



United Nations Development Programme

Overview of UNDP's Approach to Supporting Capacity Development

Capacity Development Group
Bureau for Development Policy
United Nations Development Programme
August 2009



UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008-2011

and of the Population Fund

Second regular session 2007
10 to 14 September 2007, New York
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011

UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011 Progress on human development

Capacity development is UNDP's "core service to programme countries"

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Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, 2007

11/12/07 - 22:00
Sixty-second session
Second Committee
Agenda item 11

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“Recognizes that capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed developed goals... and calls upon UN organizations to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national institutions and to support the implementation and, as necessary, the devising of national strategies for capacity-building”

“Stresses that capacity development is a core function of the UN development system, and in this regard requests the SG, in consultations with member states, to take measures to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach by UN in its support to capacity development efforts of programme countries”



UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development, 2006

Dear Colleagues,

18 December 2006

I am pleased to share with you the attached "UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development", prepared by a UNDG task team with members provided by many of you. I urge you to take the time to read the statement.

Capacity development is a key element of UNCTs' work in their countries.

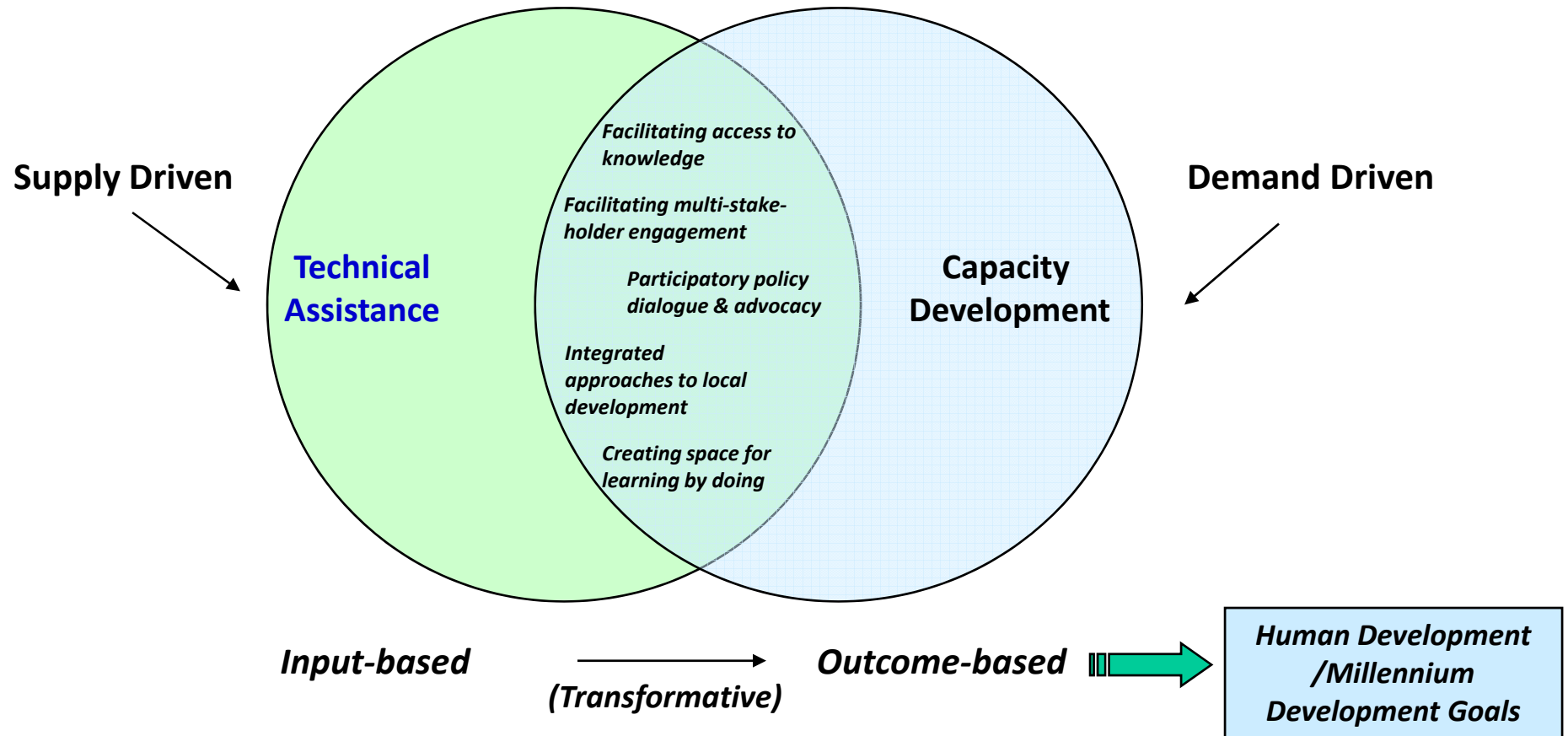
"Capacity development is more than just a theoretical concept. The UNDG Position Statement highlights when and how UNCTs can address capacity development in their work..."

