004.

19 In appreciating the challenge of enhancing capacity through knowledge transfer, it is important to recognize that these concepts are not uni-sectoral. Many of the ideas that are discussed in this paper transcend sectoral boundaries, disciplines and fields of application. Some of them originate in the theories of learning, etc. This fusion across perspectives from different disciplines has helped the author to navigate the difficult terrain that is capacity development. For a fascinating account of the links between fundamental principles underpinning various disciplines see Edward O. Wilson, Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge, Knopf, 1998.

20 This paper was completed before the publication of the final report of the ACDTF.

21 These key messages from the data set used for the present paper are supported by a separate analysis prepared by EXT and comparing the results of 13 CFS conducted Bank-wide between July 2003 and July 2004. Overall, the preceding report suggests that there was deterioration in the trend in most of the questions that have been used in the present paper (e.g., building capacity at the community level, adapting knowledge to the country’s needs, and the Bank’s flexibility in adjusting to changing country circumstances, etc.). See Country Survey 2004 Review: Report of Findings, FY 2004. It is difficult to directly compare the two data sets, since the sample of 13 countries in the EXT report includes four countries (Burkina Faso, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia) where CFS were carried out in 2003 and which countries are also included in the data set of 78 CFS used in the present paper.

22 Annex I contains a methodological note on the CFS, including the limitations of the data, and the composition of the three data panels. Annex 5 contains a complete list of CFS used in the data set.

23 For example, how well the Bank is doing in “incorporating local knowledge and expertise in the country”, “involving local project experts” or “helping to build expertise among local development specialists”, “building capacity at the community level”, etc., is a reasonably good proxy for how well the Bank helps empower the country stakeholders to learn by doing and by actually using what capacity already exists in the country. Similarly, “staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the country needs”, “respect for local knowledge and expertise”, and “incorporating local knowledge and expertise in the country”, etc., are reasonably good proxies for the Bank’s effectiveness in finding the ‘best local fit’ that is realistic in a given institutional context. Finally, several of the indexes which measure per-
ceptions of Bank staff’s ‘realism’, ‘flexibility’ and ‘respect for local culture and priorities’ are reasonably good proxies for the behavioral competencies that are critical to effective capacity enhancement.

This chart and the subsequent similar charts are structured into four quadrants to better highlight the areas which are more or less important to the country and where the Bank is more or less effective. Ideally, one would like to see country responses clustering in the upper right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the country and where the Bank is perceived to be most effective). By contrast, one would not like to see any responses in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the country and where the Bank is perceived to be least effective). See Annex I for details on the definitions of the means and the scales.

These data are more limited than in the earlier data set in that: (i) they cover only client perceptions of effectiveness (the importance dimension has been dropped in the recent surveys). This prevents a direct comparison with the earlier surveys on both dimensions of importance and effectiveness; (ii) not all questions used to construct the three clusters were asked in all surveys. Only questions which were asked in all countries are reported in the Chart; and (iii) some of the questions in the latest surveys have been reformulated. This makes it difficult in some cases (e.g., where the sense of the question has been substantially modified) to compare the data across the data sets.

The scale in the chart is based on the rating scale used by the respondents (see Annex 1); the graphs trace the trend in the average mean scores for all the questions in the surveys for the three cohort years compared to the mean score for the selected question. Moreover, a separate report suggests deterioration in the trend on this question between 2003 and 2004 based on a sample of 13 CFS carried out during that period. See Country Survey 2004 Review, p. 51.

The scale in the chart is based on the rating scale used by the respondents (see Annex 1); the graphs trace the trend in the average mean scores for all the questions in the surveys for the three cohort years compared to the mean score for the selected question. Moreover, a separate report suggests deterioration in the trend on this question between 2003 and 2004 based on a sample of 13 CFS carried out during that period. See Country Survey 2004 Review, p. 51.


See: OED, “Sharing Knowledge: Innovations and Remaining Challenges”, 2003, p. 61. This OED evaluation was based inter alia on a survey of 121 country stakeholders in five countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, Poland, Senegal, Tanzania); the survey was complemented by a workshop in Washington with country participants to discuss the findings of the survey; further consultations were held in selected countries based on the draft report.

In the 1995–97 survey cohorts in the Africa Region, the scale measured only the degree of satisfaction (e.g., percentage of respondents satisfied with staff’s knowledge of best practices). Therefore, it is difficult to compare the data from the earlier cohorts with the more recent ones, which also measure the importance of the issue to the client. Nevertheless, the basic messages still hold. For example, in the earlier surveys, the knowledge adaptation gap was rather substantial (about 40 percentage points) measured as the difference between the level of satisfaction with staff’s knowledge of best practices (at about 75% of the satisfaction scale), and the level of satisfaction with the staff’s ability to adapt that knowledge to the local setting (at about 35%).

A separate report suggests deterioration in the trend on this question between 2003 and 2004 based on a sample of 13 CFS carried out during that period. See Country Survey 2004 Review, p. 53.

In fact, the issues of adaptation and importance of tailoring knowledge to the local setting have been recurring themes in assessments going back nearly a decade. For example, “…design and approach of …projects should take into account prevailing culture, norms, attitudes, and behavior patterns.” “Some of the worst failures have resulted from replicating designs whose needs, implementation capacities, and level of commitment differed from those of countries where the designs originally succeeded.” See OED, Lessons and Practices: Number 7, Technical Assistance, May, 1996.

See OETF, Summary of Progress To Date, 2 November 2004.


For some hypotheses along these lines see debriefing of John Roome (Development Effectiveness): “When your clients are more demanding, you lift your game”; “It may be that where we have newer
relationships, we can start on a better foot and do things a little bit better”.

37 A separate report suggests a further deterioration in the trend on this question between 2003 and 2004 based on a sample of 13 CFS carried out during that period. See Country Survey 2004 Review, p. 55. If these trends continue, it would raise interesting questions regarding the effectiveness of the recent “simplification project” in the Bank.

38 See OED (2003), p. 60.


40 The need for intellectual humility is also suggested by historical experience. For example, in some cases Bank advice on important country decisions turned out not to have been most appropriate in the light of historical outcomes. For example, in the late 1960s, the Bank advised Singapore not to proceed with the development of a container port on the grounds that it would not be a viable undertaking. In the event, the country went ahead, and today Singapore’s port is considered as one of the most efficient port operations in the world. Similarly, the Bank had advised South Korea against developing an indigenous steel industry. On the other hand, events have proven the Bank advice to have been correct in other controversial cases (e.g., advice against the construction of the Inga Shaba Dam in Zaire in the 1960s). The point here is to recognize that Bank staff don’t always get things right.

41 See Ritva Reinikka in a synthesis of debriefings on the PRSP/PRSC theme: afr/debriefing/prsp

The importance of changing one’s way of thinking in order to succeed appears in the sayings of observers of change throughout history. For example, an old Chinese proverb says: “If one doesn’t change course, one will arrive where one is headed”. Similarly, Jack Welch (former CEO of General Electric) has said: “The secret of success is changing the way you think”.

43 See Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, Betty Sue Flowers, Presence: An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organizations, and Society, Doubleday, 2005. In this fascinating recent work the authors present a theory of learning that is built around behavioral concepts such as “suspending” old mental models, “sensing” (i.e., seeing, observing, listening), “presencing” (i.e., retreating and reflecting), etc. The underlying messages focus on the importance of listening, empathy, etc., which are critical if one wants to avoid imposing pre-established mental frameworks. These notions very much support the success factors in CE that the analysis in this paper has focused on. When staff listen to the country stakeholders and empathize with them they will have a better chance of understanding what approaches will be more effective in enhancing capacity in the particular local context.

See also Chris Argyris, Flawed Advice and the Management Trap: How Managers Can Know When They’re Getting Good Advice and When They’re Not, Oxford University Press, 2000. Argyris argues that mental models are crucial in understanding organizational behaviors. He describes two basic mindsets: “defensive reasoning” and “productive reasoning”. The former is used to essentially avoid valid testing of ideas; with the consequent behavior that promotes self-protection over genuine learning, especially when the issues are about challenging the status quo, etc. The productive reasoning mindset on the other hand is used in the service of deriving informed choices within a framework of genuine learning and continuous testing of basic assumptions to ensure that knowledge claims are valid. Argyris also distinguishes between “espoused values” and “underlying values”. The former is what people claim they believe in, while the latter forms the basis for their observed actions, which may be very different from the espoused values. Argyris calls this the “theory-in-use”, i.e., a sort of master program or design that individuals store in their heads to shape and implement their actions. One theory-in-use model leads to a defensive reasoning mindset and another to a productive reasoning mindset.

See also David Perkins, King Arthur’s Round Table: How Collaborative Conversations Create Smart Organizations, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003. Perkins uses the analogy of the round table to look into what makes organizations learn better. In a nutshell, organizations are made of conversations/interactions (i.e., the virtual neurons that tie an organization together); it is the quality of these conversations that determines whether a community’s or an organization’s “table is round”. The analysis very much supports the view of an organization as a complex living system. In drawing lessons from adaptive living systems, Perkins argues convincingly that relatively simple rules
followed by relatively simple interacting units can yield complex and impressive collective behavior that often leads to spectacular results. In effecting organizational change the focus needs to be on changing mindsets, values and assumptions that underpin actions: “It’s often easier to learn how to handle situations for the first time than to relearn how to handle them in a new way.”

44 Senge et al, 2005, p. 216.

45 Although Bank teams do sometimes engage in knowledge brokering in the context of lending operations, this dimension of the operational work is not directly measured; rather, it is assumed to impact the overall quality of the operation and the effectiveness of service to the country. Similarly, in the context of AAA activities, the brokering dimension is generally assumed to be implicitly affecting the quality of discrete outputs (e.g., reports produced, workshops organized, etc.). Conceptually, brokering is based on the premise that learning emerges from internalization of knowledge in a social context, and not from a mechanical transfer of knowledge and passive acceptance of advice. Brokering offers an opportunity for Bank teams to become facilitators of context-specific learning based on comparative experience. For a discussion of these concepts, see: David Ellerman, “Must the World Bank have official views”, unpublished paper, 2000; and by same author, “Knowledge and Aid”, unpublished paper, 2000.


47 These perceptions were reported in the OED evaluation of knowledge sharing; see p. 60.

48 For example, listening and fostering an environment for mutual learning and adaptation during the dialogue with the country may require more time than can be accommodated within current task budgets.

49 A recent QAG paper states, “…free standing technical assistance has been responsible for some remarkable success but also many failures. It has exerted a corrupting influence in some cases, and even more often it has inadvertently disempowered local interlocutors and truncated local capacity”. See QAG Approach Paper, Assessing the Quality of Non-Lending Technical Assistance (no date).

