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The Governance, Regulation and Finance Division of WBI (WBIGF) conducted a core course on Global Reform and Privatization of Public Enterprises in Washington, D.C., from November 1-13, 1998. This course was the second offering by WBIGF, following the pilot course held in Washington, D.C. in June, 1998. The objectives of the course were to provide both government policy-makers and business leaders with the latest discussions, tools and best practices of the formulation and implementation of public enterprise reform and privatization. The course was delivered through a combination of lectures, case study presentations, a video conference, and group discussions and exercises. A total of 51 participants, including 11 women, attended this course from 30 countries.

The WBI Evaluation Unit (WBIES) conducted a Level I (participants’ reaction) evaluation using a participants’ feedback questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the course organizer based on the questionnaire used earlier in the pilot course. Because some participants attended the course only partially, the course organizer administered the questionnaire twice during the two-week course, at the end of each week. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their views about course content and delivery. They were also asked to rate their level of knowledge about the course topics covered during each week, before and after the week. The course measured for the first time respondents’ perceived knowledge gains from attending the course. A 5-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1=minimum to 5=maximum was used for each question. At the end of the first week, the questionnaire was completed by 35 respondents out of 39 participants (89.7%) who attended the first week of the course. They consisted of 5 respondents from OECD countries (14.3%) and 30 from non-OECD countries (85.7%). In the second week, 25 respondents out of 45 participants who attended the second week (55.6%) completed the questionnaire, consisting of 9 respondents from OECD (36%) and 16 from non-OCED countries (64%).

Following is a summary of the evaluation findings.

Course Design and Delivery

- The overall usefulness of the course measured at the end of the second week of the course was 4.40 on a 5-point scale. A mean score exceeding 4.0 on this indicator was given by both OECD respondents (mean=4.44) and non-OECD respondents (mean=4.38).

- The course had expected participants to benefit from attending the course in 3 specific areas. Participants were expected to be able to 1) review their current strategies with a broader perspective, 2) improve their understanding of the necessary steps to take for further professional development, and 3) acquire new knowledge of privatization and enterprise reform. Respondents’ views of their achievement in these areas were fairly consistent during the two-week course. At the end of the first week, the ratings on the 3 aspects were 4.31, 4.11 and 4.03, respectively. The second week had slightly higher but the similar results to the first week, 4.32, 4.29 and 4.08, respectively.
The course used 4 different methods of instruction to deliver the course's messages. They were lectures, case studies, a video conference, and a panel discussion. **Lectures** and **case studies** were used throughout the two-week course duration. Respondents' ratings of the usefulness of **lectures** were 4.23 on the first week and 4.12 on the second week. **Case studies** received 4.18 on the first week and 4.32 on the second week. A **video conference** with a university professor on the first week received 4.44 out of 5.0, the highest score given by respondents among all 4 methods. A **panel discussion** on the first week received 4.11.

While the number of participants increased from 39 on the first week to 45 on the second week, the response rate to the questionnaire dropped from 85.7% to 55.6%. The organizer is advised to encourage all participants to fill out the questionnaire in order to increase the reliability of the response data.

**Self-Reported Knowledge**

- Respondents' self-assessment of their knowledge levels indicated a positive gain across all course topics. Of 13 specific issues discussed during the first week, the percentage gain among respondents from OECD countries was more than 100% on 5 issues: **New Zealand Country Experiences; Bolivia Experiences; Ingredients for Successful Reform Programs; Privatization and Corruption;** and **Labor Issues.** The OECD respondents' knowledge of these 5 topics was at 2.0 or below before the course. Their post-course ratings rose to the 3.80-4.25 level. Non-OECD respondents' ratings also more than doubled on the 2 country cases of **New Zealand and Bolivia,** from the 1.87-1.77 level to the 4.0-4.10 level.

- The second week had another 13 presentations on different topics. Both OECD and non-OCED respondents reported that their knowledge of one particular issue, **Contract Design for Regulation,** increased as much as 80%, from the low 2.0 to the high 3.0 level. OECD respondents had a gain of more than 60% in **Privatizing Social Services** and **Use of Proceeds from Sale** as well. OECD respondents appeared to have been highly familiar with issues related to **Valuation** before the course (mean=4.0). Their gain on this topic was a minimum (9.4%). Among non-OECD respondents, **Regulatory Institutions** and **Corporate Governance** had a pre/post gain of 71% and 63%, respectively.

- The course attempted to measure changes in respondents' pre/post knowledge levels for the first time in this course offering. The results obtained were, however, based on respondents' self-perceptions of their knowledge gains from the course, and therefore, did not reflect the degree to which they actually learned. The course organizer is encouraged to use a method that can measure levels of participants' actual learning in future courses.

**Comments from Respondents**

- Written comments collected at the end of the two-week course showed both positive feedback and suggestions for future courses from respondents. When asked about the most useful aspect of the course, the two most common responses were the presentations of country cases and examples (N=10), and the opportunity to interchange and network with other participants (N=10).
Respondents' suggestions for future courses were made on both course content and organization. These suggestions can be grouped into 4 areas. First, 9 respondents commented on case study presentations, requesting more examples from developing countries, as well as more chances for direct and active participation in the case presentations by, for example, allowing participants not only to listen but to analyze each case, and encouraging them to share in class their similar experiences in home countries. Second, several respondents requested more in-depth treatment of key issues such as valuation and contract design (N=6). Third, respondents asked for the course organizer's further effort in facilitating participants' learning by, for example, ensuring the appropriate balance between the amount of presentations and the time available, distributing reading materials in advance, and better structuring case study groups (N=6). Fourth, five respondents felt that a regional course should be organized as a follow-up to this course.