

# WBG CORE COMPETENCIES

*Competencies with definitions and grade-level descriptions*



**WORLD BANK GROUP**  
Human Resources

---

## Introduction

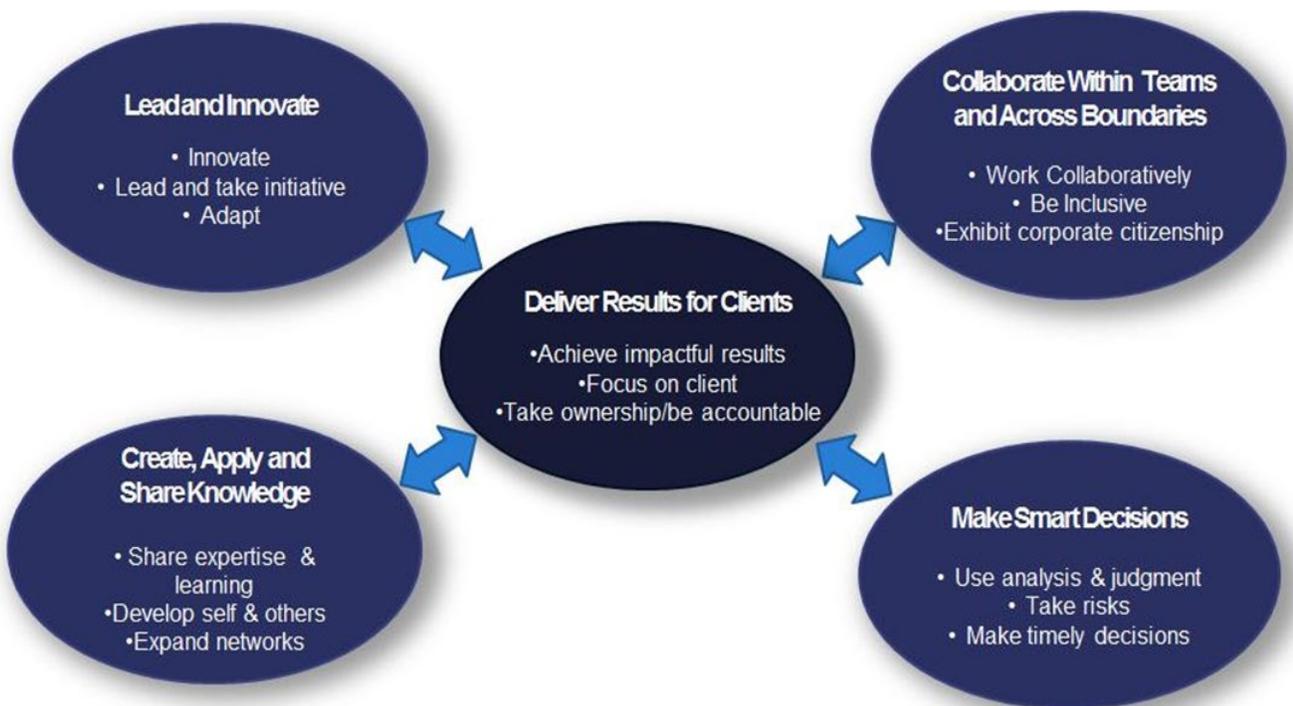
---

**The World Bank Group (WBG) Core Competencies are the critical behaviors required of WBG staff. They are complemented by job specific competencies that define technical knowledge and skills for jobs across the organization. They are also complemented by Managerial competencies for those staff in managerial jobs. These core competencies will be used in the WBG performance management process, for recruitment and selection, and for career development.**

The five World Bank Group core competencies are:

- **Deliver Results for Clients**
- **Collaborate Within Teams and Across Boundaries**
- **Lead and Innovate**
- **Create, Apply and Share Knowledge**
- **Make Smart Decisions**

Each competency includes behavioral themes which are listed under the competency title and are further described in the pages below.



