

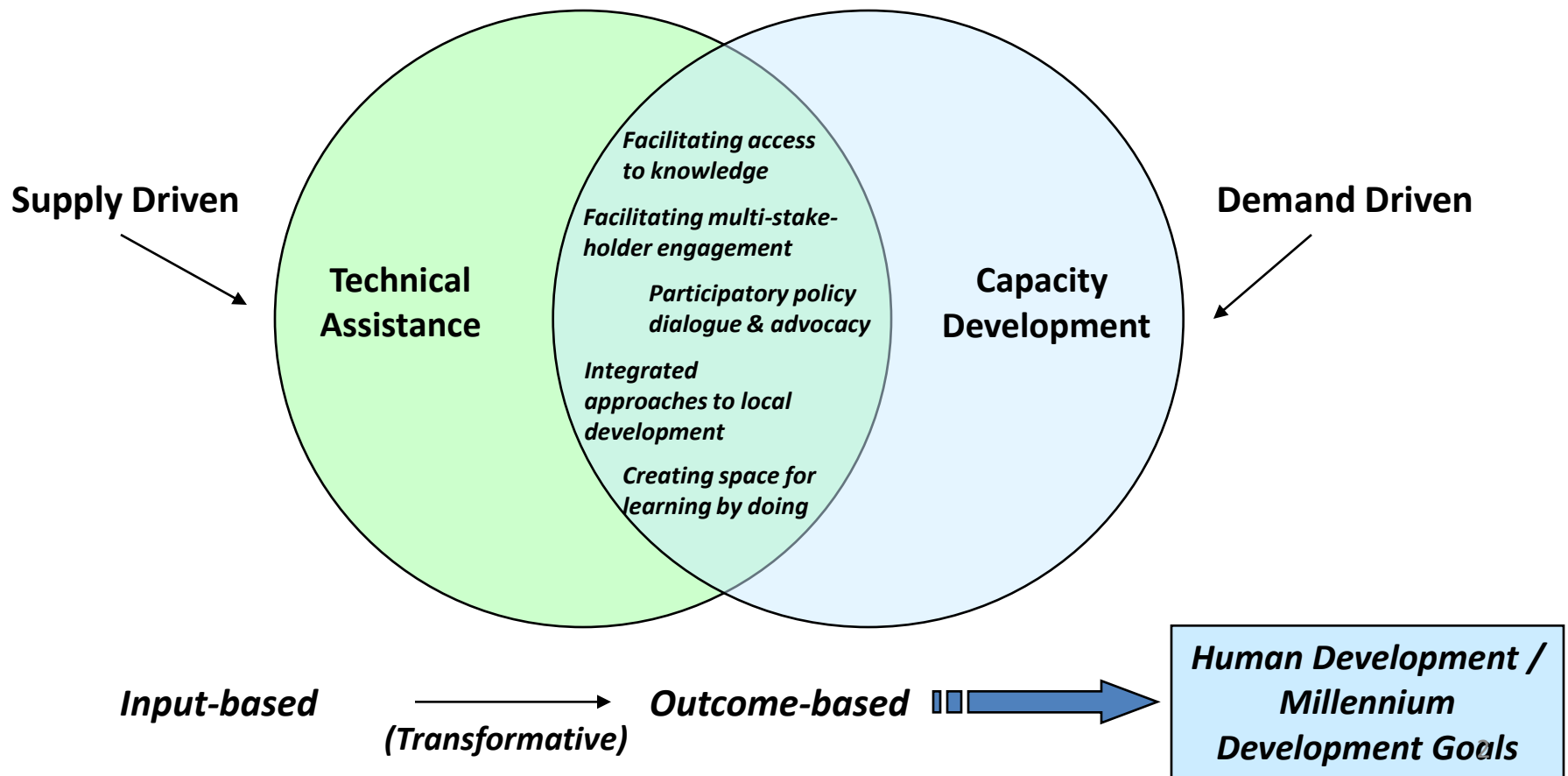


# **United Nations Development System**

