THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP

Pedagogy or Policing: The problem of transferring knowledge and skills

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Introduction

The Development Industry has strongly embodied the notion of Technical Assistance alongside aid flows, foreign investment and large-scale, often turn-key, construction. Technical Assistance in its literal sense has connoted ‘knowledge transfer’—certainly a current buzzphrase in UK universities. While TA has tracked development fashions, it is variously associated with aided policy formulation, sector planning, programmes and projects, carrying a presumption that financial resource transfers are insufficient on their own, and that invariably aid should be accompanied by knowledge and skills transfer commissioned by the donor and agreed to (voluntarily or involuntarily) by the recipient or client. In this process, essentially a post-war phenomenon, it is hard to avoid the tag of cultural imperialism, expressed through all 3 dimensions of power, put forward by Stephen Lukes—obvious, disguised and structural. This cultural imperialism has not always taken the same form, if, for example, we consider the contrast between a high reliance upon public sector planning models and more contemporary expressions of neo-liberalism through privatisation, right-sizing and the NGO sector. However many sceptics of the development industry would judge that the interests of global capitalism as a system of economic and social relations is always being advanced through TA-supported aid.

I have not been asked in these remarks to offer a full deconstruction of the TA phenomena, but to focus upon knowledge and skills transfer as a problem in the working relationship. I will certainly reach that focus, but the issue certainly needs to be contextualised. Since my own experience is strongly located in South Asia, the universality of my analysis will need to be qualified by other experience during the discussion which follows.

Distinctiveness of Development TA

Leaving some of those broader questions aside, we clearly have to address the assumptions, which lie behind the TA phenomena. Intrinsic to the notion is a

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breathtaking arrogance, akin to the colonial project itself. Of course we wrap it up in fancy linguistic packing, but assumptions of knowledge and skills superiority remain. Some of that fancy wrapping has included locally hired TA as a diversion from the racial overtones of white on black. Indeed the whole concept of international TA within discrete sovereign contexts appears to be so bizarre, especially so long after the formal decolonisation of so many erstwhile colonies, that we might be forgiven for thinking the issue as passed, if it were not for the large number of consultancy companies and freelance consultants comprising the service sector of post-industrial economies like the UK. At the same time, consultancy is intrinsic to the running of modern political economies where neither the state nor the private, corporate sector wishes to retain large pockets of expertise within their own direct employment. The issue with 'development' TA, as a sub-sector of the broader consultancy phenomena, is that it invariably has an inter-national, cross cultural dimension to it and appears more through a donor-recipient relationship than a client-service relationship. The former carries significantly different baggage from the latter. The natural concern for the international consultancy industry is whether even the questionable justification for such TA in the last 50 years will persist into the next few decades, or whether this aspect of the development industry is past its sell by date. The livelihoods of many well educated experts in the West is at stake, and indeed that of several university departments as well!

**Idealism of early Development TA**

Clearly conditions have changed and have thus changed the meaning of TA and 'advice'. At its independence in 1964, Zambia had one African graduate. Its basic knowledge and skills dependency was palpable in the context of a failure of preparation. 4 years later, when I first arrived, senior African civil servants continued to be surrounded by their erstwhile colonial masters dominating all forms of decision making despite the masquerade of 'assistance'. To a young, idealistic, development socialist like myself this was painful to observe. Back at IDS in the UK as a young postgraduate, I was in awe of the first generation technical assistants such as Richard Symonds, or Dudley Seers and Richard Jolly, who had both had a hand in Zambia's early years, even prior to the formation of the Overseas Development Administration (Elephant and Castle). My generation was the first post-imperialist one and as internationalists we had a strong sense of guilt over the colonial project of the preceding centuries. We had to help. International social workers, as a former academic boss of mine at Bath derisively described me. My turn to act out that breathtaking arrogance soon came, after earning my research spurs in Zambia and Bihar, N.India. The invitation to 'help' in the newly liberated Bangladesh was fantastically seductive. My wife and I resigned our jobs, accepted a ridiculously low stipend from the Ford Foundation, behaving in effect as volunteers, took the Biman fight to Bangladesh (innocent of its split fuselage) and in my late 20s I led a team of Bengali instructors from the Comilla Academy for Rural Development in the study of their own society! Only years later, as I grew up to be less confident, did I appreciate that humility had passed me by on that occasion. And yet: 3000 intellectuals had been slaughtered 3 years before; the social science practised at the Academy was the worst form of rigid positivism; even instructors born in the locality (including the Academy's Director) did not know the peasant Bangla terms to describe elementary categories of kinship; residential fieldwork was unheard of. So maybe the presence of an external anthropologist/catalyst was justified in order to raise different questions and stimulate new insights. Perhaps creative tension between my science and that of my counterparts was the key function. But was I 'assisting' them, or fundamentally challenging their cosmology and paradigms with my own? Later on in my personal
experience in Bangladesh I could see that TA could mean many things and be justified or critiqued along different dimensions.

The Colonial Roots of TA: Projecting the European Enlightenment

Returning to cultural imperialism, TA has been an extension of the colonial relationship into the present time. It has been closely connected to ideas of progress and rationality derived from the European enlightenment, embodying the triumph of science over magic and superstition. It has been the major vehicle for the modernisation assumptions which spread across the post-enlightenment social sciences. Implicit has been an assumption of backwardness, of tradition-bound less developed societies, reproducing poverty through cultural values and belief systems, revealing apparently non-rational preferences for resource use and subsistence-oriented, drudgery averse economic behaviour. If only these societies would abandon their traditions and customs in favour of the modern rationality of advanced, industrial, capitalist societies, their development problems would be solved. Of course, as part of that recipe, markets need to be regulated to avoid the waste of economic experimentation and to ensure some distribution of welfare outcomes to those chronically excluded from market opportunities. That balance between market dominance and regulation has ebbed and flowed in the tension between neo-liberalism and planning. Thus the principle of TA has been that culture could be fixed, while other structural explanations of poverty associated with the inequities of the global political economy may be valid, but were beyond the reach of this limited form of agency. Other forms of agency, as social movements, would have to deal with that. TA in effect as contributing to reform, but entailing paradigm confrontations nonetheless.

The Problem of Attitudinal Irrationality

Much applied development research has reflected the same assumptions. The whole Green Revolution phenomenon required institutional and social engineering to accompany the narrower technological innovations designed to improve the productivity of land and labour, and thereby turn peasants into farmers. Many papers were written on the characteristics of non-adopters, as anthropology was recruited into the project. As Bailey shrewdly observed in his commentary on these incorporated anthropologists, they offered the view that peasants were improvident, imprudent, risk averse and unwilling to innovate, superstitious, fatalistic and over-preoccupied with religious sentiment. A culture of poverty stance, but the emphasis upon attitudinal irrationality also implied that demonstration and training could overcome and transform it. The IDS-LP model of farmers’ decision making behaviour completely ignored the rationality of dowry expenditure or the importance of spending on *rites de passage* since such expenditure appeared to compete and conflict with the objectives of raising agricultural productivity. The policy and indeed TA implications were clear as the colonial infrastructure of agricultural extension was renewed and expanded, remnants of which are still with us today.

