

**Perspectives on
WBI's FY07 Performance
in Focus Countries**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFR	Africa Region
BTOR	Back-to-Office Report
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CMT	Country Management Team
CMU	Country Management Unit
CO	Country Office
CT	Country Team
EAP	East Asia and Pacific Region
ECA	Europe and Central Asia Region
ESW	Economic and Sector Work
LCR	Latin America and Caribbean Region
MNA	Middle East and North Africa Region
SAR	South Asia Region
TTL	Task Team Leader
WB	World Bank
WBI	World Bank Institute
WBIEG	World Bank Institute Evaluation Group
WBIRC	World Bank Institute Regional Coordination Unit
WPA	Work Program Agreement

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 To assess the World Bank Institute's performance from the viewpoint of Operations in WBI's focus countries, the Evaluation Group of WBI surveyed 120 senior members of the Country Management Teams (CMT) of WBI's 45 FY07 focus countries. Seventy-nine respondents (66 percent) completed the survey between August 1 and September 20, 2007, providing an assessment on 42 of the 45 countries in the survey. (See methodology and response rate in annex 1.) The survey followed a similar survey conducted a year earlier about WBI in FY06.¹

1.2 The survey included ten quantitative questions related to the respondents' familiarity with WBI's program in their country, the communication between WBI and the CMT, WBI's alignment with capacity needs, effectiveness in building capacity, usefulness to the country, and comparative advantage. (See question list and ratings in annex 2.) Respondents were also asked how WBI could improve its effectiveness in their country. Finally, they were given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses.

1.3 This paper summarizes the assessment of the seventy-nine respondents and compares FY07's ratings with the previous year's survey. Then, the authors highlight the FY07 respondents' main recommendations and briefly discuss implications for WBI.

2. COUNTRY MANAGEMENT TEAMS' OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WBI IN FY07

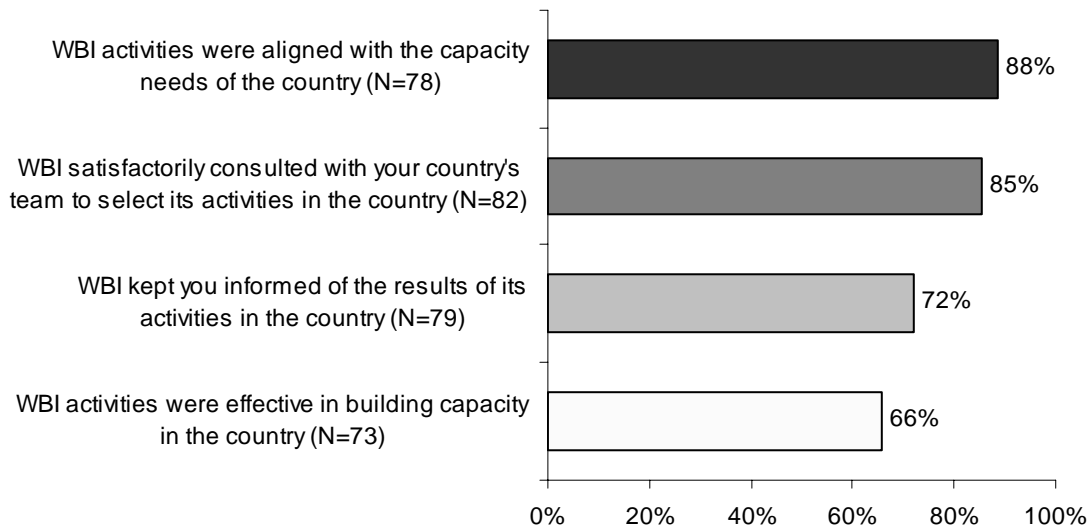
GOOD ALIGNMENT, BUT COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS AND EFFECTIVENESS COULD IMPROVE

2.1 Overall, senior members of the Country Management Teams of WBI's focus countries gave a favorable assessment of the Institute's performance in FY07. Notably, 88 percent of the respondents said that WBI FY07 activities were aligned with the capacity development needs of their country to a large extent or higher. Almost as many, 85 percent, noted that WBI satisfactorily consulted with their country team in selecting activities (figure 1 and annex 2 table A2-1).