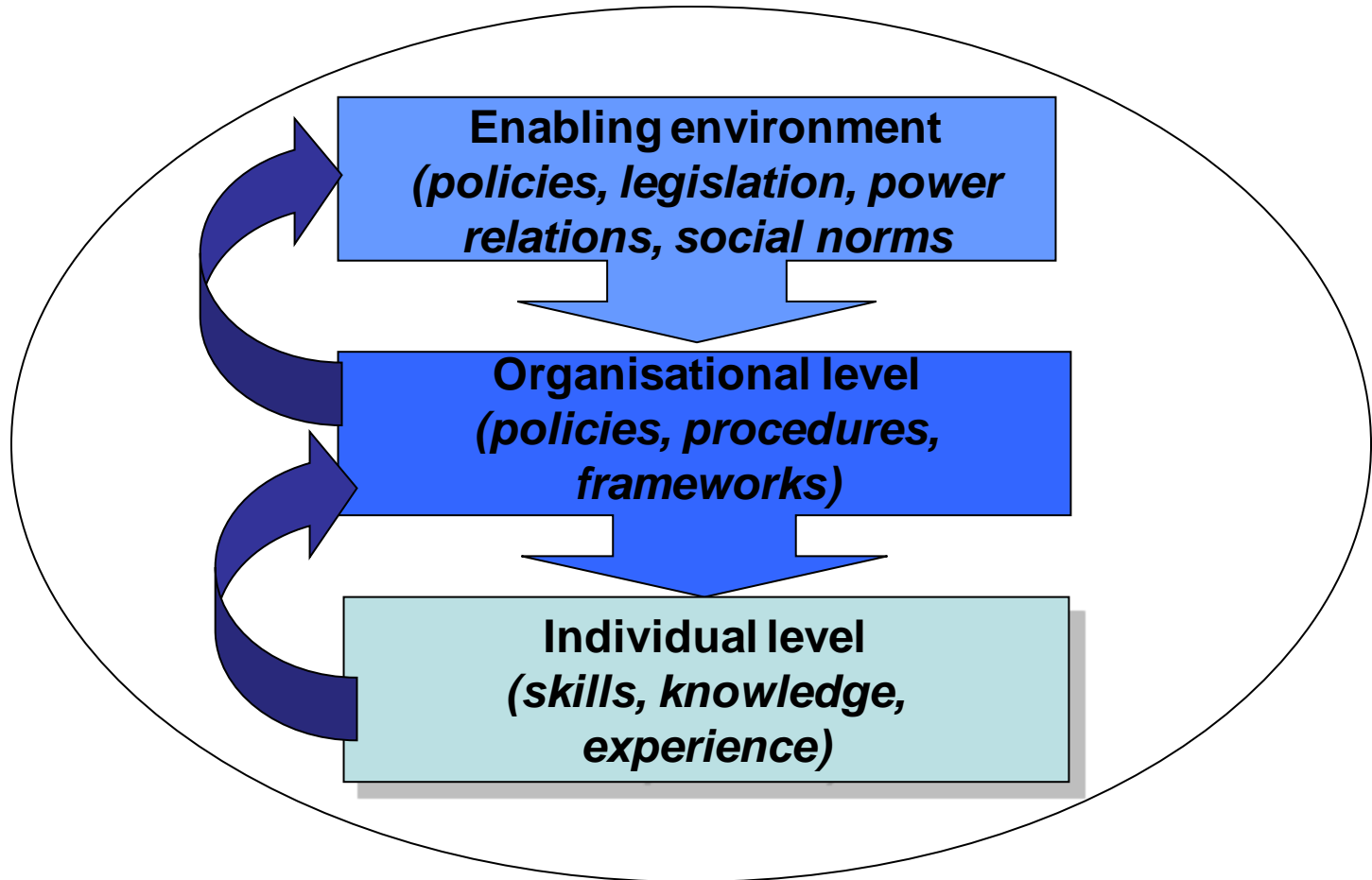
**A Collective Approach to  
Supporting Capacity  
Development**

