

## **Annual Evaluation Review FY06**

### **Effectiveness, Outcomes, and Quality of WBI's Learning Programs: What Does Evaluation Evidence Show?**

*Nidhi Khattri*



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Vice President, World Bank Institute	Frannie Léautier
Manager, Institute Evaluation Group	Richard Tobin
Task Team Leader	Nidhi Khattri

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## **Acronyms and abbreviations**

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FY	Fiscal Year
JAI	Joint Africa Institute
JCS	Joint client staff
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
WBI	World Bank Institute
WBIEG	World Bank Institute Evaluation Group

## INTRODUCTION

1. In support of the Bank's development work, the World Bank Institute's core function is to foster its clients' capacity for *generating, disseminating, and using knowledge* essential for development success. The importance of developing this knowledge-based capacity for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is broadly accepted in the development community. The meetings in Monterrey, Doha, Johannesburg, and Shanghai placed knowledge-based capacity at the core of development and led to the consensus that an explicit emphasis on this capacity is essential for sustainable development, growth, and poverty reduction.
2. The recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC 2006) paper, *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice*, and the Paris Declaration, too, highlighted the centrality of knowledge-based capacity to address development challenges.
3. This review presents a summary of evaluation findings regarding the effectiveness and outcomes of WBI's learning programs in focus countries, as well as the quality of WBI's learning programs worldwide.<sup>1</sup> WBI uses its learning programs as a key instrument for developing knowledge-based capacity. These findings are summarized from evaluations and studies completed by WBI's Evaluation Group (WBIEG) in FY05 and FY06.

## BACKGROUND

1. Critics hold that the development community's efforts to foster capacity have not yielded visible results and are marred by a supply-driven approach, lack of ownership by the putative beneficiaries, and poorly designed interventions. OECD DAC (2006) estimates that more than \$15 billion a year – about a quarter of donor aid in recent years – has funded technical cooperation, the bulk of which is intended for capacity development.

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<sup>1</sup> WBI's other functions and services, such as research and knowledge-generation work that influence the demand side of capacity (governance and anticorruption; knowledge for development) and technical assistance, a new product line for WBI, are outside the scope of this review.

The paper asserts, however, the results have been lackluster, and the challenges in developing knowledge-based capacity remain daunting.

2. A study conducted by the World Bank Institute's Capacity Development unit and WBIEG similarly shows that the Bank's projects completed between 2000 and 2004 fared less well on institutional development impact, which is an aspect of developing knowledge-based capacity, than on achieving other outcomes (Khattari et al. 2006).

3. In June 2006, WBI's Capacity Day conference brought together World Bank staff and a diverse set of partners to discuss and understand how to promote the development of capacity. Some areas of consensus emerged from the discussions among experts and practitioners:

- The development of knowledge-based capacity requires sustained engagement and takes time
- Supporting and guiding leaders and agents of change are critical aspects of developing capacity
- Peer-to-peer learning, learning-by-doing, and knowledge-exchange foster capacity
- Building organizational capacity is a key lever for development
- Measuring capacity *per se* is difficult, but indicators of organizational *performance* are useful for assessing organizational capacity (and for accountability and learning)

4. Despite these lessons, little information exists regarding whether capacity development programs are designed and measured with respect to the above-mentioned principles. Thus, criticisms about lack of results in developing knowledge-based capacity may apply to the World Bank Institute (WBI) as well.<sup>2</sup> What does evaluation evidence show?

5. This review primarily covers the effectiveness and outcomes of WBI's learning programs in focus countries. Focus countries are those in which WBI's capacity development services are formally agreed upon with the Bank's country team and aligned with the Bank's country strategy. The review derives information from tracer studies completed by WBIEG in a sample of 25 of WBI's focus countries. The review also summarizes information on the quality of WBI's learning programs worldwide and draws

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<sup>2</sup> Information on WBI's programs and budgets is available in WBI's annual reports.

on findings of other strategic studies to identify additional lessons learned.<sup>3</sup> The review addresses the following questions:

- (1) What are the effectiveness and outcomes of WBI's learning programs in the focus countries?
- (2) What is the quality of WBI's learning programs?
- (3) What lessons do the evaluation and research findings provide for the future?

### **WHAT ARE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND OUTCOMES OF WBI'S LEARNING PROGRAMS?**

1. The premise that knowledge-based capacity is essential for sustainable development is undisputed, but the specific methods to identify and assess the precise relationships between efforts to grow capacity and longer-term development outcomes remain elusive. The development of such capacity is a long-term process, and the attribution of the specific aspects of the capacity developed to a specific, time-bound set of inputs is tenuous. Nonetheless, tracer studies conducted with the immediate beneficiaries of capacity development efforts (clients who participate in learning activities) can help establish some initial measurable results.

**WBI's focus-country learning activities were more effective and achieved better outcomes in FY05 than in FY01. However, WBI's effectiveness and outcomes were rated less favorably in middle-income countries than in low-income countries.**

2. In FY03, WBI implemented significant organizational changes in an effort to improve the relevance and effectiveness of its services. WBI established a country-focus approach to better align and integrate its development functions with regional operations and to foster longer-term, sustained engagement with the Bank's clients.<sup>4</sup> Simultaneously, WBIEG initiated tracer studies of WBI clients in a sample of the focus

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<sup>3</sup> The reports cited in this review provide information on the evaluation methods used and the limitations of the data and analyses underpinning the evaluation findings. Readers interested in the technical details are encouraged to refer to the individual reports, all of which are available from WBIEG.