---

## Deliver Results for Clients

---

### ***Includes client orientation and results orientation with a focus on accountability and creating an impact on the mission***

Effective WBG staff set high standards and challenging goals, and measure impact. They address the needs and challenges of internal and external clients, while also keeping the goal of “reducing poverty” and “increasing prosperity” as the ultimate objective. They hold themselves accountable and take personal ownership for identifying and managing risks and delivering evidence-based results that are financially, environmentally and socially sustainable and have development impact.

#### Behavioral indicators at each level build around:

- |                                      |                       |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ <b>Achieving impactful results</b> | ✓ <b>Client focus</b> | ✓ <b>Ownership/accountability</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|

#### **Level 1 (GA): Responds to client requests in a timely manner**

- Demonstrates positive attitude and responsiveness to client requests
- Has basic understanding of the role of the department and of the larger organization
- Is able to execute tasks and complete requests in a consistent and timely manner

#### **Level 2 (GB): Proactively responds to and completes client requests**

- Displays a positive and professional service-orientation in client interactions
- Demonstrates understanding of department’s key programs and/or products and how they are related to the larger organization
- Prioritizes requests and/or tasks according to priority and highest impact for clients

#### **Level 3 (GC): Takes personal responsibility to make things better for the client**

- Displays understanding of client context and environment and interacts with them tactfully and diplomatically
- Understands the department’s priorities and how they relate to those of the organization
- Demonstrates an independent sense of urgency and initiative; takes ownership for meeting agreed-upon deadlines for routine issues

#### **Level 4 (GD): Takes full ownership to address client needs**

- Demonstrates initiative, independence and autonomy in addressing client needs in changing business contexts and environments
- Has knowledge of department strategy, vision, and goals and can link them to those of the larger organization. Allocates and prioritizes resources according to areas of most urgent need and greatest impact for the client

#### **Level 5 (GE): Contributes to delivery of results for clients on complex issues**

- Sets challenging goals that align with the WBG mission and is always looking to improve
- Understands clients’ most pressing challenges and contributes to solutions
- Takes personal responsibility for producing high quality work, identifying and informing of risks, and delivering results for clients

#### **Level 6 (GF): Proactively addresses clients’ stated and unstated needs**

- Adds value by constantly looking for a better way to get more impactful results; sets challenging stretch goals for oneself
- Immerses oneself in client experiences and perspective by asking probing questions to understand unmet needs
- Demonstrates accountability for achieving results that have a development impact and financial, environmental and social sustainability. Identifies and proposes solutions to mitigate and manage risks.

#### **Level 7 (GG): Achieves results and identifies mission-driven solutions for the client**

- Develops and implements solutions that show understanding of how clients and/or own work achieves results that are financially, environmentally and socially sustainable
- Shares new insights based on in-depth understanding of the client and recommends solutions for current and future needs of clients
- Holds self and team accountable for risk management and outcomes.

#### **Level 8 (GH): Acts as a trusted, strategic advisor, partnering with clients to deliver results**

- Creates opportunities that are aligned with the mission to increase impact and leads initiatives to take advantage of these opportunities
- Proactively guides clients to see the possibilities in new approaches and solutions
- Takes full accountability for managing risk and ensuring outcomes consistent with WBG strategy

#### **Level 9 (GI): Leads an organization that focuses on results for clients and impact rather than transactions or processes**

- Develops and implements structures, processes and systems that track the empirical results achieved by the organization, and drives performance to the highest level
- Motivates the organization to make decisions that create impact for clients, and to remove organizational obstacles to delivering results
- Inspires the culture and creates norms and processes to hold self and others in the organization accountable for managing risk and delivering results that are financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable

#### **Level 10 (GJ): Creates an enterprise and a culture that focuses on results for clients and impact rather than transactions or processes**

