

Capacity Enhancement for Social Development: Building on Local Context and Process

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Executive Summary

This paper attempts to provide a new conceptual framework for, and on that basis practical recommendations, for capacity enhancement initiatives for social development. Most such initiatives—in social development and elsewhere—have been conceived as conventional short courses or self-contained training modules for sharing “tools” and disseminating “best practices,” the overriding purpose of which has been to enhance the technical skills of task managers and policymakers, whether they be donors, colleagues, or clients. All of these tasks are valuable and have an important place. That place, however, needs to be understood as part of a broader discussion that recognizes the range of decision-making involved in devising, implementing, maintaining, and evaluating effective responses to poverty.

We argue that conventional capacity enhancement approaches and the underlying assumptions on which they rest—that the fundamental development problem is one of inadequate technical skills, which in turn give rise to “bad policies” and “weak institutions”—conspire against recognizing the importance and comparative advantage of social development. This advantage lies in social development’s emphasis on context and process. Our argument is that people working on core policy problems must come to terms with how institutional and cultural contexts shape clients’ perceptions of both the ends (“what they want”) and the means (“how they seek to realize those wants”) of development. They must also focus on the mechanisms that shape incentives, resource flows, information, and accountability that determine whether and how given policies and programs are implemented. For the most part, however, policymakers generally, and economists in particular, “have focused their tools on the question of what government should do, with relatively less attention given to the economics and politics of how to accomplish the ‘what’” (Pritchett and Woolcock 2004, p. 192). This paper attempts to redress this imbalance and explores its implications for capacity enhancement initiatives in social development.

The paper consists of five sections. We begin by discussing the role of capacity enhancement within the World Bank Institute (WBI), and in the World Bank Group generally, as it has shifted direction over the past two years. Then we provide a series of arguments—based on the core tasks of understanding “context” and “process”—for enhancing the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to more accurately identify appropriate poverty-reducing policies and instruments (“the what”), and, more particularly, their capacity to address policy and project implementation issues (“the how”). The key elements of this entail forging and sustaining social relationships between multiple stakeholders and engaging in problem-solving tasks whose resolution involves using skills that are primarily “adaptive” (that is, require extensive face-to-face negotiation) rather than “technical” in nature. Indeed, we argue that an emphasis on such issues is—or should be—a defining feature of social development’s contribution to poverty reduction strategies. The next section shows how this approach to thinking about capacity building articulates with the Bank’s overall efforts at capacity enhancement in social development. We then define WBI’s comparative advantage given this Bank-wide agenda and make recommendations for moving ahead with greater focus and potential impact. This last section will feed into the preparation of a proposed business plan for WBI capacity enhancement initiatives in social development to be completed in consultation with the regions and the anchor.

The single most common source of leadership failure...in politics, community life, business or the nonprofit sector...is that people, especially those in positions of authority, treat adaptive challenges like technical problems.

Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky¹

I. Introduction

(1) This paper emerges from discussions surrounding the drafting of a Bank-wide Social Development Strategy, which was launched in April 2002 and is due for presentation to the Bank's Board in May 2004. As part of the drafting process, operational regions of the Bank were called on to develop regional social development strategies, both to better define their direction in the area of social development and as input to the Bank-wide strategy. As an operational Vice Presidency, the World Bank Institute (WBI) was asked by the Social Development Board to prepare a companion piece to the Bank-wide paper on the topic of capacity enhancement for social development.

(2) The writing of this strategy comes at a timely point for WBI. In 2003, the Institute embarked on a restructuring of its activities along three pillars to better align itself with the Bank's operational complex. Thematic programs were organized sectorally to conform better to the Bank's networks under a new "sector and thematic" pillar. A "regional coordination" pillar was created to serve as the link between the Institute and country teams. A third pillar focuses on global knowledge and outreach.

(3) Consistent with the overall World Bank Group (WBG) shift to closer client orientation, WBI is gradually shifting its focus from training individuals to enhancing in-country capacity by tailoring its programs to the specific needs and priorities of each country. Country focus implies continuity and depth in WBI's engagement with clients and operational programs. This new country focus is aimed at increasing the efficacy and impact of WBI assistance and ensuring that these results are sustainable. Training and other learning products continue to be central in WBI's package of assistance, but they are increasingly conceived as part of a menu of services that includes diagnostics and advisory work, strengthening of in-country learning organizations and service delivery institutions, and consulting on capacity enhancement issues.

(4) In consultation with the regions, 12 initial countries were the target of increased WBI presence (for example, the reach of learning activities in these countries increased by almost 50 percent in one year), and currently the list is to be expanded to approximately 30 countries. In the end what matters is not where, but how learning programs are designed and tailored to country needs, and how well WBI leverages World Bank assistance in increasing country capacity. This shift is being implemented gradually, as it implies a radically different way of doing business.

(5) WBI's reorganization has coincided with a greater emphasis within the larger development community on the role of capacity enhancement in development. At the Monterrey Financing for Development Conference in 2002, the international community agreed that "without scaled-up capacity enhancement for human, organizational, and societal change, development impact would be minimal."² This was followed in January 2003 by the Bank's Implementation Forum, during which Bank Group managers identified capacity enhancement in client countries as a key factor to in-

¹ Heifetz and Linsky (2002, p. 14).

² See WBI website, country pillar (reference forthcoming).

creasing development effectiveness. Shortly afterward, the International Symposium on Capacity Development and Aid Effectiveness was held in Manila. Coming two years after the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reopened the debate on how to make technical assistance more effective, the Manila symposium demonstrated increasing convergence among donors in their concepts of capacity enhancement. A key finding was that the international community shared a desire to move away from the “skills transfer mode” of previous technical cooperation. Drawing on UNDP’s ongoing Reforming Technical Cooperation for Capacity Enhancement initiative, donors identified with a new definition of capacity development as “an endogenous process in a country, with external assistance playing a key role in the process.”³ Central to the new conceptual framework were principles of national ownership, participation, and of adopting flexible and long-term support strategies.

(6) WBI has further defined capacity enhancement as an “investment in human, institutional and societal development.” In disaggregating these three areas, WBI has outlined human development as “helping people share and disseminate knowledge, and acquire and enhance their skills.” Activities at this level can include formal training, special learning events, and on-the-job learning supported by external advisors. Institutional development is defined as “helping improve and enhance the roles and status of organizations and institutions, their management and financial systems and the relationships between institutions.” The need here is to examine the environment in which the institution operates and identify the areas where people and organizations are constrained from operating effectively. Finally, societal development is defined as “strengthening the process by which good policies are generated and translated into concrete results, and involving giving attention to broader society issues such as behaviors, cultures, norms and incentives.” With these definitions, WBI has recognized that capacity enhancement services are generally provided in the interest of building organizational and institutional capacity, even though the target audience in the near term may be individuals.⁴

(7) For the purposes of this paper, we define “capacity” as “the ability to access and use knowledge to perform a task,” and capacity enhancement as “focusing on performance in carrying out change.” This definition evolves out of work within WBI aimed at identifying real capacity enhancement needs at the country level through conducting capacity enhancement needs assessments (CENAs). Through using a variety of methodologies, the Institute is attempting to capture indicators of capacity from which a baseline can be developed and improvements measured over time. The hope is that these assessments will lead to comprehensive capacity enhancement strategies that align to country assistance strategy (CAS) priorities and respond to thematic and programmatic demands. Capacity enhancement, then, is both integral at an operational level—through leading more integrated capacity enhancement activities as part of project design—and at policy level, where it incorporates a comprehensive development framework (CDF) approach to policy formulation.

II. Why Capacity Enhancement Matters for Social Development: Understanding Context and Process

(8) The World Bank’s newly formed Social Development Strategy, “Social Development in World Bank Operations: Results and Way Forward” (World Bank, 2003a), identifies capacity enhancement as one of four strategic priorities, and calls on WBI to “enhance its capacity to become more

³ See WBI website, country pillar (reference forthcoming); see also Lopes and Theisohn (2003).

⁴ See WBI website, country pillar (reference forthcoming).

involved in the capacity building agenda.” Why is the role of capacity enhancement so strong in the social sectors? Social development, as defined in the Social Development Strategy, “exists at the intersection between formal and informal rules. It requires, therefore, a deep knowledge of local context, which informs an understanding of how the perspectives and constraints of men, women and children living in, say, the slums of Calcutta differ from those of people living in Bosnian villages, or in Brazilian rainforests” (p. 1). It is precisely this emphasis on local context that can only be understood through listening to and building upon in-country expertise and knowledge, and in designing projects that take these factors into account. This places emphasis on understanding the cultural, historical, and sociological aspects that help define local context, or the “social” aspects of development.