<sup>4</sup> WBI also provides advice regarding capacity development issues for the country assistance strategies, the quality and relevance of which is currently under review by WBIEG.

countries, which provide information on WBI’s performance on beneficiary-level outcomes<sup>5</sup> (See table 1).

**Table 1: Focus countries included in the tracer studies, by region**

Africa	East Asia & Pacific	Europe & Central Asia	Latin America & Caribbean	Middle East & North Africa	South Asia
Burkina Faso	China	Russia	Bolivia	Egypt	India
Ethiopia	Indonesia	Tajikistan	Brazil	Iran	Sri Lanka
Ghana	Philippines	Turkey	Guatemala	Morocco	
Kenya	Thailand		Mexico	Yemen	
Nigeria	Vietnam				
Senegal					
Tanzania					

**The perceived effectiveness and outcomes of WBI’s learning programs were higher in FY05 than FY01.<sup>6</sup>**

**Effectiveness and Outcomes Defined**

**Effectiveness:** Participants’ ratings of the degree to which the WBI learning activity they attended was effective in raising their *awareness*; improving their *knowledge and skills*; and providing them with *strategies and approaches* to address the needs of their organization or country. Rating scale: 1 = “not effective at all” to 7 = “extremely effective.”

**Outcomes:** Participants’ ratings of the degree to which they used the information, knowledge, and skills they gained from the activity for (1) *academic purposes* (the “generating” and “disseminating” components of knowledge-based capacity); and (2) *operational purposes* (the outright “use” component of knowledge-based capacity). Rating scale: 1= “[use] not at all” to 7 = “[use] very often.”

**Effectiveness**

3. Development of knowledge-based capacity encompasses a variety of approaches to inform, engage, and influence agents of change who absorb knowledge and apply it in

<sup>5</sup> The studies collected data from over 2,900 WBI clients in these countries for activities implemented between FY01 and FY05. The data were collected 8 to 22 months after the completion of the activity in which the client participated. The average survey response rate across countries was 66 percent. Ling et al. (2006) provide a discussion of the study methodology and limitations.

<sup>6</sup> Throughout this report, differences between means or percentages (including increases or decreases) are stated only when they are statistically significant at the .05 level or less.

complex ways. Research indicates that adult learning in organizations comprises four main immediate objectives: (a) raising awareness; (b) developing individual capabilities; (c) developing team effectiveness; and (d) developing leaders (mainly through executive training) (Lockheed and Arango 2005). These objectives represent core dimensions of adult learning. Adult beneficiaries apply the information, knowledge, and learning gained to their jobs, thereby contributing to broader organizational and institutional capacity (Lockheed and Arango 2005).<sup>7</sup> A variety of tools and interventions, including training and knowledge-exchange fora, can help achieve these objectives.

4. In WBIEG's tracer studies, clients rated the effectiveness of WBI's programs related to the first three dimensions of adult learning: raising their *awareness*; improving their *knowledge and skills*; and providing them with *strategies and approaches* to address the needs of their organization or country.

5. The ratings of perceived effectiveness of the FY05 programs were higher than the ratings of the FY01 programs (see figure 1). Calculations based on simulations show that *overall effectiveness* (including all three dimensions of learning) ratings for FY05 were 16 percent higher than the FY01 ratings. The ratings were 14 percent higher for *raising awareness*, 19 percent higher for *improving knowledge and skills*, and 13 percent higher for *providing strategies and approaches*.<sup>8</sup>

### **Outcomes**

6. The relationship between knowledge-based capacity inputs and ultimate development results, such as the achievement of MDG targets, is mediated by numerous factors, including appropriate behavioral change on the part of those individuals responsible for development. Results are more likely to be achieved when those responsible *use* appropriate information, knowledge, and skills acquired and have the organizational or institutional support to do so.<sup>9</sup> However, changing behavior is more difficult than boosting individuals' knowledge, and the measures of behavioral change are difficult to operationalize and assess objectively. Subjective reports of behavioral

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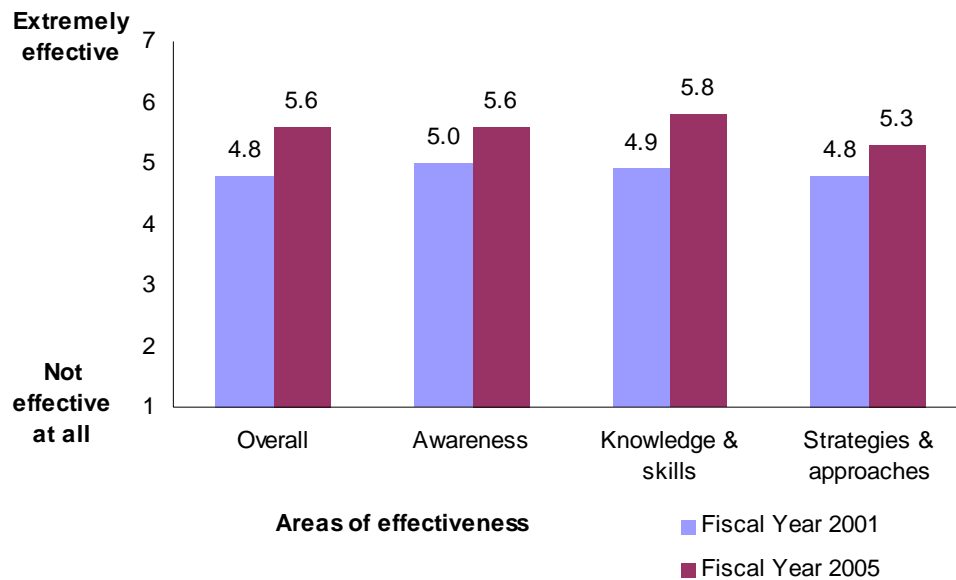
<sup>7</sup> Relatively little is known empirically about the effects of improved learning on corporate outcomes. See Lockheed and Arango (2005) for a discussion of this topic.

