The World Bank Group Archives: 60 Years of Development Knowledge on the “Science of Delivery”

Elisa Liberatori Prati
Chief Archivist, The World Bank Group

Using History to Inform Development Policy
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3) To encompass the complexity of delivery challenges, a future delivery science will have to be **multidisciplinary** from the outset. [...] Delivery learning will draw on the natural sciences; the social sciences; engineering and applied mathematics; and the business disciplines; but also humanities fields like **history**…

4) “We’ll build a **library of delivery case studies** and use these as a resource for training Bank staff and country implementers...”

*Jim Yong Kim, October 9, 2012, Seoul, Korea*
If history matters, archives can help
Let’s go to the Mine and find case studies

The World Bank Group Archives:
60 Years of Development Knowledge
on the “Science of Delivery”
Inside the Mine...

- **463 million pages** of paper records (193,000 linear ft.) dating back to 1946
- 200 oral history interviews
- 524 linear ft. photographic material
- 100 linear ft. film reels
- 30 linear ft. audio & video tapes
- 110,000 digitized Bank documents & reports
- Stacked, the boxes would reach **7 times** as high as Mt. Everest

.....and growing!

**2010 Access to Information Policy**
Fonds: 55 out of 78 described

www.worldbank.org/archives
Electronic Mine

Documents & Reports

- 122,000+ documents available to the public
- More than 100,000 unique users per month
- Available in multiple languages
- 800,000 documents downloaded during FY11
Examples of primary unpublished sources in the Bank Archives to help scholars understand patterns of development

**India:** India records start in 1948 (correspondence, project files, loan files)

**Indonesia:** Member from 1954

**Records of the Early Bank**
India Case #1) Forming the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India, ICICI

- Loan in 1955, Voluminous records of negotiations and progress reports
- **William Diamond, Bank Staff member loaned to ICICI as Advisor:**
  - Diamond donated his **personal papers** to the Bank
    - Incoming and outgoing correspondence
    - Notes of meetings
    - Reports
    - Clippings
    - Personal correspondence
  - Diamond’s **correspondence** includes exchanges with:
    - Eugene Black
    - George Woods
    - Future Presidents of the Bank
    - ICICI officials
    - Indian Government officials
    - IBRD Resident Representatives in India and Pakistan
    - Staff members in WB offices in Washington
India Case #2) Forming the Indian Consortium in 1958

• The Archives holds the records of all meetings, starting with the first meeting in 1958

• Lending to India had developed slowly and there were concerns about the credit-worthiness of the economy

• Therefore, the Bank organized a consortium – a club of donors – to secure “pledges” in sufficient amounts to meet the targets specified in the development plan
India Case #3) Series of high profile “missions” to India (1960-66)

- Archives holds the records of these missions

- The **Three Wise Men** Mission, 1960:
  - Hermann J. Abs of Germany
  - Sir Oliver Franks of the U.K.
  - Allan Sproul of the U.S.

- The **Bell Mission**, 1964-1966:
  - Led by Bernard Bell
  - Archives holds the official records
  - Archives also holds seven boxes of records that Bell himself retained on his Indian mission!
  - Archives holds two oral history interviews with Bell...
India Case #4) India/Pakistan Indus Basin Water Agreement

- Extremely large holdings
- The most authoritative source in the world on the negotiations

Hector Prud’homme notes of Eugene Black meetings with B.K. Nehru, March 9, 10, and 27, 1953
Indonesia Transmigration Projects

Map “Sket Peta Kab. Lampung Utara,” ca. 1980
Fonds 84-05, Personal papers of Gloria Davis, Indonesia transmigration program subject file.

“Way Abung I – From the Project Director” ca. 1978.
Fonds 84-05, Personal papers of Gloria Davis, Indonesia transmigration program subject file, Way Abung (1).
Records of the Early Bank

Experience of a Ph.D. Researcher

The IBRD and the First Italian Loan
1947-51

Anita Guelfi
LUISS, Rome, Italy
The experience of a Ph.D. researcher: The IBRD and the First Italian Loan, 1947-51

Italy General Files – Correspondence

Italy Project Files
  • “Equipment for development”, negotiation01-04
  • “Equipment for development”, administration01-04
  • “Cassa per il Mezzogiorno”, negotiation01
  • “Cassa per il Mezzogiorno”, administration01-02

Other countries’ related projects
  • “Belgium Congo Development Plan”, negotiation01-02

Presidents’ and staff members’ files
  • President Black’s files
  • Leonard Rist’s files

Archives Oral History Program
Archives Photo Collection
Usage of WB Archives
July 1, 2010 - September 30, 2012

• **1,796,119** Downloads from Documents&Reports (D&R)

• **2,082,629** D&R Unique Users

• **11,299,717** Page Views in D&R

• **61** Researchers Studied in the Archives

  Reading Room
  - US, UK, Italy, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Pakistan, Denmark, Turkey, Belgium, Canada, India, Netherlands, Singapore, Israel
Usage of WB Archives
July 1, 2010 - September 30, 2012

• **1,120** Access requests were processed by the Archives (≈70% of the total Access requests)

• **2,800** folders were reviewed for declassification = **255 linear feet** of records

• **98.5%** were subsequently disclosed
255 linear feet of declassified records in 15 months...

Freedom Tower, Miami, 255-foot Art Deco Skyscraper
Developing e-Archives Project

- Dissemination of public records
- Original context in a virtual experience
- Global access regardless of location
- Shared knowledge and information
- Enhanced transparency and accountability

Objectives

1. To provide easy access to public records from the Archives of the World Bank to interested parties around the world
2. Ensure appropriate adherence to Access to Information Policy in the dissemination of records online
3. Guarantee that records are presented in a manner which communicates the context and original order of records clearly
President McNamara Nairobi Speech 1973

Address to the Board of Governors, 1973 Annual General Meeting
Nairobi, Kenya September 24, 1973

In his address to the Board of Governors at the 1973 annual general meetings in Nairobi, Kenya, President McNamara proposed a strategy for rural development with an emphasis on productivity of smallholder agriculture. He warned that official development assistance (ODA) is inadequate, and that over 800 million people live in absolute poverty. Bank Group financing of development efforts increased by 40% over the subsequent five years.

This is a digitized recording of President McNamara delivering this speech in Nairobi.
Library of Case Studies
A public good for the public good!

Open up history! Build the library of case studies!
- Come and use the records from the Archives
- Nurture the roots of the development tree
- Our understanding of development will benefit enormously from your work
THANK YOU!

Elisa Liberatori Prati
Chief Archivist, The World Bank Group
eliberatoriprati@worldbank.org

http://www.worldbank.org/WBAccess