(9) Similarly, local capacity is needed to facilitate the process of policy implementation, or the “how” of development. A recent Operations and Evaluation Department (OED) review of social development activities in the Bank builds on the above point and identifies one of four areas in which the Bank needs to improve its performance as “utilizing better Bank and existing local institutional capacity to provide timely and relevant expertise throughout the project cycle” (World Bank, 2003b, p. 41). Local capacity also needs to be tapped in making use of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that involve clients and stakeholders. Such feedback loops are essential to ensuring that an iterative process of learning occurs. A significant step toward adopting a process approach to capacity enhancement initiatives can be reached through incorporating client participation into the design and implementation of monitoring systems. This participatory monitoring and evaluation approach enables clearer evaluation of qualitative change and the impact of interventions. Establishing a clear role for participatory monitoring and evaluation in capacity development strengthens the Bank’s ability to tailor learning activities to fit client needs over a period of time.⁵

The Role of Context

(10) The richness and variety of local context is especially important for designing, implementing, and maintaining sustained service delivery to the poor and marginalized. Extending the arguments put forward by Pritchett and Woolcock (2004), we argue that identifying the most effective strategies for responding to institutional heterogeneity and the inherently relational nature of key aspects of service delivery is not, and cannot be, simply a matter of training smarter technocrats or replicating (or scaling up) a standardized “best practice.” Acquiring more and better technical skills has its place, and is surely important, but such technical training is inherently unable to address realms of decision-making and program solving that necessarily require face-to-face negotiation, debate, and cooperation.

(11) Distinguishing between two forms of decision-making in public policy (generally, and development policy in particular) helps to locate the conceptual space for such activities.⁶ The first form has to do with the degree of discretion that decision-makers are willing and able to exercise when confronted with a given problem; the second with the extent to which reaching an outcome requires transaction-intensive interaction between clients and providers. Discretion refers to decisions that require some form of professional or experience-based knowledge to be exercised (for example, diagnosing the cause of crop failure), while transaction intensity refers to the extent to which outcomes require few or many exchanges (for example, designing a curriculum versus classroom teaching). (See table 1.)

⁵ On strategies for integrating participatory (and other qualitative) methods with quantitative approaches as part of a general strategy for program evaluation, see Rao and Woolcock (2003).

⁶ These details are outlined in Pritchett and Woolcock (2004).

Table 1. *Classifying Modes of Decision-Making in Key Public Services*

	High discretion	Low discretion
Many face-to-face transactions	Practices (e.g., classroom teaching)	Programs (e.g., child immunization)
Few face-to-face transactions	Policies (e.g., setting interest rates)	Procedures, rules (e.g., making bank deposit)

Source: Adapted from Pritchett and Woolcock (2004).

(12) Decisions that require low discretion and few transactions can be (and usually are) mechanized (for example, cash withdrawals from a bank account). Decisions that entail low discretion and many transactions, however, can be called ‘programs’; because they can be standardized, they are perfectly well suited to the organizational structures of large bureaucracies, enabling resources to be carefully managed and controlled. Programs can be put to the service of accomplishing important goals, such as the eradication of polio, but in corrupt or unaccountable hands, they can also be instruments of coercion and control (see Scott, 1998). Decisions that entail high discretion and few transactions (we will call them ‘policies’) are also well suited to modern bureaucracies, since they place power, privilege, and prestige in the hands of intellectual or technocratic elites. Again, certain decisions can and should be made this way—for example, the setting of interest rates—though we argue there are strong organizational imperatives to regard many other development issues as amenable to this mode of analysis. As we have defined them, policies and programs are two realms in which the World Bank—itsself an embodiment of what Scott (1998) calls bureaucratic high modernism—routinely operates, and within which it largely frames, and responds to, the development challenge.

(13) The fourth realm, however, which entails high discretion and many transactions (‘practices’), is the one large organizations struggle to address because it requires giving space to decisions that, by definition, cannot be standardized or solved by abstract technical analysis. Classroom teaching, curative health care, and agricultural extension are prime examples—delivering these services inherently requires clients and providers to interact with one another over extended periods of time. The realm of practices is an important but frequently overlooked weak link in the long chain of activities and decisions required to deliver services; without it, the credibility, effectiveness, and responsiveness of the whole enterprise is threatened (Lipsky, 1980). Moreover, incorporating practices into an overall strategy for service delivery is likely to entail devolving certain tasks (and corresponding accountability mechanisms) to local intermediaries and organizations, while at the same time harnessing the resources and reach of larger (and more likely formal) institutions. Hence, for development projects generally and social development in particular, facilitating these types of transactions and organizational arrangements is likely to require specific forms of capacity enhancement, ones that go beyond just providing more and better training to senior managers.

The “How” of Local Capacity

(14) Understanding, tapping into, and building on such local capacities, however, takes time and does not fit the standardized systems often advocated by external policymakers, or the frames of reference of “ten smart people” (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004, p. 194) in charge of a given sector. It is also heavily context specific. If services are to be provided to the poor—or be sustainable once delivered—they require both an understanding of and building upon these local capacities. This finding has been borne out by recent OED evaluations that found that “reliance on local knowledge and experience may result in higher upstream costs (building in time for input, consultation, educa-

tion, and conflict resolution), but determined that the improved sustainability of projects where stakeholders are sufficiently involved made up for this” (World Bank 2003b, p. 25). A recent paper prepared by the Department for International Development (DFID) points as well to the need for external actors to better understand local context before designing interventions. Donors, the report argues, “should start with an analysis of each country’s particular context, not a specific list of policies. Understanding the social, political and historical context will help identify the underlying factors which could promote or inhibit pro-poor change, and the likely impact on political and social institutions of particular policy choices” (Unsworth and others, 2003, p. 1).

(15) Building on this analysis, we now move to the “how” of development. The context dictates the starting point at which the “how” of service delivery can take place. This often rests at the point at which a project or program meets the community or clients. What are the needs of the community or group? What are its capacities to manage resources, to participate in project design, to demand services from local and central governments? How does one build these capacities? Each of these contextual factors plays a role in how a service can or will be delivered. Social development argues not only that understanding this local context is important, but also that the values, power dynamics, culture, and informal and formal rules of the game dictate whether positive social and economic change is possible. The recent OED evaluation on social development points to the finding that “learning about peoples’ behavior and opinions in a continuous fashion is essential to ensuring that project objectives are relevant to peoples’ needs, and that project implementation must take account of local realities” (World Bank, 2003b, p. 21). Evaluations in 9 of the 10 areas surveyed agreed that awareness of the sociopolitical realities and the performance of social analysis within borrowing countries is crucial to effective social development assistance (World Bank, 2003b).

(16) This emphasis on context was first tested in the early 1990s in the water and sanitation sector, where studies showed the failure of water supply services when implemented through mechanisms “in which a universal need was met by a technical (supply) solution, and then implemented by an impersonal, rules-driven, provider” (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004, p. 196). In those services whose delivery entails high levels of discretion and transaction-intensive exchange—such as health, education, and agricultural extension—multiple levels of interaction must be addressed simultaneously: between citizens and the government, between government and agencies, between agencies and its employees/contractors (the providers), and between citizens and providers and public authorities. Because of its complexity, provision of key, discretionary, transaction-intensives services through the public sector is the “mother of all institutional and organizational design problems” (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004, p. 196).

(17) Both the high level of complexity and the inherent nature of the tasks to be performed in the delivery of these services mean that a purely technical approach is inadequate; indeed, persisting with this approach alone and/or when it is inappropriate can itself be the problem. Let us be very clear that technical skills (reading, writing, fixing machinery, preparing budgets, drafting a contract) are surely crucial, that upgrading them is an important task in all countries, and that a comprehensive capacity enhancement strategy must give due recognition to them. A key message of this paper, however, is that technical skills should be part of, not a substitute for, a strategy for capacity enhancement. That is, technical skills need to be complemented by what Heifetz (1994) calls adaptive skills, and, importantly, the integration of technical and adaptive skills.

(18) What are “adaptive” skills, and how can they be integrated with technical skills to enhance the delivery of services (and the resolution of development’s multiple dilemmas⁷)? Adaptive problems (and the skills needed to address them) are those that require fundamental changes in people’s attitudes, perceptions, values, and behavior; the answer (or answers) to the task at hand is/are usually not knowable *ex ante*, and is compounded when any available data are imperfect and incomplete. Even if the answer is knowable, we would argue that an answer arrived at through some form of “adaptive” process is a qualitatively different answer to the same outcome arrived at through technical means alone, because it is then endowed with a degree of ownership and legitimacy. (Peace accords are a prime example: a group of lawyers could perhaps have drawn up a statement that in principle was acceptable to both/all sides, but the same outcome reached through negotiation and the direct involvement of the key players is more likely to endure.) War, crime, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS prevention—these issues (and a host of others related to development) can and have been assessed using technical means, but their very complexity and relational nature means that adaptive skills must also be brought to bear. Adaptive problem-solving skills (which themselves are often context specific) can be taught, and they should be seen as something required of all team members, not just leaders.

