

# Role of Academic Research in Economic Development Work

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## Exploratory Research Questions

### Research Questions

Organizations like the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and the African Development Bank work with country governments, non-governmental organizations and knowledge domain experts to develop Country Assistance Strategies for client countries. A logical source of knowledge would be the country's academic institutions.

The purpose of this exploratory research is to understand the extent to which the Country Assistance Strategy development process leverages in-country academic knowledge, and the alignment or lack thereof of in-country academic research with country development strategies.

- Is in-country academic research and knowledge leveraged in economic development work?
- Is the academic research and knowledge produced in-country aligned with the economic development strategy adopted by the country?

### Sample Countries

Algeria  
Brazil  
Ghana  
Liberia

Argentina  
Cambodia  
India

### Research Methodology

The review consisted of:

- semantic analysis and categorization of the Country Assistance Strategies and country project documents
- review of the CAS to determine any evidence of the involvement of academic institutions or professional associations

In addition, in-country universities were identified for the purpose of understanding the alignment of research and the topical focus of the CAS and project documents.

## The Research Context

### What is a Country Assistance Strategy?

The World Bank prepares a Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for active borrowers from the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The CAS takes as its starting point the country's own vision for its development, as defined in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper or other country-owned process. Oriented toward results, the CAS is developed in consultation with country authorities, civil society organizations, development partners, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the CAS is to set out a selective program of Bank Group support linked to the country's development strategy and based on the Bank Group's comparative advantage in the context of other donor activities. CASs are designed to promote collaboration and coordination among development partners in a country.

The CAS includes a comprehensive diagnosis—drawing on analytic work by *the Bank, the government, and/or other partners*—of the development challenges facing the country, including the incidence, trends, and causes of poverty. The CAS identifies the key areas where the Bank Group's assistance can have the biggest impact on poverty reduction. In its diagnosis, the CAS takes into account the performance of the Bank's portfolio in the country, the country's creditworthiness, state of institutional development, implementation capacity, governance, and other sectoral and cross-cutting issues. From this assessment, the level and composition of Bank Group financial, advisory, and/or technical support to the country is determined.

World Bank's external website – [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0\\_contentMDK/20120746-menuPK/61551-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941\\_00.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0_contentMDK/20120746-menuPK/61551-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941_00.html)

### How is a Country Assistance Strategy Realized?

After analytical work is conducted, the borrower and the Bank produce strategies and priorities for reducing poverty and improving living standards.

**Identified projects can range across the economic and social spectrum from infrastructure, to education, to health, to government financial management.** World Bank's external website – [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0\\_contentMDK/20120731-menuPK/41390-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941\\_00.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0_contentMDK/20120731-menuPK/41390-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941_00.html)

### Where Does Knowledge Come From For a CAS?

The World Bank's knowledge base in a particular country is acquired through economic and sector work and the analysis it generates. Economic and Sector work means that in-country staff gathers and evaluates information (data and statistics) about the existing economy, and/or government and social services systems. The economic data and statistics collected provide a starting point for policy discussions with our borrowers and helps build a country's ability to evaluate, for example, its economic and social policies, financial, management and program delivery systems, physical and human infrastructure needs, and governance practices. In general, a **CAS is prepared by the Country Team, at Headquarters and in country, the country government, NGOs and other development organizations.** World Bank external website – [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0\\_contentMDK/20120720-menuPK/235710-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0_contentMDK/20120720-menuPK/235710-pagePK/41367-pPK/51533-theSitePK/40941.html)

## Observations

Of the seven countries sampled, only three had any evidence of involvement of academic institutions in the preparation of the Country Assistance Strategy – Argentina, Brazil and India.

Whether academic expertise is leveraged may have to do with the state of higher education in the country as may be the case in Cambodia or Liberia. However, in others such as Algeria and Ghana, the reason for lack of involvement is unclear from the documentation available.

There may be a regional strategy that promotes involvement of academic experts, for example the two countries in the sample from Latin America and Caribbean both included universities in the preparation and consultation steps. The university communities clearly has expertise aligned with the CAS focus.

There is an opportunity to increase the visibility of in-country academic research to those involved in the preparation.

**One thing seems clear from the limited review represented here – role of academic institutions and professional associations in the strategy development appears to be underutilized.**

**Increased access to and coverage of dissertations and theses in member countries might encourage the use of these experts and their research in the CAS preparation and project design and implementation.**

## Country Reviews

### Algeria



**Academic Research Input:** No evidence of any university involvement in the CAS document.

**Topical Focus of CAS and Project Documents:** Agriculture, Education, Energy, Environment, Financial Sector Development, Health and Nutrition, Housing, Industry, Information and Communications Technology, Labor and Social Protections, Science and Technology Development, Transport, Urban Development, Water Supply and Sanitation

**Research Universities:** 130 In-Country, Heavy Math and Engineering Focus. Major universities are listed below. There is strong alignment between CAS and in-country research.

Annaba University  
Abou Bakr Belkaid University  
University of Algiers  
Badji Mokhtar University  
University of Batna  
Ecole Nationale d'Administration à Alger  
Ecole Nationale Polytechnique  
University of Blida  
Djillali Liabes University  
Université de Bejaia  
University of Sciences and Technology  
Houari Boumediène  
University of Oran  
Es-senia University  
Mentouri University

### Cambodia



**Academic Research Input:** No evidence of any university involvement in the CAS document

**Topical Focus of CAS and Project Documents:** Agriculture, Education, Energy, Environment, Financial Sector, Governance, Health, Indigenous Peoples, Information and Communications Technologies, Law and Justice, Private Sector Development, Trade and International Economics, Transport.