50 New NTLA guidelines were issued in July 2004 and are applied to tasks starting in FY05.

51 See QAG’s Approach Paper which outlines the objectives and methodology that will guide this assessment.

52 For more details see debriefing of Govind Nair (Bank staff) and Estafanos Afekere (country partner): Brokering and Learning Between Eritrea, China and Silicon Valley. These shed interesting light on how the Bank team behaved in its broker/enabler role and how it succeeded in helping design a highly customized solution, which in turn played a critical role in bringing about the turnaround in the country’s posture on reform.

53 During a presentation of the Bank’s knowledge sharing programs to the Executive Directors on June 5, 2002, staff used the Eritrea example as a “good practice” in knowledge brokering. One observer reacted to this case by saying that it was actually a “bad practice” if a Bank team goes to a country and does not produce a report.

54 The exchanges could take the form of free-standing services or be an integral part of other operational products and services.

55 Other examples of peer-to-peer knowledge and learning exchanges include: EAP Region’s program of assistance in many Middle-Income Countries is based inter alia on peer-to-peer learning for specific client groups across the region; ECA Region’s high-level seminar on economic growth in Russia
included prominent policy experts from Ireland, India, Singapore, Korea and focused on competitiveness, innovation and economic diversification; LAC Region uses GDLN to connect Project Implementation Units across countries; SAR Region has facilitated policy dialogue between State officials in Tamil Nadu in India and key stakeholders; NE Brazil to Mexico exchange on CDD; NE Brazil to N. Colorado Water Conservancy District on water markets; Eritrea to China and Silicon Valley on telecommunication; and Thailand to Cambodia and Lao PDR on social investment funds and land titling programs. On examples of community empowerment through national and regional knowledge networks see Capacity Development Briefs, “Communities of Practice for Local Capacity in Central Asia: A Community Empowerment Network”, WBI, No. 11, March 2005. See also Annex 11 on the various activities undertaken in the context of the Bank’s Indigenous Knowledge Program to facilitate peer-to-peer knowledge and learning exchanges at the community level.

For more detail, see the website of the Heiveld cooperative: http://www.indigo-dc.org/history.html

The Bank’s IK Program and the IFAD-housed Global Mechanism (GM/CCD) jointly conceived the C2C initiative, which the Governments of the Netherlands and Switzerland have supported generously. A toolkit for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of community-to-community knowledge and learning exchanges has been prepared and is available on line at: http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/commun_toolkit/starthere.htm.

For further information on this exchange see www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/dlc/default.htm The success of this learning approach has led to some follow up activities: (i) 60 participants from Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana and Sri Lanka attended a follow-up exchange on the use of local knowledge in HIV/AIDS management, organized by the Tanzania GDLN; and (ii) 170 participants from Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia attended another learning event to exchange community-based responses to prevention, voluntary counseling and testing, treatment and care using traditional knowledge to improve the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS programs on the ground.

The workshop took place in South Africa in February 2005. GRA is an alliance of nine of the top centers of scientific excellence in the world (Battelle Memorial Institute, USA; Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia; Danish Technological Institute; Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Germany; Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research; SIRIM-Berhad, Malaysia; Technical Research Centre of Finland; CSIR India; CSIR South Africa). Together, this alliance represents the brains of about 50,000 scientists. For more information on the GRA see: http://www.research-alliance.net/; and on the IK validation workshop see: http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/validation.htm

In traditional action learning processes the focus of activity is “realistic” cases or specially constructed team projects for artificially assembled teams. Emergent learning practices are driven by the natural work processes of the team itself. See: Signet Consulting Group’s presentation at a Bank workshop on emergent learning (October 2001).

Message to Staff from President Paul Wolfowitz, June 3, 2005.

The pre-occupation with “best practice” is most noticeable in the mission and strategy followed by the Networks (e.g., identification and sharing of “best practices” is a strategic priority of most Networks; yet, one does not find a similar focus on the notion of knowledge adaptation). Another Bank publication has argued that the “recipients” of development advice must also be involved as “contributors” of knowledge in a mutual learning process, if there is to be a genuine attempt to adapt “best practices” to the local practices. See: Indigenous Knowledge for Development: A Framework for Action, World Bank, 1998.

Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton (editors), Culture and Public Action, Stanford University Press, 2004. Another recent publication authored by Bank staff suggests that there is a lack of knowledge of the African context and culture on the part of the donors, and troublesome institutional constraints
that make it difficult for aid agencies to change the way they operate. See: Phyllis Pomerantz, Aid Effectiveness in Africa: Developing Trust Between Donors and Governments, Lexington Books (2004).


66 See ARDE, 2003, p. xi.

67 See Assessing the Quality of non-Lending Technical Assistance, Approach Paper (no date).

68 A recent synthesis of staff/client debriefings on the PRSP/PRSC theme has again highlighted the critical importance of empowering the client, adapting advice to the country context, and behaviors that build trust and confidence in the dialogue with clients; see: afr/debriefing/prsp

69 For example, one stakeholder stated, “it’s one thing for the presentation to be theoretically sound, but it cannot be considered ‘best practice’ until it is tested for relevance, implementability, and benefit to people on the ground”, OED report, p.64.

70 For example, at a recent retreat of the Africa Regional Leadership Team, country and partner representatives stressed that Bank teams could do much better in helping country stakeholders with “how to” solutions that are relevant and realistic in the local context.

71 See following cases in the debriefing library ( afr/debriefing ): On Mauritania: Hasan Tuluy (PRSP in Mauritania—a Country Director’s Reflections; and Role of a Country Director); Mohamed Lemrabott (Mauritania PRSP—Client’s Perspective); Govind Nair, Mohamed Lemrabott, Svetoslav Tintchev (Role of Knowledge Brokers).


73 The field of medicine is a good example of this balancing act: doctors and nurses need to strike a similar balance of imparting expert knowledge or best practices and finding the best local fit and empowering their clients. In development work the balance of needs between adaptation and global best practices is somewhat a function of institutional capacity. In some countries, especially the MICs, it is likely that the demand for Bank adaptation skills may be relatively less pronounced; instead, there may be more of a demand for the Bank to provide raw evidence and analysis of what works (and does not work) in practice, and what the experience has been of implementation by practitioners. In such cases, the country may have the capacity to do the needed adaptation themselves.


75 In the field of medicine for example, the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia has developed a technique for measuring empathy—the Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy (JSPE). Application of this test has produced surprising results: a high score on empathy generally correlated with high marks on clinical care (i.e., patient was more likely to get better with an empathetic doctor than with one who is detached); empathy test scores were not related to conventional medical test scores (MCAT) (i.e., traditional measures of physician aptitude are not necessarily capable in identifying who is likely to be a good doctor). See Daniel H. Pink, A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age, Riverhead Books, 2005, p. 164.

76 There is a growing field of “behavioral” economics as demonstrated by the fact that the 2002 Nobel Prize for Economics was awarded to Daniel Kahneman of Princeton University, and Vernon Smith of George Mason University. Both scholars represent work at the cross roads of economics and psychology (Kahneman is actually a psychologist), which has produced out of the box insights into people’s sometimes “irrational” behavior when confronted by uncertainty and risk. A good example of failure
to calculate risk in a rational manner is the stock market bubble of the late 1990s. See The Economist, October 12, 2002, p. 74.

77 Humility in this context is used to convey the notion of “inquiry” versus “advocacy.” In a nutshell, the relevant point for Bank staff effectiveness is that people who approach a collaborative situation with the mindset of inquiry (i.e., with an interest in hearing what others have to say, and a belief that one’s own ideas may be countered) are more likely to have a productive experience than those who enter such a meeting with a firm position and communicate only in terms of defending or bolstering their own point of view.

78 The author is indebted to Govind Nair for introducing me to this saying.

79 See following cases in the debriefing library (afr/debriefing): Hasan Tuluy (PRSP in Mauritania—a Country Director’s Reflections; and Role of a Country Director); Mohamed Lemrabott (Mauritania PRSP—Client’s Perspective); Govind Nair, Mohamed Lemrabott, Svetoslav Tintchev (Role of Knowledge Brokers); John Roome (Development Effectiveness).

80 Nicholas Stern, when he was Chief Economist and Senior Vice President, DEC.

81 The author is indebted to Professor Dorothy Leonard (Harvard Business School) for the use of this term and broadening her definition to include not only multidisciplinary aspects but also behavior competencies.

82 The following are some examples: Empathy Quotient (EQ) is a sixty-question instrument developed by Simon Baron-Cohen (tinyurl.com/9qdi); Emotional Intelligence Quotient (E-IQ) is a ten-question instrument developed by Daniel Goleman (www.utne.com/interact/eiq.html); IDEO Method Cards (like conventional playing cards) are organized into four “suits” representing four methods for empathizing such as learn, look, ask, try (www.ideo.com). These pointers are from Daniel Pink, 2005, Portfolio on Empathy, pp.171–74.

83 The mindset challenge in Bank’s work manifests itself in a variety of other ways as well. For example, is “harmonization” about reconciling differences in approaches of donors or is it about aligning with country procedures and systems. In the case of “partnership”, is it based on contracts and conditionality or is it grounded in a vision of common humanity and shared goals.

84 One could argue that “listening” in the rigid mindset is in fact a ‘fake’ behavior.

85 The author is indebted to David Gurteen for some of these insights.

86 “Conversation is a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they don’t just exchange facts: they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, engage in new trains of thought. Conversation doesn’t just reshuffle the cards: it creates new cards...It’s like a spark that two minds create.” See Theodore Zeldin, Conversation: How Talk Can Change Our Lives, HiddenSpring, 2000, p. 14. As mentioned earlier (see footnote 43) another scholar of organizational learning has also suggested that organizations can be evaluated based on the quality of conversations (defined in the broad sense to include all forms of interactions) that members of the organization engage in. “Organizations are made of conversations.” Quotation of Ernesto Gore in David Perkins, 2003, p. 17.

87 To use Chris Argyris’ term, these models represent the “theories-in-use” by Bank staff.

88 These observations are inspired by the works of Chris Argyris (Harvard University). The author is indebted to Professor Argyris for pointing me in this direction during a stimulating exchange at the learning event organized by the Learning Innovation Laboratory (LILA) at Harvard University in December 2003. Other students of organizational learning have made similar suggestions while using a different terminology (e.g., “unilateral control” versus “mutual learning” models which are also adapted from the work of Chris Argyris). See Roger Schwartz, “Becoming a Facilitative Leader”, Training and Development, April 2003, pp. 52-56. David Perkins distinguishes between “progressive interactions” (i.e., those that involve effective knowledge processing and kind of behavior that builds trust, etc.), and “regressive interactions” (i.e., those that involve poor knowledge processing and behaviors that weakens trust, etc.); see Perkins, 2003, pp. 26–29.