(19) These themes are taken up in the World Development Report (WDR 2004) on Making Services Work for Poor People (World Bank, 2003c), which points to the need to strengthen accountability in three key relationships in the service delivery chain: between poor people and providers, between poor people and policymakers; and between policymakers and providers. This emphasis on relational capacity, or the dynamics between different stakeholder groups, is precisely the point at which social development focuses. To strengthen the relative stakeholders through capacity enhancement is one thing; to build productive relationships between different stakeholder groups is another. Capacity enhancement in social development attempts to do both, but it recognizes that the relational aspects are key. Social development goes to the heart of this issue: how do we build organizational capacity to strengthen weak groups, such as the poor and marginalized, while at the same time improving the relationships among groups (sometimes called “bonding” social capital) and between groups (“bridging” social capital), and enhancing the quality of information flows and accountability mechanisms between clients and providers of services (“linking” social capital).⁸

(20) The WDR 2004 boldly states the former priority in suggesting a proposed solution to getting services to poor people: “By putting poor people at the center of service provision: by enabling them to monitor and discipline service providers, by amplifying their voice in policymaking and by strengthening the incentives for providers to serve the poor” (World Bank, 2003c, p. 1). Social development is often the entry point for recognizing the need for “client power,” as defined in the WDR 2004. Through seeking to understand the values, culture, history, and informal rules of the poor, social development acknowledges the need to build on this local context, and on the role that local capacity plays in facilitating relationships of accountability. The report also acknowledges that the failure of service delivery often has nothing to do with lack of technical capacity of deliverers or the availability of resources, but rather on the breakdowns in the “institutional relationships between the three main actors: policymakers, providers and clients” (World Bank, 2003c, p. 6). Considering what goes wrong in these relationships and how they might be strengthened is a prime area in which social development can and should contribute.

⁷ For example, finding the line between respecting local practices and recognizing when they are inadequate; between giving assistance to those in desperate circumstances knowing that their leaders are corrupt, etc.

⁸ These distinctions between bonding, bridging, and linking social capital are outlined in World Bank (2000, p. 128).

The Importance of Process to Development Outcomes

(21) Practitioners of social development within the World Bank Group often cite frustration that, because of this emphasis on relational capacity, it fails to fit neatly within one sector or network. Similarly, while social development focuses on the poor and excluded as a priority target group, recent studies have shown that it cannot exclude addressing capacity gaps in the public sector that relate to issues of accountable governance. Attempts to bring about systemic change without addressing the institutions that govern service delivery, resource flow, and political power are doomed to fail; “without an equitable country institutional framework overall, the impact of Bank attempts to focus on social issues at the community level will be marginal” (World Bank, 2003b, p. 26).

(22) The emphasis on relational capacity also makes it difficult to define and evaluate outputs and impact. How does one quantify and assess progress made in improved relations? Recent attempts have been made to develop a series of indicators of capacity in the area of community-driven development (CDD), which draw on the relational strengths and/or gaps between various stakeholder groups,⁹ but there is still a lack of quantifiable data to assess when progress is being made. The recent CENA pilot in Tajikistan identified 71 indicators of relational capacity, including the nature and quality of relations between communities and local governments, awareness by communities of nongovernmental (NGO) and civil society organizations in the community, and level of collaboration between local government and local organizations, among others. Recent efforts have also focused on developing a framework and indicators for evaluating social capital and empowerment. A field-tested and peer-reviewed questionnaire for measuring social capital has been developed, which aims to generate quantitative data on various dimensions of social capital as part of a larger household survey, such as the Living Standards Measurement Survey (Grootaert and others, 2004). Macroindicators of empowerment are also being developed with the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network (PREM) of the World Bank Group.¹⁰ The process is complicated by three factors: the lack of a universal definition of empowerment, the intangible and nonmaterial nature of empowerment as bound up in institutions and idiosyncratic processes, and the contextual nature of those institutions and processes. The difficulty also lies in monitoring “progress” toward empowerment (Grootaert, 2003). Yet unless empowerment—like capacity enhancement—is measured, it is impossible to draw useful conclusions regarding the relationships between empowerment levels and poverty reduction, or the outcomes of strategies designed to empower individuals and groups.

(23) These arguments point to a definition of social development—as well as capacity enhancement for social development—as a process, and one that by its nature is riddled with false starts, mistakes, and a decidedly un-uniform approach. Consider the theme of CDD, which has recently been the subject of reviews by the Development Economics Vice Presidency and the Social Development Vice Presidency. In a recent paper by Stuart Gillespie of the International Food Policy Research Institute, CDD is defined as a “process that recognizes that poor people are prime actors in the development process, not targets of externally designed poverty reduction efforts” (Gillespie, 2003, p. 1). Part of this process, according to Gillespie, is not to push communities too fast—if proponents “drive for quick timebound results that compromise quality” he argues, capacity development becomes “anathema to a true ‘learning by doing approach’” (Gillespie, 2003, p. 42). In an influential review, Mansuri and Rao also argue that the success of CDD is “crucially conditioned

⁹ See annex 2, CENA Pilot Project.

¹⁰ See Holland and Brook (2003).

by local cultural and social systems” (Mansuri and Rao, 2003, p. 57), and therefore best not done with a wholesale application of “best practices” applied from other projects that were successful in other contexts, but by a careful “learning-by-doing approach.”¹¹

(24) These and other studies tell us that an emphasis on local capacity building over a sustained period of time and among a wide range of stakeholder groups is essential to successful CDD efforts. Such capacity enhancement must be targeted and designed on the basis of current capacity and local knowledge and skills. Gillespie even suggests that support for CDD be divided equally between enhancing capacity and funding the implementation of projects; “flexibility, adaptability and openness to changes applies to all stakeholders in CDD processes” (Gillespie, 2003, p. 42). Also important is the acceptance of a long time frame required to bring about social change. Pritchett and Woolcock refer to the short-term, top-down approach to development effectiveness as “skipping straight to Weber,” because “this form did not emerge from an internal historical process of trial and error and a political struggle (as it did in most European and North American countries), but rather was ‘transplanted’ more or less intact as a top-down decision” (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004, p. 201).

(25) The South Asia Region’s Social Development Strategy sums it up well: “In talking about Social Development we are talking about long-term processes of social change. This happens slowly because it involves changes in the norms and values that underlie behavior. Some of the multiple goals of social development are reflected in the targets set for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—these combine economic, capability, empowerment and public good aspects of well being, all of which are necessary for social development. None of these will be achieved by technical inputs alone, as all require long-term, sustained changes in behavior” (World Bank, 2004, p. 25). Generating and sustaining these changes in behavior, we argue, is necessarily a relationally intensive exercise; as such, corresponding capacity enhancement initiatives need to reflect this (see below).

Steps in the Process

(26) Given the above, however, some steps in the capacity enhancement process can and should be outlined to ensure that such efforts are both incorporated into the project cycle and able to be measured both for outputs and impact. Steps in the process also need to be identified to establish the link between policy and implementation through capacity building, and why it must be done with multiple stakeholders: individuals, communities, policymakers, and service providers. As Pritchett and Woolcock point out, “It is in the tension between the incentives of administrators, clients and front-line providers that the solutions lie. These tensions—between specialists and the people, planners and citizens, authority and autonomy—cannot be escaped, rather, they need to be made creative rather than destructive” (Pritchett and Woolcock, 2004, p. 207). Capacity enhancement initiatives can work toward keeping this tension creative by bringing various stakeholders together around the table; that is, by drawing on the convening power of the Bank. As the Bank begins to recognize the role of civil society in development, this convening power becomes even more important, since the Bank has a unique ability to bring government, private firms, and civil society together.

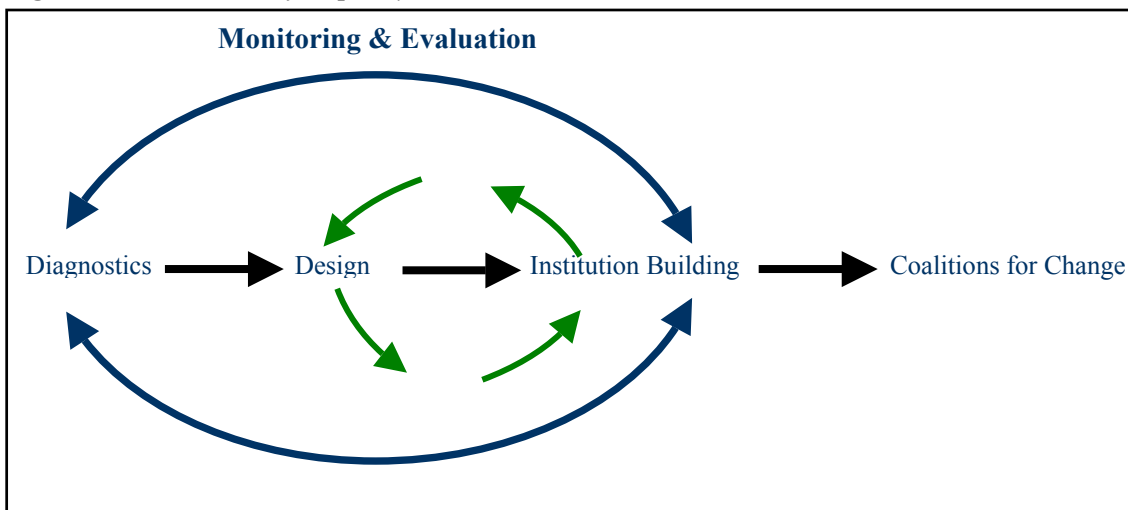
(27) A first step is the use of diagnostics to assess capacity gaps, and to better understand and build on already existing capacities. Such diagnostics need to have an explicit “capacity enhancement”

¹¹ See also the systematic SDV review of the Bank’s CDD portfolio conducted by Wassenich and Whiteside (2003), which reaches similar conclusions.

focus. For example, what are the factors that go into building stronger relationships between local governments and communities?¹² What are the perceptions of stakeholder groups related to issues of corruption or to priorities for government support? The recent OED evaluation of social development points to the need for greater data in this area: “without data to show that local groups need more attention than they currently get, field needs have often been overshadowed by procedural requirements and the need to work with government staff in the implementing ministries” (World Bank, 2003b, p. 40).