Sincerely,

Kemal Derviş
Chair

To: All UN Resident Coordinators

The Shift in Paradigm to a Capacity Development Approach

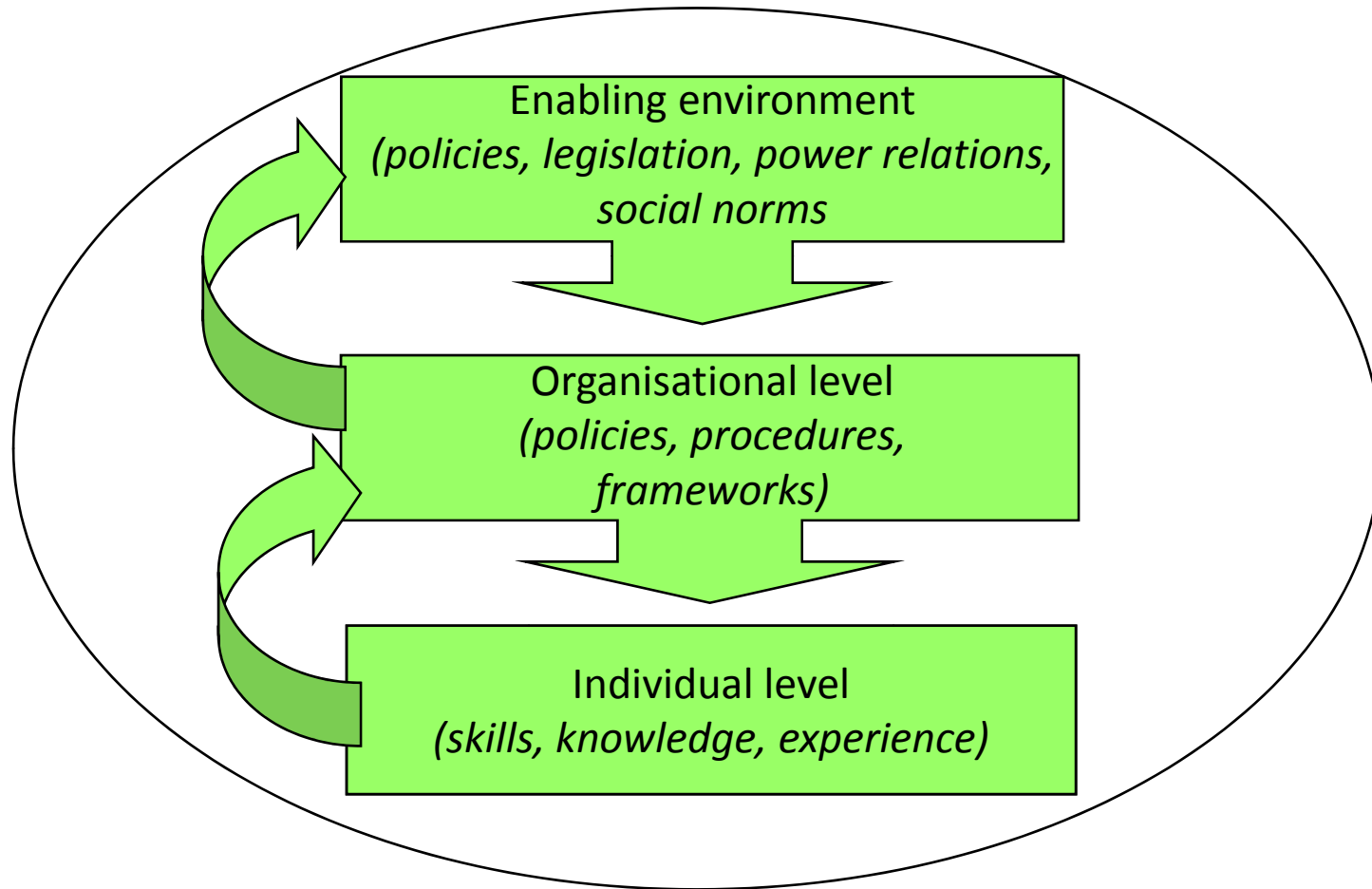




UNDP Definition of Capacity Development

Capacity Development: The process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time

A Systems Approach to Capacity Development: Points of Entry





Capacity Development Is...

UNDP

The process through which individuals, organisations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time

OECD/DAC

Process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time

GTZ

Process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and societies to make effective use of the resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis

JICA

The ongoing process of enhancing the problem-solving abilities of developing countries by taking into account all the factors at the individual, organizational, and societal levels



What Does UNDP Offer on Capacity Development?

1. The theme, practice or sector application provides the 'What.' UNDP's approach to supporting capacity development provides both positions and strategies on the 'How'
2. Is driven by UN and UNDP human development perspectives and goals
3. Looks at assets and deficits of skills, knowledge, relations and systems that affect individual, organisational and systemic transformations
4. Provides on-the-ground advisory services, programme funding and implementation support
5. Measures using international data and standards; impartiality of tools and methodologies; spread of case study evidence and comparative experience

What is UNDP's Value Proposition on Capacity Development?

1. Positions on the 'How', as relevant to UN and UNDP human development perspectives
2. UNDP and UNDG prescriptive policy
3. On-the-ground programme design, funding and implementation support
4. International norms and standards
5. Impartiality of tools and methodologies
6. Spread and depth of case study evidence



What is Different in This Approach?

1. It gives tangible expression to the concept of national ownership, which is about the ability to make informed choices and decisions
2. It address power relations, mindsets and behaviour; it emphasizes motivation as a driver of change
3. It is a long-term process and can be promoted through a combination of quick wins and longer-term initiatives
4. It requires sticking with the process under difficult circumstances
5. It links the enabling environment, the organizational level and the individual level
6. It looks beyond individual skills and a focus on training
7. It emphasizes the use of national systems, not just national plans and expertise
8. It requires adaptation to local conditions. There are no blueprints.
9. It should link to broader reforms, such as in education, wage structure and the civil service
10. It results in unplanned consequences
11. It measures capacity development systematically

What Does the Evidence Show (1/4)

- Capacity development is underpinned by the fundamental characteristic of national ownership
- A comprehensive capacity development response must link to and draw from relevant national reforms to be sustained, e.g., civil service, wage, language, education, public administration reforms
- Taking a capacity development response to scale requires linking it to national and local plans, processes, budgets and systems

What Does the Evidence Show (2/4)

- Tendency often to look only inside of an organization and downplay larger institutional context in which that organization resides
- A capacity development response should be based on the findings of a capacity assessment, and is a deliberate set of sequenced actions that will influence a given set of skills, systems and power relations
- A capacity development response can and often must show both short- and long-term gains, to ensure continued political commitment and resource support

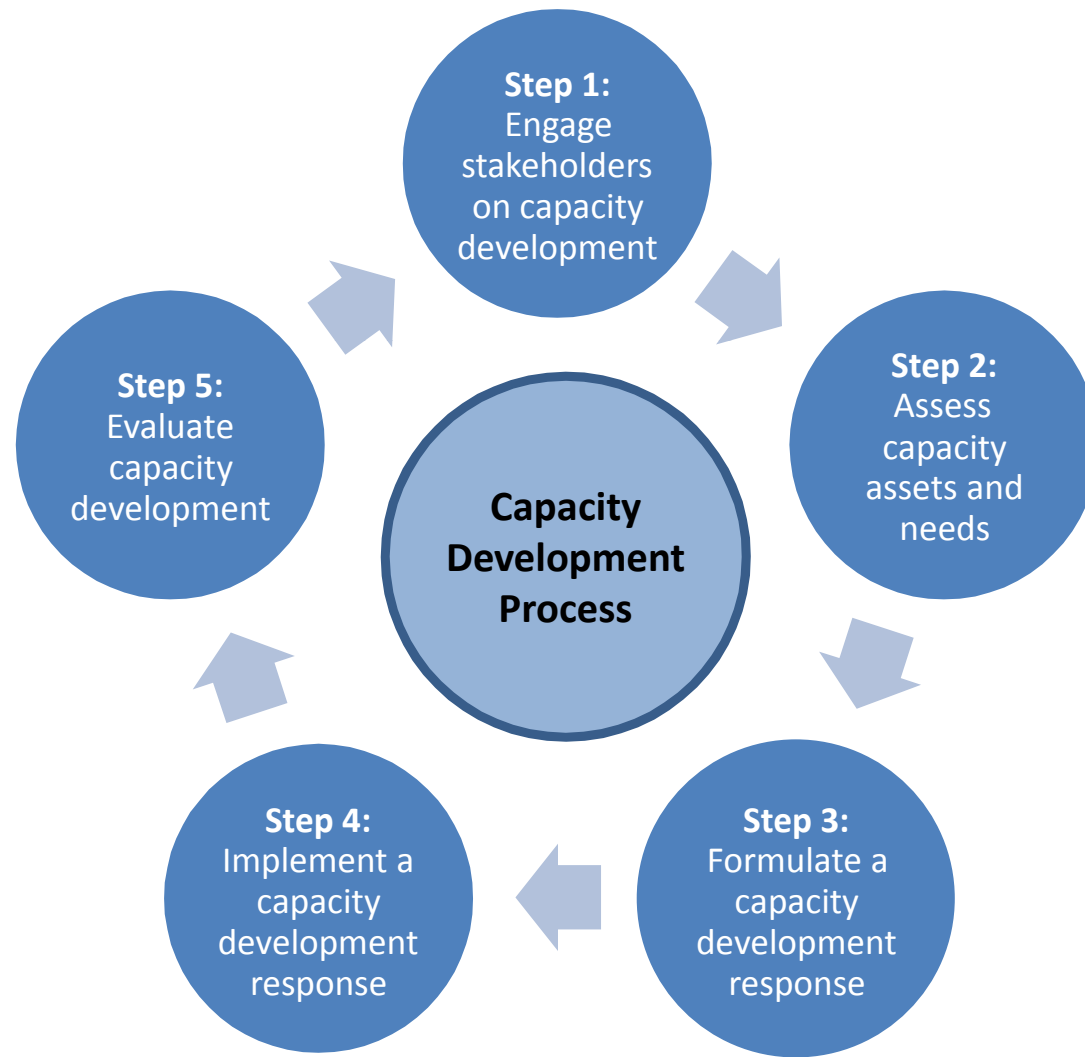
What Does the Evidence Show (3/4)