- Creates a culture and implements structures, processes and systems that track the empirical results achieved by the organization, and drives performance to the highest level
- Motivates everyone in the organization to make decisions that create impact for clients, and to remove organizational obstacles to delivering results
- Inspires the culture and creates norms and processes to hold self and others in the organization accountable for managing risk and delivering results that are financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable

#### **Level 11 (GK): Creates an enterprise and a culture that focuses on results for clients and impact rather than transactions or processes**

- Creates a culture and implements structures, processes and systems that track the empirical results achieved by the organization, and drives performance to the highest level
- Motivates everyone in the organization to make decisions that create impact for clients, and to remove organizational obstacles to delivering results
- Inspires the culture and creates norms and processes to hold self and others in the organization accountable for managing risk and delivering results that are financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable

---

## Collaborate Within Teams and Across Boundaries

---

### ***Includes teamwork and collaboration as well as inclusion and a commitment to One WBG***

Effective WBG staff collaborate and work with others across and outside of the World Bank Group in order to achieve the best results for clients. They cultivate and leverage their professional networks to this end. They are inclusive in gathering options and information, and align their behavior and priorities with the needs and goals of WBG. They maintain a WBG corporate mindset above an individual or team perspective and are proactive in mitigating and managing conflicts.

#### Behavioral indicators at each level build around:

✓ Collaboration and Teamwork	✓ Inclusion	✓ WBG corporate citizenship
------------------------------	-------------	-----------------------------

#### **Level 1 (GA): Acts cooperatively**

- Works cooperatively and displays an open, helpful attitude toward others Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved
- Values the importance of others' views
- Is aware of impact of work on larger WBG

#### **Level 2 (GB): Contributes collaboratively to one's own team**

- Actively collaborates with others in own team and displays an open, helpful attitude toward others
- Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved
- Includes others in own work and thinking
- Considers the impact of work on WBG

#### **Level 3 (GC): Initiates collaboration beyond the team**

- Seeks opportunities to collaborate within own department and displays an open, helpful attitude toward others
- Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved
- Involves others and seeks additional perspectives when needed
- Considers the impact of work on WBG

#### **Level 4 (GD): Contributes to wider collaborative efforts**

- Adopts a collaborative approach to improve overall effectiveness outside one's department and displays an open, helpful attitude toward others
- Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved
- Demonstrates understanding of and acts to incorporate multiple perspectives
- Frames thinking/actions with a WBG corporate perspective in mind

#### **Level 5 (GE): Collaborates within team and across boundaries**

- Keeps others fully informed to ensure integration and work consistency and displays a sense of mutuality and respect
- Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved
- Seeks and listens to input from others to inform own decision making and openly shares information
- Frames thinking/actions with a WBG corporate perspective in mind

#### **Level 6 (GF): Collaborates across boundaries, gives own perspective and willingly receives diverse perspectives**

- Appropriately involves others in decision making and communicates with key stakeholders
- Approaches conflicts as common problems to be solved. Actively seeks and considers diverse ideas and approaches displaying a sense of mutuality and respect
- Integrates WBG perspective into work

**Level 7 (GG): Initiates collaboration across boundaries and broadly across WBG, and brings differing ideas into the forefront**

- Collaborates across organizational boundaries, internally and externally with a sense of mutuality and respect
- Consistently engages others in open dialogue, brings out any conflicting viewpoints and incorporates viewpoints into solutions, giving credit where credit is due. Leverages expertise of all team members to ensure successful outcomes
- Makes choices and sets priorities with a WBG corporate perspective in mind

**Level 8 (GH): Leads collaboration across WBG and with partners drawing on robust professional networks**

- Clearly articulates and models expectations of collaborative behavior, recognizes collaboration and contributions of others
- Provides safe environment for exchange of ideas where people feel free to express dissenting opinions, handling conflicts as opportunities and problems to be solved
- Prioritizes WBG corporate goals over individual or team goals when in conflict