**Research Universities:** Public and private universities are listed below. There is strong alignment between the research focus and topical focus of the CAS and project documents.

Angkor City Institute  
Angkor University  
Asia Europe University  
Asia Pacific Institute  
Build Bright University  
Cambodia Agricultural Research and Development Institute  
Cambodia Mekong University  
Cambodian University for Specialties  
Chamroeun University of Polytechnique  
Economics and Finance Institute  
Human Resources University  
ICS University  
Institute for Business Education  
Institute of Cambodia  
Institute of Health Science of Royal Cambodian Armed Forces  
Institute of Management Science  
Institute of Technology of Cambodia

### Ghana



**Academic Research Input:** No evidence of any university involvement in the CAS document

**Topical Focus of CAS and Projects:** Agriculture, Education, Energy, Environment, Financial Sector Development, Health and Nutrition, Public Sector Development, Rural Development, Transport, Urban Development, Water Supply and Sanitation.

**Research Universities:** 6 Public Universities and 1 Private University. There is some alignment between the university coverage and the CAS and project documents, but not as strong as for other countries.

Ghana Institute of Languages  
Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration  
Institute of professional studies  
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology  
University for Development Studies  
University of Cape Coast  
University of Education  
University of Ghana  
University of Mines and Technology  
Valley View University

### Liberia



**Academic Research Input:** No evidence of any university involvement in the CAS document

**Topical Focus of CAS and Projects:** Agriculture, Community Development, Gender, Health and Nutrition, Infrastructure, Social Development, Transport, Water Supply and Sanitation. Major focus is on food crisis, emergency aid, and post-conflict reintegration.

**Research Universities:** Liberia has three major universities. The alignment here would likely be weak as the university system is small, due to the post-conflict and emergency situation over the past decade.

Cuttington University College  
University of Liberia  
Robertstown University

### Argentina



**Academic Research Input:** Consultation with universities and professional associations is evident in the CAS and Project Documents

**Topical Focus of CAS and Projects:** Agriculture, Banking Systems, Education, Energy, Environment, Financial Sector Development, Forestry, Health and Nutrition, Housing, Indigenous Peoples, Industry, Infrastructure, Labor and Social Protections, Law and Justice, Public Sector Development, Public Sector Development, Social Development, Tax Administration, Transport, Water Resources Management, Water Supply and Sanitation

**Research Universities:** 100+ public and private universities, including the following small sample. There is strong alignment between CAS and in-country research.

Argentine Atlantis University  
Argentine University of Business  
Austral University  
Buenos Aires Institute of Technology  
CAECE University  
Catholic University of La Plata  
Diocesan School of Social Service  
Favaloro University  
Fraternity and Group University of the Saint Tomás de Aquino  
IAE Austral University  
Instituto Universitario de Ciencias de la Salud  
Fundación H.A. Barceló  
Instituto Universitario de Estudios Navales y Marítimos  
Instituto Universitario del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires  
John F. Kennedy Argentine University  
Jorge A. Sábato Institute  
Maimónides University  
National University Institute of Arts  
National University of Catamarca

### Brazil



**Academic Research Input:** Evident in CAS and Project Documents

**Topical Focus of CAS and Projects:** Education, Energy, Environment, Financial Sector Development, Health, Rural Development, Rural Development, Social Development, Transport, Urban Development, Water Supply and Sanitation

**Research Universities:** 73 major universities, with over 800 colleges and universities. There is strong alignment between the research focus and topical focus of the CAS and project documents.

Escola Federal de Engenharia de Itaipava  
Escola Técnica Federal de Goiás  
Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo  
Fundação Getúlio Vargas  
Federal University of Paraíba  
Instituto Militar de Engenharia  
PUC-Rio  
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná  
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas  
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul  
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo  
Universidad Federal de São Paulo  
Universidade Católica de Brasília  
Universidade Católica de Pernambuco  
Universidade Estadual Paulista  
Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense  
Universidade Federal Fluminense  
Universidade Federal da Bahia  
Universidade Federal de Alagoas  
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora  
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais  
Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto

### India



**Academic Research Input:** Evident in CAS and Project Documents

**Topical Focus of CAS and Projects:** Spans the entire list of World Bank topic areas from Agriculture through Water Supply and Sanitation.

**Research Universities:** 500+ universities including both public and private, too many to list in the poster. Sample set is only from one district (Tamil Nadu) is provided below. There is very strong coverage between the university research focus and the CAS and project documents.

Alaga University  
Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham  
Anna University  
Annamalai University  
Avinashilingam University  
Bharati University  
Bharathiar University  
Bharathidasan University  
Chennai Mathematical Institute  
Gandhiarum Rural Institute  
Indian Institute of Technology Madras  
Kalsalingam University  
Karunya University  
Madurai Kamaraj University  
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University  
Mother Teresa Women's University  
National Institute of Technology  
Noida  
Islamic University  
Periyar University  
Periyar Maniammai University  
Sathyabama University  
SASTRA University