¹ Le Rouzic, Violaine, and Sara Okada 2006. *Perspectives on WBI's FY06 Performance in Focus Countries*. Report No. EG07-121. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

2.2 However, communication of results and effectiveness in building capacity could improve. Seventy-two percent of the respondents felt that WBI kept them informed of the results of its activities in their country to a large extent or higher. Sixty-six percent said that WBI FY07 activities were effective in building capacity in their country to a large extent or higher (figure 1 and annex 2 table A2-1).

Figure 1 – Alignment, consultation, follow-up, and effectiveness
(Percent of ratings from 5 to 7)



Scale: 1 = not at all; 2 = to a very small extent; 3 = to a small extent; 4 = to a moderate extent; 5 = to a large extent; 6 = to a very large extent; 7 = completely.

Note: "N" represents the number of data points (sum of responses for all countries). It may be higher than the total number of people who answered the survey, because twelve people with responsibilities in several focus countries were asked to complete a set of questions for several focus countries. To make this paper easier to read, for quantitative questions the term "respondents" is used to refer to data points.

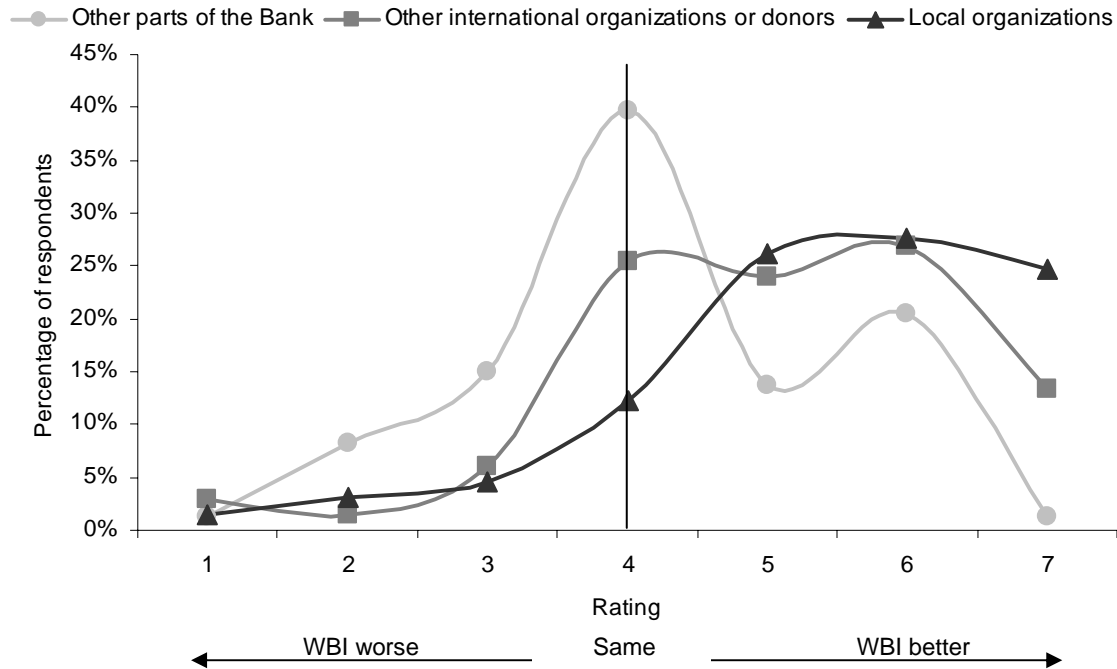
**WBI COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS—
LESS SO WITH THE BANK**

2.3 Surveyed CMT members were asked to rate the quality of WBI's FY07 activities compared to equivalent capacity development activities of other groups. On average, WBI was rated higher than the three groups considered. On an ascending seven-point scale, where 4 meant that the quality of WBI activities was the same as comparators', all average ratings were above 4. The highest rating (5.40) was given in comparison with local organizations. The rating was 5.00 when compared to other international organizations or donors (figure 2 and annex 2 table A2-1).

2.4 However, the average rating comparing WBI with other parts of the Bank was just above the mid-point 4.23, indicating that the respondents perceived WBI as having a limited comparative advantage over the rest of the Bank. Thirty-six percent of the respondents rated WBI higher than the rest of the Bank (figure 2 and annex 2 table A2-1).

Further, the ratings are lower in middle-income countries (4.08) than in low-income countries (4.42), with 28 percent and 45 percent respectively rating WBI higher than the rest of the Bank (annex 2 table A2-3).