90 See Senge et al, 2005. Another aspect of the learning puzzle is that most people define learning as mere “problem solving”, i.e., dealing with the external factors that may be creating the problem. Changing behaviors, however, implies looking inward and
reflecting critically on own actions and mindsets. In particular, there is a need to learn how the very way one goes about defining and solving problems can be a source of problems in its own right. See Chris Argyris, Teaching Smart People How to Learn, Harvard Business Review, Product No. 4304, May-June 1991, p. 6.

91 See Daniel Pink, 2005. This author has argued that industrialized societies have progressed from a collection of farmers to a collection of factory workers to a collection of knowledge workers. The trend is towards a “society of creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers, and meaning makers.” He also suggests that the abilities that in the past led to success in school, work, and business were characteristic of the left hemisphere (i.e., linear, logical, analytical talents measured by scientific tests such as SAT). While those capabilities are still necessary, they may no longer be sufficient. The abilities that will matter most are in line with the specialties of the right hemisphere (e.g., empathy, seeing the big picture, etc.). Pink also highlights the following differences between the two sides of the brain that may have a bearing on the behavioral issues discussed in this paper: the left side is sequential, specializes in text, and analyzes the details; the right side is simultaneous, specializes in context, and synthesizes the big picture.

92 Nevertheless, there is some recent evidence from psychological and neurological studies to suggest that some behaviors referred to in this paper (e.g., empathy) may be a product of genetic wiring of human brains and may not be easily changeable. For example, one scholar has argued that “the female brain is predominantly hard-wired for empathy. The male brain is predominantly hard-wired for understanding and building systems”. See Simon Baron-Cohen, The Essential Difference: The Truth About the Male and Female Brain, Basic Books, 2003, p. 1. Christian Keysers, a neurologist at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands, is studying the role of a particular neuron cell in controlling empathy. “Empathy with others seems to be due to a type of brain cell called a mirror neuron.” See The Economist, May 14, 2005, pp. 77–78.

93 As one African leader put it in the context of stressing the importance of investing in dialogue with the civil society, “we may waste time when we discuss, but that saves time when we implement.” H. E. Louisa Diogo, Prime Minister, Republic of Mozambique during the Conference on Capacity Matters: Operational Implications, June 8, 2005, at the World Bank.

94 It is difficult to envisage a task team behaving in a manner that allows time for listening and adapting to the local context, if the resources allocated to the task are based on the old model of doing business.


96 This issue is especially problematic in the Africa Region. In FY05, there were more TTLs at GE/GF level than at GH level (see analysis by OETF). Another survey in 2003 showed: 64 team leaders with less than three years of Bank experience (27 of these had less than two years and 12 less than one year in the Bank); 20–25% of GG staff from which most of the team leaders are drawn from had less than three years experience in the Bank (see “Does AFR have the Capacity to Deliver?”, draft discussion paper for RLT Retreat, March 10–14, 2003, pp. 4–5).


98 For example, tasks managed by team leaders with less than three years experience in the Bank had quality at entry scores that were 20 percent lower than team leaders who had more experience. See, “Does AFR have the Capacity to Deliver?”, draft discussion paper, March 2003, p. 5. Similarly, “…new managers with three years or less experience had significantly lower quality at entry ratings than the QAE5 average.” See, QAG, Quality at Entry in FY02 (QEA5) A QAG Assessment, April 8, 2003, p. ii.
In a conversation with the author, a former Minister of Finance of an African country has reported that once he had to intervene to stop visiting junior Bank staff from automatically expecting to see ministers.

See for example the debriefing of Callisto Madavo, where he reflects among other things on how staff learned on mission in the past: http://afr.worldbank.org/aftqk/debriefing/madavo/default.htm

The relevant literature draws a distinction between coaching and mentoring because the latter term involves a lot of personal help, but not necessarily the deliberate practice of knowledge transfer, whereas a coach who undertakes to improve the performance of a person or a group knows that he/she must understand a great deal about the learning process. For example, some knowledge is easier to transfer than other. When the knowledge held by the coach is experience-based, it cannot be readily packaged and transferred, but may have to be re-created through guidance. Similarly, available research suggests that appointing mentors may not work very well. What may work better is creating a pool of potential people to be mentored and one of potential coaches and allowing some self-selection/nomination, so that there is some motivation and some “chemistry.” However, an assigned mentor is probably better than none. For the above and the source of quotes see Dorothy Leonard and Walter Swap, Deep Smarts, 2005, especially pp. 203–226.

One scholar has observed that “…such a distinction may well be based on soft reasoning.” See Chris Argyris, Organizational Dynamics, 1993, p. 7.

Mindset aspects of organizational transformation have also been referred to as the cognitive dimension of transformation. These deal with mental models, beliefs, assumptions. They are differentiated from behavioral aspects, which refer to how members of an organization carry out their organizational roles and functions and how they interact with others. See Deborah Sole and Pamela Whitehouse, “Transforming Organizations”, Harvard Graduate School of Education Brief. See also, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Confidence: How Winning Streaks and Losing Streaks Begin and End, Random House, 2004.

Sometimes ‘getting along by going along’ is interpreted as good team playing, yet such behavior in a team may in fact inhibit a search for new approaches.

This has implications for example for the way the proposed new “Team Leaders” would be selected if and when the recommendations of the OETF are implemented.

For example, over the past decade, “Findings” and “Infobriefs” (two monthly publications of the Africa Region) which synthesize the main lessons of operational work (in 1–4 page briefs) have consistently been the most visited sites on the Africa Region’s external portal.

For an example of a results framework tailored to knowledge sharing activities see Nicolas Gorjestani and Jody Kusek, “Knowledge Sharing in the Africa Region: a Results Framework”, Knowledge and Learning Group, Africa Region, September 2004.

For example, QAG assessment of ESW quality shows ~90 percent satisfactory ratings. At the same time, almost two-thirds of TTLs in a recent survey say that knowledge products do not alter project design or delivery; see “Technical Briefing to the Executive Directors by the Task Force on Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness” (August 4, 2004). QAG assessments of AAA products look into dissemination issues, and there is a specific category in the ratings.


In fact, the OED evaluation actually calls on both QAG and OED itself to “…build client feedback into their assessments.” OED (2003), p. 40.

For example, if the objective of the knowledge transfer is to enhance the capacity of a local community water management committee (i.e., whose capacity?), and the critical function (i.e., capacity for what?) is water pump maintenance in the community that cannot be serviced by central services, then the possible indicators of capacity could be a pump management committee that meets once a month and keeps the pump functioning 90 percent of the time in normal conditions. For a detailed review of the challenges in measuring CE see Yemile Mizrahi, “Capacity Enhancement Indicators: Review of the Literature”, WBI Evaluation Studies, No. EG03–72, June, 2003.
QAG has found that “quality, and hence the impact, of the country AAA programs reviewed are often less than the sum of their parts” (see QAG, Annual Report on Portfolio Performance: Fiscal Year 2004, January 2005).

Upon his appointment in May 1999, the managing director of the utility declared “we will turn this company around within 100 days, or I will resign”. He went on to keep his promise and the utility went from being a fiscally and operationally dysfunctional utility to a financially sustainable and efficient service provider. In talking about his relationship with the Bank team that worked with him to transform the utility, this champion explained: “the key is not that they stepped in and waved a magic wand, restoring the NWSC to profitability. Rather, they stepped back and let us figure it out for ourselves.” This case suggests that sometimes passionate and committed leadership can turn things around in a remarkably short time and make results stick; and that the right behaviors by Bank teams could help create the right environment for champions to emerge. This example “…turns on its head conventional wisdom about capacity growth and how long it takes to effect enduring change.” See WBI, Capacity Development Briefs, October 2005, No. 13.

KAG is a ratio measuring the difference in the average scores of client perceptions on Bank’s effectiveness in three areas: A (Staff’s technical competence); B (Staff’s knowledge of international best practices) and C (Staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the client country’s needs). The ratio is derived from the following formula: $KAG = \frac{\{\frac{(A+B)}{2} - C\}}{(A+B)/2}$

The basic premise of the IK Program is that to get better results, the development process must be enriched by the indigenous practices of local communities in solving their problems. To learn more about the program visit: www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/ See also the publication marking five years of the World Bank Indigenous Knowledge for Development Program: World Bank, Indigenous Knowledge: Local Pathways to Global Development, 2004.

For example, the Programmatic ESW (PESW) developed in the MENA Region provides a very useful platform for collaboration and sharing of knowledge with country stakeholders. The PESW approach de-emphasizes long papers, focuses on “just-in-time” notes, workshops and other training events to help enhance capacity of the country stakeholders. Developing clear metrics to monitor value to the stakeholders will help define what activities bring most value for the money in terms of enhancing capacity.

The percentage of CASs reporting on client surveys is higher in the 2002–03 period than in the earlier years, suggesting an improving trend. A separate recent survey of a sample of 60 CAS and CAS progress reports found that only about 20 percent treated the transfer of knowledge as a strategic objective. See, OED (2003), p.20.


For example, in response to client perceptions that the Bank is slow and unresponsive, and that Bank staff sometimes apply pre-conceived solutions without due attention to local conditions, one CAS proposed to ensure that communication with all stakeholders is improved and that proposed reforms are explained more fully.

The Malawi/Zambia approach has been developed in a partnership between the country team and the Africa Region Knowledge and Learning Group. The Cameroon country team is also embarking on a similar approach, planning to use the CFS data as explicit input for the CAS review process, including drawing operational implications; and developing indicators at the CAS level on dissemination efforts (just-enough, just-in-time, practical, adapted to local context), flexibility in adjusting to changing circumstances (one of the critical issues in the recent CFS), and free-standing brokering of good practices/enabling services including country peer learning.

For eight debriefings of the Malawi country team, Bank managers and the country stakeholders involved in the Malawi CPR see the Debriefing Library: http://afr.worldbank.org/aftqk/debriefing/malawicpr/default.htm

Confucius once said: “Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated”. In development work, the best advice on this issue seems to
be what Albert Einstein advocated: “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.” See The Economist, October 30, 2004, p. 19. Bank’s quality at entry review process has consistently pointed to the tendency of teams to design complex projects, and the link to satisfactory ratings. For example, less than satisfactory operations exhibit weakness such as “an overly complex approach that goes beyond the country’s implementation capacity.” See QAG, Quality at Entry in FY02 (QEA5) A QAG Assessment, April 8, 2003, p. 5.


126 The Rescuer project in Iganga reportedly cost less than $0.5 mln. Therefore, replicating the approach in all the administrative districts in Uganda would require a project of roughly less than $30 mln.

