

Organizational Development for Partners Terre des hommes Germany

Reflection: Takeways Day 1

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Documentation of collectively generated outputs

What are your key takeaways from this first session?

Cultural sub-system

Importance of core value and philosophy

Importance of organizational culture

- Learning culture
- Culture of accountability

Needs clear vision and mission to develop their identity but often lacking documentation capacities and networking with government entities (esp. with younger organisations)

- Despite co-decision not all partners take over the strategic goals and need to introduce them to partner organisations (co-decision vs imposing/information on tdh strategic goals to realise them and why tdh decided on these goals; keeping partner autonomy but clearly communicate tdh goals)

Social sub-system

Social sub-system needs to be taken into account

We need to consider power relations

- Trying to use QUAM and select the qualified organisations but changes in staff might bring difficulties to the single project; staff turn over a difficulty (training staff and then leaving organisation --; also difficult for a possible handing over to "the next generation")
- Challenge: how to maintain core staff, how to do proper leadership to avoid staff turnover;

Technical-instrumental sub-system

Other organisations: well developed but still have difficulties to articulate their activities due to language barriers (esp. field staff)

Often tdh partners implement in remote areas where language barriers come up but at the same time they have well established contacts on the ground but have difficulties to communicate their successes

- Some organisations tend to exaggerate their activities
- Only organisations with good funding can compete with international organisations
- Local organisations cannot pay sufficient salary

- Challenge: documenting impact, incl. fundraising strategies (to not only depend on tdh, "selling their successes")

Capacity building

- Partners should not be overcharged with trainings
- Limited technical knowledge (reporting, photography, limitations internet access, etc.)
- Difficult to find organisation providing good capacity building
- Capacity building is needed as we work with marginalised communities in remote areas --; difficult to find good staff and it needs organisations with expertise in that area
- We need to "train" partner on strategic goals and the inclusion into project work to fulfill roles and responsibilities according
- Important: leadership trainings, finance management, team building
- Not providing sufficient amount on capacity building, only do it in context of project but needs capacity building before (e.g. how to do feasibility study, baseline, etc.)
- Regular training; training outside project context, more permanent including mentoring
- Consider one person to be responsible for capacity building as a topic/task at level of regional offices of tdh
- Partners appreciate the trainings but find it difficult to apply what they have learnt
- Diverse partner landscape, no training is "one size fits all"; find different approaches
- Capacity building is based on their need
- Effective trainings need to address more than one element, should be needs based
- Apart from methods, strategies etc., we should also address the social sub-systems of POs. Example: capacity building is only attended by the director - we should by definition invite at least 2 people to a training, especially the responsible key staff (f.e. finances).

Role and functioning of tdh

Gap within programme department: Bridging the gap between those directly and indirectly working with partners.

7 elements of an organization and development phases

- Its good to have a mixture of organizational phases (pioneer, differentiation, integration, analysis) in the different partner organizations in one region / one country
- Awareness about how 7 elements are inter-connected. But also, that some topics are very sensitive, for example, identities, and that it is difficult for external organisations like tdhG to work on.

Difficult to institutionalise capacity building / knowledge management

- Knowledge gets lost with high staff turn-overs.
- POs should build up good knowledge management.

ORLA

- Rol de coordinadoras: tarea de traducir la realidad de las copartes a los formatos de tdh
- Cómo acomodar los temas de las copartes?
- Prestar atención al pensar y al sentir también; no solamente al hacer (dinámica de tdh ha cambiado y esto influencia a las copartes)
- Separar personas de roles y seguimientos; no personalizar los procesos institucionales
- Comunicación entre oficina central y regional tiene que funcionar para poder apoyar a las copartes
- Confianza entre colegas y copartes -; se necesita apoyo

Which questions come to your mind now?

How to influence the 7 key elements? Tools and methods?

How to influence the social sub-system?

TDH mandate

We should clarify the mandate of tdh towards capacity building of partners earlier

How to accompany partners in becoming financial sustainable?

challenging if many partners because the process is very time-demanding and also we are aware that it is very difficult to raise funds locally