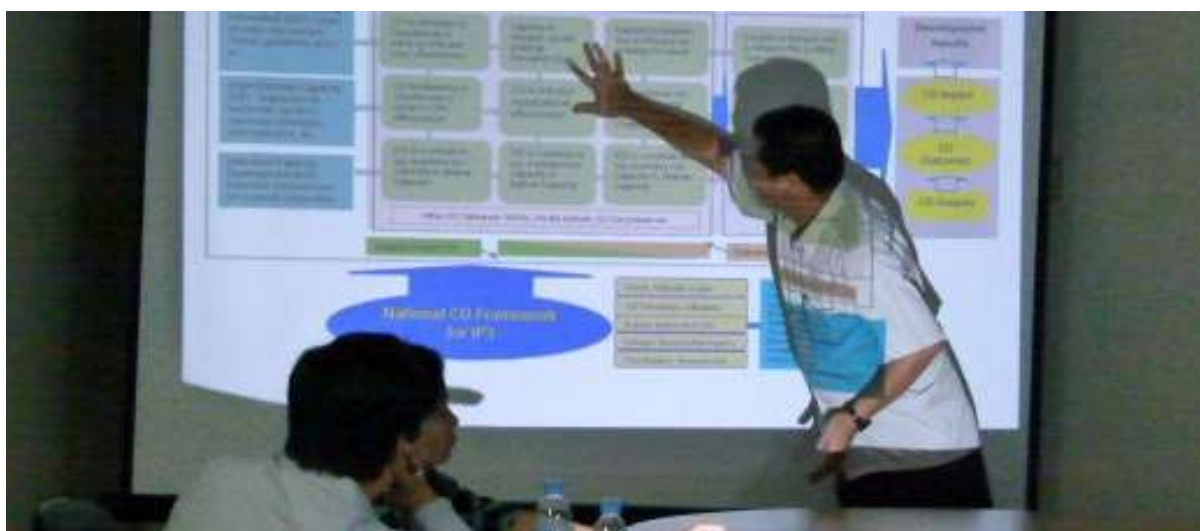


**Part 3**

**Trainer-facilitator's guide**



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[www.lencd.org/learning](http://www.lencd.org/learning)

**LenCD**

**Learning Network on Capacity Development**

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## Introduction

This section offers some guidance for anyone who wants to use the materials for workshops or training events. The learning package was not developed to be a training course. It was developed to be a resource for learning processes across the range of self and group study, and informal and formal learning exercises. These guidance notes are not, therefore, a training manual but rather suggestions and examples for anyone who wants to use the learning package materials in training or workshops. The guidance gives some ideas for how to use the materials with questions and exercises that can be used to explore and deepen understanding of any of the components of the resource package.

**If you use the materials as a resource you are invited to share your experience on the LenCD web site ([www.lencd.org](http://www.lencd.org)). Please add your session plans or other information about what you did so that this resource can be expanded over time based on live experience.**

The layout is as follows:

- General points of guidance
- Ideas for using the Core Concept section
- Two sample sessions plans using the Core Concept section, based on workshops to pilot the materials
- Ideas for using the 'How to... pages'
- Attached separately is a PowerPoint presentation based on the Core Concept section.
- NOTE: it is not suggested that this presentation is used in its entirety, or in the same order. It is offered as a resource from which trainers and facilitators can select slides to use in any way they need.

### General points of guidance

- This isn't something that can be presented as a neutral learning exercise – the participants will be concerned and engaged with the meaning and application for their own situation and needs. So it is essential that:
  - Wherever possible you use live examples from the participants' working environment to illustrate the general information. If for example, there is a Ministry Capacity Development Strategy available it should be presented as the working example to show analysis of the different aspects of the information.
  - Additionally, as the facilitator you need to be ready to adapt as participants' issues emerge if the programme doesn't already cover what they are most concerned about.
- The best starting point for a training session or workshop, whoever your participant group, is an exercise that explores how the participants understand capacity in their own context. In this way you can set the scene for the relevance and applicability of all the materials that you offer in the rest of the process. Being able to relate the materials to their own context will help the participants' learning as they assess the relevance and whether or not the general ideas really work for them.
- It would be important to stress throughout presentation of the materials that:
  - What is offered is NOT a new model or approach to capacity development, but a synthesis of current understanding based on the ideas of a lot of different agencies, and
  - The materials do not promote any one model or approach as being better than others because all the models and theories have been developed to suit the mandate of different agencies
  - Everyone needs to chose for themselves what works for them

