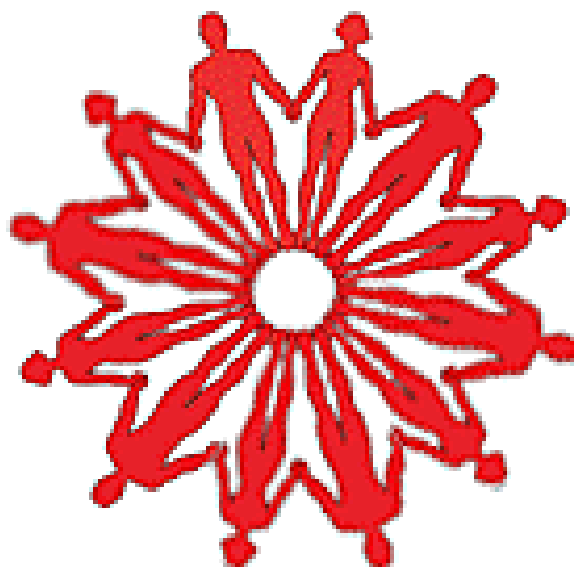


**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

**GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

# **LEARNING & INFORMATION PACK**



## **Overview**

*October, 2000*

## Outline of the LCB Methodology

This document contains:

- An [outline of the LCB methodology](#), including:
- [The Approach to Adult Learning](#)
- [Two stories about “leadership” and “results”](#).
- [A Brief History of the LCB Programme](#)
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- [Linkages between individual and organisational learning](#)
- Acknowledgements

### An Outline of the LCB Methodology

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The LCB methodology combines known adult education techniques with research on competencies for gender mainstreaming. It has demonstrated its effectiveness in building multiple capacities to act as a change agent – to take risks, seize openings, think dialectically, deploy skills of “purposeful opportunism” and influence decision-making processes effectively and productively. It builds leadership and team-related skills at many levels.

The methodology comprises four elements: a set of [learning materials in the six areas](#) that make up the competencies required for gender mainstreaming. Specific [facilitation skills and processes](#) which are relevant for both individual workshop events and for broader cycles of organizational learning, and a set of [management systems](#) to support both these linked processes. All of these are linked by an overall [approach to adult learning](#).

The Learning Materials include the six knowledge, skill and attitude sets that have been identified as comprising (gender) mainstreaming capacity<sup>1</sup>. These are:

- conceptual clarity on mainstreaming in general, and gender mainstreaming in particular;
- socio-economic and policy analysis;
- creating and seizing opportunities – organizational and project cycle entry points for gender mainstreaming<sup>2</sup>;
- process management and advocacy skills;
- strategic planning and strategy development; and
- information management and communication.

The basic model used in developing the methodology was that of a spiral, which symbolizes the emphasis on consultation as the foundation of iterative cycles of learning. This model also guides the *déroulement* of each LCB workshop, and the structure of many of the individual sessions within it, and the facilitation process itself. This spiral could also govern planned cycles of organizational learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The identification of this group of skill sets for gender mainstreaming competence is entirely new, and possibly one of the principal contributions of this programme to debates on mainstreaming as a policy process.

<sup>2</sup> This is closely tied to the Logical Chain of project design, and UNDP’s Strategic Results Framework.

The methodology is based on adult education techniques of participation, systematic needs assessment linked to functional requirements, and a mix of methods and approaches to respond to the identified needs. It is a competency-based learning support strategy, which defines learning as a sustained change in behavior and performance, in the capacity to do a job and fulfill a function. Moreover, the methodology is fully participatory. This means that workshops are not only structured in such a way that people get to talk to each other and questions are encouraged. The purpose of the programme is to help people **learn how to operate policy through consultative processes**, provide a fully enabling environment for them, and make the time to work through the difficulties that arise, in which the most intensive learning usually takes place.

At the heart of the methodology lies a commitment to identify and respond to the learning needs of each workshop participant, as mediated by their function(s) within the organization (i.e., their specific contributions to the attainment of policy objectives). This responsiveness requires a quite specific perspective on the facilitation function, and on the facilitation skills required. This perspective is the subject of this document.

