

4.1 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PROGRAMMING?

It may be useful now to look at how CD is best integrated in FAO's day-to-day work.

What programming mechanisms are most suitable to capture the incremental nature of CD? How can existing capacity assets be identified and analysed? What types of evidence should be monitored and evaluated? And how can change be made sustainable after a project/programme has ended? These are some of the typical challenges involved with programming CD support in Member Countries.

This Chapter will discuss, at an introductory level, the process of engaging in CD programming to address some of the challenges indicated above. A more in-depth discussion will be covered under Learning Module 2 on CD Approaches in FAO Projects, which will also offer a range of tools that could be useful when designing projects and programmes that have CD components.

The most successful and sustainable of the interventions were those that provided: interdisciplinary support across all three CD dimensions over time; ongoing links with, and access to, FAO expertise; and activities anchored in local or national institutions.

Evaluation of FAO's Activities on CD in Africa, main report, paragraph 136

FAO can boast hundreds and hundreds of projects that have produced significant results in their respective areas. But have they produced lasting impact? Did they result in increased capacities of Member Countries?

Experiences are mixed – success is intermingled with frustration in the stories recounted. In some cases there was a problem at the receiving end: corruption, lack of real commitment by national actors. More frequently, however, the problem was found to be in the way CD interventions were programmed: poor assessment of needs, insufficient attention to context, short timeframes, activities not built into existing institutions – to mention few of the major obstacles.

Indeed, CD programming processes can be improved.

CD programming is fully integrated within FAO's broader Result-Based Management (RBM) approaches and procedures. Yet, the traditional perception of programming needs to be broadened to take into account the intrinsic nature of capacity development – i.e. a process that is not linear (in contrast with the RBM perspective) but instead tends to be associated with multiple causes, solutions and effects, some of them unintended or essentially unpredictable.

The clear implication is that we need to recognize and acknowledge that there are specific challenges in CD and that we need to cater to them in FAO programming approaches.

Collaborative mechanisms, iterative planning and reflective practice are some of the key elements that can help address such challenges. **Box 6** illustrates how these elements contributed to a successful CD initiative in FAO's post-Tsunami intervention in Banda Aceh.

BOX 6: FAO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

The project Rehabilitation and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture affected by the tsunami in Aceh Province aimed at bridging the post-tsunami recovery phase in the fisheries sector to longer-term development. It promoted a more sustainable management of fisheries resources, mainly through CD of stakeholders ranging from fishers to government planners.

Some key points of the programming process:

- > **Participatory and collaborative methods** were used from the early phase of project planning, through joint validation of the results framework and joint development of annual work plans that were adjusted and modified based on stakeholder feedback. In addition to building trust with stakeholders, such methods helped promote ownership and commitment throughout implementation, hence laying the ground for the sustainability of the project.
- > **A context analysis and risk assessment** were carried out early in the project. This helped to identify areas in the policy domain that required change, and to analyse elements of the context that could represent obstacles for the uptake of project outcomes.
- > **Careful identification of local partners** to implement the project was another key action of the early phases of the project and continued throughout the implementation phases. This ongoing activity addressed the risk that partners identified might need to be changed (for example, for insufficient performance) as the project evolved. The project invested in and capitalized on the capacities of local partners as potential “champions” of the changes that the project was meant to promote. As such, the selection process took quite a long time.
- > **Joint planning of changes in roles and responsibilities** in the context of an exit strategy took place well before the project ended. Planning considered who would do what and when, and what type of capacity needs local partners had in order to take up such new roles.
- > **Attitudes** made the whole difference in the project. FAO did not perceive its role as problem-solver in the project; instead the Organization was well aware of its facilitative role to catalyse learning and changes with local partners, being ready to learn in turn from them.

OSRO/INS/601/ARC – Rehabilitation and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture affected by the tsunami in Aceh Province, Indonesia. Final Project Report and Notes on Process, January 2007 – June 2010, FAO.

4.2 FIVE KEY STEPS FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PROGRAMMING

Five key steps are essential for enhancing programming of CD support in FAO: engaging in sustained dialogue; understanding the context, including assessing capacities; engaging in CD-focused design; using a participatory and adaptive implementation approach; reflecting on outcomes and learning.

These steps feed sequentially into a programming process in which expected capacity outcomes develop through repeated cycles (i.e. iterative) and through small achievements (i.e. incremental), thus allowing all actors to build on earlier successes using the expertise that has been developed. At each iteration, design modifications and/or adjustments are made based on reflection and learning.

A thorough illustration of the steps, together with a list of tools that can help FAO staff put them into action, is provided in Learning Module 2.

Capacity Assessment: Assessing needs has emerged as the key area for learning in FAO. An **FAO-specific tool for assessing capacities** at the levels of individuals, organizations and enabling environment was developed to address this need. The tool is included in the Learning Module 2 – Capacity Development Approaches in Programming of the Capacity Development Learning Programme; it can also be accessed from the FAO Capacity Development Portal at: <http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/en/>

4.3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT STOP WHEN A PROJECT HAS ENDED

As a final consideration, it is important to reiterate that CD does not stop with the termination of the project/programme. CD is an iterative process that requires long-term commitment, constant adjustment and follow-through.

Pursuing long-term engagement is not easy. Most often, FAO's engagement terminates with the project's end and no follow-up is planned systematically. In addition, even successful projects often do not get beyond the piloting stage, either because donors do not extend financial support due to priority shifts, or because CD interventions have not been built strategically into national institutions, so there is no **political will** by the countries to institutionalize and upscale results.