(28) The second step is to design capacity enhancement activities in response to identified demand. Too often such activities are supply driven, determined either by the “Washington consensus,” the priorities of Northern-financed and driven NGOs, the preferences of individual donors, or the interests of powerful (local) elites. There is little point in undertaking diagnostics unless capacity enhancement interventions are to be designed on the basis of the findings. Yet, for donors this is still a challenge that needs to be addressed, that is, the “need for short-term progress in meeting poverty reduction targets against the longer-term objective of supporting local incentives and pressures for change” (Unsworth and others, 2003, p. 3). Figure 1 below outlines steps in the capacity enhancement process, with emphasis on feedback and evaluation from participants/clients.

Figure 1. *The Process of Capacity Enhancement*



(29) To ensure sustainability and local ownership requires a third step in the process: the adoption—as needed—of such learning activities (or the tailoring of existing activities) by country-level institutions, both institutions of training and institutions charged with policy development and implementation. The former is perhaps more within the mandate of the World Bank Group, but it is nonetheless not an easy process. In the Bank, institutional support involves the use of more traditional operational forms of grant making, such as institutional development grants, which have an explicit capacity enhancement focus, as well as the use of new technologies that make knowledge more readily available to all and that provide tools for greater and easier adaptability to local context. An example is open source curriculum and the use of e-learning to expand the reach of learning opportunities.

(30) A fourth step in the process involves large-scale coalition building, leading to policy change. How can capacity enhancement efforts strategically help create the energy and skills for positive

¹² See CENA indicators, annex 2.

change within influential organizations at the country level, or build the capacities of organizations to lead such change? “Change, and the management of change, are at the heart of the development process,” argues a recent DFID report. “However, there is a tendency to become preoccupied with current problems and their immediate causes, and with short-term solutions. To counter this, donors need ways of thinking about change which help them keep longer-term, strategic objectives in view, and to identify medium-term, incremental steps to address the root causes of bad government” (DFID Unsworth et al, 2003, p. 2). An important role here is the use of information and the media in making knowledge more readily accessible by a broader base of the population.

III. Capacity Enhancement Instruments and the World Bank Group

(31) The question arises, then, of how to translate this conceptual framework—which emphasizes context and process—into the capacity enhancement process of the World Bank, and, in particular, into those activities related to the social development agenda. The World Bank Group finances large amounts of capacity enhancement activities for client countries. A recent study (Kovalsky, 2003) suggests that 35 percent of total investment lending goes for this purpose, with capacity enhancement being defined as both about substantive analysis and programs, and also about process—the way in which programs are designed and implemented. This process needs to involve country ownership at the macro and program level, country-led donor coordination, and shared learning (especially South-South learning). But there has been difficulty in assessing whether capacity enhancement approaches are successful and whether they are cost-effective. While project quality is high, sustainability and institutional development are among the lowest-rated categories.

(32) If capacity enhancement is to be considered an important part of the Bank’s work, however, the same focus and rigor needs to be applied to it as in other areas. This means defining objectives more explicitly as well as measuring outcomes. Kovalsky (2003) recommended that the Bank increase its evaluation of the different approaches to capacity building used over the years, as well as invest more in knowledge sharing both inside the Bank and through building cross-country and cross-regional networks and communities of knowledge. Suggested ways to proceed included increasing the focus of the Bank’s knowledge work more toward methods and tools for enhancing capacity, including developing knowledge tools to support customized policy/research dissemination and economic sector work (AAA/ESW), and greater use of such tools at the program level to enhance capacity in lending and non-lending activities.

(33) Several attempts bear noting here. First, at the country level, Comprehensive Development Framework and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) frameworks have worked to enhance capacities at the country level through knowledge sharing and specific training programs (such as participatory monitoring and evaluation of PRSP implementation in several countries). The CDF approach has helped coordinate donors at the country level around specific capacity enhancement initiatives, particularly in strengthening government–civil society relationships. In Low-Income Countries under Stress (LICUS), particular emphasis has been put on capacity enhancement activities among civil society and community groups. For example, in Angola, the Third Social Action Fund has a focus on developing social capital within communities through enhancing skills in community-led organizational capacities, civic identity, and accountability.

(34) In the field of social development, capacity enhancement initiatives have focused on five areas: a) capacity enhancement initiatives linked to lending operations; b) formal and informal technical assistance; c) collaborative ESW; d) knowledge tools to support customized policy/research dissemination and AAA/ESW; and e) knowledge tools linked to policy development. In addition,

specific social development tools with capacity enhancement components include country or sector-wide social analysis; participatory poverty assessments; poverty and social impact analysis (PSIA); social and public accountability tools such as public expenditure monitoring surveys and reports cards; conflict analysis frameworks; and social capital assessments.

(35) In applying the conceptual framework for context and process presented in this paper, Bank instruments can be aligned as follows in table 2:

Table 2. Bank Instruments Related to Context and Process

Conceptual framework	Bank activities
Knowledge/context	Social assessment Participatory poverty assessments Poverty and social impact analysis (PSIA) Conflict analysis frameworks Social capital assessments
Process (in support of) Diagnosis Design based on needs Institution building Coalition building	CENA, ESW/AAA Tailored training programs Loans, grants, technical assistance Policy dialogue (CAS, PRSP, CDF)

(36) The question, however, of how the concepts discussed here can be more broadly applied across the Bank's activities in capacity enhancement remains. Here we again emphasize that the conceptual framework presented here does not argue against enhancing technical capacities among clients (i.e, through training in-country social scientists in how to conduct PSIA and social assessment, for example), but rather for broadening the way in which the Bank defines capacity enhancement in the social field. In lending operations, several "best case" examples exist in which understanding and building on local context led to the success of the project. For example, in El Salvador, the Education with the Participation of Communities (Educo) project seized on a preexisting model of community-based schooling as the basis for a formal program that would be financially and administratively supported by the Ministry of Education.

(37) Another well-known example is the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP) in Indonesia—often cited as a "scaling up" success story. The project was designed on the premise that building local self-reliance and reversing the usual dependence on technical staff from ministries was key to its success (see Box 1).

**Box 1. Enhancing the Capacity of the Poor to Make Adaptive Decisions:
The Case of the Kecamatan Development Project, Indonesia**

The Kecamatan Development Project (KDP) in Indonesia is one of the world's largest social development projects. The central feature of its design is the extent to which committees at the sub-district level are given block grants, which are then competitively allocated to community groups on the basis of the strength of the proposals (usually for roads, wells, or community meeting places) they submit; only the strongest proposals—as determined by the villagers themselves on the basis of their own assessment of a given proposal's technical merit, likely impact, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability—are funded. The final outcomes of these deliberations, and the specific criteria used to arrive at them, are clearly posted on community bulletin boards for all to see. Villagers are thus actively involved in the design, selection, implementation, and maintenance of projects that directly affect their well-being.

Communicating the procedures and building an organizational environment that enables these collective decisions to happen, however, are largely the responsibility of village facilitators, or intermediaries. These people are typically young college graduates in their mid-twenties who live in the villages in which they serve. They are trained not only in the details of the program's formal rules (what they are and how to convey and enforce them), but also how to help villagers resolve problems. Explaining the KDP system, and convincing villagers of its merits, is no easy task in a country that for generations stifled all forms of decision-making at, and accountability to, those at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Several organizational design features enabled KDP to scale-up so quickly (from several hundred villages in 1999 to more than 20,000 today), but a little-understood key to success has been KDP's high level of transparency and long participatory planning cycle. Bringing this to fruition has meant investing heavily in the training of dedicated village facilitators, whose primary day-to-day task is helping villagers respond to context-specific problems. As the managers of the project astutely note, "scaling up KDP required major changes to the project's organizational design and management. Going from the 1,000 villages appraised in KDP1 to the 20,000 in KDP2 was not as simple as copying the core design 20 times over. Virtually every attempt to scale up in this way has failed" (Guggenheim and others, 2003, p. 2).

Formal evaluations of KDP—and its urban counterpart, the Urban Poverty Project (or UPP)—have also made extensive use of adaptive skills in the training of researchers. Precisely because KDP and UPP place such an importance on process issues, assessing whether and how particular aspects of that process have been able to help villagers overcome collective action problems and conflict has required extensive investments in the training of qualitative research skills. The fruits of this research have been important in their own right (since the answers are not at all obvious *ex ante*), but also in terms of informing the design and content of larger household surveys used to assess broader impact questions.