Psychology of Dependency

What was interesting about colonialism, and remains so today, is that these external constructions of cultural backwardness and attack upon 'indigenous' rationalities did
not entirely fall upon stony ground (to retain the land imagery). Sub-sections of the local population became incorporated into the external analysis through exposure to western education and an internalisation of the critique of their own cultures. Hence the Director of the Academy at Comilla being more preoccupied with the significance of his 35k correlations on agricultural production variables from his PhD at Michigan, than with the kinship terminology of his own erstwhile community. This genuflection has been a feature of much writing about the colonial experience, such as Mannoni’s ‘Prospero and Caliban’ (from the The Tempest); Franz Fanon’s ‘Black Skins and White Masks’; Achebe’s ‘Things Fall Apart’; and, of course, E.M. Forster's 'A Passage to India'. There is much contemporary resonance with these earlier reflections, to which I return.

The colonial contact, as expressed in these writings, has produced a significant blend in the forms of learning and knowledge acquisition which, I believe, has artificially sustained, or at least validated, the TA relationship. I refer to the dimensions of authority and deference. The notion of received wisdom from authoritative sources persists even today, embodied in the language of training rather than education, and gets in the way of our preferred linguistic packing of TA as dialogue and partnership. There is much to deconstruct/disentangle on this, and not much of it can be done in these remarks. Let us recall a few observations first: white ex-colonial officers inducting a cadre of secondary school teachers into the civil service in Zambia via intensive training programmes; the black permanent secretary in Lusaka who thanks the callow research student from the UK after handing over requested confidential files; the senior civil servants in Bihar, bemused by authoritative analysis of the young economists from Sussex, barely arrived in the location; the instructors at Comilla wanting to do rural anthropology by rote; the Masters students in Coimbatore (TNAU) unable to present seminars or write original essays, and only prepared to learn from dictated lectures; the over-formality of action-research among both government and NGOs in Bangladesh with grassroots programme staff reluctant to use their own knowledge and make local decisions; the conversion of PRA into a formulaic, repetitive method; the nervousness associated with individual, qualitative research and analysis among my urban livelihoods team in Bangladesh during the 90s; the totem-art problem among the staff of AKRSP in N.Pakistan; the near panic among the same staff when asked to prepare proposals for post-classroom assignments in the Training and Learning Programme (TLP) in Social Development; the deferential behaviour of staff even in progressive, innovative NGOs. These are just some examples from my own repertoire. What do they reveal to us?

**Authoritative Structures: the Social Context for Learning**

They are symptomatic of basic features of social structure which are then projected onto the way knowledge is authoritatively constructed and passed between social actors and generations, and further projected onto the relationship between locals and outsiders, who are constructed as experts with therefore authoritative insight. These social structures rely heavily upon personalised power expressed through a patriarchal, age based seniority, and a ritually ranked hierarchy of social functions with the intellectual domain at the top, enjoying the highest accorded status, falling to the organic domain at the bottom—in effect a generic notion of caste. This is in effect a codified division of labour, characterised by the patron-client, jajmani, master-servant relation. This maps onto the realm of knowledge through the notion of ustad, the teacher offering unchallenged wisdom. A metaphor for such a relationship would be Indian classical music, and the apprenticeship relation between senior and junior players, often from within the same family. I was once privileged to know Ustad Vilyat
Khan, and to witness his training of his son on the sitar. I accept the potential for improvisation is the goal, but only after supreme mastery of classical technique. Thus the culture of knowledge acquisition embodies these principles of power and respect. The stronger the sense of hierarchy and authoritativeness, the higher the perceived validity of received wisdom and the lower the sense of knowledge as contestation, exchange, sharing and iteration.

I should immediately observe, at this point, that I would not want this proposition itself to go unchallenged. I have debated this understanding of knowledge acquisition extensively with friends and counterparts across the sub-continent and with PhD students from the sub-continent over many years. There are examples both within universities, NGOs and projects where respect for sources of knowledge is tempered by critical questioning and independent analysis. In my experience, such questioning still comes from those exposed directly to Western forms of higher education (or even secondary) or who have been educated in institutions which have consciously imitated the self-discovery model of learning. Strong examples in my experience would be JNU in Delhi, the Institute of Economic Growth in Delhi, Shanti Niketan in West Bengal, the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS). At the same time, I have encountered many counterpart colleagues who have had postgraduate experience in the West which has made little impact upon reducing their respect for the Ustad. At the same time, I have encountered teenagers who have had exposure to primary, self-discovery, schooling in the UK (perhaps while their parents were on assignments or studying) which has sustained inquisitive, independent minds even through conventional, didactic higher education experiences back in their home country. And of course, some parents themselves have not behaved in conventional patriarchal or matriarchal fashion, thereby creating the space for challenge and open debate with their children.

Clearly generalisations are difficult. However, perhaps some of my clearest evidence of the 'knowledge as received wisdom from authoritative sources' argument is the inability of organisations in South Asia to make good use of returning graduates, and the initial tension that those returning graduates feel when they re-enter and are re-absorbed into the hierarchical, ascriptive management structures where genuflection is rewarded and criticism outlawed. This has been particularly noticeable in Bangladesh, even among the apparently non-bureaucratic, flexible, innovative NGO sector. Small wonder therefore that the more adventurous from that cadre end up creating or joining small consultancy companies to participate themselves in the TA process, and insulate themselves from the enervating organisational cultures where leaders and seniors are jealous of their status.

Authoritativeness as 'state of the art'

A further aspect of claiming authoritativeness for knowledge in addition to the seniority variable has been the 'state of the art' game, played in a TA context across cultural boundaries. I have been both irritated by but have also been personally guilty of the 'state of the art' game. This is where one group sees its role as unsettling others by asserting new thinking to denigrate old thinking. I witness this game frequently on university committees, as actors manoeuvre for superiority. It has become essential status affirming behaviour for those in the knowledge business, and this applies to TA and consultancy par excellence, not just to universities, and especially when played across cultural boundaries within a neo-colonial historical framework. DFID has been a major perpetrator of this game, mainly and superficially through the continuous production of vocabulary rather than underlying paradigms or
concepts. The World Bank behaves similarly. Of course he who pays the piper calls the tune. Thus we observe a very crude process of establishing authoritativeness via the leverage of contract allocation.