An appropriate selection of FAO's funding modalities is required to ensure that these promote sustainability.⁹ Where FAO cannot extend the length of its involvement, it must work with others and promote **partnerships** to strategically assist countries in completing the full extent of the required CD.

The case of Farmer Field Schools in India (**Box 7** below) provides an excellent example of an iterative intervention that achieved incremental results, which was eventually scaled up.

⁹There is consensus in FAO that, because the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is by its very nature a short-term modality, it is not best placed to address the long-term nature of CD. TCP may still be effective in CD-oriented interventions but they need to be undertaken in a more integrated way.

BOX 7: FAO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE

UPSCALING APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

A long-standing partnership between the Government of India and FAO has enabled Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) to be introduced and subsequently scaled up. In Andhra Pradesh, FFS has become the official method to train farmers in sustainable approaches to agriculture. The main modality of intervention was the training of farmers and extension officers; however, complementary means were used to build awareness at policy level of the importance of strengthening farmers' capacities and skills. A large cadre of trained FFS farmers and facilitators has been created in the state departments of agriculture and horticulture, universities, international and national research centres, NGOs, foundations and the private sector.

Some of the factors contributing to the success of the programme are:

- > **Government commitment:** The Government is committed to innovative approaches to building the capacities of its extension service to meet farmers' needs, and supported the introduction of the FFS approach, leading to a new National Policy for Farmers in 2007.
- > **Stable/strategic allocation of resources:** The central government and three state governments have allocated funds to programmes of farmer training in cotton IPM since 2002.
- > **Mix of intervention modalities:** A range of international meetings, workshops, and seminars was organized as complementary instruments to sensitize policy-makers on the need to adopt educational programmes enhancing farmers' knowledge.

The full case can be found on the FAO CD Portal at <http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/good-practices/en>

KEY POINTS FOR CHAPTER 4

- > For more impact and sustainability, five key steps should be systematically incorporated in CD programming: engaging in sustained dialogue; understanding the context, including assessing existing capacities; engaging in CD-focused design; using a participatory and adaptive implementation approach; and reflecting on outcomes and learning.
- > Pursuing long-term engagement is not always easy, but is necessary to ensure the sustainability of CD interventions. Adequate funding modalities, iterative approaches and promotion of partnership arrangements can help with this.

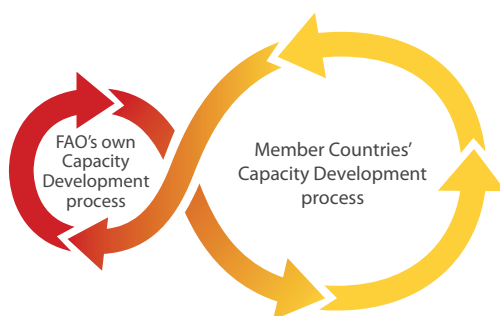
5.1 SHIFTING ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ATTITUDES

Real promotion of national ownership requires an attitudinal and behavioural change: FAO staff need to learn “to let it go”; that is, moving from an implementer to a facilitator role. We must first of all ensure a real understanding of what country ownership means.

Excerpts from: FAO Internal Needs Assessment on Capacity Development, interviews with FAO staff members, January 2010.

FAO is convinced that to support others in their CD processes, an internal process of CD and organizational learning are required. As illustrated in **Figure 6**, CD is a joint learning and sharing process.

All staff are affected by such process, from FAO Representatives and Programme Coordinators to Technical Officers and National Staff. External Consultants, both national and international, deserve special attention in this process as they are at the front line of delivering much of FAO’s CD work.



[FIG 6] Capacity Development – a double learning loop

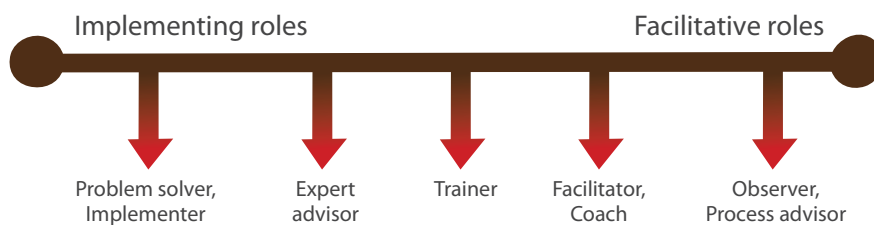
An enhanced CD practice requires a shift of the Organization from a problem-solving or “direct” role to a facilitative or “indirect” role. What differences does it make and what does it imply in terms of changes in responsibilities, behaviours and attitudes of FAO staff?

The theory recognizes a range of possible roles for external agencies in development work, as shown in **Figure 7**.

At the one end under the **problem-solver/implementer** role, the external expert undertakes the analysis of the problem mostly on his/her own, and proposes and implements a suitable solution based on his/her knowledge and expertise.

At the other end, we find the **observer and process advisor** role in which the external expert enables the national partner to work on the problem independently and develop its own solutions. In this situation, the expert mainly pays attention to the manner in which the partner handles the matter, as the ability to solve problems is more important than the problem itself.

¹⁰Adapted from *Roles and Competencies in Consulting*, V-EZ inWent, page 40



[FIG 7] Range of possible roles for external agencies

Clearly, neither of the two models is completely applicable in its pure form. Experience confirms that usually there are no clear-cut roles in development work. External agencies such as FAO are frequently called upon to adopt multiple or mixed roles within the same intervention, depending on the context, the capacities of national actors and the type of task, challenge or need to be addressed.