<sup>8</sup> The percent changes noted are robust estimates based on multivariate analysis, controlling for the sample differences in the level of country income in the two time periods compared, FY01 and FY05. The changes reported are based on the most conservative simulation model. Multivariate regression modeling shows that several variables are related to effectiveness, as discussed in the next section; time-related improvements in these variables (e.g., use of action plans, activity relevance to country needs, etc.) are partially driving the improvements in effectiveness over time. In addition, 5 percent of the change in *overall effectiveness* is explained by the time variable itself, indicating that there are other factors (e.g., better targeting, improved program content, etc.) changing or improving with time but that are not captured in the regression model.

<sup>9</sup> See Lockheed and Arango (2005) for a discussion of this topic.

change (clients’ self reports of use of information, knowledge, and skills), nonetheless, provide a rough indication of the intermediate outcomes of capacity-development efforts.

**Figure 1: Participants’ average ratings of WBI activity effectiveness were higher in FY05 than in FY01**



7. As part of the tracer studies, clients rated the degree to which they used the information, knowledge, and skills they acquired for two main purposes: (1) *academic purposes*, such as research and teaching (the “generating” and “disseminating” components of knowledge-based capacity); and (2) *operational purposes* such as influencing legislation and developing organizational strategies (the outright “use” component of knowledge-based capacity).

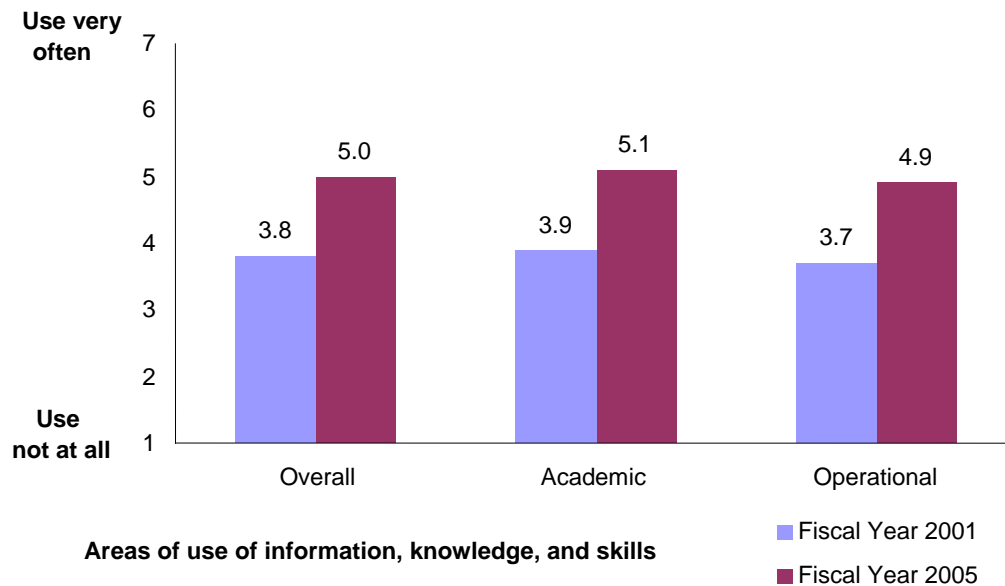
8. WBI clients in FY05 reported more frequent use of what they had learned than did their counterparts in FY01 (see figure 2). The FY05 ratings were 30 percent higher for *overall use* (including all dimensions of use), 28 percent higher for *academic use*, and 32 percent higher for *operational use* than the FY01 ratings.<sup>10</sup>

9. These ratings, however, do not indicate whether the outcomes achieved were sufficient or whether individuals’ improved knowledge and behavior led to enhanced

<sup>10</sup> The percent changes noted are robust estimates based on multivariate analyses, controlling for sample differences in level of country income in the two time periods compared, FY01 and FY05. The changes reported are based on the most conservative simulation model. Multivariate regression modeling shows that several variables are related to use, including the position of the participant, as discussed in the sections below.

organizational and institutional capacity. To determine whether the average ratings represent acceptable performance, WBI should establish benchmarks, based on research regarding adult learning and behavioral change. In addition, WBI will need to demonstrate that training of individuals (as well as individuals' favorable perceptions of effectiveness and reports of use of knowledge, information, and skills) in fact leads to desired changes in organizational and institutional capacity.

