

From human capacity development to national capacity development: a report on capacity development in the economic and public sectors of PNG during 2006-2013

Kevin Ryland, Terry Evans and Rebecca Miller

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Abbreviations

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AC placement	Adviser-counterpart placement
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
APA	Adviser Performance Appraisals
ASF	Advisory Support Facility
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CD	Capacity Development
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DNPM	Department of National Planning and Monitoring
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EPSC	Economic and Public Sector Governance
EPSP	the Economic and Public Sector Program
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GNI	Gross National Income
GoA	Government of Australia
GoPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
HDI	Human Development Index
HoD	Head of Department
ICR	Independent Completion Report
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDA	International Development Assistance
IHDI	Inequality Human Development Index
IT	Information Technology
KAS	Key Agency Staff
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MaD	Making a Difference
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MTDS	Medium Term Development Strategy
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
PAAOTS	PNG-Australia Audit Office Twinning Scheme
PACTS	PNG-Australia Customs Twinning Scheme
PAFTS	PNG-Australia Finance Twinning Scheme
PATOTS	PNG-Australia Taxation Office Twinning Scheme
PATTAF	PNG-Australia Targeted Training Facility
PATTS	PNG-Australia Treasury Twinning Scheme
PCR	Placement Completion Reports
PIU	Parallel Implementation Unit
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RQ	Research Question
SGP	Strongim Gavman Program
SM	Senior Manager
SWAps	Sector-Wide Approaches
TA	Technical Assistance
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WW	Wokabaut Wantaim

1 Executive summary

This Report concerns capacity development in the economic and public sectors of PNG. In particular, it focuses on the use of advisers to develop the capacity of PNG counterparts in economic and public sector agencies. Such advisers were funded by the Government of Australia and completed or commenced their placements during the period 2006–2013. The research was commissioned by (then) AusAID and commenced in mid-2012. It was completed in mid-2014 under the auspices of Australian Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade. The project was overseen by the Economic and Public Sector Program administered by Coffey International. The research brief posed several research questions about adviser-counterpart placements; these are summarised below.

- What are the advisers' and counterparts' views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships in achieving their placements' stated aims?
- What approaches were adopted to enable counterparts to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims? What were the main things learned by counterparts? What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved?
- What were the main enablers of and impediments to the success of the placements?
- What have been the outcomes of the introduction of other modalities of capacity development including short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research? Do these modalities provide increased efficiencies and effectiveness compared to adviser-counterpart placements?
- What are the main improvements that can be made to ensure the success of future adviser-counterpart placements?
- What do major stakeholders in PNG conclude from the evidence produced by this study about the impact and success of adviser-counterpart placements?
- What may be asserted from the evidence of the worth or otherwise of adviser-counterpart placements and other capacity development modalities undertaken since 2006? What suggestions or recommendations may be made for the future?

To answer these questions, the research design incorporated a variety of research methods to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data. These data were collected from: advisers' final reports of their adviser-counterpart placements; counterparts' progress reports on their adviser-counterpart placements; online surveys, interviews and/or focus group discussions with past and current advisers and counterparts; interviews, group discussions and/or a validation workshop with key informants and stakeholders in the Government of PNG, the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (Canberra and Port Moresby) and others.

The evidence presented in this Report shows that, in general, adviser-counterpart placements have been successful during the period since 2006. Importantly, the counterparts, the stakeholders and the Government of PNG senior managers commonly expressed views about, and reported instances of, the success of the placements. Across the range of research participants some criticisms were made, and some examples of problems, limitations and weaknesses were identified. Likewise, most participants offered views about how adviser-counterpart placements could be improved in the future; and they wanted adviser-counterpart placements to be part of PNG's future capacity development. Most research participants reported that it was necessary to sustain continuous or regular capacity development to maintain good quality public services within the changing social, political and economic circumstances of PNG. It was not, therefore, a single 'boost' of capacity development that was required by PNG for its national development. The extent of social and economic change occurring in the nation requires capacity development, either donor-supported or provided by PNG itself, for the foreseeable future.

PNG's aforementioned need for sustained capacity development is viewed in this Report in the context of international concerns for human and national capacity development, especially those embodied in the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2005/2008). The Declaration's five key principles—ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability—emerged after longstanding international concerns about aid effectiveness. Internationally, Australian aid has been at the forefront of efforts to embed the principles articulated in the Paris Declaration into capacity development initiatives, spearheading a move that has been characterised in the literature as a shift from the first to the second generation of technical assistance. Despite these efforts and various consultative processes, the Government of PNG stakeholders identified remaining tensions between the Government of PNG's interests and those of the Government of Australia. The Government of PNG stakeholders and senior managers and, indeed, the advisers and counterparts, generally saw the placements as being primarily 'owned' by the Government of Australia although they generally understood that the outcomes were 'owned' by the Government of PNG.

It was asserted that the Government of PNG agencies involved in negotiating adviser-counterpart placements need to scope the Terms of Reference as a foundational investment toward the agency owning the placement. Several counterparts stated that they were not informed about 'their' placement until after it had been established, or were not fully consulted about their needs and requirements, which suggests that these staff ought to be involved in formulating their Terms of Reference, too. Arguably, the foundation for such collaboration centres on the Government of PNG and the Government of Australia negotiations about adviser-counterpart placements being genuinely and formally conducted in a manner that ensures that the Government of PNG 'owns' each placement. Consequently, the Government of PNG accepts and fulfils its responsibilities to support the adviser-counterpart placement and its Terms of Reference, processes and outcomes, and to embed and sustain these in the agency. To achieve this it is recommended (Recommendation 1) that a comprehensive planning document be developed for use in these negotiations. This should involve an agency (or cross-agency) capacity diagnostic framework with a specific capacity development needs analysis and an analysis of the contemporary capacity and infrastructure in the agency (or agencies) available to support adviser-counterpart placements. These analyses need to show that satisfactory capacity and infrastructure exists, or will exist by remedies applied prior to the commencement of adviser-counterpart placements. Steps have already been taken recently in this direction by EPSP.

Two recurring themes found in the research were that the time required to fulfil the Terms of Reference and outcomes was often unrealistic within the original duration of the placements, and that the agencies' capacities (staffing, staff's knowledge and skills, IT infrastructure etc.) to support placements were inadequate to enable the placement to commence at the level of the Terms of Reference. These impeded the implementation and/or institutionalisation of changes prior to project completion.

To address the aforementioned time and capacity impediments, it was common for extensions to be granted. Although this may be seen as a laudable piece of flexibility, it occurs so frequently that it appears to be a planning failure. An obvious weakness was that often adviser-counterpart placements' schedules did not match PNG agencies' annual planning cycles or the amount of time required—typically said to be three to five years—to achieve sustainable change within agencies. This could be remedied partly by ensuring that the agency, supported by the managing contractor, uses appropriate capacity diagnostics and needs analyses. The research showed that the capacity diagnostic processes for placements completed by 2012 did not provide an accurate assessment of individual and organisational needs, and inaccurately gauged the requirements for achieving placement outcomes.

The research showed that one-third of advisers noted in their final placement reports and in their online survey responses that their Terms of Reference were unrealistic given the conditions at the start of their placements. The Terms of Reference were acknowledged as central to the success or otherwise of the placements. They were seen as emblematic of the placements' planning and preparation processes. As noted above, several counterparts stated that they were not involved in the planning process for their placements. They generally had lower levels of satisfaction at the beginning of the placement but had less reduction in satisfaction during the placement than did the advisers. It may be concluded, therefore, that the counterparts were more realistic in their appraisals of the Terms of Reference than were those who developed them. This suggests that (prospective) counterparts should be involved in the agencies' planning processes from the outset; this would also encourage their early 'ownership' of their placements.

It was reported that Terms of Reference were sometimes unachievable targets or limitations on the success of adviser-counterpart placements. If they were unachievable targets (for example, as previously mentioned, if they were unrealistic for the agencies' capacities) then advisers became frustrated at their lack of achievement or focused narrowly on meeting the Terms of Reference to the extent possible whilst ignoring other important matters including capacity development. Terms of Reference were limitations when they distracted from adapting to changing circumstances in the agencies or government so that desirable outcomes that advisers or counterparts felt useful were unable to be addressed.

A range of research participants argued that, if adviser-counterpart placements are to develop capacity that can sustain self-generating performance improvement, then Terms of Reference need to be reconfigured to accommodate the processes required to achieve such. Such Terms of Reference need to enable advisers and counterparts to work more collaboratively in partnership—from design, through to implementation, evaluation and assessment. Recommendations 2 and 3 address the placement duration and ToR matters.

The Report emphasises that capacity development is about counterparts learning and that change must occur in all the people concerned for the agency to achieve capacity development. This recognises that the capacity development relationship between an adviser and counterpart involves advisers working to change—sometimes in a fundamental way—the thinking and behaviour of their counterparts. The receptivity of the counterpart to the adviser depends on multiple factors, one of which is the level of trust placed in their advisers. This trust is partly founded on the advisers' understanding of, and sensitivity to, PNG cultures. It is also based on the interpersonal skills and teaching competencies of the advisers. Broadly, the research participants appreciated the advisers' technical expertise and experience in their particular fields, but the research data showed that the advisers' strategies and approaches to teaching their counterparts were relatively unsophisticated and over-reliant on mentoring. Advisers' cross-cultural competencies (or lack thereof) were generally of little significance in appointment decisions, as was their understanding of PNG cultures, which was often limited and depended on 'learning as they went' in their placements. This contributed to some dysfunctional working relationships and limited human capacity development. Recommendation 4 addresses this matter.

Given that the foundation of capacity development requires advisers to shape, enable and assess counterparts' learning to improve and change their (and their agencies') practices, the advisers' knowledge and skills around teaching for capacity development are crucial to success and sustainability. Those advisers who do not possess such skills need an appropriate course and assessment to ensure that they have the necessary teaching capabilities. Some advisers reported that they received little advice about how to structure their counterparts' capacity development; furthermore there was no mention of assessment being conducted of or with counterparts about their learning and, likewise, no explicit suggestion of remediation being provided for counterparts

whose learning was insufficient. Recommendation 5 suggests that an online module and resources be developed by/for the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade Australian Aid covering matters including: developing learning plans, assessing in the workplace, and collaborative teaching and learning in PNG contexts.

The required approach to planning for learning within the development process of each adviser-counterpart placement and its Terms of Reference is more complex than 'knowledge transfer' or 'skills training', although these may be part of the learning plan. Advisers need to become, in part, 'learning managers' who ensure that the learning plan is monitored for scheduled achievements and provide assistance, remediation etc., as required to maintain the schedule. The counterparts, as a consequence, will also be learning about how to facilitate learning in their agencies.

Learning plans are best seen as ones that contain an iterative process that enables each adviser and their counterpart(s) to review, reflect and act to keep the learning plan attuned to the agencies' needs and circumstances as these evolve during the placement. Process-centred, participatory, people-centred and iterative approaches are most likely to produce knowledge and outcomes that are 'owned' by counterparts and thus more able to be adapted and sustained in their future contexts. There was evidence that some adviser-counterpart placements successfully used team-based, departmental- or organisation-wide approaches to enhance counterparts' and agency staff's knowledge and skills. The success was partly concerned with the increased propensity for sustainability when a number of agency staff shared the same knowledge and skills. It was said these approaches had positive team-building effects; led to an increased appreciation of consultation and the need to review existing practices; improved counterpart ownership of outcomes; and enhanced transparency and accountability. Recommendation 6 addresses the suggestions discussed above.

It was noted previously that the Government of PNG, agencies and counterparts should 'own' and take responsibility for the success and sustainability of their placements. The current practice, therefore, of advisers writing and submitting 'their' final reports to the Government of Australia's managing contractor is inconsistent with such indigenous ownership and responsibility. Previously it was acknowledged that there are tensions between the interests and needs of the Government of Australia and the Government of PNG concerning adviser-counterpart placements.

Recommendations 1 to 3 suggest processes and procedures to minimise these tensions in accordance with contemporary OECD approaches capacity development. Recommendation 7 derives from these and suggests that each adviser and counterpart(s) should take responsibility for producing the final report in their placements. Not only is this consistent with the collaborative approaches, such as action learning, to adviser-counterpart placements, it is also consistent with counterparts learning how to take responsibility themselves for the sustainability of the changes.

In most instances, advisers usually have bifurcated reporting relationships, one to a senior staff member in the agency, the other to a senior person in the managing contractor's establishment. This reflects the aforementioned tension between the Government of PNG and the Government of Australia ownership of adviser-counterpart placements. Additionally, some counterparts reported concerns about these relationships and believed that the adviser is another 'boss' to whom they must answer. In concert with Recommendation 7, Recommendation 8 argues for similar and consistent reporting relationships for advisers and counterparts.

The Report also considers the matter of 'other modalities' including: short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research. The research design was principally established to collect data on adviser-counterpart placements from 2006–2013. The other modalities research was conducted on the 2012 and 2013 period, but there was little development work in other modalities during this period. A literature review on the topic conducted for this research project, together with the small amount of data collected, provided an insight into the

other modalities used in PNG, especially short-term consultancies. Given the limited data, however, no firm conclusions about these matters could be made other than that further research will be required to do so; this constitutes Recommendation 9.

This Report shows that there are some important interrelated areas of learning for future practices. These areas of learning, which focus heavily on the day-to-day operational and distinctly human aspects of capacity development, are suggested by some of the findings and reinforced by the current scholarship around capacity development and technical assistance discussed in the literature review.

First, while EPSP tends to employ second-generation principles to design its technical assistance interventions, the data indicates that a focus on sustainable capacity development (as opposed to more tangible placement outcomes) tends to result in more third-generation style approaches being employed on the ground. These approaches take the concept of indigenous 'ownership' and apply it at the micro level, giving rise to a system whereby processes and outcomes emerge from the local context under adviser direction and guidance. At present, this seems to occur more frequently out of exigency than by design. However, this can create a tension between the flexible and iterative approaches required to ensure that change processes are owned by, embedded in and sustainable within an agency, and donor requirements for efficiency and control, results and accountability. This can be conceptualised as a tension between 'product' and 'process'. Certainly the data indicate that, as currently constituted, placements in which advisers pursue 'product' over 'process' are likely to encounter problems with institutionalisation and sustainability, whereas the pursuit of 'process' over 'product' is likely to result in tangible outcomes remaining imperfectly realised within placement timeframes. Future practices for capacity development should endeavour to take into account both of these fundamental requirements and aim for some level of integration between them.

Future practices for sustainable development should also be based on the awareness that more attention needs to be paid to the intangible elements of capacity. These elements, such as culture, politics and interactions within stakeholder networks, structure and influence the behaviour of actors in systems in important ways, yet are by their nature more difficult to analyse and understand. This is perhaps one of the reasons, in addition to the donor requirements mentioned above, why more attention tends to be paid to tangible aspects of capacity—such as the development of policy and IT systems—in the planning, management and evaluation of capacity development initiatives. The research data show, however, that intangible elements can have a decisive influence on placement processes, outcomes, success and sustainability. Cultural awareness, mentioned earlier, was seen as a very important enabler of placement success, whereas features of Papua New Guinean organisational culture and politics were often isolated as the biggest impediments to the successful pursuit of placement outcomes and/or sustainability. The operational implications of these intangible elements, and their potential to act as both opportunities and constraints, stands out as an important area for further investigation.

Related to the focus on both process and the intangible elements of capacity is the emphasis that was placed by both advisers and counterparts on interpersonal relationships as important enablers of sustainable capacity development. In addition to direct focus on the relationship, a number of distinctly interpersonal processes, such as collaboration and communication, as well as qualities that support interpersonal relationships and processes, such as cultural awareness, were ranked as being of fundamental importance to placement success and the creation of sustainable outcomes. Taken together, these interpersonal factors gave the impression of being 'drivers of change' in that they gave momentum to placement activities and created the energy required for counterparts and KAS to overcome obstacles and engage in and commit to a sustained process of change.

Overall, there were strong similarities between advisers' and counterparts' responses to the research questions about their engagement in human capacity development. In general, they were positive (especially the counterparts) about their experiences and the outcomes of their work and, where they identified concerns (time constraints, difficulties with Terms of Reference, management problems) they typically held similar views. The need for capacity development in the PNG economic and public sectors was strongly advocated and external, particularly Australian, donor support was recognised as invaluable.

In conclusion, this Report shows that the capacity development provided by the Government of Australia through EPSP to the Government of PNG between 2006 and 2013 was important and valued by the agencies and counterparts involved. PNG agencies need to sustain continuous and/or regular capacity development to maintain good quality public services within the nation's changing social, political and economic circumstances. Future capacity development in the PNG economic and public sectors may increasingly come from PNG's own resources; the evidence suggests, however, that Australian aid will remain important to help guide an efficient and effective public sector for national development.

The following recommendations draw on the findings and conclusions of this report and are intended to assist the processes of the Government of PNG's capacity development that are supported by the Government of Australia. If the PNG and Australian Governments decide to adopt third generation capacity development principles in the future, then the recommendations need to be adapted to embrace broader 'trans-agency' or whole of government planning and implementation, within more flexible, responsive approaches for which the PNG government would exercise responsibility

Recommendation 1

The Government of PNG and the Government of Australia develop a planning and approval document to be used by agencies, assisted by the managing contractor, for the establishment, operation, evaluation and post-placement support of their future adviser-counterpart placements.

Recommendation 2

Agencies, including prospective counterparts, and managing contractors should verify that each adviser-counterpart placement's Terms of Reference address the capacity development needs of the agency and can be reasonably expected to be fulfilled within the agreed schedule. The Terms of Reference must be feasible within the agencies' contemporary capacities, especially including the prospective counterparts', and the agencies' infrastructures.

Recommendation 3

Adviser-counterpart placements' Terms of Reference should be sufficiently flexible to enable adaptations to change the Government of PNG policies or procedures, and changed agency circumstances and needs etc. during the placements.

Recommendation 4

Advisers should be appointed, not just for their technical expertise, but also for their interpersonal capacity to help others learn in cross-cultural environments.

Recommendation 5

Early in their placements, advisers should be provided with a course on the knowledge and skills to teach and assess in adviser-counterpart placements in PNG.

Recommendation 6

Adviser-counterpart placements should be planned and operated explicitly as learning engagements for the counterparts and the agency more broadly. At commencement, advisers and their counterparts should develop a detailed learning plan for the placement. This should specify what the counterpart(s) need(s) to learn to develop their capacities and what teaching actions the adviser will provide to enable them to learn. The plan should specify a schedule of learning goals and their assessment, and should include scope for remediation, if required.

Recommendation 7

The final reports on adviser-counterpart placements either should be co-produced by advisers and counterparts, or there should be equivalent final reports from each.

Recommendation 8

Consideration should be given to each adviser and their counterpart being accountable to, and supervised by, the same senior staff member in the agency to oversee the placement, and for consideration and approval of any modifications etc.

Recommendation 9

If other modalities are to be researched, they will require more substantial enactment before they are researchable

2 Overview of the project

2.1 Introduction

The Australian and Papua New Guinea (PNG) governments have been engaged in many development activities in PNG since Independence in 1975. A key early investment by AusAID and managing contractors was made in employing both long- and short-term advisers to work with counterparts with the intention of developing both human and organisational capacity. Since 2006, adviser-counterpart placements (AC placements) within the economic and public sector have been managed by firstly the Advisory Support Facility (ASF) and from 2010 the Economic and Public Sector Program (EPSP); both were funded by AusAID. These placements were part of a selected range of capacity development modalities and had the aim of improving the capacity of the economic and public sector.

This project was commissioned in 2012 to assess the efficacy of past and continuing AC placements in contributing to: human capacity development through the development of counterparts' knowledge, skills, values and expertise and overall public sector capacity development. The research investigated the ways in which the AC placements have operated as 'workplace learning' contexts wherein advisers 'teach' through a range of strategies—such as mentoring, coaching and workshops—such that the skills, knowledge and workplace practices of counterparts are enhanced. The project did this through content and thematic analyses of placement reports, online surveys of and interviews of advisers and counterparts for placements completed between 2006 and 2012. In 2013 all current AC placement participants were invited to participate in regular (individual and group) interviews regarding their work together. Additional capacity development modalities were also explored to understand their contributions to capacity development. These approaches provided data and analyses spanning ten years of AC placements. In addition the project team consulted with key staff from DFAT, both those based in Canberra and PNG, Coffey International staff and undertook a literature review and document analysis.

To establish the efficacy of the AC placements and other capacity development modalities within their respective organisations, the data collected was analysed to identify the claims, evidence (artefacts, interview statements, etc.) of the outcomes, consequences, persistence, and sustainability of each of the AC placements and other capacity development modalities. The aggregated information was presented to, and considered by, a group of senior stakeholders of the EPSP program including GoPNG senior managers, DFAT staff with responsibility for EPSP, Coffey International managers, and experienced advisers and counterparts. The stakeholder group was asked to consider issues identified by the team that appeared to have contradictory evidence and merited further consideration.

This report is organised in four sections, the first section sets up the background of the project, outlines relevant literature, details the research questions addressed by this report, and the methods used by the project team to address the research questions. The second section of the report presents the data from the research organised by the research questions. The third section of the report discusses the findings presented in section 3 and presents the considerations of the senior stakeholder group on a list of issues identified by the team as outlined above. Finally, the fourth section of the report brings together the major themes identified in the preceding sections and draws overall conclusions on these themes. It also contains recommendations for the consideration of the governments of PNG and Australia. In addition the report also contains an executive summary, appendices of key associated material and a list of abbreviations used in the report.

The project team would like to thank all the advisers, counterparts, and managers of PNG agencies for their contribution to the research. The project team would especially like to thank Dr Richard Guy for his support and contribution to the project, and also his colleagues at Coffey International who set up many of the meetings and provided the documents analysed in this work. Finally we would like to acknowledge colleagues in DFAT who provided advice and support both prior to and during the research. Without the support of all these people this important piece of research would not have been possible.

2.2 Review of selected literature

Capacity development, both as a process and an outcome of international development assistance (IDA), has received increasing attention since the turn of the century, particularly in relation to the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This section reviews some of the most recent literature on capacity development—with an emphasis on its technical assistance component—much of which has arisen from detailed study of experience in the field. In particular, the first part of this section seeks to address foundational questions such as ‘what is capacity?’, ‘how can capacity be developed?’ and ‘what are the links between capacity development and improved performance?’. The second part turns to the PNG context, looking at the most recent reports on PNG’s progress toward achieving the MDGs, as well as other aspects of the national and public administration environment relevant to the pursuit of capacity development. It also reviews some of the most recent findings of studies undertaken into the effectiveness of advisers as a mechanism for capacity development in PNG.

2.2.1 The history of the capacity development model

The use of the concept of ‘capacity building’ or ‘capacity development’ in IDA was initially heavily influenced by the successes wrought from the implementation of post-World War Two Marshall Plan reconstruction projects in Europe. Taking its cue from these successes, IDA during the 1950s focused on the building of public institutions in recipient countries, which would then act ‘to implement the investment programmes of major development aid organisations’ (Kuhl, 2009, p. 551). This focus changed in the 1960s to the strengthening and restructuring of existing institutions, primarily through the use of technical cooperation, with an emphasis on enabling local institutions to take responsibility for implementing complex development projects themselves (Kuhl, 2009).

The 1970s saw development assistance aimed increasingly toward the individual, and the policy and practice of human resource development became its centrepiece (Kuhl, 2009). Disappointing results in terms of broader, sustainable outcomes led to a further change of direction during the 1980s, with attention increasingly directed to ‘the influence of economic and political conditions’ (part of what is referred to in modern discourse as the ‘enabling environment’) and ‘the interplay of organisations and institutions’ (Kuhl, 2009, p. 555) (the beginning of the application of systemic approaches to development thinking).

In the early 1990s, these three levels of approach (the individual, the organisational and the enabling environment), and consideration of the interactions between them, were consolidated into one comprehensive development model known first as ‘capacity building’ and later ‘capacity development’. The assumption underpinning this model is that ‘when interventions are undertaken on one level only the effects will dissipate, so *sustainable* development requires simultaneous action at all of these levels’ (Kuhl, 2009, p. 555, emphasis added). Despite the widespread acceptance of capacity development as *the* model for sustainable development, throughout the 1990s little research was undertaken on either capacity development as an outcome or capacity development as a process (Baser & Morgan, 2008, p. 7).

The international community's focus on capacity development began to grow after the turn of the century, and initial efforts culminated in the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, which called for capacity development to be 'an explicit objective of national development and poverty reduction strategies' (including the pursuit of the MDGs) in the context of 'the need for significantly enhanced support for country efforts to strengthen governance and improve development performance' (OECD/DAC, 2008, p. 243). In the Paris Declaration, capacity development was recognised as an essentially endogenous process, responsibility for which lay with recipient countries with donor countries playing a supporting role (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007). Explicitly developed on the basis of 'first-hand experience of what works and does not work with aid' (OECD, n.d.) the Declaration was formulated around five central principles:

- 1) Ownership—Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and coordinate development actions;
- 2) Alignment—Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institution and procedures;
- 3) Harmonisation—Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective;
- 4) Managing for Results—Managing resources and improving decision-making for results; and
- 5) Mutual Accountability—Donors and partners are accountable for development results (OECD, 2005/2008, pp. 3-8).

The Paris Declaration was followed in 2008 by the *Accra Agenda for Action* (AAA) which again focused strongly on capacity development as the key to achieving development results. The AAA reinforced the need for country ownership, stating, 'developing country governments will take stronger leadership of their own development policies, and will engage with their parliaments and citizens in shaping those policies. Donors will support them by respecting countries' priorities, investing in their human resources and institutions, making greater use of their systems to deliver aid, and increasing the predictability of aid flows' (OECD, 2005/2008, p. 15).

The AAA also recognised increasing development activities on the part of 'middle income countries, global funds, the private sector [and] civil society actors' and declared that 'all development actors will work in more inclusive partnerships so that all our efforts have greater impact on reducing poverty' (p. 16). Finally, it reinforced the need to place development results at the heart of activities and to 'demonstrate that our actions translate into positive impacts on people's lives' (p. 16). The AAA stresses that citizens and taxpayers need to see the tangible results of development efforts.

2.2.2 Technical cooperation

Technical cooperation—in the form of technical assistance (advisers, experts and consultants), training and education grants—has been a mainstay of development assistance for over five decades. Indeed, until relatively recently, 'capacity development was viewed mainly as a technical process, involving the simple transfer of knowledge or organisational models from North to South' (OECD/DAC, 2008, p. 239). In the early 1990s, criticisms of technical cooperation, and in particular technical assistance, began to emerge which highlighted its high cost, often limited impact, lack of alignment with national needs and lack of local management control (OECD/DAC, 2011). As indicated above, however, the traditional focus on supply-side 'skills transfer' shifted at the turn of the century to a more strategic and demand-driven concept of 'capacity development' and this created impetus for a change in the practice of technical cooperation. Technical cooperation began to be viewed as a means to an end (i.e. capacity development) and 'good practice' policies began to be rethought of in this light (OECD/DAC, 2011).

Morgan (2010) characterises this shift as that from the ‘first generation’ of technical assistance to the ‘second generation’. The first generation was characterised as supply- and donor-driven, two- to five-year projects that focused on gap-filling at the individual/task level and the transfer of knowledge and techniques based on ‘good practice’ from the industrialised world. It had an extensive focus on training and would tend to bypass country systems and rely on capacity substitution (Morgan, 2010 cited in OECD/DAC, 2011).

The second generation, coming in at the turn of the century and continuing until the present, shifted the emphasis to country ownership and started to conceptualise technical assistance explicitly within the framework of capacity development. Operationally it favours strategies of planned change, with a focus on ‘good practice’ models. Here, most aspects of the management of technical assistance are delegated to outside management contractors, and donors fulfil the functions of processing, contracting and monitoring. The contours of this approach respond to demands from domestic constituencies for ‘control, clarity, efficiency, results and accountability’ (Morgan, 2010 cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5).

A comprehensive summary of the learning that has taken place around the use of technical cooperation in Official Development Assistance, undertaken by the OECD/DAC in 2011, shows how changes found at the operational level reflect the principles of the Paris Declaration and the integration of a capacity development perspective into the design of technical cooperation. On the part of donors these included changes, mostly with regard to technical assistance, to: emphasise local ownership and management; align with country system reforms; integrate strategically at the sector level; place experts physically in government office space; support regional efforts to build local capacity; use experts in advisory rather than implementation positions; and minimise the use of parallel implementation units (PIUs: units that are accountable to external development agencies rather than to country institutions, where ToRs for externally-appointed staff are determined by the development agency rather than the country agency and most of the professional staff are appointed by the development agency on a salary structure that often exceeds that of civil-service personnel [OECD/DAC, 2007]); amongst others. Some partner countries had also changed practices to: increase and promote the use of local expertise; play a greater role in the selection and use of experts; use aid effectiveness processes in the service of reform; and set-up programmes to build capacities of local experts and trainers (OECD/DAC, 2011).

Morgan (2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011) also describes the current emergence of a third generation of technical assistance, which reflects an increased understanding of the complexities of development. Based on the expanding availability of experience-based learning and theory, and the needs of new initiatives such as Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs), the third generation of technical assistance practice uses context as a starting point, ‘sees indigenous institutions, cultures and structures as key determinants’ in capacity development, and is ‘integrated with governance and political economy issues’ (p. 5). It is a flexible approach that uses ‘searching rather than planning’ (p. 5) and concerns itself with the dynamics of change, including at the informal level. Deliberate effort is made to ‘shift control and decision making to local systems and actors’ and to ‘build on strengths rather than weaknesses’ (p. 5). Given the emphases listed above, this approach also recognises the need for long-term engagements.

A summary of the design and operational features necessary for third-generation approaches to capacity development follows, however, these issues and others are considered in further detail in following sections. First, diagnosis of capacity development requirements needs to be undertaken systematically, taking into account the external context, including sector dynamics, readiness for reform and drivers of change, etc. (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007). Iterative approaches are required and flexibility must be built into programme operations such that emergent needs and changing demands can be accommodated. This is noted as being of particular importance ‘in complex and

politically sensitive environments where the momentum and direction of reform can quickly change' (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007, p. 6). Again focusing on local conditions, care needs to be taken to ensure the right mix of 'direct' and 'indirect' approaches to capacity development, taking into account local capacities. Where capacities are stronger more indirect approaches may be warranted. Here, local actors are essentially in charge and technical assistance personnel act as facilitators of counterparts' learning, adaptation and self-organisation. Such an approach must be based on a 'full understanding of country processes, politics and culture' (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007, p. 6). Where capacity is weaker, technical assistance personnel may play a key role implementing activities jointly-agreed upon by donor and partner countries, while also engaging in capacity development via their interactions with national staff and country processes. It is generally accepted that technical assistance personnel 'doing' the role should only be applied where local systems or procedures are completely absent or very weak, or where skilled nationals are not available (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007). Each of these approaches lays on a continuum and can be applied progressively as engagement deepens. For example, in 2006 AusAID developed the Staged Capacity Building Model—to be used in the assessment, planning and monitoring of capacity development activities—in which four stages are applied which 'reflect the degree of reliance on and involvement of the adviser, and the degree of 'ownership' or responsibility by counterparts; namely, 'dependent', 'guided', 'assisted' and 'independent' (AusAID, 2006, p. 4).

Despite criticisms, technical cooperation remains one of the most consistently applied and visible aspects of donor activities when it comes to capacity development, and a lot of attention is being paid to how to do it more efficiently (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007). Furthermore, technical assistance personnel 'remain the most obvious and significant element of technical cooperation, and will certainly remain a key input to capacity development in the future' (p. 1). The key is in ensuring that a capacity development perspective is applied systematically throughout the design, implementation and review of interventions.

2.2.3 Capacity and capacity development

If technical assistance is to be designed, implemented and reviewed through a capacity development lens, the questions remain: What is 'capacity'? How can it be 'developed'?

The following are a few examples of definitions of capacity and capacity development put forward by development agencies and academics:

- 'Capacity is the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner' (UNDP, 2007a, p. 2).
- 'Capacity is the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully (OECD/DAC, 2006, cited in Baser & Morgan, 2008, p. 22).
- 'Capacity deals with the aptitudes, resources, relationships and facilitating conditions necessary to act effectively to achieve some intended purpose' (Brinkerhoff, 2010, p. 66).
- 'Capacity development is the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time' (OECD, 2008, p. 244).
- 'Capacity development is the process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups and organisations, sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement' (AusAID, 2004 cited in DFAT, 2009, p. 26).

Although these definitions are very broad, it is possible to glean a few insights into the nature of capacity and capacity development from these examples. First, capacity is *purposive*, it is used to engage with real-life issues and achieve results (Baser & Morgan, 2008). Second, capacity is *latent*, its existence becomes manifest only in actual performance and outcomes. Third, capacity and capacity development are about *sustainability*, they are not simply about achieving specific outputs

but extend further into the ability to renew, adapt and develop and maintain a sense of purpose over time—in other words capacity is *dynamic*, it is a form of change that centres on improvements. Finally, capacity is about *people*, and thus involves not only knowledge but also the ability to relate, engage and interact as individuals and in collective action within the broader context of a whole society and polity.

A problem arises, however, when operationalising these definitions to frame capacity development as an explicit practice or set of practices. The broad field of current practice in development cooperation usually focuses on achieving a set of outcomes in terms of performance or development results and coming to conclusions around what changes or reforms may need to be put in place to achieve those outcomes. It is then assumed that ‘those changes—organisational, institutional, political—add up to something in the aggregate that can be labelled as capacity’ (Baser & Morgan, 2008, p. 21). This approach eludes explaining capacity, what kinds of capacity are needed or what they should look like in operation. It is, rather, based on the assumption that ‘certain mechanisms will automatically enhance capacity’ (OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 2). This makes conversations about capacity development difficult. To operationalise capacity development, it is critical for practitioners to understand what it is that is being sought in terms of capacity and ‘to use this as a basis for identifying activities which will help to encourage its development’ (p. 2).

One of the first questions that arises when looking at the foregoing definitions of capacity and capacity development, then, is what are the ‘abilities’, ‘competencies’ and ‘capabilities’ that work together to create capacity?

2.2.4 The five core capabilities

In 2008, Baser and Morgan, under the auspices of the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), completed a study ‘to understand better the processes of capacity development to provide some good practice to guide [International Development Agency] programming, particularly at the operational level’ (p. 7). Out of the analysis of sixteen comprehensive case studies, including interviews with participants from donor and recipient partners, the authors isolated five core capabilities that were present in all organisations that achieved successful capacity development. While these capabilities are formulated to apply at the organisational level, they can also be read as applying to the individual and institutional (enabling) levels.

2.2.4.1 The core capability to commit and engage

This capability encompasses, but also goes beyond, conventional notions of ownership and motivation. This capability is about the ‘human, social, organisational and institutional energy and agency’ that derives from, and is reflective of, an organisation’s ability ‘to be conscious and aware of its place in the world, to configure itself, to develop its own motivation and commitment and then to act’ (p. 26). To the same extent that the notion of ownership is extended, so too are its effects. In its limited formulation, ownership is seen as one essential element in the success of broader capacity building efforts. The expanded concept of ownership described here, which incorporates elements of attitude and self-perception, confers an energising impetus that enables actors and organisations to overcome a wide variety of internal and external constraints, such as lack of confidence, integrity, purpose, and resources.

Baser and Morgan describe how the most obvious sign that this capability is lacking is when an organisation seems ‘stuck’ in a ‘low commitment, low capacity, low performance equilibrium’ (p. 27). They cite PNG’s health sector and describe a situation where political and bureaucratic instability both causes and reinforces low commitment, which in turn renders capacity building

initiatives less effective, which reinforces the lack of 'legitimacy' of public sector agencies in popular perceptions and a concomitant "'weak demand, weak response" syndrome that further locks inaction in place' (p. 27).

Narrow, 'technical' approaches to capacity development will have limited usefulness where there is no capability to commit and engage. Further, conventional needs analyses and capacity diagnostics are generally not equipped to uncover the deeper political, cultural, psychological and social factors that underpin what is generically seen at the surface as 'lack of commitment' and/or 'lack of political will' (p. 28).

2.2.4.2 The core capability to carry out technical, service delivery and logistical tasks

This capability underpins conventional thinking about capacity building and is focused on performance and results, mostly for larger developmental ends. The emphasis here is on 'functional, instrumental ways of meeting a set of objectives and fulfilling a mandate' (p. 28). This focus conforms to the need for donors and agencies to be seen as achieving substantive developmental outcomes and it is often the most comfortable focus for recipient countries as it shifts attention from politics and power to more instrumental concerns. It is nevertheless a crucial component of capacity development. Within this realm the focus should be on understanding and bolstering the links between capacity and performance and, in particular, understanding 'which technical and logistical capabilities are crucial to generating results over time' (p. 29). Functions such as strategy and policy formulation, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation are also included here.

2.2.4.3 The core capability to relate and to attract resources and support

Another capability is related to the organisation's ability to 'craft, manage and sustain key relationships needed for the organisation to survive in the real world' (p. 29). These relationships are necessary to create the legitimacy and operational conditions required to pursue mandated goals in the context of broader instability, and to create potential additional sources of funding, staff and learning. Organisations require, at least, the resources to protect the 'technical core' of the operation upon which performance relies. For relational issues such as legitimacy, they also require the ability 'to manage symbolic appearances, to communicate effectively, to enter into productive partnerships and alliances, to manage political conflict and, in general, to secure the organisation's operating space' (p. 30).

Baser and Morgan observe that there is also a political dimension to this capability, particularly in the public sector where capacity is often a function of power, bargaining and elite accommodation. In this sense, this capability is pursued as much, if not more, through informal and intangible channels as it is through formal and tangible. Excessive preoccupation with survival in this setting can result in efficiency being sacrificed for loyalty, and the loss of ability to innovate. Ultimately, whether by extending outward or having mechanisms that guard against total dependence on political support and alliances, 'actors needed operating space if they were to have a real chance of building their capacity' (p. 30).

2.2.4.4 The core capability to adapt and self-renew

Although all organisations require the ability to adapt and self-renew, Baser and Morgan note that almost all of the cases they studied were situated in contexts of rapid and sometimes destabilising change. This could be the result of external forces, such as policy and structural adjustments engendered by global developments or the constantly changing nature of donor initiatives, or

internal institutional upheaval. In the latter regard, they note of PNG that ‘ministers and senior officials rarely lasted in a job for more than two years [and] problems appeared in the form of complex, “wicked” patterns that were resistant to simple solutions’ (p. 31). In these contexts, ‘windows of opportunity for capacity development opened and then closed’ (p. 31).

Baser and Morgan list the capabilities associated with adaptation and change as including the capability to: ‘improve individual and organisational learning; to foster internal dialogue; to reposition and reconfigure the organisation; to incorporate new ideas; and to map out a growth path’ (p. 32). They also place a particular emphasis on the need to develop the capacity for strategic thinking.

2.2.4.5 The core capability to balance diversity and coherence

The capability of balancing diversity and coherence revolves around the need to foster both stability and innovation, by encouraging a sufficient array of differing abilities, perspectives and ways of thinking to support resilience, while ensuring that such an approach does not lead to excessive complexity and fragmentation. Achieving this difficult balance involves finding the right combination of: centralisation and decentralisation; organisation as ‘human community’ and organisation as technical value/service provider; internal and external focus; short-term and long-term focus, etc. (Baser & Morgan, 2008).

Kaplan (2000) devised a similar formulation of the requisite elements of organisational capacity following his study of the successful capacity development of the Community Development Resource Association in South Africa. Kaplan isolated the following elements: 1) a conceptual framework (an organisation’s understanding of the world around it and its location within that world); 2) organisational ‘attitude’ (the ‘confidence to act in and on the world in a way that it believes can be effective and have an impact’ [p. 518]); 3) vision and strategy (a sense of purpose that enables the planning and implementation of a programme of action that can be adapted in a rational and considered manner); 4) organisational structure (clearly defined and differentiated roles and responsibilities, clear lines of communication and accountability, and transparent and functional decision-making procedures); 5) acquisition of skills (the individual skills, abilities and competencies to both devise and pursue agreed organisational vision, strategy and outcomes); and 6) material resources (finances, equipment, office space and so on). In general, Kaplan sees these features as forming a nested hierarchy, with the success of interventions on any level dependent, at least partly, on the existence of those features higher in the hierarchy. In practice they are interdependent, and the point of entry of any capacity development intervention depends on the particular needs that obtain at any particular juncture.

The point here is not to prescribe or comprehensively describe a particular model or models of ‘capacity’, but rather to demonstrate how current perspectives on capacity development have developed beyond a narrow, instrumental focus on technical cooperation, and the implications of this shift for both conceptualising and operationalising capacity development initiatives. Conceptually, this shift has involved the movement from a focus on tangible aspects of organisational life, toward inclusion of the more intangible features of organisations and the individuals they are made up of—such as culture, attitude and worldview—that are observable only through their effects (Kaplan, 2000). The failure to take into account these essential components of overall capacity, which are not typically the purview of conventional ‘needs assessments’ or ‘audits’, is often a strong explanatory factor in the failure of technical interventions to have their desired impacts (Kaplan, 2000). For example, if individuals are unaware of the broader purpose of a procedure they have been trained in—the ‘why?’—they are less likely to be able to adapt that procedure in the face of novel circumstances. Or if individuals are to develop commitment and

motivation in their work, it is important for them to be aware of the purpose of what they are doing and its impact on both the organisation and the world around them.

The second conceptual shift is from a 'static' model of organisational life to a 'developmental' reading (Kaplan, 2000). This means that the needs of any organisation with regard to any of these elements will differ according to its level of development and that these needs will change (evolve) as further development occurs. Further, these models recognise the interdependence of the elements, and the need to work with a number of them simultaneously in certain situations in order to have an effect (Kaplan, 2000). These models also recognise explicitly that capacity building is essentially about change and change processes, and that these change processes occur in an emergent and organic, rather than a mechanical, way.

2.2.5 Implications for capacity development practice

The purpose of this section is to apply the literature to try to explore some of the elements of the operational definition of capacity development employed by EPSP. As stated earlier, EPSP applies the AusAID definition of capacity development as 'the process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations and sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement'. The following discussion adopts the insights provided by third-generation approaches to capacity development, the understanding of capacity that has been outlined above, and the fundamental principle of partner-country ownership contained in the Paris Declaration, and applies them particularly to the practice of technical assistance in the service of capacity development.

The important questions are: What kind of process is necessary to create the capacity for achieving sustained and self-generating performance improvement? What is the link between capacity development and performance improvement? And what are some of the operational implications of this understanding of capacity development?

2.2.5.1 The process

Whereas capacity development was once considered a process of training and skills transfer, there is emerging agreement on the need to focus on the broader concepts of *learning and learning practices* when applying technical assistance for capacity development. Learning is a complex change process which occurs on each of the individual, organisational and institutional levels (OECD/DAC, 2011).

At the individual level, cognitive theory maintains that 'individuals acquire knowledge and skills in *purposeful interaction* with their environment, and not as passive recipients in a straight transfer of prefabricated knowledge' (Raab, 2008, p. 435, emphasis in original). When applying cognitive theory to development practice, Michaela Raab (2008) highlights the benefits that have arisen from process-centred approaches 'which allow for constant redesign of plans as the participants' knowledge evolves' (p. 435). It is beyond the scope of this review to explore particular practical techniques; the general principle is, however, that process-centred, participatory, people-centred and iterative approaches are most likely to produce knowledge and outcomes that are truly 'owned' by participants and thus more able to be adapted and sustained in changing contexts.

At the organisational level, similar principles of 'action-learning' are recommended (Johnson & Wilson, 1999). In essence, this approach again requires participatory approaches that involve the negotiation of shared meanings and agendas, and agreements as to performance assessment mechanisms that can then be used to facilitate learning and innovation. The intention here is not to prescribe an approach, but rather to indicate that learning, as opposed to knowledge or skills

transfer, involves iterative and participatory processes capable of providing feedback mechanisms that can then become the basis for further and sustained learning. It is in this way that 'collective and purposeful norms of behaviour can be developed and changed over a sustained period of time, both in shared practices and in coordination and cooperation' (Johnson & Wilson, 1999, p. 45).

As discussed earlier, the individual, organisational and institutional levels are interdependent, and the issue of how individual learning can be translated into increased organisational capacity is an important one. Again it is dependent on context. A study by Johnson and Wilson (1999) suggests that individuals' straightforward application of new knowledge, ways of understanding or techniques occurs in organisational settings where objectives are agreed, tasks and functions reasonably clear, and where both individual and organisational learning are aimed at improving performance. The whole organisation must provide both opportunities and support for the application of learning by the individual (Johnson & Wilson, 1999). Implied here is the broader vision of learning (and capacity) under discussion, which incorporates the capabilities to make decisions and to act. The fundamental importance of a supportive organisational environment means that often organisational and other contextual capacity constraints need to be addressed simultaneously with, or in some cases prior to, individual capacity development (OECD/DAC, 2011).

The idea of *purposeful* interaction to promote learning is important at each of the levels discussed. Whatever the level at which technical assistance is provided, results frameworks with specific timeframes are required to be negotiated among all parties and used to track and discuss activity progress and change. Overall strategies are required that connect short-term activities to long-term goals in order to achieve continuous learning and sustainable capacity impact (OECD/DAC, 2011).

The approach to learning and the learning practices described here are continuous, dynamic and take place over the course of a long-term engagement. The shift in focus from the tangible to the intangible features of capacity described earlier also precipitates the need for longer-term engagements, as it gives rise to the need to focus explicitly on the psychological, social and cultural aspects of capacity development. It takes time for practitioners to understand the local environment and to understand the patterns of behaviour and styles of thinking that generate and impact on performance. It also takes time to build constructive working relationships and to cultivate local ownership of programme activities (OECD/DAC, 2011). Finally, it takes a long time for new norms of thinking and being to be cultivated and embedded in any human system. As AusAID have recognised, 'capacity development is about generational change' (OECD/DAC, 2009, p. 1).

An additional part of the recognition of capacity development as a long-term process stems from the conceptual shift outlined above, in which capacity is understood as a feature of a system that emerges organically, as opposed to one that can be constructed 'mechanically'. The approach to capacity building in this framework is 'systems searching and explorative, rather than prescriptive or formulaic' (Morgan, 2005, p. 4). AusAID recognised the need to allow scope for 'learning by trial and error' and recommend a 'fluid program design with room for experimentation and evolution' (OECD/DAC, 2009, p. 1). This means, in practice, that a balance between planning and flexibility is required.

It is now coming to be generally accepted that sustainable capacity development relies upon a long-term commitment on the part of development assistance agencies and their country partners. While many elements of the capacity development process remain the subject of discussion, any articulation of fundamental principles will invariably include this requirement. For example, the UNDP's default principles for capacity development include: 'Don't rush. Capacity development is a long-term process. It is not amenable to delivery pressures, quick fixes and short-term results seeking. Engagement for capacity development needs to have a long-term horizon and be flexible' (UNDP, 2007b, p. 74). Also, in *Capacity development for good governance in developing societies:*

Lessons from the field, Hope (2009) includes as a fundamental principle of capacity development: 'Being addressed as a continuous, dynamic and long-term process. Fragmented short-term interventions have never been successful. A longer-term approach would have a greater potential to achieve sustainable capacity development' (p. 83).

2.2.5.2 What is the link between capacity development and performance improvement?

If capacity is a latent and emerging phenomenon, performance is about the 'execution and implementation, or the application and use of capacity' in the service of achieving results, that is, 'substantive development outcomes that represent improvements to human welfare' (Baser & Morgan, 2008, p. 85). As Baser and Morgan (2008) note:

Years of experience with technical assistance [make clear that] all kinds of trade-offs, tensions and dilemmas can be found in the relationship between capacity, performance and results, especially when external interveners are part of the mix. Patterns of both capacity development and performance are uneven, with progress going at different speeds at different times. Investments in capacity can take years to yield significant results (p. 86).

Monitoring and evaluation efforts have been inconsistently and intermittently applied, and in general efforts have been based on the assumption that 'the aggregated condition called capacity would over time lead to improved performance and results at the project, programme and organisational levels' (p. 86).

In order to redress the dearth of knowledge in this area, Baser and Morgan (2008) analysed sixteen case studies in an attempt to isolate the conditions under which capacity development resulted in, or did not result in, performance improvement. In cases where improved capacity led relatively straightforwardly to improved results, they noted the following conditions: competencies and capabilities appropriate to the actual performance challenges faced were developed and maintained, and they were 'good enough' to actually make a difference to performance such that the organisation gained legitimacy and resources; all of the organisations had leaders with a sense of strategic management who were focused on strengthening the relationship between capacity and results; and all of the organisations had a set of potential outcomes that key stakeholders wanted, as well as relative control over their operating space and resources.

In cases where improved capacity made little or no difference to results Baser and Morgan noted: capabilities were effectively developed, but they were the wrong capabilities for the performance challenges faced; new knowledge, structures, systems or strategies were formulated and applied but they were not embedded into daily performance; there was a 'knowing-doing' gap that impeded progress; or political instability created disincentives for change.

The overall lesson derived from Baser and Morgan's analyses was that 'an imbalanced focus on either results or capacity eventually undermines both' (p. 88). An undue preoccupation with outcomes and results led to declining capacity because participants—both technical assistance staff and their country participants—did not have the time or resources to invest in the required capacity development. This often related to the role of advisers and whether they were seen as predominantly there to 'get things done' or whether their primary purpose was to facilitate others to get things done. Alternatively, an undue preoccupation with capacity development meant losing track of the need to produce or deliver results. Organisations could find themselves engaged in meaningless reorganisations, or resources for capacity development could be diverted to other ends. This also occurred where a particular theory of capacity development was pursued for its own sake

and not tailored to performance needs. In these cases, capacity development both failed and impacted negatively on performance and results.

This led the authors to conclude that, operationally, there is a need to 'blend product and process' (Baser & Morgan, 2008, p. 89). Crucial to this was 'the ignition of a virtuous cycle in which capacity development and results reinforce and feed of each other in a rising spiral' (p. 89). Capacity development needs to improve performance, which then, perhaps through increased demand for or recognition of services, leads to increased confidence, motivation and resources (capacity), which then lend themselves to further improved performance and results. Further, expectations of good performance can then become increasingly entrenched.

Baser and Morgan noted that the relationship between capacity development and performance was in large part a function of both the quality of the assumptions underlying the goals of a programme (what performance challenges exist, what is needed to address them, what is required by end-users, etc.) and quality of the theory of change or capacity development that underpinned capacity development approaches and strategies. The authors isolate four possible consequences depending on the nature of each of these components and their interaction. Where assumptions underlying programme goals are strong but the theory of change is weak, only superficial change will result. Where programme goal assumptions are weak but the theory of change is strong, change will occur merely for the sake of change. Where both are weak, organisations will drift. However, where both are strong, deep change can occur.

2.2.5.3 Some operational issues for practitioners

Under this paradigm of capacity development, technical assistance personnel need to possess a much broader array of skills and abilities than simply high quality technical expertise (although this is still essential for success in capacity building). As is to be expected, these skills are those that are capable of drawing out and strengthening the intangible capabilities that constitute capacity, and that align with an emergent and organic understanding of capacity development.

Kaplan (2000) compiled a list of the skills that would need to exist or be developed in technical assistance practitioners working within this paradigm of capacity development:

- the ability to find the right question which may enable an organisation to take the next step on its path of development, and to hold a question so it functions as a stimulus to exploration rather than demanding an immediate solution, and to help organisations to do the same;
- the ability to hold the tension generated by ambiguity and uncertainty, rather than seek immediate resolution;
- the ability to observe accurately and objectively, to listen deeply, so that invisible realities of the organisation become manifest;
- the ability to use metaphor and imagination to overcome the resistance to change, to enable an organisation to see itself afresh, and to stimulate creativity;
- the ability to help others overcome cynicism and despair and to kindle enthusiasm;
- integrity, and the ability to generate the trust which alone will allow the organisation and its members to really 'speak' and reveal themselves;
- the ability to reflect honestly on one's own interventions, and to enable others to do the same;
- the ability to 'feel' into the 'essence' of a situation;

- the ability to empathise (not sympathise) so that both compassion and confrontation can be used with integrity in helping an organisation to become unstuck; and
- the ability to conceptualise, and thus to analyse strategy with intelligence.

How these skills are called upon in a concrete operational setting was taken up in Greenwell and Moore's (2014) *Capacity development in economic policy agencies*. The paper addresses 'issues that [the authors] grappled with in [their] roles as capacity development advisers in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands' (p. 1). The authors make several interrelated offerings of advice for advisers working in the field, all of which can be traced to a fundamental need to think strategically, to understand the complexity of the context and the competing objectives that can drive placement activity, and to respect, respond to and develop the intangible elements of capacity that have been highlighted in this section.

Many similar areas of concern elaborated by Greenwell and Moore will be covered by this research—for example the critical nature of effective relationships to adviser effectiveness ('advice can only be influential if it is delivered to a receptive audience' [p. 17]) and the difficulty in, yet importance of, measuring progress in capacity development—so in this section it will suffice to draw out one issue discussed by the authors which illuminates the way in which demands on advisers to work with the intangible elements of capacity and to 'blend product and process' can manifest themselves operationally. This issue revolves around the use of 'failure' in the learning process and judgements advisers must make about when to intervene and when to 'let things fall over' (or, in words preferred by the authors, when to allow work to 'fall below acceptable standards' [p. 19]).

The idea of adviser intervention feeds into the doing/advising debate so often encountered in discussions around capacity development and refers in a broad sense to 'situations where advisers identify the risk of a potential failure eventuating and then choose to contribute to the substantive work in some way in order to reduce that risk' (p. 19). According to Greenfield and Moore these decisions are best made on a case-by-case basis taking into account the risk of creating dependency on advisers, the risk of damaging ongoing relationships through intervention and the overall risk of a poor outcome. Further, non-intervention is discussed as reaping less (or no) reward when there is little potential for management and staff 'to recognise and learn from the consequences of substandard work' (p. 20) or where there is the potential for significantly negative side effects on intangible capacities such as team morale, credibility, motivation and/or stakeholder relationships. As this single example illustrates, advisers need to be able to weigh up competing demands on the product and process elements of placement objectives and similarly consider strategically the various consequences, good or ill, for intangible capacity that can arise from any course of action.

The broad range of skills and personal qualities required for capacity development practitioners to be successful in the field also has implications for the organisations/agencies responsible for locating and recruiting these professionals, as well as for how these agencies evaluate the performance of advisers working in the field (to be discussed further below).

2.2.5.4 Some operational issues for donors/development agencies

Technical assistance interventions that are intended for capacity development purposes should be designed, implemented and evaluated with a specific capacity development focus in mind. This means keeping in mind both the product and process elements described above, and providing realistic timeframes for capacity development objectives. As discussed earlier, the goal of EPSP's capacity development activities is 'sustained and generating performance improvement'. For Greenwell and Moore (2014) this means that 'the point at which advisers are no longer needed is when organisations are "resilient" in the sense that they have the capacity to address any serious lack of capacity themselves' (p. 14). This means 'enhancing the organisation's capacity for self-

regeneration—its ability to build capacity itself— [which] may be the most advanced stage of capacity development that can only be actively developed once other, more basic capacities, have already been entrenched’ (p. 14). In the authors’ experience it typically takes two to three years to achieve ‘significant, measurable progress against these objectives’ (p. 14) and the frequency of substantial program reviews should reflect this. The timeframe required to fully achieve these objectives, however, should more appropriately be measured in decades rather than years. Further, decisions to undertake capacity development programs should be based on funding commitments that acknowledge these timeframes.

In terms of program delivery, many initiatives have already been undertaken to promote and strengthen the capacity building element of technical assistance. For example, AusAID introduced the ‘Making a Difference’ program (MaD), which brings advisers and counterparts together to learn about action-learning approaches and processes of capacity building and change management (OECD/DAC, 2009). While many agencies articulate and promote a capacity development focus, however, it is rare for aid organisations to focus on capacity development criteria when assessing the performance of technical assistance personnel (OECD/DAC, 2011). This is important because monitoring and evaluation can significantly influence how technical assistance personnel perform (OECD/DAC, 2011). Land, Hauck and Baser (2007) present guidelines for monitoring and evaluation, based upon the principle that personnel performance should be assessed in terms of the roles and functions that they are expected to perform. They stress that it is critical to avoid making technical assistance personnel responsible for overall results because this ‘encourages them to take over and disempowers country partners’ and ‘can also lead to an emphasis on achieving tangible and measurable results at the expense of investing in less tangible but equally important process and learning tasks’ (p. 7). For this reason, monitoring and evaluation systems should balance the demands for accountability (on the part of both donors and country partners) and learning. As a concrete example, referring to Greenwell and Moore’s (2014) discussion of adviser intervention/non-intervention outlined above, the authors agree that advisers have a strong incentive to intervene where capacity development activities are assessed largely on the basis of organisational outputs. As a practical measure they suggest that performance evaluators try to establish a mechanism for formally acknowledging decisions not to intervene, ‘evaluating the consequences and lessons learnt and then, where appropriate, reward[ing] advisers through their performance appraisals and otherwise’ (p. 21). Part of this suggestion also recognises that evaluation methodologies should also consider the need to reflect on and learn about processes of change and capacity development, such that donor programs themselves can become sites of action-learning and continuous improvement.

In addition to integrating a capacity development perspective into design, implementation and assessment, donors also need to consider those design and operational aspects that encourage and support the three Paris Declaration principles of alignment with recipient country priorities, recipient country ownership and recipient country accountability. Land, Hauck and Baser (2007) outline a range of features and principles of placement design that align with and support these principles. The first is that the process of both identifying and formulating capacity building needs should be led by country stakeholders and these stakeholders should also decide whether technical assistance personnel are necessary and, if so, the kind of role they should perform. Second, while the ultimate goal should be the procurement of technical assistance personnel using national systems and procedures, country partners should at least, and ‘as a matter of principle, chair review/selection panels and be involved in developing criteria for selection and appraising performance’ (p. 4). Even if contracting remains the responsibility of the development agency, the selection of technical assistance personnel should be under recipient country leadership and, ‘once deployed, TA [technical assistance] personnel should be unambiguously accountable to the host organisation they serve’ (p. 4). This means coming to some arrangement that can ensure accountability to the host agency, whilst also recognising the legitimate need for accountability to

the managing contractor or development agency. The *Perspectives Note* on technical cooperation published by the OECD/DAC (2011) concurs that when the responsibilities for personnel management are not clearly defined and established, it limits the degree to which partner countries can play an active management role and thus can limit the effectiveness of capacity development activities.

One of the thorniest issues for donors trying to identify the strategic and operational implications of current approaches to capacity development arises when attempting to grapple with the fact that development is political. Although dealing with development in general, Hudson and Leftwich's (2014) *From political economy to political analysis* promotes a focus on the human, political and otherwise intangible elements of development contexts through the lens of interactions between 'agency' and 'structure'. The authors problematise the deterministic way in which institutions, and the incentives they give rise to, have been treated in the most recent generation of political economy analyses, and destabilise structure/institutions and the function of incentives by illuminating their contingency on the actions of agents working within them. In this way the interdependency of structure and agency is revealed: structure is a medium without which agents cannot act, yet without agents 'structures cease to exist' (p. 75). Structure, therefore, 'is not just the context, it is also the outcome' (p. 75). This formulation recognises that structures are not only material (or understandable in terms of know-how and resources etc.) but also social and 'constructed from shared ideas and understandings (p. 75). Agents are not automatons, but must rather '*interpret* the opportunities and risks facing them...as such, agents' beliefs, values and other cognitive filters are central to understanding how they act (p. 75, emphasis added). These are the same realities, writ large, that individual advisers grapple with.