A more realistic and generic distinction for FAO can be made between implementing and facilitative roles, as shown in **Table 2**¹¹.

| Features | FAO implementing roles (expert advisor, problem solver, trainer, implementer) | FAO facilitative roles (coach, facilitator, process advisor) |
|---|--|--|
| Objective of intervention | To solve the problem on behalf of partners; to provide technical knowledge to supplement or upgrade the knowledge base of partners | To improve the problem-solving ability of partners; to guide action and enable reflection and learning on the job |
| Ownership of results | Shared (FAO-partners) | Lies with partners |
| Responsibility and accountability for the process | Lies with FAO expert | Joint (FAO-partners) |
| Type of processes involved | Joint identification of problem and definition of appropriate solutions (linear process) | Ongoing interaction FAO-partners, action-reflection cycles (iterative & incremental process) |
| Type of expertise/behaviour required | Technical expertise in ARD, communication & training-delivery skills | Technical expertise and process-related skills, ability to engage with partners |
| Examples of services | Technical assistance, training, problem analysis, concept proposals, demonstrations | Coaching and mentoring, facilitating consensus-building, knowledge- and experience-sharing, piloting, network creation |
| Useful when... | Substantial technical know-how is missing or largely inadequate. | Sustainability of the solution and development of capacities is the priority. |

Table 2: FAO implementing vs. facilitative roles

¹¹Adapted from *ibid*, *Characteristics of expert and process consultancy*, page 16

The challenges of shifting to facilitative roles

Whereas the ability of FAO to play the role of expert advisor or other implementing roles is undisputed, there are great challenges involved with shifting to more facilitative roles. These challenges do not reside only at the delivery end.

For example, there may be instances in which a “hand-out” mentality prevails with national partners, who may seem to resist adopting more leading roles. This may even lead to the paradoxical situation in which, while FAO strives to progressively adopt more facilitative roles, national partners, especially at community levels, expect ready-made solutions to their problems.

In this project, FAO is delivering activities by itself with the assistance of international consultants. However, we appreciate that this is not cost-effective in the long term and that we should not be the ones doing this work. We tried to identify regional organizations to take over this work, but we have not been very successful so far. In our last attempts, we realized that the regional organizations were considering themselves as the “implementers” and were looking at FAO as the fund provider. So it is hard to reason in terms of ownership as they do not seem to even want such ownership at all.

Excerpts from: FAO Internal Needs Assessment on Capacity Development, interviews with FAO staff members, January 2010

The challenges include:

At the receiving end (national partners):

- > lack of motivation and self-confidence based on experiences with top-down planning practices of external development programmes
- > over-estimation of the value of foreign resources, solutions and knowledge as opposed to internal potential and resources

At the delivering end (FAO):

- > protective attitude with regard to the scope of own work, and concerns that FAO would lose ground if work is handed over
- > difficulty in building trust with national actors, also in view of the weak FAO presence in the field and the usual short timeframes of engagement
- > weak institutional practice of planning for an exit strategy together with national stakeholders from the outset of the project/programme, which would prepare the latter for changes in roles/responsibilities after the project ends
- > generally weak competencies and skills in process-related areas, in particular insufficient ability to identify national potential and motivate actors through positive inquiry.

5.2 COMPETENCIES FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Enhancing corporate CD practices demands a great investment on the part of FAO's staff, in terms of time, energy, commitment and motivation to learn. It also requires that the Organization support the development of a new set of competencies of its staff while ensuring an enabling environment that encourages the development of such competencies.

What are the key competencies that should be supported?

The ideal attitudes and skills for FAO staff to promote CD are: ability to interact on an equal footing with national counterparts; ability to engage personally and to take risks; commitment and involvement; ability to listen, to be questioned and probed; and solid technical competences.

Our CD role should be that of helping national governments identify their priorities, making them aware of the implications of different policy choices and negotiating the most appropriate and realistic options. This requires exposure to a variety of developing-country situations; management skills; ability to relate and work with people; and ability to develop and implement projects.

Excerpts from: FAO Internal Needs Assessment on Capacity Development, interviews with FAO staff members, January 2010

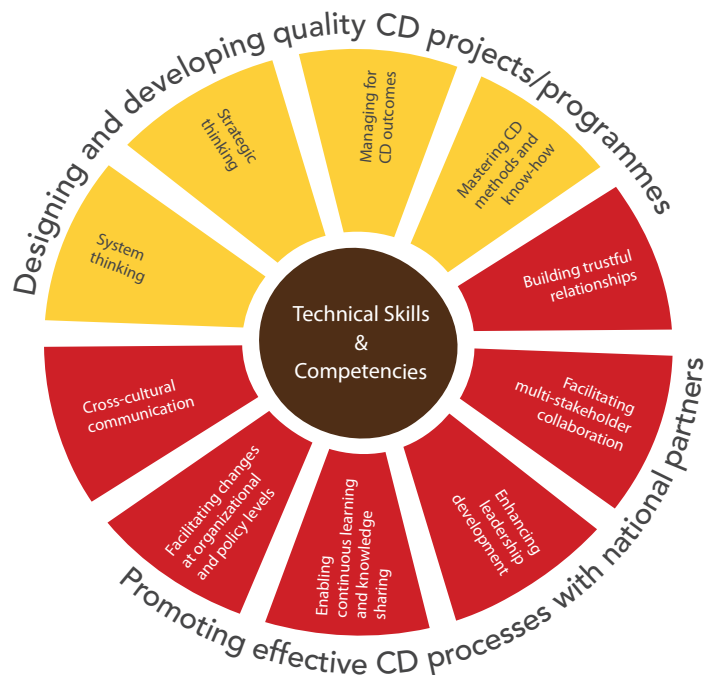
A competency framework¹² for CD is provided in **Figure 8**.