- Capacity development is not about a technical fix. It is about transformations and must address how best to manage change
- “Capacity traps” more often pertinent to the “soft side”, such as power relations, vested interests, access, ethics and attitudes
- Technical assistance and capacity development are not the same thing! Capacity development is more than training. Training is necessary, but what learning strategies work best for what purpose....

What Does the Evidence Show (4/4)

- Our approach to supporting capacity development need to be highly contextual, iterative and flexible for “good fit”
- The hardest part of a CD process for external partners is the “letting go”- the litmus test for capacity development is if we make ourselves irrelevant!

UNDP Capacity Development Process





Capacity Assessment and Capacity Development... Key Design Questions

Capacity for Why?

Capacity for Whom?

Capacity for What?



Capacity Assessment and Development Planning... Multiple Points of Entry

National Development Strategies

Sectors

Themes

Capacity Assessment and Development Planning... Multiple Points of Entry



Illustrative



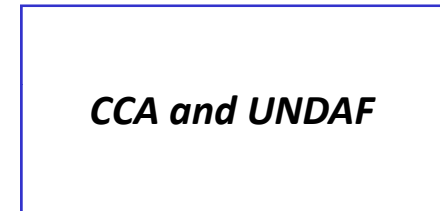
Needs Assessment and Capacity Assessment are complementary in nature, and can inform capacity development strategies.

Rwanda



Capacity Assessments and Capacity Development Strategies can be applied in defining a medium-term poverty reduction strategy (PRS).

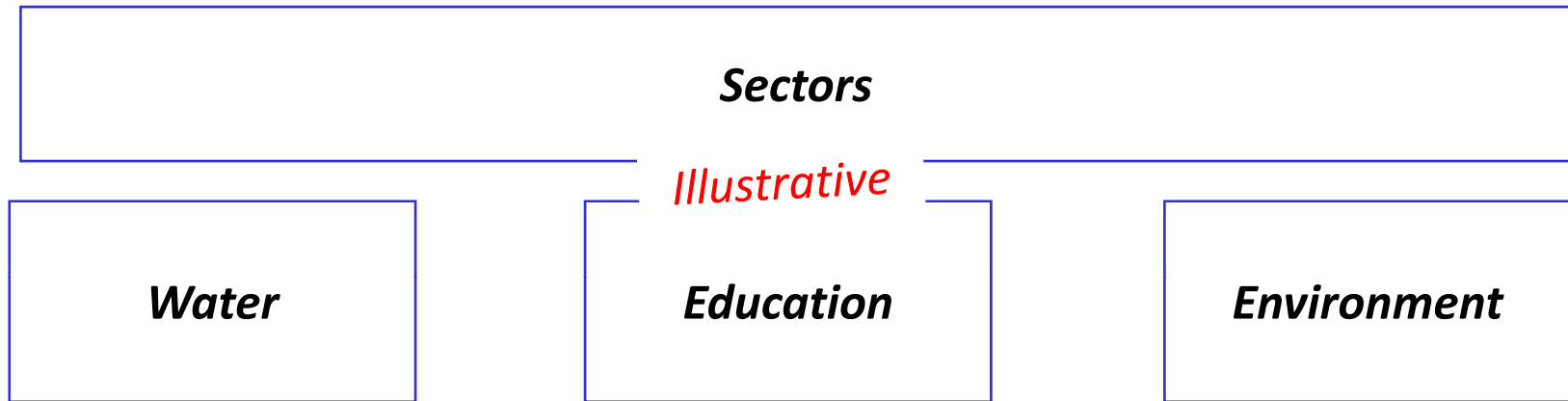
Liberia



A Capacity Assessment can be used to underpin the analysis in priority areas of engagement for the UN in a country and can lead to the formulation of targeted capacity development responses.

Egypt

Capacity Assessment and Development Planning... Multiple Points of Entry



Capacity of national and local entities responsible for administration, management and delivery of services

