Summary of Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWA) Program Evaluation Recommendations, Findings and Opportunities

Odile Rheaume, RWA Program Administrator, Ombuds Services

Between September 2011 and March 2012, Ombuds Services engaged two external evaluators, Dr. David Miller and Dr. Richard Williams, to conduct an independent evaluation of the RWA Program. This is the first thorough evaluation of the program since OMB started administering it in 2000. This article summarizes the Evaluation’s recommendations, findings as well as a proposed plan to implement some of the recommendations.

The purpose of the evaluation, other than accountability, was to:

1. Assess progress toward achieving the RWA Program’s objectives, as stated in the Program’s Terms of Reference;
2. Provide recommendations to strengthen and to improve the Program;
3. Raise awareness of the Program; and
4. Develop a baseline for future evaluations.

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Personal and Work Stress Counseling Unit, HSD

Stuart Fisher, Senior Psychologist

The Personal and Work Stress Counseling Unit is an integral part of the Joint Bank/Fund Health Services Department (HSD), located in Washington on MC2. The Unit provides a wide array of services for Bank Group and Fund staff members located both at HQ and at country offices. First amongst these is confidential individual counseling and consultations during which Unit staff provide assessment, guidance, and support on concerns related to personal/work stress and psychological health; in addition to English, one of the unit’s counselors speaks Spanish, and one speaks French. When need-
Summary of Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWA) Program Evaluation Recommendations, Findings and Opportunities

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The evaluation used four primary sources of data:

1. An online survey of staff in Country Offices that have RWAs;
2. Fifty structured interviews with randomly selected key stakeholders in the RWA Program;
3. A review of WBG internal documents related to the RWA Program; and
4. The author’s experience and expertise with Alternative Resolution Dispute (ADR) programs.

Three evaluation themes were considered: Organization and Program Environment, Program Effects, and Program Management and Development.

Key Evaluation Findings:

- The RWA Program is an effective, well conceived, well designed and well administered Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program;
- The Program is basically sound. No major problems and no recommendations for significant change; some recommendations for improvements;
- The Program is most valued in country offices;
- The Program has several notable achievements as set out in the last progress report;
- The rationale for the Program remains vital

Three Things about RWA Mid-Term Training

Daniel Kozak, RWA in Romania

I am the External Affairs Officer in Bucharest Romania. About two years ago I found a message in my inbox asking me if I agree to be a respectful workplace advisor. My colleagues had nominated me as someone they trust and respect, someone they would go to if they wanted to discuss a confidential workplace issue. It was a nice surprise, but with nice surprises come great responsibility, and despite the initial warm fuzzy feeling that my colleagues trusted and appreciated me, my immediate thoughts and feelings had more to do with concerns about my abilities and their expectations. A lot happened in these past two years, including recently attending the RWA mid-term training. So let me tell you the first three things that come to my mind about the RWA mid-term training: my mantra, our experience, and their expectations.

1. I am a sounding board

I do not offer advice. I listen. I ask questions. I review your options. But it is your call. I give you my mantra as a respectful workplace advisor. Only remember, no matter how powerful one’s mantra is, at my desk and in life outside the office, a little bit more is needed to make things work. In this particular case it’s walking the talk day in and day out. And at times, it is about finding your own pack and resonating with them.

Mid-term training provided just that,
Three Things about RWA Mid-Term Training

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an opportunity to be with my RWA colleagues.

2. You can buy time, but you cannot buy experience

Yes, you can quote me. It is tested in my past twenty years at work, it is how things are, you just cannot buy experience, you have to do things, and you have to try new things. That is experience. And the good news is, although you cannot buy experience, you can exchange experiences. Exchanging with my fellow respectful workplace advisors about our mandate, about our questions and uncertainties, about what works and about what does not really work is my take-away from the RWA mid-term training. It was exciting to meet my colleagues, to listen to them, and at times to give them my answers coming from my own experience so far. I left the training feeling more empowered. Pretty much like our visitors after seeing us, I left the training very well aware that the weight of the world is not only on my shoulders. There are others like me, and there are others who can help. I am part of a well oiled system, and I can always count on our colleagues from the Ombudsman’s office, and the team administering the RWA program. This is a certainty coming from experience. For my remaining RWA mandate I am more confident I will not fail those who come to me with their concerns, needs, and expectations, and I am more confident I can deal with them within the limits of my RWA mandate. Mid-term training was a time to share our experiences, without crossing the impartiality and confidentiality boundaries set by our role.

