

Five Science of Delivery Approaches: An Introduction

What does it take to produce transformational impacts on people's quality of life, every time in every country?

At the World Bank Group, we are driven by our commitment to eradicating poverty and boosting shared prosperity. This means putting people, and positive outcomes for people, at the center of our projects. But how can we bring better outcomes to those who need them most? This question lies at the heart of the Science of Delivery.

The Science of Delivery is the collective and cumulative knowledge base of delivery know-how that helps practitioners make more informed decisions and produce consistent results on the ground. It is emerging from the recognition that not only sound technical knowledge is critical for effective interventions that impact people's lives – we also need to improve our ability to combine technical expertise with on-the-ground delivery know-how; and develop a more systematic, collaborative, and cumulative understanding not just of *what* to deliver, but also of *how* to deliver.

Five approaches are emerging as a central aspect of the Science of Delivery learning process. These are beginning to represent part of the delivery know-how that practitioners use on the ground to achieve results. They work together and reinforce each other. Also, they are not new – we see them in practice across the development community, drawn from the success of practitioners in the field. What is new is their introduction into a systematic, cumulative body of knowledge about “the how.”

Relentless focus on citizen outcomes

- a) Identify the nature of the problem based on a thorough understanding of citizens' demands and the local context.
- b) Design a context-sensitive strategy to relentlessly focus on outcomes, defined as measurable welfare gains of citizens.
- c) Pay attention to other factors, beyond the project, that influence citizen outcomes.

Multi-dimensional response

- a) Facilitate multi-stakeholder coalitions and multisectoral perspectives to identify problems and solutions.
- b) Convene development partners and build on their comparative advantages.

Evidence to achieve results

- a) Use the best available evidence to identify the nature of problems and to develop solutions.
- b) Develop local evidence, through experimentation and other strategies, to refine solutions.
- c) Collect, throughout the project cycle, evidence of results to enable course correction.
- d) Contribute to the global body of knowledge with the evidence accumulated during implementation.

Leadership for change

- a) Identify the incentives that motivate individual behavior change and integrate them in solution design.
- b) Understand the political economy and drivers of change to determine how and when to best engage with the client.
- c) Ensure leadership support and facilitate coalition building among different stakeholders.

Adaptive implementation

- a) Develop an adaptive implementation strategy that allows for iterative experimentation, feedback loops, and course correction.
- b) Build a committed multidisciplinary team with the right skills, experience, and muscle memory.
- c) Maintain the capacity for reflection and a diagnostic mindset. Take action, step back, and assess the results of the action.