

A GLOBAL WORKFORCE

A true global community, the World Bank staff is made up of people representing 161 countries. The work of IBRD and IDA is performed by about 8,600 staff working in Washington, DC, and in almost 120 country offices worldwide. Today, 36 percent of Bank staff works in country offices, where an increased presence in the field helps the Bank better understand, work more closely with, and provide faster service to its partners in client countries.

Staff diversity is critical to the World Bank's organizational effectiveness, enriching its talent base, reflecting its global membership, and bringing a wide range of perspectives to bear on its poverty reduction work. In 2007, the Bank Group adopted a five-year Diversity & Inclusion Strategy for Bank Group staff, emphasizing four key themes—the role of leadership; more inclusive staffing processes; new learning to promote behavior change; and fresh metrics that focus on developing-country nationals, gender, and Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean nationals. Future metrics and research will focus on language, education, and previous experience, together with more sustainable diversity in the workforce.

The Bank Group continues to deploy a comprehensive diversity and inclusion agenda supportive of staff with disabilities and any sexual orientation, in country offices as well as Washington. Nationals of developing countries account for 62 percent of all staff and 45 percent of management and senior technical positions. Women account for 52 percent of all staff and 38 percent of management and senior technical positions. Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean nationals represent 17 percent of all staff and 12 percent of management and senior technical positions. The Bank's 24 senior managers include 10 developing-country nationals, seven women, and four Sub-Saharan African nationals.

The intention of the Bank's decentralization initiative was to increase the Bank's responsiveness to clients and to better integrate global and country knowledge. The experience in recent years suggests that, since this process was started a decade ago, the Bank has become a more responsive and effective institution. Although the pace of decentralization has slowed in recent years, there continues to be a call for the Bank, most recently as part of the IDA15 replenishment, to decentralize further, particularly in Africa and in fragile and conflict-affected countries. As a result, the move to deploy more resources from headquarters into the field has continued during fiscal 2008. The cost of maintaining a field presence continues to place significant pressure on the annual budget. The major drivers for this increase in many countries have been higher-than-expected salary growth and office expenses and, in some countries, security costs. These costs have been exacerbated by the depreciation of the U.S. dollar against a number of currencies worldwide. The Bank is developing a strategy to guide future decentralization efforts as well as to adapt its human resource policies and support services to facilitate the decentralization process.

Staff Knowledge and Learning

Knowledge and learning are key to the Bank Group's ability to achieve its mission. A menu of learning activities and knowledge products is available to staff so that they can continuously sharpen their skills and expertise to fight poverty. Options include activities to foster technical expertise, expand cultural awareness, and strengthen interpersonal and client engagement skills. Learning with and from partners is an increasingly critical stepping stone for teams in producing results. The Bank is expanding its use of technology and innovative methods to reach country offices and help these teams harness global expertise in the search for local solutions.

Community Outreach

As the third-largest employer in Washington, DC, the World Bank Group recognizes the need for individual and corporate responsibility where we live and work. In keeping with the Bank's poverty reduction mission, the Community Outreach Program seeks to improve the lives of our neighbors in the greater metropolitan community. We encourage staff volunteerism, administer a workplace giving program, manage an annual high school summer internship program, and partner with area groups to strengthen local communities.

Staff Recognition

Contributions of staff are recognized in several forms. Since 1996, the Staff Association has presented annual Good Manager Awards to honor individuals who demonstrate the highest qualities of leadership and management. In March 2008, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Awards were presented for the fifth year to individuals and teams whose actions promote respect for and recognize the value of differences.

WORLD BANK STAFF: WHERE DO THEY WORK?

- 57 percent work in the six World Bank regional vice presidencies.
- 14 percent work in the “anchor units” of the professional networks and other operational units.
- 29 percent work in finance, administrative, and corporate units.
- More than 73 percent of staff are affiliated with one of the professional networks within the Bank.
- 76 percent of Country Directors and 36 percent of staff are now based in country offices, and 30 percent of staff are hired locally by country offices.