**Figure 2: Participants' average ratings of use of knowledge and skills increased between FY01 and FY05**



**WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF WBI'S LEARNING PROGRAMS?**

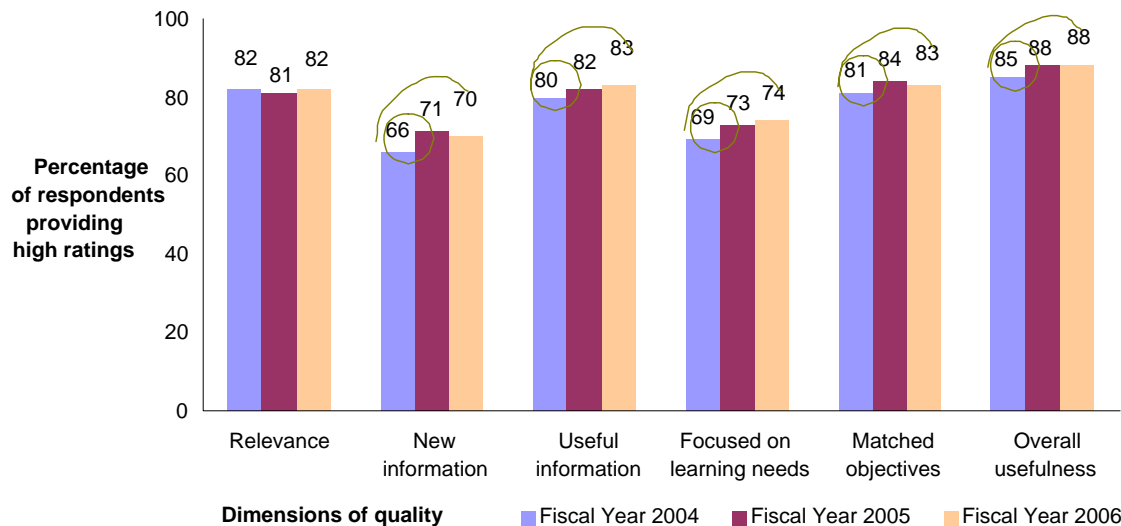
**Quality of WBI's learning activities meets WBI's institutional benchmark.**

1. WBI regularly collects information on the quality of its learning activities, as a leading indicator of the effectiveness of its activities. Participants provide their assessments of the quality of the activity they attended on a confidential, end-of-activity survey.<sup>11</sup> The survey is based on a 5-point scale, from 1 = "minimum" to 5 = "maximum," and assesses six dimensions of quality.

<sup>11</sup> The assessment rate (percentage of activities with more than half the participants completing the survey) increased 8 percentage points, from 50 to 58 percent between FY04 and FY06, and the average activity-

2. Data collected over the past three years show that the quality of WBI’s learning activities has remained above the 80 percent benchmark established for “overall usefulness” (percentage of clients rating the activity “4” or “5” on the 5-point scale). See figure 3.

**Figure 3: The perceived quality of WBI learning activities improved between FY04 and FY06**



Note: High ratings are ratings of “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale. The number of activities rated was 410 in FY04, 506 in FY05, and 437 in FY06. The markers between the bars indicate statistically significant differences between the fiscal years.

3. The ratings improved from FY04 to FY06 for all dimensions of quality except “relevance,” which was about 80 percent in all three years. Although ratings for the extent to which the activities “focused on learning needs” improved between FY04 and subsequent years, the data indicate there is scope for WBI to further tailor its activities to meet its clients’ needs.<sup>12</sup>

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE TRACER STUDIES AND QUALITY DATA

1. Analytic findings from WBIEG’s tracer studies and the data on the perceived quality of WBI’s learning events support some of the key observations regarding the

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level participant response rate remained unchanged at 69 percent. In FY03, these figures were 46 and 63 percent, respectively.

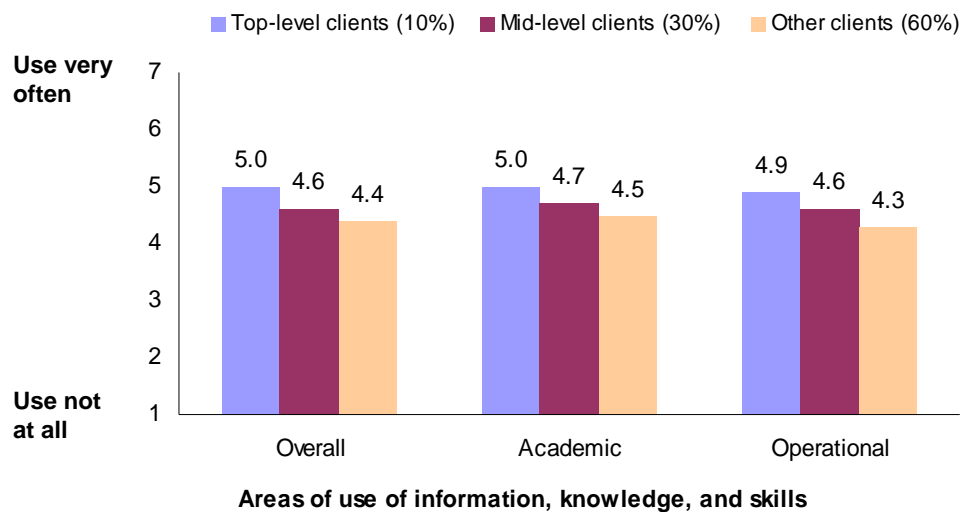
<sup>12</sup> The ratings on “new information” may not be applicable in all cases because many activities focus on information-sharing and the use of such information for policy or operational purposes.

nature of knowledge-based capacity development. The findings also highlight avenues for action that show promise for the future.

2. Clients in top-level positions, including ministers and deputy ministers, reported more frequent use of what they learned for *operational purposes*, compared with those in lower-level positions.<sup>13</sup> The top-level category of clients comprised 10 percent of WBI’s clients in the tracer studies. See figure 4.

**Support for leaders is essential for influencing change. Participants in high-level positions reported more frequent use of what they had learned compared with those in lower-level positions.**

**Figure 4: Top-level clients reported high use of learning**



3. In addition, government officials reported higher effectiveness (about 2 percent higher) of WBI activities, particularly for *knowledge* and *strategies and approaches*, than participants from the private sector and other nonacademic jobs.