Source: *Guggenheim and others (2003).*

(38) But is KDP more the exception than the rule? To answer this question, one needs to look at the Bank-wide SD portfolio to assess the amount of project resources that go toward capacity enhancement. What percentage of social development projects systematically incorporate capacity enhancement components into project design. What kinds of activities do they entail? Do they contain a focus on adaptive skills, or rely predominately on technical skills? At what point in the project cycle are they undertaken, and who is involved in the design? Are diagnostics with an ex-

licit “capacity” focus being undertaken and fed into the design of capacity enhancement initiatives? This is an important area for future research that goes beyond the scope of this paper.

(39) Capacity enhancement on the “social development–specific” tools mentioned above such as social analysis and PSIA is essential. But also needed are capacity building programs that emphasize adaptive skills, such as in participatory monitoring and evaluation, participatory rapid assessments, and appreciative inquiry that are targeted at a broad range of stakeholders. To accomplish this requires partnering with non-governmental organizations or other institutions (including donor agencies) who often have greater experience in this field and/or the capacity to operate more intensively at local levels, drawing on a networking or community of practice model among clients. Nonetheless, if the Bank’s social development portfolio is to show sustained success, emphasis on these kinds of context specific, long-term capacity building efforts at local levels is essential.

(40) What are the realistic limitations to the Bank in implementing the conceptual framework presented here? Some are mentioned above, including its bureaucratic structure, which facilitates implementation of “programs” as opposed to “practices.” Operational task managers often do not have the resources, the time, or the expertise required to implement such a process of capacity building. Donors have conflicting agendas at the country level that make partnering with them difficult. The same can be true of the NGO community. WBI is also constrained by lack of staff and resources to implement large-scale capacity enhancement efforts over a sustained period of time. It must therefore choose carefully the timing of its interventions at country level, and continue to focus on facilitating networking among practitioners and policymakers at regional and global levels.

(41) The thematic networks have an important role to play in providing assistance to task managers in facilitating a better understanding of what is needed, as well as in developing tools and mechanisms in the area of adaptive learning that can be implemented as part of the project cycle, or as a precursor to project design. The social development paper (World Bank, 2003a) identifies several areas in which capacity enhancement can focus. These include building or strengthening national networks of social development specialists; training consultants, NGOs, and others to provide project inputs; building capacity among marginalized groups to improve accountability; and including social development in country capacity assessments to ensure that they cover civil society capacity to partner with and make governments more accountable; and working to build coalitions to promote inclusion.

(42) All of these can and are being done to some degree. But the question is what can be added to this menu and where should we focus efforts in light of the momentum created by the new SD strategy? Table 3 below summarizes the stages in the project cycle and what capacity enhancement efforts can be used to better incorporate the adaptive approach. The table outlines the “status quo” of skills building at various stages of the project cycle and points out where adaptive skills need to be taken into consideration (as complements to the more orthodox approach). Table 2 above provides a menu of instruments and practices that the social development family can support to improve capacity enhancement along the lines presented in the conceptual framework.

Table 3. Adaptive and Technical Approaches in Social Development

Stages in project cycle	Nature of key decisions	Orthodox approach	New social development approach	Capacity enhancement activity/instrument
1. Designing	Technical	Cost-benefit analysis; forecasting models		
	Adaptive	Safeguards	Understanding context: Social Analysis, PSIA, Capacity Enhancement Needs Assessment (CENAs)	Social Analysis, PSIA, Capacity Enhancement Needs Assessments (CENAs) Participatory Rapid Appraisal Processes
2. Implementing	Technical	Log frames		
	Adaptive		Training intermediaries	Support regional and country Networks of Social Scientists with adaptive skills; twin with local institutions to improve training capacity in adaptive areas; maintain Communities of Practice among practitioners and exchange of best practice
3. Monitoring	Technical	Input-output models		
	Adaptive		Focus on relationships of accountability	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Evaluating	Technical	Randomized experiments		
	Adaptive		Assessing process	CENAs systematically and quantitatively measure relational capacities and baselines against which improvements can be measured
5. Replicating / Scaling-Up	Technical	Extrapolating from past experience		
	Adaptive		Learning by doing; scale, new settings create unique problems	

(43) In addition to those mentioned above, the SD family needs to take a bold look at new ways of enhancing local capacity, not just in adaptive skills but in technical skills as well. Should a partnership be formed with a well-known academic institution to develop and deliver a comprehensive, intensive course on social development issues for both Bank staff and clients? Can we re-institute study tours for practitioners, i.e., enable Indonesians to spend a month in Brazil's rural labor unions? Can we launch a comprehensive piece of ESW that looks at what transferable lessons we've learned from our CDD and post-conflict operations? At a minimum, we recommend a more systemic look across SD projects be undertaken to guide the SD family in designing and implementing the capacity enhancement agenda outlined in the SD strategy paper. Our analysis here also results in the following preliminary recommendations:

1. *Raise the profile of capacity enhancement as a crucial ingredient for project success.* This could be accomplished by a rigorous analysis of what capacity enhancement entails: its costs, benefits, time and sustainability. How do SD programs rate against other types of programs across the Bank? What lessons can be learned from successes and failures? The analysis needs to distinguish between short and long-term capacity enhancement (i.e., developing local language toolkits for "short-term" capacity, measured against developing new kinds of leaderships, or "long-term" capacity enhancement). What are the operational implications of these approaches?
2. *Incorporate adaptive skills building and decision-making as part of its core SD staff training,* with emphasis on its understanding and use as part of project design and implementation, or the "how" of project lending. Such a strategy should include enhancing staff capacity in adaptive decision-making as well as technical decision-making, and in understanding the realistic demands and constraints in using this approach. Such course could be designed jointly by SD and WBI and offered to both staff and clients.
3. *Give greater attention and resources to the systematic design of capacity-building components within projects, especially adaptive decision making.* To accomplish this, tools for mainstreaming capacity enhancement initiatives more systematically into the project cycle, such as CENAs, could be piloted and implemented. Such tools could monitor and evaluate the impact of capacity enhancement activities on project success, and to ensure continuous attention to capacity enhancement over the life of the project cycle, and especially up front of project implementation and design.
4. *Reorient technical assistance components to pay more attention to local context* and to recognize that getting to the right answer requires merging adaptive information and skills with technical solutions (that is, technical specialists interviewing villagers to better understand how a road will be used and for what purpose, thus bringing about changes in technical design).
5. *Design AAA/ESW to leave space for adaptive problem solving.* For example, a Living Standards Measurement Survey that incorporates "relational" data into its survey findings is now being piloted through the Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital (SC-IQ) (Grootaert and others 2004). Through focusing on process, greater dialogue between researchers, policymakers, task managers, and poor people themselves can occur, leading to improved and more effective poverty reduction strategies. It is in this area

that the building of local professional capacity (that is, as in nurturing country and regional level networks of social scientists) is called for.

6. *Work to develop better linkages between in-country and regional networks of local expertise.* Draw on the Bank's "power to convene" to facilitate stronger South-South information exchange and building of professional capacities in the social development field.

IV. The Role of WBI

(44) Given the above analysis—and looking at WBI's comparative advantages and limitations—it is necessary to be realistic about what the Institute can and cannot promise to undertake. At best, WBI needs to identify its comparative advantages in leveraging and complementing the work of the SD family. WBI also needs to look seriously at how it can best support the operational regions in its capacity enhancement activities.

(45) The thematic program most directly affiliated to social development in WBI is the Community Empowerment and Social Inclusion Learning Program (CESI). Launched in conjunction with an External Advisory Board, the social development anchor, and sector managers and representatives from PREM Poverty Group (PREMPO) in February 2001, WBI's CESI Learning Program is now the Institute's fifth largest program (in terms of funding) within the thematic and sector pillar of WBI. Although formally affiliated with the social development family, it is a cross-network program with PREM; CESI team members are networked both to SDV and PREM, and joint program deliveries are made with the HD and FPSI thematic learning programs.

(46) The CESI Learning Program Framework draws on both the Empowerment and Social Development frameworks and is structured along two key pillars of capacity enhancement: citizen strengthening and institutional reform. The program consists of core learning modules clustered in the areas of empowerment, civic participation and governance, and social policy, and has delivered learning activities in Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia and the Pacific. The table below outlines recent CESI activities, as defined through primary audience and delivery mechanism.