August 2009

# The Shift in Paradigm to a Capacity Development Approach



# A Systems Approach to Capacity Development



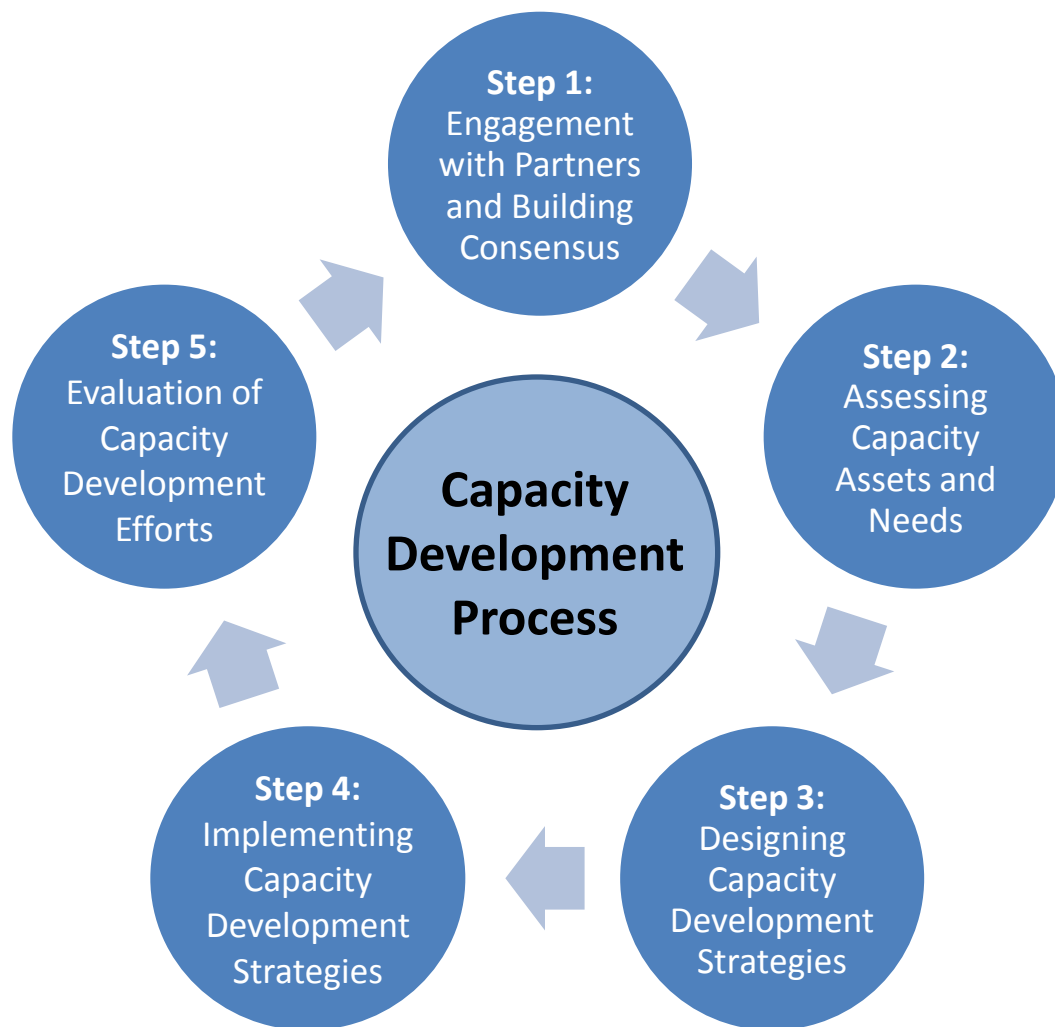
# UNDG Definition of Capacity Development

The process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time

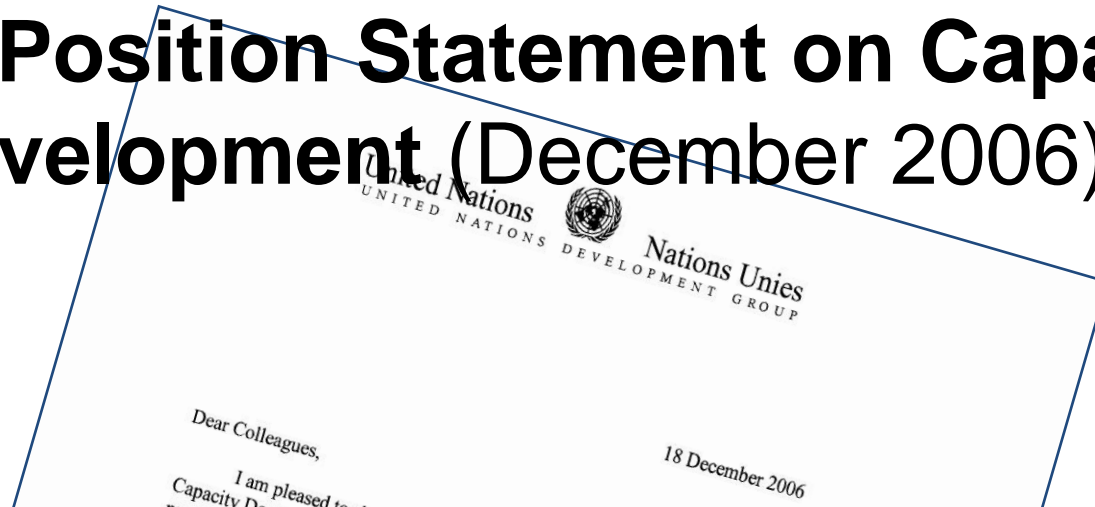
# Capacity Development is...