4. Data in WBI’s Client Registration System indicate that WBI overall (not just in focus countries) is increasing its reach to high-level participants. Although WBI activities involved about the same number of ministers in FY05 and FY06, 372 and 347, respectively, the number of parliamentarians participating in WBI programs increased from 1,250 in FY05 to 1,836 in FY06. The total number of such high-level officials included in WBI’s activities increased from 34,508 in FY05 to 36,150 in FY06. In FY05, government officials comprised 32 percent of all WBI participants; in FY06 this proportion increased to 40 percent.

<sup>13</sup> Top-level officials category includes ministers, deputy ministers, other top government officials (above the rank of program manager, project leaders, etc.), and heads of organizations.

5. WBI's tracer studies and data on the quality of WBI's learning events, however, also point to the need for WBI to develop a strategy specifically for middle-income countries, particularly lower middle-income countries.

**The need for an improved WBI strategy in middle-income countries is evident. WBI performed better in low-income countries than in middle-income countries.**

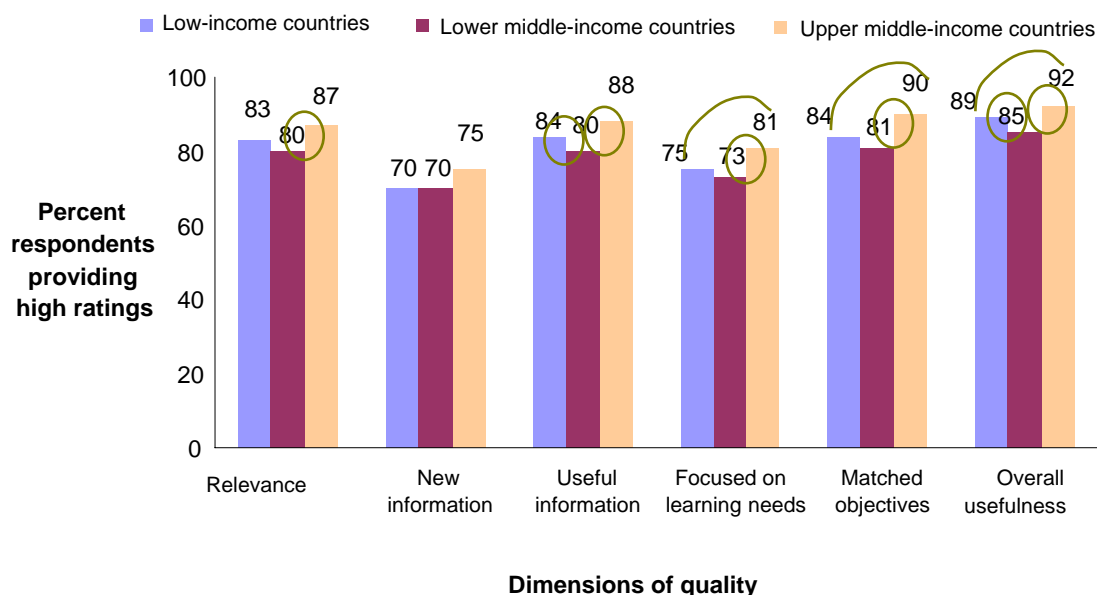
6. The tracer study data show that WBI's effectiveness was higher in low-income countries than in middle-income countries (by about 3 percent) and clients from low-income countries reported higher use of what they had learned than did those from middle-income countries (by about 1.5 percent). Although these differences are small, they are statistically significant. This finding mirrors the broader observation that the Bank should find ways to remain relevant to these countries' needs.<sup>14</sup> These countries consider the Bank to be an important source for knowledge and ideas, but they are less interested in generic knowledge and ideas than in specific solutions to specific problems. The precise reasons why WBI's learning programs were more positively received in lower-income countries than in middle-income countries are unclear and need to be examined. Several lines of inquiry need to be pursued: Is the content of the learning activities sufficiently tailored to the needs of middle-income countries? Are the learning activities demand-driven? Are the pedagogies used suitable?

7. The FY06 end-of-activity data on quality also show that the ratings meet the benchmark of 80 percent for *overall usefulness* for all income categories (see figure 5). However, the ratings are lower for lower middle-income countries than for upper middle-income countries for five of the six dimensions. Interestingly, ratings for low-income countries are lower than those for the upper middle-income countries on three dimensions. Of concern are the ratings on *focused on learning needs*, which are well below 80 percent for both low-income and lower middle-income countries. This pattern in the data on quality may indicate that the needs of *lower* middle-income countries, not *all* middle-income countries, may require review and modification.

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (2005) for a discussion of this topic.

**Figure 5: Perceived ratings on activity quality were more favorable for low-income and upper middle-income countries than for lower middle-income countries, FY06**



Note: High ratings are ratings of “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale. The markers between the bars indicate statistically significant differences between the country groupings.

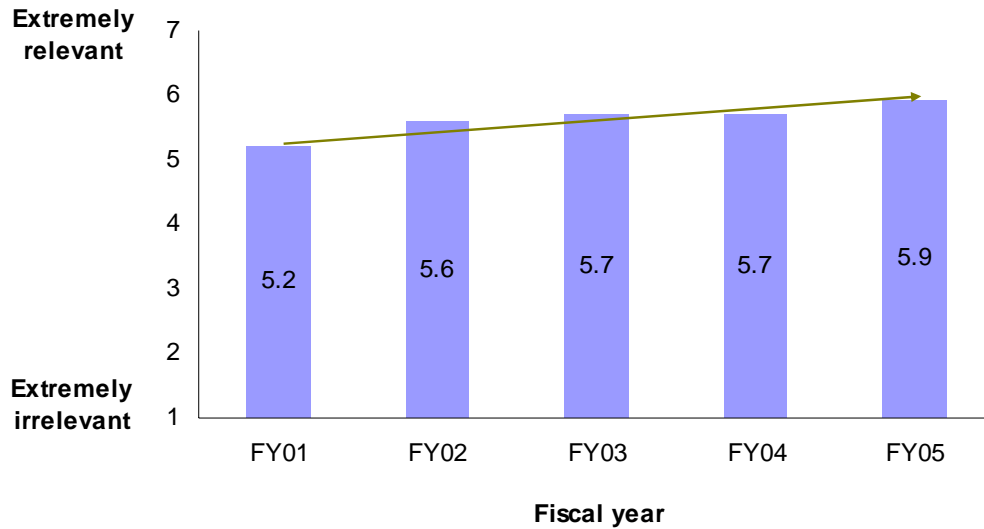
**Relevance to country needs contributes to effectiveness of capacity development services. WBI’s relevance to country needs improved between FY01 and FY05.**