Figure 2 – Quality of WBI's activities compared to others



Rating scale: 1 = WBI much worse; 2 = WBI worse; 3 = WBI slightly worse; 4 = same; 5 = WBI slightly better; 6 = WBI better; 7 = WBI much better.

WBI'S RATINGS WERE HIGHER IN FY06 THAN IN FY07

2.5 Despite a generally positive assessment of WBI, the survey shows a decline in WBI's perceived performance between FY06 and FY07. Out of nine quantitative questions included in both years' surveys, seven were rated lower in FY07 than in the previous year. The decline in ratings related to WBI's communication with the CMTs is considerable: -0.71 points on a seven-point scale for consultation in selecting activities and -0.37 points for informing respondents of the results of WBI's activities. The comparative advantage of WBI over the three groups considered also declined noticeably, -0.34 points on average for the three comparators. The ratings for WBI's understanding of the capacity needs and for its effectiveness in building capacity in the country dropped by 0.29 and 0.27 points respectively (annex 2 table A2-2).

2.6 The results of only two questions remained statistically the same, i.e., the extent to which WBI's activities were: a) aligned with the capacity needs of the country and b) useful to the country (annex 2 table A2-2).

3. WHAT COUNTRY MANAGEMENT TEAMS RECOMMEND

FIRST, COMMUNICATE! GOOD COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION WITH COUNTRY TEAMS AND CLIENTS IS KEY

3.1 Out of the 66 respondents who provided comments, 56 made statements related to WBI's communication, coordination and close work with their country teams and/or clients.² Twenty-two praised WBI for its communication. Working closely with the country teams and clients is reportedly key to alignment and effectiveness.

A dialogue scheme with country and sector management team in [the country] has been established for WBI's program. The communications with clients, central government agencies, have been improved. I think the effectiveness of FY08 program will for sure be higher.

I am extremely happy with the program delivered by WBI in [the country] last year. It was done in full consultation with country management and relevant sectors and ideally aligned to support priorities and help leverage impact of sector-led [Economic and Sector Work] ESW. I am of the view that WBI involvement was fully demand-driven and that the collaboration and interaction between WBI and sectors was exemplary ... two things that did not always take place - or take place to this extent in the past.

3.2 However, 34 respondents felt that WBI needs to communicate and coordinate better with the country team (CT) to ensure that its work program fits the country's priorities.

Generally, linkage with the Bank's program could be improved - this requires close liaison from both sides, which hasn't always been the case. The WBI's approach seems somewhat opportunistic.

The country team should be informed of the entire WBI program - not just the sector.

Better outreach to the CT, not just a couple of core team members

² The term "respondents" to open-ended questions corresponds to the number of people expressing the idea—not the number of times the idea was expressed. For example, if a country director of two focus countries said that WBI should communicate better for each country in the survey, her/his responses count as one respondent.

As the portfolio manager in [the country], I did not meet one person from WBI during all of FY07. Either they weren't present or they did not coordinate sufficiently with core members of the CT.

3.3 To improve communication, seven respondents suggested maintaining or increasing the presence of WBI staff in the field by placing a WBI representative in the country and/or visiting frequently. Also, having a WBI staff posted in the country was viewed as a positive experience.

Local WBI staff presence will be necessary (but must be someone familiar with the country context, multiple dimensions of the Bank's program and equally importantly able to work effectively with the large, strong [locally]-based team)

Since WBI and [the Country's Management Unit] jointly worked out placing a high-level coordinator in the [country] office, the situation has been improving with time.

3.4 Respondents also highlighted and suggested other good practices or deplored their absence:

[The previous Regional Coordinator] made a huge effort to be part of the [...] country team, and participated in project and ESW meetings, portfolio reviews, [Country Assistance Strategy] CAS preparations etc, and to continuously adjust WBI activities to country and department's strategic priorities, and seek synergies and complementarities. [S/he] visited [the country] very frequently. [S/he] also made effort to understand [...] regional priorities and support our aim to promote cross country knowledge sharing and involve other [Region's] countries in WBI activities where possible. The new coordinator has not yet become integrated into the team, and as a result we are less aware of WBI activities and hence both sides (WBI and country team) are less able to leverage each others' efforts and adjust programs as needed to respond to specific demands or emerging opportunities.