Audience	Delivery mechanism	Examples from CESI experience
Community members	Collaboration in design and implementation of capacity enhancement activities with operational task managers Technologies that reach mass audiences (radio) Partnerships with in-country dissemination networks at community level	Romania Social Fund Africa radio pilot Monterrey Institute of Technology (partnership); radio programs for mass audiences, Africa
Intermediaries (macro/meso)	Fostering of local networks at regional/global levels Training of trainers (TOT) model (grounded in local institutions), leading to networks of local expertise that provide a business service	Southeastern Europe Network; ASEAN Secretariat; LAC Social Policy; Investing in Communities Africa CDD CDD Library of Learning Objects, web-based course delivery

	Development of open-access learning materials for adaptation and use by local expertise, both individual and institutional	
Practitioners	Regional and in-country networks of local experts with common interests and on-the-ground experience	Community Empowerment Network in Central Asia

(47) The primary audiences of CESI learning activities are communities, intermediaries (both individual and institutions), and practitioners at the local government level. The program reaches macro level audiences, but in general much less than it does audiences at micro and meso levels. Communities are reached primarily in conjunction with operations through marrying capacity enhancement initiatives into project design and implementation. A CESI example in reaching communities was the training of community facilitators undertaken as input to the Romanian Social Fund, in which community facilitators, trained by CESI prior to project implementation, went on to facilitate communities as part of the project implementation; the group subsequently went on to develop its own professional service association. Communities can also be reached through mass audience technologies such as radio or through partnerships with local institutions offering in-country distance learning deliveries, as in the Monterrey Institute of Technology, where in-country distance learning capacities are moving toward setting up community learning centers with wide participation at the grassroots level.¹³

(48) Intermediary clients—both individual and institutional—are composed of diverse audiences at macro and meso levels with cross-sectoral backgrounds. The purpose here is to (a) use the Bank’s “power to convene” to bring together constituent groups that might not normally meet together, as in government representatives and NGO representatives; and (b) use distance learning technologies and “blended” deliveries to foster networks at the country, regional, and global levels through which learning and knowledge exchange continue over a sustained period of time. Examples from WBI/CESI experience are the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat work, the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Social Policy Network, and the CDD Learning Network in Africa.

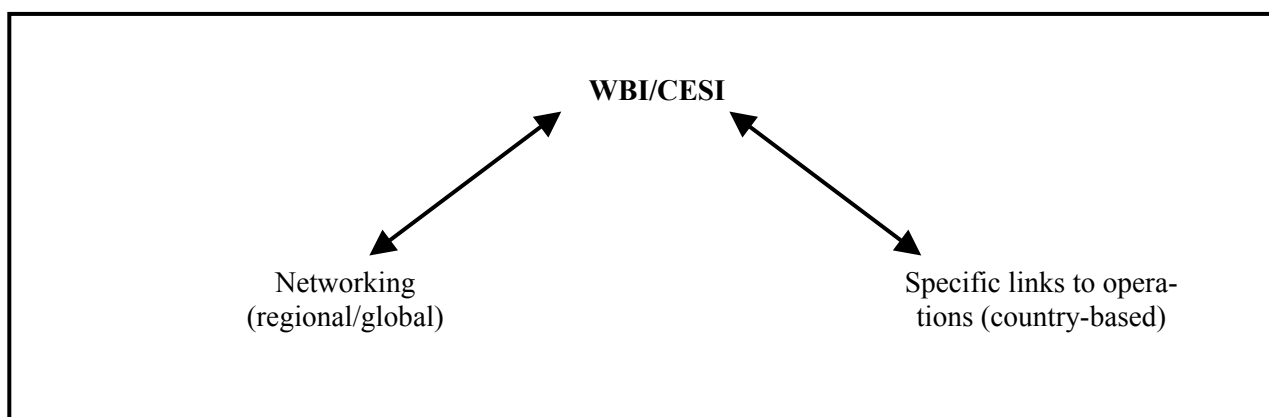
(49) Another subset of clients is practitioners with common backgrounds that meet nationally and regionally to foster knowledge sharing. Examples are the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) in Central Asia (regional), and its in-country knowledge sharing initiative in Azerbaijan. In Azerbaijan, given the small amount of resources available, the CEN partner has promoted knowledge sharing through two main mechanisms: supporting the documentation of local/practical knowledge and dissemination of existing knowledge (both formal and informal) through networking. Networking means disseminating information through linking to the methods that people already use to get information. For example, one effort involves linking community leaders with informal networks of inexperienced practitioners in an effort not to “teach” but to share practical knowledge. The figure below outlines CESI efforts at building local capacity through regional networking.

(50) Given these primary audiences and building on the conceptual framework presented here, CESI’s two main product lines are: (a) building local capacity through networking, mass audience outreach, and partnerships with local institutions, which would be undertaken both in alignment

¹³ See annex IV, Monterrey Institute of Technology.

with the rest of the World Bank Group and to “lay the groundwork” for Bank lending operations and other interventions to draw on existing local capacity; and (b) targeted links with operations on specific projects, taking careful consideration of WBI constraints in terms of time, resources, and other demands on WBI’s staff and outputs. Because of these constraints such interventions can only be undertaken in a selected number of operations and countries, with WBI’s comparative advantage being in leveraging its knowledge in helping in the design, implementation, and monitoring of operationally financed capacity enhancement interventions. As part of this activity CESI is piloting diagnostic tools to help identify capacity gaps and to monitor improvements in capacity enhancement over time as part of project design.

Figure 2. *Strategic Focus*



(51) The majority of WBI/CESI experience has been in the first category of networking to build local capacity. The challenge here is to continue both to build local capacity through these channels and to provide, through two-way knowledge exchange with clients, feedback on practical solutions to capacity building issues in the Bank’s operational regions and policy dialogue with client governments. This process also enables Bank interventions and capacity-building initiatives to be truly demand driven and to develop capacities that exist prior to Bank lending operations, but which the Bank can draw on in implementing projects. These capacities often are more general than those specific to lending operations (that is, procurement for CDD projects), but they exist above and beyond those capacities needed to implement a specific project—hence, they lead to a more long-term process of capacity building.

(52) In the future, however, WBI needs to give more attention to working in close collaboration with the Bank’s operational task managers on selected projects. WBI has been successful in its approach when its activities have been strongly integrated into a project (as in the Romania Social Fund). Criteria that need to be in place are a supportive task manager who understands the importance of adaptive capacity, as well as the point and timing of capacity interventions. CESI also needs support from the sector and CMU. Agreement has to be made on the sharing of resources as well, both in terms of staff and discretionary resources.

(53) CESI’s experience in this area has been limited, so in moving ahead, a pilot approach could be tested in a few countries to demonstrate both the pros and cons of a comprehensive, integrated collaboration with operations in designing capacity-building strategies. CESI’s role would be to ensure a comprehensive approach to capacity enhancement in the project’s design, which would begin by assessing capacity needs, followed by planned interventions at various stages of the project cycle and with a range of stakeholder groups. The regions, then, can benefit from “outsourcing” the

capacity-building component of a project to WBI. The box below describes possible steps in the process.

Box 2. Possible Steps for a Coordination with Operations for Capacity Enhancement Strategy Design

- Select with operational task manager a project with CESI-related components at its design stage to create a capacity-building plan in line with the project time frame.
- Select and train local partner institution(s) to identify potential key persons or institutions for the design of a capacity-building strategy and to become the focal points of country-based strategy implementation.
- Design and prepare several stages for discussions with communities and stakeholders on the project identification and formulation. At this stage, CESI/WBI can implement workshops that facilitate articulating new project needs by the stakeholders themselves, reinforce the capacity of future stakeholders on the project's key topics, and build the base for networking among practitioners.
- Propose a CENA to map out the potential bottlenecks for project formulation and impact and the capacity-building needs in the mid and long term (this stage ensures the capacity-building strategy will be demand driven and integrated by all the stakeholders).
- Propose training plan in line with the project time frame to reinforce the capacity of the stakeholders to discuss the new project formulation and goals, and to regularly monitor project progress in terms of capacity-building achievements, bottlenecks, and new needs.
- Reinforce synergies among stakeholders by providing incentives for networking and exchange of best practices.
- Align operations, trust fund, and WBI training budget with the training plan.
- Regularly monitor project capacity-building needs and progress with the local institution focal points, operation partners, and the practitioners' networks.

V. Conclusion

(54) The purpose of this paper is to present a conceptual framework that *stimulates discussion* on the role capacity enhancement plays in social development. We have outlined the importance of *context* and *process* in high discretion and transaction-intensive decision-making, which comprises the bulk of interventions aimed at social development outcomes. *Context* depends on understanding, building upon, and making use of local capacity; *process* relies on a sustained, iterative approach that incorporates feedback from monitoring and evaluation in project design and implementation, or, a “learning by doing” approach. This paper demonstrates how CESI can contribute to this approach, given its comparative advantages in delivering capacity enhancement activities.

(55) CESI has a strategic focus on delivering learning activities toward its *main audiences*, which have been identified here as communities, intermediaries (individual and institutional), and practitioners at meso and community level, but on also addressing macro-level audiences in conjunction with targeted lending operations and policy dialogue. Our focus in terms of *strategic deliveries* is in two areas: (a) local and regional networking to build local capacity; and (b) targeted partnerships/collaboration with specific Bank lending operations. In doing so, it will maintain a content focus on issues of community empowerment and inclusion and accountability.