- OECD/DAC**      The process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time
- UNDP**            The process through which individuals, organisations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time
- GTZ**              The process of strengthening the abilities or capacities of individuals, organisations and societies to make effective and efficient use of resources, in order to achieve their own goals on a sustainable basis
- JICA**             The ongoing process of enhancing the problem-solving abilities of developing countries by taking into account all the factors at the individual, organizational, and societal levels

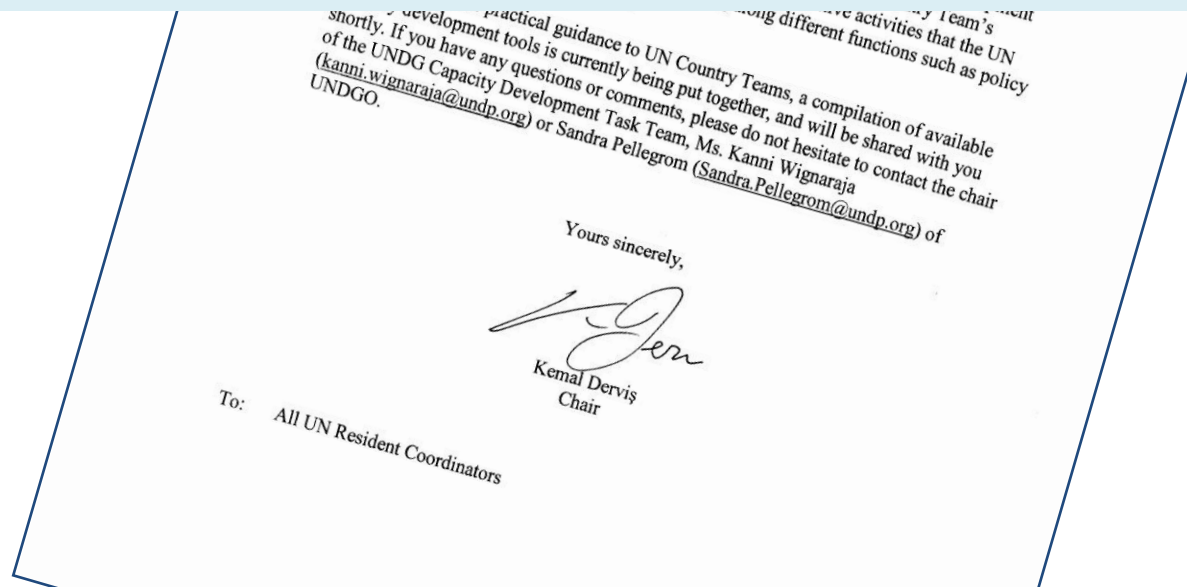
# UNDG Capacity Development Approach...



# UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development (December 2006)



**“Capacity development is more than just a theoretical concept. The UNDG Position Statement highlights when and how UNCTs can address capacity development in their work...”**



# Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (December 2007)

**“Recognizes that capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed developed goals...”**

**“Stresses that capacity development is a core function of the UN development system, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General, in consultations with members states, to take measures to ensure a coherent and coordinate approach by the United Nations development system in its support to capacity development efforts of programme countries.”**



# **UNDG's Approach to Supporting Capacity Development: The Bottom Line**

- Capacity development is one of the most effective ways of fostering sustainable human development
- The MDGs are a set of development outcomes, and capacity development is a means of achieving them
- Capacity development is a pillar for economic and social development and a pre-requisite for aid effectiveness
- Global crises call for reinforcing state capacity for development

# What Does the Evidence Show (1/4)

- Capacity development is underpinned by the fundamental characteristic of national ownership
- A comprehensive capacity development response must link to and draw from relevant national reforms to be sustained, e.g., civil service, wage, language, education, public administration reforms
- Taking a capacity development response to scale requires linking it to national and local plans, processes, budgets and systems

# What Does the Evidence Show (2/4)

- Tendency often to look only inside of an organization and downplay larger institutional context in which that organization resides
- A capacity development response should be based on the findings of a capacity assessment, and is a deliberate set of sequenced actions that will influence a given set of skills, systems and power relations
- A capacity development response can and often must show both short- and long-term gains, to ensure continued political commitment and resource support

# What Does the Evidence Show (3/4)

- Capacity development is not about a technical fix. It is about transformations and must address how best to manage change
- “Capacity traps” more often pertinent to the “soft side”, such as power relations, vested interests, access, ethics and attitudes
- Technical assistance and capacity development are not the same thing! Capacity development is more than training. Training is necessary, but what learning strategies work best for what purpose....

# What Does the Evidence Show (4/4)

- Our approach to supporting capacity development need to be highly contextual, iterative and flexible for “good fit”
- The hardest part of a CD process for external partners is the “letting go” - the litmus test for capacity development is if we make ourselves irrelevant!

# Four Entry Points for UNCTs to Address Capacity Development

1. Articulate capacity development and its underlying principles as the central thrust of the UNDG's role in the country, captured in the CCA and the UNDAF
2. Following the principles of national ownership and leadership, situate work in capacity development within national policy and development priorities/plans
3. Assess the level of national and local capacity assets and respond to the identified capacity needs by drawing on, or feeding into, national or sector capacity assessments and capacity development strategies
4. “Unpack” capacity development into tangible critical and cross-cutting components (ex public sector accountability; access to information; inclusion, participation, equity and empowerment)

# CCA/UNDAF Guidelines (February 2009)

United



Nations

**Capacity development is the central thrust and main benefit of UNCT cooperation**

**Capacity development should take place within the national development framework**

**The objective of capacity assessment is to ensure the systematic application of, and follow up to, country-led assessments within national development exercises**

**During country analysis, assessment of both functional and technical capacities may occur primarily at the system level**

February 2009

# UNDG Principles

Per the 2009 CCA/UNDAF Guidelines, five inter-related principles must be applied at country level:

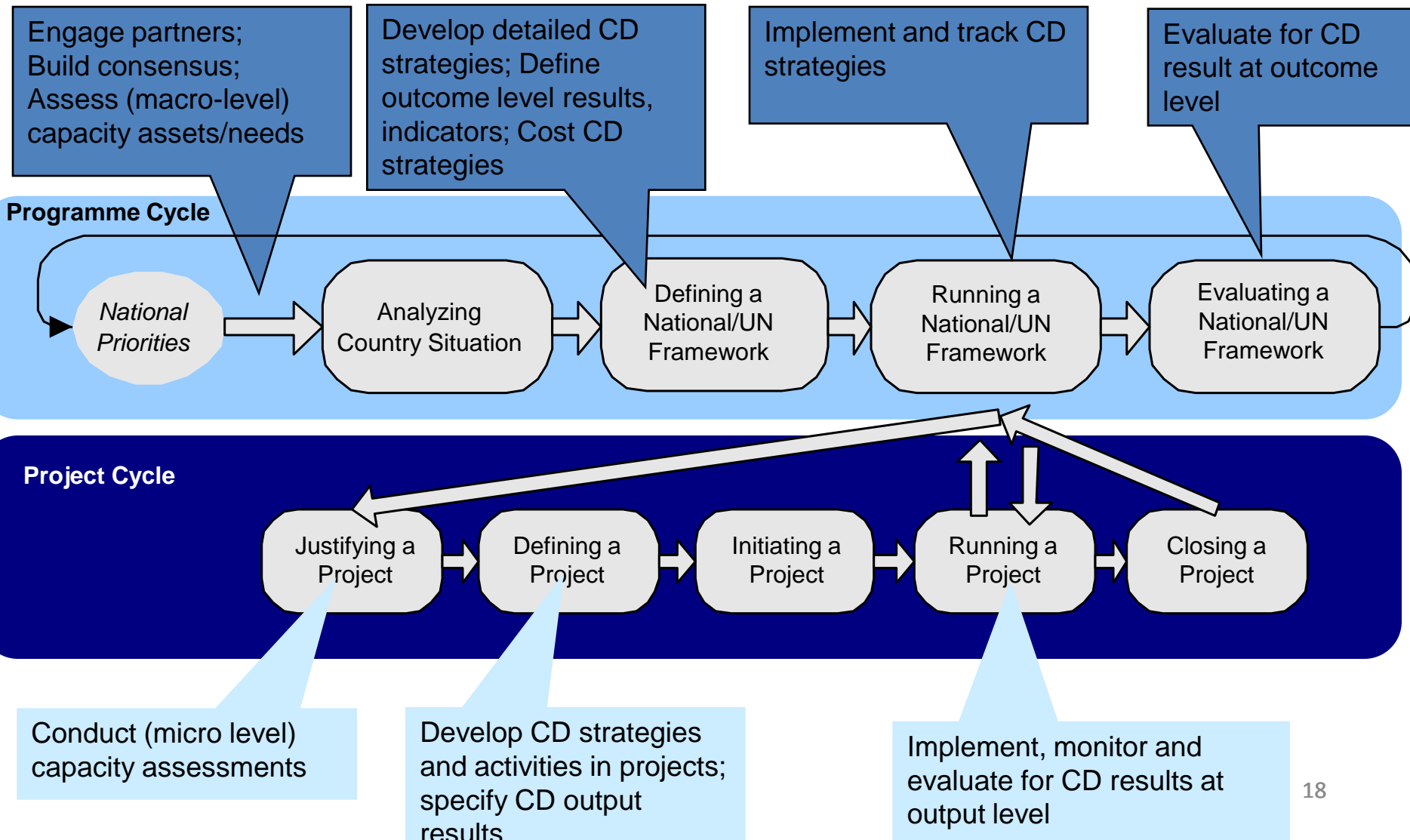
1. Human Rights-Based Approach
2. Gender Equality
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Results-Based Management
5. Capacity Development



# Integrating Capacity Development in Programming

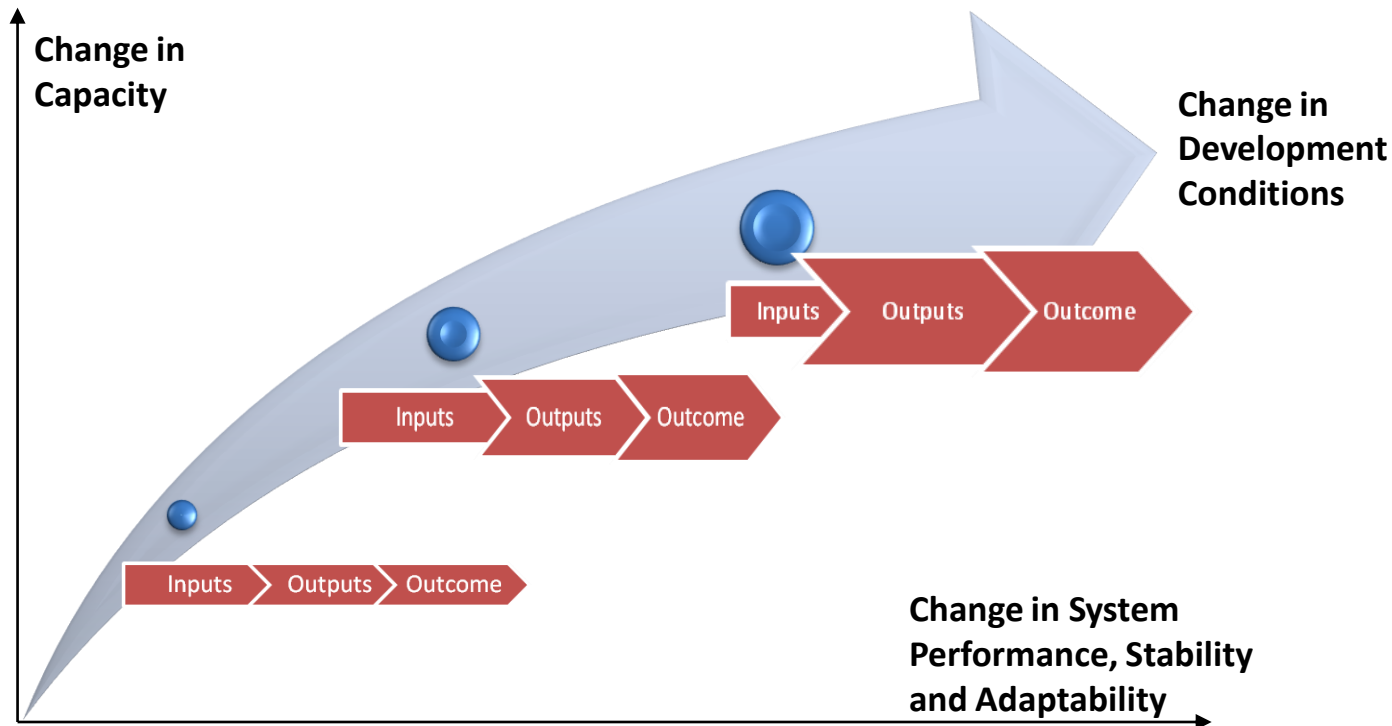
- Capacity development policies and strategies must be translated into programmes, and then into action
- Capacity development efforts should always be guided by addressing the questions: “capacity for why?”; “capacity for what?”; and “capacity for whom?”
- Capacity development responses should be rooted in:
  - Cultural specificity and grounded in local context
  - State and public sector’s willingness to reform
  - Local capabilities and knowledge base
  - Social capital mobilization