### **The Approach to Adult Learning**

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Each of the three elements of the methodology was developed through, and is implemented by a combination of factors which together have been designated the LCB *approach*. The approach is made up of:

- *Learning* according to objectives determined through mutual analysis of needs, self-assessed, organizationally defined and professionally compared.
- *Consultation* among staff and external resource people to share, organize and analyze their experiences relating to gender mainstreaming. Such consultation helps in identifying lessons learned, good practice/s and recommendations for action. Consultation provides the base of experience from which organizational change can be initiated and the capacity to act as a change agent built.
- *Briefing* on the latest in basic information, perspectives, data, position statements, policy decisions, practical guidelines, research information, and the development of tools, techniques and methodologies.
- *Linkages with the workplace*, so that decisions on desired outcomes, strategies and activities are transferred back to the workplace of the workshop participants. Such transfer mechanisms are built into the design of the LCB methodology, as are tracking and evaluation systems to ensure accountability.

## Two Stories

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The LCB methodology was designed to develop the skills to act effectively as a change agent within UNDP. This requires both team-based leadership at many levels of the organization, and management for results rather than the oversight of inputs.



### **A. Leadership: The True Story of Canada Geese**

*As Canada Geese migrate, they fly in “V” formation. This is because the beating of their wings creates up-draughts of air that support the geese. Scientists estimate that geese flying in these formations can cover 71% greater distances than a goose flying alone.*

*However, the lead goose is not supported by up-draughts, and quickly becomes tired. To address this, the geese are constantly changing roles, with leaders dropping back into the ranks, while another moves into the leadership position. In fact, if you watch a flock of geese flying, it is constantly combining and re-combining into fluidly formed groups and sub-groups.*

*Moreover, the geese flying in the rear positions know the challenges of leadership because they have all had the chance to exercise its responsibilities. They are constantly “honking” to express their support and encouragement to the lead goose.*

From a capacity-building perspective, the challenge is to create a learning environment that is as complex as the workplace, facilitates work in recombinant teams, and in which participants are involved in the management of the workshop, and take responsibility for their own learning just as they must take responsibility for their own contributions to leadership.

The LCB programme has sought to develop the skills of leadership “from below” as well as “from above”, and to develop the capacity to take mutual responsibility for team-based tasks, and for the outcomes and results of teamwork, in the new UNDP. This is also described well in the following text.

*“The organization of the post-industrial, post modern world is still in the process of being created. There are, however, some indications of its character. It will be a network more than a hierarchy. The roles of manager and leader will more likely be situational, contextual or transactional than formal classifications in a fixed organizational structure. The new organization will have to be flexible and adaptable. It will need to make effective and appropriate use of technologies, especially those that facilitate communication, information processing, individual and organizational learning, the acquisition of feedback from the organizations environment and promote systems thinking. The post modern organization will likely move away from prescriptive technologies of the past to a renewed form of holistic technology in which workers or work groups will take responsibility for an entire process from start to finish, from a client with a need to a client served. This organization will break the gender assignments associated with many forms of traditional work and with organizational roles. The modern organization is likely to emphasize cooptation as much or more than competition and build strategic alliances with suppliers, customers, and even competitors.*

*Clearly, such an organization demands that every member is empowered, encouraged to learn and create, and is given the capacity to build the organization both as a member and as*

*a leader/manager.* McClaren, D. and McIntosh, M. (2000). *Leadership and Learning in an Information Technology-Rich Environment*. LT 531. Victoria, BC, Canada: Royal Roads University

### **B. Management for Results: The Story of the Fox and the Crane**

*The Fox invited the Crane to dinner. He served the food on a large flat dish. The Crane with her long, narrow beak could not eat.*

*The Crane invited the Fox to dinner. She served the food in a deep vase, and so the Fox with his short, wide face could not eat.*

*Both friends had an equal opportunity for nourishment, but each time one of them could not take advantage of this opportunity.*

*The development challenge in every case is to identify barriers to the opportunities that exist, and custom design the adjusted interventions that will lead to equality of outcome and result.*

The LCB programme aims to build staff capacity to analysis, understand and act upon the unique requirements of each development situation. The first step to this kind of professional relevance is to understand that justice and equal treatment does not presuppose the **same** treatment for all. Quite the contrary, a typical development problem will require a varied spectrum of activities and approaches to achieve a single objective, and to obtain the same result in different circumstances.