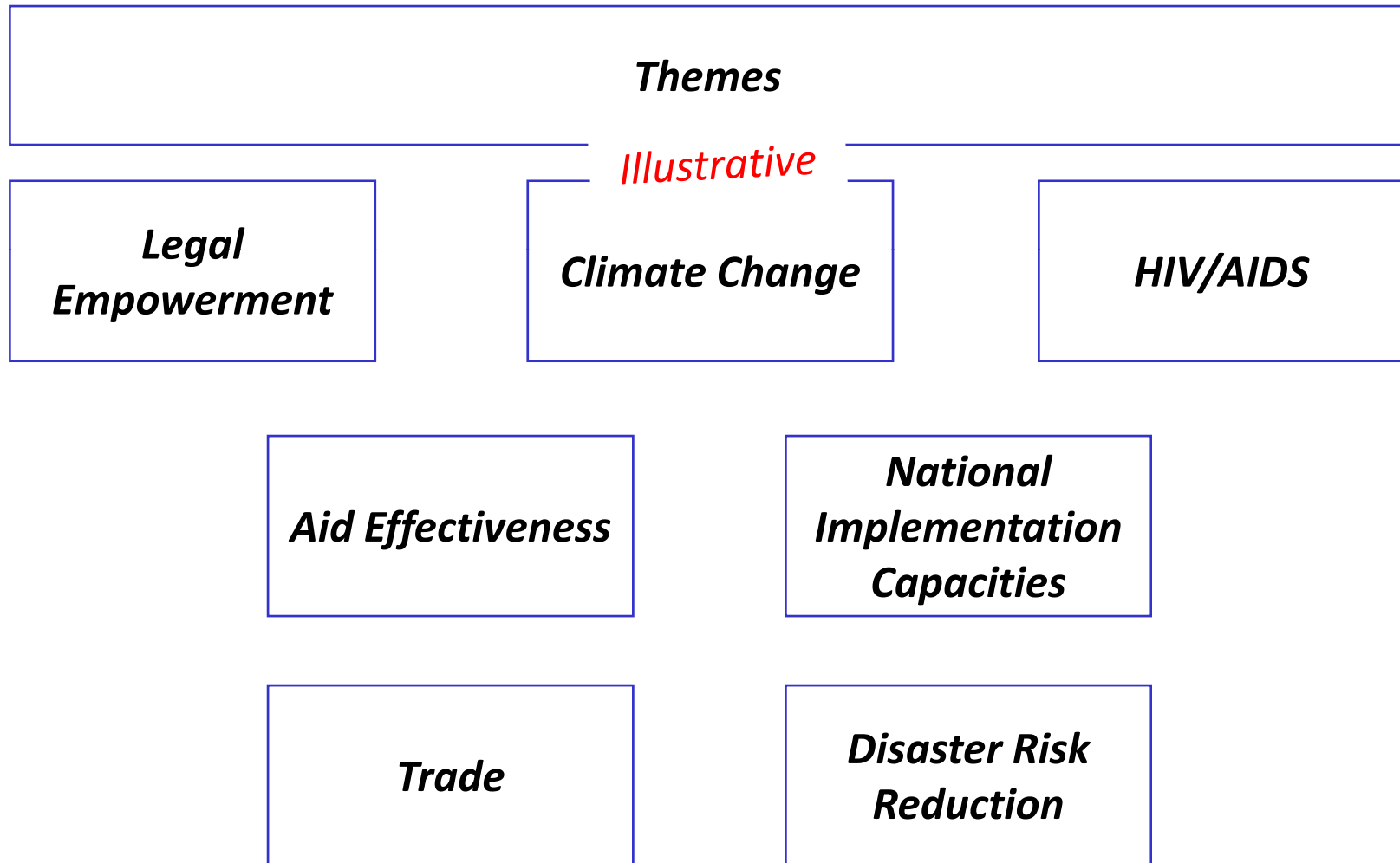
Capacity development in conjunction with UN development system partners

Malawi

Uganda

Haiti

Capacity Assessment and Development Planning... Multiple Points of Entry



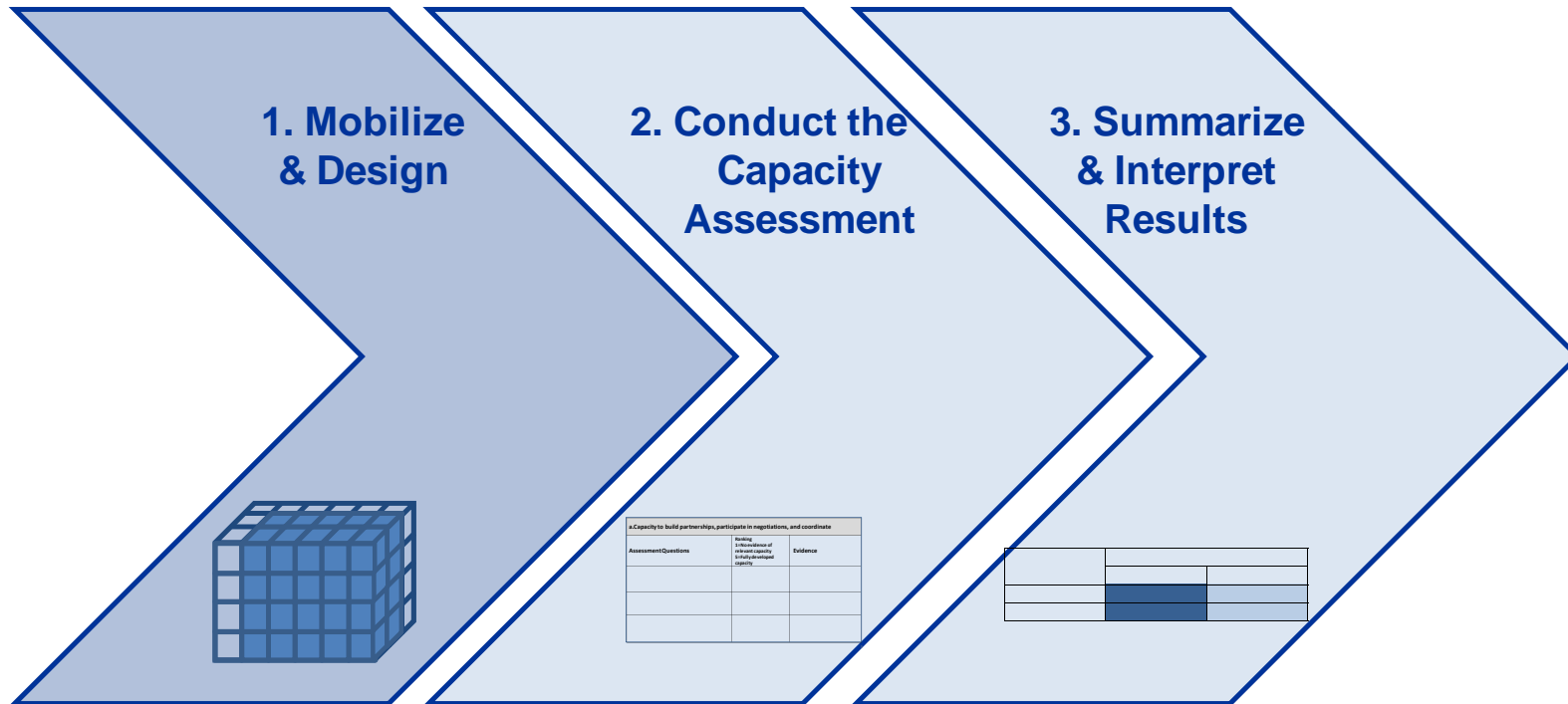
UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology: Introduction

*A **capacity assessment** is an analysis of desired capacities against existing capacities; this generates an understanding of capacity assets and needs and serves as input to formulating a capacity development response.*

UNDP has developed a systematic yet flexible methodology for conducting a capacity assessment. This methodology consists of:

1. A process for conducting a capacity assessment
2. The UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework
3. Supporting tools