The framework does not introduce new types of competencies in FAO.¹³ It leverages existing competencies from within the current FAO Competency Framework (Core Competency, Managerial Competency and Professional Enabling Competency areas)¹⁴ and consolidates them around a common corporate objective – increasing FAO's effectiveness in supporting CD of Member Countries.

¹²The competencies have been identified from three sources: (i) feedback from FAO staff engaged successfully in CD-sensitive programming; (ii) analysis of the nature of CD processes and the role of external actors supporting such processes; and (iii) literature review on successful cases of CD and how they were influenced by the people involved in CD.

¹³Three competencies of the suggested CD framework are currently not covered in the FAO competency framework. These are: CD methods and know-how, strategic thinking and system thinking.

¹⁴ FAO Competency Framework, 2006.



[FIG 8] A competency framework for Capacity Development in FAO

The technical subject-matter competencies in the ARD sector are at the core of the framework. As repeatedly stated in the module, the highly specialized technical competencies of FAO staff represent FAO's greatest pride and comparative advantage and are necessarily part of any CD competency framework.

However, for better results, subject-matter competencies of FAO staff need to be blended with an additional set of CD-related competencies, which have been grouped in two areas:

(i). Competencies for designing and developing quality CD projects/programmes

The focus of this first set of competencies is about internal efficiency, coherence and effectiveness of FAO's work. It is related to the ability to think strategically and holistically and master the skills needed for putting in place sound CD interventions.

- > Systems thinking
- > Strategic thinking
- > Managing for CD outcomes
- > CD methods and know-how

(ii). Competencies for promoting effective CD processes with national partners

This second set is related to the ability of the FAO staff to engage with national actors in an effective way and craft collaborative processes that contribute to the development of sustainable capacity.

- > Cross-cultural communication
- > Facilitating changes at organizational and policy levels
- > Enabling continuous learning and knowledge sharing
- > Enhancing leadership development

- > Facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration
- > Building trustful relationships

Why do we need a competency framework for CD?

There are some good reasons why it is worthwhile consolidating CD-relevant competencies into a common framework:

- > It provides a corporate shared view on the standards needed for promoting effective CD.
- > It guides internal performance management processes and the strategic posting of staff in decentralized offices of Member Countries.
- > It orients FAO staff when recruiting consultants for CD-related tasks, and when identifying national partners.
- > It provides the foundation for designing corporate learning solutions and for supporting staff in developing their CD-related competencies and skills.

5.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT-RELATED COMPETENCIES

An ample selection of learning solutions is available at FAO to improve CD-related competencies.

These include Face to Face learning courses offered by CSH in various “soft” areas such as Communication, Facilitation, Cultural Effectiveness. Dedicated CD courses are under development by OEKC, including: a Learning Module on **CD Approaches in FAO Projects**, a Reference Manual on **Good Training Practices for Effective Capacity Development**, a Learning Module on **Organizational Development**. A wide collection of e-learning resources is also available from the FAO Capacity Development Portal. A full list of references is provided at the end of this module under CD Resources and learning.

Clearly, strengthening competencies alone is not sufficient to improve FAO’s organizational practice. Staff and managers in fact can only translate their competencies into successful organizational performance if the organization aligns its programming processes, operating procedures, and institutional and administrative arrangements with this objective.

KEY POINTS FOR CHAPTER 5

- > An enhanced CD practice requires a shift of the Organization from a problem-solving or “direct” role to a facilitative or “indirect” role.
- > Realistically, FAO may be required to adopt multiple or mixed roles within the same intervention, depending on the context, the capacities of national actors and the type of task, challenge or need to be addressed.
- > To take on facilitative roles, FAO staff must learn how to better engage with partners, promote knowledge sharing and learning, and craft the right types of processes that can best strengthen the ability of partners to solve those problems on their own.

KEY MILESTONES AND EMERGING TRENDS: THE INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

WITHOUT ROBUST CAPACITY – STRONG INSTITUTIONS, SYSTEMS, AND LOCAL EXPERTISE – DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CANNOT FULLY OWN AND MANAGE THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES.
ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION

I. Key milestones

CD is a core concern of the international development community and an essential component for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A summary follows of the key milestones that contributed to generate the current international consensus on CD.

- > **UN General Assembly, 2004.** In its resolution 59/250 of December 2004, the UN General Assembly reflected the determination of the International community to improve results in this area as part of the UN effort to overcome poverty, build a food secure world and ensure environmental sustainability. The resolution called upon the 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/the devising of national strategies for capacity building”; and it “encourages all organizations of the United Nations development system to include reporting on their capacity building activities in their annual reports to their respective governing bodies”.
- > **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2005.** CD took a central role in the Paris Declaration. Signed by over 100 countries and organizations, it established a set of concrete commitments and areas that donors and partner countries pledged to monitor jointly from 2005-08. As such, it redefined the conditions of the development partnership. It is grounded on five mutually reinforcing principles: ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability.
- > **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC), 2006.** Drawing lessons from the last two decades of development cooperation, the good practice paper “The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice” provided the conceptual foundations that changed our understanding of CD. OECD DAC, in particular, pointed to the shortcomings of technical cooperation, which has led to numerous micro-successes (such as better infrastructure, health care, education, housing and improved means of productive livelihoods in agriculture), but has not resulted in the development of sustainable capacities to enable countries to manage their own development independently.
- > **UN Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), 2007.** CD had been highlighted by members as a priority in the TCPR, given its role as a major component of UN-level reform. In its Resolution 62/208 the TCPR reaffirms that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing countries. The resolution also stresses that CD is a core function of the UN development system and recommends it take measures to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach in its support to CD efforts of programme countries.
- > **Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), 2008.** The AAA was adopted in Accra on 4 September 2008 as a result of the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. It reflects the international commitment to support the reforms needed to accelerate an effective use of development assistance, focusing on the main technical, institutional and political challenges to full implementation of the Paris principles. It emphasized a number of priority areas for action concerning, among others, enhancement of country system capacity, integration of CD in national and sector strategies, increased engagement of civil society and private sector, and enhancement of the relevance and quality of CD support.