Indeed, through Hudson and Leftwich it is possible to see parallels in the evolution of thinking around development contexts and the evolution of the delivery of technical assistance on the ground. In the former, ideas have shifted from those promoting the transplant of 'best practice' to recipient nations toward an understanding of the fundamental role that the interplay of context and individual agency (with all that those entail) plays in successful development. It has moved from a normative approach to a positive one, concerned not with what should be but with *what actually is*. In the latter, as discussed earlier, the third generation of technical assistance uses context as a starting point, 'sees indigenous institutions, cultures and structures as key determinants' in capacity development, is 'integrated with governance and political economy issues' (Morgan, 2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5), is flexible and eschews planning in favour of searching, and concerns itself with the dynamics of change, including at the informal level. Deliberate effort is made to 'shift control and decision making to local systems and actors' and to 'build on strengths rather than weaknesses' (p. 5). Both reject the mechanical and formulaic in favour of the organic and emergent, and in doing so establish an entirely different—and more realistic—array of opportunities and constraints within which (capacity) development efforts must take place.

It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the operational implications applying to practitioners and discussed above, will also have their parallels with regard to donors and development agencies. These, too, must be able to accommodate an understanding of processes and, importantly, outcomes of development assistance as 'emergent' and 'organic', and 'contingent' and 'contextual' and integrate these into the design, implementation and evaluation of capacity development initiatives. This, of course, entails a somewhat radical departure from strategies of planned change that respond to needs for 'control, clarity, efficiency, results and accountability'.

2.2.6 Conditions in PNG

This part of the literature review outlines some of the conditions in PNG that are relevant to the pursuit of local capacity development. It will first sketch out the general state of development in

PNG, as indicated by its progress toward achieving the MDGs, as well as its current state in terms of the UNDP's Human Development Index. The MDGs are important because of the general international agreement, as expressed in both the Paris Declaration (2005) and the AAA (2008), that aid, including technical assistance, should be directed toward their attainment. The Human Development Indices are also useful in providing a generalised overview of the context for development in PNG, and both offer some insight into aspects of the broader 'enabling environment' for capacity development mentioned briefly earlier in this section. Some of the particulars of the environment in which capacity building occurs in PNG will be discussed in relation to a study undertaken of the deterioration of public administration in PNG. Finally, two recent evaluative studies of Australian technical assistance in PNG will be discussed, as a means of moving from the previously general discussion of capacity development into the particularities of the PNG case, and to provide some additional context for the issues that will be explored in later sections of this report.

2.2.6.1 The Millennium Development Goals

The first comprehensive appraisal of PNG's progress toward the MDGs was completed in 2004 and covered the period from the MDGs' base year of 1990, to 2003. This period was characterised as 'mainly one of stagnation' with 'limited progress made with regard to some of the MDGs' but with the country not on track to meet any of them by 2015 (UNDP, 2009, p. 1). In 2003 the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) created a set of national targets which were incorporated into PNG's Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2005-2010. These targets were considered to be more realistic and achievable than the global, 'aspirational' goals set originally by the United Nations.

A second national appraisal was completed in 2009 under the auspices of the DNPM (UNDP, 2009). The report concluded that PNG had not achieved any of the global targets, and had made, in the main, only limited progress toward the national targets. The main findings of the report in relation to each of the national MDG targets are set out below.

MDG1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

In the absence of new information on income and consumption (the last Independent Household Survey had been completed in 1996) proxy indices (related to education and literacy, labour force participation, longevity, etc.) were used to measure the poverty component of this MDG. From these it was concluded that there had been a marginal decrease in 'poverty of opportunity', of an approximate value to that envisaged in the MTDS. Indirect measurement of the hunger component (again in the absence of up-to-date survey data) found that there had been little change since 1990.

MDG2: Achieve universal primary education

The appraisal found that the limited progress made with regard to access, retention and achievement was 'disappointing', in light of the fact that educational reforms had commenced in 1994 and should have been completed in 2004.

MDG3: Promote gender equality and empowerment of women

While gender disparity in terms of education and literacy, employment and longevity was noted as 'not as large as often assumed', women were noted as being at a disadvantage by virtue of widespread, culturally-sanctioned gender-based violence. This was also implicated in the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which of course poses a huge threat to future development. PNG's high level of maternal mortality was also seen as an indication of a lack of empowerment of women.

MDG4: Reduce child mortality

It was noted that child mortality decreased rapidly in the 1970s, started to level off in the 1980s and that 'since 1990, further decrease has been slow'. Further reductions were seen as dependent on the successful implementation of the plan to introduce Community Health Posts throughout the rural sector.

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

Again, using proxy indicators in the absence of reliable data, it was concluded that maternal mortality had decreased only marginally since 1994 and remained at a very high level at the time of the 2009 report. Once more, the introduction of Community Health Posts to rural areas was seen as essential to improving this state of affairs.

MDG6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Evidence available at the time of the 2009 report suggested that there was no sign that the HIV/AIDS epidemic, nor the spread of several closely associated opportunistic diseases, especially tuberculosis, pneumonia and malaria, had stabilised.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

The 2009 report noted that most national targets remained ambiguous. While PNG had signed 46 multilateral environmental agreements, most of the indicators for progress contained therein had 'never been measured and may never be measured' and any monitoring carried out was 'fragmented and uncoordinated'. It was deemed essential that the Department of Environment and Conservation assume 'a leading role with regard to the collection, processing, management and analysis of all the data required for the monitoring of MDG7'.

MDG8: Develop a global partnership for development

The results of attempts that had been made to localise this MDG were noted in the report as 'disappointing', and the management and analysis of data with which to monitor the goal 'unsatisfactory'. It was suggested that a recommendation by the 2004 MDG Steering Committee to establish a Task Force to continuously monitor this MDG be implemented as soon as possible.

2.2.6.2 The Human Development Index

The Human Development Index is a composite statistic employed to measure long-term progress with regard to three basic dimensions of human development: 1) a long and healthy life, 2) access to knowledge and 3) a decent standard of living (UNDP, 2013). The first dimension is measured by life expectancy. The second is measured by the mean years of schooling for the adult population (≥ 25 years) and the expected years of schooling for children of school-entrance age. The final dimension, standard of living, is measured by gross national income (GNI) per capita expressed in constant 2005 international dollars converted by using purchasing power parity (PPP) rates.

In 2012, PNG's HDI value was 0.466 (the baseline being zero and the maximum one) which placed it in the 'low human development' category and as 156th of 187 countries and territories. Changes in the underlying data and methods in 2012 means that it is not useful to compare rankings from previous years. However, as can be seen in the table below, between 1980 and 2012, PNG's HDI value increased from 0.324 to 0.466, an increase of 44 per cent, or an average annual increase of approximately 1.1 per cent. In the same period, GNI per capita increased by around 27 per cent (UNDP, 2013).

Table 2.2.6.1 Papua New Guinea’s HDI trends based on consistent time series data, new component indicators and new methodology

Year	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	GNI per capita (2005 PPP\$)	HDI value
1980	52.8	4.1	1.2	1,885	0.324
1985	54.7	4.1	1.8	1,738	0.347
1990	55.6	4.5	2.3	1,620	0.368
1995	57.2	4.9	2.9	2,114	0.405
2000	58.7	5.2	3.2	1,826	0.415
2005	60.5	5.5	3.5	1,720	0.429
2010	62.4	5.8	3.9	2,162	0.458
2011	62.8	5.8	3.9	2,272	0.462
2012	63.1	5.8	3.9	2,386	0.466

Source: UNDP, 2013, p. 2

In 2010, the Inequality Adjusted HDI (IHDI) was introduced to take into account inequality along all dimensions of the HDI (with each dimension’s average value being discounted according to the level of inequality). The loss in potential human development that results from inequality is then indicated in the difference between the HDI and IHDI. Unfortunately this figure is not available for PNG, due to a lack of relevant data. This difficulty in accessing relevant data similarly prevented the production of a figure for PNG for the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which identifies multiple deprivations in the same households in education, health and standard of living. As can be seen here and in the previous section on the MDGs, data collection is itself a problem in PNG which can have ramifications for both understanding existing conditions and formulating needs, as well as assessing the impact of any development activities undertaken.

The final statistic used to measure potential losses in human development is the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which reflects gender-based inequalities in reproductive health (measured by maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rates), empowerment (share of parliamentary seats and educational attainment by gender) and economic activity (labour market participation by gender). In 2012, PNG had a GII value of 0.617, placing it 134th of 148 countries. At this time, 2.7 per cent of parliamentary seats were held by women, 6.8 per cent of women had reached a secondary or higher level of education compared to 14.1% of men, and female participation in the labour market was 70.6 per cent compared to 74.1 per cent of men.

2.2.6.3 The deterioration of public administration in PNG

In 2004 a report was prepared for AusAID by Lynn Pieper which discussed the deterioration of public administration in PNG from the early 1980s, based upon the views of eminent long-term public servants. The report highlighted the factors that interviewees saw as driving the transformation of PNG’s public service from an efficient, professional, team-based, committed, independent and well-educated corps of individuals in touch with the basic service needs in the provinces, to a highly politicised, inefficient and sometimes incompetent cadre of state employees, often motivated by narrow political or personal interests.

The lion’s share of responsibility for this decline was directed toward changes in the structure and function of PNG’s political system as post-Independence internal reforms accelerated. For example, tight central control over budgets was shifted to sectoral, that is ministerial, control over budget allocations. As the report notes, ‘this was the first real move to political control of public sector

management, and to using public funds as slush funds' (Pieper, 2004, p. 4). The increasing desire of politicians to control public resources coincided with a change in public service appointments from permanent to contract (the introduction of private sector culture into the public sector), with departmental head appointments being made by the cabinet rather than the Public Services Commission. Whilst the intention had been to strengthen the role of departmental heads, the result in practice was the changing of secretaries (and often other senior personnel) whenever a new minister was appointed. 'This has seriously undermined the professionalism of the public service, causing departmental heads to focus only on the short-term, and to play political games in their own attempts at survival... it has enabled politicians to get too close to operational areas within the public service' (p. 4).

Interviewees also expressed the opinion that PNG's decentralised, three-tier system of government was not functioning as intended. Revisions made to the 1995 Organic Law required over one hundred pieces of enabling legislation that were still being worked through in 2004. As Pieper's report notes, 'confusion over the roles of agencies at different levels of government means service delivery is declining rather than improving' (p. 4). Further, all layers of government, public sector institutions and decision-making are 'disaggregated and unfocused', local governments are not empowered, and provincial governments cannot meet expectations (in part due to underfunding) which further hampers effective service delivery. These factors were compounded by the movement of less experienced people into key positions, and rapid recruitment to meet increasing demands for service delivery that was both inefficient and ultimately unsustainable in terms of PNG's economic capacity.

Along with these factors internal to PNG, the change in the nature of Australian government-funded technical assistance was also noted as a contributing factor. Due to its relevance to this study, the whole section will be reproduced here.

[Previously] expatriate personnel were in contracted, line positions, subject to normal lines of command, discipline and public service ethics. ***The shift to off-line, advisory support*** in the 1980s, whilst a well-intentioned part of the localisation process, "was a step backwards" in the opinion of the interviewees. Apart from being much more expensive, it has created a feeling of condescension between 'advisers' and their 'counterparts'; reduced sustainability prospects by separating the work done by advisers from the 'normal' work of departments; created a dependency by Departmental Heads on using advisers to fix problems rather than training nationals to learn the job by doing it; destroyed the collegiate sense that previously existed ("we used to work and socialise together"); and eroded any sense of pride in achievements—counterparts do not have any sense of ownership of results, and advisers today "are not long-term stayers" (p. 3, emphasis in original).

The particularities of PNG's 'enabling environment' as mentioned here, as well as the features of AC relationships within it, will be discussed in further detail in the following section.

2.2.6.4 Technical assistance in PNG

This section considers two evaluative studies undertaken of technical assistance in PNG, each of which involved consultations with local participants and incorporated the findings of previous evaluations. The first is the *PNG-Australia Joint Review of Technical Adviser Positions* (AusAID, 2010b; hereafter referred to as the 'Joint Review'), a study completed in order to 'confirm the priority attached to each adviser position and whether it is an effective response to mutually agreed development needs and priorities' (p. 4). This was a broad study which reviewed adviser positions across all AusAID programs in PNG, including the Strongim Gavman Program (SGP) and the PNG-

Australia Policing Partnership, in addition to the ASF. For this reason only the most general findings will be discussed here. The second is Morgan's (2008) *Improving Counterpart Relationships in Papua New Guinea: A Study for the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia*, which looked more closely at the internal dynamics of AC relationships in light of the 2005 Paris Declaration principles. Although the two studies were conducted on different bases, there is often overlap in their findings, as well as some contradictions which may illuminate some of the difficulties in pursuing effective capacity development.

The task of the Joint Review was to evaluate the 487 long-term (providing at least six months input per year) adviser placements that were operating in PNG in 2010-2011. Of these, 355 were held by international advisers and 132 by PNG advisers. The objective was to assess the value and effectiveness of each adviser position (not the performance of individuals in adviser positions) in terms of: value for money; the intended outcomes of the position (results) including how the position was building capacity in the host agency; whether there were alternative or more cost-effective ways of achieving these outcomes; and the relative importance of the adviser position to the broader country program and bilateral relationships (p. 4). The Joint Review was conducted using 'a combination of data collection, document review and stakeholder consultation' (p. 41). Overall, the Joint Review gave 41 per cent of positions a 'high' rating with regard to the abovementioned criteria and recommended that they be continued. Twenty-two per cent of positions were rated as 'medium,' indicating that they provided 'assistance in important areas but needed to be re-designed or reassessed subject to particular issues being addressed' (pp. 31-32). Finally, 37 per cent of positions were given a rating of 'low' and recommended to be phased out. Some of the positions were given this rating because they were 'deemed a success where objectives had been achieved' (p. 32).

While there were clearly many positions that were seen as being both valuable and effective in providing technical assistance and capacity development to PNG agencies, the Joint Review discussed a series of impediments to the efficient use of advisers across the programs. The diagnostic process that led to the decision to establish an adviser position was criticised as being 'insufficiently robust' and often accompanied by the 'assumption that an adviser can "fix the problem" without proper scrutiny of how realistic this is or even what the problem actually entails' (p. 17). The overall perceived effectiveness of technical advisers is of course diminished when they are appointed in situations in which they are unlikely to achieve intended outcomes in a cost-effective manner. A more comprehensive diagnostic process was recommended as a means to both accurately identify needs and the appropriate way to respond to them. In particular, the diagnostic process 'should identify the specific capacity improvement outcomes expected that link directly to the agency's service delivery role' (p. 17). This formulation is emblematic of the Joint Review's general position that capacity development activities should be oriented away from general systems strengthening and toward strengthening systems capacity for implementation.

In its discussion of system capacity development, the Joint Review noted the successful case of the National Economic and Fiscal Commission, in which 'the primary objective was to support the development of *system* capacity, rather than individual or organisational capacity' (p. 20, emphasis in original). While individual and organisational capacity development followed from this process, it was seen as more important to work toward the sustainability of system capacity as the first goal, and develop individual/organisational capacity around this objective. Also pertinent here is the Joint Review's noting of earlier criticisms of the 'counterpart model' for placing 'too much emphasis on building the capacity of one individual' (p. 20) who may subsequently, as was often the case, leave the organisation. Consequently, it was suggested that advisers work with 'teams' of people, or even across multiple teams. Morgan (2008) also supported the use of teams, with the additional reason that team approaches are more suited to PNG culture.

Morgan (2008) also mentioned the relationship between individual capacity development and broader, systemic capacity development, noting that 'evidence about the contribution of counterpart relationships to bigger systems change in the public sector in PNG remains mixed at best' (pp. 3-4). In general, according to Morgan, advisers seemed to be 'much better at improving individual competencies than they were at developing collective competencies especially on a more sustainable basis' (p. 4). While part of this comes down to approach, that is, the general tendency to focus on capacity building at the level of the individual, part of it may also be attributed to a general lack of in-depth awareness on the part of advisers as to how to bring about complex organisation change (discussed below).

On the side of counterparts and host organisations, it was recognised in the Joint Review that adviser effectiveness is contingent upon their 'commitment, willingness and motivation to participate in the proposed activity, reform or change' (p. 19). The strength and quality of organisational leadership was noted as a key ingredient to the success of any adviser position, with ultimate responsibility and accountability for placement outcomes lying with the head of the host agency or organisation. To this end, it was recommended that the design of placements should include a joint agreement that outlines what is expected of all involved parties (the host agency including direct counterparts, managers and the agency head, the managing contractor and the adviser) and what the intended placement outcomes are. It was suggested that these agreements replace, or complement, advisers' ToRs. In addition to specific placement outputs, the agreements should include 'the specific "capacities" that are expected to be developed in counterpart staff, teams and the organisation more broadly or in a particular system' (p. 22) with a framework such as the Staged Capacity Building Model (AusAID, 2006) used to guide the process. Specific review timetables, and the process through which progress will be monitored and assessed, should be made clear (and, where possible, led by the host agency) and assessment should include the performance of both adviser and counterpart(s). Further, joint agreements 'should be reviewed semi-annually by the PNG agency, adviser and the managing contractor to track progress and address any issues arising' (p. 23). Further, 'where progress is severely hampered by issues that have arisen in the course of the assignment, the agency head (or senior delegate) should be responsible for taking appropriate actions including ending the assignment where there is no prospect for successful achievement of outcomes' (p. 36).

The focus on capacity development needs and suitable approaches/strategies in the early stages of placement design will then have implications for the kind of adviser sought for the role. As addressed earlier in the discussion of capacity building, capacity development roles require a combination of skills and attributes in advisers, and a balance between technical and interpersonal skills. The Joint Review noted that in some cases 'advisers have simply been unclear on how to achieve change at any level' and that 'often relationships can be formed, but the ability to build on them, develop capabilities and then translate this into systemic capacity has eluded many' (p. 26). This issue was also discussed by Morgan (2008), who wrote that technical advisers in general 'had difficulty addressing capacity development effectively even at the level of individuals [and were] frequently unclear about how to bring about the evolution of complex organisational and institutional change' (p. 3). The Joint Review noted that 'skills in facilitation, mediation, negotiation, change management and especially cross-cultural competence make a big difference' to adviser effectiveness (p. 26). Mention was made of the drawbacks of paying a fixed fee to managing contractors for adviser recruitment, as this could act as a disincentive to spending the amount of time and money required for high quality recruitment.

In terms of the formal relationship between advisers and their agencies it was noted in the Joint Review, in accordance with the Paris Declaration principles, that 'advisers should have clear accountabilities to the PNG government agency or organisation they work for' (p. 23). Due to the fact that managing contractors have contractual responsibilities, the appropriate arrangements need

to be negotiated with host agencies to ensure that accountability and management lines are made clear. These recommended arrangements give additional weight to the recommendation included in the Joint Review—as well as the majority of sources consulted for this section—that recruitment processes should be jointly undertaken by the managing contractor and the PNG agency and that ‘the agency should be represented at a senior level on selection panels’ (p. 23).

In what could be considered an extension of the above arrangements, the Joint Review notes considerable support for ‘in-line’ placements of the sort discussed in Pieper’s 2004 report on public administration in PNG. The Joint Review agrees with the assessment made by Pieper that this style of placement may have been abandoned prematurely and noted that a majority of those consulted favoured the use of in-line positions for international advisers as this meant that they were truly ‘part of a team’ rather than ‘outsiders’ or ‘external inspectors’ who exercised oversight but did not take personal responsibility. As indicated in the Joint Review, and in other sources consulted, this ‘outsider’ approach is conducive neither to achieving effective outcomes, nor to capacity development: the issue of ‘ownership’ is clearly implicated here. The use of formal in-line placements also ‘recognises that many advisers already do perform many functions that would be considered ‘in-line’ and would remove the ambiguity of whether they should do or not’ (p. 24).

In the arrangement suggested in the Joint Review, advisers would occupy an established position in the organisational structure of the host agency in in-line placements, while their ToRs would also include explicit responsibility for developing the capacity of their teams, including through mentoring, transferring skills, and identifying training and other opportunities. Further, ‘by modelling good practices and behaviour [advisers] are also influencing their staff, teams and others in the work environment’ (p. 24). However, it was recognised that the use of in-line placements should not have the effect of displacing local candidates with the requisite skills and abilities to fulfil these roles.

Morgan (2008) pursued this issue in terms of the doing/advising debate that features in many discussions about capacity development. Morgan agreed with the Joint Review that advisers should not replace or disempower country capacity, but that ‘hybrid combinations of doing and advising, e.g. sequenced or concurrent, could work under certain circumstances’ and in some cases be ‘the only feasible option’ (p. 14). On an interpersonal level, ‘doing’ as a process through which counterparts observe and learn was considered effective in building capacity, and many counterparts did not respond well to advisers staying on the sidelines, offering only support and recommendations. ‘Doing’, therefore, does not always work against the interests of capacity development, however ‘gap filling that has no inclination or ability or even strategy to leave behind some kind of sustainable institutional legacy ultimately fails’ (p. 14).

The issue of placement duration was discussed in both reports, with more concrete recommendations being made in the Joint Review. It noted that there was often ‘no strong rationale for the initial term of an advisory position’ (p. 22) nor a clear view of ‘what success looks like’ and an associated exit strategy. Initial contract terms of twelve months were ‘often insufficient to have any sustainable impact, given the time it takes for advisers to understand the complexity of the environment and build relationships’ (p. 22). Accordingly, it was recommended that, placement design should give realistic consideration to how long adviser support is likely to be required. The Joint Review suggested an initial contract period of two years, with an option to extend the contract for an additional year or two in order to maximise adviser productivity. Longer-term contracts would require the establishment of performance management procedures that could respond to any adviser performance issues that arose throughout the placement. The Joint Review also mentions short-term inputs, such as those provided through a twinning program, as a potential exit strategy from long-term placements.

Morgan's (2008) study into ways to improve counterpart relationships also canvassed the issue of needing to understand 'what success looks like', as mentioned in the Joint Review. Gathering data primarily through interviews, Morgan noted that in the absence of 'effective ways of assessing the outcomes of capacity development and coming to a shared understanding of what worked and what didn't work... judgements about the effectiveness of [technical assistance] in general and counterpart relationships in particular remain mainly subjective' (p. 2). Thus views expressed by both Morgan and the Joint Review lend support to the view expressed earlier in this section of the need to formally integrate an explicit capacity development element into program assessment, for the purpose of evaluating both progress and outcomes, as well as to contribute to further learning in the field of capacity development.

While the Joint Review focused on broader measures of effectiveness, such as value for money and the achievement of intended outcomes, Morgan's (2008) study instead focused on operational issues arising from the interpersonal and human dynamics at the heart of adviser/counterpart-style capacity development. The value in examining these reports together is that it illuminates some of the tensions that can arise between capacity-development-as-program and capacity-development-as-practice. For example, as discussed above, the Joint Review recommends taking a highly structured approach to placement design, such that outcomes, and the means of achieving and reviewing progress toward them, are laid out in detail prior to placement commencement, albeit subject to periodic review. In contrast, Morgan (2008) warns of 'the limits of any plan to structure counterpart relationships' (p. 11). Even in cases where the relationship was well-positioned, technical assistance staff selected by and accountable to the host agency, where formal objectives had been set and reporting and appraisal functions agreed, Morgan found that 'the real opportunities and constraints inherent in the relationship remained to be discovered during implementation...[w]hat then took over was a process of evolution and emergence during which the effects of personal relationships, hidden organisational agendas and outside events shifted and changed the relationship...[m]uch of this was unpredictable in advance and required adaptability' (p. 11). The contrast suggests that a compromise between planning and flexibility is required to ensure that programs designed at the donor/agency level can actually be implemented effectively on the ground.

A second, and related, contrast concerns ownership of, and commitment to, placement activities. While the Joint Review promotes ownership at the organisational level (and Morgan's report noted the increasing trend toward greater PNG management and control of technical assistance interventions in the form of: appointing advisers to PNG-selected initiatives; exercising greater control over the design of ToRs; increased participation in recruitment; and increased incidence of technical assistance staff reporting directly to and being appraised by GoPNG staff), it was noted by Morgan that 'country staff at the mid-level [where most counterpart relationships actually function] would have different interests and viewpoints compared to top-down prescriptions championed by central agencies and donors' (p. 7). This, in conjunction with the dynamics of the GoPNG public sector hierarchy which tends to 'disempower staff at the middle levels of departments and agencies' (p. 7) meant that middle-level counterparts needed 'the prospect of some benefits from the counterpart relationship *on their own terms*' (p. 7, emphasis in original). To induce this commitment, Morgan suggests that program design could start at the operational rather than the strategic level, that is, with an 'inventory of the needs of the individual GoPNG officers who would actually implement' the program and technical assistance interventions subsequently shaped around 'a range of support measures intended to improve the individual competencies and collective capabilities of these individuals' (p. 7). Once more this is in contrast with the highly structured, strategic approach recommended by the Joint Review, and suggests that an intervening approach is required that recognises the needs of both donors/agencies and advisers working with individual counterparts.

These two examples imply a tension between the second-generation approaches to technical assistance favoured by donors and agencies, and the emergence of third-generation approaches in response to the exigencies of actual practice in the field. Whether these two approaches are susceptible to some form of hybridisation or mutual accommodation would appear to be one of the more pressing questions arising from this review of the capacity development literature.

The importance of the interpersonal relationships central to capacity development was noted in the Joint Review, in its discussion of the skills and attributes required in advisers and the realistic timeframes required for the establishment of sound relationships. Unsurprisingly, the issue of human relationships was treated in detail in Morgan's (2008) report, which noted that almost all of the comments made by GoPNG staff about their advisers 'centred on their personal qualities and ability to adapt to PNG constraints and opportunities' (p. 11). According to Morgan, advisers (and managing contractors) needed a better understanding of the professional, political, financial and wantok pressures that shaped counterparts' daily preferences and behaviour and which 'could determine the way in which GoPNG staff could or would engage with their [advisers]' (p. 11). GoPNG staff placed great emphasis on the adviser's perceived loyalty or commitment to the counterpart's/host agency's agenda and advisers could lose credibility if they were perceived as working for their own or external causes. On a practical level, the separation of technical staff in an office away from counterparts was seen as counterproductive to the establishment of sound relationships. Once more, however, it was not sufficient for the adviser to simply work well with others, he/she 'also had to have at least elements of a matching set of technical skills and the ability to think strategically in terms of change and capacity development' (p. 12).

In terms of capacity development strategies, Morgan noted that most discussion at the level of advisers/counterparts focused on the micro-level, that is, 'on the job training, mentoring, the exchange of tacit knowledge, learning through doing, coaching, formal training, group formation, confidence building and awareness raising' (p. 15). While learning outcomes at the individual level are often stressed as a means to improving capacity and results, Morgan noted a number of 'knowing-doing gaps' where learning and knowledge was not applied due to a variety of personal, cultural or organisational reasons. These, and other external reasons such as broader reform and change, could affect the objective of capacity development to induce an organisational and behavioural change in GoPNG staff or systems that can lead to greater capacity, performance and results. Finally, Morgan noted that there was not much observed impact of formal training on counterpart relationships, with on-the-job group learning appearing far more relevant.

Finally, the most difficult challenge facing sustainable capacity development is the nature of the 'enabling environment'. The features of this environment are often the most complex and intransigent obstacle to effective capacity building, as well as being the least amenable to adviser or donor intervention. Some of these obstacles to public sector reform in PNG arise directly from features of the enabling environment that were discussed in the earlier review of Pieper's (2004) study of public administration in PNG. For example, such obstacles include: poorly-trained or inexperienced appointees to senior positions; political interference with due process; disrespect for the rule of law among politicians/senior public servants; the politicisation of the public service and concomitant erosion of professionalism; the lack of accountability and appropriate sanctions; and the loss of institutional credibility (AusAID, 2010b). Other obstacles noted in a GoPNG Review of the Public Sector Reform Program (2007) were: the absence of political and senior executive leadership; lack of genuine commitment to reform; the absence of clear strategy and ownership; and low levels of corporate knowledge as well as organisational leadership, capacity and knowledge (GoPNG, 2007 cited in AusAID, 2010b). While both the Joint Review and Morgan's study note many positive improvements with regard to many of the internal aspects of adviser/counterpart relationships, they also note that there has been slow progress dealing with broader reform, political and other contextual factors.

Despite the criticisms that have arisen around the use of advisers, and the questions around their actual impact on improving—or minimising the decline in—public sector capacity in PNG when there are so many other influences at play, the Joint Review notes that the ‘need to build up skills and capacity in PNG remains a high priority [which] will become even more prominent over the next decade as revenues expected from the LNG project (and the resources boom more generally) result in a growing economy that will demand a skilled workforce’ (p. 8). It also notes that there are ‘critical skills gaps in service delivery [for which] adviser support is in many cases the best way to meet them’ (p. 8). The key is to ensure that adviser placements support the objectives of both GoPNG and GoA to improve service delivery in key sectors in PNG and to support PNG’s progress toward the MDGs. Entailed here is a focus on the implementation of critical tasks, and a reduction in focus on corporate reform (AusAID, 2010b). Finally, it was noted in the Joint Review that there have been a range of studies and analyses conducted on the use of advisers in Australia’s aid program to PNG, many of which were drawn upon by the review team to examine adviser effectiveness. However, the Joint Review also noted that the wealth of ‘lessons learned’ contained in these studies and analyses have generally not been followed up by the agencies that commissioned them. Thus it would seem that another of the remaining challenges is to ensure that study findings actually have an impact on program conceptualisation and design, such that real improvements and change in capacity development practice can occur.

2.3 Research design

2.3.1 Introduction

The research design was developed to answer the research questions within the context and circumstances in which the research had to be conducted. In particular, although a longitudinal study was favoured, the duration of the project was limited to two years. Furthermore, the research team (and several of the research participants and informants) were located in Australia (and the Pacific), whereas most participants were in PNG. Therefore, a research design was required that enabled some data collection to be undertaken remotely, whilst also including some personal encounters with research participants and informants in PNG and, to a lesser extent, Australia.

Accordingly, a mixed method research design was developed and adopted for the study. Each method addressed one or more of the research questions with some overlap between them; this provided broader data to answer each question and, to some extent, validation. The research generated both quantitative and qualitative data which enabled both scale and detail to be reported.

This section (2.3) presents the research questions and then the research methods that were adopted. The methods are presented in order of commencement; however, there was considerable overlap between the use of the methods over the data collection period. The data collection commenced in September 2012 and continued until May 2014. In accordance with normal ethical practice, and to encourage full and frank responses, it was agreed that individual respondent’s identities would not be revealed in any reporting related to this project. Therefore, appropriate means have been used in this report to anonymise reporting of disaggregated data. Aliases have been used to disguise the identities of advisers and counterparts whose views have been gathered via written reports, interviews, workshops and focus groups. Where comments made in the survey appear in this Report, they are not accompanied by aliases as the data entry was anonymous.

2.3.2 Research questions

The following research questions (RQs) were derived from the project brief and developed in negotiation with EPSP prior to commencement of the project.

- RQ1 What are the advisers' views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their counterpart(s) in achieving their placements' stated aims? What evidence is there to support these views?
- RQ2 What are the counterparts' views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their advisers in achieving their placements' stated aims? What evidence is there to support these views?
- RQ3 What strategies were adopted by advisers to enable their counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims? How did the advisers learn about or develop such strategies? What do the advisers believe are the main things their counterparts learned? What evidence is there of such learning? What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved through future AusAID programs?
- RQ4 What approaches were adopted by counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims? What do the counterparts believe are the main things they learned from their placement? What evidence is there of such learning? What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved through future AusAID programs?
- RQ5 What have been the outcomes of the introduction by EPSP of other modalities of capacity development including short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research? Do these modalities provide increased efficiencies and effectiveness compared to the use of long-term advisers?
- RQ6 What were the enablers of, and impediments to, the success (or 'drivers of change') of the AC placements?
- RQ7 What, if any, are the main improvements that can be made to ensure the success of future AC projects?
- RQ8 What do major stakeholders in PNG conclude from the evidence produced by this study about the impact and success of AC projects and other capacity development modalities in their areas of influence?
- RQ9 In general, what may be asserted from the evidence of the worth or otherwise of AC projects and other capacity development modalities undertaken since 2006? What suggestions or recommendations may be deduced for the future?

2.3.3 Research methodology

The research methodology incorporated a variety of research methods to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data. These data were collected from: advisers' final reports of their AC projects, counterparts' progress reports on their AC projects, past and current advisers and counterparts, key informants and stakeholders in GoPNG, DFAT (Canberra and Port Moresby), EPSP, etc. The various methods employed, and the research questions they address, are presented below in a sequence of stages. The stages are outlined chronologically but they overlap such that there was often more than one stage active at any given time.

STAGE 1

- 1a EPSP provided final advisers' Placement Completion Reports and counterparts' Adviser Performance Appraisals on AC projects completed between 2006 and 2012. It was initially

envisaged that these would be matched and thus comparisons drawn between adviser and counterpart views of the same placement, and over the entire length of the placement. A spreadsheet was provided by EPSP of AC placements over this period and an attempt to match documents was made, however, not all reports were available for all placements. In addition, EPSP provided email and/or other contact information for relevant project participants where these were available.

- 1b Seventy-eight Placement Completion Reports and ninety-one Adviser Performance Appraisals were entered into NVIVO (qualitative database and analysis software), coded and content analysed for data relating to RQs 1, 2, 5 and 6.
- 1c Analyses occurred during Stage 1 to assist: 1) the identification of potential questions to include in the online surveys (Stage 2); 2) the identification of any particular matters to include in individual adviser and/or counterpart interviews (Stages 3 and 4); and 3) identification of matters and/or evidence for inclusion in the validation process (Stage 5) and report writing (Stage 6).
- 1d A report detailing the outcome of the qualitative analysis in relation to RQs 1, 2 and 5 was produced.
- 1e A database of advisers and counterparts was developed to record their involvement with the ASF and EPSP programs. The database also recorded their involvement with the project.

STAGE 2

- 2a A supplementary search was undertaken for email contacts for AC projects completed in the period 2006–2012 for which EPSP was unable to provide current contact details. This involved both general Internet searching and the use of the professional database LinkedIn. A spreadsheet of all contact details was prepared.
- 2b Draft online surveys, one for advisers and one for counterparts, relating to RQs 1, 3, 6 and 7 (advisers' survey), RQs 2, 4, 6 and 7 (counterparts' Survey) were formulated. Matters isolated in 1c (above) were incorporated at this point (See Appendices A and B for details of the survey instruments).
- 2c Consultation on survey items and design occurred with DFAT (then AusAID) in Canberra and Port Moresby and EPSP.
- 2d Detailed survey development using Opinio online survey software (Opinio enables the individual tailoring of a questionnaire to a respondent, therefore, where appropriate, matters identified specific reports in Stage 1 could be pursued with appropriate questions.) Testing of the survey within the project team was followed by trialling of survey with a pilot group and consultation with EPSP and others in PNG experienced in research. This was followed by the preparation of the survey email invitation and the merging of the participants' data (that is, the individual tailoring mentioned above).
- 2e The survey for the advisers was administered between April and June 2013. It was re-opened in 2014 to allow advisers who attended the Stage 6 workshop to participate. The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to advisers by email. Reminders were sent to advisers between two and four weeks after the initial invitation.

The survey instrument for the counterparts (suitably modified from the advisers' survey) was initially administered in a similar manner to the advisers' with the initial invitation sent by

email in May 2013. However, the response rate was low and a considerable number of email addresses proved to be out of date. The project team passed on the list of problematic email addresses and contact details to EPSP in August 2013 to determine if they could find more up to date contacts; this resulted in only one or two more responses. EPSP then attempted in September 2013 to contact possible participants by telephone to encourage further participation, this proved to be unsuccessful. Next, in December 2013, at the suggestion of a counterpart during a focus group, past advisers who had completed the survey were asked to contact their counterparts and request they participate in the survey; this resulted in one or two more participations. Finally, counterparts who attended the Stage 6 workshop in April 2014 who had not completed the survey were asked to participate in it, this resulted in two or three more responses.

The survey data for both the advisers and counterparts were downloaded into MSExcel for analysis to produce descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analysed using a grounded approach to identify any trends or themes in the data.

- 2f Analyses of the data were undertaken for matters to be included in interviews (Stages 3 and 4) and for evidence to be included in the validation process (Stage 5). The comprehensive survey analyses, and the development and design of tables, graphs etc., were conducted for the final report (Stage 6).

STAGE 3

- 3a Based on RQs 1, 3, 6 and 7 (advisers), RQs 2, 4, 6 and 7 (counterparts) the questions for semi-structured interviews were developed for those who had completed their AC placements by 2012. This process also incorporated matters from 1c and 2f above as subsidiary questions for particular interviews (See Appendix C for interview structure).
- 3b The interviews were conducted, usually by Skype or telephone, between May 2013 and September 2013. Some were conducted in person in Port Moresby, and a few counterparts' interviews were conducted in small groups due to difficulties in arranging telephone interviews.
- 3c The interview notes were entered into NVIVO for coding and analysis.
- 3d The interview data were analysed initially for matters to be included in interviews of current advisers and counterparts (Stage 4) and later for evidence to be included in the validation process (Stage 5). The final interview analyses were prepared for inclusion in the final report.

STAGE 4

- 4a This stage was based on focus group work with advisers and counterparts who were active on AC projects during 2013. In May and November focus group interviews with advisers and, separately, counterparts were held. These interviews addressed RQs 1–5 for the May focus group interviews and 1–7 for the November group interviews, and incorporated relevant matters from 1c, 2f and 3d (see Appendices D and E for interview structure).
- 4b Between the May and November focus groups, the project team conducted individual interviews with advisers by Skype or telephone. These interviews were focused on further responses to the initial interview questions based on their subsequent experience in their AC projects. Also, opportunity was given for other relevant matters to be raised. The interviews addressed RQs 1, 3, 6 and 7 and incorporated relevant matters from 1c, 2f and 3d. It was intended to interview counterparts, but it proved impossible to do so

- 4c All focus group and interview notes were entered into NVIVO for coding and analysis. The data were analysed initially for matters to be included in the validation processes (Stage 5) and then for the final report (Stage 6).

STAGE 5

- 5a In April 2014, in consultation and collaboration with EPSP, this stage comprised a validation workshop held in Port Moresby comprising key stakeholders from GoPNG, DFAT, EPSP and other programs to consider key issues arising from the available data and evidence from the study. The participants were presented with a summary of the research and some selected data around five key themes that arose from the analyses which contained contradictions, dilemmas etc. Using a group process, each theme was addressed by the participants and matters to do with evidence, conclusions and recommendations. A plenary discussion was held of each group's outcomes. This process addressed RQs 7, 8 and 9 (See Appendix G and H for details of the workshop).
- 5b The groups provided their notes of their views on their particular issue which were then typed and entered into NVIVO for analysis. Notes were taken of the plenary discussion which were then typed and entered into NVIVO for analysis. These analyses were incorporated into the final report.
- 5c Focus groups and interviews were held with senior PNG government staff to determine their views on the usefulness of adviser-counterpart placements. (See Appendix F for details of the interviews).
- 5d A meeting was held with DFAT in Port Moresby (teleconferenced to DFAT Canberra) to discuss the key issues. The participants were presented with a summary of the research and some selected data around five key themes that arose from the analyses which contained contradictions, dilemmas etc. Notes were taken on the meeting and incorporated into the final stage (Stage 6) of the project.
- 5e Meetings were held with EPSP staff to discuss the selected data around the five key themes that arose from the analyses which contained contradictions, dilemmas etc. Notes were taken on the meetings and incorporated into the final stage (Stage 6) of the project.
- 5f A later meeting was held with DFAT in Canberra to discuss the key issues. The participants were presented with a summary of the research and some selected data around five key themes that arose from the analyses which contained contradictions, dilemmas etc. Notes were taken on the meeting and incorporated into the final stage (Stage 6) of the project.

STAGE 6

- 6a Final analyses of all data were undertaken in terms of the RQs. A draft report was prepared by September 2014 and sent for checking for accuracy, etc.
- 6b This final report was completed in November 2014, and launched in Port Moresby and otherwise disseminated thereafter.

3 Analysis of data

Section 3 presents data from the research and analyses related to the main sets of research questions as discussed in section 2.3 above. Data from each of the research methods and stages are marshalled together to address the questions and provide the evidence for answers thereto. Section 4 draws on the evidence and analyses here to discuss the implications of the findings and to elicit recommendations for improvement.

3.1 Advisers' views of their placements' success

3.1.1 Introduction

This section addresses two main questions from the research:

- What are the advisers' views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their counterpart(s) in achieving their placements' stated aims?
- What evidence is there to support these views?

Evidence from the online survey—both quantitative and qualitative data—the Placement Completion Reports (PCRs) and the interviews and focus group data is used to answer these questions. The survey quantitative data have been aggregated and analysed. These data and analyses are presented in tables and graphs, along with extracts of text (with some editing for clarity and to preserve anonymity) in the written text. Seventy-eight PCRs (submitted between 2006 and 2012) were searched for advisers' views contained in their responses to the PCR question 'Would you rate your placement as very successful, successful or limited in terms of achieving its planned outcomes?' In addition, other statements in the advisers' reports, interviews and focus groups reflecting their effectiveness or success in specific areas of activity are reported here.

Section 3.1.2 presents the advisers' ratings on various measures (such as Terms of Reference [ToRs]) related to the success or otherwise of their placements, followed by their comments in the survey, the PCRs, interviews and focus groups.

Section 3.1.3 considers the various kinds of evidence reported by advisers across the aforementioned data sources as supporting their ratings; this evidence was also used to incorporate in the research activity reported later in Section 4.6.

3.1.2 Views about success

The online survey of the 2006–2012 completed AC placements contained questions concerning the success or otherwise of these placements. The ToRs for a placement are fundamental to assessing its success as it is the ToRs that underpin each placement's aims and outcomes. Table 3.1.2.1 presents the advisers' ratings of the appropriateness of the ToRs at the beginning and end of their placements. They scored their responses on a five-point scale from 1 (highly inappropriate) to 5 (highly appropriate). It shows a high mean rating (4.18) at commencement, dropping noticeably by completion to a mean of 3.65.

Table 3.1.2.1 Advisers’ rating of the appropriateness of their ToRs on commencement and completion

Item	Mean	Highly appropriate or appropriate	N
At the time you accepted the placement	4.18	97%	33
Upon completion of the placement	3.64	67%	33

Figure 3.1.2.1 Percentage of advisers who felt their ToRs were appropriate or highly appropriate at commencement and completion of their placement

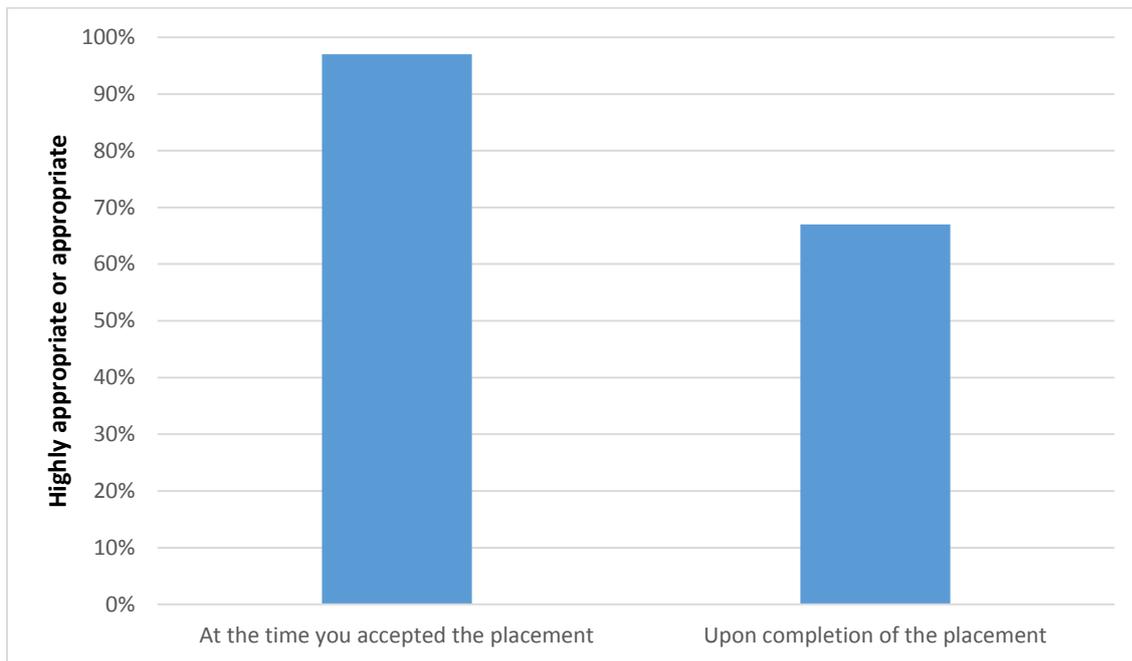


Figure 3.1.2.1 shows the percentages of advisers who rated their ToRs with the top two scores (4, appropriate; 5, highly appropriate) at commencement (97%) and completion (67%). This evidences that there was a 30-percentage point drop between commencement and completion for those advisers using these two highest scores.

The survey provided the opportunity for respondents to comment on their ratings and on any changes in their ratings between commencement and completion. Their comments fell broadly into three groupings. The first, largest (67%), grouping related to those who rated their ToRs as ‘appropriate’ or ‘highly appropriate’ at the end of the placement. Typically, these respondents noted that the ToRs were well-developed within the agency and with the EPSP or ASF managing contractors, and all parties subscribed to what was to be achieved and contributed and/or supported the placement. As one such respondent wrote:

The terms of reference were developed in close consultation with the primary agency Counterpart, ensuring ownership from the beginning of the capacity development process. This provided a very strong foundation for partnership which was sustained throughout the placement.

A more common response within this category was that the original ToRs were fine but that, as circumstances developed, the ToRs were modified to keep them attuned. A selection of comments of this kind follows.

The terms of reference could be adjusted to reflect more accurately the assistance that was required.

The Terms of Reference were appropriately drafted to facilitate my initial placement, but also broad enough to accommodate the additional priorities identified within the placement extension.

My ToRs were refined in my contract extension to reflect other capacity development priorities

The ToRs were adjusted to allow a different model of engagement for my role.

The next grouping comprised those whose ratings dropped from 'appropriate' or 'highly appropriate' to a lower rating. The reasons given spanned those that related to ToRs that initially appeared to be appropriate for the context proving not to be so once the placement had commenced, through to changes in circumstances, and lack of cooperation from some parties. A selection of such comments follows.

ToRs should've been changed regularly due to changes in the personnel in the agency and also position requirements, but overall the ToRs were sufficient when I started.

As with any job, the requirements change throughout the duration of the placement. Once I got into the department & better understood its capabilities and requirements, and had built relationships with staff and management, it was evident that some aspects of the ToR were lower priority for attention than others

While the original ToRs may have been appropriate for my initial entry on duty, the whole ball game changed the day before I arrived in that my intended Counterpart, the (HoD), who had commissioned the project, was sacked and there followed a succession of Acting (HoDs) who had diametrically opposing agenda and, usually, different allegiances.

My original ToRs encompassed the key capacity development needs in relation to agency management and the need for effective coordination between the Advisers and (senior) officer. The 2nd objective in my ToRs related to providing advice and assistance to the agency in implementation of the strategic and operational plans. In reality, there was no agency management ownership of the existing strategic plan and there was no operational plan. The more immediate priority was, therefore, to assist the agency to develop an operational plan for the initial six months.

The final, relatively small, grouping comprised those who did not think that their ToRs (and often their placement) were appropriate from commencement and throughout their placement. For example, one respondent stated that:

The Counterpart for the position was rarely in place in the office, therefore it was difficult for the ToRs to be (addressed and fulfilled).

Another respondent explained that:

There were no terms of reference. Just a generic (managing agent's) description of advisory roles which were not appropriate to the role in question.

Respondents commented that the department was unrealistic about its capacities or unwilling to perform its part of the placement.

There was a belief within the agency about their baseline skills and abilities that was probably inaccurate.

The department did not commit to the model for development and PNG Counterparts were not made available. An international private company was engaged to undertake the work.

In one case the enabling legislation was not passed by the PNG parliament for the duration of the project.

The project had no legs at the time (of recruitment) as the legislation had not passed parliament.

The above data show that, by completion, one-third of the placements had ToRs that were seen by their advisers to be inappropriate given the circumstances at the time. In some instances (3% of placements), the ToRs were seen as inappropriate at commencement, but generally the difficulties arose during each placement; there is some evidence that some of these difficulties could have been foreseen or known by the agency or the managing contractor.

The focus group data on the ToRs reflect a similar position. Three separate adviser and three counterpart focus groups were held on two occasions, once in March and again in November 2013. Generally, the AC placements involved were in their first three months for the first focus groups and in their last two months for the second focus groups. In the first focus group participants were asked: 'To what extent are the goals and intended outcomes of your placement realistic and achievable?'

Most of the thirteen advisers involved in the focus groups were previously involved in AC placements. Indeed, some were now involved in AC placements that were extensions of, or derived from, previous placements. It was remarkable that, at this early stage of their current placements, none was fully convinced of the appropriateness of their ToRs. Three advisers thought that their ToRs were 'doable', but contextually limited.

My ToRs are OK, but the context in which they operate doesn't really fit. (A96)

They are doable, but whether they are sustainable is another matter. There are problems in that ToRs are dependent on other things being done or available in the organisation that are not part of the ToRs. (A60)

The ToRs are OK and doable in their own terms, if tight in terms of time. But the systems do not exist in the agency to support achieving the ToRs. It will cost money and resources to establish the systems and these are not part of the project so the ToRs are unlikely to be achieved. (A31)

ToRs need to be assessed against the time available. Some of their ToRs are not realistic within the schedule, but are appropriate for the organisation's needs. (A50)

Another, highly experienced adviser, said that he wrote his own ToRs but that,

[i]n retrospect, given AusAID's/Coffey's support over the years, the ToRs could have been extended. (A95)

Several advisers' ToRs had already been modified since the commencement of their placements.

The original ToRs were realistic but too simplistic for the complexity of the environment and circumstances. The ToRs have been revised subsequently. (A77)

Some ToRs were unrealistic and infeasible. [They] were founded on two local agencies collaborating, but they disliked and distrusted each other so much that this could not occur. Eventually, a reorganisation meant that the need to collaborate was removed. More recently, the ToRs have evolved to be realistic. (A73)

My ToRs changed within two weeks of commencement about four years ago, and have changed slightly every year with extensions and new contracts. These changes have reflected the prevailing circumstances and needs, and generally been mutually determined with agency, Coffey etc. (A62)

There was a common view amongst the advisers that ToRs were almost always unrealistic for the time and circumstances.

Some of their ToRs are good, but others are 'big projects' in themselves and were never achievable in the time. This was mentioned in the performance review and the ToRs were modified to be more realistic. Even the good ToRs were not fully achievable within twelve months. (A98)

My ToRs are 'pretty good', but they were designed to save money, whereas they should have been aligned with providing public services effectively. At the time of my interview I thought the ToRs were unlikely to be achievable, but I didn't say so...as I had not had any exposure to the actual conditions and management on the ground at that time, and perhaps also in order not to jeopardise getting the position. Following completion of my Baseline Analysis, my initial impressions were confirmed. I advised Coffey of my concerns and the financial focus was reduced, and the main aims were adjusted to a more appropriate strategic focus. However, some of the ToRs will take years to implement. (A97)

It is naïve to assume you can turn someone into a good finance manager or whatever in one year when they can never be such without the systems, infrastructure and resources. (A60)

How can I change twenty years of embedded out-dated practices?...It is hoped that shifting to computer-based processes may help to bring about a major shift. (A50)

One adviser (A99) was engaged for a shorter term of less than one year, but his ToRs contained 'a long list of placement outcomes'. In his view:

...it would take several years, at least one and a half years to achieve them all. So basically, the intended outcomes under this placement are unachievable. (A99)

An adviser (A100) argued that ToRs are:

...always problematic and need to be changed or refocused after commencement. Once the context and circumstances are understood one tends to foreground some ToRs over others.

It was believed that there was pressure on advisers to do the work for which they are expected to develop their counterparts' capacities to do for themselves.

The agency's expectations are often that the advisers will do the work, but they are supposed to work alongside to advise the counterpart. My ToRs were not realistic, and they were interpreted differently between the agency and its counterparts, EPSP and the adviser. There are cultural differences in understanding what some ToRs mean. (A101)

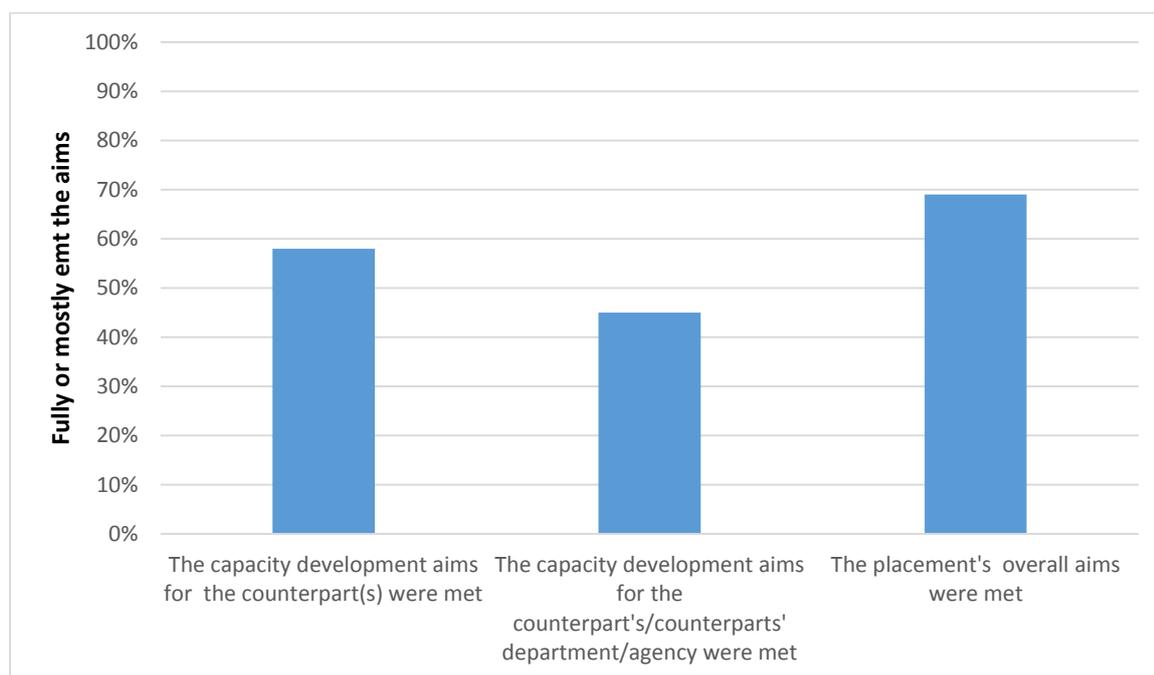
The ToRs provide the basis upon which the stated aims are specified for the placements. Table 3.1.2.2 shows the advisers' survey ratings of the extent to which the aims were met, from 1 'not at all' to 5 'completely'. Commensurate with the responses on ToRs, more than two-thirds of respondents stated that the overall aims of the placement were fulfilled, with slightly lower percentages being reported for the questions about capacity development aims.

Table 3.1.2.2 Advisers' ratings of the extent to which their placements met the aims

Item	Mean	Fully or mostly	N
The capacity development aims for the counterpart(s) were met	3.45	58%	33
The capacity development aims for the counterpart's/counterparts' department/agency were met	3.39	45%	33
The placement's overall aims were met	3.78	69%	32

Figure 3.1.2.2 shows the percentage responses graphically. The ratings ranged from 1 'not at all' to 5 'fully'. It is notable that the two capacity development aims have lower scores and percentages than the overall aims for the projects. The capacity development aims may be understood as common aims for most, if not all, placements, whereas each placement also will have its own specific aims, for example, to develop a strategic plan or to introduce a new system or software. These aims may well have higher success rates because they are specific tasks to be done, which advisers may have largely undertaken themselves or contributed to substantially, thus increasing their likelihood of being fulfilled.

Figure 3.1.2.2 Percentages of aims met by type



In order to address the ToRs and fulfil their aims, advisers were required to provide capacity development for counterparts, and their key agency staff (KAS) more broadly. Table 3.1.2.3 shows the advisers' ratings (from 1 'highly effectively' to 5 'highly ineffectively') of the extent to which they worked effectively with their counterpart(s) and Table 3.1.2.4 shows the advisers' ratings (from 1 'none at all' to 5 'considerable' a lot) of the extent to which their counterparts' capacities were developed.

Table 3.1.2.3 Advisers' ratings of the effectiveness of working with their counterpart(s)

Item	Mean	Highly effectively or effectively	N
How effectively were you able to work with counterpart(s) during the placement?	4.34	91%	35

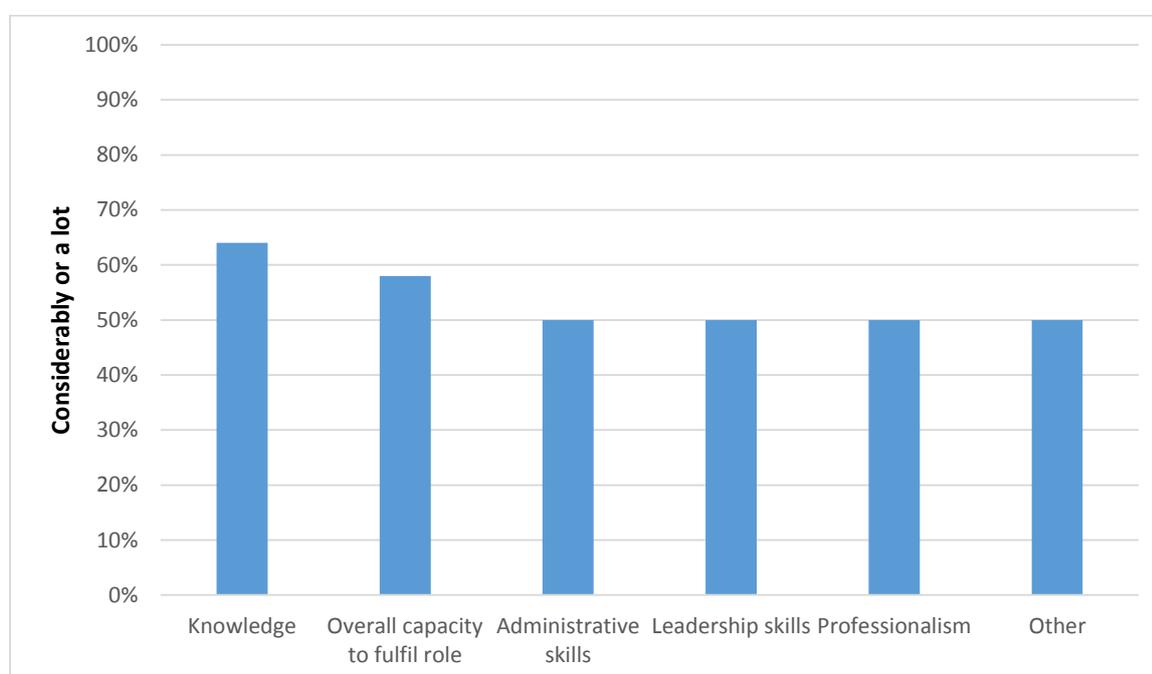
Clearly, a high proportion (91%) of advisers rated the effectiveness of their working relationship with their counterparts as effective or better. Given the evidence reported in previous comments, it is clear that in a few instances counterparts were not appointed, or were changed, or were frequently absent. These circumstances are likely to contribute substantially to the nine per cent of advisers who rated their relationship with their counterparts as less than effective. Table 3.1.2.4 illustrates that the capacity development was evenly spread across several aspects of capacity development, with 'knowledge' attracting the greatest proportion (64%) of advisers' ratings as being developed 'considerably' or 'a lot'.

Table 3.1.2.4 Advisers’ ratings of their counterparts’ capacity development

Item	Mean	Considerably or a lot	N
Knowledge	3.79	64%	33
Overall capacity to fulfil role	3.64	58%	33
Administrative skills	3.56	50%	32
Leadership skills	3.44	50%	32
Professionalism	3.44	50%	32
Other	3.33	50%	6

Figure 3.1.2.3 below illustrates the data from Table 3.1.2.4 graphically.