(56) A few final points also need to be made. First, with regard to institutional capacity building, the Bank/WBI needs to play particular attention to the *relational* underpinnings that enable formal institutions to function effectively. Second, while country-specific solutions are highlighted both here and, increasingly, Bank-wide, their replicability as “best practice” models is still in question. Models that suggest wholesale reforms in the social development field must take local constraints into account as well as respect social and political contexts. Experience is pointing—as we have tried to describe here—to a more *incremental*, country-specific approach to building political systems. Often, initiatives are simply mistimed—for example, pressing detailed governance reforms on a country preoccupied with reestablishing basic security and reconstructing public institutions following internal conflict. The strength of CESI, then, is not the amount of resources it is often able to bring to capacity enhancement initiatives (which will never match the amounts available to operations), but rather the *point* and *timing* of interventions. Ultimately, these must rely on understanding the local context and commitment to a long-term process of capacity building.

(57) Finally, there is increasing recognition that direct assistance for capacity enhancement needs to be seen in a broader context and take more account of the underlying causes of weak performance. Knowledge sharing has long played a role in development assistance programs, but there is now a recognized need to value it more and to become more skilful in its execution. This includes emphasizing building local capacity to conduct research, policy analysis, and data collection, and assessments by groups both within and outside government. Nothing is more crucial in this respect than the availability of good quality, objective information that can be more persuasive than any amount of direct advocacy. Absence of such information can allow misconceived ideas and policies to go unchallenged. It also involves more support for networking and learning from international partners—including non-government and private sector partners—and especially for regional networking. Integration with neighboring countries can be important in reinforcing success—in terms of economic growth patterns, but also, importantly here, in relation to more intangible changes in attitudes of elites, exchanges of ideas, and in building confidence (in addition to technical competence) to handle social and political change.

(58) It can also serve to strengthen, build on, and make use of local capacity and leave space for adaptive problem solving. This is precisely the area in which WBI can bring its capacity to bear. Through using its flexibility in establishing local partnerships and outreach capacities through distance learning and access to a wide range of technologies, its convening power to bring diverse stakeholders together, and its ability to maintain a degree of independence from government control, WBI can focus on building the local capacity needed for successful implementation of social development tools, projects, and policies. The box below outlines some comparative advantages of WBI in building such local capacities that can be applied in Bank lending and other activities.

Annex I. Capacity Enhancement and Regional Social Development Strategies*

*Reflects explicit mention of capacity enhancement in regional social development strategies

Region	*High priority	*Mid-priority	*Low-priority
<p>AFRICA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate citizens' empowerment and build civil society capacity. • Improve governance by strengthening the way citizens and governments interface. • Scale up CDD approaches; test public and social accountability mechanisms from national to local levels. • Enhance socially responsible private investments by strengthening the way citizens and civic groups react. • Invest in bridging groups (producers' organizations that have the potential to negotiate for improved market conditions). • Test accountability mechanisms in private sector investments. • Facilitate multi-stakeholder participation in the analysis and implementation of market reforms. • Improve social analysis to bring about better social equity, especially on pressing issues such as HIV/AIDS. • Strengthen in-country capacity in social analysis. • Reduce social tensions, conflict, and violence (social capital building and social analysis; analytical work on gender and conflict). • Address gender and youth exclusion (including contributing to analytical work, developing youth strategy for region). • Staff to work increasingly as "managers" of local teams, contracting out services and partnering with local organizations because of resource constraints; implies need to build local capacity. 	X		
<p>Middle East and North Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the growing pressure of youth. • Strengthen social cohesion and security in region. • Improve citizen–state interface for better accountability. • Empower women to participate in development process. • Strengthen urban and rural social organizations. • Ensure access to information for all for better governance and socioeconomic development. 	X		
<p>South Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combating poverty and patronage (another way of looking at corruption). • Address instability and conflict by engaging with civil society in more innovative ways (participatory monitoring and evaluation, workshops, seminars about local government service delivery). • Understand informal systems/institutions. 	X		

Region	*High priority	*Mid-priority	*Low-priority
<p>Latin American and the Caribbean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging greater empowerment of the poor in terms of their participation through civil society and community organizations in the formulation of programs and policies (with emphasis on dissemination of learning). • Promote equal opportunities and equal access to assets, information, and justice for the poor, including women and children. • Offer indigenous groups training (region will prepare sub-regional and country-level strategies with organizations for representing indigenous peoples and afro-descendant populations and civil society and empowerment strategies) and promote understanding of cultural heritage. • Support public policies and programs for historically excluded groups, the multi-cultural nature of those groups' cultural heritages, identities, and knowledge. • Conduct dialogues on "poverty reduction and inclusive social policies" and in relation to reaching MDGs (service delivery). • Partner with international, regional, and national social development institutions. • Increase attention to issues of civic engagement, community empowerment, youth, and gender. • Prepare regional youth and urban violence prevention strategies. • Help realize citizenship rights, promote participation and empowerment, strengthen social capital and democratic processes, and reduce social conflicts and tensions. • Include explicit mechanism in investment operations to ensure social accountability of government executing agencies and participation of local civil society in project preparation and implementation. 		X	
<p>East Asia and the Pacific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating social development laboratories. • Implementing government performance report cards; rapid survey-based measures to assess citizen perceptions of government service delivery (civic engagement and social accountability). • Scale up CDD initiatives • Focusing on conflict and post-conflict reconstruction; work toward social cohesion in areas with low levels of trust; build social capital. • Conduct country assessments on gender. • Engage in advocacy and coalition building through regional partnerships (with ASEAN Secretariat; civil society dialogue; youth initiatives). 			X

Region	*High priority	*Mid- priority	*Low- priority
<p>Europe and Central Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fair and effective institutions (accountability): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —judicial and legal reform (Russia, Albania). —participation of civil society in projects and policy formulation (social accountability, including participatory budgeting (Russia), independent budget analysis and participatory performance monitoring through tools such as citizen report cards (Ukraine)). • Promote social inclusion and cohesion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —policy dialogue with government on inclusiveness (regulatory framework against employment discrimination; protecting cultural integrity of minorities and rights of disabled; programs and outreach activities for children and youth; awareness regarding gender-based violence. —targeted investments for vulnerable groups (social funds, roma, indigenous peoples, welfare projects that incorporate marginalized and vulnerable groups in provision of basic services). • Conduct post-conflict reintegration and conflict prevention efforts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —increased conflict analysis (to be fed into CASs and PRSPs). —investment in post-conflict societies, re “social reconstruction—restoration of livelihoods, sense of security and social trust. 			X

Annex II. CESI Technical Review: Summary Recommendations

Recommendations from the CESI Technical Review in Paris (February 25-26, 2004) reinforced the following future directions for CESI:

On Process/Content:

1. Continue to foster networks and communities of practice at both global and regional levels, and at country level to encourage exchange of information and skills building between networks of social development scientists and practitioners. Support such networks in feeding into the policy dialogue.
2. Use its flexibility and speed at forming partnerships to identify and leverage existing local capacity, and to help link local capacity to the Bank and to regional and global counterparts.
3. Recognize its limitations in conducting resource-intensive, long-term capacity enhancement initiatives at country level by partnering closely with operations in the delivery of selected country-based strategies that are closely integrated with a lending operations
4. Given the above, do not condition CESI programs solely on Bank programs/projects. CESI should continue to use its flexibility to innovate and develop new processes, tools and strategies for bringing value to the Bank's social development work. Preserve the unique relationship WBI has with clients through its learning programs, which retain a degree of independence from the Bank lending operations.
5. Take advantage of its unique distance learning capabilities to foster two-way information flow and consultation with clients. Recognize and build on the array of technologies available to develop, deliver and foster capacity enhancement initiatives.
6. Maintain its focus on micro and meso level participants by recognizing its mandate lies in improved local governance for poverty reduction. This requires building community-civil society-local government relationships as a priority, and recognizing that community empowerment is also about state reform.
7. Continue to advocate for the role of process and context in social development, and on the need for adaptive capacity in decision-making, both among clients and Bank staff.

Annex III: The CENA Approach

To address the capacity needs of various stakeholders and individual communities, WBI has designed and piloted CENAs in the area of community empowerment in Tajikistan and Nigeria. While methodologies for implementing the CENA in these countries differed, the aim of each was the same: “to evaluate existing capacity, identify capacity gaps and weaknesses and recommend possible remedies” (Darlan 2003). A thematic CENA is designed to identify and assess existing capacity within a particular topic area or cross-cutting theme, and this assessment is used to design a multiyear strategy of capacity enhancement actions that measurably raise capacity in that specific area (McNeil and Siddiqi 2002). Learning interventions could include an exchange of information, space for dialogue within and across constituency groups, focused learning and training opportunities, networks or communities of practice for sharing knowledge, and hands-on support for the application of learning and monitoring results.

The CENA should be carried out in the context of World Bank operations and in close consultation with task team leaders. As a component of a project, the capacity-building activities should be sustained at least over the life of the project. By strengthening local human and institutional capacity, such activities would be an important output of sector projects beyond the specific project objectives. While the CENA can be cross-sectoral, it can also be specific to projects with a CDD focus, such as rural health and education or small-scale infrastructure. For community empowerment, for example, this is often decentralization, local government strengthening, and participatory budgeting, in which sectoral expertise is called upon as needed. Finally, it is hoped that the CENA would support a more cohesive strategy among donors and other actors working on capacity enhancement initiatives by providing a common framework.