3. Dealing with conflict is managing expectations

I say this from a crisis communication’s perspective. RWA is crisis communication, to some extent: listen, be human, show concern, have a plan, have a plan B, and manage expectations. Those of you who have been through mid-term training already know this to be true: mid-term training will give you new enhanced theoretical and practical knowledge and tools. Those of you who will be through mid-term training will have to take my word for it. And as I was saying above at number two, do take the time and opportunity to have this experience, it is like no other. I too thought that after the basic training there is nothing much I can learn about my RWA role. I was surprised to learn new things in terms of format, like the ice breaking activity that was revisited at the end of the training to give participants a sense of “before and after” the training, as well as new things in terms of content, like the ladder of inference. There is more to learn at the mid-term training and it reminded me that I not only have to manage the expectations of my visitors, but also mine. Mid-term training was a reminder about managing expectations.

Two years into the job, I consider my RWA experience as a tremendous opportunity. I am part of an organization that cares about people in general, and provides for a system to preserve fairness for its staff in the workplace. Being part of this system not only gives me the personal satisfaction of being able to help others, but it has been a learning experience and a chance to meet extraordinary colleagues. It is a constant reminder that no matter how good a professional, we all remain human.

Personal and Work Stress Counseling Unit, HSD

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ed, referrals are made to both internal and external resources for additional or ongoing care. Unit staff have frequent contact with staff members in country offices via email, telephone, and Skype. In many offices, staff have difficulty accessing counseling or other mental health services, and a significant resultant function of the Counseling Unit is to facilitate access to care through its network of mental health providers. We also work closely with the HSD Field Health Unit, particularly the regional medical advisors in Africa and Asia, in order to link staff with resources.

Resiliency briefings are offered by the Unit to individuals who are taking a position in a FCS (Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations) country; these briefings present an opportunity for staff members to review the realities of the upcoming position, have a discussion on available resources (both internal to the Bank, and external), and review coping strategies. Follow-up appointments after staff members have transferred are also offered and encouraged.

The Counseling Unit is also available to provide consultations to management regarding issues centered on staff members’ declining performance or negative patterns of behavior. The
goal is to assist both the staff member and the manager in developing a plan that will benefit everyone involved; this may include referring the staff member to the Counseling Unit for confidential counseling, recommending a referral to other units within HSD, or addressing any conflicts between the manager and the staff member. Often, once we meet with the staff member, we recommend further consultation with other internal resources within the Internal Justice System, including the Respectful Workplace Advisors program.

The Unit has additional offerings to address staff concerns both in Washington and in country offices. These include trainings to work groups on various topics including stress management and work-life balance concerns; in country offices, these may be facilitated by video-teleconference or through the use of local resources including UN counselors. Additionally, the Unit is in the process of developing an online stress ‘toolkit’ which is anticipated to come online via the HSD website in late Spring 2013. This toolkit will provide a framework for developing and maintaining stress management skills, and will include directly applicable exercises that staff will be able to access at any time, from anywhere.

To contact the Counseling Unit for services, please call 202-458-4457 (DAMA 5222 84457) or email Stuart Fisher.

Book Review: Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict
Dr. Donna Hicks, 240 pp. Yale University Press
by: Tanisha McGill, Ombuds Services

Who gave you the right to deem me worthless, as though I'm filthy rags you toss in the trash? Who gave you the right to devalue my existence in a world we were both born and are destined to die? Who empowered you to take my life because you determined it had no purpose? Who graced you with authority to take away my honor, my pride? You do have a right, a right to live at peace or at war with me, to like or dislike me, or even to respect or disrespect me; but you do not have the right to rob me of my DIGNITY, a birthright both you and I deserve limitlessly.

According to Dr. Donna Hicks, Associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, dignity has a colossal role in resolving conflict and improving relationships. As Dr. Hicks sees it, dignity “is a birthright—an internal state of peace that comes with the recognition and acceptance of the value and vulnerability of all living things”.

With nearly 20 years of experience facilitating dialogue between communities in conflict across the world and a background in teaching alternative dispute resolution, Dr. Hicks seems a likely candidate to examine the elements essential for resolving conflict. In her 2011 released book “Dignity”, Dr. Hicks tackles the subject of relationships and conflict from an uncommon concept she refers to as the “dignity model.”