To be integral part of CT, including participating in review meetings, retreats etc.

I would continue strengthening the link between WBI and the overall CAS, both in design and in downstream implementation. WBI is an integral part of the "country team" (as it should be).

Going forward, we would like to see the WBI team participate in broader needs assessment for the country and integrate fully their activities in our work program.

It is hard to see how to improve WBI's effectiveness when the [Country Management Unit] CMU has not had much interaction. Would have liked

to meet the WBI team at the time of the budget preparation to synergize on deliverables.

[WBI can improve its effectiveness in the country] by submitting its [Work Program Agreement] WPA to country programs and units.

HAVE LONGER PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS AND FOLLOW UP WITH COUNTRY TEAMS/CLIENTS

3.5 Eleven respondents suggested that WBI continue with its longer-term programmatic approach (where it exists) or improve it (where needed).

Have a longer planning timeframe – e.g., commit to three years support in a given area.

The need in [the country] and the other middle-income countries in the region is for long-term capacity development. The training should be developed jointly with [the country's] institutions, and conducted with them; a long-term training plan would be valuable.

Please maintain continuity, building upon the successful activities undertaken in the last few years. [...] It is essential that this support continues as part of a programmatic approach.

How to pull together the various WBI activities into a cohesive, critical mass -- rather than a seeming cluster of useful interventions?

3.6 A programmatic approach includes having longer term interventions in which the country team is not only consulted during preparation, but also during and after implementation. Comments on follow-up echoed the survey ratings. Respondents gave lower ratings to the extent to which WBI kept them informed of the results of its activities in the country than to WBI's consultation with the country's team to select activities in putting together its program. The average ratings were 5.06 and 5.65 respectively on an ascending seven-point scale (annex 2 table A2-1).

We were well consulted on the program but we don't receive feedback on the status, results and effectiveness.

We (WB and WBI) coordinated better during preparation, but very little afterwards to discuss the results/feedback of the WBI training or follow-up that WB can do, etc. [...] we need to go beyond sharing [Back-to-Office Reports] BTORs. Neither WBI nor WB (myself) initiated such a discussion. This can be improved in the future. Often, through specific feedback from specific individual, etc., if shared can be quite useful in coordinating the follow-up actions.

3.7 Among the follow-up measures that respondents suggested, one person proposed using a results framework commonly developed and implemented by WBI and the country office counterpart. This person specifically recommended that each program:

[...] have its own unique outcome measurement system which will gauge the effectiveness of the program in terms of (actual) results on the ground. This system needs to be devised jointly by the WBI [Task Team Leader] TTL and [Country Office] CO counterpart. An integral part of the WBI program should be the post-event follow-up where the WBI TTL and the CO counterpart will evaluate performance of the beneficiaries in terms of what they deliver.

COORDINATE WITHIN WBI TO ADHERE TO THE PLANS AGREED WITH THE COUNTRY TEAMS

3.8 Seven respondents referred to the need for all parts of WBI to implement its plans as agreed with the country teams.

We have an excellent working relationship with WBI. Where it can be more effective is ensuring alignment WITHIN WBI, ensuring the non [Region] programs are aligned with the programs agreed with the country team.

WBI has still a number of programs that are driven by the center, rather than the Country needs. Even though WBI has a country capacity building program, from time to time, one sees projects that are outside this program being put forward in countries. This creates confusion as it is difficult to get adequate support from Country staff. It is important that WBI sticks to the country program throughout and any changes should be discussed at a management level rather than at operational level.

Improving coordination among several WBI activities in [the country], including perhaps the appointment of "ONE overall program leader."

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR WBI

4.1 As WBI is reviewing its long term strategy framework, the viewpoint of operational counterparts should be taken into account. Also, the noticeable decline in most items rated between FY06 and FY07 should prompt actions.

- Make improving communication—the area with the largest decline—a priority. Good communication with the country teams is feasible, as last year's ratings and FY07 examples related to some WBI staff demonstrate.

Measures to improve communication should include ensuring that plans are implemented as agreed, without surprising the country teams with additional activities.