Figure 3.1.2.3 Percentages of counterparts’ aspects of development that were developed ‘considerably or a lot’



The above data are substantially based on the advisers’ ratings or views about the matters in question. The advisers were also asked to identify any evidence to support their ratings. The intention was to identify any evidence that may be appropriate to incorporate in the research activity reported in section 4.6 below. The evidence identified is discussed in the next section, 3.1.3.

3.1.3 Evidence of success

It was important to establish what evidence was used by advisers to make their ratings in the online survey and to complete their PCRs. The intention was to use appropriate evidence for the fifth stage of the research project where key GoPNG and other informants would be used to verify selected evidence of capacity development. In the online survey several areas were identified in which capacity development was typically required in AC projects and participants were asked to rate the extent to which there was identifiable evidence of success in each area. Table 3.1.2.4 lists these areas and shows the mean rating (1= no evidence, 5=considerable evidence), and also the

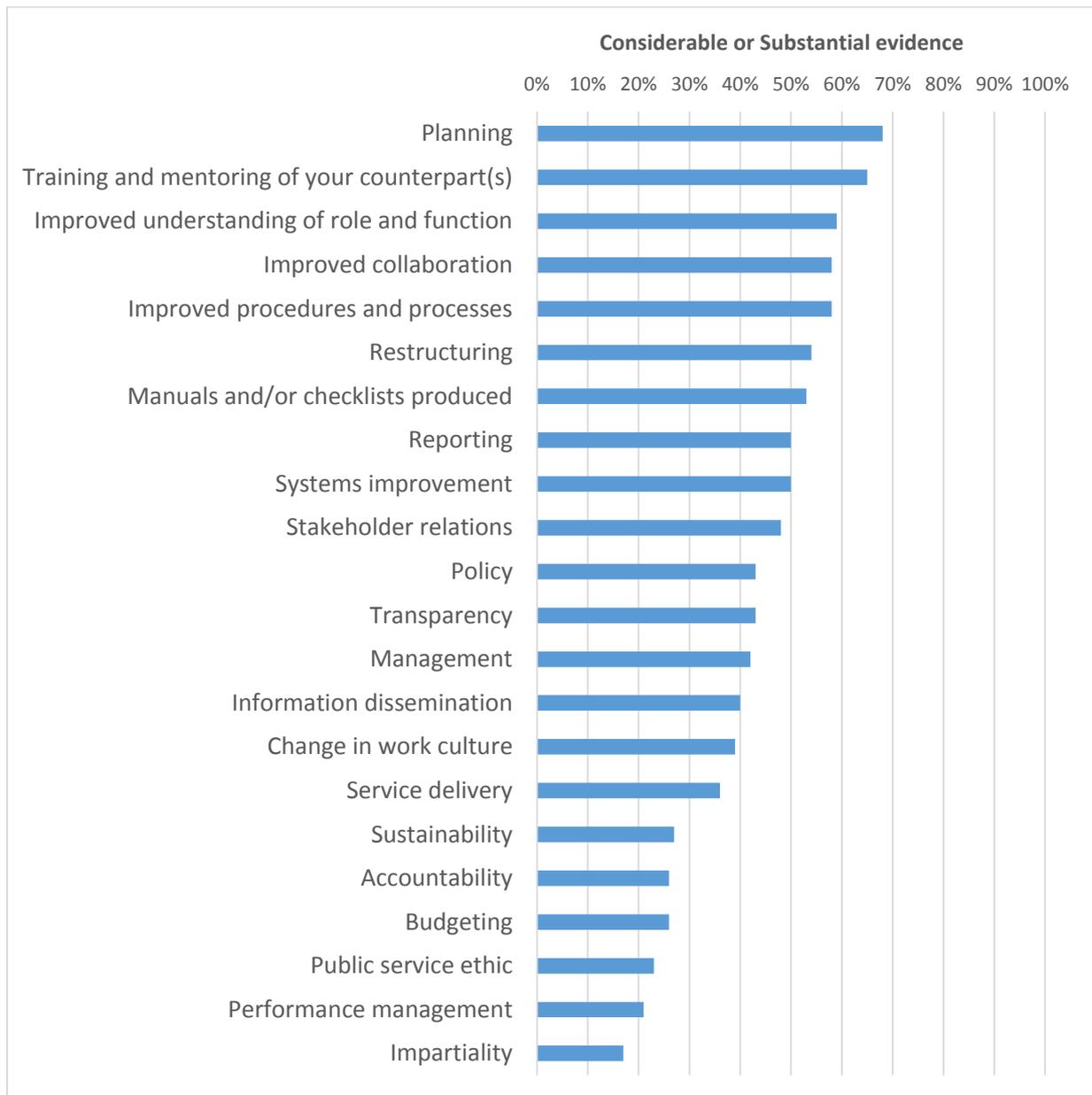
percentages of advisers who identified 'considerable' or 'substantial' evidence in the nominated areas. Figure 3.1.3.1 shows this latter feature graphically.

Table 3.1.3.1 The extent to which advisers identified evidence of success by area

Area	Mean	Considerable or Substantial	N
Planning	3.87	68%	31
Training and mentoring of your counterpart(s)	3.81	65%	31
Improved understanding of role and function	3.75	59%	32
Improved collaboration	3.61	58%	31
Improved procedures and processes	3.65	58%	31
Restructuring	3.46	54%	31
Manuals and/or checklists produced	3.50	53%	31
Reporting	3.50	50%	32
Systems improvement	3.43	50%	31
Stakeholder relations	3.58	48%	31
Policy	3.47	43%	31
Transparency	3.00	43%	30
Management	3.45	42%	31
Information dissemination	3.40	40%	31
Change in work culture	3.16	39%	31
Service delivery	3.21	36%	30
Sustainability	3.20	27%	30
Accountability	3.10	26%	31
Budgeting	3.04	26%	3030
Public service ethic	2.83	23%	30
Performance management	2.72	21%	31
Impartiality	2.67	17%	30
Other, please specify	3.00	0%	4

Table 3.1.3.1 shows that planning (68%), training and mentoring (65%) and improved understanding of role and function (58%) were the areas where the highest percentages of advisers were able to identify evidence of success. In contrast, impartiality (17%), performance management (21%) and public service ethic (23%) were the areas where the lowest percentages of advisers were able to identify evidence of success. It is likely that these latter areas may be the lowest because they were areas of least success (hence, there was less evidence) or that they were areas in which evidence was difficult to obtain due to the subjectivity of the matters, such as 'impartiality'. Sustainability was also an area that was rated low (27%) for the identification of evidence. This is likely to be because the nature of sustainability may be evidenced over a long period of time, and the advisers did not have such time to identify the evidence (which is likely to have gone beyond their placement).

Figure 3.1.3.1 Areas in which advisers identified evidence of success



The data presented above were complemented by the evidence collected from the PCRs (they are also complemented by evidence obtained in the adviser interviews and the focus groups). In these reports, 57 advisers (73%) rated their placements as ‘successful’ or ‘very successful’, eleven advisers (14%) rated some of the aspects as successful and others less so, nine advisers (12%) rated their placements as of limited success, and only one adviser rated their placement as ‘unsuccessful’. Those advisers (73%) that rated their placements as successful or better fell into three approximately equal-sized groups:

The first group expressed the view that their placements achieved positive outcomes with regard to at least 75 per cent of their ToRs (alternatively expressed as ‘planned outcomes’ or ‘deliverables’). Typical comments from these advisers were as follows.

Very successful as I have achieved all objectives set out in my ToRs and also considering the Counterparts’ positive and encouraging feedback. (A22, 2012)

Largely, very successful as the ToRs have been completed to a large extent. (A14, 2007)

The second group rated their placements as successful or very successful for similar reasons as those above, but expressed concern about the sustainability of the success following their departure. Sustainability was questioned for various reasons, predominant amongst them: the inability for changes to be embedded into organisational practice prior to the completion of the placement; the fact that plans, policies or procedures formalised throughout the placement had not yet been implemented upon the departure of the adviser; and, the fact that, for operations occurring on an annual basis there had only been time to complete one cycle within the timeframe of the placement. Typical comments from this group follow.

Overall, I would rate the placement as successful in terms of achieving its planned outcomes. There are significant achievements, but the achievements are fragile. (A19, 2007)

I would rate it as successful, however much more work would have been required to institutionalize it. (A10, 2006)

On some matters, such as the Three Year Training Plan, they were heavily involved in the development of the plan, gathering data and identifying key training priorities. They still lacked ownership of the completed plan and have yet to commence working towards the activities identified. (A13, 2006)

The third group rated their placements as successful to varying degrees, given the 'limits and constraints' faced in the agency. Their typical comments were as follows.

I think that I would describe my placement as reasonably successful, given the constraints facing the Division. In view of those constraints I don't think I could have achieved much more. (A63, 2012)

Successful given these constraints: significant skill/knowledge gap between the existing and the requisite level, especially in terms of rational thinking and analytical ability; unwillingness of key Counterpart to engage in activities; lack of staff commitment; high staff absenteeism; high staff turnover; and lack of support from the Deputy Secretary and Secretary. (A67, 2012)

Despite being described tentatively as successful by this final group of advisers, the rationales they provide are similar to the nine advisers (12%) who rated their success as 'limited.' They typically distinguished between achieving their placements' stated aims and the broader goal of capacity building.

I would critically rate the placement as 'limited' in terms of achieving the planned objectives and outcomes primarily because they (outcomes and objectives) were created based on an inaccurate assessment of existing capacity and achievement in the agency and because their ultimate delivery was heavily dependent on a reasonable level of support from the Secretary, which was never realised. (A3, 2006)

In terms of the planned outcomes specifically aligned to the work plan I'd rate my placement as limited to successful. In terms of the broader requirement to increase overall capacity to understand and undertake public sector procurement for GoPNG, for those groups that I managed to reach, I'd rate the placement as very successful. (A18, 2007)

From the 2006–12 PCRs, it appears that approximately 50 per cent of advisers viewed their placements as achieving their placements' stated aims, while the remainder reported limited success when 'success' is measured solely as achieving the explicit placement outcomes, with one adviser rating their placement as unsuccessful.

Table 3.1.3.1 and Figure 3.1.3.1 showed specific areas where advisers were able to identify evidence of success. Analysis of the 2006–12 PCRs provides further data on some of these areas, such as policy development or service delivery. These provide nuanced interpretations of the achievement of ToRs and the success of placements from the advisers' supporting evidence. The remaining discussion focuses on evidence of success in specific areas of activity for those advisers who rated their placements as of limited success or better. These areas are: planning; policy development; systems development/improvement; service delivery; improving procedures and processes; training and mentoring; and human and organisational capacity building.

3.1.3.1 Planning

A total of 67 advisers recorded success in improving planning within their agencies, while 14 indicated that they had achieved limited success in this area. The combined total is 81 (from the 78 reports analysed) because a few advisers indicated success in one area of planning and limited success in another. In their comments advisers focused on two aspects of success in planning: the formulation and/or implementation of specific plans and improvements in planning processes more generally.

The most straightforward evidence provided by advisers was the listing of specific plans that had been developed and/or implemented throughout the course of the placement: corporate, strategic, operational and annual plans. In some cases, evidence of successful plan formulation was buttressed by the ratification or endorsement by the relevant authority, or by the plans contributing to agency success in securing additional funding for projects or achieving on-time budget submissions and appropriations. Some advisers were concerned that while plans had been successfully formulated they were yet to be implemented.

With regard to improvements in planning processes, the evidence offered by advisers was largely anecdotal. Further, the advisers' ratings of success covered a range of achievements, reflecting the differing levels of agency planning capacity at the commencement of their placements. For agencies in which planning processes were non-existent, the observation that staff now formulate and use plans to guide their own and/or organisational activity, or place more emphasis on planning, was used as evidence of success. Where minimal planning was occurring, staff periodically reporting against projected outcomes or incorporating performance indicators into their plans constituted evidence of success. The next stage of success was evidenced by observations that staff members achieve projected outcomes as a result of improvements in planning processes. The lower the initial level of planning capacity the greater the concern on the part of advisers that improvements in planning activity would not be sustainable beyond the placement period. This was particularly the case for one-year placements, where new activities, such as annual planning, were not open to iteration and advisers were unable to observe whether agency staff could repeat the activities with minimal adviser assistance.

When commenting on the potential sustainability of improvements in planning capacity, advisers tended to link positive forecasts of sustainability (i.e., 'success') with: 1) the institution of planning processes that were as broadly collaborative as possible; 2) the creation of manuals and templates to guide future planning activities; 3) observations that staff were able to complete planning activities with minimal adviser assistance; and 4) observations that staff understood the rationale for planning in terms of achieving organisational goals and implementing strategies.

3.1.3.2 Policy development

Fifty-five advisers recorded success in policy development, while twelve recorded limited success. Similarly to planning, advisers focused predominantly on the successful formulation of specific policies throughout the placement and improvements in policy development processes more generally.

As with planning, the most straightforward evidence offered was the enumeration of specific policies formulated throughout the placement or, alternatively, the realms of activity for which policies had been created where previously no policy had been in place. Seventy-five per cent of advisers reporting success in policy development listed the specific policies to support their claims. Fifteen per cent of advisers also reported success in the review and improvement of existing policies. A number of advisers (about 15%) offered additional evidence as to the effectiveness of the policies, by noting that they had resulted in cost savings or improvements in service delivery, transparency in general, or in specific tasks such as recruitment or financial management. A further 10 per cent of advisers noted success in undertaking comprehensive needs analyses where activities in the placement period had not progressed to the actual drafting of policy.

In terms of reported improvements in policy development processes more generally, just over 20 per cent of advisers reported the successful development and implementation of robust and comprehensive policy development frameworks (including standardised processes and procedures), often noting the concurrent development of manuals, guidelines and templates to support the policy development process and ensure consistency and sustainability. A similar number reported successes in improving processes for the *implementation* of policy, including as evidence the establishment of monitoring and evaluation frameworks, the establishment of committees, the institution of appropriate planning methodologies and the successful pursuit of legislative changes to support policy initiatives.

A comprehensive statement of policy development within a placement follows.

Volunteers from within either the KAS team or other Branch staff, formed working parties made up of [Agency] staff from throughout the agency, to examine the policy issue from the various [Agency] perspectives. KAS or Branch staff drafted the policies and circulated them throughout the agency, often several times, to receive feedback on them. This feedback was then incorporated into the documents until a final version was produced. Endorsement from all senior executives was obtained before the policy being signed off by the agency head. This same process has been used for all policies and has worked extremely well. [Branch] staff now know how to use working parties, how to research and draft policies and get policies to the point of executive endorsement. They have also learnt about the implementation of such policies in terms of dissemination of them, the conduct of awareness sessions or training and how there is also a need to determine whether any systems or processes need to be revised or developed to support the policy.

Evidence of this is recorded in weekly minutes recorded during the meetings, e.g., increase in the number and expediency of disciplinary actions, policing of bonded staff on external studies and the development of stringent guidelines for the determination of sponsored external studies. Further evidence is shown in the final entitlements determination for contract staff who fail to comply with their contracts. Policy guidelines were used to update records in relation to dependants' airfare entitlements. (A35, 2008)

From a capacity building perspective, approximately 15 per cent of advisers reported that the KAS could now undertake policy development independently, by virtue of their having participated in a comprehensive and sustained policy development process, such as that described above. In addition to skills acquisition, advisers noted attitudinal changes in counterparts to the effect that they: appreciated the role of broad consultation and collaboration in the policy development process; understood the role of policy in implementing legislation; and accepted the need for the critical assessment of current practices and monitoring and evaluation to support policy implementation. These advisers believed that KAS had gained sufficient and sustainable skills in policy development via their participation in tailored training and mentoring exercises.

Similarly to planning, some advisers expressed concern that policies created throughout the placement had not yet been formally adopted or implemented, or noted limited success in terms of compliance and/or enforcement of compliance. Time was also a concern, to the effect that processes had not yet been 'embedded' prior to placement completion and remained in a fragile state of development.

3.1.3.3 Service delivery

Fifty-five advisers reported success in improving service delivery, whereas 17 advisers reported limited to no success in this area. Some of the strongest evidence in support of advisers' views of success was provided in this area, given that it is an activity open to quantitative measurement (turnaround times etc.) and with finite measurable outcomes, the beneficiaries of which are often external to the agency.

A very strong example of externally-sourced evidence for improvement in service delivery was provided in the following example:

An independent review provided to AusAID in 2007 confirmed improved service performance of the Agency as part of a case study undertaken during the review of the ASF program. A report to the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee in 2007 (as relayed by Deputy Secretary Corporate Services) noted that over the last five years the Agency had moved from having one of the worst financial administration service performance records to now being 'in the top 5'. (A36, 2008)

In addition to formal measures, such as those mentioned above or, for example, feedback surveys completed by end-users, many advisers noted informal measures of improvement in service delivery, such as, general positive feedback or acknowledgement from customers, increases in client numbers, and/or increases in requests for assistance from associated agencies.

In terms of quantitative measures, the most often mentioned metric was improvement in turnaround times in fundamental departmental activities, for example, recruitment, often to the point where service delivery standards were now being consistently met. This kind of improvement was occasionally expressed indirectly as a marked reduction in backlogs. In other cases advisers noted an increase in the quantity of services being delivered (for example, courses or condoms) and/or an increase in the quality of services provided (for example, 'now in line with international humanitarian standards').

Anecdotal evidence was also offered for improvements in service delivery, with advisers noting the success of training in enhancing client service skills and/or the customer-focus of agency staff. Where the baseline level of customer-focus was non-existent or low, improvement was noted in the

form of a developing responsiveness to customer and/or stakeholder requirements. Occasionally, this involved increasing the awareness of support staff of their roles as ‘internal service providers’ supporting the core business of the agency. Again, where baseline levels were low, the caveat was often added that advisers could not attest to whether improved skills/awareness on the part of agency staff, or improved policies and procedures, would actually translate into sustained improved service delivery.

Just as the evidence in support of substantial improvements in service delivery was some of the strongest provided, this category also elicited some of the strongest statements with regard to limited or no success. In these cases, reference was often made to factors outside of the adviser’s control, such as inadequate information systems or the withholding of approval from higher authorities with regard to reforms or actions on individual cases. For example:

The simple answer is ‘no’. Service delivery is closely linked to the information available in the [Agency Information System], and investigations have found that data to be at least 60% incorrect and the system open to error and illegal activity. Until GoPNG treats the replacement of [this system] as a priority very little can be done in this regard although there has been some discussion relating to redesign of customer service areas and functions nothing has yet emerged. (A3, 2006)

Where advisers had been unable to personally witness improvements in service delivery standards, the majority remained sceptical that such improvements would occur subsequent to their departure.

3.1.3.4 Systems development/improvement/implementation

In terms of improvement in systems, 65 advisers reported successful outcomes, while 12 advisers reported limited success. Again, due to differing baseline levels of existing capacity, evidence of success ranged from the successful completion of comprehensive systems needs analyses and reviews of existing policies and procedures, to the complete development and implementation of integrated, agency-wide, ICT systems, including hardware, software and the completion of relevant staff training.

Where success involved the establishment of comprehensive information management, sharing and reporting systems (approximately 30% of advisers recording successful outcomes), including the relevant infrastructure and training, evidence of success—in addition to the existence of the ICT system itself where previously there was none—was presented in the form of:

- 1) The improved integration of agency activities resulting from improved communication capacities and information-sharing systems, and the associated improvements in efficiency and intra-agency processes whereby outputs from one division serve as inputs to others, including the systematisation of relevant agency-wide processes and procedures. For example:

The [Agency] has significantly enhanced its administrative capacity over the past 12 months with the implementation of a calendar for planning meetings and other workplace activities. All of the [Agency’s] electronic files are now on a common network and all staff have been working to progressively move files onto this network and organise them into a commonly agreed structure. More systematic processes were introduced for storing and sharing data on our computer network. (A11, 2006)

- 2) Demonstrated improvements in functions reliant upon effective information management systems, such as, the production of timely quarterly reports and bank reconciliations, improvements in planning and related outcomes, the successful integration of previously disparate activities (for example, planning and budgeting or planning and implementation), and improvements in operational response times, turnaround times, etc. For example:

The previous accounts system was obsolete, supplier and invoice info not maintained, journals and adjustments (cancelled cheques, credit notes, vote corrections, etc) unable to be processed, expenditure reporting not possible until an end-of-month update was completed, cheque printing regularly failed, financial delegation and certification of claims poorly exercised, and poor supporting documentation for payments. Supplier payments are now processed effectively and efficiently. Supplier information and payment history available online, reports available when required, posting to the general ledger undertaken effectively, reconciliation of accounts (e.g. suspense and clearing accounts) cost centres and votes undertaken and journals and adjustments completed as required. Delegations are exercised appropriately and supporting documentation is held for payments. Work Instructions for supplier payments, cheque cancellations and credit note processing are available on the desktop, and the Account Officer can undertake all accounts payable tasks competently. (A31, 2008)

- 3) Demonstrated improvements in monitoring and evaluation capacities in the form of, transparent audit trails, increased transparency of processes and procedures in general, increased accountability resulting from electronic records tracking user activities and the clearer articulation of roles and responsibilities, and increased capacity for performance management due to the institutionalisation of centralised record-keeping. For example:

The processing of the payroll has become efficient and transparent with the inclusion of batching systems and audit systems as part of the fortnightly payroll process. (A36, 2008)

Where advisers did not specifically note that system-dependent functions or maintenance were now able to be fulfilled independently by KAS (few advisers noted this explicitly), the predicted sustainability of efficient system utilisation was supported by noting the existence of manuals, templates and guidelines relating to policies, processes and procedures.

A smaller number of advisers (approximately 25%) working at the division level, noted similar improvements to those mentioned above, albeit on a smaller scale. In these cases, rather than agency-wide ICT systems, advisers noted the successful development and implementation of division databases, and presented evidence for their usefulness of a similar nature to that presented above. This was also the case where advisers noted success in improving or modifying existing systems (approximately 15%). On occasion the effectiveness of improvements was supported by anecdotal evidence to the effect that KAS and other staff were simply more inclined to use the system than had previously been the case.

Other measures of success were offered in the form of simple statements to the effect that business processes had been successfully reviewed as a preliminary step toward the development of new or improved systems (in one case the success of this process was specifically quantified in the form of the statement:

The business process review has been undertaken and the true number and complexity of [Agency] process has begun to be documented, in particular to support the implementation of new systems. A simple set of 13 process maps existed when the placement began. Now 65+ processes have been identified, some with up to 50–60 sub-processes, and many are now properly documented at 100+ pages each. (A43, 2010)

Sometimes statements named the systems that were successfully planned and developed and were awaiting implementation.

Where advisers reported 'limited success' in the realm of system improvement, the fundamental concerns expressed were that: proposals or improvement initiatives lacked either funding or the support of senior management or had failed to gain final authorisation; and/or that the sustainability of improvements was vulnerable due to inconsistency in implementation by staff and the absence of an adviser to ensure compliance and the embedding of reforms.

3.1.3.5 Training and mentoring

While the vast majority of advisers indicated at least some level of success in the training and mentoring activities undertaken throughout the course of their placements, this category was the most variable (almost one-third of advisers reported views of both 'success' and 'limited success' in this category). The primary reason was that training and mentoring activities were often spread over a range of KAS and other agency staff and, due to individual styles, propensities, abilities and levels of interest, often achieved mixed results. This category was also one of the least amenable to the provision of evidence of success when viewed in a general sense (although much can be gleaned by noting improvements in the other areas of activity outlined previously in this report, each of which entailed at least some level of training and mentoring).

Consequently, the bulk of the evidence offered for general successes in training and mentoring was anecdotal, based largely on observations made by advisers with regard to the developing abilities of KAS and other agency staff. In the cases where verifiable data were offered, these invariably related to training successes only. For example, advisers were able to list specific training programs or workshops that had been undertaken in direct fulfilment of specific ToRs (almost 50% of advisers reporting success in training). Where the *effectiveness* of training was the subject of comment, only a few advisers were able to offer hard evidence, for example, by reference to the results of a periodically undertaken "Skills and Abilities Audit" (A33, 2008) or other measurable results, for example:

The pass rate for staff undertaking CPA exams in first semester 2008 was 60% - a significant increase on the pass rate for semester 2, 2007 (39%) which can be directly attributed to the training and study support initiatives. (A41, 2008)

With regard to demonstrating that training and mentoring occurred in line with ToRs, the bulk of advisers' comments revolved around the enumeration (in part or in full) of the specific kinds of skills and knowledge that was imparted during training (around 75% of advisers reporting success in training) and mentoring (around 80% of advisers reporting success in mentoring) activities. Approximately 25 per cent of advisers reporting success in training referred to training activities that had occurred in conjunction with the implementation of new systems and policies within the placement period, with a handful referring to the concomitant production of manuals and/or templates.

In terms of the anecdotal evidence of the *effectiveness* of training and mentoring, there is some qualitative difference that appears to reflect the difference in the form of the interpersonal

relationships underpinning the two activities. For example, almost 30 per cent of advisers reporting success in mentoring noted observed changes in counterparts' overall attitudes, behaviour and confidence as evidence of success (as opposed to 10% with training). Almost 25 per cent of advisers noted the counterparts' willingness to approach them independently for advice as a measure of mentoring success (as compared with one adviser with regard to training). Almost 20 per cent of advisers reported that counterparts were now able to independently complete specific work functions as a result of mentoring, as opposed to 10 per cent of advisers commenting on the effectiveness of training. Nevertheless similar numbers of advisers (around one-third for both training and mentoring) reported observing their counterparts apply the skills and knowledge imparted to their work activities, and increase their functional effectiveness thereby, as evidence of success in training and mentoring activities. A smaller number (around 10%) reported positive counterpart or staff feedback as anecdotal evidence of success in both training and mentoring.

As stated earlier, approximately one-third of advisers reported mixed results arising from training and mentoring activities. Generally speaking, the reasons given for limited success arose from either the unavailability of staff to attend training/mentoring sessions (due to prolonged absences, poor attendance, difficulty fitting in additional activities on top of existing workloads, or a lack of qualified appointments) or the failure of trained staff to subsequently apply their training in the workplace (due to lack of willingness, lack of support from senior management, or a generally unsupportive work environment). The constraint of available time given low baseline abilities was also mentioned. These factors will be considered in further detail when discussing impediments to success in section 3.5 below.

3.1.3.6 Human capacity building

As there is a significant human capacity building component in all of the areas of activity treated thus far, this section focuses primarily on the qualitative nature of comments made by advisers when indicating success specifically in this area. There are, not surprisingly, significant similarities between advisers' views regarding success in training and mentoring and in capacity building more generally. In total, 68 advisers reported some level of success in capacity building in terms of imparting 'soft' skills, while 57 reported successes in terms of 'hard' skills acquisition. Further, as with training and mentoring, while most advisers indicated some level of success in capacity building, the evidence offered in support of their views was largely anecdotal.

Nevertheless, the broader goals of capacity building, which tend to encompass the 'whole person' rather than merely the skills the person acquires, are reflected in the comments accompanying advisers' views of success. It appears that in capacity building (as distinct from skills/knowledge transfer) advisers are looking for a perceptible transformation in the way counterparts act in and respond to their work situations. This view is typified in the following adviser statement.

For me success as a trainer/mentor is not simply the imparting of skill and knowledge – true success comes when the learner can adapt the learning across a wide variety of situations. While I am unable and would not presume to claim the total person [my Counterpart] as a personal success, because there was so much potential already in place, I can confidently state that under my influence I have seen, and had others state that they have seen, [my Counterpart] grow into a most impressive, respected leader and role model. [My Counterpart] has grown to the point where I am now learning from him how to better adapt the principles demonstrated to many different and confronting PNG situations. (A3, 2006)

Reflecting this broader view, advisers tended to place additional emphasis on attitudinal factors when assessing successes in capacity development. Indeed, approximately two-thirds of advisers

specifically commented on their counterparts' or other agency staff's improvement in terms of confidence, commitment and professionalism in the discharge of their daily duties when reporting capacity building successes. Taking the initiative, presenting confidently in organisational or broader public forums, seeking out additional responsibility, or even challenging senior management were all seen as indicators of success. For example:

Through networking with other government agencies and IT vendors, [my Counterpart] has also established himself as a competent and confident manager who is proud of his work and his team. His staff respect him for his knowledge and assertiveness. He is able to deal with IT vendors with confidence and courage, and can demand and articulate arguments for quality service. (A22, 2007)

This more encompassing view is also reflected in advisers' focus on more expansive areas of knowledge transfer, most commonly articulated in terms of counterparts' greater 'awareness' and/or 'understanding' of the larger context of their activities. Again, almost two-thirds of advisers linked counterparts' greater understanding of the broader organisational context and objectives, how their roles and the roles of other divisions contributed to the functioning of the organisation as a whole, and how organisational activities fit into the broader objectives of the government with successes in capacity building. For example:

Middle managers have improved their awareness of the linkages between planning, implementation and monitoring although this awareness has yet to be applied consistently. The Secretariat has a much broader understanding of how monitoring and evaluation can be used to improve public service performance at a whole-of-government level as well as at an agency level. (A5, 2007)

In another vein, an adviser speaks of:

Building an awareness, especially at Council level, but also across a critical mass of senior staff, of the importance of both systemic and interpersonal relationships to the effective performance of organisations, and the need to manage for these two driving attributes, not allow them to simply drift as by-products of daily management. (A29, 2008)

As stated above, capacity building successes were often linked with the acquisition of specific skills via targeted training and mentoring. There was a pronounced tendency with advisers to link successes in this area with specifically process-driven forms of skill and knowledge acquisition (50 per cent of advisers reporting such success in capacity building). While this has been the case in other areas discussed (see 3.1.3.2 for a discussion of policy development process-driven skills and knowledge transfer), when mentioned in a capacity building context these examples are often supplemented with observations as to: the positive team-building effects arising from participation in these processes; the increased appreciation for both consultation and the need to review existing practices; the positive effects of ensuring counterpart 'ownership' of outcomes, and of enhancing transparency and accountability. For example:

A multidisciplinary team was formed for the implementation of the payroll and members researched and prepared a proposal for the implementation of a computerised payroll system. This team process lead to significant capacity building in terms of consultation, inclusion of peers, learning of systems and review of internal processes. (A46, 2010)

Indeed, if capacity building objectives are to be achieved, such forms of process-driven learning are considered fundamental:

...the restructure initiative was approached and supported entirely from a capacity building perspective. This often led to timelines not being achieved but ensured ownership, accountability, and understanding; allowing for the [Department] Manager to play a key leadership role. (A46, 2010)

Moreover, over a third of advisers who saw process-driven learning as fundamental to capacity building focused specifically on the process of organisational or systems/processes review. For example:

The administration and ground staff group have had capacity built by becoming involved in the organizational review. They were exposed to the review process and asked to contribute their thoughts on the various Human Resource processes existent at [the Agency]. Their capacity was clearly built in understanding how the review was being undertaken and how the organizational structure must support the goals and mission of [the Agency]. (A54, 2010)

Clearly, this is linked to the generation of a broader awareness among staff as to how the organisation operates and the role of each staff member and each department. Approximately one-third of advisers stated that KAS were now able to fulfil their roles independently or with minimal adviser assistance, while over half noted an increased ability in KAS to fulfil their organisational roles. For example,

Improvement of staff skills is clearly evidenced by the quality of their audit work and documentation produced following my CD activities since August 2010. (A67, 2012)

Productivity has improved. The reorganization of roles and responsibilities, the separation of duties and the initiation of performance and development plans has given each officer a better understanding of their role and the impact that delays or errors can have on other staff and the organization. There is a concerted effort to help each other. (A29, 2008)

Occasionally, it was noted that significant promotions or advancements of KAS, or their successful application for private sector jobs, were evidence of successful capacity building.

3.1.3.7 Organisational capacity building

In a similar fashion to human capacity building, success in any or all of the previous categories could be used to underpin an assessment of success in building organisational capacity. As the PCRs did not contain a question that specifically addressed organisational capacity (they asked about 'capacity building' more generally) this subject is not addressed directly by all advisers. Of the advisers who did comment in some way on organisational capacity building, 41 indicated that they had achieved successful outcomes, while four reported limited success.

The variety of successful activities that could form the basis for assertions of success in organisational capacity building is reflected in the variety of reasons given for these assertions. Around 20 per cent of advisers cited the successful development and implementation of information management systems as the basis (or one of the bases) for improvement in organisational capacity more generally. Around 15 per cent cited the production of manuals, guidelines and standardised templates as one of the bases for their assessments of improved organisational capacity. Following this, around 10 per cent of advisers listed one or more of the following reasons as one of the bases for their positive assessments: the implementation of a long-term training plan or program; the improvement in procedures and processes within the agency/department; and the successful

creation of intra- or cross-agency networks for information sharing. Just under 10 per cent cited: agency staff's improved understanding or awareness of the context of their role; an increase in budget appropriations resulting from improvement in budget processes; and the introduction of strategic management plans or other operational frameworks. Despite the divisions made here, statements made by advisers were often quite comprehensive, incorporating a number of the factors outlined above.

Two examples of adviser statements that encompass many of these individual factors follow.

[The Department] now has a detailed Plan in place which is being actively implemented to ensure the management of its newly devolved powers are in compliance with the legislation. It has a dedicated team that is across all areas of Devolution and is charged with managing all matters arising therefrom. It has trained its managers in the requirements of this new environment. It has sought its own legal advice to ascertain its true legal position and developed a strategy to manage any potential ramifications. It has developed guidelines and procedures to assist its managers comply with the new provisions. It is establishing Committees (e.g., Recruitment and Selection, Discipline, Training) to ensure transparency and compliance in practices. [The Department] is well placed in successfully managing the change to a devolved environment and in ensuring this success is sustainable – as long as support and leadership from the most senior levels of the organisation continues. (A48, 2009)

Organisational capacity development: Project and program management templates, manual, methodologies and model; Improving purchasing approaches and contract/price negotiation skills; Improved understanding of [Agency] and Government purchasing process; Improving vendor and contract management skills; Enhanced understanding of project & program management concepts including project management disciplines and documentation requirements; Improved ability to work together as organizational representatives in identifying and delivering on corporate goals; Improving understanding of the need to develop a project ownership and work culture improvement amongst all staff; Improved understanding for the need to 'know our business' and of the role of information technology as an enabler of business improvement not an owner. (A43, 2010)

As indicated in the previous quotes, building organisational capacity necessitates changes in organisational culture incorporating the kinds of attitudinal shifts discussed in section 3.1.3.6 above, yet extended throughout the whole department or agency. Of the four advisers who specifically reported on limited successes in organisational capacity building, two based their comments around the lack of success (often due to time constraints) in promoting this systematic change.

In the placement period, the Adviser considered it necessary to get a few structural issues attended to, like the development and introduction essential policies and procedures, conducting training and attempting to create a cultural shift towards complying with procedures, especially on procurement, when none had been followed, as there were none to follow. This culture shift was bigger than developing KAS capacity, as it related to developing the Agency's capacity to do it. While the seeds of this shift have been planted, and has had some success, the lack of leadership and support from senior management has resulted in bringing limited success to the broader culture shift. (A37, 2008)

In addition, the limited impact an adviser is able to have at the purely Branch level and the low level of baseline capacity met upon commencement of the placement were mentioned. These aspects will be discussed more fully when addressing the impediments to project success.

Advisers were asked in their interviews what they believed their counterparts learned during the placement. In particular, they were asked: what are the three most significant examples/pieces of evidence of success from your placement(s)? Given that capacity development was a strong part of almost all the placements, one may expect that some of the examples were about what counterparts learned to do. Due to confidentiality concerns, it is not possible to provide some of the best examples of learning as they readily identify the people and agencies involved. What follows are some examples that are more general in nature or that have been de-identified.

An adviser (A75, 2008) believed that she and the other two advisers achieved a lot in the eighteen months when she was there. There was big shift from technical process training in financial management of people and to a competency-based training approach in the agency. In the last nine months they developed a CBT-based capacity development plan that was endorsed by the Executive, they established an advisory committee to monitor and advise on the plan, and they developed one CBT module. They recruited staff, moved to another office (which took a lot of Adviser action). The agency was reorganised so that it was aligned better with its functions (A75 2008)

Another adviser (A39, 2008) believed his biggest evidence of success occurred the day he saw the counterpart 'dressing down an angry highlander' which he saw a 'quantum leap' for such a mild-mannered man. He also noted improvements in the administration of training, reports were submitted on time, as were other documents, certificates, etc. Furthermore, 'the administration of training was hugely improved over the two or three years and this had still been the case as of last year' (A39, 2008).

Some advisers pointed to an array of changes.

1) The development of the national (specified) framework which has been implemented across a number of government departments, to the point that it might be called institutionalised. 2) The director was moving along with all the changes. (A70, 2008)

1) The recruitment training, while I'm unsure how sustainable it will be they had received a lot of positive feedback around moving to merit-based recruitment and opening people's eyes to various recruitment techniques. 2) General team-building skills have changed with weekly meetings and broadening out the way the department sees and structures their work planning. (A50, 2010)

The next Section (3.2) deals with the counterparts' experiences of the matters addressed in this section.

3.2 Counterparts' views of their placements' success

3.2.1 Introduction

This section addresses two main questions from the research:

- What are the counterparts' views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their advisers in achieving their placements' stated aims?
- What evidence is there to support these views?

Evidence from the online survey—both quantitative and qualitative data—and the Adviser Performance Appraisals (undertaken by counterparts) is used to answer these questions. The survey quantitative data have been aggregated and analysed. These data and analyses are presented in tables and graphs, along with extracts of text (with some editing for clarity and to preserve anonymity) in the written text.

Data were obtained and analysed from 91 counterparts' Adviser Performance Appraisals (APAs) for placements completed between 2006 and 2011 (no such appraisals were available for 2012). Seventy-four counterparts completed a total of 91 reports as some completed two or more placements. Each report is treated as a single counterpart's report. The APAs differed from the PCRs completed by the advisers. The APAs were not completion reports but rather were administered during the placement. They are not, therefore, necessarily the final views of counterparts reflecting on the entirety of their partnerships with advisers. They are also less comprehensive than the PCRs, comprising either four or five questions, depending on the year they were administered. Also the APAs do not enumerate, nor do they specifically ask for, counterparts' views of progress towards the placement's stated aims or for any evidence of such achievements.

Data are also included from the focus groups with counterparts.

3.2.2 Views about success

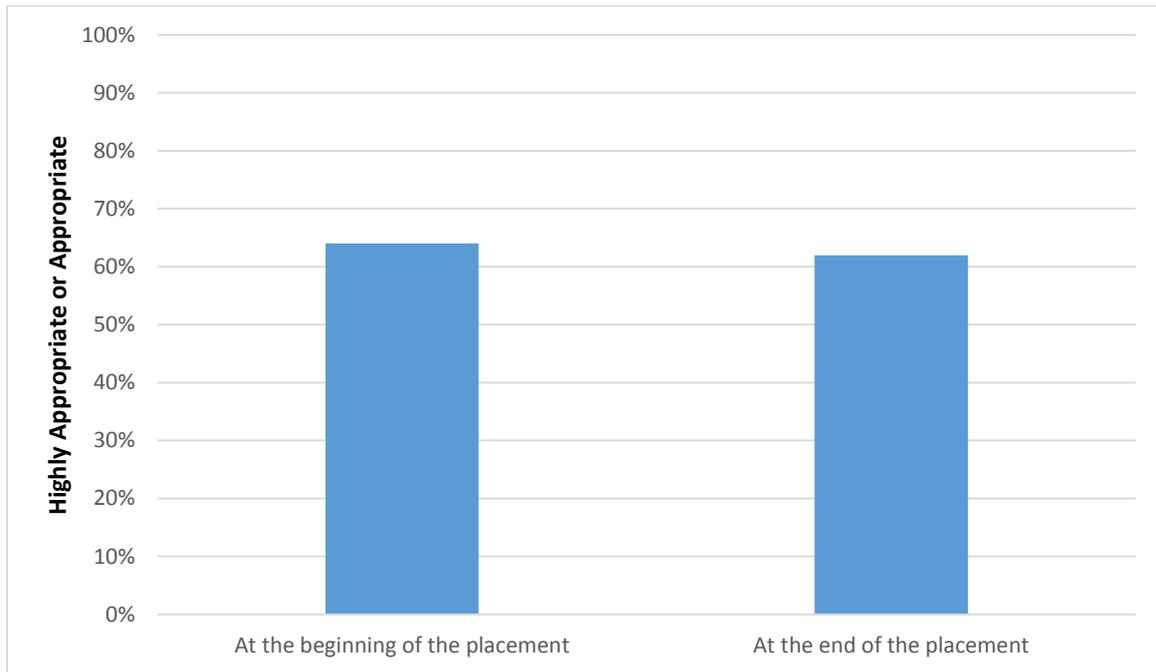
The online survey of the 2006–2012 completed AC placements contained questions concerning the success or otherwise of these placements. As noted in 2.1.2, a placement's ToRs are fundamental to assessing its success because the ToRs underpin each placement's aims and outcomes. Table 3.2.2.1 presents the counterparts' ratings of the appropriateness of their ToRs at the beginning and end of the advisers' placements. As with the advisers, they scored their responses on a five-point scale from 1 (highly inappropriate) to 5 (highly appropriate). The data show a high mean rating of 3.9 at commencement, dropping slightly by completion to a mean of 3.7, in comparison with the greater reduction in the advisers' equivalent ratings from 4.18 to 3.64.

Table 3.2.2.1 Counterparts' ratings of the appropriateness of their ToRs at commencement and completion

Point in placement	Mean	Highly appropriate or appropriate	N
Beginning of placement	3.9	64%	14
End of placement	3.7	62%	13

Figure 3.2.2.1 below shows the percentages of counterparts who rated their ToRs with the top two scores (4, appropriate; 5, highly appropriate) at commencement (64%) and completion (62%). This shows that there was only a two-percentage point drop between commencement and completion, whereas in Section 3.1.2 it was reported that advisers had a thirty-percentage point reduction, although from a much higher commencement percentage of 97%. It is notable that on completion counterparts (62%) and advisers (67%) had fairly close agreement in their use of these two highest ratings. The explanations are discussed further below in section 3.2.3.

Figure 3.2.2.1 Percentages of counterparts who rated their ToRs as highly appropriate or appropriate



The survey provided the opportunity for respondents to comment on their ratings and on any changes in their ratings between commencement and completion. Most respondents' comments were that their views about the ToRs were unchanged:

My opinion about the Terms of Reference did not change from the beginning to the end.

My opinion about the Terms of Reference did not change.

The ToRs were consistent throughout the period.

One counterpart noted that there had been change to the ToRs during the period (which, presumably, meant that his rating did not change):

The ToRs were changed to suit the inclusion of activities in a new structure that was created by the agency.

Another exemplified the type of difficulties that personnel changes make to AC placements:

I just stepped in for my director and have no idea about the ToRs or any formal documents

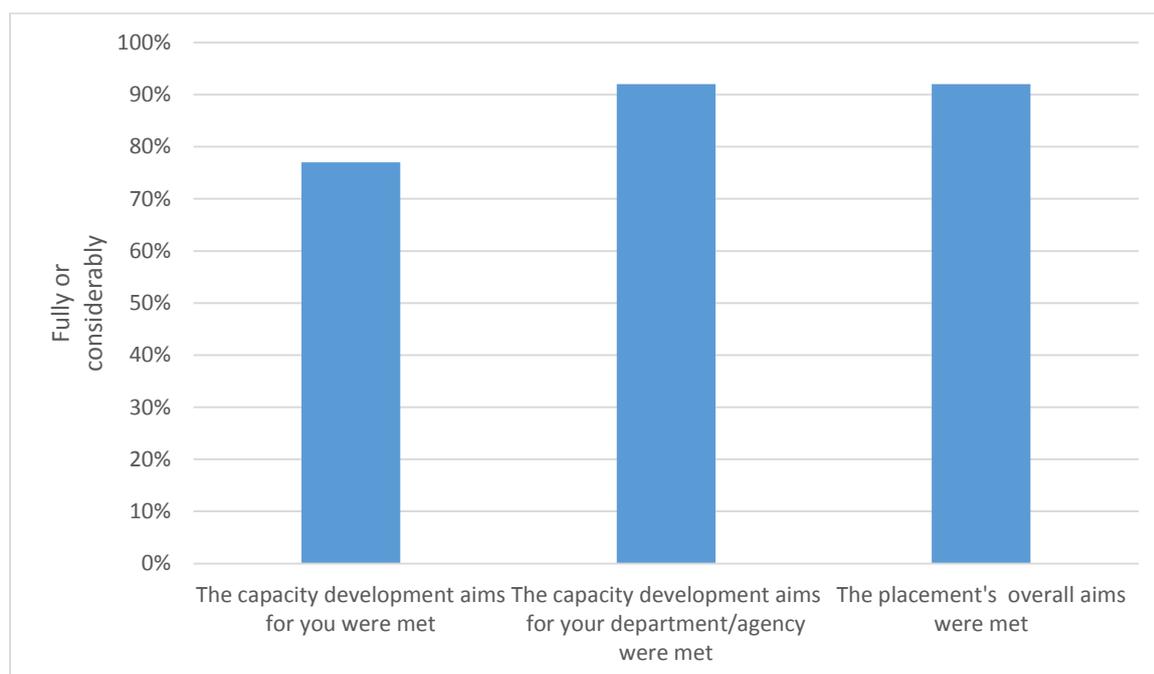
The ToRs provide the basis upon which the stated aims are specified for the placements. Table 3.2.2.2 shows the counterparts' ratings of the extent to which the aims were met, from 1 'not at all' to 5 'completely'.

Table 3.2.2.2 Counterparts’ ratings of the degree to which the placement aims were met

Item	Mean	Fully or considerably	N
The capacity development aims for you were met	4.0	77%	13
The capacity development aims for your department/agency were met	4.2	92%	13
The placement's overall aims were met	4.3	92%	13

Nearly all respondents (92%) rated the placements’ aims as being fully or considerably met, both in the overall sense and for the agency’s capacity development. Notwithstanding this, the proportion of counterparts who thought that the aims for their capacity development were met was lower at 77 per cent. This may reflect the capacity substitution element of a placement contributed by an adviser to an agency helping to achieve the overall and agency aims. Figure 3.2.2.2 shows the responses graphically by percentages for the type of aims (counterpart, agency and overall).

Figure 3.2.2.2 Percentages of counterparts’ rating that the placement aims were met fully or considerably



Arguably, the most important aspect of aims being met is the effectiveness of the relationship between the counterpart(s) and their adviser. Table 3.2.2.3 shows the counterparts’ ratings (from 1 ‘highly effectively’ to 5 ‘highly ineffectively’) of the extent to which they worked effectively or not with their adviser.

Table 3.2.2.3 Counterparts' ratings of the effectiveness of working with their adviser

Item	Mean	Highly effective or effective	N
Effectiveness of working relationship with adviser during the placement.	4.7	100%	12

The data are unequivocal here that the counterparts' mean rating (4.7) of the effectiveness of their working relationship with their adviser was 'highly effective'. Given that almost all else in a placement depends on this relationship, and that 91% of advisers (see Table 3.1.2.3) also gave a very high mean rating (4.34), this suggests that, between 2006 and 2012, the people at the heart of the placements have been working very effectively with each other. Given the cultural and other differences, this seems to be an outstanding feature. This is borne out in the c statements in their online survey responses. Some examples follow.

I was able to work very effectively with the Adviser during the placement. We understood each other very well particularly in relation to the roles we played in our work. She understood her role as an Adviser and there was no 'role conflict' in our daily work. In addition, there was always very good communication and understanding between the Adviser and me.

The advisor knew her role and advised accurately on my work outputs. I was very comfortable to relate with her in all matters of my role.

I worked with two different ASF Advisers. The relationship with me, the top management and staff was great.

I had a very good working relationship with the Adviser. We understood each other well and there was no 'role conflict' in relation to work performance.

I saw the placement as an opportunity for me and it was highly effective because I have learned much from the Adviser. Not so much on a technical level but on the management level, capacity building and hands-on training/multitasking in the work place.

With regard to what was achieved for counterparts as a result of such working relationships, Table 3.2.2.4 shows the counterparts' mean ratings (from 1 'none at all' to 5 'considerable' a lot) of the extent to which they rated that their capacities were developed.

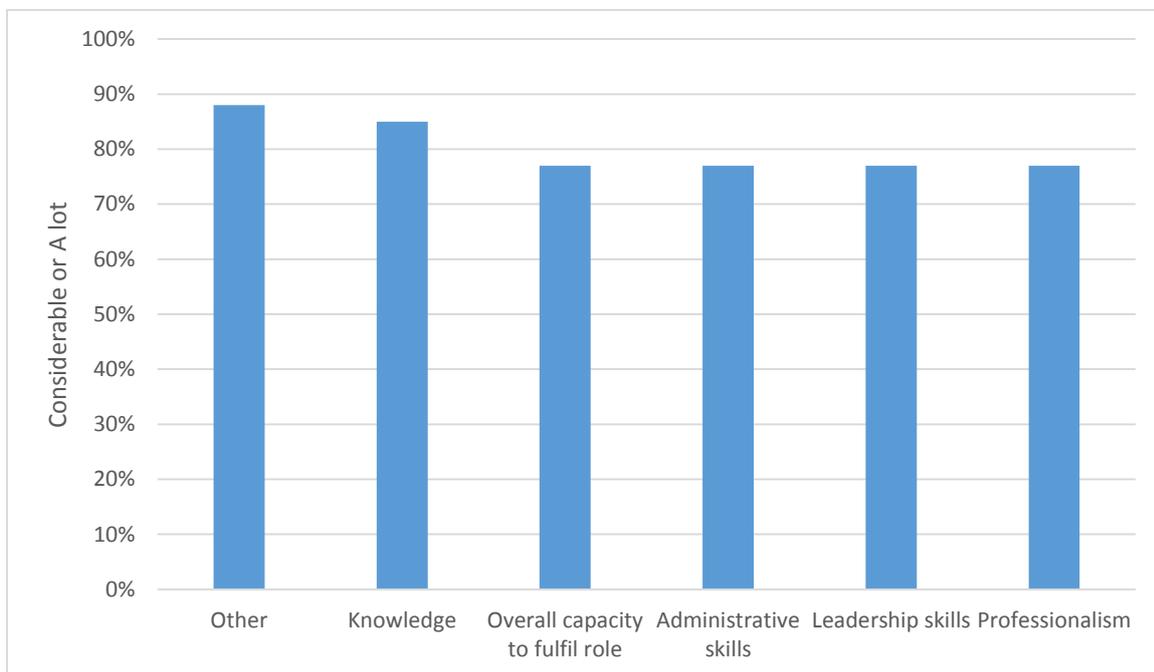
Table 3.2.2.4 Counterparts’ ratings of the improvement in capacity development achieved through their advisers

Item	Mean	Considerable or a lot	N
Other	4.4	88%	8
Knowledge	4.2	85%	13
Overall capacity to fulfil role	4.2	77%	13
Administrative skills	3.9	77%	13
Leadership skills	4.0	77%	13
Professionalism	4.2	77%	13

Table 3.2.2.4 illustrates that the capacity development was evenly spread across several aspects of capacity development, with ‘knowledge’ attracting the greatest proportion (85%, excluding ‘other’) as being developed ‘considerably’ or ‘a lot’; this was also the case with the advisers’ ratings (see Table 3.1.2.4).

Figure 3.2.2.3 shows the counterparts’ rating of their achievements in relation to particular aspects of their knowledge and skills. The ratings show in all cases between 70% and 90% of counterparts rated the various aspects of their development as either ‘considerably’ or ‘a lot’.

Figure 3.2.2.3 Percentages of counterparts’ rating they achieved a ‘considerable’ or ‘a lot’ of improvement in capacity development through their advisers



The counterparts’ additional comments in the online survey reflected not only the data above in Table 3.2.2.4 and Figure 3.2.2.3 but also showed some of the specific areas in which they gained capacity. Three particular examples are below.

(I increased my) ability to deal with other agencies of Government in relation to the specific area that I was dealing with together with the Adviser.

(I learned to make) a difference in difficult situations and manage difficult communications at different levels and importance of people.

We really built our confidence in ourselves (Counterparts) and were able to undertake the (work) function in a more professional manner.

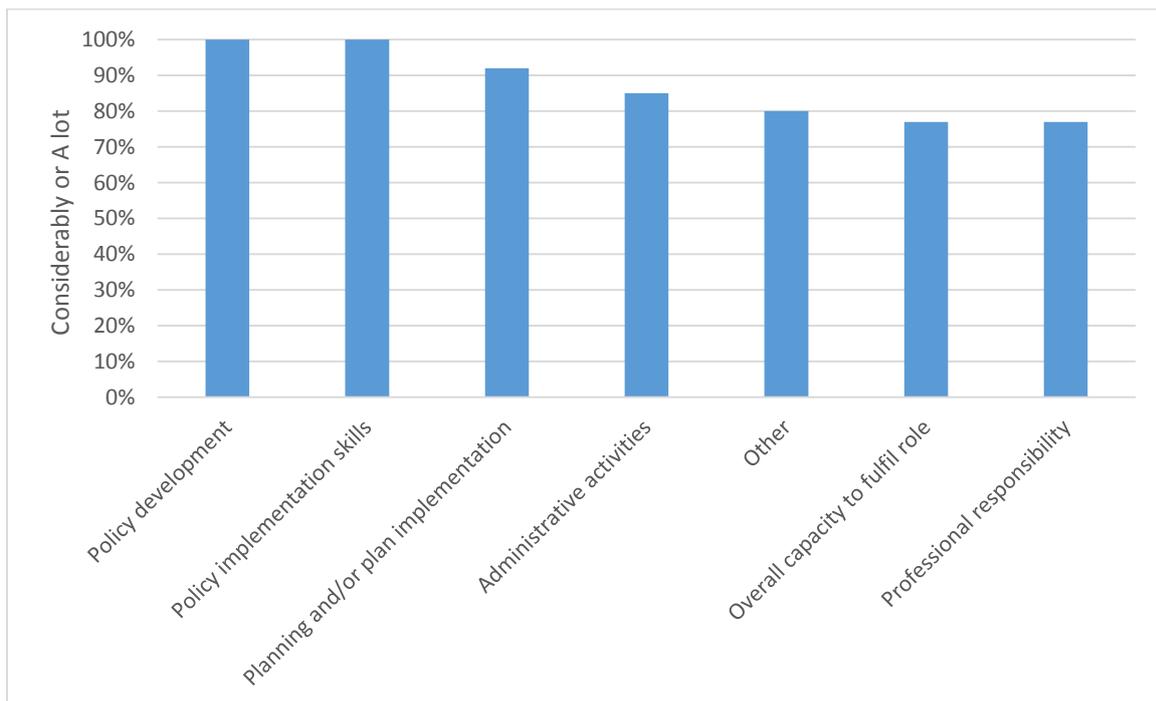
A related matter was the extent to which the counterparts rated the capacity development in their agencies as a result of the placement. Table 3.2.2.5 shows the counterparts' ratings for such development (1 = not at all to 5 = considerable) against particular aspects of their agencies' work.

Table 3.2.2.5 Counterparts' ratings of development in specific areas from working with the adviser in the agency

Area	Mean	Considerably or a lot	N
Policy development	4.4	100%	13
Policy implementation skills	4.2	100%	13
Planning and/or plan implementation	4.3	92%	13
Administrative activities	4.1	85%	13
Other	3.8	80%	5
Overall capacity to fulfil role	4.2	77%	13
Professional responsibility	4.2	77%	13

Again the mean ratings (apart from 'other') are around the threshold of 'considerably' (4<) with policy and planning aspects also having the highest percentages (92% to 100%) of ratings 4 and 5. Figure 3.2.2.4 illustrate the percentage ratings graphically.

Figure 3.2.2.4 Percentages of counterparts' rating 'considerable' or 'a lot' of development in specific areas from working with the adviser in the agency



The above data are substantially based on the counterparts' ratings or views about the matters in question. As was done with advisers, the counterparts were asked to identify any evidence to support their ratings. The intention was to identify any evidence that may be appropriate to incorporate in the research activity reported in section 4 (below). The evidence identified is discussed in the next section, 3.2.3.

3.2.3 Evidence of success

It was important to establish what evidence counterparts believed would support their ratings and comments in the online survey and their APAs. As noted previously, appropriate evidence was required for the fifth stage of the research project where key GoPNG and other informants would be used to verify selected evidence of capacity development. In the online survey several areas were identified in which capacity development was typically required in AC projects and participants were asked to rate the extent to which there was identifiable evidence of success in each area. Table 3.2.3.1 lists these areas and shows the mean rating (1 = no evidence, 5 = considerable evidence), and also the percentages of counterparts who identified 'considerable' or 'substantial' evidence in the nominated areas. Figure 3.2.3.1 shows this latter feature graphically.

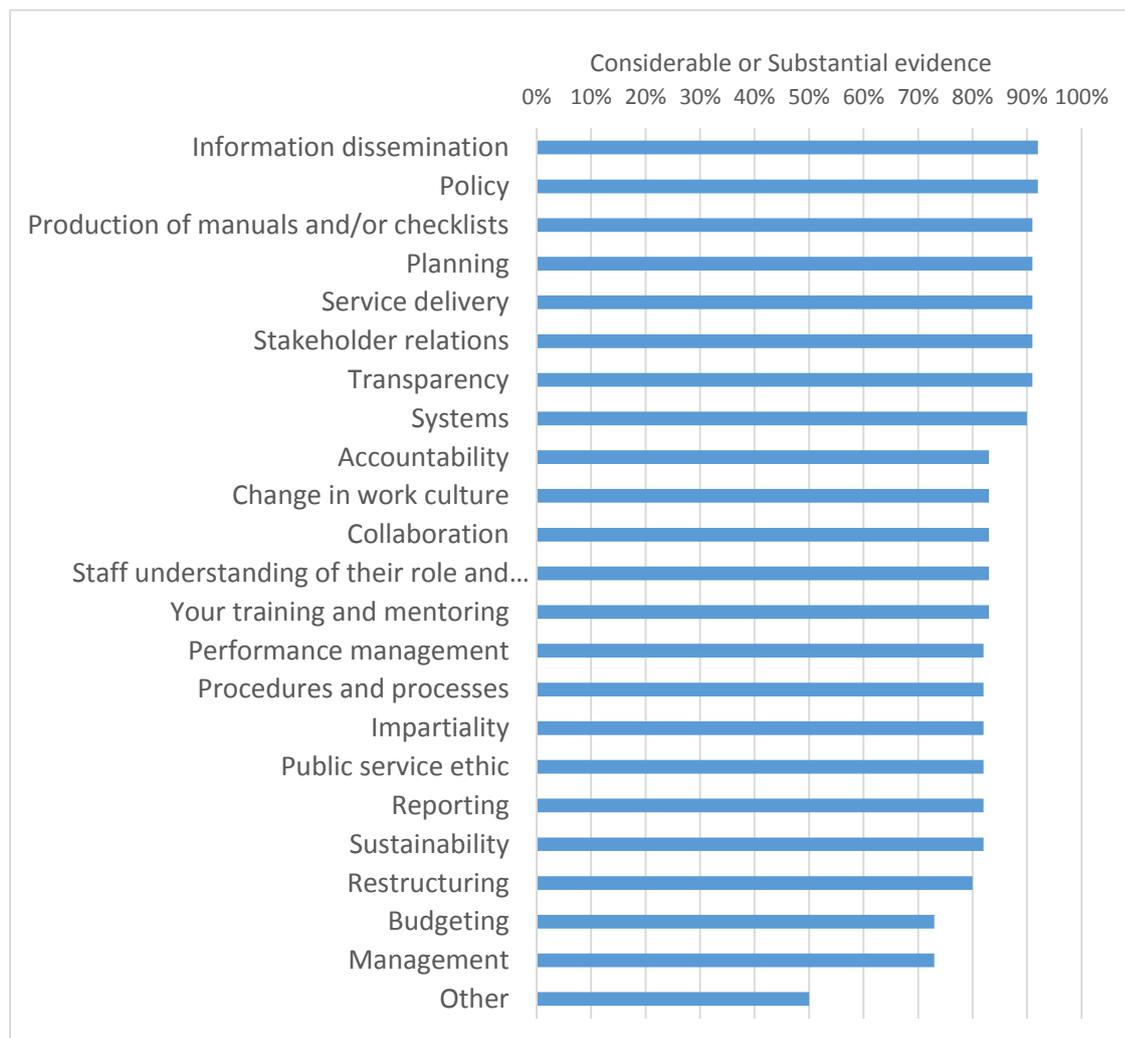
Table 3.2.3.1 Counterparts' rating of extent to which there was evidence of success and/or improvement by area

Item	Mean	Considerable or substantial evidence	N
Information dissemination	4.4	92%	12
Policy	4.2	92%	12
Production of manuals and/or checklists	4.1	91%	11
Planning	4.3	91%	11
Service delivery	4.2	91%	11
Stakeholder relations	4.3	91%	11
Transparency	4.6	91%	11
Systems	4.2	90%	10
Accountability	4.2	83%	12
Change in work culture	4.3	83%	12
Collaboration	4.3	83%	12
Staff understanding of their role and function	4.3	83%	12
Your training and mentoring	4.3	83%	12
Performance management	4.1	82%	11
Procedures and processes	4.2	82%	11
Impartiality	4.2	82%	11
Public service ethic	4.1	82%	11
Reporting	4.5	82%	11
Sustainability	4.0	82%	11
Restructuring	4.1	80%	10
Budgeting	4.1	73%	11
Management	4.2	73%	11
Other	4.0	50%	2

Table 3.2.3.1 shows the extent to which counterparts identified evidence of success; it is the companion to Table 3.1.3.1 for advisers. Comparing the results between these tables, it is clear that counterparts consistently provided higher ratings than the advisers on each measure and that the percentages of counterparts rating as 'considerable' or 'substantial' are also consistently higher. Every mean rating and percentage is higher for counterparts than advisers. The counterparts' mean ratings are all on or above the threshold (4<) for 'considerable'. This suggests that the counterparts were of the view that success generally had been close to considerable across all areas, and that there was evidence to show such. Figure 3.2.3.1 illustrates that the areas the highest percentages of counterparts rated as 'considerable' or 'substantial' were 'information dissemination' (92%), service delivery (91%), transparency (91%) and stakeholder relations (91%); the respective percentages for advisers for these areas were 40 per cent, 36 per cent, 43 per cent and 48 per cent. The areas that the lowest percentages of counterparts rated as 'considerable' or 'substantial' were 'budgeting' (73%), 'management' (73%) and 'restructuring' (80%). The equivalent percentages for advisers for these areas were, respectively, 26 per cent, 42 per cent and 54 per cent. In contrast, the lowest for advisers were 'impartiality' (17%), 'performance management' (21%) and 'public service ethic' (23%).