UNDP Capacity Assessment Process



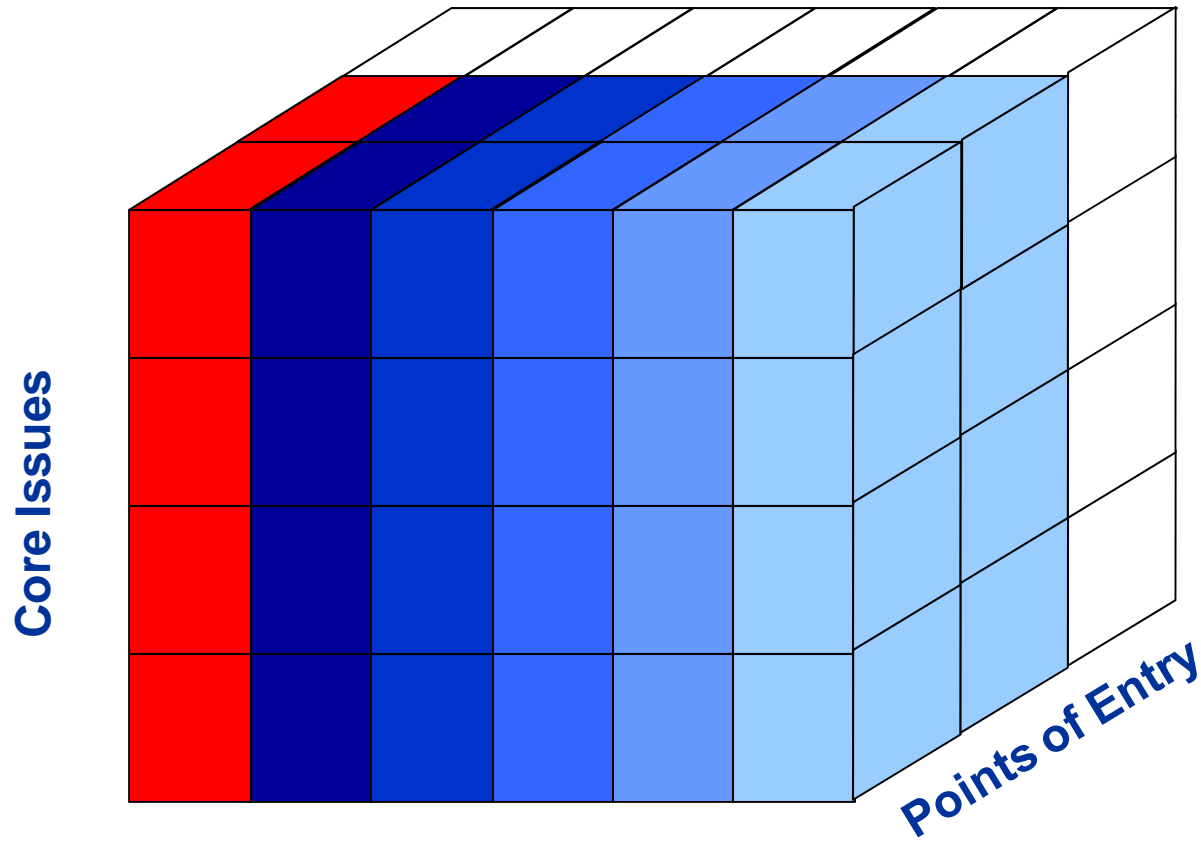
UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework

Technical Capacities

+

Functional Capacities

(Within a Sector/Thematic Context)





UNDP Capacity Assessment Supporting Tool

Core Issues	Functional Capacities									
	Engage Stakeholders		Assess a Situation and Define a Vision & Mandate		Formulate Policies & Strategies		Budget, Manage & Implement		Evaluate	
	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level
01. Institutional Arrangements	4.00	3.00	3.25	1.88	3.25	2.10	3.35	2.10	3.21	2.29
02. Leadership	3.25	2.10	3.25	1.88	3.25	2.10	3.35	2.10	3.21	2.29
03. Knowledge	3.70	2.50	3.25	1.88	3.25	2.10	3.36	2.35	3.21	2.29
04. Accountability	3.50	2.44	3.25	1.88	3.25	2.10	2.90	1.80	3.21	2.29
05. Human Rights	3.25	2.10	3.25	1.75	3.25	2.10	3.25	2.10	3.29	1.57
Overall	3.73	2.64	3.25	1.92	3.50	2.40	3.20	2.08	3.25	1.93

Illustrative



UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology – What's New?

- Brings rigor and a systematic **process** for assessing existing capacities and needs and formulating a capacity development response
- Provides a **structure** for discussion about the scale and scope of a capacity assessment and more generally about a capacity development agenda
- Provides **resources and tools** to support a capacity assessment including **content** for assessing the various cross-sections of point of entry, core issue and functional capacity

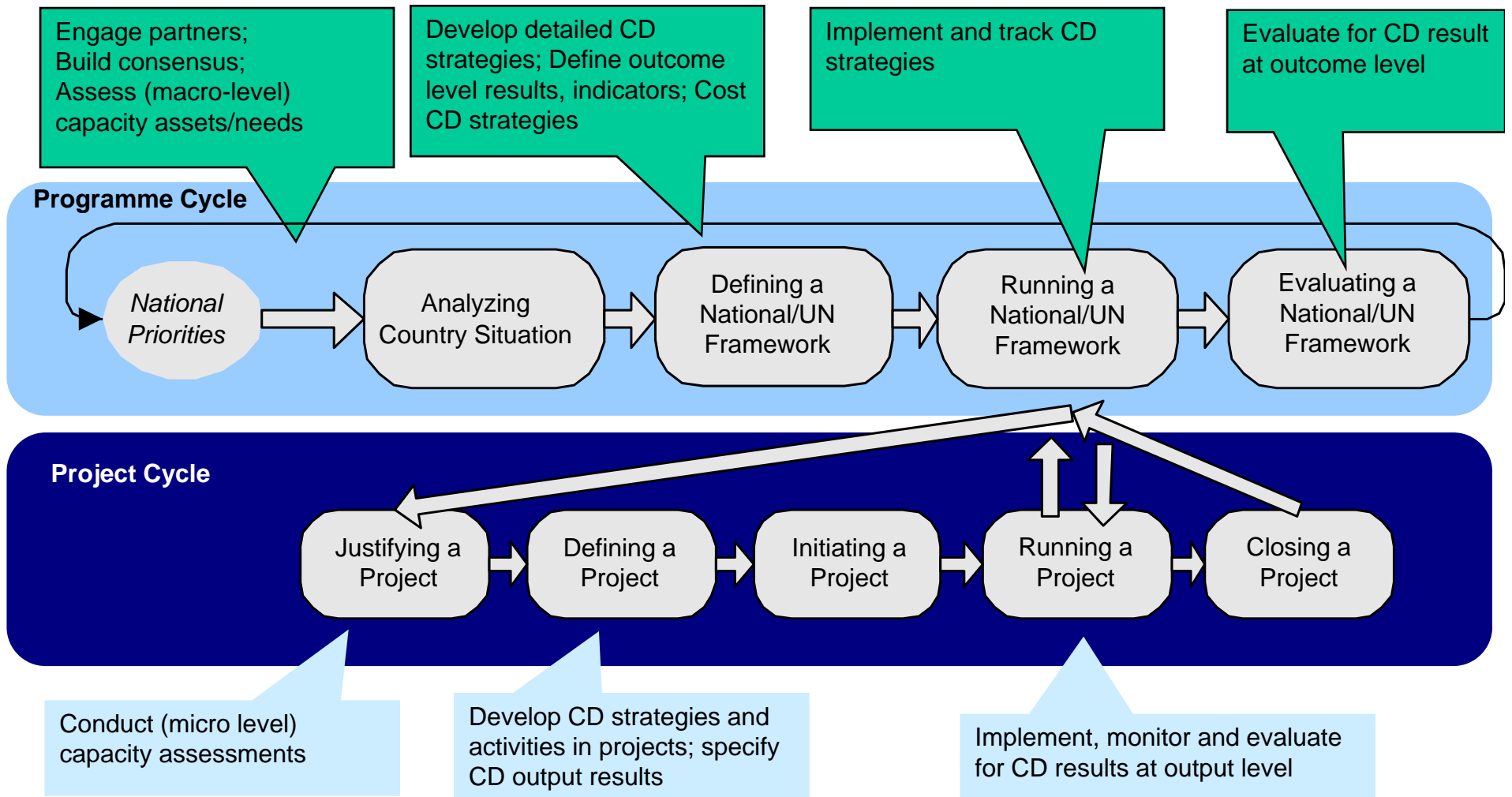
UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology – What’s Different?