- You will need to make your own decisions about how to use the suggestions offered here depending on:
  - The profile of your participants
  - How many participants you have in the group
  - The learning objectives set for the exercise, and
  - The time you have available. In general terms for groups of more than a few people (say 8 – 10) it is better to limit whole group presentations and discussions because group dynamics will usually prevent everyone from participating fully. If you have the time, and the learning objective requires depth, then it is better to have the participants actively working in small group exercises where they can focus very specifically on their own situation.
- One aspect of the materials you will need to think about carefully is how much information to give about the background and current efforts to achieve a paradigm shift in the policies and practices of capacity development. For example, senior government officials who work on a daily basis with development partners will likely be very familiar with issues such as the Accra Agenda for Action, South-South cooperation and so on. They may be very aware of the current challenges and wanting to make those challenges the focus of their learning, for example about results. Others, maybe people who have a strong technical orientation to their work, will not necessarily be familiar with these issues and will need some basic inputs on the 'big picture' issues to help them understand the context of the other information you will be sharing with them, i.e. why so many different agencies are paying so much attention to capacity development. This type of participant might not be ready to look at the current challenges in detail.

## Ideas for using the Core Concept section

### Summary of the Core Concepts

The material in this section can be used in several ways, for example:

#### A summary overview of the whole section is helpful for when you:

- Have limited time and need to get the main ideas presented without working on any of them in detail
- Want to establish a framework of the bigger picture of current thinking before going into a specific area of application, e.g. a workshop on capacity development in a specific context, such as a sector or an organisation
- Want to start with an overview of the core concepts as a lead into more detailed work on different dimensions or themes of capacity development
- Need an exercise at the end of a workshop to pull together the participants' ideas and outputs so they can assess how their ideas fit with the trends in current understanding

#### Using the different parts of the section individually is helpful for:

- Illustrating the details of each of the other sections in the materials – e.g. if you are working on understanding what capacity is, then information on the Levels and Types will help you to expand the discussion
- Making linkages between different aspects of capacity and capacity development in order to build up a comprehensive picture, rather like building blocks

### *Capacity: what is it?*

For participant groups to get a good understanding of capacity they need to move from the general to the specific of their areas of work. The definitions given by development agencies are generally helpful as an overall guide and starting point but they do not provide guidance about how to apply or define capacity for specific contexts, whether it is for individuals, teams and departments, organisations, systems, networks or partnerships. In order to do that you can use any or all of the following questions and exercises for whole or small group work, as appropriate to the overall purpose and set up of the workshop.

Start the group looking at the general ideas, before moving to specific application to their circumstances. Ask deepening questions such as:

- How would you describe the main ideas that are coming across in these definitions?
- Which words and phrases stand out as being really important for your organisation and context? Which words or phrases are not important, and why?
- Do any of these definitions really fit to your context?
  - If yes, explain why you choose that one and how it applies.
  - If no, explain why none of them work for your context.
- In what ways does this fit with or change your previous thinking about how capacity is defined?

After you have considered the general definitions, the participants might find it useful to try to create one that fits specifically to their own work and circumstances.

Example of small group exercise instructions:

1. Decide on who or what you want to define capacity for, e.g. yourself, a team, your department, organisation or sector, or maybe a network or partnership.
2. Visualise what 'living' capacity would look like for those people or groups – how would they function? What would they achieve?

3. Complete the sentence 'For (insert who or whatever you have chosen) capacity is...' Your answer should clearly state:
  - Who needs it? (Capacity for who?)
  - The purpose of having this capacity – why it is needed? (Capacity for why?), and
  - What do people need to be able to do (soft and hard capacities) in order to fulfil the purpose? (Capacity for what?)

Example: *For the planning department capacity is the ability to produce timely and actionable plans that appropriately link ministry strategy, policies and priorities with relevant operational needs, resources and implementing conditions.*

4. Small groups share their ideas with each other and discuss together to reach a shared definition.

If time allows it is helpful to take this exercise further in either or both of the following ways:

5. Repeat the exercise for different groups or levels to create a more comprehensive picture of the system you work in and how all the component parts link together. This can be for the whole organisation or sector in which you work. For example, look at different departments to build up an overview definition for the whole ministry.
6. When you have defined what capacity means in terms of external purpose i.e. 'for why?' think about what internal capacities are needed to realise that by going more deeply into the 'for what?' question. Don't forget to consider both hard and soft capacities.