Clearly the discrepancies between advisers and counterparts are marked both by the degree to which they can identify evidence for success, and in the areas in which they rate lowest and highest. The mean rating (excluding 'other') for counterparts was 4.2 (slightly above 'substantial evidence') and 3.2 (slightly above 'some evidence' for advisers). The differences may be explained by the counterparts being more clearly aware of what the agency was like before the AC placement and what it was like at the end of the placement. It is likely that the advisers' ratings are shaped partly by what they understand as good practice from an Australian or international perspective. The differences may also be explained by differences in what advisers and counterparts see as important areas of success, and also what they see as constituting evidence of success.

Figure 3.2.3.1 Percentage of counterparts rating 'considerable' or 'substantial' evidence of success by area



The data presented above are complemented by the evidence drawn from the counterparts' APAs. The first question in the APA asked: 'What is your assessment of the progress of the ASF placement in your agency over the last few months?' This question was modified with the introduction of the EPSP program to: 'Overall, what is your assessment of the Adviser's performance progress over the past twelve months?' In addition, both forms of the question asked counterparts to indicate a rating of either 'Excellent', 'Very Good', 'Good', 'Fair' or 'Poor' and requested comments on their ratings.

Of the 91 APAs reviewed, 50 counterparts rated their adviser as 'excellent', 31 as 'very good', three 'good', three 'fair' and two 'poor'. Of the 84 counterparts (92%) who gave their advisers ratings of

good or above, the explanatory comments supporting the ratings focused primarily upon two categories: 1) the strengths and personal qualities of the adviser; and 2) the activities undertaken as part of the placement, or their effects. Approximately 60 per cent of comments focused upon the former category, while the remainder focused on the latter.

In terms of the advisers' strengths and personal qualities, counterparts connected their positive assessments of the placements with (in descending order of number of references made in the comments sections), the adviser's: ability to form good working relationships (20%); demonstrated knowledge and experience in the field (18%); the quality and relevance of advice (16%); being 'always available' and working beyond 'the call of duty' (16%); being cooperative and supportive (10%); exemplifying good communication, spotting weaknesses, thoroughness, consultative, a 'team player' and being fair and just (each <10%).

When focusing on activities or their effects, eight counterparts (17%) referenced the placement's stated aims by commenting that the meeting of planned outcomes was progressing well or was 'on target'. Six counterparts (13%) noted that their own skills had improved. There were four references (each <10%) made to improved procedures, four assertions of improved performance output, and four general comments to the effect that the counterpart believed they were 'getting a lot out of the adviser being there. Three counterparts commented on a positive change in organisational culture that had occurred as a result of their advisers' activities and approaches.

The five low ratings were accompanied by two comments that the adviser does not teach but rather 'does' (C21, 2007; C36, 2010), one comment that the adviser should do *less* advising and more 'doing' (C74, 2011), one that the adviser lacks understanding of the PNG public sector (C45, 2008), and another attributing lack of progress (with another AC placement in his department) to the absence of a clear counterpart to work with (C32, 2008). The remaining discussion in this section considers the specific areas where counterparts identified evidence of success.

As counterparts were not required to discuss specific areas of activity/development addressed in the course of the placements in their APAs (whereas advisers were so asked in their PCRs), the categories discussed here are those for which more than 20 per cent of counterparts independently mentioned some level of success. These categories are: planning and/or plan implementation; training and mentoring; and human capacity building (or the acquisition of skills and/or knowledge). A further category of 'gender equity and equality' is also discussed, as counterparts were asked to provide ratings in the APAs on this from 2009.

3.2.3.1 Planning and/or plan implementation

In total, 25 of the 91 counterparts mentioned some level of success in this category. By far the most frequently occurring comments (50%) pertained to specific plans that had been formulated, revised or implemented in the course of the placement, for example, Counterpart C52 (2009) said, 'We [will] have our Corporate Plan 2010-2014 finalised soon'. Around 25 per cent of counterparts mentioned improvements in planning/plan implementation processes or frameworks, while a similar number mentioned improvement in planning skills more generally. For example, 'I have learnt a lot in terms of planning and organising all strategic issues. This has helped me a lot with my responsibilities to be delivered effectively' (C44, 2011). In terms of limited success, one counterpart noted their 'disappointment' that the plans developed had not yet been formally approved by the Board (C33, 2007).

A counterpart (C77) reported in a focus group that his agency's strategic plan was a definite indicator of success from the placement. The plan is used to shape future work and actions. She claimed that there are key things to do with their reporting now which are much better. They have

asked for the adviser to return for follow-up activities and this led to a short-term contract to make several brief visits.

3.2.3.2 Training and mentoring

Twenty-two counterparts referred to success achieved through the mentoring they received, while 19 referred to their success from training activities. When reporting mentoring successes, counterparts most often commented on the quality of the adviser's advice: '[The adviser] has given advice on all financial aspects and the department has improved ever since his attachment' [C61, 2011]. Some made broader statements about the overall quality of the adviser as a mentor and the gains they have reaped from the mentoring, of which some examples follow.

[The Adviser] has worked with me and my staff as a coach and mentor on broader issues than procurement. By improving our communication skills, management skills, public speaking skills, research skills and even negotiation skills we have all become more proficient and have more confidence. (C17, 2007)

During the 12 months [the Adviser's] work performance was excellent. She was my regular coach and mentor whenever I encounter situations where I was unable to immediately address. I personally learnt a lot from her. From [the Adviser's] regular coaching and mentoring to me, I personally improved on my communication skills both written and oral, presentation skills, report writing skills, policy formulation, training needs analysis skills, planning, leadership and managerial skills. (C63, 2011)

The Adviser is an excellent mentor. I had no problem working with him and in fact have learnt much from his professional approach to work and problem solving approaches. (C58, 2011)

When reporting on training successes, the most common response (over 50% of counterparts reporting success in training) was to list the specific training activities that had been conducted by the adviser. For example, [the adviser] conducted an in-house training on the interpretation of the Actuarial reports' (C14, 2007). Where specific training activities were not mentioned, more general comments praised the skills of the adviser.

[The Adviser] has worked extensively with my staff to refine and deliver training to provinces and departments. Everyone, and each province that spends time training with [the Adviser] provides great feedback and wishes for him to spend more time with them, and their workplaces. This is a testament to the high value that we all find in him and his ability to improve our capacity. (C17, 2007)

In addition there were two counterparts who reported limited success in training and mentoring, one citing insufficient attendance by staff (C9, 2006) and another reporting that they 'could not think of any' skills or knowledge they had gained from the adviser (C45, 2008).

3.2.3.3 Human capacity building

The data for this category were mostly taken from counterpart's answers to the third question on the APA: 'What skills/knowledge have you developed during the time spent with the Adviser in the last few months?' Under the EPSP program, this question became: 'What are the main skills and knowledge that you have developed during the time spent with the Adviser in the past 12 months?' In total, 53 counterparts noted the development/acquisition of technical skills in the course of the

placements, while 66 noted the development/acquisition of management skills. The majority of responses were made in the form of lists, such as:

- *Skills/knowledge of coming up with a policy document*
- *Knowledge of putting together a work plan for my section*
- *Effective communication and listening skills*
- *Presentation skills (C42, 2008)*

Given the absence of explicit reference to the placements' stated aims, it is not possible to ascertain the counterparts' views of success in light of these. Therefore, for the purpose of answering this question, all assertions of successful skills and knowledge transfer are taken to reflect at least some success in human capacity building. Furthermore, given the absence of any firm 'evidence' to support these assertions, the most prudent approach is to report the most common types of skills and knowledge deemed to have been successfully acquired by counterparts.

3.2.3.4 Technical skills

In terms of technical skills acquisition (53 of 91 counterparts, or around 60%), the most often mentioned were essential skills required by the counterpart to fulfil their day-to-day work functions, for example:

- *Data inputting in the Concept system and [Agency] intranet*
- *Accessing information from Concept system and [Agency] intranet. (C26, 2007)*

Within this category, around half of the counterparts itemised specific measurable skills (such as completing bank reconciliations or learning to operate new ICT systems) related to their workplace roles. Alternatively, counterparts mentioned the acquisition of general skills, such as, computer skills (around 15% of the 53 counterparts), or more expansive skills such as the ability to develop plans (20%) and policies (<10%).

Counterpart C78 commented in a focus group interview, that as a result of what he learned during the placement his report/audit writing skills are now sufficient for him to produce reports/briefs of evidence suitable for prosecution. This represented an important improvement for him and the agency in the conduct of its work.

3.2.3.5 Management skills

Almost three-quarters of counterparts mentioned the acquisition of one or more management skills as a consequence of their ASF/EPSP placements. In descending order of occurrence, counterparts mentioned improvements in: communication skills (20%); analytical skills (20%); people management skills (18%); presentation skills (18%); strategic thinking skills (15%); time management skills (14%); leadership skills (12%); and general increased confidence (12%). Other skills mentioned by counterparts included: interpersonal skills, decision-making, problem-solving, and skills in teamwork/team-building.

Occasionally, commentary as to skills acquisition was extended to improvements in general productivity or the fulfilling of organisational functions.

A variety of skills and knowledge were transferred to many of us in the...Division. However the highlights would be that we are able to strategically manage the [Agency's] governance framework and reporting requirements better and meet reporting requirements that we previously could not and at the same time valuable advice on how to streamline our work was also taken on board. (C67, 2011)

In the counterparts' group interview, Counterpart C88 acknowledged that he learned a lot about the management of ICT in the organisation. He had been a technical person previously focused mainly on systems use. He learned about supervising staff, planning, and developing and implementing policy. He said that before his placement 'he didn't like policy, but now I appreciate it'.

3.2.4 Gender equity and equality

From 2009, a question was added to the APA that asked counterparts to comment on the adviser's attitude and behaviour concerning gender equity and equality. This question was:

What is your assessment of the Adviser's attitude and behaviour on gender equity and equality? (i.e. equal participation of both men and women in meetings, discussions and decision making). Please rate the adviser and provide comments as well.

Forty counterparts responded to this question, 38 gave their advisers ratings of 'good' or better, the majority of whom rated them as 'excellent'. Two counterparts gave ratings of 'fair', one stating that they were not sure of the adviser's attitude (C36, 2010), and the other stated that the adviser had 'only participated in meetings related to gender' (C74, 2011).

Examples of comments accompanying ratings of good or above are:

[The Adviser] always ensures that there is equal participation in the workplace. [The adviser] supports the HRM branch staff in ensuring there is equal distribution of opportunities available in all processes and decision making. (C72, 2011)

The Adviser's attitude and behaviour on gender equity and equality has been admirable and is of high standard. Gender equality in PNG is something we are struggling to be acquainted with and to see the role model of the adviser gives us the challenge on how we should treat each and every one equally. (C70, 2011)

In all meetings and during other discussions that we carry out in the organization whether it be IT related or other general discussions, [the adviser] has proven himself to be equal to both men and women. During our ITC meetings we also invite women to participate. (C57, 2010)

The next section (3.2) considers the advisers' strategies and approaches that they used to achieve their AC placements' aims.

3.3 Advisers' strategies and activities adopted to enable their counterparts' learning

This section addresses the following research questions:

- What strategies were adopted by advisers to enable their counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims?
- How did the advisers learn about or develop such strategies?

As for the previous sections (3.1 and 3.2), evidence from the online survey—both quantitative and qualitative data—the PCRs, interviews and focus groups is used to answer these questions.

Sections 3.3.1 and 0 report survey data and section 3.3.2 reports PCR data.

3.3.1 Strategies and activities used by advisers to enable counterparts' learning

Table 3.3.1.1 below presents the online survey data concerning the types of activities that the advisers used as the means to help their counterparts learn and improve their knowledge and skills, that is, to develop their human capacities reported in sections 3.1 and 3.2. Figure 3.3.1.1 expresses these data graphically.

Table 3.3.1.1 Activities used by advisers to help their counterparts' learning

Item	N
Mentoring	32
Observation of adviser activities	28
Workshops	27
Role-modelling	25
At-desk training	24
Structured learning	19
Other	13

Figure 3.3.1.1 Activities used by advisers to help their counterparts' learning

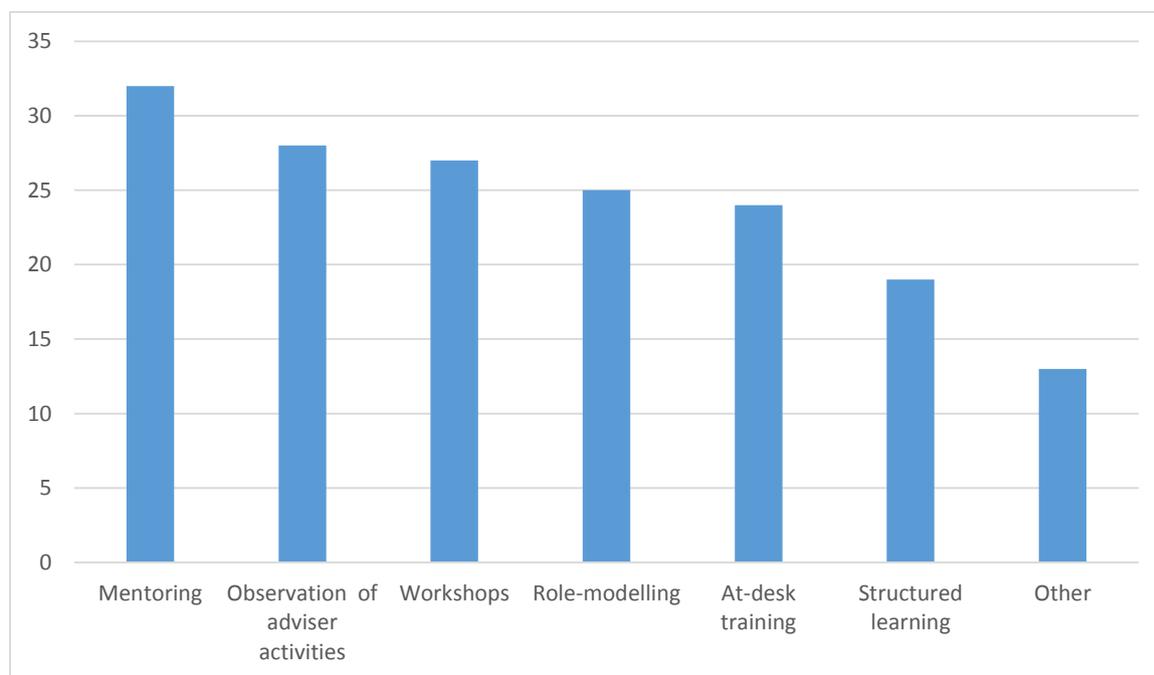


Table 3.3.1.1 and Figure 3.3.1.1 show that, of the advisers responding to the survey, 32 used mentoring as a means to help their counterparts learn to develop their capacities in the placements. Indeed, the majority of advisers used most of the nominated activities or strategies. With the exception of 'structured learning' and 'workshops', all the means used are ones that are often used in workplace-based situations to foster learning related to 'doing the job'. Some of the advisers elaborated on the strategies they used, as follows.

One of my key roles was to provide a forum where my Counterpart could openly discuss ideas and where I could provide suitable options/solutions.

I did a piece of work the first time and then subsequently I did less and less and got them to do more and more. A good example would be writing plans and reports.

Mentoring is, in my opinion, a long-term formal relationship where mentors model behaviours on, discuss issues and plan the mentees' activities and future path.

Once capacity had clearly been developed, I used a hands-off, more observational approach and provided guidance when needed and QA/editorial as requested.

After working closely with my Counterpart and his senior staff on a range of professional activities to develop their skills, they would then present on those topics directly to other staff at workshops and through one-on-one training. This process gave my Counterpart and his senior staff 'ownership' of the issues and tools developed to address the issues, and proved to be an extremely effective learning technique.

Some saw particular authentic activities as useful for learning:

Project assignments. Shadowing. Working together on real activities.

Fieldwork, visiting provinces and working as a team.

Some advisers endeavoured to provide Australian experiences and networks to assist their counterparts to learn and appreciate contemporary best practices. Two advisers noted the following activities they had organised.

Set up communication between an Australian agency and my office for placements of staff for on the job training in Australia.

Organised visits to Australia: a three week work placement for one officer in a (named) federal government department; and two officers to attend meetings with Vocational Education and Training service providers.

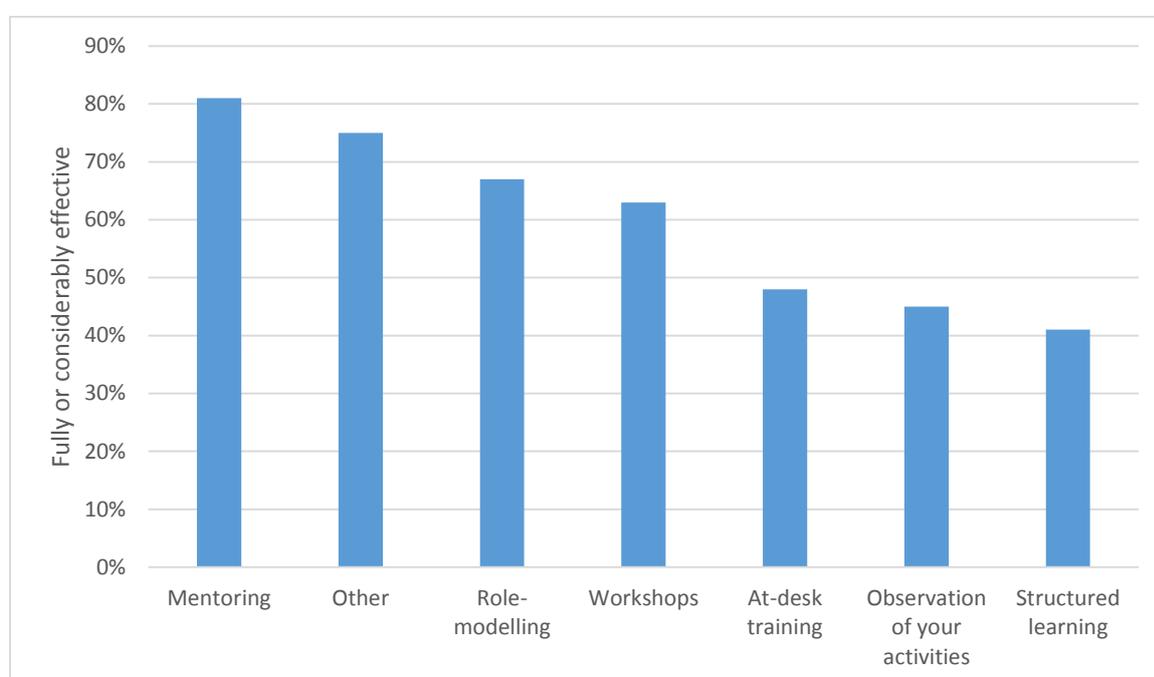
Table 3.3.1.2 below shows the advisers' ratings of the effectiveness of the strategies used—from 1, not effective, to 5, fully effective—and the percentages of those who rated the activities as fully or considerably effective.

Figure 3.3.1.2 below shows graphically the advisers' ratings of the effectiveness of the strategies used.

Table 3.3.1.2 Advisers' mean ratings of the effectiveness of activities for counterparts' learning

Item	Mean	Fully or considerably effective	N
Mentoring	4.1	81%	31
Other	4.0	75%	8
Role-modelling	3.8	67%	27
Workshops	3.8	63%	27
At-desk training	3.6	48%	25
Observation of your activities	3.4	45%	29
Structured learning	3.4	41%	22

Figure 3.3.1.2 Percentage of advisers' who rated the activities of their counterparts' learning as fully or considerably effective



There is a marked correlation between the activities most commonly used (as shown in Table 3.3.1.1) and those that the advisers see as most effective. For example, 'mentoring' (or 'coaching' as some advisers preferred to see it) was the most commonly used and had the highest mean rating (4.1); 'structured learning' was the least used and was seen as the least effective, but was still rated as 3.4 (between 'somewhat' and 'considerably' effective'). Two advisers also mentioned other strategies they used that were effective.

Working with them to achieve specific goals they had relating to their own job performance - so, for example, one Counterpart wished to have a unit established to undertake strategic planning so I worked with him to make the case for the Departmental CEO to approve it.

A particularly successful technique was communal development of PowerPoint presentations using a data projector. As much of the work of the policy process involved communication, staff would often spend several days gathered around a table

discussing how to frame the points in each slide. This provided an opportunity to synthesise messages but more importantly to debate and decide policy issues. After I left, the organisation moved to new premises and they had a data projector installed into the ceiling of their conference room. I attended a number of meetings subsequently where they used the same approach to debate and to decide how they would work.

3.3.2 Advisers' strategies for developing counterparts' learning

Section 3.3.1 reported the relevant data from the online survey of advisers who had completed their placements between 2006 and 2013. There were 33 respondents to this survey. The 78 advisers' PCRs for 2006-2012 were also analysed for the evidence they contained about the strategies and activities they used to help their counterparts learn and to develop their professional knowledge and skills. This section, 3.3.2 reports on these data and analyses.

A majority of advisers expressed views that successful skills transfer and capacity development is reliant on the establishment of sound interpersonal relationships with counterparts, based on mutual understanding and trust:

You can't effectively build capacity if you don't know your Counterparts, have earned their trust and have rapport with them. (A51, 2010)

Your relationship is more important than successes or agreement on approaches. (A43, 2009)

Taking time to build relationships is paramount and critical to capacity building success, observing not forcing opinion and listening, earning trust and respect of Counterparts and always deferring recognition to Counterpart and broader team is essential if there is going to be any genuine capacity development. (A48, 2009)

The key to success in a capacity development environment is partnership and strong Counterpart relationships. (A33, 2008)

Advisers must demonstrate trust, honesty and integrity in order to be seen as credible in the work place. Relationship building is way ahead of technical know-how. (A58, 2011)

Once such relationships are established then advisers were of the opinion that benefits and success accrue:

Individual mentoring becomes progressively more effective as the relationship is established. (A36, 2008)

If mutual trust and understanding is created, then the transfer of skills and knowledge becomes easy. (A60, 2011)

Success [in skills transfer] occurred when trust was present and when there was a willingness to look at things differently and apply in a practical sense. (A56, 2011)

Part of the relationship-building was seen to involve establishing one's credibility as a practitioner in the area and as someone who could and would contribute to the task at hand. While most advisers agree that advisers should refrain from 'doing the job' in order to ensure that local capacity is developed, many expressed the view that a certain amount of contribution to daily work is required to build credibility with counterparts and local staff.

I found that staff responded to enthusiasm as it can be infectious. They appreciate an Adviser getting involved, and getting their hands dirty. Of course there is always the trap that the staff is happy to let the Adviser do the work. The skill is in leading from behind and guiding and encouraging KAS and all staff to do the work. (A26, 2007)

There is no point being an Adviser who advises but doesn't 'do', I noticed improvements when I began to play an active role in the team's investigations. (A63, 2012)

Facilitating, rather than doing, is also a key factor, and in this sense, there is a need to 'do' part of things to get them started. This also helped to build my credibility. (A12, 2006)

Develop and encourage Counterparts to do the work and experience the benefits. There were times when the best way forward was to lead and train by example and this had very positive impacts both with relationships and the development of skills. (A53, 2010)

Part of this approach is also the adviser demonstrating to counterparts and KAS that the adviser is useful (rather than simply demanding).

As indicated, the sense of the relationship between the adviser and counterpart and KAS is one of partnership, as distinct from that of teacher/student or expert/client. It is about 'sharing skills and knowledge rather than teaching' and making a 'genuine attempt to learn from KAS and colleagues' (A22, 2007); and using 'coaching and mentoring skills, rather than [a] direct didactic teaching approach' (A36, 2008).

A key factor was having an understanding of the core business of the Division and being able to make the learning relevant within that context. I have made a conscious effort to be one of the team and staff have responded well to that. I constantly use terms such as 'we' and 'our' rather than 'you' and 'your'. Performance issues have been seen as a problem that belongs to everyone and we have worked together to find solutions. I think as part of this process staff put in an extra effort rather than disappoint me! (A63, 2012)

Most advisers believed that establishing good personal relationships early was essential partly because this was 'the PNG way' and it enabled an early understanding of the current PNG circumstances, from the agency to the wider polity and society.

I used the 'morning tea' chats as a way of building a relaxed yet professional kinship with my Counterparts and my 'open door' policy became known very quickly. This made the KAS feel they were welcome at any time to drop in for a chat about nothing in particular, but would usually end up with some pertinent issue being discussed and resolved. (A36, 2008)

Sharing an office with my key Counterpart enabled us to communicate in an informal manner on a daily basis. This led to us discussing issues and working on problems together on a daily basis. As a result my initial key Counterpart grew in his understanding of the General Orders and how to apply them and he gained confidence to draft responses without assistance. (A50, 2010)

The range of strategies and activities used by advisers for skills transfer and training comprised: workshops/formal training sessions; on-the-job training (including coaching and mentoring); and, to a lesser extent, role-modelling. Of these, one-on-one, on-the-job training and mentoring was the strategy favoured by the overwhelming majority of advisers, which is consistent with the findings reported in the previous section 3.3.1. Generally, the rationales given for this approach were that

activities were directly related to day-to-day issues, and that on-one-on interaction encouraged the maximum engagement from counterparts and provided maximum reinforcement.

Mentoring and coaching activities proved to be quite useful as the recipient had to be more involved and usually had a strong motivation to find a solution or a way to tackle a problem. (A25, 2007)

A facilitative mentoring/coaching approach has been used to jointly work through objectives and processes so that learning can occur and those involved have full access to the resources. (A8, 2010)

Due to a culture of respect for superiors and disinclination to speak up in open forums, I soon realized that the best environment for training was in a one on one basis. The KAS (and other staff) who were comfortable to engage in this process were the chief beneficiaries of the placement. (A1, 2006)

Direct training is probably not so effective at the most senior levels, as most of these people see themselves as very experienced and knowledgeable, and therefore feel 'slighted' when it is suggested that a 'Development Plan' be devised for them! Mentoring on specific issues and difficulties is probably the most effective strategy at this most senior level. (A44, 2009)

Mentoring and action learning were the strategies used to facilitate learning and understanding for all the staff members (Counterparts). In terms of the leadership and management abilities, this needed to be subtle but sure. Too strong an influence would be poorly received; yet consistent and clear messages regarding the value of democratic leadership and the importance of management that empowers and rewards staff performance were made on a daily basis and have proved to effectively impact upon the leadership and management of the secretariat. The primary recipients of more structured 'mentoring' and 'action learning' were the Project Implementation Managers and it was these staff members whose learning and development has had the most significant effect on the level of [program] implementation. (A65, 2012)

One adviser made a clear distinction between mentoring and coaching.

Mentoring is not a daily type of occurrence, the mentor is in the workplace doing their normal job and at the same time providing guidance or being a role model for others who wish to move through the organisation—it pertains to the achievement of career goals. With coaching, you are there, guiding and assisting and it is how you go about that that builds capacity...mentoring is not part of the capacity building tool-kit. While coaches are also role models, coaching is much more proactive; but as a mentor you can be reactive and still do a good job. (A39, 2008)

Formal training was almost always used by advisers as an adjunct to their primary, daily, on-the job interactions. When used, advisers noted that the effectiveness of formal training was dependent upon: 1) the subject matter being directly relevant to counterparts' day-to-day work; and 2) its content being actually transferred to/reinforced in the workplace.

Although off the job training courses are less effective than on-the-job training, they play a complementary role in that any technical gaps identified in Counterparts from work can be rectified by providing appropriate exercise/case studies for practice or

underlying knowledge (e.g. use of statistical sampling or diagnostic analyses). (A67, 2012).

Training as such was only effective if it dealt with issues directly related to participant's workplace and if they had the opportunity to practice what they had learnt. (A25, 2007)

To ensure that learning actually transferred to the workplace I would, if necessary, go through a process with an individual repeatedly until they gained confidence – it may take 30 times and on the 31st attempt they might suddenly get it, and then retain it. (A31, 2008)

During the focus groups advisers were asked: 'What strategies have you used to develop the knowledge and skills of your counterpart(s)?' It was important to understand how the advisers *developed* the capacity of their counterparts. The data show that several strategies were deployed to achieve these ends, and usually each adviser used two or more strategies. Modelling good practice was a popular strategy, because the adviser performed the task being taught, this also had a (sometimes unrecognised) capacity substitution element.

I initially had five counterparts who were then eventually reduced to one (two – one major and one less involved). The initial approach was to model good practice by doing the tasks and then gradually shifting his work to the counterpart so that after nearly three years the latter was taking responsibility for tasks. This process worked well. (A93)

I assessed the fit of the Counterparts to their jobs and works on those things that need development. Some people are very far from being the person that is required. Some don't come to work, so I tried to get the management to identify people with potential and good values. A graduate entry scheme is proving successful because it makes the current staff realise that there are bright people coming in and they need to work harder and better to survive in their own careers. Modelling behaviour is important, and also mentoring. (A60)

My ToRs include both capacity substitution and capacity development. The work team is good and the members are very keen, punctual and hardworking. The team is grossly understaffed for the work required. I work more with the team to provide advice than with the primary Counterpart. The primary Counterpart is the Secretary and I give him some advice but I am not sure if he uses it. The Secretary and Deputies to whom they report are committed to the agency and the changes embedded in the ToRs. The secondary Counterparts are keen to learn and there is regular knowledge and skills transfer though modelling and mentoring, in particular. (A93)

I have a single Counterpart. We developed a work plan for us that then developed into an operational plan for the team. I run workshops which did not occur previously in the agency, although this is not formally part of my ToRs, it will help support the work. I work through mentoring and discussing matters with my Counterpart. (A101)

Adviser A62 had five counterpart positions:

One of the counterparts has done really well and mentoring and discussion has helped. Teams go out each day but I can't participate due to security concerns. (A62)

Another adviser had difficulties in that the agency had inadequate systems in place for him to model good practice.

I did an initial baseline assessment of the team's capacity that showed that people who had various bits of training in the tasks did not have the capacity and confidence to implement these in their workplaces. The option is to train the whole department through workshops etc., or to focus on the individuals through modelling and mentoring. This is beyond working with the primary and secondary counterparts, but relates to the ToRs in terms of implementing the system. There is a keen interest in learning about the tasks, but the systems are not in place for practices to occur and for me to model good practice. (A99)

Sometimes forms of direct instruction are used to develop counterparts' knowledge, skills and/or values. Adviser A95 chose his counterpart by advertisement. He was seeking a woman with strong academic qualifications in the field. After appointment to the position, he felt that he needed 'to break down her bad habits' and 'then rebuild her skills'. He used Socratic methods in the workplace to educate her. Tests and tasks were set under pressure to help develop her skills to cope with pressure in the future.

Adviser A77 had several counterparts. She asserted that her main counterpart was one of the 'bravest' and most sensible people she knows. Amongst the first development tasks was to teach him to write good English reports, 'his reports were crap'. The adviser claimed that the counterpart often did things without seeking advice and sometimes he had to remedy things later, 'so learning was sometimes from mistakes'. The adviser is now more of a mentor 'as the counterpart is able to do good work'.

Adviser A31 provided an instance of what may be seen as an ideal working relationship.

I have a Counterpart who is keen to work together and very grateful for assistance. There is a positive attitude and it looks as if the Counterpart will be able to build the agency's strengths through their own sharing of knowledge and developing skills. (A31)

An adviser reported in an interview that his approach was based on mentoring, but that sustainability was problematic due to the complexity of the proposed system. These things are based around the good relationships. His 'nominal' boss was a Coffey expatriate with whom he had a strained relationship, but he had a good relationship with the senior local in the Commission and it was with and through him that he managed to help the agency. He adopted a 'positive, encouraging role' 'asking (non-threatening) questions 'in a non-confrontational way'. 'Sitting alongside people, not doing the role, but asking the right questions' to help them (A74, 2007).

Adviser A75 used several strategies to develop people. She ran workshops with break-out groups etc. so that they became involved. She noticed that her counterpart was not comfortable with consultation or with writing. She modelled good practice and gave him a 'template' for the particular process (writing memos, plans, etc.). 'After about a year he seemed comfortable following the templates, but sustainability was not likely once I had gone'.

Being a 'critical friend' was the strategy used by another adviser with her counterpart. The counterpart could talk to her in confidence before taking difficult decisions. 'He had nobody else to do this with as the others had staff with their own agendas. As he got to know me he trusted my judgement' (A16, 2007).

Adviser A50 reported that he had an expatriate counterpart who possessed strong views. This made it difficult to bring about change in the department. 'In spite of the open and positive relationship, it was sometimes awkward mentoring or capacity building another expatriate.' This observation suggests that cultural background influenced the capacity development relationship beyond the

actual capacities involved or required. Cultural issues represented an important feature for other advisers, too.

It was important to allow my Counterparts to approach the tasks on their own in ways that took into account the local culture and circumstances. I think many Advisers go in with the expectation that their approach could be used without changing them for the PNG situation and this often backfires because as soon as the Advisers leave, the Counterparts return to their old ways with little change to show for the placement. (A73, 2009)

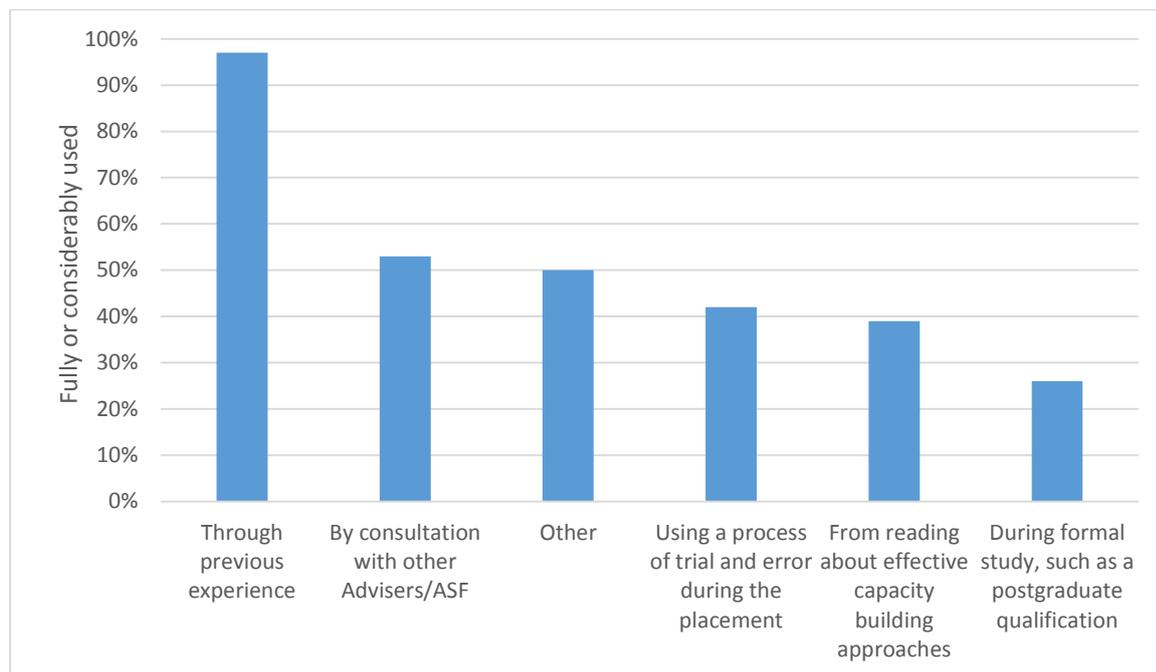
3.3.3 Advisers' learning about teaching for counterparts' capacity development

Given that advisers are appointed as experts in their field to help counterparts learn to develop their capacities in that field, it raises the question of how advisers learn to teach, that is, to enable their counterparts' learning. Table 3.3.3.1 shows the means that the surveyed advisers used to learn about how to enable their counterparts to learn, and their ratings of their use, from 1, not used at all, to 5, fully used. Figure 3.3.3.1 shows these data graphically.

Table 3.3.3.1 Advisers' forms of learning about strategies and activities to support counterparts' learning

Item	Mean	'Fully' or 'considerably' used	N
Through previous experience	4.5	97%	32
By consultation with other advisers/ASF	3.2	53%	30
Other	3.7	50%	6
Using a process of trial and error during the placement	3.1	42%	31
From reading about effective capacity building approaches	3.3	39%	31
During formal study, such as a postgraduate qualification	2.6	26%	27

Figure 3.3.3.1 Advisers' means of learning about strategies and activities to support counterparts' learning



Previous experience was rated the most highly (4.5) with 97 per cent rating it in the top two categories ('fully' or 'considerably'). Formal study was the least used, but as it was not asked what formal study people had undertaken and when, it is difficult to elaborate. There was no evidence during the study of an adviser specifically undertaking postgraduate study, for example, in order to enhance their teaching skills. The only comments made by advisers in the survey that related to specific learning they had undertaken for the human capacity development aspects of their placements were as follows.

AusAID workshop on working with Counterparts.

I found the Adviser workshops implemented by the ASF were useful in terms of: (i) opportunity to learn about a specific capacity building issue; (ii) opportunity to discuss experience and approaches with other Advisers.

Observing the capacity building strategies in practice within the ASF office.

It appears from the survey that there was little structured learning provided for advisers on how to 'teach' counterparts effectively. The 'Making a Difference' course offered previously under the ASF was mentioned by some as being beneficial. For example, an adviser reported in interview that she 'learned through the course of the need for more informal mentoring and to put more value on other conversations and not just focus on statistical sampling workshops or how to process things in Excel or how to do a field interview' (A69 2007).

Advisers in one of the focus groups reported that they were provided with little advice about how to structure the counterparts' capacity development. It was said that 'there was a bit of written stuff provided' but no regular support of this kind. Some advisers reported that they had useful informal talks on these matters with team leaders etc.

The following section (3.4) examines what counterparts reported that they learned from their placements and the successes that followed.

3.4 The counterparts' views of learning activities

This section addresses the following research questions:

- What approaches were adopted by counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims?
- What do the counterparts believe are the main things they learned from their placement? What evidence is there of such learning?

As for the previous sections (3.1 and 3.2), evidence from the online survey—both quantitative and qualitative data, together with evidence from the focus groups and group interview are used to answer the questions. The counterparts' APAs did not produce data on these questions.

3.4.1 Counterparts' ratings of, and preferences for, learning activities provided by advisers

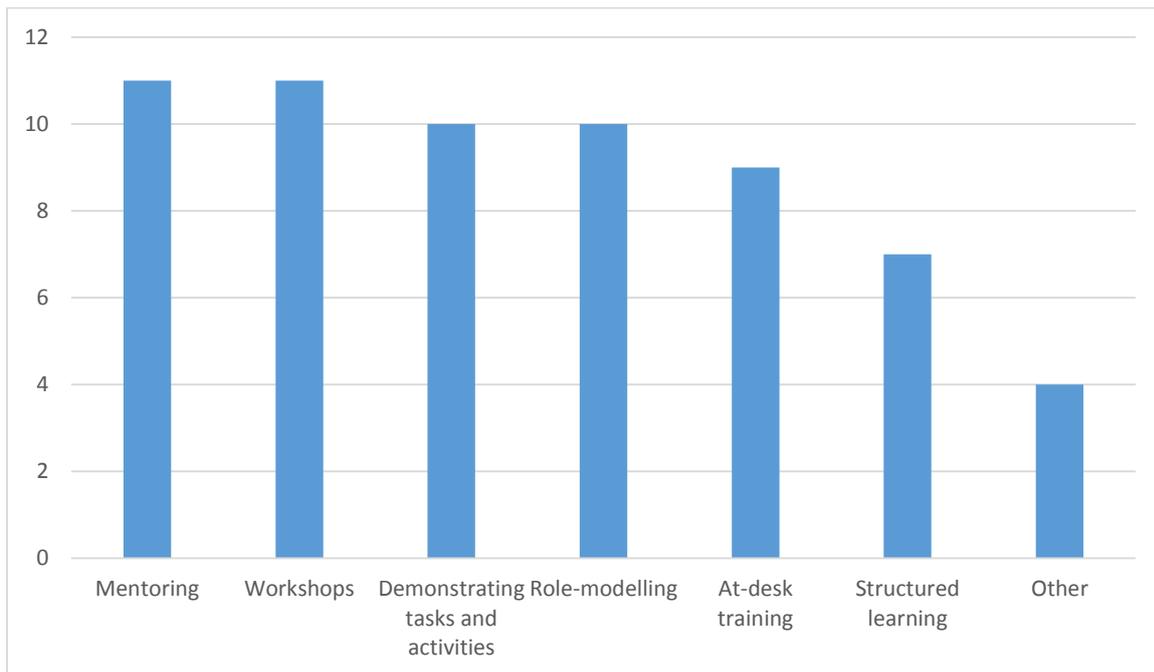
Table 3.4.1.1 below presents the online survey data concerning the types of activities used by counterparts for their learning. These activities were provided by their advisers to help them learn and improve their knowledge and skills, that is, to achieve the counterpart (and agency) human capacity development reported in Sections 3.1 and 3.2.

Figure 3.4.1.1 expresses these data graphically.

Table 3.4.1.1 Advisers' strategies and activities used by counterparts for their learning

Activity	N
Mentoring	11
Workshops	11
Demonstrating tasks and activities	10
Role-modelling	10
At-desk training	9
Structured learning	7
Other	4

Figure 3.4.1.1 Advisers’ strategies and activities used by counterparts for their learning



Eleven counterparts responded to the online survey, so Table 3.4.1.1 shows that all respondents experienced both ‘mentoring’ and ‘workshops’ provided by the advisers. As was reported in Table 3.3.1.1 for advisers, counterparts reported ‘structured learning’ as the least used capacity development activity. The counterparts offered the following comments on the activities they experienced. One reported that, ‘the Adviser used fully all facets of training during her tenure in the division.’ Others noted that there were other activities from which they learned, for example:

Apart from workshops, [we also had] meetings and discussions about how to effectively implement the Department's annual work plans so that outcomes are achieved.

[We were taught] reconciling actuals against projections and setting up simple MS Excel databases.

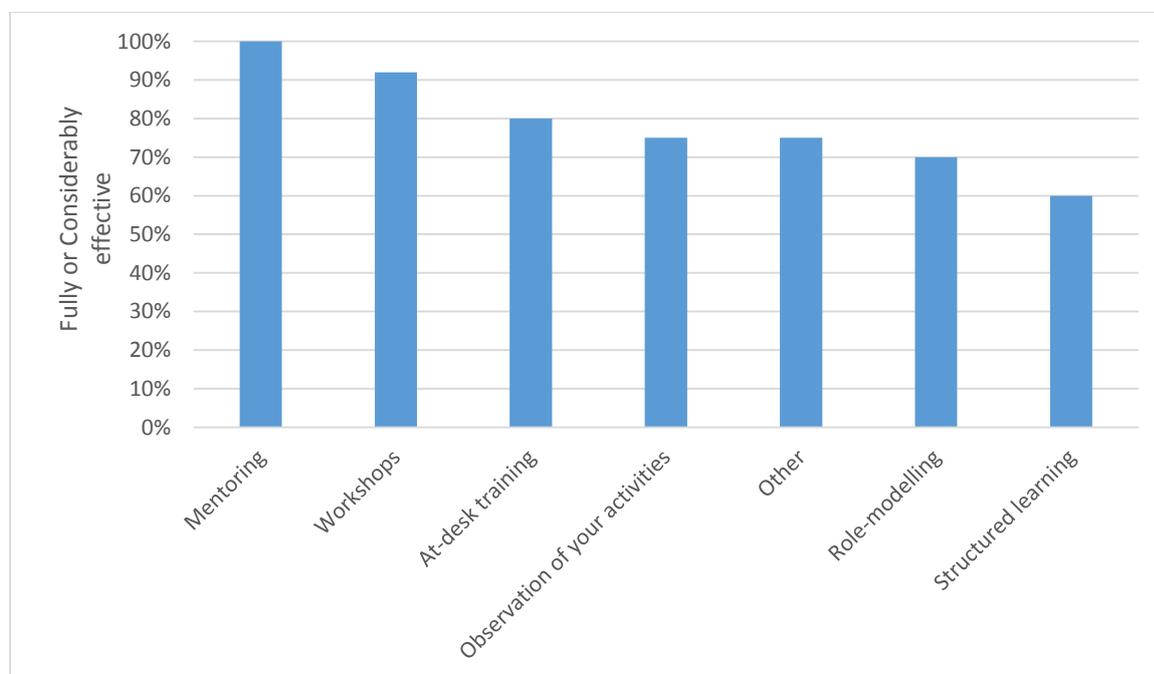
Arguably, these activities could well have fit within one or more of the categories in Table 3.4.1.1, so perhaps they were merely being emphasised by the respondents.

Table 3.4.1.2 below shows the counterparts’ ratings of the effectiveness of the strategies or activities that they experienced—from 1, not effective, to 5, fully effective—and the percentages of those who rated the activities as fully or considerably effective. Figure 3.4.1.2 below shows graphically the counterparts’ ratings of the effectiveness of the strategies experienced.

Table 3.4.1.2 Counterparts' mean ratings of the effectiveness of activities for their learning

Item	Mean	Fully or Considerably effective	N
Mentoring	4.5	100%	12
Workshops	4.3	92%	12
At-desk training	3.9	80%	10
Other	4.0	75%	4
Observation of your activities	3.9	75%	12
Role-modelling	3.9	70%	10
Structured learning	3.9	60%	10

Figure 3.4.1.2 Percentage of counterparts who thought the activities were fully or considerably effective for their learning



There is a marked correlation between the activities most commonly used (as shown in Table 3.4.1.1) and those that the counterparts saw as most effective. For example, 'mentoring' was the most commonly used and had the highest mean rating (4.5); 'structured learning' was the least used and was seen as the least effective, but was still rated highly as 3.9 (almost 'considerably' effective). As was found in Section 3.2, the counterparts' mean ratings are somewhat higher than the advisers' mean ratings on the equivalent items, except one (see below). In this instance, counterparts rated 'mentoring' as 4.5 (advisers 4.1), 'workshops' 4.3 (advisers 4.1), 'structured learning' 3.9 (advisers 3.4), 'observation of activities' (advisers 3.4), 'role-modelling' 3.9 (advisers 3.6) and, the only activity that advisers rated more highly than counterparts, 'at-desk training' at 3.6 (advisers 4.0).

Counterparts were asked in the focus groups and in the group interview about what were the best ways for them to develop their knowledge and skills with their advisers.

Only one counterpart (C77) reported working with his adviser at the beginning to identify his needs and then to develop a plan for fulfilling them. This contrasts with several advisers in Section 3.1.2 who suggested that they conducted needs analyses or other forms of assessment of the capacity development required at the beginning of their placements.

In accordance with many advisers, counterparts often preferred learning from their advisers modelling good practice and/or mentoring.

I learned from cases that were analysed and how to deal with them in terms of the Public Service Act etc. So it was modelling and then mentoring. (C82)

I find that on-the-job work and mentoring was the best. There needs to be discussion and consideration of strengths and weaknesses of any organisational changes in the ToRs. It is important to do this so that the change process can be explained and advocated in the organisation. (C83)

I was an accounting and finance person who was moved to work in HR. It was necessary for me to learn managing people from the Adviser in order to develop in the new role. (C79)

Two counterparts (C84 and C85) said that they developed models for their agencies that their advisers usually reviewed and commented on. They preferred this form of task-oriented mentoring. Another counterpart (C75) preferred talking and addressing issues together with his adviser, 'so that the Adviser is not imposing things'. The counterpart stated that she makes the final decision, but that through the adviser she 'hopes to get ideas and matters that [she has] not considered before that may help the organisation.' Counterpart C80 learned through the co-development with his adviser of a workplace health policy for the agency; this was then implemented.

Some concerns were expressed about advisers performing the required tasks rather than helping the counterparts to do so, or performing other tasks (beyond the ToRs) instead of supporting the counterparts.

It is important that Advisers are left to work with their Counterparts to achieve the ToRs. They sometimes get given other tasks that detract from their contracted work. They do these extra things so they get their contracts renewed...Sometimes because of staff shortages the Advisers fill gaps otherwise the agency will not do a required task or even function adequately. My Adviser works with me and the team on things that we need to do, but the Adviser also [additionally] runs workshops to address problems for the agency (C78).

Another counterpart (C81) complained that his adviser was doing too many of the tasks herself, such as writing letters and documents, so he and others couldn't learn the skills. They wanted to learn the English language and style/genre skills and knowledge for this work but were restricted from doing so by the adviser's approach.

3.4.2 Counterparts' views about what they learned

Counterparts' learning is an important element of the capacity development process and the success of AC placements generally (matters that have been discussed in previous sections). Here the counterparts specifically note things that they have learned (or are learning in the case of focus group participants) during the placements. Typical comments about what was learned follow.

I learned a lot from my adviser to do with processes and systems...I learned about developing policy and technical papers [that] reported to senior management. The Adviser was very helpful and skilful in these areas. I still meet her occasionally when she returns to PNG for consultancy and we have email contact. (C87)

One counterpart (C88) learned a lot about the management of ICT in the agency. He learned about supervising staff, planning, and developing and implementing policy. He manages 13 people now in two sections. He would have liked, however, to have more opportunities to learn his management skills, though formal programs or workshops.

Counterpart C86 stated that, 'I learned a lot about financial procedures and systems. My Adviser taught me about project management and conceptualising projects.' This is similar to another counterpart (C76) who said that he learned about report writing and developed his English skills. This was, however, 'not something that was part of the ToRs but it was very important to my tasks.'

Management skills were a priority for many counterparts as they aspired to become, or improve as, senior managers.

My aim was to work in senior management and I wanted to gain confidence from working with the Adviser and to develop my management and leadership skills. I have also learned strategic planning and about change management... [and how] to get the staff engaged and to have ownership of the strategic plan if there is to be real change. (C77)

I wanted to learn new skills, knowledge and also new ways to do things, such as, governance. I needed to build my confidence to lead and manage. (C80)

Counterpart C77 reported that his adviser wrote a tender document that the agency had to submit and so he learned how to do this sort of work by seeing how the adviser completed the work. He said that his team now uses this knowledge and skills to complete their own reports, plans and other documents.

One counterpart (C78) stated that he wanted to learn about auditing skills and strategies, and also how to manage and lead the organisation. In one of his early assessments he said he wasn't learning much because of his lack of involvement with the adviser (who was communicating mainly with the agency head) and as a result this was remedied. He says that his English writing skills were developed during the placement.

A counterpart (C83) observed that her agency had 'a gap in its strategic planning and management and the organisation needed to become better'. She needed an adviser, rather than a consultant, to help 'fill the gap' because 'an adviser has a genuine interest in trying to help someone develop their knowledge and skills'. The agency needed specific assistance with workforce planning processes and models in order for the organisation to budget and deliver its services appropriately. These were developed with the advisers, but 'the new processes are contested within some parts of the organisation so implementation is not easy'.

The theme of advisers being 'genuinely interested' in the agency was reflected in the final comment from Counterpart C81 who believed that 'there was mutual learning that occurred between advisers and counterparts'. He argued that he 'taught the Advisers the rules of engagement', that is, the Public Service Act and the hierarchical structure of the public service.' He also argued that the advisers needed to have 'the cultural circumstances' explained to them.

Section 3.5 follows with a discussion of the enablers of, and impediments to, the success of AC placements.

3.5 Enablers of and impediments to the success of AC placements

This section addresses the research question: What were the enablers of, and impediments to, the success (or ‘drivers of change’) of the AC placements?

Evidence from the online survey—both quantitative and qualitative data—and from the advisers’ PCR reports and interviews, and the counterparts’ APAs and group interviews is used to answer this question.

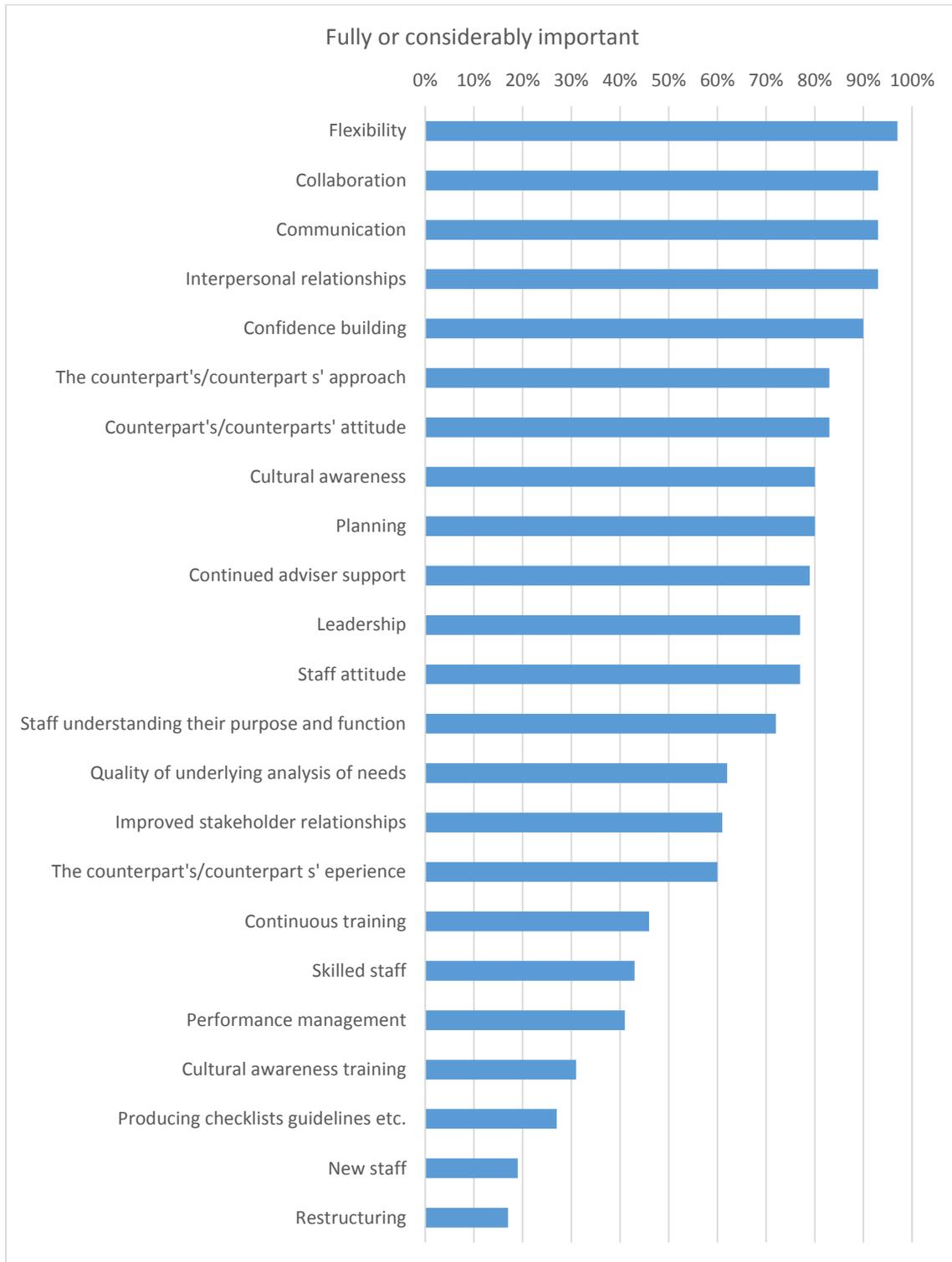
3.5.1 Survey evidence about enablers of success for AC placements

The online survey asked advisers to what degree the factors in Table 3.5.1.1 (below) were important to the success of their AC placements. They were asked to rate whichever of the items were relevant to their placement on a five-point scale (‘not at all’, ‘a little’, ‘somewhat’, ‘considerably’, or ‘fully’). This table also shows the percentage rated as either ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ important to the placements’ success. Figure 3.5.1.1 shows the ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ ratings graphically.

Table 3.5.1.1 Advisers’ ratings of enablers of success for AC placements

Item	Mean	Fully or considerably	N
Flexibility	4.53	97%	31
Collaboration	4.20	93%	31
Communication	4.47	93%	31
Interpersonal relationships	4.57	93%	31
Confidence building	4.37	90%	31
The counterpart's/counterparts' approach	4.23	83%	31
Counterpart's/counterparts' attitude	4.27	83%	31
Cultural awareness	4.20	80%	31
Planning	3.87	80%	31
Continued adviser support	4.10	79%	31
Leadership	4.10	77%	31
Staff attitude	3.90	77%	31
Staff understanding their purpose and function	3.83	72%	30
Quality of underlying analysis of needs	3.55	62%	31
Improved stakeholder relationships	3.71	61%	29
The counterpart's/counterparts' experience	3.60	60%	31
Continuous training	3.29	46%	31
Skilled staff	3.27	43%	31
Performance management	3.11	41%	31
Cultural awareness training	2.69	31%	30
Producing checklists guidelines etc.	2.93	27%	31
New staff	2.63	19%	31
Restructuring	2.67	17%	31

Figure 3.5.1.1 Percentages of advisers rating enablers as ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ important for success of AC placements



Almost all advisers rated all the items in relation to their importance. The conspicuous items are those that rated lowest (mean rating of around ‘a little’ importance): ‘producing checklists/guidelines’, ‘new staff’, ‘cultural awareness training’ and ‘restructuring’; and those that rated highest (mean rating of between ‘considerably’ to ‘fully’ important): ‘interpersonal relations’, ‘communication’ and ‘flexibility’.

