PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:

INTEGRATED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TRAINING THROUGH COMPETITIVE SIMULATION

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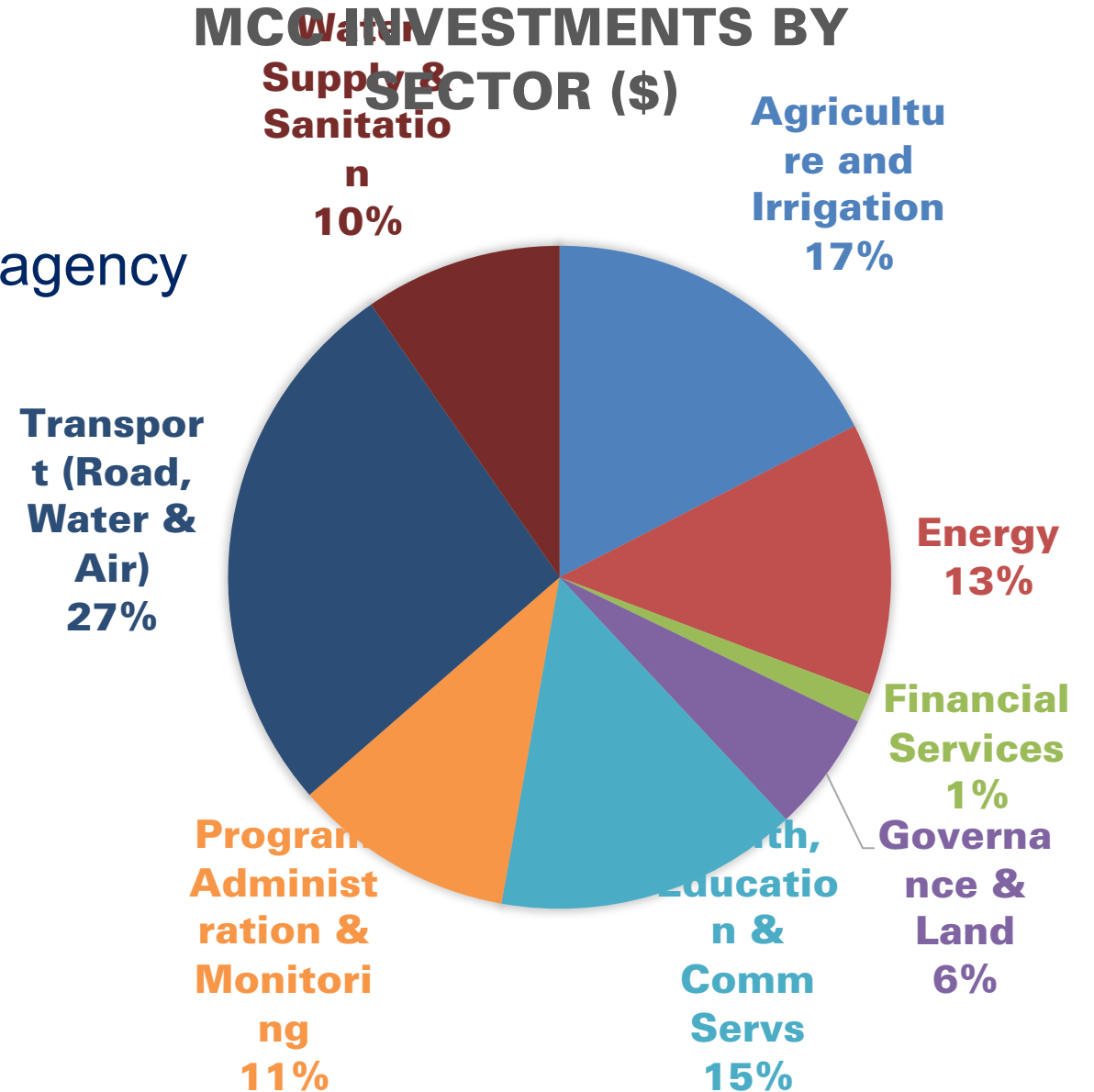*2020 Project Management Symposium*

What is MCC?

A U.S. Government foreign assistance agency fighting to end global poverty.