Nowhere was this process of cultural imperialism more acutely observed than in the livelihoods discourse, where conformity to the SRL model became a necessary condition of any successful tender, despite its intellectual weakness as an explanandum of poverty and vulnerability. Pip Bevan and I had some fun a couple of years ago within feminist paradigms (where the game is played hardball) by offering NID as the destabiliser of WID. But there are so many examples. How many younger academics and consultants appreciate that the new wine of social capital is from the old bottle of political culture, with Putnam repeating the analysis of Banfield 3 decades earlier? At least Coleman wrote in both eras. In a survey, 2 years ago, of donor fashions in rural and social development from before the end of colonialism (when development as practice started--e.g. Malcolm Darlings's canal colonies, inter many alia), I counted about 20. But I am already out of date with that number.

Does TA rely upon this 'state of the art' game? Are the consultants commissioned by donors merely the brokers of this ongoing cultural imperialism? The entrepreneurs between different knowledge markets. Observing the relationship between DfID and AKRSP over the last 5 or so years, I was struck in 1996 during and after my first formal visit to AKRSP by the powerlessness of the staff in relation to visiting review missions and connected TA inputs. The staff were simply not empowered intellectually and conceptually with the continually shifting nuances of development discourse as represented to them by DfID, their major funder. Although I presented much of my 'empowerment' agenda through the TLP in terms of the relationship between different levels of programme staff in order to transform troops into officers with respect to strategic thinking and local level analysis leading to local level solutions, a key part of the agenda was empowerment in relation to external discourses. I referred earlier to the hardball game played by feminist outsiders. It was so difficult for staff (whether male or female) to place the subtleties of a contextualised gender analysis onto the donors' agenda. Instead they had a strong sense that each review visit was an opportunity for the gender consultants to beat up on them. Now, there is no doubt that forceful feminist outsiders helped to create the room for manoeuvre for local female staff to give expression to their concerns about female subordination, but it was an exceptionally crude process, in which local female staff themselves became increasingly resentful of the western feminist discourse and its perpetrators. That contact was in effect disempowering for local female staff--precisely the opposite outcome to the rhetoric. What they needed was access to the forms of knowledge behind those discourses in order to debate real as opposed to prescriptive gender analysis with the donors.

**Indicators, tracking and LFA**

Intrinsic to the 'state of the art' game is the construction of indicators through which to track progress towards targets derived from the new vocabulary. Logical Framework Analysis, and its variants, has become the tool by which this monitoring occurs. Thus two types of TA emerge: state of the art knowledge and/or skills transfer; and the monitoring of that transfer through the tracking of implementation targets, supported if necessary by the transfer of methods to do that tracking. Indeed, there was a time earlier in the 90s when LFA was itself part of the 'state of the art' game in the sense of methods, although it has become rather totemic and constraining now. Certainly its introduction into the TA relationship signalled a shift in the purpose of much TA
towards a tracking/policing role via project planning technique. The logical composition of the framework took the principles of rationality to new heights and undoubtedly focused the attention of recipient/client partners. A consequence of that focus was to produce one-dimensional programmes and to shut down whole areas of creative thinking once the initial creativity had been recorded in the LFA. Protestations that LFA was a process tool did not match up to the reality of review missions and associated TA which treated the LFA more as a blueprint for measuring and assessing value for money on donors' accounts.

In some respects, LFA was more a symptom of a shift in TA purpose and function, rather than a cause of that shift. I was struck through the 80s in Bangladesh, i.e. before the widespread introduction of LFA, by how little knowledge or skills enhancement occurred through the TA relationship, as the 'ideological' notion of capacity building was already effectively being displaced by a policing role--for example in the tracking of fraud and corruption on rural works programmes. I have recently noted with some despair the reluctance of DfID advisers in the field, with real knowledge and technical skills, to offer real technical advice instead of critique of partners. Microfinance comes especially to mind. This process of re-defining partnership towards principal-agent (i.e. between donor and aid recipient) monitoring revealed intriguing project level micro politics, which I think can be generalised across the TA relationship, whether policing or not.

Context and Experience of Contemporary Development TA

Through all of these reflections and illustrations, I am arguing that since development TA is intrinsically about inter-cultural, inter-organisational and inter-personal dynamics, those dynamics are determined by both the context within which the TA has been set up as well as the experience of it in practice. And the context has a determining influence upon the experience. The context variables would seem to be: a definition of need for TA in terms of knowledge or skills transfer; whether TA has been donor commissioned as part of conditionality or genuinely requested by recipient/client; whether the TA has relative autonomy from donors (a function either of request source, or plurality of donors, or whether the TA provider is metaphorically a gentleman or a player); whether it is continuous over a long time period or one-off, short term; mechanism for choosing TA provider in terms of principal-agent choice; whether the functional motivation for the TA is capacity-building and pedagogic or policing and accountability; whether the TOR are compartmentalised and specific or strategic and general; how the primary TA contact is specified in terms of reporting relationships to principal-agent management tiers, since this determines ownership or deniability; and the mechanism for ensuring responsibility for quality.

Knowledge and Skills Transfer: the What and How of Knowing

Working through these headings, it is therefore time in these remarks to distinguish between knowledge and skills, in particular the skills to gain knowledge (defined as theory, information and technique). The distinction maps onto TA as the difference between 'what I know' and 'how I know'. It is interesting to note in UK universities that it is now necessary to identify and attach the transferable skills associated with each unit of every programme of study. This has drawn the process of learning, at least for some subjects, away from didactic delivery into much more project based, self-discovery modes of learning--research in other words. Finding out for oneself,
thereby equipping oneself with the techniques for a continuous process of self-managed knowledge acquisition in the information society. It is a little akin to the fish and rod slogan. My earlier comments about the Ustad culture of pedagogy and authoritativeness are relevant here. The absorption of well-digested, pre-packaged knowledge (even if that is clear technical methods rather than theory) is consistent with the Ustad metaphor of didactic teaching. Imitation and repetition is all that is demanded from such knowledge. So maybe not much transfer difficulty here, but the problem is that the outcome can be totemic and irrelevant, whereas the context of application requires flexibility and adaptation from first principles. My AKRSP TLP graduates were very confused with my discussions of epistemology, and some still are. But I was concerned to take them, if possible, from 'what I know' into 'how I know', so that they would learn for themselves from their own fieldwork in highly diverse situations where formulaic, deductive knowledge could not capture significant, localised detail. The problem is: how can our own generated knowledge be authoritative, we are not Ustad? How can we possibly challenge our seniors and their knowledge with our own? Junior staff in PROSHIKA have the same problem with their seniors too. Thus the skills of creating knowledge are far harder to transfer. It is a different agenda from knowledge as received wisdom from an authoritative source. This is why we sometimes encounter problems of plagiarism in the university from overseas students who have been brought up in the Ustad culture. Of course the published words of the professor must be superior to one's own, and the student must not give offence.