II. Emerging trends for putting CD into practice

While there is international consensus on the new understanding of CD, operational approaches, frameworks and methods to put CD into practice are still taking shape. The following can be considered as some emerging trends:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>A. From focus on single aspects towards a systemic perspective</p> | <p>Capacity emerges through the interplay of capabilities of individuals, organizations and the larger environment. Programmes and projects that focus on only one element of such a complex system – hence neglecting the wider system in their analysis and interventions – will not be effective in promoting CD. A systemic perspective is essential in assessing the level and status of capacity components in a given country and in designing effective interventions.</p> |
| <p>B. From blueprints towards flexible planning and situation-specific solutions</p> | <p>An endogenous and dynamic process such as CD is by nature unique and cannot be guided by blueprint plans and fixed solutions. Agencies involved in genuine CD processes need to pay attention to the complexity and specificity of the situation and be flexible in their implementations. A careful diagnosis of capacity needs is essential to identify appropriate interventions.</p> |
| <p>C. From knowledge transfer towards strengthening endogenous processes of knowledge creation</p> | <p>CD is (no longer) a question of transferring knowledge from North to South. National processes of knowledge creation can be supported by external agents, for example by assisting partners to access and adapt the knowledge needed (e.g. through South-South collaboration) and by facilitating continuous learning and reflection processes.</p> |
| <p>D. From fixed planning towards incremental processes of management</p> | <p>CD resists traditional programming practices consisting of linear planning, logical cause-effect relations and predictability of results. The outcomes of CD interventions cannot be exactly predefined or planned. A continuous action- reflection cycle combined with a clear vision is required to address the incremental nature of CD.</p> |
| <p>E. From training towards learning</p> | <p>The practice of many development organizations is frequently dominated by providing ready-made solutions through technical assistance or trainings.¹⁵ Genuine CD involves more profound change processes characterized by reflection and continuous learning. Training can be an element in supporting learning, but for promoting CD other instruments are needed, such as mentoring, coaching and blended learning. Only a wide portfolio of learning instruments can, in the right context, support learning, which in turn stimulates reflection, the creation of knowledge and thus the development of capacity.</p> |
| <p>F. From implementation towards facilitation</p> | <p>Understanding CD as an open, dynamic, multi-dimensional learning and change process means that CD cannot be “implemented” by outsiders. External agencies can only support, facilitate and nurture CD processes once in motion. CD is essentially dependant on internally motivated partners taking ownership of changes to move towards their vision.</p> |
| <p>G. From quantitative measurement of outcomes towards more holistic approaches</p> | <p>Because of the “emergent”¹⁶ character of CD, traditional methods of outcome measurements mainly based on predefined indicators and quantitative efficiency measures may not be sufficient. Qualitative approaches¹⁷ based on reflection, self-awareness and multi-stakeholder dialogue offer possibilities to track capacity outcomes in an evidence-based way. Such reflective monitoring is also a valuable learning tool and a driver of the CD process itself.</p> |
| <p>H. From quick fixes to long-term engagement</p> | <p>CD is not a technical process, quickly solved by transfer of knowledge, skills or organizational models. It needs long-term commitment based on trustful relationships and the willingness to co-create processes. This recognition drives the process of moving from small projects towards programmes, which provide the “space” for long-term engagement with a clear orientation towards intended outcomes and impacts.</p> |

¹⁵Kaplan, A., ‘The development of capacity’, *Development Dossier*, NGLS, New York, 1999, available at <http://www.un-ngls.org/developmentdossier.htm>

¹⁶*Emergence is a key concept in the theory of System Thinking, according to which capacity emerges out of the complex interactions among all actors in a system and produces characteristics not found in any of the elements of the system. Ref European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECPDM), Capacity, Change and Performance, April 2008*