- Focuses on capacity... as a complement to other types of assessment, e.g., organizational, functional, risk
- Emphasizes the link with capacity development responses... tries to move beyond “analysis paralysis” – people are happy to stay in the analysis phase... most have skills in this area, accountability for results is limited... it’s a safe area
- Establishes indicators... the indicators used to assess capacity become the benchmarks against which to measure progress

Core Issues and Capacity Development Responses

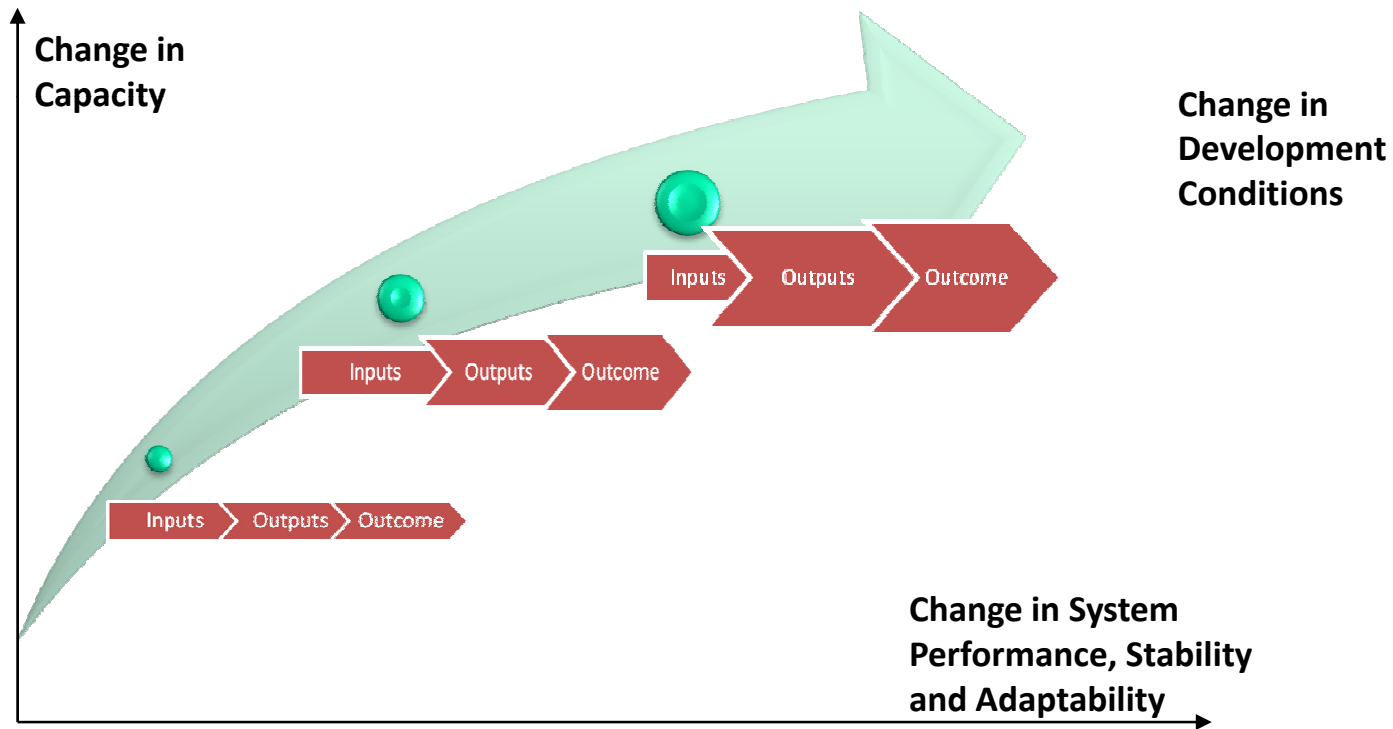
- 1. Institutional Arrangements:** e.g., support to functional reviews and the design of human resource management systems, monetary and non-monetary incentive mechanisms and results-based management.
- 2. Leadership:** e.g., support to visioning, systems thinking and strategic planning exercises; promotion of peer-to-peer mentoring; coalition building and negotiation skills development; design of career management systems.
- 3. Knowledge:** e.g., support to education reform strategies to incorporate human development needs into curriculum reform; facilitation of partnerships for investment in reforming post-secondary education; support to south-south learning solutions.
- 4. Accountability:** e.g., design and support to monitoring and evaluation systems and independent partner review mechanisms; promotion of public information disclosure policies and legislation; support to civic education.