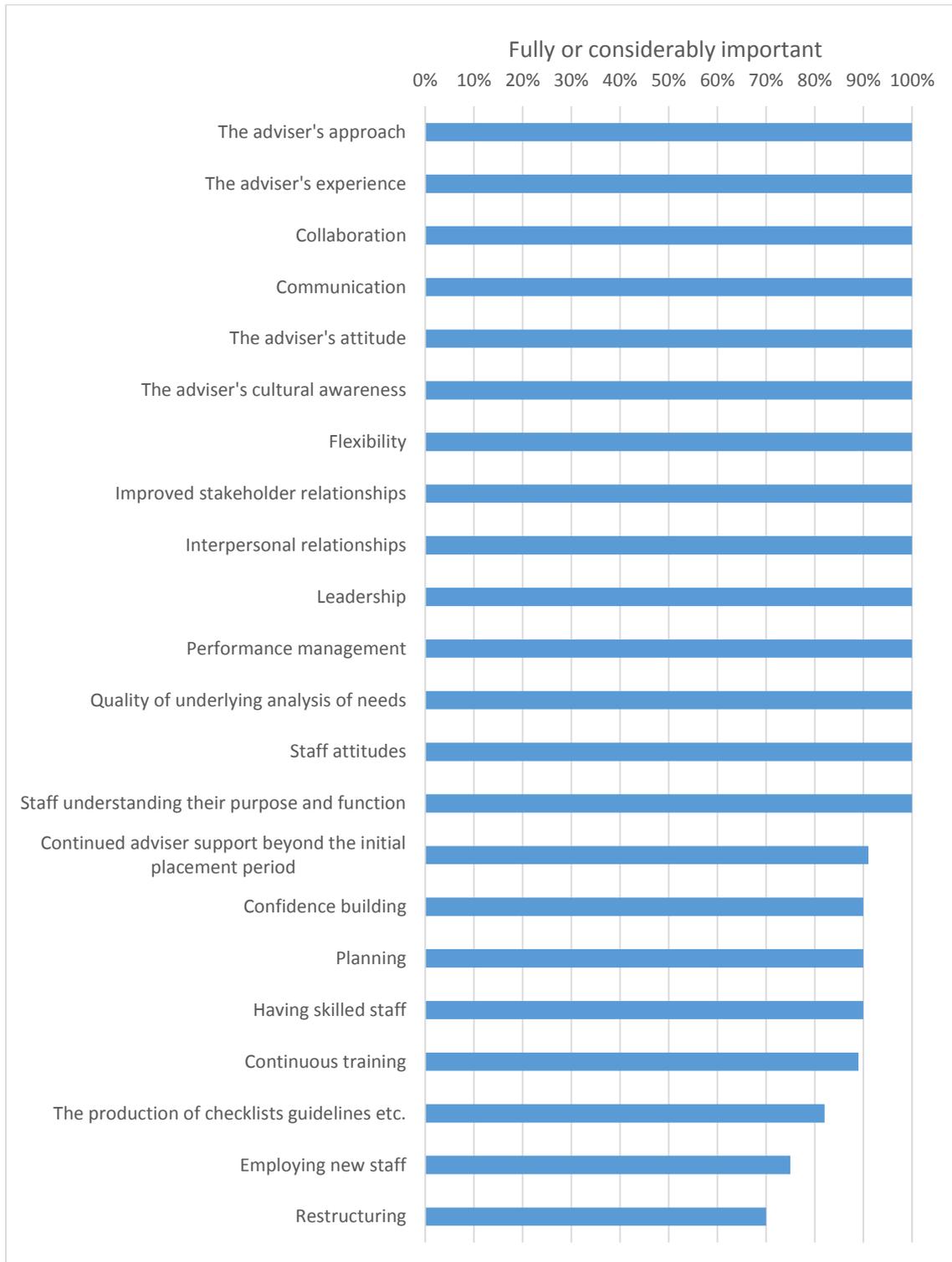
Table 3.5.1.2 (below) shows similar (but not identical) survey data for the counterparts with

Figure 3.5.1.2 shows graphically the percentages of counterparts rating items ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’.

Table 3.5.1.2 Counterparts’ ratings of enablers as important for success of AC placements

Item	Mean	Fully or considerably	N
The adviser's approach	4.8	100%	11
The adviser's experience	4.8	100%	11
Collaboration	4.8	100%	11
Communication	4.8	100%	11
The adviser's attitude	4.5	100%	11
The adviser's cultural awareness	4.7	100%	10
Flexibility	4.7	100%	11
Improved stakeholder relationships	4.7	100%	10
Interpersonal relationships	4.6	100%	11
Leadership	4.5	100%	10
Performance management	4.4	100%	10
Quality of underlying analysis of needs	4.6	100%	9
Staff attitudes	4.6	100%	10
Staff understanding their purpose and function	4.5	100%	10
Continued adviser support beyond the initial placement period	4.5	91%	11
Confidence building	4.4	90%	10
Planning	4.4	90%	10
Having skilled staff	4.3	90%	10
Continuous training	4.3	89%	9
The production of checklists, guidelines etc.	4.1	82%	11
Employing new staff	3.9	75%	8
Restructuring	3.9	70%	10

Figure 3.5.1.2 Percentages of counterparts rating enablers as ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ important for success of AC placements



Almost all counterparts rated each item. As for previous instances of ratings in the surveys, the counterparts consistently gave higher ratings than the advisers, although both were skewed towards the positive end of the scales. The least highly rated items for counterparts were ‘new staff’ and ‘restructuring’ which were the only two items to receive a mean rating (3.9) just below ‘considerably’. Advisers also rated these two items amongst the lowest. There were four items that counterparts rated equally highly (mean rating of between ‘considerably’ to ‘fully’ important): ‘adviser’s approach’, ‘adviser’s experience’, ‘collaboration’ and ‘communication’. The first two of these items were particular to the counterparts’ survey, and advisers also rated the latter two amongst the highest.

3.5.2 PCR and APA evidence of enablers of success

A total of 25 enablers of project success were isolated in the qualitative analysis undertaken in Stage 1 of this project. Table 3.5.2.1 shows the range and number of enablers identified. It should be noted that advisers and counterparts were not asked to specifically comment on these factors in their PCRs/APAs. These factors were isolated during a qualitative analysis of these reports. The numbers refer to the number of advisers or counterparts who mentioned these enablers in, respectively, their PCRs and APAs.

Table 3.5.2.1 Enablers of success of AC placements identified in PCRs and APAs

ENABLER	Advisers	Counterparts
Interpersonal relationships	48	9
Collaboration	46	6
Checklists, manuals, templates and other documentation	40	-
Counterpart attitude	38	1
Cultural awareness	37	3
Staff understanding of purpose and function	31	1
Quality of underlying analysis of needs	27	4
Improved systems, procedures and processes	25	-
Counterpart ownership of project activities	24	-
Flexibility	23	1
Improved communication, information dissemination and production	23	1
Improved planning	23	-
Continued adviser support (beyond initial project term)	21	7
Continuous or additional training	21	3
Leadership	19	-
Recruitment of new staff	17	-
Adviser attitude and experience	16	26
Improved performance management	16	-
Restructuring/organisational review	15	-
Confidence building	10	1
Management	10	2
Improved stakeholder relationships	8	-
Involvement of as many staff/managers as possible	8	-
Presence or recruitment of skilled staff	8	-
General staff attitude	3	-

Table 3.5.2.1 shows that, of the 25 enablers discernible in the advisers’ PCRs, ‘interpersonal relationships’, ‘collaboration’, ‘checklists and guidelines’, ‘cultural awareness’ and ‘counterpart

attitude' were most common. In the advisers' survey, with the exception of 'checklists and guidelines' which rated amongst the lowest, these items were rated amongst the highest in terms of importance. The counterparts also frequently mentioned 'interpersonal relationships' and 'collaboration' as enablers, but by far their most frequently mentioned enabler of success was 'the adviser's approach and experience'; this was also amongst the most highly rated in the counterparts' survey. Therefore, although these sources of data are quite different and were generally completed at quite different points in time and for different purposes, there was considerable consistency between them.

Of the five most oft-mentioned enablers, four represent a constellation of enabling factors focused on, or amenable to influence by, the interpersonal aspects of the AC placements. These five enablers are discussed below and, although treated in isolation, they may be seen as mutually supportive and reinforcing. Further, reference is made to other enablers not specifically discussed when their influence interacts or overlaps.

3.5.2.1 Checklists, guidelines, manuals, templates, and other documentation

A total of 40 out of 78 advisers specified the production of checklists, guidelines, manuals, templates and other documentation as important enablers of success, both in terms of achieving positive outcomes throughout the placements and as a means of promoting the sustainability of these outcomes. Over half of these advisers stressed the importance of checklists, guidelines and templates in streamlining procedures and processes throughout departments, and around 20 per cent linked the production of templates etc. with improvements in efficiency. For example, three advisers commented in their PCRs as follows.

The availability of accurate data and the introduction of various training administration forms and report templates have streamlined the activities of training administration, preparation and delivery. The new forms and templates have also improved the efficiency of preparing and administering training courses. With the new report template, trainers can now easily and quickly prepare training reports after the delivery of each training course. Further, because the report format has now become standard, it has also become easier for the coordinators to read through them and identify problems/issues that the trainers have encountered during the delivery of the training. (A23, 2007)

Operational efficiency has also improved, supported by development of operational templates, training plans and training programs undertaken by staff members. (A28, 2008)

The flow of [permit] processing has been streamlined resulting in faster processing times. This process has been supported by the developed of a new workflow checklist for each stage of the screening and assessment process which also acts as a decision record. (A33, 2008)

Further, around one-third of advisers linked the production of documentation supporting procedures with improved outcomes vis-à-vis sustainability.

Sustainability has been enhanced through the development of documented procedures and processes which are now used by all staff. (A33, 2008)

Actions to enhance sustainability include: For important corporate functions, developing operational policies and procedural documents that aim, amongst other things, to “lock in” policies and procedures for the longer term. (A51, 2010)

Continuous training, on the job and off the job and checklists covering tasks, timeframes and quality assurance are the means to ensure sustainability. (A14, 2011)

What was done within the placement to enhance sustainability of the above improvements/changes? [1] Documented policies, procedures and work instructions. [2] Work instructions for daily processes are available on the desktop. [3] Clearly defined, documented and understood roles and responsibilities. (A31, 2008)

Adviser A31’s comment above also links ‘clearly defined, documented and understood roles and responsibilities’ with sustainability. A total of 31 advisers commented upon agency staff’s improved understanding of their purpose and function within the organisation as an enabling factor in human/organisational capacity building.

Although none of the counterpart APAs analysed contained information regarding their views on the enabling effect of supporting documentation, one adviser’s report included the following quote from one of his counterparts:

The training manual produced by the Adviser made it so much easier to understand the process. I am now able to teach others including staff in my section. (A22, 2012)

3.5.2.2 Interpersonal relationships

A majority of advisers (46 out of 78) placed particular emphasis on the need to cultivate solid interpersonal relationships as a means of maximising placement success. Indeed, for many advisers, the importance of building strong relationships with KAS and other agency staff cannot be underestimated.

It remains evident that of paramount importance is the ability to build strong working relationships and be proactive. These areas should be the key focus of any Adviser in the first few months of the position or it will be very difficult to complete any of the tasks identified in the work plan. (A41, 2008)

The key to success in any capacity development/building environment is partnership and strong Counterpart relationships. (A33, 2008)

Building relationships – this is vital to achieving any change, and is critical in the success of an Adviser placement. The building of the relationship cannot be rushed and needs to focus on working with their needs and the priorities they perceive. KAS can be very disapproving if ideas or changes are forced upon them. Establishing the relationships and involving them is critical. (A26, 2007)

Building a good and trusting relationship with the Secretary has proved pivotal to the success of my placement and offered opportunities for greater creativity and honesty in dealing with wide-ranging concerns of the department. (A19, 2007)

Counterpart C75 stated in a focus group that interpersonal relations between the advisers and counterparts are important. He stated that another counterpart was so difficult to work with that the advisers could not have had successful placements, so he (C75) helped them ‘to work around’ the difficult counterpart.

There is a significant amount of agreement among advisers that successful skills transfer, training and mentoring/coaching is especially reliant on relationships with KAS that are based on mutual respect, understanding and trust.

For me, the key factor for success [in skills/transfer and training] was the relationship developed with KAS. Through respect and by developing trust we were able to work together to achieve the outcomes in the work plan. We established a safe working environment where issues could be discussed and attempts made at completing a task without judgment or criticism. My KAS had ownership of the activities at all stages of the process. (A20, 2007)

Some advisers went further to link the establishment of mutually respectful, honest and trusting interpersonal relationships with broader/or and more sustainable changes in their organisation.

The relationships built with [Agency] Counterparts were built on open and honest communication and a platform of support, patience and understanding. This relationship enabled parties to raise questions and ideas and debate in a friendly and professional manner. Debate, especially between senior and junior staff and expatriates and nationals is certainly not frequent in PNG. However being able to build this unique relationship with KAS allowed for the free flow of ideas and solutions to problems, the correct information as to what was happening or why things were happening and importantly consultation when something was or may go wrong. This relationship was visible to others and facilitated a much-quicker removal of barriers with participants in training sessions and staff from client agencies. (A18, 2007)

For each KAS the methods of interacting are quite different and it was important to take the time to build relationships of trust and cooperation with each of the KAS and in most situations their subordinate staff as well. This helped make any improvement in capacity more sustainable as officers within the Branches became engaged in the capacity building process and activities. (A36, 2008)

Whilst considered here as an enabler, the need to establish strong working relationships before commencing substantive work has implications for the completion of ToRs within the given schedules. This will be referred to later when discussing the impediment 'time' later in Section 3.5.6.

With all placements a critical issue is the establishment of a productive and professional working relationship with the agency KAS and/or Director. The process of establishing respect and rapport takes time, in the case of my placement only patience and time proved to be the vehicles for overcoming early issues of establishing my role and purpose in the [Agency] team. (A34, 2008)

3.5.2.3 Collaboration

A total of 46 advisers (almost 60%) mentioned collaboration (or 'partnership', 'cooperation', etc.) with KAS as fundamental to their AC placements' success. This general view is encapsulated in the following quote, taken from the 'Lessons Learned' section of one adviser's PCR: 'The main lesson learnt is that a partnership approach yields the most effective results' (A33, 2008). More elaborate comments pertaining to the essential nature of a collaborative approach in ensuring successful placement outcomes can be divided into three categories: 1) the need for collaboration between advisers and KAS; 2) the need to foster a collaborative team-approach across agency staff; and 2) the positive benefits of inter-adviser collaboration.

When discussing the need for collaborative partnerships between advisers and KAS, advisers stressed the need for this approach across all project stages, from the initial or continuing development of ToRs/work plans, to planning, policy and systems development, all the way through to implementation.

The ToRs were compiled in collaboration with my Counterpart. The ToRs formed a platform which enabled us to work through a series of HR processes to build the capacity of the HR Unit in modern practices. (A4, 2006)

A collaborative approach to problem/issue/opportunity identification was taken. Therefore, the deliverables were what the Department wanted – not what I wanted. An inclusive approach to system/process improvement was taken. Those that had to work with the system were always involved in working through options. A great deal of effort was put in to ensuring that officers within the Department took ownership of the work in which I was involved. (A8, 2006)

It is essential that KAS are involved in the planning phase of activities such that they develop the skills to take an activity from conception to completion, as this ensures they feel ownership from the activity from the start and also that they can use this approach for other activities in the future. (A13, 2006)

The second and third quotes above convey a collaborative approach as being important for ensuring counterparts' 'ownership' of project initiatives. Although not separately addressed in this report, it is worth noting that approximately one-third of advisers specifically mentioned counterpart 'ownership' of activities as essential to maximising project successes.

The key to sustainability however is the fact that all improvements and changes were done via consultation and discussion, so they are supported by the KAS as well as other involved employees. This will ensure the improvements are continued as they are 'owned' by those individuals within [the Agency] and not by me as the Adviser. (A54, 2010)

The statement by Adviser A8 above also envisages the second form of collaboration that advisers stressed as important: ensuring a team-approach across agency/department staff. In addition to frequently noting the previously mentioned theme of 'ownership,' the comments made were often quite specific in terms of the positive benefits seen to accrue from such an approach.

A team approach is essential in such a technical area. This provides a multi-skill result and helps make up for the lack of capacity. (A2, 2006)

During my placement, I worked with management to open communication lines, and introduced shared consultation, discussions on performance and an open forum to discuss career progression. A focus on teamwork is being incorporated into the restructure of the Division to encourage team ownership of activities and this has had a positive flow on effect on the time taken to complete tasks. Some further work is required to ensure that these new work practices become entrenched, sustainable and provide a solid base from which to build on. There are already positive outcomes coming from these changes. Management are beginning to acknowledge staff openly for the work that has been done well, increasing staff satisfaction to work. (A28, 2008)

A very useful tool from the beginning of this placement was establishing the KAS as a team responsible for the achievement of the Adviser's ASF Work plan. KAS were involved

right from the outset in the formulation of the work plan and they all determined who between them would be responsible for leading each project within the work plan. The KAS team met regularly to review progress with each KAS member's work plan tasks and the project overall. One of the benefits of these meetings was that all KAS members put aside their positions or titles and simply operated as equal members of the KAS team whose objective was to see the ASF work plan come to fruition. This provided an excellent opportunity for KAS to provide feedback to each other that might not have otherwise occurred. (A35, 2008)

Finally, almost half (21 out of 46) of the advisers who stressed the essential nature of collaboration focused on the positive benefits arising from inter-adviser collaboration both across, and within, agencies. Some of the strongest statements in support of collaboration pertained to this particular type. In their comments, advisers tended to highlight the efficacy of inter-adviser collaboration in pursuing the broader goal of organisational capacity building as a whole.

The group training activities undertaken by the ASF Advisers in a team situation were extremely effective not only in the training outcomes but in breaking down the barriers between Branches and Divisions. The Department operates with the silo effect, where there is little interaction between Divisions or Corporate and Technical groups. There has been a significant degree of change as a result of the workshops that have included corporate and technical officers in sessions such as change management, team leadership and management, Vision and Mission development, and Corporate Awareness. I was fortunate in working within a self-managed team of three ASF Advisers and as such had the ability to seek counsel from my team on issues or challenges. In many instances we were able to work on issues together with generally a greater overall outcome for everyone. (A36, 2008)

The support of the other ASF Advisers for both team activities and finance specific activities was vital. As their KAS also reported to the CSM, they helped in trying to get him to take a broader view of the division and occasionally the finance section alone. The team created a lot of synergies and the relationships between the Advisers and their KAS enhanced the relationship between the individual KAS and the team leading to much more consultation over decisions. This needs to be further built on as this is where the real change can begin. (A42, 2008)

There is considerable synergy of capacity building when there is a team of cohesive, dedicated, mutually supportive and committed Advisers in the same organisation. (A46, 2009)

Having a strong network of Advisors in similar roles to discuss issues with or seek feedback from is important. The HR Advisors have managed to set this up well in 2009. (A50, 2010)

3.5.2.4 Cultural awareness

Just under 50 per cent of advisers (37 out of 78) emphasised cultural awareness as essential to maximising placement successes, in particular, in the realms of skills transfer and training activities and capacity building more generally. Comments made by advisers ranged from general exhortations as to the need to, for example, 'understand the sociocultural setting in which you work—preferably by dialogue with the staff with whom you work' (A52, 2010), to more detailed explanations of the specific cultural context in PNG to which advisers must respond.

Try [to] understand how culture influences people's decisions and actions. For instance the fear of ramifications in asking questions of people with more status (seniority); that fear can be interpreted by Papua New Guineans as respect; that doing nothing is at times relates to lack of confidence and survival, if people do nothing it might be because they think they will then not put themselves in a position where someone can tell them they did something wrong (and potential conflict); that possibly one of the influencing factors around the lack of performance management culture might be that some Papua New Guineans seem to take comments personally (and are not easily able to be objective and separate 'themselves' from discussions about progress, lack of or otherwise). (A5, 2006)

Silence is golden – if the Adviser stays silent and allows long pauses in the conversation, this encourages KAS to open up and continue to share information, and this is the same in meetings, where some Advisers try to dominate. The PNG way is to share information slowly and in a round-about way, so it is important as an Adviser to recognise this and to allow a conversation to move slowly and in the direction the KAS want to take it, as they will inevitably get to the point and vital information will be forthcoming. (A26, 2007)

The notion of taking time to understand the 'way things work' locally was an oft-repeated sentiment of advisers stressing the essential nature of cultural awareness.

Don't rush, it takes a long time in PNG for people to trust new folk on the scene, and information gets shared slowly and sometimes in very obtuse ways. So a patient approach and gently, gently approach gets there in the end. (A44, 2009)

The initial phases of this placement involved a lot of observation and getting to know the culture of [the Agency] along with the culture of PNG people. The first thing I learnt was not to rush anything as it can be seen as pushy and bossy. I learnt that one needs to sit back and raise the issue and allow ownership to take over by the KAS. Then through support whilst the process is underway, the capacity building can be effectively achieved and the task completed. (A54, 2010)

As shown above, cultural awareness is associated with the development of trust and respectful interpersonal relationships which, as previously discussed, were also deemed by many advisers as absolute necessities in the pursuit of successful placement outcomes. The need to take account of the local cultural context was also stressed with regard to the production of training materials and approaches to problem-solving.

When designing training or materials for agency staff – it is important not to use materials off the shelf. Avoid assuming because it worked in Australia or another country that it will work in PNG. Materials should be designed by the Adviser to suit the [Agency] and to ensure they are PNG culturally adapted. It is important to avoid jargon and complicated language. Advisers must put themselves in the agency staff's shoes. It is imperative to think about them operating after you have gone – and consider what they will need to do so. Do not leave them with things they cannot use without an Adviser there. Make the training and the work fun. Papua New Guineans have a fun loving sense of humour and it helps to incorporate this into what you do with them. (A35, 2008)

Try to find solutions that take the best of all the cultures and ensure it is agreeable to PNG culture overall. Do not rely on 'First World' concepts and assumptions or "first world" thinking for finding solutions. (A25, 2007)

Ensuring language, materials, tools, examples, etc. are culturally adapted. They should incorporate Papua New Guinean words and concepts and not just be downloaded from the Internet or imported from another country without being adapted for Papua New Guineans. (A35, 2011)

Although there is a paucity of detailed commentary in counterparts' APAs, generally speaking, the comments below demonstrate the positive impact of an adviser's cultural awareness from counterparts' viewpoints and, as noted in the first quote, that this is directly related to the establishment of solid interpersonal relationships and, at least by association, to successful placement outcomes.

[The Adviser's] progress at the [Agency] has continued to be very good. With his assistance we are continuing the task of updating the financial records of the organization to an acceptable level. He has built up a good relationship with all staff in the [Agency] as well as other divisions. He has been able to achieve this because of his professional knowledge and experience as well as his outside knowledge of PNG people and culture. (C33, 2007)

[The Adviser's] understanding of procurement, and processes in a PNG context has seen him improve the procurement capacity of everyone that he spends time training. (C16, 2007)

3.5.2.5 Counterparts' attitudes

Almost 50 per cent of advisers (38 of 78) considered that counterparts' attitudes toward their placement activities and to the adviser were fundamental to success. A common pool of adjectives describing the essential features of a counterpart's attitude appeared frequently throughout the PCRs, including, 'willingness', 'determination', 'perseverance', 'receptivity', 'commitment', 'responsiveness', 'enthusiasm', 'openness to change/new ideas', and 'ambitious'. Some examples of their comments follow.

The key factors to success were the willingness of the agency officer(s) to learn and to make a difference. (A8, 2010)

During this placement it became very clear to the [Department] Adviser that a Counterpart who is committed to working in a capacity building relationship with an Adviser translates into better outcomes and a more successful placement. Cooperation and commitment are crucial elements to the successful transference of skills and knowledge to Counterparts. (A47, 2011)

Alongside this strong commonality in the terms used, it was possible to identify particular means used by advisers to cultivate, encourage or maintain these qualities in their counterparts during the placements. The main ones identified, together with examples of the advisers' statements about them, follow.

a) Discovering what motivates counterparts

Finding the right motivating drivers for Counterparts and staff is just as important if not more important than building capacity. An organisation needs motivated and committed people first and then the skills can be developed from this base. (A53, 2010)

What is in it for me situation – Counterparts need to find out very early in the process that there is some benefit for them in this cooperation and work together. (A22, 2012)

b) Focusing on KAS's, counterparts' and the organisations' priorities

One of the most important aspects in achieving capacity building is that KAS want to be involved in the activities and see the outcomes as a priority, both for themselves individually and for the organisation. For example, KAS actively worked towards the completion of the [Department] Manual as they considered this a high priority and could see the benefits for themselves (in respect to having a major new initiative completed) and for the Authority (in respect to having vital information disseminated to all employees and to improve employee management). (A13, 2006)

Within [the Branch] there was constant checking with the Counterparts to ensure they were committed to the direction capacity building was taking. Ensuring their commitment and confidence was a key component of the advice I have given. (A59, 2011)

c) Awareness of counterparts' obligations to others, not only to their advisers

Whilst the Authority initially indicated support for the ToRs listed, this did not always translate into commitment to implementation. It is, therefore, important to build on the commitment of all and to try to maintain enthusiasm for activities. One means to do this was recognising that KAS still have day-to-day work to complete and ensuring that assistance is provided in prioritising and time management to help them meet the varying demands on their time. (A13, 2006)

Successful activities depended on: a willing Counterpart; focusing on activities that make the Counterpart's job easier/more effective; being flexible to fit in with Counterparts' readiness; resisting the temptation to take over a task; developing an open relationship which cares for the people involved and is not just about the 'work'; sufficient time, practice and repetition; having a laugh! (A16, 2007)

d) As with the preceding and the following quote, focusing on the relationship:

KAS commitment only comes and is maintained by continuous interaction building an environment of trust. (A38, 2008)

3.5.2.6 Counterparts' views about advisers' characteristics that enable success

Analysis of the APA comments made by counterparts shows the kinds of adviser characteristics they regard as enabling success. In particular, counterparts valued advisers who were: supportive but non-directive; good role models; able to build strong interpersonal relationships; demonstrated strong professional competence in their field; and seen to be accessible to their counterparts. As can be seen in the following selection of counterpart comments, these qualities are often mutually supportive.

a) Supportive but non-directive advisers

He was very open and gave advice. His nature of work was that he provided advice but did not make it his concern on whether we took the advice or not. If he gave me advice, he made it my decision whether I wanted to take the advice or not. (C9, 2006)

Remind all advisors that they are placed in all our organisations to advise and complement our work and they must not try to run our divisions or departments and try to overrule their Counterparts as this happens with one or two of the advisors that have

come and gone through our department but we are thankful that [this Adviser] was not like this. (C67, 2011)

b) Advisers as good role models

I enjoy and benefit from working with [the Adviser] as he deals with people and clients. Whilst he is often very straightforward he bases his views on logical arguments that are supported by the facts or legislation. From his example, we have improved our ability to deal with and negotiate with clients. (C17, 2007)

[The Adviser] is a workaholic and she is very conscious of time management—she advises and reminds me not to allow official time [to be] wasted by all staff. (C56, 2010)

c) Advisers who build strong interpersonal relationships

Relationships based on trust - Can argue freely/ Debate/ Resolve/ improved understanding/ strong personal relationships/ respect/private sector experience. (C9, 2006)

[The Adviser] has a strong personality and always conducts himself with honesty and integrity with all Counterparts that he works with. The nature of his role is that he identifies deficiencies; so building trust with Counterparts is critical to his success. [The Adviser] has done this well. (C17, 2007)

[The Adviser] is a people-centred person and tried his best to know officers in the different branches of the department. He has very good PR and I believe with the type of personality he has, we will learn a lot of good things from him. (C19, 2007)

Rapport between the Adviser and all members of my [Department] Team is outstanding. [The Adviser] was the main drive for my division's involvement in Provincial Capacity Building activities. Prior to that [the] Division was totally internal focused. (C23, 2007)

d) Advisers who demonstrate strong professional competence in their field

The Adviser is highly skilled and competent. In fact, he will be an ideal candidate for any line agency placement in any government agency including [this agency]. (C58, 2011)

[The Adviser] has time for me at any time during his placement in [this office]. I have found him to be very conversant on all aspect of finance and administration work, hence it makes easy to work with him. (C34, 2008)

His knowledge and experiences in procurement and managing people has resulted in [the Adviser] identifying a number of key deficiencies and he works tirelessly with staff in the [agency], provinces and departments. (C17, 2007)

He has built up a good relationship with all staff in [this] Directorate as well as other divisions. He has been able to achieve this because of his professional knowledge and experience as well as his outside knowledge of PNG people and culture. (C33, 2007)

e) Advisers who are accessible

[The Adviser] is easily approachable as she is always willing to assist with whatever work problem we are faced with. (C2, 2006)

[The Adviser] is a great mentor and always available to offer alternatives. (C4, 2006)

FACTORS FOR ADVISER SUCCESS...Open door policy (original emphasis) (C10, 2006)

3.5.3 Adviser and counterpart interview and focus group evidence of enablers of success

Fourteen advisers participated in interviews by phone or Skype, and four counterparts participated in a group interview in Port Moresby. A further 13 (current) advisers participated in three focus groups in Port Moresby (across two occasions in 2013) as did 12 (current) counterparts. The questions for these data collection methods were derived from the research questions and previous research stages to pursue particular matters in more detail. The written records of interviews etc. were analysed and, for this section, material selected on the enablers of success. The key matters that were identified and are presented below with supporting quotes are as follows: 'style of engagement'; 'cultural adaptation'; 'leadership'; 'means of recruitment'; and 'number of counterparts'.

3.5.3.1 Style of engagement

It is clear from the interviews that the manner in which advisers engage with their counterparts is considered to be a crucial element to successful capacity development. In particular, two-thirds of the advisers interviewed emphasised the importance of close, one-on-one, daily, on-the-job interaction with counterparts, which ranged from, 'actually sitting there and doing the job with them' (A68, 2007) to the adviser simply 'sitting alongside people...asking non-threatening questions in a non-confrontational way' (A74, 2007). Mostly, this approach was privileged by advisers and augmented from time to time with more formal or subject-specific workshops. Clearly this approach goes beyond the idea of the adviser-as-role-model or technical trainer, and suggests that most advisers pursue capacity building through collaborative, on-the-job coaching. These views echo the finding discussed above that 59 per cent of advisers saw 'collaboration' as essential to success.

It is clear that this method of working was seen as the most appropriate for direct capacity building activities, that is, for the imparting of skills and knowledge required by counterparts to fulfil their organisational roles. One adviser spoke of how her counterpart's development accelerated when they began to share an office and could discuss issues as and when they arose and work together on time-management and goal-setting practices, and how it was 'these little things, this on-the job stuff' that had been the most effective (A50, 2010). These working arrangements were also seen as facilitating other factors that have been identified as enablers of success. For example, as noted previously, interviewees saw such day-to-day, on-the-job interaction as crucial for establishing good interpersonal relationships and also for ensuring counterpart ownership of processes and outcomes.

In addition, the comments made by some interviewees indicated that this approach can address some of the impediments to success that are discussed below. For example, one adviser noted that this style was imperative due to the fact that there was simply not enough background experience for staff to complete tasks on their own (A68, 2007) (51% of advisers noted 'insufficient human capacity' as an impediment to placement success in the PCRs). Another adviser noted that this mode was the only way to achieve cultural change in an organisation, saying that 'sustainable change is a function of the length of time available to have this day-to-day interaction' and that 'incremental change and cultural change...needs to be worked out on a continuous basis, you can't change on a fly-in-fly-out basis' (A21, 2010).

The need to work in a collaborative and consultative way with counterparts was implicated as a factor that inevitably affects placement schedules (analysis of the PCRs evidenced that 46% of

advisers viewed 'insufficient time' as an impediment to project success). An adviser noted that, 'this [approach] means that the process can take twice as long as originally envisaged, but if personnel are not engaged in producing outcomes then ultimately they will have little worth' (A69, 2008).

3.5.3.2 Cultural adaptation

As discussed earlier, the analysis of the PCRs found that 47 per cent of advisers saw cultural awareness/adaptation to local circumstances as an enabler of placement success. Throughout the interviews comments asserted the need for cultural awareness and for understanding the local context. These comments included understanding local living conditions and wages, and the effects of these factors on staff commitment (A17, 2007), and the need to understand the PNG emphasis on personal relationships over data-driven results (A73, 2009).

One adviser specifically linked the tailoring of initiatives to local cultural specificities as essential for sustainability, suggesting that without this approach counterparts would merely 'revert to their old ways' subsequent to the adviser's departure (A73, 2009). Another adviser (A70, 2008) stressed the importance of using PNG-specific approaches from the outset of system design and development. This adviser took the broader conceptual issues underpinning Australian-type systems and integrated them with local practices to produce 'a new PNG-style approach'. He added that the resulting outcomes, while successfully adopted locally, sometimes 'horrified' his Australian colleagues.

Some counterparts also expressed complementary views. Counterpart C80 said it was essential for advisers to respect the local culture and ways, and to understand the legislation under which they operate. She was concerned that previous advisers developed policies and procedures that contravened the Public Service Act and the General Orders over matters such as recruitment and procurement. Counterpart C80 then had to teach KAS what was required and remedy the policies and procedures. This is another example in which what has been identified as an enabler has a corollary impediment, depending on, in this case, whether cultural and contextual awareness exists (enabler) or is absent (impediment).

Counterpart C81 said that it was necessary to teach advisers the 'rules of engagement', that is, the Public Service Act and the hierarchical structure of the public service. The cultural circumstances need to be explained to the advisers in order for change to occur. Another counterpart felt that 'some advisers are 'outsiders' who just do the job and leave, others participate in the two-way process so that the adviser learns and appreciates PNG, as well as the counterpart learning about the job' (C87).

3.5.3.3 Leadership

In Stage 1 it was found that 19 per cent of advisers saw engaged leadership as vital to placement success. Similar views were expressed in the interviews, from both positive and negative perspectives. Two advisers discussed how the leaders in their agencies had been essential to their placement successes, for example, '[the Agency] had a fantastic leader, but if this had not been the case it would have been impossible to do anything' (A16, 2007) and how 'a "change champion" is essential if real gains are to be made' (A70, 2008). In contrast, two advisers spoke of how their efforts had been stymied by uncooperative agency and departmental heads (A73, 2009 & A71, 2010).

3.5.3.4 Means of recruitment

Both advisers and counterparts in a number of interviews addressed adviser and counterpart selection processes. In one case an adviser found that a number of her key counterparts were unwilling to cooperate and so she sought out other, willing, agency staff. This adviser argued that, 'the element of self-selection in this process had proved critical to the success' of her placement (A17, 2007). Another adviser believed that being interviewed and chosen by the agency director was essential to her placement's success. This was beneficial because it showed that the agency thought she would be a 'good fit' and that 'at the very least this should mean that the head of the agency would not try to undermine the work being done by advisers' (A68, 2007). Relating these two insights back to the findings of Stage 1, they could be seen to support both the enabler 'counterpart attitude' (49% of advisers, Stage 1) and at least partially mitigate two impediments: 'lack of will/interest' (58% of advisers) and 'active resistance to adviser' (23% of advisers).

3.5.3.5 Number of counterparts

A few advisers spoke of how working alongside multiple agency staff improved overall placement effectiveness (in Stage 1, 10% of advisers indicated involving as many people as possible as an enabler of project success). In the case of one adviser (A68), an arrangement with multiple counterparts had been instituted after her first primary counterpart 'went bush' and the second left the organisation after a short period of time (A68, 2007). In this way, the practice of recruiting multiple counterparts can be seen as mitigating the effects of two impediments to placement success isolated in Stage 1: 'absence of key counterpart' (27% of advisers) and 'staff turnover/removal' (26% of advisers). Moreover, this initiative was seen as actually enhancing overall placement outcomes because of how it 'allows [an Adviser] to focus efforts more broadly and helps with the broader project of institutional capacity building' (A68, 2007).

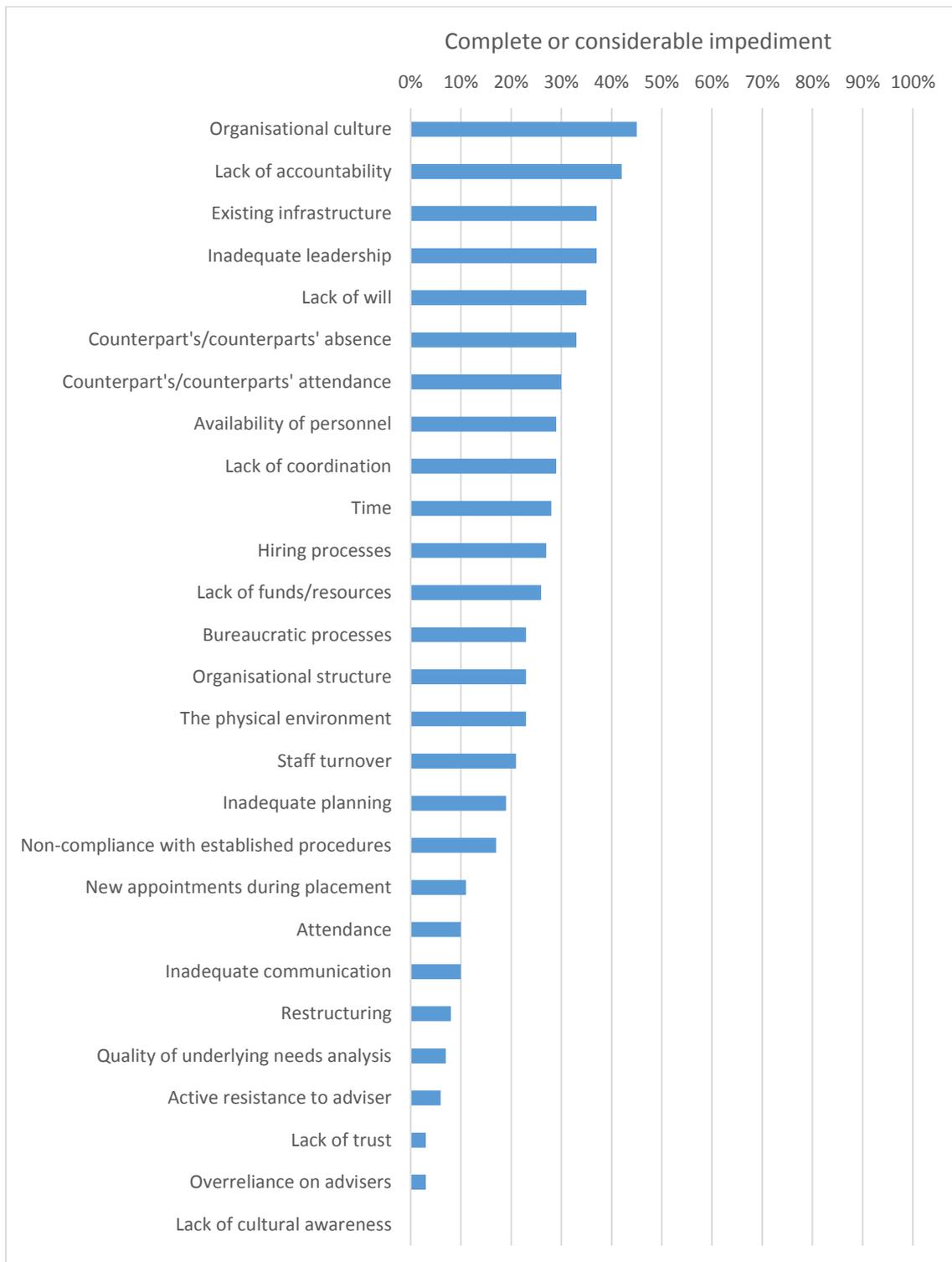
3.5.4 Survey evidence on impediments to success in capacity development

The online survey asked advisers to what degree the factors in Table 3.5.4.1 (below) were impediments to the success of their AC placements. They were asked to rate whichever of the items were relevant as impediments to the success of their placements on a five-point scale ('not at all', 'a little', 'somewhat', 'considerably' or 'fully'). This table also shows the percentage rated as either 'fully' or 'considerably' significant as impediments. Figure 3.5.4.1 shows the 'fully' or 'considerably' ratings graphically.

Table 3.5.4.1 Advisers' ratings of the major impediments to placement success

Item	Mean	Complete or considerable impediment	N
Organisational culture	3.13	45%	31
Lack of accountability	2.94	42%	31
Existing infrastructure	2.87	37%	31
Inadequate leadership	2.83	37%	30
Lack of will	2.77	35%	31
Counterpart's/counterparts' absence	2.67	33%	31
Counterpart's/counterparts' attendance	2.47	30%	31
Availability of personnel	2.90	29%	31
Lack of coordination	2.90	29%	31
Time	2.62	28%	30
Hiring processes	2.85	27%	30
Lack of funds/resources	2.52	26%	31
Bureaucratic processes	2.68	23%	31
Organisational structure	2.71	23%	31
The physical environment	2.45	23%	31
Staff turnover	2.29	21%	31
Inadequate planning	2.45	19%	31
Non-compliance with established procedures	2.23	17%	30
New appointments during placement	2.07	11%	31
Attendance	2.16	10%	31
Inadequate communication	2.52	10%	31
Restructuring	1.92	8%	31
Quality of underlying needs analysis	2.07	7%	31
Active resistance to adviser	1.77	6%	31
Lack of trust	1.77	3%	31
Overreliance on advisers	2.23	3%	31
Lack of cultural awareness	1.52	0%	31

Figure 3.5.4.1 Advisers' ratings of the impediments to placement success

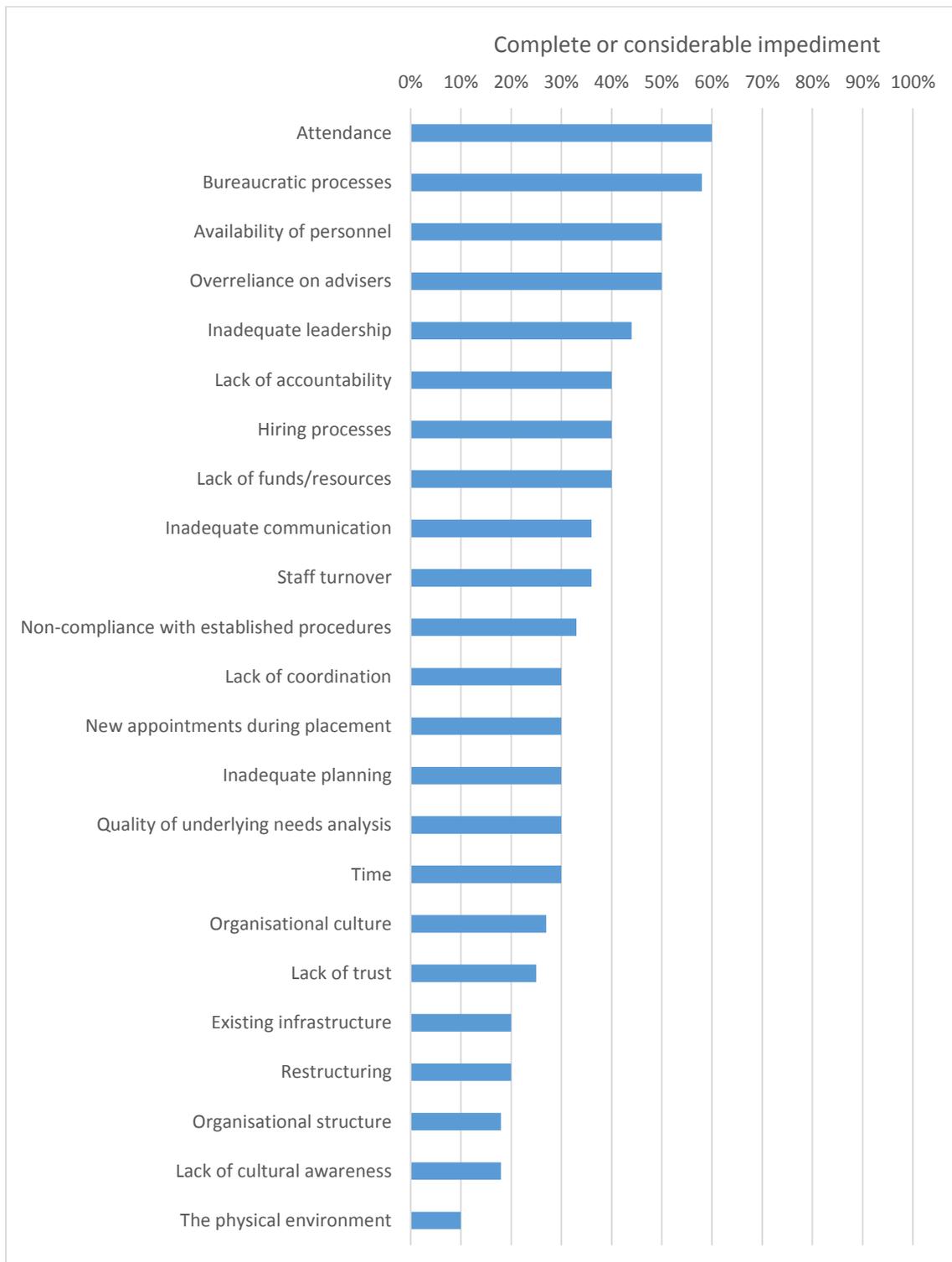


Almost all advisers rated all the items in relation to their importance as impediments to success. The conspicuous items are those that rated lowest (mean rating of around 'a little' importance): 'lack of cultural awareness', 'lack of trust', 'resistance to adviser', and 'restructuring'; and those that rated highest (mean rating around of 'somewhat' importance): 'organisational culture', 'lack of accountability', 'existing infrastructure' and 'inadequate leadership'. Table 3.5.4.2 (below) shows similar (but not identical) survey data for the counterparts, with Figure 3.5.4.2 showing graphically the percentages of counterparts rating items 'fully' or 'considerably'.

Table 3.5.4.2 Counterparts' ratings of the major impediments to placement success

Item	Average	Complete or considerable impediment	n
Attendance	3.0	60%	10
Bureaucratic processes	3.3	58%	12
Availability of personnel	2.9	50%	10
Overreliance on Advisers	3.0	50%	10
Inadequate leadership	2.6	44%	9
Lack of accountability	2.9	40%	10
Hiring processes	2.8	40%	10
Lack of funds/resources	2.7	40%	10
Inadequate communication	2.8	36%	11
Staff turnover	2.9	36%	11
Non-compliance with established procedures	2.7	33%	9
Lack of coordination	2.6	30%	10
New appointments during placement	2.5	30%	10
Inadequate planning	2.4	30%	10
Quality of underlying needs analysis	2.6	30%	10
Time	2.6	30%	10
Organisational culture	2.7	27%	11
Lack of trust	2.4	25%	8
Existing infrastructure	2.4	20%	10
Restructuring	2.4	20%	10
Organisational structure	2.5	18%	11
Lack of cultural awareness	2.5	18%	11
The physical environment	2.4	10%	10

Figure 3.5.4.2 Counterparts' ratings of the impediments to placement success



Almost all counterparts rated each item. The counterparts gave slightly higher ratings (that is, seeing impediments as slightly more important) than did the advisers. As the number of counterparts responding was so low there is little to be drawn from these differences. The least highly rated items for counterparts, all scoring a mean rating of 2.4 which is between 'a little' and 'somewhat' were: 'lack of trust', 'restructuring', 'existing infrastructure', 'inadequate planning' and 'physical environment'. Advisers also rated 'lack of trust' and 'restructuring' amongst the lowest, but they rated 'existing infrastructure' amongst the highest in terms of its importance as an impediment. The

Counterparts rated highest (mean rating of about 'somewhat' important): 'attendance [of agency staff]', 'over-reliance on advisers', and 'bureaucratic processes', none of which matched the advisers' highest ratings, although the score differences were minor and, as noted previously, the number of counterparts responding means little can be drawn from these differences.

3.5.5 PCR and APA evidence of impediments to success

A total of 39 impediments to placement success were isolated in the qualitative analysis undertaken in Stage 1 of this project. Table 3.5.5.1 lists the impediments to success identified in this analysis, along the numbers of advisers and counterparts who mentioned these impediments.

Table 3.5.5.1 Impediments to success of AC placements identified in PCRs and APAs

IMPEDIMENT	Advisers	Counterparts
Lack of will, interest	45	-
Organisational culture and/or politics	43	-
Insufficient human capacity	40	2
Management	39	-
Insufficient time	36	1
Lack of availability of skilled personnel	36	1
Attendance	31	1
Inadequate performance management	31	1
Incorrect needs analysis	27	1
Lack of funds, resources	24	-
Non- or inconsistent compliance with policies and procedures	23	-
Staff lack understanding of purpose and function	23	-
Absence of key counterpart	21	-
Poor leadership	21	-
Staff removal, turnover	20	-
ToRs unrealistic	20	-
Hiring processes	19	2
Overreliance on advisers, donors, external assistance	19	1
Active resistance to adviser	18	-
Physical environment	17	-
Reliance on other agencies, departments, individuals	17	-
Inadequate budgeting practices	16	1
Lack of accountability	16	-
Organisational structure	13	-
Systemic	13	1
End of adviser placement	11	1
Lack of coordination	11	-
Poor internal communication	10	-
Inadequate infrastructure	10	-
Insufficient organisational capacity at outset	9	-
New staff, appointments during placement	9	-
Inadequate planning	8	-
Restructuring	7	-
Bureaucracy	6	-
Elections/change of government	5	-
Interpersonal relationships	2	-
Poor stakeholder relations	2	-
Adviser attitude/experience	1	4
Poor stakeholder relations	2	-

The five most oft-mentioned impediments were: 1) insufficient human capacity; 2) organisational culture and/or politics; 3) lack of will/interest; 4) management; and 5) insufficient time. As with the enablers, most elements within these categories are mutually reinforcing and interactive. These five impediments are discussed in this section, with reference made to others not specifically discussed when their influence interacts or overlaps. As would be expected, much of the data presented here

(but by no means all) relates to factors that are furthest from the advisers' powers of influence, often being related to conditions arising from deep within the local culture and/or work and political context.

3.5.5.1 Insufficient human capacity

The nature of the AC projects as 'capacity building' is founded on there being capacity deficiencies requiring development. The 'insufficient human capacity' impediment, therefore, pertains to situations where advisers reported that initial levels of capacity were inadequate to fulfil certain ToRs. The lack of capacity reported may refer to individual counterparts, and/or to the unavailability of sufficient numbers of personnel, and/or to insufficient higher-level capacity to implement initiatives, policies or plans devised throughout the course of the placements. A total of forty advisers reported insufficient human capacity as an impediment to success at one or all of these levels. (A further impediment, 'initial analysis of needs incorrect', which was reported by 27 advisers, is also implicated here.) The advisers' statements reported below provide examples of the impediments and of the ways in which they impeded success and sustainability.

a) Inability to complete ToRs due to insufficient starting levels of human capacity

There is a significant amount of work to be achieved in the time-frame by the HR Advisor and [Agency] HR Counterparts and this should not be underestimated. Given the current capacity of the HR team, both in terms of their abilities to perform at the levels required to achieve the outcomes required and from a resourcing perspective, it is unlikely all of these issues will be able to be addressed in a 12-month timeframe. (A50, 2010)

These outcomes were realistic and desirable in principle. However as the Staff on strength of HR was so low (only 15 staff were actually in place from a branch establishment of 32 for some time after I started) in addition to the key Counterpart positions being vacant (that is the HR Manager position and Senior Training Manager position) there was not the capacity in HR branch to really move forward on ToR 4 & 5. I tried to achieve by ToRs by seizing opportunities in their day today work to include some aspect of the ToRs. (A55, 2011)

Reasons for the unrealistic time frame related to terms of reference: It takes at least 3 years for big [professional] firms in developed countries to train a qualified person so that he/she can carry out end-to-end [professional] process and assess the internal controls independently and competently. With the existing level of skills, knowledge and analytical ability of my PNG Counterparts, it will take longer time and greater effort to develop the [process] Counterparts in PNG. The [professional] skills and knowledge of the experienced audit Counterparts are not significantly better than the younger and less experienced audit staff. This has created a vacuum in the supervisory level. I could place very limited reliance on my key Counterparts to acquire new skills from me first within a relatively short time frame and then assist in training his staff. Instead, I was required to train all staff from the same basic level and at the same time. (A67, 2012)

Work was carried out on each of these ToRs but they were not achieved as noted in the agreed work plan. These objectives along with the remaining six also require a reasonable level of expertise and capacity from Counterparts. This was non-existent. The level of expertise and understanding was found to be extremely low, boards were not capable of being aware that they themselves operated outside of legislative parameters, and at the agency and provincial level their ability to operate sound procurement processes is hindered by the lack of capacity and understanding at the most

fundamental levels such as the drafting of specifications and evaluation plans. (A18, 2007)

The [Counterpart] had no previous experience in human resources and as such opportunities for capacity building were limited to basic human resource activities commensurate with the [Counterpart's]. (A47, 2009)

b) Inability to implement initiatives developed throughout the placement

[The Branch] lacks the management capability to implement processes and procedures including performance standards for trainers, effective performance management of staff, communication structures, strategic planning and management and resource usage. Despite the development of a Training Operations Manual outlining standards and processes to ensure quality training development and delivery, there is little ability to cause compliance from staff. (A39, 2008)

The third reason that anticipated outcomes from this placement were unrealistic in the timeframe is that capacity to implement and sustain envisaged changes to [the Agency's] operating model is very unequal among staff across the organisation and the pace of change is necessarily slow. (A16, 2007)

c) Implications for sustainability

When endeavouring to build capacity in other trainers to assist with design and development, it became evident that their supposed qualifications gained in Cert 4 TAA, which includes four units of competency in design and development of learning and assessment materials is almost non-existent. Therefore the sustainability is a problem with trainers unable to agree on many aspects, creating their own rules, not adhering to consistency, etc. (A57, 2011)

The intermediate outcomes, which I have achieved during the past 2 years, fall short of the self-generating CD [capacity development] level where staff could develop themselves based upon the existing [professional] infrastructure which I have developed and [professional] skills and knowledge which I have transferred to the staff. (A67, 2012)

3.5.5.2 Organisational culture and/or politics

A total of 43 out of 78 advisers reported that success was impeded by organisational culture and/or politics. Advisers expressed concerns about the difficulty KAS have in asserting themselves and in promoting change due to the prevailing attitudes about challenging authority.

Overall the training and mentoring activities have been effective. In conjunction with the other ASF advisors located in the [Agency], we have been working to improving analytical skills within the agency. This work has shown progress, however, there are cultural issues with staff frequently reluctant to challenge the views of more senior officers. (A11, 2006)

My whole approach was about building sustainability through understanding, particularly of the key organisational drivers of interpersonal and systemic relationships. Many senior staff were beginning to capture this understanding, and with it, its practical implications for their daily management. But faced with the reality of the operating culture and leadership style were finding it hard to implement. (A29, 2008)

Advisers reported that, in some circumstances, organisational culture was such that there was little or no incentive for KAS to support any organisational change and/or for the adviser to promote change successfully.

The working environment is such that it is not in the self-interest of staff to change. Change requires compliance with the Public Finance (Management) Act and the General Orders. This means that the opportunity for personal gain through the manipulation of existing systems will be eliminated, thereby making staff who currently benefit from such manipulation worse off than they are currently. Hence there is no incentive to change. (A30, 2008)

Public service culture, risk aversion, protection of miscreants and a general unwillingness to speak up reduce the ability to make a quantum change in service performance or to undertake appropriate disciplinary actions. (A36, 2008)

A selection of statements from advisers follows regarding the specific challenges they faced in the cultural/political contexts in which they were working. These show that this particular impediment is implicated in a number of other impediments identified in the analysis of the PCRs: 'active resistance' (18 advisers); 'inadequate performance management' (31 advisers); 'attendance' (31 advisers); 'lack of will or interest' (45 advisers); 'management' (39 advisers); 'staff turnover/removal' (20 advisers); and 'hiring processes' (including 'Wantokism' - 19 advisers).

During the input, the organisational will to change was not consistent and some initiatives moved quickly while others did not progress at all despite significant effort by both Advisers and KAS. Internal politics often stands in the way of implementing change—and changing 'alliances' among managers makes it difficult to assess in advance how successful an initiative will be. For example, the Director Corporate Services—a KAS for the HR Adviser—has been inconsistent in support for activities supported by the HR Adviser. Initially he was very resistant to Adviser assistance, then very supportive of Adviser assistance, largely a reflection of leadership from changes in the A/MD position. During the last months of the placement he has been supportive, allowing for finalisation of a number of initiatives. Over time it has become apparent that there are many social, cultural and political reasons for things to happen or not happen and despite some change, in general it seems that decisions are still not generally made in the best interests of the Authority and usually are in the best interests of one or more individuals involved in, or influencing, the decision-making process. It is likely that appointment of a substantive Managing Director will overcome some of the inconsistency in support for change and the period after the appointment of a substantive MD will be an opportunity for significant change. (A13, 2006)

'Wantokism' is prevalent in the [Agency] and prevents any performance management. (A18, 2007)

Improving performance management across [the Agency] - this requires significant changes to organisational culture. People recognise what 'good' management is but there are limited incentives for good performance. As noted, there are few and rare (although jarring) consequences for unprofessional conduct and non-delivery. (A19, 2007)

PNG has a formal and an informal system for project planning and resource allocation, the formal is run on a legal rational basis and is the one that is described in procedures manuals; the other is the informal system where a society-wide patrimonial or 'Big Man'

system influences public choices. This system is one in which 'Big Men' — politicians and senior bureaucrats in today's terms — have huge expectations placed upon them by their kinsfolk and constituents for them to use their positions to access and distribute largesse. These two systems exist side by side and are always in competition. An Adviser may help to strengthen the formal rational system and while capacity building alone will help, there is always powerful countervailing pressures applied from the informal system... In PNG the survival of the rational planning system depends on the resolve of senior managers and the Minister. (A24, 2009)

Political alignment and jealousy affected my ability to connect with certain staff who seem determined to bring down any changes, improvements or successes that may provide success for their rivals. (A43, 2010)

I would rate the placement as being successful as we have achieved a lot and some very effective relationships were formed at all levels. The level of success has been limited due to the entrenched work culture of senior managers and the level of sustainability is limited. (A53, 2010)

3.5.5.3 Lack of will/interest

The positive effect of counterparts' willingness to participate in placement activities and commitment to pursuing placement outcomes on success was seen as an enabler, whereas its absence was seen as an impediment. The following is an example of the adviser's experiences of this impediment.

Many frustrations were faced by myself and my partner Adviser in the [Agency] in trying to address skills gaps within the [Agency], training and capacity building can only be successful if there is a willingness to learn and participate by the Counterpart. In the [Agency] the staff that were non-performing did not have either. (A18, 2007)

The data isolated within this category go beyond the realm of skills transfer and training into the territory of lack of willingness to implement project initiatives at the highest echelons of agency leadership/management. A total of 45 out of 78 advisers reported lack of will/interest as an impediment to placement success, with the majority pointing to staff at the senior/executive management, director and assistant secretary/secretary levels as impeding AC projects' improvement of agency functioning.