127 Reducing maternal mortality rates is the one MDG which has the least chance of being met in Africa according to current assessments. Such a pessimistic assessment is in part due to the following considerations: (i) the decline required to meet the goal (i.e., a three-quarter reduction) is especially steep; (ii) delivering the needed health services effectively requires the coordination of policies across sectors; (iii) improving health outcomes is linked not only to the provision of health services but also to interventions outside the health sector. See World Bank, “Supporting Sound Policies with Adequate and Appropriate Financing,” prepared for the 2003 meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank and the IMF in Dubai. See also Mark Baird and Sudhir Shetty, “Getting There: How to accelerate progress toward the Millennium Development Goals”, Finance and Development, December 2003, pp. 14–19. How did the community in Iganga overcome these hurdles? What can we learn from the practice in Iganga?

128 For half a dozen debriefings of country stakeholders and Bank staff involved in the Nigeria CPPR see the Debriefing Library: http://afr.worldbank.org/aftqk/debriefing/nigeriaCPPR/default.htm

129 “The Bank team played a major role in developing the Government’s strong commitment to reform through the organization of a workshop and interactions with officials. Thanks to its ability to listen to the Government needs and concerns, its willingness to lay out the trade-off involved in the various elements of sector reform and to adapt global knowledge, the Bank team prepared a well tailored project... The Bank developed and maintained a fruitful working relationship with all the parties involved in the project and acted as a knowledge broker.” See Implementation Completion Report, Mauritania: Telecommunication and Postal Sector Reform Project, Report No. 29430, June 23, 2004, pp. 20–21.

130 While the general trend is towards the use of country systems, there are also some exceptions. For example, a recent project in Mali (Rural Community Project) includes five PIUs (one central and four regional).

131 One of the key messages of the ACDTF is that “External partners must engage existing capacity in all African countries.” (see Development Outreach, September 2005, p. 13).

132 See for example, QAG Quality of Supervision Assessment Notes on: Bosnia-Herzegovina SOC INS TA, Argentina Maternal & Child Health & Nutrition 2; Albania PUB ADM REF; Colombia Public Financial Management Project II; and West Bank & Gaza Emergency Municipal Services.


134 For example, in Kenya, a strategic dissemination plan was under discussion in early 2005 to develop better platforms for sharing the findings of Bank studies to a broader group of stakeholders, including among the civil society, etc. This is also an example of the potential of leveraging the resources of EXT colleagues and rendering their work more relevant to addressing the strategic issues.

135 One Sector Manager in the Africa Region has suggested such an approach to his staff in the context of project implementation (see APTH2 manager’s guidance on Project Implementation Support).

136 The U.S. Department of Defense followed a similar approach in their Project Exodus, in response to the realization that more than 50 percent of its leadership would be retiring within five years. See Perkins, 2003, p. 131. The Africa Region’s Debriefing Program has already initiated a pilot with half a dozen reflections by retired staff. The methodology and approach therein could provide a basis for the design of the proposed “Exodus Program for Retirees”.
I. Debriefing Approach

In 2001, the Africa Region launched its pioneering Debriefing Program. The objective is to enhance the quality of Bank service to country partners by helping to capture tacit knowledge and the operational learning experiences of Bank teams, partners and country stakeholders and by disseminating this knowledge to teams for re-use in their operational work. The platform allows the three perspectives (staff, country, donor partner) to be brought together, producing an effect that is greater than the individual parts. The potential strength of the debriefing process (and one of its most innovative and instructive elements) comes from the possibility of triangulation of the three perspectives on the same issue.

Process: videotaped interviews based on a series of open-ended questions. The objective is to provide teams and country stakeholders space to reflect on their experiences in an informal setting. The facilitated narrative seeks to elicit and capture the experiences of the practitioners in the form of “stories” and concrete example. The focus is less on “what” the task was, and more on “how” problems were solved. The results are then synthesized into short clips by themes that emerge from the narratives during the debriefing process.

Dissemination: The synthesized clips (typically about 2–5 minutes each) are disseminated online, enabling task teams to access the knowledge and lessons of earlier institutional experiences “just-in-time, just-enough”. Thus, someone wishing to learn from previous experiences in a certain area can access the information needed without having to listen to the entire interview or read a full report. The video clips provide staff with easy access to lessons of experience on “what works” and “how to do it”. For example, in the case of empowering the country stakeholders, how did the successful teams achieve that, and what specifically did they do that was different in the eyes of the country stakeholders? Similarly, how to transfer knowledge of good practices in a form and manner that is most useful to the country stakeholders and adapt it to the local setting? Finally, how to shift our role from “doing it” for the country to “enabling” the country to do it?

Debriefing Library: The Program has already added to the institutional knowledge base with a library of about 100 debriefings of about 1–2 hours each (i.e., over 1000 hours of reflections available online). The debriefings cover a variety of topics, including in strategic priority areas such as Results CAS/M&E, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), Poverty Reduction Sector Credit (PRSC), Community Driven Development (CDD), HIV/AIDS. The knowledge base helps guide task teams on what works “best” in terms of effectiveness of development programs on the ground with respect to a particular context, a specific cultural, historical, technical, economic setting, and not necessarily an absolute best. See the library collection at: afr/debriefing

Debriefing Learning Kit: is a learning tool which highlights the common themes and success factors emerging from several debriefings related to a particular topic. This learning tool is available online and on CD/DVD and then disseminated Bank-wide to further inform the evolving process and provide valuable learning opportunities for other teams and managers who would embark on similar tasks. For example, a cross-cutting synthesis of “how to” pointers emerging from the country stakeholder and staff perspectives on capacity enhancement was disseminated in preparation for the Implementation Forum in 2003. A similar learning kit was disseminated in early 2005 on the success factors underpinning a PRSP/PRSC. Another learning kit on Results-CAS was under preparation in September 2005.

II. Client Feedback Surveys

Basic information: The Client Feedback Survey (CFS) was launched in the Africa Region in 1995. This is a stratified purposive survey targeting people who have knowledge of working/interaction with the work of the Bank in the country; it is not a random survey involving sampling tests prior to the administration of the surveys. For example, in the Africa Region, a typical CFS is sent to a sample of about 200–300 po-
tential respondents who have knowledge of working/interaction with the work of the Bank in the country. For the nine CFS conducted in African countries in 2002–2003, the number of questionnaires sent out ranged from 160 to 360, the number of respondents ranged from 43 to 203, and the response rate ranged from 22% to 75%. The number of questions in the CFS varies from country to country since in addition to a core set of questions each region/country can add its specific questions to the survey; in practice, the total number of questions in each survey usually ranges from around 50 to around 60.

In the Africa Region, client surveys were usually complemented by a survey of country team perceptions on the same issues. The results were used to identify potential ‘blind spots’ in country team perceptions of how well they were doing in serving their country stakeholders. The number of country team respondents was obviously much smaller than in the client surveys. For example, in the 2003 cohort, the number of respondents ranged from around 10 to 30.

**Data panels used in the paper:** of the 78 CFS used in this paper, the largest sample (45) is from the Africa Region, which pioneered the client surveys and where these surveys have been conducted since the mid-1990s (for a complete list of the countries in the data set see Annex 5). However, 20 of the earlier surveys in the Africa Region (1995–98) measured only client satisfaction with Bank’s effectiveness in providing advice/service. The 30 surveys carried out in 1999–2001 in African, Eastern European and Asian countries also reported on the importance that the client attributes to a particular Bank role/service. The 28 most recent surveys in 2002–03 Bank-wide have again dropped the dimension of importance to the client.

Accordingly, it is difficult to aggregate the data from all the surveys into one data set. The data used in this paper have, therefore, been grouped in three data panels, with inherent limitation in drawing inferences across them. The three data panels are:

(i) from the sample of about 30 countries Bank-wide, which includes surveys conducted in 1999-2001 in three regional sub-groups in Africa (16 countries), Eastern Europe (10 countries) and East and South Asia (4 countries);

(ii) from the sample of 28 countries Bank-wide, which includes surveys conducted in 2002-03 in four regional subgroups in Africa (9 countries), Eastern Europe (10 countries), East Asia (7 countries), and Latin America & Caribbean (2 countries); and

(iii) from the 20 earliest surveys conducted in the Africa Region in 1995-98 (the latter has been used primarily to track trends in several of the key indicators over time).

**Proxy indicators used in the paper:** The questions included in the CFS may not always provide a basis for directly measuring attitudes on the success factors emerging from the debriefing synthesis that was described earlier. The analysis in this paper is, therefore, based on the use of proxies for assessing the client’s perception of the Bank’s performance on the three clusters of success factors. For example, how well the Bank is doing in “incorporating local knowledge and expertise in the country”, “involving local project experts” or “helping to build expertise among local development specialists”, “building capacity at the community level”, etc., is a reasonably good proxy for how well the Bank helps empower the client/stakeholders to learn by doing and by actually using what capacity already exists in the country (see Annex 6 for the list of questions used to construct proxy indicators).

Similarly, “staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the country needs”, “respect for local knowledge and expertise”, and “incorporating local knowledge and expertise in the country”, etc., are reasonably good proxies for the Bank’s effectiveness in finding the ‘best local fit’ that is realistic in a given institutional context. Also, several of the indexes which measure perceptions of Bank staff’s ‘realism’, ‘flexibility’ and ‘respect for local culture and priorities’ are reasonably good proxies for the behavioral competencies that are critical to effective capacity enhancement. Finally, some of the questions also raise issues of interpretation and hence the limitation of the analysis that is based on these questions. For example, in some survey questions (e.g., building capacity at the community level) the intent of the question may have been unclear to the respondent, and this in turn may have resulted in vague answers.

These limitations notwithstanding, and in the absence of other more direct indicators, responses to about 30 questions (i.e., about half of all the questions in the surveys) represent reasonably good proxies for assessing the client’s perception of the Bank’s performance on the three clusters of success factors.
emerging from the debriefings. The data set used in this paper consists of about 30 questions dealing with the clients’ views on the importance of and the Bank’s effectiveness in: capacity enhancement, knowledge transfer and adaptation, and behavioral competencies. These questions have been grouped into three clusters to provide proxy indicators (see Annex 6 for the complete list of questions and the cluster groupings).

Charts used in this paper: There are a series of charts to present the results of the analysis of the CFS data. Where data is available on both the perceptions of importance to the client as well as Bank’s performance (e.g., Chart 1), the charts are structured into four quadrants to better highlight the areas which are more or less important to the client and where the Bank is more or less effective. Ideally, one would like to see client responses clustering in the upper right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the client and where the Bank is perceived to be most effective. By contrast, one would not like to see any responses in the lower right quadrant (i.e., the area that records what is most important to the client and where the Bank is perceived to be least effective). The following describes the key elements of the charts:

Data points: each circle on the chart represents the average score of the country responses in the data panel on a specific question in the covered surveys;

Means: represent the un-weighted average of the country means in the covered surveys (the country means themselves have been derived from the un-weighted average of all the scores in each client survey).