Capacity Development in the Country Programming Cycle



Measuring Capacity Development

An improvement in capacity accelerates achievements of development goals



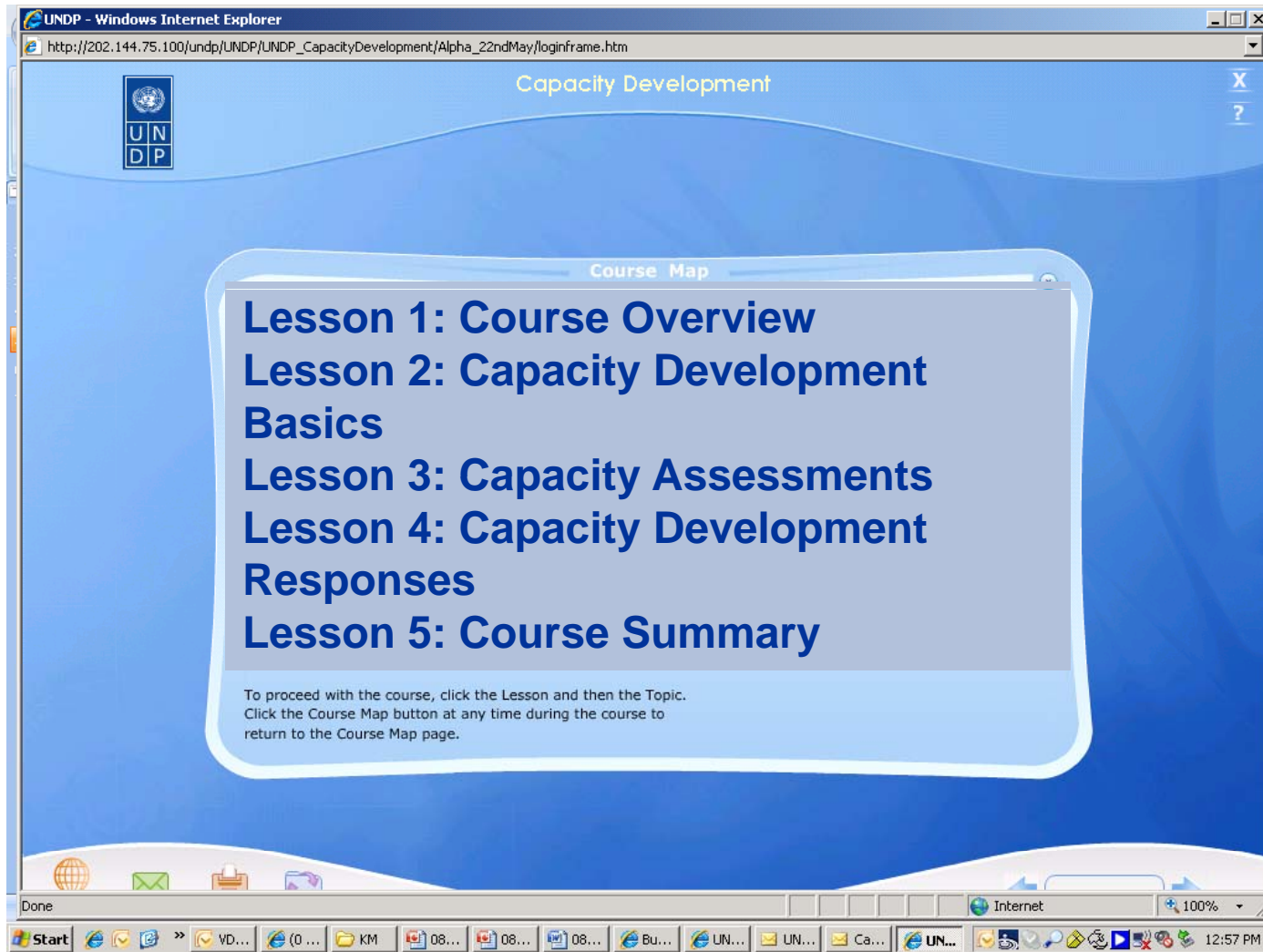


UNDP Capacity Development Website www.undp.org/capacity

The screenshot shows the UNDP Capacity Development website in a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays <http://www.undp.org/capacity/index.shtml>. The browser's menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, and Help. The toolbar contains various icons for navigation and utility. The website's navigation menu includes links for UNDP Home, About UNDP, Regions, Millennium Development Goals, What We Do, and Newsroom. The main content area features a header with the UNDP logo and the text "United Nations Development Programme Capacity Development". Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs for Home, Our Approach, Country Support, Knowledge Resources, and About Us. The main content is divided into several sections: "Core Issues" (Institutional Arrangements, Leadership, Knowledge, Accountability), "Five Step Process" (Engage, Assess, Respond, Implement, Evaluate), and "Global Initiatives" (National Implementation, Aid Effectiveness, Local Service Delivery). A search box is located at the bottom left. The central section, "Supporting Capacity Development", includes a photo of a woman and child, a video player, and text discussing the world's progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and the challenges of capacity development. A sidebar on the right features a video titled "Conversation on Capacity Development" and a section for "Capacity Development Global Event 2009". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several open applications, and the system clock displaying 4:34 PM.

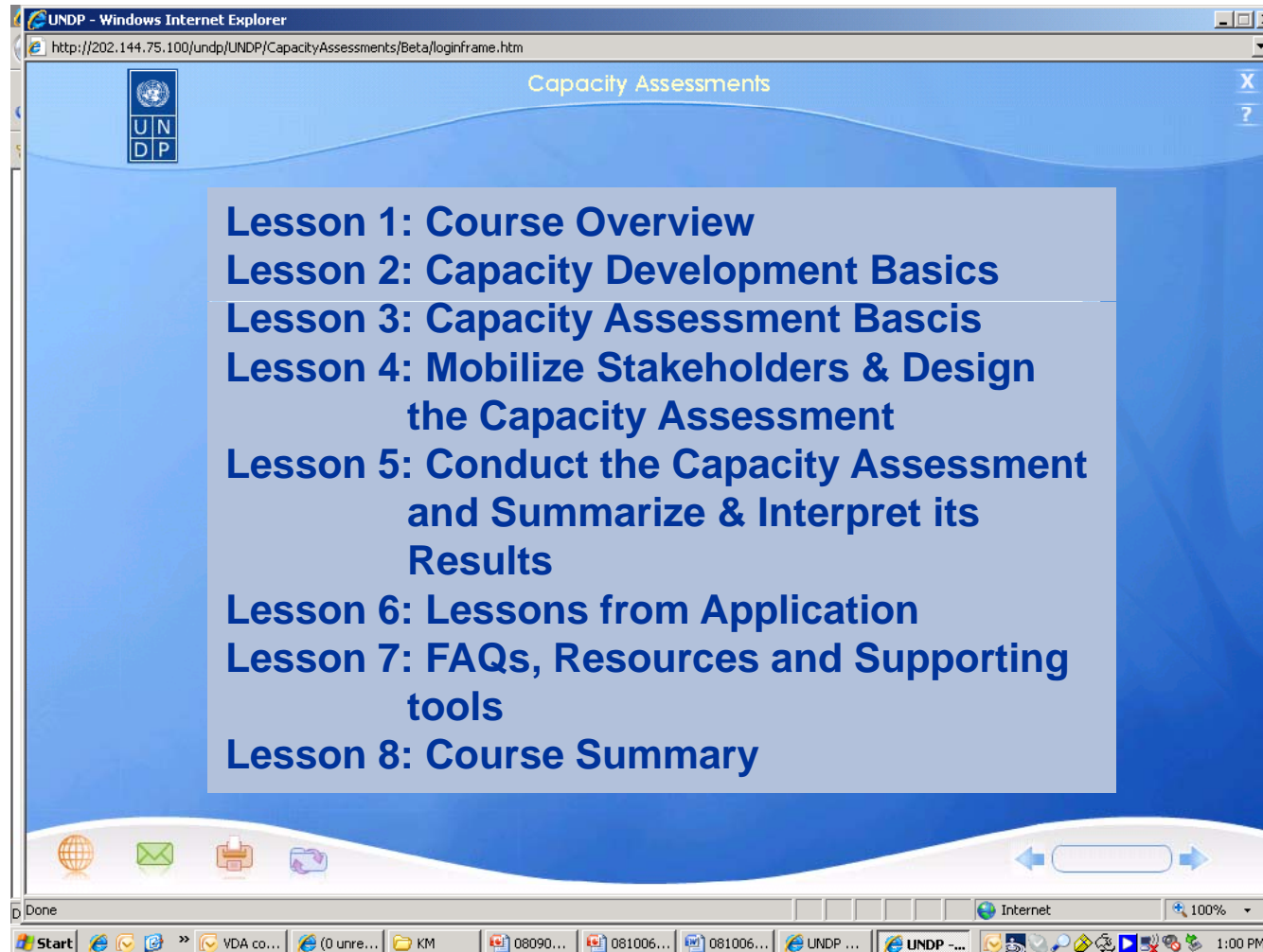


Online Course on Capacity Development (through UNDP Learning Management System)