Differing Perceptions of Need for TA

The significance of the Ustad culture will be affected by the circumstances under which the TA has been commissioned: namely the perception of need. Unless the need for TA has been internalised by the recipient/client organisation, or at least the major players within it, then the TA will probably be ineffective and resisted, or at least heavily cherry-picked to please the donors to some extent. Since large recipient organisations, especially governments, are not homogenous this process of need perception is not just a tussle between recipient and donor. Thus particular departments or factions within recipient organisations, programmes and projects may use the 'need for TA' as a weapon in their manoeuvrings with competitors. Thus consultants can easily be sucked into local disputes, and deployed in those struggles. Avoiding such capture is certainly a key trick for the consultant. Of course, TA is also used sometimes as an internal management tool, where the organisational leaders find it difficult to embark upon significant reform or structural change, but where the deployment of an external consultant can provide legitimation for such initiatives. Sometimes, it can work the other way, with a section heads using TA in their struggles to get leaders to change. Sometimes senior management, intensely wary of each others' motives, conduct their competition and arguments with each other at one remove, via the consultant/facilitator. This has been a very familiar role for me. In these contexts, then, the intrinsic quality of the knowledge or skills being offered is almost secondary to where those arguments, ideas and techniques fit into political battles being fought within the organisation. Power structures determine which knowledge and skills are preferred over others. With these considerations, TA is invariably part of a political process, either between the donor and recipient, or within the recipient organisation itself.
Autonomy of TA: Gentlemen V Players

Of course the providers of TA also have agendas. Since most TA operates within the commercial sphere through consultancy companies or freelance individuals, there is a natural concern to generate livelihoods and, dare one say, profits (especially if the company is publicly floated rather than an assembly of professionals needing to service stable livelihoods and cover costs). In my experience, development consultants in the commercial sphere are usually in the business through value driven and ethical motivations as well. Nevertheless, it can be difficult to reconcile values and ethics with commercial requirements. The need for continuing business from the major donors and their client partners (recipient governments, other agencies and NGOs) challenges the intellectual autonomy of the TA provider. Conformity to prevailing donor discourses, paradigms and methods inevitably features as a precondition for repeat business from donor sources. At the same time, that reduces the ability to present oneself as merely a technical, honest broker only concerned with capacity building, operating at a level below policy and political argument. If the recipient organisation really does share the donor agenda, then the TA provider avoids conflicts of loyalty and the definition of capacity is confined to technique. But where the purpose is to induce change through the leverage of aid, thus a deeply political process, then the notion of capacity building is extended to more fundamental issues about the 'right' ways to think and do things. If, under conditions of principal-agent conflict, the TA provider sides too strongly and over-identifies with the principal (i.e. the donor) then their value to the agent (the recipient organisation) becomes discounted and suspect.

In an earlier paper ('Projects as Communities') I distinguished between gentlemen and players (apologies for gender bias) derived from the composition of England and County cricket teams. The 'gentlemen' were the rich amateurs, learning their cricketing skills from public schools and able to play without financial reward. The players (they tended to be the toiling bowlers) need payment to play--they had to be working class professionals, at least for the duration of play or season. Gentlemen consultants, let us say from universities or retired from other professions with pensions, have less need for repeat business and so more autonomy from either principal or agent. This might make them loose, irresponsible, cannons and thus valueless. But it might underpin their role as honest brokers. The players, on the other hand, fully dependent upon consultancy for income, have less autonomy and therefore a problem of trust, especially if they operate at the more political level of paradigmatic knowledge and change. Is there a pattern, therefore, between the work that gentlemen and players do--operating with different definitions of capacity enhancement? Of course there can be double bluff here. Biting the hand that feeds can also be an art--a qualification for repeat business if the principal wishes to show a capacity for absorbing criticism as part of an overall partnership stance.

Multi-Period Games: the Search for Trojan Horses

One favoured stance for knowledge and skills transfer in TA is to develop long term relationships with recipients or clients within host programmes and projects. Those who know my own record will recognise my personal 'long-haul' mantra. Where this occurs, however, we may be observing a reproduction of patron-client relations across international boundaries entailing a microcosm of neo-colonial partnerships of dependency and cultural imposition. Consultants searching for constituents and allies among host organisations, supporting their individual career development and
deploying them as Trojan horses for change towards preferred versions of rationality. Svengali, pulling the strings, leadership by proxy, undue influence on strategic policy and so on--I have been accused of all this and more. But programmes and projects comprise a spectrum of values and choices. For every ally, there are also opponents. Non-favoured clients see the patronage of individual colleagues more obviously as interference which further stimulates their opposition, often deploying a critique of nationalism, sovereignty and cultural relativism (‘those ideas are simply not possible or relevant here’). Thus the presence of longer term consultants also produces its own opposition and elements of faction fighting between favoured and non-favoured clients. I have witnessed countless strategic review meetings in large host organisations in the sub-continent where staff are essentially positioning themselves around the tension between the visiting consultant and the programme director, either trying to work out how to be loyal to both or calculating cost and benefit of siding with one side or the other. If the host organisational culture is intrinsically hostile and resentful of donor presence, then the decision is easier. It is also easier, if individuals have exit options in one direction or the other. This all raises the question not whether TA has a distorting impact (that is axiomatic in the sense of being its essential rationale), but what kind of impact on which clients with what outcomes?

Single Period Game: High Exit, Lower Receptivity?

These dynamics are changed if the TA relationship is hit and run rather than sustained over long periods of time. The contrast between multi-period and single-period games changes the behaviour and calculations of the parties to the relationship. In a single-period, hit and run situation, everyone (including the consultant) has a high exit option and will therefore reduce their receptivity to each others' positions to an assessment of whether knowledge, skills and advice is convenient to ongoing individual, factional and organisational survival, where these coincide. The costs of avoiding compliance are low. Partnership is stranded as a rhetorical façade. Thus large host organisations, whether in or out of government, can receive endless advice and recommendations about re-structuring, right-sizing, re-focusing mission and purpose, adopting new merit principles of personnel management, and so on. But if this advice comes from one-off review teams, assembled specifically for a few weeks, then it would be unwise for any senior staff to over-embrace the findings and analysis if they are essentially critical of strategy and organisational performance to date. Such breaking of ranks without the prospect of continuing patronage from the outsider (and the donor behind that outsider) would be very risky indeed.

I recall witnessing a wonderful moment of collective assertion of independence when a group of senior management of a significantly funded client organisation (no names, no pack drill) discussed the recommendations of the recently departed review mission. There was much collective humour as the list was dissected: the mission was not participatory, so we had no chance to debate its findings and conclusions; we're certainly not doing that, we would have the whole local community against us; that idea only came from one member of the mission and h/she was marginalised by the others during the visit; that specialist barely left the hotel or office during the visit--what can they know; too many members of the mission were making their first visit, so we should not roll over and accept their judgements; their PRA methods were laughable and just confirmed their initial prejudices about us; they don't realise that we are already doing that; I thought LFA was meant to be a process document, so why do we have to meet those targets, why not just revise them; the team does not seem to be up to date on the latest thinking about microfinance--have
any of them done the Colorado course; don't they realise that some women enjoy the security of purdah; it will be a different team composition for the next visit so we don't have to worry too much about this team's recommendations as the next visit might take a different view; OK, so that's our agreed response? Who is going the write the reply? Who is going to edit it for political correctness?