Scales: for the data panel covering the 1999–2001 CFS, the scales are based on the 1–5 ratings that the respondents used in responding to the survey questions. For example, in the scale measuring importance of an issue to the client, the rating is from 1 = very unimportant to 5 = very important; and in the scale measuring Bank’s effectiveness, the rating is from 1 = very ineffective to 5 = very effective. The same approach is used in all similar charts derived from this data panel. The CFS conducted in 2003, however, used two different rating scales: (i) some questions used a 1–5 scale similar to the one used in the earlier surveys; and (ii) some questions used a 1–10 scale, where the rating measured the respondent’s level of agreement with the statement in the question. The latter scores were, therefore, re-scaled to (1–5) for this study to make all scores based on the same scale in the charts that report data from the 2003 surveys.

Limitations of the survey data: Overall, the data limitations in both the client surveys and the country team surveys suggest caution in interpreting the results. Accordingly, the inferences made in this paper should be seen as general indications of trends. Nevertheless, this is the best data that is currently available in the Bank on the issues addressed in this paper. This points to the need to conduct more scientific surveys to measure the evolving trends in country perceptions of Bank performance.
Through debriefing of staff, country stakeholders and donor partners we have learned that empowering the country is a key success factor in enhancing country capacity. Its more about “creating space” for the country to “learn by doing” than “filling the space” with Bank-prepared solutions. The following are pointers on practical steps that can be taken to help empower the country by:

- Creating space for “learning by doing”
- Focusing on institutional capacity

The material can be viewed in its entirety in the Debriefing Library (afr/debriefing/capacity) by clicking on Empowering the Client Video File (29 min), or on Empowering the Client, Part II (16 min), or via shorter clips sorted below along the main themes in the form of “how to” solutions (blue) which have emerged during the various debriefings. Each short clip is previewed in text form by a key message, the person(s) debriefed and the length of the video.

I. Creating Space for “Learning by Doing”

Stand Back to Allow the Client to Own the Process (Peter Harrold, 1:55 min). “If they want reports. Financial consultative support, fine, but we’re not going to provide Bank suggestions for what their strategy should be.”

Promote a Process that is Country-Owned and Driven (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1.41 min). “We felt that if the Bank, the Fund and other donor organizations were willing to listen and give us some limited help, we would be able to form sound PRSP’s.”

Step Aside for the Client to get into the Driver’s Seat (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2.34 min). “The main directive that our colleagues from the Bank had received was, they were not to write a single sentence in the Mauritania PRSP—it’s not about saving time and writing strategies. It’s about having an entire nation write the strategies.”

Avoid Being a ‘Back-Seat Driver’ (Hasan Tuluy, 8:52 min). “Make sure that we reach a level of understanding that we can support the will of the countries. Come to a common understanding - this requires continued discussion—are we in agreement on what problem we are trying to solve? Can we agree on a process?”

Generate Buy-in From the Top Leadership in the Country (Mohamed Lemrabott, 5:30 min). Approaches used to get buy-in from the top. “That was a strong sign from government—it created an autonomous commission to deal with poverty reduction.”

Believe that the Client Can do it (Noel Pallais, 1:06 min). “The human beings in charge of believing this thing could happen, were adamant in convincing, in pushing the people to do it.” The organizers from the bank “were really convinced, they managed to convince us, and then we managed to convince ourselves that yes we actually could do it.”

Enable the Client to do it (Ritva Reinikka, 2:48 min). “The locus of accountability does change, and the questions simply change. Obviously who is in the driver’s seat, as I see this, this really moves us one step behind and we become more of a bank and less of an implementer.”

Support a Participatory Approach in the Design of Development Strategy (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:23 min). “In order for our policies to be successful…they had to be owned by our own people…must have a participatory approach built into the very design of the PRSP…”

Involve the Client in Quality Assessment (Hasan Tuluy, 3:28 min). “It’s ultimately about effectiveness as seen by the client.”

“Walk the Talk” on Country Owned Process (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:17 min) “You have to mean business, when you say country owned…it doesn’t just stop at one level…this should show more and more in your actions…”
Listen to Clients (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:30 min). ‘If you mean business...this is a different way of thinking...if you listen...you will hear things you don’t like...but it will help you to deliver services.’

Change Your Attitude (Mohamed Lemrabott, Gov-indan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:49 min) You want the country to have the ability to ‘...run their own economic policy, social policy. You want the people the country to stand on its own.’

Assess Your Contribution in Terms of Client Capacity Enhancement (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:07 min). “The central actor of development is now the country itself. The Bank should assess how much staff are instrumental in helping the country internalize knowledge and put it to work.” “People should be evaluated on how much the country itself was able to conduct its development—the capacity to apply the knowledge, value of knowledge is only by how much people understand it and implement it in their lives.”

Adopt a Village-Level Participatory Approach (Chabeuf, 1:37 min). This approach is fundamental. “If you don’t have a participatory approach with the villagers to have them discuss their development constraints and design their development program, you end up with micro-projects which are not endorsed by the community...you have no sustainability.

Ensure Community Ownership (Opper, 1:16 min). “The idea in Senegal was always that one should get to a point where the population itself should take command.”

Ownership Is a Three-Way Process (Abbey, 3:08 min). “The donors are at the table...the governed...and the government of the day should also be at the table. If you believe in democracy, somebody went to the public, the electorate, and said ‘I think I can take care of the affairs of the state...that type of institution is not as a manager, it should be seen as a shareholder, a vision that probably was reflected in a manifesto”

Use Community-Based Procurement. (Chabeuf, 8:62 min). Procurement was delegated to the communities; the investment funds are owned and managed by the communities themselves. “This was a kind of revolution because in Niger you have a very low literacy rate—Once the villagers, even if they are illiterate, have understood the process—that they are in command, they will not go back”.

Increase Government Ownership of the Reform Process (Kahkonen, 50 sec). by “…strengthening the governments own arrangements... mainstreaming implementation of projects within the government—strengthening the government’s own public procurement processes, (its) own financial management processes...” allowing the “government to take the drivers seat.

The Government is the Final Decision-Maker (Kahkonen, 1:04 min). The Bank “can only raise issues and basically convey to the government our concern of the situation...but it is up to the government to decide whether they will revise the strategy or not...and what kind of assistance they want from different donors...”

II. Focusing on Institutional Capacity

Care More About Systemic than Transactional Issues (Hasan Tuluy, 3:38). “Capacity is about issue of trust (‘verify ex-post rather than be in a policing role’); help the countries to grow their capacity to deal with the transactional issues. It’s all about having respectful relationships with the owners of the process. If you have trust, you need to help them to build up their capacity.”

Focus on Creating Capacity Within the Communities (Brian Falconer, 4:51 min). “What we really need to do is to have procedures which are at the level which communities can actually use in the way large companies would use its financial management procedures.”

Build Capacity for Replication (Willem Floor, 2:13 min) “There are already some markets functioning, but—people need to be trained how to do it, you need to have capacity to do that.” “Everybody in the community concerned needs to know—it’s a process that you have to initiate and accompany.”

Leverage the Opportunities that Exist into the Hands of Communities (Brian Levy, 1:32 min). Every country in our program should have substantial funds block
granted down to local governments or should have major social funds reaching urban and rural communities.

Don’t Forget the ‘Hard Assets’—cars, computers, etc., are an important enabler (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:05 min). “One of the questions that came up constantly was capacity building—not on the soft side, but on the hard side. We identified a set of NGOs in a participatory way and tried to help them with managerial skills.”

Strengthen the Local Micro-Financial Institutions (Chabeuf, 2:34 min). Facilitate empowerment; “…Isolated villages have bank accounts in their village, in the local unit of the micro-finance institution.” “…we strengthened the micro-finance institutions—we also got the villages used to dealing with them”

Defining Key Areas of Focus and Emphasis (Abbey, 6:55 min) “…clearly there is a need for technical know-how… in which to dialogue and participate…a clearinghouse for ideas.” “You have to have knowledge…but you also need institutions that will guarantee that the environment will be enabling …”

**Debrief Sources:**

Peter Harrold, Ghana Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) and PRSP
Mohamed Lemrabott, Mauritania PRSP—Client Perspective
Hasan Tuluy, Role of a Country Director
Ritva Reinikka, Challenges of Programmatic Lending
Mohamed Lemrabott, Capacity Enhancement: A Clients Viewpoint
Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, Role of Knowledge Brokers
Willem Floor, GEF Operations in AFR: Household Energy Pilot in Mali
Brian Falconer, Financial Management (FM)
Noel Chabeuf, Noel Chabeuf: Community Driven Development for Benin, Borgou
Susan Oppor, Senegal Female Literacy Pilot Project
Joseph Abbey, Capacity Enhancement—a Clients Perspective
Noel Chabeuf, Natural Resource Management
Satu Kahkonen, Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC) Uganda
Through debriefing of staff, country stakeholders and donor partners we have learned that adapting knowledge to the local context is a key success factor in enhancing country capacity. It’s more about creating the “best local fit” than applying the “best global practice”. The following are pointers on practical steps that can be taken to enhance the adaptation process by:

- Looking for the “best local fit”
- Involving local stakeholders

The material can be viewed in its entirety in the Debriefing Library (afr/debriefing/capacity) by clicking on Adaptation to Local Context Video File (1:17 min) or on Adaptation to Local Context, Part II (11 min), or via shorter clips sorted below along the main themes in the form of “how to” solutions (blue) which have emerged during the various debriefings. Each short clip is previewed in text form by a key message, the person(s) debriefed and the length of the video.

I. Looking for the ‘Best Local Fit’

Bridge the Knowledge Gap (Keshav Varma, 8:32 min) Confluence of thought; between what the Bank knows and the realities of the local communities that we are trying to develop. “We need to be more patient and compassionate in our thinking—then, we are not seen as coming from the top, we are seen as a learning institution.

Leverage Global and Local Knowledge (Philippe H. Le Houerou, 1:34 min). “What they appreciate is the technical knowledge and bringing this international knowledge to Madagascar and where we were the weakest was to adapt the knowledge to the local conditions.”

Contextualize Knowledge (Peter Materu, 4:21 min). “Knowledge has to be contextualized to become effective. We want to make sure right from the beginning that the course is contextualized to suit the African environment.”

Pay Attention to Local Specificity (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:16 min). “Every country has it’s own specificities…this whole process (of PRSP) has to be country specific…and there weren’t going to be any pre-conceived, pre-established formats…”

Adapt Global ‘Best Practice’ (Hasan Tuluy, 6:08 min). “The real challenge is how we take global best and good practice and make it country level good and best practice—we need to adapt it—You cannot just go and parachute a solution onto people, people have to be part of the search for the answer”.