From a capacity building point of view, the challenge is to convey an understanding of the variety and specificity of development situations, without overwhelming workshop participants with the fluidity and contingency of results-based management

### **A Brief History Of The LCB Programme**

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The Learning, Consultation and Briefing (LCB) methodology was developed during a three -year pilot programme (1996-1999), managed by GIDP. The emerging methodology was cumulatively tested and validated in consultation with the staff of approximately 110 Country Offices, and about 80 Governments<sup>3</sup>. Other development partners, such as training institutions and NGOs, have also made valuable contributions to the process. About 500 staff members have provided their insights and critiques to the evolving process as workshop participants, and almost 100 more as members of facilitation teams and advisors. A core team guided the programme to ensure consistency and comparability of the pilot findings. However, the methodology is based entirely on the outcome of regional and national consultations. About 25 experts from various backgrounds at regional and national levels, have participated as members of Facilitation Teams, and made critical contributions to the development of the methodology, both with regard to the basic structure of the methodology, and its local adaptability. UNDP support staff has made particularly important contributions in developing mechanisms to ensure that workshop events

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<sup>3</sup> Two of the four elements of the methodology (the approach and the substantive content) have been tested and fully validated by the end of 1999. The remaining two elements (the facilitation process and the management systems) were extensively tested by the end of 1999, with full validation planned for 2000. However, the validation process was overtaken by internal transition at UNDP. Nevertheless, the materials are made available for adaptation as required.

unfold smoothly. Please see the [LCB Management Systems Manual](#) (link available on CD-ROM version only).

In the first pilot cycle (1996-1998) the main focus was on strengthening the capacity of the gender focal point function, and identifying, through consultation with gender focal points, the capacity needs of country offices. Seven regional or global pilot workshops were held during this two-year period, and one for a whole country office<sup>4</sup>. The problems experienced by Country Office staff were identified and clarified through the LCB's consultative process, and workshop approaches, content and materials developed to respond to these needs.

The original intentions were to develop a set of flexible training materials that could readily be adapted by country offices to local needs and priorities, and to strengthen national and regional networks of trainers who could provide on-going cost-effective support. These broad objectives are still in place and have been largely achieved, although their realization has been different in several ways from what was originally envisaged.

For example, the original idea of "mix and match" training "modules" was found to be too rigid a structure to respond to the variety of needs expressed by a typical workshop group, and so more flexible materials, and techniques for their rapid adaptation, have been developed. These adaptive techniques placed new emphasis on the kinds of facilitation skills that would be required to make the necessary changes on the spot. This in turn required specific logistical and information management systems to enable secretarial staff to support the adaptations, and to free them up from more routine tasks in order to do this. Thus the core elements of the methodology (substantive content, facilitation skills and processes, and management systems links) were developed on the basis of experience.

Very importantly, it was not anticipated at the outset that the consultative process would yield such rich information for organizational learning, and present the opportunity to develop organizational capacity to collect, systematize and disseminate this learning<sup>5</sup>. The programme has developed as "two-way street" of building staff capacity on the one hand, and gathering, systematizing, and seeking to disseminate information to build organizational capacity on the other<sup>6</sup>.

A mid-point assessment of the LCB programme was undertaken in October 1998<sup>7</sup>, and identified several achievements and innovations, and a number of issues that required further attention. Among the latter were several issues internal to the programme, and also a set of organizational

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<sup>4</sup> Regional or global workshops were held in Harare, Vilnius, New York, Beirut, Manila, Santo Domingo and Dhaka, with a Country Office workshop in Moldova.

<sup>5</sup> Some usages of the term "organisational learning" refer to learning from project-related activities, especially through evaluation, and ensuring that evaluation findings are fed back into the project cycle. The term is used more broadly here to signify learning from the full gamut of an organisation's activities, processes and staff experience.