- Pursue the current WBI quality assurance processes requiring that staff articulate and monitor outcomes, as communicating results will be easier once reporting results becomes a standard step in WBI's program cycle.
- Continue the shift towards longer term programmatic interventions with activities building up on each other. Following this recommendation from the CMTs would also help with the communication of results of individual activities.
- Manage expectations: explain that a programmatic approach in the context of a budget cut requires focusing on fewer areas and/or clients. Promise a smaller, more cohesive plan. Criticisms received related more often to the limited amount of activities from WBI in a country than quality issues.

ANNEX 1 – METHODOLOGY AND RESPONSE RATE

Methodology

To assess the World Bank Institute's performance from the viewpoint of Operations in its focus countries, the Evaluation Group of WBI surveyed 120 senior members of the Country Management Teams of WBI's 45 FY07 focus countries. Each question asked by name about one country at a time. Twelve people received several sets of questions (one per country) because of their responsibilities in several WBI focus countries.

For each focus country, three senior members of the Country Management Team were surveyed. Ideally, the surveyed team consisted of the country director, the country manager, and a person identified by the WBI's Regional Coordination Unit (WBIRC) as most knowledgeable about WBI. If a country lacked a country manager or a country director, the Evaluation Group identified other senior members and vetted the final list with WBIRC.

In FY06, WBIEG had conducted a similar survey.³ This paper compares the quantitative data between FY06 and FY07. All comparisons of mean differences are based on t-tests. Comparative statements are reported only when the differences between groups of over 30 cases each are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

Response rate and respondent profile

Of the 120 people surveyed, 79 completed the survey (66 percent), providing information on 42 countries of the 45 countries in the survey. The countries without responses are Argentina, India, and Lebanon. Table A1-1 below provides the response rate per region.

Table A1-1: Responses by region

Regions	Number of countries	Number of expected responses	Number of actual responses	Response rate (per country/region) ⁴
AFR	14	42	25	60%
EAP	9	27	17	63%
ECA	6	18	13	72%
LCR	6	18	12	67%
MNA	5	15	9	60%
SAR	5	15	8	53%
Total	45	135	84	62%

³ Le Rouzic, Violaine, and Sara Okada 2006. *Perspectives on WBI's FY06 Performance in Focus Countries*. Report No. EG07-121. Washington, DC: World Bank Institute.

⁴ The response rate per person is 66 percent. However, because some people were asked to answer about several countries, the response rate per country out of the total number of expected data points is 62 percent.

The response rate was higher among country managers and country directors, than other members, e.g., senior country officers, country program coordinators, senior economists, etc. Table A1-2 indicates the response rate per title.

Table A1-2: Responses by title

Title of people surveyed	Number surveyed	Number of respondents	Response rate
Country director	37	19	51%
Country manager	15	12	80%
Other	78	28	36%

Open-ended responses:

The survey included two open-ended questions:

1. How can WBI improve its effectiveness in *the country*?
2. If you would like to share any comments on your responses, please type them below.

Respondents offered rich responses. In all, 66 people gave 68 responses related to 43 countries.

ANNEX 2 – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS AND COMPARISONS

Table A2-1: Results of all focus countries

Questions	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N
1. To what extent are you familiar with WBI's FY07 program in <i>the country</i> ?	5.58	1.32	84%	83
2. In putting together WBI's program for FY07, to what extent did WBI:				
a. satisfactorily consult with your country's team to select its activities in <i>the country</i> ?	5.65	1.36	85%	82
b. understand the particular needs for capacity development in <i>the country</i> ?	5.28	1.28	80%	79
3. In FY07, to what extent did WBI keep you informed of the results of its activities in <i>the country</i> ?	5.06	1.58	72%	79
4. In terms of implementation, to what extent were WBI's FY07 activities:				
a. aligned with the capacity needs of <i>the country</i> ?	5.53	1.05	88%	78
b. effective in building capacity in <i>the country</i> ?	4.75	1.23	66%	73
c. useful to <i>the country</i> ?	5.14	1.20	76%	76

Scale: 1 = not at all; 2 = to a very small extent; 3 = to a small extent; 4 = to a moderate extent; 5 = to a large extent; 6 = to a very large extent; 7 = completely.

5. How would you rate the quality of WBI's FY07 activities for <i>the country</i> compared to equivalent capacity development activities of:	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N
a. other parts of the Bank?	4.23	1.29	36%	73
b. other international organizations or donors?	5.00	1.39	64%	67
c. local organizations?	5.40	1.40	78%	65

Scale: 1 = WBI much worse; 2 = WBI worse; 3 = WBI slightly worse; 4 = same; 5 = WBI slightly better; 6 = WBI better; 7 = WBI much better.