8. A key variable predicting effectiveness was the relevance of WBI’s programs to the specific needs of the country. Regression analyses of the data from the tracer studies showed that the activities that were perceived to be highly relevant to the country’s needs were 35 percent more effective than those that were perceived not to be relevant at all, controlling for other variables, such as country income and year of activity delivery. WBI’s activities were rated as being more relevant (by 10 percent) in FY05 than they were in FY01, controlling for country income. See figure 6.

9. Qualitative data from the tracer studies indicate that relevance is ensured through prior analysis of needs, customization of activity content to the specific needs of the participants and their countries, and provision of capacity-development services in response to demand. WBI’s country-focused strategy is designed to increase the relevance of WBI’s services to country needs by conducting needs analyses and implementing a demand-driven strategy. However, WBI’s full operationalization of its plans to ensure relevance has been slow in some respects. In its annual report for FY02, WBI indicated that it would pilot formal assessments of capacity-development needs in 12 focus countries and eventually extend the assessment process to all of its focus

countries. Through December 2006, however, formal analyses of capacity-related needs had been completed in four focus countries. In contrast, a recent WBIEG survey (Le Rouzic and Okada 2006) of members of focus-country operations teams found that 87 percent of the respondents agreed that WBI’s activities are aligned with the country’s needs, indicating that WBI is attempting to ensure relevance through other means.

**Figure 6: Perceived relevance of WBI’s programs to specific country needs increased between FY01 and FY05**



Note: For FY03, FY04, and FY05 activities, the scale was from 1 = “not relevant at all” to 7 = “extremely relevant.” Thus, the differences in the scale anchors could account for some of the differences between FY01 and FY05

10. Effectiveness of capacity-development activities is also supported through the use of pedagogies appropriate for adult learners. They value learning on the job, learning relevant to current or anticipated job, and interactive learning (Lockheed and Arango 2005). Using participatory approaches, in-class assignments, practical examples, and developing action plans for using the information, knowledge, and skills gained are all part of what is referred to as “action learning.” How has WBI done with respect to this aspect of quality of its learning programs?

**Use of action plans to engage participants in the learning activity improves perceived effectiveness.**

11. Data from tracer studies show that the pedagogical use of action plans (as an indicator of action learning) boosted effectiveness by 6 percent (controlling for other variables). However, fewer than half (43 percent) of participants surveyed in the tracer studies during this period (FY01 to FY05) reported being part of activities that utilized this approach. Sixty-six percent of those who did develop action plans reported using

them in their work. This finding suggests a clear need for WBI learning programs to review whether they are making optimal use of this pedagogical approach.

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER STUDIES

1. Three additional studies conducted in FY05 and FY06 provide lessons for WBI's approach to capacity development: (1) a review of the World Bank's partnership with the Joint Africa Institute (Feinstein and Khattri 2005); (2) a study of approaches to joint client-staff learning (Quizon, Gunnarsson, and Rajakaruna 2005), conducted for the World Bank's Knowledge and Learning Board; and, (3) an evaluation of the Shanghai Learning Experience (Quizon, Liu, and Rajakaruna 2006).

**Strategic in-country or regional partnerships and use of peer-to-peer learning are important instruments for developing knowledge-based capacity.**

### **Strategic partnerships enhance reach for capacity development.**

2. In FY05 and FY06, about half of WBI's activities were delivered in collaboration with partners. WBI's approach to partnerships has not been evaluated comprehensively, but a review of the Joint Africa Institute (JAI), which WBI managed on behalf of the Bank, sheds some light on how WBI can use partnerships strategically.<sup>15</sup> The World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund established JAI as a collaborative effort in 1999 to provide policy-related training to government officials and other participants from African countries.

3. The purpose of the JAI review was to help the Bank refine its strategies for, and enhance its focus on, capacity development in Africa. The review found that the three-way partnership between the Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the African Development Bank had, in principle, functioned as envisioned. The quality of the WBI-supported activities was above the 80 percent benchmark, with the *overall usefulness* dimension of quality reaching 97 percent. Nonetheless, the partnership lacked sufficient emphasis on utilizing strategies that would foster the development of organizational and institutional capacity. A second key issue was a relative lack of emphasis on a demand-led capacity development strategy. Finally, the JAI had not reached out to some key African institutions of recognized competence (such as the African Economic Research

