



Thematic Session on Capacity Development

4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
Busan, Republic of Korea- BEXCO Centre
29 November 2011

I. Objectives

Capacity development (CD) has long been understood as critical to increased and sustainable development effectiveness. Consensus is emerging around key principles for country-led capacity development, as well as the importance of putting these principles into practice – as reflected in the Cairo Consensus on CD, the Bangkok Call to Action on Technical Co-operation for CD, the Addis Ababa Third Regional African Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness and the Bogota High Level Meeting on South-South Co-operation and CD. Recognising that capacity development remains a binding constraint to the ambitious goals of the Fourth High Level Forum, concrete, far-reaching actions are urgently needed to advance the practice and knowledge of this crucial area of country-led development.

II. Moderators and participants

Moderator: Frannie LÉAUTIER, Executive Secretary, African Capacity Building Foundation.

Panellists

- *Talaat ABDEL-MALEK, Co-Chair, Working Party on Aid Effectiveness*
- *H.E. Chhieng YANARA, Minister attached to the Prime Minister, Secretary-General of the Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board of the Council for the Development of Cambodia*
- *Stella MUGABO, Executive Secretary, Public Sector Capacity Building Secretariat, Rwanda*
- *Don MARUT, Executive Director, International NGO Forum of Indonesian Development*
- *Ibrahim Assane MAYAKI, Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development*
- *Irina Bokova, Director General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation*
- *Christoph BEIER, Director, GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) GmbH, Germany*
- *Emmanuel AKWETAY, Executive Director, Institute for Democratic Governance, Ghana*
- *Wonhuyk LIM, Korean Development Institute, Korea*
- *H.E. Dalmas Anyango OTIENO, Minister of State for Public Service, Kenya*

Planned floor interventions were made by:

- *Gerard Van Bilzen, Ambassador for Train4Dev*
- *Nils Boesen, Director, United Nations Development Programme, Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD)*
- *Akihiko Nishio, Director, World Bank Institute*

II. Key Issues discussed and main messages

It was emphasised that while there is widespread agreement that capacity development is necessary for sustainable development results, and there are sporadic cases of success, there are multiple cases of failure. CD is complex, long term and involves political challenges.

Ownership, political commitment, and sustained political engagement and leadership are critical for effective capacity development. It is a question of self-determination. This was underscored in the discussions of the successful cases presented by Cambodian, Rwandan, Korean and Kenyan speakers. However, a speedier rate of change in behaviour is needed of the development partners. Monitoring of practice compared to agreed actions is required post-Busan.

Speakers pointed to the importance of strong national vision and focusing CD on clear national priorities. In addition, a strong emphasis was given to the role of non-state actors as well as state actors in the development process and hence the need for CD and synergies across society. Southern think tanks can play a critical role in identifying and analysing home grown solutions.

Examples of good practice in CD mentioned include (i) focus on improving performance of institutions, (ii) strong results logic, (iii) systematic planning, implementation, monitoring and exit strategy, (iv) joint learning events at the country level, (v) transparent monitoring of performance, (vi) learning by doing, (vii) pragmatic solutions.

Knowledge exchange and peer learning are powerful mechanisms for capacity development when undertaken with engagement over a period of time and are mutual in nature, as highlighted by the KDI/WBI study of Korea's Knowledge Sharing Program and new networks such as APDev.

Capacity development goes beyond training and education – it is about institutions and processes of change, and includes women's empowerment.

III. Possible next steps

The capacity development thematic session highlighted the importance of results-focused capacity development in successful change processes and put forward concrete actions to carry forward:

- Result-focused capacity development should be a key, explicit focus of the country-led compacts—and the work on effective institutions that will follow Busan.
- There is a need for more organised and explicit approach to capturing and sharing knowledge on capacity development. This has to be a focus on the commitments made in Busan, using existing networks and strengthening the global knowledge architecture for capacity development.

Capacity development is not just an add-on, an afterthought, but requires an engaged political leadership to put capacity development at the centre of country-led development priorities.