Adapt Project Design and Policies to Local Conditions (Sushma Ganguly, 8:01 min). How to capture client’s view of quality. “We can talk of improving performance indicators, performance triggers, but I think we really have an issue on the clients’ side.”

Adaptation is Key to the Effective Transfer of Knowledge (Mohamed Lemrabott, 5:33 min). “I’m definitely pleading here for direct people to people transfer of knowledge, with tools to allow both sides to see that there was effective transfer of knowledge.”

Adapt Practices to the Local Context (Olivier LaFourcade, 5:19 min). “I find that we are much more sensitive and sensitized to things (than) three of four years ago...” especially in adapting to country contexts in terms of indigenous peoples and cultures.

Take Stock of the Local Government (Brian Levy, 2:22 min) “Take stock of the of local government and their relation to the state structure in that country...”

Pay Attention to the Local Political Context (Brian Levy, 6:46 min). The important role of the political opening-up of civil society and its transformation of government-citizen relations. “More focus is needed in areas we are involved where the accountability relations are strong enough to focus capacity building around.”

Apply a Differentiated Approach (Olivier LaFourcade, 3:02 min). “We need a more differentiated approach... we need to be more modest...”
See it Through the Lens of the Particular Country or Institution (Hasan Tuluy, 1:28 min). Good team members have had sensitivity to social/political history of the country; ‘seeing it through the lens of the particular country or institution’.

How to Apply What We Know “...the need for technical knowledge is there, the need for the institutions in which we begin to put this knowledge that we have gathered to work...There’s a lot of room for judgment, you are dealing with people, attitudes, cultures, values... at the end of the day, you must put the knowledge to work, and be aware of the circumstances” (Abbey, 4:46 min).

Adapt Your Approach, Be Open-Minded, Retain Flexibility Success depends on effective adaptation of the approach and a flexible program design. “You have to look carefully and analyze the local situation, the people with whom you are working. The success is linked to the adaptation of the approach to the local situation—what works in one region will not work in another—you have to be able to adapt to a number of different social organizations.” (Chabeuf, 3:14 min).

Adapt the Curriculum to the Local Needs National Capacity Building through women’s literacy programs depends on the success of adapting the curriculum to the local needs, and on the emphasis of continuity through the participation of local government. Adaptation was achieved by providing “literacy in different languages, not just in French but also in the mother tongue of the population.” (Opper, 1:21 min).

Adapt to the Socio Ethnic Diversity of the project, “One of the main challenges was to adapt to the needs of so many different socio-ethnic groups in the work of the project. “We were working in five different districts, all with different socio ethnic composition...” (Chabeuf, 2:16 min).

Ensure Project Sustainability by adapting “Development is a long-term endeavor - designed based on the experience of the case before. We should continue what is successful—The only way to consolidate what we have done, the achievements, and to move forward is to continue on what we have started and which works” (Chabeuf, 2:19 min).

II. Involving Local Stakeholders

Learn from Local Communities to Develop Effective Solutions (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:28 min). The objective is to turn it over to government - Maintaining locally elected representatives. This “makes a lot of difference in the prioritization of needs. We try not to come up with preconceived solutions and impose them on these people.”

Offer Civil Society the Opportunity to Participate in Design of Policies (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:59 min). Events put into motion before the conception of the PRSP which helped to accelerate its acceptance and integration:

a) Creation of local NGO bodies to carry out PRSP
b) Local Groups that can formulate better strategies
c) Autonomous body that would help the government

Create Space for Civil Society to Participate in the PRSP Process (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:05 min). How during the first round of the PRSP the Mauritanian team provided an opportunity to civil society to criticize policy.

Invest in Helping Civil Society to ‘Learn by Doing’ (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:24 min). How the Civil Society/NGO’s in Mauritania were helped in building skills and capacities needed to participate in the design and implementation of the PRSP process.

Understand the Social and Political Fabric (Olivier LaFourcade, 3:06). Having the people themselves come up with part of the solution are key. “Understand what is at play, there may be different programs that impact at that local level—each with its legitimate claim.”

Promote a ‘National Attempt to Listen’ to the Civil Society (Mohamed Lemrabott 1:21 min). Participation of the civil society was a fairly new approach.

Support Expansion of Participation Opportunities to Larger Audiences (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:14 min). Open up participation opportunity to a larger audience.
Learn from Local Communities (Sushma Ganguly, 4:24 min) Sector managers need to encourage teams to tap into client and local communities, which are a rich source of indigenous knowledge.

Use Local Counterparts to Help in the Adaptation Process (Mohamed Lemrabott, 58 sec). “Adapting to the local context is going to be partly the responsibility of your experts, but also they may find it useful to use expertise of their counterparts in Mauritania—whether it be from the government side or the civil society side.”

Get Clients Involved with the Innovation Process (Maria Christina Germany, 3:39 min). Focus groups were used to gage client’s needs and interests. “Users were involved from day one.”

Promote Performance—Oriented Public Sectors (Brian Levy, 1:22 min). “To generate real accountability—is the heart of what it will take for public sector reform and capacity building.”

Establish Accountability: “…you better make sure that the people at the table—will be around for 8 years, 10 yrs, 20 yrs”. There should also be a focus on the level of government, “to ensure that this transformation is durable, is done pragmatically, in a way that is accountable to the local constituencies…”(Girishankar, 3:53 min).

Create Participatory Process at the Local Level “There is a big premium placed on consensus-building and marrying technocratic knowledge with participatory processes at the local level.” Also, “raising the bar for local level politicians and technical people to understand things better at the same time demanding more of federal/regional bureaucrats to listen to people at the local level” (Girishankar, 59 sec).

Be Responsive to the Community-Level Capacity building has to be structured for durability, and this was achieved through community-level responsiveness (Girishankar, 5:10 min).

Avoid Paternalism: ‘Solutions Must be Participatory, people must be empowered—given the skills to be part of the production process…Do the PRSP’s really give a voice to the poor? Would our people recognize themselves in the PRSP? We’ve failed because we’ve not involved our people” (Abbey, 2:50 min).

Create Capacity Through Women’s Education Initiatives Basic education in local languages was combined with practical development issues to address the problem of illiteracy at its source. This provided the initiative to empower local women with the means and capacity to improve their standard of living. Women on an isolated island in the Region of Fatick “…got in touch with a prospective contractor—so that the women could keep working in the home and also in their fish drying business…” (Opper, 2:49 min).

Achieve Consensus “This was the first of joint efforts of hundreds of people, from five different communities and from different ethnic groups for a common purpose…they agreed not only to pool the resources that you get from the project, but also their own resources” (Chabeuf, 2:59 min).

Debrief Sources:

Keshav Varma, Client Orientation
Philippe H. Le Houerou, How to be an Effective Resident Representative
Peter Materu, Africa Virtual University (AVU)
Mohamed Lemrabott, Capacity Enhancement: A Clients Viewpoint
Hasan Tuluy, Role of a Country Director
Sushma Ganguly, Championing the Road Map for Quality
Mohamed Lemrabott, Mauritania PRSP—Client Perspective
Olivier Lafourcade, A 30 Year Retrospective: Olivier Lafourcade
Brian Levy, Enhancing Client Capacity for Public Sector Reform
Joseph Abbey, Capacity Enhancement—a Clients Perspective
Noel Chabeuf, Community Driven Development for Benin, Borgou
Susan Opper, Senegal Female Literacy Pilot Project
Navin Girishankar, Public Service Capacity Building in Ethiopia
Maria Christina Germany, Reflections of an Innovator
Annex 4 Debriefing Synthesis on Behaving as an Enabler

Through debriefing of staff, country stakeholders and donor partners we have learned that the Bank’s ability to play a broker/enabler role is a key success factor in helping country stakeholders enhance their capacity. *It’s more about nurturing effective behavioral competencies than strengthening staff’s technical skills.* The following are highlights of what country stakeholders & task teams see as the main challenges for the Bank in:

- Shifting to a broker/enabler role
- Strengthening behavioral competencies

The material can be viewed in its entirety in the Debriefing Library (afr/debriefing/capacity) by clicking on **Behaving as an Enabler Video File** (82 min) or on **Behaving as an Enabler, Part II** (14 min), or via shorter clips sorted below along the main themes in the form of “how to” solutions (blue) which have emerged during the various debriefings. Each short clip is previewed in text form by a key message, the person(s) debriefed and the length of the video.

I. Shifting to a Broker/Enabler Role:

**Become an Enabler** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 4:16 min). “It is (Bank’s new role) coming with the PRSP, but its fairly new;” “experts in the Bank are used to coming to countries and used to people being all ears.”

**Balance Knowledge vs. Resource Transfer, and Systemic vs. the Transactional** (Hasan Tuluy, 3:38). “Capacity is about issue of trust (“verify ex-post rather than be in a policing role”); help the countries to grow their capacity to deal with the transactional issues. It’s all about having respectful relationships with the owners of the process. If you have trust, you need to help them to build up their capacity.”

**Consider Knowledge Transfer as an Enabling Process** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:51 min). Knowledge transfer needs to enable the client, and not be a process facilitated in the “…classical method…”

**Provide Knowledge When its Needed and in a Form that is Suitable to the Client** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 3:59.5 min). “Just in time / just enough.”

**Facilitate the Move to Multi-sector Approaches** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 58 sec). “Facilitating the shift to more programmatic lending before we get to budget support.”

**Work with the Client to Adapt and Customize** (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 6:57 min). The clients perspective on the role of the Bank as a knowledge broker.

**Demonstrate Effective Transfer of Knowledge** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 4:42 min). Need to move to a different way of doing business were staff are “judged not on the paper they produce, but how many countries have their own macro models running, etc.”

**See your Role as Primarily Knowledge Transfer** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 43 sec). “Bank should never give up on its role in knowledge transfer.”

**Focus on Governance Through K-Brokerage** (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:29 min) “We can only achieve it through knowledge brokerage…”

**Don’t do things for the Client, Help Clients do it** (Mohamed Lemrabott, 1:58 min). The best way to communicate is through people. What would be useful is “sending more people with the understanding that they need to transfer the knowledge, not do things themselves, but help local teams.”

**Don’t Rush to Impose Reforms** (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 2:06 min). The Bank should enable countries to ‘transform lessons learned into actions…and not impose the actions...’

**Appreciate the Nature of the Knowledge Gap** (Mohamed Lemrabott 6:29 min). Understanding the issues between the parties: coordinating the objectives and participation of all players, including PRSP technicians, macro economists, civil representatives, etc.