Who Chooses the TA Expertise?

The efficacy of TA is also influenced by the mechanism of choice over actual TA inputs. Who decides who is going to arrive at the destination airport? With large-scale tendering for a variety of services over the lifetime of a project or programme involving companies with the capacity to manage large-scale contracts and logistics, like HTS Development, this can be a sensitive issue. The TA contract holder wants room for manoeuvre to field particular individuals and substitutes according to availability and previous knowledge about quality and deadline compliance, and so on. In awarding the contract, the donor may wish to maintain preferences on personnel. The recipient may regard the TA personnel as substitutable, particularly if the input is defined very specifically in technical terms without influence on policy and strategy, and not requiring prior knowledge of country or recipient. The recipient may be ignorant of possibilities and accept the nominees of the contract holder. But they may have their own ideas of whom they want, for all kinds of good or bad reasons. They may also resent having personnel changed during a series of inputs, or wish for change which is not being granted. All of these contract variations will have an influence on the quality of the TA relationship and the corresponding senses of ownership and partnership. A successful mechanism becomes a prerequisite for a successful outcome, however defined.

Intertwining of Pedagogy and Policing

In the development industry, it will always be claimed that TA is about capacity building, and is therefore fundamentally a pedagogic relationship. Thus the problem, if there is one, is whether corresponding learning and transfer is taking place. In a sense, it is presented as international on the job education at a postgraduate level, without a degree qualification at the end of it. But this is only part of the picture. Behind the rhetoric of knowledge and skills transfer lie other transactions and motives. I have contrasted pedagogy to policing in terms of purpose, but functionally they can be intertwined. If the understood purpose is to gain compliance and conformity to externally imposed paradigms, strategies and standards, then recipient agents are going to be very wary of the principal's representatives. Gaining compliance can be at the level of inculcating particular methods and organisational practices—doing things in the right way. Thus improving the capacity to monitor and assess the quality of poor groups of landless people in Bangladesh can be about improved MIS within the NGO and efficient implementation of owned policy, but it may also be derived from a challenge to the criteria by which the NGO judges and assesses the quality of the groups it has formed. It can thus be the insidious intrusion of alien agendas.

In both PROSHIKA and AKRSP, where HTS Development has been involved in capacity building to improve monitoring and evaluation, the internal debate rages about evaluative principles, definitions of categories and indicators to be monitored, and the real meaning of quantitative measures given, at least in PROSHIKA's case,
the highly political role of its mobilisation agenda. Or, to refer to another example, what is the real function of the Shore Bank in PROSHIKA's microfinance programme—is it to insist upon standard banking practices as part of a de-politicisation of the purpose of microfinance? That debate rages internally too. Contrasting paradigms are at work. With these examples, the neutral pedagogic appearance of TA is under the mildly delinquent recipient's microscope. It is Lukes' first dimension of power in operation—it is that crude, in the minds of the recipients though it masquerades as something else. So, there is much suspicion of the pedagogy even though it might be valid in a strict capacity building sense, because of the implicit paradigmatic baggage. The techniques cannot be insulated from the politics.

**Being Awkward: Escaping the TOR and Alienating Both Sides**

Of course I personally transcend this criticism for PROSHIKA if not for AKRSP by having the privilege of not being confined to a compartmentalised, and over-specified TOR prior to an input. In PROSHIKA, that has been understood for a long time, enabled by PROSHIKA's open access to Ford Foundation funds. I am a clear protagonist. Indeed, DfID have acknowledged as much in my current participation with next phase planning. My paradigmatic position about development in Bangladesh is clear, and the knowledge and techniques required to support it. But that is a rare relationship—probably only available to a gentleman, in the sense that the personal consequences of alienating either principal or agent are not so great. Thus my visit reports have criticised both principal and agent even-handedly. It is rare for TA to be able to implicate the donor in the problem as well as the agent!

In AKRSP, on the other hand, I am deeply suspected of having a specific policy and strategic agenda, but hiding it behind the rhetoric of analytic capacity building in order to manipulate everyone to my point of view. My denials that I am supporting process not advocating a blueprint fall on rocky ground! Still a gentleman nonetheless, but with the feeding hand withdrawn before I could bite it! (i.e. DfID withdrawing funding support for other reasons.) But at least in both instances I escape the policeman's tag! And in both cases, I would claim that my erstwhile Ustad status has dissipated as I am increasingly challenged and criticised by my erstwhile disciples.

**From Output to Outcome: from Technical to Political**

Rather the continuing problem of capacity in both organisations is the difficulty for staff in challenging the intellectual and strategic grip of senior management (PROSHIKA) or the Board (AKRSP), because authoritativeness continues to be specified by patron forms of seniority. In AKRSP I have had to use my gentleman's position to extend the boundaries of my TOR in order to try and convert the output of enhanced analytic capacity (the TLP) into social development outcomes i.e. consequent organisational change to permit flexible models of operation and practice. In both cases, despite the variations between them, having access to senior figures has to some extent enabled the technical advice to enter the organisation's political domain and thus have some effect. Years ago, I had the same relationship with Secretaries and Ministers in Bangladesh. Ownership at those levels can open hearts and minds lower down. It took some time to gain the ear of the key figure in Pakistan, whose record was being challenged. It thus took time before the traffic
lights turned from red and deniability, to green and therefore ownership of the right to think critically for the staff lower down.

Conclusion

Thus receptivity to TA is a function of several variables: post-colonial mass psychology; inter-personal mental dependency within pedagogic relationships; the particular purpose and function of the TA presence, defined within a principal-agent framework; the sociological processes through which client relationships are established; the micro-political outcomes of having a significant outsider (significant because of donor commissioning) present at various stages of a project cycle; the contrast between single-period and multi-period games; the micro-political circumstances under which the need for external consultancy has been identified in terms of ownership and partnership; the relative autonomy of the consultant to break the confines of technical advice in order to have political effect.

On a final personal note which perhaps encapsulates the problem of converting capacity building via knowledge and techniques into development and poverty reduction outcomes. When my daughter, Marsha, was about 7 and despairing of yet another lengthy trip by her father to Bangladesh, she remarked that I can't be any good if I have to keep going back!