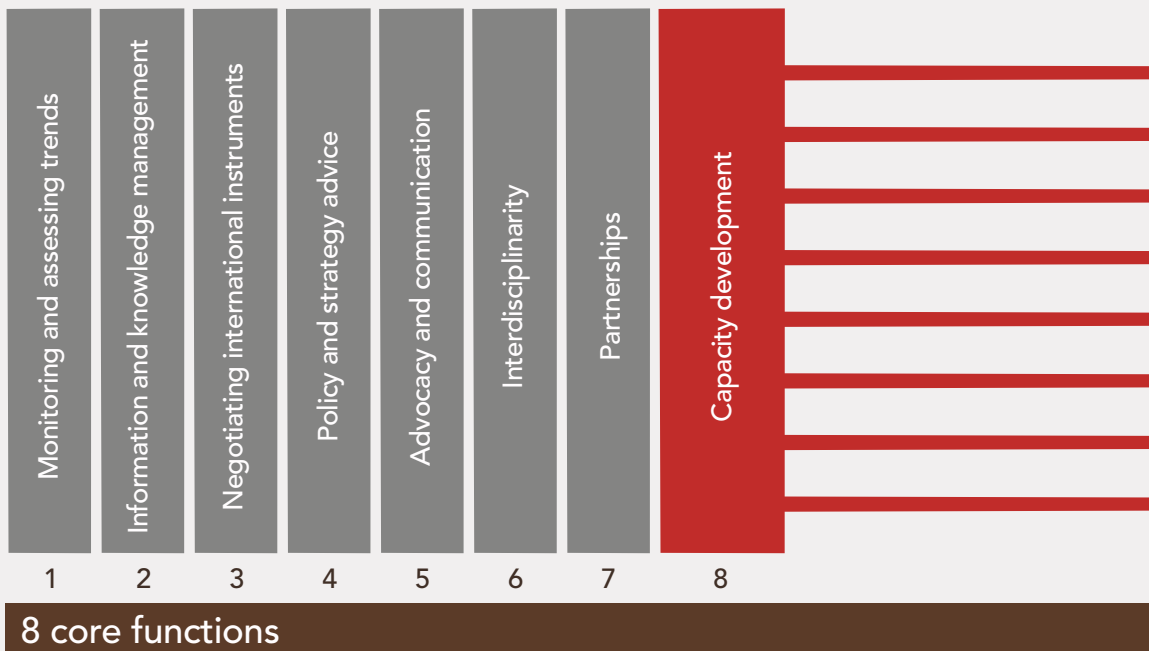
¹⁷For example: *Outcome Mapping, Most Significant Change, Story Telling*

APPENDIX B

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN FAO'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FAO's new Strategic Framework provides a comprehensive description of FAO's intended results at various levels and of the core functions required to ensure that these results are achieved. The results chain defines three global goals at the top level, representing the long-term development impact in the area of FAO's mandate. A level below shows 11 strategic objectives¹⁸ defining core impacts to be achieved by Member Countries and regions over a timeframe of around ten years (Figure 9).

The organizational results are formulated at outcome level and are intended to be achieved in a time horizon of four years. FAO has identified 50 organizational results. In order to contribute to these 50 outcomes, FAO has associated each of them with several outputs that a Sub-Regional Office, a Regional Office or HQ Division is held accountable for achieving through the delivery of a series of individual products and services.

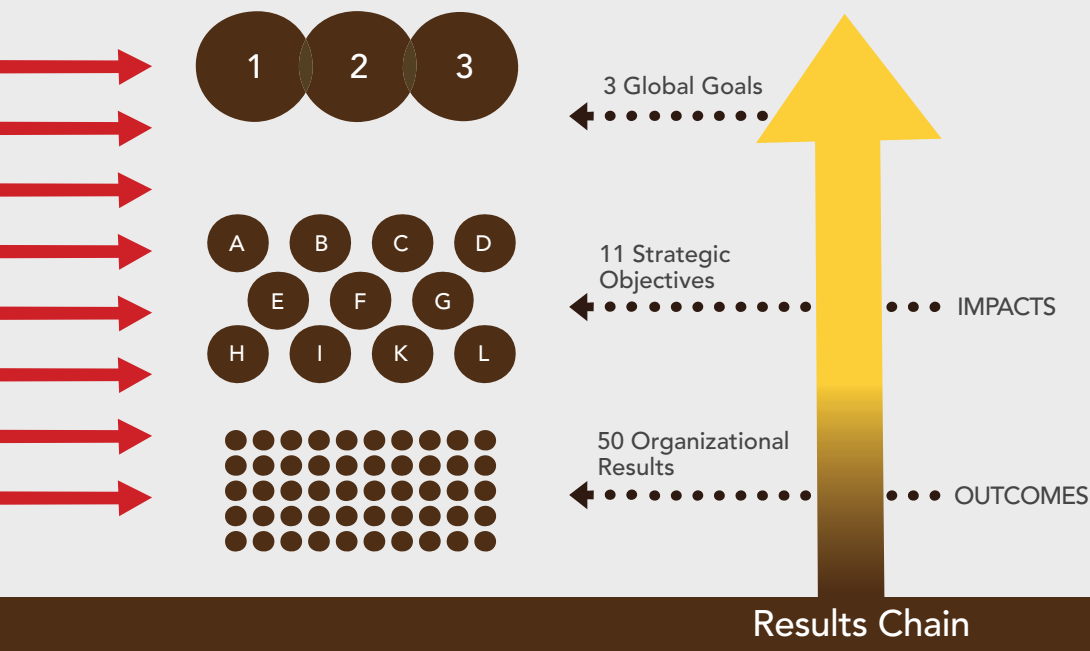


¹⁸The eleven strategic objectives defined by FAO are: A - sustainable intensification of crop production; B - increased sustainable livestock production; C - sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources; D - improved quality and safety of food at all stages of the food chain; E - sustainable management of forests and trees; F - sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved responses to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture; G - enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods and rural development; H - improved food security and better nutrition; I - improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies; K - gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision making in the rural areas; and L - increased and more effective public and private investment in agriculture and rural development.

The Strategic Framework defines CD as one of the eight core functions,¹⁹ which are cross-cutting means for achieving the developmental outcomes.

As much as 50 percent of FAO's organizational results across the technical sectors explicitly state one or several CD. This percentage increases if we consider the organizational results in which CD is implicitly stated.

This confirms that CD lies at the very heart of FAO's mandate as a specialized agency of the UN.