## Capacity development

Whole group discussions and small group exercises can be organised under three different headings:

- Understanding the models and approaches
- Applying the models and approaches
- Creating a model to fit your context

### *Understanding the models and approaches*

Examples of questions to guide discussions and exercises

- What are the main ideas coming across about capacity development? Do some key words and phrases stand out as being really important?
- What are the interesting similarities and differences between the definitions used by different agencies?
- Why do you think there are so many different models?
  - What are the advantages and disadvantages of different agencies developing their own model and approach?
  - Are they consistent in addressing all the dimensions of capacity – levels, types, etc.?
  - Why do you think it is that so many of these definitions seem to come from northern countries or donors?
  - What assumptions about capacity and change appear to be underpinning the models?
  - What does this mean in terms of the applicability of the concepts in your country or context?
- Do some reading about theories of change and see if and how they fit with the models.

One of the best known theories of change comes from the Aspen Institute which defines theory of change as follows: "At its most basic, a theory of change explains how a group of early and intermediate accomplishments sets the stage for producing long-range results."

The theory of change model espoused by Aspen includes the following:

1. A pathway of change that illustrates the relationship between a variety of outcomes that are each thought of as preconditions of the long-term goal.
2. Indicators that are defined to be specific enough to measure success.
3. Interventions that are used to bring about each of the preconditions on the pathway, and at each step of the pathway.
4. Assumptions that explain why the whole theory makes sense!

*The 'How to define and map a change process' page also gives some guidance for how to do this, and some more helpful references about theories of change.*

Source: Ascendant Strategy Management Group website blog, available at <http://www.ascendantsmg.com/blog/index.cfm/2008/10/20/Theory-of-Change-Logic-Models-and-Strategy-Maps-Oh-My> downloaded 11.11.2011

### ***Applying the models and approaches***

#### **Examples of questions to guide discussions**

- Which ideas resonate for your organisation and context? Which ideas are not important, and why?
- In what ways do any of these ideas add value to the way capacity development has been conceived and practiced in your context?

#### **Example of an exercise to explore application**

##### **Introduction:**

Maybe you don't have any choice about which model you and your organisation are working with, because others have already made that choice linked to specific programmes and projects supported by different donors. Often it feels like no one is working with a specific model because there doesn't seem to be a clear strategy or approach behind the activities, so they don't seem to hang together in any logical way. But you can choose which model you like best to help you understand the core concepts of capacity development as it applies to your needs. Before you can see what fits your context you first need to understand it in terms of capacity development.

- First think about **what is really important in your context** (see *The relevance of culture and context*). What factors are relevant to how capacity is understood and how it can be developed in your culture and the specific organisation or system that you are concerned with?
- With your colleagues chose one or more of the models and analyse it/them for relevance and usefulness to apply to your context.  
OR: Create some criteria for screening for relevance and use them to analyse some or all of the models.

## Creating a model to fit your context

Guidance for steps in a process to develop your own model:

If you and your colleagues want to think about formulating a model to fit your context and needs, then there are two questions to be answered as preparation.

- **Which theory of change do you feel is most appropriate for your context?** Your answer should have clear links with the way you approach capacity development. However, you might also need to take into consideration how to maintain coherence with the approaches used by other important actors such as your donors.
- **How you conceptualize organisations, their dynamics and relationships with the environment?** Some concepts in current use are organizations as: machines; networked social organisms; families or communities; organically fitting with their environment; and, political arenas. How you understand your organisation influences very much how you look at related capacity development issues.

When you have that background thinking in place you can start to think about what is really important in your context.

- What are the development goals to which this capacity development framework needs to contribute?
- At which levels do you need to work? Especially consider what will need to be addressed in the enabling environment?
- What cross cutting issues are important?
- What types of capacity are most important to achieve the development goals?
- What themes for application would work – either as areas of need or as drivers of change?

Then you can look at the other models and use them as a guide, either for how they are structured or their content. You can take what you like from different models and bring them together to create your own. For example you might like the definitions of capacities from one, but the different entry points from another, and the cross cutting themes from yet another. This might be:

- Empowerment as the central idea
- A four level framework for entry points because you work at sector level so that is the primary level for your interventions and you work with others in relation to that
- A mixture of core areas of application that are drivers of change, like good governance, leadership and knowledge management
- Linked to this a range of hard and soft capacities that are essential to achieving the development goal

Try to create something visual, a diagram or flow chart, to show how your ideas would link together to create a framework for how you approach capacity development activities.