All programs are:

- Designed using cost-benefit analysis
- Designed and implemented by country partners with oversight by MCC
- Independently evaluated

MCC INVESTMENTS BY SECTOR ($)

- Water Supply & Sanitation 10%
- Agriculture and Irrigation 17%
- Energy 13%
- Financial Services 1%
- Governance & Land 6%
- Health, Education & Comm Servs 15%
- Program Administration & Monitoring 11%
- Transport (Road, Water & Air) 27%

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Project Management and International Development

- Work in challenging environments where flexibility is key

- Often manage at a distance or without direct control over outcomes

- Limited or outdated information

- Political pressure and conflicting priorities of implementer vs. funder

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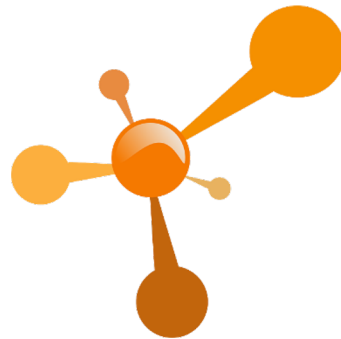# Integrated Program Management

IPM sets up our programs for success.
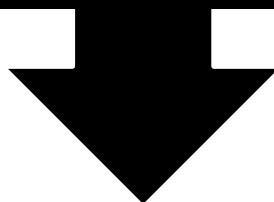
Our tools

Desired Results- Competitive Simulation at MCC

Demonstrate utility of PM tools

Improve Understanding of Others

Share Problems and Create More Solutions

Build Knowledge Together

What we've seen happen

- Increased adoption of PM tools and approaches introduced via games

- Improved transfer of knowledge across groups

- More debate and innovation

- High demand for more games!

"It put us in a position to understand the scope of decisions and see a broader range of perspectives than we normally have in our roles."

"This creates a platform for coaching later on because participants have been exposed to these new ideas in the context of their work"

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What is Competitive Simulation?

- Using a situational model that reflects a real-world system

- Responsive to participant actions and the decisions they make as part of the play

- Facilitators guide the action and judges determine results

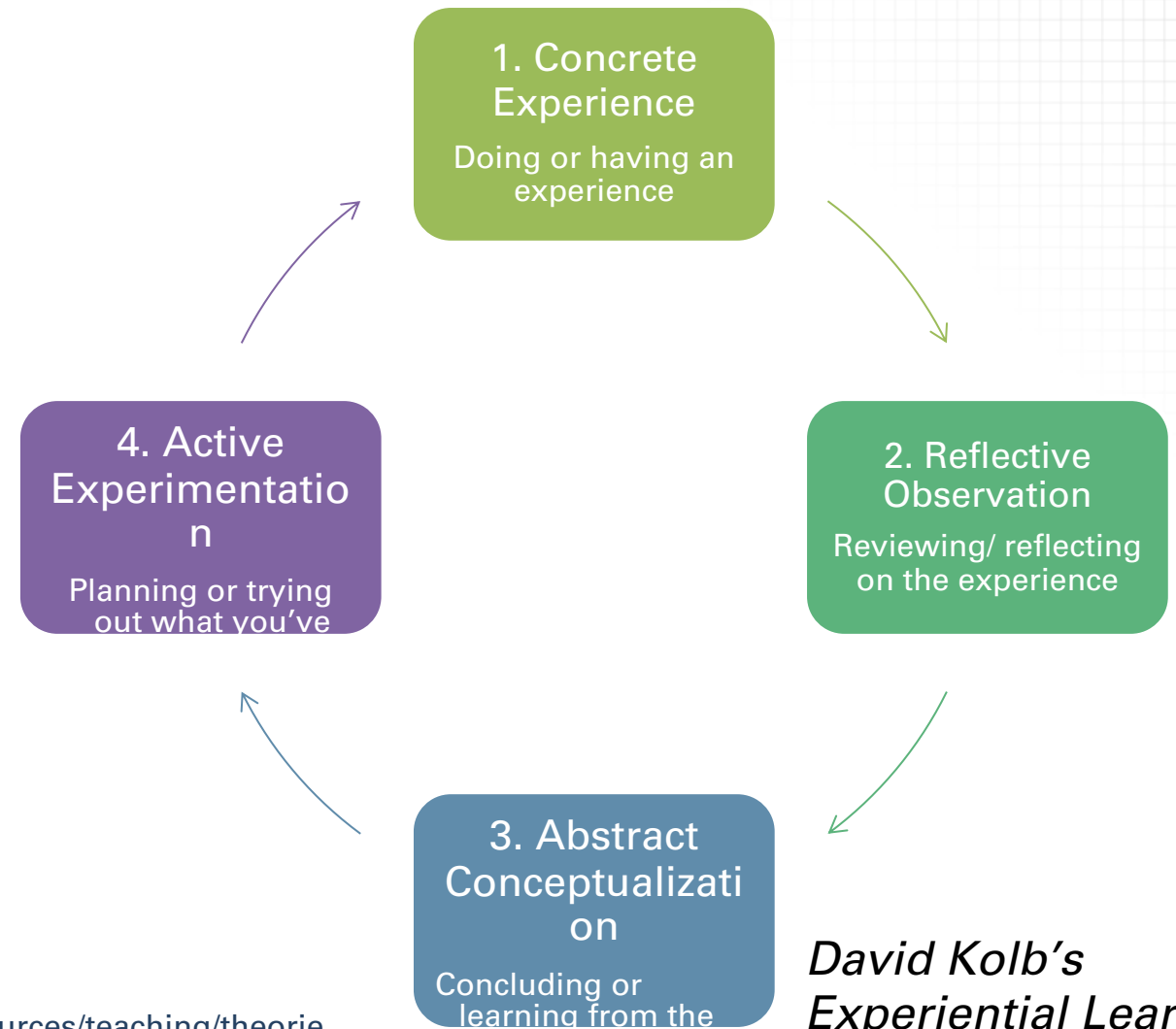- Participants step out of their daily roles to compete