[FIG 9] - Capacity Development- a core function in FAO's Strategic Framework

¹⁹The eight core functions are: (i) monitoring and assessing trends; (ii) information and knowledge management; (iii) negotiating international instruments; (iv) policy and strategy advice; (v) capacity development; (vi) advocacy and communication; (vii) interdisciplinarity; and (viii) partnerships.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND THE EVALUATION OF FAO'S CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA

In the context of FAO's Reform, CD has been recognized as an important "area needing focus and a strategy". The **Independent External Evaluation** (IEE) carried out in 2007 highlighted the following:

- > FAO's development activities comprise small, non-strategic interventions with little prospects of replication elsewhere or of generating sustainable benefits.
- > FAO's approach consists of a shopping list of projects rather than a systematic approach to identifying areas where FAO comparative strengths and the needs of the countries converge.
- > There can only be a limited uptake of new production technologies unless the enabling environment of policies, institutions, legislation and infrastructure is assured.
- > FAO's direct support in the application of production technologies as distinct from appropriate policies and capacities is less and less necessary.
- > Greater emphasis should be put on developing more generalized skills, as CD through technical cooperation can be overly specific.
- > The sustainability of institution-building activities is insufficient, especially in least-developed countries.

More recently, the **Evaluation of FAO CD Activities in Africa** (2010) highlighted that

"CD needs to be the focus of most, if not all, of FAO activities including assembly and provision of information, support to international instruments, norms and standards, policy advice, advocacy, the formation and dissemination of knowledge products, technology development and transfer, and networking. *This does not mean that all activities should have a specific training component, but rather that all activities and products need to take into account engagement in ways that best strengthen the capacity of clients.*"

It also emphasized that "FAO staff need to recognize the importance of the process rather than focusing on outputs... and be prepared to invest a significant proportion of resources in such processes."

Table 3 provides a snapshot of the findings of the Evaluation of FAO CD Activities in Africa and highlights the areas in which FAO needs to improve.

| FAO is good at.. | FAO should improve.... |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Providing high-quality technical support > Developing relevant and quality normative materials > Facilitating policy initiatives (policy formulation and adoption) > Providing training | <p>Corporate understanding of CD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Common vision and definition for CD including a better understanding of what constitutes good CD practice, how to enhance soft skills, organizational strengthening and how to influence the enabling environment <p>Design and implementation of CD projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Greater emphasis on process > Monitoring and evaluating CD > Designing CD initiatives with clear assessment of needs in three dimensions <p>Sustainability of CD interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Adjusting project timeframes to take the iterative nature of CD into account; formulating exit strategies as part of project design/formulation; increasing use of national expertise; anchoring CD interventions in existing institutions; providing critical complementary activities to CD interventions, such as soft skills (marketing, management, trade support, etc.) <p>Supporting local/national actors to develop themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Emphasis of CD initiatives should be on setting up processes and modalities of engagement to work with national and local actors to increase their capacities to stand on their own feet <p>Dissemination and uptake of knowledge/normative products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > More focus on ensuring access to and use of FAO's normative products in Africa <p>FAO's own CD capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Capacity of decentralized offices to carry out CD should be strengthened, especially capacities to engage in policy dialogue and undertake leadership roles in common initiatives and multi-donor groups |
| <p>FAO risks losing its lead position if attention is not put on...</p> | |
| <p>Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > As more skilled individuals and organizations in Member Countries emerge, FAO's role needs to shift from implementing CD directly on its own to supporting CD in partnership with others. For example, FAO needs to partner more with regional organizations and local implementing partners such as associations of national farmers and commodity traders or exporters, which have wide reach and the potential and desire to partner with FAO. | |

[TABLE 3] Excerpts from the Evaluation of CD Activities in Africa

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<http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/document/wbi-capacity-development-and-results-framework>

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Websites

- > African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) <http://www.acbf-pact.org>
- > Capacity.org <http://www.capacity.org>
- > European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) <http://www.ecdpm.org>
- > OECD-DAC <http://www.oecd.org> (under Governance and Development)
- > UNDP <http://www.undp.org/capacity>
- > WB Capacity Development Resource Centre <http://go.worldbank.org/tfipt5boro> and <http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/about/capacity-and-results>