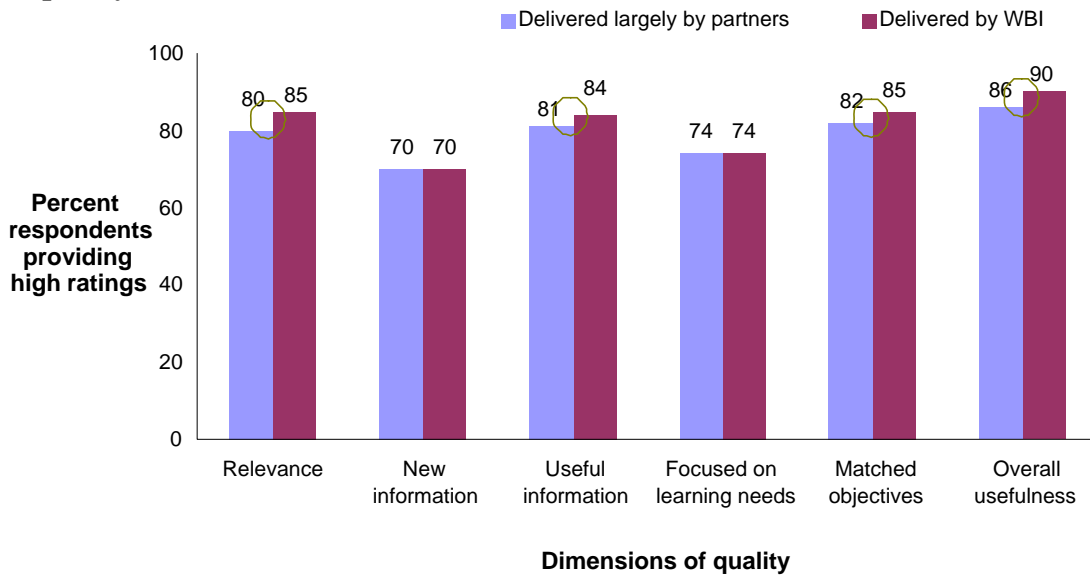
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<sup>15</sup> WBI maintains different types of partnerships. WBIEG has initiated an evaluation of WBI's partnerships that will address their various functions and purposes. The report is scheduled for completion in FY07.

Consortium), which could expand the reach of the partnership to key audiences. These issues can be addressed when a new partnership framework is negotiated.

4. Data on quality also reveal that partner-led activities had lower ratings than WBI-led activities on relevance, useful information, objectives, and overall usefulness (see figure 7). Although the ratings for partner-led activities meet the institutional benchmark of 80 percent on *overall usefulness*, there is room for WBI to work closely with its partners to enhance the quality of their activities with respect to relevance, usefulness of information, matching learning objectives, and overall usefulness.

**Figure 7: Partner-led activities are rated lower than WBI-led activities on four of six quality dimensions, FY06**



Note: High ratings are ratings of “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale. The markers between the bars indicate differences that are statistically significant

**Joint client-staff learning and peer-to-peer learning are effective strategies for developing client and staff capacity.**

5. WBIEG’s study on joint client-staff (JCS) learning focused on activities supported through the Bank’s budget for staff learning, but the findings of this study are instructive for WBI as well. The study (Quizon, Gunnarsson, and Rajakaruna 2005) found that JCS approaches are more suited to: policy discussions directly related to operational tasks (rather than highly technical topics); regional or country-specific events (versus global or multisite activities); and activities where learning or working in teams are the desired outcomes. Of primary importance was the finding that learning activities were rated higher on team-building by participants of JCS activities than by participants in non-JCS activities of similar nature (an average of 5.6 versus 4.8 on a 7-point scale, from 1 = “not effective at all” to 7 = “extremely effective”), and dialogues with experts and peers contributed to the activity’s effectiveness in this area. Yet, joint client-staff learning is relatively rare; the study estimated that only 5 percent of all staff learning activities in the Bank’s learning catalog for FY03-05 were purposely planned JCS activities.

**The Bank should actively promote and fund joint client-staff learning programs to support the development of a common understanding of operational tasks and to encourage teamwork between Bank staff and clients.**

6. Thus the Bank may wish to explicitly encourage and fund joint client-staff learning programs to support the development of a common understanding of operational tasks and to encourage teamwork between Bank staff and clients.

7. Evaluation of the WBI-organized Shanghai Learning Experience (Quizon, Liu, Rajakaruna 2006), which culminated in the Shanghai Conference on Scaling-Up Poverty Reduction (held in Shanghai in May 2004) resulted in pertinent findings as well.<sup>16</sup> Interviews with participants highlighted the value of peer-to-peer exchanges for learning and developing a textured understanding of different approaches to development. The preconference field visits generated discussions with the beneficiaries of the poverty alleviation programs and provided a forum for networking among people representing diverse organizations. Several participants adopted the tools used – field visits, case studies, focused dialogues, and so on – as viable approaches to learning in their own work.

8. The preconference activities and the conference were costly and cannot be replicated at such scale every year, but the key elements that made the Shanghai Learning

<sup>16</sup> The magnitude of the effectiveness and outcomes of the Shanghai Learning Experience activities is not reported here, as the tracer study obtained a participant response rate of only 13 percent.

Experience effective (e.g., peer-to-peer learning) can be mainstreamed through cost-effective means such as distance-learning technologies and low-protocol field visits that specify clear learning objectives.<sup>17</sup>

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The evidence suggests that the effectiveness and outcomes of WBI's learning programs in focus countries improved between FY01 and FY05, and participant selection, pedagogy, and WBI's country-focus strategy (among other factors) appear to be contributing to improved outcomes, as measured by participants' feedback.
2. The findings also support some of the current thinking on ways to develop knowledge-based capacity effectively, as articulated in the 2006 Capacity Day discussions. The evaluations show that including leaders (defined as high-level participants, who can also be powerful agents of change) is important for achieving capacity-related outcomes – generating, disseminating, and using information, knowledge, and skills. The evaluations also reveal that learning-by-doing, as measured by the use of “action plans” as a pedagogical approach, is associated with effectiveness and outcomes (use of learning).
3. The focus of the evaluations was limited to discrete learning programs, so the findings do not provide information about other aspects of capacity development that are believed to be effective: sustained engagement and addressing organizational capacity as a lever for change. Future evaluations need to use broader methodologies to address and test the other assumptions regarding effective capacity development and to assess whether WBI's capacity development instruments are based on those assumptions and understandings.
4. Other findings clearly indicate room for improvement in WBI's learning programs. The recommendations based on those findings, as well gaps in the data, are summarized below.