<sup>6</sup> UNDP is currently developing mechanisms through which to distill the raw data of country office experience into actionable plans, track the incorporation of this learning into organizational procedures and report upon the impact of this learning in improved performance. The SURF Hub and the SRF/MYFF framework are examples of such mechanisms. Workshops are only one tool that may be used for this distillation process. However, at the present time much of the information generated at workshops is simply thrown away, and what is saved never gets beyond the covers of the workshop report. More seriously, time is rarely made available for adequate follow-up and follow-through. One key dimension of organisational capacity for learning could be the strengthening of workshop management skills by all staff so that these often quite costly events yield richer and more consistent outcomes,

<sup>7</sup> *Building Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming: UNDP's Experience*. UNDP, January 1999. By Johanna Shalkwyk.

constraints, or structural impediments, to gender mainstreaming, which were operating at the level of the organization, and hence beyond the reach of the programme to address. Nevertheless, the assessment indicated that these constraints were having a deleterious effect not only on the outcome of the pilot programme, but also on the attainment of one at least of UNDP's policy goals (the advancement of women).

These constraints were further identified in consultation with senior management as being not only impediments gender mainstreaming, but also impediments to more general organizational processes of learning and change. Consultations in inter-agency foro have also generated consensus on their salience to many organizations within the UN system

In light of this mid-point assessment and its conclusions, the second pilot cycle, during which five workshops were held, and four more planned, focused in particular on full consolidation and validation of the methodology, and its preparation for publication and dissemination. A particular area of emphasis was the facilitation function, and the relationship between individual and organizational capacity.

The experience of this phase of the pilot confirmed that the facilitation requirements of a methodology such as this are indeed its most challenging aspects. The challenges have been interlinked, and strongly related to limited perspectives on the collective responsibility for organizational learning, and in many cases a limited grasp of what learning is. They have occurred particularly with regard to limitations in the time and resources necessary to support learning processes, the extreme difficulty of ensuring adequate preparation, follow-up and follow-through on learning processes, and in ensuring linkages with related initiatives in the organization. Fortunately it has been possible to document these difficulties in order to learn from them.

## The Standard Structure Of An LCB Workshop

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The standard structure serves to guide each LCB workshop in the most productive way, and ensure the attainment of workshop objectives. The process is cumulative, so each session builds on what has gone before, and prepares the ground for subsequent sessions<sup>8</sup>.

Objectives for each workshop session, which are established by the lead facilitator for that session, in consultation with the whole Facilitation Team, are presented at the beginning of the session. They serve to anchor each session in the overall roll-out of the workshop, and as benchmarks of progress.

Experience has shown that the expectations regarding the use of learning objectives for each session should be included in the terms of reference of everyone associated with an LCB meeting. Resource people are normally quite casual about the use of and reference to learning objectives, and about ensuring that their contributions to the workshop are fully linked with and contribute to the sessions that come before and after<sup>9</sup>. The systematic use of learning objectives for each session helps to ensure that the cumulative nature of the learning that takes place in LCB workshops is understood and adequately prepared for.

LCB workshops are typically five days in length. Some two and three day workshops have also been held. They are really unsatisfactory as full learning experiences, but offer some opportunities for entry level discussion and briefing, and may be useful as follow-up workshops (this has not been tested). One eight-day workshop has been held, with a definite strengthening in coverage of strategic planning and linkages with the workplace. The impact of this workshop on improved functioning of the participants has been markedly stronger than for other workshops.

The standard structure is the same regardless of workshop length: experience has consistently shown that no element of the methodology can be dropped. In shorter workshops some elements may be condensed to a briefer-than-optimum time, others may be addressed simultaneously during small group work.

Each day starts and ends with a brief review session in plenary. This allows the facilitation team and the participants to review the workshop process together, and has been found to be a critical opportunity for learning on issues related to the tracking of change processes. In addition, the entire group can keep in touch with the learning that is going on (or not), and make adjustments. The systematic daily review of the workshop and session objectives makes a major contribution to the attainment of them, and models good, results-oriented practice in the workplace.

Please note that the opening and closing sessions serve to link the workshop with its broader organizational learning context.

**Opening (one day)** (dual function of completing the planning process and generating the basis of shared experience for subsequent learning at the workshop)

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<sup>8</sup> Because of the essentially cumulative nature of an LCB workshop, part-time participation is disruptive and can be counter-productive, and is actively discouraged.