CD Communities and Networks

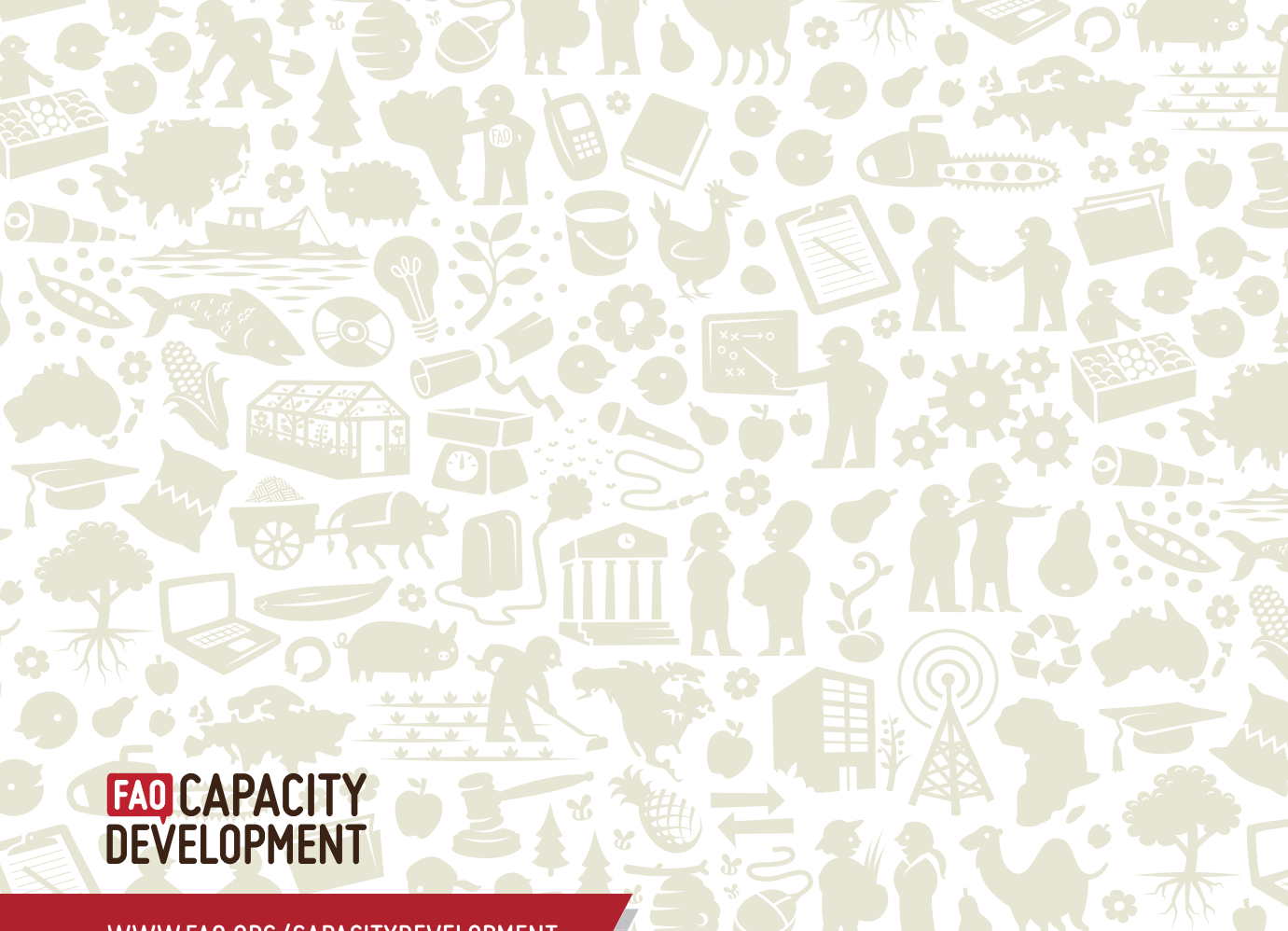
- > CapacityDevelopment <http://capacitydevelopment.ning.com/groups/group/list>
- > Capacity Development Network (Capacity-Net UNDP) <http://www.undp.org/capacity-net/2010/issue-30.htm>
- > Development Gateway Foundation (dgCommunities) <http://topics.developmentgateway.org/capacitydevelopment>
- > Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD) <http://sites.google.com/site/lencdorg/>

CD Resources and Learning

- > A collection of thematic learning resources is contained in FAO Capacity Development Portal <http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/en/>
- > UNDG e-learning course about Capacity Development concept and principles <http://unkampus.unssc.org/home/course/search.php?search=Learn4Free>
- > The CD Knowledge Resources of the Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD) contains a set of resources for learning about CD <http://sites.google.com/site/lencdorg/>
- > The UNDP page on Capacity Development contains reference material in various areas of CD <http://www.undp.org/capacity/>

GLOSSARY

- > **Accountability**
The process whereby actors respond to their constituencies for actions taken
- > **Capacity**
The ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully (OECD – DAC)
- > **Capacity Assessment**
A structured process to identify existing capacity assets and needs in a given context
- > **Capacity Development**
The process whereby individuals, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time (OECD – DAC)
- > **Competencies**
Measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviours that are critical to successful job performance
- > **Enabling Environment**
The context in which individuals and organizations put their capabilities into action, and where capacity development processes takes place. It includes the institutional set-up of a country, its implicit and explicit rules, its power structures, and the policy and legal environment in which individuals and organizations function.
- > **Functional Capacity**
Capacities that Member Countries need to uptake and sustain changes in the ARD sector, including: the capacity to formulate and implement policies; the capacity to create, access and exchange information and knowledge; the capacity to initiate and sustain networks, alliances and partnerships; and the capacity to manage projects and programmes efficiently and effectively.
- > **Individual Capacity**
The knowledge, skills, motivation, values and attitudes of a wide range of actors in the ARD sector, such as farmers, producers, traders, food inspectors, policy makers, staff of organizations and administrations.
- > **Organizational Capacity**
The collective capability of members to achieve the organization's goals. It includes the capacity of central and decentralized government agencies and ministries, inspectorates, laboratories, national agricultural research systems, enterprises, cooperatives, commerce chambers, consumer groups, producer associations, community-based organizations, NGOs, and education and training institutes.
- > **Ownership**
The exercise of control and command over development activities. A country or an organization within a country can be said to "own" its development programme when it is committed to it, and able to translate its commitment into effective action. (SIDA)
- > **Technical Capacity**
Capacities that Member Countries need to achieve the MDGs in the areas of Agriculture and Rural Development, including Forestry, Fisheries and Natural Resources Management.
- > **System thinking**
A way of understanding reality that emphasizes the relationships among a system's parts, rather than the parts themselves



FAO CAPACITY
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WWW.FAO.ORG/CAPACITYDEVELOPMENT

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

E-mail: capacity-development@fao.org



www.fao.org

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