Table A2-2 Comparing results between FY06 and FY07

Questions	FY06		FY07	
	Mean	N	Mean	N
1. To what extent are you familiar with WBI's program in <i>the country</i> :	NA	NA	5.58	83
2. In putting together WBI's program, to what extent did WBI:				
a. satisfactorily consult with the country's team to select its activities in <i>the country</i> ?*	6.36	53	5.65	82
b. understand the particular needs for capacity development in <i>the country</i> ?*	5.57	54	5.28	79
3. To what extent did WBI keep you informed of the results of its activities in <i>the country</i> ?*	5.43	53	5.06	79
4. In terms of implementation, to what extent were WBI's activities:				
a. aligned with the capacity needs of <i>the country</i> ?	5.52	54	5.53	78
b. effective in building capacity in <i>the country</i> ?*	5.02	48	4.75	73
c. useful to <i>the country</i> ?	5.24	50	5.14	76

Scale: 1 = not at all; 2 = to a very small extent; 3 = to a small extent; 4 = to a moderate extent; 5 = to a large extent; 6 = to a very large extent; 7 = completely.

5. How would you rate the quality of WBI's activities for <i>the country</i> compared to equivalent capacity development activities of:	FY06		FY07	
	Mean	N	Mean	N
a. other parts of the Bank?*	4.48	52	4.23	73
b. other international organizations or donors?*	5.45	47	5.00	67
c. local organizations?*	5.72	43	5.40	65

Scale: 1 = WBI much worse; 2 = WBI worse; 3 = WBI slightly worse; 4 = same; 5 = WBI slightly better; 6 = WBI better; 7 = WBI much better.

* The difference is statistically significant at 95 percent confidence level. The statistically higher mean is presented in bold.

Table A2-3: Comparing results between low-income countries and middle-income countries

Questions	Results of low-income countries				Results of middle-income countries			
	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N
1. To what extent are you familiar with WBI's FY07 program in <i>the country</i> ?*	5.45	1.58	83%	40	5.70	1.01	86%	43
2. In putting together WBI's program for FY07, to what extent did WBI:								
a. satisfactorily consult with your country's team to select its activities in <i>the country</i> ?*	5.45	1.74	79%	38	5.82	0.92	91%	44
b. understand the particular needs for capacity development in <i>the country</i> ?	5.33	1.60	78%	36	5.23	0.95	81%	43
3. In FY07, to what extent did WBI keep you informed of the results of its activities in <i>the country</i> ?	4.92	1.81	69%	39	5.20	1.32	75%	40
4. In terms of implementation, to what extent were WBI's FY07 activities:								
a. aligned with the capacity needs of <i>the country</i> ?*	5.71	1.03	94%	34	5.39	1.06	84%	44
b. effective in building capacity in <i>the country</i> ?*	4.94	1.34	69%	32	4.61	1.14	60%	41
c. useful to <i>the country</i> ?*	5.35	1.30	76%	34	4.98	1.09	76%	42

