Evaluating Capacity Building: Building A Results Framework for A Development Agency

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Evaluating Capacity Building: Some Issues

- Many development agencies grappling with the issue of how to assess capacity building initiatives
- How is the concept constructed? Do different constructions of the concept affect the type of results they get?
- To date, there is relatively little in the literature on established or acceptable ways to measure development agencies' capacity results
Who Do You Target?

• Common targets in literature: individuals, organizations (entities), and systems level

• The typology of targets for the IDRC study also includes networks and the state:
  ➢ Individuals
  ➢ Organizations
  ➢ Networks
  ➢ State
  ➢ Societal (research users)
Conceptualization of Capabilities

• For each target there’s a different capability
• How you construct the concept of capacity building and the results affects how you conceptualize capability
  ➢ Functional (financial management)
  ➢ Process (decision-making)
  ➢ Research (writing a problem statement, using a different methodology)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Education &amp; Training</th>
<th>Mentoring / Coaching</th>
<th>Networks / Networking</th>
<th>Face-to-Face Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Applying learned methodologies</td>
<td>New ways of thinking/working</td>
<td>Linking with others in same field</td>
<td>Interacting with peers at forums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Applying knowledge from SWOT to org</td>
<td>Using org’l learning/reflections for org’l dev</td>
<td>Linking with like-minded org’s</td>
<td>Receiving invitations to events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>Building long-term skills with scholarships</td>
<td>Peer learning, mutual support</td>
<td>Working with others on a regional/global level</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional / State</td>
<td>Recognizing the need to know more about research</td>
<td>Seeking advice/opinions from experts</td>
<td>Working with policy makers directly on the project</td>
<td>Working with other policymakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal (users)</td>
<td>Using findings to influence policy</td>
<td>Working with researchers to establish relevance</td>
<td>Linking with other users (e.g., advocates)</td>
<td>Influencing others to reform or change policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concluding Comments

• To date, we have been trying to understand the concept as it is applied to individual projects, not how it is used by development agencies

• Does it matter that there is no common or shared understanding of what capacity building is or means within an agency?

• Over the next year we will be looking at IDRC’s results and the determinants of success