## Towards a shared understanding about the principles and values of capacity development

Some of the information in this section might not be helpful or relevant for all participants, so you would need to think carefully about whether or not to take time for discussion or exercises on these subjects. In general practitioners are primarily concerned with getting information and skills around the practical aspects of doing capacity development so they would likely not want to spend time on the issues that are not directly related to their everyday practice. However, many people are currently very concerned about how to deal with the challenges of defining and measuring capacity development results. The questions and exercise offered below can work at an overview level. There are some 'How to ...' pages for those who need to go deeper.



### **Examples of questions for discussion**

- What are the most important principles and values that need to be agreed among all development actors?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of trying to agree a common understanding?
- What will help you and those you work with agree a common language that reflects a shared understanding about capacity development?

### **Example of an exercise to explore the challenges of capacity results**

- Choose a capacity development initiative that you are familiar with – preferably one with which you are directly involved
- Identify the capacity results that the initiative is designed to achieve. These capacity results should be: related to a development goal; cover hard and soft capacities at different levels; and, possibly relate to different themes for application
- Make two lists:
  1. The results that can be defined and measured through a results based management approach, e.g. technical knowledge and skills, systems development and implementation, and so on
  2. The results that cannot easily fit into a results-based management approach e.g. developing leadership skills at middle manager level, or the willingness and ability of a department to accept and implement major changes in their work, or the ability of local leadership to negotiate and resolve difficult vested interests that have resulted in conflict

For each result in the second list try to identify at least one indicator and one way to measure it. Be creative in your thinking and move away from output and number based measurements to think about qualitative processes like 'Stories of most significant change' and 'action learning' methods.

# Examples of session plans for workshops using the Core Concept materials

## UN agency – one day workshop

This sample session plan was used to guide a workshop conducted for a mixed group of participants at a UN agency headquarters. The participant group was very mixed, ranging from senior department heads at one end of the scale to interns at the other. This group were very open to working in participatory and creative ways.

**Learning Objective:** By the end of the workshop the participants will have deepened their knowledge and understanding of capacity development concepts and identified ways in which this learning can be applied to their work.

9.00: Introductions

9.10: Capacity in their agency context

- Participants individually draw a symbol or other type of characterisation of capacity in their work context
- Share and discuss drawings in pairs, making a note of key words, characteristics and ideas
- Pairs share their key points for whole group discussion and synthesis
- Facilitator shares some definitions of capacity for group to compare their ideas

10.00: Break

10.15: Levels, types and themes

- PowerPoint on the levels, types and core themes. Questions and clarifications
- Small group work exercise to:
  - o Identify the levels, types and themes that seem most relevant for this UN agency's work
  - o Draft a definition of capacity for your area of work/department
- Group feedback and discussion. Reflection questions to include:
  - o From this discussion what is emerging as really important for this UN agency's context?
  - o In what ways does this fit with or change your previous thinking about how capacity is defined?

12.30: Lunch

1.30: Capacity development

- *'What if ...'* Start with a statement such as *What if this UN agency had the capacity to do everything it wanted to in its sector ....* The first person answers the question. Then go round the group asking each person to build on the statement made by the previous speaker, without any repetitions.
- PowerPoint on different definitions of capacity development, why a shared understanding of principles and values is needed, and key current challenges – including results measurement. Questions and clarifications.
- Small group work:
  - o Which of the ideas or definitions have resonance for this UN agency, and why? Which are not important, and why?
  - o Identify the factors of culture and context that are particularly relevant to understanding, practicing and measuring capacity development in this UN agency context
  - o What is emerging as the most important learning points for how capacity development is conceptualised and practiced in this UN agency?
- Presentations and group discussion to synthesise.

3.00: Break

3.15: From learning to action

- Referencing back to the first exercise and the ideas about capacity in your context, small groups discuss:
  - o What has been your most important learning from the session
  - o How this supports or challenges your own capacity development practice
  - o How this supports or challenges this UN agency's current approach to capacity development
  - o How you are going to take this learning into your work
- Sharing and discussion in whole group

4.30: Evaluation

4.45: Wrap up and closing comments – including reference to website and 'How to ...' pages.

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## National government officials - two linked half day workshops

This learning exercise was designed for national government officials, most of whom have a mandate concerned with aid effectiveness and aid coordination. They are therefore actively involved on a daily basis with development partners for the management of projects. This group had expectations of processes that were based on a formal, didactic methodology for learning so offered less opportunity for creative exercises.