In Tajikistan a pilot CENA was tested throughout the summer of 2003 in six different communities in three districts. The purpose of the pilot study was to identify the nature of capacity by designing appropriate indicators against which a baseline can be measured. This tool, called the “CENA Matrix,” includes a set of indicators that in turn identifies capacity strengths and limitations of key stakeholder groups from the perspective of selected communities. The results of the CENA include a diagnostic tool on capacity from which a comprehensive learning strategy for each stakeholder group can be designed to incorporate both a multiyear and collaborative perspectives. The results of the CENA approach also allow for an ability to measure capacity gains over time.

The tool is designed to be used at the community level, as it provides input for the design of projects by giving upfront information to the task managers about capacity needs as they relate to project implementation. The tool also offers task managers indicators of measurement for capacity enhancement that they can build into their projects, and against which they can be evaluated.

At the macro level, the tool allows for the possibility of bringing about a cohesive strategy among actors working on capacity enhancement initiatives at the national and regional levels. The diagnostic assessment also leads to a comprehensive, cross-sectoral, and multiyear strategy.

In Nigeria, a thematic pilot CENA (Capacity Enhancement Needs Assessment) for Community Empowerment was completed in the states of Ekiti, Imo, Bauchi and Kano. The CENA was implemented through phased learning interventions. Phase one involved identifying the nature of existing capacity (in particular at the local level) for community empowerment, especially for the poor and excluded. Phase two entailed identifying and differentiating gaps in capacity for key stakeholder groups. Phase three focused on developing a multi-year strategic plan of action (CE-

CES: Community Empowerment Capacity Enhancement Strategy) to enhance the capacity for community empowerment.

After a concept note based on the basic framework and draft guidelines for the approach was prepared by the CE-CENA, terms of reference to carry out CE-CENA in selected states were prepared and circulated in Nigeria. Expression of interest and detailed proposals were received and reviewed by the team, and seven proposals were chosen for further discussions. The second step¹⁴ was shaped largely by the preliminary observations and findings of field missions, continuing dialogue with key stakeholders, and findings of the CE-CENA exercise.

Working closely with four selected communities in their respective states, the local partner organizations identified and engaged key stakeholder groups to conduct the assessment over a period of three-four months. These groups, selected in each community included: Local and State Government officials, Traditional Leaders, Community Based Organizations, Women, Youth, Religious Leaders, Teachers, Artisans, Private Sector Business Operators, Farmers and so on. For each state, the CENA instrument was adapted with customized tools and approaches.

The CE-CENA approach was adapted to suit the various communities, and tools were tailored to provide convenient platforms for each stakeholder group to express their views and articulate capacity needs in languages intelligible and familiar to them. By so doing, the instrument allowed people to talk freely about problems and issues, thinking about solutions along the way, which also helps release pent up frustration, and is useful to gain the trust and support of the people. It also develops a solid grounding for the community empowerment agenda. The application and use of CE-CENA was noted to be labor intensive, consuming a lot of time and human resources. Notably this characteristic did not diminish but enhanced its practical utility: providing varied platforms and channels for communities to express their views freely and to articulate clearly their capacity needs and challenges.

During the second phase of the CENA exercise, draft reports were completed by local partners, and a second mission was undertaken by the Team to provide feedback and to discuss with communities and local partners their experience of the CENA exercise; interact with key stakeholders in the remaining two selected states; brief counterparts on the progress of the exercise and initiate work on the development of benchmarks and indicators for measuring the capacity enhancement for community empowerment. The process is currently in its third phase, with a synthesis of the findings being presented in the pilot report. This will also provide inputs for the Country Capacity Enhancement Strategy (CCES) being prepared by WBI as a contribution to the CAS document. As a final step, multi-stakeholder dialogues at the state and cross-state level are scheduled for early 2004. The findings of the CENA exercise will be discussed at these dialogues and a multi-year plan of action will be developed with the stakeholders who are also expected to be the main implementers of the agreed actions.

¹⁴ Conceptualizing the approach and underlying issues, interacting with WBI and Bank-financed programs, pre-selecting local partner organizations to undertake the CENA exercise; followed by a four-week field mission to complete: the selection of Local Partner Organizations for the CE-CENA work in the states of Imo, Ekiti, Kano and Bauchi; site visits and dialogues with key stakeholders; and an interactive session on approaches, tools and methods for situation analysis with local development, research, and training organizations. Activity Agreements have been signed with selected Partner Organizations, and work has been initiated for the CE-CENA exercise.

Annex IV: Building Local Capacity through Networks: CESI Examples

Southeastern Europe

Civil society practitioners and public authorities from six countries in South Eastern Europe gathered in Szentendre (Hungary) on May 2001 to establish a dialogue to help them work together more effectively. The network formed during the workshop has continued as some country participants have decided to collaborate in refining and implementing the action plans (on increasing public participation) that were drafted during the workshop. CESI has continued providing support to some efforts (for example, Serbia), while other teams moved ahead in implementing the action plans on their own (for example, Montenegro).

ASEAN Secretariat

This program has effectively brought together key stakeholders in the national development structure to work on integrating social development more effectively into national priorities and goals. Program activities included having teams from the participating nations work on their concept for the production of a country action proposal that would address an aspect of rural poverty alleviation using local participation as a means of obtaining ownership for the proposed intervention. The concept papers were then posted on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) site (<http://www1.worldbank.org/gdln-scripts/dlmanage.exe?l=0&course=141>), and received feedback. Revised concept papers were later developed, presented, and discussed during two video conferences held October 30 and November 6, 2003.

LAC Social Policies

A lively community of practitioners emerged from the participants of the Dialogues on Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Social Policies, which was organized by WBIEN-CESI in partnership with LCSEO and Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, FLACSO Costa Rica. WBIEN has been supporting this network by identifying and disseminating materials and information about activities and web sites, and channeling participants' demands for specific information or action to program participants, which include high-level policymakers, various government ministries, and representatives of NGOs, civil society, and the private sector.

CDD—Africa

CESI has been working with the Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (ESSD) Network and Operations to build commitment to CDD in Africa, improve capacity among African institutions to formulate and implement CDD operations, and to scale these operations up quickly. Part of this effort included the design and delivery of country-level stakeholder workshops, which brought together up to 200 national and local government and NGO representatives in these training sessions, as well as regional courses (distance learning) and country level policy seminars (face to face) which gathered about 200 policymakers to learn and discuss issues such as decentralization, municipal governance, and civic participation.

CEN—Central Asia

WBI's CESI is currently supporting the development of regional and national networks of local institutions and individuals working to build capacity for CDD in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. This is being done in partnership with the Attacking Poverty Program and the Social Development Group (ESSD) in Europe and Central Asia. Program activities include components at the national and sub-regional levels, such as national-level consultations and annual regional workshops, and are implemented by a local partner organization under the guidance and supervision of a steering group.

Annex V. Outreach to Mass Audiences: The Monterrey Institute of Technology

The Virtual University of Monterrey Tech is a privately run center for education via distance learning in Mexico launched in 1943 and supported by 26 nonprofit associations. Its mission is to provide quality education by using innovative education models, learning networks, and advanced information technologies to contribute to the “integration and development of Spanish-speaking communities.” Monterrey Tech reaches 97,000 students through 32 distance-learning campuses in Mexico, and links with an additional 10 offices globally (Vancouver, Dallas, Houston, Boston, Washington, Miami, Paris, Madrid, Hangzhou and Singapore).

The Institute has as its stated goal to “reduce the education gap between those who have access to education and those who do not.” The theme of social inclusion guides its development strategy, which promotes community sustainability based on four key elements: education, innovation, technology, and social consensus. In February 2001 it launched an innovative system of Community Learning Centers, whose purpose is to help alleviate the lack of equity and respond to the problems of extreme poverty that Mexico faces. The initiative now has 250 centers operating across Mexico, with another 2,000 planned to come on line within the next year. Each center is equipped with a bidirectional Internet via satellite, connected by radio frequency, and wireless connection.

Community Learning Centers are based on a partnership model between Monterrey Tech and public and private sector organizations. The first center, located in the south of Nuevo Leon, was begun as a partnership between the Education Secretariat of the state of Nuevo Leon and the telephone company Telmex (Telefonos de Mexico) in February 2001. One month later the Institute signed an agreement with the federal government, through the Social Development Secretariat (SEDESOL), to launch a Community Learning Center in each of the 250 microregions with marginalized populations in the country. The implementation of these centers was done in two phases; today there are 305 centers in Mexico and the United States.

Key to the functioning of Community Learning Centers are “social promoters” working within each center who are charged with promoting community participation, identifying programs that respond to the needs of communities, coordinating education sessions, managing resources, and linking with technologies. The education model used emphasizes learning rather than teaching and encourages students to develop their abilities for independent study.

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