The examination of data within this category provides insight into the distinction between ratings of 'successful' (often with qualifiers such as 'reasonably' or 'moderately') and 'very successful' made by advisers, by highlighting some of the difficulties faced by advisers in translating intermediate project outcomes into fully implemented and sustainable ones. Once more a constellation of factors is implicated in accounting for lack of will/interest, in particular, organisational culture and the associated impediments of hiring practices, ineffective management, and inadequate or non-existent performance management regimes. Although the following quotes are presented under general headings, it can be seen that the impediments mentioned above are mutually reinforcing and are capable of having deleterious effects on placement outcomes in the long term.

a) General impediments

The objectives and outcomes were generally unrealistic and overly optimistic in terms of what could be achieved in the timeframes. In some cases outputs were achieved but the

level of [Agency] ownership and sustainability is not adequate. This is due to a lack of leadership and management commitment to progressing initiatives. (A53, 2010)

This part of the planning process has been greatly enhanced through the placement but remains in a fragile state and is unlikely to survive the exit of the Adviser as the CPMO lacks the necessary 'mental discipline' to carry it forward without close monitoring from an effective Secretary. (A3, 2006)

b) Hiring processes – Acting positions and long-term vacancies

The ToRs were realistic but the commitment ability of staff to work to this level was not forthcoming. In part, the lack of commitment has been due to the continuing vacancy of the position of Manager [specified] since the end March. (A21, 2007)

A large number of senior management positions within the IT Division were Acting positions, resulting in instability and limited commitment from senior management to make operational and technical improvements. This issue was Department wide and not only within the IT department. (A28, 2008)

On paper and on the surface these things were realistic and achievable and whilst a corporate plan and policies and procedures were designed and formulated; the most important state of moving things to the completion and implementation stages were almost impossible because of the lack of will from the acting managing director due to resistance from the senior management group. The corporate plan, the restructure and other related, but difficult issues, were only finally implemented when the substantive managing director was appointed. (A44, 2009)

c) Organisational culture, including performance management

Training and mentoring of the Secretary has proved less effective, whilst he is often receptive to one-on-one mentoring he did not make the effort to complete work tasks, or follow-up on work that was actually done for him. I did not envy his position, staff performance has been a significant issue and the underperformers are his relatives. This coupled with the Chairman and Secretary holding their respective positions on an acting basis compounded the problem. Non-attendance has been an ongoing issue; attempts by Finance to pay officers according to hours worked (i.e. by the time sheets lodged) have not been successful either. (A18, 2007)

To be fair to the Department, implementation only commenced in 2007 after its endorsement by the [government]. However, my view is that the Department will be ineffective in the implementation due to the general malaise within the Department, general incompetence of management and lack of any form of discipline or performance management. (A30, 2008)

These activities were effective in the sense that KAS know the right thing to do. They have a good understanding of the Public Finance (Management) Act and the General Orders. They just decline to implement those laws, preferring to take an easier or more personally advantageous course of action. (A30, 2008)

d) Implications for placement outcomes

The strategy is simple but it would have to be sustained over two or more years to turn around the entrenched culture and practices of [the Agency]. Application of

performance management throughout all levels of [the Agency], from top-to-bottom, is the critical missing ingredient in [the Agency]. This would start with a performance agreement between the Chief Secretary and [the Agency] Secretary, cascading down to individual performance agreements for every manager. Such agreements for managers are in place now and have been an important output of my placement. What is missing is firm, fair and consistent decision-making by the Secretary where he puts systems in place to make his two deputy secretaries accountable for their personal performance and that of their divisions. What is also missing is holding the deputies to account, handing out consequences and rewards for poor and good performance respectively; repeated poor performance would be dealt with, by discipline where necessary. Such an approach would be repeated throughout the rest of the organisation... The foundations and systems for this cultural change are there: many were built through this placement. What is needed now is executive willingness to make it happen, and a willingness to do all the hard work and take the tough decisions that go with changing organisational culture. By my reckoning, such willingness is not there at present. (A51, 2010)

Regarding the achievement relating to audit recommendations, no positive impact could be made upon the public sector governance and control until top management in [the Department] is committed to implementation. With the present management style, corporate culture and staff capability, I am not optimistic that those key recommendations will be implemented by [Department] management. (A67, 2012)

e) Perfunctory support for a collaborative approach

It is sometimes difficult to gauge 'genuine' interest/motive from managers to implementing improvements and change during initial meetings and in hindsight it would have been beneficial to facilitate a group discussion with managers on changes to planning, monitoring and reporting during the first month of the assignment. The purpose of this group discussion would have been to try and internalize the need for change. The types of questions to be posed to the managers would have been: 'what is in it for me'; 'what is in it for you' and 'what is in it for us'. As it turned out, I don't think enough people supported the proposed changes to progress from developing an annual plan to implementing it and monitoring progress despite there being overall agreement to do so from the SMC during the timeframe of the assignment. Therefore more time needed to be spent on getting real buy-in to the proposed changes. (A5, 2007)

Because the Acting Director at the time, [Counterpart name], did not provide any input into the formation of the final terms of reference, there was a lack of commitment and support as evidenced by his reluctance to support their implementation. (A47, 2009)

3.5.5.4 Management

A total of 39 of 78 advisers reported inadequacies in management practices as impediments to their placement's success. Due to the interrelated nature of impediments, each of the impediments discussed thus far—insufficient human capacity, organisational culture and/or politics, and lack of will/interest—both implicate and have implications for staff working at the managerial level. There are a number of extracts from the PCRs in previous sections that specifically address management issues. For this reason, these issues and concerns will not be raised again here.

The additional concern reported here concerns advisers reporting the negative effects of managerial influence—or lack thereof—on work undertaken with their direct counterparts.

[My Counterpart's] ability to gain more from the placement was hampered by a lack of resources and managerial support in Corporate. (A17, 2007)

[My Counterpart] possesses the underlying skills and knowledge to be able to provide effective coordination in her area of responsibility. Her constraints are – limited resources, ineffective formal structure, ineffective management support and confidence. (A39, 2008)

Internal service delivery by HR has certainly improved due to the initiatives discussed so far. There is no doubt there is room for further developments but there has definitely has been progress made. This improved service delivery operates quite independently of Adviser input however whether it will continue after the Adviser placement has finished is questionable. Undertaking these activities while interesting and rewarding require effort. To-date there has not been a great deal of pressure nor reward from management for the HR staff to expend this additional effort and therefore the enthusiasm displayed by the KAS may reduce over time. (A20, 2007)

[Training and mentoring of] the Acting Director [has been] very effective. However he has been hampered by an uncooperative band of senior managers in his attempt to implement and enforce compliance with policies and procedures. (A37, 2008)

3.5.5.5 Insufficient time

Almost 50 per cent of advisers (36 of 78) reported insufficient time to meet project ToRs within the placement periods. Unsurprisingly, the various reasons given for insufficient time directly relate to each of the impediments discussed here, as well as others mentioned in passing. Further reasons relate to the project enablers, in particular the need to establish sound interpersonal relationships based upon mutual respect and trust, and the time taken to establish these before substantial work towards the realisation of ToRs can begin. Examples of each are offered below, as well as an additional factor not previously mentioned: the nature of adviser placement contracts.

a) Organisational (and local) culture

[ToR] Change in organisational culture to focus on achieving results: a most noble ideal but unrealistic in the project time available under PNG conditions. It is generally recommended that achievement of cultural change in an organisation would take between 3 to 5 years under ideal conditions. Listing this objective for achievement in 2 years under PNG conditions and without employing 'shock tactics' (which is not really an option in PNG as it requires extremely strong leadership) the timeframe was most unrealistic. In addition to the PNG contextual issues the leadership in [the Agency] has been counterproductive to achieving this outcome - it required people who could 'walk the talk' and be a 'role model' for others in the organisation. (A3, 2006)

I would caution about having unrealistic expectations about the timing required to undertake tasks when planning projects. Decision-making in PNG is often a very iterative process, and considerable importance is attached to everyone having their say, which can be very frustrating when it seems apparent that a decision has already been agreed! Despite working here for several years I can still be surprised by the number of unexpected issues that can arise to delay project implementation. These have included national staff having to manage sick or dying relatives (an issue that is only going to exacerbate with the increasing prevalence of HIV-AIDS), power outages damaging computer equipment and delays in government procurement processes. (A11, 2006)

b) Insufficient time for implementation/sustainable change

This type of change in PNG requires on-going maintenance and while the activities were completed in the timeframe the on-going application of the skills and long-term effects may not be realized without further support. (A20, 2007)

During the placement a total of 55 HR policies and procedures have been developed which provide clear direction and responsibilities for managing HR issues. Training has been provided to 120 managers and supervisors in the first 15 of these, however, due the timing of approval of these coinciding with the end of the placement; I have not been able to support the implementation and training in the remaining 40 policies and procedures. There is a need to ensure that this initiative is fully implemented to achieve the highest level of change possible and to ensure that the policies and procedures do not become just another folder on the desk but are actually used on a daily basis to guide better management. (A13, 2006)

c) Insufficient human capacity/initial analysis of needs incorrect

Throughout the placement issues arose in the lack of wider understanding of procurement from other advisors and contractors. The amount of time required to provide assistance and support was not considered in the work plan. The provision of assistance is important and was provided, the note here is that the broader need for this advice and assistance is not acknowledged nor catered for. (A18, 2007)

The ToRs were very ambitious for a 12-month period, particularly given the HR staffing levels...and the level of understanding of HR practices by my key Counterpart, the acting Registrar. (A50, 2010)

d) Initial analysis of needs incorrect/time needed to form relationships

At the time of accepting this position the job and person specifications appeared current and relevant. However on assessing the [Agency] situation and progress with their field operations work for the [placement focus] at the start of my contract, the situation was such that the role required far more operational inputs and activities than outlined in the job specifications as a 'standard' Adviser position and therefore allowed less time for capacity building which resulted in that particular specification being largely opportunistic... Further, given that it takes time to build trust and relationships in order to have free and frank discussions with Counterparts, the amount of lead in time to the project also affected the level of capacity building desired to take place. Proposed changes are that an appropriate assessment of the actual situation for an Adviser placement be undertaken to ensure that AusAID, the program management contractor, Adviser and Adviser facility are in full agreement regarding the capacity building, operational activities and expected inputs and outcomes. (A62, 2011)

e) Lack of will/interest

The objectives and outcomes were generally unrealistic and overly optimistic in terms of what could be achieved in the timeframes. In some cases outputs were achieved but the level of [Agency] ownership and sustainability is not adequate. This is due to a lack of leadership and management commitment to progressing initiatives. For example an outcome that requires managers from across the organisation to use information more

constructively was always going to be a huge challenge in the short to medium term (3 years). (A53, 2010)

In the placement period, the Adviser considered it necessary to get a few structural issues attended to, like the development and introduction essential policies and procedures, conducting training and attempting to create a cultural shift towards complying with procedures, especially on procurement, when none had been followed, as there were none to follow. This culture shift was bigger than developing KAS capacity, as it related to developing the Agency's capacity to do it. While the seeds of this shift have been planted, and has had some success, the lack of leadership and support from senior management has resulted in bringing limited success to the broader culture shift. (A37, 2008)

f) Existing workload of KAS

After the initial novelty of having an Adviser working with the HR team had subsided, the reality of the work that came with reviewing systems and formulating policies etc, became apparent to the KAS. The KAS had now inherited work that some of them saw as an 'extra work load'. Although the Adviser work plan tasks they had taken on were in fact extra work – the tasks were in most cases activities that should have been occurring in the first place. Deadlines for completion of work plan tasks often had to be moved as KAS had not been able to complete them when they planned to. It would have been easy for the Adviser to step in and complete the tasks, but this would have defeated the capacity building aspect of the KAS being the one to do the task. (A35, 2008)

g) Twelve-month placements/contractual arrangements

Capacity building is a long process and does not happen within months or even a year as it requires behavioural change and most of all, the willingness to change at all. ASF placements are initially for a period of 12 months. Although they are often extended for twelve more months, one must assume it is for 12 months only. I would have approached some issues differently if I had known from the beginning that I would have 24 months. (A25, 2007)

I could, and did, aim to influence the thinking, direction and pace of change in some areas of [the Agency's] performance but it is unrealistic to anticipate 'sustained' capacity in this setting within a twelve-month period. I feel that [the Agency] has been disadvantaged by my departure at the end of the twelve-month placement; the ASF has advertised for a new Adviser for an extension of the placement. I feel this outcome could have been avoided if the ASF could provide better certainty on placements offered as 'twelve months with possibility of extension'. Unfortunately, when the decision was subsequently made to extend the placement it was too late for me to revisit my departure. I believe that continuity of my advisory role would have been a better outcome for the agency and the placement. (A16, 2007)

3.5.6 Adviser and counterpart interview and focus group evidence of impediments to success

Fourteen advisers participated in interviews by phone or Skype, and four counterparts participated in a group interview in Port Moresby, a further 13 (current) advisers participated in three focus groups in Port Moresby (across two occasions in 2013) as did 12 (current) counterparts. Further details are provided in section 3.5.3 above. The key matters that were identified and are presented

below with supporting quotes are as follows: ‘difficulty of measuring success’, ‘late contract extensions’, ‘gender issues’, ‘insufficient human capacity’, ‘incorrect needs analysis’, ‘inadequate performance management’ and ‘inadequate preparation of staff’.

3.5.6.1 The difficulty of measuring success

One of the most discussed impediments to achieving ‘success’ in capacity building related, not to capacity building itself, but to how its success is identified and measured. Advisers argued that their views of the success of their placements changed over time. They came to realise that ‘the [outcomes] occur over a longer timeframe than the placement itself, often many years longer’ (A69, 2008). In the majority of cases, advisers believed their placements were far more successful years after the fact. One adviser, almost five years since the end of her placement, still ‘reads and hears about initiatives occurring that were the subject of discussion with [her] Counterpart’ (A68, 2007). Another adviser initially regarded his placement as of limited success because his project office had been closed down, but later realised that his work had been ‘picked-up when the project was re-established and would have led to the project’s ultimate success’ (A76, 2006). One adviser could not think of any evidence of success that would have been apparent at the end of his placement, but could arguably see evidence of it now in examples of organisational behaviour that indicated positive cultural change. In the short-term however, this adviser’s placement had ‘just felt like continuous frustration’ (A21, 2007).

One adviser (A58, 2011) took the opposite view of his first placement, which he left believing was ‘very successful’ but later realised that, while ‘procedurally a lot of things happened [the Counterpart had] not successfully connected the dots’. He realised that the counterpart understood all of the processes in isolation and could carry them out independently but, ‘he didn’t actually understand how and why they fit together’ This is reflective of the impediment ‘staff lack understanding of purpose and function’ isolated in Stage 1 (29% of advisers), which this adviser addressed in subsequent placements by ‘starting at the top and working down to the process’.

In other cases advisers believed that success was difficult to quantify because it encompassed immeasurable factors such as self-confidence and changes in demeanour and attitude (A16, 2007). In addition, the activities engaged in by advisers to promote this kind of development were themselves difficult to quantify. An adviser stated that, ‘there is a tension there about what you can put on a checklist—it is easier to say I ran three workshops and four seminars, two field trips and five questionnaire designs, than it is to say I had ten conversations with her that made her feel more confident as a female in PNG society. It is really hard to put that in a report’ (A68, 2007). With regard to individual capacity development in general, another adviser noted that, at least at the time of her placement, ‘there was no real formal method for identifying Counterparts’ development as a result of placement activities’ (A50, 2010).

3.5.6.2 Late contract extensions

Several advisers mentioned problems arising from the system of instituting six-month or twelve-month initial placement periods, with the possibility to extend. Decisions about extensions were often left until very late in the initial placement period, therefore advisers often located and secured other employment prior to an extension decision being made (advisers spoke of this with regard to themselves and as having been the experience of other advisers they knew and/or worked with). One adviser noted:

[This] string of Advisers is problematic because everyone does things differently regardless of how detailed handover notes are...while this doesn’t mean starting from scratch every time there is not a nice continuous process...backtracking happens;

relationship building has to start from scratch... and [there is the risk of] Adviser fatigue. (A50, 2010)

Another noted the problem of 'reinventing the wheel' (A16, 2007). As a result of the uncertainty about how long an adviser will have with an agency, it was argued that the practice of appointing for an initial period and then extending it 'was not an effective or efficient use of resources' (A73, 2009). Adviser A79 asserted that 'AusAID does not like extensions. It likes breaks and new projects with Advisers'. He claimed that his initial six months was 'just a scratch' on the work required and that the agency could have an adviser there for years which would delight the PNG government.

3.5.6.3 Gender issues

Four of the women advisers interviewed specifically mentioned problems they encountered in their placements with senior males in their organisations. One such adviser suggested that, 'to really have an impact on senior male managers the adviser [has] to be a senior male manager (A68, 2007). Another female adviser who had seen male staff act respectfully toward a male expatriate colleague stated, 'I definitely think if I was a male adviser they [the senior males] would have behaved differently' (A16, 2007). Often this caused delays in commencing placements as time had to be taken to overcome counterpart resistance to working with a woman. As one adviser stated, she was 'eventually [able] to work with his team' although it was a much longer period before she was able to work with the director, her primary counterpart (A71, 2010).

3.5.6.4 Insufficient human capacity

One adviser spoke of her counterpart simply not having sufficient capacity to fulfil his role. He had a series of advisers over 10 years and 'basically did not have what it takes to do his job' (A75, 2008). Others spoke of how a very low level of starting capacity made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to achieve the higher level capacity development aims of their placements within the contract. Advisers found that they needed first to undertake training at a very basic level (A50, 2010 & A71, 2010) or that a lack of understanding of technical issues 'made the organising of technical workshops and training more complicated' (A68, 2007). Another adviser found it easier to work on systems development, saying that ultimately all he could do was 'try to take staff along with all the new processes and processes' and that 'staff picked up knowledge in a piecemeal fashion through these various interactions' (A70, 2008). The following impediment of incorrect needs analysis is clearly also implicated here.

3.5.6.5 Incorrect needs analysis

The analysis of PCRs (above) showed that 35 per cent of advisers identified that inadequate needs analysis during the planning for the placement was an impediment to success. This was stated clearly by advisers in a focus group who alleged that EPSP's capacity diagnostic exercise was 'ludicrous'. They characterised the process as involving eminent PNG bureaucrats to investigate the 'failings of agencies' and to recommend solutions. They suspected that the teams were briefed that ASF was 'a disaster' and need 'big fixes'. Hence, they argued, 'things that ASF got right' were ignored and there was a lack of consultation and/or ignoring of agencies' advice. It was said that the subsequent capacity development agreements often bore no relation to the discussions that occurred and that this contributed to poorly targeted AC placements and some unrealistic ToRs.

Some advisers spoke of how it became clear that their counterparts' difficulties did not reside in them not knowing what to do, but rather in not knowing how to do it. In these cases, it was often a matter of building counterpart confidence (A21, 2007) or setting up opportunities for counterparts to practise and then apply their skills (A39, 2008). One adviser believed that this problem was a

function of both placement design and the way that success is measured (A39, 2008). In the design stage he believed that what was often identified as a 'training need' was really a 'performance gap', with the latter arising from a variety of possible causes and only one of those being a need for training. Further, when placements were designed around the delivery of training, this adviser believed that those placements were deemed to be 'successful' once the training had been delivered and its deliverers had 'ticked all the boxes' (A39, 2008). He added, however, that the 'delivery of training means nothing if after it the skills cannot be or are not actually applied' and that 'you can only know that there has been success when you can see the skills put into action' (A39, 2008).

In the group interview with three counterparts (C86, C87 & C88) a general feeling was expressed that the AC projects are conceptualised without an adequate appreciation of the abilities of the staff. Often the potential counterparts are not asked or not even aware of the project before they are engaged. Counterpart C86 gave the example that 'there are problems when the Adviser does things that the Papua New Guineans already know'. Counterpart C87 claimed that, 'while there are knowledgeable PNG people in [my] Agency, until the Adviser came they were not being used effectively, so now everyone does better'.

3.5.6.6 Inadequate performance management

As was the case in the PCRs, a few advisers mentioned difficulties cementing capacity building gains in skills and knowledge because, for example, 'management issues are not being addressed [and] staff remain unaccountable for their actions and there are no sanctions applied' (A39, 2008). In stronger terms: the 'main obstacle to achieving any form of progress in PNG is a total lack of executive will or leadership to institute proper performance management, people don't turn up and know that they will only be promoted if their Wantok is the manager' (A75, 2008). This state of affairs then led to 'low motivation' on the part of staff (A70, 2008), feeding into the impediment of 'lack of will/interest' mentioned earlier.

3.5.6.7 Inadequate preparation of staff

A few advisers mentioned that their placements had been adversely affected by the fact that counterparts or other agency staff had not been properly advised of or prepared for their arrival. This resulted in 'resentment and confusion' (A16, 2007) and 'a lack of willingness to engage' (A17, 2007). One adviser expressed the cause of this resentment as the fact that 'suddenly someone arrives saying "I'm here to help you do your job better" and they didn't realise they were doing anything "wrong"' (A39, 2008). In the words of one adviser, 'there needs to be a "climate of readiness" in the area where the placement [is] to occur if it [is] going to be fully successful' (A17, 2007). Formulated alternatively, 'the Adviser needs to be seen as not forced on staff and this requires both managerial and broader organisational buy-in' (A21, 2007). Clearly this has implications for other impediments isolated in Stage 1 of this project, namely 'lack of will/interest' (58% of advisers), 'active resistance to adviser' (18%) and also has implications for 'counterpart attitude' (noted by 49% of advisers as an enabler of placement success).

Counterparts expressed some other related views. In a group interview, four counterparts had the view that that the AC placements are conceptualised without an adequate appreciation of the abilities of the staff. Often the potential Counterparts are not asked or not even aware of the project before they are engaged.

3.5.6.8 Internal politics

The majority of advisers interviewed made mention in some way of how internal politics (closely linked with organisational culture) had negatively affected some aspect of their placements. This is

in line with the 55 per cent of advisers in Stage 1 who made mention of this impediment in their PCRs. Of particular concern was the fact that internal political wrangling could mean that by the time an adviser arrived at their placement the situation had 'dramatically changed' in terms of priorities and personnel (A69, 2008) and, concomitantly, that pre-established ToRs would no longer be fitting.

4 Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This section is based on the topics of the main research questions described previously in section 2.3. It draws on the data and discussion provided in section 3 to offer analyses and discussion under the following headings: ‘the effectiveness of AC placements’; ‘capacity development through AC placements’; ‘the influencing factors on AC placements’; ‘stakeholders’ views about AC placements’; and ‘the role of other modalities in capacity development’.

4.2 Effectiveness of AC placements

This section brings together the issues around the effectiveness of undertaking AC placements in PNG government agencies. It will cover the operation of the placements and issues around setting them up. In determining the effectiveness of AC placements this section also considers what evidence is available to determine their level of effectiveness. This section draws on the findings discussed in sections 3.2 and 3.3 on the fieldwork undertaken with advisers and counterparts. This section also draws on the review of previous work undertaken in the area as outlined in the literature review in section 2.2.

This section will discuss the issues around research questions one and two as stated below:

- RQ1 What are the advisers’ views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their counterpart(s) in achieving their placements’ stated aims? What evidence is there to support these views?
- RQ2 What are the counterparts’ views of the success or otherwise of their partnerships with their advisers in achieving their placements’ stated aims? What evidence is there to support these views?

Determining whether an AC placement is a success or not is complex and perspectives will often vary between those involved with the placement, for example, advisers, counterparts, colleagues and the managers of counterparts. It is acknowledged that other parties will also have views of the success of a placement including the funding agency (DFAT) and the managing contractor for the program (Coffey International). However, the aim of this section is to discuss the views of the advisers and counterparts of the success of their placements.

The nature of the evidence of the outcomes of AC placements varies widely. In some cases the output of a placement leads itself to tangible evidence, e.g. the development of a policy, in other cases where a cultural change in an agency is the desired outcome explicit evidence may be more difficult to identify. Even where there is evidence of a successful output of the placement (e.g. the writing of a policy) whether a successful outcome has occurred is often more difficult to assess, e.g. the policy has improved the area it has addressed.

4.2.1 Terms of reference and meeting the aims of the placement

The role of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) was acknowledged by all the parties as central to the success or otherwise of an AC placement. It was often seen as emblematic of the whole planning and preparation process of placements with all the issues that brought to bear. Of all the topics covered by this study, the ToRs were perhaps the one that caused the most strident comments from advisers and counterparts.

Although 97 per cent of advisers, as shown in section 3.1.2, indicated that they felt that their ToRs were either highly appropriate or appropriate at the time of commencement on reflection many were critical of them later. The level of critical reflection seemed to increase the further away the comments were made from the start of the placement. Discussions with advisers who were currently engaged with their placement indicated that they could see shortcomings with their ToRs which were often a factor of changes in personnel or the environment (see section 4.4.4). The survey of advisers also showed 67 per cent indicating that their ToRs were highly appropriate or appropriate at the completion of their placements. In interviews, the advisers who had completed their placements several years previously were the most critical of their ToRs. This effect is possibly explained by the advisers becoming aware of what could have been done if alternatives had been available at the beginning of the placement. The role of reflection and distance on views about the success of planning and outcome of a placement should not be underestimated. This point is further explored in section 4.4.4 which discusses capacity diagnostics and placement design.

Counterparts' views of the ToRs varied from that of advisers; counterparts generally had lower levels of satisfaction with 64 per cent indicating that they thought that their ToRs were highly appropriate or appropriate (see section 3.2.2 for further details) at the beginning of the placement but less reduction in those levels (62%) the later the views were gathered from when the placement commenced. It appears that counterparts were consistently satisfied or not with the ToRs from when they were drawn up to after the placement completed. Perhaps this is due to the counterparts knowing from the start, from being situated in the context where the placement was going to occur, whether the ToRs were appropriate or not. Thus they had a more direct experience to draw on as to whether the ToRs were a good fit or not for their context, whereas the advisers learnt this the more they were exposed to the placement.

The development of the ToRs was a cause of great discussion by all concerned with AC placements, i.e. the funding agency, the managing contractor, and advisers and counterparts associated with the placement. One of the tensions around the development of the ToRs was their influence on whether the placement was seen to be successful or not, that is, whether ToRs acted as a target or a limitation. In the case of the ToRs acting as a target they were sometimes perceived as being unachievable for a variety of reasons which caused advisers to become frustrated or led to the perception that advisers focused purely on meeting the ToRs while ignoring other important matters. Whereas when they were perceived as acting as a limitation, the ToRs were seen as making desirable outcomes that advisers or counterparts felt useful unachievable. Often changes were required because of a change of direction in agencies due to ministerial changes (see section 4.4.3.2). Finding a balance between the two was felt to be an important precursor to a successful and sustainable placement.

Both advisers and counterparts acknowledged that there had been changes by EPSP in the way ToRs were developed and allowed to evolve during placements. There was also acknowledgement that developments and changes in the agency and its surrounding context often overtook ToRs, sometimes even before the placement commenced. Thus, there was a strong feeling amongst counterparts that, once a broad area had been identified as requiring an adviser, those who were to have direct contact with the adviser should have a significant role in revising the ToRs before the placement commenced.

Closely connected to the above discussion of the role of the ToRs is the determination of whether the aims of the placement have been met. The consequence, or otherwise, of this occurring is closely tied to the impact of a placement. If the aims of the placement are not met, it is not likely to have the desired impacts.

Broadly two dimensions were identified by advisers and counterparts in determining whether the aims of the placement were met. The first dimension was that of the development of the counterpart or counterparts and the second was the development of the department or agency where the Adviser was located. These dimensions broadly reflect the wider view of development discussed in section 2.2.3 of development occurring at the individual, agency and societal levels.

The determination of whether the stated aims of a placement had been met was often left to the adviser's opinion, as there was no formal mechanism for the counterpart to add their voice to this determination. Although it was sometimes mentioned that EPSP would conduct interviews with key managers in the agency to solicit feedback (see section 4.6.5) few counterparts in this study were asked themselves. The evidence from the survey suggests that the views of advisers and counterparts are somewhat at odds with each other. The counterparts, on the whole (97%), appeared to feel that the aims of the placements were more often met than advisers (69%). This raises the issue of, if judgements of the success of the EPSP program are based on advisers' views, whether an underestimation of its impact is occurring.

4.2.2 Working with counterparts

The centre of an AC placement is the relationship between advisers and counterparts. It was acknowledged by most advisers and counterparts that if the relationship between the key individuals was not positive then the chance of the placement being successful was considerably reduced. The working relationship between advisers, counterparts and others in their agencies manifested itself in many variations depending upon a wide range of issues and contexts of where the placement took place.

The evidence in sections 3.1.3 and 3.2.2 of the advisers' and counterparts' views of their relationships respectively shows similar levels of perceived effectiveness when quantified in the survey, but the qualitative data brought out differences as well as similarities between the two groups. Both groups agreed that positive working relationships needed to be formed as quickly as possible in the placement (see section 4.4.1.1). However, the context surrounding the relationship often brought the two parties together from quite different circumstances. For example, many counterparts had a number of advisers before and some had troubled relationships with them. This often affected the way counterparts approached new advisers. Most advisers were aware of such sensitivities but sometimes with the pressure of their placements, particularly short-term placements, there was little opportunity to address them (see sections 4.4.1.7 and 4.5.2).

A further factor in working with counterparts was, not only the relationship with the individual who had been identified as the key person, but also the team and managers who worked around him or her. Advisers often spoke about the issue of senior managers being obstructive to their work, or their counterparts not receiving support from appropriate colleagues and this adversely affecting the outcome of the placement. This suggests that the agency did not 'own' the placement from the outset. As outlined in section 2.2.4.1 the matter of ownership of development activities is one that has been at the centre of a debate for a long time. The move towards more ownership to the recipient of development activities should improve the prospect of better working relationships developing in AC placements (see section 4.6.5 for comments made by senior managers on this issue).

4.2.3 Departmental planning and policy development

Many of the placements were designed to improve the planning processes of the agency in which they were situated. Often the counterpart was one of the key staff responsible for the development of a departmental plan. This area is one where the measurement of success can significantly vary

between producing an output (e.g. a departmental plan) and an improvement in outcomes (e.g. improvement in the running of the department). It was often the case that the adviser was able to report that a plan had been written but was less sure about whether there would be subsequent changes as a result of implementing the plan or indeed whether the plan was implemented at all.

What was clear from the data from the advisers was the effect of the length of a placement when its aim was to address departmental planning. The nature of departmental planning means it is on an annual cycle and therefore the opportunity to allow counterparts to learn and apply the skills and knowledge was difficult to achieve with any placements shorter than two years. Many advisers spoke of their frustration at not being able to follow through with departmental planning both in terms of its implementation and ensuring that their counterpart was able to undertake it when they had completed their placement (see section 4.4.1.7 for further discussion on this issue).

There is often a close connection for many of the departments included in this study between planning and policy development and they share several of the issues identified above. However, in the case of policy development the distance between the output of the placement (the development of the policy) and the outcome (the effect of the policy on the area concerned) is much greater and there are many more factors, often outside of the department, at play. This is perhaps reflected in the data from the advisers' survey with the level of evidence of successful implementation of policies being approximately one third less than that of departmental planning. In comparison, counterparts showed little difference between levels of evidence of successful departmental planning and policy development.

It is in this area that the issue of stability in the agencies' remit and ministerial oversight is in most focus. Advisers whose placements were centred on policy development often spoke of the fact that, although they and their counterparts and their senior managers had developed and approved a policy, getting it through the ministerial process was often frustrating. This frustration was often due to the instability of the government but also counteracting pressures from other areas of the government (see section 4.4.3.1). As discussed in section 2.2 this issue has been recognised for some time, but more consideration needs to be given to how to support advisers and counterparts when they encounter this situation.

4.2.4 Service and system delivery

An overriding objective of the EPSP program is the improvement of government services for the people of PNG. The connection between the activities undertaken during an AC placement and improvement in service delivery is a complex one as there are often many factors outside the control of the placement. Also, in most cases in this study the service delivery outcomes of a placement are services delivered to other departments or agencies.

There seemed to be a wide disparity between advisers and counterparts in their views of the amount of evidence of success in the area of service delivery. Advisers felt that there was little evidence of success with only 36 per cent of the survey respondents indicating considerable or significant evidence compared to 91 per cent of counterparts on the same measure. It is difficult to explain this large difference other than perhaps the levels of expectations of the placements between advisers and counterparts. Amongst advisers there seemed to be two distinct groups of opinions. One group believed their placement had produced improvements to service delivery within the constraints of their placement. The other group believed that because of all the factors external to their placements, it was almost impossible to determine if improvements had been made to the final point of the delivery of the service.

In some placements the aim was to deliver improved systems and less the development needs of an individual or individuals. This is not to say that the development of individuals' skills and knowledge were not planned to occur in such placements but rather these came as a result of implementing a system of some type, more often than not an IT system. Producing evidence of the improvement or implementation of the system itself is usually not difficult but showing evidence that those whose jobs it will be to use, maintain and improve the system have had their capacity improved is more problematic.

Similarly to the findings for service delivery, there was a large disparity between the results from the adviser and counterpart surveys on the improvement of systems. Fifty per cent of advisers reported that they could identify evidence of considerable or significant improvements to systems as a result of their placement, whereas 90 per cent of counterparts felt they could identify such evidence. Again this difference may be explained by differences in expectations.

As with any systems delivery that involves the use of IT, the success or otherwise can broadly be split into two major components; the technology used (hardware and software) and the business re-modelling (the associated ways of doing the work in question). In the AC placements both these aspects of system delivery posed challenges and advisers commented on them widely as outlined in section 3.1.3.4. The challenges encountered when the placement was primarily focused on delivery of the technical component was about ensuring that technical staff had the skills and knowledge to maintain the system, particularly after the adviser had left. In addition, the advisers who were involved with business remodelling, as a result of introducing new IT systems, indicated that in many cases the changes in processes and policies were also a very useful outcome of introducing such systems.

4.2.5 Capacity building

At the core of most AC placements is the development of a counterpart's capacity to undertake their role in their department. This human capacity building is essentially an educational activity occurring in the workplace. This aspect of AC placements is examined in section 4.3, therefore in this section only issues around the evidence found of human capacity development is discussed.

As outlined in section 3.1.3.6 human capacity building is seen as more than the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Rather, it is seen as the development of the whole person, so for example it includes improvements in confidence, commitment, developing relationships, independence, leadership etc. The elements that go beyond the skills and knowledge learned during a placement are the outcomes that are more likely to have an enduring result after the adviser has left. This, along with the understanding of 'why' rather than 'how' something should be done, is central to the notion of human capacity development. However, these sorts of changes are more difficult to achieve and measure.

Some evidence was found by advisers, but less so by counterparts, of the broader range of human capacity development attributes discussed above. One adviser cited examples of where they had seen the counterparts 'grow into respected leaders' (A3, 2006) while another said he saw his counterpart become a 'competent and confident manager' (A22, 2007). When asked about such issues, counterparts had a tendency to cite examples at the more technical level but some recognised issues such as communication and listening skills as being important.

The idea of capacity building being focused on individuals is a longstanding one but there has been a realisation that this is insufficient if long-term change is to occur. Recent developments in capacity building in the literature (for example, see Morgan's [2008] views in section 2.2.2) have pointed to the notion of capacity building needing to occur across a number of levels for it to have impact and

sustainability. One of these levels is organisational capacity and there is growing acknowledgement that addressing this level is critical. The nature of organisational development and providing evidence of such is more contentious and difficult to show.

One way of conceptualising organisational capacity building is the development of groups of peoples' capacity rather than focusing on individuals. One adviser cited as an example of building organisational capacity a cultural change in an agency that was designed to bring its values in line with acceptable practice and this was achieved by engaging with teams of staff. Other advisers cited examples of development plans and procedures which they believed would be followed after they left because of the change in the way the organisation worked as a whole, again due to changes in values held by the organisation which was achieved by working with large numbers of staff.

The issue of how capacity development is achieved is discussed in section 4.3.

4.2.6 Conclusions

This section has addressed the issue of determining whether an AC placement can be considered successful or not. In addressing this issue it became apparent through the data and the literature review that this is a complex area which relates to all the other parts of the study's consideration. However, there is evidence that many placements can be considered to be successful against a number of measures including the ToRs originally identified for the placement and broader measures of success, e.g. improvement in managerial or technical skills etc.

In the next section the process of how capacity development occurs within AC placements is considered.

4.3 Capacity development through AC placements

This section draws principally on the data reported in section 3.3 above and the related literature discussed in section 2.2. It relates to the following research questions.

- RQ3 What strategies were adopted by advisers to enable their counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims? How did the advisers learn about or develop such strategies? What do the advisers believe are the main things their counterparts learned? What evidence is there of such learning? What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved through future Australian Aid programs?
- RQ4 What approaches were adopted by counterpart(s) to learn what was required to fulfil their placements' aims? What do the counterparts believe are the main things they learned from their placement? What evidence is there of such learning? What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved through future Australian Aid programs?

Section 3.3 presents the data related to these questions, with the exception of the two final questions in RQ3 and RQ4: What can be understood from these experiences and how might capacity development be improved through future Australian Aid programs? These two questions are the particular focus of the present section.

4.3.1 Learning as the foundation of capacity development

In section 2.2 the literature relating to capacity development was reviewed. This showed that, over approximately the past 60 years, the major aid and development agencies, networks and others have addressed capacity development as a foundational aspect of international development

assistance (IDA). The notion of 'capacity' in IDA is generally understood in broad terms. The UNDP describes capacity as 'the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner' (UNDP, 2007, p. 5). This definition embodies the interplay between individuals and collective forms of human activity in the enactment of capacity; instances from the present research, however, show that such interplay may include resistance to performing functions, solving problems, and/or setting and achieving objectives. Section 3.1 provided examples of instances where such resistance occurred and affected the achievement of AC placements' outcomes. For example, in the survey responses two advisers commented:

While the original ToRs may have been appropriate for my initial entry on duty, the whole ball game changed the day before I arrived in that my intended Counterpart, the (HoD), who had commissioned the project, was sacked and there followed a succession of Acting (HoDs) who had diametrically opposing agenda and, usually, different allegiances.

My original ToRs encompassed the key capacity development needs in relation to agency management and the need for effective coordination between the Advisers and (senior) officer. The 2nd objective in my ToRs related to providing advice and assistance to the agency in implementation of the strategic and operational plans. In reality, there was no agency management ownership of the existing strategic plan and there was no operational plan. The more immediate priority was, therefore, to assist the agency to develop an operational plan for the initial six months.

Another example from a PCR makes a similar point.

I would critically rate the placement as 'limited' in terms of achieving the planned objectives and outcomes primarily because they (outcomes and objectives) were created based on an inaccurate assessment of existing capacity and achievement in the agency and because their ultimate delivery was heavily dependent on a reasonable level of support from the Secretary, which was never realised. (A3, 2006)

It is important, therefore, to understand that 'opportunities for capacity development' may ebb or flow as competing or complementary individual and collective interests come into play. Therefore, AC project capacity development processes may be 'swimming' with or against the 'tide' unless the competing interests can be nullified or otherwise managed. Without such management, neither placement outcomes nor sustainability will be achieved.

In essence, the individual and collective interests in the PNG agencies involved in AC placements represent the human elements of the learning milieu within which capacity development occurs. Although, as is reported in section 3.1, agencies' physical and technical infrastructures are also important features and, where inadequate, prevent capacity development. For example, an adviser made the following point in a PCR:

Service delivery is closely linked to the information available in the [Agency Information System], and investigations have found that data to be at least 60% incorrect and the system is open to error and illegal activity. Until GoPNG treats the replacement of [this system] as a priority very little can be done in this regard. (A3, 2006)

Arguably, learning is at the heart of all capacity development (see Morgan, 2010; Johnson & Wilson, 1999; Raab, 2008) and, in particular, in AC placements in PNG. Technology, systems, infrastructure, etc. are all important elements to sustaining national life, but it is the people involved who use,

develop and maintain these elements who are the essential enabling human capacity. Humans need to learn how to use and maintain new technology, systems and physical infrastructure; hence, the technical assistance provided by donors to install such new items requires (human) capacity development if agencies are to use the items. This is part of Morgan's (2010, p. 5) 'first generation' approach which emphasised technical donor-to-agency skills transfer, capacity substitution, etc. Adviser-counterpart placements fit within Morgan's 'second generation' of agency designed and 'owned' technical assistance provided by donors. Capacity development, in this context, '...is the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time' (OECD/DAC definition, cited in Baser & Morgan, 2008 p. 22).

In the PNG context of this research, EPSP adopted the AusAID definition of capacity development as 'the process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations and sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement' (DFAT, 2009, p. 26). In order to develop the 'competencies and capabilities'—and associated knowledge and values—to 'perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner' (UNDP, 2007, p. 5) requires the advisers to teach and the counterparts to learn. That is, the advisers are required to go beyond a 'first generation' technical assistance/capacity substitution approach and act within a 'second generation', agency-owned/oriented approach. Such an approach is congruent with collaborative forms of education that focus on workplace-based, action-oriented learning, rather than didactic approaches. Advisers, therefore, need to learn in order to teach, and counterparts may teach (their advisers) in order to shape their own learning. (This matter is discussed further in section 4.3.3.)

Agency-owned/oriented collaborative forms of education that focus on workplace-based, action-oriented learning are relatively complex to understand and use. They are often difficult for advisers (and others) to understand and use, especially if their own professional fields of study are learned somewhat didactically. This raises the matter, which follows, of how the advisers learned to 'teach' their counterparts and how this may be improved.

4.3.2 Advisers' learning about teaching for capacity development

Given that the foundation of capacity development concerns people (counterparts) learning from others (advisers) about ways to improve and change their (and their agencies') practices, then it suggests that the advisers' knowledge and skills about teaching for capacity development are crucial to the success and sustainability of their AC placements. How then do advisers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills about teaching for capacity development in order to meet their ToRs and fulfil the AC placements' aims?

Table 3.3.3.1 (in section 3.3) represents numbers and ratings data about advisers' methods for learning to develop their counterparts' capacities. 'Previous experience' was the most common method that advisers used to learn about how to develop their counterparts' capacities. The mean rating (4.5) was between 'considerably' and 'fully' in terms of their use of this source. Previous experience in this context is problematic, especially for advisers new to PNG and/or to the agency, and for those with no qualifications and/or training in human resource development, workplace training, professional development etc. Previous experience was seen as important because it concerned what was being taught (best practice, etc.) rather than how it is best taught. As was noted in section 3.3.3, formal study was the least common means of learning about capacity development, and there was little evidence of an adviser specifically undertaking postgraduate study to learning or enhance their teaching skills in international development contexts.

There was evidence that some advisers had participated in short courses or workshops offered by the managing contractors. These opportunities were viewed positively.

Under the auspices of the ASF, the 'Making a Difference' (MaD) program was developed and offered between 2006 to 2009, prior to the ASF's cessation in May 2010. Participation was encouraged, but not required, and it is not clear how feasible it was for advisers and counterparts to attend prior to or early in their placements. The MaD program brought advisers and counterparts together to learn about action-learning approaches to, and processes of, capacity building and change management. A typical comment from an adviser who attended follows.

I found the Adviser workshops implemented by the ASF were useful in terms of: (i) opportunity to learn about a specific capacity building issue; (ii) opportunity to discuss experience and approaches with other Advisers.

In mid-2010 EPSP developed a new program, Wokabout Wantaim (WW) which was designed as a modular professional development course for advisers and counterparts that they engaged with during their placements. EPSP commenced offering the WW modules in late 2010. It ceased in 2013 (except for a special offering) because of changing DFAT priorities. The EPSP Annual Report 2013 (EPSP, 2014) describes the circumstances thus:

The Wokabout Wantaim (WW) program is a series of professional development modules designed for Advisers working with Counterparts on DFAT funded programs in PNG. The program is an offshoot of the Making a Difference program and was developed in response to feedback from PNG- based professionals requesting tailored content delivered periodically over the span of an Adviser-Counterpart relationship.

EPSP began developing and presenting WW modules in 2010. Thirty-three WW sessions were conducted in 2012, and attended by 505 (278 males and 225 females) Advisers and Counterparts.

In early 2013, concerns were raised by DFAT as to the ongoing relevance of the program in its current form as a result of the declining number of long-term Advisers; most current Advisers and Counterparts having already attended the course; and the 2012 review of EPSP which recommended future technical assistance focus on addressing immediate, specific service delivery issues rather than medium-term capacity development.

Poor attendance at the first WW offering for 2013 accelerated the decision to change the delivery schedule to 'on request' rather than regular monthly sessions and development work on two additional modules: Anti-Corruption and Leadership was discontinued.

During 2013, PNG Customs requested a tailored version of the Change and Coaching modules through their SGP Adviser. A series of sessions was conducted mid-year combining workshop training sessions with workplace follow-up directed at supporting change initiatives introduced during the year within PNG Customs.

In late 2013, as future EPSP program directions emerged with clarification on such matters as service delivery issues to be addressed and national/sub-national collaboration in addressing them, discussion around Wokabout Wantaim has been revived. There have been suggestions that specific modules such as Financial Processes, Change Management and Coaching —with some redesign— have relevance to the 2014 program (pp. 15-16).

As noted in section 3.3, there was limited evidence of advisers undertaking structured learning in how to 'teach' counterparts effectively. This is probably due to the MaD and WW programs not being offered consistently and consecutively from 2006 to 2013 (the period of this research), and it not being mandatory for advisers and counterparts to participate. There were instances of positive comments about each program, but these sit alongside others such as advisers' comments in one of the focus groups that they received little advice about how to structure their counterparts' capacity development. It was said that 'there was a bit of written stuff provided' but no regular support of this kind.

The preceding discussion suggests this as an area of improvement that may be enacted and beneficial across each AC placement from the planning to evaluation (final report) stages. If learning is fundamental to counterparts' (and agencies') capacity development, then this suggests that the ToRs and aims for each placement should explicitly consider the learning required and the counterparts' learning needs and contexts, and that these should be embedded in a learning plan (or at least an outline of such) which the adviser is required to address. Once the placement has commenced, the learning plan needs to be confirmed and agreed between the parties and documented. The documentation should include what is to be learned, how and when, and also how it will be assessed. Although the counterparts are the main focus of the learning, other members of the particular agency involved may well be expected to learn particular things at given times in order for the changes required in the ToRs to be embedded in the organisation and to become sustainable. At this point one may expect that the counterpart 'teaches' the others, or is involved with the adviser in so doing. That is, the counterparts may well be expected (in the learning plan) to learn how to teach their colleagues.

The above approach to planning for learning within the development process of each project and its ToRs, more complex than 'knowledge transfer' or 'skills training', although these may be part of the learning plan. It also requires the Adviser to have a role as a 'learning manager' who ensures that the learning plan is monitored for scheduled achievements and provides assistance, remediation etc, as required to maintain the schedule; something that the Counterparts are learning, but experiencing, too.

Such learning plans are best seen as ones that contain an iterative process that enables each adviser and their counterpart(s) to review, reflect and act to keep the learning plan attuned to the agency's needs and circumstances as these evolve during the project. Raab (2008) highlights the benefits accruing from process-centred approaches that 'allow for constant redesign of plans as the participants' knowledge evolves' (p. 435). The general principle is that process-centred, participatory, people-centred and iterative approaches are most likely to produce knowledge and outcomes that are truly 'owned' by participants and thus more able to be adapted and sustained in changing contexts.

At the agency level, similar principles of 'action-learning' are recommended by Johnson and Wilson (1999). Again, participatory approaches are required for agencies and donors to negotiate shared meanings and agendas for learning and innovation (p. 45), and, in our terms, to produce agreements about ToRs, aims, objects and, importantly, performance assessment mechanisms. Such an approach indicates that learning, as opposed to knowledge or skills transfer, involves iterative and participatory processes capable of providing feedback mechanisms that can then become the basis for further and sustained learning. It is in this way, Johnson and Wilson argue, 'collective and purposeful norms of behaviour can be developed and changed over a sustained period of time, both in shared practices and in coordination and cooperation' (p. 45).

The following section considers the approaches that were used by advisers and counterparts to achieve capacity development and how these may be improved in accordance with the suggestions made above.

4.3.3 Advisers' and counterparts' engagement in capacity development

Sections 3.3 and 3.4 reported, respectively, on the strategies deployed by advisers to foster capacity development and the counterparts' views of their learning during their placements. These adviser and counterpart perspectives of their engagement in capacity development processes are important for understanding ways to improve capacity development and to achieve sustainable change within agencies. Given that the MaD and WW courses, to varying degrees, focused on mentoring as a viable approach to teaching counterparts to improve their practices, this perhaps influences the ratings in Table 3.3.1.1 and Table 3.3.1.2 showing that mentoring was the advisers' most popular approach. Advisers also rated mentoring as the most effective approach (81% rated mentoring as either 'fully' or 'considerably' effective with a mean of 4.1). It was reported in section 3.3 that there was a marked correlation between the activities most commonly used and those that the advisers saw as most effective and that, in contrast to 'mentoring', 'structured learning' was the least used and was seen as the least effective (but was still rated as 3.4, that is, between 'somewhat' and 'considerably' effective'). As isolated in the PCRs, the range of strategies and activities used by advisers for capacity development comprised: workshops/formal training sessions; on-the-job training (including coaching and mentoring); and, to a lesser extent, role-modelling. Of these, one-on-one, on-the-job training and mentoring was the strategy favoured by the overwhelming majority of advisers, which is consistent with the findings reported in section 3.3.1. Generally, the rationales given for this approach were that activities were directly related to day-to-day issues, that on-one-on interaction encouraged the maximum engagement from Counterparts and provided maximum reinforcement of what was learned.

Table 3.4.1.2 shows that the counterparts also rated mentoring in their survey as their equal most used learning strategy alongside 'workshops'. (Workshops are a common feature of professional and industrial education and training in PNG. Often a new system, approach etc. has not commenced until it has been 'workshopped' in a well-catered setting!) Counterparts rated 'mentoring' (mean 4.5) slightly more highly than workshops (mean 4.3) (see Table 3.4.1.2). They also rated 'structured learning' equal lowest but with a relatively high mean of 3.9. An important feature here is that both advisers and counterparts generally concurred about the frequency of use for the particular strategies they used/experienced, and the ones they rated highest and lowest. In this respect, mentoring is the agreed highest-rated strategy and structured learning is (amongst others) the agreed lowest-rated strategy. This may suggest that mentoring is where the future improvements lie and that structured learning should be avoided. Given, however, the MaD and WW courses' encouragement of mentoring, the former is to be expected; the paucity of structured learning also suggests that there is little opportunity for positive experience of its benefits which may contribute to its lower ratings.

Mentoring is a useful reflective process for professional development, but it tends to be limited to responding to the activity in which the counterpart (in this instance) is engaged and guiding them to complete it satisfactorily. In educational contexts, mentoring may be understood as an activity undertaken by senior or experienced colleagues within the organisation who has undertaken the tasks that the mentee wishes to learn how to improve. Coaching on the other hand may be seen as an activity undertaken by someone, often outside the organisation, to address a specific skill or lack of knowledge in an area (see Parsloe & Leedham, 2009). Coaching tends to be more structured than mentoring and a coach may not necessarily have done the job of the person being coached. Mentoring assumes that the activity undertaken by the mentee is the correct one to be doing at the time (if at all), which it may be if the placement's ToRs and aims are appropriate. The role of an

adviser can be conceived as a hybrid of a mentor and a coach as it has elements of both and this is reflected by many advisers and counterparts using the two terms synonymously. In section 3.3, however, one adviser was quoted making a clear distinction between mentoring and coaching.

Mentoring is not a daily type of occurrence, the mentor is in the workplace doing their normal job and at the same time providing guidance or being a role model for others who wish to move through the organisation—it pertains to the achievement of career goals. With coaching, you are there, guiding and assisting and it is how you go about that that builds capacity...mentoring is not part of the capacity building tool-kit. While coaches are also role models, coaching is much more proactive; but as a mentor you can be reactive and still do a good job. (A39, 2008)

Section 3.1 above showed that one third of advisers (see Table 3.1.2.1) found that their ToRs became, in their view, less appropriate or realistic once there were 'in placement' and became familiar with the local conditions and/or circumstances, or experienced changing conditions and/or circumstances. In such instances, advisers needed to be proactive in shaping what was done and, therefore, what was learned.

The notion that advisers usually need to be proactive in 'teaching' their counterparts was generally predicated on three conditions: understanding the local PNG culture; appreciating their particular agency's context and needs; and forming good working relationships with the counterparts with whom they worked. Several advisers reported in section 3.3 that they conducted needs analyses or other forms of assessment of the capacity development required at the beginning of their placements, although only one counterpart (C77) reported working with his adviser at the beginning of the placement to identify his needs and then develop a plan for fulfilling them. It possible that those advisers who conducted needs analyses did so for their own personal professional purposes and did not share the process or the outcomes explicitly with their counterparts or, if they did so, these were not recognised as 'needs analyses' by the counterparts but as something more generally related to their placements.

In section 3.5 it was reported that almost 50 per cent of advisers emphasised cultural awareness as essential to maximising project successes, in particular, in the realms of skills transfer and training activities and capacity building more generally. The following comment is typical of those made by Advisers on this matter.

The initial phases of this placement involved a lot of observation and getting to know the culture of [the Agency] along with the culture of PNG people. The first thing I learnt was not to rush anything as it can be seen as pushy and bossy. I learnt that one needs to sit back and raise the issue and allow ownership to take over by the KAS. Then through support whilst the process is underway, the capacity building can be effectively achieved and the task completed. (A54, 2010)

Counterparts' also reported (see section 3.5) on the positive effects of advisers' cultural awareness on the success of AC placements and on establishing good interpersonal relationships.

[The Adviser's] progress at the [Agency] has continued to be very good. With his assistance we are continuing the task of updating the financial records of the organization to an acceptable level. He has built up a good relationship with all staff in the [Agency] as well as other divisions. He has been able to achieve this because of his professional knowledge and experience as well as his outside knowledge of PNG people and culture. (C33, 2007)

[The Adviser's] understanding of procurement, and processes in a PNG context has seen him improve the procurement capacity of everyone that he spends time training. (C16, 2007)

Counterpart C81 engaged with the matter of advisers being 'genuinely interested' in their agency and in PNG's development in general. He suggested that 'there was mutual learning that occurred between advisers and counterparts'. He believed it was necessary that, advisers be 'taught...the rules of engagement', that is, 'the Public Service Act and the hierarchical structure of the public service' and 'the cultural circumstances'. Such 'both ways' learning can do much to strengthen the capacities of both advisers and counterparts in their respective roles; the didactic, adviser-instructing-counterpart path was eschewed by most if not all research participants. Being able to undertake an equal, collaborative relationship is difficult, of course. The power relations, politics, cultural and professional backgrounds, for example, suggest that each adviser and counterpart will experience activities and events during their placements in which their relative power and influence will ebb and flow relative to the other. For example, it was reported in section 3.5 that counterparts (C84 and C85) said that they developed models for their agencies that their advisers usually reviewed and commented on. This suggests that these counterparts controlled the activities and that their advisers influenced the outcomes. Another counterpart (C75) explained that she discussed activities issues together with her adviser, 'so that the Adviser is not imposing things' and she makes the final decision. The sense of ownership by the counterparts and their agency was significant, however, the limited responses received from counterparts for some elements of the research mean that it is possible (maybe likely) that the non-respondents have a different view of their power and positions in their placements.

4.3.4 Conclusions

The above discussion can be related to the five central principles for sustainable capacity development embodied in the *Paris Declaration* and *Accra Agenda for Action* (OECD, 2005/2008).

Ownership—Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and coordinate development actions;

Alignment—Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institution and procedures;

Harmonisation—Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective;

Managing for Results—Managing resources and improving decision-making for results; and

Mutual Accountability—Donors and partners are accountable for development results

It can be argued that the AC placements broadly can be reviewed against these principles, but in the case of the capacity development discussed in this section these principles need to be interpreted at the agency rather than national level. Morgan (2008) argued that counterpart relationships in PNG could be improved by attention to matters that relate to some of these principles, and recent practices in EPSP (and other programs) indicate that Australia and PNG are part of the international changes contributing to the ideas in the aforementioned *Paris Declaration* and *Accra Agenda for Action*. Therefore, each AC placement needs to be constructed and, in the case of this Report, interpreted within the partner (PNG) and donor (Australia) nations' actions with regard to the five principles, if sustainable change is to occur.

At the heart of the principles is the notion that ‘ownership’ of, in this case, AC placements, is firmly held by GoPNG with donors working ‘harmoniously’ toward PNG ends. This implies that collaboration (literally ‘working together’) is necessary and requires being conducted in a ‘transparent’ manner. Arguably, the foundation for such collaboration centres on the GoPNG and GoA negotiations that develop the ToRs for each placement. There is much evidence (see, especially, sections 3.1 and 3.3) that, in this process and in the first stages of each placement, collaboration is essential. Also, as the following examples show, advisers stressed the need for this approach to span all project stages, from the initial or continuing development of ToRs/work plans, to planning, policy and systems development, all the way through to implementation.

The ToRs were compiled in collaboration with my Counterpart. (A4, 2006)

A collaborative approach to problem/issue/opportunity identification was taken. Therefore, the deliverables were what the Department wanted – not what I wanted. An inclusive approach to system/process improvement was taken.... A great deal of effort was put in to ensuring that officers within the Department took ownership of the work in which I was involved. (A8, 2006)

It is essential that KAS are involved in the planning phase of activities such that they develop the skills to take an activity from conception to completion, as this ensures they feel ownership from the activity. (A13, 2006)

The link from ownership, collaboration to sustainability was well made by the following adviser.

The key to sustainability, however, is the fact that all improvements and changes were done via consultation and discussion, so they are supported by the KAS as well as other involved employees. This will ensure the improvements are continued as they are ‘owned’ by those individuals within [the Agency] and not by me as the Adviser. (A54, 2010)

This individual, within AC placement, approach mirrors the national (GoPNG and GoA) approach to establishing PNG’s ‘development policies, and strategies and coordinat[ing] development actions’ (OECD, n.d.). It is important, however, to recognise that, in Kuhl’s (2009) terms, ‘when interventions are undertaken on one level only the effects will dissipate, so *sustainable* development requires simultaneous action at all of these levels’ (p. 551, emphasis added). This research suggests that there may be room for improvement here in ensuring that individual capacity development interventions (AC placements) are required to operate at multiple levels in order to achieve sustainability, and also are systematically formally assessed (in terms of the counterparts’ learning) and subsequently evaluated (in terms of the placements ToRs) in these respects.

4.4 Influencing factors on AC placements

This section will discuss the various factors that research data revealed as having a positive or negative influence on overall placement outcomes. As such, this section will draw predominantly upon the data presented in Section 3.5, in response to the research question:

RQ6 What were the enablers of, and impediments to, the success (or ‘drivers of change’) of the AC placements?

When considering project ‘success’, the discussion will extend beyond the framework of the ToRs and into areas considered fundamental to capacity development such as sustainability, and the translation of capacity development activities at the individual level into improved organisational

performance. Where relevant, the findings will be interwoven with the material presented in the literature review (section 2.2).

In order to break the findings down into more manageable and potentially useful categories, the enablers and impediments will be discussed as they operate with regard to a) the individual level, b) the translation of capacity development from the individual to the organisational level, and b) the organisational level. While these distinctions are possible in the main, there will occur, at times, some unavoidable crossover. In addition to discussing the influences that affect the outcomes of placements once they have commenced, this section will also address some deficiencies that were highlighted in ASF/EPSP's capacity diagnostic frameworks and the implications of these for both project design and final project outcomes.

4.4.1 The individual level

The evidence gathered throughout every stage of this research unambiguously confirms the fundamental part that interpersonal relationships play in the success of technical assistance projects. Whilst the necessity of adviser technical expertise is a given, the data shows that the processes through which this expertise is offered and taken up can be the lynchpin of sustainable skills and knowledge acquisition. Capacity development is about people, and learning and change must take place at the level of the individual for capacity development initiatives to bear fruit. This section discusses some of the features of the AC placements and adviser approaches that could be seen to influence, positively and negatively, both capacity development and the pursuit of placement outcomes.