**Be Transparent and Create Space for Reflection and Information Sharing** (Hasan Tuluy, 5:10 min). Transparency is key to team cohesion. “I can create
the space for that to happen, which means that elicit the ideas - you can create both the intellectual space, where people can think about things, and also then when the thinking has matured, making it possible to move towards implementation.“

Seek Opportunities to Provide the Catalytic Element (Olivier Lafourcade, 1:23 min) “the Bank was the catalytic element. It was absolutely extraordinary...our transfer of knowledge, transfer of experience that we have accumulated”

Create Conditions that Empower the Client (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:59 min). ‘Creating the conditions for us to do our own business...’

Help Local institutions Work Together (Norman Piccioni, 2:16 min). “Different institutions that work in the same sector...don’t typically work together”. But, “We made sure that in each team there would be a balanced combination, because one of the purposes is to have people working together, and then its more likely that during their regular activities they would continue to interact.”

Facilitate Integration Between Institutions (Noel Pallais, 2:15 min). Short-term goals were set among many institutions, involving re-prioritization and teamwork. “Human beings were involved - the fever caught on, which translated into a strong willingness to collaborate.” Also, important was the pressure to integrate between institutions. “Higher echelons of the institutions were able to put pressure on the people of the other institutions.”

Promote a Culture of Performance (Brian Levy, 3:33 min). The key point is how to build on an approach to private sector reform that is embedded in pressure for performance. “In a context in which there was no pressure for performance - it was unlikely to see strong results.” Ensure credible demand for capacity.

See your Role as a Facilitator in Helping Enhance Client Capacity (Olivier Lafourcade, 4:16 min). In building institutional and educational capacity, are we a “one way street on the transfer of knowledge without necessarily enhancing the capacity of the country?” The Bank can only claim to be the facilitator. They have all the skills, the education. We can force them to interact horizontally.

Use Your Knowledge to Effect Change (Olivier Lafourcade, 2:25 min). To new incoming teams. An example from Mexico & Colombia; through a team exercise “…we mobilized the entire country team and we prepared 30 sectoral notes...I asked them to...assume you have two minutes with Mr. President...what do you tell him?”

Be Prepared to be Everything to Everyone (Olivier Lafourcade, 2:48 min). “…for some we are the agent of change...the agent of stability...(agent of) advocacy...agent of transfer of knowledge...it is the nature of the institution”

Be Non-Intrusive and Create a Culture of Sharing—I see the World Bank as a broker—Staying in by staying out and being non-intrusive...’ You 'need to create space...but also be insistent on what you know to be the truth...must be able to find a way to speak to each other honestly…” (Abbey, 4:04 min).

Be a Purveyor of Information and Knowledge—“...The World Bank has been involved in the struggles of so many countries. Therefore one hopes that it has developed the capacity for information gathering...and processing—and recognizes the sheer heterogeneity of the globe...(this) means that the type of knowledge we need...cannot be immune to (our) differences...” (Abbey, 5:53 min).

Role of the Project Staff and Government Services as Advisor There has been a “revolutionary change of attitudes, which was required in these projects—from being the boss in the past to becoming an advisor. At first there was hostility to the project—it was “seen as the Bank coming in to reduce the power of the government and in the end they understood that they had their role, a role which was different, and they have adapted and they have played their part” “It is, I think one of the achievements of this project to have fostered this evolution of their relationship” (Noel Chabeuf, 81 sec).

II. Strengthening Behavioral Competencies

Show Patience and Willingness to Listen (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 2:33 min). Success due to a foundation of ‘knowledge sharing, learning and institution building’ we mapped out
all the things that had to be done into a framework. what was important was “the patience, willingness to listen to each other.”

Listen, Hear, and Once You’ve Heard… (Hasan Tuluy, 1:02 min) You need to think about what are the motivations behind the client’s statement?

Listen More and Talk Less (Olivier Lafourcade, 2:59 min). “The need to comment and participate no matter what is not a productive work habit—we need to listen more and talk less.”

Listen and Hear, Be Patient, Have a Flexible Attitude (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 3:45 min) “…a good knowledge broker should be able to hold on to his idea of knowledge sharing and not be discouraged by anything…and transfer the best knowledge that is available…people learn at different speeds…”

Come with an Open Mind… (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:08 min) to learning and modifying your views; the Bank didn’t “…come with a blueprint, we could not have pretended to have a blueprint because Mauritania is Mauritania…” and there were specific country factors to take into account.

Be Willing to Experiment (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 3:48 min). What are some of the fundamental behavioral elements of a knowledge broker role?

Demonstrate Patience and Willingness to Try Something New (Mohamed Lemrabott, 2:18 min). Demonstrate ‘patience…and willingness to try something new…”

Be Willing to Customize (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:30 min) Even though the ‘…principles of design might remain the same…as you customize there is always the opportunity of learning…”

Demonstrate Tolerance (Olivier Lafourcade, 45 sec) “We are entitled to make mistakes….we should make mistakes.”

Transmit the Sense of Urgency and Challenge (Norman Piccioni, 38 sec). “What is important is that you transmit this sense of urgency and a sense of challenge.” “Teamwork becomes a real thing - because people really feel like they share a common difficult goal.”

Believe in the Client’s Ability “to do it” (Noel Pallais, 1:06 min). “The human beings in charge of believing this thing could happen, were adamant in convincing, in pushing the people to do it.” The organizers from the Bank “were really convinced, they managed to convince us, and then we managed to convince ourselves that yes we actually could do it.”

Believe Passionately in What You Advocate (Noel Pallais, 2:48 min) What it takes to apply the lessons of RRI more widely is “an adamant belief by the organizers that this works—Once the people that are in charge believe in something, this passion becomes like an infectious disease that translates.”

Establish an Atmosphere of Trust (Olivier Lafourcade, 2:57 min). “In an atmosphere of trust…should not need to use the cop approach…”

Trust your Client (Hasan Tuluy, 3:38). “Capacity is about issue of trust (“verify ex-post rather than be in a policing role”); help the countries to grow their capacity to deal with the transactional issues. It’s all about having respectful relationships with the owners of the process. If you have trust, you need to help them to build up their capacity.”

Nurture Trust by Being Transparent (Hasan Tuluy, 2:33 min). Nurturing trust with the team and the client. Use transparency, never play games, don’t have multiple agendas, always speak one level of language. Have humility, listen, respect, adjust, and ask questions.

Be a Protagonist for Openness and Transparency (Brian Levy, 1:56 min). “We can add to the pressure for public information on how money is used, that is comprehensive, timely, accurate, public. We are powerful protagonists for the openness and transparency.”

Demonstrate Intellectual Rigor and Honesty (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:26 min) Need to work with the country and take calculated risks such as with Mauritania in 1999 ‘…when the government took the bold decision to lift exclusivity…before privatizing their operator…’
“Know What You Don’t Know” (Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, 1:17 min). Eritrea wants to move towards using IP centric networks ‘... we do not have all the necessary knowledge...but we can bring the knowledge together piece by piece...’

Need to Listen “…To really sustain it (development) with the interests of the prospective participants, I think you really do need to be able to listen, to respond to what the populace says they are interested in’ (Opper, 34 sec).

Success Depends on Creating the Conditions to Listen—“This means that you are made more conscious of peculiarities, cultural problems, inconsistencies—…” …it depends on the motivation, it depends on the environment… If we want to make listening an important input, let us go and make sure that we create the conditions there.” (Abbey, 1:54 min).

Allow for Time “You have to allow for time, to listen to them, to talk to them, to understand what their concerns are. This takes a lot of time, because you have the language barrier, you have to go through an interpreter, people don’t always directly tell what they think, very often they see you as a bearer of goods and of money, so they try in the first step to tell you what they think you want to hear.” (Chabeuf, 1:00 min).

Debrief Sources:

Mohamed Lemrabott, Mauritania PRSP - Client Perspective
Mohamed Lemrabott, Capacity Enhancement: A Clients Viewpoint
Mohamed Lemrabott, Govindan Nair, Svetoslav Tintchev, Role of Knowledge Brokers
Noel Pallais and Normon Piccioni, Rapid Result Initiatives in Nicaragua
Hasan Tuluy, Role of a Country Director
Olivier Lafourcade, A 30 Year Retrospective: Olivier Lafourcade
Brian Levy, Enhancing Client Capacity for Public Sector Reform
Hasan Tuluy, PRSP in Mauritania—a Country Director’s Reflection
Joseph Abbey, Capacity Enhancement—a Clients Perspective
Susan Opper, Senegal Female Literacy Pilot Project
Annex 5 List of Client Feedback Surveys Consulted

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** Djibouti is currently considered a MNA country; however at the time of its 1999 Client Survey, it was part of AFR, therefore it is included.
Cluster 1: Client Perception of Bank’s Efforts in Capacity Enhancement

1. Involving the participation of beneficiaries in project design and implementation
2. Involving local project experts
3. Incorporating the knowledge and expertise available in the client country
4. Disseminating the results of Bank studies and analyses to those who need them most
5. Developing effective management systems and procedures
6. Strengthening knowledge and skills of individuals
7. Strengthening local training and research organizations
8. Building capacity at the community level
9. Promoting private involvement in effective delivery of public services
10. Helping to build expertise among local development specialists
11. * Promoting the participation of local populations and communications in design and implementation of strategies and programs
12. ** Promoting the participation of civil society in the design and implementation of strategies and programs

Cluster 2: Client Perception of Bank’s Efforts in Knowledge Adaptation

1. Technical competence
2. ** Knowledge about international best practices
3. Staff’s ability to adapt their knowledge to the client country’s needs
4. Respect for local knowledge and expertise
5. Incorporating the knowledge and expertise available in the client country
6. Helping to bring relevant knowledge of development practices from the expertise of other countries
7. Disseminating the results of Bank studies and analyses to those who need them most

Cluster 3: Client Perception of Bank Staff Behaviors

1. Respect for the client country’s culture
2. Realism of Bank program, given the client country’s situation and constraints
3. Flexibility in adjusting to changing country circumstances
4. Taking account of country realities
5. Considering a range of alternatives, feasible options
6. Showing flexibility in applying procurement rules
7. Realism of policy advice, given the client country’s needs and situation
8. Respecting the client country’s social priorities
9. Reflecting the diversity of views in the client country
10. Communicating with diverse groups in the client country affected by the Bank program
11. Providing flexibility when standard Bank procedures do not fit client country’s situation

* These two questions only appeared in four of the more recent surveys in Benin (2001), Niger (2001), Senegal (2000), and Zambia (2001). These two questions were not used in the overall cluster charts, but included in the country specific charts.