### *Learning Objectives*

By the end of the two workshops the participants will have:

- Deepened their knowledge and understanding of capacity development concepts, and
- Using at least one of the 'How to ...' notes for guidance, improved their knowledge and skills through practical application of the guidance given

### *Workshop one*

2.30 **Introductions and explanations** about LenCD and the learning package

2.45 **Existing capacity**

Brief whole group discussion

- What do you think are your country's capacity development successes so far – either generally or for your sector? What are the remaining challenges?
- List the key points and synthesise to get an overall picture of the participants' perceptions

3.00 PowerPoint presentation on *Towards as Shared Understanding*

Comments, questions and clarifications: discuss how this overview resonates by asking:

- What is the synthesis between what you have identified as your challenges and these global issues?
- Which of these issues particularly resonates for you in the country context?

3.30 Continue presentation - *Core Concept*: levels, types and themes, the importance of culture and context and some examples of capacity development definitions. (Be sure to include any relevant frameworks in current use by the national government, either for overview of the national development agenda, or within specific sectors or themes.)

Comments, questions and clarifications.

4.00 Break

4.15 Small group work

Discuss and prepare a short presentation on:

- What in these definitions do you find helpful for the national context, and why?
  - Which ideas would be most appropriate to apply to your specific areas of work?
- Group presentations and discussion to synthesise

5.00 Introduction of the 'How to ...' pages and assignment. (Have copies available for distribution.)  
Assignment instructions

- Take the paper and apply it to your task between now the next workshop – either working alone or in pairs/small groups.
- Prepare a short paper/presentation to share at the next workshop about:
  - What you did
  - How the ideas did or didn't help you move forward with the task
  - The challenges that emerged
  - The learning you have gained from working on this exercise
  - What you will do next

NOTE: feedback presentations should focus on the challenges and learning, rather than a lot of detail about the activities

- Participants chose one or more that they want to work with for the assignment.

5.20 Wrap up comments

5.30 Close

### **Workshop two**

2.30 Check in and welcome back

2.45 Small group work: organisation of groups can either be by the subject worked on, or by the work mandate of the participants. For the purposes of timing the groups should have a maximum of 4 participants each.

Instructions:

- Each participant gives their presentation about challenges and learning – maximum 5 minutes, followed by 5 minutes for other group members to ask questions of clarification.
- Group discusses the key challenges and learning points that have emerged from all of their presentations. Synthesise for presentation to the large group. (20 minutes)

3.45 Break

4.00 Groups present back to the whole group. Facilitator to lead the discussion about what has emerged from the exercises. Depending on what the group has identified and think is most important the remaining time to be spent on discussion of how to overcome challenges, or how to apply the learning to other areas of their work.

5.15 Evaluation and wrap up

5.30 Close

## The 'How to...' pages

These pages can be used in a variety of ways as resources for training or other learning exercises. However, it should be remembered that these pages were not developed for the specific purpose of training, they were developed to be a resource for multiple types of learning exercise, including and especially direct on-the-job application. It should also be noted that the pages will be developed further in the next phase of the Learning Package Project. More information such as case studies and further resources will be provided for each one.

As with the other materials decisions will need to be made about what can be done in the time available. In particular it should be noted that even the current short form of each page is too long to be used in any type of short, general training course. Using the pages as the primary content of training would require at least half a day to be given to the subject. Because of this the best ways to use the pages in training events or workshops would be either:

- **Preparatory reading:** If you want the participants to come to the event prepared with some knowledge and ideas they could be given the relevant pages in advance.
- **Follow up resources:** If you have done some exercises on a subject and want to give the participants something to take away for future references they could be given the relevant pages at the end of the event.

Example of working with the package: a two day training event on capacity development for technical experts preparing to go on posting in developing countries.

### Key components in the workshop:

- Presentation based on the Core Concept section to give an overview of current thinking about capacity development
- Small group exercises in which participants:
  - First, using a tool of their choice, for example mind maps or rainbow diagrams, map out what they know about the capacity development stakeholders in their projects
  - Presentations, sharing and discussion with the whole group
  - Second, identified ways in which they might approach different stakeholders to support capacity development initiatives
  - Presentations, sharing and discussion with the whole group
- Presentation about specific models and approaches for capacity development in use by different agencies like UNDP, World Bank and others
  - Discussion
- Small group exercise to explore methods for assessing change readiness, in particular the political economy
  - Presentations, sharing and discussion with the whole group
- Wrap up: Whole group discussion

For this workshop the participants were given the '*How to map and influence stakeholders to get started*', and '*How to assess change readiness, including analysis of the political economy*' as resources to take away and read after the workshop.