4.4.1.1 Establishing the relationship

As discussed in the literature review, there has been a shift from a narrow focus on knowledge transfer (which conveys a sense of passivity on the part of the recipient) to a broader focus on learning and the associated practices that promote deep learning (OECD/DAC, 2011). This recognises that the capacity development relationship between an adviser and counterpart is essentially one of influence, with advisers working to change—sometimes in a fundamental way—the thinking and behaviour of their counterparts. The receptivity of the counterpart to this influence will depend on multiple factors, one of which is the level of trust they place in their adviser. As one counterpart wrote, 'the nature of [the Adviser's] role is that he identifies deficiencies; so building trust with Counterparts is critical to his success' (C17, 2007). In the case of C17, the adviser built trust by conducting himself 'with honesty and integrity with all Counterparts that he works with'. The link between the adviser's personal qualities and the potential for KAS and counterpart learning is made explicitly here:

[The Adviser] is a people-centred person and tries his best to know officers in the different branches of the department...I believe, with the type of personality he has, we will learn a lot of good things from him (C19, 2007)

Advisers noted in all stages of the study the fundamental importance of counterpart receptivity to the success of skills transfer and other learning and capacity development initiatives (throughout the data receptivity was alternatively noted as 'enthusiasm', 'willingness', and other descriptive nouns that were collated under the category 'counterpart attitude'). In the survey, 83 per cent of advisers rated the counterpart's attitude as 'considerably' or 'fully' important to project success, and it was mentioned by over 50% of advisers in the PCRs reviewed (see section 3.5). This lends support to the conceptualisation of capacity presented in Section 2.2 as encompassing the core capability to 'commit and engage'.

Just as with other elements of capacity, a counterpart's willingness to commit and engage can be influenced positively or negatively depending on the adviser's approach to the relationship. Where counterpart views were available, they were clearly averse to advisers who arrived in their placements and tried to 'take over' or force their own agendas (see section 4.6.3 for senior managers views on this). As outlined in section 3.5.2.6, counterparts worked most successfully with advisers who were supportive but non-directive, who could act as good role models, who took the time to know their counterparts well, and who would be available for consultation and discussion on issues as and when they arose. Advisers needed to make it clear that they were there for their counterparts, and to support counterparts in achieving their own objectives and goals, rather than the other way around.

Advisers agreed that they were able to generate commitment and engagement by making an effort to discover what motivated their counterparts as individuals and by demonstrating how their working together would benefit counterparts personally. Advisers also stressed the need to take into account and support the counterpart's existing workload and to continuously ensure that the work being undertaken was in line with counterparts' and the organisation's priorities (see section 3.5.2.5). It is in the nature of these approaches that they demand advisers take the time to come to know their counterparts well and show a genuine interest in their counterparts personally and professionally (see section 4.2.2 for the views of advisers and counterparts on this and 4.4.1.7 on the impediment of 'time' in placements).

The views of both counterparts and advisers, expressed above, are encapsulated in the following quote:

Building relationships—this is vital to achieving any change, and is critical in the success of an Adviser placement. The building of the relationship cannot be rushed and needs to focus on working with their needs and the priorities they perceive. KAS can be very disapproving if ideas or changes are forced upon them. Establishing the relationships and involving them is critical. (A26, 2007)

From the very outset it is possible to see some features of third-generation approaches to technical assistance being favoured, or indeed at times deemed essential, for the successful pursuit of capacity development and placement outcomes on the ground. As stated in section 2.2, the third-generation uses context as a starting point and is a flexible approach that uses 'searching rather than planning' (Morgan, 2010 cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5). As indicated above, this 'searching' style, and the proper understanding of context, must first begin through the development of trusting relationships between advisers and counterparts.

The data revealed that at times counterparts' and KAS's willingness to commit and engage had been adversely affected from the outset, by counterparts and other agency staff being inadequately prepared for, or occasionally not even aware of, the impending arrival of an adviser (see section 3.5.6). This could lead to resentment, which made it very difficult for advisers to successfully engage with their counterparts once on the job. One interviewed adviser found a number of her key counterparts unwilling to engage with her and so sought out other willing agency staff. She believed that the element of self-selection in this process had proved critical to her placement's success (A17, 2007). On the other side of the equation, in one of the instances where the agency director was involved in the selection of the adviser, this appeared to pave the way for a productive and cooperative relationship as the 'fit' of the adviser for the agency had already been determined (section 3.5.3.4). The foregoing suggests that while the ways in which advisers approach and relate to their counterparts are critical to fostering and maintaining engagement, the ways in which placements are set up and counterparts and advisers recruited are also important factors in ensuring

engagement and minimising active resistance (see section 4.4.1.6). (See section 4.2.2 for further views of advisers and counterparts on establishing relationships).

4.4.1.2 Capacity development as learning – a ‘process’ approach

The establishment of trusting interpersonal relationships can be seen to pave the way for a continuous interaction between advisers and counterparts that allows for capacity development and tangible placement outcomes to be pursued in an organic rather than a mechanical way. For advisers this was facilitated most effectively through close, daily one-on-one interactions, with the adviser preferably sharing office space with counterparts and/or KAS and acting as a ‘coach’ or ‘mentor’ (see Table 3.3.1.1 and Table 3.3.1.2 in which survey results demonstrate ‘mentoring’ as both the most popular approach and the one that 81% of advisers rated as most effective).

Discussion of the learning rationales underpinning the particular capacity development strategies adopted by advisers has already been included in sections 4.3 and 4.2.5 of this report. Suffice it to say here that close proximity to counterparts was seen to facilitate an ongoing interaction that allowed learning and consultation to be closely tied to the daily demands of counterparts’ roles and responsibilities, and allowed for the continual reinforcement of new processes, procedures and attitudes essential to ensuring that change is sustained. This is in line with the understanding of capacity put forward in the literature review as ‘purposive,’ that is, engaged with real-life issues, and capacity development as requiring an engaged and iterative approach that allows for continual feedback and improvement. Once more the issue of trust is pivotal here, in particular with regard to the creation of a ‘safe space’ that allows for open and honest discussion and can incorporate ‘failure’ into the process of learning. This also recognises the latent quality of capacity, and that the adviser must be able to actually witness that learning has occurred via visible performance.

Closely related to this was the recognition of the need for collaborative work practices with counterpart and KAS (mentioned by 60% of advisers in the PCRs and noted by 93% of adviser survey respondents and 100% of counterpart survey respondents as ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ important to the success of their placements, see sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2.3). The rationales given for the need for collaboration were many, and its application extended from the initial planning stages of placement activities all the way through to their implementation. The processes of collaboration were emphasised as giving rise to new practices of debate, open discussion, problem-solving and feedback, and contributed to counterparts’ and KAS’s ownership of placement activities and outcomes. Furthermore, these provided the opportunity for KAS to develop the skills to ‘take an activity from conception to completion’ (A13, 2006).

The processes described are similar to those discussed in the literature review in the context of organisational sustainability as ‘learning’, in particular ‘action learning’. On this subject Johnson and Wilson (1999) discuss the need for participatory, iterative approaches that include the joint negotiation of agendas and agreement upon mechanisms that can be used to assess performance, with results fed back into the process to facilitate further learning. The description of these processes as ‘enablers’ in the context of this study also lends support to Baser and Morgan’s (2008) assertion of the need to ‘blend product and process’ (p. 89) in order to strike a productive balance between the pursuit of placement outcomes and capacity development such that improvement can become sustained and self-generating. This insight enables the question ‘what is it that is to be sustained following placement completion?’ While particular, tangible placement outcomes such as new policies and procedures are certain to become obsolete or redundant over time, what is critical to be sustained and sustainable is the process or processes through which outcomes can be articulated, formulated, pursued and successfully achieved.

As an example of the broader benefits that accrue from applying a collaborative process-approach to achieving placement outcomes, approximately 15 per cent of advisers reported in their PCRs that KAS could now undertake policy development independently, by virtue of their having participated in a comprehensive, collaborative and iterative policy development process. In addition to skills acquisition, advisers noted attitudinal changes in counterparts to the effect that they: appreciated the role of broad consultation and collaboration in the policy development process; understood the role of policy in implementing legislation; and accepted the need for the critical assessment of current practices and monitoring and evaluation to support policy implementation (section 3.1.3.2). As indicated by Johnson and Wilson (1999), it is through these participatory, iterative and sustained processes that ‘collective and purposeful norms of behaviour can be developed and changed over a sustained period of time, both in shared practices and in coordination and cooperation’ (p. 45). As discussed in section 2.2, however, it takes a long time for new norms of thinking and being to be cultivated and embedded in any human system.

4.4.1.3 A tension between product and process

Tensions existed in AC relationships between the product (as enumerated in the ToRs) and the processes required for sustainable capacity development as is indicated in the some of the advisers’ opinions about their projects’ success (see section 3.1.3). Some advisers noted having achieved their ToRs but expressed concerns about their sustainability (see section 4.2.3 for views of senior managers on this matter) given that there had not been time to embed new procedures and processes into organisational practice (a focus on outcomes over capacity development). An adviser encapsulated this point as follows.

I would rate it as successful, however much more work would have been required to institutionalize it. (A10, 2006)

Others stated, however, that the need to focus on proper processes for developing capacity made certain placement outcomes unachievable within given timeframes (a focus on capacity development over outcomes).

In terms of the planned outcomes specifically aligned to the work plan I’d rate my placement as limited to successful. In terms of the broader requirement to increase overall capacity to understand and undertake public sector procurement for GoPNG, for those groups that I managed to reach, I’d rate the placement as very successful. (A18, 2007)

Both of these statements, as well as others made by a range of advisers, suggest that when it comes to the formulation of ToRs, and the timeframes in which ToRs are expected to be realised, current placement design favours the pursuit of tangible outcomes over the pursuit of processes aimed at sustainably developing capacity. This emphasis is indicative of the second-generation approach to capacity development which favours ‘control, clarity, efficiency, results and accountability’ (Morgan 2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5), and which stands in contrast to the more third-generation style of flexible, participative and iterative approaches that seem to be favoured and applied by advisers in the field. As discussed in section 2.2, the emergence of third-generation technical assistance has been based on the recognition that flexibility needs to be built in programme operations such that emergent needs and changing demands can be accommodated (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007). This is supported by the survey data, in which 97 per cent of advisers, and 100 per cent of counterparts, rated ‘flexibility’ as considerably or fully important to placement success (which resulted in flexibility being the number one enabler selected by advisers in the survey). The data suggest that the way AC placements are currently constituted sets up a trade-off between achieving

tangible outcomes and achieving sustainable capacity development, with implications for the chances of success of either or both.

4.4.1.4 Learning as a two-way process: culture and context

The need for advisers to spend time to know and understand their counterparts was discussed previously, however, advisers must also learn ‘the way things work’ in PNG, and in their agency. They then need to tailor their approaches accordingly in order to be successful. This extends to understanding and working with local conventions of communication and hierarchical interactions, to adapting training and training materials to be culturally relevant, and to understanding the local legislative and political environment (see also section 4.4.3.1). Again this requires time and sound interpersonal relationships that allow for fruitful exchange.

The data support the importance of cultural awareness for placement success. In the survey, 80 per cent of advisers and 100 per cent of counterparts rated the adviser’s cultural awareness as being ‘fully’ or ‘considerably’ important to project success (section 3.5.1). It was also mentioned by advisers in almost 50 per cent of the PCRs reviewed (section 3.5.2.4), as well as by advisers and counterparts who participated in interviews and focus groups (section 3.5.3.2). When discussing cultural awareness in the PCRs, advisers frequently mentioned the lessons they had learned after commencing their placements, such as the need ‘stay silent and allow long pauses in the conversation...and in meetings’ as this ‘encourages KAS to open up and continue to share information’ (A26, 2007). Cultural awareness was also seen as pivotal to understanding the influences on counterpart behaviour that may prevent them from applying knowledge and skills that they already possess (the ‘knowing-doing gap’ identified by Baser & Morgan [2009, p. 87]) and thwart the translation of improved capacity into improved performance.

The need for cultural awareness includes, but also goes beyond, the interpersonal interactions that go on at the individual level. At a more basic level, advisers made statements about the need to adapt training materials and other instructional documents into culturally-relevant terms and concepts that do not rely on an adviser for explanation and can continue to be used after the adviser’s departure (A13, 2006). A number of interviewed advisers were able to expand this to a more substantive level, and indicated that placement initiatives and outcomes themselves had to possess cultural fit in order to be sustainable. If not, counterparts would merely ‘revert to their old ways’ subsequent to the adviser’s departure (A73, 2009). With broader systems development, one adviser spoke of the need to adopt PNG-style approaches from the outset of system design and development. This particular adviser took the broader conceptual issues underpinning Australian-type systems and integrated them with local practices to produce a ‘new PNG-style approach’. He added that the resulting outcomes, while successfully adopted locally, sometimes ‘horrified’ his Australian colleagues (A70, 2008).

The insights above imply that successful and sustainable outcomes are in ways dependent upon a two-way learning process between advisers and KAS/counterparts. Therefore, the collaborative and participatory processes of exchange and learning described above are essential not just for counterpart but also for adviser learning and adaptation. Once more these examples suggest that advisers who placed emphasis on achieving sustainable capacity development outcomes applied more third-generation approaches to technical assistance on the ground, approaches which use context as a starting point, ‘see indigenous institutions, cultures and structures as key determinants’, and employ a ‘searching rather than planning’ strategy (Morgan, 2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5).

4.4.1.5 Ownership and sustainability

All of the processes discussed above were also raised by advisers in connection with counterpart 'ownership' of project activities and initiatives, and ownership is, in turn, intimately connected with sustainability. In some ways what was seen on the ground was a translation of the 2005 Paris Declaration principle—that donor agencies should play a supportive role in the pursuit of country partner priorities—to the level of practice in the field. Just as the Declaration's principles were based on practical experience as to what works and what doesn't at the country level, the data from this study also supports the contention that advisers who are seen to be working for their own or for external interests, rather than the interests of counterparts, KAS and the recipient agency, will have very little sustainable impact at either the individual or the organisation level (see section 4.6.5 for the views of senior managers on this).

KAS, counterpart and organisational interests in turn had to be pursued by means of a process that was also, in significant ways, owned and pursued by local actors, with the adviser playing a facilitating role through establishing and guiding participatory and consultative processes. While the ownership of placement outcomes was seen as essential for ensuring their sustainability (understood as their continued application or implementation and embedding) it was the process through which outcomes were pursued which was important for developing the capability to adapt and self-renew so critical to the capacity for sustained and self-generating performance improvement sought by ASF/EPSP.

4.4.1.6 The tension between second-generation design and third-generation application

Some tensions emerge from the data in what can be conceptualised as a conflict between second-generation, outcomes-driven project design and the application of third-generation, process-driven technical assistance approaches in the field. One of the clearest tensions emerging from the data presented above is the time that is needed to establish interpersonal relationships based on trust, and to formulate and pursue culturally-fit placement outcomes through sustainable consultative and participatory processes, versus the timeframes that are allocated at the outset of projects. While many advisers stated directly that the time required to become trusted and accepted in the organisation (and therefore to begin to be able to start having an impact) had not been considered in the establishment of placement timeframes, the emphasis on product over process in placement design is also clear in the observation that many advisers could rate their placements as 'successful' while still considering placement outcomes to be unsustainable (section 3.1.3). As discussed in section 2.2, sustainability is inherent in the very concept of capacity development and to the extent that outcomes are unsustainable capacity development cannot have been said to occur. This would indicate that the conceptual shift from a 'static' to a 'developmental' model of capacity that has occurred in thinking around capacity development is yet to be realised in the case of EPSP, and that, more generally, an explicit capacity development focus is yet to be fully integrated into placement design.

This situation would appear to be exacerbated by the practice of appointing advisers for 12-month placements with the possibility of an extension (see sections 4.5.2 and 4.6.2). Two scenarios tended to play out with regard to these arrangements. The first was that an adviser would be given an extension but would state how, had they known at the outset that they would have an additional year, would have approached capacity development activities differently. The second would be that the adviser was granted an extension too late, by which time they had already sought and secured alternative employment. In these cases a new adviser would be appointed and the process of establishing new relationships would have to begin all over again and momentum lost (see section

4.2.2 for counterpart views on ‘serial’ placements). This could also lead to ‘adviser fatigue’ on the part of counterparts.

[This] string of Advisers is problematic because everyone does things differently regardless of how detailed handover notes are... while this doesn't mean starting from scratch every time there is not a nice continuous process... backtracking happens; relationship building has to start from scratch... and [there is the risk of] Adviser fatigue. (A50, 2010)

The second, and related, tension emerges in the way that placement success is measured. Once more this is indicated in the PCRs, with their focus on tangible indicators of project success, particularly when it comes to measuring capacity development (including sustainability). This came out most clearly in the interviews, when advisers were able to expand upon the impact of their placements in a way not possible in the PCRs. As clearly stated by one adviser:

There is a tension there about what you can put on a checklist—it is easier to say I ran three workshops and four seminars, two field trips and five questionnaire designs than it is to say I had ten conversations with her that made her feel more confident as a female in PNG society. It is really hard to put that in a report. (A68, 2007)

Other comments made by advisers regarded the difficulty in quantifying changes in capacity, which encompassed immeasurable factors such as self-confidence and changes in demeanour and attitude (A16, 2007), as well as the fact that there ‘was no real formal method for identifying Counterparts’ development as a result of placement activities’ (A50, 2010). These findings are in agreement with the observation discussed in the literature review that it is rare for aid organisations to focus on capacity development criteria when assessing the performance of technical assistance personnel, which is important because monitoring and evaluation can significantly influence how technical assistance personnel perform (OECD/DAC, 2011). Land, Hauck and Baser (2007) suggest that personnel performance should be assessed in terms of the roles and functions they are expected to perform and stress that it is critical to avoid making technical assistance personnel responsible for overall results because this ‘encourages them to take over and disempowers country partners... [and]...can also lead to an emphasis on achieving tangible and measurable results at the expense of investing in less tangible but equally important process and learning tasks’ (p. 7).

The emphasis on the tangible over the intangible in placement design and assessment perhaps also explains some of the differences noted in the data obtained through the PCRs and that obtained through the survey. For example, while over 50 per cent of adviser PCRs mentioned the production of checklists, manuals, guidelines and other documentation as enablers of placement success (particularly with regard to sustainability in that they ‘lock-in’ procedures and can be consulted subsequent to the adviser’s departure), this was rated as fully or considerably important by only 27 per cent of advisers in the survey. Further, while just less than 30 per cent of advisers discussed the need for flexibility to enable placement success in the PCRs, 97 per cent of advisers felt that this was fully or considerably important to placement success in the survey. The foregoing suggests that the second conceptual shift in thinking around capacity discussed in the literature review—that from a focus on tangible to intangible aspects—is also unable to be accommodated in EPSP placement design and assessment as currently constituted.

4.4.1.7 The impediment of ‘time’

The impediment of ‘insufficient time’ (noted by 50% of advisers in the PCRs; 28% of advisers in the survey; and in comments by senior managers in section 4.6.2) clearly draws some of its significance from the need for advisers to establish productive interpersonal relationships prior to pursuing

substantive project outcomes, as well as the tendency of advisers to pursue iterative and participatory process-driven capacity development strategies. Project timeframes essentially appear to be designed with product, rather than process, most clearly in mind and this requires a trade-off to be made between tangible results and sustainable capacity development. This is encapsulated in the following quote:

...the restructure initiative was approached and supported entirely from a capacity building perspective. This often led to timelines not being achieved but ensured ownership, accountability, and understanding; allowing for the [Department] Manager to play a key leadership role. (A46, 2010)

That either project outcomes, their implementation, or the embedding of sustainable processes or procedures were not able to be achieved within initial 12-month timeframe of adviser placements was indicated in the survey data where 79 per cent of advisers and 91 per cent of counterparts rated 'continued adviser support beyond the initial placement period' as fully or considerable important to project success.

4.4.2 Translating individual capacity into improved collective performance

This section will discuss the various factors that can influence, positively or negatively, the translation of individual capacity development into improved collective performance. Due to the fact that advisers often work at different levels within organisations, as well as at the organisational level, the term 'collective' performance will sometimes be employed to cover these multiple levels of activity.

4.4.2.1 Manuals, guidelines checklists and documentation

One of the few tangible products noted as enablers of placement success was documentation, in the form of manuals; guidelines and checklists for processes developed or systematised through placements; adviser documentation of work that had been undertaken; and the laying out of steps and strategies for the implementation of policies or systems developed through the placement (see section 4.2.3 for the views of advisers on development of policies and planning processes). In the PCRs over 50 per cent of advisers listed such documentation as an enabler of placement success. Often this was related to sustainability, and the usefulness of guidelines, checklists etc. for 'locking-in' procedures and processes that had been developed through the placement.

The production of documents was also connected to translating work done with individual counterparts into organisational improvements. For example, they were cited as improving operational efficiency by allowing the streamlining of previously disparate procedures. Some forms of documentation, such as standardised reports, were also cited as facilitating collective learning by allowing for the identification of problems and issues as part of standard process. Training manuals were also cited as enabling training developed with counterparts to then be applied across the broader organisation.

While there would certainly be some broader organisational benefits obtained from the documents discussed above, there are also reasons to be cautious about overestimating their value as tools for capacity development. In the first instance, as already discussed, the focus on describing tangible outcomes in the PCRs may have resulted in these products being overemphasised (or perhaps even pursued) at the expense of other initiatives. This is partially supported by the lesser valuing of such documentation as important to project success by advisers who participated in the survey (27%, as discussed above). While 82 per cent of counterparts rated documentation highly, documentation

was nevertheless still one of the lowest rated items, being afforded less significance than other intangibles such as communication, collaboration and the adviser's cultural awareness.

Another reason for caution lies in the static nature of manuals and guidelines etc. and the uncertainty around whether the underlying knowledge has also been developed that would allow these materials to be updated as circumstances changed or for innovation to occur.

4.4.2.2 The team-based process approach

Instituting a team-based, departmental- or organisation-wide approach was preferred by a number of advisers. In some cases this was for clearly pragmatic reasons, such as the fact that counterpart absence or shifting counterparts made it ineffective to focus efforts on one individual alone (around 30% of advisers in both the PCRs and the survey noted 'absence of key counterpart' as a full or considerable impediment to placement success). Another example was a deficiency in the skills base throughout a department which made a team-based approach effective in creating a multi-skilled and therefore versatile group of counterparts and KAS (A2, 2006). Regardless of the originating rationale, all advisers who used this approach reported the positive outcomes that obtained at the collective level by virtue of its application.

As discussed in section 3.1.3.6, the team-based process approach to skill and knowledge acquisition was praised by advisers as yielding: positive team-building effects; an increased appreciation for both consultation and the need to review existing practices; improved Counterpart ownership of outcomes; and enhancements in transparency and accountability. For example:

A multidisciplinary team was formed for the implementation of the payroll and members researched and prepared a proposal for the implementation of a computerised payroll system. This team process lead to significant capacity building in terms of consultation, inclusion of peers, learning of systems and review of internal processes. (A46, 2010)

Further positive outcomes were noted in terms of efficiency and productivity and giving each staff member 'a better understanding of their role and the impact that delays or errors can have on other staff and the organization' (A29, 2008), staff being positively acknowledged by management for the work they were doing (A28, 2008), and staff better understanding how roles and organisational structure had to support agency goals and mission (A54, 2010).

In addition to facilitating the acquisition of process skills and the broader understanding that can contribute to ongoing improvements in departmental and organisational performance, these examples indicate that a team-based approach can lend itself to the creation of the conditions outlined in section 2.2 in which individuals' new knowledge, ways of understanding and techniques are able to be applied straightforwardly in the organisational setting. The conditions mentioned were: where organisational objectives are agreed, tasks and functions reasonably clear; where both individual and organisational learning are aimed at improving performance; and where the organisation provides both opportunities and support for the application of the learning by the individual (Johnson & Wilson, 1999).

Again, the descriptions of the benefits accruing from this approach encompass some of the intangible elements of capacity discussed in section 2.2, such as understanding the place of the organisation, and the individual within it, in terms of the broader systems in which they are located. The importance of this is indicated in the findings from the research wherein 40 per cent of advisers in the PCRs reviewed mentioned 'staff understanding of purpose and function' as an important enabler of placement success, and 72 per cent of advisers surveyed (and 100% of counterparts) rated this as fully or considerably important to placement success. As stated in section 4.3.2 this is

not only relevant to staff's ability to adapt and innovate by virtue of understanding the 'why' that is the animating force of the 'how', it also reflects the essential contribution that sense of purpose makes to motivation, commitment and engagement.

The second condition that was noted above—where the organisation provides both opportunities and support for the application of learning by the individual—was one that was noted by advisers as a significant impediment to project success in cases where it did not obtain. Fifty per cent of advisers noted a range of ways in which management and management practices could impede the application of individual counterparts' knowledge to improve the workplace (Section 3.2.3.5), for example:

[My Counterpart's] ability to gain more from the placement was hampered by a lack of resources and managerial support in [the] Corporate [group] (A17, 2007).

Some of the underlying reasons for lack of management support will be discussed in the following section on influences at the organisational level.

A further impediment to accruing the full benefits of team-based process approaches was time. This has already been mentioned, and again here the problem lay with not having sufficient time to ensure that processes were embedded and institutionalised prior to project completion. As discussed by Baser and Morgan (2008) and mentioned in section 2.2, one of the prominent reasons for capacity development failing to result in improved organisational performance is where new knowledge, structures, systems or strategies are formulated and applied but not embedded into daily practice.

4.4.2.3 The time needed to notice results

The interview stage of this study was an important one for gathering advisers' views of the success or otherwise of their placements (as discussed in section 4.2.1) after a number of years had elapsed since placement completion. Five advisers specifically noted how placement outcomes can actually occur over a longer timeframe than the placement itself, 'often many years longer' (A69, 2008). For example, one adviser stated that he could find no evidence at all that his placement had been successful when it was completed, but that he could arguably see evidence of it now in examples of organisational behaviour that indicated cultural change (A69, 2008). While four of the advisers saw greater evidence of success in the years following the placement, one adviser said he saw less as he realised that the technical knowledge (successfully) transferred was insufficient on its own to enable the understanding required for continued application and innovation (A58, 2011).

These insights lend support to Baser and Morgan's (2008) assertion that 'patterns of both capacity development and performance are uneven, with progress going at different speeds at different times... investments in capacity can take years to yield significant results' (p. 86). Once again this has implications for configuring the right mix of product and process in designing capacity development initiatives, and for improving the monitoring and evaluation of projects to support greater understanding of processes of change and support learning.

4.4.2.4 Inter-adviser collaboration

Section 3.1.3 provides a sample of adviser views regarding the very positive benefits that can accrue from inter-adviser collaboration. In terms that are by now familiar, this style of collaboration allowed for counterparts and KAS to develop a much broader view of the organisations of which they were a part, and to institute productive processes of inter-departmental communication and consultation. What is of particular interest here is how the collective action of the advisers was aimed directly at

organisational capacity development and capacity development processes, as opposed to specific placement outcomes (more than likely because their own placement outcomes were tied to their departmental ToRs), and focused more on the intangible aspects of capacity outlined in section 2.2. For example:

The group training activities undertaken by the ASF Advisers in a team situation were extremely effective not only in the training outcomes but in breaking down the barriers between Branches and Divisions. The Department operates with the silo effect, where there is very little interaction between Divisions or Corporate or Technical groups. There has been a significant degree of change as a result of the workshops that have included corporate and technical officers in sessions such as change management, team leadership and management, Vision and Mission development, and Corporate Awareness. (A36, 2008)

The team created a lot of synergies and the relationships between the Advisers and their KAS enhanced the relationship between individual KAS and the team leading to much more consultation over decisions. This needs to be further built on as this is where the real change can begin. (A42, 2008)

4.4.3 The organisational level

This section contains a discussion of the influences on placement success that were seen to work at the level of the organisation. There has been a small amount of crossover, for example in the discussion above regarding the need to design culturally-appropriate systems. While the design of such systems occurs at the level of individual actors acting collaboratively, the consequences can be seen to affect organisational capacity as a whole. Given that advisers most often work with a limited range of individuals, their ability to make an impact can be impeded by organisational features and actors that are beyond the purview of their influence. It is for this reason that the more negative and, unfortunately, pervasive impacts on placement success can occur at this level.

4.4.3.1 Organisational and PNG culture

As discussed in section 2.2, in 2004 Lynn Pieper completed a study that investigated the deterioration of public administration in PNG. The report highlighted the factors that interviewees saw as driving the transformation of PNG's public service from an efficient, professional, team-based, committed, independent and well-educated corps of individuals in touch with the basic service needs in the provinces, to a highly politicised, inefficient and sometimes incompetent cadre of state employees, often motivated by narrow political or personal interests. Some of these factors will be discussed further below.

If this assessment of PNG's public service is to be taken as correct generally speaking—it should be noted that the study was undertaken a decade ago and the experiences recounted by advisers demonstrate that this assessment does not always apply—it can explain part of the 'knowing-doing gap' that was alluded to by advisers in the PCRs and interviews. For example at times the improved skills, knowledge and awareness gained by counterparts through the placements would elevate their professional competencies above those of their senior managers, yet the general reluctance in PNG to challenge those in higher positions of authority would inhibit their applying that knowledge in the service of improved organisational performance (section 3.5.5.2).

Advisers spoke of the tension that exists between the formal, legal, bureaucratic system in PNG and the informal, patrimonial system in which persons in positions of political influence and authority are expected to use these positions to access and distribute largesse to kin and constituents. These two

systems were often in competition and while advisers would work to strengthen the former, the implementation of completed initiatives could be thwarted, or at least unsupported, by beneficiaries of the latter (see also section 4.2.3). Advisers could find themselves supported in initiatives involving the design and formulation of policies or performance management frameworks, for example, but then witness how the functioning of the informal system provided a strong disincentive to actually implement change, once more leading to the knowing-doing gap. For example:

These activities were effective in the sense that KAS know the right thing to do. They have a good understanding of the Public Finance (Management) Act and the General Orders. They just decline to implement those laws, preferring to take an easier or more personally advantageous course of action (A30, 2008)

The wantok system in PNG could be seen to have a strong influence specifically on initiatives aimed at improving performance management (inadequate performance management was mentioned as an impediment to placement success by 40% of advisers in the PCRs). Again the operation of the informal system of appointments created a strong disincentive to implement or consistently apply performance management frameworks, and the absence of such frameworks enabled the continuation of underperforming or inadequately qualified appointees in their positions.

It is safe to say that the implementation of such broad-based cultural change is beyond the power of any adviser or external agency. Nevertheless, the existence of informal systems of decision-making and resource allocation side-by-side with formal, bureaucratic ones is commonplace, as is recognised by third-generation technical assistance which concerns itself with the dynamics of change at both the formal and informal levels (Morgan, 2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011). However while advisers can and should make efforts to understand and work with these dynamics, the need for recipient country leaders to champion change is also vital. Further, even with the support of capable leaders, it must be recognised that cultural change is a long-term process that requires continuous engagement.

4.4.3.2 Acting positions, contract positions, and long-term vacancies

In her 2004 report, Pieper also discussed how the change in public service appointments in PNG from permanent to contract, with departmental head appointments being made by the cabinet rather than the Public Services Commission, resulted in the still prevalent practice of changing secretaries (and often other senior personnel) whenever a new minister is appointed (this is touched on in section 4.2.3 with the regard of getting policy changes approved). The consequence of this has been an undermining of the professionalism of the public service, 'causing departmental heads to focus only on the short-term, and to play political games in their own attempts at survival... it has enabled politicians to get too close to operational areas within the public service' (p. 4).

The instability created by this state of affairs has been reported by advisers as having seriously deleterious effects on placement outcomes. The support for change from senior management (and consequently from any counterparts lower in the hierarchy) could ebb and flow throughout the course of a placement, implementation plans could be stymied, or placement initiatives successfully implemented could be overturned when organisational leadership was replaced. The relationship between support and shifting political tides seemed to be mostly apparent in cases where positions of leadership were acting positions, and advisers could spend the entirety of their placements without substantive senior managers being appointed. However, in cases where substantive appointments were made late in placements, advisers could see progress accelerate rapidly (section 3.5.5.2). As an illustration of these points:

On paper and on the surface these things were realistic and achievable and whilst a corporate plan and policies and procedures were designed and formulated; the most important state of moving things to the completion and implementation stages were almost impossible because of lack of will from the acting management director due to resistance from the senior management group. The corporate plan, the restructure and other related, but difficult issues were only finally implemented when the substantive managing director was appointed (A44, 2009).

The circumstances described above create two of the conditions noted by Baser and Morgan (2008) as inhibiting the translation of capacity development initiatives into improved organisational performance, namely, the knowing-doing gap that impedes progress, and political instability, which creates disincentives for change. They also feed into the core capability 'to relate and attract resources and support,' described by Baser and Morgan (2008) as one of the five core capabilities constituting capacity. As they state, and as can be witnessed in the field in PNG, there is a political dimension to this capability which, particularly in the public sector, is pursued as much, if not more, through informal and intangible channels as it is through formal and tangible. Too much of a preoccupation with survival in this setting can result in efficiency being sacrificed for loyalty, and the loss of ability to innovate. As the authors conclude, these agencies need to extend outward in the forging of strong stakeholder relationships or institute mechanisms that guard against total dependence on political support and alliances, in order to secure the operating space required to really build capacity.

Political instability, and the shifting and changing priorities that instability gives rise to, was one of the reasons cited by advisers for the need for flexibility in formulating and pursuing placement outcomes (see section 4.2.1 for advisers and counterparts views on this). Flexibility allows emergent needs and changing demands to be accommodated and this is particularly important 'in complex and politically sensitive environments where the momentum and direction of reform can quickly change (Land, Hauck & Baser, 2007, p. 6). There is a sense here of capacity development initiatives needing to be pursued somewhat opportunistically, with advisers ready to respond to opportunities as and when they arise

4.4.4 Capacity diagnostics and placement design

Capacity diagnostics were not often mentioned directly by advisers in the PCRs, however they were implicated in a number of impediments that were isolated in the analysis of these reports, in particular, 'insufficient human capacity' (51% of advisers) and 'incorrect needs analysis' (35% of advisers). Where EPSP's capacity diagnostic exercise was broached by a group of advisers in a focus group, it was not viewed positively (see section 3.5.6.5). The process was characterised as one that involved eminent PNG bureaucrats investigating the 'failings of agencies', while eschewing both consultation and acknowledgement of the positive learning that had come from the ASF experience. In the view of these advisers, the subsequent Capacity Development Agreements often bore no relation to the discussions that had occurred and this contributed to poorly targeted AC placements and some unrealistic ToRs.

The data from this study suggest that there are several ways in which the diagnostic framework used to assess capacity failed or fails to provide an accurate assessment of individual and organisational needs, and therefore leads to failure to accurately gauge what will be required in order to achieve placement outcomes prior to their commencement.

Just on one-third of advisers noted in their PCRs that baseline conditions at the start of their placements were insufficient to allow placement outcomes to be achieved within given timeframes. For example, while ToRs may have called for the development of corporate or strategic plans,

advisers would discover after commencing their placements that the understanding of the processes required to support these initiatives was either limited or absent. The absence of basic underlying systems or processes to support higher-level objectives then became one of the reasons for ToRs remaining only partially realised upon placement completion. Alternatively, a ToR would be realised in time, but at the expense of ensuring that the proper systems and processes were in place to support its later implementation and sustainable operation. As indicated, this overestimation of baseline capacity related to both individuals and organisations as a whole. This is acknowledged in PCR comments as one of the reasons why advisers who believed their ToRs to be appropriate upon commencement of their placements, later came to view them as inappropriate (see section 3.1). As such, the data points to inadequacies in the capacity diagnostics employed by ASF/EPSP when it comes to isolating the finer or more ground-level capacity deficits that must be addressed in order to pursue higher-level objectives.

This view is encapsulated by Adviser A50 (2010) who said in the interview that she thought adviser job descriptions were written almost as a 'wish-list' in the hope that advisers would go in and 'magically' fix problems that have been there for years. In her view, it is 'more systemic' than that, and the work involves big changes but also lots of very small changes. Consequently, a 'slowly slowly' approach is needed in order to achieve real and sustainable change. The idea of the 'wish list' and the absence of proper consideration as to what is actually required to achieve these objectives, brings up once again the tension isolated between product and process in placement design and the tendency to focus on the former at the expense of the latter. Also, as indicated here, a change in the approach to capacity diagnostics employed by EPSP or any subsequent program, and the incorporation of an explicit capacity development perspective in placement design, must also lead to a change in what would be considered to be realistic placement timeframes.

Almost all of the issues described above, as well as others highlighted in this section, are neatly encapsulated in the following quote:

At the time of accepting this position the job and person specifications appeared current and relevant. However on assessing the [Agency] situation and progress with their field operations work for the [placement focus] at the start of my contract, the situation was such that the role required far more operational inputs and activities than outlined in the job specifications as a 'standard' Adviser position and therefore allowed less time for capacity building which resulted in that particular specification being largely opportunistic... Further, given that it takes time to build trust and relationships in order to have free and frank discussions with Counterparts, the amount of lead in time to the project also affected the level of capacity building desired to take place. Proposed changes are that an appropriate assessment of the actual situation for an Adviser placement be undertaken to ensure that AusAID, the program management contractor, Adviser and Adviser facility are in full agreement regarding the capacity building, operational activities and expected inputs and outcomes. (A62, 2011)

The data also suggest that deficiencies exist when it comes to diagnosing the causes giving rise to agency or department performance deficits. A number of advisers noted that while it had been assumed that underperformance was simply a function of lack of knowledge, upon engagement it became clear that counterparts knew what to do but were stifled in applying their knowledge by some other factor, such as lack of confidence, lack of support, lack of opportunity or as a result of some particular characteristic of the organisational or broader culture. This can be traced again to a general tendency to focus on the technical and formal aspects of capacity, and the concomitant absence of focus on the intangible elements that are also fundamental to capacity and its translation into performance. As discussed in section 2.2, a lack of focus on these intangibles is often a strong explanatory factor in the failure of technical assistance interventions to have their desired impacts.

And, as Baser and Morgan (2008) note, conventional needs analyses and capacity diagnostics are generally not equipped to uncover the deeper political, cultural, psychological and social factors that underpin what can be generically seen at the surface as ‘lack of commitment’ or ‘lack of will’, etc. When explicit consideration is given to these factors, the need for longer-term commitments when pursuing changes at these levels becomes readily apparent.

It should be noted here that only seven per cent of advisers surveyed rated ‘quality of underlying analysis of needs’ as an impediment to project success. It is possible to conjecture as to why this was the case. One probable reason is that capacity diagnostics are an underlying and often ‘invisible’ factor that set the stage for project design, and establish adviser expectations, and then disappear into the background. The adviser then becomes aware of impediments to project success as they become apparent throughout the placement, without necessarily considering whether these obstacles or impediments could have realistically been foreseen. For example, in the survey, 37 per cent of advisers noted ‘existing infrastructure’ as a considerable (or full) impediment to project success, and it is reasonable to consider whether inadequacies in existing infrastructure should have been isolated in the initial analysis of organisational or departmental capacity. This example has been chosen specifically to indicate that it is not simply in the realm of intangibles that deficiencies appear to exist in capacity diagnostics, but also with regard to the more traditional, material elements of organisational capacity.

4.4.5 Conclusion

If AC placements are to work to develop capacity that is capable of producing sustained and self-generating performance improvement they will need to be reconfigured in a way that accommodates the processes required to achieve this result. At present, the emphasis on product over process creates tensions that can ultimately negatively impact the achievement of both. Adviser and counterpart experience in the field stresses heavily the ‘human’ component of capacity development and the implications this has for the way that placements should be approached. Advisers and counterparts both need to be receptive to being influenced by the other, and there is a strong sense that placements in their entirety—from design, through to implementation and assessment—should be approached collaboratively and with a clear sense of partnership.

In general, the findings discussed here are both a confirmation and validation of the emergence of third-generation approaches to technical assistance discussed in section 2.2. Whether familiar with the discussion of these approaches in the literature or not, advisers are discovering in the field that flexible, contextually-specific and iterative learning approaches are what gives capacity development initiatives the greatest chance of sustainable success. This stands in contrast with the second-generation design employed by ASF/EPSP, with its focus on tangible outcomes and relatively short timeframes. Longer-term engagements are certainly required if change is to be deep and abiding.

The political context in PNG creates challenges. Greater flexibility and realistic expectations, however, can help minimise their inhibitory forces. Once again, collaboration and partnership would seem to be key in ensuring there is something of a ‘climate of readiness’ in which technical assistance placements can operate. Moreover there needs to be readiness on the part of advisers and donor agencies to take advantage of opportunities as and when they arise and to bide their time when circumstances dictate.

4.5 The role of other modalities in capacity development

4.5.1 Introduction

This section deals with a small part of the research that was directed at ‘other modalities’, that is, other than AC placements. Due to what were recent AusAID interests in PNG, this matter was added late in the research project’s design in order to capture data about such modalities: short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research. The research question added was:

RQ5 What have been the outcomes of the introduction by EPSP of other modalities of capacity development including short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research? Do these modalities provide increased efficiencies and effectiveness compared to the use of long-term advisers?

The research design was principally established to collect data on AC placements from 2006–2013, which included the end of the ASF period and through the EPSP period. The other modalities research was conducted on the 2012 and 2013 period, but EPSP managed little work in other modalities during this period. This was confirmed by an EPSP staff member as follows.

EPSP sought to expand the kinds of capacity development modalities available to it such as targeted training, research and analysis, procurement, incentive grants and co-funding arrangements...EPSP has undergone several reviews and refocusing of its role and objectives over the past eighteen months. EPSP is conscious that other modalities have not been realised as anticipated. (Personal email communication)

The research proceeded initially on the basis that there would be other modalities to be researched and that some data could also be collected in the AC placement research stages that related to previous (pre-2012) work in other modalities. A brief review of relevant literature and the small amount of data collected in this research are used in this section to provide the basis for a discussion of the above research questions, although clearly the absence of other modalities to study during the research means that there are no answers to these questions.

4.5.2 Short-term consultants

Perhaps the most common ‘other modality’ used for Australian aid-based development in PNG is the short-term consultancy. Short-term generally means consultancies of a few weeks to a few months, some on a multiple fly-in/fly-out basis. They may take the form of short-term extensions to long-term AC placements, technical support, capacity substitution, consultancy etc. They differ from AC placements in that, usually, there are no counterparts and their ToRs do not include capacity development (see also section 4.4.1.6). Some short-term consultancies relate to the work of one or more AC placements and, in other ways, may also involve some aspects of capacity development. Short-term consultancies were a topic of consideration at the GoPNG and donor workshop held by the research team in April 2014 (see section 4.6.2 for full details). A group of participants noted that the benefits of short-term consultancies included: cost effectiveness for the donors, the ability to address specific capacity needs quickly, and improving agency staff’s particular technical skills. The group noted, however, that capacity development was limited at best in short-term consultancies, there was often resistance to consultants’ efforts to achieve change, and there was limited understanding on the part of consultants of cultural and contextual matters.

An adviser with experience of short-term consultancies confirmed the above in his following statement in his PCR.

In the current environment, where managing contractors and development partners are looking to see quick wins (tangible outcomes) delivered with short-term technical assistance and other modalities, [short-term consultancies] frustrate and fracture support and the work that has already been done and will hinder progress towards reform. (A94, 2011)

Arguably, the negatives expressed about short-term consultancies are about them not being long-term consultancies (AC placements). As shown later, this was a recurring theme in the data but it is unreasonable in the sense that short-term contracts are there for a short-term purpose and not for (necessarily long-term) sustainable capacity development. Various meetings with AusAID (later DFAT) staff in Canberra and Port Moresby expressed positive views about the usefulness of short-term consultancies for capacity substitution etc. One short-term adviser made this point in his PCR.

I believe that a fly in/fly out arrangement works extremely well. Advisers, like many consultants, are commonly tempted to complete tasks for Public Servants when they start to struggle. Of course, this is not sustainable. My working arrangements encouraged local staff to more fully participate in expediting solutions and resolving problems. I believe that much of the success of the [specified] reform can be attributed to these working arrangements. (A7, 2006)

Generally, GoPNG senior managers, counterparts and others expressed negative views about short-term consultancies.

[Senior staff] did cite that they had a short-term consultant in the department to do some training courses but when he left the courses ceased...Also, 'part-time' Advisers are not suitable where they only come in a few days a week. This was the case for some consultants brought in through another arrangement, not with EPSP. We suggested that we needed full-time Advisers who stay for an extended time. This was essential as we deal with human beings who are complex and need time to deal with change. (G1&G2)

Some short-term consultants felt that they were plunged into difficult circumstances that were not amenable to short-term advice.

In hindsight, looking for patterns of behaviour early on, such as, avoidance and coming up with more strategies to manage them. Short-term assignments are difficult. In the four months of the assignment, it took me a month to realise that the Secretariat Manager might be avoiding particular discussions or situations. (A5, 2006)

Counterparts were similarly unimpressed with short-term consultants.

I needed an Adviser not a consultant to help fill the gap because an Adviser has a genuine interest in trying to help someone develop their knowledge and skills. A consultant comes to do a small project, gives advice and leaves, and then isn't around to see it through. (C83)

[Short-term] consultants collect information for themselves and retain it. They submit a report then come back later to review whether things have been done. (C85)

Short-term Advisers are no good for human capacity development, or for the institutionalisation of new policies and procedures etc. Short term is only good for a specific job or product. Also short-term visits are of questionable value as people are not committed locally and not available on the ground. (C79)

Given the limited data, it is unwise to draw firm conclusions about short-term consultancies other than that further research will be required to do so. It may be suggested that short-term consultancies are probably useful in particular circumstances and are favoured by donors for their specificity and apparent cost effectiveness; conversely the recipients dislike short-term consultancies and prefer long-term AC placements, especially because of their capacity development strengths.

4.5.3 Twinning

The information for this section has been taken from the PNG-EPSC Twinning Initiative Phase I Independent Completion Report (Murphy, 2010). It contains the most recent evaluation data available on the contribution of the twinning initiative.

The use of institution-to-institution 'twinning' arrangements commenced informally in PNG in 2006, and was formally instituted as Phase 1 of the Papua New Guinea (PNG)-Australia Economic and Public Sector Governance (EPSC) Twinning Initiative in July 2007. At the time of the Independent Completion Report produced near the end of Phase 1 of the Initiative, the Initiative comprised the PNG-Australia Audit Office Twinning Scheme (PAAOTS); the PNG-Australia Taxation Office Twinning Scheme (PATOTS); the PNG-Australia Treasury Twinning Scheme (PATTS); the PNG-Australia Finance Twinning Scheme (PAFTS); and the PNG-Australia Customs Twinning Scheme (PACTS). The three objectives of Phase I were to: 1) facilitate an ongoing relationship between selected PNG and Australian departments; 2) develop appropriate knowledge and skills among selected PNG staff in specific departments; and 3) develop the capacity of selected PNG departments to undertake their designated roles and responsibilities.

Twinning worked 'by pairing organisations with similar portfolios to undertake workplace exchanges; capacity building can occur through the sharing of decision-making processes, problems, constraints and the approaches taken' (AusAID, 2010a, p. 14). Twinning activities included: training; study tours; work attachments (both PNG officers to Australia and Australian officers to PNG); activities or placements from one week to 12 months in duration; and capacity development, capacity filling or a combination of both (AusAID, 2010a).

Murphy (2010) noted that, although the Initiative is portrayed as a single initiative, it is characterised by a variety of independently-initiated and managed schemes that vary widely in the duration and nature of deployments of Australians to PNG and vice versa. From Murphy's report: 'PATOTS and PACTS are characterised by very short deployments (typically one to two weeks) both in Australia and in PNG. PAAOTS places PNG graduates in the Graduate Program of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) for up to a year. Deployments from ANAO to PNG have so far been minimal. Between these two extremes PATTS and PAFTS placements are typically between 6 weeks and 3 – 5 months... This means that it is difficult to make any conclusions that can be generalised across the full set of five schemes' (p. 3).

The Initiative is also strongly linked with the Strongim Gavman Program (SGP), with many twinning activities being used to complement SGP's strategic reforms at the operational-level.

Murphy states that the Twinning Initiative has been effective at consolidating and strengthening long-term institutional links between Australian and PNG partner agencies, and enabled the development of close relationships at the senior, middle and junior levels of the involved organisations. In the case of PACTS, this led to a familiarity where involved PNG personnel were 'comfortable to get on the phone and "work-shop" issues and ideas with their international Counterparts' (p. 6). On the other hand, the view was expressed that the twinning timeframes in PATTS were 'too short to build effective relationships that facilitate effective mentoring of Counterparts' (p. 6).

Murphy noted a few clear improvements in operational capacity, such as a reduction of the backlog of audit reports in the Auditor's General Office and an increase in the number and complexity of cases registered in PNG Customs. Special note was made of how Customs' investigation officers were now able to train their peers and were continuing to refine their training methods. Nevertheless, the report noted that 'in terms of outcomes of the relevant PNG departments, there was not a lot of evidence [at the time] to demonstrate the Initiative's contribution to development of the capacity of selected PNG departments to undertake their designated roles and responsibilities' (p. 9) and that, 'contributions to PNG agencies through technical inputs [were] difficult to distinguish from those of SGP' (p. 6). In its response to Murphy's report, Management stated that it 'does not hold the view of the Report that that twinning outcomes cannot be differentiated from those of the SGP, although more work needs to be done to ensure that monitoring and evaluation frameworks capture these' (Whole of Government Deployment and Capacity Development Section, 2010).

Murphy noted in her report that skills and knowledge had been developed across a number of agencies, as evidenced by improved technical knowledge and work practices. Further, 'soft skills', such as written and oral communication, participation in meetings, professionalism, and relationship management, amongst others, were also seen as being developed through placements in Australian partner departments. The author believed that advances in technical skills could be capitalised on by widening the scope of placements to include generic skills, such as a train-the-trainer program that could assist with the further dissemination of the skills learned (particularly in regional areas). It was also observed that the benefit of placements were maximised when learning objectives were drafted ahead of placements such that a tailored program could be arranged for each employee.

In terms of broader capacity development, both of the institutions and participating staff, the author noted that she had difficulty adequately assessing the contributions made by the Twinning Initiative, by virtue of capacity development being notoriously difficult to measure and in light of the aforementioned difficulty of distinguishing between the contributions of Twinning and those of SGP. However, the author believed that 'without the complementary role of SGP, twinning deployments (with the exception of the PAAOTS deployments) [were] of too short duration to contribute significantly to capacity development' (p. 7). Further, in a later recommendation, the author noted that 'lack of support once employees return to PNG limits the ability of the employees to apply their newly developed knowledge, skills and confidence in the workplace' (p. 25).

The Auditor General's Office was commended for using Twinning strategically for generational change, 'by developing a cadre of capable young graduates who may act as change agents for the organisation' (p. 7). Although the graduates faced difficulty in changing the behaviour of more senior staff, 'the long-term benefit to the PNG Audit Office is that the graduates are likely to form the nucleus of senior management in years to come' (p. 7).

While there were a few shortcomings noticed above, it is clear that none of these arose from features inherent in the nature of the approach itself. The design of Phase II of the Initiative incorporates many of the recommendations made in Murphy's report, including improvements to monitoring and evaluation. Further, despite these shortcomings, Murphy noted that the Twinning Initiative 'has made a worthwhile contribution to delivering a jointly agreed program of high quality financial, technical and policy support to assist Central Agencies in PNG to build effective national institutions and public sector workforce capacities'. (p. 4)

The following comparative advantages of twinning were isolated in Murphy's report. First, the reciprocal nature of twinning arrangements allows personnel from PNG to experience placements in Australia, while the SGP and ASF/EPSP's advisory facility only provide for the deployment of Australian personnel to PNG. Citing the ANAO Twinning Program Secondment Report (2008), the

author stated that such deployments allowed PNG personnel to develop 'better interpersonal skills, levels of confidence, and communication, analytical and computing skills' (p. 20), at a lower cost per deployment week than PNG-based placements (to be discussed further below). Further, Murphy stated that the 'exposure of PNG personnel to the work ethic and organisational culture of a government agency with a similar role in an advanced economy' enabled personnel, particularly those who experienced longer deployments, 'to gain an understanding and vision for how things might be different' as well as 'the confidence and skills to act as change agents in their home agencies' (p. 20). According to the report, much of this can be attributed to the whole-of-government nature of the Twinning Initiative.

Secondly, the tailored approach to the design of each scheme was considered to be one of the Initiative's main comparative advantages. Substantial variation was allowed both between and within individual schemes, which maximised the relevance of twinning to PNG partner agency needs and allowed the capacity constraints of Australian agencies, to both supply and receive employees, to be accommodated. The scope for a flexible response to changing needs and priorities was maximised through the tailored approach, and it encouraged a strong sense of ownership by both partner agencies. Further, the small scale and flexibility of the schemes allowed for learning and change to take place easily, and the author noted that evidence of learning and analysis at the scheme level was strong, reflected in multiple learning cycles, continuous improvements, and the implementation of 'quite exhaustive M&E approaches' (p. 17).

Thirdly, the Twinning Initiative is also credited as complementing the SGP program in its establishment of links at the graduate and middle-management levels, as opposed to the primarily senior level at which the SGP operates.

Fourthly, the links and synergies created between GoA and GoPNG agencies under the twinning management structure are likely to lead to a greater awareness of the actual development needs of GoPNG agencies, and the best people to address those needs, than that which could be expected from a managing contractor/service provider. Further, it was highlighted that an important contribution of twinning is that it gives Australian partner agencies and staff an improved understanding and appreciation of the constraints and difficulties inherent in the operating environment of their PNG partner agencies, and thereby assists in facilitating constructive and contextually-specific engagement.

Fifthly, in terms of value for money, Murphy noted the relative cost-efficiency of twinning as compared to other forms of capacity building such as that provided through long-term advisory support and higher-level programs like SGP. While cost differentials between twinning and SGP were stated, there was no direct comparison offered between twinning and long-term adviser costs. In support of this assertion, however, the 2010 *PNG-Australia Review of Technical Adviser Positions* (AusAID, 2010b) also concluded that twinning arrangements offered cost savings when compared to the average costs of long-term advisers. By way of clarification, Murphy noted that the conclusion that twinning is a cost-effective form of capacity building should not be taken as a statement as to its cost *effectiveness*, which was hard to calculate given the difficulty in isolating its outcome-level effects.

Finally, the 'hands-on' approach afforded by twinning was noted as particularly appropriate to the Melanesian culture and 'the personalised method of skills transfer and experience-sharing was seen as helping to motivate the workforce' (p. 21).

In the present research there were few data about twinning upon which to base conclusions. It was evident, however, that some advisers used their professional networks to arrange formal or informal visits by counterparts to Australian and/or New Zealand public sector agencies.

An important aspect of these projects is for Counterparts to experience life in a functioning department in Australia. A visit to Australia is also seen as a reward and so they are valued by the Counterparts. I have experienced this in my current work with [State Government Department] where we have had PNG people on placement. (A74)

I help my Counterparts by providing access to the [specified area] contacts that they are then able to foster for themselves. I am working with executive management on a whole of government project. I have put the team in contact with the Australian [specified professional] society and also the CIO for [specified national organisation]. It's about providing regional contacts at the same or higher level so that they can learn from these contacts and gain from them in the future. (A28)

4.5.4 Targeted training

The PNG-Australia Targeted Training Facility (PATTAF) commenced in April 2002 to provide targeted training to meet selected PNG agencies' capacity and skills development to support the broader governance and public sector reform objectives of the PNG-Australia Development Cooperation Program. The Facility was designed to provide management of short-term training and Australian Development Scholarships. GRM International was engaged by AusAID as the managing contractor for PATTAF in 2002. Australian Development Scholarships took up 80 per cent of the facility's activity budget over the life of the initial contract.

An Independent Completion Report containing the findings of an evaluation of PATTAF's operations from 2002-2009 was published in December 2009 (Reynolds, Laimo & Field, 2009). Whilst the report found that the program objectives outlined in the original design document had been largely met, the lack of explicit capacity development-related (outcome-level) objectives in the design made it difficult to assess the facility's contribution to broader development goals. As the authors note, the original contract preceded the Paris Declaration (2005)—and the subsequent raft of aid effectiveness studies and formulations—and thus reflected the practice at the time of stating objectives at the output level. Subsequent AusAID guidance recommended that an objective describe, at the very least, a 'desired outcome' and that this outcome be stated as 'the immediate effect of delivering an output, input or task' (Reynolds, Laimo & Field, 2009, p. 10). The lack of outcome-level objectives in the program design had flow-on effects for the monitoring and evaluation framework, in that the limited definition of success restricted the collection of information relevant to effectiveness and sustainability. Within these constraints, the report's authors were able to make several comments regarding stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of both the non-scholarship and scholarship components of the program. The authors' ToRs required a focus on the scholarship component of the program, and this is reflected in the data offered below.

Reynolds, Laimo and Field stated that they received 'overwhelming feedback' from all stakeholders that this element of the program had been very useful in the PNG context, for the wider PNG country program and, in particular, the public sector capacity building programs. Much of this feedback was in praise of the flexibility of PATTAF to respond to capacity building needs (isolated by both AusAID and GoPNG) as they emerged over time.

The authors, however, also stated that they were unable to determine whether this positive view of the effectiveness of the program was limited to its ability to deliver outputs. They also advised of the need to ensure that flexibility was strategic in nature, rather than simply an ability to respond effectively to *ad hoc* requests.

4.5.5 Grants

In the Independent Progress Review undertaken of EPSP (Saldanha, Dobunaba & Edwards, 2012), its grants facility was described as ‘a potentially powerful mechanism to support problem resolution or organisation change’ (p. 13). Whilst the authors praised those grants that could be seen to directly support the objective of improving service delivery in PNG (for example a grant provided to the Department of Finance to support revenue collection assistance in the provinces), they questioned the utility of grants that had been provided for requests such as conference attendances and office upgrades. The authors stated that of the ten grants that had been approved by EPSP as of 2012, only two directly related to service delivery.

The authors believed that EPSP’s practice of calling for grant applications in ‘open rounds’ was a sub-optimal use of the facility that encouraged ‘an input-driven, free-goods-capture approach on the part of applying agencies’. They offered that ‘rather, this facility should be used as part of a well-targeted package to address very specific capacity gaps affecting performance related to service delivery, ideally as a supplement to the agency’s own resources being applied to the issue’ (p. 14).

There was little evidence in our project about the use of grants. There were some examples where reference was made to the usefulness of purchases made with grants. A GoPNG senior staff member explained that:

EPSP provided the [agency] with video equipment to record the discussion and outcomes of the committee as possible evidence if any of the issues went to court for legal challenges. My colleagues have been trained how to use the equipment and this had improved the way courts treated the evidence. (G4)

The GoPNG staff member also noted that now they have video equipment to maintain and replace, and they were hoping EPSP would assist further. This raises the matter of the ‘sustainability’ of improvements brought about by grants for equipment unless there are efficiencies achieved that can enable funds to be redirected to equipment servicing and replacement.

4.5.6 Research

In their 2012 Independent Progress Review of EPSP, Saldanha, Dobunaba and Edwards noted that the research program had only recently been established. Given this, they were only able to comment on the relevance of the research commissioned to the goals of EPSP, and not on the outcomes of the research as such. Nevertheless, the authors wrote that ‘all of the initiatives on the table appear useful, and some are directly relevant to the recommended service delivery emphasis’ (2012, p. 14).

An overview of the issues currently being addressed via research was given as: (i) research on the Effectiveness of Capacity Development in GoPNG going back to 2006 (this study); (ii) a Service Delivery Study (completed in 2014); (iii) the Mainstreaming of Gender initiatives within central agencies; (iv) the Australian National University/National Research Institute Budget and Tracking of Expenditures on Services, and (v) the Impact of Digital Technology on the four key service sectors. While endorsing the relevance of the research listed here, the authors noted that ‘there appear to be several initiatives currently in train to study and track budget expenditures, including one at the district level under the auspices of the CIMC [Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council], and work being done by the ADB [Asian Development Bank]. This begs a question of how well all the work in this area is being coordinated at present’ (p. 14).

4.6 Stakeholders' views about AC placements

In this section the views of the major stakeholders of the evidence found by the project on the impact and success of AC placements will be discussed. A number of mechanisms were used to gather the views of the stakeholders, including holding a workshop in Port Moresby attended by senior GoPNG managers, advisers, counterparts, DFAT and Coffey International colleagues. The project team presented to these stakeholders, aspects of the data gathered by the team that contained elements of contradiction and which the team thought would be useful to explore further with the stakeholders. Also, interviews and focus groups of senior managers of agencies who were recipients of AC placements were undertaken.