Hicks developed the dignity model as a way to help people understand the important role dignity plays in improving one’s life and relationships. The model has three main parts and serves as the basis in which “Dignity” is written. Parts one and two identify the ten essential elements of dignity and the ten temptations to violate dignity, respectively. By devoting a chapter to each essential element, Hicks is able to show what dignity looks like when it is honored and when it is violated. The ten temptations to violate dignity also have corresponding chapters to show why dignity is violated. When the essential elements of dignity are not understood, and dignity is not acknowledged as a birthright to all, Hicks suggests it may be easy, to intentionally or unintentionally, violate others or one’s own dignity. The final section explains how to reconcile and heal relationships with dignity.

“Dignity” vividly recounts stories of individuals, groups, organizations and nations who at some point were in a state of turmoil and despair. These accounts are based on Dr. Hicks’ professional and personal experiences which she uses to support her argument that conflict is a direct result of one’s dignity being violated. The concepts are clearly articulated and thought provoking. Each section of the book provides a glimpse

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of the dignity model in action as Hicks cleverly ties it into the stories she retells. Hicks attempts to convince readers that dignity and violations of dignity are the missing links for resolving conflict and restoring relationships. This theory is fundamentally sound and attainable...for most. For parties involved in complex and or long standing wars, it may take a little more persuasion.

A considerable amount of attention is given to distinguishing dignity from respect. As Hicks describes it, dignity is an inherent birthright that belongs to all mankind. Respect is something that must be earned. In considering Hicks’ explanation, one passage in particular caused some hesitation; “Their inherent value and worth need to be honored no matter what they do.” While I agree that dignity and respect are different, I had difficulty agreeing with her viewpoint; as visions of senseless deadly attacks crossed my mind such as the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, the Khmer Rouge and the Bosnian genocide. How could these violators possibly deserve to be treated with dignity when they caused so much devastation in the lives of others? This was a hard pill to swallow, but after some meditation, I came to terms that indeed all life has value; it is the destructive actions of mankind that is subject to indignity.

Hicks asserts that dignity violators are typically at the core of conflict. By providing a description of how one should behave when honoring the dignity of others, Hicks is able to show that the same elements used to honor dignity can also be used to violate it.

Drawing from studies on evolutionary psychology, Hicks suggests that all human beings have tendencies to violate dignity, but by exercising self-control, these temptations can be managed without taking a defensive course of action. This speaks volume to the epidemic of seemingly unwarranted violence occurring today. Of interest to readers largely concerned with self-awareness and self-improvement in this area, are the chapters on the ten temptations to violate dignity. These chapters focus more on violating one’s own dignity by examining common stressors (temptations) and by knowing how they influence inherent instincts, particularly when vulnerabilities are exposed.

Understanding what can make us violate the dignity of others is crucial, especially since violations of dignity can take a violent turn. About a decade before Dignity was published, the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education conducted a joint study of fatal assaults in U.S. schools. Findings showed that 71 percent of attackers had been bullied, threatened, attacked or injured. However, a greater population of attackers (98 percent) had experienced or perceived some major loss prior to the attack. This includes perceived failure or loss of status (66 percent), loss of a loved one (51 percent) and suffered from a major illness (15 percent). In each of these statistics, dignity violations can be found. Acceptance of identity, inclusion and safety immediately come to mind. Temptations to violate dignity such as seeking false dignity and saving face are also evident.

Any broken relationship can be healed through dignity; “Relationships, no matter what kind, present opportunities to showcase our humanity or our inhumanity,” insists Hicks. One story to make this point comes at the conclusion of the book. The story involves the reconnection of two people whose dignity had been violated some 30 years prior. For them, healing came only after they were willing to accept the truth and to acknowledge and understand the experience from the other person’s point of view. Hicks’s optimism that every person is capable of dignity doesn’t appear to account for those who have a distorted view of dignity or simply have no regard for their own dignity, not to mention the dignity of others. Nonetheless, it would be difficult to argue her point that dignity has the same amount of influence in reconciling relationships as it does in tearing them apart.