<sup>9</sup> This appears to be a reflection in miniature of the broader casual approach to ensuring that each workshop builds on what has gone before, and contributes in a planned way to anticipated future developments.

- Review of objectives and draft agenda
- Mutual briefing on personal, professional and organizational experiences
- Analysis of patterns emerging from these briefings
- Finalizing the agenda based on the participant profile and identified needs

### **Substantive workshop content (3.5 days)**

- Briefings, working group and plenary discussions
- case studies, role-plays and other learning exercises
- Rapid response to emerging needs
- Individual tuition and evening groups as required (often offered by participants)
- Half-day discussions with local advocates of women’s issues (usually NGOs)
- Focus on relevance to actual work tasks.

### **Consolidation and Recommendations (0.5 days<sup>10</sup>)** *(dual function of closing the workshop and preparing the key issues for follow-up and organizational learning)*

- Review of workshop process and what has been learned (achievement of objectives)
- Next stage planning and commitments (preparation for long-term workshop outcomes, which are mainly dependent on organizational capacity)
- Evaluation
- Closure

### **Linkages Between Individual And Organizational Learning**

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In developing the LCB programme, the planning team did not start with “content”, with the substantive issues of gender analysis and gender mainstreaming. Rather, consultations were held to define the tasks that need to be done, and the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to do these tasks to a sufficiently high professional standard<sup>11</sup>.

These early consultations defined advocacy and influencing skills as being of prime importance for gender focal points. This was at variance with the received wisdom that the principal skill needed to fulfill the gender focal point function is gender analysis. The inclusion of materials and exercises on these advocacy and influencing skills distinguished the programme *ab initio* from more conventional gender training, which focuses principally on gender analysis, and normally does not address the skills needed to incorporate the outcomes of analysis into the work of an organization.

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<sup>10</sup> Half a day is actually too brief a period for the full purpose of this component of the workshop to be realized. There is a case for making the standard workshop length six days, with a full day for this component, but this has not been tested. However, the value of an additional day for forward planning is moot so long as the impulse towards systematic follow-up action is relatively weak in the organization as a whole.

<sup>11</sup> These early consultations were based on the Developing a Curriculum (DACUM) method, described in. Policy-related spin-offs from these consultations have included: *the Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming; Terms of Reference for the Gender Focal Point Function; Integrated Strategic Planning Tool for Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Country Offices; and staff competency profile for gender mainstreaming.*

This “incorporation” is what mainstreaming is, and presupposes that the structure of the organization itself facilitates such incorporation, in other words, that it is a learning organization. Thus, from the start of the pilot process, an exploration of the linkages between individual and organizational capacity building was an integral part of the pilot programme, albeit without full definition at the outset.

This attention to the connections between individual and organizational learning was given some definition when the fourth dimension of the LCB approach – linkages with the workplace – was added to the methodology during the second year of the pilot, in response to persistent requests from participants. It became the basis of the programme’s work on various aspects of organizational learning, and has been overwhelmingly the most difficult part of the LCB approach to apply effectively. No workshop process is in itself able to influence the absorptive capacity of the workplace.

An amplification of our understanding of these linkages came when the difficulties that workshop participants had told us about in connection with transferring their learning to the workplace were consolidated into the set of *Organizational Constraints to Gender Mainstreaming* referred to above<sup>12</sup>. It was in response to the work to address these constraints that the perception of a broader facilitation function, linking individual capacity with organizational learning, evolved most distinctly.

Although all staff members have responsibility for organizational learning, the facilitation of the process is uniquely the terrain of management. Ultimately it proved impossible to test this approach through systematic dialogue with managers themselves, as required by the consultative and participatory principles underlying the methodology.

Nevertheless, the lessons learned by the LCB programme regarding the indivisibility of individual and organizational capacity, and certain aspects of the facilitation of these two linked phenomena, remain valid, and may prove useful to those working more centrally on organizational capacity. They are summarized here as a contribution to the capacity and learning dimensions of the on-going discussion on how to maximize UNDP’s output and effectiveness.

Please see Organizational Constraints.

See the LRC website for further materials on management and organisational learning. <http://learning.undp.org> (UN staff access only.)

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<sup>12</sup> See page 6 above, and Annex 2.

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