It seems to me that a crucial consideration for assessing the future of TA in the 21st Century is to understand what roles are being assigned to it, and whether donors continue to be significant. Capacity building in a strict interpretation of the term must be a declining need with so many well educated local actual and potential consultants with relevant knowledge and skills, aided now by global electronic communication. However, if the issue is the authoritativeness of paradigms, theory and methods, then legitimation and validation may only flow from those perceived as either having influence over aid donors through their accumulated expertise (corporate or individual), or being a necessary and intrinsic part of the aid flow so long as aid remains significant to livelihoods in poor countries. However that perceived authoritativeness is double-edged if the role assigned to TA is the policing and management of donor agendas, rather than local capacity building per se. And if the policing function itself (as a legitimate part of rich country governance and accountability) becomes de-linked from the national sources of aid (as for example in the increasing internationalisation of aid such as the EU), then there is no reason to employ rich country expertise at high prices when local expertise can do the same job for a fraction of the price. With globalisation, there is no a priori reason to suppose that expertise carries national loyalties. A critical Bengali looking at a DfID funded project in Bihar would satisfy my governance and accountability criteria. The large management consultancy companies are now truly global, with staff residentially scattered world-wide.

While I do not expect international development TA to disappear overnight, the claims for comparative advantage need to be closely examined. Where might they lie: accumulated knowledge and adaptive experience; honesty and integrity; economies of scale on management and logistics in large-scale projects; comparative knowledge of different countries and contexts; proximity to donor thinking; exposure to restless policy formulation? All these monopolies will eventually be challenged. On the other hand, the consultancy phenomena itself will not disappear, so the future for an organisation like HTS Development must be to globalise its expertise and compete in the local, non-aided, consultancy markets.
There are increasing examples of poor country governments contracting international management and finance companies out of their own tax revenue sources rather than aid sources.

Despite my daughter's strictures, my own personal comparative advantage is that as an international socialist, the world without national boundaries has always been my domain, and our agenda has such a long way to go!!
The Future of Technical Assistance: A Macro Perspective

Paul Collier

Introduction

To date, technical assistance to developing countries has been overwhelmingly aid-financed. The future trend in this demand for technical assistance depends partly upon the future trend in aid, and partly upon changes in the modalities of aid delivery. There is likely to develop a market in technical assistance not funded by aid. Most of my remarks will be focused on aid-financed TA, but I will add a little on the new commercial elements in TA.

Future trends in aid

Let me start with future trends in aid.

During the 1990s global aid budgets declined sharply in real terms. I don't think that this was a trend, but rather the conjunction of three circumstances. First, and most obviously, the Cold War ended, and with it the need to buy allegiance. The USA in particular lost interest in aid for this reason. The second influence was the creation of the Euro and the consequent introduction of fiscal stability pact rules. This produced a once-and-for-all squeeze in budgets as governments across Europe sought to close deficits by the politically least costly routes. This, for example, squeezed French aid. The third influence was intellectual. During the mid-1990s research seemed to show that aid was ineffective and this chimed with popular sentiments that aid was being wasted, ending up in Swiss bank accounts. Between them, these influences produced a one-off reduction in the size of aid budgets.

Then during the late 1990s aid budgets started to get back on track. Belief in the effectiveness of aid, at least under certain conditions, was somewhat restored, and the purpose of aid became more sharply focused around poverty reduction. In particular, the emergence of ‘globalisation’ as a concept greatly strengthened the case for aid. The problems of low-income countries became the concerns of ordinary voters in rich countries. In Britain Claire Short managed to capture this sentiment with great force and helped to build the political basis for a remarkable expansion of the British aid budget. After September 11th, a somewhat differently motivated growing awareness of the developing world was forced upon America. In what would otherwise have been a truly astonishing move, a Republican Administration orchestrated a massive expansion in the American aid budget. With Britain and the USA strongly increasing their aid budgets, it became much easier for their

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counterpart ministries in other OECD governments to press for budget increases. I think that the future path of aid in aggregate is for it to continue to grow roughly in line with OECD GDP, or possibly even to increase its share.

**Compositional changes in aid**

I now turn to the first compositional aspect of aid – where will it go? Here I think that there will be massive changes. The main driver of change will be the successful development of most of the developing world. Until recently the problem of development could be conceptualized as the needs of five billion people in developing countries versus the resources of one billion people in developed countries. However, many developing countries – including the most important – are now quite rapidly converging on the OECD economies.²

The most-spectacular instance is China, which has transformed itself out of being a low-income country. But the phenomenon is much more general. Approximately four billion people are living in developing countries that are either already middle-income or are broadly on track to become middle-income. Having said this, I do not want to belittle the problems of development that they will continue to face – development is a very bouncy road. The likely trend for the remaining billion is radically different.

Over the past decade the poorest countries have been in absolute decline – with per capita incomes falling by around one percent per year. This is an astonishing phenomenon. After all, the 1990s were, in retrospect, a pretty good decade for the world economy. Yet during this decade the forces for the marginalization of the poorest countries were so strong that not only was their relative performance very weak, they were in absolute decline. With the 4-billion rapidly converging on the OECD, and the one-billion in absolute decline, over the next couple of decades the development problem is inevitably going to be redefined. Like it or not, development, and consequently aid budgets, are going to become increasingly focused upon a relatively small group of countries – the bottom billion.

The other new influence on the spatial allocation of aid is the introduction of specific measurable criteria for ‘poverty-efficiency’. The concept of poverty-efficiency is simply the principle that if the purpose of aid is to reduce poverty, an efficient allocation is one in which at the marginal a million dollars of aid lifts the same number of people out of poverty regardless of where it is deployed – that is, there is no further scope for reducing poverty by redeploying aid between countries.

Together with David Dollar I developed a simple allocation formula based on three principles. The first is that other things equal, countries with more poverty have more potential for growth to reduce poverty. The other two concern the absorptive capacity for aid. One is simply the principle of diminishing returns. There are diminishing returns to pretty well everything in life, and very likely to aid. The other principle is that the absorptive capacity for aid depends upon the quality of policies and institutions. Where policies and institutions are very weak it is hard for the government to use large volumes of aid productively.

These three principles between them generate a poverty-efficient allocation in which countries with a lot of poverty but reasonable policies and institutions get large aid

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inflows.\(^3\) The World Bank’s rules for the allocation of IDA are very close to this allocation formula, and increasingly the bilateral donors are benchmarking their allocations against it. The big reallocations generated by the formula are from middle-income countries to low-income countries. Hence, one effect of this process of sharper performance-orientation in aid agencies, is to reinforce to shift of aid towards the countries at the bottom – the poorest countries. However, the scene is now set for the main dilemma that I want to focus on.

The dilemma is that aid will increasingly need to be delivered to environments in which absorptive capacity is already low. Large increases in aid to these environments are quite likely to have even lower returns than existing aid. Partly this is because of diminishing returns. Worse, there is some evidence that in weak environments aid tends further to corrode the environment, increasing corruption.\(^4\) As aid becomes more focused on these countries there will be the financial scope for large increases in their aid budgets. The problem will be to redesign delivery so as to increase absorptive capacity.