Hicks maintains that a better quality of life is achievable when (i) all of the essential elements of dignity are present; (ii) there is intimate awareness of dignity violators, and (iii) there is understanding of how to respond to violations of dignity. Yet, the reality is that this concept may not resonate with every person. The question remains, at least for me, is it truly possible to fairly or lawfully address indignant acts while maintaining the dignity of all involved parties? For instance, an acceptable consequence of wrong-doing under the law may not coincide with one’s perception of being treated with dignity.

Dignity gives a gift of peace. Whether dignity alone is sufficient for resolving every type of conflict, it is, undeniably a vital element in our lives. “Dignity” is a good read even for the skeptic. It is enlightening and certainly inspires self reflection.

To Dr. Hicks’ original question – What does Dignity feel like? It feels like RWAs helping staff help themselves resolve workplace issues. Here is a quick reference on honoring the dignity of others as you perform your role as a RWA.
Book Review: Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict
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The Ten Essential Elements of Dignity: A Reference for RWAs

- The acceptance of identity and impartial interaction I displayed, allowed the visitor to comfortably be him/herself.
- Did I encourage inclusion in exploring possible courses of action in handling the visitor’s situation?
- Was there an atmosphere (physically, psychologically, emotionally) of safety for the visitor to openly express his/her concern?
- Did I give the visitor recognition for his/her efforts in trying to manage conflict through the available WBG resources?
- Was my treatment towards the visitor based on fairness rather than status or personal affiliation?
- Did I give the visitor the benefit of the doubt by not allowing others or pre-existing information influence my role as a RWA?
- Did I refrain from imposing my own beliefs to gain a good understanding of the visitor’s viewpoint?
- Did the visitor have independence in deciding the course of action for addressing the situation?
- Did I honor the dignity and rights of the visitor? If not, what actions of accountability will I take to mend the relationship?

Summary of Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWA) Program Evaluation Recommendations, Findings and Opportunities
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To read the RWA Program Evaluation Report in full, please visit the RWA Website or access this link: RWA Program Evaluation, 2012

We welcome your comments, observations and feedback. Please send us an email at rwa@worldbank.org
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<td>Management should be more visible to the staff in their support of the RWA Program and their encouragement for staff to use it.</td>
<td>OMB, Management &amp; Human Resources</td>
<td>OMB has set up regular with all HR teams to disseminate evaluation findings, evaluation, recommendations and general trends</td>
<td>• Increased awareness of RWA Program • Staff use RWAs • Staff are more knowledgeable • Managers ensures RWAs attend training • Nominations are easier and faster • Staff and Managers have • Increased Activity Forms from RWAs</td>
<td>Meet with all HR Teams Meet with Learning Board</td>
<td>Met with: Sean McGrath 3/28/13; D. Berry 5/10/13; UC 6/18/13; ECA/MNA 6/20/13; HRNW 7/9/13; Learning Board 7/9/13 Pending: EAP/ SAR</td>
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<td>Explore with HR and management why a lower percentage of HR staff surveyed indicated that the work environment was good or excellent (see figure 16)</td>
<td>OMB, Management &amp; Human Resources</td>
<td>Discuss findings with each VP HR, HR teams and IJS colleagues, plus Focus Group</td>
<td>• Better understanding HR Business Partners’ views of the work environment (where RWAs are present) • Increased morale</td>
<td>Same as above—discussed at each meeting</td>
<td>Discussed at meetings above</td>
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Figure 4: RWA responsibilities were inaccurately identified by up to a third of survey respondents

- Provide mediation: 16% CMs, 32% HR staff, 6% Current or former RWA, 28% Staff who have consulted a RWA, 33% Staff who have not consulted a RWA
- Speak to others on a staff member’s behalf: 11% CMs, 29% HR staff, 5% Current or former RWA, 22% Staff who have consulted a RWA, 23% Staff who have not consulted a RWA
- Help implement policies: 16% CMs, 30% HR staff, 16% Current or former RWA, 25% Staff who have consulted a RWA, 23% Staff who have not consulted a RWA
- Take a staff member’s issue to a higher level: 18% CMs, 23% HR staff, 10% Current or former RWA, 25% Staff who have consulted a RWA, 29% Staff who have not consulted a RWA

Figure 5: Agreement that the RWA Program helps to maintain a respectful workplace environment

- CMs: 71% HR staff: 81%
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### Recommendations and Areas of Opportunities