** Since 2002, question has been modified to “sharing knowledge about international best practices”.
Annex 7  Country Perceptions of Bank’s Capacity Enhancement Efforts by Regional Groupings

Chart 1: Country perceptions of Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts in AFR

Source: 16 client surveys in Africa (1999–2001)

Chart 2: Country perceptions of Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts in non-AFR Regions

Source: 14 client surveys in ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Chart 3: Country perceptions of Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts in ECA

Source: 10 client surveys in ECA (1999–2001)

Chart 4: Country perceptions of Bank’s capacity enhancement efforts in SAR, EAP

Source: 4 client surveys in SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Annex 8 Country Perceptions of Bank’s Efforts in Knowledge Adaptation by Regional Groupings

Chart 1: Country perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt in AFR

Source: 16 client surveys in Africa (1999–2001)

Chart 2: Country perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt in non-AFR Regions

Source: 14 client surveys in ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Chart 3: Country perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt in ECA

Source: 10 client surveys in ECA (1999–2001)

Chart 4: Country perceptions of Bank staff knowledge & ability to adapt in SAR, EAP

Source: 4 client surveys in SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Annex 9  Country Perceptions of Bank Staff’s Behaviors by Regional Groupings

Chart 1: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors in AFR

Source: 16 client surveys in Africa (1999–2001)

Chart 2: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors in non-AFR Regions

Source: 14 client surveys in ECA, SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Chart 3: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors in ECA

Source: 10 client surveys in ECA (1999–2001)

Chart 4: Country perceptions of Bank staff behaviors in SAR, EAP

Source: 4 client surveys in SAR & EAP (1999–2001)
Annex 10 Gaps in perception of Bank effectiveness between clients and country teams in the Africa Region

Chart 1: Gap in perception of Bank effectiveness in capacity enhancement between clients & country team (AFR)


Chart 2: Gap in perception of Bank effectiveness in knowledge adaptation between clients & country team (AFR)


* This question was asked only in 2003
** This question was formulated differently in earlier surveys
ANNEX 10 – GAP IN PERCEPTION OF BANK EFFECTIVENESS BETWEEN CLIENTS AND COUNTRY TEAMS IN THE AFRICA REGION

Chart 3: Gap in perception of Bank effectiveness in enabling behaviors between clients & country team (AFR)

CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT THROUGH KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
Knowledge packs synthesize findings from studies, drawing lessons of peer experience on challenges in community capacity development.

Practitioners use peer advice to develop action plans that adapt learning to local contexts to help achieve community capacity goals.

Community-to-Community Knowledge and Learning Exchange Toolkit provides roadmap for design and implementation and M&E of community exchanges.

Multilingual Website and “IK Notes” provide access to resources, events, learning tools & platform for sharing results.

Reflections of practitioners on their learning captured on video & synthesized for “just-enough” dissemination among peers.

Cross community/country/regional exchange visits provide platform for peer-to-peer learning about “how to” solutions to common problems.

Participate use peer advice to develop action plans that adapt learning to local contexts to help achieve community capacity goals.

VC follow up to exchange visits provide opportunities for “just-in-time” peer advice on implementation of action plans.

Knowledge Packs

Adapted actions

Toolkits

Debriefing

Website “IK Notes”

Exchange Visits

Workshops KL Fairs

Video-conference

Annex 11 South-South Peer Learning Approaches to Strengthen Capacity at Community Level: IK Program Experience
The Bank helps to build capacity at the community level. | Technical competence. | Sharing knowledge about international best practices. | Ability to adapt its knowledge to the country’s needs. | The Bank takes account of country realities. | Respect for the country’s culture. | The Bank is flexible in terms of adjusting to changing country circumstances. |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
The Bank helps to build capacity at the community level. | 1 | | | | | |
Technical competence. | 0.372** | 1 | | | | |
Sharing knowledge about international best practices. | 0.515** | 0.357** | 1 | | | |
Ability to adapt its knowledge to the country’s needs. | 0.578** | 0.567** | 0.546** | 1 | | |
The Bank takes account of country realities. | 0.735** | 0.472** | 0.522** | 0.642** | 1 | |
Respect for the country’s culture. | 0.653** | 0.453** | 0.525** | 0.688** | 0.710** | 1 |
The Bank is flexible in terms of adjusting to changing country circumstances. | 0.742** | 0.344** | 0.512** | 0.598** | 0.812** | 0.593** | 1 |
Providing recommendations that are practical. | 0.486** | 0.402** | 0.472** | 0.652** | 0.570** | 0.673** | 0.511** |
The Bank shows flexibility in applying procurement rules to the country’s situation and needs. | 0.674** | 0.291** | 0.475** | 0.468** | 0.692** | 0.532** | 0.643** |
Reflecting the diversity of views in the country. | 0.596** | 0.306** | 0.445** | 0.578** | 0.564** | 0.669** | 0.556** |
Respecting the country’s social priorities. | 0.615** | 0.458** | 0.461** | 0.622** | 0.658** | 0.775** | 0.565** |
Helping to build expertise among local development specialists. | 0.656** | 0.298** | 0.535** | 0.525** | 0.578** | 0.629** | 0.521** |
Including local communities (beneficiaries) in the development of strategies. | 0.727** | 0.360** | 0.654** | 0.602** | 0.574** | 0.577** | 0.537** |
Promoting private involvement in effective delivery of public services. | 0.575** | 0.428** | 0.607** | 0.689** | 0.573** | 0.548** | 0.532** |
Incorporating the knowledge and expertise available in the country. | 0.547** | 0.423** | 0.560** | 0.726** | 0.558** | 0.653** | 0.569** |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Listwise N=78
## Correlations between Selected Questions from the Client Survey Data in the Africa Region (2003)

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<thead>
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<th>Providing recommendations that are practical.</th>
<th>The Bank shows flexibility in applying procurement rules to the country’s situation and needs.</th>
<th>Reflecting the diversity of views in the country.</th>
<th>Respecting the country’s social priorities.</th>
<th>Helping to build expertise among local development specialists.</th>
<th>Including local communities (beneficiaries) in the development of strategies.</th>
<th>Promoting private involvement in effective delivery of public services.</th>
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*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Listwise N=78

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<th>Number of CAS and CAS updates done</th>
<th>Number of CAS that mention the CFS</th>
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<th>Number of CFS Done</th>
<th>Number of CAS and CAS updates done</th>
<th>Number of CAS that mention the CFS</th>
<th>Number of CAS that do not mention the CFS</th>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Some countries have mentioned the CFS in all of the CASs that have been done.

** In countries that had multiple CASs completed, some CASs mentioned the CFS and some did not.
The Rapid Results Approach is a structured intervention designed to accelerate program implementation. It has been applied in World Bank projects in 11 countries ranging from Nicaragua to Sierra Leone to Sri Lanka. These experiences suggest that the huge untapped potential of “achievement capacity” can be mobilized for development purposes—the challenge is to unleash this “latent capacity” and to channel it towards the achievement of results. In interventions, the cast of characters and the resources are the same—before and after the dramatic results.

In Kenya, the newly elected Managing Director of the Nakuru Water Company sponsored his first round of Rapid-Results Initiative (RRIs) even before his staffing plan was fully in place, targeting a 35% reduction in unaccounted for water (UFW) within 100 days! The success of this initiative led to other water companies in Kenya to focus on and achieve similar results in lieu of hoping that activities such as training, meter installation, etc. will lead to the same outcome.

Teams start by prioritizing the areas they want to impact, and develop capacity as they go—in the context of achieving 100-day results. This has significant implications for the huge investments that are being made in capacity building and training initiatives: less “just-in-case” workshops and more “just-in-time” training and coaching; more learning by doing while achieving; and learning in smaller bites.

The leaders in each case are a diverse group with differing styles. One quality they all exhibited was a stubborn belief in the possibility, or even the inevitability, of succeeding in tackling big challenges by entrusting the people closest to, and mostly affected by, the issue to channel their existing knowledge and capacity to achieve results. These are individuals who step forward and take a risk in spite of the odds. In doing so, they inspire others to take a leap of faith as well—to contribute rather than staying on the sidelines—to own the problem and find the solution.

The Approach emphasizes that implementation and “learning by doing” are an integral part of the policy development process and a means to assess the capacity for, and the political will to, undertaking larger policy reforms through the achievement of tangible results. Despite the tremendous investments and technical expertise provided in developing countries, implementing effective reform remains a very difficult task and simply looking for better policies may not be the answer.

In the Fall of 2004, Sierra Leone elected new local council members as part of a decentralization and devolution program supported by the World Bank. Local council chairmen were asked to choose areas of focus for their first wave RRIs before disbursement procedures were established, before bank accounts were set up, and even before the chairpersons had officially taken office. Each council was provided with coaching and a small grant ($30,000 on average) to undertake a high-visibility and high-impact project within 100 days. Two examples of the nineteen RRI were:

- Reduce travel time between Sewafe and Peiya of Nimiyama Chiefdom of Kono District from 1hr to 15 minutes and reduce the cost of transportation from Le 5,000 ($1.75) to Le 2,000 (70 cents).
- Increase the availability of high-yield quick-harvest Inner Valley Swamp Rice seeds in Pujehun District by 4,000 bushels within 90 days

The success of the 1st round of RRI convinced the federal government in the 2nd round to devolve to the Local Councils the authority and the resources of key service delivery ministries (education, health, and agriculture). The initial effort was designed to overcome inertia and change the political economy of decentralization. Subsequent initiatives expanded the scope and depth of service delivery programs while informing the design of financial management and procurement systems to strengthen governance and accountability.

Rapid Results is a tool developed by the management consulting firm of Robert H. Schaffer and Associates and has been applied in partnership with the World Bank in a number of its projects in Africa, Latin America, and South Asia. Material for this Annex was contributed by Ronnie Hammad and Bassma Amari.
———, (2003b) “Does AFR have the Capacity to Deliver?”, Draft Discussion paper for Regional Team Leadership (RLT) Retreat, March 10–14.
_____ (2005a) “Committing to Results: Improving the Effectiveness of HIV/AIDS Assistance.”
QAG (Quality Assurance Group), (2003) Quality at Entry in FY02 (QEA5) A QAG Assessment.
_____ (2005b) “Assessment of the Quality of Other Economic and Sector Work.”
_____ (no date) “Assessing the Quality of Non-Lending Technical Assistance: Approach Paper.”
_____ “Quality of Supervision Assessment Notes” on: Bosnia-Herzegovina SOC INS TA, Argentina Maternal & Child Health & Nutrition 2; Albania PUB ADM REF; Colombia Public Financial Management Project II; and West Bank & Gaza Emergency Municipal Services.

Web sites:

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<th>World-wide web:</th>
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Capacity Enhancement through Knowledge Transfer

A Behavioral Framework for Reflection, Action and Results

Knowledge and Learning Group
Africa Region
The World Bank