### New Modalities for Aid Delivery

Projects are, I think, going out for various reasons. There will always be aid projects, because they are politically so attractive to donors, but the intellectual case for them has been substantially eroded. This does not mean that there will be no role for TA. The new patterns of aid delivery will still need TA, but they will be less associated with projects.

To date, the main trend in aid delivery has been the shift towards budget support. This is turn is part of the philosophy of shifting power from donors to recipient governments – in a word, ‘ownership’. I was part of this shifting of power – critiquing the idea and operation of policy conditionality.\(^5\) In countries with reasonable policies and institutions this makes a lot of sense. Uganda provides a model here, with all aid integrated into the budget and with the government deciding how this is to be spent, subject to negotiations over sensitive issues such as the size of military spending. In turn, the donors judge their success in Uganda not by the evaluation of individual projects but in the overall performance of the government in reducing poverty. In such environments the need for external technical assistance is sharply reduced and its nature changes. There is more need for advice in budgetary processes, and less need for hands-on project implementation. To the extent that such governments feel that they need TA – and often they feel that they still do – then they simply purchase the assistance in the open market as a chosen item in their budgets.

However, countries such as Uganda will gradually exit the aid world. With reasonable policies and large aid inflows they are likely to grow their way out of poverty. On our projections, after about 2010 Uganda gets a rapidly decreasing amount of aid as the needs of less successful countries start to supplant it.\(^6\) Unfortunately, budget support is much less likely to be a good idea in the countries that remain at the bottom of the world economy. The whole idea of country ownership depends upon governments being reasonably competent and reasonably well-intentioned. By ‘reasonable’ I do not mean to set very demanding standards. Policy in particular gradually becomes

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more controversial as it becomes better. There are, for example, very substantial policy differences between the UK, France, and the USA. There is no consensus as to which has the better policies in any particular field, nor is there ever likely to be. By contrast, once we get to the very worst policy and institutional environments, no one has much trouble in practice in recognizing them. Nor in agreeing what would constitute improvements. The problem in such countries is not what should be done, it is how to do it. Economists have often fussed about sequencing of reform in such countries. I think that this has been over-done. The reality is that where there is a lot wrong, but only a few things can be changed at a time, there is a wide range of choice – in economic terms – as to where to start. The criteria for choosing where to start should probably be largely political, with just a few economic rules respected. So, LICUS countries are those in which policies and institutions are uncontroversially not of reasonable quality. In such circumstances the whole idea of country ownership has to be called into question. The government may need to be seen as part of the problem – indeed in some cases as the core of the problem – rather than being a reasonable recipient of unconstrained donor resources.

Over the past couple of years the World Bank and the DAC have been working trying to formulate some principles as to how the aid relationship should be different in such countries. Last year the Bank published a task force report on its strategy – Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) and its conclusions are now being operationalised. I was a co-leader of that task force and what I have to say reflects that thinking.

One important point is that the countries at the bottom are made up of two somewhat different groups. One substantial group is post-conflict countries. The other is countries that have not had recent conflicts but have got very weak policies, institutions and governance. The difference is important because post-conflict countries are distinctive.

Post-conflict opportunities

Over the past two decades the incidence of civil war in Africa has been rising, not falling. I have recently tried to project the incidence of such conflict and find that it is likely to be a persistent feature of the poorest countries for a long time. About half of all civil wars are in societies which have fallen back into war, so, if we are to reduce the incidence of large scale violent conflict, the easiest point to target is to improve our interventions in post-conflict societies. I think that this will become recognized by the international community so that aid flows will increase very substantially.

Typically post-conflict countries start with very weak policies and institutions. However, unlike other LICUS environments both policies and institutions are often quite fluid. Further, the government is more likely to be simply incapable rather than ill-intentioned. Hence, there may be a lot of scope for building the capacity of the government.

A further important aspect in which post-conflict countries are distinctive is that during the first post-conflict decade they have much larger absorptive capacity for aid than the policy and institutional environment would suggest. In the past, donors did not reflect this in their allocations – aid came in during the first couple of years of peace and then tapered out again. Research suggests that this is not an effective pattern –

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7 Paul Collier et al., Breaking the Conflict Trap, OUP, 2003.
the absorptive capacity for aid is initially modest post-conflict, but becomes really big after about four years of peace – so aid should be tapering in just when in practice it has been tapering out.\textsuperscript{8} Aid should be larger overall in the post-conflict context and differently phased. Aid agencies are increasingly aware of this, and so aid allocations are likely to shift towards post-conflict situations, with post-conflict defined over the first decade of peace. So, not only will aid shift to the bottom billion, within this group it will increasingly shift to the post-conflict societies.

I think that there are two opportunities for TA in post-conflict societies. The first is the need for institution building. The key institutions are pretty basic – the legal system, property rights, the police, budgetary processes and audit. Sometimes also there is a need to regulate vulnerable assets such as forests and alluvial diamond fields. These are specialist skills that will increasingly be required and they will be predominantly external. The ‘project’ here is institution-building. Contractually this can still be packaged as a project, but it requires a very different type of TA. The second opportunity for TA is very traditional. In the early stages of post-conflict recovery absorptive capacity can be increased by by-passing the government as well as by strengthening it. Obviously, by-passing risks weakening the government unless it is done in a very careful fashion, basically taking on functions that the government does not yet have the competence to do but which are urgently needed. A possible example here is road building and maintenance. Typically, post-conflict, there is a need to re-integrate the rural population into the market – during conflict the rural economy sensibly retreats into subsistence. For example, in Uganda, road projects in the aftermath of conflict had an estimated 40\% rate of return. Yet construction contracts in post-conflict settings are often disastrous harbingers of corruption. The opportunities for kickbacks are so great that in the fragile governance environment of post-conflict, getting the government to handle them is just asking for trouble. I know one former finance minister of a post-conflict country whose policy was to veto all construction projects, just on the grounds that once corruption got established it would be impossible to root it out, and that the government lacked the systems to prevent construction projects from being corrupt. Hence, shifting such projects into separate implementation units, with very tight donor control, is not a bad idea for the first few post-conflict years.

Other LICUS opportunities

In the early phase of post-conflict, absorptive capacity is low despite high needs. This is the more permanent hallmark of the remaining LICUS countries – those that are not post-conflict. The LICUS approach to this problem is twofold. First, aid should be delivered in a very labour-intensive way – that is, with plenty of scrutiny and hands-on implementation assistance. In other words, it is likely to be very intensive in technical assistance. The emphasis should be on basic service delivery and here we actually proposed a model termed Independent Service Authorities – deliberately analogous to Independent Revenue Authorities. The idea is to keep service delivery in such environments out of the direct line of involvement of the government, with the Authority subcontracting retail delivery to charities, churches, NGOs and local authorities in a competitive manner, supporting and expanding whatever is found to be working, without strong priors as to which channels are likely to be most effective. The skills needed here are those of management – designing incentive systems, monitoring performance, building in client feedback, and indeed attempting to empower clients through such institutions as school boards. The TA is, in effect,

helping to build an effective wholesale organization, or quasi-franchise operation, rather than itself deliver a project on the ground.