Adult Learning and Simulation

Interaction with others

Realistic environments

Complex problem-solving

Hands-on activities

VS.

Instructor-led

Classroom lecture

Test-driven

https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/doctoralcollege/training/eresources/teaching/theories/kolb

1. Concrete Experience
Doing or having an experience

2. Reflective Observation
Reviewing/ reflecting on the experience

3. Abstract Conceptualization
Concluding or learning from the

4. Active Experimentation
Planning or trying out what you've

David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

Competitive Simulation and MCC

Pilot Game: reducing silos and developing project-focused organizational structures

Environmental and Social Performance Game: RACI matrix, risk response planning

Water and Sanitation in Schools Game: Risk assessment, contract management

African Leadership Conference: organizational structure, RACI matrix

Infra Sustainability Game: organizational structure, risk response, RACI matrix in sustainability planning

Procurement Game: risk and options analysis in procurement

Gender and Social Integration Game: RACI matrices, risk reduction, contract management

Executive Outcomes Game: contract management, decision support tools

A Game in 3 Parts:

1. Learning by Doing: teaching project management tools in context

2. Reality hits: Testing the tools and demonstrating their use

3. Wrap up: Reflecting, making conclusions, and planning for future application

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SAMPLE GAME: GENDER AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Guyana Compact Description

- High poverty and low levels of literacy (particularly among girls)

- Regional disparities between two regions that will receive infrastructure investments

$85 million compact designed to develop a more reliable electricity grid while increasing household access to electricity