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| Find a way of communicating the program’s benefits to staff and the organization | OMB | 1. Analyze evaluation to find benefits  
2. Staff Association Survey  
3. Survey to RWAs re: benefits  
4. Collect anecdotes and testimonies from RWAs | • Better understanding of program’s benefits  
• Increase of use of RWAs by Staff;  
• Increase of support for Program | To be determined | Not started |
| Encourage the RWAs to be more proactive in briefing Head of office about the program and its benefits to the staff and the organization OMB*, RWAs and Head of Office* | OMB*, RWAs and Head of Office* | • Monitor and encourage RWAs to brief head of office at training and in regular communication  
• OMB will encourage Head of offices to schedule meetings with RWAs | • Increased outreach and understanding of Program  
• Managers are knowledgeable about the RWA Program  
• Increased communication between RWAs and Head of offices | Email to Head of offices during current ongoing communications  
Add regular reminders to Head of offices | Ongoing |
| Design and implement a monitoring and evaluation plan that captures: 1. stakeholder satisfaction data on a regular basis  
2. program’s effectiveness and utility | OMB | • Periodic yearly survey to all stakeholders (10 questions);  
• May use Exit survey for users;  
• Periodic evaluation of program | • More accurate assessment of impact of Program  
• Identify needs of users  
• Ability to measure progress overtime using the current evaluation as a benchmark | Needs to be assessed | FY15–16 |
| Increase the program’s engagement with HR staff to improve awareness for this group (see figure 11) | OMB | Set up regular meetings with HR Team, and invite 1–2 HR staff to attend each Basic training session;  
Get increased support for the nomination process; | • Increased awareness of and support for Program, and partnership with RWAs  
• Effective Nomination Process  
• Positive impression of Program | 1 or 2 HR Business Partners are invited to attend the Basic training.  
In FY12–13, a total of 8 HR Staff have attended.  
For FY14, 6 HR Staff are expected to attend. | |
| Increase overall communication and education about the RWA’s role and responsibilities (see figures 32 & 33) and (figures 22) | OMB, RWAs, IJS Staff | Increase outreach communication to better understand the RWA role and responsibilities, specifically addressing what the responsibilities do not include (mediation, intervention, etc.) | • Better understanding of RWA responsibilities and the reasons of the limitations  
• RWAs are a good resource  
• Increased trust  
• Managers expresses support | Ongoing outreach by all OMB, RWA and IJS during presentation about the RWA Program and IJS Services | |
| Review frequency and modalities of RWA in-service training opportunities and invite management and HR staff to attend training | OMB | Partner with Learning Coordinators to address additional training (virtual) and skills needs for RWAs. Invite non-RWAs to attend (HR, IJS) | • Build more skills for RWAs, HR and IJS Staff  
• More effective management of conflict across all groups | OMB will assess resources availability | FY15 |

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Thank you to all our contributors.

For information on the RWA Program, please visit our website at http://rwa

Questions or comments? Contact us at rwa@worldbank.org or (202) 458-1058

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<td>Examine and reconsider the role and responsibilities of the RWAs with respect to being proactive</td>
<td>RWA Program</td>
<td>Ombuds Services will not implement this recommendation as other IJS services fulfill this function. The RWA role should continue to be the same.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Adopt Standard of Practice for the Program to illuminate the principles on which the Program operates and as a set of performance indicators for future evaluations</td>
<td>RWA Program, RWAs</td>
<td>Adoption of Standards of Practice</td>
<td>Increased understanding of the role and responsibilities of RWAs</td>
<td>Written and published on website</td>
<td>Completed</td>
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* The title Head includes: Country Director, Regional Director, Country Manager, General Manager, Resident Representative and Vice President.

Identify yourself as a RWA with a wall sign!

You can now have a mounted wall sign that reminds your colleagues of your role. Complimentary for RWAs only. This sign should be displayed only if you are an active RWA. If you are interested in receiving one, please send us an email at rwa@worldbank.org, and allow a few weeks for shipment if you are located in a country office.

Abdallah Awad, one of our RWAs in West Bank & Gaza, had this great idea during training last January. Thank you Abdallah!

Dimensions in inches:
Overall Size: 6-1/4"w x 8"h x 7/8"d
Graphic Size: 6"w x 7-1/2"h
Weight: 1 lb.