ACS Network Positioned for Effective Service.

The Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Network recently held a workshop for its members to strategize on ways to improve on service delivery model. The ACS team took advantage of the presence of Jane Mwebi- Finance Analyst and Namuka Nwamuka- Finance Assistant (LOAG2), who were in the country office to act as facilitators to another workshop targeted at building the capacity of selected government employees in the various PIUs to process withdrawal applications for funds meant for project execution. According to Ngozi Udolisa, ACS coordinator, “...the high point of the workshop was the production of a VCD of the proceedings, which will serve as a ready-reference point whenever the need arises”. She also listed (1) Statement of Standards (2) Terms of Reference and Results agreement (3) Monthly/quarterly reports as being the other service areas that the ACS staff were working hard at improving.

Malaria Booster Program.

A World Bank Health Team visited Nigeria between May 22 till June 02 2006 to (i) continue the pre-appraisal of the malaria control booster project; and (ii) follow-up on implementation of the HSDP II and Partnership for Polio Eradication project. The Team and counterparts on the Government side agreed to modify the project design to finance a Malaria Plus Package (MPP). The contents of the package were discussed with ‘Roll Back Malaria’ partners, and the MPP eventually adopted as the package of services to be financed by this project. Where elements of this package are already being financed by other sources, this project will eventually adopt as the package of services to be financed by this project. Where elements of this package are already being financed by other sources, this project will eventually adopt as the package of services to be financed by this project.

Hafez Engages Nigerian Students.

The Country Director of the World Bank in Nigeria, Hafez Ghanem has said that the World Bank has adopted a new model of development cooperation client countries. He told Economic Students and lecturers at the Nasarawa state University on Saturday June 24, 2006 that the new model is based on partnership rather than assistance. Mr. Ghanem said that in the partnership, government must be in the driver’s seat. He said that the World Bank lays emphasis on openness and transparency adding that all bank processes and documents were accessible to the public through the World Bank Information Center (PIC) at the Country office in Abuja.

In his lecture titled, “The Role of the World Bank in Enhancing Economic Development in Nigeria”, Mr. Ghanem told students and faculty members that the bank gives Nigeria only “soft” credits available only to low income countries. He said the credit was interest-free and could be repaid over 30 years with 10 years grace period with a service charge of only 0.75%.

He asked the students: “If I give you $100 million loan to pay back in 30 years with a grace period of 10 years- would you not take it?”. “We will take”, they chorused.

The Head of Department, Dr. Yusuf Bulus and the President of the Economics Students Association, Nasarawa State University Chapter, Mr. Nathaniel Oladipo expressed gratitude to the Bank for engaging and identifying with their students and the University at large, adding that the partnership between the Bank and the University should be sustained. The Bank donated two boxes full of Economics books to buoy up the fledging Departmental Library. .........[Continued on next page]
World Bank’s Anti-Corruption Strategy.

Given the mounting evidence of the costs of corruption and the need for more coordinated approaches at both the country and international levels, the World Bank has adopted a four-part strategy for tackling corruption:

- Preventing fraud and corruption within Bank-financed projects.
- Helping countries in their efforts to reduce corruption.
- Taking corruption more explicitly into account in country assistance strategies, country lending considerations, the policy dialogue, analytical work, and the choice and design of projects.
- Adding voice and support to international efforts to reduce corruption.

The ultimate goal of the Bank’s strategy to help countries address corruption is to assist them move from systemic corruption to an environment of well-performing government that minimizes corruption’s negative effect on development.

President of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, unfolded the plan in a speech in Jakarta, Indonesia on April 11, 2006.

Wolfowitz said, “Today, one of the biggest threats to development in many countries. It weakens fundamental systems, it distorts markets, and it encourages people to apply their skills and energies in non-productive ways.”

In Partner countries, the Bank is working to significantly expand anti-corruption work at the country level so that partner countries can receive the support they need in carrying out reforms. This will include investing in professional expertise to address corruption and backing bank teams in the field with governance specialists. Staff of the Bank will mobilize instruments such as loans, grants, research, technical assistance and private sector investment to strengthen governance and fight corruption.

The Bank is to increase investments in key areas such as judicial reform, civil service reform, the media, and freedom of information and decentralization of public service delivery.

The World Bank is implementing a new system for minimizing the risk of corruption in World Bank-funded projects. The bank will deploy anti-corruption teams in many country offices to work with local institutions, like government audit units and anti-corruption commissions, to protect bank assisted projects and strengthen public procurement.

The Bank is also changing the ways projects are designed so that they address the incentives and opportunities to fight corruption right from the start. In all of these projects, the community determines where the investments would be made as well as controls the flow of funds and monitors the results of the projects.

The Bank is developing anti-corruption strategies for World Bank project and these strategies are being... [Continued on next column...]

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Hafez and Students

Mr. Ghanem told the students and faculty members that the total World Bank support to Nigeria was about $2 billion. These, he said are in three key areas: Changing the Way Government does its business; Growing the Private Sector; and Empowering people.

World Bank Donates to Pensioners.

The Information Technology (IT) unit of the World Bank donated seventy-seven orange-coloured T-shirts to pensioners in Abuja, Nigeria. Peter Ijeh- Information Analyst, explains... “We asked around and found out that a church in Abuja- The Capital Assembly, runs a welfare program for Retired Soldiers. They take some of the retirees to church on sundays and feed them after the church service. We discussed with the church authorities and they were very pleased to have us make the donation after the church service on Sunday, June 10 2006”. The pensioners were pleased with the donation and expressed appreciation to the Bank for showing concern towards their plight.

Esther and Sam move on...

May 31 2006- Time literally stood still in the Country Office as staff stopped pounding away at their computers and trooped out to the car-park, venue of the send-forth party for Esther and Sam who were spending their last day here as Bank staff. Sam Eremie – having spent 19 years at the Bank is moving on to take up other challenges with IFAD in Rome. Esther, on the other hand is staying on in Nigeria, and intends to pursue a career at the Senate, to... “Attempt to influence policy from the place where it matters most”. Colleagues in the office wished them the best in their next endeavors.

Send forth in Pictures

Esther & Sam

The Country Office pose with both staff

Pensioners at the occasion

PIC News:
The Public Information Centre is freely accessible to the public.

Opening Hours: 10:00am till 4:00pm daily, except weekends and public holidays

Resources:
- Internet-connected Computers.
- Books, Journals, Reference materials, Development data, etc.
- Seating area for meetings/dialogues.

Location:
The Public Information Centre is located on the ground floor of the World Bank Country Office.

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