# Capacity Development in the Country Programming Cycle



# Measuring Capacity Development

An improvement in capacity accelerates achievements of development goals



# UNDG Capacity Development Resources

- A common policy articulated in the UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development (2006)
- A common UNDG Capacity Assessment Methodology (2008) – including User Guide and Supporting Tool
- Capacity development contribution prescribed in new CCA/UNDAF Guidelines (2009)
- A Technical Brief on Capacity Development (2009)
- A common learning platform for UNCTs on Capacity Development
- UNDG capacity development services made available to UN agencies and UNCTs to integrate capacity development approach into UNDAFs and joint programmes

# Programming for Capacity Development

## – Support Materials

	Policy, guidance and tools	Training	Quality assurance	Support & advice
<b>Overall</b>	CCA/UNDAF guidelines	UN Staff College leads Web-portal	RDT, RBX, Government	UNSSC/UNDG RBX
<b>Capacity Development</b>	UNDG Position Statement on CD UNDG Capacity Assessment Methodology User Guide and Supporting Tool UNDG Technical Brief on Capacity Development Checklists for Programming for CD (forthcoming)	Participation in Global ToT Participation in Regional ToTs Capacity Development Learning Module (updated version forthcoming)	Checklists for Programming for CD (forthcoming)	Regional CD Teams

**UNITED NATIONS  
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## Capacity Development

The World Summit Outcome document emphasised that UN development cooperation is, primarily, a means for capacity development (CD). It underlies each of the other principles for UN development cooperation, and is geared towards the achievement of MD/MDG-related national priorities. For government to fully own, achieve, and account for the priorities in the national development framework, it must assess its capacity development needs, respond to those needs, and evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts. The UNCT can play a critical role in helping government to do this. The UNCT must aim to develop lasting in-country capacities at individual, institutional and societal levels. In line with a HRBA, these capacities will help rights-holders to claim their rights, and duty-bearers to meet their obligations.

Support to capacity development must be "unpacked" into tangible components that offer a best fit in each country, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. [The UNDg Position Statement on Capacity Development](#) provides key messages about capacity development and guides this "unpacking" of capacity development into 8 distinct components.

### Policy and Guidance

Follow this link to the [Capacity Development](#) pages at the [Development Gateway Foundation](#). The Foundation offers an online resources portal for development information and knowledge-sharing worldwide.

**UNDG Position statement on Capacity Development** (UNDG Programme Group)  
21 December 2006  
*The first position statement of the UNDg on capacity development (2006). The*