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<sup>17</sup> Information on full costs is not available, as the Government of the People's Republic of China and the City of Shanghai contributed significantly to the conference.

## **Refine Strategy and Approach for Improving the Outcomes of Learning Programs**

- Review the approach to middle-income countries and tailor capacity development programs to their needs, bridging the key aspects of what works in low-income countries with what is applicable in middle-income countries.
- Broaden the use of peer-to-peer learning and other tools (e.g., site visits) found to be useful in the Shanghai Learning Experience, after assessing their affordability.
- Encourage the use of action learning pedagogies.
- As part of the actions above: (a) clearly specify the expected outcomes of the learning programs in different types of countries and contexts; and (b) identify the timeframe by which the results are to be achieved.

## **Formalize and Deepen Approaches to Build Organizational/Institutional Capacity**

- Take a programmatic, long-term approach to developing capacity, working with the same set of actors within organizations to support individual-level behavioral changes that influence organizational and institutional capacity. WBI already advocates this approach, but it is unclear how widespread it is, and what results have been achieved.
- Review the mix of capacity development tools and instruments (e.g., learning programs combined with technical assistance) to determine the optimal balance needed to support organizational change.
- As part of the actions above: (a) develop a framework to deepen, and monitor and evaluate, this programmatic approach; (b) define *measurable* indicators of success, and targets, for organizational and institutional capacity; and (c) define a timeline for achieving the targets.

## **Institutionalize Joint Client-Staff Learning for Operational Impact**

- Include Bank staff in learning and technical assistance programs in which a common understanding between staff and clients is important for achieving development results.
- To achieve the desired outcome above: (a) review the administrative barriers to the participation of Bank staff in such programs; (b) develop a proposal and timeframe to present to senior management for increasing the number of learning programs that include both clients and Bank staff; and (c) develop a timeframe for assessing the effectiveness of joint client-staff learning programs.

## **Broaden Approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation to Provide Relevant Information for Accountability and Learning**

5. The analytical and evidential base for measuring the performance of WBI's capacity-development programs needs to be broadened to provide relevant information for accountability and learning purposes.

- The findings of the tracer studies are difficult to interpret in normative terms, as no benchmarks are available for individual-level outcomes. Conduct a comparative study, working with other development partners, to develop benchmarks for determining the measures for, and range of, individual-level outcomes. Apply the framework to WBI's learning programs that specify individual-level results.
- Build a systematic evaluation framework for comprehensive coverage of WBI's business lines, including the knowledge-generation programs and technical assistance. In collaboration with WBI management, develop a timeframe to evaluate all of WBI's major business lines.
- Develop and apply methods to assess organizational and institutional outcomes and impacts of WBI's and the Bank's knowledge-based capacity development programs. Organizational change is being viewed as an increasingly important aspect of sustained capacity development. Evaluations in FY08 should address this topic for accountability and learning purposes.
- Consider refined analyses of WBI's effectiveness and outcomes in countries of different income levels to pinpoint precisely the income group where WBI's performance needs attention. Provide information to WBI for refining its approach to different types of countries.
- Assess the degree to which WBI's program and planning are demand-driven. Provide actionable feedback to WBI management.

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## APPENDIX: WBIEG'S FY05 AND FY06 PUBLICATIONS

WBIEG conducts studies and evaluations for WBI and for the Bank's Knowledge and Learning Board. It also conducts studies specifically commissioned by other parts of the Bank. The findings and lessons from these studies and evaluations are disseminated widely to encourage learning and cross-fertilization of ideas and practices. During FY05 and FY06, WBIEG completed 15 evaluations and studies for WBI and 13 evaluations and studies for the Knowledge and Learning Board.

### FY05 and FY06 Publications for WBI

Chard, C. L. and S. Jha. 2005. *Impact Evaluation of WBI Sector & Thematic Programs in FY02-03: Social Protection and Risk Management Learning*. Report No. EG05-106. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

Feinstein, O. and N. Khattri. 2005. *The Joint Africa Institute: A World Bank Institute Review*. Report No. EG05-110. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

Khattri, N., S. Zhengfang, J. Wimpey, and O. Rajakaruna. 2006. *Institutional Capacity Development: An Empirical Review of Bank Projects*. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute

Khattri, N. and F. Ouchi. 2004. *Formative Assessment of WBI's Capacity Enhancement Strategy*. Report No. EG 05-97. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

Le Rouzic V. *The Impact of WBI FY02-03 Activities on Participants from Burkina Faso: A Baseline Assessment*. Report No. EG05-102. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

Liu, C., J. Ritchter, and L. Choi. 2004. *Country Focus Evaluation of WBI Client Activities in FY02-03, Guatemala: A Baseline Assessment*. Report No. EG05-93. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

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#### **FY05 and FY06 Publications for the Knowledge and Learning Board**

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- Liu, C., M. E. McIntosh-Alberts, and V. Gunnarsson. 2004. *Evaluation of the Human Development Network Staff Learning Programs*. Report No. EG 05-100. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

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