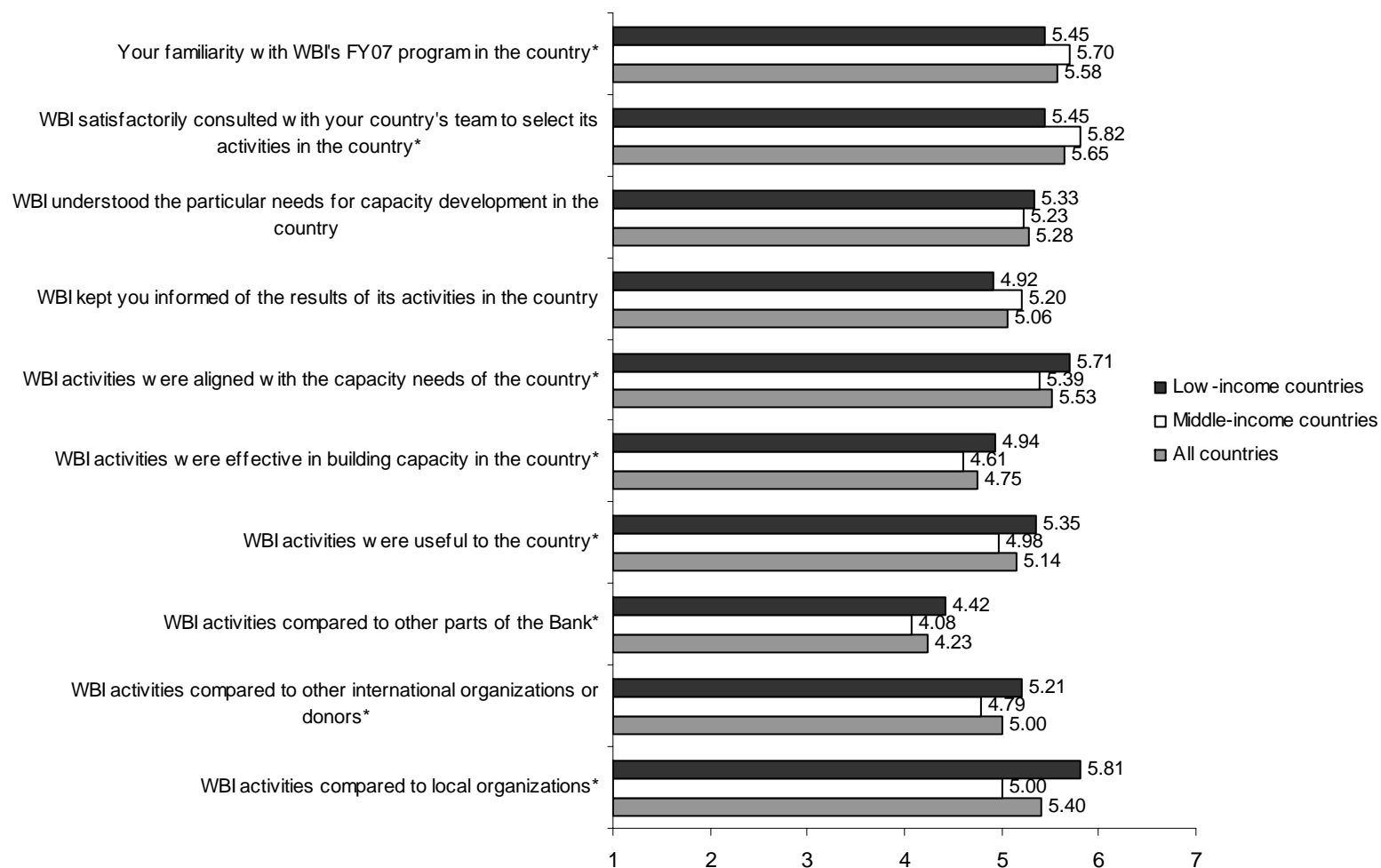
Scale: 1 = not at all; 2 = to a very small extent; 3 = to a small extent; 4 = to a moderate extent; 5 = to a large extent; 6 = to a very large extent; 7 = completely.

5. How would you rate the quality of WBI's FY07 activities for <i>the country</i> compared to equivalent capacity development activities of:	Results of low-income countries				Results of middle-income countries			
	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N	Mean	Standard deviation	% 5 to 7	N
a. other parts of the Bank?*	4.42	1.41	45%	33	4.08	1.16	28%	40
b. other international organizations or donors?*	5.21	1.41	70%	33	4.79	1.37	59%	34
c. local organizations?*	5.81	1.35	91%	32	5.00	1.35	88%	33

Scale: 1 = WBI much worse; 2 = WBI worse; 3 = WBI slightly worse; 4 = same; 5 = WBI slightly better; 6 = WBI better; 7 = WBI much better.

* The difference is statistically significant at 95 percent confidence level. The statistically higher mean is presented in bold.

Figure A2-1: Comparing average ratings by country income groups



Rating scale of the first seven questions: 1 = not at all; 2 = to a very small extent; 3 = to a small extent; 4 = to a moderate extent; 5 = to a large extent; 6 = to a very large extent; 7 = completely.

Rating scale of the last three questions: 1 = WBI much worse; 2 = WBI worse; 3 = WBI slightly worse; 4 = same; 5 = WBI slightly better; 6 = WBI better; 7 = WBI much better.

* The difference between the ratings of low-income countries and middle-income countries is statistically significant at 95 percent confidence level.