**Level 9 (GI) Takes accountability for collaboration at all levels of the WBG and with external partners**

- Personally leverages the strengths of the institution to bring together differences in perspectives, experiences, cultures etc. in order to create the best solutions
- Establishes and follows norms of robust debate that bring the best ideas to the forefront, and approaches conflicts as opportunities and problems to be solved
- Role models WBG corporate citizenship by putting common corporate goals over individual or team goals when in conflict

**Level 10 (GJ): Creates an enterprise and culture that drives collaboration at all levels of the WBG and with external partners**

- Ensures the enterprise is leveraging the strengths inside and outside the institution to bring together differences in perspectives, experiences, cultures etc. in order to create the best solutions
- Creates a culture that establishes and maintains norms of robust debate that bring the best ideas to the forefront, and approaches conflicts as opportunities and problems to be solved
- Role models WBG corporate citizenship by putting corporate goals over individual or team goals when in conflict

**Level 11 (GK): Creates an enterprise and culture that drives collaboration at all levels of the WBG and with external partners**

- Ensures the enterprise is leveraging the strengths inside and outside the institution to bring together differences in perspectives, experiences, cultures etc. in order to create the best solutions
- Creates a culture that establishes and maintains norms of robust debate that bring the best ideas to the forefront, and approaches conflicts as opportunities and problems to be solved
- Role models WBG corporate citizenship by putting corporate goals over individual or team goals when in conflict

---

## Lead and Innovate

---

### ***Includes concepts of personal leadership, initiative, innovation, and adaptability***

Effective WBG staff demonstrate personal leadership and commitment to the WBG's values and mission. They take initiative, and are persistent in their drive for results. They seek opportunities to improve and find innovative solutions, where appropriate, to problems. They inspire and encourage others to have a positive attitude and impact, are able to adapt to changing circumstances, and are willing to be bold to increase the Bank's Group's effectiveness.

#### Behavioral indicators at each level build around:

✓ Innovation	✓ Personal leadership and taking initiative	✓ WBG corporate
--------------	---	-----------------

#### **Level 1 (GA): Shows positive, constructive attitude**

- Shows interest in and helps to solve routine problems
- Considers own behavior in context of WBG's values and mission
- Adapts to changing circumstances

#### **Level 2 (GB): Identifies problems or obstacles**

- Proactively identifies problems or obstacles in area of assigned responsibility
- Considers own behavior in context of WBG's values and mission
- Understands and displays flexibility to adapt to department needs

#### **Level 3 (GC): Suggests improvements to solve problems**

- Applies problem solving skills to engage self and others in developing solutions
- Considers own behavior in context of WBG's values and mission and recognizes impact on others
- Adapts own work to new approaches/processes

#### **Level 4 (GD): Initiates changes to work processes to improve efficiency and performance**

- Applies creativity, flexibility and persistence to develop new approaches
- Considers own behavior in context of WBG's values and mission and recognizes impact on others
- Frames problems and recommends solutions

#### **Level 5 (GE): Brings new and different insights**

- Applies critical thinking to current approaches, identifies areas for improvement, and tries new solutions that drive results
- Considers own behavior in context of WBG's values and mission and recognizes impact one has on others
- Operates in ambiguity and changing needs and supports others to do the same

#### **Level 6 (GF): Develops innovative solutions**

- Contributes new insights to understand situations and develops solutions to resolve complex problems
- Adapts as circumstances require and manages impact of own behavior on others in context of WBG's values and mission
- Identifies and pursues innovative approaches to resolve issues

#### **Level 7 (GG): Develops innovative solutions with others**

- Encourages and works with others to identify, incubate and implement relevant solutions
- Identifies opportunities in changing circumstances and energizes others to continuously improve, using intentional strategies to boost morale, team spirit, and productivity in context of WBG's values and mission
- Helps others to understand problems, client needs and the underlying context