The second pillar of the LICUS approach is that there should be a strong emphasis upon capacity building. In the past, capacity building has often not been strongly focused to goals. In the LICUS approach the goal is reform of policies and institutions, but it is recognized that such reform can only come from within the country. The purpose of the capacity building is to strengthen the forces for reform that are substantial but latent in LICUS environments. Obviously, almost everyone is harmed by the poor policies and institutions that persist in LICUS countries, but that very persistence shows that in social and political terms these environments are stable equilibria. The challenge is to empower people themselves to achieve change. There is scope for TA here, but it needs to be politically and socially smart – well plugged in to the local pattern of interest groups.

**Beyond LICUS**

Beyond LICUS there are the successes and the grey areas. Among the successful countries there will be a growing need for TA purchased on commercial terms. A good indication here is China. The Chinese government values and maintains its relationship with the World Bank – to take an important example – not because it provides money – the Chinese government is awash with money and that provided from the World Bank is a drop in the ocean. Rather, China values its relationship with the Bank because it recognizes that in the transformation of its society into a market economy it has massive need for TA to assist this institutional change. To give a few examples, there is the whole vast area of regulation of utilities, the thorny issues of bankruptcy law, and the supervision and incentives needed to create a competitive but prudent banking system. Such matters will create a huge demand for TA. To give you an African example, the Finance Ministry of Senegal recently paid Standard and Poor’s to get a credit rating and this is now becoming more common across Africa.

Finally, I turn to the grey area countries – the countries that are not bad enough to be in the LICUS category, but are not good enough for budget support to be a realistic option. Here the most likely strategy is sector-wide approaches. That is, the donors will fund sectors, but not usually projects. They will engage with an entire sector – such as health, working to help the government to reform the sector. The need here is evidently for specialists in systems rather than in projects. Instead of running a project to build health clinics, TA will be needed to reform the health care system so that it performs better.

**Who will be providing the TA?**

Will this new TA continue to be provided by ‘white men in suits’, or will it be localized? Unfortunately, in the countries of the bottom billion, where I think most aid will come to be concentrated, it is a complete myth that local capacity has been built over the past forty years. It has more often been destroyed. There are very, very few resident citizens of LICUS countries with good managerial and technical qualifications. Further, the experience that people acquire within the African public sector is often dysfunctional or at best useless for gaining the skills that would be needed to run an efficient system. As modern public sector management gets more sophisticated, staff in African public sectors are learning how to deal with problems that would not exist in the first place in a well-run system. An analogy would be the skills acquired by managers of African manufacturing firms. Because the delivery of inputs is so unreliable, the successful manager of an African firm learns to carry very
large inventories. Meanwhile, over the past couple of decades, globally managers of manufacturing firms have gradually learnt the difficult skills of running an operation virtually without inventories. Here the learnt behavior of successful African managers is precisely the opposite of the skills needed for being globally competitive.

And the pipeline of supply of skills is also pretty dry. To give an example which I know well, there are only a handful of Africans being trained to doctoral level in economics at reputable universities. Senior African government officials I have talked to are very concerned about the imbalance between such skills and the supply of superficially trained people coming out of masters programmes of doubtful value. However, this imbalance is, of course, good news for white men in suits – you will continue to be needed.

Finally, in recent work, I have tried to model the outflow of human capital from Africa. Human capital – skills – turns out to move surprisingly like financial capital. Over the past two decades Africa has hemorrhaged financial capital more than any other region. I estimate that Nigeria now has around 70% of its private wealth held abroad. To date, Africa has not hemorrhaged human capital to the same extent. However, the disturbing trend is that out-migration of the skilled from Africa is set to become very much bigger over the next few decades. So, not only will the supply of skilled Africans be very limited, many of them will choose to emigrate. This provides a new opportunity for political correctness for the TA agencies. In the future you will be able to hire these emigrants and send them back as a flow of highly paid temporary TA – the only basis on which they will be willing to work in their own countries. So, the future may well, in fact, not be white men in suits. It may be black me in suits.

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ATTENDEES
LIST OF THOSE ATTENDING

Mr Howard Dalzell, Concern
Mr Keith Thompson, ULG
Mr David Warwick, Masdar Ltd
Professor Joe Morris, Cranfield University
Professor William Stephens, Cranfield University
Mr Tom Franks, Bradford Centre for International Development
Dr Guy Poulter, Natural Resources Institute
Dr John Farrington, Overseas Development Institute
Dr Sheila Page, Overseas Development Institute
Dr Joanna Chataway, Open University
Dr Gordon Wilson, Open University
Mr Bob Fitch, Enterplan Ltd
Dr David Uglow, Landell Mills
Mr Michael Boyd, Landell Mills
Professor Alex Duncan, Oxford Policy Management
Mr Andrew Bird, Mokoro
Mr Ray Purcell, Mokoro
Mr Michael Mattingly, University College London
Mr Ashley Parasram, International Institute for Environment and Development
Ms Dianna Melrose, Department for International Development
Mr Jim Harvey, Department for International Development
Ms Sharon Harvey, Department for International Development
Mr Tim Foy, Department for International Development
Mr Chris Grose, IMA
Mr Paul Burgon, Overseas Development Group
Mr Nigel Peters, BCCB
Mr Jim Turnbull, Belmont Management Consultants
Mr Eric Buhl-Nielsen, Intermediate Technology Development Group
  Mr Martin Gueldner, GOPA Consultants
  Ms Marion Molteno, Save The Children
  Mr Michael Parker, TDI Group Ltd
  Mr Peter Thompson, Consultant
  Mr Kenneth Grundey, Consultant
  Mrs Maureen Hadfield, Hadfield Associates
  Mr Heywood Hadfield, Hadfield Associates
    Ms Arabella Fraser, Oxfam GB
    Dr Nicholas Oustead-Miles, Arup
  Mr Armen Kouyoumdjian, Consultant
  Mr Suhail Aziz, The Brettonwood Partnership Ltd
    Dr Stephen Merrett
    Mr Harry Piper
    Dr Carl Greenidge, CTA
  Miss Lorraine Howe, NR International
    Mr John Roberts
    Mr Jim Winpenny
    Mr James Joughin
  Mr Peter Massey, Greenstar Resources Plc
    Mr Philip Jones
    Mr Laurence Sewell
  Ms Sara Cottingham, VSO