As indicated above, the project team analysed the data gathered in Stages 1 to 4 to identify areas where there seemed to be conflicting or contradictory evidence. The data analysed were from reports of past advisers and counterparts, surveys, interviews and focus groups of current and past advisers and counterparts. The analysis of the data identified five areas where it was felt that the views of the major stakeholders would be useful and these were:

1. Identification and planning of placements
2. Duration of placements
3. Relationships between advisers and counterparts
4. Purpose of placements
5. Sustainability of outcomes of placements

In the sections below, each of these areas will be explored both in terms of the evidence provided to the stakeholders and their responses to it. Thus this section will discuss the data that addresses research question eight as stated below:

RQ8 What do major stakeholders in PNG conclude from the evidence produced by this study about the impact and success of AC placements and other capacity development modalities in their areas of influence?

Each of the sections starts by outlining the issue that was put to the workshop followed by the responses from the workshop and, where relevant, the thoughts of the senior managers who participated in focus groups and interviews.

4.6.1 Identification and planning of placements

The process of identifying and planning AC placements was one that usually focused around the ToRs, but the circumstances and processes that lead up to the writing of the ToRs were also an issue that generated considerable discussion among advisers and counterparts (see section 4.4.4). The initial project findings showed that the ToRs of an AC placement are seen by advisers and counterparts either as: key items to be addressed during the project; a guide to their activities; or as an out-dated structural impediment to the work that now needs to be done. In general, advisers were much more influenced by the ToRs than were counterparts, and reported that they were active in addressing them, modifying them or resisting/working around them (see section 4.2.1).

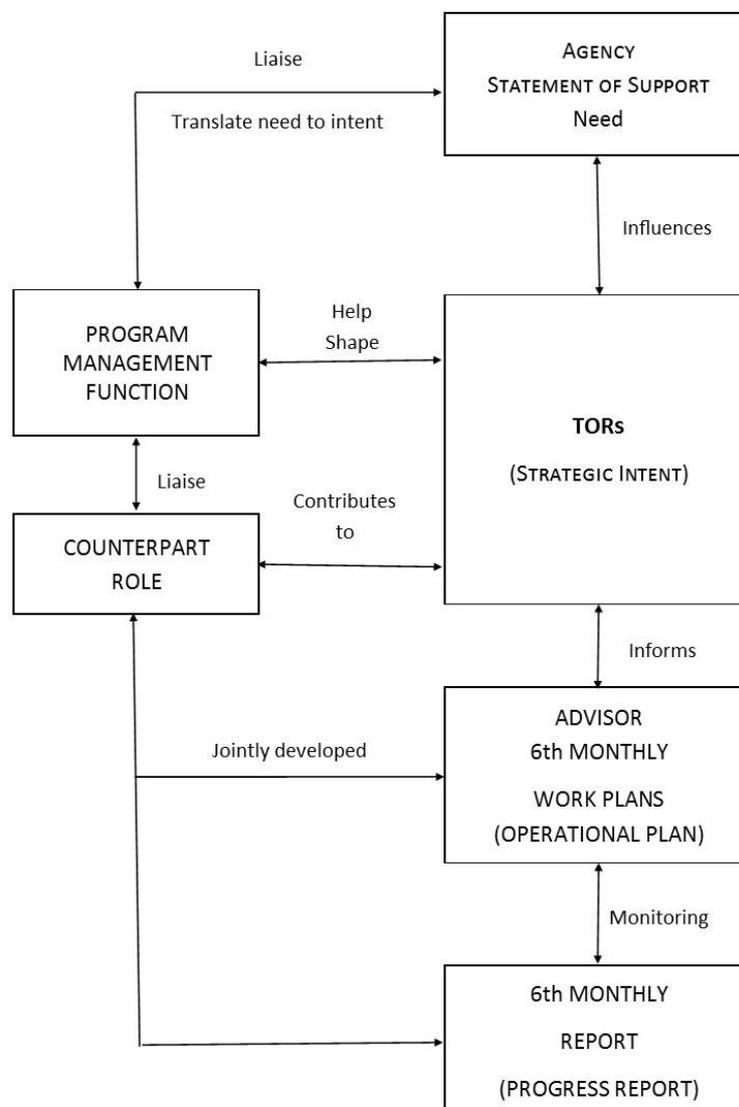
The stakeholders felt that there was an inherent tension around the role of the ToRs that arose from the needs and views of the different players involved with the placement e.g. the funding agency, the managing contractor, the PNG agency, advisers and counterparts. For example, the focus group of senior managers of GoPNG agencies felt it was important that the agency be aware of the 'whole package' of GoPNG and GoA interests. They felt the scoping of the ToRs was critical to getting the

agency to buy-in and own it, and communication was critical in the agency to ensure the counterpart knew the adviser was coming.

Stakeholders at the workshop felt that ToRs have both strategic and performance elements, and the ToRs need to be a broad statement of requirements in order to encompass them. They also felt that the ToRs needed to reflect the reality of what is found on the ground by the adviser and a six-monthly review is most likely to reveal this.

A process was proposed by the workshop group to develop the requirements for AC placements. They felt that a statement of needs should be drawn up initially by the agency and this then shape the statement of intent that is agreed to by the funding body and managing contractor. The statement of intent is then operationalised and becomes the ToRs. The ToRs are then modified following a six-monthly review with the contribution of the counterpart. The diagram below was developed by the group to illustrate this process.

Figure 4.6.1.1 Stakeholders proposed development of ToRs



The a majority view of the workshop group was that ToRs are to inform the advisers of roles and responsibilities and ToRs must not be done in isolation from the counterparts; they should have the counterpart's input and influence. Although the group felt that ToRs need to be developed with the counterparts, they also recognised that sometimes some agencies may have a need for an adviser, but a counterpart may not be available at the time the ToRs are written. However, where possible the ToRs should identify a joint activity between the adviser and counterpart and should reflect the reality of the organisation's timeframe. The focus group of senior managers felt that managing counterparts is important prior to the placement e.g. the counterparts needs to accept the ToRs, and they need to be explained so that that ToRs are well understood (see section 4.4.1.1 about counterparts being unaware of a forthcoming placement).

The workshop group agreed that ToRs are a critical component of the planning process and some felt that advisers must deliver in terms of ToRs. The senior managers' focus group agreed that the skills that the adviser brings to an agency must be relevant and, if a counterpart identifies that an adviser does not have the appropriate skills, the adviser have an opportunity to receive some training. They felt that there is a need for more socialisation from non-PNG advisers than has occurred in the past.

4.6.2 Duration of placements

The duration of the placements was a contentious subject for advisers and counterparts consulted during the first four stages of the project. Many of the respondents were of the view that the initial long-term contract period (typically one year in the first instance) was too short to achieve the ToRs and, in particular, to do so to a sustainable level. Commonly, extensions were granted to achieve these ends. Some were of the view that prolonged long-term placements could cause a counterpart's and agency's dependency on the adviser, and that what was required was a first initial long-term period followed by subsequent short-term periods (one to three months) with breaks of several months in between (see section 4.5.2 for discussion of short-term placements). In this way the counterpart(s) would be solely in control for a period but would have brief periods of adviser support to consolidate actions, tasks and achievements and to identify matters to be addressed in the next period. There was also a view that short-term (three to six months) advising is best for producing cost-effective useful changes in an agency.

The stakeholders at the workshop were of the view that there are benefits, issues and challenges for both long-term and short-term placements. The group felt that the key point is to consider the desired outcome of the placement when considering its duration. Also, they saw the issue of long- and short-term placements as closely related to the capacity development and substitution issue. They did feel, irrespective of the duration of the placement, that the socialisation of the adviser and counterpart is central to achieving an effective relationship in a placement and often this can take time (see section 4.2.2 for a discussion of the views of advisers and counterparts on working together). The group suggested that perhaps some combination of short-term and long-term placements could produce a harmony of both approaches. The duration of the adviser's contract is integral to the success of the placement achieving the desired outcomes.

Long-term placements were more likely to achieve a transfer of knowledge and overcome cultural sensitivities, the stakeholder group believed. They felt that long-term placements allowed fruitful relationships to be developed between advisers and counterparts, and that this could take up to three to six months. Also, counterparts at times did not recognise the support they received from an adviser until the end of the placement. Periodic placements may be a way of addressing this.

The advantage of short-term placements, the stakeholder group believed, is that the outcomes are more likely to be achieved as they are more constrained and can produce immediate results. Short-

term placements are also seen as cost effective from the view of the donor and they can allow for follow-up placements. However, they require the immediate availability of the counterpart for the whole time the adviser is in the agency. As indicated above, not only can it take three to six months to form an effective relationship between an adviser and counterpart, it can take a similar length of time for advisers to become used to the GoPNG system.

4.6.3 Relationships between advisers and counterparts

The critical issue of having an effective relationship between advisers and counterparts has been covered in Section 4.2.2. Arising from that discussion is whether counterparts are or should be leaders or followers in their placements. The evidence shows that there is a range of ways that AC relationships are enacted. The range spans from the adviser being seen and behaving as the *de facto* leader of the placement and of the counterpart(s) and others, through to the (main) counterpart being seen as the leader of the placement and other counterparts and staff, with the adviser acting as a mentor, guide and adviser to the counterpart. Some respondents were of the view that advisers were there to promote 'the Australian way' with little concern for PNG culture and context; others suggested that some advisers tried to follow the counterparts' lead and adapt to the 'PNG way'.

The feeling of the stakeholders at the workshop was that advisers should have a positive and sensitive attitude towards PNG culture, opinions and ways of life. Counterparts should have a similar approach towards their advisers. Central to the relationship is ensuring respect is in place on both sides.

The workshop group believed that whether the placement is of a substitution or developmental nature influences the leadership relationship between the adviser and the counterpart. It was suggested that if a placement is more of a substitution nature the adviser takes on a leadership role whereas if the placement is of a developmental nature the roles are often more equal but with the Counterpart setting the agenda.

The stakeholders felt that there is often a tension between group and individual objectives for a placement and the leadership and follower roles need to be negotiated at placement commencement. The consensus of the senior manager focus group was that placements must be integrated into their agencies. Agencies need to know where their advisers fit in and the advisers need to report to senior managers, rather than someone else in the agency, as there needs to be a senior person who ensures the relationship works. The group felt that advisers need to be responsible to senior managers and not the funding agency.

The workshop participants sensed that advisers and counterparts needed to work together to achieve the targets and results as identified in the ToRs. The senior manager focus group also believed that there should be no gap between advisers and counterparts as it should be a mentoring relationship. They felt that advisers need to treat counterparts as equals and the human relationship is critical. They believed mutual respect was critical, as the confrontational approach of some advisers can be counterproductive. The senior managers believed that some advisers develop relationships with an individual but do not fit into the team and that this can cause problems. They also indicated that some advisers bring skills and knowledge not originally required by the placement, which can be very useful, but also some advisers teach counterparts what they already know.

4.6.4 Purpose of placements

At the heart of the discussion around the worth and impact of AC placements is often whether the activity undertaken by the adviser should primarily be one of capacity substitution or development.

The evidence gathered from advisers and counterparts in the early stages of the research revealed different emphases by various parties on AC placements. Some felt they were about human capacity development in the sense that counterparts and others learn how to do their work differently, better etc. Others saw placements as being capacity substitution in the sense that there is an absence of capacity within the agency and the adviser fills the absence and gets the job done for the agency. Many placements can be seen to be located somewhere between these two positions in that there is, to varying degrees, some capacity development and some capacity substitution.

The participants in the stakeholder workshop were of the opinion that strategic management leads to capacity development and policy development leads to capacity substitution, but they felt most placements sit on a continuum between the two positions. The group felt in general that long-term placements produced capacity development and short-term placements produce capacity substitution but, as previously stated, the scale is continuous and most placements sit between the two (see section 4.4.1.7 for a discussion around the issues on the duration of placements). They felt that development roles rarely happened without substitution, but also that substitution alone does not produce sustainability and the passing on of skills and knowledge required by the agency is central to the benefits of hosting a placement. The senior manager focus group thought that counterparts must take personal and professional responsibility for their own development. They believed some advisers came to their agencies to detect what they as senior managers needed to do which sometimes resulted in tensions in the placement.

Some of the workshop group participants recommended that strategic substitution be the dominant approach, as they believe it can produce more achievements by both advisers and counterparts. In such a scenario, capacity substitution has a role of its own with advisers coming in and doing their duties and leaving when the contract has expired. However, a development phase can be added, with the capacity substitution phase quickly producing a model as a guide and a coaching and mentoring phase occurring later. The senior manager focus group felt that some advisers were more into mentoring or coaching and not addressing the problems of the department. They felt advisers could either be 'hands on' or more focused on the mentoring of junior staff: the consensus was that the former was more useful to the majority of the group.

4.6.5 Sustainability of outcomes of placements

One of the central principles that underlie the design of AC placements is that where possible the outcomes of the placements should continue after the adviser has left the GoPNG agency or department. The evidence collected from the initial stages of this project showed that sustainability claims related to particular AC placements spanned a range from no sustainability, through to full sustainability. Counterparts (almost) always reported that they continued to benefit personally from what they had learned and done during the placement. Some counterparts reported that the organisation continued to operate according to the capacity development that had been provided. Other counterparts reported that things were only partly sustained. A few reported that things had reverted or even reversed since the placement finished. Advisers were often of the view that their counterparts had benefited from the experience, and that the organisation had done likewise. While some advisers reported sustainability and could identify practices and systems that continued as a result of their placement, others were unsure because they had lost contact with the agency and counterpart(s). Others were of the view that sustainability was unlikely once they had left due to organisational inertia, change of policy, change of senior personnel etc.

The senior stakeholder group at the workshop held various views on sustainability and, although all agreed that it was an important issue, there was little consensus on what was central to it occurring, either in terms of the design or implementation of the placements. However, the group agreed that

the issue of sustainability needed to be addressed from the time of identifying the need for a placement through to its completion.

Some in the group felt that there needs to be flexibility in the ToRs if a placement is to be sustainable, in order to allow for changes in circumstances. They also believed that consultation during the development of the ToRs was important for sustainable outcomes and there needed to be a 'critical mass of support' for a placement before, during and after it has been completed for its outcomes to be sustainable. To achieve such a critical mass, advisers need to work with teams and placements need to take into account training needs beyond direct counterparts.

Senior managers SM1 and SM2 felt that the major obstacle to sustainability was leadership, as without senior support for the outcomes of a placement they felt they were unlikely to remain in place after the adviser had left. They went on to say it was critical that the executive take ownership of policies, and the senior managers felt it was essential to have executive support for placements to be sustainable. Senior manager SM3 believed that one of the elements for placements to be sustainable was that senior people needed to understand how they worked. He felt placements needed to be demand-driven by GoPNG, rather than supply-driven by donor agencies. He argued that GoPNG departments need to identify what they need, perhaps through a needs analysis, and this then be communicated to the various donor agencies (see section 4.2.2).

For a placement to be sustainable the workshop group believed counterparts, and advisers, should be willing to accept change. Therefore, there needs to be open communication between the adviser and the counterpart and the counterpart needs to be open to learning during the placement and to continue learning after the placement has completed (see section 4.4.1.6).

Senior manager SM3 cited examples of improved sustainability when the advisers were PNG nationals; he believed that their understanding of the work and social culture of PNG was an important factor in the effectiveness and sustainability of placements. SM3 believed that when the adviser was not from PNG the counterparts often returned to their old ways once the adviser left.

The workshop participants believed that the counterpart needed passion, vision and a positive attitude and to take ownership of outcomes if the placement outcomes were to be sustainable. Thus the planning and implementation processes of placements need to recognise the importance of 'soft outcomes', e.g. an increase in the confidence of the counterpart, for outcomes to be sustainable. The senior manager focus group also felt that the confidence and leadership attributes of counterparts had to be improved by the placement for any sustainable outcomes to be achieved.

One of the key issues identified by the workshop group in determining if the outcomes of the placements are to be sustainable is the importance of leadership in the agency, particularly the senior leadership. Senior managers must take responsibility for the placement and at the organisational level there needs to be a shared vision that includes all those involved in the area of the placement. Thus, teamwork is essential during a placement and without this it is likely that any outcomes will disappear soon after the adviser leaves. In addition, the agency needs guidance as to what to do after any adviser leaves.

The workshop group identified that one of the problematic issues for determining whether a placement's outcomes are sustainable is their measurement, but it was recognised that from a donor's point of view this is important. It was suggested that an assessment of changes that occurred during and after the placement could be introduced and this could be internal or external. However, it was recognised that it could be difficult for an external assessor to measure some changes e.g. changes in counterparts' confidence, leadership etc. There were some suggestions that monitoring and evaluation of key performance indicators would ensure sustainable change, but a

timeline would need to be agreed as to when it is appropriate to determine whether sustainable change has occurred or not. It was also emphasised that it is important to share good stories of successes, as it was often the less successful outcomes that garnered publicity.

In a similar vein, senior managers SM1 and SM2 felt they needed someone from outside the organisation to help with sustainability. They questioned how they and the funding agency would know how well a placement's outcomes were being sustained unless there was some sort of monitoring in place. They acknowledged that EPSP does send a liaison officer to check on the operation of a placement but they noted lately that there had been different people and they felt that consistency was crucial.

4.6.6 Advice for the future

At a number of the meetings held with senior managers and the workshop of stakeholders advice was offered as how to improve AC placements. This advice ranged from changes to the way the placements were planned, through to changes in the way the placements operated, to what could be done after the placements were completed.

Senior managers SM1 and SM2 felt perhaps the most effective way of addressing their needs was through a form of twinning with Australian government staff, where they spend 12 months in PNG and then return six months later. They also felt that 'part-time' advisers that come in only a few days a week were not suitable (which had been the case for some consultants brought in through another arrangement not with EPSP). SM1 and SM2 suggested that they needed full-time advisers who would stay for an extended time. They felt this was essential as they deal with human beings who are complex and need time to be dealt with.

Senior manager SM3 felt that mentoring and coaching of young PNG public servants was a way of improving the effectiveness of the public sector. He also stated that the working relationship between the counterpart and adviser be as compatible as possible, with the adviser being fully aware of the work and social cultural differences between their overseas workplace and PNG. SM 4 thought that an extended induction program should be provided to advisers, which would introduce them to the cultural issues they may face. On the other hand, he also believed that counterparts needed to have the right attitude when participating in placements, otherwise advisers could be wasting their time.

Senior manager SM4 stated that he felt that EPSP should produce a final report on a placement for an agency (it was explained that this was already the case for advisers) and the recommendations be followed up with the agencies where the placement occurred. He also thought that counterparts should provide a final report (it was explained about the presence of interim reports by counterparts but also the absence of a final counterpart report).

SM4 believed that the outcomes from previous placements were often absent at the beginning of new placements and there needed to be more learnt from the past. That is, the handover process from one adviser to another was not allowing the new adviser to build effectively on past work. He commented that he felt there needed to be a move from general capacity development to developing specific skills for individuals and agencies. He also thought there should be a move to targeted placements with specific tangible outcomes.

Advice for the future of AC placements from the focus group of senior manager of GoPNG agencies included:

- It is important that the agency be aware of the 'whole package' of GoPNG and GoA interests

- The scoping of the ToRs is critical to getting the agency to buy-in and own the placement
- Communication is critical within the agency to ensure the counterpart knows the adviser is coming
- Managing counterparts is critical, e.g. the counterpart needs to accept the ToRs and they need to be explained so that that ToRs are well understood.
- There is a need for further socialisation by advisers who are from outside of PNG
- If a counterpart identifies that an adviser does not have the appropriate skills, the adviser have an opportunity to receive some training
- The adviser needs to know where they fit in and they should report to the senior manager rather than someone else in the agency
- Advisers need to be responsible to the senior manager and not AusAid
- There needs to be a senior person who ensures the relationship works
- It is essential to have executive support for the placement

In the next and final section of the report the team conclusions and recommendations will be presented.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

This section distils the main findings and analyses into concluding comments supporting specific recommendations for improvements to capacity development in PNG, especially with regard to the management and operation of AC placements. The evidence presented in this report shows that, in general, AC placements have been successful during the period since 2006. Importantly, the counterparts, the stakeholders and GoPNG senior managers commonly expressed views and reported instances of the success of the placements. Across the range of research participants some criticisms were made, and some examples of problems, limitations and weaknesses were identified. Likewise, most participants offered views about how AC placements could be improved in the future; and they wanted AC placements to be part of PNG's future capacity development.

Any government agency will atrophy without capacity development, so it is important that PNG agencies sustain continuous or regular capacity development to maintain good quality public services within changing social, political and economic circumstances. Capacity development is not, therefore, a single 'boost' required by developing nations, such as PNG, in order to attain a permanent 'world standard' public service. PNG needs sustained capacity development in the economic and public sectors in order to sustain an efficient and effective public sector to serve the emerging nation. The level of capacity development required is such that donor nations' support typically accelerates the process of PNG achieving an efficient and effective public sector. The extent of social and economic change occurring in the nation, however, means that capacity development, either donor-supported or provided by PNG itself, will be required for the foreseeable future. It is in this context that the following recommendations are made for GoPNG and GoA to consider.

The Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2005/2008), referred to previously in this Report, provides a framework through which improvements to AC placements (and other modalities) can be viewed. The Declaration's five key principles are pertinent in this regard.

Ownership—Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and coordinate development actions;

Alignment—Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institution and procedures;

Harmonisation—Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective;

Managing for Results—Managing resources and improving decision-making for results; and

Mutual Accountability—Donors and partners are accountable for development results (from, OECD, 2005/2008 pp. 3-8).

The Declaration's principles emerged after longstanding international concerns about aid effectiveness. Internationally, Australian aid has been at the forefront of efforts to embed the principles articulated in the Paris Declaration into capacity development initiatives, spearheading a move that has been characterised in the literature as a shift from the first to the second generation of technical assistance. Despite the consultative processes that are undertaken by the EPSP (and its predecessor, the ASF), the GoPNG stakeholders participating in this research identified remaining tensions between the interests of GoPNG agencies and donors, in this case, GoA. The GoPNG stakeholders and senior managers and, indeed, the advisers and counterparts, generally saw the placements as being primarily 'owned' by GoA (typically, 'AusAID'), in particular because AusAID—

through its managing contractor—was paying and had managerial control over the advisers. These same parties generally understood that the outcomes were ‘owned’ by GoPNG (typically, by the agency and the counterparts involved). The GoPNG senior managers felt it was important that the participating agency be aware of the ‘whole package’ of GoA and GoPNG interests from the outset; in particular, they asserted that the agency needs to scope the ToRs as a foundational investment toward the agency owning the placement. Given that several counterparts stated that they were not informed about ‘their’ placement until after it had been established, or were not fully consulted about their needs etc., this suggests that these key agency staff (KAS) lacked the integral involvement required to build sustainable change in their agencies. Some advisers reported complementary experiences, such as, absent or reluctant counterparts upon placement commencement. Arguably, the foundation for such collaboration centres on GoPNG and GoA negotiations about AC placements being genuinely and formally conducted in a manner that ensures that GoPNG ‘owns’ each placement. Thereby, GoPNG accepts and fulfils its responsibilities to support the AC placement and its ToRs, processes and outcomes, and to embed and sustain these in the agency. Furthermore, stakeholders argued that AC placements’ ToRs have both strategic and performance elements that must reflect ‘the reality on the ground’ at the outset, and also be open to modification during periodic reviews involving both advisers and counterparts.

The above commentary suggests that AC placements, while successful, still require operational finessing in order to shift more fully into Morgan’s (2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5) ‘second generation’ of technical assistance in terms of enabling agency-designed and ‘owned’ capacity development initiatives. Of significance here, however, are the data from this study which indicate that a focus on sustainable capacity development (as opposed to the more tangible placement outcomes favoured by donors) tends to result in more ‘third-generation’ approaches being employed, often more out of exigency than by design, on the ground. These approaches take the concept of indigenous ‘ownership’ and apply it at the micro level, giving rise to a system whereby processes and outcomes emerge from the local context under adviser direction and guidance. It is through flexible and iterative approaches that advisers attempt to ensure that not only outcomes but also change processes themselves are owned by, embedded in and sustainable within an agency. The deep operationalisation, however, of the concept of ownership inherent in third-generation approaches (which emphasise ‘process’) tends to conflict with the second-generation preference for strategies of planned change in line with donor requirements for efficiency and control, results and accountability (which emphasise ‘product’). The evidence indicates that, as currently constituted, placements in which advisers pursue ‘product’ over ‘process’ are likely to encounter problems with institutionalisation and sustainability, whereas the pursuit of ‘process’ over ‘product’ is likely to result in tangible outcomes remaining imperfectly realised within placement timeframes. The following recommendations in this section have been formulated with this tension in mind, and aim to ensure that the pursuit of ‘ownership’ within the framework of a second-generation approach can, where possible, both accommodate and provide a foundation for the future realisation of third-generation program design and delivery.

Recommendation 1

GoPNG and GoA develop a planning and approval document to be used by agencies, assisted by the managing contractor, for the establishment, operation, evaluation and post-placement support of their future AC placements.

This planning document should involve an agency (or cross-agency) capacity diagnostic framework with a specific capacity development needs analysis and an analysis of the contemporary capacity and infrastructure in the agency (or agencies) to support AC placements. These analyses need to show that satisfactory capacity and infrastructure exists, or will exist by remedies applied prior to the commencement of the AC placement. The schedule and length of placements should be realistic

for PNG's and the agency's circumstances. The agency should identify the post-placement support and conditions required to assist sustainability as part of each placement's plan.

In terms of a future shift to third-generation design, it is envisaged that such a planning and approval document will also act as a framework within which the agency will commence the identification of the intangible elements of the capacity development context, the understanding of which is fundamental to capacity building successes. These include, in Morgan's terms, the 'cultures and structures that acts as key determinants' (2010, cited in OECD/DAC, 2011, p. 5) of capacity development processes and outcomes. The need for this framework also arises from an increasing awareness— expressed in both the literature and this Report—that more attention needs to be paid to the intangible elements of capacity. These elements, such as culture, politics and interactions within stakeholder networks, structure and influence the behaviour of actors in systems in important ways, yet are by their nature more difficult to analyse and understand. This is perhaps one of the reasons, in addition to the donor requirements mentioned above, why more attention tends to be paid to tangible aspects of capacity—such as the development of policy and IT systems—in the planning, management and evaluation of capacity development initiatives. The research data show, however, that intangible elements can have a decisive influence on placement processes, outcomes, success and sustainability. For example, features of Papua New Guinean organisational culture and politics were often isolated as the biggest impediments to the successful pursuit of placement outcomes and/or sustainability within current forms of placement design.

The following two recommendations (Recommendations 2 and 3) address particular aspects of EPSP's current diagnostic process that were identified in the research as needing improvement.

Two recurring themes within the research were that the time required to fulfil ToRs and outcomes was often unrealistic for the original duration of the placements, and that the agencies' capacities (staffing, staff's knowledge and skills, IT infrastructure etc.) to support placements were inadequate to enable the placement to commence at the level of the ToRs. These impeded the implementation and institutionalisation of changes prior to project completion. It is notable that the PNG-Australia Review of Technical Adviser Positions (AusAID, 2010b, p.19) also identified these matters as a significant problem. In terms of the product/process tension outlined above, project schedules appeared to be designed to achieve a product, rather than a process, so that tangible results (for example, new policies or procedures) were often completed at the expense of sustainable capacity development. Baser and Morgan (2008) warn that capacity development will fail to result in improved organisational performance when new knowledge, structures, systems or strategies are formulated and applied, but are not embedded into daily practice.

To address the aforementioned time and capacity impediments, it was common for extensions to be granted. Although this may be seen as a laudable piece of flexibility, it occurs so frequently that it appears to be a planning failure. An obvious weakness was that often AC placement schedules did not match PNG agencies' annual planning cycles or the amount of time required—typically said to be three to five years—to achieve sustainable change within agencies. This could be remedied partly by ensuring that the agency, supported by the managing contractor, used appropriate capacity diagnostics and needs analyses. This is distinct from EPSP's capacity diagnostic exercise and the Capacity Development Agreements (CDAs), which were not viewed positively by advisers. The research showed that the capacity diagnostic processes used to assess capacity did not provide an accurate assessment of individual and organisational needs, and inaccurately gauged the requirements for achieving placement outcomes.

Once capacity diagnostics and needs analyses are appropriately completed, then the agencies can turn to creating realistic ToRs for their placements. The research showed that one-third of advisers noted in their PCRs and the survey that their ToRs were unrealistic given the conditions at the start

of their placements. The development of the ToRs was a cause of great discussion by all concerned with AC placements i.e. the funding agency, the managing contractor, and advisers and counterparts associated with the placement. The ToRs were acknowledged as central to the success or otherwise of the placements. They were seen as emblematic of the placements' planning and preparation processes. As noted above, several counterparts stated that they were not involved in the planning process for their placements. They generally had lower levels of satisfaction with the ToRs at the beginning of the placement but had less reduction in satisfaction during the placement than did the advisers. It may be concluded, therefore, that the counterparts were more realistic in their appraisals of the ToRs than were those who developed them. This suggests that (prospective) counterparts should be involved in the agencies' planning processes from the outset; this would also encourage the early 'ownership' of their placements.

Recommendation 2

Agencies, including prospective counterparts, and managing contractors should verify that each AC placement's ToRs address the capacity development needs of the agency and can be reasonably expected to be fulfilled within the agreed schedule. The ToRs must be feasible within the agencies' contemporary capacities, especially including the prospective counterparts', and the agencies' infrastructures.

It was reported that ToRs were sometimes unachievable targets or limitations on the success of AC placements. If they were unachievable targets (for example, as previously mentioned, if they were unrealistic for the agencies' capacities) then advisers became frustrated at their lack of achievement or focused narrowly on meeting the ToRs to the extent possible whilst ignoring other important matters. ToRs were limitations when they distracted from adapting to changing circumstances in the agencies or government so that desirable outcomes that advisers or counterparts felt useful were unable to be addressed.

Recommendation 3

AC placements' ToRs should be sufficiently flexible to enable adaptations to changed GoPNG policies or procedures, and changed agency circumstances and needs etc. during the placements. A range of research participants argued that, if AC placements are to develop capacity that can sustain self-generating performance improvement, then ToRs need to be reconfigured to accommodate the processes required to achieve this result. Such ToRs need to enable advisers and counterparts to work collaboratively in partnership—from design, through to implementation, evaluation and assessment. The research participants' argument is indicative of implied support for third-generation approaches to capacity development outlined earlier. If GoPNG and GoA decide to adopt third-generation capacity development principles in the future, then the above recommendations need to be adapted to embrace broader 'trans-agency' or whole of government planning and implementation, within more flexible, responsive approaches for which GoPNG would exercise responsibility.

The following three recommendations derive from this Report's argument that learning is at the heart of all capacity development and, therefore, in AC placements in PNG. Technology, systems, infrastructure etc. are all important elements to sustaining national life, but it is the people involved who use, develop and maintain these elements that are the essential enabling human capacity.

This Report has emphasised that capacity development is about people, and learning and change must occur for each individual for capacity development initiatives to bear fruit. This recognises that the capacity development relationship between advisers and counterparts involves advisers working

to change—sometimes in a fundamental way—the thinking and behaviour of their counterparts. The receptivity of counterparts to this influence will depend on multiple factors, one of which is the level of trust they place in their advisers. This trust is partly founded on the advisers’ understanding of, and sensitivity to, PNG cultures. It is also based on the interpersonal skills and the teaching competencies of the advisers. Broadly, the research participants appreciated the advisers’ technical expertise and experience in their particular fields, but the research data showed that advisers’ strategies and approaches to teaching their counterparts were relatively unsophisticated and over-reliant on mentoring. Advisers’ cross-cultural competencies (or lack thereof) were generally of little significance in appointment decisions, as was their understanding of PNG cultures, which was often limited and depended on ‘learning as they went’ in their placements. This contributed to some dysfunctional working relationships and limited human capacity development.

In contrast to their apparent lack of significance in recruitment decisions, the evidence showed that advisers and counterparts placed considerable emphasis on interpersonal factors as important enablers of sustainable capacity development. In addition to direct focus on the relationship, a number of distinctly interpersonal processes, such as collaboration and communication, as well as qualities that support interpersonal relationships and processes, such as cultural awareness, were ranked as being of fundamental importance to placement success and the creation of sustainable outcomes. Taken together, these interpersonal factors gave the impression of being ‘drivers of change’ in that they gave momentum to placement activities and created the energy required for counterparts and KAS to overcome obstacles and engage in and commit to a sustained process of change.

Recommendation 4

Advisers should be appointed, not just for their technical expertise, but also for their interpersonal capacities to help others learn in cross-cultural environments.

Given that the foundation of capacity development requires advisers to shape, enable and assess counterparts’ learning to improve and change their (and their agencies’) practices, then this suggests that the advisers’ knowledge and skills about teaching for capacity development are crucial to the success and sustainability of their AC placements. Therefore, for those advisers who do not possess such skills, an appropriate course and assessment is required prior to commencement or as part of their induction to ensure that they have the necessary teaching capabilities. Some advisers reported that they received little advice about how to structure the counterparts’ capacity development; furthermore there was no mention of assessment being conducted of or with counterparts about their learning and, likewise, no explicit suggestion of remediation being provided for those counterparts whose learning was insufficient. The MaD course partly fulfilled these needs but was limited in scope and it was not mandatory for advisers to participate. Consideration should be given to providing an online module and resources developed by/for DFAT Australian Aid. This course should cover matters including: developing learning plans, assessing in the workplace, collaborative teaching and learning in PNG contexts.

Recommendation 5

Early in their placements, advisers should be provided with a course on the knowledge and skills to teach and assess in AC placements in PNG.

The required approach to planning for learning within the development process of each AC placement and its ToRs is more complex than ‘knowledge transfer’ or ‘skills training’, although these may be part of the learning plan. Advisers become, in part, ‘learning managers’ who ensure that the learning plan is monitored for scheduled achievements and provide assistance, remediation etc., as

required to maintain the schedule. The counterparts, as a consequence, will also be learning about how to facilitate learning in their agencies.

Learning plans are best seen as ones that contain an iterative process that enables each adviser and their counterpart(s) to review, reflect and act to keep the learning plan attuned to the counterparts' and agencies' needs and circumstances as these evolve during the placement. Process-centred, participatory, people-centred and iterative approaches are most likely to produce knowledge and outcomes that are 'owned' by counterparts and thus more able to be adapted and sustained in their future contexts. There was evidence that some AC placements successfully used team-based, departmental- or organisation-wide approaches to enhance counterparts' and KAS's knowledge and skills. The success was partly concerned with the increased propensity for sustainability when a number of KAS share the same knowledge and skills. It was said these had positive team-building effects; led to an increased appreciation of consultation and the need to review existing practices; improved counterpart ownership of outcomes; and enhanced transparency and accountability.

Recommendation 6

AC placements should be planned and operated explicitly as learning engagements for the counterparts and the agency more broadly. At commencement, advisers and their counterparts should develop a detailed learning plan for the placement. This should specify what the counterpart(s) need(s) to learn to develop their capacities and what teaching actions will be provided by the adviser to enable them to learn. The plan should specify a schedule of learning goals and their assessment, and should include scope for remediation, if required.

The first three recommendations concerned GoPNG and GoA planning, approval and initiation of AC placements for human capacity development in the PNG economic and public sectors. The second three recommendations concerned the implementation of AC placements by advisers and counterparts as an explicit, planned and assessed collaborative learning activity for the counterparts and their agencies. Of central concern is that GoPNG, the agencies and counterparts 'own' and take responsibility for the success and sustainability of the placements. The current practice, therefore, of advisers writing and submitting 'their' final reports to GoA's managing contractor is inconsistent with such indigenous ownership and responsibility. Previously it was acknowledged that there are tensions between GoA, through its managing contractor paying for and employing advisers, and GoPNG requiring its capacities to be developed in its own interests and for its own needs. Recommendations 1 to 3 suggest processes and procedures to minimise these tensions in accordance with contemporary OECD approaches to capacity development. This leads to the conclusion that each adviser and counterpart(s), as a team, should take responsibility for producing the final report in their placements. Not only is this consistent with collaborative approaches to AC placements, such as action learning, it is also consistent with counterparts learning how to take responsibility themselves for the sustainability of the changes they have enacted with their adviser.

Recommendation 7

The final reports on AC placements either should be co-produced by advisers and counterparts, or there should be equivalent final reports from each.

In concert with the above recommendation, it is useful to consider ensuring consistent reporting relationships for advisers and counterparts. In most instances, advisers have bifurcated reporting relationships; one to a senior staff member in the agency, the other to a senior person in the managing contractor's establishment. This reflects the aforementioned tension between GoPNG and GoA ownership of AC placements. Some counterparts are troubled by these relationships and have

the additional concern that the adviser may be another 'boss' for them; and one who reports on them to their agency 'boss'. For the purposes of the placement, and consistent with the indigenous ownership thereof, it is suggested that the following recommendation be considered.

Recommendation 8

Consideration should be given to each adviser and their counterpart being accountable to, and supervised by, the same senior staff member in the agency to oversee the placement, and for consideration and approval of any modifications etc.

The final recommendation is a separate entity concerning 'other modalities' including: short-term consultants, twinning arrangements, targeted training, grants and research. The research design was principally established to collect data on AC placements from 2006–2013, which included the end of the ASF period and through the EPSP period. The other modalities research was conducted on the 2012–2013 period, but EPSP managed little work in other modalities during this time. This was confirmed by an EPSP staff member as follows.

EPSP sought to expand the kinds of capacity development modalities available to it such as targeted training, research and analysis, procurement, incentive grants and co-funding arrangements...EPSP has undergone several reviews and refocusing of its role and objectives over the past eighteen months. EPSP is conscious that other modalities have not been realised as anticipated. (Personal email communication)

The research proceeded initially on the basis that there would be other modalities to be researched and that some data could also be collected in the AC placement research stages that related to previous (pre-2012) work in other modalities. A literature review on the topic conducted for this research project, together with the small amount of data collected, provided some insight into the other modalities used in PNG, especially short-term consultancies. Given the limited data, however, it is unwise to draw firm conclusions about these matters other than that further research will be required to do so. It may be suggested that short-term consultancies are probably useful in particular circumstances and are favoured by donors for their specificity and apparent cost effectiveness; conversely some recipients dislike short-term consultancies and prefer long-term AC placements, especially because of their capacity development strengths. It appears reasonable that, as other modalities have different purposes to AC placements, they are unlikely to substitute for the latter.

Recommendation 9

If other modalities are to be researched, they will require more substantial enactment before they are researchable.

Other modalities may well be useful in the overall planning of some AC placements in order to provide equipment, support, research, etc. that may be required to ensure sustainability of the placements' outcomes. This research shows, however, that the capacity development provided by GoA to GoPNG has been important and valued by the agencies and counterparts involved. It is essential that PNG agencies sustain continuous or regular capacity development to maintain good quality public services within the nation's changing social, political and economic circumstances. Future capacity development in the PNG economic and public sectors may increasingly come from PNG's own resources; the evidence suggests, however, that Australian aid will remain important to help guide an efficient and effective public sector to serve the emerging nation.

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Success in placement

9. To what degree did the placement meet its aims as stated in your agreed terms of reference?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
The capacity development aims for the counterpart(s) were met	<input type="radio"/>				
The capacity development aims for the counterpart's/counterparts' department/agency were met	<input type="radio"/>				
The placement's overall aims were met	<input type="radio"/>				

10. What degree of development did your counterpart(s) show in their:

	Considerable	A lot	Somewhat	Very little	None at all
Overall capacity to fulfil role	<input type="radio"/>				
Administrative skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Knowledge	<input type="radio"/>				
Leadership skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Professionalism	<input type="radio"/>				
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

Learning in the placement

13. Which of the following activities did you use to help your counterpart(s) to learn:

	Yes
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>
Workshops	<input type="radio"/>
Structured learning	<input type="radio"/>
Observation of adviser activities	<input type="radio"/>
Role-modelling	<input type="radio"/>
At-desk training	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>

Other

14. To what degree were the following activities effective for your counterpart's/counterparts' learning during the placement:

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not used
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>					
Workshops	<input type="radio"/>					
Structured learning	<input type="radio"/>					
Observation of your activities	<input type="radio"/>					
Role-modelling	<input type="radio"/>					
At-desk training	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Please specify other

Evidence of success

16. To what extent do you believe you identified evidence of success for your project in the following areas?

	Considerable evidence	Substantial evidence	Some evidence	Little evidence	No evidence	Not applicable
Accountability	<input type="radio"/>					
Budgeting	<input type="radio"/>					
Change in work culture	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved collaboration	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved understanding of role and function	<input type="radio"/>					
Information dissemination	<input type="radio"/>					
Management	<input type="radio"/>					
Manuals and/or checklists produced	<input type="radio"/>					
Performance management	<input type="radio"/>					
Planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Policy	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved procedures and processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Impartiality	<input type="radio"/>					
Public service ethic	<input type="radio"/>					
Reporting	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Service delivery	<input type="radio"/>					
Stakeholder relations	<input type="radio"/>					
Sustainability	<input type="radio"/>					
Systems improvement	<input type="radio"/>					
Training and mentoring of your counterpart(s)	<input type="radio"/>					
Transparency	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Factors of success

17. To what degree were the following factors important to the success of your placement?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not applicable
The counterpart's/counterparts' approach	<input type="radio"/>					
The counterpart's counterparts' experience	<input type="radio"/>					
Producing checklists guidelines etc.	<input type="radio"/>					
Collaboration	<input type="radio"/>					
Communication	<input type="radio"/>					
Confidence building	<input type="radio"/>					
Continued adviser support	<input type="radio"/>					
Continuous training	<input type="radio"/>					
Counterpart's/counterparts' attitude	<input type="radio"/>					
Cultural awareness	<input type="radio"/>					
Flexibility	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved stakeholder relationships	<input type="radio"/>					
Interpersonal relationships	<input type="radio"/>					
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>					
New staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Performance management	<input type="radio"/>					
Planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Cultural awareness training	<input type="radio"/>					
Quality of underlying analysis of needs	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Skilled staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff attitude	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff understanding their purpose and function	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Impediments to success

18. To what degree were the following matters impediments to the placement's success?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not applicable
Counterpart's/counterparts' absence	<input type="radio"/>					
Counterpart's/counterparts/ attendance	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of accountability	<input type="radio"/>					
Active resistance to adviser	<input type="radio"/>					
Attendance	<input type="radio"/>					
Availability of personnel	<input type="radio"/>					
Bureaucratic processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate communication	<input type="radio"/>					
Hiring processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Existing infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of coordination	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of funds/resources	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of trust	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of will	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate leadership	<input type="radio"/>					
New appointments during placement	<input type="radio"/>					
Non-compliance with established procedures	<input type="radio"/>					
Organisational culture	<input type="radio"/>					
Organisational structure	<input type="radio"/>					
Overreliance on advisers	<input type="radio"/>					
The physical environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Quality of underlying needs analysis	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff turnover	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of cultural awareness	<input type="radio"/>					
Time	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Success in placement

9. To what degree did the placement meet the aims stated in the Terms of Reference?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
The capacity development aims for you were met	<input type="radio"/>				
The capacity development aims for your department/agency were met	<input type="radio"/>				
The placement's overall aims were met	<input type="radio"/>				

10. As a result of working with the adviser, what degree of development did you achieve in the following areas?

	Considerable	A lot	Somewhat	Very little	None at all
Overall capacity to fulfil role	<input type="radio"/>				
Administrative skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Knowledge	<input type="radio"/>				
Leadership skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Professionalism	<input type="radio"/>				
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

^
v

11. As a result of working with the adviser in your agency/department to what degree did it improve in the following areas?

	Considerably	A lot	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Overall capacity to fulfil role	<input type="radio"/>				
Administrative activities	<input type="radio"/>				
Policy development	<input type="radio"/>				
Policy implementation skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Planning and/or plan implementation	<input type="radio"/>				
Professional responsibility	<input type="radio"/>				
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

^

v

12. In terms of building agency/department capacity through the adviser/counterpart relationship, which factors do you think were crucial for change?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all
Learning to be responsible for change	<input type="radio"/>				
Tailoring change processes to align with local cultural attitudes and practices	<input type="radio"/>				
Being provided with regular on-the-job and/or off-the-job training	<input type="radio"/>				
Learning essential knowledge, skills and/or values	<input type="radio"/>				
Adviser establishing productive relationships prior to implementing any change	<input type="radio"/>				
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

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v

Learning in the placement

13. Which of the following activities did your adviser use to help you learn? (You may choose as many as you wish)

	Yes
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>
Workshops	<input type="radio"/>
Structured learning	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating tasks and activities	<input type="radio"/>
Role-modelling	<input type="radio"/>
At-desk training	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>

Other

14. To what degree did the following activities help you to learn effectively during the placement?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not used
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>					
Workshops	<input type="radio"/>					
Structured learning	<input type="radio"/>					
Observation of your activities	<input type="radio"/>					
Role-modelling	<input type="radio"/>					
At-desk training	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Please specify other

Evidence of success

15. To what extent do you believe there was evidence of success and/or improvement in the following areas as a result of the adviser's placement?

	Considerable evidence	Substantial evidence	Some evidence	Little evidence	No evidence	Not applicable
Accountability	<input type="radio"/>					
Budgeting	<input type="radio"/>					
Change in work culture	<input type="radio"/>					
Collaboration	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff understanding of thier role and function	<input type="radio"/>					
Information dissemination	<input type="radio"/>					
Management	<input type="radio"/>					
Production of manuals and/or checklists	<input type="radio"/>					
Performance management	<input type="radio"/>					
Planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Policy	<input type="radio"/>					
Procedures and processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Impartiality	<input type="radio"/>					
Public service ethic	<input type="radio"/>					
Reporting	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Service delivery	<input type="radio"/>					
Stakeholder relations	<input type="radio"/>					
Sustainability	<input type="radio"/>					
Systems	<input type="radio"/>					
Your training and mentoring	<input type="radio"/>					
Transparency	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Factors for success

16. To what degree were the following factors important to the success of the placement?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not applicable
The adviser's approach	<input type="radio"/>					
The adviser's experience	<input type="radio"/>					
The production of checklists guidelines etc.	<input type="radio"/>					
Collaboration	<input type="radio"/>					
Communication	<input type="radio"/>					
Confidence building	<input type="radio"/>					
Continued adviser support beyond the initial placement period	<input type="radio"/>					
Continuous training	<input type="radio"/>					
The adviser's attitude	<input type="radio"/>					
The adviser's Cultural awareness	<input type="radio"/>					
Flexibility	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved stakeholder relationships	<input type="radio"/>					
Interpersonal relationships	<input type="radio"/>					
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>					
Employing new staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Performance management	<input type="radio"/>					
Planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Quality of underlying analysis of needs	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Having skilled staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff attitudes	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff understanding their purpose and function	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Impediments to success

17. To what degree were the following matters impediments to the placement's success?

	Fully	Considerably	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Not applicable
Lack of accountability	<input type="radio"/>					
Attendance	<input type="radio"/>					
Availability of personnel	<input type="radio"/>					
Bureaucratic processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate communication	<input type="radio"/>					
Hiring processes	<input type="radio"/>					
Existing infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of coordination	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of funds/resources	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of trust	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate leadership	<input type="radio"/>					
New appointments during placement	<input type="radio"/>					
Non-compliance with established procedures	<input type="radio"/>					
Organisational culture	<input type="radio"/>					
Organisational structure	<input type="radio"/>					
Overreliance on advisers	<input type="radio"/>					
The physical environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Inadequate planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Quality of underlying needs analysis	<input type="radio"/>					
Restructuring	<input type="radio"/>					
Staff turnover	<input type="radio"/>					
Lack of cultural awareness	<input type="radio"/>					
Time	<input type="radio"/>					
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>					

Other

Appendix C Interview structure for advisers who had completed placements

Background

Please explain how you came to be an adviser in PNG? (Professional background and circumstances, previous PNG/OS experience etc.)

Achieving sustainable capacity development

How worthwhile was your placement(s) for the development of your counterpart's/s' capacities? To what extent did you identify their development? What were they key indicators for you of their development?

What means did you use to develop your counterpart's/s' capacities? What was most effective?

How sustainable was their capacity development (post-placement)? How do you know?

Evidence of success

If possible, what are the three most significant examples/pieces of evidence of success from your placement(s)?

Advice for the future

Do you have any advice or suggestions concerning the establishment of placements (including nomination of counterparts) and their ToRs for PNG circumstances?

What are the best ways to ensure that adviser-counterpart placements are successful in PNG?

What are the main obstacles to success for adviser-counterpart placements in PNG? What advice do you have to counter these?

Do you have any other advice or comments to make?

Appendix D First round interview structure for continuing advisers and counterparts

Welcome, introductions of convenor and brief overview of project and confidentiality

Participants' introductions: names and brief details about placement

To what extent are the goals and intended outcomes of your placement realistic and achievable?

Have their views changed since commencement?

What obstacles, if any, have they identified? Unexpected?

What strategies do you use to develop the knowledge and skills of your counterpart(s)?

What works? What's most effective?

What indicators of success do you (expect to) see?

Are these identifiable by others? Measureable? Intrinsic?

What are your views about the sustainability of the outcomes of your placement?

What might assist the sustainability in the future?

What might inhibit the sustainability?

Advisers (ending after November)

Welcome, introductions of convenor and brief overview of project and confidentiality

Do we provide a document summarising the project?

Participants' introductions: names and brief details about placement

Keep brief and ensure names are clearly on the recording

To what extent are the goals and intended outcomes of your placement realistic and achievable?

Have their views changed since commencement?

What obstacles, if any, have you encountered? Were these unexpected? Are they countered?

What strategies do you use to develop the knowledge and skills of your counterpart(s)?

What works? What's most effective?

Do you intend to use different strategies later in the placement?

What indicators of success do you see so far?

Are these identifiable by others? Measureable? Intrinsic?

What other indicators of success do you expect to see at the end of the placement?

Are these identifiable by others? Measureable? Intrinsic?

Counterparts

Welcome, introductions of convenor and brief overview of project and confidentiality

Participants' introductions: names and brief details about placement

What things did you wish to learn and achieve with your adviser?

Have these changed since commencement?

What difficulties, if any, have you experienced in achieving your goals? Unexpected? Institutional? Adviser-related?

What are the best ways for you to develop your knowledge and skills with your adviser?

What works? What's most effective?

What indicators of success do you expect to see by the end of the period with your adviser?

Are these identifiable by others? Measureable? Intrinsic?

How sustainable do you think the outcomes of your placement will be?

What might assist the sustainability in the future?

What might inhibit the sustainability?

Appendix E Second round interview for continuing advisers and counterparts

Advisers

Welcome

Participants' introductions: names and brief details about placement

To what extent were the goals and intended outcomes of your placement realistic and achievable?

Have your views changed since commencement?

What obstacles, if any, have you identified? Unexpected or not?

What strategies have you used to develop the knowledge and skills of your counterpart(s)?

What worked? What was most effective?

What indicators of success do you see?

Are these identifiable by others? Measureable? Observable? Intrinsic?

What are your views about the sustainability of the outcomes of your placement?

What might assist the sustainability of the outcomes in the future?

What might inhibit the sustainability?

Advice for the future about A-C placements in general

Do you have any advice or suggestions concerning the establishment of placements (including nomination of counterparts) and their ToRs for PNG circumstances?

What are the best ways to ensure that adviser-counterpart placements are successful in PNG?

What are the main obstacles to success for adviser-counterpart placements in PNG? What advice do you have to counter these?

Do you have any other advice or comments to make?

Counterparts

Welcome, maybe brief overview of project and confidentiality if there are new people.

Participants' introductions: names and brief details about placement

Keep brief

What things did you learn and achieve with your adviser during the placement?

Were there other things that you would have liked to have learned as well?

What difficulties, if any, did you experience in achieving your goals? Unexpected? Institutional? Adviser-related?

What were the best ways through which you developed your knowledge and skills with your adviser?

What worked best for you? What was most effective?

What are your views about the sustainability of the outcomes of your placement?

What (could have) assisted the sustainability?

What (might have) inhibited the sustainability?

Advice for the future about A-C placements in general

Do you have any advice or suggestions concerning the establishment of placements (including nomination of advisers) and their ToRs for PNG circumstances?

What are the best ways to ensure that adviser-counterpart placements are successful in PNG?

What are the main obstacles to success for adviser-counterpart placements in PNG? What advice do you have to counter these?

Do you have any other advice or comments to make?

Appendix F Senior PNG government staff interview structure

Background

What experiences have you had of adviser-counterpart placements in your agency(ies)? This includes not only the A-Cs in their agencies, but their own counterpart experiences, of any.

Achieving sustainable capacity development

How worthwhile are A-C placement(s) for the development of the counterpart's/s' capacities? To what extent do you notice any such development? Are there key indicators for you of such development?

How sustainable do you believe counterpart capacity development is in your agency? How do you know?

What are the main obstacles, if any, to the sustainability of capacity development in your agency?

Evidence of success

Can you suggest up to three of the most significant examples/pieces of evidence of success from A-C placement(s) in your agency?

Other modalities

To what extent have other modalities been used in your agency for capacity development or capacity replacement?

What seems to be most effective for your agency?

Advice for the future

Do you have any advice or suggestions concerning the establishment of A-C placements and their ToRs for your agency and/or PNG in general?

What are the best ways to ensure that adviser-counterpart placements are successful in your agency/PNG?

What are the main obstacles to success for adviser-counterpart placements in your agency/PNG? What advice do you have to counter these?

Do you have any other advice or comments to make?

Appendix G Workshop agenda

Holiday Inn, POM

2nd April 2014 8:30—1:00

Participants

30-40 Invited members of: agency senior management, Australian Aid, Coffey International, advisers, counterparts, and external experts (UPNG, NRI, etc)

8:30- 13:00

Program

8:30 Welcome and Introduction

Richard Guy, Coffey International

8:45 Overview of project (Research Questions, methods etc)

Kevin Ryland

9:00 Selected findings that illuminate key issues for the future (establishing AC projects within donors' and agencies' interests, ToRs as targets and limitations, counterparts as leaders or followers, what counts as sustainable change (personal, organisational and how to enable it to occur).

9:30 Four group (6-10 persons, structure groups beforehand to have different agencies etc) discussions of main conclusions and preliminary recommendations

10:15 Refreshments (or this could be a left for people to get coffee etc and return to their group work)

10:30 Group discussion continue.

11:00 Group reports and plenary discussion

12:15 Farewell and lunch

Appendix H Workshop group topics

Group A: Capacity Development and/or Capacity Substitution

Topic summary

Our research has revealed different emphases by various parties on Adviser-Counterpart projects being about human capacity development in the sense that Counterparts and others learn how to do their work differently, better etc. Others see these projects as being capacity substitution in the sense that there is an absence of capacity within the agency and the Adviser fills the absence and gets the job done for the agency. Many projects can be seen to be located somewhere between these two positions in that there is, to varying degrees, some capacity development and some capacity substitution.

Group tasks

- 1 Nominate a person to take notes and report back to the whole workshop on the group's deliberations.
- 2 Share and discuss your experiences and views about the topic. Note the key points that are important to the group for consideration in the future.
- 3 Discuss, develop and note your group's key recommendations on the topic for future action.
- 4 Consider, discuss and note how the group's recommendations could be operationalized for the management and conduct of future Adviser/Counterpart projects.

Group B: Terms of Reference as targets and limitations

Topic summary

The projects findings show that the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of an Adviser-Counterpart project are seen by Advisers and Counterparts either as: key items to be addressed during the project; a guide to their activities; or as an out-dated structural impediment to the work that now needs to be done. In general, Advisers were much more influenced by the ToRs than the Counterparts, and reported that they were active in addressing them, modifying them or resisting/working around them.

Group tasks

- 1 Nominate a person to take notes and report back to the whole workshop on the group's deliberations.
- 2 Share and discuss your experiences and views about the topic. Note the key points that are important to the group for consideration in the future.
- 3 Discuss, develop and note your group's key recommendations on the topic for future action.
- 4 Consider, discuss and note how the group's recommendations could be operationalized for the management and conduct of future Adviser/Counterpart projects.

Group C: Advisers and counterparts as leaders or followers

Topic summary

The evidence shows that there is a range of ways that Adviser-Counterpart relationships are enacted. The range spans the Adviser being seen and behaving as the *de facto* leader of the project and of the Counterpart(s) and others, through to the (main) Counterpart being seen as the leader of the project and its other Counterparts and staff, with the Adviser acting as a mentor, guide and adviser to the Counterpart. Some respondents were of the view that Advisers were there to promote 'the Australian way' with little concern for PNG culture and context; others suggested some Advisers tried to follow the Counterparts lead and adapt to 'PNG way'.

Group tasks

- 1 Nominate a person to take notes and report back to the whole workshop on the group's deliberations.
- 2 Share and discuss your experiences and views about the topic. Note the key points that are important to the group for consideration in the future.
- 3 Discuss, develop and note your group's key recommendations on the topic for future action.
- 4 Consider, discuss and note how the group's recommendations could be operationalized for the management and conduct of future Adviser/Counterpart projects.

Group D: Long-term and/or short-term placements

Topic summary

Many of the respondents were of the view that the initial long-term contract period (typically one year in the first instance) was too short to achieve the ToRs and, in particular, to do so to a sustainable level. Commonly, extensions were granted to achieve these ends. Others were of the view that prolonged long term placements could produce 'Adviser fatigue' and/or the Counterpart's and agency's dependency on the Adviser and that what was required was a first initial long-term period followed by subsequent short-term periods (one to three months) with breaks of several months between. In this way the Counterpart(s) would be solely in control for a period but would have brief periods of their Adviser's support to consolidate actions, tasks and achievements and to identify matters to be addressed in the next period. There was also a view that short-term (three to six months) advising is best for producing cost-effective useful changes in an agency.

Group tasks

- 1 Nominate a person to take notes and report back to the whole workshop on the group's deliberations.
- 2 Share and discuss your experiences and views about the topic. Note the key points that are important to the group for consideration in the future.
- 3 Discuss, develop and note your group's key recommendations on the topic for future action.
- 4 Consider, discuss and note how the group's recommendations could be operationalized for the management and conduct of future Adviser/Counterpart projects.

Group E: What constitutes sustainable change (personal, organisational)?

Topic summary

Data from the research showed sustainability claims related to particular Adviser-Counterpart projects spanned a range from no sustainability, through to full sustainability. Counterparts (almost) always reported that they continued to benefit personally from what they had learned and done during the project. Some Counterparts reported that the organisation continued to operate according to the capacity development that had been provided. Other Counterparts reported that things were only partly sustained. A few reported that things had reverted or even reversed since the project finished. Advisers often were of the view that their Counterparts had benefitted from the experience, and that the organisation had done likewise. Whilst some reported sustainability and could identify practices and systems that continued as a result of the project, others were unsure because they had lost contact with the agency and Counterpart(s). Others were of the view that sustainability was unlikely once they had left due to the organisational inertia, change of policy, change of senior personnel etc.

If sustainability of organisational change is a goal, at what point in time can one deduce that sustainability has been achieved? What would one expect to observe or experience that may constitute sustainability from an Adviser-Counterpart project. Is there a point beyond which sustaining practices and procedures becomes counter-productive as circumstances, needs and ideas change or develop?

Group tasks

- 1 Nominate a person to take notes and report back to the whole workshop on the group's deliberations.
- 2 Share and discuss your experiences and views about the topic. Note the key points that are important to the group for consideration in the future. In particular, what does the group believe constitutes evidence of sustainability.
- 3 Discuss, develop and note your group's key recommendations on the topic for future action.
- 4 Consider, discuss and note how the group's recommendations could be operationalized for the management and conduct of future Adviser/Counterpart projects to both improve sustainability and also to assess/verify that is achieved.