#### **Level 8 (GH): Inspires and influences others to drive innovation**

- Fosters open discussions with broad audiences to set vision and establish buy-in for innovation that can enhance WBG effectiveness
- Inspires others to develop new solutions that have a development impact and advocates for changes and application of new methods to enhance results
- Develops partnerships and relationships that enable the WBG to achieve results through innovation

#### **Level 9 (GI): Mobilizes the organization for innovation**

- Creates the structure and process to support the development of innovative solutions that are a source of competitive advantage and long-term sustainability for WBG
- Develops and executes strategies by motivating, encouraging, and developing individuals to enhance their ability to create innovative approaches to get results
- Works across the organization to support those using innovative approaches to achieve results (e.g., autonomy, time, resources)
- Develops partnerships and relationships to enable the WBG to achieve results through innovation

#### **Level 10 (GJ): Creates an organization that strives for innovation**

- Inspires others and creates an organization where innovative solutions are a source of competitive advantage and long-term sustainability for WBG
- Develops and executes strategies by motivating, encouraging, and developing individuals to enhance their ability to create innovative approaches to get results
- Works across the organization to support those using innovative approaches to achieve results (e.g., autonomy, time, resources)
- Develops partnerships and relationships to enable the WBG to achieve results through innovation

#### **Level 11 (GK): Creates an enterprise and a culture that drives innovation**

- Builds an enterprise where the culture drives innovative solutions as a source of competitive advantage and long-term sustainability for WBG
- Develops and executes strategies by motivating, encouraging, and developing individuals to enhance their ability to create innovative approaches to get results
- Works across the organization to support those using innovative approaches to achieve results (e.g., autonomy, time, resources)
- Develops partnerships and relationships to enable the WBG to achieve results through innovation

---

## Create, Apply and Share Knowledge

---

***Includes the development and sharing of knowledge, as well as networking, mentoring others, and developing self and others to create a greater contribution to achieving WBG goals***

Effective WBG staff understand the value of creating, applying, and sharing knowledge. Staff, rapidly and readily share their expertise; create and contribute to the WBG's body of knowledge and efficiently reflect and draw on lessons of past experience from colleagues, clients, partners and external sources to drive the WBG to achieve its goals. They expand their professional networks in their areas of expertise by forging linkages with others. They energize others to create, apply and share knowledge and learn from each other. They also seek opportunities to grow personal and institutional knowledge and invest in the growth of others through mentoring, as well as developing themselves and others through feedback and continuous learning.

### Behavioral indicators at each level build around:

- |   |                                       |                             |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ <b>Sharing expertise and learning</b> | ✓ <b>Developing self &amp; others</b> | ✓ <b>Expanding networks</b> |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

#### **Level 1 (GA): Seeks opportunities to grow and further develop own capabilities**

- Shows interest in knowledge, learning, and enhancing own skills
- Interacts positively with others for the exchange of information and ideas
- Receives and incorporates feedback from others

#### **Level 2 (GB): Shares knowledge appropriately**

- Demonstrates initiative in building and growing own skills
- Understands own knowledge and learning gaps
- Takes feedback constructively and provides feedback on the work of others

#### **Level 3 (GC): Proactively and regularly shares knowledge**

- Provides guidance and coaching to more inexperienced staff in areas of assigned responsibility or expertise
- Shares knowledge and information with others across the work unit or department
- Provides feedback on the work of others; recognizes importance of multiple perspectives

#### **Level 4 (GD): Actively promotes knowledge-sharing**

- Takes ownership for organization of knowledge-sharing and learning activities
- Contributes to the knowledge of the work group and beyond
- Uses feedback to develop self and mentor others
- Builds personal and professional networks within and beyond the work group

#### **Level 5 (GE): Actively contributes to and readily applies WBG's body of knowledge for internal and/or external client solutions**

- Contributes to the department's and WBG's body of knowledge by applying lessons learned and expertise
- Actively invests in own knowledge and seeks feedback
- Builds personal and professional networks within and beyond the work group