Rural Electrification Project: $25M

Transmission Infrastructure Project: $60M

SAMPLE GAME: GENDER AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION
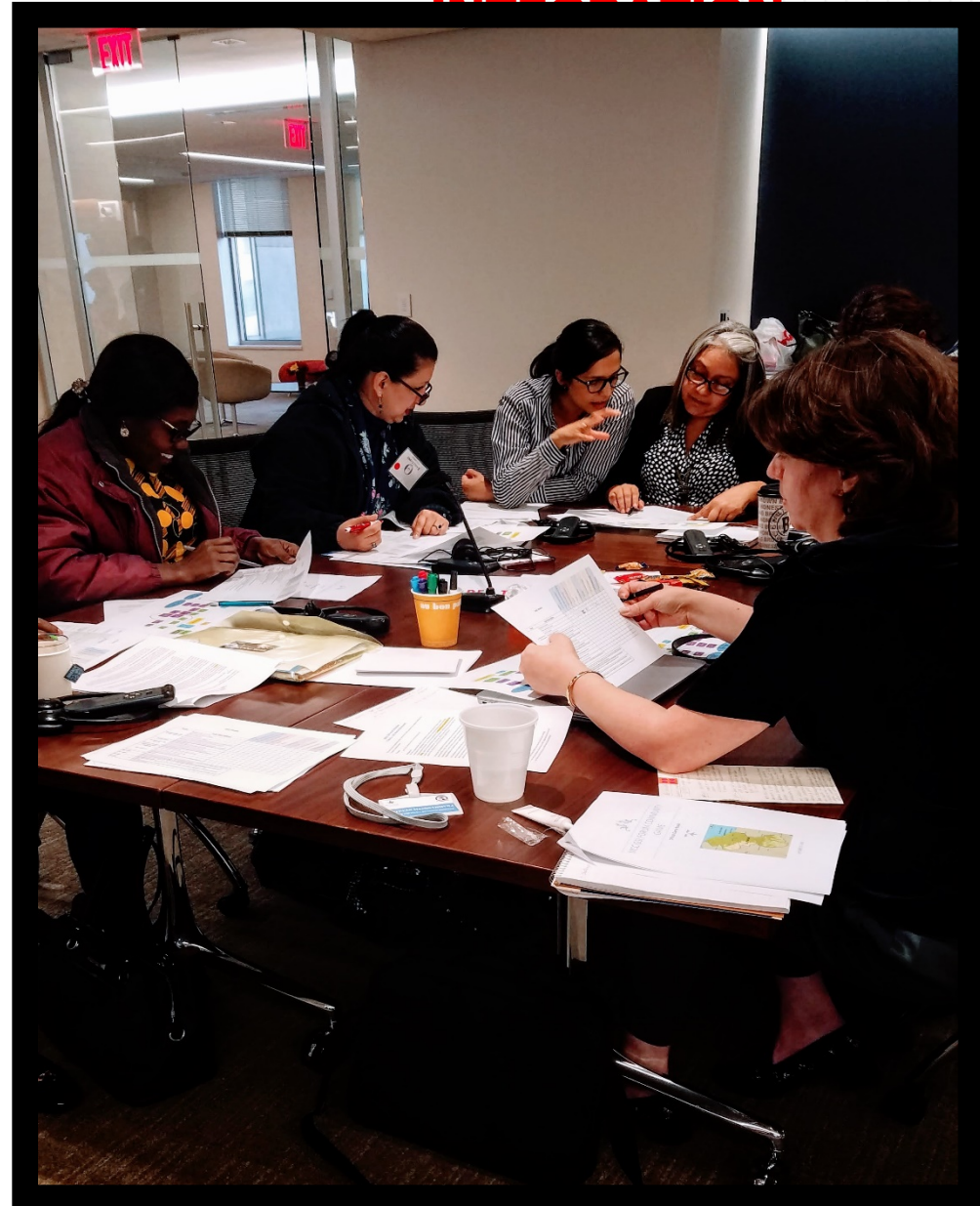
Goal: Each Turn

Read & understand instructions

↓

Team Creates Solution

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Presentation to Judges and Peers

↓

Respond to Questions; Score

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SAMPLE GAME: GENDER AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Turn 1
- Design a RACI matrix for project delivery
- Indicate decisional authority and communications protocols

Turn 2
- Identify and prioritize risks to project implementation
- Develop mitigation measures for top 3 risks

Turn 3
- Respond to scenario of underperforming contractor
- Identify how tools from rounds 1&2 informed response

SAMPLE GAME: GENDER AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Our Winners and the Judge's Panel

The Way Forward at MCC

- Apply learning and continue to improve
- Move from game development to coaching
- Continue to develop games that reinforce good project management processes
- Spread the word and collaborate with others!

How to make competitive simulation work

- Start early! It can take us a few months to develop a game
- Keep it focused and simple to start
- Know what you want to get out of the simulation
- Create a believable simulated environment and give the game some stakes (prizes)
- Leave time for a debrief and identification of action items – this is where things get real
- Ask for feedback

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Integrated Program
Management Team

Questions?