

Assessing Existing Practices in Capacity Building for the Central European New Donors

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Structure of the presentation

- Background
- Providers of capacity development assistance between 2001 and 2011
- Approaches and tools used in the capacity development programs
- Potential areas for future capacity building
- Conclusions

Background

- Many CEE countries were donors of foreign aid during the Communist period, but these policies were more or less terminated after 1989
- The (re)creation of international development policies, in-line with the EU's relevant *acquis* however became an explicit requirement during the EU accession negotiations
- By 2003, the 8 CEE countries joining the EU in 2004 all had operational international development policies
- Several established donors provided capacity building assistance to the CEE emerging donors during this process and even afterwards
- The World Bank Institute commissioned Corvinus University to map these emerging donor capacity development programs
 - The mapping report is based on web based research, document analysis, and a large number of qualitative interviews with key donor personnel

Providers of capacity development assistance between 2001 and 2011 researched for the report

■ Bilateral donors

- Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands
- Foreign Ministry of Finland
- Japanese International Co-operation Agency (JICA)
- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
- USAID

■ Multilateral institutions

- Council of Europe, North-South Centre
- European Commission
- OECD DAC
- UNDP

Approaches and tools used in the capacity development programs

- Assistance in developing policies, legal issues and institutions
 - Institutional development plans, strategic ODA frameworks, country strategies, formalization of processes, proposing amendments to legislation
- Formal training
 - The global ODA system, MDGs, project cycle management, DAC reporting, M&E, financial management, tendering & procurement
- Study visits, internships, mentoring
 - To complement formal training, hands-on approaches were also used
- Mobilizing resources for bilateral ODA
 - UNDP Trust Funds, trilateral programming (CIDA, Sida, EC)
- Engaging other development stakeholders
 - National NGDO platforms, academia, private sector
- Awareness raising and development education
- Mapping existing national expertise

Potential areas for future capacity building

- These areas, identified in the report, should not be seen as definitive, rather they are meant to form a basis for discussion

1. Transparency

- Disclosure of information is still a problem for many MFAs, most CEE donors ranked low on initiatives like *Publish What You Fund*
- Technical and perhaps financial assistance to improve access to data (such as helping the development of on-line, searchable project databases) could provide incentives for governments to publish more and better quality data.

2. Evaluation of projects and country assistance

- Only a few of the CEE donors have operational M&E systems, but learning from results a problem even there
- In some cases, the culture of evaluation is totally missing from the government sector → training in M&E methodology is most likely not enough...

Potential areas for future capacity building

3. Communicating results

- Most MFAs and implementing agencies have no communication strategies, and often no dedicated staff members either
- MFAs could be provided both financial and technical assistance for communication activities - not only assist the creation of a communications strategy, but also help in its implementation

4. Program-based approach

- Besides some cautious experiments, not many CEE donors make use of program-based assistance
- A realistic goal would be to convince and assist the CEE countries in developing a pilot program towards one of their priority countries, which would later be evaluated as well (UNDP, EC, Sida)

5. Institutional development

- Not all countries have efficient institutional structures, and could be encouraged to experiment with other set-ups
- Some CEE donor agencies are interested in opening branch offices
- Any new institutional development plans must be formulated together

Potential areas for future capacity building

6. Trilateral programming and joint implementations

- Many such projects are already underway (Sida, EC, earlier CIDA)
- Established donors could make wider use of CEE expertise, and the new donors would gain experience in cooperation in the field
- There are several forms and possibilities, but also some obstacles

7. Strategic planning

- Many of the CEE countries do not have operational country assistance strategies
- Training, mentoring and hands-on consultancy may be required to help the process of creating and negotiating these strategies with the partners

8. Staff training

- The impact of formal training is perceived to be low by most donors, but some form of continuous training is required due to high staff turnover
- Creation of an e-learning repository

Potential areas for future capacity building

9. Strengthening other stakeholders

- All non-state development stakeholders in the CEE countries could make use of further capacity development assistance
- Hands-on approaches would be preferred here as well
- NGOs: fund raising, volunteering, effective campaigning
- Academia: not just teach development studies (and the next generation of ODA decision makers), but become engaged as a provider of expertise in ODA programs.
- Most severe problem: reaching out to private companies – some forms of positive discrimination in contracts/tenders?

Conclusions and the way forward

- Any future capacity development program should take the lessons of the ones so far into account
 - Take differences in country needs into consideration ('a la carte' capacity building)
 - All development stakeholders have capacity problems, so a good program must address them all
 - In many cases, the political level must also be engaged in order to generate political will and enthusiasm to go forward with development policy
 - Providers of capacity development assistance must ensure that the experience transferred is not lost

Potential areas for future capacity building

1. Transparency
2. Evaluation of projects and country assistance
3. Communicating results
4. Program-based approach
5. Institutional development
6. Trilateral programming and joint implementations
7. Strategic planning
8. Staff training
9. Strengthening other stakeholders

Thank you for the attention!

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