#### **Level 6 (GF): Applies knowledge across WBG to strengthen solutions for internal and/or external clients**

- Leverages department's expertise and body of knowledge across WBG to strengthen internal and/or external client solutions
- Seeks to learn from more experienced staff to deepen or strengthen their professional knowledge and helps others to learn
- Builds personal and professional networks inside and outside the department unit

**Level 7 (GG): Creates, applies and shares knowledge from across and outside WBG to strengthen internal and/or external client solutions**

- Ensures systematic sharing of good practice and learning from lessons from across WBG, clients, and partners
- Is known across WBG in their subject area and is sought out by WBG colleagues to advise, peer review, or contribute to knowledge products of others
- Seeks mentoring opportunities with more experienced staff to deepen or strengthen their professional knowledge and mentors junior staff
- Builds networks across the WBG and as part of external professional groups/networks

**Level 8 (GH): Establishes an environment where knowledge is created, applied and shared**

- Leverages external knowledge and partnerships to strengthen solutions for internal and/or external clients
- Is known across WBG and externally in their subject area and is routinely sought out by WBG colleagues to advise, peer review, or contribute to knowledge products of others
- Encourages a learning culture by seeking out and being open to feedback, as well as effectively mentoring others, on how to improve contribution and impact through continuous learning and knowledge acquisition
- Builds networks of experts and clients to share knowledge and experience for the purpose of strengthening internal and/or external client solutions as well as WBG's role as convener and facilitator of knowledge

**Level 9 (GI): Drives a culture where knowledge is created, applied, and shared to strengthen WBG's leadership role, development impact and to improve solutions for internal and/or external clients**

- Reinforces a culture and enabling environment to ensure staff share, create, and reflect/apply knowledge (e.g., encourages staff to connect with others outside of their traditional networks and explore areas to innovate).
- Role models a learning culture by seeking out and being open to feedback, as well as effectively mentoring others, on how to improve contribution and impact through continuous learning and knowledge acquisition
- Leverages experience and thought leadership to guide WBG's strategy, receiving significant internal and external recognition
- Forges strategic internal and external partnerships that enhance WBG's ability to deliver solutions to clients and maintain leadership position among other development organizations

**Level 10 (GJ): Leads an organization and drives a culture where knowledge is created, applied, and shared to strengthen WBG's leadership role, development impact and to improve solutions for internal and/or external clients**

- Inspires others and creates an enabling environment that ensures staff share, create, and reflect/apply knowledge
- Role models a learning culture by seeking out and being open to feedback, as well as effectively mentoring others, on how to improve contribution and impact
- Leverages experience and thought leadership to guide WBG's strategy, receiving significant internal and external recognition
- Forges strategic internal and external partnerships that enhance WBG's ability to deliver solutions to clients and maintain leadership position among other development organizations

**Level 11 (GK): Creates an enterprise and drives a culture where knowledge is created, applied, and shared to strengthen WBG's leadership role, development impact and to improve solutions for internal and/or external clients**

- Builds an organization and a culture that ensures staff share, create, and reflect/apply knowledge
- Role models a learning culture by seeking out and being open to feedback, as well as effectively mentoring others, on how to improve contribution and impact
- Leverages experience and thought leadership to guide WBG's strategy, receiving significant internal and external recognition
- Forges strategic internal and external partnerships that enhance WBG's ability to deliver solutions to clients and maintain leadership position among other development organizations

---

## Make Smart Decisions

---

***Includes analytical thinking, judgment, risk taking, and focus on empirical data, but also the ability to make decisions and take action***

Effective WBG staff balance the need for risk management with a sense of urgency by making quick, timely, and relevant decisions. They display the confidence to take smart risks and make timely and effective decisions and show confidence in own judgment and actions. They are good problem solvers, collect evidence, lessons from past experience, and research to support their actions, and are willing to make decisions and take smart risks that advance the goals of WBG. They take ownership for decisions they make, and ensure issues are pushed to the right level for decision-making when needed. Senior leaders drive alignment, and ensure information is shared to make realistic, sound decisions and recommendations. Trust and support is given to decision makers, regardless of level, with the assumption that the right decisions will be made.