Online Course on Capacity Assessment (through UNDP Learning Management System)





UNDP Capacity Development Resources

Theoretical and Case Study Publications

- Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems
- Developing Capacity through Technical Cooperation
- Ownership, Leadership, and Transformation: Can We Do Better for Capacity Development?
- Action Brief on Capacities for Integrated Local Development
- Action Brief on Brain Gain
- Action Brief on Ethics and Values in Civil Service Reforms

Practice Notes

- Practice Note on Capacity Development
- Practice Note on Capacity Assessment
- Practice Note on Supporting Capacities for Integrated Local Development
- Practice Note on Capacity Development during Periods of Transition



UNDP Capacity Development Resources (cont.)

Concept Notes on Capacity Development Responses

- Institutional Reform and Change Management: Managing Change in Public Sector Organizations
- Incentive Systems: Incentives, Motivation and Development Performance
- Leadership Development: Leading Transformations at the Local Level
- Knowledge Services and Learning
- Mutual Accountability Mechanisms: Accountability, Voice and Responsiveness
- Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes

Concept Notes on Capacity Development Applications

- Capacity Development and Aid Management
- Procurement Capacities



UNDP Capacity Development Resources (cont.)

Resource Guides and Tools (Selection)

- UNDP Capacity Assessment User's Guide and Supporting Tool
- A Review of Selected Capacity Assessment Methodologies
- UNDP Procurement Capacity Assessment User's Guide and Supporting Tool
- Resource Catalogue on Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Guide to Benchmarks and Indicators

Training materials (For UNDP Staff)

- Self-paced online course on Capacity Development
- Self-paced online course on Capacity Assessment

Network

- Capacity Development Network and Community of Practice



CDG's Services

Capacity Development Responses and Capacity Assessments

- Formulation and mainstreaming of capacity development policy in national and thematic contexts, including for example transition situations and integrated local development
- The three phases of capacity assessment: mobilise & design; conduct capacity assessments; summarise and interpret results
- Adaptation of capacity assessment methodology to various thematic or sectoral areas and national contexts (including Aid Effectiveness, Procurement, HIV/AIDS, Trade etc.)
- Evaluation of capacity development
- Facilitation of partnerships for investments in capacity development

Capacity Development for Aid Effectiveness

- Aid coordination mechanisms, aid management systems and reporting results
- Application of the capacity assessment methodology for aid effectiveness
- Analysis of progress on Paris Declaration at country, regional and global levels

Capacity Development for National Implementation

- Development of national implementation capacities, specifically in programme & project management; procurement; financial management; human resources management and information management
- Application of the capacity assessment methodology, including the procurement adaptation
- Formulation, implementation and evaluation of capacity development responses to address implementation capacities needs

Capacity Development for Local Service Delivery and Public Private Partnerships

- Application of the capacity assessment methodology at sub-national level, including assessments of different local stakeholders (local governments, service delivery agents)
- Formulation, implementation and evaluation of capacity development responses, in particular leadership capacities and voice and accountability mechanisms
- MDG localization, including the facilitation of participatory processes to adapt goals and indicators to the local level and to develop a local MDG strategy
- Mobilisation of (public-private) partnerships and resources for pro-poor investments for local service delivery

UNDG's Approach to Supporting Capacity Development – The Bottom Line

- Capacity development is one of the most effective ways of fostering sustainable human development
- The MDGs are a set of development outcomes, and capacity development is a means of achieving them
- Capacity development is a pillar for economic and social development and a pre-requisite for aid effectiveness
- Global crises call for reinforcing state capacity for development



UN Development System: A Coordinated Response to Supporting Capacity Development

- A common policy articulated in the UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development (2006)
- A common UNDG Capacity Assessment Methodology (2008) including User Guide and Supporting Tool
- Capacity development contribution prescribed in new CCA/UNDAF Guidelines (2009)
- A Technical Brief on Capacity Development (2009)
- A common learning platform for UNCTs on Capacity Development (with UN Staff College and UNDP VDA, 2008)
- UNDG capacity development services made available to UN agencies and UNCTs to integrate capacity development approach into UNDAFs and joint programmes

Programming for Capacity Development – Support Materials

	Policy, guidance and tools	Training	Quality assurance	Support & advice
Overall	CCA/UNDAF guidelines	UN Staff College leads Web-portal	RDT, RBX, Government	UNSSC/UNDG RBX
Capacity Development	UNDG Position Statement on CD UNDG Capacity Assessment Methodology User Guide and Supporting Tool UNDG Technical Brief on Capacity Development Checklists for Programming for CD (forthcoming)	Participation in Global ToT Participation in Regional ToTs Capacity Development Learning Module (updated version forthcoming)	Checklists for Programming for CD (forthcoming)	Regional CD Teams

www.undg.org



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Home

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UNDG Working Groups

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Resident Coordinator System

Programming Reference Guide

News and Updates

Topics & Tools

Achieving the MDGs

Common Premises/LN House

Common Services

UN Reform & Coherence

Post-Crisis Transition

My Account

Capacity Development

The World Summit Outcome document emphasised that UN development cooperation is, primarily, a means for capacity development (CD). It underlies each of the other principles for UN development cooperation, and is geared towards the achievement of MD/MDG-related national priorities. For government to fully own, achieve, and account for the priorities in the national development framework, it must assess its capacity development needs, respond to those needs, and evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts. The UNCT can play a critical role in helping government to do this. The UNCT must aim to develop lasting in-country capacities at individual, institutional and societal levels. In line with a HRBA, these capacities will help rights-holders to claim their rights, and duty-bearers to meet their obligations.

Support to capacity development must be "unpacked" into tangible components that offer a best fit in each country, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. The UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development provides key messages about capacity development and guides this "unpacking" of capacity development into 8 distinct components.

Policy and Guidance

Follow this link to the [Capacity Development pages](#) at the [Development Gateway Foundation](#). The Foundation offers an online resources portal for development information and knowledge-sharing worldwide.

UNDG Position statement on Capacity Development (UNDG Programme Group)
21 December 2006
The first position statement of the UNDG on capacity development (2006). The