### Behavioral indicators at each level build around:

✓ **Analysis/judgment**

✓ **Risk taking**

✓ **Making timely decisions**

#### **Level 1 (GA): Makes decisions appropriate to scope of job**

- Seeks assistance and guidance from others where appropriate
- Uses own judgment to make timely and sound decisions

#### **Level 2 (GB): Uses critical thinking to inform own decision-making**

- Thinks through problems and articulates the appropriate course of action
- Takes action once decisions are made

#### **Level 3 (GC): Identifies information needed to support decisions**

- Locates and accesses appropriate sources of information, data and lessons to support decision-making
- Demonstrates a basic understanding of risk and risk management concepts
- Takes action with a sense of urgency in time-sensitive situations

#### **Level 4 (GD): Analyzes data to support and enable decision-making**

- Anticipates, researches, reviews, and analyzes available data and relevant empirical evidence, including lessons learned
- Understands risk and can provide basic assessment using cost-benefit analysis
- Uses critical thinking and good judgment to make decisions
- Supports decisions, takes action and ensures appropriate follow-up actions are taken

#### **Level 5 (GE): Leverages available data and makes timely decisions**

- Seeks and analyzes facts, data and lessons of past experience to support sound, logical decisions regarding own and others' work
- Applies cost/benefit analysis to meet work program objectives
- Contributes to decision making by providing relevant risk-analysis
- Shows initiative when necessary, and makes decisions in a timely manner within own area of responsibility

#### **Level 6 (GF): Interprets a wide range of information and pushes to move forward**

- Seeks diversity of information and inputs, researches possible solutions, and generates recommended options
- Identifies and understands risks and proposes recommendations
- Based on risk analysis makes decisions in a timely manner within own area of responsibility, considering the interests and concerns of stakeholders

#### **Level 7 (GG): Recommends and takes decisive action**

- Applies critical thinking and seeks inputs and experience from others to recommend a course of action consistent with the WBG's strategy
- Evaluates risk and anticipates the short and long term implications of decisions
- Commits to a decision and takes action once a decision has been reached

#### **Level 8 (GH): Makes timely decisions that have a broad impact**

- Makes timely decisions, which anticipate, evaluate and plan for the impact across organizational boundaries and stakeholder groups.
- Demonstrates the confidence to make bold decisions quickly, balancing speed and thoroughness even in the face of ambiguous circumstances
- Takes accountability for decisions that involve higher levels of risk, works effectively with stakeholders to minimize risks involved

#### **Level 9 (GI): Models decisiveness and accountability**

- Evaluates decisions with an understanding of how they fit into the global context and WBG's goals
- Leads the decision-making process by making timely decisions, ongoing analysis of the impacts of that decision, taking accountability, and modifying the decision if appropriate
- Provides the space and empowers others to act decisively by clearly communicating expectations and with appropriate for decision-making authority

#### **Level 10 (GJ): Leads an organization that is decisive and accountable**

- Inspires others and creates the conditions for others to effectively Evaluate decisions with an understanding of how they fit into the global context and WBG's goals
- Leads the decision-making process by making timely decisions, ongoing analysis of the impacts of that decision, taking accountability, and modifying the decision if appropriate
- Provides the space and empowers others to act decisively by clearly communicating expectations and with appropriate for decision-making authority

#### **Level 11 (GK): Creates an enterprise and a culture that models decisiveness and accountability**

- Builds and organization and a culture that evaluates decisions with an understanding of how they fit into the global context and WBG's goals
- Leads the decision-making process by making timely decisions, ongoing analysis of the impacts of that decision, taking accountability, and modifying the decision if appropriate
- Provides the space and empowers others to act decisively by clearly communicating expectations and with appropriate for decision-making authority